



GRI STANDARDS

# GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016

# 402

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 JULY 2018

TOPIC STANDARD

# GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016

## Topic Standard

### Effective Date

This Standard is effective for reports or other materials published on or after 1 July 2018

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# Introduction

*GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016* contains disclosures for organizations to report information about their impacts related to labor/management relations, and how they manage these impacts.

The Standard is structured as follows:

- [Section 1](#) contains a requirement, which provides information about how the organization manages its impacts related to labor/management relations.
- [Section 2](#) contains one disclosure, which provides information about the organization's impacts related to labor/management relations.
- The [Glossary](#) contains defined terms with a specific meaning when used in the GRI Standards. The terms are underlined in the text of the GRI Standards and linked to the definitions.
- The [Bibliography](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments used in developing this Standard.

The rest of the Introduction section provides a background on the topic, an overview of the system of GRI Standards and further information on using this Standard.

## Background on the topic

This Standard addresses the topic of labor/management relations. This covers an organization's consultative practices with employees and their representatives, including its approach to communicating significant operational changes.

An organization's consultation practices are expected to be aligned with relevant international norms and standards.

Collective bargaining can play an important role in an organization's consultation practices. Collective bargaining refers to all negotiations that take place between one or more employers or employers' organizations, on the one hand, and one or more workers' organizations (e.g., trade unions), on the other, for determining working conditions and terms of employment or for regulating relations between employers and workers.<sup>1</sup>

These concepts are covered in key instruments of the International Labour Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: see [Bibliography](#).

Reporting on collective bargaining is covered in more detail in [GRI 407: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining 2016](#). In addition, [Disclosure 2-30 in GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021](#) requires reporting on the percentage of total employees covered by collective bargaining agreements.

## System of GRI Standards

This Standard is part of the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards (GRI Standards). The GRI Standards enable an organization to report information about its most significant impacts on the economy, environment, and people, including impacts on their human rights, and how it manages these impacts.

The GRI Standards are structured as a system of interrelated standards that are organized into three series: GRI Universal Standards, GRI Sector Standards, and GRI Topic Standards (see [Figure 1](#) in this Standard).

### Universal Standards: GRI 1, GRI 2 and GRI 3

[GRI 1: Foundation 2021](#) specifies the requirements that the organization must comply with to report in accordance with the GRI Standards. The organization begins using the GRI Standards by consulting [GRI 1](#).

[GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021](#) contains disclosures that the organization uses to provide information about its reporting practices and other organizational details, such as its activities, governance, and policies.

[GRI 3: Material Topics 2021](#) provides guidance on how to determine material topics. It also contains disclosures that the organization uses to report information about its process of determining material topics, its list of material topics, and how it manages each topic.

### Sector Standards

The Sector Standards provide information for organizations about their likely material topics. The organization uses the Sector Standards that apply to its sectors when determining its material topics and when determining what to report for each material topic.

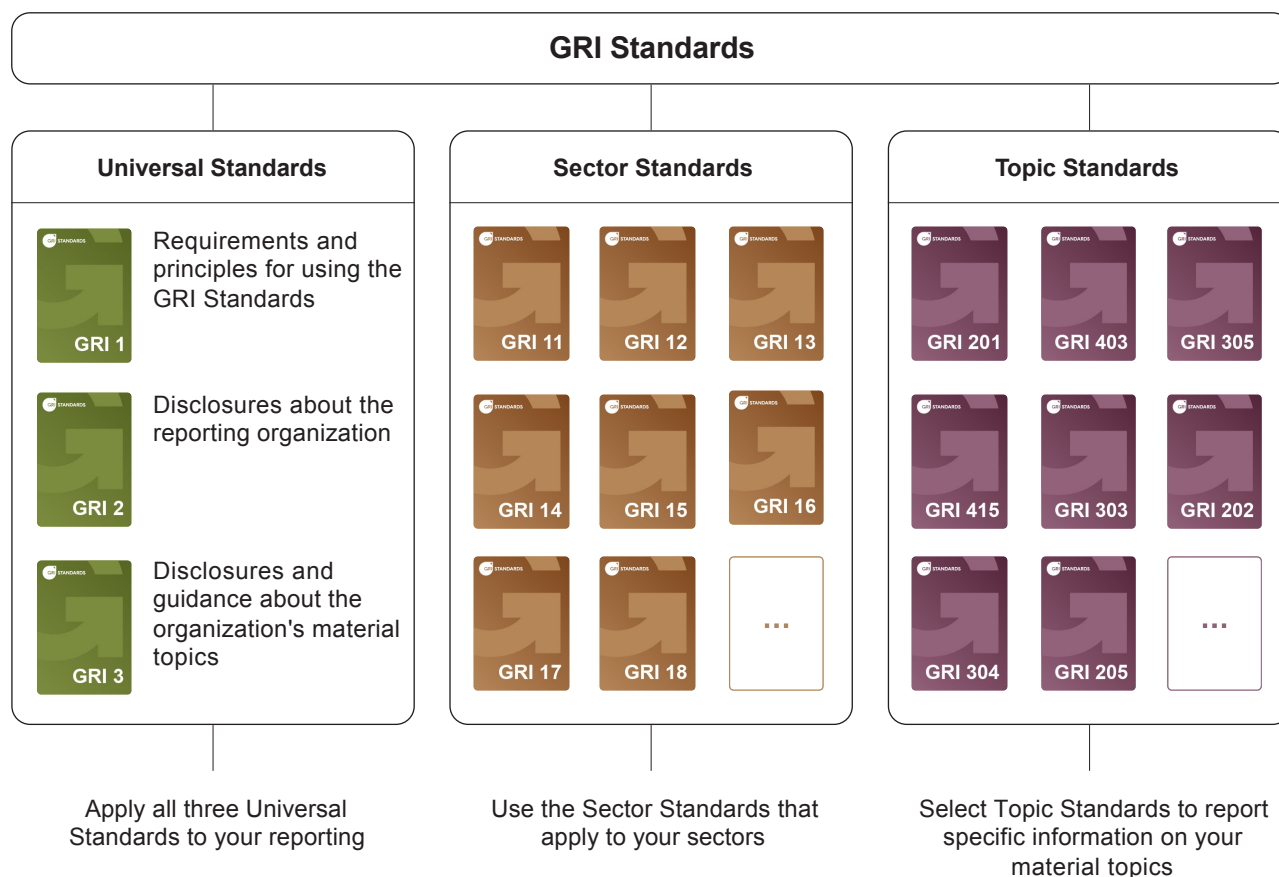
### Topic Standards

The Topic Standards contain disclosures that the organization uses to report information about its impacts in relation

<sup>1</sup> This definition is based on the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 154, 'Collective Bargaining Convention', 1981.

to particular topics. The organization uses the Topic Standards according to the list of material topics it has determined using *GRI 3*.

**Figure 1. GRI Standards: Universal, Sector and Topic Standards**



## Using this Standard

This Standard can be used by any organization – regardless of size, type, sector, geographic location, or reporting experience – to report information about its impacts related to labor/management relations.

An organization reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards is required to report the following disclosures if it has determined labor/management relations to be a material topic:

- [Disclosure 3-3 in GRI 3: Material Topics 2021](#) (see clause 1.1 in this Standard);
- Any disclosure from this Topic Standard that is relevant to the organization's impacts related to labor/management relations (Disclosure 402-1).

See [Requirements 4 and 5 in GRI 1: Foundation 2021](#).

Reasons for omission are permitted for these disclosures.

If the organization cannot comply with a disclosure or with a requirement in a disclosure (e.g., because the required information is confidential or subject to legal prohibitions), the organization is required to specify the disclosure or the requirement it cannot comply with, and provide a reason for omission together with an explanation in the GRI content index. See [Requirement 6 in GRI 1: Foundation 2021](#) for more information on reasons for omission.

If the organization cannot report the required information about an item specified in a disclosure because the item (e.g., committee, policy, practice, process) does not exist, it can comply with the requirement by reporting this to be the case. The organization can explain the reasons for not having this item, or describe any plans to develop it. The disclosure does not require the organization to implement the item (e.g., developing a policy), but to report that the item does not exist.

If the organization intends to publish a standalone sustainability report, it does not need to repeat information that it has already reported publicly elsewhere, such as on web pages or in its annual report. In such a case, the organization can report a required disclosure by providing a reference in the GRI content index as to where this

information can be found (e.g., by providing a link to the web page or citing the page in the annual report where the information has been published).

**Requirements, guidance and defined terms**

The following apply throughout this Standard:

Requirements are presented in **bold font** and indicated by the word 'shall'. An organization must comply with requirements to report in accordance with the GRI Standards.

Requirements may be accompanied by guidance.

Guidance includes background information, explanations, and examples to help the organization better understand the requirements. The organization is not required to comply with guidance.

The Standards may also include recommendations. These are cases where a particular course of action is encouraged but not required.

The word 'should' indicates a recommendation, and the word 'can' indicates a possibility or option.

Defined terms are underlined in the text of the GRI Standards and linked to their definitions in the [Glossary](#). The organization is required to apply the definitions in the Glossary.

# 1. Topic management disclosures

An organization reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards is required to report how it manages each of its material topics.

An organization that has determined labor/management relations to be a material topic is required to report how it manages the topic using [Disclosure 3-3 in GRI 3: Material Topics 2021](#) (see clause 1.1 in this section).

This section is therefore designed to supplement – and not replace – Disclosure 3-3 in *GRI 3*.

REQUIREMENTS	<b>1.1</b> <b>The reporting organization shall report how it manages labor/management relations using <a href="#">Disclosure 3-3 in GRI 3: Material Topics 2021</a>.</b>
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## 2. Topic disclosures

### Disclosure 402-1 Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes

#### REQUIREMENTS

The reporting organization shall report the following information:

- a. Minimum number of weeks' notice typically provided to employees and their representatives prior to the implementation of significant operational changes that could substantially affect them.
- b. For organizations with collective bargaining agreements, report whether the notice period and provisions for consultation and negotiation are specified in collective agreements.

#### GUIDANCE

##### Guidance for Disclosure 402-1

Minimum notice periods can be found in corporate policies and standard employment contracts. Different policy statements can exist at a regional level.

An organization can identify the collective bargaining agreements referred to in [Disclosure 2-30 of GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021](#), and review the notice period clauses within these documents.

##### Background

Organizations are expected to provide reasonable notice of significant operational changes to employees and their representatives, as well as to appropriate government authorities. Minimum notice periods are a measure of an organization's ability to maintain employee satisfaction and motivation while implementing significant changes to operations.

This disclosure provides insight into an organization's practice of ensuring timely discussion of significant operational changes, and engaging with its employees and their representatives to negotiate and implement these changes, which can have positive or negative implications for workers.

This disclosure also allows an assessment of an organization's consultation practices in relation to expectations expressed in relevant international norms.

The essence of consultation is that management takes the views of workers into account when making specific decisions. Therefore, it is important that consultation takes place before a decision is made. Meaningful consultation includes the timely provision of all information needed to make an informed decision to workers or their representatives. Genuine consultation involves dialogue; opinion surveys and questionnaires are not considered consultation.

Timely and meaningful consultation allows the affected parties to understand the impacts of the changes, such as possible loss of employment. It also gives an opportunity for them to work collectively to prevent or mitigate negative impacts as much as possible (see references [11] and [12] in the [Bibliography](#)). Consultative practices that result in good industrial relations help to provide positive working environments, reduce turnover, and minimize operational disruptions.



# Glossary

This glossary provides definitions for terms used in this Standard. The organization is required to apply these definitions when using the GRI Standards.

The definitions included in this glossary may contain terms that are further defined in the complete [GRI Standards Glossary](#). All defined terms are underlined. If a term is not defined in this glossary or in the complete *GRI Standards Glossary*, definitions that are commonly used and understood apply.

## **business partner**

entity with which the organization has some form of direct and formal engagement for the purpose of meeting its business objectives

Source: Shift and Mazars LLP, *UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework*, 2015; modified

Examples: affiliates, business-to-business customers, clients, first-tier suppliers, franchisees, joint venture partners, investee companies in which the organization has a shareholding position

Note: Business partners do not include subsidiaries and affiliates that the organization controls.

## **business relationships**

relationships that the organization has with business partners, with entities in its value chain including those beyond the first tier, and with any other entities directly linked to its operations, products, or services

Source: United Nations (UN), *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework*, 2011; modified

Note: Examples of other entities directly linked to the organization's operations, products, or services are a non-governmental organization with which the organization delivers support to a local community or state security forces that protect the organization's facilities.

## **collective bargaining**

all negotiations that take place between one or more employers or employers' organizations, on the one hand, and one or more workers' organizations (e.g., trade unions), on the other, for determining working conditions and terms of employment or for regulating relations between employers and workers

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO), *Collective Bargaining Convention*, 1981 (No. 154); modified

## **employee**

individual who is in an employment relationship with the organization according to national law or practice

## **human rights**

rights inherent to all human beings, which include, at a minimum, the rights set out in the *United Nations (UN) International Bill of Human Rights* and the principles concerning fundamental rights set out in the *International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*

Source: United Nations (UN), *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework*, 2011; modified

Note: See [Guidance to 2-23-b-i in GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021](#) for more information on 'human rights'.

## **impact**

effect the organization has or could have on the economy, environment, and people, including on their human rights, which in turn can indicate its contribution (negative or positive) to sustainable development

Note 1: Impacts can be actual or potential, negative or positive, short-term or long-term, intended or unintended, and reversible or irreversible.

Note 2: See section 2.1 in *GRI 1: Foundation 2021* for more information on 'impact'.

#### **material topics**

topics that represent the organization's most significant impacts on the economy, environment, and people, including impacts on their human rights

Note: See section 2.2 in *GRI 1: Foundation 2021* and section 1 in *GRI 3: Material Topics 2021* for more information on 'material topics'.

#### **significant operational change**

alteration to the organization's pattern of operations that can potentially have significant positive or negative impacts on workers performing the organization's activities

Examples: closures, expansions, mergers, new openings, outsourcing of operations, restructuring, sale of all or part of the organization, takeovers

#### **supplier**

entity upstream from the organization (i.e., in the organization's supply chain), which provides a product or service that is used in the development of the organization's own products or services

Examples: brokers, consultants, contractors, distributors, franchisees, home workers, independent contractors, licensees, manufacturers, primary producers, sub-contractors, wholesalers

Note: A supplier can have a direct business relationship with the organization (often referred to as a first-tier supplier) or an indirect business relationship.

#### **supply chain**

range of activities carried out by entities upstream from the organization, which provide products or services that are used in the development of the organization's own products or services

#### **sustainable development / sustainability**

development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

Source: World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, 1987

Note: The terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' are used interchangeably in the GRI Standards.

#### **value chain**

range of activities carried out by the organization, and by entities upstream and downstream from the organization, to bring the organization's products or services from their conception to their end use

Note 1: Entities upstream from the organization (e.g., suppliers) provide products or services that are used in the development of the organization's own products or services. Entities downstream from the organization (e.g., distributors, customers) receive products or services from the organization.

Note 2: The value chain includes the supply chain.

#### **worker**

person that performs work for the organization

Examples: employees, agency workers, apprentices, contractors, home workers, interns, self-employed persons, sub-contractors, volunteers, and persons working for organizations other than the reporting organization, such as for suppliers

**Note:** In the GRI Standards, in some cases, it is specified whether a particular subset of workers is required to be used.

# Bibliography

This section lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments used in developing this Standard.

## Authoritative instruments:

1. International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 87, 'Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention', 1948.
2. International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 98, 'Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention', 1949.
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