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International Labour Conference

The International Labour Conference brings together governments', workers' and employers' representatives.

The ILO organises once a year the International Labour Conference in Geneva to set the broad policies of the ILO, including conventions and recommendations. Also known as the "international parliament of labour", the conference makes decisions about the ILO's general policy, work programme and budget and also elects the Governing Body.

Each member State is represented by a delegation: two government delegates, an employer delegate, a worker delegate and their respective advisers. All of them have individual voting rights and all votes are equal, regardless the population of the delegate's member State. The employer and worker delegates are normally chosen in agreement with the most representative national organizations of employers and workers. Usually, the workers and employers' delegates coordinate their voting. All delegates have the same rights and are not required to vote in blocs.

Delegates have the same rights, they can express themselves freely and vote as they wish. This diversity of viewpoints does not prevent decisions being adopted by very large majorities or unanimously.

Heads of State and prime ministers also participate in the Conference. International organizations, both governmental and others, also attend but as observers.

Conventions

Main article: [List of International Labour Organization Conventions](#)

Domestic workers rejoicing after the Convention on Domestic Workers was adopted at the International Labour Conference, 100th Session in Geneva. 16 June 2011.

Through July 2018, the ILO had adopted 189 conventions. If these conventions are ratified by enough governments, they come in force. However, ILO conventions are considered [international labour](#)

[standards](#) regardless of ratification. When a convention comes into force, it creates a legal obligation for ratifying nations to apply its provisions.

Every year the International Labour Conference's Committee on the Application of Standards examines a number of alleged breaches of international labour standards. Governments are required to submit reports detailing their compliance with the obligations of the conventions they have ratified. Conventions that have not been ratified by member states have the same legal force as recommendations.

In 1998, the 86th International Labour Conference adopted the [Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#). This declaration contains four fundamental policies

- The right of workers to associate freely and [bargain collectively](#)
- The end of [forced and compulsory labour](#)
- The end of [child labour](#)
- The end of [unfair discrimination among workers](#)

The ILO asserts that its members have an obligation to work towards fully respecting these principles, embodied in relevant ILO conventions. The ILO conventions which embody the fundamental principles have now been ratified by most member states.^[12]

Protocols

This device is employed for making conventions more flexible or for amplifying obligations by amending or adding provisions on different points. Protocols are always linked to Convention, even though they are international treaties they do not exist on their own. As with Conventions, Protocols can be ratified.

Recommendations

Recommendations do not have the binding force of conventions and are not subject to ratification. Recommendations may be adopted at the same time as conventions to supplement the latter with additional or more detailed provisions. In other cases recommendations may be adopted separately and may address issues separate from particular conventions.^[13]

Membership

The ILO has 187 state members. 186 of the 193 [member states of the United Nations](#) plus the [Cook Islands](#) are members of the ILO.^[14] The UN member states which are not members of the ILO

are [Andorra](#), [Bhutan](#), [Liechtenstein](#), [Micronesia](#), [Monaco](#), [Nauru](#), and [North Korea](#).

The ILO constitution permits any member of the UN to become a member of the ILO. To gain membership, a nation must inform the director-general that it accepts all the obligations of the ILO constitution.^[15] Other states can be admitted by a two-thirds vote of all delegates, including a two-thirds vote of government delegates, at any ILO General Conference. The Cook Islands, a non-UN state, joined in June 2015.

Members of the ILO under the League of Nations automatically became members when the organisation's new constitution came into effect after World War II.

Programmes

Labour statistics

The ILO is a major provider of labour statistics. Labour statistics are an important tool for its member states to monitor their progress toward improving labour standards. As part of their statistical work, ILO maintains several databases.^[36] This database covers 11 major data series for over 200 countries. In addition, ILO publishes a number of compilations of labour statistics, such as the Key Indicators of Labour Markets^[37] (KILM). KILM covers 20 main indicators on labour participation rates, employment, unemployment, educational attainment, labour cost, and economic performance. Many of these indicators have been prepared by other organizations. For example, the [Division of International Labour Comparisons](#) of the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) prepares the hourly compensation in manufacturing indicator.^[38]

The [U.S. Department of Labor](#) also publishes a yearly report containing a [List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor](#)^[39] issued by the [Bureau of International Labor Affairs](#). The December 2014 updated edition of the report listed a total of 74 countries and 136 goods.

Training and teaching units

The [International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization](#) (ITC-ILLO) is based in [Turin](#), Italy.^[40] Together with the [University of Turin Department of Law](#), the ITC offers training for ILO officers and secretariat members, as well as offering educational programmes. The ITC offers more than 450 training and educational programmes and projects every year for some 11,000 people around the world.

For instance, the ITCILO offers a [Master of Laws](#) programme in management of development, which aims specialize professionals in the field of cooperation and development.

Child labour

These young boys are among the millions of children in child labour worldwide. They work at a brickyard in Antsirabe, Madagascar.

The term [child labour](#) is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, potential, dignity, and is harmful to their physical and mental development.

Child labour refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children. Further, it can involve interfering with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely, or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age. Whether or not particular forms of "work" can be called *child labour* depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries. The answer varies from country to country, as well as among sectors within countries.

ILO's response to child labour

Parties to ILO's 1973 Minimum Age Convention, and the minimum ages they have designated: purple, 14 years; green, 15 years; blue, 16 years

The ILO's [International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour](#) (IPEC) was created in 1992 with the overall goal of the progressive elimination of child labour, which was to be achieved through strengthening the capacity of countries to deal with the problem and promoting a worldwide movement to combat child labour. The IPEC currently has operations in 88 countries, with an annual expenditure on technical cooperation projects that reached over US\$61 million in 2008. It is the largest programme of its kind globally and the biggest single operational programme of the ILO.

The number and range of the IPEC's partners have expanded over the years and now include employers' and workers' organizations, other international and government agencies, private businesses, community-based organizations, NGOs, the media, parliamentarians, the judiciary, universities, religious groups and children and their families.

The IPEC's work to eliminate child labour is an important facet of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.^[42] Child labour not only prevents children from acquiring the skills and education they need for a better future,

Exceptions in indigenous communities

Because of different cultural views involving labour, the ILO developed a series of culturally sensitive mandates, including convention Nos. 169, 107, 138, and 182, to protect indigenous culture, traditions, and identities. Convention Nos. 138 and 182 lead in the fight against child labour, while Nos. 107 and 169 promote the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples and protect their right to define their own developmental priorities.^[44]

In many indigenous communities, parents believe children learn important life lessons through the act of work and through the participation in daily life. Working is seen as a learning process preparing children of the future tasks they will eventually have to do as an adult.^[45] It is a belief that the family's and child well-being and survival is a shared responsibility between members of the whole family. They also see work as an intrinsic part of their child's developmental process. While these attitudes toward child work remain, many children and parents from indigenous communities still highly value education.

Issues

See also: [List of International Labour Organization Conventions](#)

Forced labour

The ILO has considered the fight against forced labour to be one of its main priorities. During the interwar years, the issue was mainly considered a colonial phenomenon, and the ILO's concern was to establish minimum standards protecting the inhabitants of colonies from the worst abuses committed by economic interests. After 1945, the goal became to set a uniform and universal standard, determined by the higher awareness gained during World War II of politically and economically motivated systems of forced labour, but debates were hampered by the Cold War and by exemptions claimed by colonial powers. Since the 1960s, declarations

of labour standards as a component of human rights have been weakened by government of postcolonial countries claiming a need to exercise extraordinary powers over labour in their role as emergency regimes promoting rapid economic development.

Ratifications of the ILO's 1930 [Forced Labour Convention](#), with non-ratifiers shown in red

In June 1998 the International Labour Conference adopted a [Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#) and its follow-up that obligates member states to respect, promote and realize freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour, the effective abolition of child labour, and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

With the adoption of the declaration, the ILO created the InFocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration which is responsible for the reporting processes and technical cooperation activities associated with the declaration; and it carries out awareness raising, advocacy and knowledge functions.

In November 2001, following the publication of the InFocus Programme's first global report on forced labour, the ILO's governing body created a special action programme to combat forced labour (SAP-FL),^[47] as part of broader efforts to promote the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its follow-up.

Ratifications of the ILO's 1957 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, with non-ratifiers shown in red

Since its inception, the SAP-FL has focused on raising global awareness of forced labour in its different forms, and mobilizing action against its manifestation. Several thematic and country-specific studies and surveys have since been undertaken, on such diverse aspects of forced labour as [bonded labour](#), [human trafficking](#), forced domestic work, rural servitude, and forced prisoner labour.

In 2013, the SAP-FL was integrated into the ILO's Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS) bringing together the fight against forced and child labour and working in the context of Alliance 8.7.

One major tool to fight forced labour was the adoption of the ILO Forced Labour Protocol by the International Labour Conference in 2014. It was ratified for the second time in 2015 and in November 9 2016 it entered into force. The new protocol brings the existing ILO Convention 29 on Forced Labour ^[50], adopted in 1930, into the modern era to address practices such as human trafficking. The accompanying Recommendation 203 provides technical guidance on its implementation. ^[51]

In 2015, the ILO launched a global campaign to end modern slavery, in partnership with the International Organization of Employers (IOE) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). The 50 for Freedom campaign aims to mobilize public support and encourage countries to ratify the ILO's Forced Labour Protocol. ^[52]

Minimum wage law

To protect the right of labours for fixing [minimum wage](#), ILO has created [Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928](#), [Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery \(Agriculture\) Convention, 1951](#) and [Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970](#) as [minimum wage law](#).

HIV/AIDS

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the lead [UN](#)-agency on [HIV](#) workplace policies and programmes and private sector mobilization. The ILO recognizes that HIV has a potentially devastating impact on [labour](#) and [productivity](#) and represents an enormous burden for working people, their families and communities. ILOAIDS is the branch of the ILO dedicated to this issue.

The ILO has been involved with the HIV response since 1998. In June 2001, the ILO's governing body adopted a pioneering code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, which was launched during a special session of the UN General Assembly.

The same year, ILO became a cosponsor of the [Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS](#) (UNAIDS).

In 2010, the 99th International Labour Conference adopted the ILO's recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the world of work, 2010 (No. 200), ^[55] the first international labour standard on HIV and AIDS. The recommendation lays out a comprehensive set of principles to protect the

rights of HIV-positive workers and their families, while scaling up prevention in the workplace. Working under the theme of *Preventing HIV, Protecting Human Rights at Work*, ILOAIDS undertakes a range of policy advisory, research and technical support functions in the area of HIV and AIDS and the world of work. The ILO also works on promoting social protection as a means of reducing vulnerability to HIV and mitigating its impact on those living with or affected by HIV.

ILOAIDS is currently engaged in the "Getting to Zero"^[56] campaign to arrive at zero new infections, zero AIDS-related deaths and zero-[discrimination](#) by 2015.^[57] Building on this campaign, ILOAIDS is executing a programme of voluntary and confidential counselling and testing at work, known as VCT@WORK.^[58]

Migrant workers

As the word "migrant" suggests, migrant workers refer to those who moves from one country to another to do their job. For the rights of [migrant workers](#), ILO has adopted conventions, including [Migrant Workers \(Supplementary Provisions\) Convention, 1975](#) and [United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families](#) in 1990.

Domestic workers

Domestic workers are those who perform a variety of tasks for and in other peoples' homes. For example, they may cook / clean the house and look after children. Yet they are often the ones with the least consideration, excluded from labour and social protection. This is mainly due to the fact that women have traditionally carried out the tasks without pay.^[60] For the rights and [decent work](#) of [domestic workers](#) including [migrant domestic workers](#), ILO has adopted [Convention on domestic workers](#) on 16 June 2011.

ILO and globalization

Seeking a process of globalization that is inclusive, democratically governed and provides opportunities and tangible benefits for all countries and people. The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization was established by the ILO's governing body in February 2002 at the initiative of the director-general in response to the fact that there did not appear to be a space within the multilateral system that would

cover adequately and comprehensively the social dimension of the various aspects of globalization. The World Commission Report, *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*, is the first attempt at structured dialogue among representatives of constituencies with different interests and opinions on the social dimension of globalization, aimed at finding common ground on one of the most controversial and divisive subjects of our time.

Future of Work

The ILO launched the Future of Work Initiative in order to gain understanding on the transformations that occur in the world of work and thus be able to develop ways of responding to these challenges.^[62]

The initiative begun in 2016 by gathering the views of government representatives, workers, employers, academics and other relevant figures around the world. About 110 countries participated in dialogues at the regional and national level. These dialogues were structured around "four centenary conversations: work and society, decent jobs for all, the organization of work and production, and the governance of work."

The second step took place in 2017 with the establishment of the Global Commission on the Future of Work dealing with the same "four centenary conversations". A report is expected to be published prior to the 2019 Centenary International Labour Conference.

The aim of this Commission is to set the basis for the delivery of the "social justice mandate" in the 21st century. It will analyze the proper manner of structuring the world of work which is constantly transforming so that it responds to the values of social justice.

There are 28 members in the Global Commission who are all eminent individuals with outstanding personal achievements and vision. They represent a balance of geographical regions and experiences, with equal participation of women and men.

The Commission has two co-chairpersons: Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

ILO Conventions

The ILO Conventions cover a wide area of social and labour issues including basic human rights, minimum wages, industrial relations, employment policy, social dialogue, social security and other issues. ILO Conventions concerning gender-specific issues have a long history. As early as 1919, at the year when the ILO was founded, the Organization adopted the first two Conventions on women (No.3 on maternity protection, and No.4 on night work for women). Convention No.3 was several times revised - for the latest time in the year of 2000 (Convention No. 183).

In the present day society it has been argued that protective measures for women can have a negative impact by denying them entry into certain jobs and contributing to a gender-segregated labour market. In the case of maternity protection, these measures are necessary to protect the reproductive role of women. However the maternity benefits increase the cost of employing women and therefore discourage their employment. This is why the revised variant of the Convention on maternity protection places an emphasis on the payment of maternity benefits from social security funds and restricts the circumstances in which an employer can be held individually liable to pay them (Convention 183, article 6).

- 1919 Maternity Protection Convention (#3)
- 1919 Night Work Women Convention (#4)
- 1951 Equal Remuneration Convention (#100)
- 1958 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (#111)
- 1965 Workers with Family Responsibilities Recommendation (#123)
- 1975 UN International Women's Year
- 1976 - 1985 UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace
- 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination Against Women
- 1981 Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (#156)
- 1994 Part-Time Work Convention (#175)
- 1996 Home Work Convention (#177)
- 1998 Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation (#189)
- 1999 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (#182)
- 2000 Maternity Protection Convention, revised (#183)

In the early 1950s, emphasis shifted to the promotion of equality in employment between men and women, and, more recently, to recognition that equality implies sharing of family responsibilities between men and women.

Convention No.100 and Recommendation No.90, of 1951, laid down the guiding principles of equal remuneration for work of equal value regardless of sex. In 1958, Convention No. 111 and Recommendation No. 111 were adopted to establish the principle of non-discrimination on a number of grounds including sex, with regard to access to vocational training, access to employment, and terms and conditions of employment.

In 1965, Recommendation No.123 on Workers with family responsibilities was adopted, covering measures that should be taken to enable women workers to fulfil their various responsibilities harmoniously and without discrimination. Later, the conviction gained ground that any change in the traditional role of women should be accompanied by a change in men's role and should be reflected in their greater participation in family and household duties: the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention No 156, and accompanying Recommendation No. 165, were adopted in 1981. These instruments apply to men as well as women with responsibilities for dependent children or other members of their immediate family and, are intended to facilitate the employment without discrimination as a result of existing private duties.

The Part-Time Work Convention No. 175 and Recommendation No. 182 adopted in 1994, aim at the equal treatment of full- and part-time workers, the latter consisting mainly of women. The Home Work Convention No. 177 and Recommendation No. 184, adopted in 1996, will contribute to improving the situation of millions of home-workers, a large majority of whom are women.

Convention No.182 and Recommendation No. 190, aiming at the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, also have a gender component, calling for account to be taken of the special situation of girls.

As it is seen in the table of the basic Conventions concerning gender issues all the ten countries of the region covered by the Subregional Office have ratified Conventions No. 100 (On Equal Remuneration) and 111 (On Discrimination in Employment and Occupation). The Russian Federation is the only country of the region that ratified another basic tool of the gender equality – Convention No. 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities. The revised Maternity Convention (No. 183) has been recently ratified by the Republic of Belarus (2.10.2003 – it is not yet indicated in the table as the official date of the ratification will be the date of the registration of this fact in the ILO Headquarters.

31. Assignments / Quiz

32 Presentation / Test /

END of term – Final Examination.

Source of reading, www.ilo.org