

No. 584

---

**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION**

**Convention limiting the hours of work in industrial undertakings to eight in the day and forty-eight in the week, adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation at its first session, Washington, 28 November 1919, as modified by the Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946**

*English and French official texts communicated by the Director-General of the International Labour Office. The registration took place on 15 September 1949.*

---

**ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DU TRAVAIL**

**Convention tendant à limiter à huit heures par jour et quarante-huit heures par semaine le nombre des heures de travail dans les établissements industriels, adoptée par la Conférence générale de l'Organisation internationale du Travail à sa première session, Washington, 28 novembre 1919, telle qu'elle a été modifiée par la Convention portant revision des articles finals, 1946**

*Textes officiels anglais et français communiqués par le Directeur général de l'Organisation internationale du Travail. L'enregistrement a eu lieu le 15 septembre 1949.*

No. 584. CONVENTION<sup>1</sup> LIMITING THE HOURS OF WORK IN INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS TO EIGHT IN THE DAY AND FORTY-EIGHT IN THE WEEK, AS MODIFIED BY THE FINAL ARTICLES REVISION CONVENTION, 1946<sup>2</sup>

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,  
Having been convened at Washington by the Government of the United States of America on the 29th day of October 1919, and  
Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to the "application of the principle of the 8-hours day or of the 48-hours week", which is the first item in the agenda for the Washington meeting of the Conference, and  
Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of an international Convention,

adopts the following Convention, which may be cited as the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919, for ratification by the Members of the International Labour Organisation, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation :

*Article 1*

1. For the purpose of this Convention, the term "industrial undertaking" includes particularly—

- (a) mines, quarries, and other works for the extraction of minerals from the earth;
- (b) industries in which articles are manufactured, altered, cleaned, repaired, ornamented, finished, adapted for sale, broken up or demolished, or in which materials are transformed; including shipbuilding and the generation, transformation, and transmission of electricity or motive power of any kind;
- (c) construction, reconstruction, maintenance, repair, alteration, or demolition of any building, railway, tramway, harbour, dock, pier, canal,

<sup>1</sup> For the date of entry into force of the Convention and the list of ratifications see Certified Statement on page 36.

<sup>2</sup> See page 3.

inland waterway, road, tunnel, bridge, viaduct, sewer, drain, well, telegraphic or telephonic installation, electrical undertaking, gas work, waterwork or other work of construction, as well as the preparation for or laying the foundations of any such work or structure;

(d) transport of passengers or goods by road, rail, sea or inland waterway, including the handling of goods at docks, quays, wharves or warehouses, but excluding transport by hand.

2. The provisions relative to transport by sea and on inland waterways shall be determined by a special conference dealing with employment at sea and on inland waterways.

3. The competent authority in each country shall define the line of division which separates industry from commerce and agriculture.

#### *Article 2*

The working hours of persons employed in any public or private industrial undertaking or in any branch thereof, other than an undertaking in which only members of the same family are employed, shall not exceed eight in the day and forty-eight in the week, with the exceptions hereinafter provided for :

- (a) the provisions of this Convention shall not apply to persons holding positions of supervision or management, nor to persons employed in a confidential capacity;
- (b) where by law, custom, or agreement between employers' and workers' organisations, or, where no such organisations exist, between employers' and workers' representatives, the hours of work on one or more days of the week are less than eight, the limit of eight hours may be exceeded on the remaining days of the week by the sanction of the competent public authority, or by agreement between such organisations or representatives; provided, however, that in no case under the provisions of this paragraph shall the daily limit of eight hours be exceeded by more than one hour;
- (c) where persons are employed in shifts it shall be permissible to employ persons in excess of eight hours in any one day and forty-eight hours in any one week, if the average number of hours over a period of three weeks or less does not exceed eight per day and forty-eight per week.

*Article 3*

The limit of hours of work prescribed in Article 2 may be exceeded in case of accident, actual or threatened, or in case of urgent work to be done to machinery or plant, or in case of "force majeure", but only so far as may be necessary to avoid serious interference with the ordinary working of the undertaking.

*Article 4*

The limit of hours of work prescribed in Article 2 may also be exceeded in those processes which are required by reason of the nature of the process to be carried on continuously by a succession of shifts, subject to the condition that the working hours shall not exceed fifty-six in the week on the average. Such regulation of the hours of work shall in no case affect any rest days which may be secured by the national law to the workers in such processes in compensation for the weekly rest day.

*Article 5*

1. In exceptional cases where it is recognized that the provisions of Article 2 cannot be applied, but only in such cases, agreements between workers' and employers' organisations concerning the daily limit of work over a longer period of time may be given the force of regulations, if the Government, to which these agreements shall be submitted, so decides.

2. The average number of hours worked per week, over the number of weeks covered by any such agreement, shall not exceed forty-eight.

*Article 6*

1. Regulations made by public authority shall determine for industrial undertakings—

(a) the permanent exceptions that may be allowed in preparatory or complementary work which must necessarily be carried on outside the limits laid down for the general working of an establishment, or for certain classes of workers whose work is essentially intermittent;

(b) the temporary exceptions that may be allowed, so that establishments may deal with exceptional cases of pressure of work.

2. These regulations shall be made only after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, if any such organisations exist. These regulations shall fix the maximum of additional hours in each instance, and the rate of pay for overtime shall not be less than one and one-quarter times the regular rate.

#### *Article 7*

1. Each Government shall communicate to the International Labour Office—

- (a) a list of the processes which are classed as being necessarily continuous in character under Article 4;
- (b) full information as to working of the agreements mentioned in Article 5; and
- (c) full information concerning the regulations made under Article 6 and their application.

2. The International Labour Office shall make an annual report thereon to the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation.

#### *Article 8*

1. In order to facilitate the enforcement of the provisions of this Convention, every employer shall be required—

- (a) to notify by means of the posting of notices in conspicuous places in the works or other suitable place, or by such other method as may be approved by the Government, the hours at which work begins and ends, and where work is carried on by shifts, the hours at which each shift begins and ends; these hours shall be so fixed that the duration of the work shall not exceed the limits prescribed by this Convention, and when so notified they shall not be changed except with such notice and in such manner as may be approved by the Government;
- (b) to notify in the same way such rest intervals accorded during the period of work as are not reckoned as part of the working hours;
- (c) to keep a record in the form prescribed by law or regulation in each country of all additional hours worked in pursuance of Articles 3 and 6 of this Convention.

2. It shall be made an offence against the law to employ any person outside the hours fixed in accordance with paragraph (a), or during the intervals fixed in accordance with paragraph (b).

*Article 9*

In the application of this Convention to Japan the following modifications and conditions shall obtain :

- (a) the term "industrial undertaking" includes particularly—
- the undertakings enumerated in paragraph (a) of Article 1;
  - the undertakings enumerated in paragraph (b) of Article 1, provided there are at least ten workers employed;
  - the undertakings enumerated in paragraph (c) of Article 1, in so far as these undertakings shall be defined as "factories" by the competent authority;
  - the undertakings enumerated in paragraph (d) of Article 1, except transport of passengers or goods by road, handling of goods at docks, quays, wharves, and warehouses, and transport by hand; and,
- regardless of the number of persons employed, such of the undertakings enumerated in paragraphs (b) and (c) of Article 1 as may be declared by the competent authority either to be highly dangerous or to involve unhealthy processes.
- (b) the actual working hours of persons of fifteen years of age or over in any public or private industrial undertaking, or in any branch thereof, shall not exceed fifty-seven in the week, except that in the raw-silk industry the limit may be sixty hours in the week;
- (c) the actual working hours of persons under fifteen years of age in any public or private industrial undertaking, or in any branch thereof, and of all miners of whatever age engaged in underground work in the mines, shall in no case exceed forty-eight in the week;
- (d) the limit of hours of work may be modified under the conditions provided for in Articles 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this Convention, but in no case shall the length of such modification bear to the length of the basic week a proportion greater than that which obtains in those Articles;
- (e) a weekly rest period of twenty-four consecutive hours shall be allowed to all classes of workers;
- (f) the provision in Japanese factory legislation limiting its application to places employing fifteen or more persons shall be amended so that such legislation shall apply to places employing ten or more persons;

- (g) the provisions of the above paragraphs of this Article shall be brought into operation not later than 1 July 1922, except that the provisions of Article 4 as modified by paragraph (d) of this Article shall be brought into operation not later than 1 July 1923;
- (h) the age of fifteen prescribed in paragraph (c) of this Article shall be raised, not later than 1 July 1925, to sixteen.

#### *Article 10*

In British India the principle of a sixty-hour week shall be adopted for all workers in the industries at present covered by the factory acts administered by the Government of India, in mines, and in such branches of railway work as shall be specified for this purpose by the competent authority. Any modification of this limitation made by the competent authority shall be subject to the provisions of Articles 6 and 7 of this Convention. In other respects the provisions of this Convention shall not apply to India, but further provisions limiting the hours of work in India shall be considered at a future meeting of the General Conference.

#### *Article 11*

The provisions of this Convention shall not apply to China, Persia, and Siam, but provisions limiting the hours of work in these countries shall be considered at a future meeting of the General Conference.

#### *Article 12*

In the application of this Convention to Greece, the date at which its provisions shall be brought into operation in accordance with Article 19 may be extended to not later than 1 July 1923, in the case of the following industrial undertakings :

- (1) carbon-bisulphide works,
- (2) acids works,
- (3) tanneries,
- (4) paper mills,
- (5) printing works,
- (6) sawmills,
- (7) warehouses for the handling and preparation of tobacco,
  
- (8) surface mining,
- (9) foundries,

- (10) lime works,
- (11) dye works,
- (12) glassworks (blowers),
- (13) gas works (firemen),
- (14) loading and unloading merchandise;

and to not later than 1 July 1924, in the case of the following industrial undertakings :

(1) mechanical industries : machine shops for engines, safes, scales, beds, tacks, shells (sporting), iron foundries, bronze foundries, tin shops, plating shops, manufactories of hydraulic apparatus;

(2) constructional industries : limekilns, cement works, plasterers' shops, tile yards, manufactories of bricks and pavements, potteries, marble yards, excavating and building work;

(3) textile industries : spinning and weaving mills of all kinds, except dye works;

(4) food industries : flour and grist-mills, bakeries, macaroni factories, manufactories of wines, alcohol, and drinks, oil works, breweries, manufactories of ice and carbonated drinks, manufactories of confectioners' products and chocolate, manufactories of sausages and preserves, slaughter-houses, and butcher shops;

(5) chemical industries : manufactories of synthetic colours, glassworks (except the blowers), manufactories of essence of turpentine and tartar, manufactories of oxygen and pharmaceutical products, manufactories of flaxseed oil, manufactories of glycerine, manufactories of calcium carbide, gas works (except the firemen);

(6) leather industries : shoe factories, manufactories of leather goods;

(7) paper and printing industries : manufactories of envelopes, record books, boxes, bags, bookbinding, lithographing, and zinc-engraving shops;

(8) clothing industries : clothing shops, underwear and trimmings, workshops for pressing, workshops for bed coverings, artificial flowers, feathers, and trimmings, hat and umbrella factories;

(9) woodworking industries : joiners' shops, coopers' sheds, wagon factories, manufactories of furniture and chairs, picture-framing establishments, brush and broom factories;

(10) electrical industries : power houses, shops for electrical installations;

(11) transportation by land : employees on railroads and street cars, firemen, drivers, and carters.



*Article 13*

In the application of this Convention to Rumania the date at which its provisions shall be brought into operation in accordance with Article 19 may be extended to not later than 1 July 1924.

*Article 14*

The operation of the provisions of this Convention may be suspended in any country by the Government in the event of war or other emergency endangering the national safety.

*Article 15*

The formal ratifications of this Convention, under the conditions set forth in the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation, shall be communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration.

*Article 16*

1. Each Member of the International Labour Organisation which ratifies this Convention engages to apply it to its colonies, protectorates and possessions which are not fully self-governing—

- (a) except where owing to the local conditions its provisions are inapplicable; or
- (b) subject to such modifications as may be necessary to adapt its provisions to local conditions.

2. Each Member shall notify to the International Labour Office the action taken in respect of each of its colonies, protectorates, and possessions which are not fully self-governing.

*Article 17*

As soon as the ratifications of two Members of the International Labour Organisation have been registered with the International Labour Office, the Director-General of the International Labour Office shall so notify all the Members of the International Labour Organisation.

*Article 18*

This Convention shall come into force at the date on which such notification is issued by the Director-General of the International Labour Office, and it shall then be binding only upon those Members which have registered their ratifications with the International Labour Office. Thereafter this Convention will come into force for any other Member at the date on which its ratification is registered with the International Labour Office.

*Article 19*

Each Member which ratifies this Convention agrees to bring its provisions into operation not later than 1 July 1921, and to take such action as may be necessary to make these provisions effective.

*Article 20*

A Member which has ratified this Convention may denounce it after the expiration of ten years from the date on which the Convention first comes into force, by an act communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office for registration. Such denunciation shall not take effect until one year after the date on which it is registered with the International Labour Office.

*Article 21*

At least once in ten years the Governing Body of the International Labour Office shall present to the General Conference a report on the working of this Convention, and shall consider the desirability of placing on the agenda of the Conference the question of its revision or modification.

*Article 22*

The French and English texts of this Convention shall both be authentic.

The foregoing is the authentic text of the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919, as modified by the Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946.

The original text of the Convention was authenticated on 1 December 1919 by the signatures of W. B. Wilson, President of the Conference, and H. B. Butler, Secretary-General of the Conference.

The Convention first came into force on 13 June 1921.

IN FAITH WHEREOF I have, in pursuance of the provisions of Article 6 of the Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946, authenticated with my signature this thirtieth day of April 1948 two original copies of the text of the Convention as modified.

Edward PHELAN  
Director-General  
of the International Labour Office

## CERTIFIED STATEMENT

This is to certify that the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919, adopted by the International Labour Conference on 28 November 1919 at its First Session, and which entered into force on 13 June 1921, has to date been ratified by the following countries<sup>1</sup> and that these ratifications were duly registered on the dates indicated<sup>2</sup>:

<i>Country</i>	<i>Date of registration of ratification</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Date of registration of ratification</i>
Argentine .....	30.11.1933	* Italy <sup>5</sup> .....	6.10.1924
* Austria <sup>3</sup> .....	12. 6.1924	Latvia <sup>6</sup> .....	15. 8.1925
* Belgium .....	6. 9.1926	Lithuania .....	19. 6.1931
Bulgaria .....	14. 2.1922	* Luxembourg .....	16. 4.1928
* Canada .....	21. 8.1935	Nicaragua .....	12. 4.1934
Chile .....	15. 9.1925	* New Zealand .....	29. 8.1938
* Colombia .....	20. 6.1933	Peru .....	8.11.1945
Cuba .....	20. 9.1934	Portugal .....	8. 7.1928
Czechoslovakia .....	24. 8.1921	Rumania .....	13. 6.1921
* Dominican Republic .	4. 2.1938	Spain .....	22. 2.1929
* France <sup>4</sup> .....	2. 6.1927	Uruguay .....	6. 6.1933
Greece .....	19.11.1920	* Venezuela .....	20.11.1944
* India .....	14. 7.1921		

The Convention is also in force for Pakistan, which became a Member of the International Labour Organisation on 31 October 1947, on which date the Director-General of the International Labour Office received a letter from the Government of Pakistan accepting the obligations of the Constitution of the

<sup>1</sup> It would not be appropriate for the International Labour Office to express an opinion with regard to the complex questions of a constitutional and juridical nature which may arise in regard to the effect of political or military events on the position of certain countries which have ratified the Convention.

<sup>2</sup> The names of Members Parties to the Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946, are marked by an asterisk.

<sup>3</sup> This ratification specified that the Convention in question shall only be put into force in Austria when it has been ratified by the European States of chief industrial importance which are Members of the International Labour Organisation (i. e. Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy), and also by the States bordering on Austria with which Austria has economic relations (i. e. Hungary, Poland, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia).

<sup>4</sup> Ratification subject to the condition that the obligations which this approval entails for France will only have effect when the Convention shall have been ratified by Germany and by Great Britain.

<sup>5</sup> Ratification conditional upon and to date from the day of, the registration by the Secretariat of the League of Nations of the ratification, without any other reservations or other conditions, of the same Convention by Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Switzerland.

<sup>6</sup> Ratification conditional upon the registration with the Secretariat of the League of Nations of the ratifications of the Convention by three of the States of chief industrial importance (within the meaning of the fifth and sixth paragraphs of Article 393 of the Treaty of Versailles).

Organisation; this declaration states that the Government of Pakistan recognises that the obligations resulting from the ratification by India of International Labour Conventions before 15 August 1947 continue to be binding upon Pakistan in accordance with the terms of these Conventions.

The Convention is also in force for Burma. In 1937 the United Kingdom Government delegate declared at the Twenty-third Session of the Conference that Burma had ceased to form a part of India on 1 April 1937 but would continue to observe the International Labour Conventions ratified up to that date by India and would participate in the future in the work of the International Labour Organisation through the medium of the Government of the United Kingdom which was empowered to accept on behalf of and with the consent of the Government of Burma the obligations arising from future international Conventions. Burma became a Member of the International Labour Organisation on 18 May 1948, on which date the Director-General of the International Labour Office received the instrument of acceptance by the Government of The Union of Burma of the obligations of the Constitution of the Organisation; this instrument states that the Government of Burma recognises that the obligations resulting from the ratification by India as regards Burma of International Labour Conventions before 1 April 1937 continue to be binding on the Union of Burma in accordance with the terms of these Conventions.

Geneva, 10 August 1949.

For the Director-General

C. W. JENKS  
*Legal Adviser*