

TENTH MEETING OF THE SRM TWG

(14 - 18 SEPTEMBER 2026)

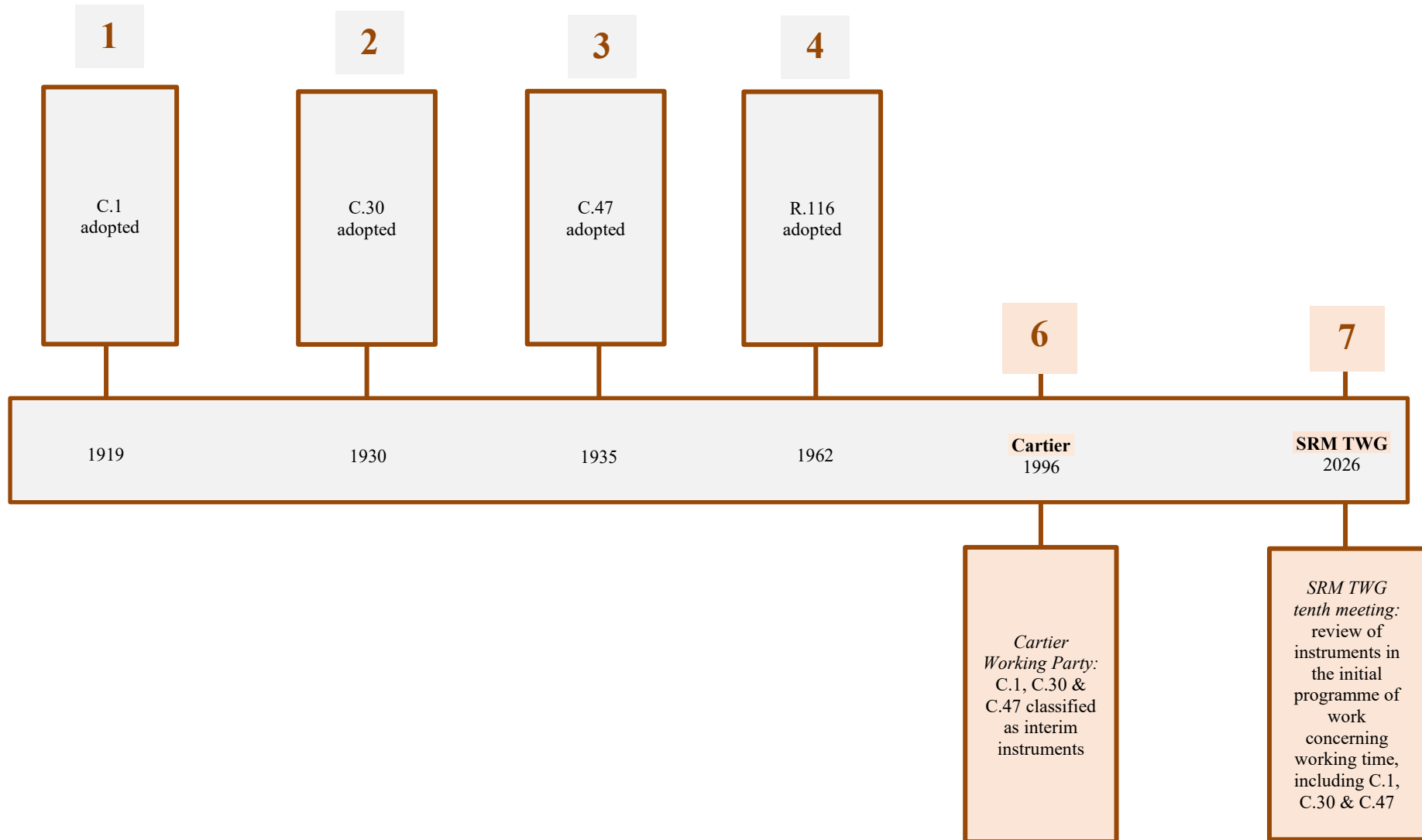
EXAMINATION OF INSTRUMENTS CONCERNING WORKING TIME

Technical Note 1.1: Hours of work

- Three instruments in the initial programme of work concern hours of work: Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1), Hours of Work (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1930 (No. 30) and Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47).
- *Current status of instruments:* These instruments were reviewed by the Cartier Working Party, following which they were classified as *interim*.
- *Action to be considered:* Classification of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47; identification of any gaps in coverage; and associated follow-up action.

14 August 2026

ILO regulation of hours of work Chronology of developments



ILO regulatory approach to hours of work

Since its founding in 1919, the ILO has made regulating working hours a central element of international labour standards. The Preamble of the ILO Constitution refers to “the regulation of the hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum working day and week” as a matter requiring urgent attention. The International Labour Conference adopted the **Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1)**, as the first international labour standard, establishing an eight-hour workday and a 48-hour workweek for the industrial sector. It provided that normal hours of work would not exceed eight per day over a six-day workweek, and allowed limited exceptions for extended hours.

Building on this foundation, the ILO continued to develop additional standards on working hours, rest periods, paid leave, night work, and part-time work over the years. In 1930, similar protections to those in Convention No. 1 were extended to salaried employees in commerce and offices with the adoption of the **Hours of Work (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1930 (No. 30)**. In response to the widespread unemployment following the Great Depression, the **Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47)** was adopted, promoting the principle of a 40-hour workweek without reduction of the standard of living. Although Convention No. 47 does not set detailed rules, it encourages countries to implement measures toward achieving the 40-hour week. The Reduction of Hours of Work Recommendation, 1962 (No. 116), adopted in 1962, supplements these Conventions by providing guidance for progressively reducing working hours, considering differing national economic and social conditions.

Various other instruments, adopted more recently, relate directly or indirectly to working time such as those concerning road transport,¹ maritime shipping,² fishing,³ hotels and restaurants workers,⁴ domestic workers,⁵ nursing personnel,⁶ and workers with family responsibilities.⁷

ILO developments since the adoption of the instruments

1. 1919: ILC adopted Convention No. 1

Convention No. 1 applies to public and private industrial undertakings, including mines and quarries; industries in which articles are manufactured or materials are transformed, such as shipbuilding and energy generation; construction, maintenance and demolition of roads, bridges and tunnels; and transport of passengers or goods by road, rail, sea or inland waterway.

¹ The Hours of Work and Rest Periods (Road Transport) Convention, 1979 (No. 153), supplemented by the Hours of Work and Rest Periods (Road Transport) Recommendation, 1979 (No. 161).

² The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended.

³ The Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188).

⁴ The Working Conditions (Hotels and Restaurants) Convention, 1991 (No. 172), supplemented by the Working Conditions (Hotels and Restaurants) Recommendation, 1991 (No. 179).

⁵ The Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), supplemented by the Domestic Workers Recommendation, 2011 (No. 201).

⁶ The Nursing Personnel Convention, 1977 (No. 149), supplemented by the Nursing Personnel Recommendation, 1977 (No. 157).

⁷ The Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), supplemented by the Workers with Family Responsibilities Recommendation, 1981 (No. 165).

It establishes working time limits of 48 hours per week and eight hours per day. However, Convention No. 1 permits exceptions under certain circumstances, allowing the extension of these daily and weekly limits.

See: [Convention No. 1](#)

2. 1930: ILC adopted Convention No. 30

Convention No. 30 applies to commercial establishments, and establishments and administrative services where the persons employed are mainly engaged in office work. It does not apply to hospitals and similar institutions, hotels, restaurants, cafés or theatres. It limits working hours to a maximum of 48 hours per week and eight hours per day, with exceptions permitted under certain circumstances to extend these limits. Convention No. 30 indicates that the term “hours of work” means the time during which the persons employed are at the employer's disposal, which does not include rest periods during which they are not at the employer's disposal.

See: [Convention No. 30](#)

3. 1935: ILC adopted Convention No. 47

As indicated during the preparatory work, the need to adopt Convention No. 47 arose from the widespread unemployment following the Great Depression in 1929.⁸ Convention No. 47 requires ratifying countries to declare their approval of the 40-hour week principle applied in such a manner that the standard of living is not reduced in consequence. As a promotional instrument, the Convention does not set out detailed rules but calls on ratifying countries to take or facilitate such measures as are appropriate to secure the 40-hour working week.⁹

See: [Convention No. 47](#)

4. 1962: ILC adopted Recommendation No. 116

Recommendation No. 116 was designed to supplement and facilitate the implementation of existing international instruments concerning hours of work. The Preamble indicates that the principle set out in Convention No. 47 is a social standard to be reached by stages if necessary. It outlines practical measures for the progressive reduction of hours of work, taking into account the different economic and social conditions in the various countries, as well as the variety of national practices for the regulation of hours and other conditions of work.¹⁰ If the normal workweek exceeds 48 hours, immediate steps should be taken to bring working hours down to this level without any reduction in wages. If weekly hours are 48 or less, measures for the progressive reduction of hours of work should be formulated and implemented in a manner

⁸ ILO: *General Survey*, [Ensuring decent working time for the future](#), Report III (Part B), International Labour Conference, 107th Session, Geneva, 2018, para. 26.

⁹ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 27.

¹⁰ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 28.

suited to national circumstances and the conditions in each sector of economic activity. Recommendation No. 116 does not specify its scope of application, although Paragraph 23 excludes agriculture, maritime transport and maritime fishing.

See: [Recommendation No. 116](#)

5. November 1996: Governing Body considered Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 to be interim instruments¹¹

The Cartier Working Party recalled that a lack of consensus had prevented the revision of the Conventions on hours of work. It noted that, in 1979, during the Ventejol Working Party's examination of working time instruments, the Office suggested that there might be a need for a new global Convention to replace existing standards, but no agreement had been reached, keeping Conventions Nos 1, 30, and 47 relevant. The Cartier Working Party considered possible approaches, including a general Conference discussion on working-time arrangements to review and potentially revise standards. Other options, such as discussions in the Governing Body or further expert meetings, were also considered.¹²

Finally, the Governing Body requested the Committee of Experts to carry out a General Survey in respect of Conventions Nos 1 and 30.¹³ In relation to Convention No. 47, the Cartier Working Party noted it had not been ratified by many countries, although a trend towards its ratification persisted, and decided to maintain its status quo until revised standards on hours of work and working-time arrangements were adopted.¹⁴

The revision of the instruments on working time was included within the proposals to the Governing Body for items to be included on the Conference agenda between 1994-1997.¹⁵

See: [GB.265/LILS/WP/PRS/1](#), p. 38 (Office background paper, March 1996) and [GB.267/LILS/WP/PRS/2](#), pp 20-22 (Office background paper, November 1996); [GB.265/LILS/5](#), para. 60 and 72 (discussion by Working Party, March 1996) and [GB.267/LILS/4/2\(Rev.\)](#), paras 27-32 (discussion by Working Party, November 1996);

¹¹ In March 1996, the Cartier Working Party had already studied a number of Conventions dealing with hours of work in different sectors of economic activity. In the light of its recommendations, the Governing Body decided to shelve five of the Conventions (Nos 31, 46, 51, 61 and 67) until a procedure for their abrogation was adopted. [GB.267/LILS/WP/PRS/2](#), p. 21; [GB.328/LILS/2/1\(Rev.\)](#), Annex I, para. 12. They were later withdrawn or abrogated. Two other Conventions (Nos 43 and 49) on hours of work in glass work were also shelved in 1996 and examined by the SRM TWG in 2016 (See Technical Note 1.7, prepared for this meeting).

¹² Worker representatives supported a general discussion, while employer representatives opposed adopting new standards at the time and wished the matter to be further examined at a technical level. The representative of the United States Government suggested conducting a General Survey under article 19 of the Constitution. See: [GB.267/LILS/WP/PRS/2](#), p. 21 and [GB.267/LILS/4/2\(Rev.\)](#), paras 27-28.

¹³ See [GB.267/LILS/4/2\(Rev.\)](#), paras 27-32; [GB.267/9/2](#), para. 14. The General Survey on Conventions Nos 1 and 30 requested by the Cartier Working Party was submitted to the Conference in 2005. See ILO: *General Survey, Hours of Work, From fixed to flexible?*, Report III (Part 1B), International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005. A second General Survey on instruments concerning working-time instruments in general was adopted by the Conference in 2018. See: ILO: [2018 General Survey](#).

¹⁴ See: [GB.265/LILS/5](#), para. 72; [GB.265/8/2](#), para. 24.

¹⁵ A proposal on working time was included in the possible items for inclusion on the agenda of the Conference between 1994-1997: [GB.261/2/1](#), 1994, para. 14; [GB.264/2](#), 1995, para. 9; [GB.267/2](#), 1996, para. 13; [GB.270/2](#), 1997, paras 164 – 184.

[GB.265/8/2](#), para. 24 (decision by LILS Committee, March 1996) and [GB.267/9/2](#), para. 14 (decision by LILS Committee, November 1996).

Analysis of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47

ANALYSIS OF SUBSTANTIVE PROVISIONS OF CONVENTIONS NOS 1,30 AND 47	
Scope of application	
Arts 1 and 2 of C.1 Art. 1 of C.30	• <i>Objective</i>: Defines the scope of application. ○ C.1: Applies to public or private industrial undertakings, including mines and quarries; industries in which articles are manufactured or materials are transformed, such as shipbuilding and energy generation; construction, maintenance and demolition of roads, bridges and tunnels; and transport of passengers or goods by road, rail, sea or inland waterway. Excludes family undertakings and supervisors, managers and persons employed in a confidential capacity. ○ C.30: Covers commercial establishments, and establishments and administrative services in which the persons employed are mainly engaged in office work. Excludes hospitals and similar institutions, hotels, restaurants, cafés and theatres. The competent authorities may exempt family establishments, offices in which the staff is engaged in connection with the administration of public authority, managers and persons employed in a confidential capacity, and travellers and representatives working outside the establishment. ○ C.47: Does not specify its scope of application. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments</i>: Other working time instruments address some aspects of hours of work, including: ○ R.116 on the reduction of hours of work does not specify its scope of application. However, Paragraph 23 excludes from its scope agriculture, maritime transport and maritime fishing. ○ C.153 on hours of work and rest periods in road transport (see TN. 1.6); C.43 and C.49 on hours of work in glass work (see TN 1.7); R. 8 on hours of work in inland navigation. Other sectoral instruments also address certain aspects of hours of work, including: ○ C.172 and R.179 on hotels and restaurants;¹⁶ C.189 and R.201 on domestic workers;¹⁷ C.149 and R.157 on nursing personnel;¹⁸ C.188 on fishing;¹⁹ MLC, 2006,²⁰ and C.184 on safety and health in agriculture.²¹ • <i>Current relevance</i>: Considered together, C.1 and C.30 cover most economic sectors with certain important exceptions. Some aspects of hours of work in certain sectors are addressed by other up-to-date instruments. The distinction between industry, commerce and offices remains relevant in only a few countries where these are regulated separately, while in several countries, different regulations apply separately to private and public sectors.²²

¹⁶ See Art. 4 of Convention No. 172 and Paras 6-11 of Recommendation No. 179.

¹⁷ See Arts 7(f) and 10 of Convention No. 189 and Paras 5, 8, 9 and 11 of Recommendation No. 201.

¹⁸ Art. 6(a) of Convention No. 149 and Paras 30-43 of Recommendation No. 157.

¹⁹ Arts 13-14 of Convention No. 188.

²⁰ Regulation 2.3 of the MLC, 2006, as amended.

²¹ Art. 20 of Convention No. 184.

²² ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 40.

Definition of hours of work	
Art. 2 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Definition of “hours of work”. ○ C.30: Provides that the term “hours of work” does not include rest periods during which the persons employed are not at the employer's disposal. ○ C.1 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> While Art. 4 of C.172 and Art. 6 of R. 179 on hotels and restaurants define “hours of work” as the time during which a worker is at the disposal of the employer, Art. 10 of C. 189 on domestic workers further states that it should include periods during which domestic workers are not free to dispose of their time and remain at the disposal of the household in order to respond to possible calls.²³ Similar definitions exist in R.157 on nursing personnel.²⁴ Neither C.1 nor C.30 contain explicit provisions on periods of “stand-by” or “on call” work.²⁵ • <i>Current relevance:</i> In many countries, hours of work are defined similarly to C.30. In the majority of countries, the requirement of being at the employer's disposal is supplemented or replaced by the need to perform actual work. Generally, rest breaks are included in hours of work if the employee remains at the employer's disposal, or it is taken at the work premises, such as in workplaces with continuous production where the worker cannot leave. In a few cases, national laws or practice provide that time spent “on-call” is included in working time, while in other cases the law is silent on this subject.²⁶
Limits on hours of work: General rules	
Art. 2 of C.1 Art. 3 of C.30 Art. 1 of C.47	• <i>Objective:</i> Set a limit on hours of work (normal hours of work). ○ C.1 and C.30: Set a double limit for normal hours of work of 8h per day and 48h per week. ○ C47: Adopts the principle of a 40-hour week. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> ○ R. 116 recommends the progressive reduction of normal working hours, aiming to achieve a 40-hour workweek without any reduction in workers' wages (Para. 4), with immediate measures to be implemented when working hours exceed 48 per week (Para. 5). ○ Both C.149 on nursing personnel and C.189 on domestic workers establish the principle of equal treatment with other workers regarding normal working hours (Art. 6(a) of C.149 and Art. 10(1) of C. 189); and C.172 on hotels and restaurants the entitlement to reasonable normal hours of work and overtime provisions in accordance with national law and practice. R. 157 on nursing personnel recommends reducing workweeks exceeding 40 hours progressively to that level without salary reduction (Para. 32(2)) and maintaining continuous daily hours not exceeding eight (Para. 33(1)), except where arrangements are made by laws or regulations, collective agreements, works rules or arbitration awards for flexible hours or a compressed week. • <i>Current relevance:</i> Setting limits on working hours remains relevant for protecting workers from undue fatigue, safeguarding their health and safety, and promoting work-life balance. Most countries have laws setting daily and weekly limits on

²³ Additionally, Recommendation No. 201 on domestic work encourages Member States to regulate the maximum number of hours, compensatory rest period and rate of remuneration for standby and on-call periods during which these workers should remain at the disposal of the household.

²⁴ See paras 19, 21, 30 and 31 of Recommendation No. 157 on nursing personnel.

²⁵ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 36. “On-call” time commonly includes situations in which the worker is required to either stay at home, be in a specified place or be able to be contacted by telephone, in the event that the worker is required to attend work. See also ILO: [2005 General Survey](#), para. 48.

²⁶ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 33-37.

	working hours. While many adhere to a 40-hour workweek, some allow 48 hours. In a few cases, national laws permit workweeks above 48 or below 40 hours, and only a small number allow working days longer than eight hours. ²⁷
Variations in the distribution of normal hours of work: Averaging schemes²⁸	
Art. 2(b) of C.1 Art. 4 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Authorize distributing working hours within the week without restrictions about the circumstances in which such arrangements may be used. ○ C.1: Allows the limit of 8h a day to be extended by up to one additional hour if the hours on one or more days of the week are less than eight. Requires this extension to be approved by the competent authority or by agreement between workers' and employers' organizations. ○ C.30: Permits the limit of 8h a day to be extended by two additional hours; does not set out any specific requirement. ○ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> No similar provisions. • <i>Current relevance:</i> National legislation in many countries allows variations in the distribution of working hours, including through flexible working arrangements, such as compressed workweeks.²⁹ In a number of countries, the legislation allows the averaging of working hours within the week and in many countries, only a weekly limit is set for hours of work, without a daily limit.³⁰
Art. 5 and Art. 7(b) of C.1 Art. 6 and Art. 8 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Allows the averaging of hours of work over periods longer than a week in exceptional circumstances when the normal limits of 8-hour days and 48 hour weeks cannot be observed (and only in those cases). Requires the weekly number of hours calculated over a reference period which is not specified to respect the limit of 48 hour weeks. ○ C.1: Requires that the introduction of averaging be by agreement between workers' and employers' organisations. C. 1 does not set a daily limit. ○ C.30: The introduction of averaging over periods longer than a week has to be through regulations made by public authority, after consultation with workers' and employers' organizations. C.30 sets a daily limit of ten hours. ○ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> R.116 allows averaging normal working hours over more than a week when justified by special conditions in certain branches of activity or technical needs, with each country's authority setting the maximum period (Para. 12). It also provides for consultations with the social partners in this regard (Para. 20(2)(b)). • <i>Current relevance:</i> National legislation in many countries permits the averaging of working hours over periods longer than a week without requiring exceptional circumstances.³¹ In many reporting countries, the uneven distribution of hours of

²⁷ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 44-49.

²⁸ Statutory hours-averaging schemes allow for variations in daily and weekly hours of work within specified legal limits, such as maximum daily and weekly hours, while requiring that working hours either do not exceed a specified weekly average over the period within which the hours are averaged (the "reference period"), or remain within a fixed annual total. ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 678; ILO: [Report for discussion at the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Working-Time Arrangements: Working time in the twenty-first century](#) (Geneva, 17–21 October, 2011), TMEWTA/2011, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2011, p. 16.

²⁹ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 178, 180 and 689.

³⁰ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 54-55.

³¹ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 63, 179, 180.

	work over a period longer than a week is allowed without any restriction as to circumstances. ³²
Art. 2(c) of C.1	• <i>Objective:</i> Authorize the averaging of hours of work over periods longer than a week in shift work (industry). ○ C.1: Permits the extension of normal hours of work on condition that the average number of hours over three weeks respects the limits of 8h a day and 48h a week. ○ C.30 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> No similar provisions. • <i>Current relevance:</i> The relevance of these limits may be called into question as national legislation in many countries allows the adoption of flexible working arrangements, like averaging hours over extended periods.³³ The reference period varies greatly, ranging from three weeks to one year. With regard to the number of hours that can be worked as an average over a three-week period, the limits differ between countries, and the limit of permitted weekly working hours can reach 56 hours.³⁴
Art. 4 and Art. 7(a) of C.1	• <i>Objective:</i> Authorize distributing hours of work over periods longer than a week in shift work in continuous processes (industry). ○ C.1: Provides for a limit of 56 hours a week on average (no daily limit; no reference period). This article only applies to certain processes that Governments should specify. ○ C.30 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> Para. 13 of R.116 envisages hours averaging arrangements for shift work in continuous process, with working hours that should not exceed in any case the normal hours of work fixed for the economic activity concerned (no reference period). It also provides for consultation with the most representative employers' and workers' organisations in this regard (Para. 20(2)(c)). • <i>Current relevance:</i> While national laws rarely specify averaging for continuous processes, they often allow averaging without restrictions as to the circumstances, which presumably means that general provisions on the variable distribution of working hours also apply to shift work in continuous processes. In many countries, there tends to be a lower limit on weekly hours on average than the 56 hours set in C.1.³⁵
Overtime: exceptions³⁶	
<i>Permanent exceptions³⁷</i>	

³² ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 62. The CEACR has observed that the reference periods vary significantly - ranging from two weeks to over a year. National legislation varies greatly with regard to daily and weekly limits, with about half of the reporting countries lacking any specified maximum for daily or weekly work hours. See, paras 63-67.

³³ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 178 and 180.

³⁴ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 76-77.

³⁵ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 79-81.

³⁶ The CEACR emphasizes the importance of limiting recourse to overtime to clear and well-defined circumstances and in a framework that takes into account the health and well-being of workers. ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 179 and 916.

³⁷ In the case of permanent exemptions, the extension of hours of work beyond normal working hours is considered regular and may be regarded as part of the normal conditions of work. The circumstances are determined by the competent authority and regulations in this respect shall be made after consultation with the employers' and workers' organisations concerned. Article 6 of C.1 and Articles 7 and 8 of C.30. ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para 92 and ILO: [2005 General Survey](#), para 124.

Art. 6(1)(a) and (2) and Art. 7(1)(c) of C.1 Art. 7(1)(a) and Art. 8 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Permit permanent exceptions to normal working hours.³⁸ ○ C.1 and C.30: Allow extending hours of work beyond normal working hours in cases of intermittent work. C.30 specifically mentions caretakers and persons employed to look after working premises and warehouses as classes of persons whose work is inherently intermittent. ○ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> Para. 14(a)(ii) of R.116 includes permanent exceptions in work which is essentially intermittent. • <i>Current relevance:</i> The CEACR has recalled that inherently “intermittent work” should be defined narrowly, as work which is not concerned with production as such and which, by its nature, is interrupted by long periods of inaction, during which the workers concerned have to display neither physical activity nor sustained attention, and remain at their post only to reply to possible calls.³⁹ Many countries apply permanent exceptions to transport, security, cleaning, hospitality, and healthcare workers. In certain countries, the law characterizes intermittent work as tasks that include to a large extent a simple presence or long moments of inactivity.⁴⁰
Art. 6(1)(a) and (2) and Art. 7(1)(c) of C.1 Art. 7(1)(b) and Art. 8 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Permit permanent exceptions to normal working hours. ○ C.1 and C.30: Allow extending hours of work beyond normal working hours in cases of preparatory or complementary work. ○ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> ○ Para. 14(a)(iii) of R.116 includes, among cases in which permanent exceptions are allowed, work in operations which for technical reasons must necessarily be carried on outside the limits laid down for the general working of the undertaking, part of the undertaking, or shift. • <i>Current relevance:</i> Several countries apply permanent exceptions to workers required to arrive before normal working hours or remain beyond the end of the workday, though less frequently than for intermittent work.⁴¹
Art. 7(1)(c) and Art. 8 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Permit permanent exceptions to normal working hours. ○ C.30: Allow extending hours beyond normal working hours in shops and other establishments where the nature of the work, the population size or the number of persons employed render normal limits inapplicable. ○ C.1 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> No similar provisions. • <i>Current relevance:</i> Certain countries apply exceptions mainly for wholesale and retail, as well as to restaurants and hotels, cafés and public performances, with the latter categories being excluded from the scope of C.30.⁴²
<i>Temporary exceptions</i>⁴³	

³⁸ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 43: “Normal hours of work are the number of hours that may legally be worked during the day, week, month and/or year, excluding overtime. Overtime, or additional hours, are the hours worked in excess of normal hours of work, and total hours of work are the maximum number of working hours allowed to be worked during a certain period, including normal hours of work and overtime.”.

³⁹ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 94.

⁴⁰ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 95.

⁴¹ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 98-99.

⁴² ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 101.

⁴³ The regulations in this regard shall be made after consultation with the employers’ and workers’ organisations concerned, except in cases of temporary exceptions due to war or other emergency endangering national safety, or general interruptions of work due to local holidays, accidents or force majeure. Articles 6 and 14 of C.1; Articles 7 - 9 of C.30; ILO: [2005 General Survey](#), paras 123-124.

Art. 6(1)(b) and (2) of C.1 Art. 7(2)(b), (c), (d) and 8 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Permit temporary exceptions to normal working hours. ◦ C.1 and C.30: i) in case of abnormal work pressure,⁴⁴ when no alternative exists; ii) to prevent the loss of perishable goods; iii) avoid endangering the technical work results; iv) special work like stocktaking, balance sheets, settlements, liquidations, and account closures. ◦ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> R.116 also allows temporary exceptions for abnormal work pressure and periodical exceptions for annual stocktaking, balance sheets, and special seasonal activities, both driven by work pressure (Para. 14(b)(iv) and (c)). • <i>Current relevance:</i> In many countries, legislation allows for an extension of working hours in the case of an exceptional workload. Exceptions also exist, often for the provision of public services in cases of urgency to resolve an unforeseen situation, and less frequently for annual stocktaking, preventing the loss of perishable goods, or seasonal activities.⁴⁵
Art. 3 of C.1 Arts 7(2)(a) and 8 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Permit temporary exceptions to normal working hours. ◦ C.1 and C.30: 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 to prevent serious workplace disruption. ◦ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> R.116 allows temporary exceptions in similar cases and for making up time lost due to collective work stoppages from accidents, power outages, weather, material shortages, transport issues, or calamities (Para. 14). • <i>Current relevance:</i> Legislative provisions allowing for this type of exception exist in most reporting countries.⁴⁶
Art. 14 of C.1 Art. 9 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Permit temporary exceptions to normal working hours. ◦ C.1 and C.30: permit suspension of the application of their provisions in the event of war or other emergency endangering national safety. ◦ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> Para. 14(b)(vi) of R.116 also allows suspension in the event of national emergency but sets no time frame. • <i>Current relevance:</i> The legislation allows for this type of exception in certain countries.⁴⁷
Art. 5 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Permit temporary exceptions to normal working hours. ◦ C.30: In case of general interruption or work due to local holidays, or accidents or force majeure, to make up the hours of work which have been lost: (a) hours of work which have been lost shall not be allowed to be made up on more than thirty days in the year and shall be made up within a reasonable lapse of time; (b) the increase in hours of work in the day shall not exceed one hour; (c) hours of work in the day shall not exceed ten. ◦ C.1 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> Para. 14(b)(v) of R.116 adds that the competent authority or body in each country should determine the circumstances and

⁴⁴ Abnormal pressure of work refers to unexpected surges in orders due to unforeseen events as well as the difficulty in precisely determining the completion time for a task or process due to its inherent characteristics. ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 104.

⁴⁵ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 105-108.

⁴⁶ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 109.

⁴⁷ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 112.

	limits in which exceptions to the normal hours of work may be permitted temporarily “to make up time lost through collective stoppages of work due to accidents to materials, interruptions to the power supply, inclement weather, shortages of materials or transport facilities, and calamities”. • <i>Current relevance:</i> In several countries, legislation allows for this type of exception to normal working hours.⁴⁸
Limits to exceptions	
Art. 6(2) of C.1 Art. 7(3) of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Establish limits to exceptions. ○ C.1 and C.30: Require the public authority to determine the limit of additional hours that may be worked beyond normal hours within the exceptions permitted under Art. 6(1) of C.1 and Art. 7(1) and (2)(b)(c)(d) of C.30. In addition, C.30 provides that for permanent exceptions, the number of additional hours of work allowed should be determined in the day and, in respect of temporary exceptions, in the year. Both Conventions provide for consultation with the most representative employers’ and workers’ organisations in this regard. ○ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> ○ R.116 adds that, except for cases of force majeure, limits should be determined to the total number of hours of overtime which can be worked during a specified period (Para. 17). It also provides for consultation with the most representative employers’ and workers’ organisations in this regard (Para. 20(2)(e)) ○ C.149 on nursing personnel provides that nursing personnel shall enjoy conditions at least equivalent to those of other workers regarding the regulation of overtime (Art. 6(a)). • <i>Current relevance:</i> Setting limits on exceptions to normal hours of work remains relevant in relation to occupational safety and health and the maintenance of work-life balance.⁴⁹ Although national legislation varies, three groups can be identified: those with general overtime limits, those with rules based on exception type, and those without precise limits.⁵⁰
Compensation for overtime	
Art. 6(2) of C.1 Art. 7(4) of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Establish compensation for overtime. ○ C.1 and C.30: regulations should establish the rate of pay for overtime at not less than one-and-a-quarter times the regular rate, with consultation required with the most representative employers’ and workers’ organizations before establishment. In C.1, the minimum overtime rate should apply in the case of both permanent and temporary exceptions mentioned in Art. 6, while in C.30, it applies only in the case of temporary exceptions listed under Art.7(2), except in cases of accident, force majeure, or urgent work to machinery. ○ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> ○ R.116 recommends overtime pay at a higher rate than normal hours of work, not below the C.1 standard (Para.19). It also provides for consultations (Para. 20(2)(e)). ○ Both C.149 on nursing personnel and C.189 on domestic workers include provisions ensuring workers receive equal treatment regarding overtime compensation (Art. 6(a) of C.149 and Art. 10(1) of C. 189). R.157 on

⁴⁸ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 120-125.

⁴⁹ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 127: that such limits must be reasonable, and the public authority should make a thorough evaluation of the intensity of the respective work, its ability to produce physical or mental fatigue, and possible negative consequences of fatigue for the respective employee and the public at large.

⁵⁰ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 128.

	nursing personnel provides that overtime should be compensated in time off/or remuneration at higher rate (Para. 37(2)). R.201 on domestic workers provides that national laws or agreements should define compensatory rest for domestic workers, regardless of financial compensation (Para. 12). ○ R.179 on hotels and restaurants provides that overtime should be compensated by time off with pay, by a higher rate, after consultations (Para. 7(3)). • <i>Current relevance:</i> These provisions remain relevant ensuring that additional hours are in all cases remunerated and paid at a higher rate than normal hours of work, even when compensatory time off is granted. The legislation in most reporting countries envisages some type of financial compensation for overtime.⁵¹
Enforcement	
Art. 8 of C.1 Arts 11 and 12 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> Ensure compliance with working-time provisions. ○ Both C.1 and C.30 require the employer to notify the time at which hours of work begin and end, including shifts, and rest periods; and to maintain a record of all additional hours of work performed. Working outside set hours or rest periods is an offense. Additionally, C.1 requires that changes be made with a notice and in a manner approved by the government. In addition, C.30 mandates adequate inspections, overtime payment records, and penalties for non-compliance. ○ C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> ○ While the provisions of C.30 do not contain further details on the term “adequate inspection”, relevant guidance is set out in C.81 and C.129 on labour inspection. ○ R.116 recommends measures such as inspections to ensure compliance with work hour provisions; employers should notify work start/end times, shifts, rest periods, and weekly days worked, while keeping records of normal and overtime hours; sanctions should be applied to enforce the provisions. (Para.21). ○ C.189 on domestic workers requires effective compliance mechanisms, including labour inspection (Art. 17). R.179 on hotels and restaurants calls for accurate recording of work hours and overtime, with workers having access to their records (Para. 7 (4)). • <i>Current relevance:</i> The provisions remain relevant today, ensuring communication of working hours, accurate record-keeping, compliance through inspections, and the establishment of penalties. Measures to ensure compliance with national laws and regulations on working time are closely related to controlling the safety and health of workers and the payment of wages.⁵² Advanced notice of working schedules is an important element to enable workers to organize their working and personal lives.⁵³
Other provisions	
Art. 10 of C.30	• <i>Objective:</i> ○ C.30: Preserve customs or agreements granting shorter work hours or higher rate of remuneration. ○ C.1 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> Similar provisions appear in other standards aiming to safeguard favourable working conditions.

⁵¹ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), paras 152-158.

⁵² ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 802.

⁵³ ILO: [2018 General Survey](#), para. 810.

	• <i>Current relevance:</i> This provision is consistent with current practice, encouraging countries to retain or implement beneficial working conditions without being limited by minimum standards.
Art. 9 to 13 of C.1	• <i>Objective:</i> ○ C.1: Apply the Convention to Japan, “British India”, China, “Persia”, “Siam”, Greece, “Rumania”. ○ C.30 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> Some older standards refer to specific countries or territories, with varying provisions applied. • <i>Current relevance:</i> The reference to specific countries or territories is an outmoded approach; the reference to, e.g., India by the colonial term is no longer acceptable.⁵⁴
Art. 16 of C.1	• <i>Objective:</i> ○ C.1: Application of the Convention to the colonies, protectorates and possessions which are not fully self-governing. ○ C.30 and C.47: No similar provisions. • <i>Comparison with other relevant instruments:</i> The phrase “colonies, possessions and protectorates” is used, mainly in the final provisions, in 17 Conventions adopted between 1919 and 1927. • <i>Current relevance:</i> The phrase “colonies, possessions and protectorates” reflects the historical context in which the Convention was adopted and imports colonial expectations of the possession and paternalistic protection of territories and the people living in them that are no longer acceptable.⁵⁵

The instruments in 2026

A Policy context

Regulation of the hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum working day and week is a principle enshrined in the ILO’s Constitution and the reasonable limitation of working hours is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.⁵⁶ Working hours are a key element of the employment relationship influencing workers’ physical and mental health and well-being and enterprises’ productivity and performance.⁵⁷ While the average workweek was approximately 43.9 hours prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, over one-third of the global workforce exceeded 48 hours, and one-fifth worked fewer than 35 hours, including many under 20 hours.⁵⁸ The proportion of workers working long hours is substantially higher in developing countries as compared with developed countries and is highest of all in emerging economies. Long hours are most prevalent in Asia and the Pacific, with nearly half of workers exceeding 48 hours per week, while Europe and Central Asia report the lowest rates (11%). Africa has the second-highest proportion of workers with long hours of work (27.2 per cent), particularly in Northern

⁵⁴ See [GB.352/LILS/5](#), paras 8 and 29.

⁵⁵ See [GB.352/LILS/5](#), para. 8.

⁵⁶ ILO: *2005 General Survey*, paras 317- 318.

⁵⁷ ILO: *2018 General Survey*, paras 3-5.

⁵⁸ ILO: *Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World*, International labour Office, Geneva, 2022, p.48.

Africa (40.0 per cent), followed by the Arab States at 25.1 per cent.⁵⁹ Informal workers face both extremely long and short hours.⁶⁰ Retail, transport, and manufacturing see the highest proportions of long hours, while education and public administration see the least.⁶¹

Globalization and technology are associated with the expansion of flexible, decentralized work arrangements, including different working patterns and changes in the organization of work, blurring work-life boundaries and impacting health.⁶² Modern economies are increasingly adopting flexible working-time arrangements to address evolving workforce needs.⁶³ While some can improve work-life balance, others are associated with a number of disadvantages, especially for workers, including encroachment on non-working time and rest periods, the unpredictability of working hours, income insecurity and stress associated with the (perceived) need to always be available for, or connected to, work and lost labour protections if they are classified as an independent contractor.⁶⁴

B International labour standards context

(1) Information relating to the ratification of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47

Convention No. 1 is currently in force in 47 Member States, Convention No. 30 in 27 Member States, and Convention No. 47 in 15 Member States. None of these conventions have been revised by other instruments.

Since the Cartier Working Party examination in 1996, there have been no new ratifications of Conventions Nos 1 and/or 30, and two new ratifications of Convention No. 47 by the *Republic of Moldova* (1997) and the *Republic of Korea* (2011).

The most frequent obstacles to ratification recorded in the 2018 General Survey included legal difficulties related to the content of the instruments with regard to national legislation, and practical obstacles, such as the political and socio-economic conditions prevailing in the country.⁶⁵

Convention	Effective ratifications:	Further information
<u>Convention No. 1</u>	47 effective ratifications ⁶⁶ (1 denunciation) ⁶⁷	<u>Last ratifications</u>: Czechia and Slovakia (1993)

⁵⁹ ILO: [*Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World*](#), p.14.

⁶⁰ ILO: [*Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World*](#), 2022, p.48.

⁶¹ ILO: [*Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World*](#), p.18.

⁶² ILO: [*2018 General Survey*](#), para. 7.

⁶³ ILO: [*Decent working time: Balancing workers' needs with business requirements*](#), International Labour Office, Geneva, 2007, p. 2. See Overview prepared for this meeting.

⁶⁴ ILO: [*Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World*](#), p.67 and ILO: [*2018 General Survey*](#), paras. 758 and 922.

⁶⁵ ILO: [*2018 General Survey*](#), para. 883.

⁶⁶ *Austria, France, Italy and Latvia* have ratified the Convention, but it has not entered into force.

⁶⁷ *New Zealand* denounced Convention No. 1.

		• <u>Ratification by region</u>: Europe and Central Asia: 16 ratifications;⁶⁸ Africa: 10 ratifications;⁶⁹ Americas: 15 ratifications;⁷⁰ Asia and the Pacific: 5 ratifications;⁷¹ Arab States: 6 ratifications.⁷² • <u>Declaration of application to non-metropolitan territories</u>: <i>China - Macau Special Administrative Region</i>.
<u>Convention No. 30</u>	27 effective ratifications ⁷³ (2 denunciations) ⁷⁴	• <u>Last ratification</u>: Equatorial Guinea (1985) • <u>Ratification by region</u>: Europe and Central Asia: 7 ratifications;⁷⁵ Africa: 5 ratifications;⁷⁶ Americas: 12 ratifications;⁷⁷ Asia and the Pacific: 1 ratification;⁷⁸ Arab States: 5 ratifications.⁷⁹ • <u>Declaration of application to non-metropolitan territories</u>: no declarations.
<u>Convention No. 47</u>	15 effective ratifications	• <u>Last ratification</u>: Republic of Korea (2011) • <u>Ratification by region</u>: Europe and Central Asia: 12 ratifications;⁸⁰ Africa: 0 ratifications; Americas: 0 ratifications; Asia and the Pacific: 3 ratifications;⁸¹ Arab States: 0 ratifications. • <u>Declaration of application to non-metropolitan territories</u>: no declarations.

(2) Information concerning the implementation of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47

The Committee of Experts supervises the implementation of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47. There are currently 49 pending comments under Convention No. 1; 27 pending comments under Convention No. 30; and 10 under Convention No. 47.

Within its most recent examination of Conventions Nos 1 and/or 30, the Committee requested information on measures ensuring the application to all workers within the scope.⁸² Concerns, including those raised by social partners, included the absence of clear daily (eight hours) and weekly limits (48 hours),⁸³ uneven hour distribution within a week without maximum daily

⁶⁸ Austria (not in force), Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, France (not in force), Greece, Israel, Italy (not in force), Latvia (not in force), Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain.

⁶⁹ Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Mozambique.

⁷⁰ Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

⁷¹ Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, New Zealand (denounced in 1989), Pakistan.

⁷² Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates.

⁷³ Austria has ratified the Convention, but it has not entered into force.

⁷⁴ New Zealand and Finland denounced Convention No. 30.

⁷⁵ Austria (not in force), Bulgaria, Finland (denounced in 1999), Israel, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain.

⁷⁶ Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Morocco, Mozambique.

⁷⁷ Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay.

⁷⁸ New Zealand (denounced in 1989).

⁷⁹ Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic.

⁸⁰ Azerbaijan, Belarus, Finland, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Sweden, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

⁸¹ Australia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea.

⁸² Myanmar, [direct request](#), adopted in 2022; India, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025.

⁸³ Argentina, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Belgium, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; India, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Iraq, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Kuwait, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Saudi Arabia, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024;

limits,⁸⁴ averaging of hours over long reference periods without clear regulation,⁸⁵ and the incompatibility of certain working time provisions with the Conventions, including in relation to certain flexible working arrangements, sector-specific conditions and digitalization.⁸⁶ It examined the role of collective bargaining agreements in regulating systems of averaging working hours,⁸⁷ and identified issues relating to temporary and permanent exceptions to normal hours, including the absence of clear definitions, conditions, or limits on additional hours, and examined the consultations of employers and workers organisations.⁸⁸ It requested information on the practical application of exceptions, including affected sectors, worker numbers, and maximum hours authorized,⁸⁹ and underscored the need for narrowly defined criteria for "intermittent work".⁹⁰ It noted that regulations allow the performance of overtime in circumstances that go beyond those set out in the Conventions or without limits⁹¹ and reiterated the requirement for overtime pay of at least 1.25 times the regular rate, irrespective of compensatory rest.⁹² Gaps in recordkeeping, enforcement, and penalties - such as missing overtime records, rest-period notices, and effective sanctions - were highlighted.⁹³ It urged the strengthening of labour inspections and enforcement mechanisms, particularly in the informal economy.⁹⁴

Within its supervision of Convention No. 47, the Committee noted that while some countries maintain the 40-hour standard in legislation, they allow flexibility through flexible working-time arrangements or time banks,⁹⁵ averaging hours over extended periods (e.g., three months to a year), often leading to unpredictable schedules and lack of compensation for extended

Czechia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Lebanon, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Slovakia, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024; Spain, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Canada, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; Libya, [direct request](#), adopted in 2022; Colombia, [observation](#), adopted in 2022.

⁸⁴ Iraq, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Romania, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Peru, [observation](#), adopted in 2023.

⁸⁵ Argentina, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Greece, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Ghana, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024; Czechia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Slovakia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Spain, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Malta, [observation](#), adopted in 2022; Lithuania, [observation](#), adopted in 2022; Luxembourg, [direct request](#), adopted in 2021; Mozambique, [direct request](#), adopted in 2021; Chile, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; Djibouti, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025 (repetition).

⁸⁶ Argentina, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Bangladesh, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Greece, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Portugal, [observation](#), adopted in 2023.

⁸⁷ Mexico, [direct request](#), adopted in 2021; Chile, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; Nicaragua, [direct request](#), adopted in 2022.

⁸⁸ Bangladesh, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Bolivia, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; India, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Kuwait, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Greece, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Ghana, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024; Czechia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Guatemala, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024; Saudi Arabia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Lebanon, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024; Spain, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Slovakia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Romania, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Peru, [observation](#), adopted in 2023; Panama, [observation](#), adopted in 2023; Pakistan, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; Paraguay, [observation](#), adopted in 2023; Malta, [observation](#), adopted in 2022; Lithuania, [observation](#), adopted in 2022; China – Macau SAR, [observation](#), adopted in 2022.

⁸⁹ Norway, [direct request](#), adopted in 2021; Colombia, [observation](#), adopted in 2022.

⁹⁰ Bolivia, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Egypt, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; Equatorial Guinea, [direct request](#), adopted in 2022.

⁹¹ Bangladesh, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Belgium, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; India, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Greece, [observation](#), adopted in 2025; Chile, [observation](#), adopted in 2023; Mozambique, [direct request](#), adopted in 2021; Egypt, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023.

⁹² Bangladesh, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025; Ghana, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024; Czechia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Spain, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Slovakia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; Chile, [observation](#), adopted in 2023; Cuba, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; China – Macau SAR, [observation](#), adopted in 2022.

⁹³ Saudi Arabia, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; United Arab Emirates, [direct request](#), adopted in 2020; Djibouti, [direct request](#), adopted in 2025 (repetition); Cuba, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; Egypt, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023; Dominican Republic, [direct request](#), adopted in 2023.

⁹⁴ Colombia, [observation](#), adopted in 2022; Haiti, [observation](#), adopted in 2023; Costa Rica, [observation](#), adopted in 2022.

⁹⁵ Finland, [direct request](#), adopted in 2022.

hours.⁹⁶ It noted that provisions, which authorize additional hours in unprecise circumstances, as well as the calculation of hours of work as an average over a reference period of up to one year without stipulating absolute weekly limits in a concrete week, could possibly lead to unreasonably long working hours, in direct contradiction to the principle of progressive reduction of hours of work.⁹⁷ The Committee reiterated that averaging is permitted only in limited cases and urged adjustments to uphold daily and weekly limits, particularly in sectors with 24-hour shifts.⁹⁸ In one country, it noted concerns over agreements exceeding 40 hours through individual consent and requested that measures be taken to secure the full application of the principle of a 40-hour week.⁹⁹ It also called for improved monitoring systems, particularly where overtime practices in informal sectors remain unregulated.¹⁰⁰ The Committee also examined concerns raised by social partners regarding long working hours in certain sectors, cases of fatalities due to overwork, and legislative reforms that could contradict the principle of the forty-hour work week.¹⁰¹

Key considerations

In examining Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47, for the purpose of determining their status, the following considerations are particularly relevant:

- Conventions Nos 1 and 30 take a sectoral approach to regulating working hours, with Convention No. 1 applying to industrial undertakings and Convention No. 30 to commerce and office work, a distinction that is less prevalent in more recent national legislation. Considered together, Conventions Nos 1 and 30 cover most economic sectors.¹⁰² Some aspects of hours of work in certain excluded sectors are addressed by other up-to-date instruments concerning various aspects of hours of work.
- Convention No. 47 does not set out detailed rules but calls on ratifying countries to take or facilitate measures to secure the 40-hour working week.
- Recommendation No. 116 is the only up-to-date instrument of general scope of application specifically addressing hours of work.¹⁰³ It is designed to supplement the earlier instruments and facilitate their implementation by detailing practical measures for the progressive reduction of hours of work. Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 have not been revised by other instruments.
- The Committee of Experts has continued its supervision of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47.

⁹⁶ *Tajikistan*, [observation](#), adopted in 2021; *Republic of Moldova*, [observation](#), adopted in 2021; *Kyrgyzstan*, [observation](#), adopted in 2025.

⁹⁷ *Russian Federation*, [observation](#), adopted in 2024; *Sweden*, [direct request](#), adopted in 2024; *Kyrgyzstan*, [observation](#), adopted in 2025.

⁹⁸ *Lithuania*, [observation](#), adopted in 2022.

⁹⁹ *New Zealand*, [observation](#), adopted in 2022.

¹⁰⁰ *Uzbekistan*, [direct request](#), adopted in 2020.

¹⁰¹ *Republic of Korea*, [observation](#), adopted in 2025.

¹⁰² Conventions Nos 1 and 30 do not cover agriculture, hotels and restaurants, hospitals and domestic work, maritime shipping and fishing.

¹⁰³ Recommendation No. 116 does not specify its scope of application, although Paragraph 23 excludes from its scope agriculture, maritime transport and maritime fishing.

- Other sector-specific instruments also address aspects of hours of work, including Convention No. 172 and Recommendation No. 179 on hotels and restaurants, Convention No. 189 and Recommendation No. 201 on domestic workers, and Convention No. 149 and Recommendation No. 157 on nursing personnel.
- In 1979, during the Ventejol Working Party proceedings, the Office suggested consideration of a new global Convention to replace existing standards; no tripartite agreement was reached in this regard at that time. In 1996, the Cartier Working Party classified Conventions Nos 1, 30, and 47 as interim. In relation to Convention No. 47, this was “pending the adoption of revised standards on hours of work and working-time arrangements”.¹⁰⁴
- The Governing Body considered proposals to place an item concerning working time on the agenda of the Conference between 1994-1997¹⁰⁵ Until 2008, when it was reshaped in the context of the recurrent discussions concerning labour protection,¹⁰⁶ working time continued to be among the proposals considered by the Governing Body for a general discussion; however, while proposed, working time was not placed on the agenda of the Conference.¹⁰⁷
- Two General Surveys on working time have been conducted recently: one in 2005 on Conventions Nos 1 and 30, proposed by the Cartier Working Group; and a broader one in 2018 on working time instruments. The 2018 General Survey was discussed at the 2018 Conference Committee on the Application of Standards, which considered that the adoption of an appropriate regulatory framework on working time was important both to protect workers and to ensure a level playing field for employers and that the General Survey, together with the report and outcome of its discussion, should contribute to the work of the SRM TWG on this matter.¹⁰⁸
- Further context that may be relevant for the review includes the conclusions of recent recurrent discussions, and in particular:
 - In 2015, the Conclusions concerning the recurrent discussion on social protection (labour protection) emphasized that the regulation of the hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum working day and week, for all workers regardless of the type of employment relationship, is a principle enshrined in the ILO’s Constitution and remained an important objective.¹⁰⁹
 - In 2023, the Conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on labour protection called on the Organization to promote the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards on working time (among others)

¹⁰⁴ See [GB.265/LILS/WP/PRS/1](#), p. 38 and [GB.267/LILS/WP/PRS/2](#), pp 20-22.

¹⁰⁵ A proposal on working time was included in the possible items for inclusion on the agenda of the Conference between 1994-1997: [GB.261/2/1](#), 1994, para. 14; [GB.264/2](#), 1995, para. 9; [GB.267/2](#), 1996, para. 13; [GB.270/2](#), 1997, paras 164 – 184.

¹⁰⁶ [GB.303/3/2](#), 2008, para 10.

¹⁰⁷ [GB.273/2](#), 1998, paras 109 – 123; [GB.276/2](#), 1999, paras 198-212; [GB.282/2/1](#), 2001, paras 133-149; [GB.285/2](#), 2002, paras 125-141; [GB.288/2/2\(& Corr.\)](#), 2003, paras 53-57; [GB.291/2](#), 2004, paras 64-68; [GB.294/2/2](#), 2005, paras 19-24; [GB.297/2](#), 2006, paras 88-93; [GB.300/2/2](#), 2007, paras 68-73.

¹⁰⁸ See: ILO: [Conference Committee on the Application of Standards](#), Outcome of the discussion of the General Survey concerning the instruments on working time, Record of Proceedings, International Labour Conference, 107th Session, Geneva, 2018, p. 36, paras 4 and 7.

¹⁰⁹ ILO: Resolution and conclusions concerning the recurrent discussion on social protection (labour protection), International Labour Conference, 104th Session, 2015, para. 12.

and to develop a proposal for the Governing Body for the convening of a tripartite meeting of experts on the organization and scheduling of working time.¹¹⁰

Possible action to be considered in relation to Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47

The international regulation of working hours is an essential component of ensuring decent work globally. While the regulation of hours of work is as relevant now as it was when Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 were adopted, these instruments may no longer reflect key challenges and opportunities in the world of work. As the only international labour standards specifically addressing hours of work in general¹¹¹ – apart from Recommendation No. 116, which was intended to supplement these earlier instruments – they have not lost their purpose but may no longer be fully up-to-date.

Following its review of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47, the SRM TWG will tailor lessons learnt through the SRM TWG process to the specificities of this review.

If the SRM TWG were to decide to recommend the adoption of a comprehensive instrument concerning working time, it may wish to indicate that this would include the instruments on hours of work and make appropriate recommendations in that regard. This could include recommending consideration of the abrogation or withdrawal of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 following the adoption of a new comprehensive instrument, should such an instrument be adopted, that ensures the enhanced protection of the rights of workers in relation to hours of work.

Alternatively, the SRM TWG may wish to consider the review of these instruments separately as set out below.

Based on the preceding information, and ensuring consistency with past SRM TWG recommendations, **the Office proposes consideration of:**

- the classification of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 as instruments *requiring further action to ensure their continued and future relevance*;
- whether *a regulatory gap in coverage* exists in relation to the international regulation of hours of work; and
- *practical and time-bound follow-up action* composed of the non-normative measures set out below.

In this regard, the Office has taken particular account of the continued relevance of the international regulation of hours of work, and the fact that there are currently no up-to-date and comprehensive international labour standards on this topic. The existing hours of work

¹¹⁰ ILO: [Conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on labour protection](#), paras 23(a) and (j). Proposals for this tripartite Meeting of Experts on the organization and scheduling of working time will be presented to the Governing Body in due course. [GB.356/INS/2/1](#), para 12.

¹¹¹ Conventions Nos 43 and 49 regulate working time in glass work, and Convention No. 153 and Recommendation No. 161 regulate working time in road transport.

instruments could more effectively address key challenges and opportunities in the world of work that have arisen since their adoption almost a century ago.

The SRM TWG will take decisions concerning the three elements within its mandate and make corresponding recommendations to the Governing Body concerning Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47.

1. STATUS OF INSTRUMENTS UNDER REVIEW:

The SRM TWG will consider whether, within their current legal status as active instruments, Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 should be classified as *up-to-date* instruments, instruments *requiring further action to ensure their continued and future relevance*, or *outdated* instruments. In deciding the status of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47, the SRM TWG will consider whether they are fit for purpose.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS IN COVERAGE:

In determining whether or not a regulatory gap in coverage exists in relation to hours of work, the SRM TWG should consider all relevant elements, including:

- i. The fact that the subject matter is not comprehensively regulated by any up-to-date instrument on working time; and
- ii. Whether any regulatory gaps arise in relation to the comprehensive international regulation of working time, including on themes such as minimum periods of rest and maximum shift lengths in shift work, minimum daily rest periods, rest breaks, on-call work arrangements, including on-call hours, and flexible working-time arrangements.

3. FOLLOW-UP ACTION AS APPROPRIATE:

Considering past practices of the SRM TWG and the specificities of the instruments under review, the SRM TWG will consider what follow-up action should be taken:

- i. **If the SRM TWG considers that Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 have the status of instruments requiring further action to ensure their continued and future relevance**, it could then recommend that necessary further actions that could include:
 - (a) If the SRM TWG considers that there is a regulatory gap in coverage in relation to hours of work, it could recommend that the Governing Body consider addressing this gap, including through placing a standard-setting item on the agenda of the Conference and/or through non-normative means; or
 - (b) If the SRM TWG considers that there is no regulatory gap in coverage in relation to hours of work but further action is required, it could recommend that the Governing Body consider requesting non-normative action such as conducting research to identify the key challenges and opportunities in relation to the application of the Conventions by ILO Member States, with a view to facilitating a tripartite discussion of options for possible follow-up action.
- ii. **Alternatively, if the SRM TWG considers that Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 are up-to-date instruments**, it could recognize that their full implementation

requires the *promotion of ratification, involving concerted and committed attention by governments and the social partners supported by the Office*. The SRM TWG could recommend that the tripartite constituents should collaborate to take active steps towards ratification and effective implementation of Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47.

iii. If the SRM TWG considers that Conventions Nos 1, 30 and 47 have the status of outdated instruments, it could decide to recommend:

- (a) Their revision through the placing of a standard-setting item on the agenda of the Conference; and
- (b) Once new instruments have been adopted that revise these instruments, their abrogation or withdrawal, as relevant, be considered by the Conference either:
 - i) As soon as is possible or at a particular session of the Conference as it determines; or
 - ii) At a later stage, to allow it to take into account developments, including ratifications, with respect to the new instrument or instruments on hours of work.