



International  
Labour  
Office

# Towards the Universal Ratification of Convention No. 144 on Tripartite Consultation by the ILO Centenary in 2019



# TRIPARTISM: A PILLAR OF BETTER GOVERNANCE



The **Convention on Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards), 1976 (No. 144)**, promotes application of an essential principle on which the International Labour Organization (ILO) was founded: **tripartite social dialogue** in the development and implementation of **international labour standards** (ILS).

## CONVENTION NO. 144 AND THE DECENT WORK AGENDA

Promoting the ratification of **Convention No. 144** is a priority for the ILO. The tripartite structure and functioning of the ILO are characteristics that enable it to be effective in achieving consensus and move forward towards the goal of social justice and decent work for all.

The **ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation**, adopted unanimously at the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2008, identified Convention No. 144 as one of the four most significant instruments from the viewpoint of governance<sup>1</sup>.

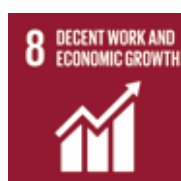
The **Plan of Action** adopted by the ILO Governing Body in October 2013 included Convention No. 144 in the list of international labour standards to be promoted by the Office. The **Resolution on Advancing Social Justice through Decent Work**, adopted at the 2016 ILC, called upon member States to “step up action with a view to achieving progressively the ratification and implementation of the fundamental and **governance Conventions**”.

<sup>1</sup> All ILO instruments, such as Declarations, Conventions and Recommendations, may be found at the ILO Database NORMLEX <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:1:0::NQ::>



## CONVENTION NO. 144 AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Social dialogue is an essential tool for advancing the **2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**, whose implementation requires active engagement of the tripartite actors: governments, employers' and workers' organizations. It is particularly relevant to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



### ■ Goal 8 “Decent work and economic growth”

- ✓ 8.6 Youth employment
- ✓ 8.7 Elimination of child labour and forced labour
- ✓ 8.8 Safety and health at work



### ■ Goal 16 “Peace, justice and strong institutions”

- ✓ 16.3 Rule of law and strong institutions
- ✓ 16.6 Effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- ✓ 16.7 Responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Social dialogue is also relevant to other SDGs, namely:



- Goal 1 “End of poverty”,
- Goal 5 “Gender equality”
- Goal 10 “Reduced inequalities”

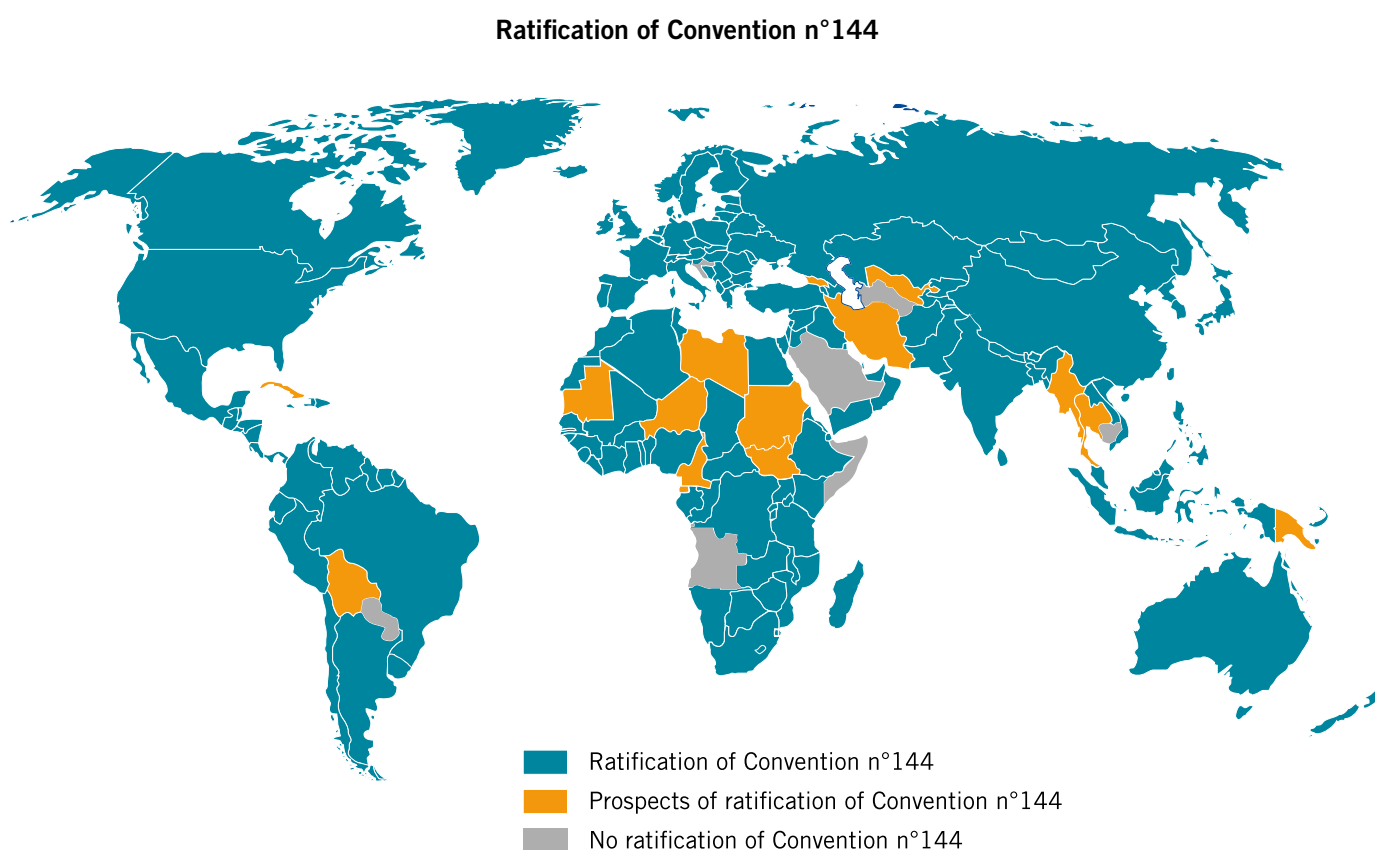
## Tripartism, Governance and Multinational Enterprises

The ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration), revised by the ILO Governing Body in March 2017, encourages countries to appoint **national focal points on a tripartite basis (taking guidance from Convention No. 144)** to promote the use of the MNE Declaration and its principles, whenever appropriate and meaningful in the national context.

# CURRENT STATE OF RATIFICATIONS

As of July 2017, Convention No. 144 has been ratified by 139 ILO member States, representing 75 per cent of the ILO's 187 member States (Map 1).

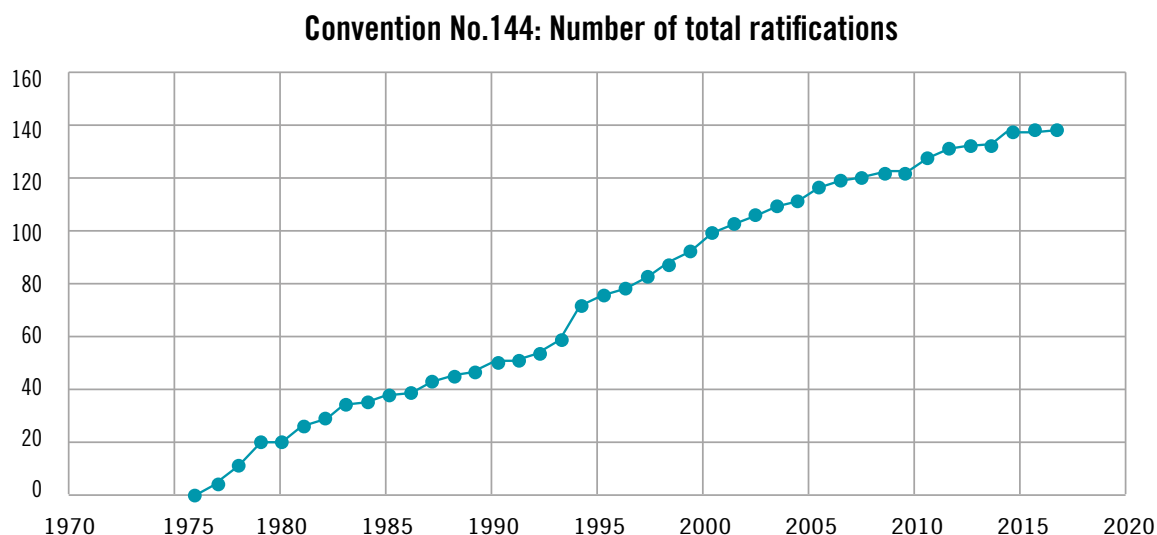
**Map 1.** Ratification of Convention No. 144



**In 40 years, 3/4 of ILO member States  
have ratified Convention No. 144**

The figures show that there has been continued and steady progress in the process of ratification of Convention No. 144 for the period 1976-2017.

**Graph 1.** The progress of ratification of Convention No. 144 (1976-2017).

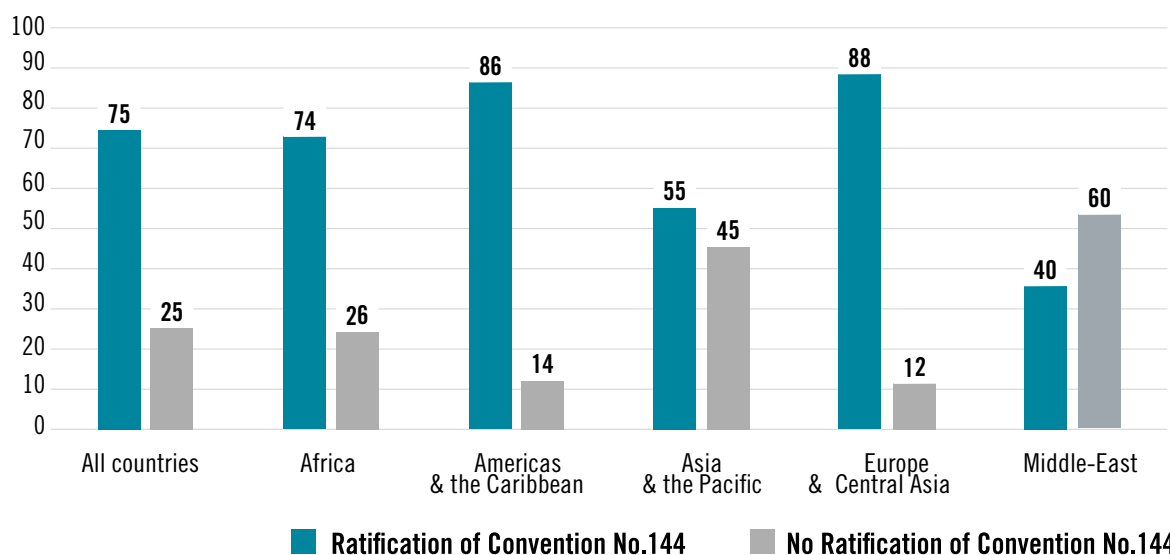


Among 48 member States that have not yet ratified Convention No. 144, 25 have initiated the process of ratification and/or have declared interest in doing so, in particular through their request for technical assistance (Table 1).

From the **regional perspective** (Graph 2), the percentage of countries which have ratified Convention No. 144 per region is as follows:

- **Europe and Central Asia - 88 per cent;**
- **Americas and the Caribbean - 86 per cent;**
- **Africa - 74 per cent;**
- **Asia and the Pacific - 55 per cent; and**
- **Middle-East - 40 per cent.**

**Graph 2.** Ratification of Convention No. 144 for 187 countries (in percentages per regions)



# THE CONTENT OF CONVENTION NO. 144

Convention No. 144 offers guidance on how member States can best ensure effective tripartite discussions on international labour standards and other ILO-related activities:

- **Member States are expected to establish and maintain mechanisms and procedures that ensure effective prior consultations, with respect to matters concerning the normative activities of the ILO;**
- **For purposes of the procedures provided for in this Convention, the representatives of employers and workers are to be freely chosen by their representative organisations, where these exist;**
- **Employers and workers are to be represented on an equal footing;**
- **Tripartite consultations should be undertaken at appropriate intervals fixed by agreement, but at least once a year.**

## Examples of topics for tripartite consultation under Article 5 of Convention No. 144

- Government replies concerning items on the agenda of the International Labour Conference;
- Submission of Conventions and Recommendations to the national competent authorities for their consideration;
- Reports on ratified and unratified Conventions;
- Proposals for the denunciation of ratified Conventions.

**Recommendation No. 152** on Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the ILO), which accompanies Convention No. 144, provides further guidance. It adds that tripartite consultations may be undertaken through a range of means, which may include:

- **a committee specifically constituted for questions concerning ILO activities;**
- **a body with general competence in the economic, social or labour field;**
- **a number of bodies with special responsibility for particular subject areas; or**
- **written communications, where those involved in the consultative procedures are agreed that such communications are appropriate and sufficient.**

Tripartism in respect to ILO standards at the national level promotes a national **culture of social dialogue on wider social and economic issues.**

Convention No. 144 does not entail significant additional costs or legislative reforms to implement and its requirements are within the reach of all ILO member States.

The International Labour Office offers its member States a range of awareness-raising services and technical assistance for the ratification and the effective implementation of Convention No. 144 and to promote stronger collaboration among governments, trade unions and employers' associations.

**Let's aim at celebrating universal ratification of  
Convention No. 144 by the ILO Centenary in 2019!**

**Table 1. Ratification of Convention No. 144 on Tripartite Consultation ILS), 1976 (No. 144)  
(data for 187 countries)**

Member States that have already ratified Convention No. 144	
<b>Africa</b>	Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
<b>Americas and the Caribbean</b>	Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Chili, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela
<b>Asia and the Pacific</b>	Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam
<b>Europe and Central Asia</b>	Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom
<b>Middle East</b>	Jordan, Kuwait, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen
Member States that have not yet ratified Convention No. 144	
<b>Africa</b>	Angola, Cabo Verde*, Cameroon*, Guinea Equatorial, Eritrea*, Gambia*, Guinea-Bissau, Libya*, Mauritania*, Niger*, Rwanda*, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan*
<b>Americas and the Caribbean</b>	Bolivia*, Cuba*, Haiti*, Paraguay, Saint Lucia*
<b>Asia and the Pacific</b>	Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Iran*, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Myanmar*, Palau, Papua New Guinea*, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Thailand*, Timor-Leste*, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
<b>Europe and Central Asia</b>	Croatia, Georgia*, Luxembourg*, Malta, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan*
<b>Middle East</b>	Bahrain*, Lebanon*, Oman*, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates*

**Note:** Countries marked with « \* » have undertaken some initiatives towards the ratification of Convention No. 144.

**Source:** NORMLEX, ILO, June 2017.

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