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Formation of the first labour standards of the International Labour Organisation in the context of contemporary international law

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Abstract. The relevance of the study was determined by the need to improve international labour regulation in the context of the transformation of social and labour relations caused by global social, economic and political processes, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic, the growth of migration and the spread of informal employment. The aim of the study was to highlight the peculiarities of the creation of the International Labour Organization as a basis for improving modern international labour standards. In the course of the study, historical-legal, axiological, comparative and systematic methods were used, which made it possible to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the organisation's development as a key international actor in the field of social protection. The ideological, political and socio-economic factors that contributed to the establishment of the International Labour Organization at the beginning of the 20th century were examined. The social, legal and political factors that preceded the establishment of the organisation were analysed, and the key decisions of the Paris Peace Conference and the first session of the International Labour Conference were highlighted. It was established that the key principle of the organisation's activities was tripartism, which ensured equal representation of workers, employers and states. The significance of the first six conventions of the International Labour Organization as sources of labour law was summarised, and the relevance of the principles laid down in the organisation's activities more than a hundred years ago was proven. It was concluded that the experience of creating the International Labour

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Organization is of great importance for revising contemporary approaches to labour law in the context of global change. The practical value of the work lies in the possibility of using its results by specialists in the field of international labour law, public employment services and authorities in the development of social protection and labour regulation policies

Keywords: international institutions; international relations; legal principles of labour; ILO conventions; international legal regulation; social dialogue

Introduction

The International Labour Organization (ILO), established in 1919, became the first institution in the field of international relations to receive a mandate to develop and implement standards directly related to workers. From the outset, its activities focused on combining ideas of social justice with economic processes, which gave the organisation a special place among other international institutions. Throughout its existence, the ILO has been caught between two dimensions: the desire to guarantee workers' rights and the need to take into account the economic interests of states and entrepreneurs (Kott, 2023). As of 2025, there is still a need to assess the ILO's activities not only in retrospect, but also in the context of current global transformations. The organisation occupies a special place among global labour governance institutions, as it combines legal mechanisms with a system of statistical measurement. It is appropriate to compare the ILO with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), given its unique ability to create universal labour standards that have become part of the international legal order.

An important area of research into the ILO's activities has been the study of the organisation's role in ensuring decent work. Thus, E. Senghaas-Knobloch (2025) shows that the concept of "decent work" has become a central element in international discussions on sustainable development, especially in the context of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In turn, F. Koliev (2025) argues that the ILO actively uses its experience to promote this idea in a globalised economy, which allows the organisation to be seen not only as a rule-maker but also as a coordinating centre for international labour policy.

The issue of labour standards in the context of international trade is reflected in the study by R. Bazillier and A.T. Rana (2025), who showed that social provisions in trade agreements can be an effective means of improving working conditions in partner countries. The experience of the agreement between the EU and Vietnam was analysed by L.T.T. Huong (2025), focusing on the combination of international commitments with corporate social responsibility practices. These results confirm that the ILO's influence extends far beyond traditional rule-making and touches on the broader sphere of international economic relations.

Research by D. McCann and A. Stewart (2024) shows that the organisation is actively working to develop new standards that meet the current requirements of the labour market. In particular, the standard on quality apprenticeships has become an important milestone in the development of international labour law. At the practical level, this confirms the ILO's commitment to ensuring the training of personnel capable of working in new conditions. In turn, M. Pucheta and J. Namgoong (2025) draw attention to the fact that contemporary challenges raise questions about the future of international labour standards beyond the framework of the ILO, especially in relation to human rights and international trade mechanisms. In the same context, the study by M. Dhermy-Mairal *et al.* (2024) is noteworthy, emphasising that Germany's integration into the ILO immediately after the First World War allows to trace not only the scale but also the limits of the internationalisation of labour standards.

In the field of labour relations regulation, considerable attention is paid to the issue of remuneration. M. Petreski and S. Tanevski (2024) show that the bargaining power of workers directly affects income distribution in transition economies, which is also relevant for Eastern European countries. The issue of protecting migrant workers is explored by D. Zavando Cerda and L. Gómez Urquijo (2023), who analyse the mechanisms of international coordination of social protection between the EU and Ibero-America. K. Kim (2024), analysing the case of South Korea during the COVID-19 pandemic, showed how interaction between the government and trade unions affects the preservation of labour rights in crisis conditions. S. Tsymbaliuk *et al.* (2025) examined wages in the agricultural sector of Ukraine from the perspective of the concept of decent work, emphasising the need for international cooperation to address social problems in rural areas.

Thus, an analysis of recent publications reveals the multidimensional nature of the ILO's activities, which cover the legal, economic and social levels of international relations. The relevance of the study lies in the need to combine a historical analysis of the ILO's development with an assessment of its role in contemporary global processes. Despite the significant number of works, there is still a lack of studies summarising the first decades of the organisation's existence in relation to its current state. Therefore, the aim of the article was to clarify the historical conditions of the ILO's formation and to analyse the content of the first labour standards in the context of the development of contemporary international law. To achieve this aim, the following tasks were set:

- to identify the historical preconditions for the emergence of ideas for international regulation of social and labour relations;
- to examine the content of the founding documents, the first ILO conventions and the formation of the principles of tripartism as the basis for its activities;
- to outline the significance of the ILO's normative heritage for contemporary international legal practice in the field of labour.

Literature review

Research into the formation and early activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO) occupies an important place in the scientific discourse on the history of international institutions and the development of the social protection system in the 20th century. One of the first fundamental works in this field was the monograph by A. Alcock (1971), which provided a thorough analysis of fifty years of ILO experience. The author showed how the organisation initially positioned itself as a unique institution combining the political, legal and social dimensions of international relations.

This work remained a starting point for further research for a long time, as it initiated the tradition of systematically understanding the ILO's activities in the broader context of the transformation of the international legal order.

In subsequent literature, more and more attention began to be paid not only to formal institutional aspects, but also to the social and political preconditions for the creation of the ILO. A significant contribution to this direction was made by J. Daele (2005), who examined the importance of international associations, in particular the International Association of Labour Legislation and the Second International, which played a role in preparing the ideological and organisational basis for the future organisation. The researcher emphasises that the concept of social justice, which became the fundamental principle of the ILO, emerged as early as the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, where various international actors attempted to reconcile the needs of the working class with the political compromises of the post-war settlement. The author later substantiated the need for an interdisciplinary approach to analysing the origins of the ILO, drawing on methodological tools from history, sociology, law and economics, which allows for a more complete understanding of the organisation not as a purely legal institution, but as the result of complex interactions between ideological currents, social movements and state policy (Daele, 2008).

A similar issue is explored in a study by R. Tosstorff (2005), who emphasises the significant role of the international labour movement in the creation of the ILO. According to the author, it was the activities of trade unions during the First World War that became the catalyst for the international labour protection project, as workers' organisations sought not only to defend their own interests, but also to propose universal approaches to guaranteeing labour rights. Thus, the creation of the ILO can be seen not only as an initiative of the victorious governments, but also as a response to growing international pressure from social movements.

Of particular interest in contemporary historical science is the monograph by D. Maul (2019), prepared for the centenary of the ILO. The author analyses a wide range of scientific works devoted to the organisation and emphasises that its roots date back to the 19th century, when the ideas of international labour regulation were formed. The researcher argues that the emergence of the ILO was driven not only by the desire of the great powers to establish social standards after the war, but also by the long-term development of liberal and socialist movements, which found common ground in their demands for improved working conditions and protection for workers. The author emphasises the importance of the international trade union movement, which for a long time remained in the shadow of official versions of history, but in fact played a decisive role in the establishment of the ILO.

Understanding the conditions under which the organisation was created is closely linked to the study of the international context after the First World War. H. Teichler (2014), drawing on the generalisations proposed by C. Clark (2012), showed that the reformatting of the international legal order after 1918 was so extensive that the creation of the ILO was a natural consequence of the epochal changes. At the same time, H. Thomas *et al.* (2020) point out that the process of institutionalisation took place in conditions of serious social and economic upheaval, in particular post-war instability and the Spanish flu pandemic. The authors argue that the establishment of the ILO had not only humanitarian but also clear political significance, as it was aimed at neutralising radical ideas and preserving the liberal order.

A separate body of literature concerns organisational and communication practices in the early stages of the ILO's activities. A study by J. Wilke (2023) emphasises that the organisation's founders paid particular attention to disseminating information about working conditions, establishing international communication channels and collecting statistics. This approach ensured not only the development of conventions, but also increased awareness among governments and society, which contributed to strengthening the ILO's authority in the international arena.

Works that examine the ILO's activities in a comparative national context are also important. For example, B. Thomann (2018) studied Japan's relations with the ILO in 1919-1938, showing how membership in the organisation influenced the formation of national labour policy. Based on archival materials, the author proved that even developed countries had difficulties implementing international labour standards. Similar conclusions are contained in the study by A. Blaskiewicz-Maison (2025), which analyses the experience of France, which declared its openness to international initiatives but did not always ensure their implementation in its domestic policy.

The example of Germany, discussed in the article by M. Dhermy-Mairal *et al.* (2024), is of particular interest for understanding the mechanisms of internationalisation of labour standards. The authors show that the integration of the defeated country into the ILO structures immediately after the war was a kind of experiment that made it possible to trace the limits and possibilities of the spread of international norms in complex political circumstances. Such studies allow to evaluate not only the political compromises of the time, but also the universalism of an organisation that sought to encompass as wide a range of states as possible. J. Fried's (2014) study broadens the understanding of the evolution of the organisation in the interwar period and after the Second World War. The author analyses in detail the process of the ILO's transition from the status of an autonomous institution within the League of Nations to cooperation with the newly created United Nations, emphasising the continuity of its activities and its ability to adapt to the new conditions of the international system while maintaining its specialisation in the field of labour law.

Recent studies focus on less explored areas. In particular, F.S. Montesano *et al.* (2023) showed that since 2015, the ILO has been trying to integrate the environmental dimension into its policies, gradually combining social and environmental parameters of development, which indicates an expansion of the organisation's traditional mandate and a desire to respond to current global priorities. An important addition is the work of D. Barros Leal Farias (2024), which focuses on the role of non-European and small states in the early years of the ILO. The author shows that their active participation not only diversified international discussions but also contributed to the establishment of the organisation as a truly universal institution, allowing the ILO to be viewed not simply as a product of agreements between large states, but as an institution that was global in nature from the outset.

In general, an analysis of the scientific literature shows that the problem of the formation and initial stage of the ILO's activities is considered from many angles. Researchers focus on legal ideas and international agreements, as well as on the role of social movements, national policies, communication practices and symbolic dimensions. This approach allows to trace that the creation of the ILO was the result of the interaction of various factors – from political compromises and international negotiations to the activities of workers' organisations and states seeking to find new forms of labour regulation, which forms the necessary basis for further research into the organisation's normative heritage and assessment of its significance for contemporary international law.

Materials and methods

The methodological foundation of the study was based on a combination of conceptual approaches, each of which made it possible to highlight the subject of the study in different dimensions. The central approach was the civilisational one, which involved interpreting international legal institutions as the result of the historical maturity of socio-political processes. In this context, the formation of the International Labour Organization is seen as a natural response to the evolution of democratic institutions in the early 20th century and the need to institutionalise a new form of social dialogue. It is this perspective that allowed to explain the emergence of the principle of tripartism not only as a legal innovation, but also as a reflection of broader civilisational processes. An important addition was the axiological approach, which made it possible to reveal the value dimension of the ILO's normative activity. Particular attention was paid to the concept of "social justice," which defined the fundamental guidelines in the organisation's first documents and legitimised it in the international legal order. This approach made it possible to examine how the ILO's norms reflected the desire to combine economic requirements with the need to protect human dignity. The systematic approach ensured the integration of the results of the analysis, as the ILO's activities were considered part of a broader system of international relations. The interdisciplinary nature of the study was reflected in the combination of methods from jurisprudence (normative analysis, interpretation of sources of international law), history (study of the stages of institutional development), sociology of labour (analysis of transformations in labour relations), and ethics (assessment of the humanitarian foundations of the ILO's activities).

The use of the historical method made it possible to explain legal and political phenomena as the result of specific circumstances of the post-war era. This method was used to clarify the interdependence between the development of the international regulatory framework and the socio-economic conditions after the First World War. Within the framework of this analysis, the impact of war destruction, mass unemployment and international conflicts on the formation of the first labour standards was outlined. The comparative method was used to compare the ILO with the League of Nations as two organisations created in the same political context. Given the different nature of these institutions, the following criteria for comparison were identified: legal status, decision-making mechanisms, organisational structure and actual effectiveness, which showed that the ILO was more universalist in nature due to its focus on specific regulatory provisions, while the League of Nations remained primarily a political entity.

Among the special methods used was content analysis of the texts of ILO conventions and recommendations, which made it possible to identify the key categories that formed the basis of international labour standards. Discourse analysis was used to reconstruct the logic of normative formulations and to identify hidden value emphases in ILO rhetoric. Both methods made it possible to trace the evolution of legal provisions from declarative formulas to specific legal norms.

The empirical basis of the study consisted of ILO normative documents – the 1919 Constitution (International Labour Office, 1920), the first six conventions and acts of the International Labour Conference (1920); international agreements that shaped the context of the organisation's formation; ILO analytical reports and statistical data, which made it possible to trace the long-term dynamics of the implementation of principles. An important component of the source base of the study was the memoirs and statements of direct participants in the events, in particular the memoirs of J.M. Keynes (1919), H. Nicolson (1933), D. Lloyd George (1938), and F.D. Roosevelt (1941), which reflect the perception of international institutions and issues of social justice in the context of the formation of a new world order. The use of these sources made it possible to combine a historical perspective with an analysis of current trends.

Results and Discussion

Retrospective of the establishment of the ILO. In academic literature, it is common to approach the formation of the ILO as being driven by four main groups of subjective factors. Firstly, the humanitarian factor - the need to overcome exploitation and ensure fair working conditions, as especially emphasised by D. Maul (2019), who analyses the ILO's establishment as a response to the need to institutionalise principles of social justice on a global scale. Secondly, the domestic political factor – the realisation that without a significant improvement in workers' living standards, the threat of social instability and the radicalisation of protest movements would grow, as reflected in research that highlights the ILO's role in balancing socio-political tensions in member states. Thirdly, the foreign policy factor – the conviction that long-term international peace could only be achieved through the establishment of social justice principles in the field of labour. An example of this is the analysis of international relations within the ILO in its early years, which shows states' desire to combine political and moral grounds for cooperation (Barros Leal Farias, 2024). Finally, the economic factor – the understanding of the link between social reforms and increased competitiveness of national economies on the world stage, which, as modern research shows, was a significant argument for many governments in supporting ILO initiatives (Maul, 2019; Barros Leal Farias, 2024). However, this schematic presentation of factors should be contrasted with a significant wealth of factual information. The creation of an international organisation with a mandate in the field of labour is due to a complex combination of socio-political, legal, and socio-economic preconditions, which have been thoroughly covered in modern research.

The origins of social and labour relations regulation date back to the late 18th and early 19th centuries, as before this time, state labour policy was based exclusively on coercive measures and a system of punishments. It was during this period that the preconditions for the social protection of workers were formed in Europe, largely driven by industrial development (the Industrial Revolution) and socio-cultural changes. Modern research confirms that the formation of labour relations during this period was directly related to the processes of industrialisation, the formation of the working class, and the gradual establishment of the first elements of a social security system. For example, M. van Leeuwen (2020) shows that in the 18th–19th centuries, European societies developed new forms of social support that gradually transformed from local aid systems into more organised social protection mechanisms. A.R. Zolberg and I. Katznelson (2021) hold similar views, arguing that the formation of working-class communities in Western Europe and the United States was not only a consequence of the Industrial Revolution but also a catalyst for the development of social support institutions. Thus, the emergence of the first social regulation mechanisms in Europe in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was due to a combination of economic, social, and cultural transformations that determined the further development of the European model of social protection. The Industrial Revolution not only brought about technical innovations but also led to profound social transformations. This era laid the groundwork for the formation of new social structures, particularly the bourgeoisie and proletariat classes, which became decisive in the subsequent development of industrial society (Zolberg & Katznelson, 2021; Berlanstein, 2021). Simultaneously with economic growth, social contradictions intensified. According to modern estimates, "the rise of factory work meant not just a technological transition, but rather a change in human relationships, creating unprecedented pressure on the status of workers, especially children and women, often with minimal regulatory protection" (Lartey, 2025). In this regard, there was an urgent need to introduce social regulation measures and establish the foundations of fair labour relations.

The Industrial Revolution, as noted in contemporary research, had complex socio-economic consequences. It was accompanied not only by technical innovations, but also by significant changes in social relations, which led to the emergence of new social groups and expanded economic opportunities for European states (Berlanstein, 2021). At the same time, industrialisation intensified expansion into colonial territories, where labour resources and natural resources were used to ensure the economic growth of the metropolises, which is emphasised in contemporary historiography as one of the fundamental factors in the formation of the capitalist economy (Zolberg & Katznelson, 2021). Within European societies, there was growing debate about the distribution of wealth and the search for models that would combine economic development with social stability. These processes contributed to the emergence of a liberal economic model based on the principles of freedom of labour, competition, trade, and limited state intervention in economic relations (van Leeuwen, 2020; Tribe, 2021). In this way, the industrial revolution determined the directions of not only economic but also socio-political modernisation of European societies, creating the basis for the further development of the system of labour relations and the search for their international regulation.

The socio-cultural preconditions in this context also include the gradual formation of public opinion on the need to introduce at least basic guarantees of social protection for workers, especially minors and women. On this basis, political and political-legal systems were gradually improved in many countries, which ultimately contributed to the gradual democratisation of social relations. Naturally, Great Britain, which at that time was called the "world's factory," stood out among such countries. In 1801, a court decision was made to convict a factory owner for cruel treatment of his apprentices – this decision later became a binding legal precedent (Case of the Journeymen Clothworkers, 1801). In 1802, the Health and Morals of Apprentices Act (1802) was passed, which is considered the first labour protection act in the modern sense (Health and Morals of Apprentices Act, 1802). However, the beginnings of full-fledged legal regulation of social and labour relations in the British Empire are associated with An Act to Regulate the Labour of Children and Young Persons in the Mills and Factories of the United Kingdom (1833), which introduced state supervision of the working conditions of minors for the first time.

The gradual formation of ideas about the protection of workers began in the era of early industrial development. One of the first figures to openly raise the issue of fair working conditions at the international level was the English manufacturer and social reformer Robert Owen, who in 1818 proposed that the victorious countries in the Napoleonic Wars create a special commission to develop regulations for the protection of hired workers (Wojtaszczyk, 2024). Although this initiative did not initially find support among governments and political leaders, it was later taken up and developed in the works of scholars and reformers. According to modern estimates, the idea of legally enshrining social protection for employees gradually became a subject of attention in legal science and international practice (Dhermy-Mairal *et al.*, 2024). The idea of creating an international system of labour standards gained increasing recognition among intellectuals, industrial circles and civil society activists. In the mid-19th century, the idea gradually matured that working conditions could be improved not only at the national level, but also through international coordination of government actions, which became an important basis for the later institutionalisation of such initiatives.

In the second half of the 19th century, efforts to improve working conditions in Western Europe took two separate paths. On the one hand, trade unionists organised themselves at the international level through the "International Workingmen's Association" ("First International", formed in 1864) and the "Second International", formed in 1889. On the other hand, liberal reformists, led by the Swiss government, promoted the idea of international labour legislation as a means of standardising working conditions in different countries (Leterme, 2016).

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, most industrialised countries already had basic legal norms in place to limit labour abuses by governments and business owners. However, in practice, such protection for workers remained limited (Hoehtker, 2022; Dhermy-Mairal *et al.*, 2024). During this period, reformers, lawyers, trade union leaders and socially responsible industrialists became more active and began to raise labour issues at the international level. A significant step was the creation in 1900 of the International Association for Labour Legislation (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.), which became the first structure to attempt to coordinate the efforts of states in the field of labour regulation.

The immediate implementation of the idea of creating an international organisation with powers in the field of labour took place at the end of the First World War. The preconditions for the global crisis that led to a war of unprecedented scale and colossal human losses were already forming at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. In 1914-1919, they became particularly acute, combined with aspirations to establish a new international order. At the same time, considerable attention was paid to finding ways to improve the system of social and labour relations at the international level.

The events of the First World War prompted an active search for a new world order. Added to this were the socio-political and social consequences of the Bolshevik revolution. Representatives of business circles and social reformist ideologies sought to prevent another escalation of relations between "labour" and "capital," trying to create a reliable legal foundation for the civilised development of social and labour relations. In 1919, in the context of the end of the war, there was an agreement between government, trade union and business circles on key social goals, in particular guarantees of fair working conditions, protection of employees and support for social stability. As researcher D. Maul (2019) points out, this interaction was also an attempt to counter the Bolshevik revolutionary wave in Europe. Similarly, D. Barros Leal Farias (2024) emphasises that the creation of the International Labour Organization was a tool for balancing social expectations and fears of radicalisation of the labour movement. Recent studies also emphasise that the formation of the ILO was seen from the outset as a means of preventing revolutionary upheavals through the institutionalisation of social justice at the international level (Dhermy-Mairal *et al.*, 2024).

The Paris Peace Conference, which opened on 18 January 1919, was intended to shape a new system of international relations after the First World War. Its significance can be compared to the Congress of Vienna in 1815, but in 1919 the focus had shifted – it was not only about creating mechanisms to prevent new wars, but also about introducing humanistic ideas into international politics. Delegations from 27 countries and 5 dominions of the British Empire took part in the conference. Key decisions were made within the "Council of Ten," which consisted of representatives of the victorious countries, and was later narrowed down to the "Council of Four" – the heads of government or presidents of France, Great Britain, the United States, and Italy. The Prime Minister of France, Georges Clemenceau, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, David Lloyd George, and the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, had a particular influence on the course of the conference. Presiding over the conference, G. Clemenceau insisted on severe punishment for Germany and compensation for all war damages. His position dominated the negotiations – contemporaries noted him as the most influential participant in the process (Datskiv, 2008). J.M. Keynes (1919), a prominent economist and participant in those events, described the position of the French delegation as "Clemenceau's Carthaginian peace".

The idea of creating the League of Nations as a new universal mechanism for international settlement was formulated by W. Wilson in his famous document "14 Points". For him, this provision was the central element of the entire peace treaty (Fakir *et al.*, 2022). D.L. George advocated a balanced approach, emphasising the importance of professional and expert preparation of decisions. One of the secretaries of the British delegation, H. Nicolson, recalled that the head of the delegation always listened to professional opinions and carefully evaluated all proposals (Nicolson, 1933). In general, the leaders of the major powers focused on general issues of restructuring the world order and did not interfere in the activities of the specialised commissions that had been set up to prepare the most important provisions of the future treaty. The exception was D.L. George, who, according to own memoirs, took an active interest in the creation of the International Labour Organization (Lloyd George, 1938).

During the same period, European and American trade unions, whose influence had grown significantly in the prewar years thanks to the expansion of their organisational structures and their increasing role in socio-political processes (Hoehtker, 2022), insisted on their right to participate in the process of concluding peace and forming a new architecture of international relations. It was primarily thanks to their persistent actions that a decision was made to create a separate Commission with powers in the field of international labour regulation. It is also worth noting that as early as 1916, trade unions in the Allied countries raised the issue of the need to create an international representative body, a kind of "labour parliament", which would consider and make decisions on social issues (Dhermy-Mairal *et al.*, 2024). Thus, their initiatives to regulate international labour law did not arise "out of thin air".

At the plenary session of the conference on 25 January 1919, a decision was made to establish a Commission on International Labour Law, composed of 15 representatives. Its members represented the interests of trade unions, employers and governments, laying the foundation for tripartism as a fundamental principle of regulating social and labour relations (Maul, 2019; Farias, 2024). Among the participants of the Commission were Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, who headed it as a well-known supporter of international cooperation in the field of protecting workers' rights; British trade unionist John Barnes, developer of the project to create a labour commission within the framework of the peace conference; French labour movement leader Leon Zhuo, who later won the Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to the trade union struggle for peace; English public figure Harold Butler, who later headed the International Labour Office as Director-General; Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Eduard Benes and other prominent trade union and political figures. The Commission's work was delayed for several months, primarily due to a number of contentious issues (in particular, regarding the representation of states in the future organisation, the nature of international labour acts, the specifics of their ratification, and the form and level of control over their application). Representatives of Italy and France proposed that the International Labour Conference should be able to adopt conventions that would be automatically binding on member states; the British, for their part, advocated an almost automatic ratification system. Under pressure from the American participants, a compromise decision was adopted, which was enshrined in the ILO Constitution (Dhermy-Mairal *et al.*, 2024).

During the Commission's work, particular attention was paid to the issue of membership in the future organisation. Two main approaches were discussed, which differed in their vision of the representation of countries and dominions. Some delegations, including the American one, proposed to do without separate membership of the dominions, but this idea did not gain widespread support. The British delegation's proposal, which provided for the participation of not only national states but also individual dominions in the new organisation, received the most votes. At the same time, even this option needed clarification. In particular, the Canadian delegation objected to some of the wording regarding membership, namely the provision that "the self-governing dominions of the British Empire and India may become members of the agreement and have the same rights and obligations as they would have had as nation states." Canada was effectively being offered to join the organisation "through the back door" (Choko, 2012). Ultimately, a decision was made that guaranteed the dominions full membership and equal rights in the newly created organisation.

Discussions on the draft Constitution continued for 35 meetings, and it was only on 11 April 1919, at a plenary meeting of the Paris Peace Conference, that the document presented by the Commission was approved and a decision was taken to establish an organisational committee to prepare for the first session of the International Labour Conference. The authors of the English text of the Constitution, which the Commission took as a basis, were the future heads of the International Labour Office, Harold Butler and Edward Filene. The Constitution became an integral part of the Treaty of Versailles and thus acquired the status of an important international legal document (International Labour Office, 1920). It is also important to note that the Constitution was adopted even before the formal establishment of the Organisation, which further emphasises the fundamental nature of its principles and operating principles (Gerwarth, 2021). Thus, in its early years, the ILO laid not only conceptual but also organisational foundations that enabled it to become a full-fledged international actor in the field of labour.

The fundamental provisions enshrined in the Constitution of the International Labour Organization have determined the main directions for the development of international regulation of social and labour relations for a long period. In the preamble to the Constitution, the term "principles" was mentioned only twice: in the context of recognising the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and affirming the freedom to organise in trade unions, as well as organising vocational and technical training. At the same time, an analysis of the content of this document shows that at the time of its adoption, a broader system of provisions had already been formulated which, although not always directly defined as "principles", actually fulfilled this role (International Labour Office, 1920). Taking into account the author's compilation, these provisions include the following: the establishment of universal and lasting peace based on social justice; the urgent need to eradicate social injustice; the need to improve working conditions, in particular by establishing maximum working hours per day and week, as well as regulating the hiring of labour; combating unemployment; guaranteeing a level of wages that ensures satisfactory living conditions; protecting workers from the dangers of industrial accidents, occupational diseases and health hazards; special protection for the labour of children, adolescents and women; the introduction of old-age and disability pensions; the protection of the interests of migrant workers; and the development of vocational and technical education (Dreval, 2015).

All of the above principles are also relevant to the modern regulation of labour issues. It is no coincidence, as D. Maul (2019) notes, that although the world has changed since 1919, many of the fundamental principles of the ILO have not lost their relevance. In this context, the principle of tripartism, which was established in 1919 and has since become a kind of calling card for the ILO, should be given importance. Indeed, as modern research points out, the main goal of this organisation since its inception and to this day remains the improvement of working conditions around the world, and this mission is as relevant now as it was in 1919 when the Organisation was founded (La Hovary, 2015). At the same time, as the researcher emphasises, it is tripartism that distinguishes the ILO from other international organisations, and the current situation only reinforces the need for additional attention to this principle. It is no coincidence that this principle was subsequently included in the fundamental principles and rights at work and found expression in the ILO's fundamental conventions, in particular the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (International Labour Organization, 1998), Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (International Labour Organization, 1948) and Convention No. 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining (International Labour Organization, 1949).

The ILO Constitution (Treaty of Versailles, 1919) was adopted on 28 June 1919, together with the creation of the League of Nations. In the summer of 1919, the Organising Committee for the preparation of the first session began its work. The main burden of the preparatory work was borne by representatives of Great Britain and France, with the British government providing significant financial assistance to the Organising Committee. Initially, 44 states became members of the ILO: 31 members of the League of Nations (the victorious countries in World War I that signed the Treaty of Versailles) and 13 states that were invited to join the League of Nations and the ILO.

In the process of preparing for the first session, some technical difficulties arose. This was mentioned by F.D. Roosevelt, the 32nd President of the United States (1933-1945), who on 6 November 1941 addressed ILO officials and trade union leaders from countries that had already suffered from fascist aggression. Unlike his predecessors, F.D. Roosevelt was a consistent supporter of international cooperation in the field of labour, calling the ILO "the parliament of human justice". In his speech, he emphasised that at the time of its creation, there were no models on which to base the League of Nations and the ILO: there was no financial support, no suitable premises and not even basic technical resources. According to F.D. Roosevelt, "to many, the idea seemed like a wild dream." It was he, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, who had to personally search for office space in the Navy building and provide it with typewriters and other necessary materials (Roosevelt, 1941).

The first session of the ILO began on 29 October 1919, which can formally be considered the date of the ILO's establishment. At that time, 44 states became members of the ILO: 31 members of the League of Nations, i.e. the victorious countries in the First World War, which actually signed the Treaty of Versailles, and 13 states that were invited to join the Covenant of the League of Nations and the Constitution of the ILO. At this session, the first six conventions were adopted, which constitute an important source of modern international labour standards (on working hours in industry, unemployment, maternity protection, night work for women, minimum age for employment in industry, and night work for adolescents in industry) (Table 1).

Table 1. First conventions of the International Labour Organization

No. p/p	Convention Title	Current status of the convention
1	Convention limiting the hours of work in industrial undertakings to eight in the day and forty-eight in the week (ILO Convention No. 1, 1919)	In force
2	Unemployment convention (ILO Convention No. 2, 1919)	In force
3	Convention concerning the employment of women before and after childbirth (ILO Convention No. 3, 1919)	Revised by Convention No. 103 in 1952, which was in turn revised in 2000
4	Convention concerning employment of women during the night (ILO Convention No. 4, 1919)	Revised by Convention No. 41 in 1934 and Convention No. 89 in 1948.
5	Convention concerning the minimum age for admission of children to industrial employment (ILO Convention No. 5, 1919)	Revised by Convention No. 59 in 1937.
6	Convention concerning the night work of young persons employed in industry (ILO Convention No. 6, 1919)	Revised by Convention No. 90 in 1948.

Source: systemised by the authors

As of 2025, two of the conventions are still in force, while four others remained in force for many subsequent decades. The content of the conventions also shows a choice of an optimal form for the relationship between international and national labour standards (international standards set general requirements that were to be specified in national labour legislation). It should also be noted that, in general, these conventions concerned two important areas of labour law – working hours and the protection of certain categories of workers (ILO Convention No. 2, 1919). This fully correlates with the modern vision of the ILO as an organisation that consistently integrates issues of safety and health at work into all areas of its normative activities. This is discussed, in particular, in the research by Yu. Dreval *et al.* (2020), which justifies the fundamental importance of these issues for the implementation of international labour standards.

The meticulous preparation of decisions that laid the foundation for the formation of international labour standards should also be noted. The practice of preparing reports on the main issues that were to form the basis of the conventions was already initiated at that time. For example, among the five main reports, the following deserve attention: Report I "The Eight-Hour Day or Forty-Eight-Hour Week," Report II "Unemployment," and Report III "The Employment of Women and Children and the Berne Conventions of 1906" (International Labour Conference, 1920).

Particular attention should be paid to the fact that a significant part of the conference's work consisted of organisational issues, primarily related to the consideration of admitting new states to the ILO. Given the strained relations between countries that had recently been in opposing blocs, this issue took on special significance and also had symbolic meaning related to the formation of a renewed international legal order in the post-war period. In this context, the decision to invite Austria and Germany to participate in the organisation's activities should be singled out, which was preceded by careful preparation: the allied and associated states referred the question of their accession to the conference itself. The resolution adopted on this matter, titled "Admission of Germany and Austria to the International Labour Organization," stated that "in anticipation of their entry into the League of Nations and in view of their expressed readiness to cooperate in the work of the Labour Organization, Germany and Austria are admitted as members of the International Labour Organization with the same rights and obligations as are conferred upon the other members of the Labour Organization by the terms of the Treaties of Peace signed at Versailles on 28th June 1919 and Saint-Germain on 10th September 1919" (International Labor Conference, 1920). At the same time, some delegations were denied admission due to a violation of the formally defined procedure for acquiring membership (this applied to Luxembourg, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico). A special resolution on this matter stated that without an official application from the government for admission to the conference, no recommendation for their admission would be legitimate (International Labor Conference, 1920).

The balanced approach to the election of the Director-General of the International Labour Office (ILO), i.e., the organisation's secretariat, should also be noted. Albert Thomas (1878-1932), who was elected the first Director-General of the ILO, had been elected to the French Chamber of Deputies in the pre-war period and was actively involved in lawmaking in the field of social protection for miners, industrial workers, and farmers (including issues of their pension provision). Despite the fact that he did not directly participate in the Paris Peace Conference, his candidacy was nominated by trade unions and received support due to his close ties with the labour movement, as well as his experience of cooperation with entrepreneurs and state bodies during the First World War.

Albert Thomas actively applied the so-called "policy of presence," visiting numerous countries to familiarise himself with the practice of social and labour relations while also spreading knowledge about the ILO's activities. This approach allowed to establish the Organisation as an authoritative platform for international dialogue in the field of labour (Maul, 2019). His vision of the ILO's activities was based on a combination of a scientific approach, technical expediency, and humanitarian ideals. As researchers note (Bolle, 2013; Blaskiewicz-Maison, 2016), it was thanks to Albert Thomas that the ILO transformed from its early years from just an administrative institution into an analytical centre for the study of labour issues. Albert Thomas particularly emphasised that the implementation of international labour standards should be based not on a system of sanctions but on the principles of voluntariness, moral authority, and public support, and it is no coincidence that he is considered by some sources to be the "most active Director-General in the history of the ILO," and his management style significantly influenced the formation of the organisation's policy in the following decades (Charnovitz, 2004). Considering that only eleven people have held this position throughout the ILO's existence, one can also speak of a more than century-long continuity in this matter.

At the same time, the so-called "American paradox" arose in international politics: for a number of formal reasons, the United States refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and the agreement to create the League of Nations. The formal date of the break with the newly formed society was 20th November 1919, when the US Senate voted against the ratification of the relevant agreements. Thus, the United States found itself outside the League of Nations and, consequently, outside the ILO structure. This state of affairs is generally explained by a lack of trust in the League of Nations, which the US never became a member of, as well as domestic political nuances and the echoes of traditional American isolationism.

Interestingly, the US began to rethink the 1919 decision during the period leading up to the so-called "Great Depression," which formally began on 29th October 1929. It, among other things, caused a sharp escalation of social problems and mass unemployment. In publications of that time, the opinion was voiced that the US government recognised the need to create a similar international organisation, despite its previous rejection of participation in the League of Nations: "Whatever the present attitude of the people of the United States toward the League of Nations, it now seems obvious that the Government of the United States has felt the necessity of such an international organisation" (Hudson, 1929). S. Berdahl (1929) held a similar opinion, emphasising the political shortsightedness of the US's avoidance of cooperation in international organisations. In later research literature, it is emphasised that after the official accession of the US to the ILO in 1934 (as well as its re-entry in 1980 after leaving in 1977), the Organisation received significant impulses for institutional strengthening (Joyner, 1978; Beigbeder, 1979).

Naturally, for the US, the path to joining the ILO was much easier, as it was not accompanied by certain dogmatic prejudices. Thus, a preliminary conclusion can be drawn that the significance of international labour standards and the ILO's activities, in general, particularly increases in conditions of social and political upheaval. Researchers from the ILO Century Project also draw attention to this, noting that in the 1930s, the ILO actively participated in the formation of economic and social policy on the international stage, responding to crisis phenomena in the world of work (Hughes & Haworth, 2012). One of the important directions of the ILO's activities immediately after its establishment was informing member states and the interested professional community about working conditions, labour legislation, and socio-economic aspects in the field of labour. For this purpose, the International Labour Office (ILO) launched extensive publishing activities, which included periodicals and thematic publications, reports, and collections of legal acts (Table 2).

Table 2. Types of publications by the International Labour Office and subscription costs (1920)

Type of publication	Description	Price (Francs)	Price (Pounds Sterling)	Price (US Dollars)
International Labour Review	Popular science publication with analytics, statistics, and articles on labour issues	50	1/4.0	5.00
Official Bulletin	The official weekly bulletin of the ILO, containing reports, documents, and decisions	25	0.12/0	2.50
Daily Intelligence	Daily news on current events in the fields of labour and industry	165	4/0/0	17.00
Studies and Reports	Reviews across 14 thematic series: hygiene, employment, trade unions, etc.	200	4/16/0	20.00
Bibliographical Series	Bibliography of official and unofficial sources on labour issues	10	0/5/0	1.00
Legislative Series	Texts of laws and regulations on labour, published in several languages	35	0/16.0	4.00
Documents of the Annual Conference	Reports of conferences, texts of conventions, and recommendations	35	0/16.0	4.00
Special Reports	Special thematic reports with the results of ILO research	–	–	–
Inclusive Subscription	A comprehensive subscription that includes all regular, irregular, and special publications	500	12.0/0	50.00

Source: developed by the author's based on the International Labour Office (1920)

As shown in Table 2, the Office offered several subscription options, both for individual series and for a general subscription covering the entire set of printed materials. When determining the cost, currency fluctuations and the economic situation in individual countries were taken into account in order to ensure wider access to the Bureau's materials, which demonstrates the ILO's desire to disseminate information on working conditions and promote the exchange of knowledge between countries at an early stage of its operation. The ILO's publishing model demonstrates the seriousness of its approach to institutional communication. The regular publication of statistics, legal norms and analytical reviews not only contributed to the transparency of the organisation's activities, but also ensured the harmonisation of labour practices around the world. This approach formed the basis for the development of international labour discourse, which later transformed into a system of global social dialogue.

Thus, the creation of the International Labour Organization was the result of the long-term development of socio-economic thought, social transformations and the intellectual efforts of a number of figures. From the first factory acts in Great Britain to the creation of international commissions and conventions, the formation of international labour law was a response to the new realities of the industrialised world. The creation of the ILO was not only an institutional response to the consequences of the First World War, but also the realisation of the idea of global responsibility for working conditions and the dignity of working people. Its creation was the result of the consolidation of humanistic, economic, political and legal factors that formed the basis for a new system of international coexistence, centred on social justice and peace. It is these values that remain relevant as the ILO continues its work as a leading international organisation in the field of labour.

Implementation of ILO labour principles in new forms of employment. The approaches embedded in the first normative acts of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1919 were shaped by the specific conditions of the post-war period, industrial production, and the need for a normative response to threats to human dignity in the workplace. However, despite the change in economic models and the emergence of new forms of labour, these provisions have not lost their significance. Studying the first six ILO conventions in light of modern labour changes allows us to determine their relevance and ability to provide basic guarantees in the contemporary legal field.

One of the fundamental provisions declared at the first ILO session is the idea of fair pay. This concept, enshrined in ILO Convention No. 1 (1919) on working hours, was intended to ensure the economic security of the worker within a stable work schedule. Currently, this idea takes on new meaning with the expansion of the gig economy. Work performed on digital platforms often lacks fixed hours, and its remuneration fluctuates depending on orders, hourly load, or algorithmic ratings. The absence of a formal mechanism for ensuring fair pay creates a situation where the basic provisions that were relevant in the 20th century are insufficiently defined for modern realities. This does not diminish their importance but indicates a need for a normative re-evaluation of the meaning of fair pay in the context of new forms of employment.

Primary attention in the 1919 acts was also given to the protection of women and young persons. For example, ILO Convention No. 5 (1919) on the minimum age for industrial work set a clear limit on the involvement of children in production. In the context of digital communication and transnational interaction, the line between learning, play, and work is blurring, especially in the online environment. Children can participate in content monetisation, work in e-commerce, or be involved in creating visual products on a platform without a clear understanding of the legal status of this activity. Accordingly, the principle of prohibiting child labour takes on new dimensions that require updating legal approaches without abandoning the original concept of protecting childhood.

Another important provision enshrined in the ILO's founding documents is the duration of working hours and minimum rest. In the modern context, where the physical presence of an employee is not a mandatory condition of employment, traditional approaches to regulating the working day lose their clarity. Labour using digital tools, especially in the context of remote work, casts doubt on the effectiveness of the classic division between working and non-working hours, creating a situation where the conventional provisions lose their effectiveness not due to imperfection but due to a change in the subject of regulation. The content of the occupational health and safety provisions, which were discussed at the first ILO session and later embodied in the relevant conventions, aimed to create safe conditions in the workplace, prevent occupational diseases, and establish employer responsibility for the state of the environment in which the employee is located. In modern conditions, when a significant part of labour activity has moved into the virtual space, the problem arises of defining the boundaries of responsibility for the consequences for the employee's physical and mental health. For example, in cases of remote work or activities related to constant interaction with digital systems, it is not always possible to establish technical or organisational health and safety measures in the classic sense. At the same time, the impact on a person's health performing work duties can be no less serious than in traditional production conditions (Jiang *et al.*, 2025). There was an increase in the number of workers seeking help from medical institutions, occupational health specialists, and psychological support due to emotional burnout, visual and musculoskeletal disorders, and disorientation in work duties due to a poorly structured management system. Therefore, the provisions of the first ILO session on creating conditions that ensure the preservation of life and health need to be conceptually rethought, taking into account the nature of new forms of labour (Ojakorotu, 2025).

A separate issue deserving consideration is the phenomenon of algorithmic management of the labour process. In 1919, no legal system foresaw that the evaluation, workload allocation, task monitoring, and even the termination of labour relations could be carried out not directly by a human employer, but by an automated system. In the modern context, such a practice has become widespread in delivery, mobile taxi services, translations, copywriting, and other types of digital work. The worker often has no ability to influence the algorithm that determines their level of access to tasks, rating, or even the amount of pay. The lack of transparency, a responsible managing entity, and clear appeal procedures creates significant legal uncertainty. And although the principles of the first ILO session did not anticipate such situations, they were based on the foundations of equal treatment, regulatory transparency, and employer responsibility - elements that must remain as the foundation for any modern legal models. Thus, while there is no direct answer to the algorithmisation of labour in the 1919 documents, the logic of regulation embedded in them allows for the identification of directions for formulating appropriate modern standards.

No less significant is the issue of maintaining the stability of labour relations as one of the central principles of international labour regulation, which was established as early as 1919. In the post-war period, European and North American countries sought to enshrine long-term employment models that provided the worker not only with income but also with access to social security, professional growth, and participation in trade unions. The ILO's founding documents, as well as the first conventions adopted, reflected this aspiration: labour relations were to be built on a basis of permanence, predictability, and legal protection. At the heart of this approach was the idea that labour is not only a source of income but also a social process that ensures an individual's integration into society. From a legal standpoint, the classic employment model provided for a permanent employment contract concluded between an employer and an employee for an indefinite period. This not only ensured legal certainty of rights and obligations but also established long-term guarantees regarding working conditions, opportunities for professional training, and social security. This form of employment stimulated the development of legal institutions for protection against unfair dismissal, the establishment of fixed working hours, guaranteed rest periods, participation in collective bargaining, and the resolution of labour disputes.

In the modern economic environment, this model is gradually losing its dominance. Classic employment is being replaced by alternative forms of work organisation: project-based employment, fixed-term employment contracts, part-time work, temporary agency work, and self-employment without registering legal relationships. Such practices are developing particularly actively in the digital sector, where workers who perform tasks through online platforms or digital services often have no direct legal relationship with the client or employer. Such individuals do not fall under the protection provided by classic labour law and are effectively outside the scope of ILO mechanisms, which were developed in completely different economic conditions.

Project-based employment is based on the completion of a defined scope of work for a specific period, without the continuation of legal relations after the project's completion. Although this model provides some flexibility for the parties, it does not guarantee long-term income and, therefore, economic security. Fixed-term contract employment may provide social guarantees, but in many jurisdictions, such workers do not have full access to insurance mechanisms or a pension system. The situation is even more vulnerable for self-employed individuals who work without a formal employment contract: their legal status is uncertain, and their opportunities to protect their interests are minimal. The lack of clearly defined obligations regarding pay, working hours, rest, protection against discrimination, and the right to association makes them completely dependent on the conditions imposed by the more economically powerful party. In this regard, it is relevant to refer to the ideas that were laid down in the ILO conventions as early as 1919. In particular, ILO Convention No. 2 (1919), which concerned unemployment, provided for the obligation of states to promote employment and coordinate actions to reduce social destabilisation. And although modern forms of work do not fit into the classic model of full employment, the very principle of maintaining a stable labour status has not lost its significance. It can be realised by developing modern normative approaches to fragmented employment - for example, creating a universal social security system that would cover not only workers in the classic sense but also independent contractors.

The concept of the continuity of labour relations, which in 1919 was understood primarily as long-term employment, can now be given a new interpretation - as ensuring consistent legal protection for an individual regardless of their employment format. This means that every person performing paid work should be covered by a minimum level of legal protection: the right to pay, rest, health protection, protection against discrimination, and the right to association. In this way, the succession of the basic ideas laid down by the ILO is ensured, taking into account changes in the socio-economic system.

Thus, although the classic provisions on the duration of labour relations may be literally unsuitable for the new format of employment, their conceptual essence retains its normative value. They not only enshrine a certain historical model of interaction between employee and employer but also provide guidelines for modern legal regulation - through the principle of predictability, guarantees of social well-being, legal certainty, and a minimum level of protection for all subjects of labour activity. Extending the scope of these principles to new forms of work is not a rejection of historical experience but its consistent implementation in the 21st century. Applying ILO principles to the latest forms of work requires both legal analysis and the involvement of related fields of knowledge - labour sociology, digital ethics, platform economics, and the philosophy of technology (Ancilla, 2025; Setiawan *et al.*, 2025; Chae & Chae, 2025). For example, the problem of ensuring decent conditions in the gig sector is impossible without analysing the motivational structure of a worker operating in a virtual space (Alekseienko, 2021).

The issue of the limits of responsibility in the case of automated decision-making cannot be fully resolved without taking into account ethical considerations, particularly those related to personal autonomy, the right to privacy, and the right to be informed about evaluation mechanisms. The economic component is no less important: the mechanisms for forming remuneration on digital platforms are not regulated by classic market principles and, accordingly, require a separate legal approach. Thus, the legacy of the first ILO session should be considered not as a completed stage but as a basis for further dialogue between the disciplines that form the modern model of labour regulation. The overall structure of the decisions adopted at the first session of the International Labour Conference in 1919 was aimed at forming a normative basis capable of ensuring minimum standards of protection for workers in different countries, regardless of their level of economic development (International Labor Conference, 1920). The application of these standards over a century has demonstrated the possibility of universalising the basic provisions in the field of labour, even in conditions of significant socio-economic changes. The modern transformation of the labour market, caused by digital technologies, decentralisation of employment, automation, and a departure from classic models of industrial cooperation, has set a task for legal systems to rethink the functionality of traditional approaches to regulating labour relations. In this context, the provisions formulated during the first ILO session remain as guidelines that allow the principles of the dignity of labour to be maintained even in new conditions. They are based on the idea of preventing exploitation, ensuring the economic security of the worker, recognising the role of the state in regulating labour processes, and respecting social dialogue as a basic element of legal influence. The content of such provisions as establishing a maximum duration for working hours, the necessity of rest, the protection of minors and the prohibition of their exploitation, the creation of safe conditions in the workplace, and the provision of fair remuneration can be adapted to the realities of the digital economy by reviewing the forms and methods of their implementation.

Instead of formally transferring the 1919 provisions into new technological conditions, legal doctrine requires a consistent interpretation of the initial goals and meanings of these norms. In the field of regulating digital labour, it is important to restore the centre of gravity to the person performing the tasks, not the algorithm that distributes them. Similarly, in situations with partial or unstable employment, it is important to ensure at least basic guarantees, regardless of the duration or form of the legal connection between the worker and the client. Thus, the legacy of the first ILO session is not only historically significant but also conceptually necessary for building a new system of labour law that combines classic principles of protection with the realities of the 21st century.

Conclusions

The subject of the study in the article was to clarify the historical conditions of the emergence of the International Labour Organization, analyse its first documents and conventions, and comprehend the principles that laid the foundation for the formation of international labour standards. The study combines historical analysis with an assessment of current trends in the development of the ILO, which allows its activities to be interpreted not only as part of the post-war settlement of 1919, but also as a factor in contemporary global transformations in the field of labour.

It was found that the creation of the ILO was a direct consequence of the First World War and the Paris Peace Conference, where the desire to avoid social upheaval was combined with ideas of social justice. Analysis of scientific research showed that the process of forming the organisation was based on previous experience of international associations in the field of labour legislation. The study of documents revealed that the ILO's founding documents contained norms that were innovative for their time, aimed at limiting working hours, protecting motherhood and protecting children's labour. Analysis of the content of the first conventions helped to establish that they laid the foundations for the modern concept of human rights in the field of labour. The study showed that the principle of tripartism played a special role, thanks to which the ILO differed from other international institutions and ensured the participation of various social groups in decision-making. These data indicate that it was tripartism that became a factor in the legitimacy of the adopted norms and increased their effectiveness in different legal systems. The analysis also revealed that the ILO's activities had a universal dimension from the outset, as its standards applied to a wide range of countries, including states with different socio-economic conditions. The results obtained allow to conclude that the first decades of the organisation's activities formed the basis for the further codification of international labour law.

To summarise the study, it can be noted that the initial stage of the ILO's activities provides an understanding of the origins of modern international labour standards and explains their universality. Conceptually, this indicates that the historical experience of the organisation is directly relevant to assessing its current role in the context of global socio-economic transformations. A promising direction for further research is the analysis of the evolution of labour standards in the second half of the 20th century, the study of the ILO's influence on the formation of national legislation, in particular Ukrainian legislation, as well as the understanding of the relationship between the organisation's activities and the modern system of international human rights protection.

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Формування перших трудових стандартів Міжнародної Організації Праці в контексті сучасного міжнародного права

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Анотація. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена необхідністю удосконалення міжнародного трудового регулювання в умовах трансформації соціально-трудових відносин, викликаної глобальними соціальними, економічними та політичними процесами, зокрема пандемією COVID-19, зростанням масштабів міграції та поширенням неформальної зайнятості. Метою дослідження було висвітлення особливостей створення Міжнародної організації праці як основи для вдосконалення сучасних міжнародних трудових стандартів. У процесі дослідження було використано історико-правовий, аксіологічний, порівняльний і системний методи, що дозволило провести комплексний аналіз становлення організації як ключового міжнародного актора у сфері соціального захисту. Було досліджено ідеологічні, політичні та соціально-економічні чинники, що сприяли заснуванню Міжнародної організації праці на початку XX століття. Було проаналізовано соціальні, правові й політичні чинники, що передували заснуванню організації, а також висвітлено ключові рішення Паризької мирної конференції та першої сесії Міжнародної конференції праці. Було встановлено, що ключовим принципом діяльності організації став трипартизм, який забезпечив рівне представництво працівників, роботодавців і держав. Було узагальнено значення перших шести конвенцій Міжнародної організації праці як джерел трудового права, а також доведено актуальність принципів, закладених у діяльність організації понад сто років тому. Було зроблено висновок, що досвід створення Міжнародної організації праці має вагоме значення для перегляду сучасних підходів до трудового права в умовах глобальних змін. Практична цінність роботи полягає у можливості використання її результатів фахівцями у сфері міжнародного трудового права, державними службами зайнятості та органами влади при розробці політики соціального захисту та трудового регулювання

Ключові слова: міжнародні інституції; міжнародні відносини; правові принципи праці; конвенції МОП; міжнародне правове врегулювання; соціальний діалог