



International
Labour
Organization

A global review

WORKING CONDITIONS LAWS 2006-2007

 **TRAVAIL**
Global Monitoring and Analysis

WORKING
CONDITIONS
LAWS 2006-2007
A global review

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PREFACE

As the set of economic and social changes characterized as globalization are revealed to generate vast inequalities as well as immense wealth, the debates around the outcomes and future directions of these trends are beginning to acknowledge that many individuals are subject to unacceptable working conditions.

This recognition hints at a growing sense of dissatisfaction among many workers. Yet, the basic conditions of our working lives – for example, our wages, the hours we work, the protection we receive on the birth of our children – are too often absent from the policy debates on the benefits of economic growth. As a result, insufficient attention is being directed towards ensuring that increasing economic integration benefits everyone.

These concerns are at the heart of the work of the ILO, as part of its historical role in encouraging its member States to adopt what the Organization's Constitution defines as “humane conditions of labour”, and what has been expressed more recently in the notion of “decent work”.

Part of the challenge of improving conditions of work is a lack of reliable data on both actual working conditions and the policies, including laws, which have been designed to address them, especially in countries beyond the industrialized world. This report

aims to respond to this lack of data as it emerges with respect to legal measures, by comparing national laws on three of the most significant conditions of work: wages, working hours and maternity protection.

The report is intended to offer a concise and accessible picture of working conditions laws in the early years of the 21st century. Since these laws do not undergo radical change on an annual basis, we expect the analysis in this report to remain relevant for a number of years, although it is our intention to update it periodically. It is our hope that this work towards documenting working conditions laws will encourage policy efforts to be directed towards ensuring that the legal standards are more firmly reflected in workplace practice. This objective will be advanced in the work of the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme's Global Monitoring and Analysis (GMA) initiative, which has been designed with the aim of tracking trends in both actual working conditions and legal standards, and exploring the relationship between them.¹

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Chief,
Conditions of Work and Employment Programme,
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¹ For further details on the Global Monitoring and Analysis Programme, see www.ilo.org/travail.

INTRODUCTION

Working conditions laws in the 21st century

Working conditions laws are among the primary techniques for advancing the decent treatment of workers and have occupied a central place in labour law systems since their origins in the 19th and early 20th centuries. At the international level, working hours and maternity protection were among the subjects of the first set of ILO Conventions in 1919, while the first standard on the minimum wage was adopted within the following decade. In addition to the protective goals that underpin these laws, however, it has also long been recognized that improving workers' terms and conditions can enhance productivity and improve firm performance, and for this reason efforts have been made, including by the ILO, to identify the regulatory regimes that can best merge the goals of worker protection and advancing productivity.

Given the significance of working conditions laws, it is essential to track their development in domestic legal regimes. This report contributes to such efforts by reviewing the extent and content of three of the primary working conditions standards: wages, working hours and maternity protection. It examines the working conditions laws of more than 100 countries across all regions, drawing on the International Labour Organization's *Database of Conditions of Work and Employment* (www.ilo.org/travail/database).

It is worth stressing that the purpose of the report is to provide an overview of national legal provisions, not to assess compliance with the relevant ILO standards. The standards embodied in the most recent ILO Conventions on each subject have generally been selected as the basis of the analysis. As a result, in a number of instances, countries that are indicated not to meet these standards have enacted laws that are in line with the Conventions they have ratified, which were adopted at an earlier stage in the ILO's history.

The report builds on previous research efforts of the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme, in particular on a recent set of reports devoted to laws on maternity protection,² minimum wages³ and working time.⁴ By reviewing legal developments across these fields, this report hopes to build on this work by offering a more comprehensive picture of the regulation of working conditions. In particular, it is designed to situate maternity protection standards at the centre of working conditions policies, in an effort to ensure that work/family conciliation and gender equality are not excluded from the global debates on working conditions.

As will become clear, the report reveals a continuing commitment on the part of national governments to establish legal minimum standards on working conditions. The vast majority of countries included in this report have adopted legal standards on working conditions, most of them at levels designed to ensure a high degree of protection. The report also highlights, however, some marked differences in the form and content of these legal standards in different regions. With respect to minimum wages, for example, there is significant variation in modes of regulation. While a number of industrialized countries specify minimum wages in collective agreements, for example, these standards are more likely to be set out in legislative measures in Africa and Latin America. In the field of working time, there is notable regional variation in the level at which the primary standards are set. Most prominently, the 40-hour week dominates in industrialized countries, Central and Eastern Europe and Africa, while the 48-hour standard is more prominent in Asia and Latin America. Similar regional variation can be found in maternity protection laws, in which the longest leave periods – of 18 weeks or more – are more prominent in industrialized countries and Central and Eastern Europe, and 14-week leave periods are more common in Africa than in other regions.

² Ida Öun and Gloria Pardo Trujillo: *Maternity at work: A review of national legislation. Findings from the ILO's Conditions of Work and Employment Database* (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

³ François Eyraud and Catherine Saget: *The fundamentals of minimum wage fixing* (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

⁴ Deirdre McCann: *Working time laws: A global perspective. Findings from the ILO's Conditions of Work and Employment Database* (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

This report contributes to the contemporary international debates on the role and content of labour standards, then, by providing a source of comparative information on domestic legal measures. It also, however, dispels certain myths about working conditions standards that appear to be emerging in some contexts. Most significantly, it contradicts any assumption that the contemporary processes of globalization are involved in a retreat from a commitment to legal minimum labour standards on working conditions.

The report does not, however, permit conclusions to be drawn about the actual working conditions in the countries it covers. Measuring working conditions, and the extent to which they converge with, or diverge from, the domestic and international legal standards, is a necessary part of efforts to ensure decent work in the globalizing economy. Yet this is an element of contemporary working life on which there is very limited data available beyond the industrialized world. To shed light on this subject, the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme has established a Global Monitoring and Analysis (GMA) unit to gather and improve data on working conditions across the world. This report marks the first contribution towards the GMA's research, and will be drawn on in its future work towards exploring the relationship between working conditions and the legal standards that govern them.



Minimum Wages

Setting minimum wages has been a role for labour regulation since the outset of modern labour law regimes. Today, the regulation of wages remains central to the debates on worker protection, globalization, development and poverty reduction. Minimum wages advance a range of policy goals, including ensuring decent wages, eliminating exploitative working conditions, reducing poverty, combating unfair competition and promoting economic growth. Minimum wages are designated in the laws of almost all countries and at the international level, including in the International Labour Organization's Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131).⁵

This section reviews the minimum wage laws of 103 countries, including 21 industrialized countries, 16 from Central and Eastern Europe, 19 from Asia, 18 from Latin America and 20 from Africa (see the methodologies used in Annex 1 and detailed country information in Annex 2).

Three central features of minimum wage laws are addressed: minimum wage rates, wage-setting mechanisms and the level of the minimum wage.

Minimum wage rates⁶

GLOBAL

Almost all countries across the world mandate legal minimum wages⁷ (see Graph 1, Table 1 and Map 1).

In over one-third, monthly minimum wage rates are between USD 100 to 499 per month.⁸ Monthly wages of at least USD 30 to 99 are found in just under one-third of countries; and slightly less than one-fifth of countries, primarily in western Europe, have a minimum wage of more than USD 1,000 per month.

REGIONAL

The majority of **industrialized countries** have a minimum wage rate of more than USD 1,000 per month.

In most **Central and Eastern European countries** and two-thirds of countries in **Latin America**, minimum wages are set at USD 100 to 499 per month.

Most **Asian** countries have minimum wages of USD 30 to 99 per month.

In most **African** countries, minimum wage rates are around USD 30, although a number of countries (including Algeria, Morocco and South Africa) have minimum wages of more than USD 100 per month.

⁵ Available at www.ilo.org/ilolex.

⁶ For details on the methodologies used to calculate the minimum wage rates, see Annex 1.

⁷ Of the 103 countries covered by this report, only Cape Verde, Saudi Arabia and Singapore do not have minimum wage laws.

⁸ Throughout this section, where more than one minimum wage is in operation, the lowest has been selected. See Annex 1 for more details on the report methodology.

Graph 1: Monthly minimum wages by region (USD), 2006-2007

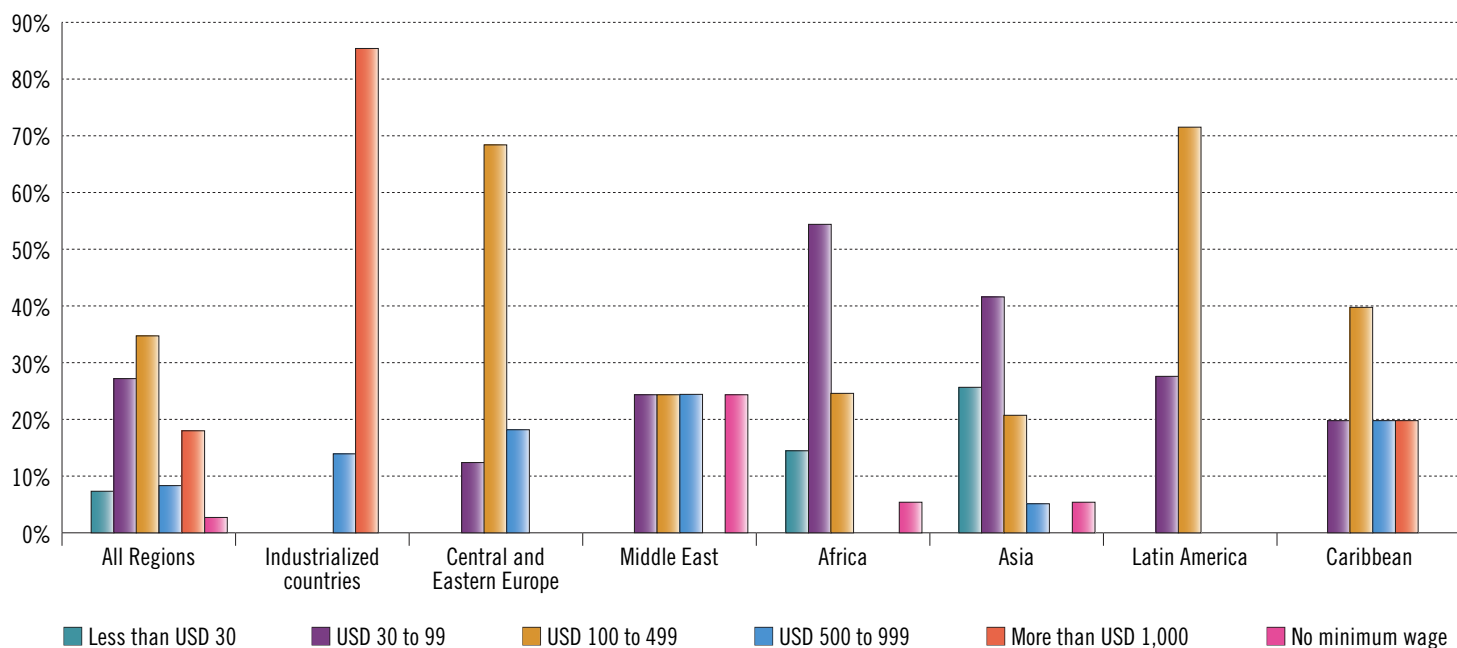


Table 1: Monthly minimum wages by region (USD), 2006-2007

Region	No minimum wage	Less than USD 30	USD 30 to 99	USD 100 to 499	USD 500 to 1,000	More than USD 1,000
Industrialized countries					Malta, Portugal, Spain	Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States
Central and Eastern Europe			Russian Federation, Ukraine	Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey	Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia	
Asia	Singapore	Bangladesh, Laos, Nepal, Viet Nam, Sri Lanka	Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands	Fiji, India, Philippines, Thailand	Republic of Korea	
Latin America			Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua	Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela		
Caribbean			Haiti	Belize, Trinidad and Tobago	Bahamas	Dominican Republic
Middle East	Saudi Arabia		Syrian Arab Republic	Lebanon	Israel	
Africa	Cape Verde	Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Madagascar	Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Ghana, Lesotho, Senegal, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria	Algeria, South Africa, Tunisia, Morocco, Namibia		

Minimum wage fixing: Mechanisms

The mechanisms by which minimum wage rates are set can be classified as:

- the government alone;
- the government in consultation with each of the social partners;
- the government on the recommendation of a specialized body;
- a specialized body (usually a bipartite⁹ or tripartite¹⁰ body established to determine minimum wage rates);
- collective bargaining.

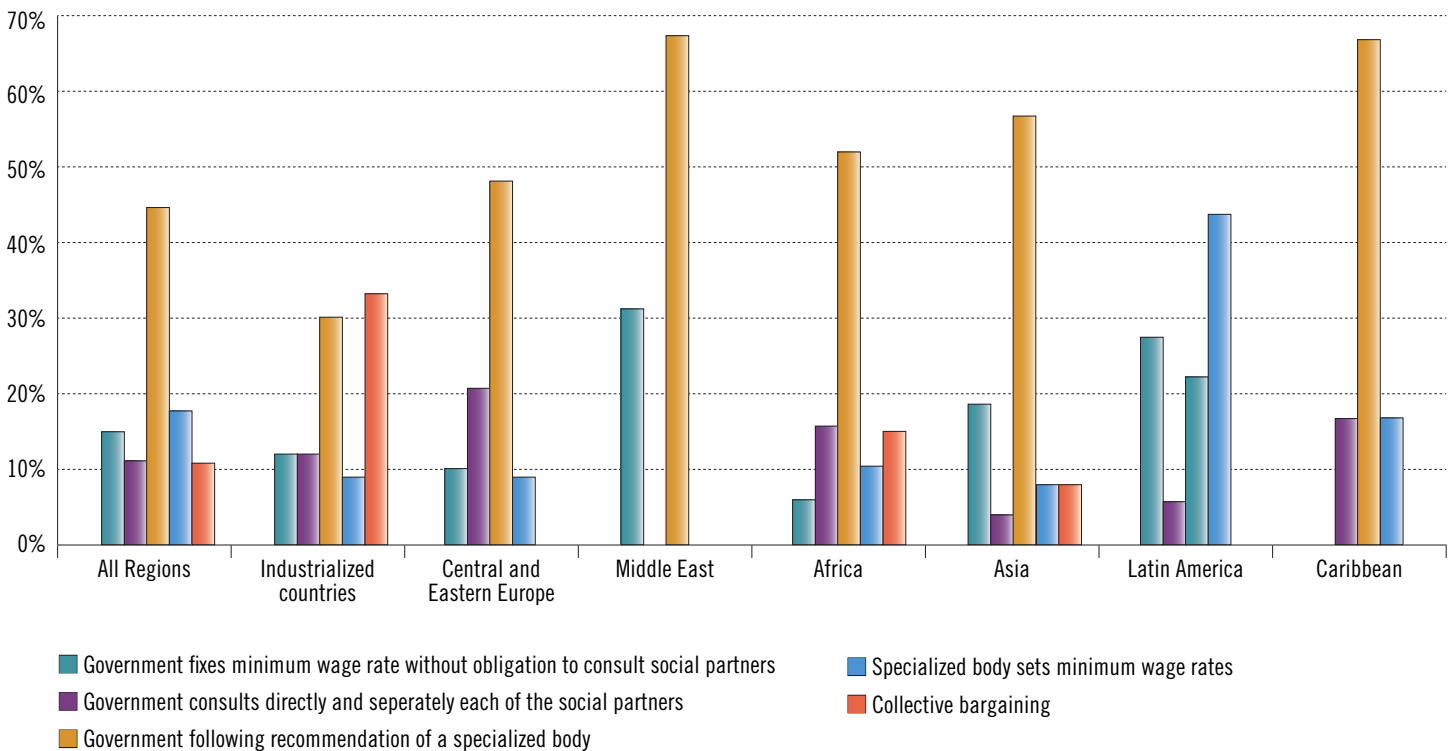
GLOBAL

In the vast majority of countries, the government plays a central role in setting minimum wage rates. It is set solely by collective bargaining in only nine countries (see Graph 2 and Table 2).

The most prevalent approach, in more than 40 per cent of countries, is for the minimum wage to be set in consultation with a specialized body.

Generally, a single mechanism is relied on to determine minimum wage rates. However, a combination of techniques is used in some countries, including Belgium, India, the Russian Federation, South Africa and the United States.

Graph 2: Minimum wage-fixing mechanisms by region, 2006-2007



⁹ A bipartite body is composed of employers' and workers' representatives, usually trade unions and employers' associations.

¹⁰ A tripartite body is composed of employers' and workers' representatives together with government representatives.

REGIONAL

There are no significant regional variations in the mechanisms used to set the minimum wage.

In one-third of **industrialized countries**, the minimum wage is fixed by the government on the recommendation of a specialized body. There are a number of prominent exceptions; in Luxembourg, New Zealand and the United States, for example, there is no obligation on the government to consult the social partners. In contrast, minimum wages are determined solely by the social partners in a

number of countries, including Italy, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland.

In other regions, it is also most common for governments to set minimum wage rates on the recommendation of a specialized body, including most countries in **Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Africa**.

In **Latin America**, tripartite negotiations are common.

Table 2: Minimum wage-fixing mechanism by region and country, 2006-2007

Region	Government without consultation	Government consulting the social partners	Government following the recommendation of a specialized body	Specialized body	Collective bargaining
Industrialized countries	Luxembourg, New Zealand, United States*	Austria*, Canada, Spain	France, Ireland, Japan, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom	Australia, Belgium*	Austria*, Belgium*, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland
Central and Eastern Europe	Russian Federation*, Ukraine	Czech Republic, Romania, Spain, Tunisia	Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Russian Federation*, Slovenia	Greece, Poland, Slovakia, Turkey	Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia
Middle East	Israel		Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic		
Africa	São Tomé and Príncipe	Algeria, Chad, Morocco	Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, South Africa*, Madagascar, Mauritius, Nigeria	Ghana, Mozambique	Senegal, South Africa*, Namibia
Asia	Laos, Pakistan*, Solomon Islands, Viet Nam	Mongolia	Bangladesh*, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India*, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan*, Papua New Guinea, Thailand	Bangladesh*, Philippines	India*, Singapore
Latin America	Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay	Cuba	El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Venezuela	Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru	
Caribbean		Bahamas	Belize, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago	Dominican Republic	

* Some countries have several types of mechanisms. For more details, see Annex 2.

Minimum wage fixing: Levels

Minimum wages can be introduced as a single national rate or a range of different rates that vary among sectors and/or occupations.

Between these extremes, a range of approaches are possible. It is possible to identify five levels at which the minimum wage can be set:

- by sector and/or occupation;
- national – single rate;
- national by sector and/or occupation;
- regional – single rate;
- regional by sector and/or occupation.

Minimum wages are often set at the **regional level** in federal systems. In **Canada** and the **United States**, for example, the provincial and state governments have a degree of autonomy in determining minimum wage levels. Although it is not constitutionally a federal

system, minimum wage rates in **China** are also set by region: provincial, regional and municipal governments stipulate separate rates for their respective locales and allowances are made for differences in living standards between regions.

The **Indian** system exhibits both a sectoral and occupational approach at both the **national and regional levels**. The central government in India sets minimum wage rates for 45 occupations, and the regional governments fix minimum wage rates for additional occupations. As a result, there are currently 1,230 occupational and sectoral minimum wage rates in India.

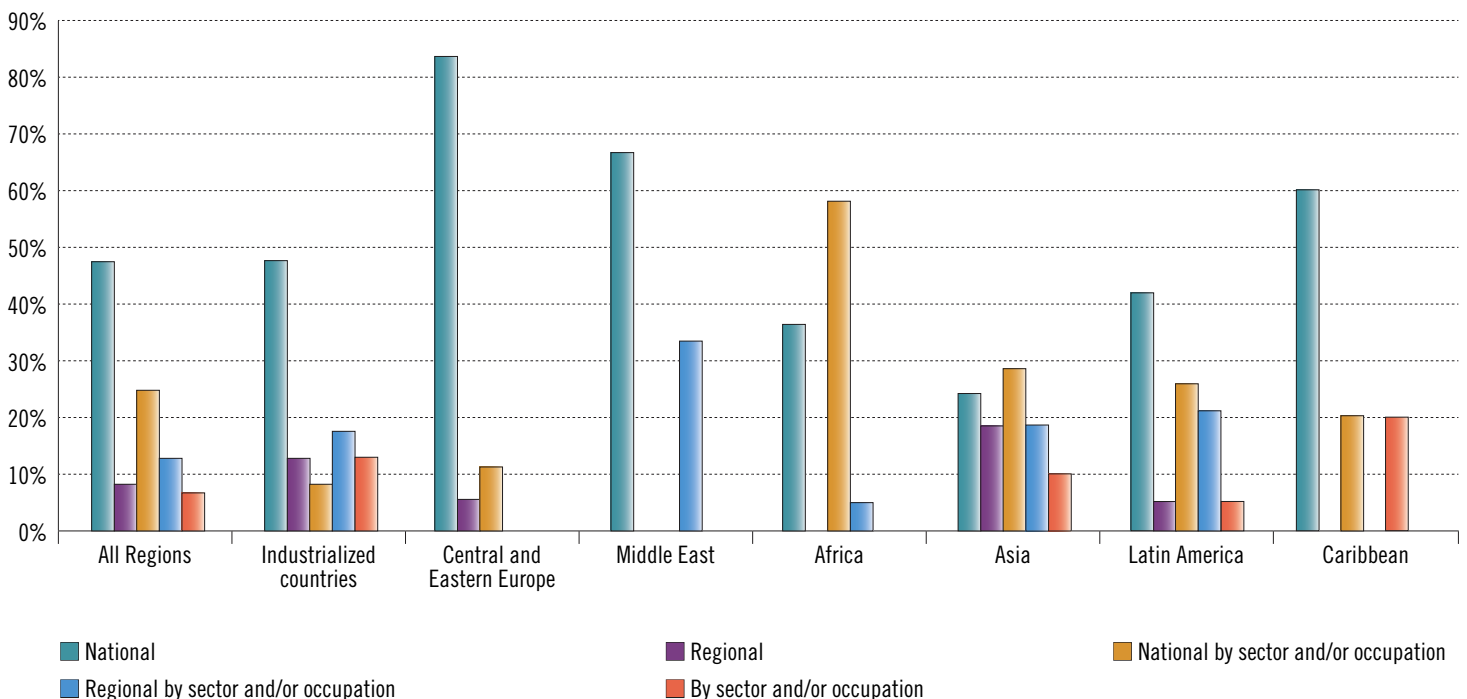
Sweden and **Namibia** are examples of countries in which minimum wage rates are set at the **sectoral or occupational levels**. In these countries, almost all wages are established through sectoral agreements.

GLOBAL

The setting of a single national-level minimum wage is the most prevalent approach across the world. It is used in around 45 per cent of the countries examined in this report (see Graph 3 and Table 3).

In all regions, more than half of minimum wages are fixed only at the national or regional level. They are fixed solely by sector or occupation in less than 10 per cent of countries.

Graph 3: Minimum wage-fixing levels by region, 2006-2007



REGIONAL

More than three-quarters of countries in **Central and Eastern Europe** and around 45 per cent of **industrialized countries** fix the minimum wage at the national level.

In **Africa**, more than half of countries set a minimum wage at the national level by sector and/or occupation, compared to less than a third of **Asian** countries.

No single technique dominates in **Latin America**. The most prevalent approach, among more than one-third of these countries, is to mandate a minimum wage at the national level. A significant number of countries, however – just less than 30 per cent – prescribe sectoral and/or occupational rates at the national level; and around 10 per cent set minimum wages at the sectoral or occupational level.

Table 3: Minimum wage-fixing levels by country and region, 2006-2007

Region	National	Regional	National by sector and/or occupation	Regional by sector and/or occupation	By sector and/or occupation
Industrialized countries	Australia, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom, United States	Canada, Japan*, United States	Finland, Iceland	Austria, Germany, Japan*, Switzerland	Belgium, Italy, Sweden*
Central and Eastern Europe	Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine, Russian Federation*	Russian Federation*	Slovakia, Czech Republic		
Middle East	Israel, Lebanon			Syrian Arab Republic	
Africa	Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Ghana, São Tomé and Príncipe, Nigeria		Botswana, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho*, Senegal, Tunisia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Tunisia	South Africa	Namibia
Asia	Republic of Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands	China, Thailand, India	Bangladesh, Fiji, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Viet Nam*	Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines	India
Latin America	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Peru, Uruguay	Mexico	Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua	Guatemala, Panama*, Venezuela*	Mexico, Paraguay
Caribbean	Bahamas, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago		Belize		Dominican Republic*

* Some countries have an additional component; for example, size of company, tax area, etc. For more details, see Annex 2.

Working hours and holidays

Limiting working hours is essential for protecting workers' health and safety and ensuring that they have sufficient time available to devote to their families and other responsibilities and interests. Working hours have been addressed by domestic labour laws since the 19th century and were the subject of the International Labour Organization's first Convention in 1919.¹¹ This element of working life remains central to contemporary debates on various elements of social and economic policy, including on improving worker protection, advancing productivity and facilitating work/life balance.

This chapter examines the working hours laws of 109 countries, including 24 industrialized countries, 15 from Central and Eastern Europe, 14 from Asia, 18 from Latin America and 29 from Africa (see the methodologies used in Annex 1 and detailed country information in Annex 3).

Three features of working time laws are addressed in this chapter: weekly hours limits, overtime limits and annual leave.

Weekly hours limits

The primary technique for curbing working hours is to mandate limits on "normal hours" (the hours that can be worked each week before overtime payments become due). There are two primary standards: the 48-hour and 40-hour weekly limits.

GLOBAL

Almost all countries have limits on weekly working hours (see Graph 4, Table 4 and Map 2).¹²

The 40-hour week is the dominant weekly hours standard. More than 40 per cent of countries have a limit of 40 hours or less. Among the others, there is an almost even divide between those that have 42- to 45-hour limits and those that adopt the 48-hour week.

REGIONAL

There are substantial regional differences in legislated weekly hours limits. The majority of **industrialized countries** adopt a 40-hour limit, including half of the EU-15, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway and the United States. Two countries have a lower threshold: Belgium (38 hours) and France (35 hours).

In **Central and Eastern Europe**, the 40-hour limit is also prevalent. It features in the labour laws of almost all of these countries. The exceptions are Cyprus (38 hours), Hungary (38 hours) and Turkey (45 hours).

¹¹ Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1), available at www.ilo.org/ilolex.

¹² Of the 109 countries covered by this chapter, six do not have a universal legislated weekly hours limit at the national level: Australia (the limit is 38 hours "and reasonable additional hours"), India, Jamaica, Nigeria, Pakistan and Seychelles. In addition, five European countries (Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom) have no limit on normal hours, instead adopting a 48-hour maximum limit on total working hours, including overtime.

In **Asia**, the 48-hour limit is also dominant, although not to the same extent as in Latin America. More than half of the Asian countries that have a universal weekly hours limit adopt this standard. The remainder of countries in this region have enacted the 40-hour week, with the exception of Singapore (44 hours).

African labour legislation also tends to favour the 40-hour week, with just less than half of these

countries having a limit of 40 hours or less. Most of the other countries in this region have weekly hours limits within the 42- to 45-hour range.

In **Latin America**, the 48-hour standard is more prominent than in other regions. It is the legal standard in the majority of these countries, with limits in the 42- to 45-hour range being the next most prevalent standard.

Graph 4: Normal weekly hours limits by region, 2006-2007

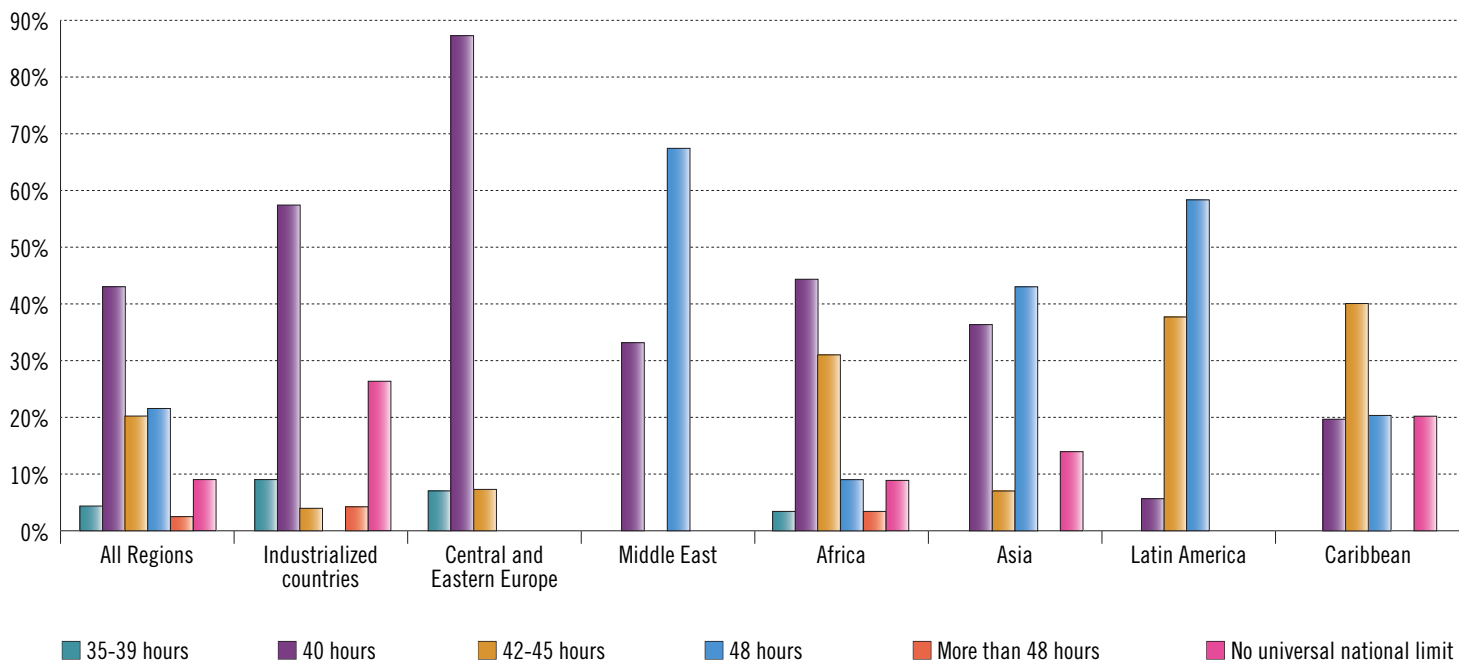


Table 4: Normal weekly hours limits by country and region, 2006-2007

Region	No universal national limit	35-39 hours	40 hours	42-45 hours	48 hours	More than 48 hours
Industrialized countries	Australia, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Malta, United Kingdom	Belgium, France	Austria, Canada, Finland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United States	Switzerland*		Switzerland**
Central and Eastern Europe		Hungary	Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia	Turkey		
Asia	India, Pakistan		China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia	Singapore	Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam	
Latin America			Ecuador	Belize, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Uruguay***, Venezuela	Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay****	
Caribbean	Jamaica		Bahamas	Cuba, Dominican Republic	Haiti	
Middle East			Egypt		Jordan, Lebanon	
Africa	Nigeria, Seychelles, Zimbabwe	Chad	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo	Angola, Burundi, Cape Verde, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Morocco, Namibia, South Africa, Republic of Tanzania*****	Djibouti, Mozambique, Tunisia	Kenya

* Workers in industrial enterprises, offices, technical posts and sales staff in large commercial enterprises

** All other workers

*** Commerce

**** Industry

***** Mainland and Zanzibar

Overtime limits

Most labour laws place an upper limit on overtime hours (beyond the weekly hours limit). These laws limit overtime by:

- placing direct limits on overtime hours (usually on a daily, weekly or annual basis, or as a combination of these limits);
- limiting total working hours; or
- specifying minimum daily rest periods.

See Annex 3 for more details on individual countries.

This section compares the limits on weekly overtime hours, irrespective of their form (see Annex 1 for the methodology).

GLOBAL

More than two-thirds of the countries have some kind of maximum limit on weekly working hours. The most common approach, in more than one-third

of countries that have legal maximums, is to specify a limit of between 48 and 60 hours (see Graph 5 and Table 5).

REGIONAL

There are significant differences between regions with respect to maximum hours limits (see Graph 5 and Table 5).

The lowest limits are found in **industrialized countries**. Just under one-half of these countries have a 48-hour upper limit, while five (Austria, France, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden) have limits below 48 hours.

Among countries that have universal working time laws, only Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States do not impose a maximum limit.

The majority of countries in **Central and Eastern Europe** have a 48-hour maximum weekly limit.

Maximum hours limits are set at similar levels in **Asia** and **Latin America**. In both regions, all countries that have maximum limits set them at 48 hours or more.

The dominant approach among **African** countries is to have no maximum limit. Among those that have ceilings on overtime hours, most have limits of more than 48 hours, including four with limits of 60 hours or more.

Graph 5: Maximum weekly hours limits by region, 2006-2007

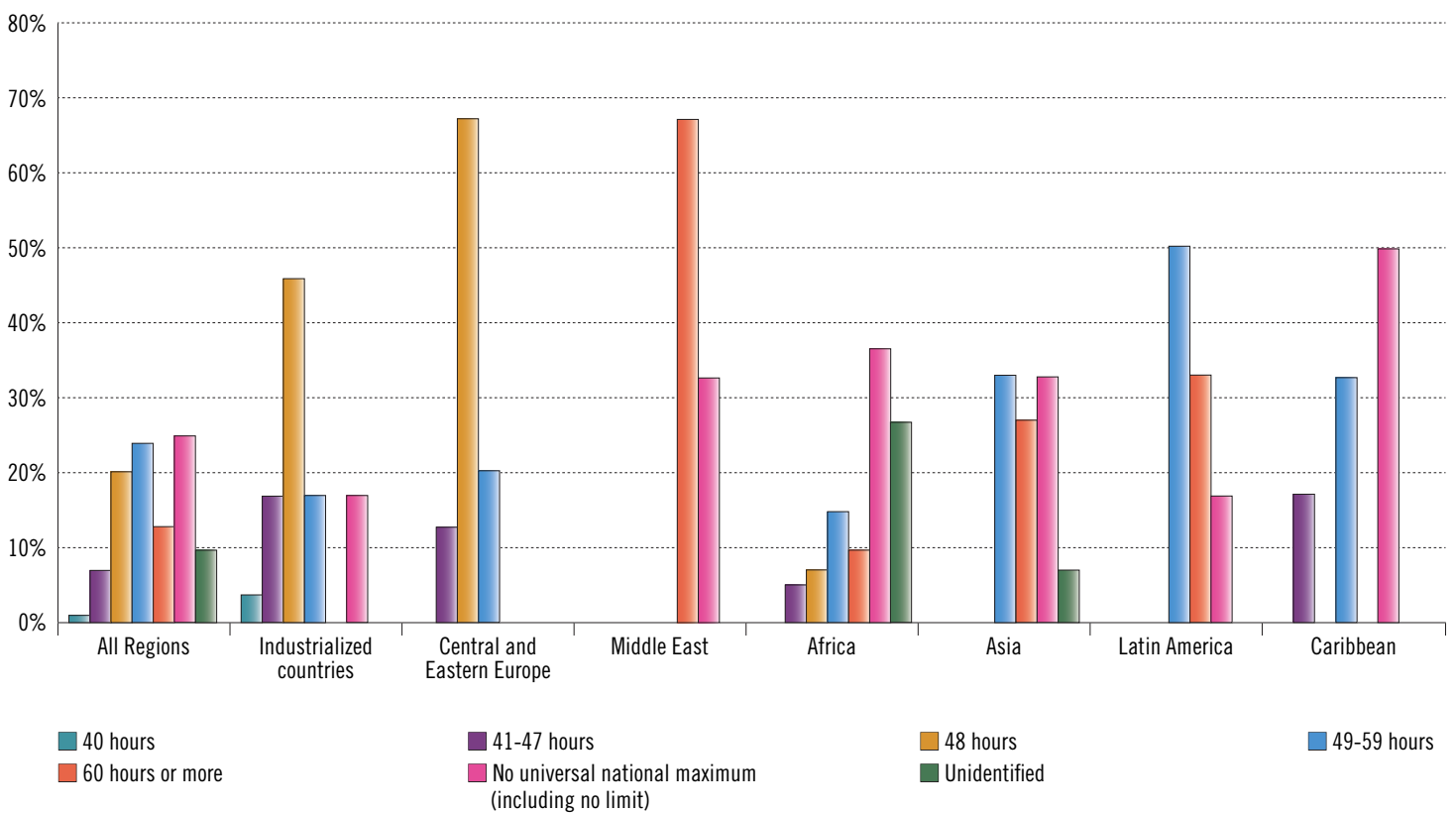


Table 5: Maximum weekly hours by country and region, 2006-2007

Region	No universal national limit	40 hours	41-47 hours	48 hours	49-59 hours	60 hours or more
Industrialized countries	Australia, Japan, New Zealand, United States	Sweden	Austria*, France, Netherlands, Spain*	Canada, Denmark, Finland*, Germany*, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom	Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland	
Central and Eastern Europe			Bulgaria, Russian Federation*	Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia*, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Croatia*, Macedonia, Turkey	
Asia	Cambodia, India, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Philippines				China*, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Laos*, Viet Nam*	Malaysia*, Mongolia*, Singapore*, Thailand
Latin America	Belize, El Salvador, Peru				Argentina*, Chile*, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay*, Uruguay, Venezuela	Bolivia*, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica*, Guatemala*, Honduras*
Caribbean	Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica		Cuba		Dominican Republic, Haiti	
Middle East	Jordan					Egypt, Lebanon*
Africa	Burkina Faso, Burundi, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali*, Mauritania*, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo, Zimbabwe		Cape Verde*, Guinea-Bissau*	Algeria*, Angola*, Niger	Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Republic of Tanzania (mainland)	Benin, Cameroon, Gabon*, Tunisia

* On average. See Annex 3.

Annual holidays

In addition to limiting weekly hours, working time laws generally also provide for minimum holidays (or “annual leave”) periods, to allow workers to take longer periods of rest. These legislated standards are

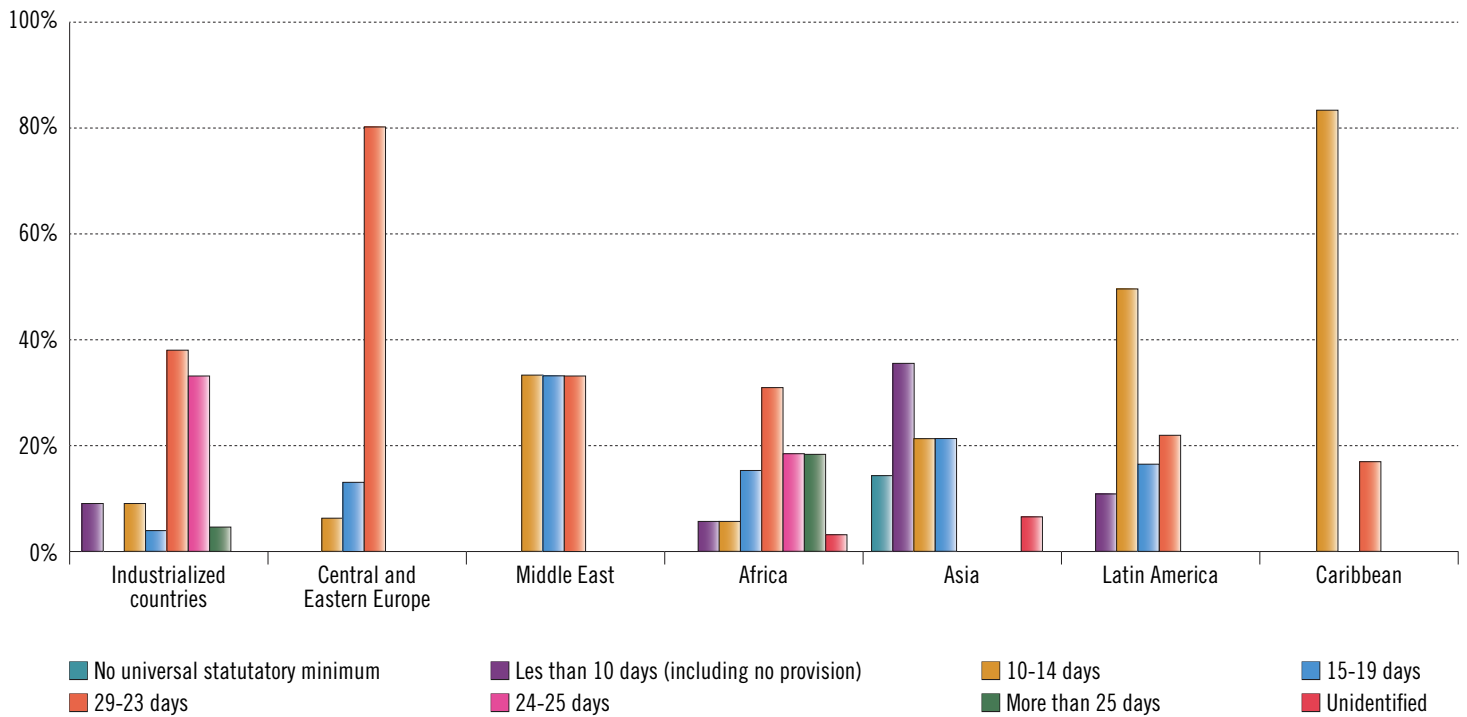
minimums and can be extended by workplace policies. They are also in addition to days that are designated as public holidays.

GLOBAL

Almost all countries extend to their workers a right to a minimum period of annual holidays (see Graph 6 and Table 6).

The most common approach is to extend a right to 20 to 23 days of holiday per year, a standard found in one-third of countries. The second most prominent range of entitlements, in around one-fifth of countries, is ten to 14 days of leave.

Graph 6: Minimum annual leave by region, 2006-2007



REGIONAL

Among **industrialized countries**, annual holiday entitlements range from ten days in Japan to 30 days in Denmark. The most prevalent approach is to extend a right to between 20 and 23 days of leave, followed by statutory entitlements of between 24 and 25 days. Only Australia and the United States have no statutory minimum leave period at the national level.

In **Central and Eastern European countries**, annual leave entitlements are less diverse. All these countries require 20 days of vacation, with the exception of Croatia and Macedonia (18 days) and Turkey (12 days).

Asian countries have the least extensive annual holiday provisions, generally requiring 15 days of leave or less.

Latin America has the same range of annual leave entitlements as the African region, from six days in Bolivia and Mexico to 30 days in Panama. Average leave entitlement is lower, however. Half of these countries provide for annual leave of ten to 14 days, and only three have adopted a right to annual leave of more than 20 days.

There is greater diversity in the **African** region, where statutory minimum leave ranges from six days [Nigeria, Republic of Tanzania (Zanzibar)] to 30 days (Algeria, Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Togo). One-third of African countries provide for annual leave of 20 to 23 days, and many prescribe minimum leave periods above this level.

Table 6: Minimum annual leave by country and region, 2006-2007

Region	No universal statutory minimum	Less than 10 days	10-14 days	15-19 days	20-23 days	24-25 days	More than 25 days
Industrialized countries	Australia, United States		Canada, Japan	New Zealand	Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom	Austria, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Sweden	Denmark
Central and Eastern Europe			Turkey	Croatia, Macedonia	Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia		
Asia	India, Pakistan	Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand	Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Viet Nam	Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia			
Latin America		Bolivia, Mexico	Argentina, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay	Guatemala, Chile, Venezuela	Brazil, Peru, Uruguay		Panama
Caribbean			Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica		Cuba		
Middle East			Jordan	Lebanon	Egypt		
Africa		Nigeria, Republic of Tanzania (Zanzibar)	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tunisia	Cameroon, Mauritania, Morocco, Rwanda, South Africa	Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Seychelles, Republic of Tanzania (mainland), Zimbabwe	Benin, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Namibia, Senegal	Algeria, Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Togo



Maternity protection

The protection of pregnant workers and mothers is central to efforts to advance the rights, health and employment of women. Maternity protection initiatives help to ensure the well-being of women and children, contributing to both the reduction of child mortality rates and the improvement of maternal health. Maternity protection measures advance gender equality, not only by ensuring that women can take time-off to have children and return to their jobs without discrimination, but also by requiring the development of gender-sensitive social security schemes. These measures also contribute to efforts to promote the better conciliation of work and family life, a policy objective that has become more prominent in recent decades. For these and other reasons, maternity protection was among the earliest elements of national labour laws and was included among the first set of standards adopted by the International Labour Organization in 1919.

This chapter focuses on legal rights to maternity leave – the period of leave taken by mothers on the birth of a child.¹³ This standard has been selected due to its

role at the heart of maternity protection laws and its presence in the labour laws of almost all countries. Inevitably, however, the chapter omits other dimensions of maternity protection that are also vital to advancing the policy objectives outlined above, not least the prevention of exposure to health and safety hazards, entitlement to breastfeeding breaks, and protection against discrimination and dismissal.

The chapter reviews the maternity protection laws of 167 countries, including 24 industrialized countries, 22 from Central and Eastern Europe, 27 from Asia, 18 from Latin America and 49 from Africa (see the methodologies used in Annex 1 and detailed country information in Annex 4).

This comparison takes into account three aspects of maternity leave laws: the minimum duration of leave, the amount of benefits available during the leave, and the source of funding of these benefits.

Duration of maternity leave

A central element of maternity protection legislation is the duration of leave. International instruments embody the primary standards that are adopted in domestic regimes. The Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), and Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), mandate a 12-week leave period. The more recent Maternity

¹³ Maternity leave is one of various forms of family leave. It is often accompanied by parental leave, which is available to both parents for more extensive periods.

Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), provides for a leave period of not less than 14 weeks, while its accompanying Recommendation (No. 191) encourages the extension of this leave period to at least 18 weeks.¹⁴ The analysis in this report is framed

around these 14-week and 18-week standards, although it is worth noting that Conventions Nos. 3 and 103 have been ratified by a significant number of countries and that the 12-week standard they embody remains influential.

GLOBAL

All of the countries included in this chapter have enacted statutory rights to a period of maternity leave (see Graph 7, Table 7 and Map 3).

Slightly more than 50 per cent of these countries mandate leave of a duration of less than 14 weeks, while one-fifth provide for leave of 18 weeks' duration.

REGIONAL

Among **industrialized countries**, just over 40 per cent provide for maternity leave of 18 weeks or more, while just less than 40 per cent extend a right to 14 weeks of leave. Only the United States has statutory maternity leave of less than 14 weeks.

central Asian countries, which provide for maternity leave of at least 18 weeks.

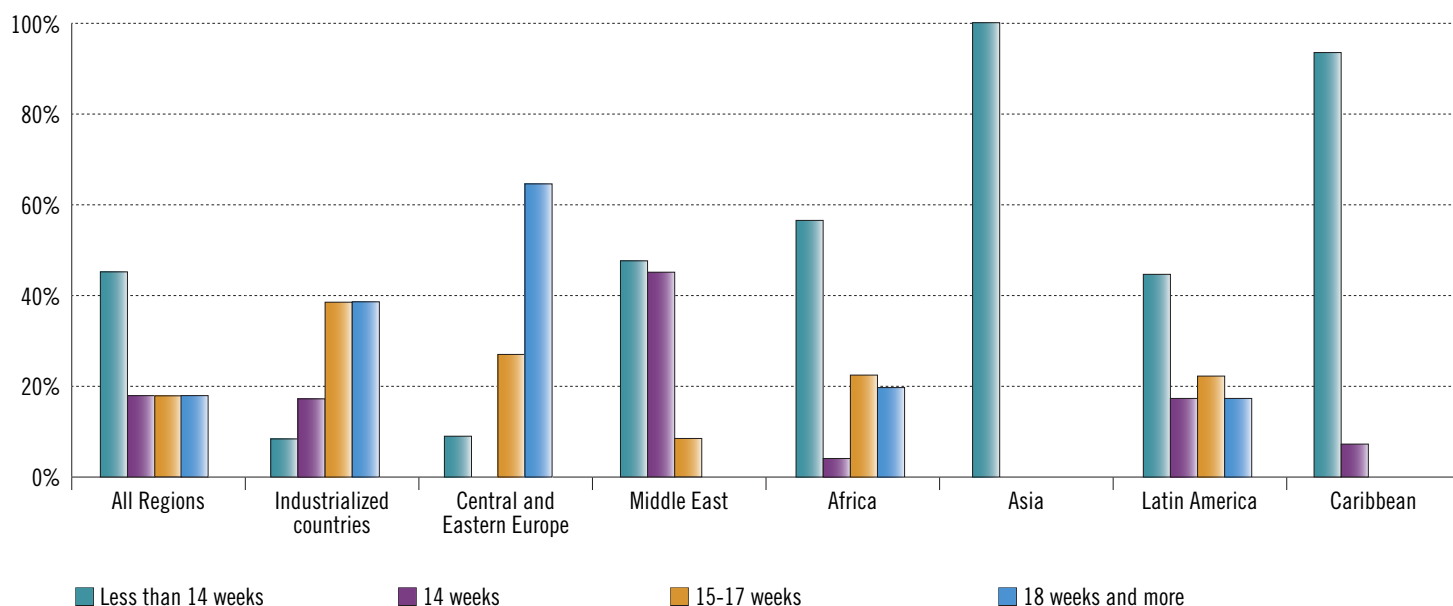
The vast majority of countries in **Central and Eastern Europe** require maternity leave of 18 weeks or more.

In **Latin America**, the majority of countries provide a right to maternity leave of less than 14 weeks.¹⁵ Leave periods of 18 weeks are required in Chile, Cuba and Venezuela.

The primary standard in **Asia** is a minimum period of maternity leave of less than 14 weeks, where the laws of around two-thirds of countries embody standards in this range. The most prominent exceptions are the

More than half of **African** countries mandate a minimum maternity leave period of less than 14 weeks, while slightly less than half require leave of 14 weeks or more. None of these countries specify a leave period of 18 weeks or more.

Graph 7: Minimum duration of maternity leave by region, 2006-2007



¹⁴ Available at www.ilo.org/ilolex.

¹⁵ A number of these countries have ratified Conventions Nos. 3 and 103 and embody a 12-week standard. See Table 7.

Table 7: Length of maternity leave by country and region, 2006-2007

Region	Less than 14 weeks	14 weeks	15 to 17 weeks	18 weeks or more
Industrialized countries	United States	Germany, Japan, Malta, New Zealand	Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland	Australia, Denmark, Finland, Iceland*, Ireland, Italy, Norway, San Marino, Sweden**, United Kingdom
Central and Eastern Europe	Bosnia and Herzegovina***, Macedonia***		Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Slovenia, Turkey	Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Ukraine
Asia	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka***, Thailand, Vanuatu		Mongolia, Viet Nam	Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Latin America	Argentina***, Bolivia***, Colombia***, Ecuador***, El Salvador, Guatemala***, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua***, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay	Panama	Brazil, Costa Rica	Chile, Cuba, Venezuela
Caribbean	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago	Belize		
Middle East	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates			
Africa	Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sudan, Swaziland, Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, Togo	Republic of the Congo, South Africa	

* Icelandic legislation requires nine months of parental leave, of which three months are to be taken by the mother, three by the father, and the additional three-month period to be taken by either parent or shared.

** Swedish law requires parental leave of 480 days in total, with each parent required to take a minimum of 14 weeks.

*** Country has ratified Convention No. 3 or Convention No. 103 (12-week standard).

Maternity leave benefits: Amount

The value of a period of maternity leave depends not only on its duration, but also on the level of benefits available during the leave. Two elements of these benefits are significant:

- the proportion of the worker's earnings to be paid; and
- the period over which they are to be paid.

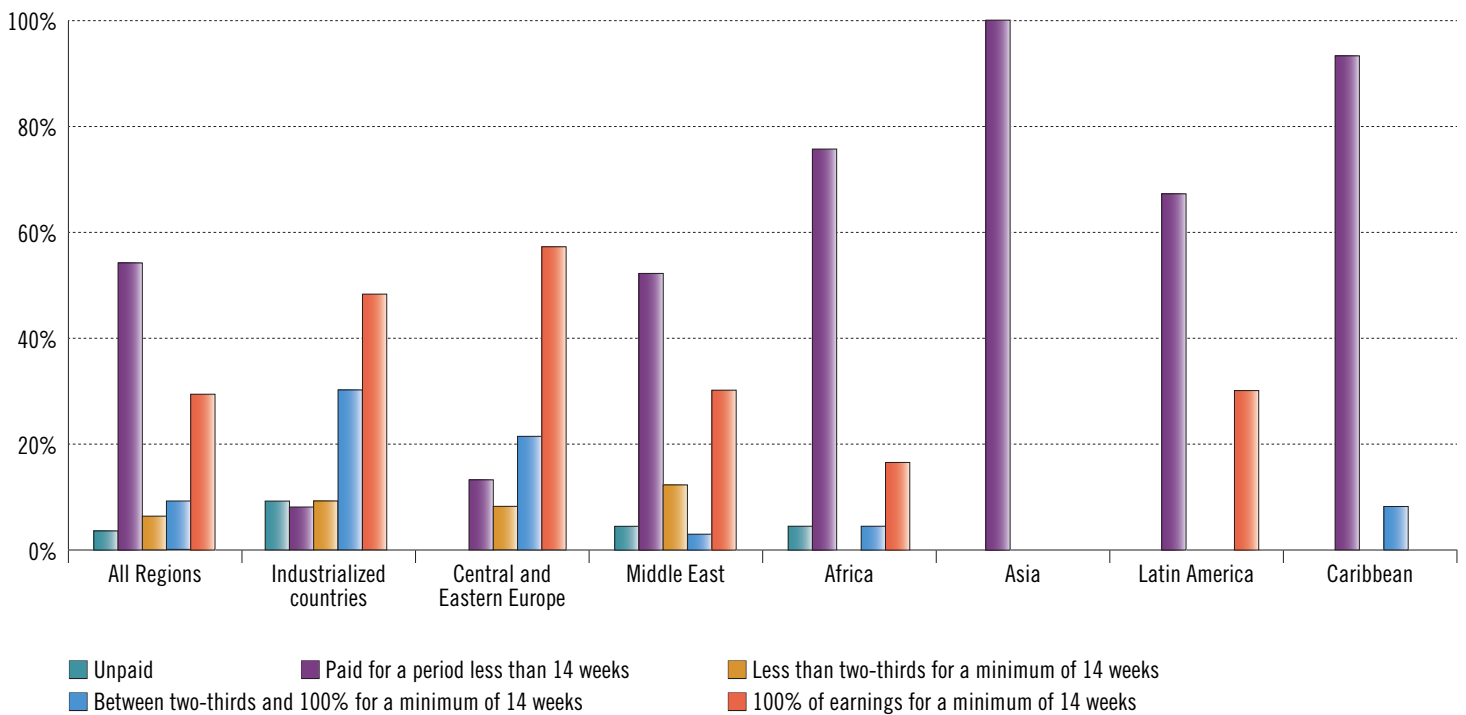
In this chapter, domestic legal provisions on maternity benefits are classified in line with the approach of Convention No. 183, which requires that at least two-thirds of a worker's prior earnings be paid for at least 14 weeks. It should be noted that this does not imply that countries that do not meet this standard are in breach of international standards. In particular, Convention No. 103 requires that two-thirds of prior earnings be provided throughout the 12-week maternity leave period that it mandates.¹⁶

GLOBAL

Across the world, the dominant legal standard is that maternity leave be paid for less than 14 weeks. This is the approach adopted in more than half of the countries covered by this report. The second most

prevalent standard is that of full pay for at least 14 weeks, which is found in just less than 30 per cent of countries (see Graph 8 and Table 8).

Graph 8: Maternity leave benefits by region, 2006-2007



¹⁶ See also Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102).

REGIONAL

Among **industrialized countries**, the dominant standard is full wages for at least 14 weeks in 46 per cent of these countries. Just less than 30 per cent require that at least two-thirds, but less than 100 per cent, of a worker's wages are paid during this period. Statutory maternity leave is unpaid in Australia and the United States.

The same standard dominates in **Central and Eastern European** countries, more than half of which require maternity benefits equal to the worker's full earnings for a 14-week period.

In contrast, in **Asia**, the most prevalent approach is for full pay to be required for less than 14 weeks, an

approach adopted in three-quarters of these countries. The central Asian countries and Viet Nam require full pay for 14 weeks.

Two-thirds of **Latin American** countries mandate full pay for less than 14 weeks, while the remaining countries specify this amount for at least a 14-week period.

In **Africa**, the most common approach is also to require full pay for less than 14 weeks, which is the standard in more than half of these countries. A further 30 per cent of countries provide for full pay during a 14-week period.

Table 8: Maternity leave benefits by country and region, 2006-2007

Region	Unpaid	Full pay for less than 14 weeks	Less than two-thirds pay for a minimum of 14 weeks	At least two-thirds but less than 100% for 14 weeks	Full pay for 14 weeks or more
Industrialized countries	Australia, United States	Iceland, Malta	Canada, Japan	Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain
Central and Eastern Europe		Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Turkey	Hungary, Slovakia	Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Romania	Belarus, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Ukraine
Asia	Papua New Guinea	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand		Mongolia	Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam
Latin America		Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay			Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Panama, Venezuela
Caribbean		Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago		Belize	
Middle East		Afghanistan, Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen			
Africa	Lesotho, Swaziland	Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, Niger, Somalia, South Africa	Côte d'Ivoire	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Togo

Maternity leave benefits: Source

The source of funding for maternity leave benefits is of some significance, given the concern that placing this obligation exclusively on individual employers could undermine the protection available to women. The earlier international standards require that these benefits be provided from public funds or a system of insurance,¹⁷ although Convention No. 183 permits individual liability where the employer has specifically agreed, or where this approach is agreed at the national level by the government and the social partners.¹⁸

Systems for funding maternity leave can be classified as taking three forms:

- employer-funded (employers are solely responsible);
- social insurance or other public funds; or
- mixed systems (contributions from both employers and public funds, e.g. the social security system funds the benefits to a designated ceiling and the employer pays an additional amount to match the worker's previous earnings).

GLOBAL

Half of the countries covered by this report rely entirely on social insurance or other public funds to finance maternity leave benefits, while in just over

one-quarter, maternity leave is funded solely by employers. Around one-fifth of countries have a mixed system (see Graph 9 and Table 9).

REGIONAL

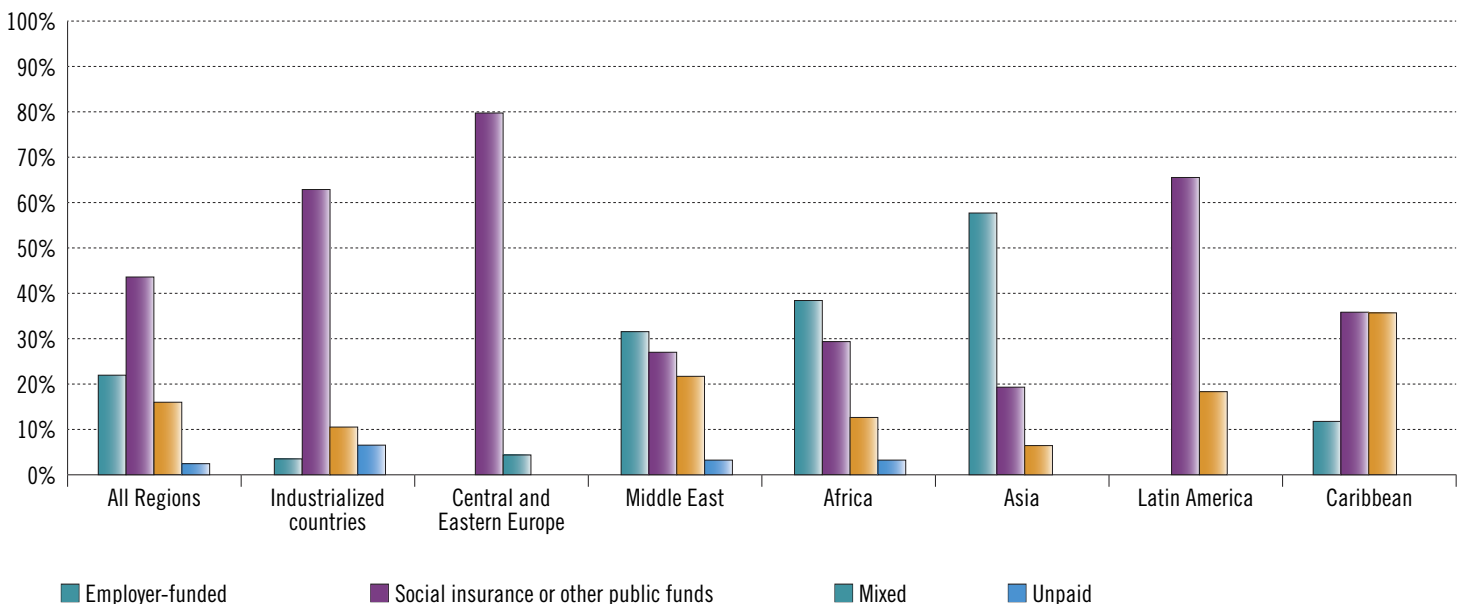
There are marked regional differences in the source of maternity leave benefits.

The vast majority of **industrialized countries** draw only on social insurance or other public funds.

This system is also adopted in almost all countries in **Central and Eastern Europe**.

Around 45 per cent of **Asian** countries require employers to fund maternity benefits, while just over one-third make these payments from social insurance or other public funds.

Graph 9: Source of maternity leave benefits by region, 2006-2007



¹⁷ Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), Article 3(c); Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), Article 4(4). Both Conventions are available at www.ilo.org/ilolex.

¹⁸ Article 8.

In more than three-quarters of **Latin American** countries, maternity benefits are drawn from social security systems or others funds, while the remainder have mixed systems.

In more than one-third of countries in **Africa**, maternity benefits are financed exclusively by employers, while just less than one-third are paid wholly from social insurance or other public funds. Around one-fifth of these countries have a mixed system.

Table 9: Source of maternity leave benefits by country and region, 2006-2007

Region	Unpaid	Employer-funded	Social insurance or other public funds	Mixed system
Industrialized countries	Australia, United States	Malta	Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland	Germany, Japan, United Kingdom
Central and Eastern Europe			Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine	Greece
Africa	Lesotho, Swaziland	Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Algeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Tunisia	Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, São Tomé and Príncipe, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo
Asia	Papua New Guinea	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka	Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam	India, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand
Middle East		Afghanistan, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen	Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel	Lebanon
Latin America			Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela	Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras
Caribbean		Haiti, Jamaica	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago

Annex 1

Methodology

GENERAL

Conditions of work and employment database

This report draws on the ILO's Database of Conditions of Work and Employment, an online database containing information on working conditions laws from all regions. The database is available at www.ilo.org/travail/database

Country coverage

The report covers 168 countries in total: 103 in Chapter One (minimum wages); 109 in Chapter Two (working hours and holidays); and 167 in Chapter Three (maternity protection). Annexes 2 to 4 list the countries included in each chapter.

Labour law coverage

Chapter One (minimum wages) contains information on both legislation and collective agreements.

Chapters Two (working hours and holidays) and Three (maternity protection) are confined to legislation. For the purposes of this report, labour laws have been classified as:

- universal: laws that are in principle applicable to all workers. These laws usually contain exceptions for specific categories of workers, sectors or occupations.
- national level: the research for Chapters Two (working hours and holidays) and Three (maternity protection) covers only legislation at the national level.

It does not include state or provincial laws. Chapter One (minimum wages) includes information on state and provincial laws.

In federal systems, the federal law has been used.

MINIMUM WAGES (CHAPTER ONE)

Minimum wage rates

For comparative purposes, minimum wage rates have been converted into US dollars. As a result, no account is taken of the purchasing power of the minimum wage in each country.

The minimum wage is calculated on a monthly basis and 2007 exchange rates were used.

Minimum wage rates are calculated on the assumption that an individual works five days a week, 40 hours a week and 4.33 weeks a month.

Multiple minimum wage rates

For countries with multiple minimum wages, the lowest rate has been selected. This is usually the minimum wage rate applicable to unskilled adult workers.

Where the minimum wage is set at a regional level, the most economically significant region has been selected, e.g. Shanghai (China), Ontario (Canada).

Where different minimum wages rates apply to agricultural and industrial workers, the industrial sector has been selected.

Where different minimum wage rates apply to probation periods (e.g. a lower rate for the first six months of service), the post-probation rate has been selected.

Where minimum wage rates vary by age (i.e. lower rates for young workers), the adult rate has been selected.

Where minimum wage rates vary by the size of the firm (e.g. lower rates for firms with less than 20 workers), the rate applicable to the smallest firm size has been selected.

WORKING HOURS AND HOLIDAYS (CHAPTER TWO)

Exceptions

The normal and overtime hours limits identified in Chapter Two are general limits and can be subject to a variety of exceptions or exclusions, e.g. for specific occupations or the performance of certain tasks.

Annual leave

In this report, statutory annual leave periods are expressed in working days and are calculated on the basis of a five-day working week.

In the national laws, annual leave is expressed in a range of ways, most often as working days or as calendar (or consecutive) days.

Working days

Where the leave period is expressed in working days and a five-day working week applies (e.g. France), the figure in the legislation is used.

Where a six-day working week applies, the leave provision is converted into a five-day week. For example, the leave period of 30 working days required by Austrian legislation is expressed in Table 6 and Annex 3 as 25 working days.

Calendar (or consecutive) days

Where the leave period is expressed as calendar days (or, more often, calendar weeks) or consecutive days, it has been converted into the equivalent number of working days. For example, the leave period of 30 calendar days required by Spanish legislation is expressed in Table 6 and Annex 3 as 22 days.

Other techniques

For jurisdictions in which rights to leave are accrued according to the number of days worked, the leave period is calculated according to the 250-day year of the five-day workweek. For example, the “one day off for every 12 working days” formula of the Zimbabwean Labour Code is expressed in Table 6 and Annex 3 as 21 days.

MATERNITY PROTECTION (CHAPTER THREE)

Maternity leave

The comparison of maternity leave periods is based on the methodology used for annual leave provisions (see above).

Maternity benefits

Maternity leave benefits are expressed in this report as a percentage of the worker’s earnings immediately prior to the leave period.

In a number of countries, the benefit entitlement decreases across the leave period; for example, maternity benefits are mandated throughout the entire leave period in Thailand, but decrease from 100 per cent to 50 per cent.

In a number of countries, a flat-rate monthly benefit is required, regardless of prior earnings (e.g. El Salvador, Somalia, Spain). Since these benefits are usually less than the minimum wage, these countries have been classified as requiring less than two-thirds of full pay.

Annex 2

Minimum wage laws, 2006-2007

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES					
Australia	511.86 Australian dollars per week (2,216.35 per month)	\$1,908.64 per month	Specialized body	National	Data not available
Austria	€1,366 per month	\$1,868.67 per month (geriatric care)	Government in certain sectors and collective agreements in others. Collective agreements dominate.	Regional, by sector and occupation	Homeworkers, agriculture workers, workers in the public sector
Belgium	€1,283.34 per month	\$1,755.60 per month (private sector)	Specialized body in the private sector and collective bargaining in certain sectors	Regional, by sector and by occupation	None
Canada	8.52 Canadian dollars per hour (1,499.52 per month)	\$1,499.52 per month (Ontario)	Provincial governments	Regional	Agriculture workers
Finland	€7.07 per hour (1,224.52 per month)	\$1,543.52 per month (unskilled electrical worker in metalworking sector)	Collective bargaining	National, by sector and occupation. The collective agreement for electrical workers in the metalworking industry does not set separate minimum wage rates by region.	None
France	€8.03 per hour (1,390.80 per month)	\$1,752.96 per month	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body. The minimum wage increases by at least 2% when the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases at this rate.	National	None
Germany	€1,371.98 per month	\$1,701.26 per month (metalworking industry in Baden-Württemberg)	Collective bargaining	Regional, by sector and occupation	None
Iceland	105,943 Icelandic krona per month	\$1,681.63 per month (store clerks)	Collective bargaining	Regional, by sector and occupation	None
Ireland	€7.65 per hour (1,324.98 per month)	\$1,841.86 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite or bipartite, depending on the sector)	National	Family workers
Italy	€995.60 per month	\$1,234.54 per month (unskilled worker in the metalworking sector)	Collective bargaining	By sector and occupation	None
Japan	719 yen per hour (126,500 per month)	\$1,072 per month (Tokyo)	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body	Regional (applies to all workers in the region) or by industry (applies to all workers in the industry across the country or in a specific region)	None

* Minimum wage rates calculated in US dollars can fluctuate due to changes in the exchange rates. Where relevant, the sector, region or workers selected are indicated (see further Annex 1).

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Luxembourg	€1,503.42 per month	\$1,864.24 per month	Government	National	None
Malta	57.88 Maltese lira per week (250.62 per month)	\$798.15 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body composed of government, workers' and employers' representatives, and an independent member	National	None
Netherlands	€1,264.80 per month	\$1,568.35 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (bipartite)	National	Apprentices, domestic workers
New Zealand	410.00 New Zealand dollars per week (1,775.30 per month)	\$1,355.19 per month	Government	National	None
Portugal	€374.70 per month	\$464.63 per month	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body	National	None
Spain	€540.90 per month	\$670.72 per month	Government following direct consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Sweden	12,747 Swedish krona per month	\$1,706.43 per month	Collective bargaining	National, by sector and occupation. Most sectoral agreements apply across the country.	
Switzerland	3,995.00 Swiss francs per month	\$3,196 per month (construction sector)	Collective bargaining	Regional, by sector and occupation	Workers not covered by a collective agreement
United Kingdom	£5.05 per hour (874.66 per month)	\$1,617.44 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (bipartite)	National	Family members, fishermen, members of the armed services
United States	\$5.15 per hour (1,029.60 per month)	\$1,209.60 per month (federal level)	Federal and state governments	National and regional	Employees of interstate commerce, public agencies, institutions providing care, and institutions providing education
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE					
Albania	11,800 lek per month	\$118.12 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Bulgaria	150 lev per month	\$104.89 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Cyprus	385 Cyprus pounds per month	\$829.74 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	Minimum wage applies only to shop assistants, clerks, nursing aids and child-care workers. All other workers are excluded.
Czech Republic	7,570 Czech crowns per month	\$316.74 per month	Government after consultation with the central representatives of workers and employers	National or national by occupation	Data not available
Estonia	3,000 kroon per month	\$238.47 per month	Government on the conclusion of a bipartite agreement	National	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Greece	€25.01 per day (€541.47 per month)	\$694.38 per month	Specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Hungary	57,000 forints per month	\$285.60 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Latvia	90 lat per month	\$157.89 per month	Government after consultation with a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Lithuania	555 Lithuanian litas per month	\$198.56 per month	Government after consultation with a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Poland	899.10 zloty per month	\$278.36 per month	Specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Romania	310.00 leu per month	\$135.37 per month	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Russian Federation	1,100 roubles per month	\$43.14 per month (national level)	National government or provincial governments following consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National or regional	None
Slovakia	6,900 Slovak koruna per month	\$222.44 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body. Where there is no agreement on the adjustment, the government unilaterally determines the minimum wage.	National, by occupation	None
Slovenia	122,600 tolar per month	\$636.22 per month	Government after direct consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Turkey	531.00 Turkish lira per month	\$395.09 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Ukraine	332.00 hryvnia per month	\$64.84 per month	Government	National	None
ASIA					
Bangladesh	900 taka per month	\$13.27 per month (garment industry)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite). For workers in export processing zones, the minimum wage is set by a specialized (bipartite) body.	National, by sector	Workers employed by the federal and provincial governments
Cambodia	US\$45.00 per month	\$45.00 per month (textile, garment and footwear sectors)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional, by sector	Domestic workers, judges and public sector workers
China	690 yuan per month	\$84.15 per month (Shanghai)	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body. Separate minimum wages are stipulated by provincial, regional and municipal governments for their respective regions.	Regional	Public sector and agricultural workers

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Fiji	2.59 Fiji dollars per hour (450.15 per month)	\$292.31 per month (heavy mobile crane drivers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (bipartite) body, where no effective collective bargaining mechanism is in place	National, by sector	Minimum wage applies to the construction, civil and engineering trades; the wholesale and retail trade; hotels and catering; road transport; mining and quarrying; the saw milling and logging industries; the printing trades; the garment industry; and the manufacturing industry. Workers in all other sectors are excluded.
India	203.86 Indian rupees per day (4,413.57 per month)	\$101.64 per month (West Bengal)	Central or local government (non-unionized occupations)/ collective bargaining (unionized occupations)	Regional or by sector or occupation	Disabled workers and family members
Indonesia	884,628 rupiah per month	\$98.02 per month (Jakarta)	Provincial governments on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional, by sector	Domestic workers
Republic of Korea	3,100 won per hour (536,920 per month)	\$594.60 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and independent persons)	National	Domestic workers, seamen
Lao People's Democratic Republic	93,600 kip per month	\$8.78 per month	Government	National	None
Malaysia	155 Malaysian ringgits per month	\$45.45 per month (unskilled cinema workers)	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body	National, by sector and occupation	None
Mongolia	42,500 tugrik per month	\$35.26 per month	Government on the recommendation of workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Nepal	1,338 Nepalese rupees per month	\$23.81 per month (unskilled tea-estate workers)	Government on the recommendation of two specialized bodies (for non-agricultural and agricultural workers). Both bodies are tripartite.	National, by sector, occupation and size of company	None
Pakistan	2,500 Pakistani rupees per month	\$42.02 per month (rate for unskilled workers across Pakistan)	The national minimum wage for unskilled workers in commerce and industry is fixed by the national government. Provincial governments set minimum wages for skilled workers on the recommendation of a specialized body (bipartite).	National by sector and regional by sector	Agricultural workers, public sector workers and coalminers
Papua New Guinea	24.68 kina per week (106.86 per month)	\$34.10 per month (adult workers)	Specialized (bipartite) body, to be approved and registered by the government	National	None
Philippines	325.00 Philippine pesos per day (7,150 per month)	\$158.61 per month (non-agricultural workers in the national capital)	Specialized (tripartite) body	Regional, by sector	Workers in enterprises that employ less than 10 workers

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Singapore	No minimum wage				
Solomon Islands	1.50 Solomon Islands dollars per hour (259.80 per month)	\$35.20 per month	Government	National	Domestic workers, seamen
Sri Lanka	98.00 Sri Lankan rupees per day (2,121.70 per month)	\$19.17 per month (textile manufacturing trade)	Tripartite body	National, by sector and occupation	Workers in the commerce sector, domestic workers and fishermen
Thailand	184.00 baht per day (3,983.60 per month)	\$100.54 per month (Bangkok)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional	Agricultural workers, homeworkers, domestic workers and workers in private schools
Viet Nam	350,000 dong per month	\$22.07 per month (state enterprises)	Government	Regional, by type of enterprise (local or foreign-invested)	None
LATIN AMERICA					
Argentina	630 pesos per month	\$200.00 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	Homeworkers, domestic workers and agricultural workers
Bolivia	500 boliviano per month	\$64.19 per month	Government	National	Agricultural workers
Brazil	350 real per month	\$81.08 per month	Government	National	None
Chile	127,000 pesos per month	\$246.60 per month	Government	National	Apprentices, disabled workers
Colombia	408,000 Colombian pesos per month	\$175.79 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	Public sector workers
Costa Rica	72,586 colones per month	\$151.92 per month (domestic workers)	Specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and occupation	None
Cuba	Unidentified	\$225 per month	Government after consultation with workers' representatives	National	The minimum wage applies only to labourers, administration and services workers, technicians and managers. All other workers are excluded.
Ecuador	US\$150.00 per month	\$150 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body). Where no consensus is reached, the minimum wage is set by the government.	National, by sector. Minimum wages apply only to workers in the small-scale industrial or agricultural sectors, and other general workers.	None
El Salvador	US\$5.16 per day (111.71 per month)	\$113.52 per month (industry)	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector	None
Guatemala	39.67 quetzals per day (858.85 per month)	\$114.51 per month (non-agricultural workers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and a labour inspector)	Regional, by sector and occupation	Public sector workers
Honduras	54.50 lempiras per day (1,199.00 per month)	\$54.50 per month (general service firms employing 1 to 15 employees)	Specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and size of company	Disabled workers and trainees
Mexico	48.67 pesos per day (1,053.70 per month)	\$98.34 per month (geographic area A)	Specialized (tripartite) body	By area (Regions A, B and C) and occupation	Public sector workers
Nicaragua	1,578.04 cordoba oros per month	\$94.08 per month (construction sector)	Specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Panama	1.68 balboas per hour (290.98 per month)	\$295.68 per month (construction sector)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Region, by sector, occupation and size of company	Public sector workers
Peru	500.00 nuevos soles per month	\$151.70 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	Public sector workers
Uruguay	1,242.00 Uruguayan pesos per month	\$50.71 per month	Government	National	None
Venezuela	426,917.72 bolivares per month	\$204.27 per month (companies employing less than 20 workers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Area (urban and rural) and size of company	None
CARIBBEAN					
Bahamas	150 Bahamian dollars per week (649.50 per month)	\$649.50 per month	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	Federal and provincial government workers
Belize	2.25 Belize dollars per hour (387 per month)	\$193.50 per month (export-oriented industries)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and independent persons)	National by occupation	None
Dominican Republic	3,000 pesos per month	\$1,111.11 per month (industrial, commercial and service companies with a net worth of up to 200,000 pesos)	Specialized (tripartite) body	Sectoral, by occupation and area (tax-free zone)	None
Haiti	70 gourde per day (1,515.50 per month)	\$40.04 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Domestic workers
Trinidad and Tobago	1,386.64 Tobago dollars per month	\$220.10 per month (national level)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Trainees
MIDDLE EAST					
Israel	3,456.58 new Israeli shekels per month	\$823.00 per month	Government	National	None
Lebanon	300,000 Lebanese pounds per month	\$200 per month	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Domestic workers, agricultural workers, family members, casual and temporary workers in the public sector, and young workers
Saudi Arabia	No minimum wage				
Syrian Arab Republic	3,500 Syrian pounds per month	\$65.00 per month	Government following consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional by occupation	None
AFRICA					
Algeria	10,000 dinar per month	\$146.00 per month	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Angola	6,260 kwenza per month	\$83.71 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Botswana	2.80 pula per hour (484.96 per month)	\$81.78 per month (night watchmen)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of government, workers' and employers' representatives, and independent persons)	National, by sector and occupation	None
Burkina Faso	166.03 CFA francs per hour (28,557.16 per month)	\$59.56 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (bipartite) body	National	None
Cape Verde	No minimum wage				
Chad	25,480 CFA francs per month	\$53.14 per month (non-agricultural workers)	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National, by occupation	None
Gabon	44,000 CFA francs per month	\$83.29 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Ghana	16,000 cedi per day (346,000 per month)	\$38.72 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Guinea-Bissau	14,800 CFA francs per month	\$28.05 per month, plus one bag of rice	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector	Domestic workers
Lesotho	421 loti per month	\$66.19 per month (unskilled workers employed by a small business)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and independent members)	National, by occupation and size of company	Trainees
Madagascar	56,713.60 ariarys per month	\$28.31 per month (non-agricultural workers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and occupation	None
Mauritius	492.05 Mauritian rupees per week (2,130.58 per month)	\$69.31 per month (unskilled workers in export processing zones)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and occupation	Minimum wage applies only to 29 industries in the private sector. All other workers are excluded.
Morocco	9.66 dirham per hour (1,673.11 per month)	\$191.84 per month (industrial and commercial sectors and the liberal professions)	Government on the recommendation of the most representative workers' and employers' organizations	National, by sector (agriculture/industrial and commercial sectors and the liberal professions)	Public sector workers
Mozambique	1,120,000 metical per month	\$48.57 per month (civil service, industry and services sectors)	Specialized body	National, by sector (agriculture and industry)	Public sector workers
Namibia	7.58 Namibian dollars per hour (1,265.86 per month)	\$176.86 per month (construction sector)	Collective bargaining	National, by sector	Some categories of agricultural workers
Nigeria	5,500 neiras per month	\$41.20 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Workers in enterprises that employ less than 50 workers; part-time, piece-rate and seasonal workers; and workers in merchant shipping and civil aviation
São Tomé and Príncipe	220,000 dobras per month	\$23.50 per month	Government	National	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Senegal	209.10 CFA francs per hour (36,216.12 per month)	\$70.40 per month (non-agricultural sectors)	Collective bargaining	National, by sector (agricultural/non-agricultural)	None
South Africa	1,505 rand per month	\$209.03 per month (wholesale and retail sectors)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body for certain sectors. Collective agreements set wages in sectors in which the minimum wage is not set by the government.	Regional, by sector and occupation	Seamen
Tunisia	164.83 dinar base salary	\$129.78 per month (non-agricultural sectors)	Government on the recommendation of workers and employers	National, by sector (agricultural/non-agricultural)	Domestic workers

* Where relevant, the sector, region or workers selected are indicated (see further Annex 1).

Annex 3

Working hours and holidays laws, 2006-2007

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES				
Australia	38 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	No universal national entitlement
Austria	40 hours	46 hours ¹	5 hours per week and 60 hours per year	25 days
Belgium	38 hours	50 hours	3 hours per day and 12 hours per week ²	20 days
Canada	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week ³	10 days
Denmark	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	30 days
Finland	40 hours	48 hours ¹	138 hours over a 4-month period and no more than 250 hours per year	20 days
France	35 hours	44 hours	180 hours per year	25 days
Germany	No normal hours limit	48 hours ⁴	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	24 days
Ireland	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	20 days
Italy	40 hours	48 hours	250 hours per year	20 days
Japan	40 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Luxembourg	40 hours	48 hours	2 hours per day and 8 hours per week ²	25 days
Malta	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	24 days
Netherlands	40 hours	54 hours	2 hours per day and 5 hours per week on average over a 13-week period	20 days
New Zealand	40 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	15 days
Norway	40 hours	48 hours	5 hours per day and 200 hours per year	25 days
Portugal	40 hours	48 hours	2 hours per day and - 175 hours per year (small enterprises) - 150 hours per year (medium and large enterprises)	22 days
Spain	40 hours	41.5 hours ¹	80 hours per year	22 days

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Sweden	40 hours	40 hours	48 hours over a 4-week period or 50 hours per calendar month and 200 hours per year	25 days
Switzerland	45 hours (industrial enterprises, offices and technical posts, and sales staff in large commercial enterprises) 50 hours (all other workers)	49 hours (workers in industrial enterprises, offices and technical posts, and sales staff in large commercial enterprises) 53 hours (all other workers)	2 hours per day and 170 hours per year (45-hour weekly limit) 140 hours per year (50-hour weekly limit)	20 days
United Kingdom	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	20 days
United States	40 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	None
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE				
Bulgaria	40 hours	46 hours	150 hours per year, not exceeding 30 day hours or 20 night hours per month; 6 day hours or 4 night hours per week; 3 day hours or 2 night hours per day	20 days
Croatia	40 hours	50 hours	10 hours per week	18 days
Czech Republic	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week and 150 hours per year ⁵	20 days
Estonia	40 hours	48 hours	4 hours per day and 8 hours per week on average ⁶	20 days
Hungary	38 hours	48 hours	Maximum limit (including overtime) of 12 hours per day	20 days
Latvia	40 hours	48 hours ¹	144 hours on average over a 4-month period	20 days
Lithuania	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per 7 working days	20 days
Macedonia	40 hours	50 hours	10 hours per week and 190 hours per year	18 days
Moldova	40 hours	48 hours	Maximum limit (including overtime) of 12 hours per day, 120 hours per calendar year	20 days
Poland	40 hours	48 hours	150 hours per calendar year	20 days
Romania	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week	20 days
Russian Federation	40 hours	42 hours ⁷	4 hours over a 2-day period and 120 hours per year	20 days
Slovakia	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week on average over a 4-month period and 150 hours per year	20 days
Slovenia	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week, 20 hours per month and 180 hours per year ⁸	20 days
Turkey	45 hours	57 hours	12 hours per week	12 days
ASIA				
Cambodia	48 hours	No universal national limit	Unidentified	18 days
China	40 hours	49 hours ⁹	1 hour per day, 3 hours per week and 36 hours per month	Unidentified
India	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation
Indonesia	40 hours	54 hours	3 hours per day and 14 hours per week	12 days

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Kazakhstan	40 hours	Unidentified	None	9 days
Republic of Korea	40 hours	52 hours	12 hours per week	10 days
Lao People's Democratic Republic	48 hours	55.5 hours ⁹	30 hours per month	15 days
Malaysia	48 hours	74 hours ⁹	104 hours per month	8 days
Mongolia	40 hours	60 hours ¹⁰	None	15 days
Pakistan	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation
Philippines	48 hours	No universal national limit	None	5 days
Singapore	44 hours	62 hours ⁹	72 hours per month	7 days
Thailand	48 hours	84 hours	36 hours per week	6 days
Viet Nam	48 hours	52 hours ⁷	4 hours per day and 200 hours per year	12 days
LATIN AMERICA				
Argentina	48 hours	52 hours ⁷	3 hours per day, 30 hours per month and 200 hours per year	10 days
Belize	45 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Bolivia	48 hours	60 hours ¹¹	2 hours per day	5 days
Brazil	44 hours	60 hours ¹¹	2 hours per day	22 days
Chile	45 hours	57 hours ¹²	2 hours per day	15 days
Colombia	48 hours	60 hours	2 hours per day and 12 hours per week	10 days
Costa Rica	48 hours	72 hours ¹³	4 hours per day ¹⁴	10 days
Ecuador	40 hours	52 hours	4 hours per day and 12 hours per week	10 days
El Salvador	44 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Guatemala	48 hours	72 hours ¹³	4 hours ¹⁴	15 days
Honduras	44 hours	72 hours ¹³	4 hours ¹⁴	10 days
Mexico	48 hours	57 hours	3 hours per day no more than 3 times per week	6 days
Nicaragua	48 hours	57 hours	3 hours per day and 9 hours per week	10 days
Panama	48 hours	57 hours	3 hours per day and 9 hours per week	30 days
Paraguay	48 hours	57 hours ¹⁴	3 hours per day and 9 hours per week ¹⁴	12 days
Peru	48 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	22 days
Uruguay	48 hours (industry) 44 hours (commerce)	56 hours (industry) 52 hours (commerce)	8 hours per week	20 days
Venezuela	44 hours	54 hours	10 hours per week and 100 hours per year	15 days
CARIBBEAN				
Bahamas	40 hours	None	None	10 days

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Cuba	44 hours on average	47 hours ⁷	4 hours over a 2-day period and 160 hours per year	22 days
Dominican Republic	44 hours	51 hours ¹	80 hours per trimester (industry) 2 hours per day and 300 hours per year (commerce)	14 days
Grenada	40 hours (agricultural, construction and industrial workers) 44 hours (clerical assistants, shop assistants and catering assistants) 60 hours (domestic workers and security guards)	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Haiti	48 hours	55 hours (industry) 54 hours (commerce) ¹⁵	80 hours per term (industry) 2 hours per day and 300 hours per year (commerce)	13 days
Jamaica	40 hours for minimum wage workers	No universal national limit	None	10 days
MIDDLE EAST				
Egypt	40 hours	60 hours	2 hours per day ¹⁶	21 days
Jordan	48 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	14 days
Lebanon	48 hours	72 hours ¹⁷	24 hours per week ¹⁷	15 days
AFRICA				
Algeria	40 hours	48 hours ¹⁸	20% of normal hours to a maximum of 12 hours in total per day	30 days
Angola	44 hours	48 hours ¹	2 hours per day, 40 hours per month and 200 hours per year	22 days
Benin	40 hours	60 hours	240 hours per calendar year	24 days
Burkina Faso	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	22 days
Burundi	45 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	20 days
Cameroon	40 hours	60 hours	20 hours per week ¹⁹	18 days
Cape Verde	44 hours	47 hours ¹	2 hours per day and 160 hours per year	21 days
Chad	39 hours	54 hours	15 hours per week ²⁰	24 days
Congo	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	26 days
Democratic Republic of the Congo	45 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	12 days
Côte d'Ivoire	40 hours	55 hours ¹⁸	3 hours per day, 15 hours per week and 75 hours per year	24 days
Djibouti	48 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	30 days
Gabon	40 hours	60 hours ¹⁸	20 hours per week	24 days
Guinea-Bissau	45 hours	47 hours ⁷	2 hours per day and 120 hours per year	30 days
Kenya	52 hours	Unidentified	Maximum limit of 116 hours (including overtime) per 2-week period	Unidentified

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Madagascar	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	30 days
Mali	40 hours	No universal national limit	2 hours per day (urgent work) 75 hours per year (extraordinary workloads) 18 hours per week (overtime performed to maintain and increase production)	20 days
Mauritania	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	18 days
Morocco	44 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	18 days
Mozambique	48 hours	50 hours	2 hours per day and 100 hours per year	21 days
Namibia	55 hours	55 hours	3 hours per day and 10 hours per week	24 days
Niger	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week	20 days
Nigeria	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	None	6 days
Rwanda	40 hours	No universal national limit	No general limit ²¹	18 days
Senegal	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	24 days
Seychelles	None	No universal national limit	60 hours per month or an aggregate of 15 hours per day	21 days
South Africa	45 hours	55 hours	3 hours per day and 10 hours per week	15 days
United Republic of Tanzania	45 hours (mainland Tanzania) 48 hours (Zanzibar)	57.5 hours (mainland Tanzania)	50 hours over a 4-week period (mainland Tanzania) ¹	20 days (mainland Tanzania) 7 days (Zanzibar)
Togo	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	30 days
Tunisia	48 hours	60 hours	12 hours per week ²¹	12 days
Zimbabwe	No universal national limit	Unidentified	Unidentified	21 days

¹ An average derived from the overtime limit.

² Derived from the daily and weekly maximum hours limit.

³ Derived from the maximum weekly hours limit.

⁴ Derived from the daily maximum limit and minimum weekly rest period of one day.

⁵ This overtime limit applies to work scheduled in a regular arrangement. The reference period for unevenly scheduled work is six consecutive calendar months.

⁶ The limits can be averaged over a four-month reference period.

⁷ An average derived from the annual overtime limit.

⁸ The limit is expressed as 20 per cent of normal hours.

⁹ An average derived from the monthly overtime limit.

¹⁰ Derived from the daily maximum limit and the statutory five-day maximum workweek.

¹¹ Derived from the daily overtime limit and statutory six-day maximum workweek.

¹² Derived from the daily overtime limit.

¹³ Derived from the daily maximum limit and statutory six-day maximum workweek.

¹⁴ Derived from the normal and maximum daily limits.

¹⁵ The 55-hour limit is an average derived from the overtime limit. The 54-hour limit is an average derived from the weekly overtime limit.

¹⁶ Derived from the daily maximum limit.

¹⁷ Derived from the normal weekly hours limit, maximum daily limit and minimum weekly rest period of one day.

¹⁸ Derived from weekly overtime limit.

¹⁹ Derived from the normal and maximum weekly limits.

²⁰ Derived from the normal and maximum weekly overtime limits.

²¹ The applicable limit depends on the nature of the overtime work.

Annex 4

Maternity protection laws, 2006-2007

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES			
Australia	52 weeks	Unpaid	Unpaid
Austria	16 weeks	100%	Social security
Belgium	15 weeks	82% for the first 30 days and 75% for the remainder (up to a ceiling)	Social security
Canada	17 weeks	55% up to a ceiling	Employment insurance
Denmark	18 weeks	100%	State (municipality)
Finland	105 working days	70%	Social security
France	16 weeks	100% up to a ceiling	Social security
Germany	14 weeks	100%	Social security (up to a ceiling)/employer (pays difference)
Iceland	6 months	80%	Social security
Ireland	18 weeks	70%	Social security
Italy	5 months	80%	Social security
Japan	14 weeks	60%	Health insurance (private sector) or social security (public sector)
Luxembourg	16 weeks	100%	Social security
Malta	14 weeks	100% for 13 weeks	Employer
Netherlands	16 weeks	100%	Unemployment fund
New Zealand	14 weeks	100% up to a ceiling	State
Norway	42 or 52 weeks of parental leave (9 weeks reserved for the mother)	80% (52-week leave) or 100% (42-week leave)	Social security
Portugal	120 days	100%	Social security
Spain	16 weeks	100%	Social security
San Marino	5 months	100%	Social security
Sweden	480 calendar days	480 days' paid parental leave: 80% for 390 days and 90 days at a flat rate	Social security
Switzerland	16 weeks	80%	Social security
United Kingdom	26 weeks	90% for the first 6 weeks and flat rate thereafter	Employer (refunded for 92% by public funds)
United States	12 weeks	Unpaid	Unpaid
CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE			
Albania	365 calendar days	80% prior to birth and for 150 days after birth; 50% for the remainder of the leave	Social security
Belarus	126 days	100%	Social security
Bosnia and Herzegovina	70 days	Paid (no data on amount)	
Bulgaria	135 days	90%	Social security
Croatia	45 days before delivery and 1 year after	100% from 28 days before to 6 months after birth; a flat rate for the remainder of the leave period	Croatian Health Insurance Fund (percentage) /state budget (flat rate)

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Cyprus	16 weeks	75%	Social security
Czech Republic	28 weeks	69%	Social security
Estonia	140 days	100%	Social security
Greece	119 days	100%	Social security/employer
Hungary	24 weeks	70% for pre-natal period (minimum of 4 weeks); flat rate for the remainder of the leave period	Social security
Latvia	112 calendar days	100%	Social security
Lithuania	126 calendar days	100%	Social security
Macedonia	73 days	Unidentified	
Moldova	126 days	100%	Social security
Poland	16 weeks	100%	Social security
Romania	126 days	85%	Social security
Russian Federation	140 calendar days	100%	Social security
Serbia and Montenegro	365 days	100%	Social security
Slovakia	28 weeks	55%	Social security
Slovenia	105 days	100%	State
Turkey	16 weeks	For 12 weeks	Social security
Ukraine	126 days	100%	Social security
ASIA			
Azerbaijan	126 calendar days	100%	Social security
Bangladesh	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Cambodia	90 days	50%	Employer
China	90 days	100%	Employer
Fiji	84 days	Flat rate of 1.50 Fijian dollars per day	Employer
India	12 weeks	100%	Social security or employer (for excluded workers)
Indonesia	3 months	100%	Employer
Kazakhstan	126 calendar days	No information unavailable	Employer
Kiribati	12 weeks	25%	Employer
Kyrgyzstan	126 days	100%	Social security
Republic of Korea	90 days	100%	Employer (60 days), social security (30 days)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	3 months	70%	Social security
Malaysia	60 days	100%	Employer
Mongolia	120 days	70%	Social security
Myanmar	12 weeks	Two-thirds	Social security
Nepal	52 days	100%	Employer
Pakistan	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Papua New Guinea	As necessary for hospitalization before confinement and 6 weeks afterwards	Unpaid	
Philippines	60 days	100%	Social security

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Singapore	8 weeks	100%	Employer (first two children), government (third child)
Sri Lanka	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Solomon Islands	12 weeks	25%	Employer
Tajikistan	140 days	No information available	Social security
Thailand	90 days	100% for first 45 days; 50% for the remaining 45 days	Employer (first 45 days); the social security fund pays a maternity allowance at a rate of 50% for 90 days
Uzbekistan	126 days	100%	Social security
Viet Nam	4 to 6 months depending on the working conditions and nature of the work	100%	Social security
Vanuatu	3 months	50%	Unidentified
LATIN AMERICA			
Argentina	90 days	100%	Social security
Bolivia	12 weeks	100% of the national minimum wage and 80% of wages above the minimum	Social security
Brazil	120 days	100%	Social security
Chile	18 weeks	100%	Social security
Colombia	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Costa Rica	4 months	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Cuba	18 weeks	100%	Social security
Ecuador	12 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
El Salvador	12 weeks	75%	Social security
Guatemala	84 days	100%	Social security and employer
Honduras	84 days	100%	Social security
Mexico	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Nicaragua	12 weeks	60%	Social security
Panama	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Paraguay	12 weeks	50% for 9 weeks	Social security
Peru	90 days	100%	Social security
Uruguay	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Venezuela	18 weeks	100%	Social security
CARIBBEAN			
Antigua and Barbuda	13 weeks	60%	Social security
Bahamas	13 weeks	100%	Social security (two-thirds) and employer (one-third)
Barbados	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Belize	14 weeks	80%	Social security or employer (for women who are not entitled to receive social security benefits)
Dominica	12 weeks	60%	Social security (75%), employer (25%)
Dominican Republic	12 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Grenada	3 months	100% for 2 months and 60% for the final month	Social security (60% for 12 weeks), employer (40% for 2 months)
Guyana	13 weeks	70%	Social security

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Haiti	12 weeks	100% for 6 weeks	Employer
Jamaica	12 weeks	100% for 8 weeks	Employer
Saint Kitts and Nevis	13 weeks	60%	Social security
Saint Lucia	3 months	65%	Social security
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	13 weeks	65%	Social security
Trinidad and Tobago	13 weeks	100% for 1 month, 50% for 2 months (employer) and a sum depending on the earnings (social security)	Social security and employer
MIDDLE EAST			
Afghanistan	90 days	100%	Employer
Bahrain	45 days	100%	Employer
Islamic Republic of Iran	90 days	Two-thirds for 16 weeks	Social security
Iraq	62 days	100%	Social security
Israel	12 weeks	100% up to a ceiling	Social security
Jordan	10 weeks	100%	Employer
Kuwait	70 days	100%	Employer
Lebanon	7 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
Qatar	50 days	100%	Employer
Saudi Arabia	10 weeks	50% or 100% (depending on the duration of employment)	Employer
Syrian Arab Republic	50 days	70%	Employer
United Arab Emirates	3 months	100%	Employer
Yemen	60 days	100%	Employer
AFRICA			
Algeria	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Angola	3 months	100%	Social security. If necessary, the employer has to pay the difference between the social security payment and the worker's wage.
Benin	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Botswana	12 weeks	25%	Employer
Burkina Faso	14 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
Burundi	12 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Cameroon	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Central African Republic	14 weeks	50%	Social security
Chad	14 weeks	50%	Social security
Comoros	14 weeks	100%	Employer
Congo	15 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	14 weeks	Two-thirds	Employer
Côte d'Ivoire	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Djibouti	14 weeks	50% (100% for public servants)	Employer
Egypt	90 days	100%	Social security and employer

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Equatorial Guinea	12 weeks	75%	Social security
Eritrea	60 days	Paid (amount unidentified)	Employer
Ethiopia	90 days	100%	Employer
Gabon	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Gambia	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Ghana	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Guinea	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Guinea-Bissau	60 days	100%	Employer/social security subsidy and employer payment
Kenya	2 months	100%	Employer
Lesotho	12 weeks	Unpaid	Unidentified
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	50 days	50% (100% for self-employed women)	Employer (social security for self-employed women)
Madagascar	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Malawi	8 weeks (every three years)	100%	Employer
Mali	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Mauritania	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Mauritius	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Morocco	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Mozambique	60 days	100%	Employer
Namibia	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Niger	14 weeks	50%	Social security
Nigeria	12 weeks	50%	Employer
Rwanda	12 weeks	Two-thirds	Employer
São Tomé and Príncipe	70 days	100% for 60 days	Social security (employer for women not covered by social security)
Senegal	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Seychelles	14 weeks	Flat monthly allowance for 10 weeks	Social security
Somalia	14 weeks	50%	Employer
South Africa	4 months	Up to 60% depending on the level of income	Unemployment insurance fund
Sudan	8 weeks	100%	Employer
Swaziland	12 weeks	Unpaid	
United Republic of Tanzania	12 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
Togo	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Tunisia	30 days	Two-thirds	Social security
Uganda	8 weeks	100% for 1 month	Employer
Zambia	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Zimbabwe	90 days	100%	Employer

Annex 5

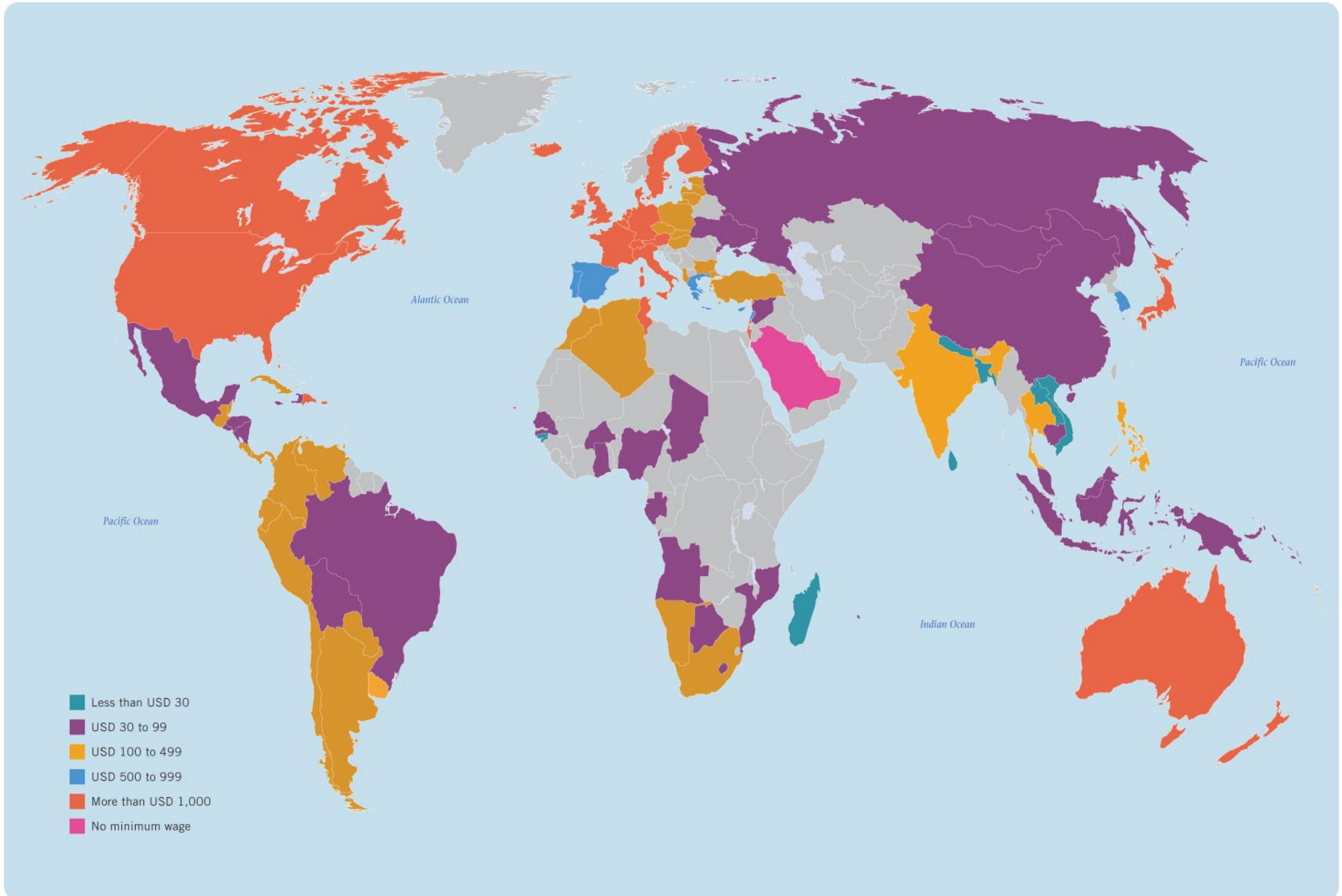
Maps

Map 1: Monthly minimum wages, 2006-2007

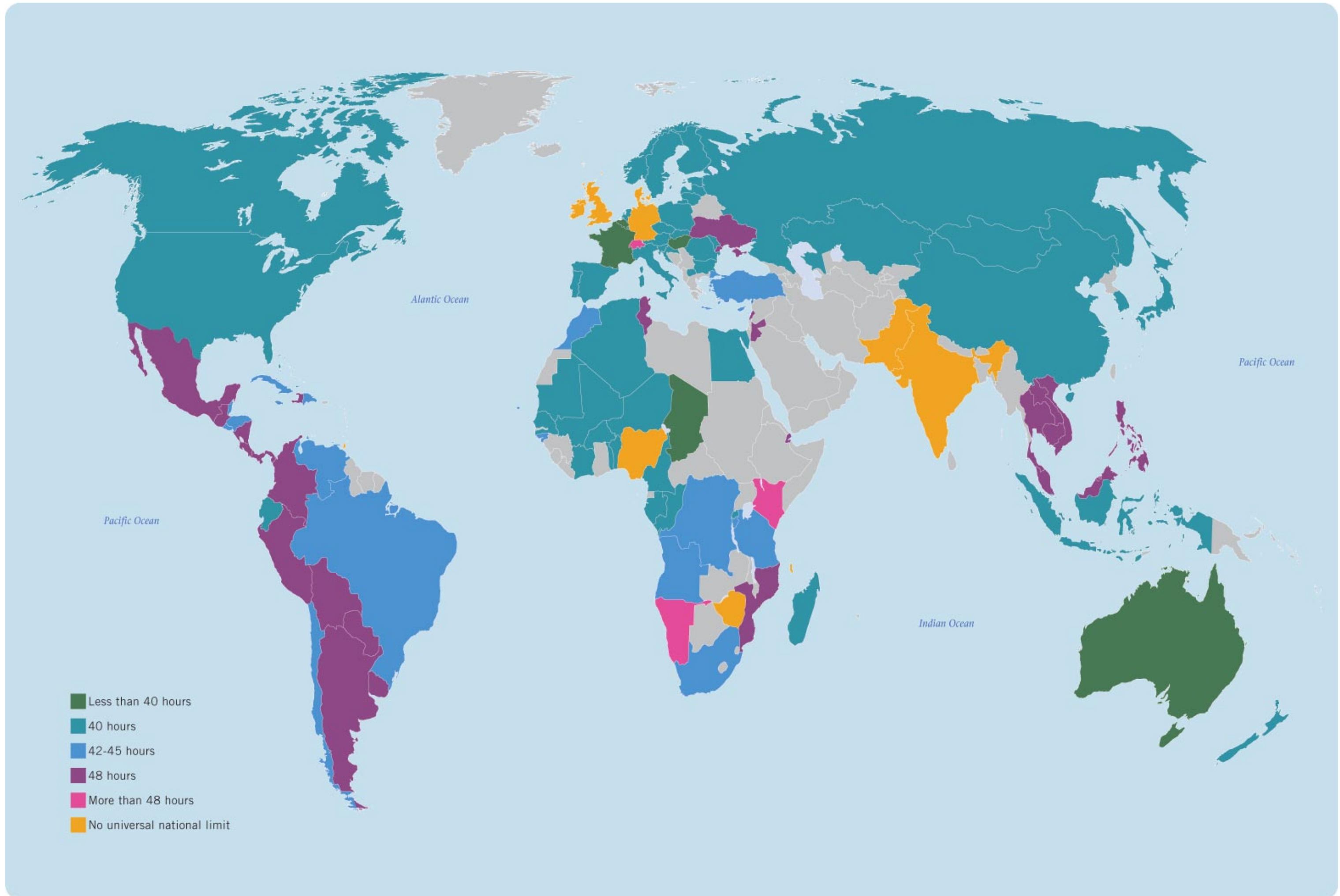
Map 2: Normal weekly hours limits, 2006-2007

Map 3: Length of maternity leave, 2006-2007

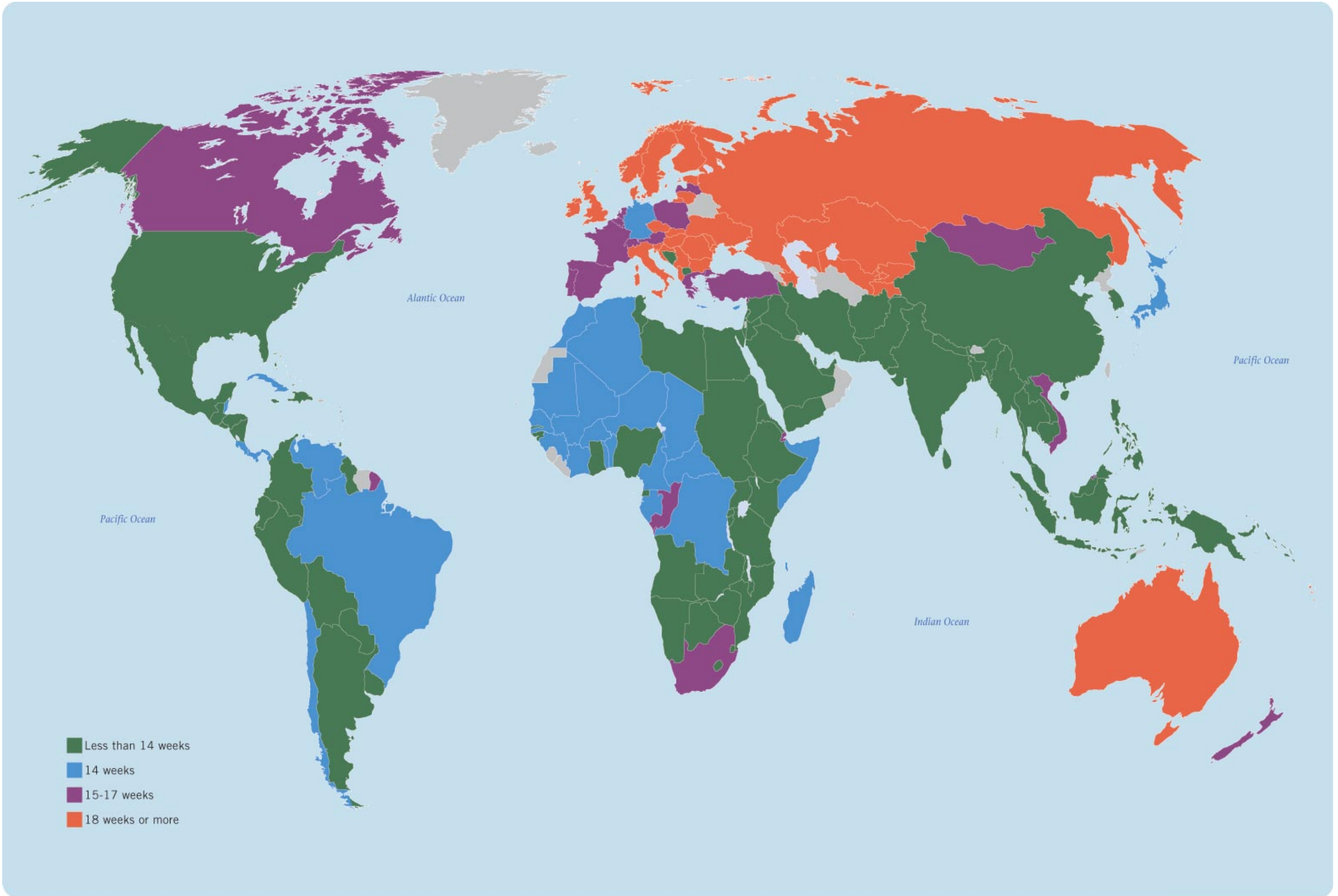
Map 1: Monthly minimum wages, 2006-2007



Map 2: Normal weekly hours limits, 2006-2007



Map 3: Length of maternity leave, 2006-2007



WORKING CONDITIONS LAWS

2006-2007 A global review

There is widespread concern that substantial numbers of workers across the world are working in jobs that are harmful to their health, make it difficult for them to combine work and family life, and fail to lift them out of poverty. As a result, increasing attention is being paid to the legal standards that regulate working life; yet limited efforts have been made to identify and systematically compare working conditions laws around the world.

This report responds to this need by providing a global comparison of national working conditions standards. The report covers three of the central elements of working conditions laws: minimum wages, working hours and holidays, and maternity protection. It identifies the primary legal standards in more than 100 countries and the most significant global and regional trends.

Working Conditions Laws 2006-2007 highlights a continuing commitment in countries across the world to minimum working conditions standards. By raising awareness of this convergence in the legal standards, the report aims to contribute towards efforts to harness these measures to the goal of realizing decent work.

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