



100 YEARS OF SOCIAL PROTECTION WITH THE ILO

The road to
universal social protection
systems including floors



SOCIAL JUSTICE
DECENT WORK

ILO CONSTITUTION

SOCIAL SECURITY:
A REQUIREMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



1919



Already in 1919, the ILO Constitution stated that “universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice”.

It recognized that to achieve social justice required “the protection of the worker against sickness, disease, and injury arising out of his employment, the protection of children, young persons and women, provision for old age...”



1

SETTING GLOBAL STANDARDS...

THE POWER OF THE FIRST CONVENTIONS



From 1919 to 1939 the ILO adopted 15 Conventions and 11 Recommendations, which guided the development of the social insurance model around the world.

These Conventions and Recommendations have established the guiding principles for the development of social security: compulsory affiliation; administration by nonprofit, self-governing institutions; administrative and financial supervision of the State; and association of insured persons to the management of the institutions.

Based on this model, countries developed their national systems that accelerated recovery from the war and the great recession.



“...the regulation of social insurance based on those principles in national systems which have best stood the test of time. It is a synthesis of all the characteristic trends of the insurance movement. It stimulates States to fresh progress and prevents any tendency to slip back.”



Albert Thomas
First Director-General of the ILO
1919-1932



2

...FOR SOCIAL SECURITY

A MANDATE TO EXTEND COVERAGE TO ALL



1944

Declaration of Philadelphia Income Security and Medical Care Recommendations

The Second World War was a crucial period of transition and welfare reform. It triggered fundamental changes in social and economic life and its underlying paradigms, articulating a vision of a just and democratic post-war world.

During and following the Second World War, the ILO's mandate was expanded from social insurance to a more integrated concept of universal coverage, which is reaffirmed in the 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia.

In 1944, the International Labour Conference in Philadelphia also adopted two recommendations: The Income Security Recommendation and the Medical Care Recommendation.

They are grounded in the guiding principle of universal coverage and can be considered the blueprint for comprehensive social security systems through a combination of social insurance and social assistance.



“The International Labour Conference recognizes the solemn obligation of the International Labour Organization to further among the nations of the world programmes which will achieve:

...the extension of social security measures to provide a basic income to all in need of such protection and comprehensive medical care...”

3

SOCIAL SECURITY: A HUMAN RIGHT

A STRONG INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT



1948

The Universal Declaration
of Human Rights



“Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.”

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

Articles 22 and 25,
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
1948

4

ILO SOCIAL SECURITY MINIMUM STANDARDS CONVENTION

GIVING CONCRETE SUBSTANCE
TO THE HUMAN RIGHT
TO SOCIAL SECURITY



1952

A landmark in international social security was the adoption by the International Labour Conference in 1952, of the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention (No. 102).

This brought together the nine branches which form the core of social security.

For each branch, it fixed a minimum level of protection in terms of population covered and the benefits guaranteed, together with core financing, organizational and management principles.

Convention No. 102 incorporated the idea that every human being had the right to social security. This right to a minimum of social security became a cornerstone of ILO post-war policy.



7

THE ROAD TO UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS



2012

Adoption of the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation No. 202

Countries have made significant progress in building national social protection systems. However, significant gaps exist worldwide with more than 70 per cent of the global population not covered by adequate social protection.

Thus, in 2012, ILO member States adopted the Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202) to give guidance on building comprehensive systems to achieve universal coverage.



“Our shared objective is to increase the number of countries that provide universal social protection.”



Guy Ryder,
ILO Director-General
2016

8

THE ROAD TO UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS



2010

2019

Since its creation, the ILO has supported countries to develop their social protection systems including floors based on its set of labour Conventions and Recommendations.

Some examples:



Over the past ten years, the ILO has supported the development of comprehensive social protection systems, including social protection floors in 136 countries:

- National social protection strategies in 22 countries;
- Health protection in 43 countries;
- Child benefits in 20 countries;
- Maternity benefits in 30 countries;
- Unemployment insurance schemes in 22 countries;
- Public employment programmes in 11 countries;
- Old-age pensions in 66 countries.

9

THE ROAD TO UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS



2019

“

“I lost several children. I lost my husband. I have children to raise. But on the day that I receive my unemployment assistance, I am someone.

I can provide for us.”

Regina
Beneficiary of the basic social protection subsidy,
Mozambique.

10

CHANGING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE

A GLOBAL COMMITMENT FOR UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND FLOORS



Social protection remains as relevant as ever to address the current and future challenges: the informal economy, demographic change, labour migration, fragile contexts and crises, austerity measures and environmental challenges.

The world of work is changing and the social protection systems will need to adapt to the future of work in order to achieve their objectives of reducing income insecurity and inequality, eradicating poverty and improving access to health services for all so as to ensure decent working and living conditions.

In 2015 World leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030. SDG 1.3 reflects the joint commitment of countries to “implement nationally appropriate social protection systems for all, including floors” for reducing and preventing poverty.

The ILO is working to turn commitments into concrete action with countries, the United Nations and other partners to make universal social protection systems and floors a reality for all and to improve the lives of millions of people around the world.

