



ECOSOC  
TecMun Morelia 2022

# International Labor Organization



# Committee:



**President**

Bellanira Valenzuela Alonso



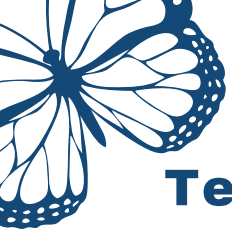
**Moderator**

*Graciela Jiménez García*



**Conference Officer**

*Mariana Ruiz Medina*



## TecMun Morelia 2022

The International Labor Organization Committee Dais, made up of Conference Officers Mariana Ruiz Medina, Moderator Graciela Jiménez García and President Bellanira Valenzuela Alonso, extend a warm welcome to all renowned delegates and observers present at this international forum.

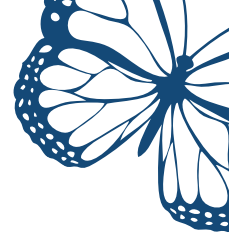
The International Labor Organization (ILO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that is in charge of labor-related issues around the world. Among its main objectives is to promote labor rights, arouse decent employment opportunities, improve social protection for workers, and consolidate dialogue on work-related issues.

The ILO's triple structure gives equal rights to workers, employers, and governments to guarantee that the views of these social partners are properly reflected in labor standards and in changing policies and programs.

Since its formation in 1919, ILO has been responsible for developing and supervising the use of international labor standards that become conventions and recommendations. These standards cover all aspects of the world of work, establishing basic principles and rights to certify decent work for all citizens.

Throughout the model, the delegates will aim to act peacefully and together to find the most appropriate resolutions on two different topics: Forced labor in the fast fashion industry and Care leave impact in the gender gap.





## Topic A: Forced Labor in the Fast Fashion Industry

### What is the issue:

According to ILO, forced labor is defined as "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily." (Forced Labor Convention, 1930).

Forced labor can be executed on both adults and children. It can be enforced by State authorities, private enterprises, or by individuals. It is discerned in all types of economic activities, such as domestic work, manufacturing, construction, sexual exploitation, forced begging, agriculture, to name some.

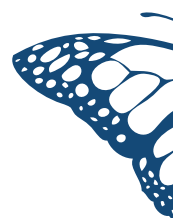


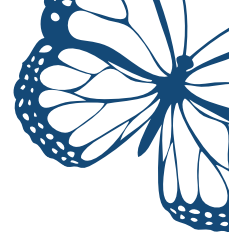
Throughout the years, the manufacturing and fashion industry have created new concepts of clothing and fashion trends. A clear example of this is what we call "fast fashion". It refers to low-cost and trendy clothing that recreate designs from the runways of high fashion brands and celebrity looks, turning these garments from high street stores at breakneck speed to meet consumer demand.

Apart from building a new tendency, it brought up to the public eye many negative consequences, such as environmental problems and harm to animals, and the topic which is going to be discussed in the forum: forced labor.

"In garment factories, children perform diverse and often arduous tasks such as dyeing, sewing buttons, cutting, and trimming threads, folding, moving and packing garments. In small workshops and home sites, children are put to work on intricate tasks such as embroidering, sequinning and smocking (making pleats)." (SOMO, 2014)

Forced labor in this industry not only starts on the manufacture of the clothing, this problem comes as well from the production of the materials which these garments such as cotton. The Xinjiang area supplies around 20% of the world's cotton, and most of the world's top clothing brands source directly from the territory. While many global brands have increased scrutiny of their Xinjiang operations, difficult supply chains in China's opaque realm make it difficult for companies to ensure their products do not contain labor-produced cotton.





## Current Relevance of the Situation

This problem is very relevant today, since companies such as Zara, Stradivarius, Forever 21, H & M, among others, are part of the fast fashion industry. These companies, in order to manufacture a larger quantity of clothes at very low prices, require millions of workers, who are vulnerable, exploited and taken advantage of by their economic needs.

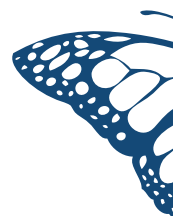
"Workers in this industry, mainly in China, India and Bangladesh, are victims of long hours of unpaid labor, as well as poor sanitary conditions and labor exploitation." (RedIntercol, 2021) This highlights the impact of unpaid labor in these countries.



We often talk about slavery as if it were a thing of the past. A horror from another era, unfortunately slavery is still a serious problem in the 21st century. That's why many call it "modern slavery."

The difference is that the 21st century slave shows people from poor or developing countries looking for work. "A woman in India left her rural village to take a job in Bangalore. Through a negotiator, she found a job in one of these factories. He charged her a fee for his brokering work and six months later she still hasn't collected any of the salary that is being engulfed by that exorbitant and illegal fee." (Ruiz, 2018)

Most shameful are luxury brands, many consumers think that expensive products have been manufactured by companies with impeccable business ethics and morals, it is quite the opposite, brands like Prada, Hermes, LV, Christian Dior, Fendi, Gucci, among others use vulnerable workers and pay them a very low salary.



As consumers, we have an important role to play in the fight against modern slavery. We can eradicate this problem by stopping buying products from brands that are engaging in these practices and supporting those that are implementing policies to protect workers' rights.



## General Statistics

- It is estimated that 170 million children engaged in child labor work in textile factories helping produce fast fashion trends. (UNBOUND NOW, 2020)
- In 2016, beyond 4 million people worked, and still do, at these sweatshop factories, with the average worker in Bangladesh having a salary of \$2 per day. (UNBOUND NOW, 2020)
- In 2015, 97% of America's clothes were contracted out from countries such as India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. (2022)
- ILO estimates the child workforce dropped by 30% between 2000 and 2012, but still 11% of the world's children are in situations that stop them from attending their right to go to school without work interference. (2021)
- Forced labor counts an estimated 81% of total human trafficking cases. (2020)
- "Over \$125 billions of fashion garments created via some forms of modern slavery are imported annually to G20 countries. These countries, which also account for 80 percent of world trade, include the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom." (Tate, 2020)
- 1 out of 6 world's workers are laboring in the fashion industry, of which most of them are female employees. (2022)
- "By 2030, it is estimated the fashion industry will consume resources equivalent to two Earths, with the demand for clothing forecast to increase by 63%." (McCosker, 2021)



## Perspectives on the Solutions



### Bangladesh

Considered worldwide as the biggest textile producer; It is the second largest exporter of clothing in the world. Its textile industry is valued at 28 billion dollars and accounts for 80% of the country's exports.

### Vietnam

One of the largest manufacturers in the textile industry. Is home to over 6000 garment factories, which employ about 3 million people. A survey applied from the Fair Labor Association showed that garment workers operate over 50 hours a week, without rest days, under a salary of double of the country's minimum wage.

### India

World's second largest manufacturer and exporter of fashion clothing, with 13 million workers. Women and girls from oppressed ethnic communities or Muslims who work from home, the majority for long hours and unsafe conditions, earning 15 cents per hour. (Paton, 2019)

### China

Largest source of fast fashion merchandise in the world. Much of these products come from domestic Chinese companies. "Not only is Chinese production a trend among cheaper brands, but high-end and "all-American" brands have high manufacturing rates in China as well." (BORGAN Magazine, 2020)

### Uzbekistan

Almost 2 million people are recruited every year for the annual cotton harvest in Uzbekistan. The area has managed to eliminate systemic forced labor and systemic child labor throughout the 2021 cotton production period, according to new findings from the International Labor Organization.



## Key Questions

- What is the current situation in the delegation?
- Does the delegation have any history related to forced labor in the fashion industry?
- How have activities labeled as human trafficking affected the delegation in recent years?
- Have sanctions been applied properly by the authorities of the delegation or has any ONG intervened in case of non-compliance by the government?
- How can existing treaties regarding workers' rights be reformed or changed to fit the needs of the current pace of fashion consumption?





## Research Sources for the Agents

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## Topic B: Care Leave Impact in the Gender Gap

### What is the issue:

Care leave is the absence of unpaid union activity to provide some time for a father to care for a newborn child or for a worker to care for a family member with an illness or disability.

With more and more women taking care of the nuclear family, full-time, year-round employment is simply not feasible for many women. In the longer term, the gender pay gap is even larger, as women are continually forced to spend time outside of the union, in part because of caring needs.

The pay gap highlights the high price women continue to pay for defeating our country's politics. Compared to other affluent territories, the US offers little support for working fathers and caregivers, particularly paid family and sick leave and affordable childcare.

This gender pay gap is even larger for many women of color and is the result of interlocking components that integrate racial and gender discrimination, workplace harassment, union segregation, and a lack of workplace policies that support family nurturing.

“COVID-19 has shone a light on the critical importance of health and care workers, who were applauded and celebrated. It also laid bare the extent of inequalities workers in this highly feminized sector have been facing for decades. Notable among these inequalities is a Gender Pay Gap. It is for this reason that the International Labor Organization and the World Health Organization co-developed the first ever global sectoral gender pay gap report.”(ILO, WHO; 2022)





## Current Relevance of the Situation

“Persistent and significant gaps in care services and policies have left hundreds of millions of workers with family responsibilities without adequate protection and support yet meeting these needs could create almost 300 million jobs by 2035” according to an International Labor Organization report. (2022) Correcting existing gaps in care services could create millions of jobs and produce consistent care that would help reduce poverty, promote gender balance and care for children and the elderly.

Unpaid care work is a fundamental aspect of economic activity and an essential component that contributes to the peace of individuals, their families and communities. Every day, individuals spend time cooking, cleaning and caring for children, the sick and the elderly.

Despite its importance for peace, unpaid care work often remains off political agendas due to the misperception that, unlike standard market labor measures, it is difficult to measure and less relevant to policy. However, neglecting unpaid care work leads to incorrect inferences about the levels and changes in individuals' rest and the cost of time, which, in parallel, limits the effectiveness of policies in several socioeconomic areas, especially those gender inequalities in the work and other areas of empowerment.

“This policy brief argues that gender inequality in unpaid care work is the missing link that influences gender gaps in labor outcomes. The gender gap in unpaid care work has significant implications for women's ability to actively take part in the labor market and the type/quality of employment opportunities available to them.” (OECD Development Center, 2014)

The station is a reduced resource, which is divided between work and rest, productive and reproductive occupations, paid and unpaid work. Every minute a woman spends in unpaid care work represents one minute less than what she could spend in market-related occupations or invest in her educational and vocational skills.





## General Statistics

- Studies have shown that the "maternity penalty" accounts for 80% of the gender pay gap.(Whiting K.,2022)
- Men spend only a third of the time that women spend on unpaid work, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2022.
- Over 2 million mothers around the world left the union during 2020, according to the ILO. (2022)
- "The Global Gender Gap Report found that, among 33 countries representing 54% of the global working-age population, men spent just a third of the time women spent doing unpaid work (as a proportion of total work) - 19% compared to 55%." (Whiting K., 2022)
- One in four women in the US return to work 10 days after giving birth. (Bischof J., d)
- Women do almost 3 times more care work than men, they do 60% more unpaid work and this is of course devastating to their careers. (World Economic Forum, 2022)
- "In countries where women spend twice as much time as men in caring activities, they earn only 65% of what their male counterparts earn for the same job. This drops to 40% when women are spending five times the amount of time on unpaid care work full-time employees." (OECD Development Center, 2014)





## Key Questions

- What is the current situation in the delegation?
- Why is it important to improve paternity leaves in terms of gender equality?
- Has the delegation been a part of international treaties that address gender equality? If so, how has this been a beneficial factor for gender gaps in care leave?
- What measures is the delegation taking to eradicate the major disadvantages faced by women in the world of work?
- If the delegation has initiatives regarding this issue, what has or hasn't helped to improve the situation?





## Perspectives on the Solution

### Lithuania and Hungary

Both countries allow parents to take up to 156 weeks off from work. Working parents in Lithuania have the option of receiving 52 weeks off from work with full pay or 104 weeks at 70 percent of pay. The remaining days off from work are unpaid. In Hungary, parents are offered 104 weeks off from work with 70 percent of their full salary. For the remaining weeks, if they wish to take time off from work, they are given a statutory flat rate.

### Sweden and Estonia

Parents in Sweden can divide 480 days of leave among themselves. Each parent is offered 90 days off from work at a pay rate of 80 percent of their regular salary. In addition, they are given an additional 300 days that can be split between them. The pay rate for this leave remains the same. Fathers in Estonia are given 14 days of paternity leave with full pay. An additional 435 days are offered and can be shared between both parents. Additional days off from work are paid at the average rate, depending on the salaries of both parents.



### Iceland

Iceland's laws are not complicated. Mothers and fathers have the same number of days off from work: three months each. An additional three months are provided, which can be shared between both parents and divided as they wish. The nine months of leave are paid at the rate of 80 percent of the worker's average salary.

### Slovenia

Fathers in Slovenia have 12 weeks of paternity leave. Of these 12 weeks, 15 days are paid in full, while for the remaining 75 days, fathers can receive the minimum wage.

### Norway

According to Norwegian law, parents have 0 to 10 weeks off from work, depending on their preference. After this, both parents can divide between 46 and 56 additional weeks of leave from work. Parents who choose to take 46 weeks off from work will receive 100 percent of their regular salary, while those who take 56 weeks will receive 80 percent of their regular salary.





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# Classroom Code:

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