

Insufficient respect for fundamental labour standards worldwide in connection with the existing competitive pressure in the global economy is a reason for selecting the research topic. The choice of theme is dictated by the need to find a balance between protective function of labour law and the attempt for flexibility, that is between strengthening the workers' rights standards and free trade and investment. Despite the fact that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted international labour standards in 1919, serious infringements of fundamental labour rights still take place, eg. forced labour, child labour, discrimination. Tendencies for trade liberalisation do not favour the improvement of the situation. An analysis of the effectiveness of workers' rights from the point of view of the rules of international trade and the search for a paradigm of the protection of those rights have never been thoroughly, comprehensively discussed in the world literature.

The aim of the study is to propose the adoption of new solutions to improve the ILO's effectiveness in enforcing workers' rights and the search for new methods of transnational labour law to increase the effectiveness of these rights. Preliminary results show that multilateral responses to such problems could encompass labour standards inclusion in "mega trade treaties" and trade agreements, changes in WTO law, more effective implementation of private sector initiatives, eg. corporate codes of conduct and development of mechanisms to ensure compliance with them.

The research to be carried out will concern: the history of workers' rights formation in the light of global trade rules, the verification of the economic theories in order to assess their suitability from the point of view of the possibility of more effective implementation of workers' rights, the issue of the effectiveness of ILO's control mechanisms and the effectiveness of the United Nations' tools, General System of Preferences, WTO law, "mega trade treaties" and trade agreements, and private regulations, among others transnational collective agreements, corporate social responsibility including corporate codes of conduct, framework agreements or NGOs' social responsibility standards.

The research is justified because the principal investigator will comment on the most current problems of the world, eg. connected with still being negotiated the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The preliminary research shows that the European Commission's proposal for legal text on "Trade and Sustainable Development" in TTIP does not protect workers' rights effectively. The European Commission proposes a soft formulation stating that "each Party shall continue to make sustained efforts towards ratifying the fundamental ILO Conventions". It is worth pointing out that the US has ratified only 14 ILO conventions, including only two of the eight core conventions. In the present state of TTIP there is a lack of a sanction mechanism and a lack of a body, which could monitor and assess the compliance with commitments connected with the protection of workers' rights.