



International
Labour
Organization



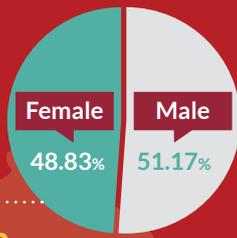
The ILO in China

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES



Population
(2017)

1.39 billion



GDP per capita
(2017)

US\$8,827

	Total	Male	Female
Economically active population (2017)	806.9M	56.3%	43.7%
Total number of employed persons (2017)	762.5M	56.1%	43.9%
Labour force participation rate (2017)	68.4%	75.7%	60.9%
Employment to population ratio (2017)	65.7%	72.3%	58.9%
Unemployment rate in urban areas (2017)	3.90%	-	-
Registered unemployed persons in urban areas (2017)	9.72M	-	-

Sources: China Statistical Yearbook 2018, ILOSTAT, WESO Data Finder

RATIFIED CONVENTIONS

China has ratified 26 ILO Conventions, of which 20 are in force.

China has ratified four of the eight Fundamental Conventions:

- C.100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
- C.111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958
- C.138 Minimum Age Convention, 1973
- C. 182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999

In Hong Kong SAR, 31 ILO Conventions have been notified as applicable, including 6 out of 8 fundamental Conventions. In Macau SAR, 36 ILO Conventions have been notified as applicable, including all 8 fundamental Conventions.

China is home to 1.39 billion inhabitants - the world's largest population - and nearly a quarter of the global workforce. Over the last 40 years of reform and opening up (1978-2018), China has maintained rapid economic growth, achieving a spectacular GDP annual growth rate of 9.5% on average. Over the period, 800 million people were lifted out of poverty and a strong middle class has emerged. The official unemployment rate remains low, but the number of people engaged in informal employment remains significant.

Today, China is the world's second largest economy and a global key trade partner.

The country is currently going through a period of significant transformation. The population is ageing, technological innovations are booming, tensions on international trade have emerged and evolving international geopolitics are shaping new roles and policies for the Chinese government and social partners. The economy is shifting towards higher-skilled production which generates the paradox of a simultaneous shortage of skilled workers and an overall labour surplus. With an average of 18,000 new enterprises registered each day, the mass entrepreneurship and innovation campaigns launched by the government are yielding positive results. Modest improvements have been made in recent years, yet many inequalities still remain.

Within a few decades, China has established a solid social security system with almost universal coverage in health insurance and pension benefits. Recently, the financial stability of the system has come under pressure due, among other factors, to an ageing population. Rural residents in particular would benefit from higher social security benefits. Significant progress has also been achieved in the areas of occupational health and safety, despite remaining gaps in both regulatory standards and their enforcement.

THE ILO - WHO WE ARE

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the United Nations agency for the world of work. Devoted to advancing social justice, it promotes a Decent Work Agenda based on four strategic pillars: rights at work, decent employment opportunities, social protection and social dialogue.

It is the only public international organisation which is tripartite, where workers and employers enjoy equal rights with governments in representation and decision making. Together they set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes upholding decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity for all.

Created in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, the ILO became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946. It received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969 and today is recognized as the world's authority on the world of work, offering over 100 years of knowledge, experience and achievements.

THE ILO IN CHINA

China is a founding member of the ILO. The ILO office in Beijing was established in 1985, overseeing ILO's activities in China (including the Hong Kong and Macau Special Administrative Regions) and Mongolia.

Since the beginning of the country's transition to a market economy, the ILO has been providing assistance to the Chinese government and social partners, in areas such as labour legislation, employment promotion and social security reform. The cooperation has extended over time so as to reflect the changes that have taken place in the socio-economic development of the country. In 2016 the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS) and the ILO signed a Memorandum of Understanding for strategic partnership focusing on the four dimensions of the decent work agenda. The MOU also reflects the new role of China in the promotion of South-South Cooperation. Thereafter, a Decent Work Country Programme was agreed between the ILO and the Chinese constituents.

China's Decent Work Country Programme for the period 2016-2020 builds upon previous cooperation and achievements to focus on three priorities:

- (1) Increase the quantity and quality of employment.
- (2) Promote and extend social protection in and out of the workplace.
- (3) Strengthen the rule of law and the realization of fundamental principles and rights at work.

To support these priorities, the country office has established cooperation programmes and projects which are implemented in close cooperation with the Chinese constituents. A few initiatives are described below:

- The Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) project is implemented by the ILO, the Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) and the China Enterprise Confederation (CEC), to broaden enterprise safety inspection from compliance to advice with the view of increasing productivity and work safety. MEM draws from the SCORE experience to design incentive schemes for greater efficiency in application of safety standards in small and medium enterprises at the national level.
- The Collective Bargaining Project in partnership with MOHRSS and the social partners, namely, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), the CEC and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC) aims at promoting harmonious labour relations at the company level.
- Research, dialogue and capacity building activities are being promoted with the objective of strengthening the constituents' understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to the emergence of new forms of employment, especially those generated by internet platforms and apps.



- The ILO Global Business and Disability Network - China Chapter was launched in Beijing in July 2018 with the objective of creating a business-to-business platform for collaboration on the employment of workers with disabilities.
- Joint activities with WHO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and MOHRSS aim at protecting the right to employment and non-discrimination of persons living with HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, following ILO international standards.
- Decent work in global supply chains is promoted through responsible business conduct in line with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the ILO tripartite Declaration on multinational enterprises and social policy.
- Technical assistance has been provided in view of the possible ratification of Convention 102 on social protection.
- Moreover, the ILO works with China to disseminate good practices that could inspire other nations on their way toward poverty eradication and employment promotion. The latest South-South Cooperation Agreement has been signed in 2018 to advance full employment and decent work in Asian countries in the context of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Finally as member of G20 and BRICs, the Chinese constituents take an active role in ILO's activities organised in the context of these two important international fora.

Social partners

Key social partners in China are the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) representing the workers and China Enterprise Confederation (CEC) representing the employers.

Decent work: a key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals



“Decent work is not just a goal – it is a driver of sustainable development”

Guy Ryder, ILO Director General

By embracing the three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social and environmental, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a once-in-a-generation chance to make a change and improve the lives of billions, leaving no one behind.

At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while working to preserve our planet.

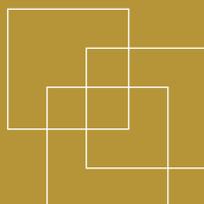
The importance of decent work in achieving sustainable development is highlighted by Goal 8 which aims to “promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

Putting decent work at the heart of economic policy-making and development plans will not only generate jobs but also lead to more robust, inclusive and poverty-reducing growth. It is a virtuous circle that is as good for the economy as it is for people, and one that drives sustainable development.

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