



International
Labour
Organization

The ILO in Cambodia

March 2025

Cambodian garment workers. ©ILO

► At a glance

Cambodia joined the ILO in 1969

Key areas of collaboration

- International labour standards in the garment industry
- Improving industrial relations and rights at work
- Social protection
- Youth employment and skills development
- Labour migration governance
- Formalised and inclusive economy

Constituents

- Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MLVT)
- Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations (CAMFEBA)
- Cambodian Workers' Organizations

Conventions ratified

Cambodia has ratified 13 ILO conventions, including 8 of the 10 fundamental conventions.

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► Towards decent work for all in Cambodia

Since the 1990s, Cambodia has partnered with the ILO to promote decent, productive and sustainable work, supporting its Vision 2030 and target for LDC graduation in 2029. Despite progress, challenges remain, including youth unemployment, skilled labour shortages, informal employment and climate change.

The ILO focuses on youth employment, enterprise development and vocational skills while improving working conditions, industrial relations and social dialogue. It also strengthens labour migration governance for fair, safe practices.

Efforts include expanding social protection for informal workers, formalizing the economy in key sectors and improving labor market transitions. The ILO supports Cambodia's commitment to International Labour Standards, fostering sustainable growth and social justice through ratification and implementation of ILO conventions.

Labour market indicators

- Population: 17 million (2024e.)
- Labour force participation rate (2021): 79.4%
- Employment-population ratio (2021): 79.2%
- Unemployment rate (2021): 0.4%
- Youth not in employment, education or training (2021): 6.2%

Source: ILOSTAT

► How do we work together?

The ILO and its government, employer and worker constituents in Cambodia are working together in a number of key areas:

- **Improving working conditions:** Enhancing compliance with labour laws and international labour standards, as well as boosting the competitiveness of the garment industry through enterprise assessments, training and advisory services.
- **Strengthening industrial relations:** Improving capacity for social dialogue, collective bargaining and effective dispute resolution mechanisms at national, sectoral and enterprise levels.
- **Skills development:** Strengthening technical and vocational skills systems to enhance workforce adaptability, improve employability and support better labour market transitions.
- **Expanding social protection:** Extending coverage to workers who are currently excluded, particularly informal workers, through enhanced social protection initiatives.
- **Supporting workers' rights:** Raising awareness about the rights and responsibilities at work and supporting the development and application of legal and policy frameworks to protect vulnerable workers, including migrants, young people, women, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities.
- **Youth employment:** Helping young people, especially those who are vulnerable or excluded, to gain access to training and job opportunities.
- **Formalised and inclusive economy:** Promoting policies that support the transition from informal to formal employment, ensuring decent work for all.
- **Labour migration management:** Implementing the Labour Migration Policy to promote decent work and protect the rights of all migrant workers.
- **Occupational safety and health:** Improving workplace safety and health, particularly in the construction and garment sectors.

► What have ILO and Cambodia achieved together?

- **Evidence-based legal and policy frameworks:** ILO has supported the development of key labour laws and policies, including those on trade unions, social security, minimum wage, occupational safety and health. These frameworks underpin the National Employment Policy, Technical and Vocational Education and Training Policy, Labour Migration Policy, and Social Protection Policy.
- **National dispute prevention and resolution system:** The tripartite Arbitration Council, established in 2003, has resolved over 3,000 labour disputes affecting one million workers, with a 73 per cent resolution success rate. Additionally, 642 disputes involving 1,943 Cambodian migrant workers were filed, and 605 were successfully resolved with compensation.
- **A stronger garment sector:** Since 2001, ILO has worked to improve compliance, working conditions, and productivity in Cambodia's garment sector—its largest export industry, employing over 700,000 workers (80% women), and supporting 2.5 million people.
- **Expanded social protection:** The National Social Security Fund now benefits 2.5 million workers, including informal and self-employed, with coverage for injury, health and pensions.
- **Skilled labour development:** Over 40,000 individuals received quality vocational training, with 77 per cent securing employment or self-employment.
- **Rural employment generation:** ILO-backed infrastructure projects—570 km of roads, 90 bridges, 21 water gates, and 92 culverts—created three million paid workdays for local workers.
- **Post-COVID employment recovery:** Support reached over 28,000 displaced workers (83% women), including returnee migrants and young people. 18,785 suspended garment workers received stipends, and 222 MSMEs were helped to retain jobs.

What is the International Labour Organization?

The International Labour Organization is the United Nations agency for the world of work. We bring together governments, employers and workers to drive a human-centred approach to the future of work through employment creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue.