



International
Labour
Organization

▶ The ILO in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

December/2024

© ILO

▶ At a glance

The Lao People's Democratic Republic joined the ILO in 1964

Key areas of collaboration

- ▶ Rural employment promotion
- ▶ Skills development and digitalization
- ▶ Social protection
- ▶ Labour migration

Constituents

- ▶ Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW)
- ▶ Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI)
- ▶ Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU)

ILO conventions ratified

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has ratified 12 ILO conventions, including 7 of the 10 fundamental conventions.

▶ Contact details:

**ILO Country Office for Thailand,
Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic**

Kolao Tower, 8th Floor, Ban Nongbone
23 Singha Road, Saysetha District
Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

T: +856 21 454 415

Visit <https://www.ilo.org/lao-peoples-democratic-republic> for more information



▶ Towards decent work for all in Lao People's Democratic Republic

The Lao People's Democratic Republic celebrated 60 years as an ILO member in 2024. Despite rapid economic growth, the country faces a number of pressing issues, including the growing impacts of climate change, urbanization, and digitalization. These factors contribute to vulnerabilities in the labour market, such as job insecurity, informality, weak enforcement of labour laws, and rising workplace safety concerns.

The ILO's collaboration with Lao People's Democratic Republic currently focuses on expanding and strengthening the social protection system, promoting rural employment, and creating jobs at both national and community levels. The partnership also aims to improve occupational safety and health concerns while addressing environmental challenges. It emphasizes migrant workers' rights, tackling gender inequality and addressing child labour. Strengthening vocational education and skill development systems is a key focus, as well as capacity building for government officials and target communities. Additionally, the ILO supports the country's commitment to international labour standards, including the ratification and implementation of ILO conventions.

In 2024, Lao People's Democratic Republic was elected as a deputy member of the ILO Governing Body, reflecting the country's progress and its potential to contribute to shaping global labour policies. This election is expected to drive significant improvements in advancing decent work in the country.

Labour market indicators

- Total population: 7.4 million
- Population growth rate: 1.4%
- Working-age population (aged 15 and above): 5,382,000 (71.6%)
- Labour force: 2,536,000 (47.1%)
- Employed in the agricultural sector: 56.8%

Sources: Labour Force Survey 2022

► How do we work together?

The ILO and its government, employer and worker constituents in Lao People's Democratic Republic are working together in a number of key areas:

- **Legislative and policy work:** Collaborating on the development and revision of labour and social protection laws and policies to align with international labour standards, with the goal of advancing decent work in Lao People's Democratic Republic.
- **Employment & skills development:** Enhancing capacity and creating job opportunities across various sectors and in rural areas as well as promoting enterprise development and entrepreneurial skills. A special focus is placed on the skills development of workers, including vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, LGBT+ individuals, women, young workers, ethnic minorities and returning migrants, to ensure access to training and employment opportunities.
- **Social protection:** Enhancing the capacity of officials to deliver inclusive and sustainable social protection services, including social security and health insurance, to all.
- **Wage setting system:** The ILO is supporting constituents to establish a national minimum wage setting system.
- **Occupational safety & health:** Promoting safe and healthy workplaces as fundamental principles and rights at work.

- **Migration:** Strengthening the capacity of government officials and social partners to engage strategically at regional and international groupings and empowering migrant workers, ensuring that their rights are respected, including access to labour rights and essential services.

► What have we achieved?

- **Enhanced legislative and policy environment:** The Lao government promulgated a comprehensive Employment Law which was subsequently updated with ILO support. Additionally, the ILO has aided in reviewing the Social Security Law and Health Insurance Law, the aim being to establish a comprehensive, coordinated, effective and adequate social security and health insurance legal framework in the country.
- **Research for policy making:** The Lao People's Democratic Republic conducted its first-ever Labour Force Survey and Child Labour Survey in 2010, with technical and financial assistance from the ILO. A wide range of research to support policy making has subsequently taken place.
- **Capacity of constituents built:** The capacity of government, employer and work constituents has been strengthened to help deliver inclusive, decent work across the country.
- **Strengthened skills development:** The ILO has supported efforts to boost national skills frameworks and boost the capacity of TVET institutions. This has seen the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare develop five National Skills Standards in key trades.
- **Enhanced migration and employment governance:** The Lao Employment Business Association was established in 2024, a major step to promote collaboration among employment agencies. Key advancements in labour migration governance have been made through various regulations and agreements.
- **Improved occupational safety and health standards:** In 2022, the Lao government ratified ILO conventions C155 and C187, improving workplace conditions and enhancing occupational safety and health standards.

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.