



International
Labour
Organization

The ILO in China

April 2026

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► At a glance

China is a founding member of the ILO since 1919

Key areas of collaboration

- Full and high-quality employment
- Social protection
- Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- International exchanges and partnerships

Constituents

- Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS)
- All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU)
- China Enterprise Confederation (CEC)

Conventions ratified

China has ratified 28 ILO conventions, including 7 of the 10 fundamental conventions, and 2 of the 4 governance conventions.

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► Towards decent work for all in China

The ILO and China enjoy a longstanding and productive partnership that has evolved alongside China's economic and social reform and development. Over the decades, China has become the world's second-largest economy, transitioning from a low-income to an upper-middle-income country, with significant improvements in income, working and living conditions, health and education. As China progresses toward high-income status and strives for decent work for all, its labour market faces challenges from demographic shifts, climate change and technological advancements that are reshaping its structure.

The ILO supports China in creating high-quality employment, promoting lifelong skills development, expanding social protection and ensuring safe and healthy workplaces. The collaboration also aims to develop harmonious labour relations and strengthen labour laws to align with international standards. It emphasizes gender equality, enhances social dialogue and promotes tripartism. Additionally, the organization helps China engage in international exchanges and supports regional actions through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) projects, which facilitate collaboration among countries in the Global South and with international partners to advance the SDGs. The ILO also advocates for the ratification of its conventions, striving for sustainable and inclusive growth for all.

Labour market indicators

- Population (2024): 1.4 billion
- Labour force participation rate (2024): 62.9%
- Employment-population ratio (2024): 60.3%
- Unemployment rate (2024): 5.1%

Source: National Bureau of Statistics and ILO modelled estimates.

► How do we work together?

The ILO and its government, employer, and worker constituents in China are collaborating on several key areas:

- **High-quality employment:** Increasing decent work opportunities, with focus on workers in new forms of employment.
- **Skills development:** Improving access to innovative, adaptive, and quality lifelong skills development opportunities.
- **Social protection:** Advancing and expanding social protection within and outside the workplace.
- **Occupational Safety and Health:** Strengthening the environment to ensure safe and healthy workplaces.
- **Harmonious labour relations:** Enhancing labour inspections, preventing disputes and promoting mediation and resolution through tripartite initiatives and collective bargaining.
- **Gender equality:** Strengthening social dialogue, improving capacity on gender issues and expanding the care sector in China.
- **International labour standards:** Raising awareness and commitment to fundamental principles and rights at work.
- **Inclusive employment:** Promoting employment and creating diverse, inclusive work environments for individuals with disabilities and people living with HIV.
- **Promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation:** Expanding and strengthening China's contribution to the realization of SDGs.

► What have ILO and China achieved together?

- **Supported labour legislation:** Supported China's labour legislation by providing technical assistance, particularly during the promulgation of the Trade Union Law (1992), Labour Law (1995), Labour Contract Law (2008), Employment Promotion Law (2008), Social Insurance Law (2010), Civil Code (2020) and Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests (revised in 2022).

- **Solidified International Labour Standards:** China has ratified 14 international labour standards since 1980s, including 7 fundamental conventions, facilitating its integration into and active participation in the global trade and economic system.
- **Expanded social security coverage:** ILO contributed to extend social security coverage to vulnerable populations, enhancing system sustainability and adequacy.
- **Improved skills development:** Provided recommendations for the national workplan to enhance the China New Enterprise-based Apprenticeship (2022), emphasizing core skills development, including green and digital skills.
- **Promoted gender equality:** Collaborated with social partners to develop policy recommendations and handbooks on gender equality at work, family-friendly workplaces, and addressing workplace violence and harassment, which have been implemented in hundreds of enterprises nationwide.
- **Boosted sustainable development in SMEs:** The Ministry of Emergency Management has continued to implement the SCORE project in China after the project concluded. Now, over 1,800 small and medium-sized enterprises implement SCORE to enhance both safety standards and productivity levels.
- **Enhanced entrepreneurial skills:** The "Start and Improve Your Business" (SIYB) and "Know About Business" (KAB) training programmes have equipped over 2 million workers with practical employment and entrepreneurial skills, with the KAB programme continuing to be promoted by the All-China Youth Federation, empowering young people.
- **Advanced global partnership:** The ILO has signed three MoUs with the Chinese government and one with ACFTU since 2019, promoting and sharing experiences globally. China funded cooperative projects with the ILO both in Asia and Africa to promote public employment services, develop skills and expand social protection.

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.