



International
Labour
Organization

100
1919-2019

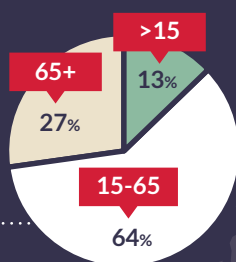


The ILO in Japan

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES



Population
127.5
million



GDP per capita
US\$ 38.4
million

	Total	Male	Female
Labour participation rate	60.5%	70.5%	51.5%
Employment-to-population ratio	58.8%	68.4%	49.8%
Regular employees	34.4M	23.2M	11.2M
Non-regular employees	20.6M	6.6M	14.1M
Unemployment rate (lowest in the past 24 years)	2.8%	3%	2.7%
Share of employees working 48+ hours per week (2015)	20.4%	-	-
Mean weekly hours actually worked per employed person	39	44	33

Source: ILOSTAT; The World Bank Databank: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx>; and Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications: <https://www.stat.go.jp/data/jinsui/new.html>

RATIFIED CONVENTIONS

Japan has ratified 49 Conventions including 3 out of 4 Governance Conventions and 6 out of 8 Fundamental Conventions:

- C.29 Forced Labour Convention, 1930
- C.87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948
- C.98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949
- C.100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
- C.138 Minimum Age Convention, 1973
- C.182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999

After two decades of economic stagnation, which prompted the government to develop comprehensive economic policy designed to revitalize the economy, the Japanese economy has entered into a long recovery period since December 2012. Under the “Abenomics” policy named after the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, corporate profits have reached the highest level ever with employment performance improving. Labour force shortage is currently felt, which is also caused by a shrinking labour force due to falling birth rates and the rapid aging of the population.

It is predicted that the economy will slow down due to the increase in burdens on the working generation to support the aged. To prevent the reduction in labour force and improve labour productivity, the government has started the second stage of Abenomics by providing more options to keep working while looking after children and the aged as well as by increasing the number of workers from overseas.

After the deliberations in the Council of Work Style Reform, in which representatives of workers’ and employers’ organizations were also present, the government adopted a comprehensive legal package in 2018 to implement the work style reform. One of the pillars of the legislation is to regulate long working hours and promote diversification of working time arrangements. The law contains provisions concerning, among others, upper limits to permitted overtime hours, flexible working time arrangements and the exemption of highly skilled professionals from regulations related to working hours. Another pillar is to ensure fair treatment within a company regardless of forms of employment by prohibiting unreasonable differences in working conditions and treatments between regular and non-regular employees and by introducing an obligatory requirement to offer equal treatment between regular and fixed-term employees.

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.

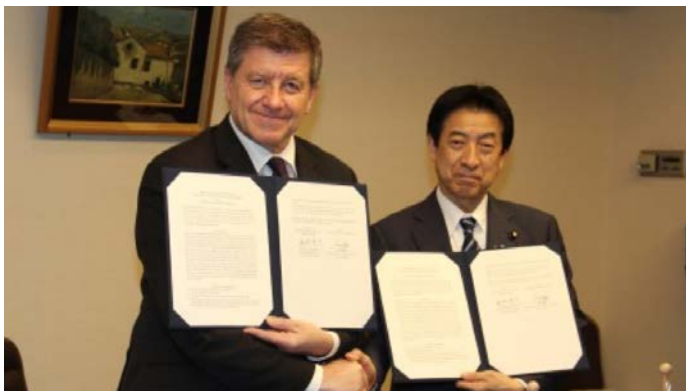
THE ILO IN JAPAN

As one of the founding member States of the ILO, Japan has a long-standing relationship with the organization dating back to 1919. Soon after its creation, ILO opened a Branch Office in Tokyo (currently ILO Office for Japan) in November 1923. Although the Office was closed during the withdrawal of Japan from the ILO for the period of 1940-51, it has been re-established in 1955. In order to contribute to the realization of decent work in Japan, the ILO Office for Japan conducts a wide range of activities mainly focusing on information dissemination by developing and distributing information resources on the future of work and other important topics.

The Government of Japan holds one of the ten permanent seats on the ILO Governing Body. Current membership of the Governing Body also includes Japanese members in both employers' and workers' groups from the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren) and the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (JTUC-RENG), respectively.

Extensive Cooperation and Partnerships

In addition to be the second largest contributor to the ILO's regular budget, the Japanese government is one of the major donors providing voluntary contributions to technical cooperation projects, which amounted to US\$ 31.8 million between 2012 and 2017. In 2017, the ILO Director General, Guy Ryder, and Japan's Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare signed the Memorandum of Cooperation in Tokyo to further strengthen the bond of cooperation between the ILO and Japan.



ILO, together with the government, workers' and employers' organizations and other actors in Japan, carry out various programmes to tackle labour issues in Asia, the Pacific and Africa. Collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, which dates back to 1974, aims primarily at supporting fair globalization, building a social safety net, contributing to poverty reduction, advancing occupational safety and health, and promoting international labour standards and social dialogue. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides support primarily to the livelihood-oriented emergency response. The ILO also collaborates with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for technical interventions in the Pacific.

Cooperative partnerships are also established with a wide range of actors including the Japanese Consumers' Cooperative Union, the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT), the Ohara Institute for Social Research (OISR), Hosei University and the Japanese Federation of Labour and Social Security Attorney's Associations.

The Japan Association for Advancement of ILO Activities, which was created in 2011 as a tripartite non-governmental organization, provides important support to activities of the ILO towards the promotion of the Decent Work Agenda in Japan. The Japanese Parliamentarians' League on ILO Activities was created in 1988 as a non-partisan group of parliamentarians with an objective to enhance government's support to the technical cooperation activities of the ILO and assists in the promotion of ILO values among legislators.

Decent Work Promoted through Partnerships and SDGs

Decent work has become an established goal of the tripartite constituents in Japan. The government, in close partnership with all relevant actors, implements measures related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which includes decent work as one of its goals, by developing the SDGs Action Plan.

Currently, three ILO projects are implemented in Japan. In April 2018, the ILO and the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo 2020) have signed an agreement to promote decent work in organizing international sporting events. The partnership will encourage the enterprises to play a positive role in promoting decent work through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and responsible business conduct.



Under the "Promoting Responsible Supply Chain in Asia" project, which is funded by the European Union (EU) and jointly implemented by the ILO and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), successful approaches to CSR are collected with an objective to its wider dissemination through policy advocacy and training programmes.

The third programme, Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment at Work through Responsible Business Conduct in G7 Countries (WEEMPOWER), is to be implemented in partnership with the EU, the UN Women and other G7 countries. It aims to support sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth by promoting women's economic empowerment.

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”.

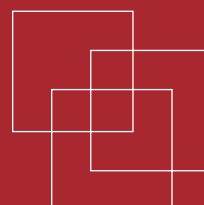
Putting decent work at the heart of economic policy-making and development plans will not only generate jobs but also lead to more robust, inclusive and poverty-reducing growth. It is a virtuous circle that is as good for the economy as it is for people, and one that drives sustainable development.

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