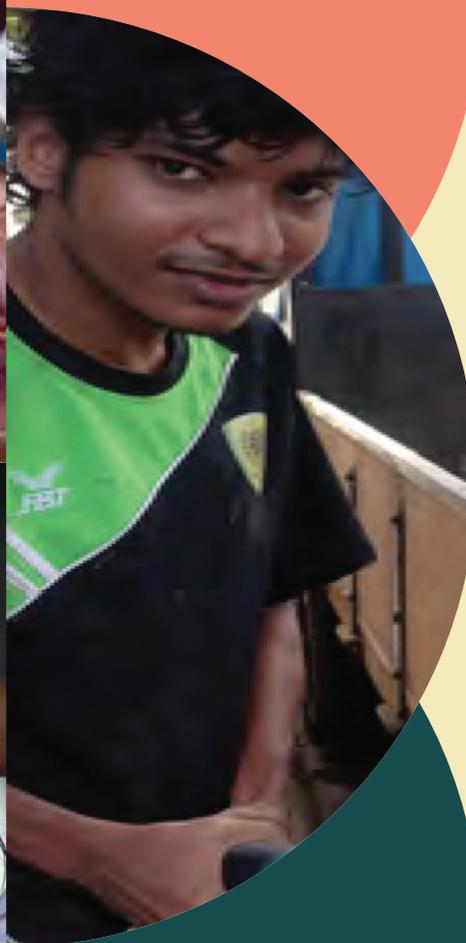




International  
Labour  
Organization

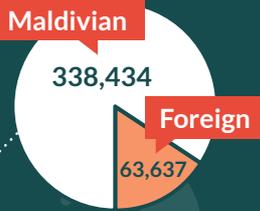


# The ILO in Maldives

# KEY FACTS AND FIGURES



**Population<sup>1</sup>**  
(2014) .....  
**407,660**



**GDP**  
**per capita (2017)**  
**US\$11,848<sup>2</sup>**

	Total	Male	Female
Working age population (2016)	<b>263,311</b>		
Labour force (2016)	<b>151.7K</b>	92.6K	59K
Labour participation rate (2016)	<b>57.6%</b>	75%	42.2%
Employment to population ratio (2016)	<b>54.1%</b>	70.3%	39.8%
Unemployment rate (2016)	<b>6.1%</b>	6.4%	5.6%
Youth (18-35 years) who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) (2016)	<b>29%</b>	17%	39%

Source: Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2016, Statistical Release III: Employment

## RATIFIED CONVENTIONS

Maldives has ratified all eight of the ILO's 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.105 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957
  - C.111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958
  - C.138 Minimum Age Convention, 1973
  - C.182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999
- In addition, it has ratified the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 and the Seafarers Identity Document Convention (Revised), 2003.

In addition, it has ratified the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 and the Seafarers Identity Document Convention (Revised), 2003.

The Republic of Maldives is an island nation in the Indian Ocean composed of 26 atolls and over 188 inhabited islands. Despite the dispersal of land, small population, and limited resources, Maldives has achieved remarkable economic progress over the last two decades with an average, though fluctuating, growth rate of 5.7% from 1997 to 2010, stabilizing to around 6.1% thereafter. This economic growth has been in large part driven by its tourism and thriving transportation and communication industries, which make up about 37% of GDP in 2017 (In MVR, 23,581mn), but were responsible for about 53% of total GDP growth that year. Strong performance in the construction sector contributed another 12% to GDP growth<sup>3</sup>.

In 2018, Maldives was classified as an upper middle income country. Though it has made great strides in raising incomes, tackling poverty, and improving human and social development, a number of critical challenges remain. At a macroeconomic level, the economy continues to be vulnerable to climate change, as well as external shocks due to a lack of economic diversification and over-dependence on the tourism industry<sup>4</sup>. For instance, in 2017, the World Travel & Tourism Council finds that travel and tourism industries directly supported 34,500 jobs (16.0% of total employment)<sup>5</sup>.

At the same time, the economic growth of the past few years appears to have created many jobs for expatriates (nearly one third of the total employed workforce, with negligible unemployment), while resident Maldivians experienced an unemployment rate of around 6%<sup>6</sup>. Lack of a skilled workforce for high-end jobs and reluctance to take "low status" jobs are the main reasons for this high unemployment rate among resident Maldivians. The sustainability of long-term development for a resource-scarce country like Maldives therefore also depends on a well-trained workforce.

- 1 Maldives Population & Housing Census 2014. Statistical Release I: Population & Households, National Bureau of Statistics, Malé, p. 13, <http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Census-Summary-Tables1.pdf>.
- 2 GDP Outlook Tables 1995 - 2017, National Bureau of Statistics, Malé (revised 28 Oct, 2018), [http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GDP-Outlook\\_Tables.xlsx](http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GDP-Outlook_Tables.xlsx).
- 3 GDP Outlook Tables 1995 - 2017, National Bureau of Statistics, Malé (revised 28 Oct, 2018), [http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GDP-Outlook\\_Tables.xlsx](http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GDP-Outlook_Tables.xlsx).
- 4 Country Operations Business Plan, Maldives 2016-2018 (August 2015), ADB, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/173147/cobp-mld-2016-2018.pdf>.
- 5 Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2018 Maldives. World Travel & Tourism Council, <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2018/maldives2018.pdf>. However, the Maldives Population & Housing Census 2014 finds that "Transportation and Storage" and "Accommodation and Food Service Activities" together account for roughly 26% of total employment.
- 6 Maldives Population & Housing Census 2014. Statistical Release IV: Employment.

## 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 MALDIVES

Maldives is the 183<sup>rd</sup> member of the ILO, joining in 2009. A Decent Work Country Programme (2016-20) for Maldives is in place. The ILO has provided assistance in developing a National Job Strategy, Labour Inspection Policy, Labour Policy, Labour Administration Strategy, Labour Dispute Prevention and Resolution Strategy, Industrial Relations Act, Occupational Safety and Health Act, and conducting a review of the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. ILO's work in the Maldives is managed by the ILO Office in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

## Current areas of work

### National Job Strategy

The National Job Strategy aims to promote decent work for all through the following objectives:

- Promoting economic diversification that leads to productive employment.
- Enhancing education and skills development that strengthens employability.
- Supporting the youth transition from school to work and improving labour market outcomes, especially for school drop outs and young women.
- Improving the management of the expatriate labour force to protect workers and encourage the participation of Maldivians in the labour market.
- Improving the labour market information system.

### Promoting Fundamental Rights and Strengthening Labour Market Governance in the Maldives (2011-2014)

Under this project, the ILO supported the establishment of the first ever National Tripartite Labour Advisory Council (NTLAC) and new legal frameworks for governance of the labour market and building the capacity of the Government and civil society.

- **Developing and improving the legal framework.** The ILO supported the government and social partners to develop proposals for key legislation based on ILO international labour standards and comparative practices. Priorities were given to legislation providing for the establishment of trade unions and employers' organisations, and regulating collective negotiations and industrial action. Efforts were also made to amend the Employment Act and develop proposals to improve laws relating to occupational safety and health, compensation for workplace injuries and the employment of migrant workers.
- **Strengthening labour administration.** Based on the outcomes of a full assessment of the labour administration, the ILO helped to strengthen the capacity of the Labour Relations Authority and Employment Tribunal to provide services to workers and employers in three main areas: legal framework implementation, labour dispute resolution and labour relations improvement.



- **Promotion of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.** In view of the limited understanding of industrial relations among the social partners, the project conducted awareness-raising campaigns on basic concepts of industrial relations in different sectors, including tourism, government and construction. Subsequently, it covered negotiation skills and collective bargaining.

## Migration Governance

In order to support the Government of Maldives to develop policies and measures for increasing employment of nationals, ILO conducted a study on increasing employment of nationals in expatriate dominated occupations and promote decent work among all workers.

Training on the capture of labour migration statistical data has also been provided.

## Social partners

The ILO's main social partners in Maldives include the Ministry of Economic Development, the Labour Relations Authority, the Employment Tribunal, the Tourism Employees Association of Maldives, and Maldives Association for Construction Industries. The strategic objectives of the ILO include strengthening social dialogue among the tripartite constituents and establishing sound labour relations, adapting labour laws to meet changing economic and social needs, and improving labour administration

