

Media Update

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ILO

PRESS RELEASE

Global labour migration increases by five million

A new ILO report estimates that between 2017 and 2019 the number of international migrants has increased from 164 to 169 million.

GENEVA (ILO News) – The number of international migrant workers globally has risen to 169 million, a rise of three per cent since 2017, according to the latest estimates from the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The share of youth migrant workers (aged 15-24) has also increased, by almost 2 per cent, or 3.2 million, since 2017. Their number reached 16.8 million in 2019.

The new report, *ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology*, shows that in 2019, international migrant workers constituted nearly five per cent of the global labour force, making them an integral part of the world economy.

Yet many migrant workers are often in temporary, informal or unprotected jobs, which expose them to a greater risk of insecurity, layoffs and worsening working conditions. The COVID-19 crisis has intensified these vulnerabilities, particularly for women migrant workers, as they are over-represented in low-paid and low-skilled jobs and have limited access to social protection and fewer options for support services.

“The pandemic has exposed the precariousness of their situation. Migrant workers are often first to be laid-off, they experience difficulties in accessing treatment and they are often excluded from national COVID-19 policy responses,” said Manuela Tomei, Director of the ILO Conditions of Work and Equality Department.

High-income countries continue to absorb the majority of migrant workers

More than two-thirds of international migrant workers are concentrated in high-income countries. Of the 169 million international migrant workers, 63.8 million (37.7 per cent) are in Europe and Central Asia. Another 43.3 million (25.6 per cent) are in the Americas. Hence, collectively, Europe and Central Asia and the Americas host 63.3 per cent of all migrant workers.

The Arab States, and Asia and the Pacific each host about 24 million migrant workers, which, in total, correspond to 28.5 per cent of all migrant workers. In Africa there are 13.7 million migrant workers, representing 8.1 per cent of the total.

The majority of migrant workers – 99 million – are men, while 70 million are women.

Women face more socio-economic obstacles as migrant workers and are more likely to migrate as accompanying family members for reasons other than finding work. They can experience gender discrimination in employment and may lack networks, making it difficult to reconcile work and family life in a foreign country.

More youth are migrating in search of employment

The share of youth among international migrant workers has increased, from 8.3 per cent in 2017 to 10.0 per cent in 2019. This increase is likely to be related to high youth unemployment rates in many developing countries. The large majority of migrant workers (86.5 per cent) remain prime-age adults (aged 25–64).

Services sector is the main employer of migrant workers

In many regions international migrant workers account for an important share of the labour force, making vital contributions to their destination countries' societies and economies, and delivering essential jobs in critical sectors like health care, transportation, services, agriculture and food processing.

According to the report, 66.2 per cent of migrant workers are in services, 26.7 per cent in industry and 7.1 per cent in agriculture. However, substantial gender differences exist between the sectors: There is a higher representation of women migrant workers in services, which may be partly

explained by a growing labour demand for care workers, including in health and domestic work. Men migrant workers are more present in industry.

“Labour migration policies will be effective only if they are based on strong statistical evidence. This report offers sound estimations, based on robust methods and reliable data integrating harmonized complementary sources,” said Rafael Diez de Medina, Chief Statistician and Director of the ILO Department of Statistics. “These policies can then help countries respond to shifts in labour supply and demand, stimulate innovation and sustainable development, and transfer and update skills.”.

ITC

PRESS RELEASE

Developing national priority sector export strategies for Pakistan

Islamabad: The Ministry of Commerce (MoC) and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) are developing a coherent and comprehensive National Priority Sectors Export Strategy (NPSES) For Pakistan to achieve its trade growth ambition.

MoC and the TDAP conducted the value-chain consultations on priority sectors in the context of the Strategic Trade Policy Framework recently.

During the consultations, high-level public and private sector representatives agreed on a strategic vision for Pakistan’s trade growth – ‘Pakistan to become a dynamic and efficient domestic market and a globally-competitive export-driven economy’.

More than 180 public and private sector representatives participated in the round of consultations for charting the next export growth cycle of the country.

The strategy design process will focus on 10 of the priority sectors to develop implementable and measurable plans to increase their export competitiveness in the global market. It will chalk out detailed and quantifiable roadmaps, with

set responsibilities for each implementing agency to bring about policy convergence, institutional alignment, and strategic private sector support.

The development of the NPSES is supported by the Revenue Mobilisation, Investment and Trade (ReMIT) Programme, implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC), and funded by the United Kingdom Government through the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

“The NPSES provides a key opportunity for the Government and private sector to work together in creating jobs and new opportunities for Pakistan. The world economy is changing fast, especially in the aftermath of the global health crisis, and we need to be strategic to participate in global value chains in line with objectives and policies of Ministry of Commerce” said Sualeh Ahmad Faruqi, the Federal Secretary of Commerce of Pakistan.

Annabel Gerry, the Director for Development for the UK in Pakistan said, “Trade and exports are a key part of Pakistan’s COVID-19 recovery and growth target for the current year. We are pleased to support the government in developing a National Priority Sectors Export Strategy enabling the private sector to improve export competitiveness, tap into new products and markets and make a positive contribution to growth and jobs.”

The following priority sectors were selected for strategic planning by MoC: 1. engineering goods, 2. leather, 3. processed food and beverages, 4. fruits and vegetables, 5. meat and poultry, 6. pharmaceuticals, 7. software development and services, 8. business process outsourcing, 9. logistics, and 10. institutional coordination.

Each sector session invited industry stakeholders to define an ambitious, yet realistic and achievable roadmap for expanding export performance. Regional public and private sector representatives as well as development partners also participated in the sessions.

These efforts will pave the way for activating Sector Advisory Councils. The Sector Advisory Councils, comprised of stakeholders from public and private sectors, will be tasked with providing continuous advisory support and industry perspective to the Government of Pakistan and the newly approved National Export Development Board, chaired by the honourable Prime Minister.

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