

Global unemployment projected to rise in both 2016 and 2017

World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2016

Despite falling unemployment levels in some developed economies, new ILO analysis - World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO) - shows the global job crisis is not likely to end, especially in emerging economies.

GENEVA (ILO News) – Continuing high rates of unemployment worldwide and chronic vulnerable employment in many emerging and developing economies are still deeply affecting the world of work, warns a new ILO report.

The final figure for unemployment in 2015 is estimated to stand at 197.1 million and in 2016 is forecast to rise by about 2.3 million to reach 199.4 million. An additional 1.1 million jobless will likely be added to the global tally in 2017, according to the [ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2016](#) (WESO).



“The significant slowdown in emerging economies coupled with a sharp decline in commodity prices is having a dramatic effect on the world of work,” says ILO Director-General Guy Ryder.

“Many working women and men are having to accept low paid jobs, both in emerging and developing economies and also, increasingly in developed countries. And despite a drop in the number of unemployed in some EU countries and the US, too many people are still jobless. We need to take urgent action to boost the number of decent work opportunities or we risk intensified social tensions,” he adds.

In 2015, total global unemployment stood at 197.1 million – 27 million higher than the pre-crisis level of 2007.

Emerging economies worst hit

The unemployment rate for developed economies decreased from 7.1 per cent in 2014 to 6.7 per cent in 2015. In most cases, however, these improvements were not sufficient to eliminate the jobs gap that emerged as a result of the global financial crisis.

Moreover, the employment outlook has now weakened in emerging and developing economies, notably in Brazil, China and oil-producing countries.

“The unstable economic environment associated with volatile capital flows, still dysfunctional financial markets and the shortage of global demand continue to affect enterprises and deter investment and job creation,” explains Raymond Torres, Director of the ILO Research Department.

“In addition, policy-makers need to focus more on strengthening employment policies and tackling excessive inequalities. There is much evidence that well-designed labour market and social policies are essential for boosting economic growth and addressing the jobs crisis and almost eight years after the start of the global crisis, a strengthening of that policy approach is urgently needed,” adds Torres.

The authors of the WESO also document the fact that job quality remains a major challenge. While there has been a decrease in poverty rates, the rate of decline in the number of working poor in developing economies has slowed and vulnerable employment still accounts for over 46 per cent of total employment globally, affecting nearly 1.5 billion

people.

Vulnerable employment is particularly high in emerging and developing economies, hitting between half and three-quarters of the employed population in those groups of countries, respectively, with peaks in Southern Asia (74 per cent) and sub-Saharan Africa (70 per cent).

Tackling informal employment

Meanwhile, the report shows that informal employment – as a percentage of non-agricultural employment – exceeds 50 per cent in half of the developing and emerging countries with comparable data. In one-third of these countries, it affects over 65 per cent of workers.

“The lack of decent jobs leads people to turn to informal employment, which is typically characterized by low productivity, low pay and no social protection. This needs to change. Responding urgently and vigorously to the scale of the global jobs challenge is key to successful implementation of the United Nations’ newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” concludes Ryder.

1. [World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2016: News, videos and charts](#)

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