



## World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2025

For Prelims: [International Labour Organisation's \(ILO\)](#), [Unemployment](#), [Labor Market](#), [G20 countries](#), [Informal Work](#).

For Mains: World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2025.

[Source: TH](#)

### Why in News?

The [International Labour Organisation's \(ILO\)](#) has released its "World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO): Trends 2025" report, highlighting that the global unemployment rate remained at a historic low of 5% in 2024.

- The report points to ongoing challenges such as **slow economic recovery**, **geopolitical tensions**, [climate change](#), and **social uncertainties** affecting the labor market.

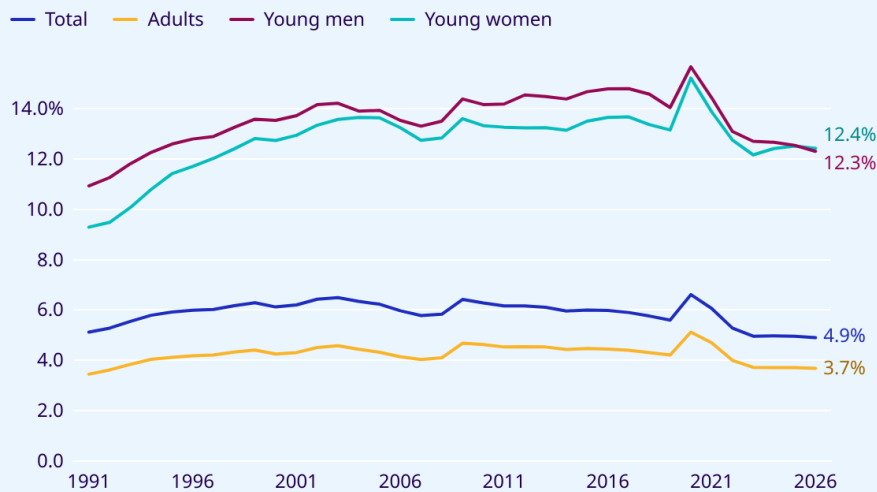
### What are the Key Highlights of the WESO Trends 2025 Report?

- **Steady Global Unemployment:** The global unemployment rate held steady at 5% in 2024, with youth unemployment notably high at 12.6%.

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## ► Global unemployment rates (%)

The global unemployment rate is the percentage of the labour force who is out of a job and actively seeking one

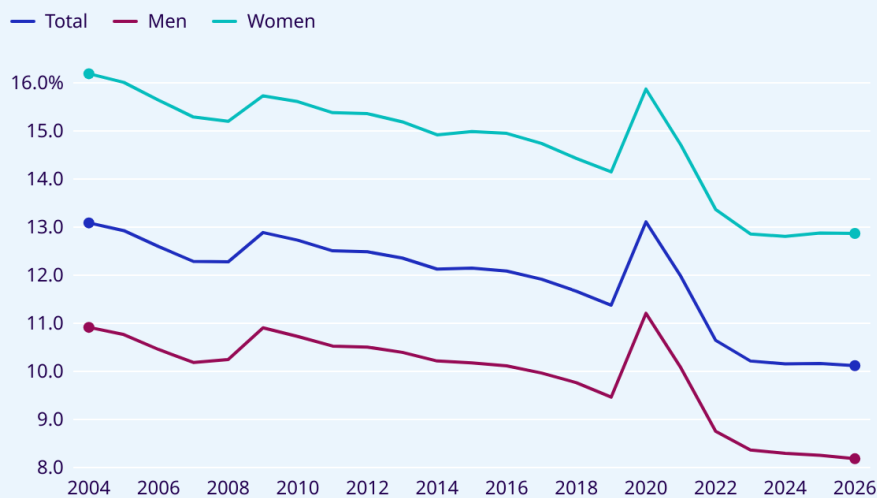


Source: ILOSTAT, ILO modelled estimates, November 2024.

- **Youth unemployment is highest in upper-middle-income countries at 16%**, and lower in **low-income countries at 8%**, often due to **underemployment** and informal work.
- This group faces significantly higher unemployment compared to adults.
- **Low-income countries (LIC)** face challenges in generating decent jobs, and informal employment has returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- **Regional Disparities in Employment:** In **Sub-Saharan Africa**, **employment growth** is largely in the **informal sector**, where workers lack stability and social protection, where around **62.6% of households live on less than USD 3.65 per day**.
  - Similarly, in other **developing countries**, while **employment is growing**, many **workers remain in vulnerable**, low-paying, and informal jobs.
- **Economic Growth Trends:** **Economic growth** for **2024 was recorded at 3.2%**, slightly down from **3.3% in 2023** and **3.6% in 2022**.
  - The report forecasts a **similar economic expansion in 2025**, followed by a gradual deceleration in the medium term.
- **Global Jobs Gap:** The **global jobs gap (i.e. number of people who desire work but are unable to find it)** stood at **402 million in 2024**.
  - This includes 186 million unemployed individuals, 137 million discouraged workers, and 79 million who are unable to seek employment due to caregiving responsibilities.
  - While the gap has narrowed since the **Covid-19 pandemic**, it is expected to stabilize in the coming years.

## ► Global jobs gap (%)

The global jobs gap is the percentage of total population who want to work but do not have a job



Source: ILOSTAT, ILO modelled estimates, November 2024.

- **Labour Force Participation:** Labour force participation has **increased in advanced economies**, particularly among **older workers and women** and it has **declined in low-income nations**, contributing to slower employment growth globally.
- **NEET Statistics:** In 2024, the global **NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)** population reached **259.1 million**, with 85.8 million **young men (13.1%)** and 173.3 million **young women (28.2%)**.
  - **LICs saw a sharp rise**, with youth unemployment worsening. NEET rates among young men increased by 4% points above pre-pandemic levels.
- **Debt Distress: High interest rates and economic challenges** have resulted in **unsustainable public debt**, particularly in **developing countries**.
  - Around **70 nations are at risk of debt distress**, with many **spending more on servicing debt** than on essential services like health and education.
  - Example: **In Africa**, the **median public debt** stands at about **65% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**.
- **Stagnant Wages Amid Shifting Labor Dynamics:** **Real wage growth remains weak** post-pandemic due to **low employment growth** and a **shift in labor market power toward employers**.
- **Green Transition:** The **renewable energy sector** saw **global employment rise** from **13.7 million in 2022** to **16.2 million in 2023**, driven by **investments in solar and hydrogen energy**, but **benefits are unevenly distributed**, with **46% in China**.
  - The digital sector **offers job potential**, though many countries lack the necessary **infrastructure and skilled workforce** to capitalize on it.

## What are the ILO Recommendations for Achieving Social Justice and SDGs by 2030?

- **Leverage Remittances:** ILO recommends that **LICs**, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, should **channel remittances into productive investments** rather than consumption.
  - Governments can create mechanisms to **consolidate remittances into investment funds, boosting private sector growth** and **long-term development**.
- **Structural Transformation:** Countries should **address structural bottlenecks** by focusing on **modern services and manufacturing** to create quality jobs, **reducing regional disparities** through investments in **infrastructure, education, and skills training**.

- **Youth skill development:** Provide **quality education and training to youth**, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills necessary for participation in **modern labor markets** and to take advantage of emerging industries like **green energy** and **technology**.
- **International Collaboration:** Promote **global cooperation**, sustainable growth, and inclusive fiscal and monetary policies that benefit all workers.

# UN SPECIALISED AGENCIES

UNSA are 15 autonomous international organizations working with the UN

**Part III**  
ILO, WHO and ITU

## ILO

*The only tripartite (govt., trade unions, employers) and the 1<sup>st</sup> affiliated UNSA*

- Estd. - 1919 (Treaty of Versailles)
- Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
- Functions -
  - » Set labour standards
  - » Develop policies & programmes for promoting decent work for all
- Member States - 187 (India a founding member + permanent member of ILO Governing Body)
- International Labour Conference -
  - » Meets annually in Geneva
  - » aka International Parliament of Labour
- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 1998 (Principles) -
  - » Freedom of Association and The Right to collective bargaining
  - » Elimination of forced or compulsory labour
  - » Abolition of child labour
  - » Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation


## WHO

*WHO became functional on April 7, 1948 (now celebrated as World Health Day)*

- Estd. - 1948
- Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
- Functions -
  - » Provides leadership on global health matters
  - » Shaping health research agenda
  - » Monitoring, assessing health trends
- Member States - 194 (incl. India)
- WHO's regional office for SE Asia is located in New Delhi
- World Health Assembly - WHO's decision-making body, held yearly at Geneva
- Major Initiatives -
  - » UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030)
  - » UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)
  - » GLASS Initiative (AMR)
  - » WHO 1+1 Initiative (2019) (TB)

## ITU

- Estd. - 1865
- Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
- Functions -
  - » Facilitate intl. connectivity in communication networks
  - » Allocate global radio spectrum and satellite orbits
- Member States - 193 (India a regular member since 1952)
- Important Publication -
  - » Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI)



**Drishti Mains Question:**

How does the growth of informal employment impact stability and social security? Can the promotion of formalization and AI reskilling contribute to sustainable employment?

**UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)**

**Q. International Labour Organization's Conventions 138 and 182 are related to (2018)**

**(a) Child Labour**

- (b) Adaptation of agricultural practices to global climate change
- (c) Regulation of food prices and food security
- (d) Gender parity at the workplace

**Ans: (a)**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/world-employment-and-social-outlook-trends-2025>

