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# ILOPasifika update

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## Prioritize world of work in implementation of Paris climate agreement

**Urgent measures to address climate change should prioritize decent work and a just transition to greener economies, says the International Labour Organization, ahead of COP26 climate change conference.**

The ILO has called on countries to prioritize the world of work aspects of the Paris agreement on climate change to ensure a just transition to greener economies.

Governments need to integrate into their long-term plans towards zero carbon emissions, clear and concrete measures to promote decent work. In addition, countries should join the coalition of 48 countries that have already committed to formulate national policies to ensure that decent work and livelihoods are at the centre of global and national climate action, the ILO says.

Alongside these measures, comprehensive and coherent policies are needed, involving all actors in the world of work, to enable successful structural change and deep economic and social transformations.

Moustapha Kamal Gueye, head of the ILO's Green Jobs programme stressed the need for a full range of social and labour market policies to be deployed, in line with the ILO's Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.

This includes concrete action in the areas of sustainable growth, industrial and sectoral policies, employment and social protection policy, public investment, enterprises, labour migration governance, skills, occupational safety and health, social protection, labour market policies, rights, social dialogue and tripartism.

**'We must ensure that climate change policies leave no one behind and empower all climate actors by promoting decent job creation and by fully taking into account the needs and priorities of indigenous and tribal peoples, persons with disabilities, displaced people with disabilities, migrant workers, workers in the informal economy and the rural sector and youth,'** *Moustapha Kamal Gueye, ILO unit head, Green Jobs*

Adequate national and international financing are essential to ensure that the transition to sustainable economies does not adversely affect workers' livelihoods.

This means public financing for skills and enterprise development, social protection, active labour market policies and job creation policies.

"National and international financing mechanisms need to address the Paris objectives of decent work creation and a just transition of the workforce and the economy, as part of the responses to climate change," Gueye stressed.

The ILO took part in discussions at the UN Climate Change Conference, in Glasgow, Scotland from 31 October – 12 November.



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In a pre-recorded statement shot by public broadcaster TVBC, Tuvalu's Foreign Minister Hon. Simon Kofe addressed cameras while standing knee-deep in the ocean to show how his low-lying Pacific island nation is on the front line of climate change.

## COP26 Side Event - Pacific Climate Change Mobility and Human Security

9th November 2021 - **Building a comprehensive regional approach to climate mobility;** The Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) programme organized a COP26 side event showcasing the advancements of the Joint-Working Group, chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu, to advance a regional framework to address climate related mobility. The side event included key messages, innovative ideas and lessons learned from the PCCMHS programme. Under the programme, ILO is working with partner governments in the Pacific to increase the labour and human rights protection of migrant

workers. ILO is also seeking to improve access to labour mobility schemes, and support reintegration.

Ms. Chihoko Asada-Miyakawa, ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific in her address said "Of specific relevance to today's discussions is the focus of the Global Call on a just transition to environmental sustainability. As we move towards a low carbon economy, we must not leave anyone behind. We must create solutions that are good for people, the planet and the economy.

Such a move has the potential to create millions of jobs and promote social justice. The challenges faced by migrant workers must be addressed during this transition, if it is truly to be 'just'."

ILO acknowledge the vital work of Pacific Island governments and non-government stakeholders in advocating on issues relating to climate mobility and looks forward to continued collaboration with IOM, ESCAP, OHCHR and all related partners and thanks the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security for supporting this programme.

## A dialogue of the Pacific Islands: Just Transition in the Pacific and Climate Action for Jobs Initiatives

4th November 2021 - A dialogue hosted by the Government of Samoa and ILO focused on Just Transition efforts in the Pacific highlighting what activities countries have already undertaken and discussed what future plans they have to take climate action and ensure people's jobs and well-being are at the centre of the transition to a carbon-neutral and climate-resilient economy. With a strong emphasis placed on disaster resilience and recovery efforts and building back better following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pacific Island countries are facing serious climate change concerns. A Just Transition to sustainable development can power a human-centred approach to the future of work that transforms economies and societies, maximizes opportunities of decent work for all, reduces inequalities, promotes social justice, and supports industries, workers and communities.

Pacific Island countries have played a leading role in raising climate change issues. However, while many actions have been taken, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted social and economic health of Pacific Island countries and slowed progress on these important issues.

### Event speakers included:

- **Hon. Leatinuu Wayne Sooiolo**, *Minister of Commerce Industry & Labour for the Government of Samoa.*
- **Matin Karimli**, *Director - ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries*
- **Albert Meredith**, *Assistant CEO - Industrial Relations, Employment Permits and OSH at the Samoa Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour and Secretariat to the Samoa National Tripartite Forum.*
- **Professor Nii-K Plange**, *Social Scientist by profession, Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Research at the Fiji National University.*
- **Jennifer Ula-Fruean**, *Vice Chair for the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation and the Immediate Past President for the Samoa Chamber of Commerce.*
- **Patricia Mallam**, *Chairperson of the ILO-funded Fiji Young Entrepreneur's Council, and Vice Chairperson for the Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council.*
- **Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson**, *co-founder of Women in Climate Change in Samoa.*
- **Tomasi Peni**, *ILO National Coordinator for Samoa*
- **Laurel Anderson Hoffner**, *ILO consultant, gender equality and environmental sustainability*

Samoa is committed to continued dialogue to build a stronger Pacific island voice not only on Climate Change but also the creation of decent, productive and inclusive employment.

*Honorable Leatinuu Wayne Sooiolo  
Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour - Samoa*

Now, more than ever before, it is critical that Pacific countries continue to raise their voices at the international level and take action to support a Just Transition and Climate Action for Jobs in the Pacific region.

*Matin Karimli  
ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries*

The success of the Green Works Initiative in Samoa, a first platform of its type in the Pacific, brought together private sector, public sector, NGOs and youth to create a sustainable green jobs contractor model, that still exists to date.

*Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson  
Co-founder of Women in Climate Change in Samoa*

For just transitions to work in the Pacific, the process needs to be owned at the local or regional level, not merely in the climate change-oriented discussion among multilaterals and central governments.

*Patricia Mallam, SCMP  
Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation*

► **Solomon Islands committed to developing a gender-responsive National Employment Policy**

Honiara - (ILO News) The ILO in partnership with the Government of Solomon Islands has completed a virtual seminar in Solomon Islands to support the design and formulation of the national employment policy (NEP) for inclusive structural transformation and environmental sustainability which took place from the 14 – 16 September 2021.

The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on the labour markets in Pacific Island Countries (PICs), including Solomon Islands, bringing disproportionate levels of unemployment and underemployment across different groups of people, sectors and regions.

The purpose of the 3 day seminar was to help constituents and other state administration bodies to understand the requirements for the development and implementation of a high-quality gender-responsive policy based on relevant information and analysis for review and adoption by the respective key authorities in the countries.

The seminar provided practical guidance for the formulation of employment policy framework structured

by the current conditions related to COVID-19 crisis and national priorities. It included discussions related to strategic planning, consultation, coordination, preparation of policy options, implementation and monitoring.

The seminar's priority focus was on measures to help Solomon Islands in their efforts to respond to the COVID-19 crisis towards job-rich recovery. For the NEP it is important in identifying employment policy priorities and transforming it into practice is a multifaceted process that requires solid commitment and coordination from all actors involved. It requires extensive efforts to define recovery measures and employment resilience policies and map them instrumentally through national implementation mechanisms.

► **A key challenge for Solomon Islands in response to the crisis is to generate more and better employment opportunities while ensuring that no one was left behind."**

*Kinan Albahnasi  
Decent Work & Employment Specialist, ILO Pacific*

► **Q&A with Tonga's Minister of Trade and Economic Development**

Hon. Tatafu Toma Moeaki speaks to us about the Tongan Government's recently passed national budget, and the support it includes for informal sector micro, small and medium business enterprises [MSME's] which have struggled through the economic hardships of the pandemic. He also speaks on select government initiatives that could provide other Pacific countries with good practices for designing their own national support strategies for MSMEs.



Hon. Tatafu Toma Moeaki

**Pre Budget, the government announced its COVID-19 assistance package for the informal sector. How is this progressing?**

The Tongan Government announced its economic and social stimulus package for targeted affected businesses in March 2020. To provide relief and build the resilience of the informal sector in Tonga, government approved an initial allocation of Tongan pa'anga 0.5million [USD 220,500] that was later increased to Tongan pa'anga 3.2million [approx. USD 1.4 million] as financial grants to informal businesses.

The objective of the stimulus was to provide cash flow assistance to affected informal enterprises to support operational vitality.

The informal business support attracted the largest number of applications, with a total of over 6,800 applications received from across all islands of Tonga. 71% of the total applications were from women, mostly in the handicraft industry.

As majority of the applicants were women, a total of Tongan pa'anga 2.3 million [approx. USD 1 million] was granted to female owned enterprises and sole traders. More than 60% of approved businesses in each of the 5 island groups were also owned by women, thus highlighting the female prevalence in the informal business sector in Tonga. This phase of government assistance closed in April 2021.

[visit our website to read the full interview](#)



## ► Samoa presides over international dialogue

Samoa took the international stage on labour matters as the Co-Chair of the International Advisory Board for Climate Action for Job Initiative. Honorable Minister, Afioga Leatinu'u Wayne So'ialo chaired the second annual ILO International Advisory Board on 9th October 2021.

The Board reinforces the need for 'just transition' aligned with global goals to ensure that workers and firms affected by the transformation to carbon-neutral economies are adequately supported and that opportunities for the creation of decent and green jobs are fully captured.



## ► Digitalization enables 2,000 informal sector workers access social security



Port Vila - (ILO News) Accessing social security for all Ni-Vanuatu engaged in the informal economy is set to improve, through the deployment of three digital platforms in Vanuatu. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Vanuatu National Provident Fund (VNPF) has signed an Implementation Agreement to develop, launch and deploy digital platforms. Payment gateways of the mobile phone apps of Vodafone (M-VATU), Digicel (MyCash) and Vanuatu Post Limited's mobile wallet (Kwikpay) have been launched.

Data received from M-VATU alone indicate that 2,000 Vanuatu informal sector workers have registered. ILO research indicates that working in the informal sector increases puts many people at a disadvantage - particularly women, youth and persons with disabilities - as they are not able to access formal services, including those available for COVID-19 recovery. It is therefore critical to design and deploy innovative and inclusive digital platforms to ensure that no one is left behind.

According to the ILO supported Vanuatu Workers rapid assessment on the impact of COVID-19 and TC Harold in 2020, the share of workers employed in the informal economy was 66.9%. Informal employment among women is higher than that of men in Vanuatu, as women make up 68.7% of total informal sector workers. With the prolonged impact of COVID-19 leading to more job redundancies from the formal sector, the informal sector is predicted to inflate further.

**The use of technology and digital platforms to reach out to the informal sector to enable greater and easy access to social security is an investment that will yield good outcomes, including by contributing to extending the broader social protection floor in Vanuatu"**

*Matin Karimli  
Director, ILO Pacific*

## UN DAY 24th October 2021

## ILO calls for global solidarity to build peaceful and sustainable future

The world is faced by its biggest crises since the United Nations was established in 1945. A global pandemic and a climate emergency. It is humanity's common agenda to address both and secure a resilient recovery for people and planet. Ahead of COP26, the ILO calls on all countries to work together for a more equitable, peaceful and sustainable future.



## Pandemic impact on jobs, worse than expected: ILO

**ILO is projecting that global hours worked this year will be 4.3 per cent below pre-pandemic levels, the equivalent of 125 million full time jobs. This is a dramatic revision of the projection made in June, of 3.5 per cent or 100 million full-time jobs.**

The eighth edition of the ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work also warns of a “great divergence” between developed and developing countries, saying it will persist without concrete financial and technical support.

The loss of working hours in 2021 because of the pandemic will be significantly higher than previously estimated, as a two-speed recovery between developed and developing nations threatens the global economy as a whole, says the International Labour Organization.

The ILO is now projecting that global hours worked in 2021 will be 4.3 per cent below pre-pandemic levels (the fourth quarter of 2019), the equivalent of 125 million full-time jobs. This represents a dramatic revision of the ILO's June projection of 3.5 per cent or 100 million full-time jobs. The eighth edition of the ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work, warns that without concrete financial and technical support, a “great divergence” in employment recovery trends between developed and developing countries will persist.

### Regional differences

In the third quarter of 2021, total hours worked in high-income countries were 3.6 per cent lower than the fourth quarter of 2019. By contrast, the gap in low-income countries stood at 5.7 per cent and in lower-middle income countries, at 7.3 per cent. From a regional perspective, Europe and Central Asia experienced the smallest loss of hours worked, compared to pre-pandemic levels (2.5 per cent). This was followed by Asia and the Pacific at 4.6 per cent. Africa, the Americas and Arab States showed declines of 5.6, 5.4 and 6.5 per cent respectively.

### Vaccines and fiscal stimulus

This great divergence is largely driven by major differences in the roll-out of vaccinations and fiscal stimulus packages.

Estimates indicate that for each 14 persons fully vaccinated in the second quarter of 2021, one full-time equivalent job was added to the global labour market. This substantially boosted the recovery.

In the absence of any vaccines, globally, the loss in hours

worked would have stood at six per cent in the second quarter of 2021, rather than the 4.8 per cent recorded.

The highly uneven vaccine roll out, means that the effect was largest in high-income countries, negligible in lower middle-income countries and almost zero in low-income countries.

According to ILO, these imbalances could be rapidly addressed through greater global solidarity in respect of vaccines.

The agency estimates that if low-income countries had more equitable access to vaccines, working-hour recovery would catch up with richer economies in just over one quarter.

### Uneven stimulus

Fiscal stimulus continued to be the other key factor in the trajectories of recovery. However, the gap remains largely unaddressed, with around 86 per cent of all measures concentrated in high-income countries.

On average, an increase in fiscal stimulus of one per cent of annual GDP increased annual working hours by 0.3 percentage points relative to the last quarter of 2019. The crisis has also impacted productivity, leading to greater disparities. The productivity gap between advanced and developing countries is projected to widen to the highest level since 2005.

ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder, highlighted the unequal vaccine distribution and fiscal capacities saying that “both need to be addressed urgently.” He pointed to the Global Call to Action for a human-centred COVID-19 recovery, a roadmap adopted last year by the International Labour Conference that commits countries to ensuring that their recovery is fully inclusive, sustainable and resilient. [Read more](#)

**It is time to implement this roadmap, which is fully aligned with and supports the UN's Common Agenda and its Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection.”**

*Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General*





### ► Samoa's progress on the ratification of Convention 190

25th October 2021 - ILO Office in Samoa in partnership with Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour with Ombudsman Office from the Human Right Unit conducted two (2) days awareness programme on the Conventions 190 (21 -22nd October 2021) on Violence and Harassment in workplaces as the inclusion on the amendments in the Labour and Employment Relation Amendments Act 2020. Awareness targets mainly the workers and employers in the Island of Savaii to ensure they are aware of their role in world of work when the Law is active as well as part of Samoa progress on the ratification of Convention 190 this year.

### ► Seasonal Workers in Vanuatu receive business awareness training

11th October 2021 - Employers are constantly seeking/retaining workers with entrepreneurial mindset as it provides for soft skills that deliver efficient and quality work. V-Lab in collaboration with the Department of Labour Vanuatu and the ILO is piloting a Businesses Awareness training programme as part of Pre Departure Briefing (PDB) for departing seasonal workers. To date the pilot programme has successfully reached out to 63 seasonal workers. The programme also sets the foundation for further business development services for seasonal workers as part of re-integration. This initiative is supported by the United Nations in the Pacific Informal Economies Recovery Project.

### ► SIDS Climate Change & the World of Work

A consultation workshop for the collaborative development of educational resources on SIDS, climate change and the world of work took place on 7th and 8th October 2021 virtually. ILO consultant, Professor Nii-K Plange together with seven other SIDS academics and technical experts have been engaged to develop the educational resources, which aim to introduce youth and future leaders into some of the key concepts and dynamics. The objective of this initiative is to promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) between SIDS across different regions. The secondary goal is to strengthen understanding and raise awareness among youth in these regions on key aspects of climate change and the world of work.

### ► Fiji holds validation workshop on the Maritime Labour Convention

6th October 2021 - ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), also known as the Seafarers' Bill of Rights, sets out international minimum standards to ensure decent working and living conditions for all seafarers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, shipping has played a continuing critical role in global supply chains. Seafarers have been seriously impacted and have worked long periods at sea and have been stranded around the world. Fiji ratified the MLC, 2006 on 10 October 2014. Fiji is now taking steps to implement the MLC, 2006 in Fijian legislation and consultations are being carried out with key stakeholders.

### ► Creative entrepreneurs in Palau receive business training

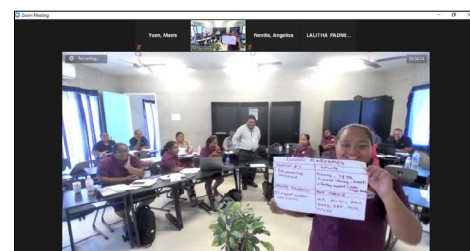
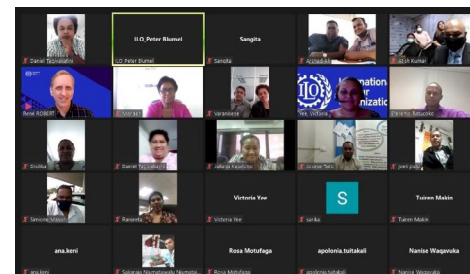
21st September 2021 - Time management is an essential skill for entrepreneurs and can be used effectively to capitalize on business opportunities in a competitive creative market. This is exactly what creative entrepreneurs in Palau received training on, to complete their programme for the month of September. The 10 series business training programme targeting informal sector creative enterprises impacted by COVID-19 is being delivered by the Palau Chamber of Commerce and supported by the ILO and UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji through the United Nations in the Pacific Informal Economies Recovery Project.

### ► Working together to end Child Labour in Fiji

12th September 2021 - To strengthen efforts to combat child labour in Fiji, ILO supported a series of training and awareness seminars online. The sessions were conducted in partnership with the Fijian Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations. The interactive sessions saw active participation and contributions from Government ministries, employer's organizations, worker organizations, CSO's and faith-based organizations.

### ► Kiribati reintegration action plan for returned migrant workers

31st August 2021 - As part of the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) programme, the ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries is supporting the Kiribati Ministry of Employment and Human Resources (MEHR) to formulate an action plan on reintegration of returned migrant workers through a consultative process. One component of the PCCMHS programme is aimed at building capacity to implement labour migration policies and programs.



## ► A voice for informal economy workers in Vanuatu

12th September 2021 - In an effort to give informal sector workers a voice in Vanuatu, the public sector union Vanuatu Association of Public Service Employees (VAPSE) and private sector union Vanuatu National Workers Union (VNWU) Sweatshop are collaborating to organise the informal sector. Organizing meetings took place in Luganville, Santo, with 60 weavers (mat and basket) and 20 food stall mothers. 30 informal sector workers signed on as new members. This initiative is supported by the ILO & ILO Actrav through the UN United Nations in the Pacific Informal Economies Recovery Project.



## ► Supporting public-private partnership to promote Covid-19 safe business operations

Suva (ILO News) – In a bid to minimize financial stressors on Fijian micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), the United Nations partnered with the Fijian Government, the Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation (FCEF), Fijian Competition & Consumer Commission (FCCC) and the Suva Retailers Association (SRA) to design, print and deliver tailored COVID-Safe signage packs to MSMEs, including those in the informal sector.

► In such unprecedented times, developing and strengthening public-private partnerships to support MSMEs including those in the informal sector, can deliver cost effective and meaningful outcomes. This can lead to businesses to open safely, to employ workers and contribute to economic recovery” *Matin Karimli, Director - ILO Pacific*



## Staff Corner

### ► Welcome to the ILO Pasifika Team

Mr. Ahmad Ali joined the ILO Pacific team as the Senior Programme Assistant as of 20 September 2021. Ahmad is an experienced and versatile development aid and private sector practitioner with more than 15 years of experience in Fiji and the Pacific, including working with partners in the region and internationally. Particularly keen on building meaningful relationships with cross sectoral stakeholders and possessing a high level of personal integrity and working towards common goals. Previously worked on the TACKLE Project with the ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries.



### ► ILO Pasifika Disability Champion

The ILO Pasifika team is excited to announce that Bimlesh Raj has been selected to be the Disability Champion for the office. Bimlesh in the last few years has been actively involved in many activities supporting disability issues in the region, including the signing of the letter of Intent with the Pacific Disability Forum and the organizing of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy Scorecard exercise within the UNCT. Disability Champion act as catalysts to assist disability mainstreaming in respective headquarters units and field offices. While they may be involved in implementing some disability-specific activities, the main focus is to aid colleagues and management to identify strategies and work methods that enable and build capacity to mainstream disability inclusion issues into colleagues' own areas of work.

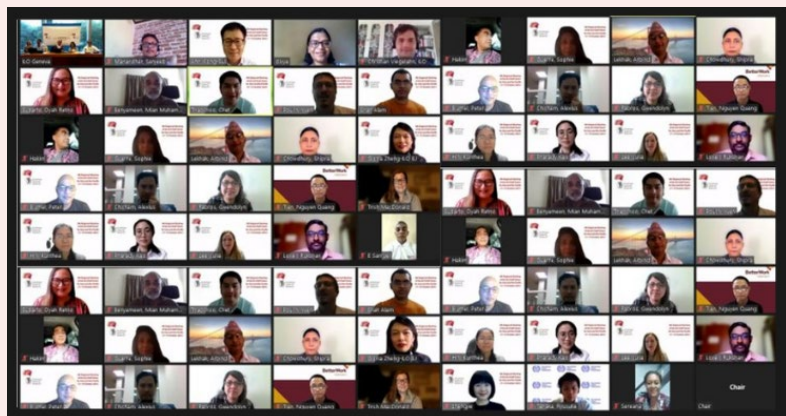


### ► 8th Regional Meeting of the Staff Union for Asia and the Pacific

From 11 to 14 October 2021, the newly elected Staff Union representatives for the Asia and Pacific region were invited to participate in their statutory meeting, which, for the first time, was entirely virtual. This was an opportunity to address the specific concerns of colleagues and members working in this very large region:

- the need to negotiate a harmonized recruitment and selection throughout the region
- the strengthening of the joint committees
- the strengthening of internal social dialogue in all the country offices and at the regional level

It was also an opportunity to build the capacity of newly elected officials so that they are better equipped to fulfil their role as Staff Union representatives. Sereana Rokoika (CO-Suva SU Secretary) & Peter Blumel (CO-Suva's Newly elected chair) joined the meeting from Fiji.





## Publications and information material

The ILO publishes a wide range of books, reports, working papers, training manuals, videos and multi-media material, relevant to the Pacific. They can be downloaded directly from the ILO CO-Suva website <https://www.ilo.org/suva> or send your requests for e-copies to: [suva@ilo.org](mailto:suva@ilo.org)

### World Social Protection Report 2020-22: Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future

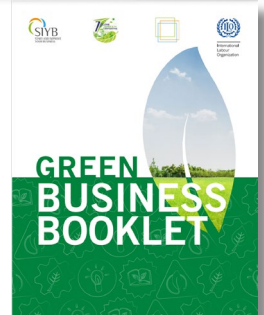
This ILO flagship report provides a global overview of recent developments in social protection systems, including social protection floors, and covers the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on new data, it offers a broad range of global, regional and country data on social protection coverage, benefits and public expenditures.

Following a life-cycle approach, the report analyses progress with regard to universal social protection coverage, with a particular focus on achieving the globally agreed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The report includes access to comprehensive statistical tables containing the latest social protection data, including detailed country data on SDG indicator 1.3.1. [Read more](#)



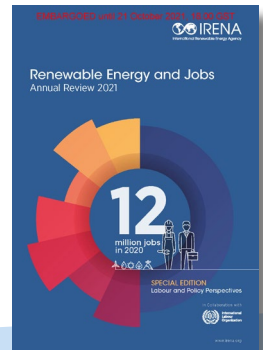
### Green Business Booklet

The Green Business Booklet (GBB) aims to help aspiring entrepreneurs to set up green businesses and existing enterprises to go green. It was developed as a joint initiative of the ILO's Decent Work Team for South Asia (DWT-New Delhi), Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Unit and Green Jobs Programme, and provides guidance on how to generate green business ideas, how to design a green business plan, and how to green the processes of a business. [Read more](#)



### Renewable Energy and Jobs – Annual Review 2021

The year 2020 demonstrated that not even a global pandemic can slow the advance of renewable energy. It also revealed the tight connections between environments, economies and human wellbeing. These, and the rapidly rising challenges of climate change, reinforce the need for a just and inclusive transition toward a clean, reliable energy supply and decent and climate-friendly jobs. That transition is well under way: Last year jobs in the renewable energy sector grew to 12 million. [Read more](#)



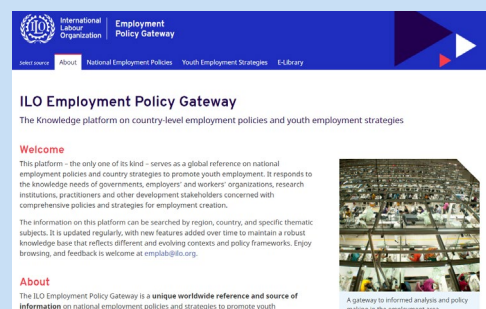
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## Interested in national employment policies and country strategies to promote Youth Employment?

### ILO launches new online database on employment policies and strategies to promote an inclusive job-rich recovery

The ILO has launched a new global database on national employment policies and strategies to promote jobs for young people. Aimed at governments, social partners, research institutions, practitioners and other development stakeholders, the Employment Policy Gateway enables users to search existing national policies and strategies for employment promotion by region, country and themes. This allows comparisons of national policies across countries and supports research and analysis on existing policy instruments.

<https://www.ilo.org/empolgateway/>



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