



Economic &

Social Affairs

# The Employment Imperative



Report on the World Social Situation 2007



United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# **The Employment Imperative**

## **Report on the World Social Situation 2007**



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## DESA

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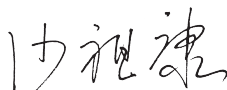
## Preface

Since the publication of the first issue of the *Report on the World Social Situation* in 1952, the series of reports have served as a foundation for discussions and policy analysis of socio-economic issues at the intergovernmental level. Over the years, these reports have identified emerging social trends of international concern and provided analysis of major development issues with national, regional and international dimensions.

The current issue, *Report on the World Social Situation 2007*, carries on that tradition by focusing on the subject of employment. More specifically, it surveys the global trends in employment and work, as well as the socio-economic context within which the world of work has evolved in the last two decades. The *2007 Report* examines the concept of full and productive employment and its relationship to socio-economic security and decent work, and highlights the critical importance of employment in achieving the overall goal of social development, and poverty eradication in particular.

The *2007 Report* closely examines four areas of increasing concern that are of particular importance when addressing the issue of employment: jobless growth, global informalization of the labour market, economic and social liberalization, and migration. It shows that these socio-economic trends are, for the most part, resulting in increased insecurity for workers. The *Report* analyses the impact of these trends on major social groups as well as the gender dimension of the changing labour market. It underscores the challenges faced by policymakers at the beginning of the twenty-first century with respect to achieving productive employment for all in developed and developing countries alike.

By providing an analysis of major challenges to achieving decent work and offering some policy directions for moving forward the employment agenda, the *2007 Report* strives to guide decisive actions at all levels aimed at building a more secure and prosperous society for all. Full, productive and decent employment is essential for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including poverty eradication. Productive employment for all is not a policy option — it is an imperative for the twenty-first century.



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## Explanatory Notes

The following symbols have been used in tables throughout the *Report*:

Two dots (..) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.

A dash (—) indicates that the item is nil or negligible.

A hyphen (-) indicates that the item is not applicable.

A minus sign (-) indicates a deficit or decrease, except as indicated.

A full stop (.) is used to indicate decimals.

A slash (/) between years indicates a statistical year, for example, 1990/91.

Use of a hyphen (-) between years, for example, 1990-1991, signifies the full period involved, including the beginning and end years.

Annual rates of growth or change, unless otherwise stated, refer to annual compound rates.

Details and percentages in tables do not necessarily add to totals, because of rounding.

The following abbreviations have been used:

AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey(s)
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	foreign direct investment
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	gross domestic product
GNI	gross national income
GNP	gross national product
G-7	Group of Seven major industrialized countries
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IFF	International Finance Facility
ILO	International Labour Organization

IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SDR	special drawing rights
TB	tuberculosis
TRIPS	Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAT	value added tax
WHO	World Health Organization
WIDER	World Institute for Development Economics Research
WIID	World Income Inequality Database
WTO	World Trade Organization

Reference to dollars (\$) indicates United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.

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Unless otherwise indicated, the following country groupings and subgroupings have been used in the *Report*:

*Developed market economies:*

North America (excluding Mexico), Southern and Western Europe (excluding Cyprus, Malta, and Serbia and Montenegro), Australia, Japan, and New Zealand.

*Economies in transition:*

Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, comprising the Baltic Republics and the member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

*Developing countries (49 countries):*

All countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific (excluding Australia, Japan and New Zealand), Cyprus, Malta, and Serbia and Montenegro.

Where data are from UNESCO, the following regional groupings have been used:

*Arab States and North Africa:* Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

*Central Asia:* Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

*Central and Eastern Europe:* Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine.

*East Asia and the Pacific:* Australia, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Nauru, Niue, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.

*Latin America and the Caribbean:* Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Bolivia, British Virgin Islands, Brazil, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

*North America and Western Europe:* Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America.

*South and West Asia:* Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

*Sub-Saharan Africa:* Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

*Least developed countries:*

Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Lao People's Demo-

cratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Yemen, and Zambia.