

India: Work

Among India's 522 million workers about 47 percent work in agriculture, 31 percent in services, and 22 percent in industry. Most of those working in agriculture are small subsistence farmers. While less than one-fifth of the labor force works in industry, India is a leader in Asia in some industries, including nuclear power production and research and garment production. Efforts have been made in recent years to take advantage of the nation's large number of highly educated people who are fluent in English by luring jobs "outsourced" from the United States, including computer programming, health care services, and customer-service centers.

Although India's constitution guarantees a worker's right to form unions, India's trade unions have been in decline for the past several decades. Today, only about 5 percent of India's labor force is unionized. The number of those employed in the informal sector, including contract workers and casual workers, has increased significantly, making up an estimated 85 percent of the labor force. The minimum wage for a select list of jobs is set by the central government, while others are set by the state governments. To reduce the disparity in minimum wages across the country the government sets a national floor level, which was RS176 (\$2.47) per day in 2019.

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