

Labour Market Profile 2018



BOLIVIA

This profile is an updated report that provides a comprehensive overview of the country's labour market situation.

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LO/FTF Council

Danish Trade Union
Council for International
Development Cooperation

PREFACE

The report is divided in eleven thematic sections including: trade unions, employers' organizations, tripartite structures, national labour legislation, violations of trade union rights, working conditions, situation of the workforce (with subsections: unemployment, sectoral employment, migration, informal economy, child labour, gender, and youth), education (with a subsection of vocational training), social protection, general economic performance, and trade. Additionally, the Appendix presents a list of approved labour market related legislations as well as status of ratification of International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions.

Data are used from international databanks (e.g. the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM) and NATLEX as well as the World Bank's World Development Indicators), national statistical institutions and ministries. Information is also collected from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), U.S. Department of State, media sources (e.g. LabourStart, national news, etc.) along with trade unions centers, employers' organizations, NGOs, among others.

Several indexes such as the Global Rights Index, the Doing Business Index, the Governance Indicators, the Human Development Index and the Global Competitiveness Index are used as proxy indicators of the labour market's environment. The indexes' methodologies and the data quality can be followed by the sources' websites.

The views expressed in this document, which has been reproduced without formal editing, are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organisations.

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This Labour Market Profile is prepared by the LO/FTF Council Analytical Unit in Copenhagen with support from the LO/FTF Council Sub-Region Office in the Latin America.

All other labour market profiles of the countries where LO/FTF Council operates are available at our website: <http://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/content/landeanalyser>

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Executive Summary

The development of the Plurinational State of Bolivia's labour market has been hindered in recent years due to economy and governance downturns. The country's main export income from natural gas plummeted and the state's budget was affected negatively. An impressive reduction of working poor during the 2000s and in the beginning of the 2010s was also slowed down. It is still not easy doing business in Bolivia, which keeps the economy and labour market confronting a large degree of informality.

Reforms of the labour market legislations were approved in recent years on a wide range of aspects, but they remain with some flaws in terms of the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions' standards. An upsurge in trade union right violations was noted and two Freedom of Association cases were opened in ILO complaints procedure in 2017.

Results of the social dialogue in tripartite institutions with participation from the government, trade unions and employers' organizations are ambiguous. First of all, negotiations between employers and workers without government participation are limited. On the other hand, several trade unions from the educational sector noted progress in negotiations with the government, while attempts in the health sector deteriorated in 2017.

Minimum wage was raised by 11% on basic salary in 2017. In real terms, however, this was a limited increase as impacts of economic downturn and the wage increase is only compensating for the loss purchasing power. A point often overlooked is that 7 out of 10 workers operate in the informal economy, which often is related to lack of knowledge and/or incentives to formalize economic activities. Most of these workers are not protected by labour market regulations, including minimum wages. Notwithstanding, a reduction of the working poor is reflecting the wage increases along with an upsurge in social safety net programmes and vocational training enrolment.

Status of employment was under changes during the 2000s. Particularly, there was a growing segment of employees while a drop among contributing family workers. This was also reflected by an increasing

employment in the service sector and a decrease in the agricultural sector. The industry sector stayed basically the same. The move from agriculture to the service sector likewise coincided with signs of an increasing urbanisation. Estimations, however, suggest that the change in different working arrangements has stalled during the 2010s, so far.

Unemployment is low at 4.0% in Bolivia, but underemployment is widespread. This is related to the lack of employment in the formal sector. An increasing number of youths are not in employment, education or training (iNEET), and this group is increasing for both men and women. Another issue is the high rate of children in employment. A reform of the school system was enacted in 2010, but it has yet to improve the net enrolment in primary school, and there are no indications of it having curbed the high rate of working children.

Point often overlooked is that Bolivia's labour market is confronting challenges of ethnic discriminations as well as gender gaps caused by cultural aspects such as *machismo*.

Social protection coverage has increased in the country during the last decade. The ratio of population protected peaked at 40% in 2013. It has dropped slightly afterwards in the aftermath of the before mentioned economic downturn. The public healthcare system was also affected negatively by the government's reduction in revenues of direct taxes on natural gas, which have affected the public healthcare expenditures not financed by private household's out-of-pocket payments.

Employers' organizations rank the labour market efficiency very low and recorded a weak cooperation in labour-employer relations. In contrast, the trade union density was relatively high at 28% of all employees. An inflow of new members in trade union is confronting challenges. First of all, employees under contract are often prevented from unionizing by norms on the approved statute of public servants and supreme decree from 2015. Secondly, the dominating informal economy has also affected the trade union affiliation.

COUNTRY MAP



Source: Google

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TRADE UNIONS

The Bolivian trade union movement is organized within the Bolivian Workers' Centre (Spanish: *Central Obrera Boliviana*, COB). This organization covers a total 2.0 million members, including affiliated trade union members and agrarian workers or indigenous peasants.¹ Bolivia has a trade union density at 11% of the total workforce and 28% of the waged and salaried workers (Table 1).

Table 1: Status of trade unions in Bolivia

Number of trade unions (2007)	163
Dues	US\$0.15-4.38
Members of COB	2,000,000 *
Members of trade unions (paying dues, COB)	560,000
Trade union members (paying dues) share of labour force	11 %
Trade union members (paying dues) share to waged workers	28 %
Trade union members share of labour force, incl. affiliated all COB members	40 % *
Women member share of trade unions (CONMERB & CTEUB)	64 %

* The members of COB's are covering a broad segment of organizations, e.g. trade union members and indigenous activists.

Source: [ILO, LABOURSTAT, UNIONS2011: Trade Union Membership Statistics 2011](#); and LO/FTF Council research.

There are differences in how much workers' pay in union-fees in the public sector and in private sector. For the teachers, for example, the Ministry of Education hold back the union-fee in the salary for each teacher, 60% of the fee is send to the federation and 40% to the confederation. The monthly fee for a teacher is about 30 Bolivianos (Bs) (US\$4.4). The Confederations for teachers and health workers pay yearly Bs 5 (US\$0.73) for each member to COB. In the private sector (i.e. construction) the worker pays 1% of his basic salary to the union which is around Bs 10 (US\$1.46) a month; the Union pay to the Federation Bs 1B (US\$0.15); and the Federations pay between Bs 100-300 (US\$14.6-43.8) as their monthly fee to the Confederation. It is not all Confederations who pay to COB.²

A key challenge of bringing more members into the trade union movement is related to the 20-worker threshold for forming a union that has proved an onerous restriction, i.e. an estimated 72% of enterprises had fewer than 20 employees. In addition, workers under contract are often prevented from unionizing by norm on the new act on arbitration from 2015 (Act # 2027).³

Bolivian Workers' Centre (COB)

The Bolivian trade union movement is unitary. COB (Spanish: *Central Obrera Boliviana*) was founded in 1952 within the framework of the 1952 Revolution. As mentioned, COB divides the member organizations in farm workers, trade unions and indigenous groups. Some of these organizations' individual interests can once in a while be contradictory. As mentioned COB has around two million members out of which 560,000 workers are members of trade unions, which equals 28% of the total COB membership (Table 1). COB is not affiliated to the International Trade Union Federation (ITUC).

Historically the most powerful COB federations have been from mining and industrial sectors. Public sector federations have gained importance lately though. Especially in education have there been growth with CONMERB (*Confederacion Nacional de Maestros de Educaci3n Rural en Bolivia*) and CTEUB (*Confederacion de Trabajadores de Educaci3n Urbana de Bolivia*), as well as CSTSPB in health (the *Confederacion Sindical de Trabajadores en Salud Bolivia*) experiencing membership gains. The powerful Transportation Workers Union rejoined the COB to solidify its support to the new Pension Law that was launched in December 2013 (see also the sections: National Labour Legislation and Social Protection). The latter trade union is made up of the owners of the transport vehicles, which in turn have personnel hired to drive the vehicles: heavy cargo trucks, urban and interdepartmental passenger buses, among others.

According to the COB statutes the General Secretary of COB must come from the Mine-workers Federation (FSTMB). The Confederations for Construction and Manufacturing Workers (CGTFB) are also very active. The latter federation affiliates workers in the textile industry, beverages, construction materials (e.g. cement, bricks, etc.), and foodstuff, among others.

COB has been negotiating with the government to improve the labour market condition, like some reforms to the Labour Code and the Social Security System. In addition, several trade unions have promoted bipartite agreements with their employer institution in the health and education sectors, respectively, looking for an improvement of the workers' conditions.

The relationship between the government and the trade union movement was deteriorating in 2016. Trade union rights violations were widespread (see also the section: Trade Union Rights Violations). During 2017, many

trade unions voiced concerns over the government's reluctance to recognise and organise certain trade union organisations that has created trade union parallels.⁴

On the positive side, trade unions have supported and ratified the government's "Process of Change" in their organic statutory spaces; a support that was given on the basis of respect for labour rights and achievements.

EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATIONS

The Global Competitiveness Index provides employers' view of a wide range of aspects, including labour market efficiency. The latter is elaborated upon surveys among employers in Bolivia. They considered the labour market as poor and rigid; ranking 136 out of 138 countries (1st is the best). Based on information from the surveys, some of the main issues were redundancy costs, hiring and firing practices as well as cooperation in labour-employer relations. The labour market efficiency highest scoring is in women participation in the labour force (Table 2).

Table 2: Labour market efficiency in Bolivia, 2016-2017

Indicator	Rank
Total	136
Cooperation in labour-employer relations	133
Flexibility of wage determination	106
Hiring and firing practices	136
Redundancy costs (weeks of salary)	137
Effect of taxation on incentives to work	106
Pay and productivity	129
Reliance on professional management	127
Country capacity to retain talent	114
Country capacity to attract talent	117
Women participation in the labour force	76

Note: Rank from 1 to 135 (1 is highest).

Source: [The Global Competitiveness Report, 2016-2017, 7th pillar: Labour market efficiency](#)

Confederation of Private Employers in Bolivia (CEPB)

CEPB (Spanish: *Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia*) has 27 affiliated member organizations, e.g. the Agricultural Chamber of the East; the Association of Wheat and Oilseed Producers; and the Chamber of Industry, Commerce, Services and Tourism of Santa Cruz.⁵ It is governed by an executive committee and is represented in various tripartite forums. It has committees within Customs and Food Safety, Legal, Trade, Economy, Health and Social Security, Tax and Housing and basic services.

The overall objective of CEPB is to promote and actively participate in the process of economic and social development of Bolivia, supporting the philosophy of free enterprise and the market economy as essential foundations of such a process.⁶ There are several private employers who wield considerable political leverage. Several times CEPB has not been invited for tripartite consultation during recent reforms.

State control on private companies generally has increased, particularly on taxation, regulatory and corporate compliance. During recent years, CEPB has complained to the government on excessive control from certain authorities, i.e. unjustified and disproportionate sanctions. Among others, large controversial tax claims with private companies are in process of resolution by administrative or judicial authorities.⁷

In 2015 and 2016 CEPB implemented a reform of the organization simplifying its administrative structures as well as redesign the principles services offered by the organization.⁸ In November 2016 CEPB and the Ministry of Institutional Transparency and Counter Corruption also launched a round table with the objective of promoting good practices, initiatives and policies on transparency in the private sector. CEPB has raised their concerns on the speculation of water price which currently constitutes a crisis.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

As already mentioned, several trade unions have raised concern over the attitude from the government regarding effective development of social dialogue, as the government mainly establishes relationships partners (including trade unions) that are related to its political position.

The wage increase has been defined in the context of the Social Dialogue between the government and the COB (see also the section: Working Conditions). In contrast, CEPB expressed "deep concern" over the negotiation process being carried out by the national government and the COB on the wage increase for 2017 without the participation of representatives from the employer organisations.⁹

On the positive side, social dialogue demonstrated progress in several cases. First of all, in the education sector there was negotiated an agreement between the Confederation of Urban Education Workers of Bolivia (CTEUB) and the government on an increase in paid hours for the primary education level of 88 hours

worked to 96 hours worked; this has benefited around 40,000 trade union members. Also the National Confederation of Teachers of Rural Education in Bolivia (CONMERB) and the government continued making progress in closing a gap on the 'working hours not paid'; currently the primary level has advanced to a payment of 108 hours, with a work of 112 and 120 hours. The latter benefitted around 10,000 affiliated trade union members on the national level.

On the negative side, the social dialogue with the Ministry of Health and the Trade Union Confederation of Health Workers Bolivia (CSTSPB) has deteriorated and attempts to improve working conditions, e.g. negotiations of *Escalafón al Mérito*, *Bono de Frontera* therefore stalled in the beginning of 2017.

Collective bargaining and voluntary direct negotiations between employers and workers without government participation is limited. Among others, public sector workers not employed in the administration of the State and agricultural workers are amongst those who are still denied the right to bargain collectively.¹⁰

Most collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) are restricted to addressing wages. Research has shown that Bolivia - along with Argentine and Uruguay - has a relatively high share of wage and salaried workers that are covered by CBAs with more than 70% covered (Table 3). This is related to the fact that most companies are unionized. It should be taken into consideration that the wage and salaried workers cover just 38% of the total employment. Stated differently; a majority of the workforce are operating in the informal economy and outside CBA coverage (see also the section: Informal Economy). This means that the overall CBA coverage among the total workforce in Bolivia continues to be low.

Table 3: Status of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) in Bolivia

Number of CBAs	N/A
Workers covered by CBAs	N/A
Share of workers covered by CBA	< 70 % *

* This estimation is assessed to be based on wage and salaried workers.

Source: [IZA & Carlos Lamarche, Collective bargaining in developing countries, 2015](#)

CENTRAL TRIPARTITE STRUCTURES

Mediation and Arbitration¹¹

Labour disputes are first handled by a labour inspector, who sets up a conciliation board with representatives

from both parties. If the board fails in settling the issue, the conflict is brought to the Arbitration Tribunal. The Tribunal consists of one member from each of the parties and it presides by the chief labour inspector. Decisions by the tribunal is only binding if the parties agree; it is an essential public service or by special resolution. If conciliation and arbitration fails the parties may initiate a strike or lock-out.

The National Labour Court handles complaints of antiunion discrimination. In practice the system is cumbersome. Rulings often take a year or more. According to sources, the court ruled in favour of discharged workers in some cases and required their reinstatement. Some trade union leaders have argued that problems have frequently been resolved or becoming no longer relevant by the time the court rules. In practice, government remedies and penalties are often ineffective and insufficient to deter violations for this reason. This is related to that labour courts are operating with insufficient resources, which has a negative impact in limited freedom of association.¹²

A draft Conciliation and Arbitration Law was launched in 2015. It resulted from a broad consensus among state institutions, public enterprises and the private sector. It was a first step to promote times of change in foreign investment protection (see also the section: Trade).¹³

National Tripartite Commission – Occupational Safety and Health

A national tripartite committee of employers, trade unions and government representatives is responsible for monitoring and improving occupational safety and health standards and enforcement. The Commission has reports of unfair labour practices and unsafe working conditions. By the same token, the Ministry of Labour has offices for worker inquiries and complaints.

Other bi/tripartite organs

- National Health Fund (*Spanish: Caja Nacional de Salud*).
- National Commission for the eradication of child labour (*Spanish: Comisión Nacional de Erradicación Progresiva del Trabajo Infantil (CNEPTI)*).
- Productivity and Competition Commission (*Spanish: Comisión de Productividad y Competitividad*).

NATIONAL LABOUR LEGISLATION

Constitution

The Constitution from 2009 improved several trade union rights. The constitution provides for protection of general and solidarity strikes, and the right of any working individual to join a union. In addition, the Constitution also incorporated and recognized the rights of indigenous people guaranteed in the International Labour Organization's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (C169) and working towards processes of autonomy and self-governance of indigenous communities in Bolivia.¹⁴ The latter has been somewhat controversial among the international donor community.¹⁵

The ILO Committee also noted with satisfaction that there was a progress on the recognition of the universal nature of the right to organize and collective bargaining for all workers, including agricultural workers, in the Constitution of 2009.¹⁶

Labour Act (Spanish: *Ley General del Trabajo*)¹⁷

The Labour Act is from 1942, and regulates collective agreements, working conditions, wages, leave, work of women and children, occupational safety and health, health care, trade unions, employers' organisations, labour disputes and strikes. The law allows only one union per industry. Moreover it prohibits anti-union discrimination and requires reinstatement of workers fired for union activity. The law does not require government approval for strikes and allows peaceful strikers to occupy business or government offices.

As already mentioned, workers may form a union in any private company of 20 or more employees. The law requires that at least 50% of the workforce be in favour. However, the law entails prior government authorization to establish a union and confirm its elected leadership, permits only one union per enterprise, and allows the government to dissolve unions by administrative fiat. Equally important, the Labour Act prohibits most public employees from forming unions; but some public sector workers (including teachers, transportation workers, and health-care workers) are legally unionized and actively participate as members of the COP without penalty.¹⁸

COB and the Ombudsman's Office on several occasions called for the deletion of article 12 of the Labour Act, assuring that it was an offense against workers' rights. In March 2017 the Plurinational Constitutional Court declared this Article 12 unconstitutional and pointed out

it could be used to dismiss workers, i.e. it was removed from the legal system of the country. It not only eliminated the notice of dismissal but even also abolished the types of employment contracts. The government has argued that the reform will harm the Bolivian workers and jeopardize the benefit of eviction. Notwithstanding, the ruling opens the possibility that employers can choose any form of contract with their workers. This can create new causes of dismissal.¹⁹

Pension Act (Spanish: *Ley de Pensiones, Ley 065*)

The Act from 2010 is a semi-contributory scheme, to increase the level of the pensions of workers with low incomes through a solidarity fund financed in part by the employers' solidarity contribution and by contributions from insured persons with higher incomes. The Act was amended in December 2013 with higher pension benefits and lower retirement age (see also the section: Social Protection). Among trade unions the law does not provide a decent retirement, i.e. workers will resume the mobilizations for achieve an income of 70% of the total earned.

Old Adults Act (Spanish: *Ley General de las Personas Adultas Mayores*)

This Act (*Ley 369*) from 2013 regulates the rights, guaranties and duties of old age as well as the institutionalization of their protection. In addition, guarantee rights of decent old age in terms of benefits and in the framework of the Solidarity Pension of the *Sistema Integral de Pensiones* (SIP) (see also the section: Social Protection).

Child Labour Act²⁰ (Spanish: *Ley de la Juventud*)

This Act (*Ley 342*) from 2010 prohibits all paid work by children under the age of 14 as well as a range of dangerous, immoral, and unhealthy types of work for minors under 18. Labour law permits apprenticeship for 12 to 14-year-old children with various formal restrictions. The law was amended in July 2014, making it more flexible and allowing children as young as 10 years old to work legally. This raised international criticism since it contravened its legal obligations by ignoring the ILO's Minimum Age Convention. In addition, it has been worrisome that the high net enrolment in primary school rates in Bolivia has dropped significantly in recent years (see also the section: Education). On the other hand, the law was met positively by several other organisations, e.g. Bolivia's Union of Child and Adolescent Workers (UNATSBO) which actively campaigned for its passing. UNATSBO argues that child workers were previously treated as 'invisible', but are

now with safeguards (see also the section: Child Labour).²¹

Participation and Social Control Act²² (*Ley de participación y control social*)

This Act (Ley 341) from 2013 establishes and strengthens participation and control of social control on social sectors, including trade union organizations and indigenous people, in formulation and implementation of public policy.

Other labour market legislations

Several other legislations exist that regulate, set standards and restrictions for the labour market in Bolivia. ILO registered a total 240 national labour, social security and human rights related legislations in 2018 (April).²³ It was registered that some pieces of new/amended legislations were approved in recent years (Table 4 and Appendix Table 25)

Table 4: Status of the national labour, social security and human rights related legislations in Bolivia, 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of new/amended legislations	17	7	6	6

Source: [ILO, NATLEX, Bolivia](#)

A fast view of some key improved legislations during the last decade could be summarized as follows: prohibiting unlawful firings; legalizing strikes; nationalizing private pension funds; increasing retirement benefits; provides three months of paid benefits after a worker is fired or resigns; and no longer allows employers to fire women with children less than a year old.

Observations on the labour legislation

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has some concerns of the labour market legislations in Bolivia, especially with reference to freedom of association and rights to strike, among others:²⁴

- The law prohibits anti-union discrimination, but does not provide adequate means of protection against it.
- Labour legislation sets out extensive registration procedures that could amount to a requirement of prior authorization by the Government for the establishment of a trade union.
- Industrial unions need the support of at least 50% of the workforce in order to be established.

- Administrative authorities' power to unilaterally dissolve, suspend or de-register trade union organizations.
- Public sector workers not employed in the administration of the State and agricultural workers are amongst those who are denied the right to bargain collectively.
- Obligation to observe an excessive quorum or to obtain an excessive majority in a ballot to call a strike.
- General strikes and solidarity strikes are totally prohibited..

According to the U.S. State Department, the government enforced applicable labour laws in the formal sector, but it is often ineffective.²⁵ In addition, a large majority of the workforce operate in the informal economy which most often is operating outside the labour regulations (see also the sub-section: Informal Economy).

Ratified ILO Conventions

With reference to Bolivia's ratification of the international labour standards, a total of 50 ILO Conventions are ratified (see also Appendix Table 26):²⁶

- Fundamental Conventions: 8 of 8.
- Governance Conventions (Priority): 3 of 4
- Technical Conventions: 39 of 177.
- Out of 50 Conventions ratified by Bolivia, 47 are in force, 3 Conventions have been denounced; none have been ratified in the past 12 months.

The latest ratified Convention was the Safety and Health in Construction Convention (No. 167) from February 2015.

Bolivia ratified the Domestic Workers Convention 189 in April 2013. So far there have not been registered changes in labour legislation since the adoption of the Convention. Events are increasing recognition of the National Federation of Domestic Workers of Bolivia (FENATRAHOB) and facilitated dialogue between the domestic workers' union and the Labour Ministry.²⁷

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Trade union rights violations have increased since 2016 in Bolivia. On the Global Rights Index, the country moved from a ranking 3 out of 5 from 2014-2016 reaching now at 4 out of 5, which is interpreted as 'systematic violation of rights': the government and/or

companies are engaged in serious efforts to crush the collective voice of workers putting fundamental rights under threat (Table 5).²⁸

Table 5: Global Rights Index, Bolivia ranking, 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Ranking on the Global Rights Index	3	3	3	4

Note: Five clusters in total with ratings from 1 to 5. A country is assigned the rating 5+ by default, if the rule of law has completely broken down.

Source: [ITUC, Global Rights Index](#)

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has registered 1 case of violations of trade union rights in Bolivia in 2015, 6 in 2016 and none in 2017 (September). These cases were related to: Barriers to trade union recognition (2016); undue intervention, parallel union and intimidation of the *Sindicato de Trabajadores Mixto de Industrias Copacabana* workers (2016); criminal prosecution in retaliation for strike action at ENVACRUZ (2016); trade union leaders unfairly dismissed at MITSUBA (2016); trade union leaders fired in retaliation for list of demands at hat factory in Sucre (2016); trade union leaders at Red Uno S.A. unfairly dismissed (2016); and decree imposes recognition requirement for trade unions (2015).²⁹

Other reports have registered that violence during labour demonstrations continued to be a serious problem. Among others, in May 2016 the National Assembly passed a decree, annulling the president's executive order from 2012 outlawing the use of dynamite during public protests. The government overturned the decree in August 2016 due to the increased and deadly violence between the miners and police during the August miner's protests.³⁰

Although the labour law prohibits all forms of forced or compulsory labour, it remains a serious problem. Among others, many men, women and children are victims of forced labour in domestic service, mining, ranching, and agriculture. Not to mention, some cases have illustrated that the government does not effectively enforce the law banning forced labour. As mentioned before, this is due to a lack of resources to implement more thorough enforcement and restricted the ability of authorities to provide services to victims of forced labour.³¹ Some sources have estimated that more than 46,000 persons were victims of forced labour.³²

Bolivia has two active confidential cases in the ILO's Committee of Freedom of Association (Table 6). These cases were raised by the COB in June 2017 and the

Federation of Medical Practitioners' Unions and Allied Branches of the National Health Fund (FESIMRAS) in April 2017.

Table 6: Freedom of Association cases in Bolivia, 2017 (October)

ILO Complaints Procedure	Number of Cases
Active	2
Follow-up	0
Closed	37

Source: [ILO, NORMLEX, International Labour Standards country profile, Bolivia](#)

WORKING CONDITIONS

In May 2017, there was a wage increase for the public sector and reference for the private sector. The increase was 7% on basic salary and 11% on National Minimum Salary; the latter amount is used to calculate the Seniority Bonus. The National Minimum Wage was set at 2,000 Bolivianos per month (US\$289). In real terms this was a limited increase as an impact of economic downturns and the wage increase is only compensating for the loss of the purchasing power of incomes. The mean earning average is significant higher, though (Table 7)

Table 7: Wages and earnings in Bolivia

	Current Bolivianos	Current US\$
Minimum wage (2017)	2,000	289
Mean earnings (2015)	2,838	411
Ratio of minimum wage to value added per worker (2016)	0.6 *	
Growth of real minimum wage (2010-2017)	187 %	
Growth of real mean earnings (2010-2015)	35 %	

* Ratio of minimum wage to value added per worker denotes the minimum wage share of labour productivity.³³

Sources: [Tradeingeconomics.com](#); ILO and the World Bank; real wage calculation from LO/FTF Council.

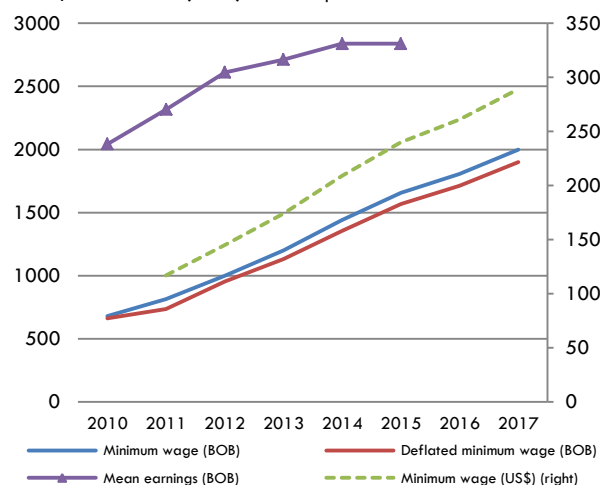
The government's official estimate of the median poverty income level was 733 bolivianos (US\$107) per month as of 2013. Thus, the minimum wage is hovering far above this poverty income level. Point often overlooked is that a large segment of the workforce operates in the informal economy which does not apply the minimum wage regulations (see also the sub-section: Informal Economy).

It is also observed gaps between salaries of trade union members and non-members in both the private

and public sector of 17% and 7.5% respectively, which explains the relatively high incentive of being a union member.

Wages are increasing in Bolivia. There has been a growth of the real minimum wage at 187% in the period from 2010 to 2017. A low and steady inflation in consumer prices has kept the salaries' purchasing power but a gap has slowly been widening in recent years (Table 7 & Figure 1).

Figure 1: Minimum and mean wage trend in Bolivia, 2010-2017, Bolivianos (BOB) and US\$



Sources: *Tradeingeconomics.com* and *ILO*

There are several income gaps in Bolivia. First of all, some studies have revealed high income gaps between men and women of up to 45%. Secondly, there are ethnic wage gaps. Based on studies, women, who know only Spanish, earn 28% more than women who are bilingual in Spanish and an indigenous language. Women, who are bilingual, earn 25% more than women who only speak an indigenous language. This is an indication of ethnic biases that are present in Bolivia.³⁴

According to sources, the health and safety protection of workers in Bolivia is poorly enforced. The number of labour inspectors increased from 78 in 2015 to 97 in 2016. This equals 1 per 55,861 workers in the labour force. However, since workers from the informal economy are most often not covered by inspections a more precise estimation among the formal sector (i.e. employees and employers) equals 1 per 24,620. The ILO recommends 1 inspector per 40,000 workers in less developed countries and 1 per 20,000 workers in transition economies.³⁵ Notwithstanding, labour inspections remain inadequate to provide effective workplace inspection. This also explains that albeit law

provides for penalties for non-compliance, the enforcement is not effective. The penalties are also insufficient to deter violations.³⁶

By law, there are no restrictions on overtime work in Bolivia. To some extent, this explains that two out of three (66%) employed Bolivians work more than 40 hours per week, and over a third work more than 50 hours per week.

A fast overview of the working conditions regulations in Bolivia is available on Table 8 below.

Table 8: Working Conditions in Bolivia

Fixed-term contracts prohibited for permanent tasks	Yes
Maximum length of a single fixed-term contract (months)	12 months
Maximum number of working days per week	6.0
Premium for night work (% of hourly pay)	25
Premium for work overtime work (% of hourly pay)	100 %
Paid annual leave (average for working days with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure)	21.7
Minimum length of maternity leave	90 days
Source of maternity leave benefits	Social insurance
Unemployment protection after one year of employment	No

Source: [World Bank, Doing Business, Labour Market Regulation in Bolivia](#) and [ILO, Working Conditions Law Report 2012](#)

WORKFORCE

The total population in Bolivia is approximately 11.1 million and the workforce force consisted of around 5.577.000 workers in 2017. Around 62% of the population is of indigenous ancestry. The total employment-to-population rate was estimated at 70%, which is relatively high in comparison with the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) average at 63%. Especially women have a higher rate compared to the regional average, although the Bolivian women have a considerably lower employment-to-population rate compared to the men (Table 9).

Table 9: Employment-to-population ratio in Bolivia and the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), 2017

Age and Sex distribution

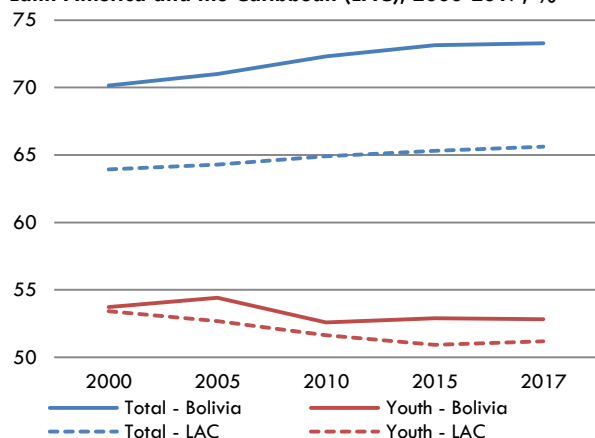
Sex	Age		Bolivia	LAC
Total	Total	15+	70 %	63 %
	Youth	15-24	49 %	47 %
	Adult	25+	79 %	69 %
Men	Total	15+	80 %	79 %
	Youth	15-24	56 %	61 %
	Adult	25+	90 %	87 %
Women	Total	15+	61 %	47 %
	Youth	15-24	41 %	32 %
	Adult	25+	68 %	53 %

Note: Income group - Lower-middle income.

Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

Labour force participation rate experienced a slight increase from 70% in 2000 to 73% in 2017. The country's rate has stayed above LAC average. The youth participation rate growth in Bolivia dropped marginally during the latter part of the 2000s, which was related to higher enrolment in secondary education (see also the section: Education). Also LAC's youth participation rate has experienced a slow decreasing trend staying below Bolivia's rate (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Labour force participation rate in Bolivia and the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), 2000-2017, %

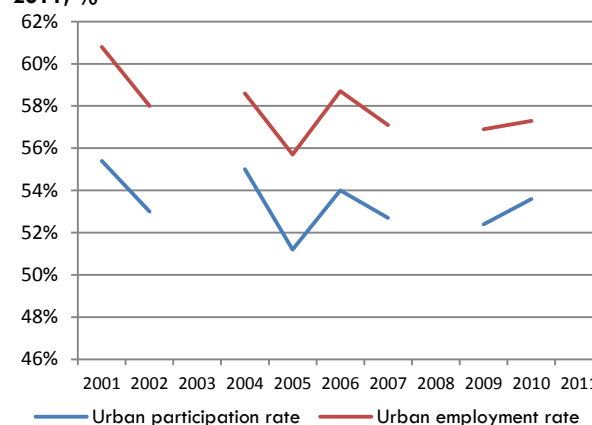


Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

Bolivia has one of Latin America's lowest urban labour participation rates on an average annual rate at 57%. Data has also revealed that Bolivians have experienced a decreasing urban participation and employment rate during the 2000s (Figure 3). This signals that the urban labour force is precarious. For example, legislation reforms to promote private actions on productivity and formality have produced some negative impacts due to wage increases that generated job evasion from the formal sector (see also the section: Informal Economy),

and there has also been a strong internal migration, of primarily indigenous Bolivians, towards the urban centres (see section on migration) This has also contributed to the falling employment rate in urban areas.

Figure 3: Urban labour participation rates in Bolivia, 2001-2011, %



Source: [ECLAC & ILO, The employment situation in Latin America and the Caribbean, Labour productivity and distribution issues, May 2012](#)

Inactivity

Approximately one out of four (27%) of the working age population (WAP, 15+) and almost one out of two (47%) of the youth population (15-24 years old) in Bolivia are inactive, i.e. do not work or study, on the labour market; and with deep gaps between men and women (Table 10).

Table 10: Inactivity rate in Bolivia, 2017

	Total	Men	Women
Inactivity rate	27 %	17 %	36 %
Inactivity rate, youth	47 %	40 %	54 %

Note: The inactivity rate is a measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that is not engaged actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work.

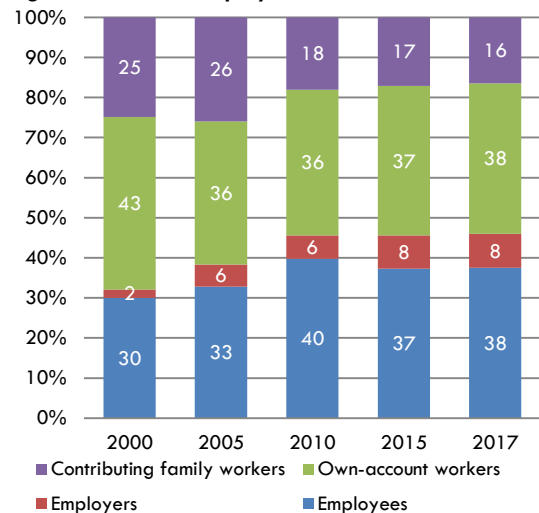
Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\)](#)

Status in Employment

During the 2000s, more workers entered into the formal sector as employees (i.e. with some kind of employment contracts that give them a basic remuneration). Also more became employers, which is defined as workers with one or more persons to work for them as employees, but they remain a minor segment. These growth trends were stalled during the 2010s, so far. Own-account workers (i.e. workers not engaged on a continuous basis and without any employees to work for

them) and contributing family workers (i.e. workers in a market- oriented establishment operated by a related person living in the same household) still reflect a labour market based on a large degree of informality.

Figure 4: Status in employment in Bolivia, 2000-2017, %

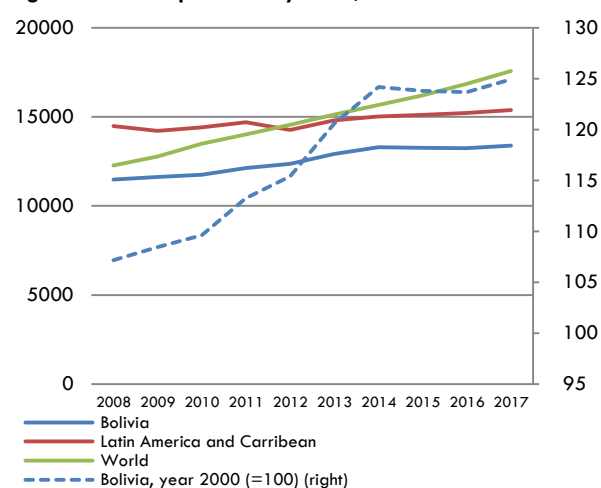


Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\)](#)

Labour productivity

Bolivia's labour productivity grew slowly during the last decade, but has stalled since 2014, most likely because of the 2015 drop in commodity prices (at least 76% of Bolivian exports come from the extractive industries; see section on trade). The country's productivity remains lower in comparison with the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the World averages (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Labour productivity trend, 2008-2017



Note: Labour productivity is estimated by 'lower-middle income' segments. Bolivia's labour productivity is defined as output per worker (i.e. GDP constant 2011 international US\$ in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) while LAC and World apply constant 2011 international US\$ in PPP; and indexed year 2000 (=100).

Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

Unemployment and Underemployment

Latinobarómetro surveys have revealed that two out of three people identify unemployment as the most important problem in Bolivia. Notwithstanding, the conventional unemployment rate is quite low at 4.0% and the youth unemployment rate at 7.8% in 2017. There are some gender gaps on these rates, however, e.g. men's youth unemployment rate is slightly lower than women's, i.e. 6.6% vs. 9.5%, respectively (Table 11).

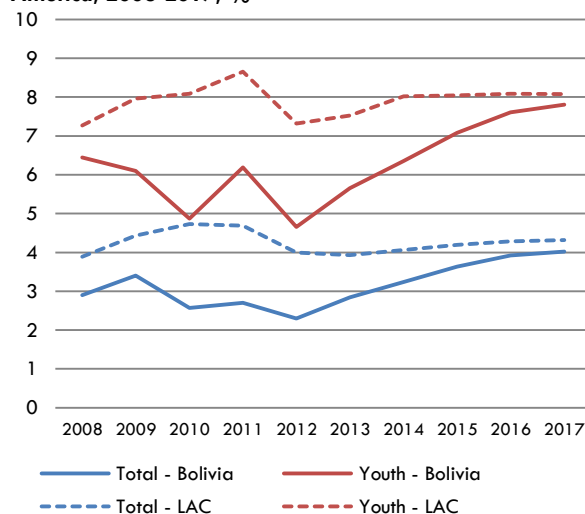
Table 11: Unemployment and Underemployment in Bolivia, 2017, %

	Total	Men	Women
Unemployment rate	4.0 %	3.3 %	5.0 %
Youth unemployment	7.8 %	6.6 %	9.5 %
Share of youth unemployed in total unemployed	39 %	42 %	37 %
Time-related underemployed as % of total employment (2009)	5.7 %	4.5 %	7.2 %

Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

Bolivia's total and youth unemployment rates are staying below the LAC averages; and the country has been estimated to have the lowest unemployment rate in South America.³⁷ However, in recent years the two before mentioned rates were on slowly increasing getting very close the regional averages (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Unemployment trend in Bolivia and the Latin America, 2008-2017, %

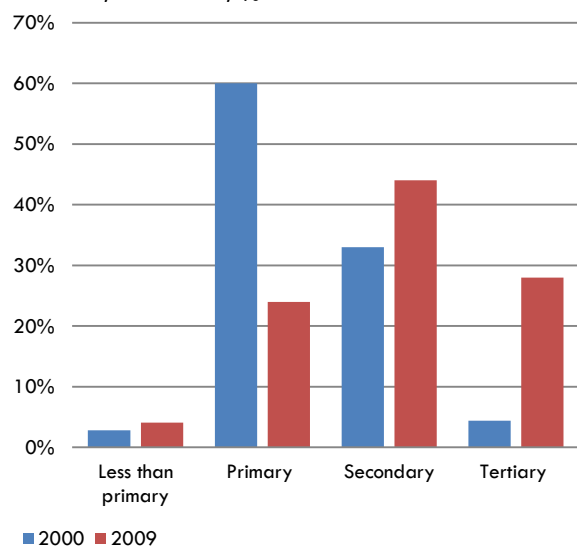


Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

Although the unemployment rate based on the statistical definition appears quite low in Bolivia, it is important to realize that underemployment is widespread. Underemployment is defined as employees who are not in full time employment, but are willing and able to work more, but cannot get full-time employment. The country confronts a lack of formal employment opportunities and many are instead operating as own-account workers and contributing family workers which often are in underemployment (see also Figure 4).

Other data show that the unemployment rate among people with less than primary education is very low at 4.1%. The unemployment by primary education attainment was extremely high at 60% in 2000 but plummeted down to 24% in 2009. This has been related to education reforms and the Child Labour Act (see also the section: Education). In contrast the unemployment by secondary and tertiary education attainment increased fast (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Unemployment by level of educational attainment in Bolivia, 2000-2009, %



Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

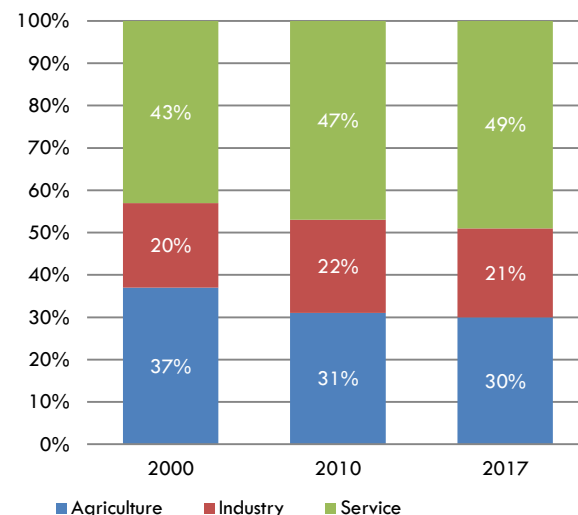
In terms of job quality regulations, workers in the formal sector have no unemployment protection after one year of employment (see also Table 8).

Sectoral Employment

The sectoral employment in Bolivia went through some structural transformations during the 2000s. The majority was related to rural agricultural workers moving towards the service sector in more urban areas. The industry sector also increased a little. However, based on estimations, the changes have stalled during

the 2010s so far (Figure 8). Equally important, the LAC average in terms of industry sector employment has a similar rate at 22% in 2017, while the agricultural sector is much lower by 16% and service sector of 63%.

Figure 8: Employment by aggregate sector in Bolivia, 2000-2017, %



Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\)](#)

The latest data available of total employment per sector was from 2009 and should therefore be read with some care. It was estimated that 1.6 million (32% of total employment) were in the agricultural sector. It was also the only employment sector that was, more or less, equally divided among men and women.

Within the industrial sector, manufacturing was the main provider of employment (11%), followed by construction (7.4%). The mining sector covered only 1.0% of the total employment. Overall, the industrial sector is very male dominated.

In the service sector, the trade and restaurant/hotel (20%) and community, social and personal services (17%) were the dominating subsectors in terms of employment. These two sectors were dominated by women. More information on the total employment per sector is available on Table 12.

Table 12: Total employment per sector, sector employment share and ratio of men in sector employment in Bolivia, 2009

Sector	Total sector employment	Sector employment share, %	Ratio of men in sector employment, %
Agriculture	1,606,408	32%	54%
Mining & quarrying	50,118	1.0%	94%
Manufacturing	567,613	11%	62%
Electricity, gas & water	14,381	0.3%	86%
Construction	370,852	7.4%	96%
Trade, restaurants & hotels	1,017,482	20%	36%
Transport, storage & communication	329,633	6.6%	87%
Finance, real estate & business services	203,922	4.1%	57%
Community, social and personal services	847,893	17%	42%
Other sources *	2,835	0.1%	74%
Total	5,011,137	100%	55%

* Activities not adequately defined.

Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

Looking at the sectoral distribution of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it was interesting to note that the agricultural sector produced 13% of total GDP. Taking into consideration that one out of three (32%) were in employment in agriculture, it suggests that the labour productivity is relatively low in this sector: GDP share by agricultural sector per workers was calculated at US\$2,670 per year. The vast majority of agricultural workers lack education and access to capital which inhibits their productivity.

Also the trade and hotel/restaurant sector had a relatively low share of 11% of GDP despite it contributed by 20% of the total employment. The employed workers in this sector create US\$3,567 per workers per year.

Other compelling estimations showed that the very narrow mining sector, in terms of employment, had a relatively high share of GDP at 12%. This equalled an extremely high economic GDP share of US\$79,009 per sector worker. First of all, this sector is very capital intensive. Secondly, working conditions in many mines remain poor. However, after years of negotiation and violent protests, a mining law was approved in June 2014, which brought it in line with the 2009

Constitution. This law denies cooperatives the right to partner with private companies, whether domestic or foreign. It bans private firms from registering minerals as property, which means they can't use them as collateral for loans or include them as assets in stock market filings.³⁸ More information on the GDP share by sector and per worker in Bolivia is available on Table 13.

Table 13: GDP share by sector in Bolivia, 2015, % and per worker

Sector	GDP share by sector, %	GDP share by sector per worker, US\$
Agriculture	13%	2,670
Mining & quarrying	12%	79,009
Manufacturing	13%	7,558
Electricity, gas & water	2.5%	57,364
Construction	3.6%	3,203
Trade, restaurants & hotels	11%	3,567
Transport, storage & communication	11%	11,012
Finance, real estate & business services	12%	19,418
Community, social and personal services *	23%	8,951

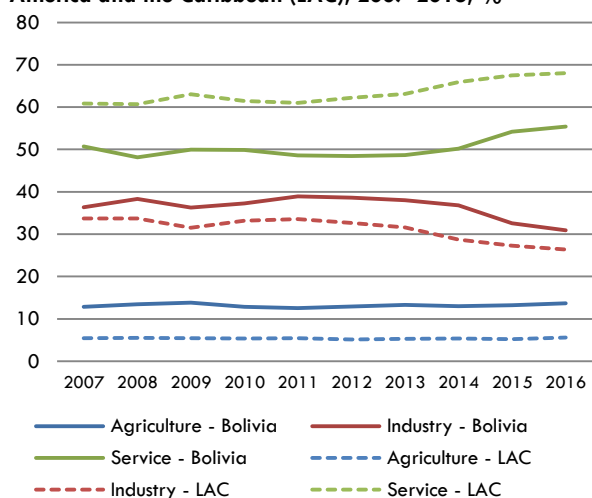
* This indicator is interpreted as public administration.

Note: GDP share by sector per worker is calculated by the total GDP (current US\$) divided by GDP share per sector origin which then is divided in number of workers per sector.

Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#); and [CEPAL, Bolivia: Perfil Nacional Económico](#)

Other estimations of the aggregated sectors' GDP share have shown that the agricultural sector has stayed on a flat growth during the last decade at around 13% on average. Both the industry and service sector also stayed stable until 2014 when the former dropped fast from 37% in 2014 to 33% in 2016 and the latter from 50% to 55% in the same period (see also the section: Trade). Another key point is that Bolivia has a low service sector share of GDP compared to the regional average with a percentage point gap of 13%. In contrast, Bolivia has higher rates on the agricultural and industrial sectors compared to the regional average (Figure 9)

Figure 9: Sectors' Share of GDP in Bolivia and the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), 2007-2016, %



Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#)

Migration

More leave than enter in Bolivia: The net migration rate was estimated at minus 12,357 per year. Bolivia received a relatively high amount of remittances at 3.8% of GDP on average, which is higher than the LAC average (Table 14).

Table 14: Migration Facts

Net migration (2008-2012)	Bolivia	- 61,794
Net migration rate (migrants/1,000 population) (2015)	Bolivia	- 0.69
Remittances received, % of GDP (2012-2016, av.)	Bolivia	3.8 %
	Latin America & the Caribbean	1.2 %

Note: Net migration rate is the difference of immigrants and emigrants within five years. A positive value represents more people entering the country than leaving it, while a negative value means more people leaving than entering it.

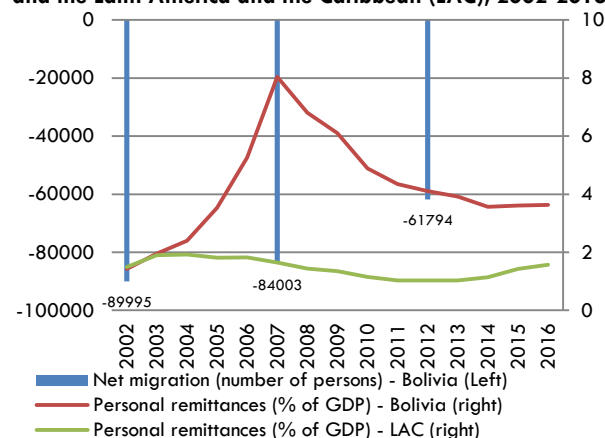
Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#); Knoema

The global financial crisis in 2007-2008 and tightenings of immigration policies in the European Union and the United States have made many return to Bolivia. Migration to Argentina and Brazil has increased instead.³⁹ Especially clandestine textile factories with low labour standards in Argentina are infamous for employing trafficked Bolivian migrants.⁴⁰

These changes are reflected in the migration trends. First of all, the negative net migration rate has been on a declining trend from minus 90,000 people in the period 1998-2002 to the around minus 62,000 in

2008-2012. Second, the remittances fell from its peak at 8.0% of GDP in 2007 to 3.6% in 2016 (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Net migration and remittance trends in Bolivia and the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), 2002-2016



Note: Net migration rate is the difference of immigrants and emigrants within five years. A positive value represents more people entering the country than leaving it, while a negative value means more people leaving than entering it.

Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#)

Between 700,000 and 1.6 million Bolivians live abroad. Several structural factors explain the emigration from Bolivia. For example are low levels of training, low salaries, lack of jobs, and precarious employment conditions incentives that encourage young and relatively inexpensive workers to emigrate to neighbouring countries, mainly to work in the textile industry.⁴¹ In practice, many Bolivian migrants are vulnerable to human trafficking and labour exploitation. There are efforts underway to establish better migration laws.⁴²

There has also been a fairly strong internal migration, primarily of indigenous people, which has given a rise to many political challenges. The main reasons are search for decent employment, education, and better health and civil safety conditions which have led to a stronger urbanisation in Bolivia. However, the labour market is not offering a sufficient amount of decent jobs in the formal sector and many indigenous migrants end up in the informal economy instead.

Informal Economy

Bolivia's informal economy is one of the largest among the Latin American countries. Informal employment constitutes an estimated 71% of total employment in the non-agricultural sector. Informal businesses constituted around 46% of the total number of employed people in Bolivia in 2009 (Table 15). Similar estimations from the National Statistics Institute (INE) 2015 Household

Survey, points out a high level of approximately 60% of Bolivia's economically active population who are mainly independent and own-account workers.⁴³ Other sources suggest that the informal economy has a share of approximately 65% of GDP, experienced VAT tax evasion of about 45% of GDP.⁴⁴

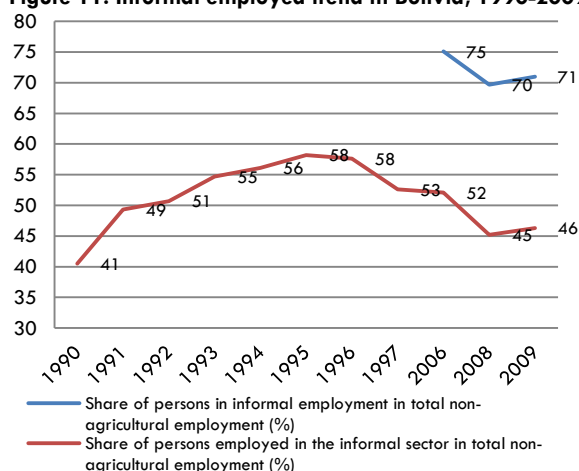
Table 15: Employment in the informal economy

Total informal employed in non-agricultural employment	Bolivia (2009)	71 %
	LAC (2010)	50 %
Employment in the informal sector in non-agricultural employment	Bolivia (2009)	46 %
	LAC (2010)	32 %

Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#) and [ILO, 2011 labour overview : Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

Based on the available data, it was interesting to observe that the share of persons employed in the informal economy were on a declining trend during the 2000s (Figure 11). This was also reflected by the increased number of employees' workers (Figure 4).

Figure 11: Informal employed trend in Bolivia, 1990-2009



Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

Bolivia's high informality rate is due to many factors, such as some cumbersome doing business regulations, underfinanced public institutions, and a lack of incentives for formalizing enterprises (see also Table 21). Lack of information on formalizing enterprises is a determinant of firms' decision to remain informal in Bolivia. They often don't perceive benefits of formalising their micro and small enterprises and therefore remain informal.⁴⁵ Many informal workers have little, if any, education. Not to mention, workers in the informal economy are often made up of mostly indigenous population.

The government has made efforts to develop a legal framework for reforms of private actions on productivity and formality. However, the results remain lagging and confronting negative impacts. As an example, a study's estimations showed that the implementation of the Pension Act from 2010 created tax evasion and reduction of the formal workforce.⁴⁶

Child Labour

Based on the most recent nationwide child labour survey, the country has a relatively high incidence of child labour. It was estimated that 28% of all children between the ages of 5 and 17 worked at least one hour a week. The vast majority of the child labour was in hazardous types of work. This is particular high in rural areas where 65% were in employment and 63% were in hazardous work; whereas 17% of urban children were in employment and 13% in hazardous work. Approximately 58% of the working children were between the ages of 5 and 13 of whom 89% worked in dangerous sectors or conditions. In February 2015, the Ombudsman's Office said that 850,000 children worked in Bolivia, most of them less than 14 years old.

Table 16: Working children
Proportion of all children in age group

Region	Year	Type	Proportion
Bolivia (age 5-17)	2008	Children in employment	28 %
		Hazardous work	25 %
Latin America and the Caribbean (age 5-17)	2008	Children in employment	13 %
		Child labourers	10 %
		Hazardous work	6.7 %

Note: Children in employment include all children who conduct some kind of work, whereas 'child labourers' is a narrower term without mild forms of work. Hazardous work is the worst form of child labour as defined in ILO C182.

Source: [ILO, Magnitud y características del trabajo infantil en Bolivia : informe nacional 2008, 2010](#) and [ILO, Accelerating action against child labour, International Labour Conference, 99th Session 2010](#)

Child labour was also much more frequent among the indigenous compared to the non-indigenous population: In urban areas, 26% of indigenous children were in employment of which 23% were in hazardous work. Of non-indigenous children 15% children were in employment of which 11% were in hazardous work. It is even worse in rural areas.

Boys were slightly more likely to be engaged in child labour compared to girls. Older children were similarly more likely to be both employed and in hazardous work. Children above age 14 were allowed to work.

Under the age of 14 children were also allowed to work as apprentices with no minimum age, which violates ILO's Minimum Age Convention (C138).⁴⁷

Among the worst forms of child labour, including in forced labour, children worked often in the sugarcane and Brazil nut harvests, brick production, hospital cleaning, domestic labour, transportation, agriculture, and vending at night.

As previously mentioned, the Child Labour Act from 2014 made the rules more flexible and allowed children as young as 10 to work legally. This Act calls that work should not interfere with a child's right to education and should not be dangerous or unhealthy such as the above mentioned worst forms of child labour. However, according to other reports, the authorities did not enforce this law effectively, primarily as a result of insufficient resources.⁴⁸

The ILO has also raised their concerns that the above mentioned Act might not adequately protect children engaged in hazardous work, and that it is in conflict with ILO's conventions No. 138 and No. 182. It also goes against the global trend to progressively increase the minimum age for admission to employment.⁴⁹ The government did not accept recommendations made by ILO committees to revise the Act.

The government raised the number from 8 inspectors to investigate child labour in 2015 to 12 in 2016 and reported instances of forced labour and trafficking in persons. Notwithstanding, the child labour inspections remain insufficient relative to the scope of child labour.

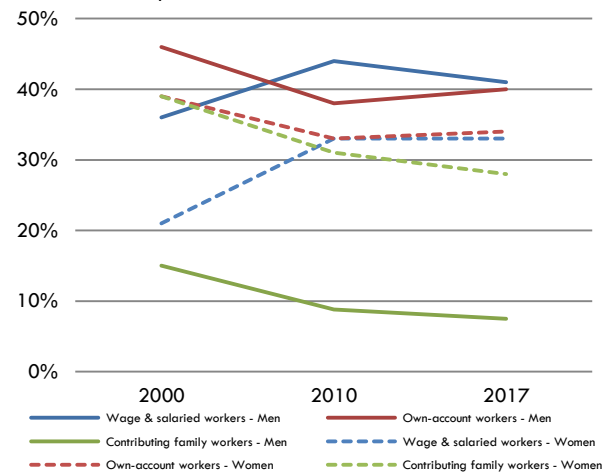
Thousands of Bolivian's child workers below the age of 18 have initiated the process to unite in order to end exploitation, by establishing the Bolivian Union of Child and Adolescent Workers (UNATSBO), which is present in seven of the country's nine departments.⁵⁰

Gender

According to the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) 2016, Bolivia is ranked 23 out of 144 countries (1 is best). The GGGI focuses on measuring gaps rather than levels; gaps in outcome variables rather than gaps in input variables; and ranks countries according to gender equality rather than women's empowerment. The country scores extremely high (1) in terms of health and survival, high on political empowerment (11); and on low-medium level in education (98) and economic participation and opportunity (98).⁵¹

During this report it has already been demonstrated that gender gaps are weighty on the labour market in Bolivia, e.g. in the employment and unemployment rates and in compensation with men earning between 1.5 and 4 times more than women for the same work. The Bolivian Labour market keeps women in the group of vulnerable employment of own account and contributing family workers. On the positive side, both men and women had experienced a declining trend in vulnerable employment: there was a wage and salaried gender gap at 8 percentage points in 2017. The gender gap among own-account workers was narrower with a percentage point of 6% (see more on Figure 12).

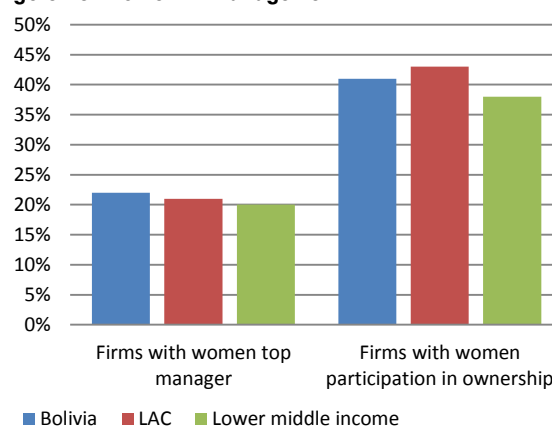
Figure 12: Status in employment in Bolivia, 2000-2017, men & women, %



Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\)](#)

The latest Enterprise Survey from 2010 reported that 41% of firms had women participating in the ownership compared to the 43% LAC average. 22% and 21% of firms had women as top managers respectively (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Women in management



Source: [World Bank, Bolivia Enterprise Survey, 2010](#)

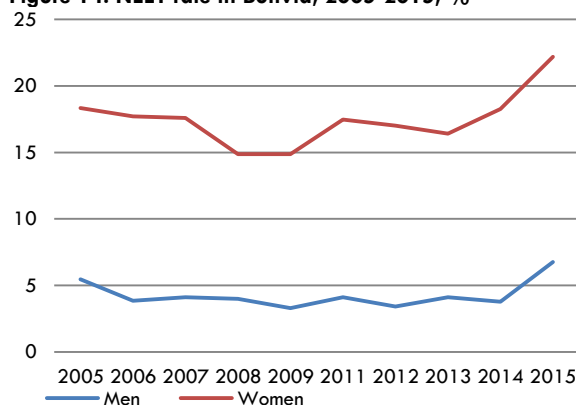
What these data have reflected is that women are confronting a wide range of gender discrimination which is an aspect of Bolivia's ethnic division and culture. Among others, many Bolivian women are often exposed to excessive *machismo* and by hardened stereotypes. Also, Spanish is the dominant language in Bolivia which includes formal enterprise practice. Many Bolivian women that live in rural communities often do not know Spanish and become excluded from the possibilities of the formal economy. However, there are reports that female employees in the formal sector encourage companies to hire more men than women, in order to circumvent labour regulations such as maternity leave.⁵² Around 6 of every 10 women worked in the informal economy and were not protected under labour laws.

Youth

Bolivia has a youth population of 2.1 million persons (age 15-24) out of which 1.1 million are in employment in 2017. As previously mentioned, the youth unemployment rate is 7.8%, which is higher among women than men. The share of labour force aged 15-24 available and seeking employment is significantly higher for women.⁵³

Another key point is that the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (i.e. the NEET rate which is a proxy indicator of untapped potential of youth) has been on a negative trend during the 2010s, for both men and especially for women. A wide gender gap remains of 15 percentage points and the total NEET rate peaked at 15% in 2015 (Figure 14). This gender gap is also an impact of the already mentioned ethnic and *machismo* cultural divergences.

Figure 14: NEET rate in Bolivia, 2005-2015, %



Note: NEET rate is the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

Source: ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)*, 9th Edition

Generally low income youngsters in Bolivia have limited access to formal jobs providing a proper salary and insurance which is related to their low skill levels. Almost 50% of employed youth aged between 17 and 24 are not paid for their work; when they do, it represents barely a third of the salary earned by youth of the same age who are not poor. Many youth get involved in activities in the informal economy.

Several programmes are implemented to strengthen youth employment in the formal sector e.g. the 'Improving Employability and Labour Income of Youth Project' from 2015 and the 'My First Job with Dignity'. The former is a youth training programme for low income Bolivian youth. The programme is expected to reach close to 15,000 youth between the age of 17-35 improving their chances of accessing the labour market the next six years.⁵⁴ The latter aims to increase the employability of low-income youth living in poor urban and peri-urban areas who completed at least the second year of secondary education. It was expanded in 2012 and reached 1,367 beneficiaries, so far.⁵⁵ My First Job with Dignity impact evaluation from 2017 indicated that the programme led to significant increases in the employability and labour quality among its beneficiaries.⁵⁶

EDUCATION

A reform of the school system was enacted in 2010. Key points were free primary education, harmonizing rural and urban education, improving the teachers' education, recognising teachers' seniority and right to organise, among others. The implementation of the reform has been slow with under-funded state schools and maybe even a negative impact of the Child Labour Law from 2010.

The country has a relatively high average of total schooling at 7.8 years. Few have 'no education', which was estimated at 14% of the population, but with a quite high level among women at 20%.⁵⁷

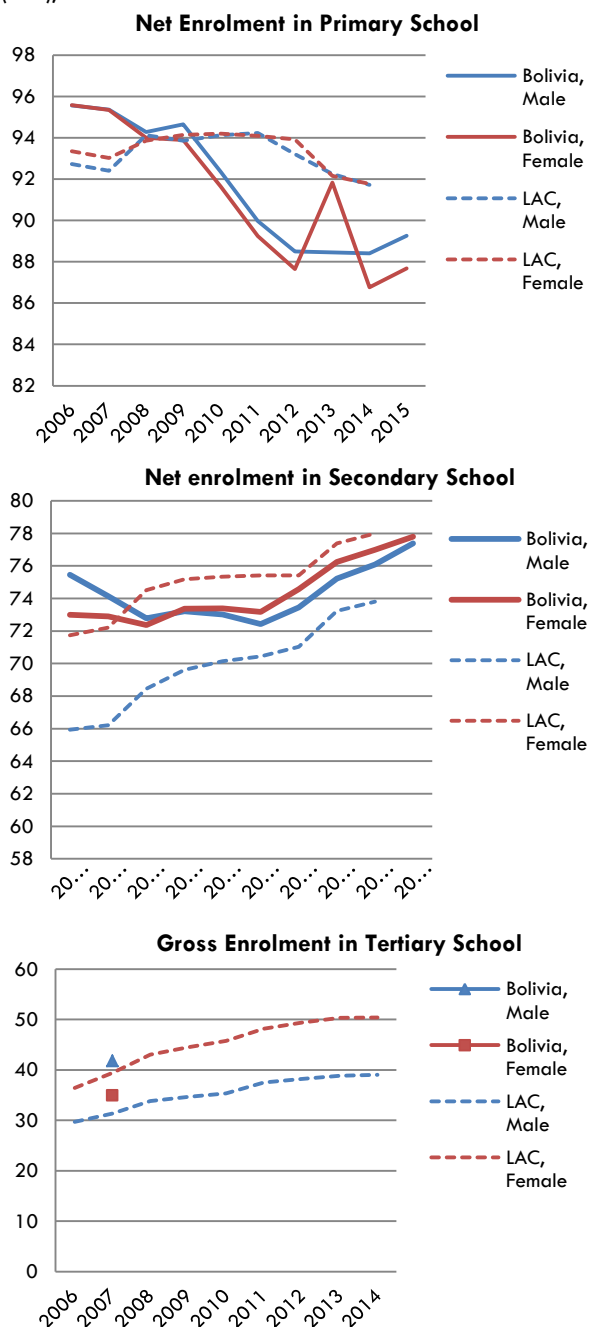
The first six years at primary school are free and compulsory. In practice, approximately 20% of children receive no benefit. Net enrolment in primary school was hovering above the Latin America and the Caribbean average in the 2000s and with no gender gap. However, data reveal that this rate has fallen during the 2010s (Figure 15).

The four years of secondary education are non-compulsory. Most go to private schools based on the

American model. Others are religiously affiliated and espouse traditional values. The net enrolment in secondary has been on an increasing rate during recent years. Bolivian males are hovering above the LAC average while females slightly below. There were data limitations in terms of updated gross enrolment in tertiary education trends (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Enrolment in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary schools, 2006-2015

Male and Female, Bolivia and Latin America & Caribbean (LAC), %



Note: Net enrolment is the ratio of children of official school age, who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official

school age. Gross enrolment is the ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the corresponding official school age.

Source: [World Bank, Education Statistics](#)

Many rural children face language challenges. As an example, the Quechua and Aymara languages are not taught in schools. With little bilingual education, many students drop out of school. Notwithstanding, reports noted that Bolivia gave more priority to education for rural and indigenous people. This was including the creation of three inter-cultural community indigenous universities, one for the Aymara people; another for the Quechua, and the other for the Guarani. These programmes were awareness-raising and educational programmes addressing stereotypes and prejudices against indigenous peoples. In addition, legal literacy campaigns were implementing regarding their rights in the national context which also were essential to promoting understanding and co-existence between different population groups.⁵⁸

Vocational Training

Based on a broad interpretation of vocational training, data suggest that close to 717,000 students were enrolled in vocational training in 2015. Half of these were females. Data also shows that vocational training has a very high enrolment ratio as a proportion of both total secondary education and the proportion of the population aged 15-24 compared to the regional averages (Table 17).

Table 17: Status of Vocational Training

Bolivia	2010	2015
Enrolment in secondary vocational, total	638,359	716,690
Enrolment in secondary vocational, female	315,451	354,150
Teachers in secondary vocational education	1,678 (2002)	2,148 (2004)
Comparative estimations	Country/region	%
Secondary education, vocational pupils (% female)	Bolivia	50 %
	LAC	53 %
Ratio of pupils in vocational training to all pupils in secondary education	Bolivia	61 %
	LAC	9.0 %
Ratio of pupils in vocational training out of 15-24 olds	Bolivia	32 %
	LAC	4.1 %

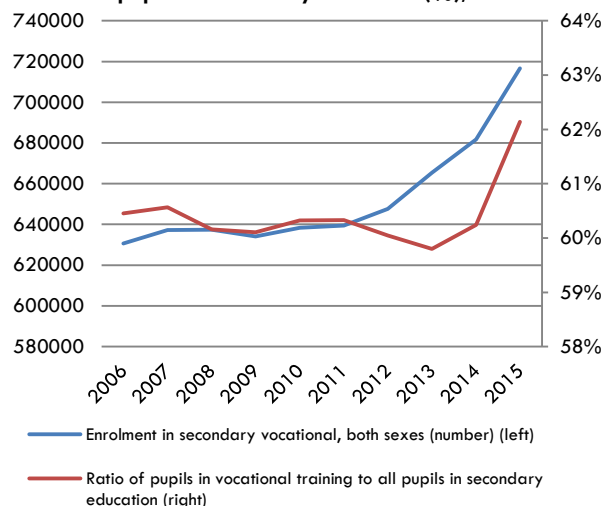
Note: Data from the World Bank diverge

Source: [World Bank, Education Statistics](#)

By a presidential decree, Bolivia put into effect a law in 2012 that provided access to credit and training courses for an estimated 200,000 small-scale artisanal workers in the country. This was reflected in the upsurge

of pupils in vocational training during recent years (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Pupils in vocational training (number) and its ratio to all pupils in secondary education (%), 2006-2015



Source: [World Bank, Education Statistics](#)

Overall, vocational training in Bolivia faces many challenges. While the majority of vocational training centres provided qualifications for basic level technicians. They targeted compulsory school dropouts, excluded people who had not concluded junior high school as well as drop outs from primary education. These centres suffer from a lack of equipment in workshops; but above all, their teachers and instructors were insufficiently trained and lack the technical skills they were supposed to teach. Not to mention, the vocational training system is uncoordinated and concentrated in urban areas.⁵⁹

It has been argued that many of the public training centres in Bolivia offer courses that have only limited labour market perspectives. This can be explained by the difficulties to get new courses accredited by the government. Often, when the government approves a new course it isn't based on market opportunities. Instead it has been based on popularity among parents and students rather than being based on market demand.⁶⁰

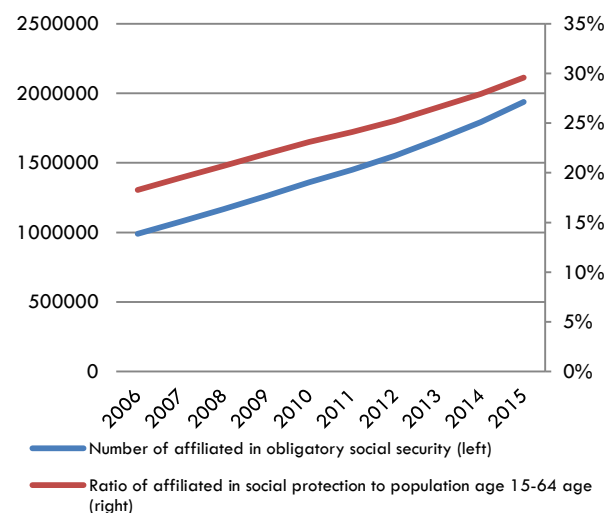
Among the unemployed youths, it has been noted that a small part of students with a vocational training certificate end up finding paid jobs. An entrepreneurship course can help them to set up their own small-scale business such as a car, computer or mobile phone repair workshop; or become a farmer that knows how to make a profit. Yet most vocational training centres do not offer entrepreneurship courses as part of their curriculum.⁶¹

SOCIAL PROTECTION

The social protection policies in Bolivia have gone through several changes since the 1990s, replacing the pay-as-you-go system with an individual capitalization system administered by private institutions. The social protection policies are oriented towards protecting the poorest and most vulnerable population.

The most recent data from the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (INE) in Bolivia registered a steady growth of the affiliation in the obligatory social security coverage that increased from 18% in 2006 to 30% in 2015 among the population aged 15-64 (Figure 17). Almost two out of three covered in this scheme are men (63%) with women having a lower coverage (37%). In practice, access to social security is better in urban areas which often favour non-indigenous people and higher income groups. This is related to the social security coverage being linked to formal employment, and it depends highly on the qualification of the worker. Some estimations show that 70% of the workforce that operate in the informal economy is not covered by social security with just 15% in formal labour not being protected.⁶²

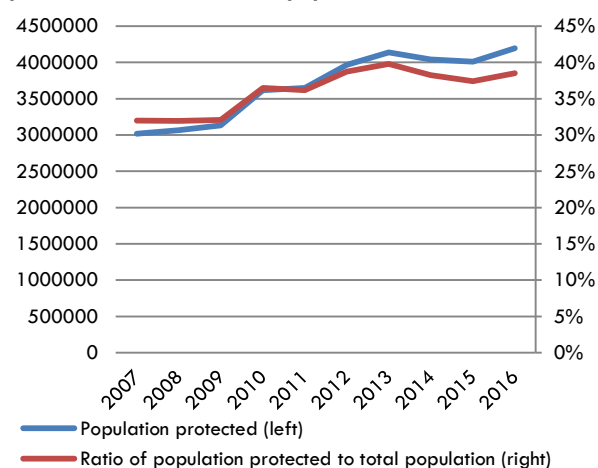
Figure 17: Affiliated in obligatory social security in Bolivia, 2006-2015



Source: *Instituto Nacional de Estadística*

The social security system is composed by the short-term Mandatory Social Insurance and the Long-Term Social Insurance.⁶³ On the positive side, the former system had an upsurge of members from 32% in 2007 to 39% in 2016 and with no gender gap (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Population protected in short term social protection and ratio of total population, 2007-2016



Source: *Instituto Nacional de Estadística*

A contrast in the social protection system in Bolivia is that the coverage of social insurance programmes is targeting the richest segments while the social safety net programs are better directed towards the poorest segment. Especially the social safety net programmes experienced a very high coverage growth for the richest segments but it was even higher among the poorest segments; both increased by 39 percentage points and 81 percentage points in the period from 2006 to 2012, respectively (Table 18).

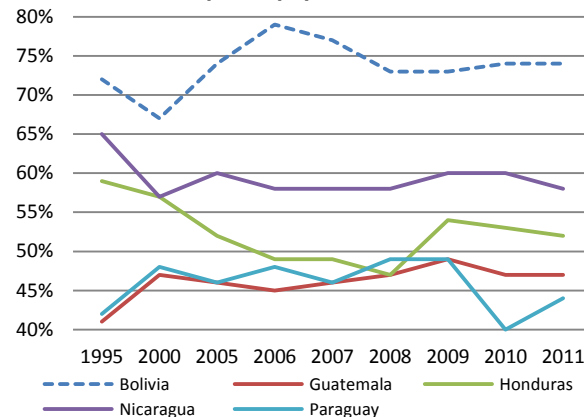
Table 18: Coverage of social insurance and safety net programmes, % of population, 2006-2012

Social protection schemes	2006	2012
Social insurance programmes, poorest quintile	0.2 %	1.4 %
Social insurance programmes, richest quintile	21 %	16 %
Social safety net programmes, poorest quintile	6.8 %	88 %
Social safety net programmes, richest quintile	15 %	54 %

Source: *World Bank, World Development Indicators*

The National Health System (SNS) provides health insurance. There is a public implementation branch; a social insurance branch run by the National Health Insurance Institute (INASES), as well as a range of private providers run by NGOs, the Catholic Church, and private consultations. The total health expenditure not financed out-of-pocket covers 74% of private households in Bolivia, which is relatively high in comparison with many other countries in LAC (Figure 19). In recent years, the public health sector budget was affected by an overall economic downturn, which has a negative impact on the private out-of-pocket health expenditure (see also the section: General Economic Performance).

Figure 19: Health-care expenditure not financed by private household's out-of-pocket payments, 1995-2011



Source: *ILO, Addressing the Global Health Crisis: Universal Health Protection Policies, 2014*

The pension system was reformed in December 2013 after a four-year negotiating process. The COB agreed to suspend its mobilization for higher wages in exchange for comprehensive pension reform. The law nationalized Bolivia's private pension funds, guaranteed universal retirement benefits for participants, and made it easier for workers to access them. The pensionable age was reduced from 65 years to 58 years for men and 55 years old for women.⁶⁴ There are still questions as to how much the system departs from the existing market-based pension scheme and its financial sustainability.⁶⁵ According to the available data, the active contributors to a pension scheme have been assessed to be 22% among people aged 15-64 population, which is slightly lower than the LAC's average; and a gender men/women gap of 13 percentage points. The old pensionable age has a full coverage.

Table 19: Benefits, coverage and contributions to pension schemes

Theme	Measure	Bolivia	LAC
Pensionable age receiving an old age pension (60+) (2013)	Proportion of total	100 %	56 %
Active contributors to a pension scheme (2010)	15+ age	29 %	38 %
Active contributors to a pension scheme (2010)	15-64 years	22 %	28 %

Source: *ILO, Social Protection, Statistics and indicators*

The pension system seeks to extend pension benefits to all workers, including those working in the informal economy. The system has received some criticism from teachers, factory workers and health workers, arguing that many workers who don't have job stability will be marginalized from the retirement rights.

The social security system does not encompass unemployment insurance. However, as mentioned in the Youth sub-section, several employment programmes operate, offering intermediation and advisory services to people looking for work and companies needing staff.

GENERAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

A wide range of reforms has been launched in Bolivia during the last decade, including a strengthening of the role of the state in the economy. The country is a resource rich country with exports of natural gas, cash crops and stable macroeconomic policies. Overall, Bolivia has experienced a high real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 5.0% on average over the last decade (see more on Table 20).

Table 20: Key Economic Facts in Bolivia, 2016

GDP	US\$ 34 billion
GDP per capita (current US\$)	US\$ 3,105
GDP real growth (2007-2016, average)	5.0 %
Budget deficit (% of GDP)	- 6.6 %
Doing Business * (2017)	↓ 2 change in rank 149 of 190 countries
Human Development Index (2015)**	No change in rank 118 of 188 countries
Gini Index *** (2015)	45.8 28 of 150 countries

* A high ranking on the Ease of Doing Business Index means the regulatory environment is more conducive to the start-up and operation of a local firm.⁶⁶

** The Human Development Index (HDI) measures the average of a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living. HDI rank change in the period 2010-2015.

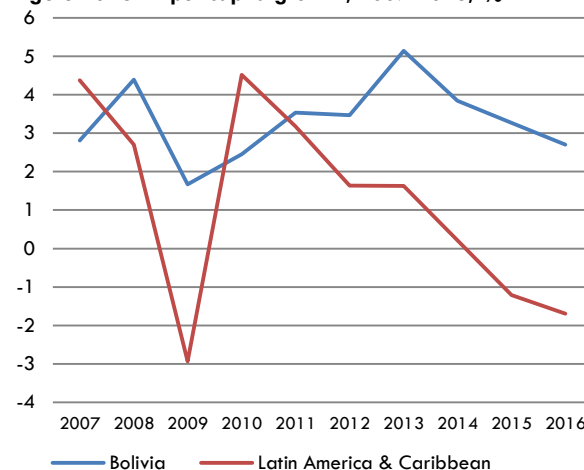
*** A Gini coefficient of 1 (or 100 percent) expresses maximal inequality among values. This Gini Index ranks the first country with the highest inequality while the number 150 has the highest equality.

Source: [CIA, The World Factbook, Bolivia](#); [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#); [World Bank & IFC, Ease of Doing Business 2016/2017 in Bolivia](#); and [UNDP, Human Development Index trends](#)

Bolivia's GDP per capita growth went through an economic downturn in 2008-2009 as an impact of the global financial crisis. However, the country's economy was not affected as much as many other Latin America and Caribbean countries. The economic real growth rebounded in 2010 and peaked at 5.0% in 2013. This was related to high export commodity prices. The global drop in oil prices in late 2014 pushed a pressure on the price of Bolivia's earnings for exported gas. This resulted in lower GDP growth rates and losses in

government revenue (see also the section: Trade). The country's GDP per capita growth is still hovering far above the LAC average since 2011 though (Figure 20).

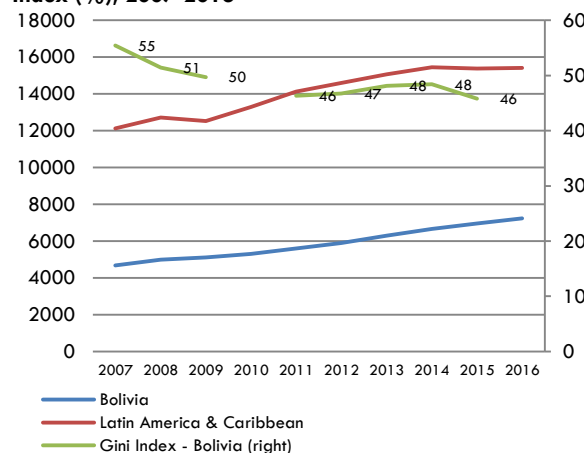
Figure 20: GDP per capita growth, 2007-2016, %



Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#)

The country remains one of the least developed countries in the Latin America economically. Measured in terms of the GDP per capita Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), Bolivia is far below the regional average with a ranking as 155th out of 230 countries (1st is best). The inequality in the distribution of family income is high in Bolivia, but has been on a declining trend in recent years from 57% in 2006 to 46% in 2015. This ranks Bolivia as 28th out of 150 countries between Rwanda and Honduras (Table 20 & Figure 21). This change has been related to the growing segment of employees and wage increases in Bolivia (revisit Figure 1 and Figure 4).

Figure 21: GDP per capita (PPP) growth in US\$ and Gini Index (%), 2007-2016



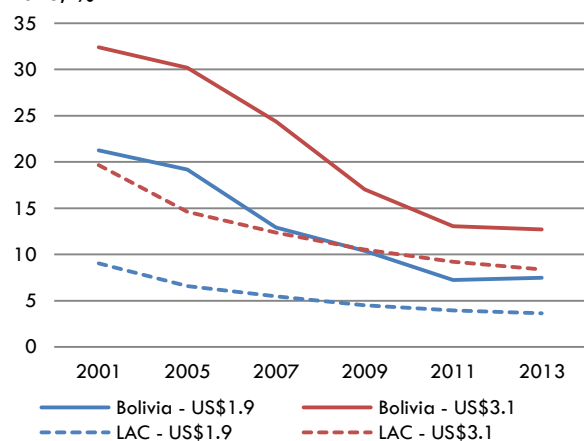
Note: A Gini coefficient of 1 (or 100 percent) expresses maximal inequality among values.

Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#)

Looking beyond economic growth, the human development (i.e. a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living) has stalled during the last five years and remains on a medium level of human development (Table 20).

The number of working poor in Bolivia has declined in recent years. The number of extremely poor (>US\$1.9 per day) in Bolivia has experienced a fast drop from 21% in 2001 to 7.5% in 2013. The number of moderately poor (\geq US\$1.9 & <US\$3.1) also experienced a positive change from 14% in 2001 to 5.2% in 2013. Overall, the working poor living below US\$3.1 per day experienced a significant drop from 32% in 2001 to 13% in 2013. The country's working poor remain above the regional average. The reduction has been stalled in recent years, though (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Working poor trends in total employment, 2001-2013, %

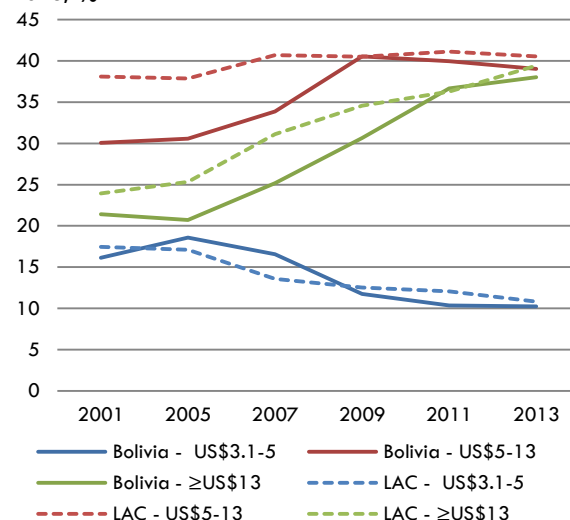


Note: 'Working poor' is the proportion of persons living with their families below the poverty line in line with the full distribution of employment across economic classes.

Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

The evolution of the middle-class has increased fast in Bolivia. First of all, the near-poor middle-class (i.e. \geq US\$3.10 & <US\$5) fell gradually from 19% in 2005 to 10% in 2013. However, as presented on Figure 22, the reduction of the number of workers from the near-poor middle-class did not drop back into poverty, but instead went into higher-income level groups. This explains that the developing middle-class (i.e. \geq US\$5 & <US\$13) was on a fast rise during the 2000s reaching the regional average. The rate has peaked around 39% in recent years. The developed middle-class and above (i.e. \geq US\$13) also grew fast during the 2000s but stayed, so far, on a flat growth in the beginning of the 2010s. The country's middle-class levels are today basically in par with the region's average (Figure 23).

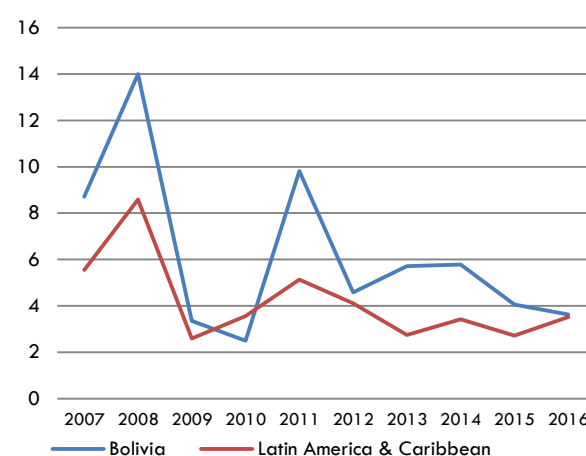
Figure 23: Middle-class trends in total employment, 1995-2013, %



Source: [ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market \(KILM\), 9th Edition](#)

The inflation in consumer prices has been volatile during the last decade, but has stayed below 6% since 2012. The inflation rate reached the regional average in 2016 (Figure 24), and the relatively low inflation rates in recent years has curbed the purchasing power loss from previous periods with high inflation.

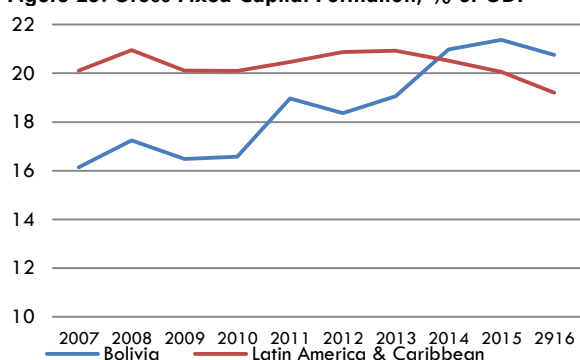
Figure 24: Inflation trend in consumer prices, 2007-2016, %



Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#)

The growth of capital formation has been slow but steady during the last decade. In 2014, Bolivia's capital formation superseded the regional average and peaked at 21% of GDP in 2015 (Figure 25). Capital formation signals how much of the new value added in the economy is invested rather than consumed, and it points towards a slow increase in investments on the domestic market, which could create new jobs in the formal sector in the future.

Figure 25: Gross Fixed Capital Formation, % of GDP



Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#)

On the Doing Business Index, Bolivia was ranked 149 out of 190 countries in 2017; and it is the lowest ranking among South American countries. This ranking fell down by two places from 2016 (Table 20). Out of ten indicators, the country's highest ranking was on resolving insolvency (96 out of 190) followed by Trading Across Borders (98) and Getting Electricity (99). However, several of the nethermost rankings were extremely low, i.e. Paying Taxes (186), and Starting a Business (177). There has only been registered some significant improvements on Enforcing Contracts (see more on Table 21).

Table 21: Ease of Doing Business in Bolivia, 2016-2017

Topics	2017	2016	Change
Starting a Business	177	176	↓ 1
Dealing with Construction Permits	152	142	↓ 10
Getting Electricity	99	95	↓ 4
Registering Property	139	142	↑ 3
Getting Credit	133	127	↓ 6
Protecting Investors	137	136	↓ 1
Paying Taxes	186	186	No change
Trading Across Borders	98	96	↓ 2
Enforcing Contracts	128	134	↑ 6
Resolving Insolvency	96	96	No Change

Note: Doing Business 2017 indicators are ranking from 1 (top) to 190 (bottom) among other countries. The rankings tell much about the business environment, but do not measure all aspects of the business surroundings that matter to firms and investors that affect the competitiveness of the economy. Still, a high ranking does mean that the government has created a regulatory environment conducive to operating a business.

Source: [World Bank & IFC, Doing Business 2017, Economy Profile: Bolivia](#)

Bolivia's governance surroundings have few positive and mostly negative trends during the period from 2011 to 2016 (Table 22). The indicator Political

Stability has shown some improvements. It was registered that especially the Rule of Law, Government Effectiveness and Control of Corruption went down at least seven percentage points in the percentile rankings. In addition, the Rule of Law indicator has a very low ranking.

Table 22: Governance Indicators in Bolivia
2011-2016, Score & percentiles, and change

Indicator	2011	2016	Change
Voice & Accountability	-0.07 / 47%	-0.01 / 47%	No change
Political Stability	-0.42 / 33%	-0.21 / 38%	↑
Government Effectiveness	-0.47 / 40%	-0.57 / 33%	↓
Regulatory Quality	-0.76 / 24%	-0.92 / 17%	↓
Rule of Law	-0.98 / 17%	-1.20 / 9.6%	↓
Control of Corruption	-0.57 / 34%	-0.71 / 27%	↓

Note: The Governance Indicators score from -2.5 to 2.5 while the percentiles rank from 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest).⁶⁷

Source: [World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators](#)

TRADE

Bolivia has a large exporting sector with large trade surpluses, but it has dropped in recent years. Since 2014, the country has been in a trade deficit (i.e. international trade in which a country's imports exceeds its exports) that peaked at 7 percentage points in 2016 (Table 23).

Table 23: Trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Bolivia, 2016

Export	US\$ 8.3 billion 25 % of GDP
Import	US\$ 11 billion 32 % of GDP
FDI flow (2015)	US\$ 503 million 1.5% of GDP
FDI Stock	US\$ 12 billion 33 % of GDP

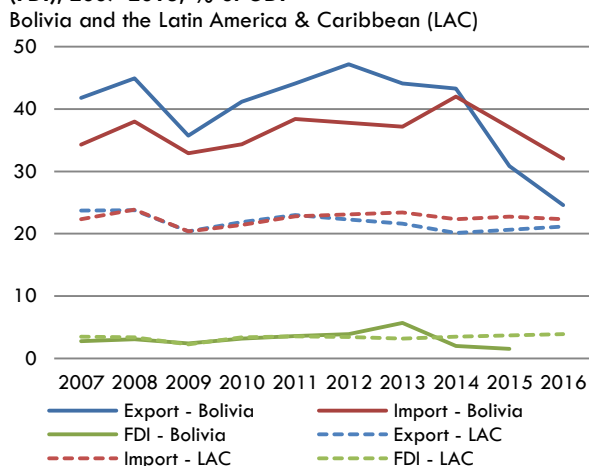
Note: Foreign direct investment (FDI) is an investment made by a company or individual in one country in business interests in another country, in the form of either establishing business operations or acquiring business assets in the other country, such as ownership or controlling interest in a foreign company.

Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development](#)

The country's trade flows were affected by changes on international oil prices in late 2014. This hit the price Bolivia receives for exported gas hard with losses in government's fiscal revenues as a result (Figure 26). The just outlined relatively high economic growth in Bolivia

was kept going by the construction and banking sectors that curbed a deeper downturn caused by the trade deficit.

Figure 26: Export, Import and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), 2007-2016, % of GDP

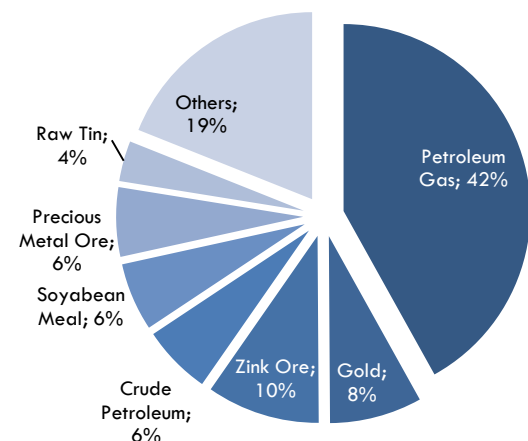


Source: [World Bank, World Development Indicators](#)

Figure 26 above also shows that the foreign direct investments (FDI) were increasing steadily and peaked at 5.7% of GDP in 2013. However, the rate dropped fast due to a crisis in the key sectors of mining and hydrocarbons along with conflict among social segments. An Investment Promotion Law was passed in 2015 that ensured not to nationalize additional industries in an effort to improve the investment climate.

Petroleum Gas accounted for 42% of Bolivia's total exports and contributed more than half of the government's budget. This signals that the country's economy is very vulnerable to the volatile international commodity price. More details on Bolivia's main products share of exports are available on Figure 27.

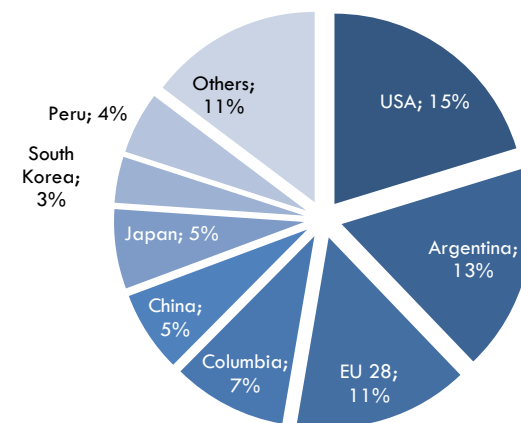
Figure 27: Bolivia's main products share of exports, 2015



Source: [OEC, Bolivia](#)

Bolivia's main export markets are Brazil (26%), USA (15%), Argentine (13%) and the United Union (EU 28) (11%) (Figure 28).

Figure 28: Bolivia's main export markets, 2016



Source: [European Commission, DG TRADE, Bilateral Relations, Statistics](#)

Trade Agreements

Bolivia's accession to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was ratified in September 1990 and a ratification of Bolivia's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995.

Bolivia's trade with neighbouring countries is growing, in part because of several negotiated regional preferential trade agreements: Bolivia is part of the Andean Community, a custom union that also includes Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. The Andean Community establishes a Labour Advisory Council. It moreover includes social cooperation in areas such as social security and recognition of education certificates.⁶⁸

Bolivia benefits from the United States' Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). GSP is a unilateral trade benefit from the U.S. government, allowing duty and quota free access for some products. A country can be removed if it is violating or do not take steps to uphold the ILO Core Labour Standards. Each country is reviewed annually, by the U.S. government. Bolivia is one of the largest exporters under the U.S. GSP arrangement, with around US\$128 million exported within the scheme.⁶⁹

Bolivia also benefits from EU's unilateral GSP+ special incentive arrangement, which allows duty and quota free access for most products. To be granted and continue to be granted GSP+, a country must ratify and

effectively implement conventions within human rights, environmental and the eight ILO Core Conventions. The European Parliament and European Council will examine each beneficiary every second year.⁷⁰ Bolivia was scrutinised on its application of drug conventions.⁷¹

Canada, Japan, Norway, Russia, Australia and Switzerland have bilateral agreement with Bolivia. The country has also free trade agreements with Chile, Mexico, and Cuba.

In 2002 Bolivia joined the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), which is a “free residence area” that permits citizens of those countries to obtain residence and the right to work in the participating countries without a visa. The full members include Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Venezuela, and Uruguay. MERCOSUR has virtually eliminated tariff and non-tariff barriers on most intra-regional trade between members with the implementation of a Common External Tariff (CET) system. Associate members enjoy tariff reductions, but are not subject to the CET system.⁷²

Free Trade Zones (FTZs)

Sources argued that by 2015 there were nine free trade zones in Bolivia of which six were in operation, namely El Alto (serving La Paz), Puerto Aguirre, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Oruro, and Desaguadero. A majority were in cities along the Bolivian borders. The aim of establishing the FTZs were to facilitate commercial and industrial activities for national and international companies.⁷³

Companies’ transactions in the FTZs were exempted from tariffs and national taxes. The National Council on Free Trade Zones (CONZOF) oversees all industrial and commercial free trade zones and authorizes operations.

Based on the limitations of data availability, the FTZs employed 48,000 workers in 2007 (3.3% of total employees), and exporting for US\$59 million (1.1% of total export). Stated differently, the FTZs had a quite limited importance for the economy and labour market. The leather and textiles were the main sectors; the main markets were USA, Chile, and Peru.⁷⁴

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL DATA

Table 24: Trade Union members in Bolivia

Trade Union / Trade Union Centre	National affiliation	Total Members	Female Members	Dues US\$ per month
COB - Central Obrera Boliviana	N/a	2,000,000	-	-
CSTSPB - Confederacion Sindical de Trabajadores en Salud Bolivia (health workers) *	COB	13,000	-	0.7
CONMERB Confederacion Nacional de Maestros de Educacion Rural en Bolivia (rural teachers)	COB	60,000	70 %	0.7
CTEUB - Confederacion de Trabajadores de Educacion Urbana de Bolivia (urban teachers)	COB	95,000	60 %	4.4
CSUTCB - Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (highland peasants' union)	COB	100,000	-	-
FENATRAM - Federación Nacional de Trabajadores Municipales de Bolivia	COB	20,000	-	-
FNMCB-BS - Federación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas de Bolivia – Bartolina Sisa (women peasants' union)	COB	-	-	-
CSCIB - Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales de Bolivia (migrants from the indigenous peasant communities of the Altiplano and the valleys)	COB	-	-	-
FSTMB - Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia (miners)	COB	-	-	-
FNCMB - Federación Nacional cooperativistas Mineros de Bolivia	COB	-	-	-
CGTFB - Confederación de Trabajadores Fabriles (manufacturing)	COB	-	-	-
Gremiales (informal workers association)	COB	-	-	-
CUB - Confederación Universitarios de Bolivia	COB	-	-	-
MST - Movimiento Sin Tierra (landless)	Not aff. to COB	-	-	-
FEJUVE - Federacion de Juntas Vecinales (urban)	Not aff. to COB	-	-	-

* The CSTSPB includes non-licensed nurses, X-ray workers, stretcher-bearers, administrative staff of hospitals and health posts, ambulance drivers, etc.).

Source: LO/FTF Council, ICTUR & <http://www.boliviainfoforum.org.uk>

Table 25: List of approved labour related legislations in Bolivia, 2014-2017 (October)

Type of legislation	Legislation
2014	
General provisions	Ley núm. 622, de 29 de diciembre de 2014, de Alimentación Escolar en el Marco de la Soberanía Alimentaria y la Economía Plural
	Decreto Supremo núm. 2167, de 29 de octubre de 2014, que aprueba la Política de Alimentación y Nutrición
	Ley núm. 516 de promoción de inversiones
Elimination of child labour, protection of children and young persons	Ley núm. 548 que dicta el Código Niña, Niño y Adolescente
Employment policy, promotion of employment and employment services	Decreto Supremo núm. 1959 que crea el Programa de Empleo Temporal (PET)
	Decreto Supremo núm. 1893 que reglamenta la Ley núm. 223 general para personas con discapacidad
Cooperatives	Decreto Supremo núm. 1995 que dicta el Reglamento de la Ley núm. 356, Ley General de Cooperativas
Occupational safety and health	Decreto supremo núm. 2235, de 31 de diciembre de 2014, que modifica el Decreto Supremo núm. 1557, de 10 de abril de 2013, que reglamenta la Ley núm. 315, de 10 de diciembre de 2012, de Seguro Privado de Vida e Invalidez Permanente por Accidentes, Enfermedades en General u Otras Causas, para las trabajadoras y los trabajadores de la Prensa de Bolivia "Hermanos Peñasco Layme", modificada por la Ley núm. 554, de 1 de agosto de 2014
	Ley núm. 573, de 11 de septiembre de 2014, que norma el acceso a los beneficios del Sistema Integral de Pensiones con reducción de edad para trabajos en condiciones insalubres
	Ley núm. 554, de 1 de agosto de 2014, que modifica la Ley núm. 315, de 10 de diciembre de 2012
Social security (general standards)	Decreto supremo núm. 2235, de 31 de diciembre de 2014, que modifica el Decreto Supremo núm. 1557, de 10 de abril de 2013, que reglamenta la Ley núm. 315, de 10 de diciembre de 2012, de Seguro Privado de Vida e Invalidez Permanente por Accidentes, Enfermedades en General u Otras Causas, para las trabajadoras y los trabajadores de la Prensa de Bolivia "Hermanos Peñasco Layme", modificada por la Ley núm. 554, de 1 de agosto de 2014
	Ley núm. 622, de 29 de diciembre de 2014, de Alimentación Escolar en el Marco de la Soberanía Alimentaria y la Economía Plural
	Decreto Supremo núm. 2152, de 22 de octubre de 2014, que reglamenta el pago de aguinaldo a los beneficiarios de la Renta Universal de Vejez (Renta Dignidad)
	Ley núm. 573, de 11 de septiembre de 2014, que norma el acceso a los beneficios del Sistema Integral de Pensiones con reducción de edad para trabajos en condiciones insalubres
	Ley núm. 562, de 27 de agosto de 2014, que establece el pago de aguinaldo a los beneficiarios de la Renta Universal de Vejez (Renta Dignidad)
	Decreto Supremo núm. 1888 que complementa y modifica el Reglamento de Desarrollo Parcial a la Ley núm. 065 de pensiones en materia de prestaciones de vejez, prestaciones solidarias de vejez, prestaciones por riesgos, pensiones por muerte derivadas de éstas y otros beneficios, aprobado por Decreto Supremo núm. 0822, de 16 de marzo de 2011
Migrant workers	Decreto Supremo núm. 1923 que reglamenta la Ley núm. 370 de migración
Indigenous and tribal peoples	Ley núm. 502 de ampliación del plazo y modificación a la Ley núm. 337 de apoyo a la producción de alimentos y restitución de bosques
Specific categories of workers	Ley núm. 545, de 14 de julio de 2014, que ratifica el Convenio núm. 167 (Convenio Sobre Seguridad y Salud en la Construcción) de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo
	Ley de minería y metalurgia
2015	
General provisions	Decreto Supremo núm. 2483, de 26 de agosto de 2015, que crea el Fondo de Desarrollo Indígena y dispone la liquidación del Fondo de Desarrollo para los Pueblos Indígenas, Originarios y Comunidades Campesinas (FDPPIOYCC)
Freedom of association, collective bargaining and industrial relations	Decreto Supremo núm. 2349, de 1 de mayo de 2015, sobre el trámite de la personalidad jurídica de Sindicatos, Federaciones, Confederaciones y Centrales Obreras cuyo objeto sea la defensa de sus derechos laborales
Education, vocational guidance and training	Decreto Supremo núm. 2506, de 2 de septiembre de 2015, que regula el subsidio de incentivo a la permanencia escolar denominado Bono "Juancito Pinto", para el año 2015

Conditions of employment	Decreto Supremo núm. 2348, de 1 de mayo de 2015, que establece los requisitos y procedimientos que deberán cumplir las empresas públicas y las empresas en las cuales el Estado tenga mayoría accionaria, para beneficiar a sus trabajadoras y trabajadores del incremento salarial
Social security (general standards)	Ley núm. 754, de 27 de octubre de 2015, que establece una dotación gratuita de medicamentos antihemofílicos para pacientes que no cuentan con seguro de salud y que reciben tratamiento en establecimientos de salud públicos
	Decreto Supremo núm. 2480, de 6 de agosto de 2015, que instituye el "Subsidio Universal Prenatal por la Vida"
Maternity protection	Decreto Supremo núm. 2480, de 6 de agosto de 2015, que instituye el "Subsidio Universal Prenatal por la Vida"
Indigenous and tribal peoples	Decreto Supremo núm. 2483, de 26 de agosto de 2015, que crea el Fondo de Desarrollo Indígena y dispone la liquidación del Fondo de Desarrollo para los Pueblos Indígenas, Originarios y Comunidades Campesinas (FDPPIOYCC)
Specific categories of workers	Ley núm. 721, de 12 de agosto de 2015, que reconoce trabajos insalubres del sector minero
	Decreto Supremo núm. 2348, de 1 de mayo de 2015, que establece los requisitos y procedimientos que deberán cumplir las empresas públicas y las empresas en las cuales el Estado tenga mayoría accionaria, para beneficiar a sus trabajadoras y trabajadores del incremento salarial
2016	
General provisions	Ley núm. 798, de 25 de abril de 2016, que modifica los artículos 1, 2 y 3 de la Ley núm. 252, de 3 de julio de 2012
Cooperatives	Ley núm. 823, de 19 de agosto de 2016, que modifica la Ley núm. 356, de 11 de abril de 2013, General de Cooperativas
Education, vocational guidance and training	Ley núm. 842, de 12 de octubre de 2016, que ratifica el "Acuerdo sobre la Creación e Implementación de un Sistema de Acreditación de Carreras Universitarias para el Reconocimiento Regional de la Calidad Académica de las respectivas titulaciones en el MERCOSUR y Estados Asociados"
Indigenous and tribal peoples	Ley núm. 813, de 12 de Julio de 2016, que crea la Unidad Territorial "Territorio Indígena Originario Campesino de Raqaypampa"
Occupational safety and health	Decreto Supremo núm. 2936, de 5 de octubre de 2016, que reglamenta la Ley núm. 545, de 14 de julio de 2014, que ratifica el Convenio núm. 167 "Convenio Sobre Seguridad y Salud en la Construcción", de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo – OIT
Specific categories of workers	Decreto Supremo núm. 2950, de 14 de octubre de 2016, que instituye incentivos a maestras y maestros que participen en el desarrollo de los procesos educativos de la "Educación Sociocomunitaria en Casa para Personas con Discapacidad" a desarrollarse en el Sistema Educativo Plurinacional
	Decreto Supremo núm. 2936, de 5 de octubre de 2016, que reglamenta la Ley núm. 545, de 14 de julio de 2014, que ratifica el Convenio núm. 167 "Convenio Sobre Seguridad y Salud en la Construcción", de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo – OIT
2017	
General provisions	Ley núm. 997, de 13 de noviembre de 2017, que modifica la Ley núm. 370 de 8 de mayo de 2013, de Migración
	Ley núm. 936, de 3 de mayo de 2017, que establece modificaciones e incorporaciones a la Ley núm. 708 de 25 de junio de 2015, de Conciliación y Arbitraje
Equality of opportunity and treatment	Ley núm. 977, de 26 de septiembre de 2017, de inserción laboral y de ayuda económica para personas con discapacidad
Social security (general standards)	Ley núm. 959, de 19 de junio de 2017, que promueve la implementación de programas y proyectos de vivienda social
	Ley núm. 922, de 29 de marzo de 2017, que establece la libre afiliación al subsector público de salud
	Ley núm. 890, de 26 de enero de 2017, que modifica el artículo 8 del Decreto Ley núm. 13214 de 24 de diciembre de 1975, elevado a rango de Ley mediante la Ley núm. 006 de 1 de mayo de 2010, en cuanto al "Aviso de Baja de Asegurado"

Source: [ILO, NATLEX, Country Profile Bolivia, Basic Laws](#)

Table 26: Ratified ILO Conventions in Bolivia

Subject and/or right	Convention	Ratification date
Fundamental Conventions		
Freedom of association and collective bargaining	C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948	1965
	C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	1973
Elimination of all forms of forced labour	C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930	2005
	C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	1990
Effective abolition of child labour	C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973	1997
	C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	2003
Elimination of discrimination in employment	C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951	1973
	C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	1977
Governance Conventions		
Labour inspection	C081 - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	1973
	C129 - Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969	1977
Employment policy	C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964	1977
Tripartism	C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	Not ratified
Up-to-date Conventions		
Working time	C014 - Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)	1954
	C106 - Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957	1973
Elimination of child labour and protection of children and young persons	C077 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1946	1973
	C078 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946	1973
	C124 - Medical Examination of Young Persons (Underground Work) Convention, 1965	1977
Wages	C095 - Protection of Wages Convention, 1949	1977
	C131 - Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970	1977
Social security	C102 - Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952	1977
	C118 - Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962	1977
	C121 - Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964	1977
	C128 - Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention, 1967	1977
	C130 - Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969	1977
Occupational Safety and Health	C120 - Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1964	1977
	C162 - Asbestos Convention, 1986	1990
Equality of opportunity	C167 - Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988	2015
	C156 - Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981	1998
Employment policy	C159 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983	1996
Labour administration and inspection	C160 - Labour Statistics Convention, 1985	1990
Indigenous and tribal peoples	C169 - Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989	1991
Specific categories of workers	C189 - Domestic Workers Convention, 2011	2013
<p><i>Fundamental Conventions are the eight most important ILO conventions that cover four fundamental principles and rights at work. Equivalent to basic human rights at work.</i></p> <p><i>Governance Conventions are four conventions that the ILO has designated as important to building national institutions and capacities that serve to promote employment. In other words, conventions that promotes a well-regulated and well-functioning labour market.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, there are 71 conventions, which ILO considers "up-to-date" and actively promotes.</i></p> <p>Source: ILO, NORMLEX, Country Profiles</p>		

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