



NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS

NIGERIA LABOUR FORCE STATISTICS REPORT Q2 2023



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INTRODUCTION

This report contains findings from the Nigeria Labour Force Survey (NLFS) for the second quarter of 2023 (Q2 2023). This is the third quarter of results since the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) revised and improved its methodology for collecting labour market statistics in Nigeria; the new methodology is now aligned with internationally agreed standards and guidelines.

Labour market statistics are among the most important economic indicators and this makes the regular conduct of NLFS crucial. The NLFS is designed to gather key labour market statistics to support government policies and programmes for more effective planning. The survey provides up-to-date information on the dynamics of the labour market in the country. Moreover, reliable labour market data can provide valuable insights about the economy for businesses and investors and can help in the design of sound economic policies to address the challenge of creating productive jobs and eliminating poverty. This can ultimately enhance the overall stability of the economy.

Labour is one of the most important factors of production and is a major determinant of the economic system globally. That is why it is imperative to know whether people are working or not, how long they work, and the nature of the jobs they are engaged in. The NLFS enables key labour market statistics and the employment situation to be monitored periodically in Nigeria. The indicators include the labour force participation rate, employment-to-population ratio, and unemployment rate, as well as time-related underemployment, self-employment, labour underutilisation, and several other key job characteristics. The NLFS aims to provide insight into the Nigerian economy, Indicators for policy formulation and a base for international comparison.

The results presented here are based on the resolutions concerning statistics of work, employment, and underutilisation from the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS 2013).

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RESULTS

- **The labour force participation rate among the working-age population remained high at 80.4% in Q2 2023.**
- **The employment-to-population ratio was 77.1% in Q2 2023.**
- **The combined rate of unemployment and time-related underemployment as a share of the labour force population (LU2) was 15.5% in Q2 2023.**
- **Most workers (around 88.0%) were in self-employment in Q2 2023.**
- **The proportion of workers in Wage Employment in Q2 2023 was 12%.**
- **The unemployment rate in Q2 2023 was 4.2%, this is an increase of 0.1% from the figure recorded in Q1 2023 (4.1%).**
- **The rate of unemployment among persons with post-secondary education was 8% in Q2 2023.**
- **The Unemployment rate among youth aged (15-24 years) in Q2 2023 was 7.2% having been at 6.9% in Q1 2023.**
- **The Unemployment rate in urban areas was 5.9% in Q2 2023, an increase from 5.4% in Q1 2023.**
- **Time-related underemployment in Q2 2023 was 11.8%.**
- **4.8% of the working-age population were in subsistence agriculture.**
- **Informal employment rate in Q2 2023 was 92.7%.**
- **Percentage of youth Not in Employment, Education nor Training (NEET Rate) was 13.8%**

Key Labour Market Indicators by Quarters

Key Labour Market Indicators	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023
Labour Force Participation Rate	77.8	79.9	80.4
Employment-to-population Ratio	73.6	76.6	77.1
Share of employed people in self-employment	84.0	86.0	88.0
Time-related underemployment	13.7	12.2	11.8
Unemployment Rate	5.3	4.1	4.2
Labour Underutilisation 2 ¹	18.2	15.8	15.5
Labour Underutilisation 3 ²	9.5	6.7	6.9
Labour Underutilisation 4 ³	21.9	18.1	17.8
Own-use Producer of foodstuff	5.6	3.9	4.8
Youth Unemployment Rate	8.3	6.9	7.2
Urban Unemployment Rate	6.3	5.4	5.9
Rural Unemployment Rate	4.0	2.9	2.5
Wage Employment Rate	13.4	11.8	12.0
Informal Employment	93.5	92.6	92.7

¹ the combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment as a share of the labour force

² the combination of the unemployed population and potential labour force as a share of the extended labour force, where the extended labour force is the combination of the labour force and the potential labour force

³ the combination of time-related underemployment, unemployment, and the potential labour force as a share of the extended labour force

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

The labour force participation rate measures the share of a country’s working-age population that is in the labour force. The labour force is the combination of those individuals who are employed and those who are unemployed.

In Q2 2023, the labour force participation rate in Nigeria was 80.4%, having been 79.9% in Q1 2023. The Q2 2023 participation rate among men was 82.1% while for women the participation rate was 78.8%. The participation rate was 78.4% in urban areas and 82.6% in rural areas.

Figure 1: Labour Force Participation Rate by Sex and Urban-Rural

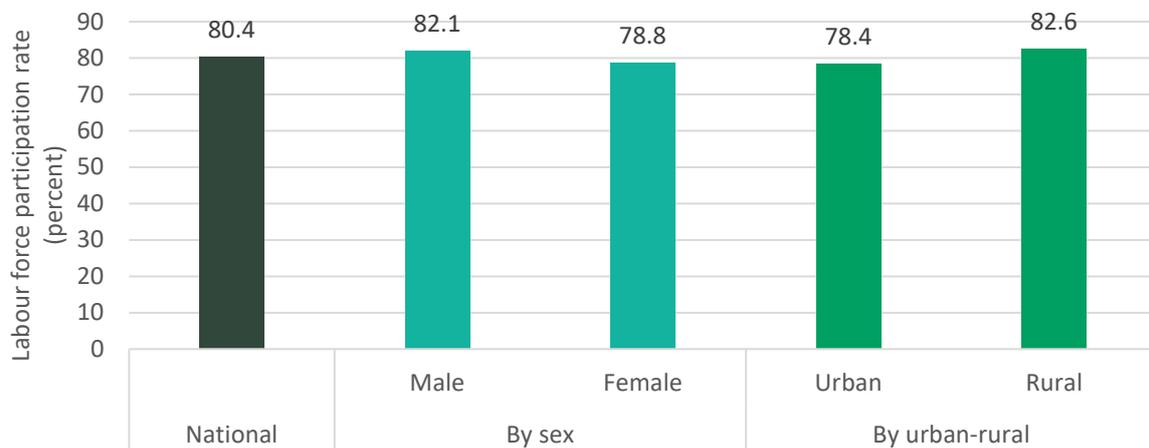
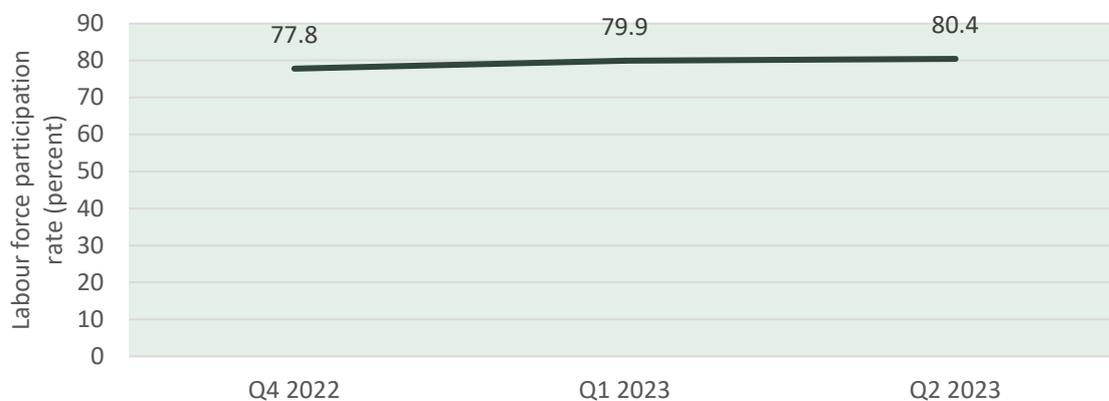


Figure 2: Trend of Labour Force Participation Rate



EMPLOYMENT-TO-POPULATION RATIO

The employment-to-population ratio is the proportion of the working-age population that is employed.

In Q2 2023, 77.1% of Nigeria's working-age population was in employment. Disaggregating by sex, the employment-to-population ratio was 79.3% for men and 74.9% for women respectively. The employment-to-population ratio in urban areas was 73.8% compared to 80.5% in rural areas.

Figure 3: Employment-to-Population Ratio by Sex and Urban-Rural

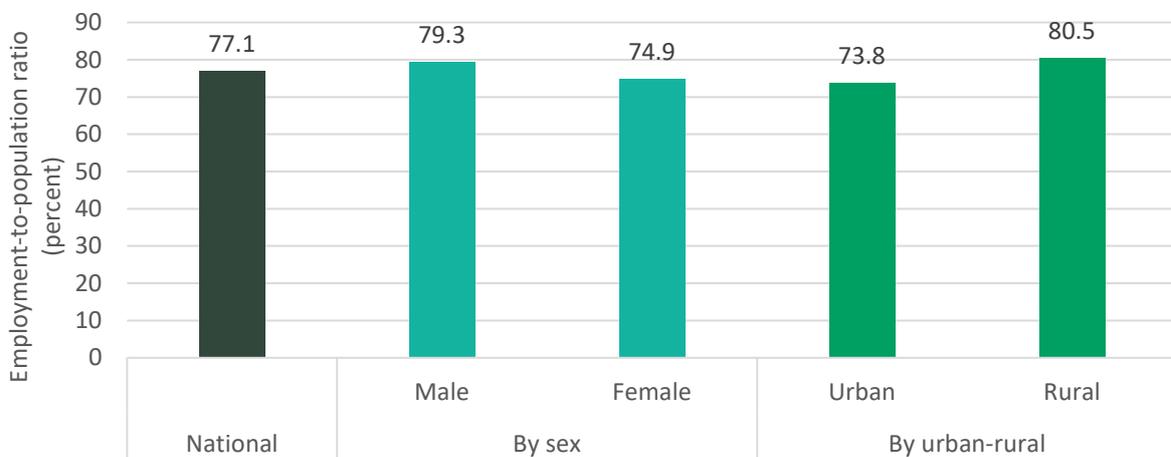
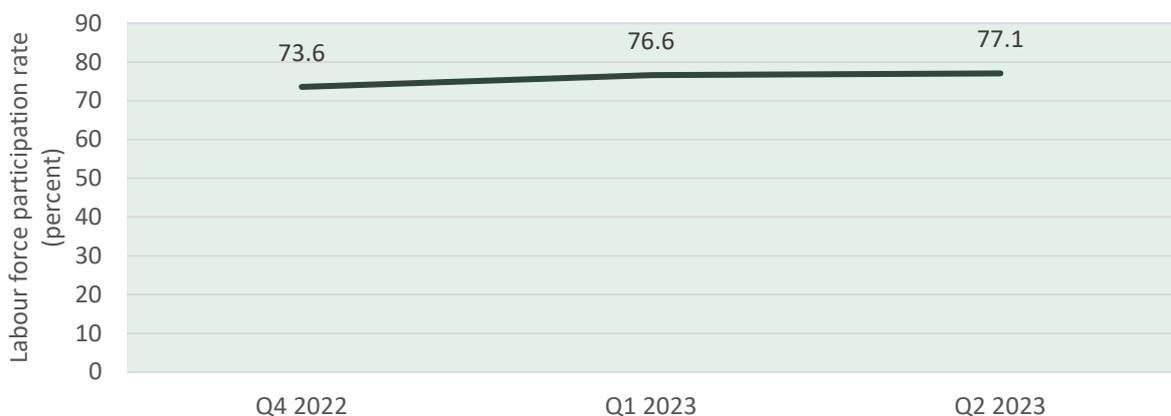


Figure 4. Trend of Employment-to-Population Ratio



STATUS IN EMPLOYMENT

The aggregate status in employment comprises two broad categories; *employees and the self-employed*. Those working for pay in the form of salaries and wages in cash or in-kind, including paid apprentices, are referred to as employees. Own-account workers, contributing family workers, and employers are referred to as self-employed.

In Q2 2023, 88.0% of employed Nigerians were primarily self-employed with the remaining 12.0% being primarily engaged as employees. Disaggregation by sex, 85.2% of employed men were self-employed compared to 91.0% of employed women. Disaggregation by location, 80.5% of employed people in urban areas were self-employed compared with 95.3% of employed people in rural areas.

Figure 5: Employment Status by Sex and Urban-Rural



INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA

Informal employment in Nigeria and other developing countries seems to be very high when compared to the developed countries. The rate of informal employment is the share of employed persons in the informal sector and informal employment. The informal employment rate in Q2 2023 was 92.7%. Like the previous two quarters, the rate of women in informal employment is higher than that of men. Although the informality rate is high across all age groups, younger persons (15-24), and persons above 65 years were more informally employed.

The rate of informal employment among people living in rural areas is 97.3% while the urban informality rate is estimated at 88%. Educational qualification seems to be negatively associated with informality as findings show that persons with higher qualifications are less likely to be in informal employment. 99.6% of people with no formal education were found to be in informal employment.

Figure 6: Informal Employment Rate by Education Qualification

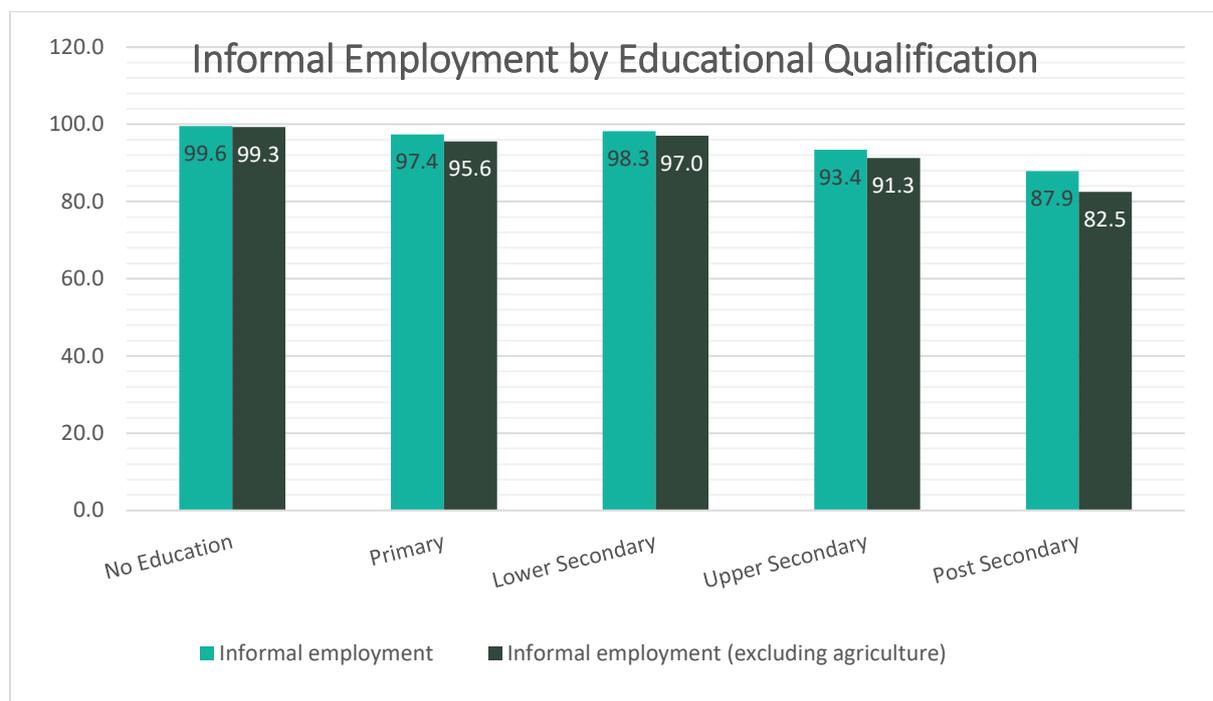
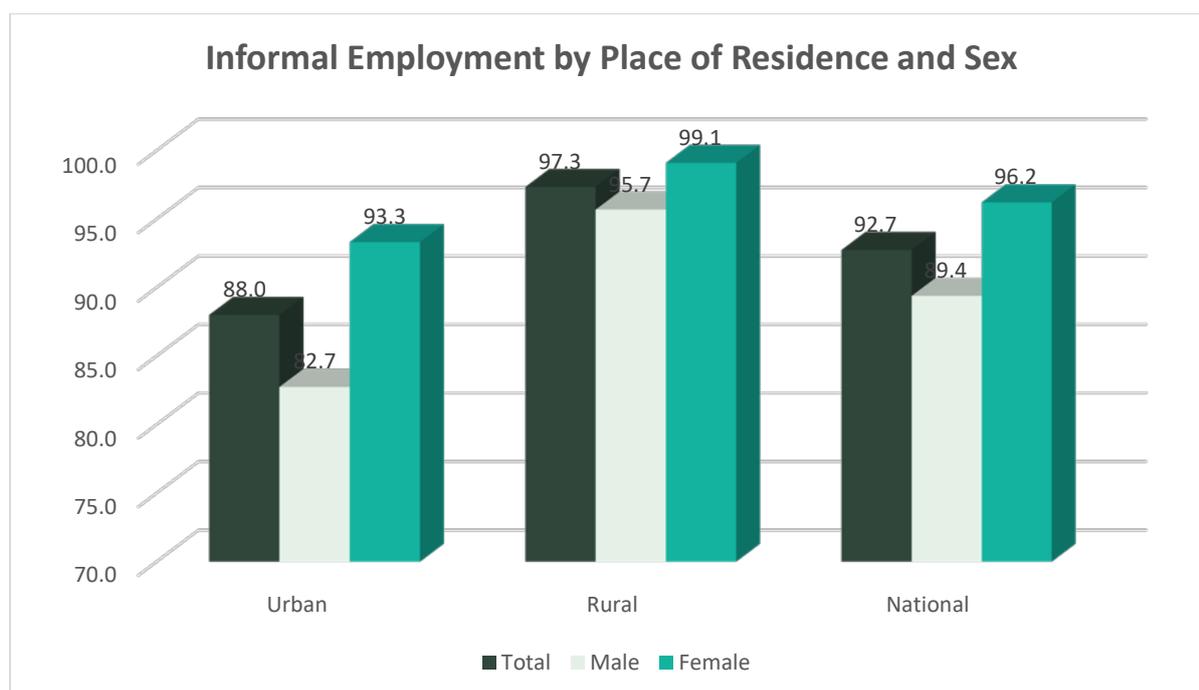


Figure 7: Informal Employment Rate by Place of Residence and Sex



UNEMPLOYMENT IN NIGERIA

The unemployment rate is defined as the share of the labour force (the combination of unemployed and employed people) who are not employed but who are actively searching and are available for work. Unemployment is one of the components of labour underutilisation.

The unemployment rate for Q2 2023 was 4.2%, this is a marginal increase from 4.1 recorded in Q1 2023. Unemployment rate by sex among men was 3.5% and among women was 5.9% in Q2 2023. Disaggregation by location, the unemployment rate was 5.9% in urban areas and 2.5% in rural areas.

Focusing on young people, the unemployment rate for 15-24-year-olds was 7.2% in Q2 2023.

In terms of educational attainment, the unemployment rate was 8.0% for those with post-secondary education, 5.4% for those with upper secondary education, 3.7% for those with lower secondary education, 3.0% for those with primary education, and 2.5% for those with no formal education.

Figure 8: Unemployment by Sex, Urban-Rural, Educational Attainment, and Age

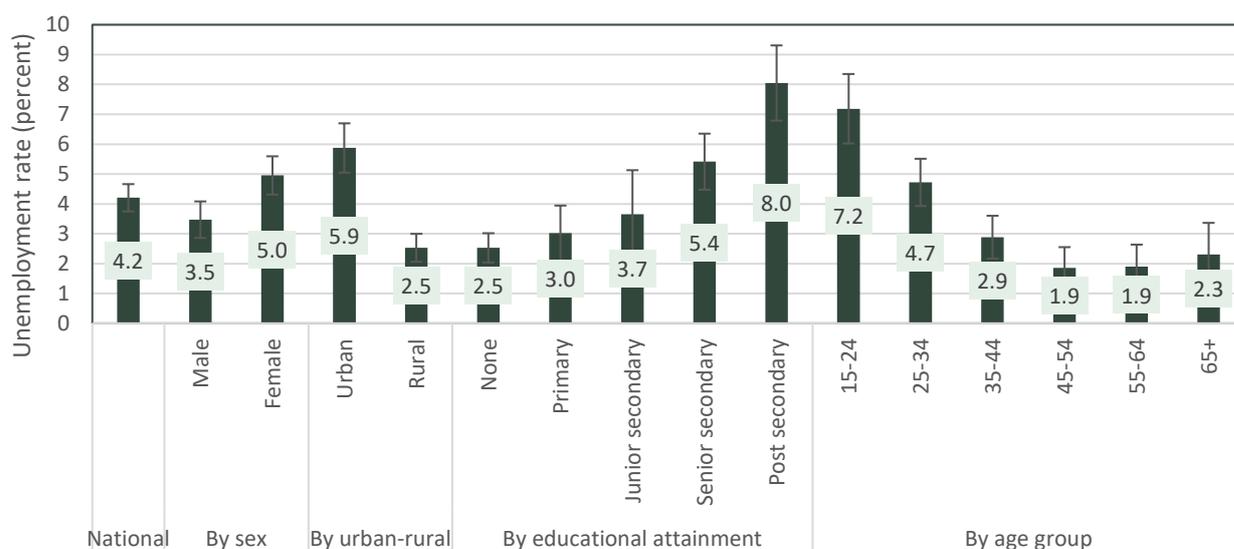
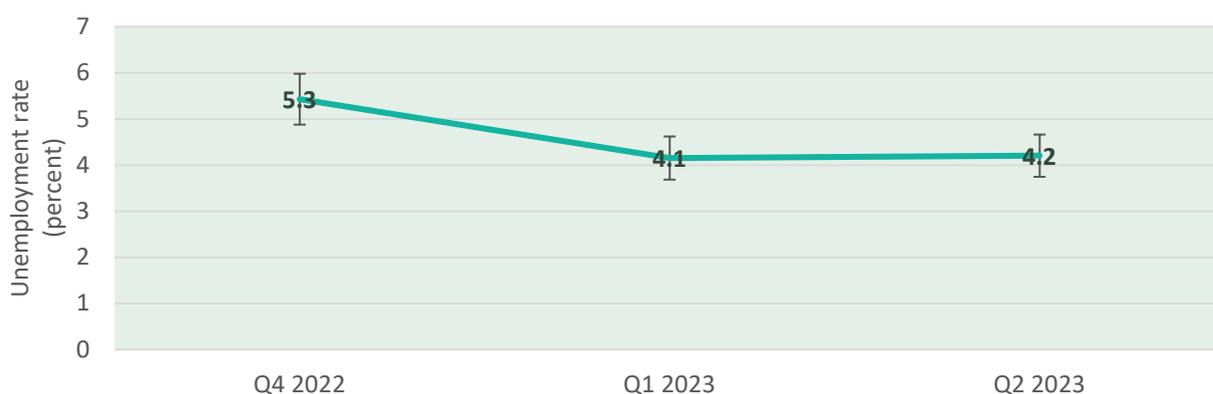


Figure 9: Trend of Unemployment



TIME-RELATED UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Time-related underemployment is one aspect of labour underutilisation. The time-related underemployment rate is defined as the share of employed people who are working less than 40 hours per week, but who would be willing and available to work more.

In Q2 2023, the share of employed Nigerians that were underemployed was 11.8%. In Q1 2023, the share of employed Nigerians that were underemployed was 12.2%.

In disaggregating underemployment by sex, the share of employed men that were underemployed was 8.4% while the share of employed women that were

underemployed was 15.3% in Q2 2023. While disaggregation by location, the underemployment rate was 10.3% in urban areas and 13.2% in rural areas.

The share of employed persons aged 15 to 24 years that were underemployed was 19.3%.

Figure 10: Time-related Underemployment by Sex, Urban-Rural, Educational Attainment, and Age

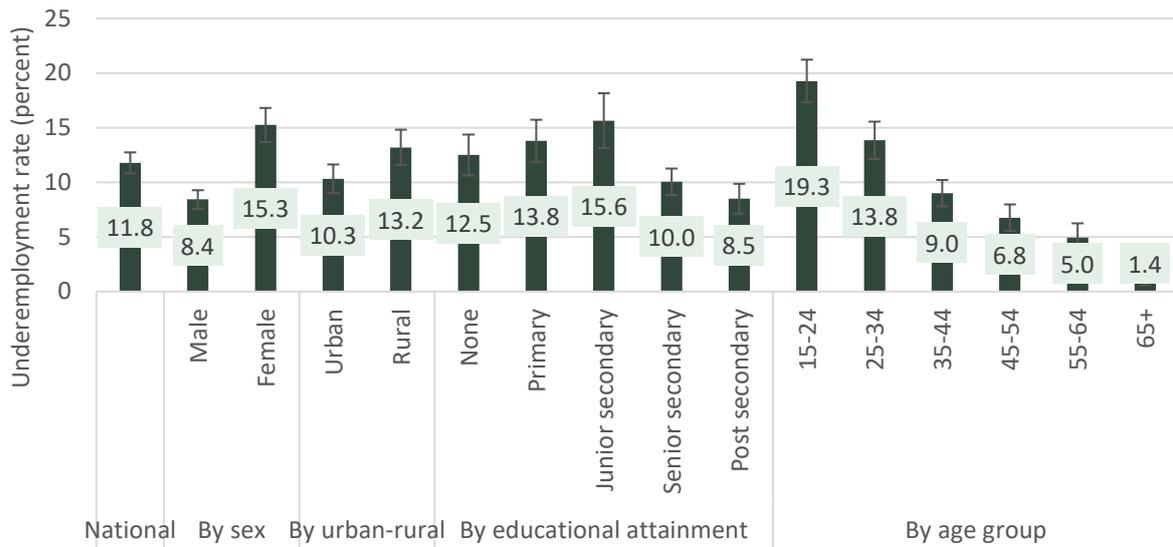
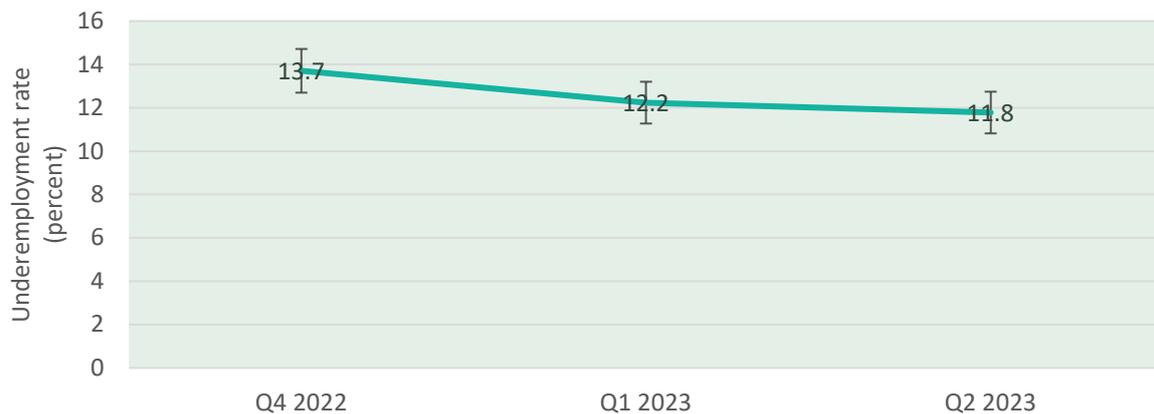


Figure 11: Trend of Time-related Underemployment



OTHER FORMS OF LABOUR UNDERUTILISATION (LU2-LU4)

There are several standard measures of labour underutilization, which is based on measures of unemployment, time-related underemployment, and the potential labour force. The potential labour force covers those who are outside the labour force but who are either actively searching for paid work but not available or available but not actively searching.

LU1 is simply unemployment rate and is reported above.

LU2 is the combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment as a share of the labour force: this was 15.5% in Q2 2023.

LU3 is the combination of the unemployed population and potential labour force as a share of the extended labour force, where the extended labour force is the combination of the labour force and the potential labour force: this was 6.9% in Q2 2023.

LU4 is the combination of time-related underemployment, unemployment, and the potential labour force as a share of the extended labour force: this was 17.8% in Q2 2023.

Figure 12: Forms of Labour Underutilisation by Sex and Urban-Rural

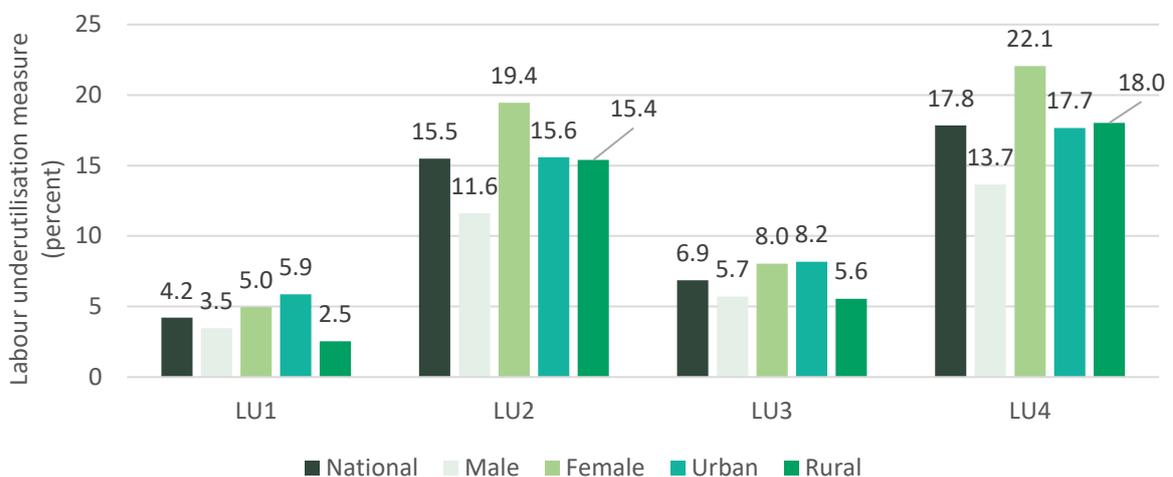
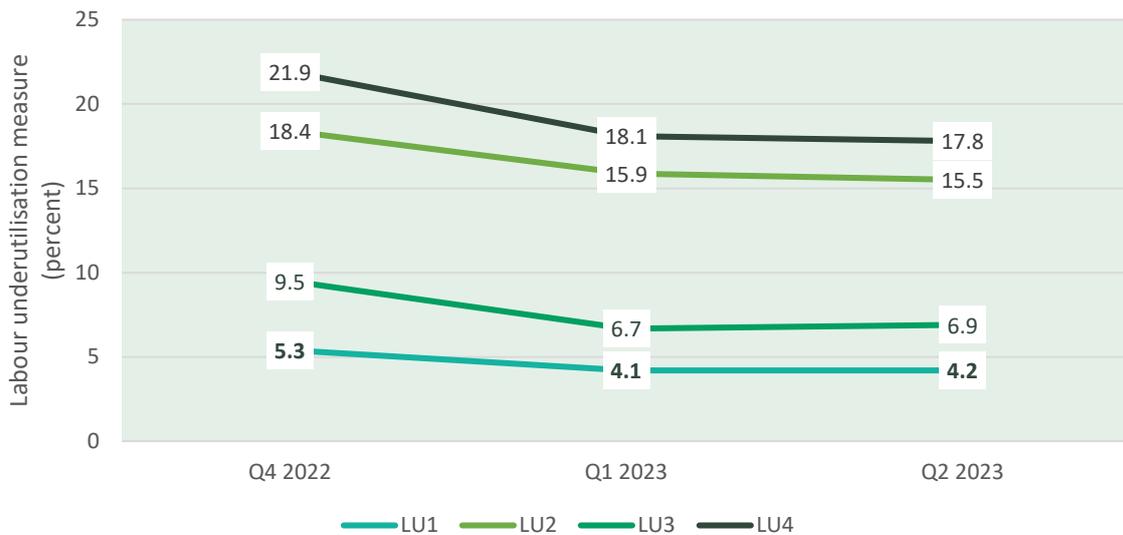


Figure 13: Trend of Labour Underutilisation



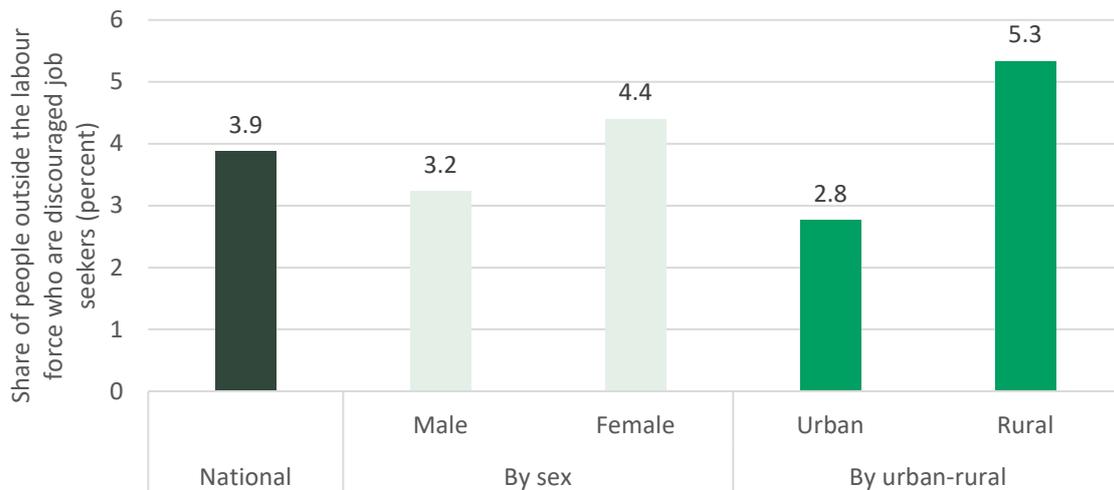
DISCOURAGED JOBSEEKERS

Discouraged jobseekers are persons outside the labour force who wanted employment and were currently available but did not seek employment during the reference period due to market-related reasons as listed below:

- past failure to find a suitable job
- lack of experience
- lack of qualifications or jobs matching the person’s skills
- lack of job
- considered too young or too old by prospective employers
- disabled or unable to work

In Q2 2023, 3.9% of people outside of the labour force were discouraged jobseekers. In the disaggregation of the discouraged jobseekers by sex, the share of men was 3.2% while the share of women stood at 4.4%.

Figure 14: Discouraged Job Seekers by Sex and Urban-Rural

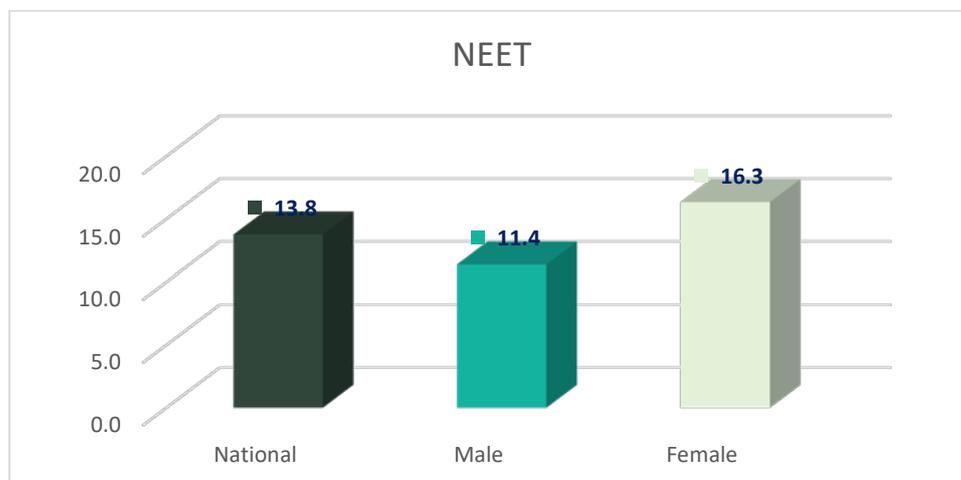


YOUTH NEET ESTIMATE

The share of youth which are neither in employment nor in education or training in the youth population. Young persons not engaged in education, employment or training, expressed as the acronym “NEET”, are being used increasingly in developed economies as a measure of youth marginalisation and disengagement. The expansion of the focus from unemployment to the broader concept of NEET responds to the need to also consider youth who have given up looking for work or who are unwilling to join the labour market,

In Q2, 2023, the proportion of youth (15-24 years) identified as NEET was 13.8. An increase from 12.1% and 10% in Q4,2022 and Q1,2023 respectively.

Figure 15: NEET Job Seekers by Sex



ANNEX A

RESULTS TABLES

Table 1: Labour Market Indicators by Sex and Place of Residence									
	Age 15 plus			URBAN			RURAL		
	TOTAL	SEX		TOTAL	SEX		TOTAL	SEX	
		M	F		M	F		M	F
Labour Force Participation Rate	80.4	82.1	78.8	78.4	79.7	77.0	82.6	84.6	80.7
Employment-to-population Ratio	77.1	79.3	74.9	73.8	75.8	71.8	80.5	82.9	78.2
Unemployment rate (as a share of the labour force)	4.2	3.5	5.0	5.9	5.0	6.8	2.5	2.0	3.1
Outside the labour force population (as a share of the working-age population)	19.6	17.9	21.2	21.6	20.3	23.0	17.4	15.4	19.3
Time-related underemployment (as a share of employed)	11.8	8.4	15.3	10.3	8.1	12.6	13.2	8.8	17.9
Discouraged job-seekers (as a share of the outside of the labour force population)	3.9	3.2	4.4	2.8	2.8	2.8	5.3	3.9	6.5
Self-employed (as a share of employed)	88.0	85.2	91.0	80.5	76.6	84.5	95.3	93.3	97.4
Employees (as a share of employed)	12.0	14.8	9.0	19.5	23.4	15.5	4.7	6.7	2.6
Own-use producers of foodstuffs	4.8	6.0	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.2	6.3	8.6	4.1
LU2	15.5	11.6	19.4	15.6	12.7	18.5	15.4	10.6	20.4
LU3	6.9	5.7	8.0	8.2	6.9	9.4	5.6	4.5	6.6
LU4	17.8	13.7	22.1	17.7	14.5	20.8	18.0	12.9	23.4

Table 2: Labour Market Indicators by Age Group and Sex

	15-24			25-34			35-44			45-55			55-64			65+		
	TOTAL	SEX		TOTAL	SEX		TOTAL	SEX		TOTAL	SEX		TOTAL	SEX		TOTAL	SEX	
		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F
Labour Force Participation Rate	62.3	63.6	60.8	89.9	92	88.5	94.7	97.3	92.4	93.3	95.9	90.5	88.7	92.1	84.1	63.3	70.2	54.3
Employment-to-population Ratio	57.8	59.4	56.1	85.7	88.2	83.9	92	95.7	88.6	91.6	94.4	88.5	87	90.3	82.5	61.9	69.5	51.8
Unemployment rate (as a share of the labour force)	7.2	6.7	7.8	4.7	4.1	5.2	2.9	1.6	4.1	1.9	1.6	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.3	0.9	4.6
Outside the labour force population (as a share of the working-age population)	37.7	36.4	39.2	10.1	8	11.5	5.3	2.7	7.6	6.7	4.1	9.5	11.3	7.9	15.9	36.7	29.8	45.7
Time-related underemployment (as a share of employed)	19.3	17.5	21.3	13.8	8.2	18	9	5.2	12.8	6.8	3.3	10.8	5	4.2	6	1.4	1.3	1.7
Discouraged job-seekers (as a share of the outside of the labour force population)	2	1.9	2.1	10	8.5	10.7	6.2	12.1	4.2	14	8.1	16.8	5.9	6.6	5.5	2.2	2.8	1.8
Self-employed (as a share of employed)	88	86.4	89.9	88.2	84.5	91	86.7	82.6	90.9	86.6	82.6	91.3	88.7	87.2	90.8	97.1	96.5	98.2

Employees (as a share of employed)	12	13.6	10.1	11.8	15.5	9	13.3	17.4	9.1	13.4	17.4	8.7	11.3	12.8	9.2	2.9	3.5	1.8
Own-use producers of foodstuffs	6.5	8.5	4.3	3.1	3.7	2.7	2.8	3.3	2.4	3.8	4.3	3.3	5.1	5.5	4.6	10.4	11.6	8.9
LU2	25.1	23	27.4	17.9	11.9	22.3	11.6	6.7	16.4	8.5	4.8	12.8	6.8	6	7.8	3.7	2.2	6.3
LU3	11.6	10.6	12.7	6.7	5.4	7.7	4.5	2.7	6.3	3.9	3.2	4.8	3.8	3.7	4.1	6.1	4.5	8.7
LU4	28.6	26.2	31.3	19.6	13.2	24.3	13.1	7.7	18.3	10.4	6.4	15.1	8.6	7.7	9.8	7.4	5.7	10.3

Table 3: Labour Market Indicators by Educational Qualification and Sex

	No Education			Primary			Lower Secondary			Upper Secondary			Post Secondary		
	TOT	SEX		TOT	SEX		TOT	SEX		TOT	SEX		TOT	SEX	
		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F
Labour Force Participation Rate	83.9	86.6	81.9	81.1	81.3	80.9	55.7	55.9	55.5	82.3	84.9	79.1	88.3	89.2	87.1
Employment-to-population Ratio	81.7	85.0	79.4	78.6	79.4	77.8	53.7	53.8	53.5	77.9	81.4	73.5	81.2	83.4	78.0
Unemployment rate (as a share of the labour force)	2.5	1.8	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	5.4	4.2	7.1	8.0	6.4	10.4
Outside the labour force population (as a share of the working-age population)	16.1	13.4	18.1	18.9	18.7	19.1	44.3	44.1	44.5	17.7	15.1	20.9	11.7	10.8	12.9
Time-related underemployment (as a share of employed)	12.5	7.7	16.1	13.8	9.8	17.7	15.6	13.3	18.2	10.0	7.7	13.3	8.5	7.6	9.8
Discouraged job-seekers (as a share of the outside of the labour force population)	6.1	5.3	6.6	4.8	2.9	6.6	1.0	0.7	1.3	2.8	3.0	2.8	6.4	8.0	4.5
Self-employed (as a share of employed)	97.6	95.9	98.8	94.1	91.1	97.0	88.9	85.6	92.5	85.1	83.3	87.6	57.9	60.2	54.5
Employees (as a share of employed)	2.4	4.1	1.2	5.9	8.9	3.0	11.1	14.4	7.5	14.9	16.7	12.4	42.1	39.8	45.5
Own-use producers of foodstuffs	5.9	9.7	3.3	6.1	6.9	5.4	6.4	7.6	5.1	3.1	3.0	3.1	2.5	3.0	1.8
LU2	14.7	9.4	18.7	16.4	11.9	20.8	18.7	16.5	21.1	14.9	11.5	19.5	15.9	13.5	19.2
LU3	5.5	4.4	6.3	6.3	4.7	7.8	7.6	7.3	7.8	7.6	6.2	9.5	9.3	7.4	11.9
LU4	17.3	11.8	21.4	19.2	14.1	24.2	22.0	19.6	24.6	16.9	13.4	21.6	17.0	14.5	20.6

LIST OF INDICATORS			
Indicators	Numerator	Denominator	
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)	Labour force population	Working age population	x100
Employment-to-Population Ratio (EPR)	Number employed	Working age population	x100
Unemployment Rate	Persons in unemployment	Labour force population	x100
Extended Labour Force	Labour force population + potential labour force population		
LU2	Persons in time-related underemployment + unemployed persons	Labour force population	x100
LU3	Employed persons + potential labour force population	Extended labour force population	x100
LU4	Population of time-related underemployed + unemployed + potential labour force	Extended labour force population	x100
Youth NEET Rate	Youth (15-24 years) not in employment, in education or training	Youth population	x100
Time-related Underemployment Rate	Persons in time-related underemployment	Employed population	x100

Informal Employment Rate	Number of persons in informal employment	Employed population	x100
Rate of Potential Labour Force	Potential labour force population	Working age population	x100
Discouraged Jobseekers	Number of discouraged jobseekers	Population outside of the labour force	x100
Own-use Producers of Foodstuffs	Number of persons in subsistence agriculture	Working Age Population	x100

LIST OF KEY TERMS

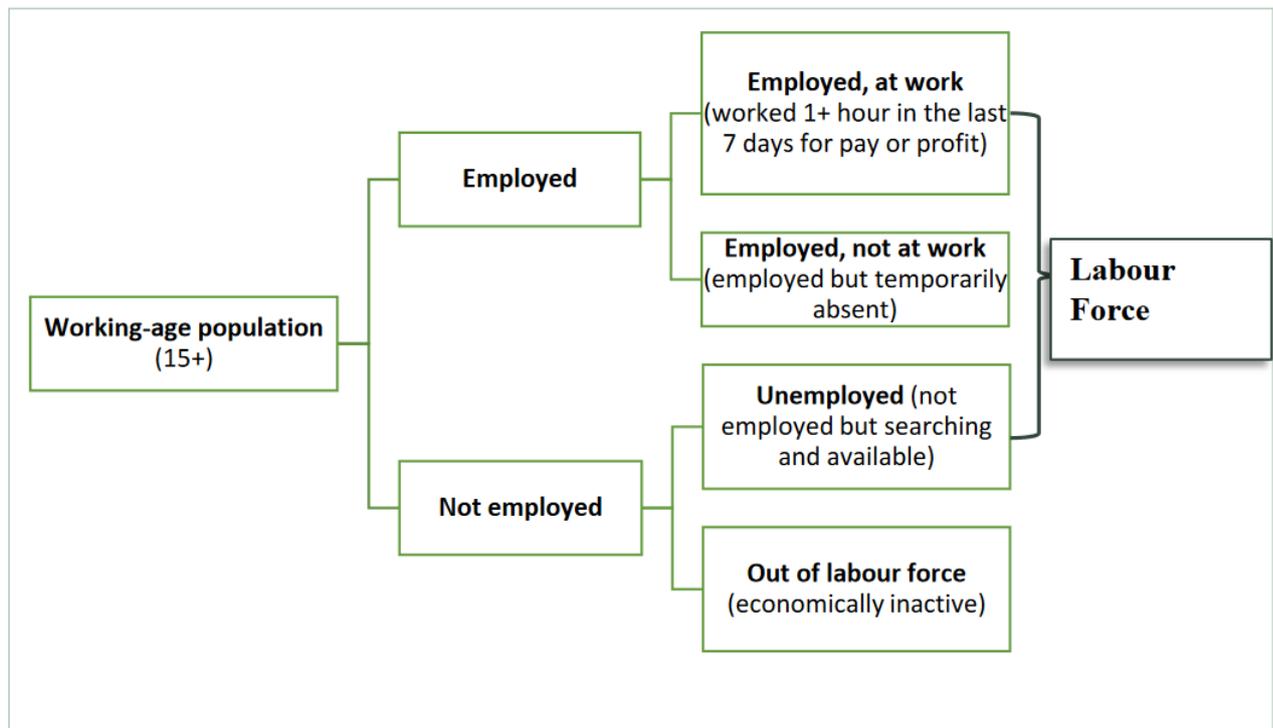
Key term	Definition
Active search	Taking specific actions to search for paid work or to start a business during the past four weeks.
Available to work	Being available to start work (or additional work) either last week or in the next two weeks.
Employed, at work	Individuals who are working for pay or profit and who worked for at least one hour in the last seven days.
Employed, temporarily absent	Individuals who typically work for pay or profit, but were temporarily absent from work during the past seven days (due to working time arrangements, such as “flexiwork”, or temporary absences, such as sick leave, vacation, or parental leave).
Employment-to-population ratio	The proportion of the working-age population that is employed.

Extended labour force	The combination of the labour force and the potential labour force
Out of the labour force	Those who are not in the labour force. This group is sometimes described as “economically inactive”.
Labour force	The combination of the employed and unemployed population.
Labour force participation rate	The proportion of the working-age population that is in the labour force.
Pay or profit	<p>Pay or profit refers to any type of remuneration that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In cash or in kind (including wages or salaries for time worked or profits from sale or barter of goods) • Already paid or expected to be paid (remuneration that is payable) • Paid directly to the person performing the work or indirectly to/through a household member
Potential labour force	Those who are outside the labour force but who are either actively searching for paid work but not available or available but not actively searching.
Primary job	The job that an individual spends the most time doing.
Proxy response	A response made on behalf of a target respondent by another member of the household at the time of the interview.
Subsistence agriculture	Subsistence agriculture workers are those farmers that grow food crops or rear livestock solely to meet the needs of themselves and their household. Their produce is (mostly) not sold at market to generate income or profit. This is sometimes referred to as own-use production work.
Underemployed	Those employed individuals working one hour or more but less than 40 hours per week who are willing to work more hours and who are available to do so.
Underemployment rate	The proportion of employed individuals that is underemployed.

Unemployed	Those individuals who are not employed and who are engaged in active search and are available to start a job.
Unemployment rate	The proportion of the labour force that is unemployed.
Working age	Individuals aged 15 years or more.

ANNEX B:

Structure of the Labour Market



LABOUR FORCE DYNAMICS

(a) A rise in the unemployment rate is not entirely equivalent to an increase in job losses or vice versa. However, an increase in unemployment can occur due to several reasons, of which loss of an existing job is just one. A rise in unemployment generally means the number of people searching for jobs has increased, which can occur because:

- i. People previously outside the labour force (e.g., students, housewives, etc.) have now joined the labour force.
- ii. People previously working have lost their jobs and are now in search of jobs.

Often, it is a combination of these two reasons stated above.

(b) Following from a) (i) above, an increase in labour force size can lead to a drop in the unemployment rate. The labour force does not change simply from job losses, since those people previously had jobs and were already in the labour market, which does not change due to job loss. Rather, what causes an expansion in the size of the labour force is the increase in the number of persons within the working-age

population, who were previously not willing or able to work, but who are now available and actively looking for work.

(c) The 1 hour a week benchmark for determining whether a person is employed or not is not to say that working an hour a week is sufficient to cater for the person's needs. Furthermore, labour force statistics deal with whether persons are engaged or not in any activity for pay or profit, and the nature of that engagement. The living standards or welfare of a person are captured by different indicators – poverty and other welfare statistics.

(d) It is also possible for persons to be engaged in employment and yet be below the poverty line. This phenomenon termed Working Poor⁴ is very common across low-income and lower-middle-income countries. A look at the poverty and unemployment rates of Nigeria's neighbours shows a very similar pattern.

SURVEY DESIGN

The NLFS adopts a continuous data collection approach where NBS' field teams are continuously collecting data, allowing for quarterly national-level estimates. A sample of 33,300 households per quarter was used in the previous labour force surveys, however, it is now 35,520 households for the entire year, divided across 12 months.

Survey Coverage and Reporting domain

The data collection was carried out in all the 36 states of the Federation including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Enumeration Area (EAs) in both Urban and Rural area were canvassed for the exercise.

Sample Size

The target sample for the entire year is 35,520 households divided across 12 months, meaning the target sample for each quarter is 8,880 households. After small levels of non-response and replacement, the final sample for Q2 2023 is 8,836 households across the 36 states including the FCT.

⁴ [wcms_696387.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)

Data Collection Method and treatment of proxy

A Face-to-face interview approach was used for the data collection with the aid of Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) device. This enables data transmission from the field to the headquarters to be done electronically.

Each team spends one week in each EA and interviews take place between Wednesdays to Sundays. This reduces the use of proxy response, as it gives enumerators time to interview the eligible respondents in person. Those respondents not available for interview weekdays may likely be available on weekends. Reducing the number of proxy response improves data quality.

Quality Control and Assurance Mechanism

Each state has a small field team comprising of five (5) enumerators (one supervisor for two teams comprising of two enumerators each) that are easier to manage, combined with constant fieldwork monitoring and coordination by NBS headquarters staff. This makes it easy to identify and fix any data issues in real time and improve fieldwork and data quality as the survey progresses.

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