



**Liberia Institute of Statistics
and Geo-Information
Services**

LIBERIA 2016/2017 LABOR FORCE SURVEY FINAL REPORT



December 2024

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FOREWORD

The Liberia Labour Force Survey (LBR-LFS) is a pivotal tool in rebuilding our country, providing invaluable insights into the dynamic landscape of employment, unemployment, and the overall structure of our workforce. As we navigate the intricate tapestry of economic fluctuations, societal changes, and technological advancements, the significance of understanding the composition and trends within the Liberian labor force becomes increasingly pronounced.

In our 176 years as an independent nation, we have conducted only three labor force surveys, the first in the 1980s, the second in 2010, and the recent LBR-LFS of 2016-2017. However, information on the report of the survey conducted in the 1980s and the exact period remains very scanty due to the civil war and data archiving issues. The results of these surveys have helped shape policy formulation and evaluation and developed national development plans. In particular, the results of the 2010 LBR-LFS helped the government and its development partners identify how to create jobs and improve the quality of life for every Liberian. In addition, the results were used to evaluate Liberia's first post-war development plan, the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), which ended in 2011, and to develop its successor, the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), which lasted between 2012 and 2017.

The 2016-17 Liberia Labour Force Survey is the second comprehensive Post war labor force survey conducted in Liberia, using the latest recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO) of 2013. The foremost goal of this survey was to collect labor market information and other socio-economic data required to design employment and labour policies that will be needed for policy formulation and decision-making in planning processes. The survey was conducted when the country was in a democratic transition from one government to another, and the new government had planned to develop the nation's then next development plan, the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) which has now elapsed and a new one, the Arrest Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID) now in vogue. This made the report even more demanding and much more important for benchmarking key policy areas of the labor market.

The results presented in this report provide a unique opportunity for the evaluation of Pillar One (Economy Transformation) of the AAID. These results also offer LISGIS and the MOL with benchmark data for the conduct of future labor force surveys. Users of labor market information now have a wealth of information to understand the dynamics and structure of the Liberia labor market.

As we appreciate the importance and quality of the results in this report, we should reflect on the challenges and difficulties surrounding their regular production and publication. Policymakers and users of labor market information must join the LISGIS and MOL in finding sustainable solutions to producing and publishing labor statistics regularly.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Government of Liberia, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other partners for providing funding and technical support for the study. Special thanks to the 2016-17 Labour Force Survey Technical Working Group for their support in the preparation of the survey instruments.

I appreciate the substantial contributions made by the ILO Department of Statistics, the ILO Abuja Office and the ILO Decent Work Team for West Africa, particularly Dr. Yacouba Diallo, for his technical support. Special thanks to Mr. Salif Massaley, Country Coordinator at the International Labour Office in Liberia for the high level of coordination between the Government of Liberia and the International Labour Office on the implementation of the project.

Also, gratefully acknowledged are the contributions of all LISGIS and MoL staff including Hon. Richard F. Ngafuan, former Assistant Minister for Research and Statistics at the Ministry of Labor who managed and coordinated all personnel and activities related to the survey preparation, design, training, implementation and data collection.

My special thanks to Mr. Andrew A. Tellewoyan for his role with the MoL Team on the preparation and implementation of the survey and for coordinating the analysis and finalization of the 2016-2017 LBR-LFS Report. His dedication and commitment contributed to the success of this report.

I want to express my gratitude to Mr. Andrew A. Tellewoyan, Mr. Boima H.M. Sonii, Mr. Kormay Adams, Mr. Mulbah K.A. Kromah, and the three MoL staff, Mr. Wolobah F. Kollie, former Assistant Minister for Research and Statistics at the Ministry of Labor, Mr. Patrick T. Kenyor and Mr. Dauoda Kromah for the technical roles played in finalizing the report.

My words of appreciation also go to Mr. Joseph W. Nyan and Mr. Richard Emmet Russ for their roles as programmers and data processing staff during and after data collection. My special thanks and appreciation also go to the GIS Technical Team led by Mr. Thomas L. Davis for the mapping phase of the survey.

I also sincerely thank all team supervisors, enumerators, and drivers who participated in the survey. Finally, but not the least, I would like to thank all respondents who agreed to spare their time for the interview and provided helpful information that has enabled LISGIS and the MoL to obtain the required information. Words are insufficient to express my gratitude for your valuable support and input.

Hon. Cllr. Cooper Kruah



Minister of Labour

December, 2024

PREFACE

The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-information Services (LISGIS) is pleased to have partnered with and supported by the Government of Liberia and development partners in conducting the 2016-17 Liberia Labour Force Survey. The production of this report has been a methodical but worthwhile journey, obliged by the desire to rethink the structure of the Liberian Labour force scopes and to ensure it is more transformative, inclusive, and diversified, as the Global Agenda reach the midway to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a pioneer to the study on the drivers of sustainable and inclusive enhancement, this report complements other reports on labour market information and supports the evidence base for policy choices in diversifying Liberia's full employment where full employment and decent work for all women and men including young people and persons with disabilities and equal pay for work of equal value are achieved by 2030. As the SDGs Development Agenda comes to a closure in 2030, the report illustrates important sectors that should be prioritized to harness Liberia's sustainable growth potential. LISGIS Management is delighted that the technical expertise that supported the production of this report is local and thank the LISGIS and Ministry of Labour staff for their tireless efforts.

The study focused on determining the unemployment trends and the dependency ratio; and identifying beneficiaries whose quality of life should improve through the availability of increasing opportunities for productive employment, which in turn should help many families to escape the poverty trap. The policy implications and response thereto are expected to contribute to addressing Liberia's poverty, and vulnerability and seek to strengthen bounciness and sustained post-pandemic recovery, as well as contribute to ongoing replication on the drivers of supportable and inclusive development and acceleration and transformation of the SDGs. The convincing case for work decency in workplaces has far-reaching implications for Liberia's shared prosperity on the SDGs, reducing external dependency and promoting decent work policy and living standards for all genders. However, this must be accompanied by human investment and other productive capital as well as innovation and digital transformation, thus creating an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive, and not crowded out by public sector activity. The Government of Liberia expects that this report will stimulate further research and be utilized to inform policy choices for SDGs transformation and inclusive growth in Liberia for improved well-being of the population through job creation and better wage bill.

Hon. Richard F. Nganfua



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Director General
Liberia Institute of Statistics and
Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)

December, 2024









ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

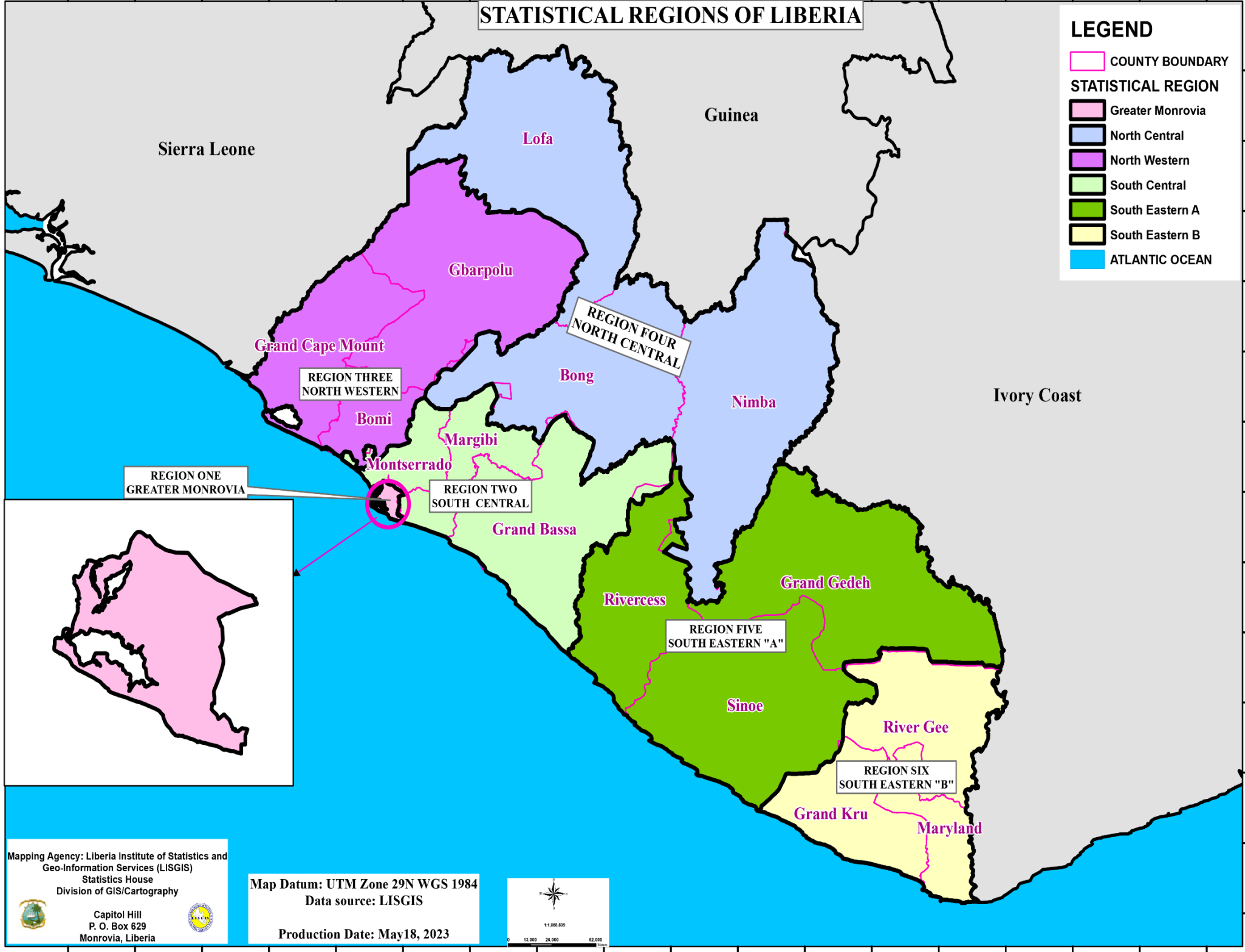
AAID	Arrest Agenda for Inclusive Development
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interviews
CS PRO	Census and Survey Processing System
CWIQ	Core-welfare Indicator Questionnaire
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
EA	Enumeration Area
ECE	Early Childhood Education
F/D	Functional Difficulty
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HISWA	Harmonizing and Improving Statistics in West Africa
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICSE	International Standard Classification of Status in Employment
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
LF	Labour Force
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
LBRFS	Liberia Labour Force Survey
LISGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services
LU	Labour Underutilization
N/A	Not Available
NEC	Not elsewhere classified
NEET	Not in employment, nor in education or training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPHC	National Population and Housing Census

PAPD	Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
PLF	Potential Labour Force
REV	Revision
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SNA	Systems of National Accounts
TRU	Time-Related Underutilization
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Childrens' Fund
UR	Unemployment rate
Yrs	Years



STATISTICAL REGIONS OF LIBERIA

LEGEND

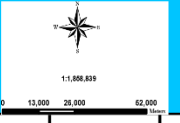
-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
- STATISTICAL REGION**
-  Greater Monrovia
-  North Central
-  North Western
-  South Central
-  South Eastern A
-  South Eastern B
-  ATLANTIC OCEAN



Mapping Agency: Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)
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Map Datum: UTM Zone 29N WGS 1984
 Data source: LISGIS
 Production Date: May18, 2023



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The working age population, defined as the population aged 15 years and older, is composed of 47.1% of males and 52.9% of females, a little over half of whom live in urban areas (54.4%) as the remaining 45.6 per cent live in the rural areas.

Labour force status of the working age population - Approximately, three in ten persons of working age are engaged in the labour market (26.1%), by either working or being unemployed. The population outside the labour force (73.9%), is composed of persons only studying (21.1%), subsistence farmers (21.6%) or persons in other situations such as elderly people, disabled, discouraged job seekers (31.2%).

As typically observed, the **labour force participation rate** (LFPR) is higher for males (32.4%) than for females (20.5%). The profile by age group shows that young people enter the labour market later due to longer education. The participation reaches a maximum in prime ages (40-44 years) around 64.0 per cent and then declines at the age of retirement. In terms of place of residence, the LFPR is much higher in rural compared to urban areas (28.6% and 24.0% respectively).

The **employment-to-population** ratio informs on the share of the working age population who is employed. The employed are all those persons of working age who, during the previous week, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services in exchange for pay or to generate profit (in cash or in kind). The employment to population ratio is 22.9% at national level.

The 2016-17 unemployment rate for Liberia is 12.5%. However, the combined rate of unemployment and the potential labour force (LU3) is much higher (18.0%). Although, the unemployment rate is a useful labour market indicator, it is an insufficient measure of labour underutilization and therefore should always be analyzed together with other labour underutilization indicators (such as the time-related underemployment rate and the potential labour force) and indicators of the quality of employment (such as the share of informal employment and earnings). Otherwise, when interpreted alone, the unemployment rate may provide a distorted view of the labour market (ILO 2018).

The total labour underutilization (LU4) combines unemployment, time-related underemployment and potential labour force. Time-related underemployment refers to employed persons who, during the specified reference period of the survey (i) wanted to work additional hours, (ii) were working in all jobs less than 35 hours, and (iii) were available to work additional hours. The total labour underutilization (LU4) was 27.1% indicating that some form of labour underutilization affected above a quarter of the extended labour force. The indicator gives a clearer picture of the difficulties faced by the persons to enter the labour market in good working conditions. Broadly, labour underutilization is more prevalent among females (29.1%) than males (25.6%), and much higher in urban areas (34.7%) compared to rural areas (18.9%).

Employment characteristics - The vast majority of the employed population has one job, multiple job holders accounts for 13.8 per cent. In terms of **status in employment**, close to half are independent workers, either as own-account workers (25.5%) or employers (19.0%).

Dependent workers mainly consist of employees (30.0%), contributing family workers amount to 22.6 per cent.

The composition of employment by **broad economic activities** shows the slight dominance of services sector (26.3%) over the agriculture sector (25.3%) whereas the industry sector has the least share of total employment (5.0%).

Occupations performed by employed derived from the structure of the economic activity. Agriculture, forestry and fishing accounts for 25.3 per cent, whole sale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles for 7.6 per cent and the rest are less than 5.0% with the exception of NEC category (43.5%). The proportion of highly qualified staff such as managers, professionals and technicians reach 16.8 per cent.

Working time - On average employed persons worked 46.2 hours in the previous week in their main jobs. **Time-related underemployment** is another indicator reflecting the mismatches between labour supply and demand. Time-related underemployment is measured in the survey as all persons employed (a) who wanted to work additional hours, (b) were working in all jobs less than 35 hours during the reference period, and (c) were available to work additional hours given an opportunity for more work. The survey shows that 9.7% of employed persons are in time-related underemployment.

Informality - The concept regroups employment in the informal sector and informal employment. Employment in the **informal sector** corresponds to workers engaged in private businesses that are not registered with the Ministry of Commerce or Ministry of Foreign Affairs or that do not keep written records of accounts. The survey reveals that employment in the informal sector amounts to 42.9 per cent of total employment, the formal sector accounts for 32.7 per cent, and the household sector 23.3 per cent.

Informal employment refers to the type of employment relationship of the job holder. Informal employment gathers employers and own-account workers engaged in the informal sector, as well as employees who do not benefit from social protection such as pension funds, paid annual leave and sick leave. The proportion of informal employment in total employment (SDG indicator 8.3.1) reaches 86.7 per cent.

Women in the labour market - The survey depicts gender imbalances in labour status and working conditions. Women labour force participation rate is lower than that of men (20.5% and 32.4% respectively). Women are more affected by labour underutilization; the composite rate of labour underutilization (LU4) was 29.1% among women compared to 25.6% for men.

Youth in the labour market - The survey shows the challenges youth faced when entering the labour market and accessing quality jobs. Their situation resembles that of women. The youth's labour force participation rate is around fifteen points below that of adults (20.5% compared to 34.6%, respectively). The unemployment rate is three times the corresponding adult rate (17.2% and 8.3%, respectively) and significant proportion of the youths are underutilized, (LU4) for the youth was 33.9% against 20.8% among adults.

SDG indicator 'Not in employment, education or training' (NEET) is the only youth-specific indicator under Goal 8 'Decent work and economic growth'. The survey reveals that 44.5% of the youths are not in employment, in education or training. This does not mean that close to half of

the youths is idle; they may be involved in other forms of work, such as volunteer work or unpaid trainee work. The fact that almost half of the youths do not participate in the economy is an issue in achieving sustainable development. The NEET group is at risk of both labour market and social exclusion, because this group is neither improving their future employability through investment in skills nor gaining experience through employment.

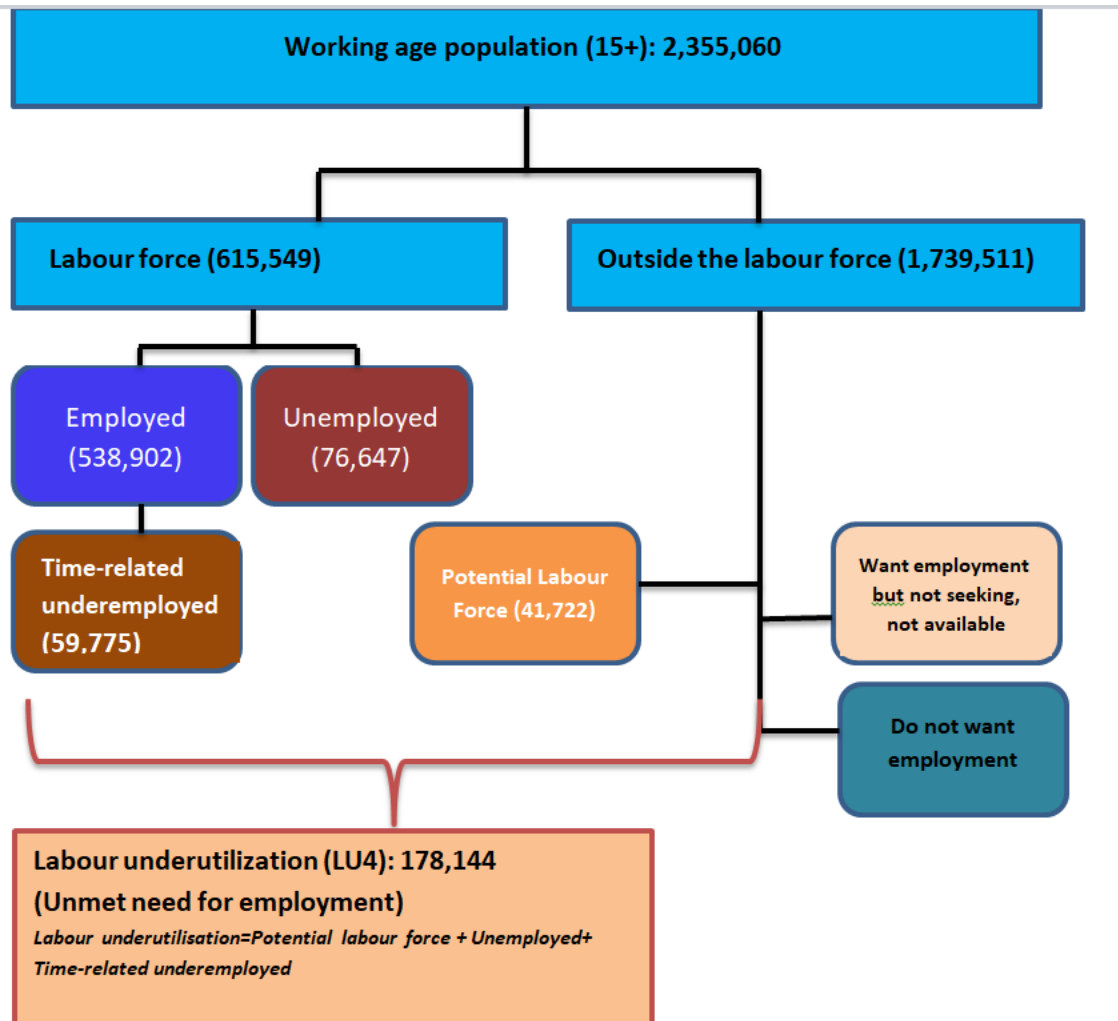


Figure 0.1: Policy focus area for the Liberia Government

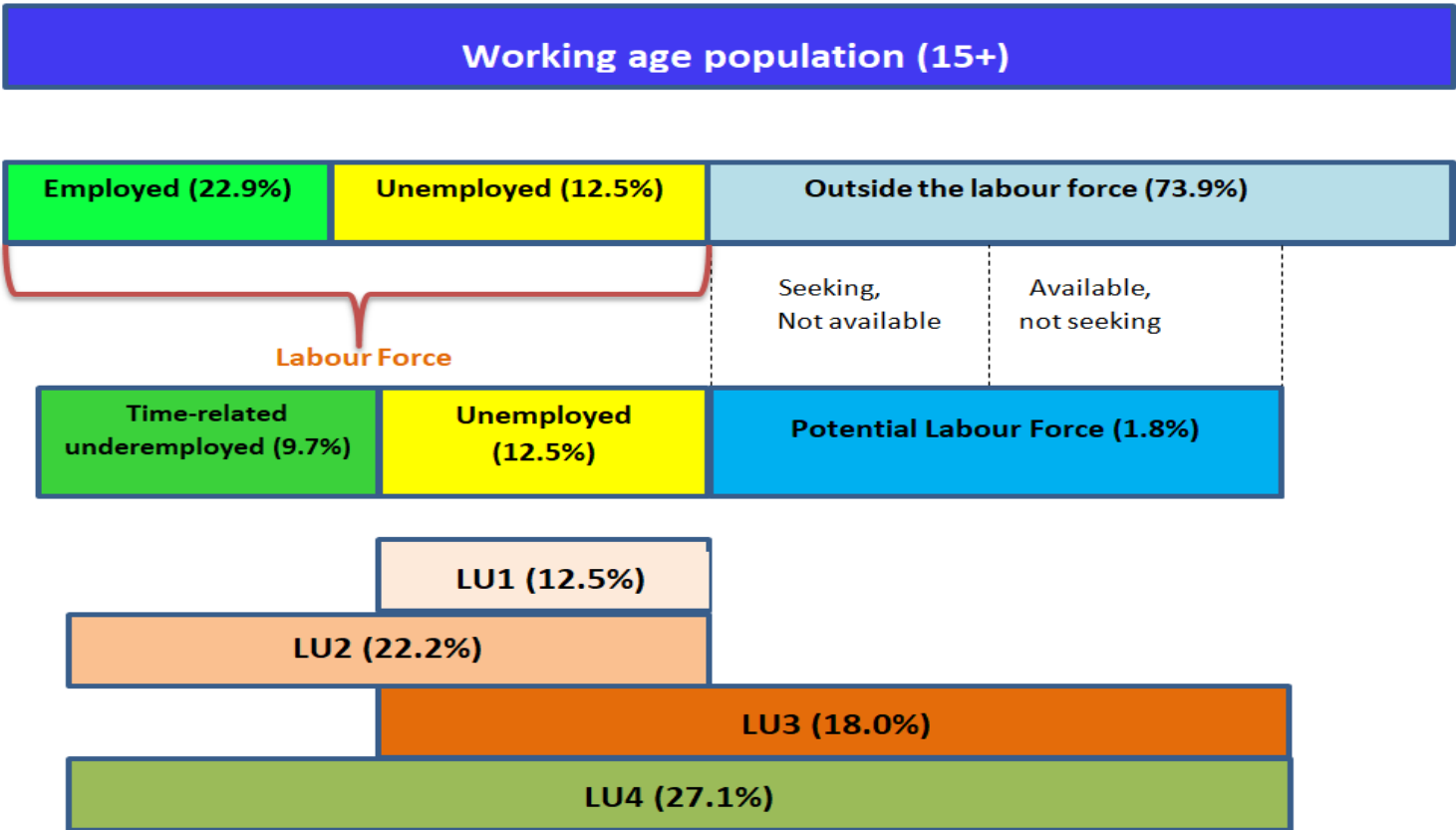


Figure 0.2: Policy focus area for the Liberia Government

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL INDICATORS

Sustainable Development Goal Indicators —The Liberia LFS 2016-17

Indicator	Sex		
	Male (%)	Female (%)	National (%)
5. Gender equality			
5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions ¹		21.7	
8. Decent work and economic growth			
8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment	82.6	92.6	86.7
8.5.2 Unemployment rate by sex	11.6	13.6	12.5
8.6.1 Proportion of youths (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training	41.2	47.2	44.5
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure			
9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment			2.1

¹ Chief executives, senior officials and legislators, 2. Administrative and commercial managers, 3. Production and specialized services managers)

1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

Liberia's 14-year civil war left a huge gap in all forms of development infrastructure. Lack of these infrastructures, which are critical to investment and recovery have delayed the creation of jobs, improvement of livelihoods and the expansion of the labour market to accommodate youth and women.

Since its democratic transition, Liberia has also made great strides to bridge the development data gap. Beginning with the formulation of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) a series of surveys have been conducted over the past decade. These include, among others, the 2010 Labour Force and Core Welfare Indicators (CWIQ) Surveys, the 2008 National Population and Housing Census and the first ever Child Labour and Human Rights survey, the 2014 and 2016 Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES), the 2013 and 2019 LDHS, etc.

The NSDS was prepared in August 2007 and updated in January 2009. The goal was to rebuild the statistical capacity in Liberia and strengthen the coordination across government agencies from 2008-2013. The availability of quality and reliable statistical data was essential for the implementation of the national Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and remains so for the AAID. The NSDS has its goals aligned with the sustainable development goals (SDGs). To a large extent, the implementation has yielded substantive improvement in the production of relevant statistical information by the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-information Services (LISGIS) and other Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs) in the country.

The 2010 Labour Force Survey (LFS) was the second of its kind in Postwar Liberia. It was funded through a major multi-partner initiative with ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, and USAID as strategic partners. The result was the availability of reliable information on economic and non-economic activities of the population aged 15 years and over. The LFS provided critical post-crisis socio economic data and labour market information, including on major dimensions of the informal sector (a major source of employment) activity, vulnerable employment and unemployment. Prior to the conduct of the 2016-17 LFS, the 2010 LFS remained the key source of evidence and basis for policy response to the growth of the labor force, efforts to improve employability and enhance overall standard of living. However, given the major changes in the country's demographic landscape and the implications for the labour market composition, it would have been difficult to effectively target development programmes for the achievement of the then Agenda for Transformation (AfT), Prop-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), the Arrest Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in the absence of an up-to-date labour market information.

In line with established norms, and in response to the rapid changes in the demographic context, the 2016-17 LFS Labour Force Survey was therefore proposed to update critical labour market information and address the dearth of reliable and timely socio-economic data, which has remained a recurrent challenge to development planning and results monitoring in Liberia. Significantly, the conduct of the 2016-17 LFS coincided with major policy and structural reforms that are expected to unfold in due course. In this connection, results from the survey informs the post-Ebola Virus Disease recovery, feed into the baseline for the Arrest Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID) as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have significant labour market dimensions.

The Labour Force Survey in Liberia is expected to be updated every five years. However, it is recommended that national programmes of statistics on work and labour force should be compiled

frequently and on a recurrent basis². It is also advised that such data be compiled on longer intervals for structural in-depth analysis and as benchmark data. However, it has been impossible to maintain this periodic update due to very limited resources. In fact, most countries in the subregion are now leaning towards production of the data on a quarterly or annual basis. This underscores the need for a more collaborative partnership in funding and other essential resources for the conduct of LFS on a more regular and higher frequency level. This is so because the demand for timely, accurate, and reliable statistics has grown rapidly while the institutional, technical and financial capacity constraints limit the ability to generate and disseminate all of the desired data. Accordingly, the conduct of the LFS is a multi-donor activity in partnership with the government of Liberia providing overall leadership. In this regard, the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo Information Services (LISGIS) and the Ministry of Labour provide overall guidance and direction with LISGIS taking the statutory lead. For the 2016-17 LBR-LFS, the ILO served as the lead technical support agency. Additional technical support was also garnered from contributing partners, including UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. More so, the World Bank under its HISWA Project provided funding for the analysis and development of the survey report.

1.2 Objective

The broad objective of the 2016-17 Liberia Labour Force Survey (LBR-LFS 2016-17) is to obtain comprehensive data on the status of the Labour Market. Broadly, the survey provides baseline data on access to the labour market, the socio-economic characteristics of the labour force, the characteristics of employment and degree of informality for use in planning, policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Government programmes aimed at improving the livelihood of the population and especially the vulnerable groups.

Specific objectives include the following:

- To measure the extent of labour underutilization including unemployment and underemployment in the country
- To provide measures of different economic activities
- To obtain a measure of the size of informal economy (informal sector and informal employment)
- Geographical and sector contribution to employment
- Gender dimension of employment

² Department of Statistics, ILO (2013) Statistics of work and of the labour force. Report for discussion at the Meeting of Experts in Labour Statistics on the Advancement of Employment and Unemployment Statistics (Geneva, 28 January–1 February 2013)

1.3 Labour market concepts and definitions

1.3.1 Household

A household consist of one person or a group of persons related or unrelated living in a dwelling/living together with common housekeeping arrangements (i.e. sharing meals and living arrangements) and acknowledged one person as the head of the household.

1.3.2 Working age population

In this survey, the working age population is defined as all persons aged 15 years and older.

1.3.3 Employed

The employed are all those persons of working age who, during the reference week (last week), were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services in exchange for pay or to generate profit (in cash or in kind).

They comprise:

- employed persons “at work”, i.e. who worked in a job for at least one hour;
- employed persons “not at work” due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangements (such as shift work, flexi-time and compensatory leave for overtime).

1.3.4 Employees

Employees are workers employed for pay, on a formal or informal basis, who do not hold controlling ownership of the economic unit in which they are employed. They are remunerated in cash or in kind in return for time worked, or, in some cases, for each task or piece of work done or for services provided including sales (by the piece or commission).

This group includes:

- Permanent employees (or with contracts without limit of time) are employees who are employed on an ongoing or indefinite basis and guaranteed a minimum number of hours or amount of work.
- Fixed-term employees are employees who are employed on a time-limited basis for a period of three months or more and who are guaranteed a minimum number of hours or amount of work.
- Short-term and casual employees are employees with short-term employment arrangements and/or without a guaranteed minimum number of hours or amount of work per pay period. It excludes paid apprentices, interns, trainees with short-term employment arrangements.
- Paid apprentices, trainees and interns are employees who work for pay in an economic unit in order to acquire workplace experience or skills in a trade or profession.

1.3.5 Employers

Employers are independent workers who own the economic unit in which they work and control its activities on their own account or in partnership with others, and in this capacity regularly employ one or more employees. The economic unit which they own and control may be incorporated or unincorporated, and its employees may be formal, informal, working full-time, part-time, or on a casual basis.

1.3.6 Branch of economic activity

The branch of economic activity refers to the main activity of the establishment in which a person worked during the reference period. The branch of economic activity of a person does not depend on the specific duties or functions of the person’s job, but rather on the characteristics of the economic unit in which the person works.

Data presented by branch of economic activity is based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC, Rev.4). They can be grouped by broad sector of economy:

- Agriculture comprises activities in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing.
- Industry comprises mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction and public utilities (electricity, gas and water).
- Services consist of wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels, transport, storage and communications, finance, insurance, real estate and business services, and community, social and personal services.

1.3.7 **Employment-to-population ratio**

The employment-to-population ratio is defined as the proportion of the working-age population that is employed. The indicator provides information on the ability of an economy to create employment; for many countries the indicator is often more insightful than the unemployment rate.

1.3.8 **Informal employment**

Informal employment refers to the type of employment relationship of the job holder. Informal employment includes:

- Employers and own-account workers without employees engaged in the informal sector;
- Employees who do not benefit from social protection such as pension funds, paid annual leave and sick leave.

1.3.9 **Informal economy**

The “informal economy” comprises all informal productive activities of persons or economic units, whether or not they are carried out for pay or profit (21st ICLS, October 2023).

1.3.10 **Informality of the employment**

Informality of the employment regroups employment in the informal sector and informal employment.

1.3.11 **Institutional sector of employment**

Institutional sector of employment refers to the kind of economic unit in which the person is employed, as defined by its legal organisation, principal functions, behaviour and objectives.

The survey data distinguish three sectors of employment:

- Public sector refers to all government institutions or state-owned enterprises.
- Private sector includes market enterprises, as well as NGOs, non-profit institutions, international organizations and foreign embassies.
- Household refers to private households as employers of domestic workers.

1.3.12 **Contributing family workers**

Contributing family workers are workers who help, without receiving regular pay, in a job or market-oriented enterprise held or operated by a household or family member.

1.3.13 **Functional difficulties**

The criteria for identifying people with disability follows the Washington Group Short Set of functioning that assesses difficulties with six universal basic activities (functions): seeing, hearing, walking, self-care, cognition and communication. Respondents who answer “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do it at all” to at least one of the six functioning questions are classified as persons with functional difficulties.

1.3.14 **Labour force**

The labour force is the sum of the number of persons of working age who are employed and the

number of persons of working age who are unemployed.

1.3.15 Labour force participation rate

The labour force participation rate is a measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work. The indicator informs on the size of the supply of labour available to engage in the production of goods and services, relative to the population at working age.

The labour force participation rate is calculated by expressing the number of persons in the labour force as a percentage of the working-age population.

1.3.16 Potential labour force

The potential labour force is defined as persons not employed during the reference period (7 consecutive days before the date of interview) who:

- want to work and searched for work but were not available, or
- did not look for work but were available to work.

1.3.17 Time related underemployment

Persons in time-related underemployment are defined as all persons in employment who, during the reference period, wanted to work additional hours, whose working time in all jobs was less than 35 hours threshold, and who were available to work additional hours given an opportunity for more work. The indicator is a measure of labour underutilization that provides information regarding the share of employed persons who are willing and available to increase their working time.

1.3.18 Labour underutilization: unemployed, time-related underemployed (TRU), potential labour force (PLF)

Labour underutilization refers to mismatches between labour supply and demand, which translate into an unmet need for employment among the population.

There are four indicators to assess the nature of labour underutilization (LU):

LU1: Unemployment rate:

Persons of working age unemployed meet three conditions:

- Not employed, meaning did not work for pay or profit during the reference period. A person can be unemployed while being engaged in other forms of work such as own-use production work, volunteer work or unpaid trainee work. The distinction between employment and own-use production of goods is based on the main intended destination of the production. Production of goods mainly intended for sale or exchange are included in employment.
- Actively searched for a paid job or tried to start a business in the past four weeks.
- Were available for a job during the reference period or in the two coming weeks.

Persons who have already found a job and who will start their new job within three months are considered as unemployed.

Long-term unemployment refers to a duration of unemployment of 12 months or more.

Measurement: $[\text{persons in unemployment} / \text{labour force}] \times 100$

LU2: Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment:

This indicator is particularly important in developing economies, where many workers are underemployed and engaged in informal activities and small-scale agriculture.

Measurement: $[(\text{persons in time-related underemployment} + \text{persons in unemployment}) / \text{labour force}] \times 100$

LU3: Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force:

$[(\text{persons in unemployment} + \text{potential labour force}) / (\text{extended labour force})] \times 100$

LU4: Composite measure of labour underutilization:

$[(\text{persons in time-related underemployment} + \text{persons in unemployment} + \text{potential labour force}) /$

(extended labour force)] x 100

1.3.19 Nature of the economic unit

The production unit can belong to the formal sector, informal sector or to the household sector.

The informal sector comprises economic units having the following characteristics:

- were not registered with Ministry of Commerce or Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- or whose employees do not benefit from a pension fund

The household sector regroups employees who work as domestic workers for households.

1.3.20 Occupation

Occupation refers to the tasks and duties performed by an employed person at their job, irrespective of the branch of economic activity or status in employment of that person. The survey data have been classified with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08).

1.3.21 Outside labour force

Persons outside of the labour force are persons of working age who are not employed and who are not looking for a job. There are different reasons for not participating in the labour force such as being occupied in caring for family members; retired, sick or disabled or attending school; persons may believe no jobs are available; or they may simply not want to work.

1.3.22 Own-account workers

Own-account workers are independent workers who operate an economic unit, alone or in partnership with others, that does not employ any employees on a regular basis. The economic unit which they operate may be incorporated or unincorporated.

1.3.23 Producers of goods or services for own final use

All persons of working age who, during the reference period, performed any activity to produce goods or provide services for own final use. For own final use is based on main intended destination of the production: by producer, by household members, or by family members living in other households.

A subset of own-use producers of goods are subsistence foodstuff producers, which are people producing and/or processing goods from agriculture, fishing, hunting and gathering, as foodstuff that contribute to the livelihood of the household or family. It excludes persons engaged in such production as recreational or leisure activities.

1.3.24 Status in employment

Status in employment refers to the type of work relationship a person has in his/her job, taking into account the kind of economic risk and degree of authority that the person experiences in their job. The survey data distinguish four statuses in employment: employee, employer, own-account worker and contributing family worker.

1.3.25 Youths not in employment nor in education, employment or training (NEET)

The NEET rate measures the share of youths aged 15-35 (15-24 for the SDGs) who are not in education, employment or training as a percentage of the total youths' population. It provides a measure of potential youths labour market entrants.

For measurement purpose it is important not to double count youth who are simultaneously both in employment and education or training. The formula can be expressed as:

NEET rate = [(Unemployed youth + Youth outside the labour force) – (Unemployed youth in education or training + Youth outside the labour force in education or training)] / Youth x 100

1.3.26 **Main job**

The main job is defined, as per the international standards, as the one in which the person usually work the most hours, even if they were absent from it in the reference week. If the hours of work are the same in each job, the main job/business is the one that generates the highest income.

1.3.27 **Decent work**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines decent work as “productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity”.

In general, work is considered as decent when:

- it pays a fair income
- it guarantees a secure form of employment and safe working conditions
- it ensures equal opportunities and treatment for all
- it includes social protection for the workers and their families
- it offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration
- workers are free to express their concerns and to organize

2 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1 Survey instruments

The survey instruments for LBR-LFS 2016-17 consist of questionnaires and instruction manuals to supervisors and enumerators. The questionnaires were developed by the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and the survey technical working group. The questionnaire comprises two parts: the household questionnaire and the individual questionnaire.

The Household Questionnaire listed all usual members of the selected households. Basic demographic information was collected on each person listed, including age, sex, marital status, nationality, relationship to the head of the household, education, migration and functioning. The data on age of household members were used to identify individuals eligible for the individual questionnaire.

The individual questionnaire collected information on each eligible individual including employment in the specified reference period, characteristics of current main job or business activity, working time in employment job search and child labour. All usual household members aged 5 years and above were eligible for the individual questionnaire. The reason for collecting information for as low as 5 years is to gather data on kids between 5 and 17 who are involved in some economic activity for the household or themselves. For all those aged 11 years and below, the parent or the caregiver was interviewed.

2.2 Technical/stakeholders' evaluation of the Questionnaire

A one-week review and finalization workshop for the questionnaire was conducted in November 2016 prior to training of field staff. The exercise comprised of more than 20 participants drawn from the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), Ministry of Labor (MoL), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the Ministry of Youth and Sports, etc. Each stakeholder reviewed the entire questionnaire with major concentration on interested sections for inputs. For instance, the UNICEF though reviewed the entire questionnaire, key attention was focused on the section on child labor.

2.3 Pre-test

About 20 participants took part in the training to pre-test the LBR-LFS 2016-17 questionnaire on November 10-14, 2016. The first three days featured classroom training focusing on questionnaire content and on the second and final days, all participants took part in field practice using the questionnaire in order to measure the convenience, accuracy and clarity of the tool. Pre-tests were carried out in the randomly selected households within clusters in Monrovia and its suburbs that were not sampled for the main survey.

2.4 Recruitment of field staff

Prior to the commencement of LBR-LFS 2016-17 main fieldwork training activities, a lot of applications

for the post of enumerator were sent to LISGIS. Out of the received applications, the candidates selected for the main fieldwork training were applicants with at least a high school education. Furthermore, some individuals with previous survey experience particularly LBR-LFS 2010 and other major surveys such as DHS 2007, DHS 2013 and CWIQ 2010 were also selected for the training. In total, about 110 fieldworkers were recruited for the training from which the best performing participants were selected.

The high standard set in the recruitment process was geared towards collection of high quality and reliable data, as information or analysis derived from the LBR-LFS 2016-17 is to be used as a baseline and for formulation of policies and evidence-based decision making.

2.5 Training of field staff

Training of field staff for LBR-LFS 2016-17 was conducted for a period of ten days from 21st November to 1st December 2016 with a break on Sunday, 27th of November 2016. The entire training was conducted in the English Language which is the official language of the Republic of Liberia. The training consisted of classroom lectures, practice with partner sessions, mock interviews, assessment and pre-test in the field to assess the understanding of the trainees. Teams were arranged in a group of 5 with field coordinators serving as supervisors. During the field exercise, each enumerator was assigned five households for enumeration area.

2.6 Fieldwork

Main fieldwork (data collection) for 2016/2017 started on 20th of January 2017. All teams were deployed simultaneously across the country. The sixty (60) days allocated for the main fieldwork ended officially on the 21st of March 2017. However, after the official closing date of the main fieldwork there were teams still left with significant number of call-backs to be done due to difficulty in accessing hard to reach areas especially in rural areas where road connectivity is challenging. As a result, the affected teams continued to work on their call-backs until the last week of March 2017.

Data was collected from 540 out of the total 7,012 EAs from the 2008 National Population and Housing Census (NPHC), of which 251 were urban EAs and 289 rural EAs. Twelve (12) households were selected in each of the EAs using systematic sampling. The total number of targeted households was 6,480 out of the 670,295 households recorded by the 2008 Census. The data collection was carried out by 20 teams, each comprised of 1 supervisor, 4 enumerators and 1 driver. Data collection was done using paper questionnaire (PAPI).

2.7 Monitoring

During the data collection the coordination team which comprised of about 10 senior and middle level technicians of LISGIS and the MoL visited all the teams on different occasions to monitor the progress of the fieldwork and observed interviews to ensure that questions were administered as the enumerators were trained. Furthermore, the coordinators assisted the enumerators to choose the right response categories in critical or unfamiliar cases where the supervisors were unable to assist.

2.8 Data processing

As data collection was done using manual questionnaire, cleaning and entry were done at the LISGIS central office in Monrovia. Coding of the questionnaire was done over a period of about two weeks and thereafter, data entry commenced with more than 20 data entry clerks. Data entry and processing took place at LISGIS. A data entry application (CS-Entry) developed with CS-pro was then used to create the microdata file.

2.9 Sample Modeling/Design

The 2016-2017 LBR-LFS used the 2008 National Population and Housing Census (NPHC) to derive the Enumeration Areas (EAs) as its sampling frame. EA maps were prepared by the GIS/Cartography Section of LISGIS, and staff of the section assisted and guided the interviewers in tracing the EA boundaries under consideration.

The population of interest, indicators and sample size were determined. A two-stage stratified random sampling design was used to arrive at the required sample size. In the first stage the EAs were selected by probability proportional to size (PPS). Systematic sampling was used in the second stage, where 12 households were selected by circular systematic sampling procedure in each EA. The total number of targeted households was 6,480 out of the 670,295 households recorded by the Census.

2.10 Response Rate

Table 1 presents the results of the household interviews. A total of 6,480 households were selected for the survey, after sampling update, of which 6,245 were occupied at the time of fieldwork. Among the occupied households, 6,161 were successfully interviewed, yielding a response rate of 98.7 per cent. In the interviewed households, 15,691 eligible individuals were identified for individual interview and 15,367 were successfully interviewed, for a response rate of 98.8 per cent. The sample design and the very low rate of non-response allowed the survey data to represent the economic activity of the households at the time of the survey. The 2016-17 LBR-LFS can therefore be considered to be representative at national as well as at county level.

Table 0.1: Results of the household interviews

Results	Total
Household interviews	
Households selected	6,480
Households occupied	6,245
Households with complete interviews	6,161
Household response rate³	98.65
Individual interviews	
Number of eligible individuals	15,691
Number of eligible individuals found	15,549
Number of eligible individuals interviewed	15,367
Eligible individual response rate⁴	98.82

2.11 Weighting Procedure

The sample for the 2016-2017 LBR-LFS was a stratified sample selected in two stages. The household design weights were computed taking into account the cluster selection and household selection probabilities. For this procedure, the weights were calculated using excel template that was developed to facilitate weighting in each stage of sampling. Moreover, a non-response adjustment is applied at the strata level to benchmark the number of households actually interviewed to the number of households targeted. The weight adjusted for non-response are obtained by multiplying the design weight by the non-response correction factor.

In 2016, the listing operations related to the HIES Survey carried out by LISGIS allowed the statistical office to update the estimates of the number of households within the different domains. Using these updated estimates in the weighting process, the HIES estimated 990,966 households and 4,243,474 of individuals; much higher values than the 670,295 households and 2,018,536 persons from Census 2008. Therefore, a further adjustment is applied to the LFS weights to take into account these demographic changes.

For the LBR-LFS 2016-17 it was not possible to replicate the weighting process used for the HIES (see HIES methodology for calculation of the weights) because the relevant information was not available. However, it was possible to benchmark the LFS estimates to the HIES 2016 results.

Two additional weights were therefore calculated:

- The **WEIGHT_ADJ_HIES** benchmarking the LFS data to the HIES estimates of the number of households at the strata level. Therefore, the two surveys produce the same estimates of the number of households.
- The **WEIGHT_ADJ_HIES_SEX** benchmarking the LFS data to the HIES estimates of the population by sex at the strata level. Therefore, the two surveys produce the same estimates of the population by sex for each of the strata.

The estimates obtained using the different weights are as follows:

3 Households interviewed/households occupied

4 Respondents interviewed/eligible respondents

- Using the WEIGHT_ADJ_NONRESPONSE the total estimated population is 2,756,090
- Using the WEIGHT_ADJ_HIES the total estimated population is 4,061,791
- Using the WEIGHT_ADJ_HIES_SEX the total estimated population is 4,243,474

It was not possible to benchmark to the estimates by AGE GROUPS from the HIES 2016 because the LFS had 232 missing data on the AGE variable (originally more than 500 but the age was recalculated using the year of birth for part of them). If these missing data were imputed it could have been possible to benchmark also to the distribution by sex and age groups. In general, the LFS produces a lower proportion of children 0-14 and higher proportions of adults in both the urban and rural areas, and for both men and women.

2.12 Missing Data

The survey data is characterized by high frequency of missing data for industry and occupation. The category “Not elsewhere classified” for industry is unusually high comprising 43.5 per cent of employment. It also has an implication for the share of employment by broad branch of economic activity. Also, the category “not elsewhere classified” for occupation (24.1%) was unusually high and raises concerns about the quality of the data collected for information on occupation. This may have an impact on the occupation indicators. For instance, the quality and reliability of statistics on the female share in senior and middle management (SDG Indicator 5.5.2) is dependent on the reliability of the employment statistics by occupation at the two-digit level of the ISCO.

The adoption of CAPI method of data collection in 2018 by LISGIS has significantly reduced issues of missing data.

2.13 Lessons Learned and Future Improvements

The following are key areas for special attention for improvement of future Labor Force Surveys:

- The survey data was collected using paper questionnaires. Double data entry was therefore required at the office level to ensure accuracy and minimize error thereby increasing the cost of the project and extending data processing time. Future Labor Force Surveys should therefore be implemented using CAPI in order to minimize cost, reduce time and ensure accuracy.
- The completion of the final phase of the survey was largely affected by resource challenges which led to delays in finalizing the report. Due to the significance of labor market indicators for macroeconomic policy making which cannot be over-emphasized, it is important to enforce and maintain strong resource mobilization strategy for regular conduct of the survey in the future in order to provide timely and reliable labor market indicators for prompt interventions by policymakers.
- More collaboration and robust coordination are highly encouraged amongst stakeholders in general and between the Ministry of Labor and LISGIS in particular on the smooth implementation of Labor Force Survey (LFS). The LISGIS, as the National Statistical Office (NSO) should at all times lead in the implementation of Labor Force Surveys as provided for by statute creating the entity but and in strong coordination with the Ministry of Labor which is the regulating body of the labor market.

3 MAIN LABOUR FORCE INDICATORS

Limitations within the old statistical standards (13th ICLS, 1982) emerged over time, such as a lack of separate recognition of various types of unpaid work, an inconsistent application of concepts across countries, and an insufficient range of indicators to describe the labour market and its evolution. The revised standards adopted by the 19th ICLS in 2013 sought to address all these limitations, while retaining and supplementing core indicators on employment and unemployment.

Following the 19th ICLS, employment was defined more narrowly as work done for pay or profit, while activities not done mainly in exchange for remuneration (i.e., own-use production work, volunteer work and unpaid trainee work) were recognized as other forms of work. Therefore, the most obvious impact arises from the change in the employment definition.

The 1982 definition included in employment all activities within the SNA production boundary, creating a broad concept with a combined range of paid and unpaid activities. With the introduction of the 19th ICLS standards, fewer persons producing goods for their own use are considered employed. More precisely, employment excludes producers of goods who mainly produce for their own consumption (but includes those who mainly sell what they produce even if they consume a small part of their own production). As such, the application of the latest standards typically results in substantially lower employment in countries with high levels of subsistence farming. This is in line with the findings in Liberia where the 13th and 19th standards were applied respectively in the LFS 2010 and LFS 2016-17. Consequently, it becomes hard to compare the two results since several persons producing goods for their own use were included in employment in the LFS 2010. The LFS 2016-17 shows that 32.9% of persons of working age population were involved in own-use production of foodstuff.

The results of main labour force indicators obtained from 2016 – 2017 Liberia Labour Force Survey (LBR-LFS 2016-17) are presented in Table 3.1 below. In LBR-LFS 2016-17 persons of working age population are those 15 years and older. According to these results, among the 2,355,060 persons 15 years old and over who were living in households, 615,549 persons were in the labour force, either employed (538,902) or unemployed (76,647). The remainder 1,739,511 persons were outside the labour force including 508,453 persons engaged wholly or mostly in subsistence agriculture, not classified as employment according to the 2013 international standards on statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization (19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS)).

The national labour force participation rate, that is the percentage of the working age population engaged in the labour force, was 26.1 per cent, indicating that they were either working for pay or profit or seeking employment. The male labour force participation rate was 32.4 per cent, which is higher than the female's (20.5%). At the same time, the labour force participation rate in rural areas (28.6%) was higher than the rate in urban areas (24.0%).

The employment-to-population ratio, i.e., the percentage of the working age population who is employed, is an indicator of the performance of the national economy in providing employment to its growing population. The ratio was 22.9 per cent according to the LBR-LFS 2016-17 results. The employment-to-population ratio was higher among men (28.7%) than women (17.7%) and higher in rural (27.2%) than in urban areas (19.3%).

The unemployment rate represents the percentage of the labour force that is unemployed. A person is considered unemployed if he/she was not employed in the reference week; looked for a job or tried to start a business in the last 4 weeks before the survey and was available to start working at paid job or business in the reference week or within a short subsequent period (2

weeks). The unemployment rate at national level presented in Table 3.1 as LU1 stood at 12.5 per cent, indicating that roughly among 8 persons in labour force, there was one person unemployed. The female unemployment rate (13.6%) was higher than the male unemployment rate (11.6%) and the unemployment rate was more than three times higher in urban areas (19.8%) than in rural areas (5.1%).

The unemployment rate is not the only indicator of the unmet needs for employment (unemployment, potential labour force and time related underemployment). Other indicators inform on labour underutilization such as time-related underemployment and potential labour force. The potential labour force includes persons who were available for employment but were not seeking employment during the reference period as well as persons who were indeed seeking employment during the reference period but were not available for work.

According to the LBR-LFS 2016-17 results, the combined rate of unemployment and time-related underemployment (LU2) was 22.2 per cent, almost two times higher than the unemployment rate. Time related underemployment is higher among females (23.8%) than males (21.0%). The combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (LU3) was 18.0 per cent. The composite measure of labour underutilization (LU4) that combines unemployment, time-related underemployment and potential labour force was 27.1 per cent indicating that some form of labour underutilization affected a good percentage of the extended labour force. In general, labour underutilization is more prevalent among female (29.1%) than male (25.6%), and urban areas (34.7%) more than rural areas (18.9%).

Table 3.1: Main labour force and labour underutilization (LU) indicators (%), LBR-LFS 2016-2017 – Main job

	Sex		Residence		Region						Functional Difficulty		Age (yrs)		Subsistence Farming		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Greater Monrovia	North Central	North Western	South Central	South Eastern A	South Eastern B	With F/D	Without F/D	Youth(15-35)	Adult (36+)	Participated in Subsistence Farming	Not Participated in Subsistence Farming	
Population 15 years and older	1,108,829	1,246,231	1,282,106	1,072,954	713,355	699,849	189,586	392,502	191,792	167,976	94,948	2,260,112	1,409,787	945,273	774,702	1,580,358	2,355,060
Labour force	359,522	256,027	308,161	307,388	168,105	161,027	62,528	125,187	54,881	43,821	14,031	601,518	288,857	326,692	266,249	349,300	615,549
-Employed	317,698	221,204	247,237	291,665	122,738	151,724	59,870	114,657	50,581	39,332	13,045	525,857	239,203	299,699	248,433	290,469	538,902
-Unemployed	41,824	34,823	60,924	15,723	45,367	9,303	2,658	10,530	4,300	4,489	986	75,661	49,654	26,993	17,816	58,831	76,647
Outside the labour force	749,307	990,204	973,945	765,566	545,250	538,823	127,058	267,315	136,911	124,154	80,916	1,658,595	1,120,930	618,581	508,453	1,231,058	1,739,511
Persons with Informal employment	262,422	204,896	196,758	270,560	97,058	141,072	57,428	98,485	39,795	33,480	11,599	455,719	218,410	248,908	236,241	231,077	467,318
Persons with formal employment	55,276	16,308	50,479	21,105	25,680	10,652	2,442	16,172	10,786	5,852	1,446	70,137	20,793	50,791	12,192	59,292	71,584
Employees	123,132	38,501	116,914	44,719	71,060	22,015	8,114	34,109	17,150	9,185	2,955	158,678	62,753	98,880	26,278	135,355	161,633
Self-employed	190,804	170,840	123,771	237,873	49,744	122,565	50,688	76,023	33,105	29,519	10,090	351,553	166,549	195,095	214,189	147,455	361,644
Labour underutilization	97,935	80,209	118,277	59,867	80,461	24,201	22,506	27,041	11,054	12,881	42,459	135,685	106,863	71,281	61,802	116,342	178,144
-Unemployed	41,824	34,823	60,924	15,723	45,367	9,303	2,658	10,530	4,300	4,489	986	75,661	49,654	26,993	17,816	58,831	76,647
-Time-related underemployed	33,672	26,103	24,536	35,239	11,287	9,967	18,792	10,533	5,364	3,832	1,065	58,710	30,983	28,792	34,286	25,489	59,775
-Potential labour force	22,439	19,283	32,817	8,905	23,807	4,931	1,056	5,978	1,390	4,560	40,408	1,314	26,226	15,496	9,700	32,022	41,722
Labour force participation rate (%)	32.4	20.5	24.0	28.6	23.6	23.0	33.0	31.9	28.6	26.1	14.8	26.6	20.5	34.6	34.4	22.1	26.1
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	28.7	17.7	19.3	27.2	17.2	21.7	31.6	29.2	26.4	23.4	13.7	23.3	17.0	31.7	32.1	18.4	22.9
Time related underemployment rate (%)	9.4	10.2	8.0	11.5	6.7	6.2	30.1	8.4	9.8	8.7	7.6	9.8	10.7	8.8	12.9	7.3	9.7
Persons with informal employment %	82.6	92.6	79.6	92.8	79.1	93.0	95.9	85.9	78.7	85.1	88.9	86.7	91.3	83.1	95.1	79.6	86.7

	Sex		Residence		Region						Functional Difficulty		Age (yrs)		Subsistence Farming		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Greater Monrovia	North Central	North Western	South Central	South Eastern A	South Eastern B	With F/D	Without F/D	Youth(15-35)	Adult (36+)	Participated in Subsistence Farming	Not Participated in Subsistence Farming	
Persons with formal employment %	17.4	7.4	20.4	7.2	20.9	7.0	4.1	14.1	21.3	14.9	11.1	13.3	8.7	16.9	4.9	20.4	13.3
Employees (%)	38.8	17.4	47.3	15.3	57.9	14.5	13.6	29.7	33.9	23.4	22.7	30.2	26.2	33.0	10.6	46.6	30.0
Self-employed (%)	60.1	77.2	50.1	81.6	40.5	80.8	84.7	66.3	65.4	75.1	77.3	66.9	69.6	65.1	86.2	50.8	67.1
LU1: Unemployment rate (%)	11.6	13.6	19.8	5.1	27.0	5.8	4.3	8.4	7.8	10.2	7.0	12.6	17.2	8.3	6.7	16.8	12.5
LU2: Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment (%)	21.0	23.8	27.7	16.6	33.7	12.0	34.3	16.8	17.6	19.0	14.6	22.3	27.9	17.1	19.6	24.1	22.2
LU3: Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (%)	16.8	19.7	27.5	7.8	36.0	8.6	5.8	12.6	10.1	18.7	15.0	18.1	24.1	12.4	10.0	23.8	18.0
LU4: Composite measure of labour underutilization (%)	25.6	29.1	34.7	18.9	41.9	14.6	35.4	20.6	19.6	26.6	78.0	22.5	33.9	20.8	22.4	30.5	27.1

4 WORKING AGE POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

The population constitutes the human capital of a nation and defines its potential labour supply. From an economic point of view, the working population is a factor of production and its aptitude and skills level contribute to the productivity of the national economy. From a social point of view, different categories of the population form social groups of particular concern and meeting their needs are major challenges faced by public institutions and society. Figure 4.1 shows the working age population by its components. The LBR-LFS 2016-17 defines working age population as persons aged 15 years and older as per the latest International Labour Organization (ILO) standards. According to the presented results, the labour force represents 26.1 per cent of the working age population. The remainder of the population is outside labour force (73.9%), of which 21.6 per cent is in subsistence agriculture, 21.1 per cent studying only and 31.2 per cent as other outside labour force such as elderly people, disabled, discouraged job seekers etc.

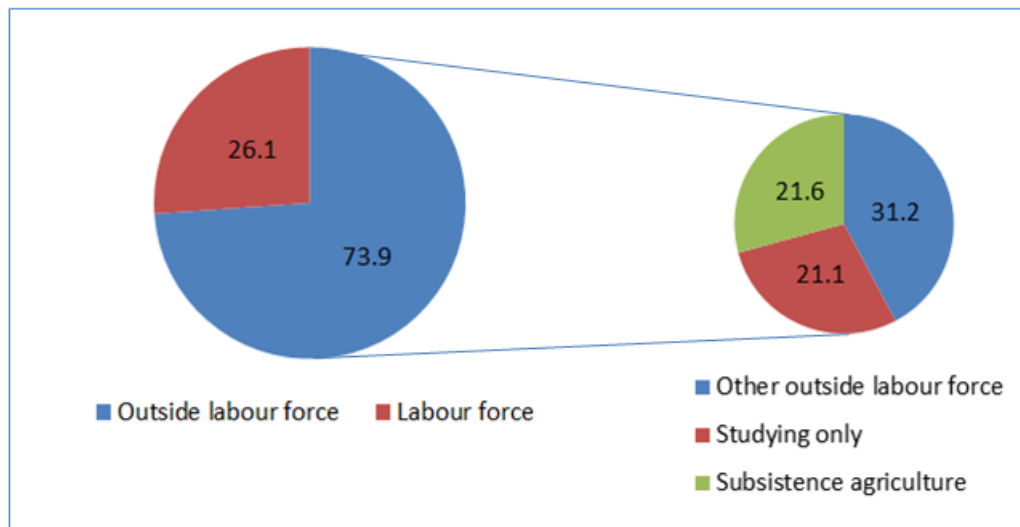


Figure 4.4.1: Working age population status (15 years and older)

The skills level of the labour force may be assessed by the level of education of the labour force participants. Figure 4.2 presents the distribution of the labour force by educational attainment. The labor force participation rate is higher among people with post graduate level of education (69.0%), followed by those with bachelors (52.1%) and senior secondary education (35.6%). The lowest labor force participation rate was observed among individuals with junior secondary education level, 20.6%.

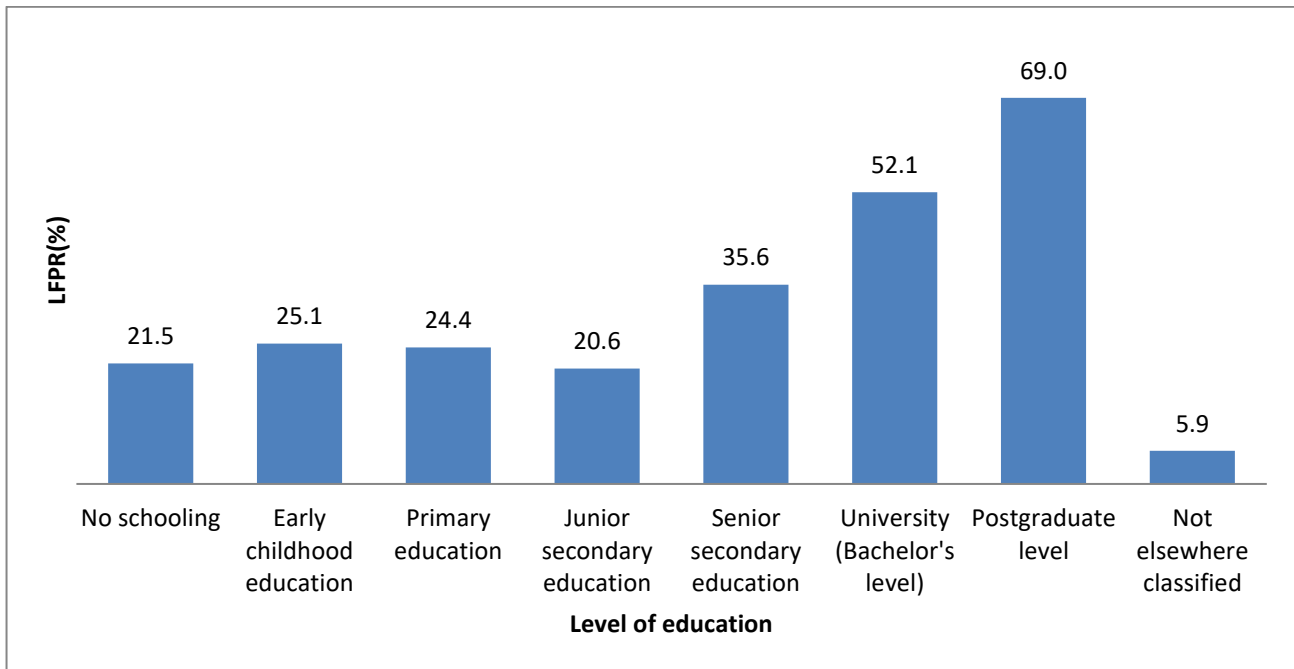


Figure 4.4.2: Labour force participation rate by level of education

The proportion of adults is higher than the youth in all levels of education. The highest proportions of adults in the labour force have postgraduate level (71.9%) followed by bachelor's degree (64.5%). Similarly, the highest proportion of youth in the labour force postgraduate level (61.0%) followed by bachelor's degree (40.5%). For adults 25.3 per cent in the labour force has never been to school against 17.8 per cent among Youth.

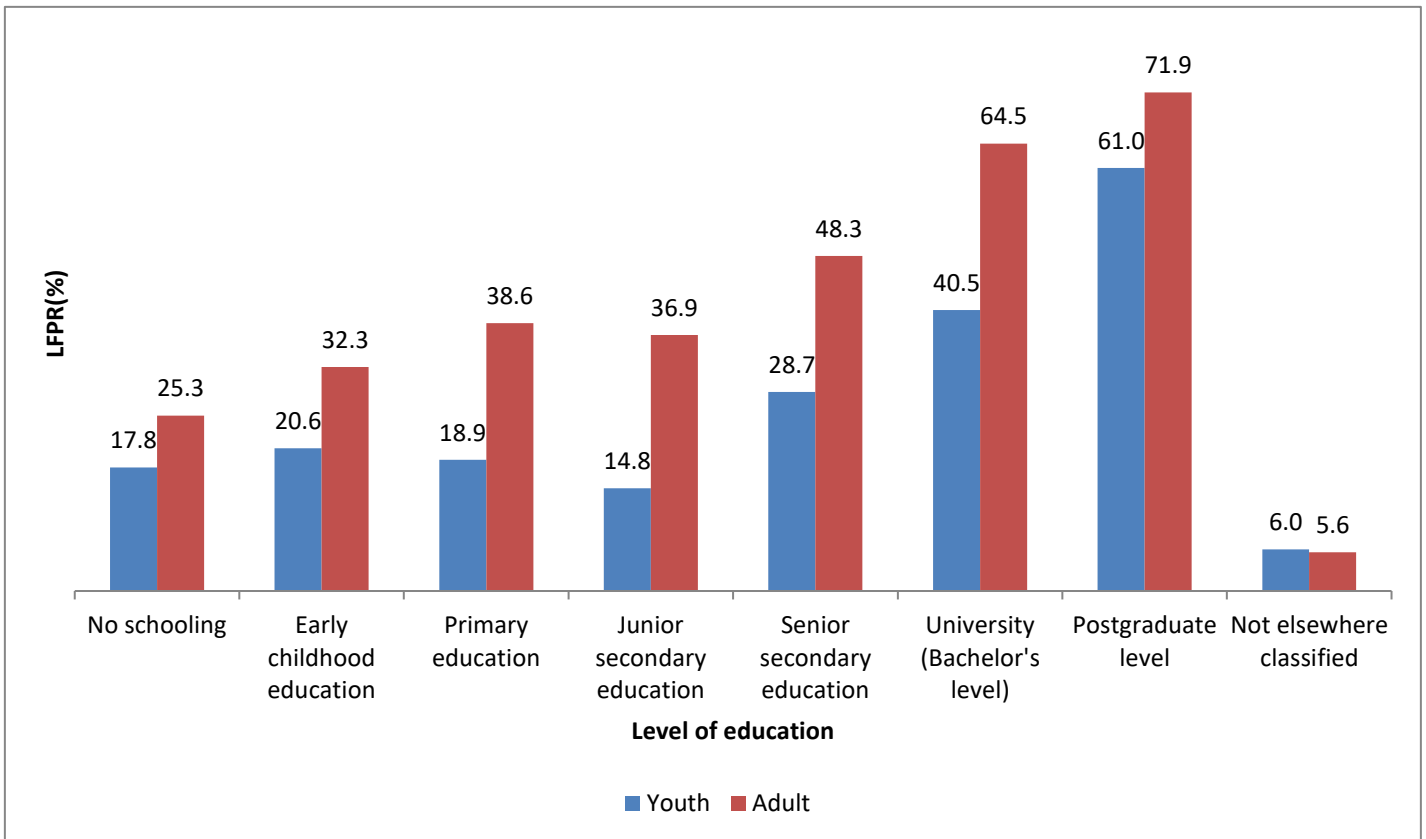


Figure 4.4.3: Labour force participation rate by level of education among young and adult population

The labour force participation rate, i.e., the ratio of the labour force to the working age population expressed in percentage terms, is an indicator of the level of labour market activity. It measures the extent of the working age population who is in the labour force. The breakdown of the labour force participation rate by sex and age group gives a profile of the labour force participation as shown in Figure 4.4.

The curves reach a peak in the age group 40-44 years for both males and females with labour force participation rates of 48.4 and 29.7 per cent respectively. The labour force participation rate decreases sharply for both men and women from 64 years old, as people leave and retire from the labour market at older ages.

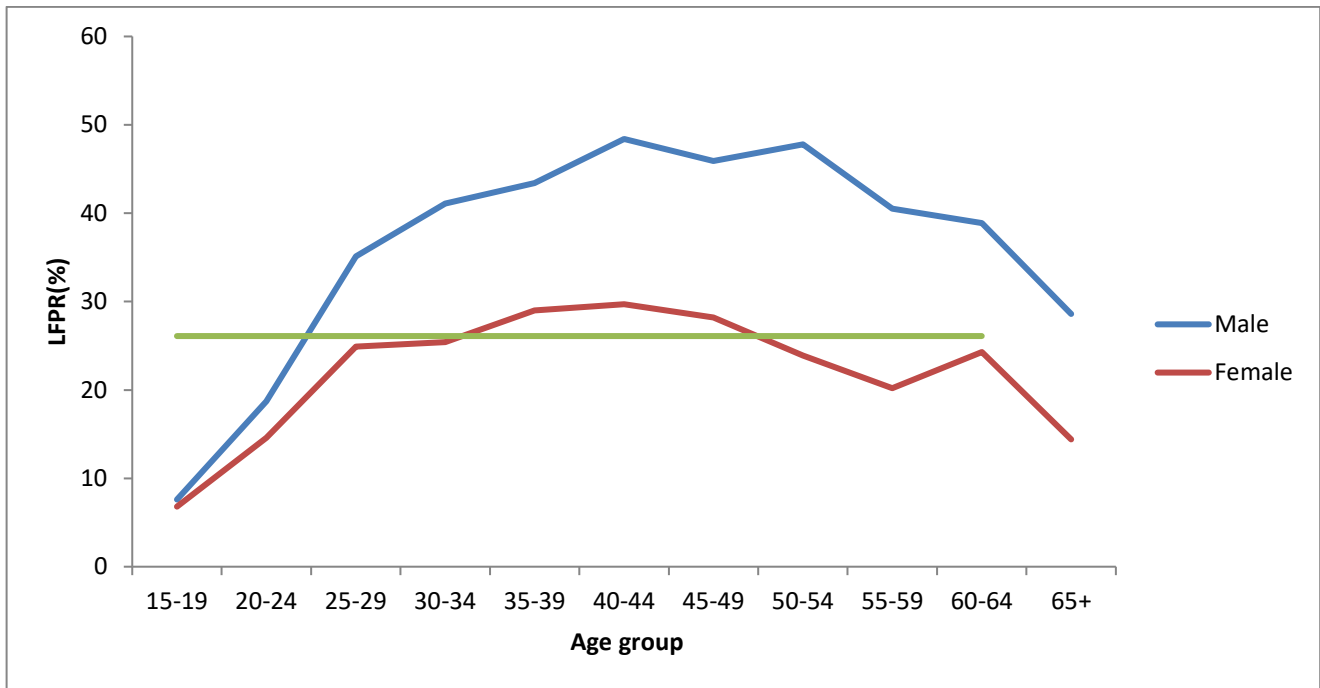


Figure 4.4.4: Labour force participation rate by sex and age group

Note: The green line represents the national average

5 EMPLOYMENT AT MAIN JOB

Aggregate employment generally increases with growing population. Therefore, the ratio of employment to the working age population is an important indicator of the capacity of the economy to provide employment to a growing population. According to LBR-LFS 2016-17 results, employment- to-population ratio is 22.9% per cent at national level.

5.1 Status in employment

Status in employment classifies jobs held by persons at a given point of time with respect to the type of explicit or implicit contract of employment of the person with other persons or organizations.

The International Standard Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-1993) identifies five main categories of persons with respect to their status in employment. Figure 5.1 shows the composition of the employed population by status in employment in main job. More than a quarter of the employed population (30.0%) was employees or paid apprentices or trainees. The share of the own-account workers was (25.5%), followed by contributing family workers (22.6%), employers (19.0%) and workers not classifiable by status (2.9%).

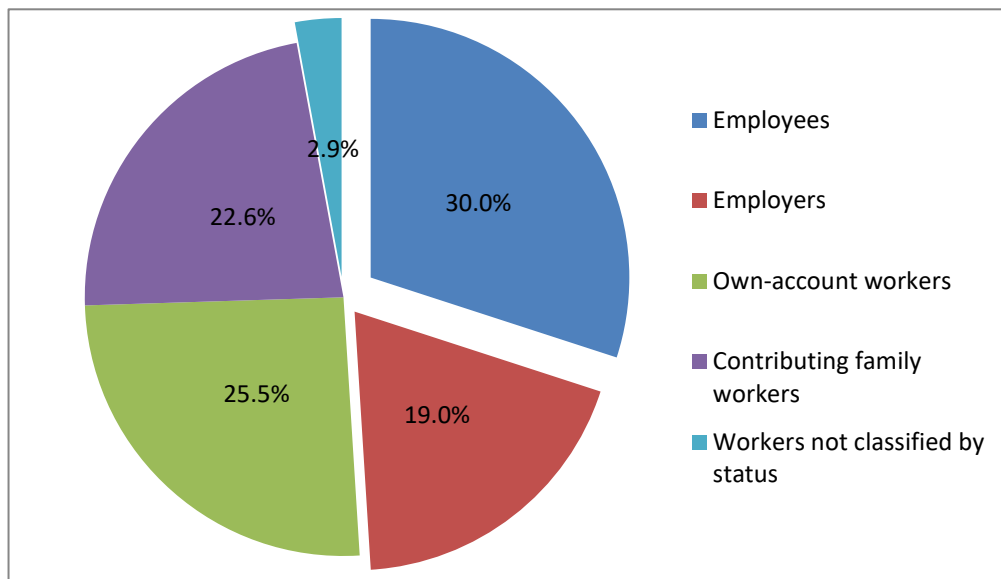


Figure 5.1: Status in employment at main job

The data disaggregated by sex shows that there is significant difference between males and females who were employed as employees as indicated in Table 5.1 below. The percentage of female employed as employees was 17.4 per cent against 38.8 per cent among males. Dissimilarly, there is slight difference between males and females who were employed as employers with 17.3 and 21.4 per cent respectively. The percentage of female employed as

own-account workers was 30.9 per cent against 21.1 per cent for male. Furthermore, the percentage of females employed as contributing family workers was slightly higher (24.9%) compared to 21.1 per cent among males.

Table 5.1: Status in employment at main job (ICSE-1993) by sex v

Status in employment (ICSE-93) – Main job	Number			Percent		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Employees	123,131	38,501	161,633	38.8	17.4	30.0
Employers	55,037	47,378	102,415	17.3	21.4	19.0
Own-account workers	68,848	68,329	137,176	21.7	30.9	25.5
Contributing family workers	66,920	55,133	122,053	21.1	24.9	22.6
Workers not classified by status	3,763	11,862	15,625	1.2	5.4	2.9
Total	317,698	221,204	538,902	100.0	100.0	100.0

The distribution of the employed population by sector of employment reveals that the majority of employed persons were in the private sector (71.2%) followed by the public sector (28.8%). The private sector also includes those who were engaged in non- governmental organizations.

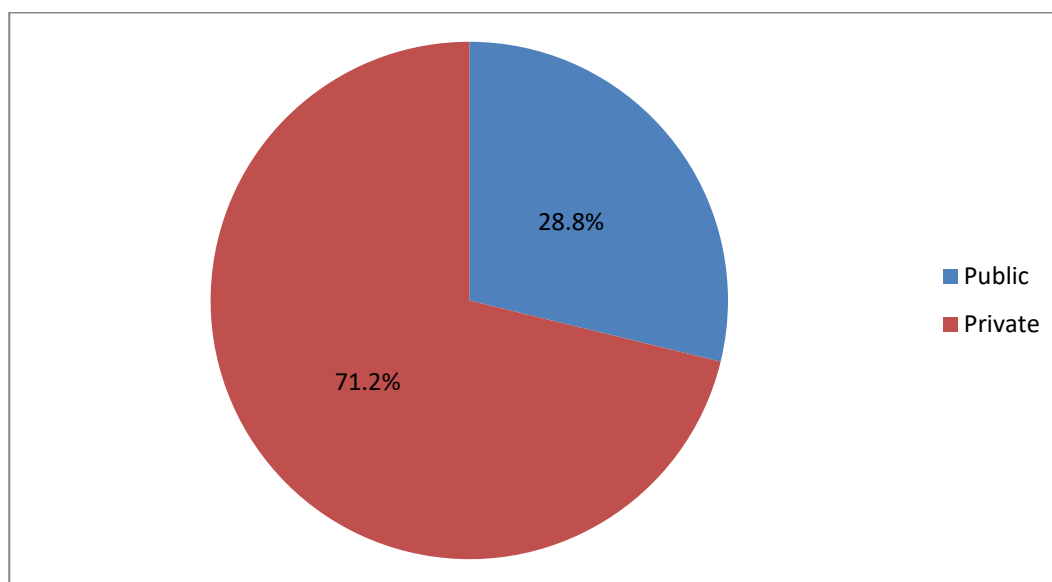


Figure 5.2: Employed population by sector of employment

5.2 **Branches of economic activity and occupations**

5.2.1 **Branches of economic activity**

Branch of economic activity refers to the economic activity of the establishment in which a person works. An establishment may be a farm, a mine, a factory, a workshop, a store, an office or a similar type of economic unit. It is important to distinguish enterprises from establishments. “Enterprise” is a broader concept than “establishment”. An enterprise is a legal entity (or group of legal entities) and may have a number of establishments with different economic activities and different locations.

The grouping of different branch of economic activities in broad sectors of economic activity (agriculture, industry and services) as presented in Figure 5.3 shows that both services and agriculture have similar shares in total employment with services employing 26.3% and agriculture 25.3%. The industry sector had the least share with 5%. The agriculture sector employed more females than males as both industry and services sectors employed more males than females.

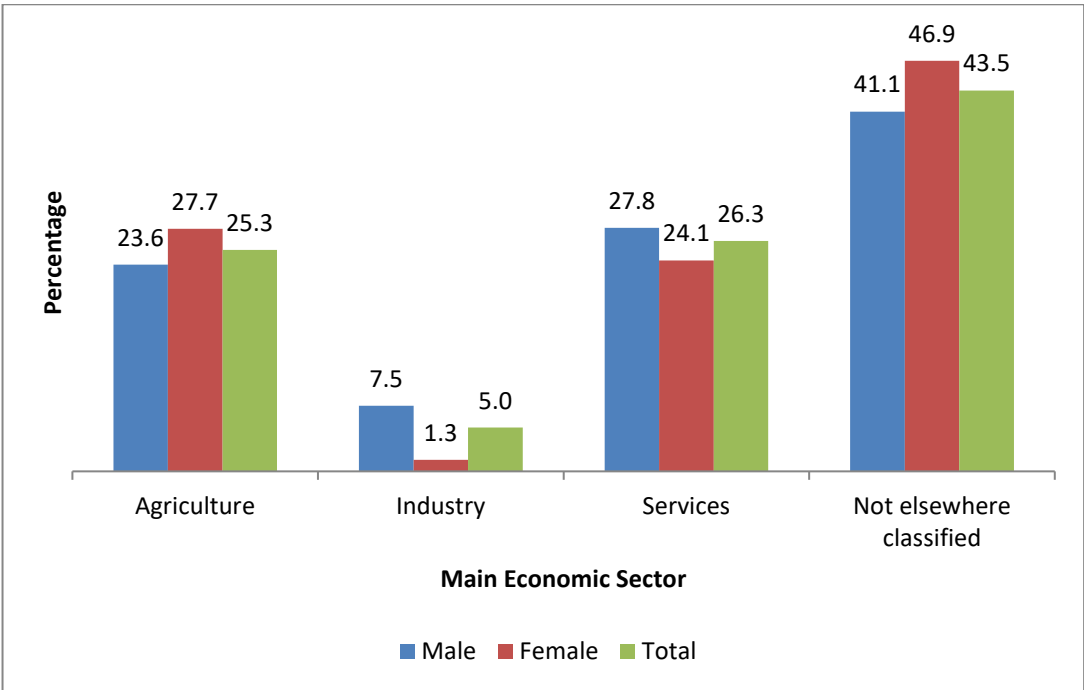


Figure 5.3: Share of employment by broad branch of economic activity

Note: Agriculture includes agriculture, forestry and fishing. Industry includes mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply, water supply, sewerage and waste management, and construction. Services cover the remaining branches of economic activity.

Table 5.2 shows the distribution of the employed population by branch of economic activity in main job. The branch of economic activity with the highest proportion of employed persons was agriculture, forestry and fishing (25.3%) followed by Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and

motorcycles (7.6%). The other branches of economic activity comprised each less than five percent of total employment. The category “Not elsewhere classified” is unusually high comprising 43.5 per cent of employment. It also has an implication for the share of employment by broad branch of economic activity.

Table 5.2: Employed persons by branch of economic activity in main job

Branch of economic activity (ISIC Rev 4) - Main job	Percent
A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing	25.3
B - Mining and quarrying	1.1
C – Manufacturing	2.1
D - Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.2
E - Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.1
F – Construction	1.4
G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	7.6
H - Transportation and storage	2.7
I - Accommodation and food service activities	0.8
J - Information and communication	0.7
K - Financial and insurance activities	0.9
L - Real estate activities	0.1
M - Professional, scientific and technical activities	1
N - Administrative and support service activities	2.7
O - Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	1.6
P – Education	4.5
Q - Human health and social work activities	1.8
R - Arts, entertainment and recreation	0.2
S - Other service activities	1.5
T - Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use	0.2
U - Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	N/A
X - Not elsewhere classified	43.5

5.2.2 Occupation

Occupation refers to the kind of work performed by a person regardless of the industry or status in employment.

Table 5.3 presents the distribution of the employed population by occupation category and sex in the main job. The occupation category with the highest proportion was skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers (28.5%), followed by service and sales workers (13.5%), professionals (10.0%) and elementary occupations (7.7%). The remaining occupation categories each covered less than five percent of the employed population. The category “not elsewhere classified” (24.1%), is unusually high and raises concerns about the quality of the data collected.

Most of the main occupation categories were male dominated. The female dominated occupations were skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers and service and sales workers. The proportion of women in managerial positions (SDG indicator 5.5.2) was 21.7 per cent, far below the objective of equal opportunities for leadership. The female share of employment in managerial positions is therefore an important indicator for providing insights into women’s power in decision-making and in the economy. However, the quality and

reliability of statistics on the female share in senior and middle management are strictly dependent on the reliability of the employment statistics by occupation at the two-digit level of the ISCO.

Elementary occupations involve the performance of simple and routine tasks. It includes cleaners and helpers, agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers, labourers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport, food preparation assistants, street and related sales and service workers and other elementary workers

Table 5.3: Percentage distribution of employed persons by occupation and sex in main job

Occupation (ISCO-08)- Main job	Percent		
	Male	Female	Total
Managers	2.6	2.6	2.6
Professionals	11.1	8.3	10.0
Technicians and associate professionals	5.2	2.7	4.2
Clerical support workers	1.5	0.8	1.2
Service and sales workers	12.1	15.7	13.5
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	24.2	34.7	28.5
Craft and related trades workers	6.6	0.9	4.3
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	5.2	0.6	3.3
Elementary occupations	9.6	4.9	7.7
Armed forces occupations	0.5	0.9	0.7
Not elsewhere classified	21.4	28.0	24.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

5.3 Informal sector and informal employment

5.3.1 Employment in Informal sector

Informal employment refers to the type of employment relationship of the job holder. In the 2016-17 Liberia LFS, Informal employment includes:

- Employers and own-account workers without employees engaged in the informal sector;
- Employees who do not benefit from social protection such as pension funds, paid annual leave and sick leave.

The **informal sector** comprises economic units not registered with Ministry of Commerce or Ministry of Foreign Affairs or whose employees do not benefit from a pension fund.

5.3.2 Informal employment

Informal employment constitutes a significant part of the economy and the labour market and thus plays a key part in production, employment creation and income generation. Therefore, in line with the SDG indicator 8.3.1, statistics on informal employment provide vital information on the quality of employment and are essential for in-depth understanding of the labour market.

Parallel to the concept of employment in the informal sector, there is a separate concept of informal employment. While the concept of informal sector refers to production units in which the individuals work, the concept of informal employment refers to the individuals' jobs as observation units. In the case of employees, informal employment is defined in terms of the employment relationship. A job held by an

employee is considered informal, if the job does not entail contributions to the pension fund, and is not entitled to paid sick leave and paid annual leave.

In the case of own-account workers and employers, the informal employment status of the job is determined by the informal sector nature of the enterprise. Thus, own-account workers (without hired workers) operating an informal enterprise are classified as in informal employment. Similarly, employers (with hired workers) operating an informal enterprise are classified as in informal employment. All contributing family workers are classified as having informal employment, irrespective of whether they work in formal or informal sector enterprises.

Table 5.4 gives classification of production units according informal or formal status of the production unit. Survey results showed that the highest proportion of production units (42.9%) is in the informal sector followed by the formal sector with 33.8 per cent and the least share of production units is in households (23.3%).

Table 5.4: Distribution of classification of production units

Classification of production units	Number	Per cent
Formal sector	182,144	33.8
Informal sector	231,092	42.9
Household	125,666	23.3
Total	538,902	100.0

Table 5.5 shows the employed population according to formal or informal status of the main job. The share of informal employment represents 86.7 per cent of total employment (SDG indicator 8.3.1). Results indicate that higher proportion of females (92.6%) is in informal employment as compared to males (82.6%). In terms of area of residence, higher proportion (92.8%) of those in rural areas have informal employment compared to those in urban areas (79.6%). The results further show that males are more engaged in formal employment (17.4%) compared to females (7.4%). As per area of residence, higher percentage (20.4%) of those in urban areas have formal employment compared to those in rural areas (7.2%).

Table 5.5: Persons in formal/informal employment - main job

	Number					Percent				
	Sex		Residence		Total	Sex		Residence		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural		Male	Female	Urban	Rural	
Persons with informal jobs	262,422	204,896	196,758	270,560	467,318	82.6	92.6	79.6	92.8	86.7
Persons with formal jobs	55,276	16,308	50,478	21,105	71,584	17.4	7.4	20.4	7.2	13.3
Total	317,698	221,204	247,237	291,665	538,902	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

5.4 Working time in employment

5.4.1 Working time

The international definition of employment is expansive covering even one hour of work during the reference week. It is thus important to note that employment is analysed in conjunction with data on hours of work in order to distinguish the various intensities of employment. Data on hours of work are also necessary to calculate time-related underemployment and hourly income from employment so that the resulting income data are comparable across different categories of workers. The LBR-LFS 2016-17 measured concept of hours of work as follows:

- **Hours actually worked:** The time spent in a job for the performance of activities that contribute to the production of goods and services during the specified reference period. It includes the direct hours that the person is engaged in the activities, as well as the related hours such as waiting time, on-call, resting time, coffee break, prayer, etc. It excludes annual leave, public holidays, sick leave and other leave, as well as commuting time between work and home, longer breaks such as meal breaks and educational activities, even if authorized by the employer.

According to the results shown in Table 5.5, the average number of hours actually worked per week by employed persons in their main job was 46.2 hours. A total of 49,190 persons representing 9.1 per cent of the employed population reported to have been engaged in secondary jobs during the reference week. The average number of hours actually worked on secondary jobs was 13.8 hours per week.

The average number of hours actually worked at all jobs was 47.6 hours per week. In total, the volume of employment in terms of actual hours worked at all jobs in the reference week was 25.7 million hours.

Table 5.6: Actual hours of work at main and secondary jobs

Job Category	Number of employed persons	Average hours actually worked in reference week
Main job	538,902	46.2
Secondary jobs	49,190	13.8
All jobs	538,902	47.6

volume of employment in terms of actual hours worked at all jobs in the reference week: **25.7 million hours**

Figure 5.4 shows the size distribution of total weekly actual hours of work of the employed population. The percentage of persons working lower than 35 hours per week was 23.7 per cent measured in terms of actual hours of work. Similarly, the percentage of persons working 35 to 39 hours per week was 6.7 per cent measured in terms of actual hours of work. Moreover, the percentage of persons working excessive hours (more than 48 hours) was 34.4 per cent when measured in terms of actual hours of work. Excessive hours of work are defined as more than 48 usual hours of work per week at all jobs. Very long or excessive hours of work is a threat to physical and mental health, interfering with the balance between work and family life, reducing productivity and often signaling an

inadequate hourly pay.

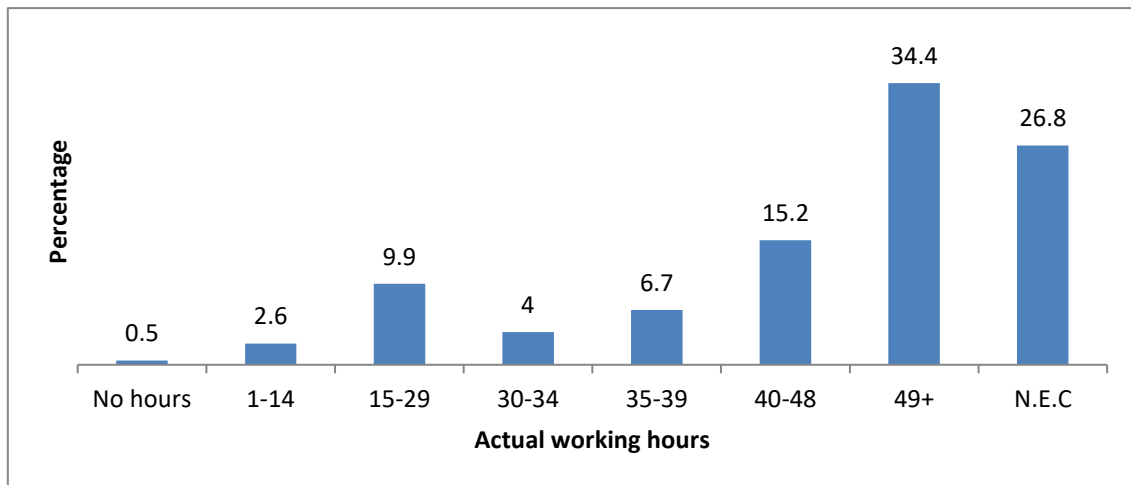


Figure 5.4: Actual hours of work of employed persons at all jobs

6 UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR UNDERUTILIZATION

6.1 Unemployment rate

Unemployment is a particular form of labour underutilization. It reflects the pressure on the labour market as it is measured in terms of the number of persons without employment, actively seeking and available for employment. Labour underutilization is a more general concept. It includes unemployment, time-related underemployment, and potential labour force referring to persons not in employment who express an interest in it but for whom existing conditions limit their active job search and/or their availability.

Persons of working age who are unemployed must meet three conditions:

The unemployment rate in this survey conforms to the definition by ILO, which is defined as persons of working age unemployed who meet the following three conditions:

- Not been employed, i.e., not to have worked for pay or profit during the reference period. A person can be unemployed while being engaged in other forms of work such as own-use production work, volunteer work or unpaid trainee work. The distinction between employment and own-use production of goods is based on the main intended destination of the production. Production of goods mainly intended for sale or exchange are included in employment.
- To have actively looked for a paid job or to start a business in the past four weeks.
- To have been available for a job during the reference period or in the two coming weeks.

However, persons who have already found a job and who will start their new job within three months are considered as unemployed.

Unemployment is one of the most commonly used indicators of the labour market. It is at times used as a proxy indicator to gauge the health of the economy. Although, the unemployment rate is a useful labour market indicator, it is an insufficient measure of labour underutilization and therefore should always be analysed together with other labour underutilization indicators (such as the time-related underemployment rate and the potential labour force) and indicators of the quality of employment (such as the share of informal employment and earnings). Otherwise, when interpreted alone, the unemployment rate may provide a distorted view of the labour market (ILO, 2018. A Guidebook on SDG Labour Market Indicators, page 28).

The results of the LBR-LFS 2016-17 show an unemployment rate of 12.5 per cent at national level; based on the definitions as per ILO standards. The unemployment rate in the urban areas (19.8%) is more than three times higher than that of the rural areas (5.1%). The unemployment rate was higher among females (13.6%) than their male counterparts (11.6%).

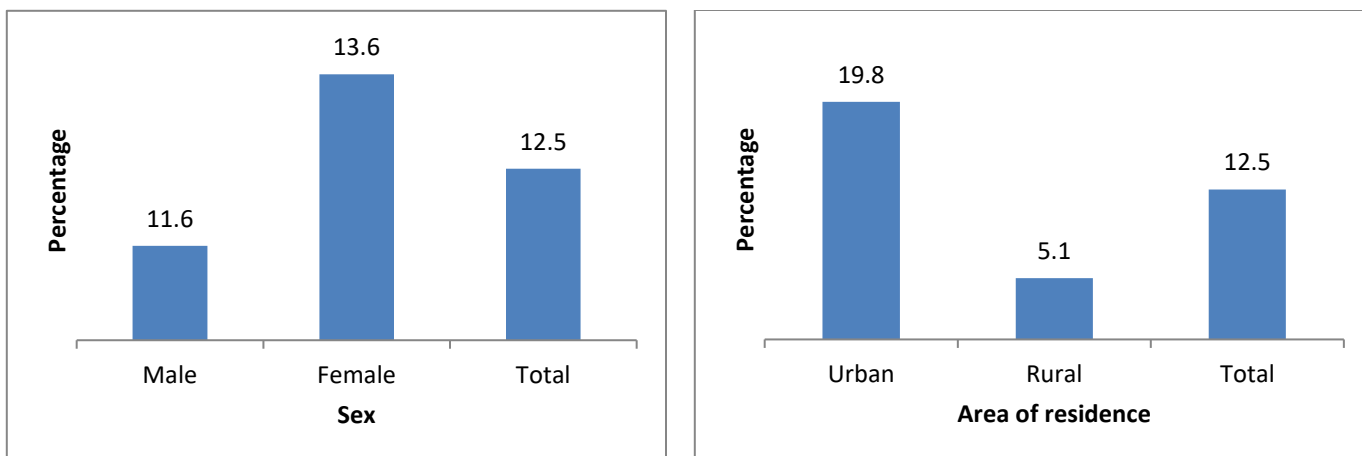


Figure 6.1: Unemployment rate by sex and residence area

6.2 Labour underutilization

Labour underutilization (LU) refers to mismatches between labour supply and demand, which translates into an unmet need for employment (unemployment, PLF and TRU) among the population. There are four indicators to assess the nature of LU: Unemployment rate, combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment, combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force, and composite measure of labour underutilization.

However, unemployment is a particular form of labour underutilization. As mentioned earlier, other forms of labour underutilization include time-related underemployment and potential labour force. Time related underemployment refers to the situation when the working time of persons in employment is insufficient in relation to alternative employment situations in which they are willing and available to work. Time-related underemployment is measured in this survey as all persons in employment who, during the specified reference period of the LBR-LFS 2016-17 (a) wanted to work additional hours, (b) were working in all jobs less than 35 hours during the reference period, and (c) were available to work additional hours given an opportunity for more work. Potential labour force is defined as all persons of working age outside the labour force who, during the reference period, were neither in employment nor in unemployment but who were considered as either (a) unavailable jobseekers (seeking employment but not currently available) or (b) available potential jobseekers (currently available for employment but did not carry out any activities to seek employment). Potential labour force together with time-related underemployment and unemployment are different dimensions of labour underutilization.

Figure 6.2 below shows the composition of labour underutilization. It is worth noting that unemployment was the largest part of labour underutilization representing 43 per cent of labour underutilization. The second largest component of labour underutilization was the time-related underemployed representing 33.6 per cent of labour underutilization. The remaining part of labour underutilization includes the potential labour force representing 23.4 per cent of labour underutilization.

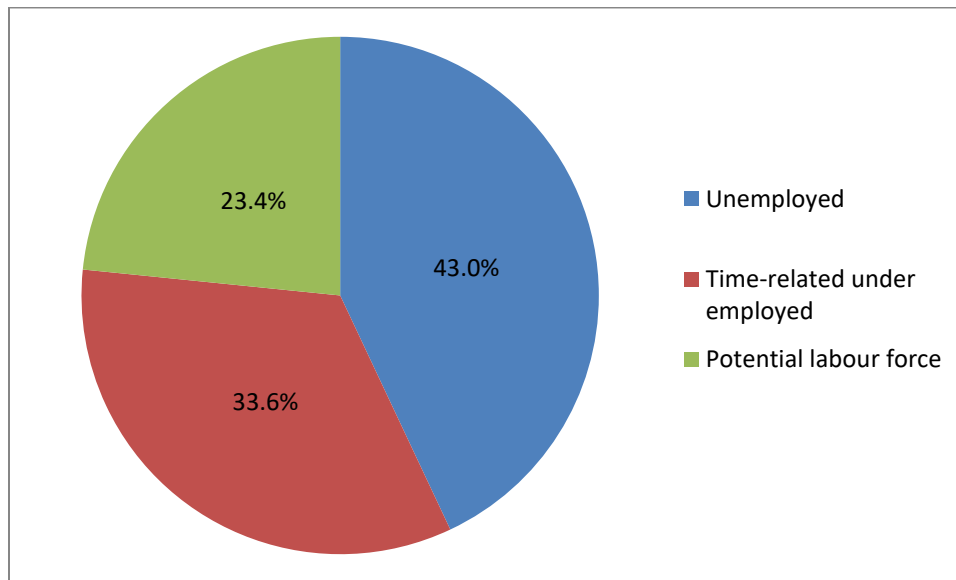


Figure 6.2: Composition of labour underutilization

Figure 6.3 and figure 6.4 shows the composite measure of labour underutilization for sex and area of residence respectively. While the unemployment rate (LU1) is the narrowest measure of labour underutilization, the composite measure (LU4) is the broadest measure of labour underutilization. It is the ratio of total labour underutilization to the extended labour force, calculated as the sum of the labour force and the potential labour force.

In terms of sex, the composite measure of labour underutilization closely follows the pattern of the unemployment rate though at a relatively higher level. The female rate of labour underutilization (29.1%) is higher than the male rate (25.6%). By place of residence, the rate of labour underutilization is higher in rural (34.7%) than in urban areas (18.9%), and also follows the pattern of the unemployment rate though at a much higher level.

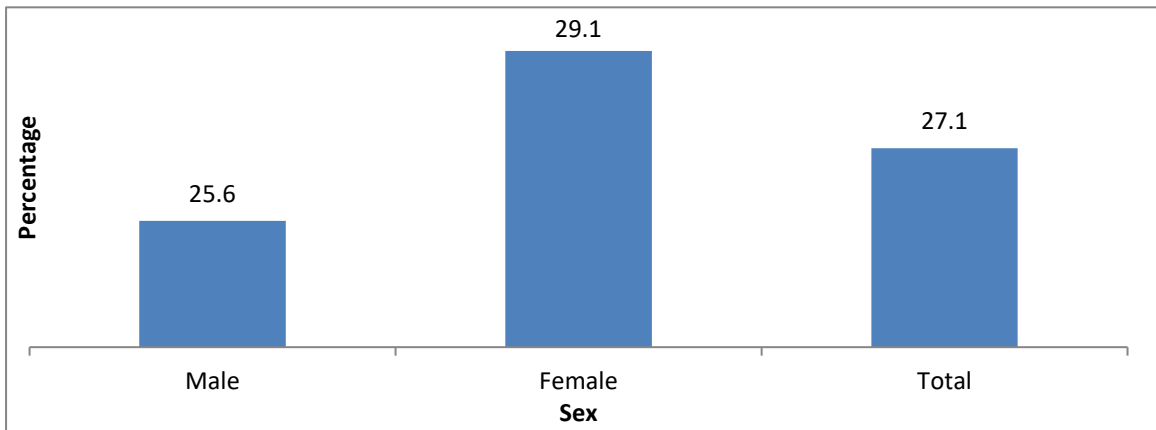


Figure 6.3: Composite measure of labour underutilization by sex

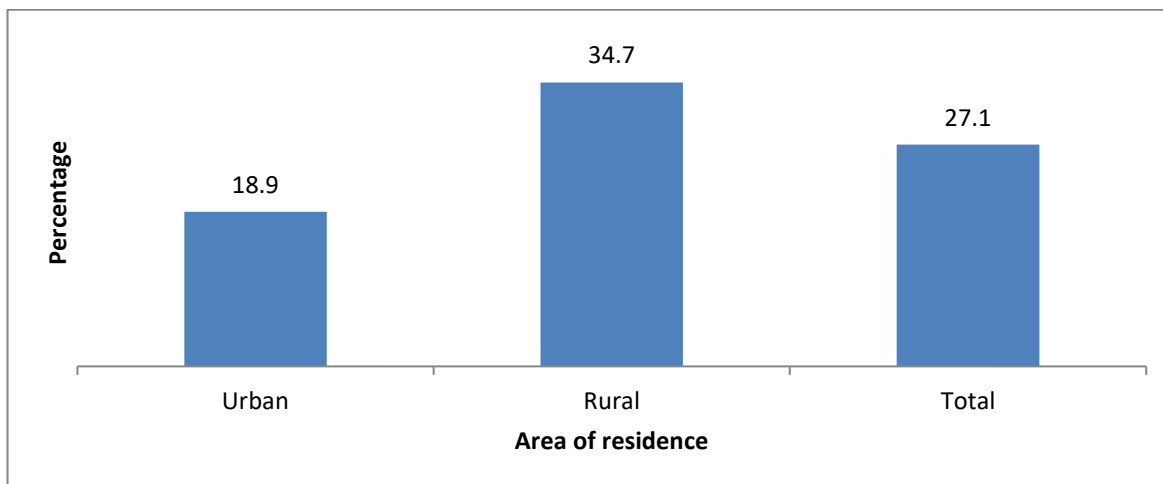


Figure 6.4: Composite measure of labour underutilization by sex

7 PERSONS OUTSIDE THE LABOUR FORCE

A particular characteristic of countries with large subsistence food stuff production is the fact that the size of the working age population outside the labour force may be as big as the size of the labour force itself. The LBR-LFS 2016-17 shows that the number of working age population outside the labour force was 1,739,511 against 615,549 in the labour force. There is substantial proportion of persons outside the labour force, who are subsistence foodstuff producers. Figure 7.1 shows the proportion of working age population outside the labour force by region. Greater Monrovia accounts for the highest proportion with 31.3 per cent, followed by North Central (30.0%), whereas the least was recorded in South Eastern B (7.1%).

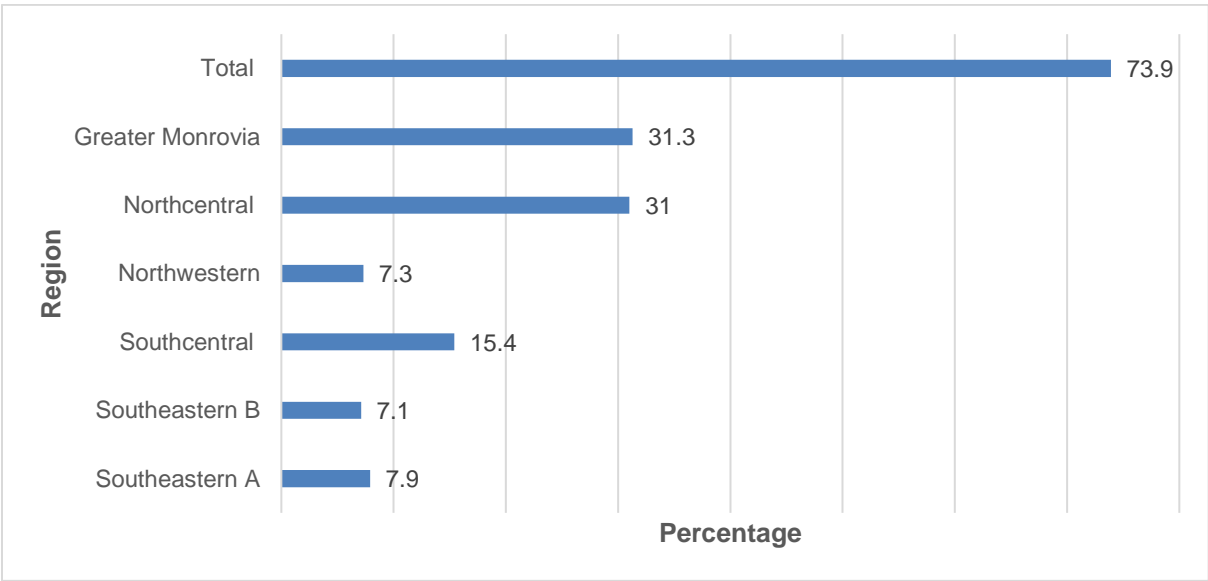


Figure 7.1: Proportion of working age population outside the labour force by region

Some other characteristics of the population such as education level, age and sex have also been analyzed for the population outside the labour force in Table 7.1. It is observed that 56.9 per cent of the population outside the labour force was females and 43.1 per cent are males, 45.0 per cent had no schooling while 2.9 per cent have Bachelor’s degree. The least proportion of the population outside the labour force was those with postgraduate level of education (0.6%). The age group with the largest share of persons outside the labour force was 15-19 with 21.7%, followed by age group 20-24 with 17.3 per cent. Furthermore, the youth outside the labour force (64.4%) accounted for a higher proportion compared to the adults (35.6%).

Table 7.1: Demographic characteristics of population outside labour force

Characteristics		Number	Per cent
Sex	Male	749,307	43.1
	Female	990,204	56.9
Education Level	No schooling	782,813	45.0
	Early childhood education	42,063	2.4
	Primary education	268,658	15.4
	Junior secondary education	233,474	13.4
	Senior secondary education	288,516	16.6
	University (Bachelor's level)	49,692	2.9
	Postgraduate level	9,672	0.6
	NEC	64,622	3.7
Age group	15-19	377,752	21.7
	20-24	300,643	17.3
	25-29	209,841	12.1
	30-34	196,315	11.3
	35-39	166,211	9.6
	40-44	131,689	7.6
	45-49	100,746	5.8
	50-54	68,355	3.9
	55-59	52,755	3.0
	60-64	39,057	2.2
	65+	96,147	5.5
Youth and adult	Youth (15 –35 yrs)	1,120,930	64.4
	Adult (36+)	618,581	35.6
Total		1,739,511	100.0

8 WOMEN AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Women account for 20.5 per cent of the labour force in Liberia. The LBR-LFS 2016-17 provides set of information on female labour force participation and other aspects such as marital status and the proportion of women in managerial positions.

As shown in Figure 8.1, the labour force participation rate was lower for never married (14.4%) and much higher for female who are married (26.3%). In terms of marital status, the highest proportion of women the labour force are those divorced/separated (31.4%). The information on marital status was collected for persons 13 years and older.

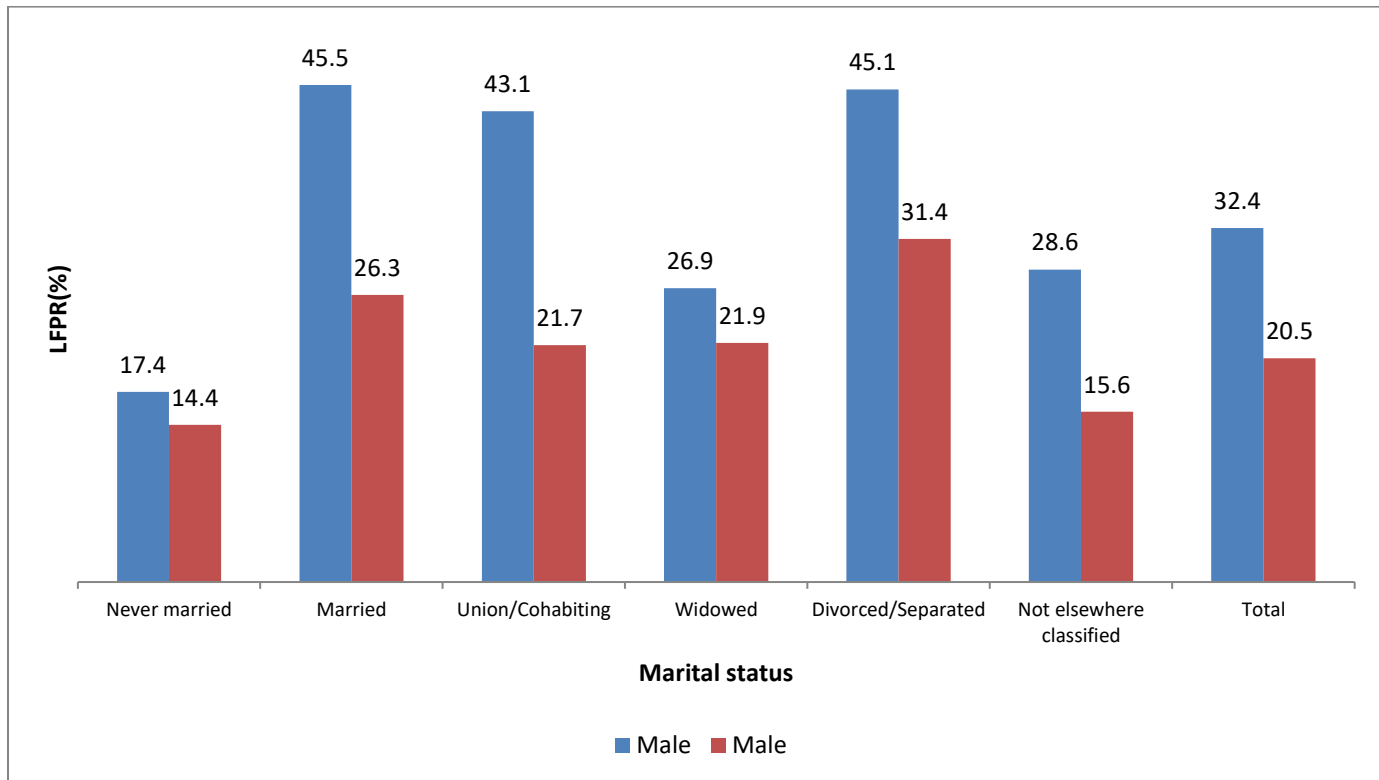


Figure 8. 1: Labour force participation by marital status and sex

One of the goals of the government of Liberia is to promote equal opportunities for both women and men to obtain decent work. However, in the managerial positions, the proportion of women is still lower than men.

The results in Table 8.1 show that the proportion of women in managerial positions (21.7%) is far below the corresponding proportion for men (78.3%). This SDG indicator provides information on the proportion of women who are employed in decision-making and management roles in government, large enterprises and institutions, thus providing some insight into women's power in decision making and in the economy (especially compared to men's power in those areas)

Table 8. 1: SDG indicator 5.5.2: Female share of employment in managerial positions*

Sex	Male	Female	Total
Percent	78.3	21.7	100

*1. Chief executives, senior officials and legislators 2. Administrative and commercial managers 3. Production and specialised services managers)

Results from LBR-LFS 2016-17 show that for most labour market indicators men are better off compared to women as indicated in figure 8.2 below. It shows that the employment rate is higher for women than men; also more women are engaged in informal employment compared to the men. It as well shows that more women in the labour market are underutilized compared to the men.

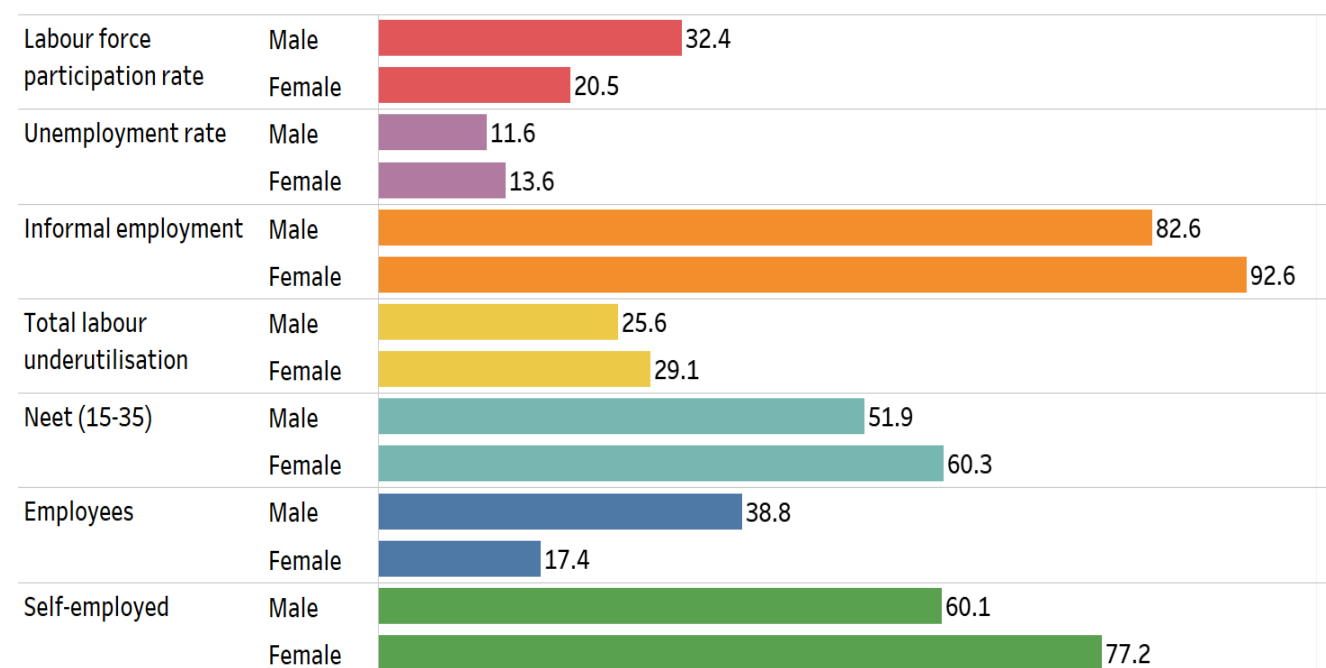


Figure 8.2: Labour market situation of women in Liberia

9 YOUTH POPULATION

The results of LBR-LFS 2016-17 have shown that there is a total of 1,409,787 youth (15-35yrs); of which 636,866 (45.2%) are males and 772,921 (54.8%) are females. By place of residence 59.3 per cent of the youth resides in urban areas and 40.7 per cent in rural areas. Again, by region analysis, bulk of the youth lives in Greater Monrovia (32.9%) and this is followed by regions such as; North Central (29.4%), South Central (16.3%), South Eastern A (7.4%), and the least proportion of youth populations were in North Western and South Eastern B, each with 7 per cent.

A total of 288,857 (20.5%) of the youth are in the labour force; of which 53.0 per cent are males and 47.0 per cent are females. Analysis by place of residence has shown that 53.5 per cent of the youth in the labour force are found in urban areas compared to 46.5 per cent of their rural areas' counterparts. Also, analysis by region, majority of the youth in the labour force are found in Greater Monrovia (30.5%); followed by North Central (29.1%), South Central (17.9%), North Western (9.2%), South Eastern A (7.9%), and South Eastern B (5.3%).

Total number of youths in the potential labour force is 26,226 representing 24.5 per cent of the youth labour underutilization. The total number of males in the potential labour force is 11,167 accounting for 21.0 per cent of the males in potential labour force and the total number of females in the potential labour force is 15,059 also representing 28.0 per cent of the females in potential labour force. By place of residence, 20,817 (79.4%) of the youth in the potential labour force live in the urban areas whereas 5,409 (20.6%) of the youth in the potential labour force live in the rural areas. By region, largest share of the youth in the potential labour force were found in Greater Monrovia (58.7.0%), followed by South Central (15.2%), North Central (11.1%), South Eastern B (9.6%), South Eastern A (3.5%). North Western (2.0%) has the least proportion of youth in the potential labour force.

The youth labour force participation rate is 20.5 per cent. The youth labour force participation rate for males (24.0%) is higher than the youth labour force participation rate for females (17.0%). The youth labour force participation rate is higher in rural area (23.4%) than urban areas (18.5%). In terms of region, South Central (22.5%), North Western (26.9%) and South Eastern A (22.1%) has youth labour force participation rates higher than the national youth labour force participation rate 20.5 per cent. The other three remaining regions Greater Monrovia (19.0%), North Central (20.3%) and South Eastern B (15.6%) has youth labour force participation rates lower than the national youth labour force participation rate.

9.1 Youth and education

The international definition of the youth population is "persons aged 15-24 years old." To cover countries where entry into the labour market occurs at a later stage, the ILO extends the definition to include young adults aged 25-29 years old for certain purpose such as school-to-work transition analysis. In Liberia, youth is defined as persons aged between 15 to 35 years old which is aligned to the African Union definition.

In general, there is a two-way relationship between the education system and the labour market. The education system supplies the labour market with educated labour force, while the labour market – through the wage structure of occupations and other labour market variables – transmits signals on the types of qualifications expected from the education system. The data collected from the LBR-LFS 2016-17 contain the elements for carrying such types of analysis.

Figure 9.1 presents the youth labour force participation rate and unemployment by level of education. The results show that the labour force participation rate was highest among the postgraduate level holders (61.0%), followed by those with Bachelor’s degree (40.5%) and senior secondary education (28.7%) which were all above the national average (26.1%). The LFPR was less than the national average in the rest of education levels; with the lowest rate among youth with the category “not elsewhere classified” (6.0%).

The relationship between level of education and unemployment rate is similar, showing a relatively positive slope. Unemployment shows an increasing pattern from 4.7 per cent for young people with early childhood education to 30.2 per cent among youth with bachelor’s degree level. The unemployment rate among youth was 17.2 per cent which is higher than the rate at national level (12.5%).

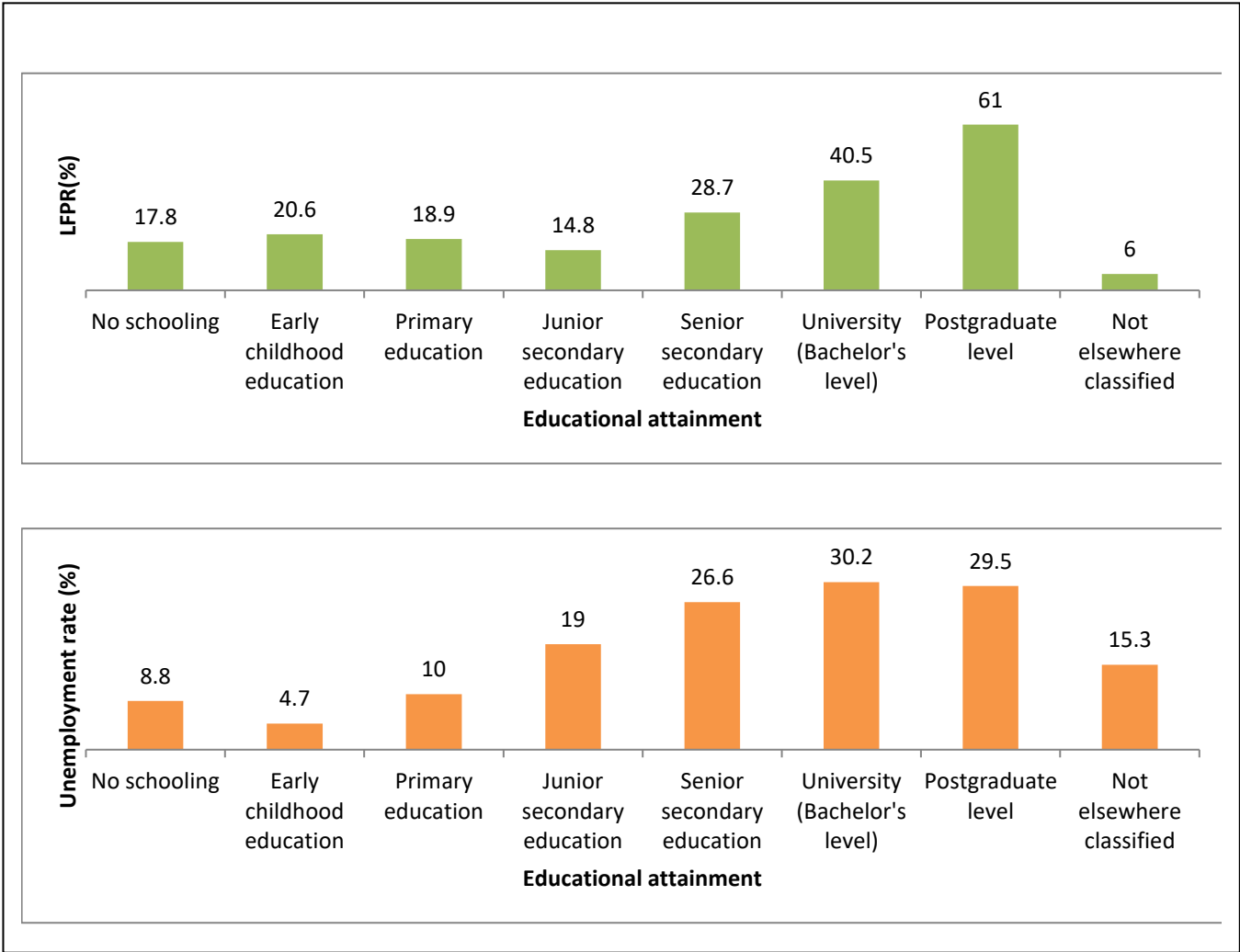


Figure 9.1: Youth labour force participation rate and unemployment by level of education

9.2 Youth neither in employment, nor in education or training (NEET)

NEET is an SDG indicator under goal 8 to “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” and part of the Propoor Agenda for Prosperity and Development. The NEET rate is an ILO decent work indicator and serves as a broader measure of potential youth labour market entrants than youth unemployment. A full account of the labour market situation of young people is important for the formulation of employment policies regarding the youth.

The number of youth population who were neither in employment, nor in education was 796,249 corresponding to 56.5 per cent of the youth population. Table 9.1 shows the youth who were neither in education nor in employment (NEET).

Among the NEET population (15-35) are the youth unemployed or in the potential labour force who are not in the educational system, 49,654 (6.2%) and 26,226 (3.3%), respectively. The results from Table 9.1 show, the NEET rate is higher among females (60.3%) than among males (51.9%), as relatively more females than males remain outside the labourforce after completing their education.

Table 9.1: Youth population (15-35 yrs.) with respect to employment and education, 2016-17

	Youth					
	Number			Per cent		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
In education	207,153	108,301	98,852	14.7	17.0	12.8
In employment	374,335	178,810	195,525	26.6	28.1	25.3
In both employment and education	32,050	19,475	12,575	2.3	3.1	1.6
Not in employment nor in education/training (NEET)	796,249	330,280	465,969	56.5	51.9	60.3
- Unemployed	49,654	25,356	24,298	6.2	7.7	5.2
- Potential labour force	26,226	11,167	15,059	3.3	3.4	3.2
- Other	720,369	293,757	426,612	90.5	88.9	91.6
Total youth population (15-35years)	1,409,787	636,867	772,921	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 9.2: NEET by age group

Age group	NEET
15-17	38.2
18-24	54.2
25-29	64.0
30-35	66.2
15-35	56.5

The results in Figure 9.2 indicate that the percentage of youth (15-24 yrs.) not in employment and not in education is lower than that of the 15-35 yrs., 49.1 per cent versus 56.5 per cent.

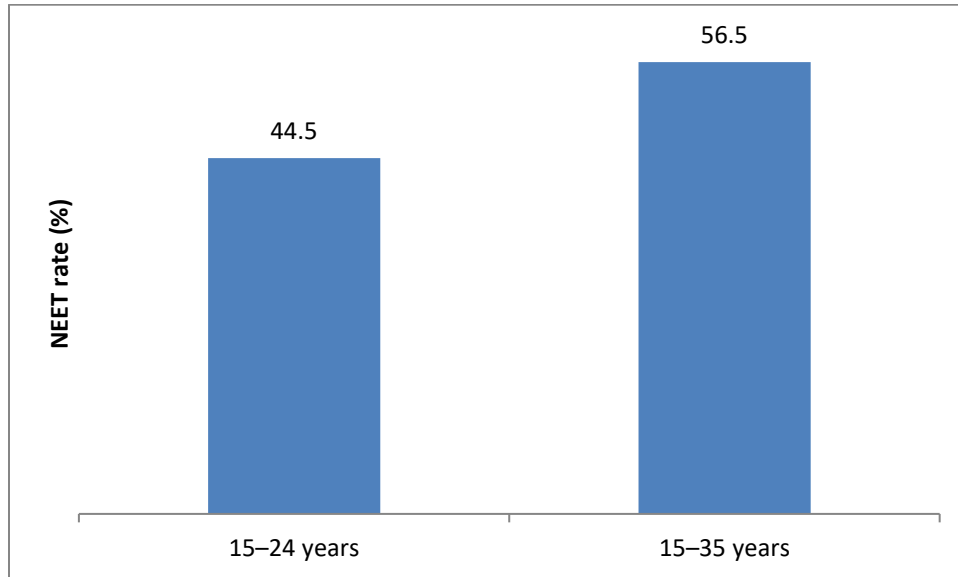


Figure 9.2: Youth not in employment and not in education

Figure 9.3 shows the proportion of youth neither in education nor in employment by region. It is observed that the youth NEET in 3 out of 6 regions were below the national average while it was higher than the national average in the remaining regions. The region with the highest youth NEET is South Eastern B followed by North Central and South Eastern A.

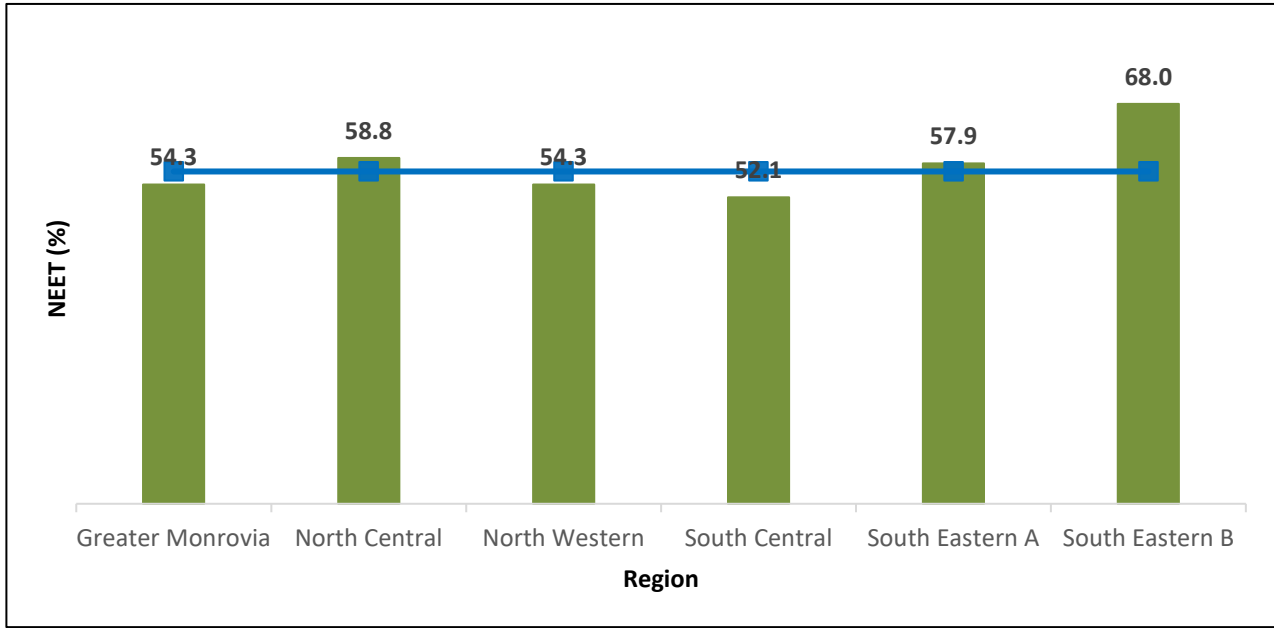


Figure 9.3: Proportion of Youth (15-35) neither in Employment nor in Education or Training (NEET) by region

**Note: The blue line represents the national average*

10 WORK IN AGRICULTURE

From LBR-LFS 2016-17, the following two categories were explained in the status of workers in agriculture: those who are engaged in market-oriented agriculture as main job, working for pay or self-employed (i.e., employed for pay or profit in agriculture) and non-market oriented (i.e., subsistence agriculture). Workers in the former category are considered as employed while those in latter are not counted as employed according to the 2013 international standards on statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization (19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS)).

10.1 Market oriented agriculture

Table 10.1 shows that 136,168 (5.8%) persons aged 15 years and older were engaged in market-oriented agriculture as their main job (employed for pay or profit); of this population, the males (74,870 or 55.0% of males aged 15 or over) were more engaged in market-oriented agriculture than females (61,298 or 45.0 per cent). Market oriented agriculture activity was also mostly observed among rural (118,321 or 86.9%) compared to urban areas (17,847 or 13.1%).

Table 10.1: Market-oriented agriculture

Labour market indicator	Number					Per cent				
	Sex		Residence			Sex		Residence		
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Total
Employed population in agriculture	74,870	61,298	17,847	118,321	136,168	55.0	45.0	13.1	86.9	5.8

10.2 Non-market oriented (subsistence agriculture)

The non-market-oriented workers in agriculture sector as presented in Table 10.2 shows that 2,355,060 working age population 15 years and older were involved in agriculture activity either participating in subsistence or not. The results show that 774,702 persons representing 32.9 per cent were engaged in subsistence agriculture while 1,580,358 persons representing 67.1 per cent were not participating in subsistence agriculture at the time of the survey.

Table 10.2: Works status in agriculture

	Agriculture		
	Participate in subsistence agriculture	Not Participate in subsistence agriculture	Total
Population 15 years and older	774,702	1,580,358	2,355,060
Labour force	266,249	349,300	615,549
-Employed	248,433	290,469	538,902
-Unemployed	17,816	58,831	76,647
Outside the labour force	508,453	1,231,058	1,739,511
Labour underutilization	61,802	61,802	178,144
-Unemployed	17,816	58,831	76,647
-Time-related underemployed	34,286	25,489	59,775
-Potential labour force	9,700	32,022	41,722
Labour force participation rate (%)	34.4	22.1	26.1
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	32.1	18.4	22.9
Time related underemployment rate (%)	12.9	7.3	9.7
LU1: Unemployment rate (%)	6.7	16.8	12.5
LU2: Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment (%)	19.6	24.1	22.2
LU3: Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (%)	10.0	23.8	18.0
LU4: Composite measure of labour underutilization (%)	22.4	30.5	27.1

For those in the labour force (615,549 persons), 266,249 participated in subsistence agriculture while 349,300 did not engage in subsistence agriculture.

The labour force participation rate in agriculture was 26.1 per cent; of this, 34.4 per cent participated in subsistence agriculture while 22.1 per cent did not.

The employment-to-population ratio for all persons 15 years and older is 22.9 per cent. The population who participated in subsistence agriculture is 32.1 per cent compare to 18.4 per cent of those who did not participate in subsistence agriculture.

Unemployment rate is 12.5 per cent. It is also observed that 16.8 per cent of those who were not involved in subsistence agriculture are unemployed.

11 OWN-USE PRODUCERS OF FOODSTUFF

Subsistence foodstuff producers¹ are defined as all persons of working age who, in a short reference period, performed any activity to produce, and/or process for storage, goods from agriculture, fishing, hunting and gathering, as foodstuff that contribute to the livelihood of the household or family. It excludes persons engaged in such production as recreational or leisure activities. Subsistence foodstuff producers are a subgroup of persons in **own-use production work**.

For subsistence foodstuff producers, the following were considered:

- Crop production (work or help in any farming activities to produce food, keep, or help in a family in kitchen, garden or orchard): These include all activities covered under growing of non-perennial crops, growing of perennial crops, plant propagation, support activities for crop production, post-harvest crop activities and seed processing for propagation. Examples include growing any kind of produce such as cereals, rice, vegetables, fruits, nuts, etc., and related activities such as preparing the land, harvesting.
- Animal production (rear or tend farm animals kept by the family). These include raising of cattle and buffaloes, raising of horses and other equines, raising of camels and camelids, raising of sheep and goats, raising of swine/pigs, raising of poultry, raising of other animals. Examples include raising or breeding cattle, sheep, poultry, goats, pigs, bee keeping, etc. It also includes activities to produce by-products such as eggs and dairy products.
- Fishing or fish farming (aquaculture activities). Examples include marine or freshwater fishing, farming fish, crustaceans, molluscs, etc. or collect shellfish.
- Gather other foodstuff such as wild berries, mushrooms etc.

Only activities mainly intended to produce goods for final consumption or use by the household or family should be included.

The results shown in Table 11.1 indicate that 774,702 persons aged 15 years and above, representing 32.9 per cent participated in own use foodstuff production. Results show that slightly more females (33.6%) participated in own use foodstuff production work than males (32.1%).

¹Source: Resolution I concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization, paragraph 24, 19th ICLS (2013).

foodstuff (farming, fishing, hunting, processing food for storage)” (38.0%) and “collecting firewood for own use” (35.0%).

Table 11.1: Participation in own-use foodstuff production by sex

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Participated in own-use Foodstuff production	355,910	32.1	418,793	33.6	774,702	32.9
Did not participate in own-use foodstuff production	752,919	67.9	827,439	66.4	1,580,358	67.1
Total	1,108,829	100.0	1,246,231	100.0	2,355,060	100.0

12 ANNEX A: STATISTICAL TABLES

Table A1. 1: Youth (15-35) Key Labour Market Indicators

	Sex		Residence		Region						Functional Difficulty		Subsistence Farming		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural		North Central	North Western	South Central	South Eastern A	South Eastern B	With F/D*	Without F/D	Participated in Subsistence Farming	Not Participated in Subsistence Farming	
Population (15-35)	636,866	772,921	835,546	574,241	463,975	414,910	98,775	229,537	103,980	98,610	37,956	1,371,831	368,328	1,041,459	1,409,787
Labour force	153,132	135,725	154,655	134,202	88,214	84,124	26,535	51,648	22,934	15,402	3,442	285,415	118,364	170,493	288,857
-Employed	127,776	111,427	112,382	126,821	56,587	77,538	25,462	45,866	20,359	13,391	3,133	236,070	110,433	128,770	239,203
-Unemployed	25,356	24,298	42,273	7,381	31,627	6,586	1,073	5,782	2,575	2,011	309	49,345	7,931	41,723	49,654
Outside the labour force	483,734	637,196	680,891	440,039	375,76 1	330,786	72,240	177,889	81,047	83,207	34,515	1,086,415	249,964	870,966	1,120,930
Labour underutilization	53,070	53,793	75,411	31,452	52,643	15,120	12,151	14,782	6,153	6,014	25,965	80,898	32,377	74,486	106,863
-Unemployed	25,356	24,298	42,273	7,381	31,627	6,586	1,073	5,782	2,575	2,011	309	49,345	7,931	41,723	49,654
-Time-related underemployed	16,547	14,436	12,321	18,662	5,633	5,628	10,561	5,006	2,659	1,496	-	30,983	19,012	11,971	30,983
-Potential labour force	1,1167	15,059	20,817	5,409	15,383	2,906	517	3,994	919	2,507	25,656	570	5,434	20,792	26,226
Employees	47,062	15,691	48,486	14,267	31,609	10,319	2,466	9,901	5,756	2,702	488	62,265	7,859	54,894	62,753
Self-employed	79,037	87,512	60,134	106,415	23,909	62,681	22,449	32,600	14,526	10,384	2,645	163,904	97,592	68,957	166,549
Persons with informal employment	112,731	105,679	96,657	121,753	48,646	73,474	25,142	41,990	17,339	11,819	2,997	215,413	107,566	110,844	218,410
Persons with formal employment	15,045	5,748	15,726	5,067	7,941	4,064	320	3,875	3,020	1,573	136	20,657	2,867	17,926	20,793
NEET	330,280	465,969	446,100	350,149	251,757	244,037	53,679	119,498	60,247	67,031	31754	764,495	202,501	593,748	796,249
Persons with informal employment %	88.2	94.8	86.0	96.0	86.0	94.8	98.7	91.5	85.2	88.3	95.7	91.2	97.4	86.1	91.3
Persons with formal employment %	11.8	5.2	14.0	4.0	14.0	5.2	1.3	8.4	14.8	11.7	4.3	8.8	2.6	13.9	8.7
NEET (%)	51.9	60.3	53.4	61	54.3	58.8	54.3	52.1	57.9	68	83.7	55.7	55.0	57.0	56.5
Employees (%)	36.8	14.1	43.1	11.2	55.9	13.3	9.7	21.6	28.3	20.2	15.6	26.4	7.1	42.6	26.2
Self-employed (%)	61.9	78.5	53.5	83.9	42.3	80.8	88.2	71.1	71.4	77.5	84.4	69.4	88.4	53.6	69.6
Labour force participation rate (%)	24.0	17.6	18.5	23.4	19.0	20.3	26.9	22.5	22.1	15.6	9.1	20.8	32.1	16.4	20.5
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	20.1	14.4	13.5	22.1	12.2	18.7	25.8	20.0	19.6	13.6	8.3	17.2	30.0	12.4	17.0
Time related underemployment rate (%)	10.8	10.6	8.0	13.9	6.4	6.7	39.8	9.7	11.6	9.7	-	10.9	16.1	7.0	10.7

Table A1. 4: Labour force status by 10-year age groups, number

Labour force status	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
Employed	71,562	150,827	158,528	94,995	39,634	23,356	538,902
Unemployed	16,158	31,209	18,399	7,120	2,248	1,512	76,647
Outside the labour force	678,395	406,156	297,901	169,101	91,812	96,147	1,739,511
Total	766,115	588,192	474,828	271,215	133,695	121,015	2,355,060

Table A1. 5: Labour force status by 10-year age groups, per cent

Labour force status	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
Employed	9.3	25.6	33.4	35.0	29.6	19.3	22.9
Unemployed	2.1	5.3	3.9	2.6	1.7	1.2	3.3
Outside the labour force	88.6	69.1	62.7	62.3	68.7	79.5	73.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table A1. 6: Labour force status by aggregate age groups, per cent

Labour force status	15-24	25-54	55-64	65+	Total
Employed	9.3	30.3	29.6	19.3	22.9
Unemployed	2.1	4.3	1.7	1.2	3.3
Outside the labour force	88.6	65.4	68.7	79.5	73.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table A1. 7: Labour force status by level of education, number

level of education	Employed	Unemployed	Outside the labour force	Total
No schooling	199,013	15,853	782,813	997,679
Early childhood education	13,211	905	42,063	56,179
Primary education	78,620	8,083	268,658	355,361
Junior secondary education	51,387	9,058	233,474	293,919
Senior secondary education	130,183	29,556	288,516	448,255
University (Bachelor's level)	44,062	10,013	49,692	103,767
Postgraduate level	19,018	2,526	9,672	31,215
Not elsewhere classified	3,409	654	64,622	68,684
Total	538,902	76,647	1,739,511	2,355,060

Table A1. 11: Labour force participation rate by marital status

Marital status	LFPR
Single	15.8
Married	35.6
Union/Cohabiting	32.4
Widowed	22.7
Divorced/Separated	35.9
N.E.C	21.8
Total	26.1

Table A1. 12: Share of employment by broad branch of economic activity

Broad economic groups	Number		
	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture	74,870	61,298	136,168
Industry	23,970	2,856	26,826
Services	88,383	53,210	141,593
Not elsewhere classified	130,476	103,840	234,315
Total	317,698	221,204	538,902

Table A1. 13: Branch of economic activity (main job) - ISIC Rev.4

	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing	136,168	74,870	61,298	17,847	118,321
B - Mining and quarrying	5,971	5,199	772	1,122	4,849
C - Manufacturing	11,507	9,663	1,844	6,745	4,762
D - Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	886	886	0	647	239
E - Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	722	722	0	507	215
F - Construction	7,741	7,500	241	7,048	693
G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	41,067	18,940	22,127	26,349	14,718
H - Transportation and storage	14,582	12,490	2,092	11,016	3,566
I - Accommodation and food service activities	4,377	936	3,441	3,131	1,246
J - Information and communication	3,901	2,958	943	2,447	1,454
K - Financial and insurance activities	5,050	2,772	2,278	5,050	0
L - Real estate activities	379	379	0	295	84
M - Professional, scientific and technical activities	5,206	4,148	1,057	3,902	1,303
N - Administrative and support service activities	14,599	11,724	2,875	12,590	2,009
O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	8,630	7,614	1,017	6,539	2,092
P - Education	24,280	15,993	8,286	17,103	7,176
Q - Human health and social work activities	9,659	4,162	5,497	7,419	2,240
R - Arts, entertainment and recreation	827	749	77	369	458
S - Other service activities	7,975	4,954	3,021	5,960	2,016
T - Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use	1,061	564	497	993	67
U - Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
X - Not elsewhere classified	234,315	130,476	103,840	110,157	124,158

Table A1. 14: Status in employment (ICSE-93) – Main job

Status in employment (ICSE-93) – Main job	Number			Percent		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Employees	123,131	38,501	161,633	38.8	17.4	30.0
Employers	55,037	47,378	102,415	17.3	21.4	19.0
Own-account workers	68,848	68,329	137,176	21.7	30.9	25.5
Contributing family workers	66,920	55,133	122,053	21.1	24.9	22.6
Workers not classified by status	3,763	11,862	15,625	1.2	5.4	2.9
Total	317,698	221,204	538,902	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table A1. 15: Classification of Production units (Formal/Informal sector)

Classification of production units	Number	Percent
Formal	182,144	33.8
Informal	231,092	42.9
Household	125,666	23.3
Total	538,902	100.0

Table A1. 16: Persons in Informal employment by broad branches of economic activity

	Number				
	Agriculture	Industry	Services	N.E.C	Total
Persons with informal employment	131,065	21,838	101,578	212,837	467,318
Persons with formal employment	5,103	4,988	40,015	21,478	71,584
Total	136,168	26,826	141,593	234,315	538,902

Table A1. 15: Persons in Informal employment by broad branches of economic activity

	Percent				
	Agriculture	Industry	Services	N.E.C	Total
1 - Persons with informal employment	96.3	81.4	71.7	90.8	86.7
2 - Persons with formal employment	3.7	18.6	28.3	9.2	13.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table A1. 18: Employed population by sex, hours actually worked per week at all jobs, and urban/rural area

Weekly hours actually worked at all jobs	Number					Percent				
	Sex		Residence			Sex		Residence		
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Total
No hours	1769	1140	1221	1688	2909	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5
01-14	6818	6952	5761	8010	13770	2.1	3.1	2.3	2.7	2.6
15-29	27065	26061	17523	35603	53126	8.5	11.8	7.1	12.2	9.9
30-34	9793	12031	7795	14029	21824	3.1	5.4	3.2	4.8	4.0
35-39	18232	17716	12118	23829	35948	5.7	8.0	4.9	8.2	6.7
40-48	52386	29405	40527	41264	81791	16.5	13.3	16.4	14.1	15.2
49+	123534	61664	93499	91700	185199	38.9	27.9	37.8	31.4	34.4
N.E.C ⁵	78100	66236	68793	75542	144336	24.6	29.9	27.8	25.9	26.8
Total	317698	221204	247237	291665	538902	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

⁵ N.E.C: Not Elsewhere Classified

Table A1. 169: Youth (15-35 years) labour force status by educational attainment

	Employed	Unemployed	Outside the labour force	Total
No schooling	80,585	7,779	408,889	497,254
Early childhood education	6,760	334	27,346	34,440
Primary education	43,747	4,850	208,144	256,741
Junior secondary education	26,023	6,119	185,066	217,208
Senior secondary education	60,693	22,044	205,998	288,734
University (Bachelor's level)	15,101	6,540	31,812	53,453
Postgraduate level	3,572	1,495	3,234	8,301
Not elsewhere classified	2,722	492	50,441	53,656
Total	239,203	49,654	1,120,930	1,409,787

Table A1.20: Duration of unemployment by sex and residence

Duration of employment	Sex		Residence		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	
Less than 1 month	6.1	7.5	6.4	7.6	6.7
1 month to less than 3 months	10.7	12.1	12.4	7.4	11.4
3 months to less than 6 months	5.8	6.4	7.1	2.2	6.1
6 months to less than 12 months	11.9	9.6	11.5	8.5	10.9
12 months to less than 24 months	24.9	21.5	24.9	17.7	23.4
24 months or more	40.5	42.4	37.5	56.5	41.4
7 - Not elsewhere classified	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

