



THE GAMBIA BUREAU OF STATISTICS (GBoS)

The Gambia Labour Force Survey GLFS 2025

LABOUR FORCE SNAPSHOT

Implemented by:

The Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS)

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THE GAMBIA LABOUR MARKET 2025 SNAPSHOT (GLFS 2025)

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE



53.8%

Male



40.9%

Female



47.1%

Total

EMPLOYMENT-TO-POPULATION RATIO



49.8%

Male



37.2%

Female



43.2%

Total

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



7.5%

Male



9.2%

Female



8.3%

Total

THE GAMBIA LABOUR MARKET 2025 SNAPSHOT (GLFS 2025)

INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT



76.7%

Male



82.3%

Female



81.0%

Total

LABOUR UNDERUTILISATION (LU3)



19.1%

Male



34.3%

Female



26.7%

Total

YOUTH NEET (15-35)



36.6%

Male



45.3%

Female



41.3%

Total

THE GAMBIA LABOUR MARKET 2025 SNAPSHOT (GLFS 2025)

TIME-RELATED UNDEREMPLOYMENT



6.8%
Male



14.2%
Female



10.1%
Total

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY



20.1%
With disability



47.4%
Without disability



47.1%
Total

EMPLOYMENT BY PLACE OF BIRTH



Foreign-born
61.9%



Native-born
41.8%

Key Findings from the 2025 GLFS

Labour Force Participation and Employment Gaps

The labour force participation rate stands at 47.1 per cent, with notable disparities between men (53.8%) and women (40.9%). Similarly, the employment-to-population ratio is 43.2 per cent, again showing a gender gap (Male: 49.8%, Female: 37.2%). These figures point to the need for inclusive employment strategies, particularly to empower women to enter and remain in the labour market.

Labour force participation among persons with disabilities stands at just 20.1 per cent, significantly lower than 47.4 per cent among those without disabilities. This disparity underscores the importance of inclusive employment policies, accessibility reforms, and targeted skills development.

Addressing Unemployment Challenges

The national unemployment rate is 8.3 per cent, with a higher incidence among women (9.2%) compared to men (7.5%). This highlights structural barriers facing women in accessing decent employment, which must be addressed through targeted policy actions such as vocational training and inclusive hiring practices.

Informality Dominates Employment

A staggering 81.0 per cent of employed persons are in informal employment, with even higher prevalence among women (82.3%) than men (76.7%). This presents a major policy concern regarding job quality, social protection coverage, and productivity. Formalisation policies, especially tailored for women and youth, are essential to transform the structure of employment.

Addressing Labour Underutilisation (LU3)

The LU3 indicator capturing both unemployment and potential labour force stands at 26.7 per cent, with women facing a disproportionate burden (34.3%) relative to men (19.1%). Addressing this gap requires continued efforts to expand employment opportunities, alongside targeted investments in care infrastructure, flexible work options, and gender-responsive labour market programmes that support both labour force entry and sustained participation.

Youth Disengagement Remains a Critical Challenge

The rate of youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET) is 41.3 per cent nationally, with nearly half of young women (45.3%) affected compared to 36.6 per cent of young men. This underscores the urgency of youth-focused employment and skills development interventions to harness the demographic dividend and reduce vulnerability among young Gambians.

Time-Related Underemployment Higher among Women

Time-related underemployment remains a critical gender issue, with women (14.2%) more than twice as likely to face insufficient working hours compared to men (6.8%). This highlights the need for targeted interventions that promote decent and adequate employment opportunities for women.

THE GAMBIA YOUTH LABOUR MARKET 2025 SNAPSHOT (GLFS 2025)



LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

40.0%

aged 15–35 participated in the labour force



LABOUR UNDERUTILISATION

33.3%

faced labour underutilisation



YOUTH NEET
41.3%

of youth (15–35) were not in education, employment or training



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

35.4%

aged 15–35 were employed



GENDER PARTICIPATION

45.6%

35.1%



INFORMALITY
84.5%

of the youth were in informal employment

The Gambia's youth labour market is marked by low participation (40.0%), high underutilisation (33.3%), and a large share not in education, employment or training (41.3%), with 84.5 per cent in informal jobs. Strengthening skills development, entrepreneurship, and job placement initiatives can enhance youth engagement and economic inclusion.

THE GAMBIA WOMEN'S LABOUR MARKET 2025 SNAPSHOT (GLFS 2025)

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE



53.8% **40.9%**
Male Female

EMPLOYMENT-TO-POPULATION RATIO



49.8%
Male



37.2%
Female

INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT



76.7%
Male



82.3%
Female

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



7.5%
Male

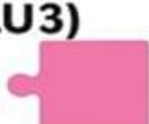


9.2%
Female

LABOUR UNDERUTILISATION (LU3) NEET (15-35)



19.1%
Male



34.3%
Female



36.6%
Male



45.3%
Female

Compared to men, women in The Gambia show lower labour force participation (40.9% vs. 53.8%), higher informal employment (82.3% vs. 76.7%), and greater labour underutilisation (34.3% vs. 19.1%). These gaps call for targeted action to enhance women's access to decent jobs, skills training, and inclusive economic opportunities.

THE GAMBIA WOMEN'S LABOUR MARKET 2025 SNAPSHOT (GLFS 2025)

EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE



12.0%
Male

24.3%
Female

17.6%
Total

EMPLOYED IN INDUSTRY



33.6%
Male

5.0%
Female

20.7%
Total

EMPLOYED IN SERVICES

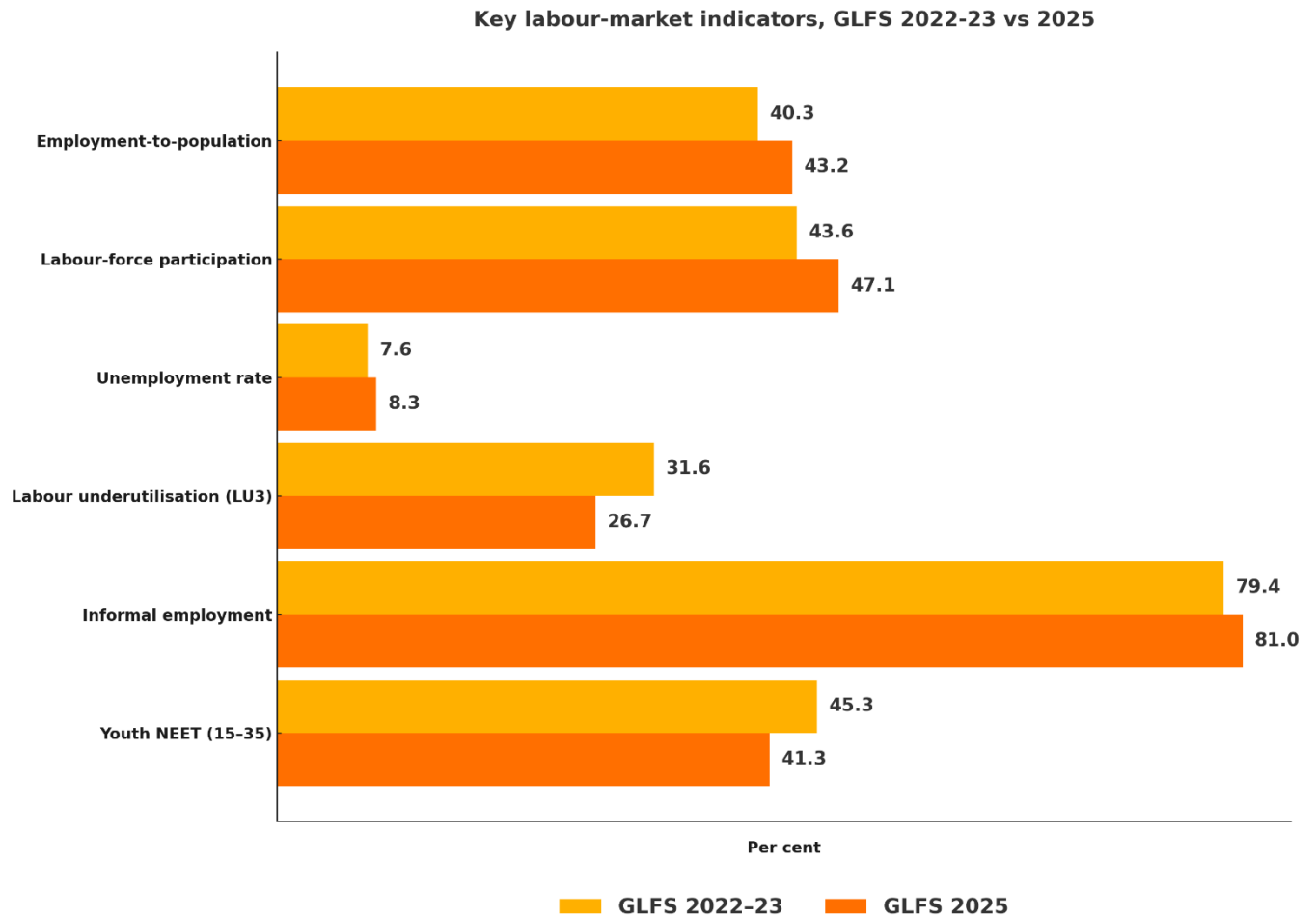


54.4%
Male

70.7%
Female

61.7%
Total

The significant concentration of women in services (70.7%) and agriculture (24.3%), compared to their lower representation in industry (5.0%), underscores the need for targeted, sector-specific strategies that enhance job quality, promote women's economic empowerment, and address gender disparities across the labour market.



Note: Data reflect key labour market indicators from the Gambia Labour Force Surveys (GLFS) 2022-23 and 2025. Labour underutilisation (LU3) is the combined rate of unemployment and the potential labour force (PLF). Youth NEET refers to persons aged 15-35 who were not in education, employment or training.

Changes in Key Labour Market Outcomes

- **Increased labour force participation**

More Gambians are engaging in the labour market (participation increased from 43.6% in 2022-23 to 47.1% in 2025), reflecting growing economic activity and opportunities for employment. Sustained efforts to expand job creation will help absorb new entrants.

Employment-to-population ratio shows positive trend

The increase in the employment-to-population ratio from 40.3 per cent in 2022-23 to 43.2 per cent in 2025 demonstrates progress in job creation. Continued investment in sectors with high labour demand can further strengthen this trend.

- **Unemployment increased slightly**

As more people join the labour force, the slight rise in unemployment (from 7.6% in 2022-23 to 8.3% in 2025) highlights the importance of accelerating job growth, particularly in the formal sector, to match workforce expansion.

- **Labour underutilisation improving, but still high**

The LU3 rate, which counts both the unemployed and those who want work but aren't actively looking or available for work, dropped from 31.6 per cent in 2022-23 to 26.7 per cent in 2025. This is a good sign, but over one-quarter of the potential workforce is still not fully utilised.

- **Informality continues to dominate the labour market**

Informal work continues to dominate (increased from 79.4% in 2022-23 to 81.0% in 2025), underscoring the need for policies that encourage formalization, enhance worker protections, and expand access to social security.

- **Youth outcomes improved, but the NEET rate remains a policy concern**

The share of youth aged 15-35 who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) declined from 45.3 per cent in 2022-23 to 41.3 per cent in 2025. The decline in youth NEET rates is encouraging, but more can be done to connect young people with jobs and training. Strengthening vocational education and private-sector partnerships will be key to sustaining this progress.

Key Recommendations

- Expanding formal job opportunities through private-sector incentives and infrastructure projects.
- Enhancing skills development to align workforce capabilities with market demands.
- Promoting gender-inclusive policies to increase women's participation and leadership.

- Promoting formal employment by simplifying registration processes and strengthening social protection coverage.
- Expanding youth employment initiatives through apprenticeships, technical and vocational training, and digital skills development.
- Expanding inclusive employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through workplace accessibility, targeted training, and supportive employment policies.