

3.2.3. Employment for specific groups

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Youth

Sources indicated that youth unemployment in Nigeria is a national ‘crisis’.983 They also indicated that high youth unemployment is due to a significant skills gaps, and that industries struggle to find trained workers for key roles, especially in technical and vocational fields.984 Many young Nigerians lack the specific skills that employers need, resulting in unfilled positions.985 The Human Capital Index for Nigeria indicated that 27 % of children aged 5 to 17 are engaged in the labour market, and that 14 % of young people with ages between 15 and 24, are neither employed, nor in school, nor in training.986 According to the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Factbook, the 2024 unemployment rate for individuals aged 15 to 24 was 5.1 %, with males at 3.7 % and females at 6.5 %.987 Nigeria’s NBS survey indicated that the youth unemployment rate for the second quarter of 2024 was 6.5 %, a decrease from 8.4 % in the previous quarter.988 For more information see Education.

In June 2024, the unemployment rate for people with secondary education was 7.6 %.989 However, the Nigeria Education News, a news website on education issues in Nigeria, indicated, that the unemployment rate for Nigerian youth was about 53 % in 2023.990 According to Germany’s BMZ, the growing young generation ‘has very little prospect of getting access to formal jobs, housing or basic social protection’ due to low economic growth, high levels of population growth, and high levels of informal employment.991

Sources reported that Nigerian companies are unable to find qualified workers due to a disconnection between local universities’ curriculum and the reality on the ground, which leave young Nigerians with significant skills gaps after graduation and render them unable to compete in the job market.992 Daily Trust reported that, according to local research, about 55 % of young people in Nigeria remain unemployed or underemployed, not due to a lack of education, but ‘because of a shortage of practical, digital, and cognitive skills demanded by today’s labour market’.993 Sources reported that firms in sectors such as technology, agriculture, manufacturing, and services are increasingly hiring workforce from other African countries due to local shortages and technical expertise.994

Women

The Jobberman report noted that women encounter educational disparities, patriarchal work environments, and cultural barriers impacting their participation in the labour market.995 The World Bank indicated that, according to ILO statistics, the 2023 rate of ‘vulnerable employment’

996 for females in Nigeria was 78.9 % compared to 54.3 % for males, down from the 2018 rates of 78.9 % and 54.9 %, respectively.997 A 2025 report on women in the workplace in India, Nigeria, and Kenya, by McKinsey & Company, a New York City-based consulting firm that offers financial and operational services to corporations, governments and other organisations, showed that despite constituting half of the national workforce, women occupy just one in three entry-level positions within the formal private sector.998 According to the same source, private sector beliefs about gender roles in the workplace are commonplace, with roles in engineering and technical services, for example, being male-dominated.999 In healthcare, in contrast, women and men have the same representation at the entry level, but the rate of women drops to 10 % in management positions.1000

Labour migration and IDPs

The Lagos Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget indicated that between 2022 and 2024, the state experienced an unprecedented increase in labour migration and internally displaced persons (IDPs), resulting in a net daily population growth of approximately 3 000 individuals, a surge that has led to a significant impact on infrastructure, housing, and public services.1001 The same source explained that Lagos state faces challenges in accommodating the rapid population growth, which is leading to 'widespread homelessness' and the expansion of slums, and that migrants and IDPs, especially those with limited resources, frequently settle in peripheral areas where informal housing and inadequate amenities are common.1002 The Borgen Project, a US-based nonprofit organisation dedicated to addressing global poverty, similarly indicated that while most analysts concentrate on Lagos, other cities such as Ibadan, Kano, and Abuja are also experiencing rapid population growth, and although rapid urbanisation can stimulate local economic growth, it is also straining social services and infrastructure, particularly impacting the poor.1003

Other groups

Nigeria's NBS survey indicated that 80 % of persons without disabilities participate in the labour market, compared to 36.7 % of people with disabilities.1004 The 2025 unemployment rate for those 15 to 64 years of age was 4.15 % among women and 2.14 % among men.1005

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