



Labour Force Survey, Male'

Quarter 2
(April-June 2025)

Release date:
30 September 2025





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MALDIVES BUREAU OF STATISTICS (MBS)
Ministry of Finance & Planning



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Within the MBS, the survey was managed by the survey division, led by Ms. Fathimath Nihan, with support from Mr. Mohamed Habeeb and Ms. Mibsam Hassan Zareer. Ms. Aishath Aniya provided overall guidance for data coding. The data processing division, including Mr. Ali Shafeeu, Mr. Ahmed Shaheed, and Ms. Aishath Risla Umar, handled questionnaire design, data processing, and tabulation.

A large team of staff, including Ms. Aishath Hassan, Ms. Aishath Shahuda, Ms. Fathimath Nihan, Ms. Fathimath Riyaza, Ms. Sajida Ahmed, Mr. Ahmed Shaheed, Mr. Mohamed Habeeb, Mr. Ali Shafeeu, Ms. Aishath Aniya, Ms. Hudha Haleem, and Ms. Mibsam Hassan Zareer, were instrumental in providing comprehensive training for the enumerators. Administrative support was also crucial, with the budget team—Mr. Abdulla Nashid, Ms. Zumna Hassan Manik, and Ms. Shamila Rasheed—managing financial matters, and the HR team working closely with Ms. Mushfiqa Ibrahim and Ms. Mariyam Yoona to ensure smooth operations. In addition to her role with the HR team, Ms. Mushfiqa Ibrahim was responsible for the layout of the final report.

The crucial tasks of analyzing the survey data and writing the final report were handled by Ms. Aishath Shahuda, with expert guidance from Mr. Antonio R. Discenza and Ms. Aishath Hassan.

Chief Statistician, Maldives Bureau of Statistics

Labour force survey (LFS) was commenced by the Maldives Bureau of Statistics on October 28, 2024, in the capital, Male' City. The fieldwork for the survey, which targets randomly selected households of four wards of Male', Hulhumale', and Vilimale'.

The LFS is fully aligned to the new statistical labour standards adopted by the 19th, 20th, and 21st International Conferences of Labour Statisticians. It helps to improve our knowledge of the labour market and the world of work by more adequately reflecting people's participation in employment and unpaid work, their labour underutilization patterns, their work relationships, and their involvement in the informal economy. The alignment to the international standards ensures that results are full comparable with those of other countries in the region and worldwide, obtained with the same methodology and standards.

Labour market data was collected from all household members aged 15 years and above in the sample households throughout the three months of the reference quarter. LFS technical and administrative reports provide survey methodology and operational aspects of the survey.

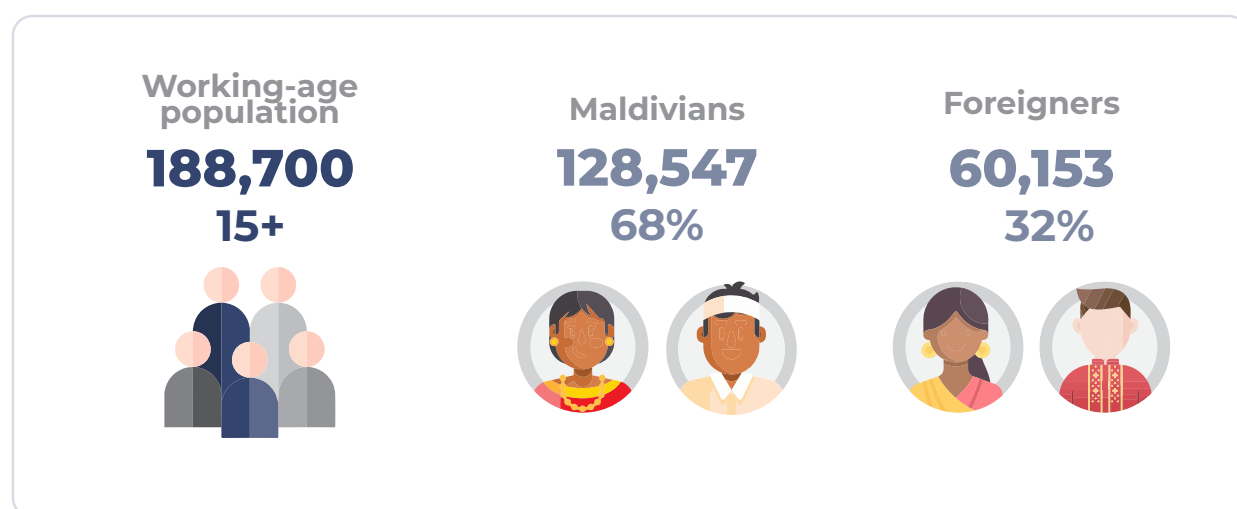
This publication illustrates results of Q2-2025 (April to June 2025) and compares them with that of the previous quarter Q1-2025 (January to March 2025)

OVERVIEW OF Q2-2025

WORKING-AGE POPULATION

In Q2-2025, working-age population (15 years and older) living in Male' were estimated at 188,700. Maldivians totaled 128,547 (68.1%). One-third (60,153) were foreigners.

Working age population by nationality



About three quarters (75.6 per cent) of the working-age population were employed (working for pay or profit) in Q2-2025, amounting to 142,717 people.

The overall employment-to-population ratio mentioned above is an average of very different ratios for different population groups.

Employment ratio is substantially higher among foreigners. It is 65.2 for Maldivians (83,774 people) and 98.0 per cent for foreigners (58,943 people).

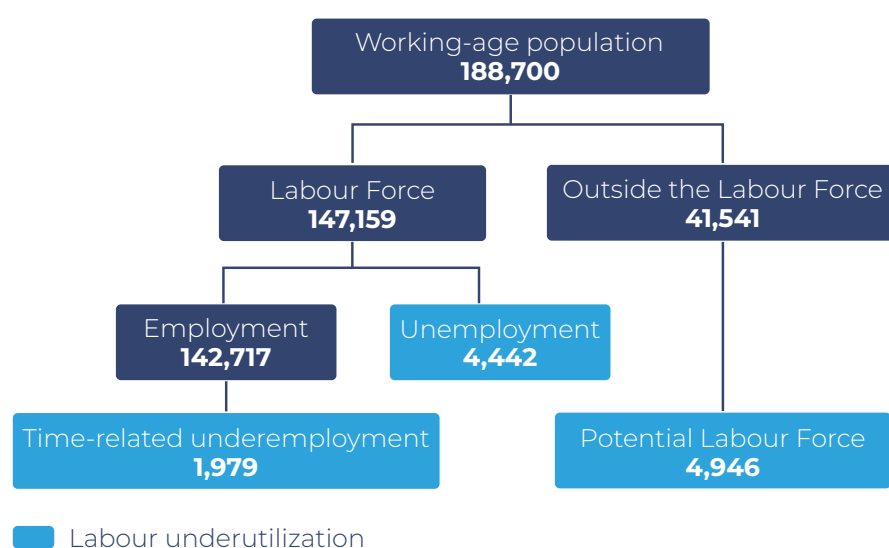
Employment ratio is much lower among women. Overall, it is 87.9 for males and 55.3 per cent for females. Looking at the Maldivian population, the employment ratio is 78.1 for males and 52.4 for females. Looking at the foreigner population those are respectively 99.5 and 85.2.

Unemployment in Q2-2025 involves 4,442 persons, almost exclusively Maldivians (4,293 people) and slightly more men than women (2,372 vs. 1,921 persons respectively).

Unemployment rate (sometimes labelled as LU1 indicator in tables) in Q2-2025 is low and equal to 3.0%. However, it reflects the fact that the foreign population is almost entirely employed. When looking at the Maldivian population only the unemployment rate is equal to 4.9% overall, 4.6% for men and 5.3% for women. It is also 6.5% for Maldivians in the age group 15-34 and 3.6% for those in the age group 35 plus.

Given the low unemployment, the labour force participation rate, which considers both employed and unemployed, is very close to the employment-to-population ratio. Overall, it is 78%, but it is much higher for men (89.9%) than for women (58.3%), and is also much higher for foreigners (98.2%) than for Maldivians (68.5%).

Overview of working age population



Within people in employment, a small group of people (1,979 persons, corresponding to the 1.4% of all employed) are classified in Time-Related Underemployment (TRU) because they usually work less than 35 hours per week but would like to work more and are immediately available to do so. However, while TRU involves only 1.1% of the employed men, it involves 2.3% of the employed women, mostly Maldivians. Putting together the Unemployed and those in TRU we can calculate the LU2 indicator and see that the gender gap increases. In fact, while the total is 4.4%, it is only 3.3% for males but 7.2% for females.

Within people out of the labour force (PLF), an important group is classified as Potential Labour Force. These are people which are “close” to the unemployed because they: a) are available to take up a job but did not search for a job in the previous 4 weeks; or b) searched for a job but are not available to start immediately. In Q2- 2025 the PLF in Maldives are 4,946 persons, slightly more than the number of unemployed, and 65.2% of them are women.

Putting together the Unemployed, those in TRU and the PLF, we can calculate the LU4 indicator and see that the gender gap increases even further. In fact, while the total is 7.5%, it is only 4.8% for males but 13.9% for females.

OVERVIEW OF THE QUARTERLY VARIATIONS

| Labour force status | Q2-2025 (nos) | Quarterly change (nos) | Quarterly change (%) |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Labour force | 147,159 | 4,728 | 3.3 |
| Employed | 142,717 | 2,462 | 1.8 |
| Unemployed | 4,442 | 2,266 | 104.1 |
| Outside labour force | 41,541 | -3,418 | -7.6 |
| Total (15+) | 188,700 | 1,310 | 0.7 |

Table 1: Key Labour market statistics, Q2-2025

Persons in the labour force increased by 4,728 persons (3.3 percent) in Q2-2025 compared to Q1-2025.

Employment increased by 2,462 persons (1.8 percent) over the quarter to 142,717 in Q2-2025. This is mainly due to an increase among foreign men.

Unemployment increased substantially over the quarter to 2,266 persons. This is mainly attributed to the increase in unemployment among Maldivians men and women.

Persons outside labour force, decreased over the quarter by a total of 3,418 persons (7.6%). This is mainly attributed to the increase in Maldivian men and women in the labour force.

Working-age population also increased over the quarter by a total of 1,310 persons (0.7%)

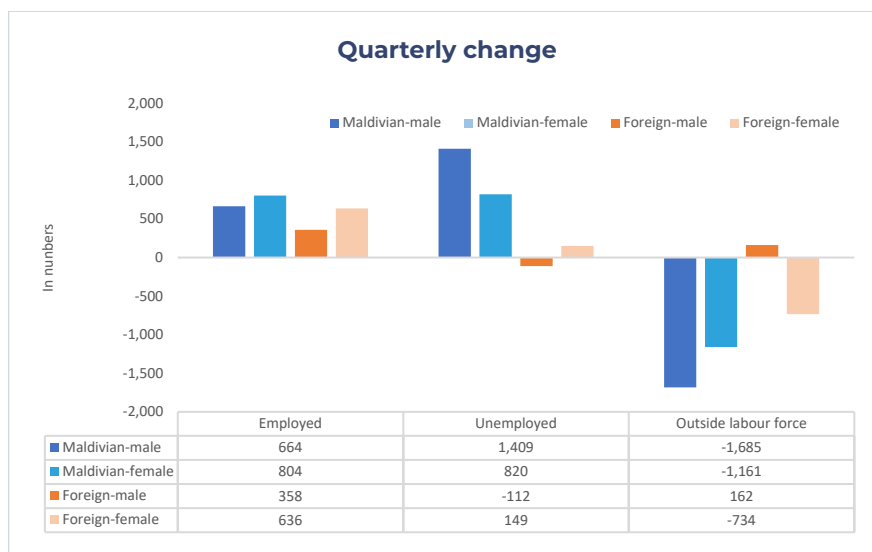


Figure 1: Quarterly change in key Labour market statistics, Q1-2025 to Q2-2025

Labour force participation rate increased over the quarter by 2.0 percentage points to 78.0 percent in Q2-2025. Employment to population ratio also increased slightly over the quarter (0.8 pts) to 75.6 percent.

Unemployment rate increased in Q2-2025 to 3.0 percent with an increase of 1.5 percentage points over the quarter.

| Key Indicators | Q2-2025 (%) | Quarterly change (percentage points-pts) |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------|
| Labour force participation rate | 78.0 | 2.0 |
| Employment to population ratio | 75.6 | 0.8 |
| Unemployment rate | 3.0 | 1.5 |

Table 2: Key Labour market indicators, Q2-2025

Labour force participation rate is substantially higher among foreigners (98.2%) in Q2-2025 while it is much lower among foreign women (87.5%).

Labour force participation rate among foreign men decreased over the quarter (0.3 percentage points), while it increased for Maldivian men (2.8 percentage points).

Increase was most prominent among foreign women (11.9 percentage points), followed by Maldivian women (2.1 percentage points).

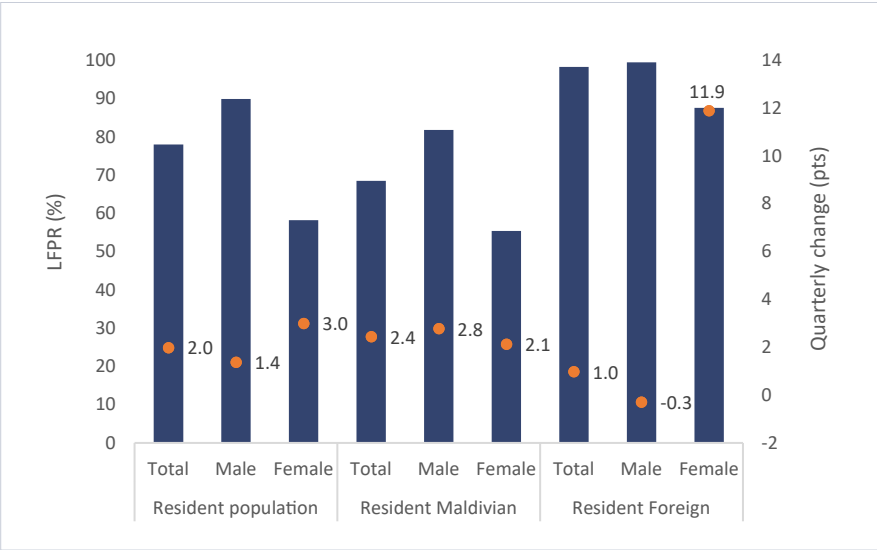


Figure 2: Labour force participation rate by nationality and sex, Q2-2025

EMPLOYED POPULATION BY INDUSTRY IN MALE' CITY

Maldivian economy is dominated by the tertiary industry. In Male' City 76.6 percent of the of employed persons worked in services industry in Q2-2025, followed by secondary industry (23.3%). Primary industry has few employed people as it is mainly concentrated in the Atolls.

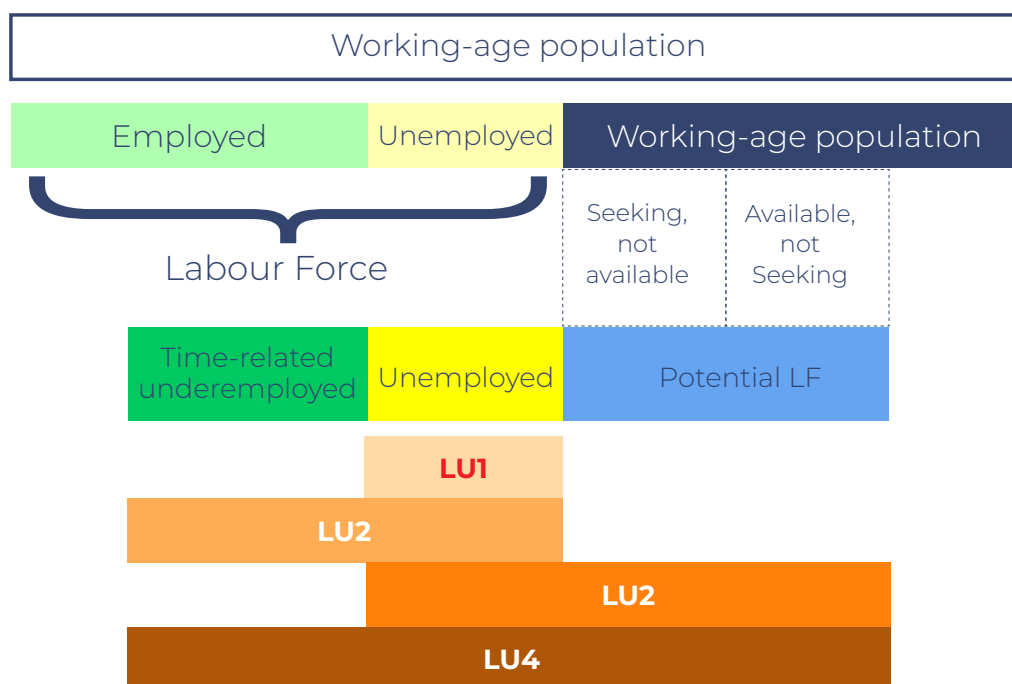
It is important to keep in mind that Industry composition will differ in this survey, as it does not cover tourist resorts or other islands in the Atolls.

Employment gain over the quarter was solely from Secondary industry with an increase of 26.2 percent Q2-2025.

| Industry | Q2-2025 (nos.) | Quarterly change (nos.) | Quarterly change (%) | Q2-2025 (% Share) |
|------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Primary | 126 | -70 | -35.7 | 0.1 |
| Secondary | 33,310 | 6,906 | 26.2 | 23.3 |
| Tertiary | 109,281 | -4,131 | -3.6 | 76.6 |
| Not Stated | 0 | -243 | -100.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 142,717 | 2,462 | 1.8 | 100.0 |

Table 3: Employed population by broad industry groups, Q2- 2025

LABOUR UNDER-UTILIZATION INDICATORS



New Combined indicators of labour underutilization indicators (LU1-LU4) are shown in the diagram below. These indicators are to be used alongside unemployment rate to provide insights into the extent of labour underutilisation.

| Labour underutilization | Q2-2025 (nos) | Quarterly change (nos.) | Quarterly change (%) |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Time-related underemployed | 1,979 | -804 | -28.9 |
| Unemployed | 4,442 | 2,266 | 104.1 |
| Potential labour force | 4,946 | -2,676 | -35.1 |
| Total | 11,367 | -1,214 | -9.6 |

Table 4: Components of labour underutilization, Q2- 2025

Unemployment rate remains the most commonly used labour underutilization indicator. Additional measures complementary are used alongside unemployment, to further explore the extent of labour underutilization. These include time-related underemployment and potential labourforce.

There was the sharp increase in the number of unemployed individuals. The unemployment increased by 2,266 persons, over the quarter to 4,442 in Q2-2025. This is mainly due to increase in unemployment among men.

The number of people in the potential labour force, who are not actively seeking employment but could be available for work, decreased by 2,676 persons. While unemployment increased, potential labour supply that can be tapped decreased over the quarter to 4,946 in Q2-2025.

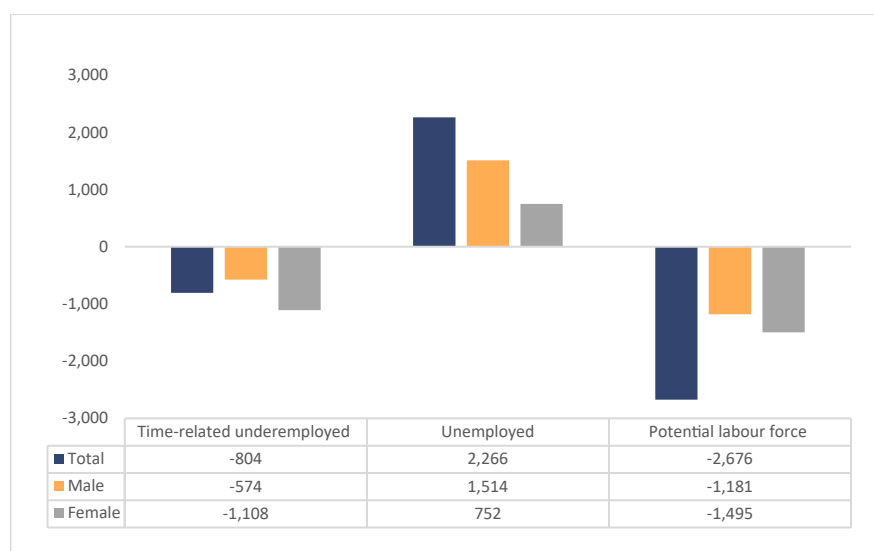


Figure 3: Quarterly change in Labour underutilization by sex, Q1-2025 to Q2-2025

The number of time-related underemployed individuals, or those who want to work more hours, saw a slight decrease of 804 persons, moving to 1,979 in Q2-2025. Looking at the Labour underutilization by sex over the quarter shows improvement in time-related underemployed among women.

The total number of people in the combined categories (unemployed, underemployed, and potential labor force) decreased by 1,214 persons, to 11,367 in Q2-2025. This indicates the existence of an unmet need for employment among the population in Male'. The situation however shows an improvement over the quarter.

Unemployment rate deteriorated more among women. Potential labour force comprises of slightly higher share of women (65.2%), indicating a higher potential labour supply of women that can be tapped.

| Sex | LU1: Unemployment rate | LU2: Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment | LU3: Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force | LU4: Aggregate measure of labour underutilization |
|------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| | % | | | |
| Both Sexes | 3.0 | 4.4 | 6.2 | 7.5 |
| Male | 2.2 | 3.3 | 3.8 | 4.8 |
| Female | 5.0 | 7.2 | 11.9 | 13.9 |
| | Quarterly change (percentatge points) | | | |
| Both Sexes | 1.5 | 0.9 | -0.3 | -0.9 |
| Male | 1.2 | 1.2 | -0.5 | -0.5 |
| Female | 2.2 | 0.1 | -0.2 | -2.0 |

Table 5: Labour underutilization indicators by sex, Q1-2025 to Q2-2025

Other labour underutilization indicators are much higher compared with unemployment rate.

In Q2-2025, aggregate measure of labour underutilization (LU4) was substantially higher at 7.5 percent compared to unemployment rate (LU1) of 3.0 percent.

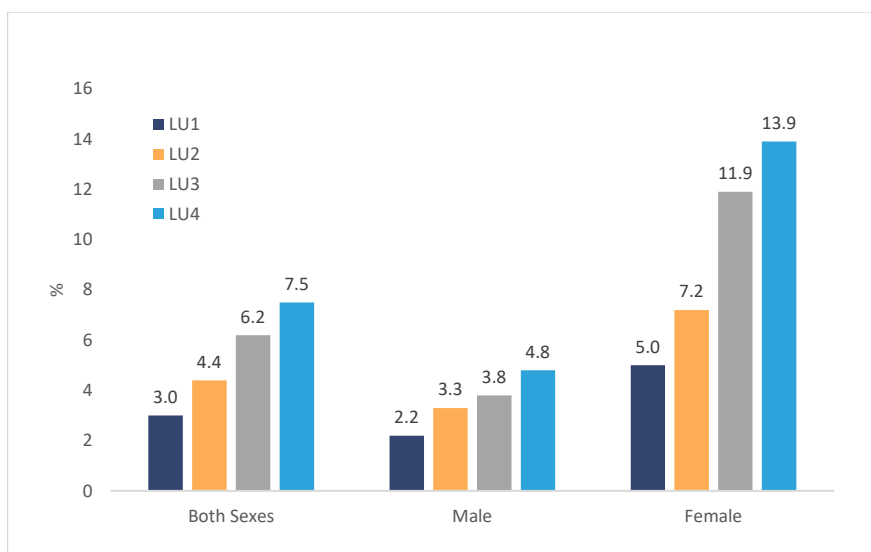


Figure 4: Labour underutilization indicators by sex, Q2-2025

PERSONS OUTSIDE LABOUR FORCE

In 2025-Q2 a third (31.5%) of the working-age Maldivian population accounting for a total of 40,480 individuals are not part of the labor force. This means they are neither employed nor actively seeking employment. There was a decrease of over one thousand individuals (3,481) among those outside labour force over the quarter.

Among those outside labour force 4,946 (11.9%) are in the potential labor force category in Q2-2025. A 35.1 percent decrease is observed in this category over the quarter. Potential labour force comprises of unavailable jobseekers and available potential jobseekers.

The remaining 36,595 individuals (88.1%) fall under the category “Others outside the labor force” They are neither actively seeking jobs nor available for employment and do not want to work at the time of the survey. Among those are working-age population comprising of students, homemakers, sick and elderly population who are unable to work. They also include individuals who have chosen not to participate in the labor market and do not want to work for various reasons.

| Outside labour force | Q2-2025 (nos) | Quarterly change (nos.) | Quarterly change (%) |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Potential labour force | 4,946 | -2,676 | -35.1 |
| Others outside labour force | 36,595 | -742 | -2.0 |
| Total (15+) | 41,541 | -3,418 | -7.6 |

Table 6: Persons outside labour force, Q2-2025

High proportion of women fall into the category of others outside labour force accounting for 26,431 women (72.2%) compared to 10,164 men in Q2-2025.

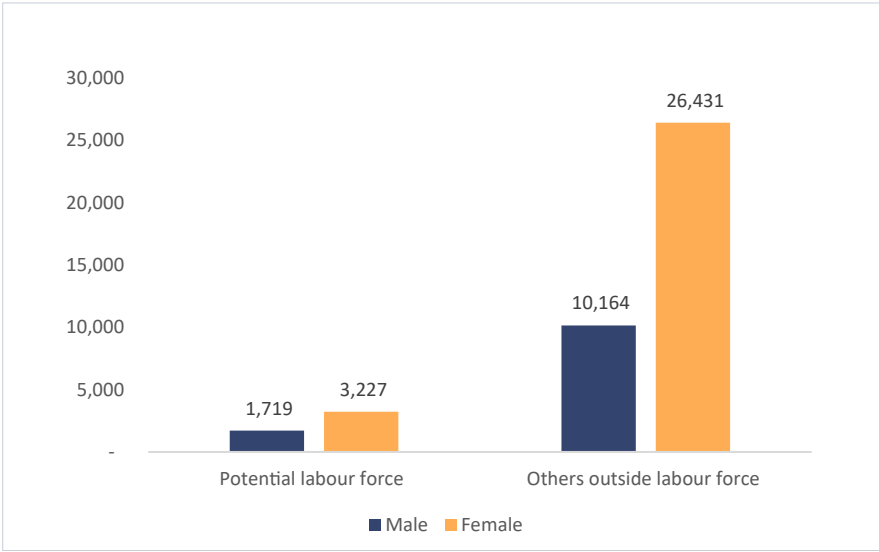


Figure 5: Persons outside labour force by sex, Q1-2025 and Q2-2025

Main activity status as to what best describes what they were doing was asked for individuals in this category and taken as self-declared.

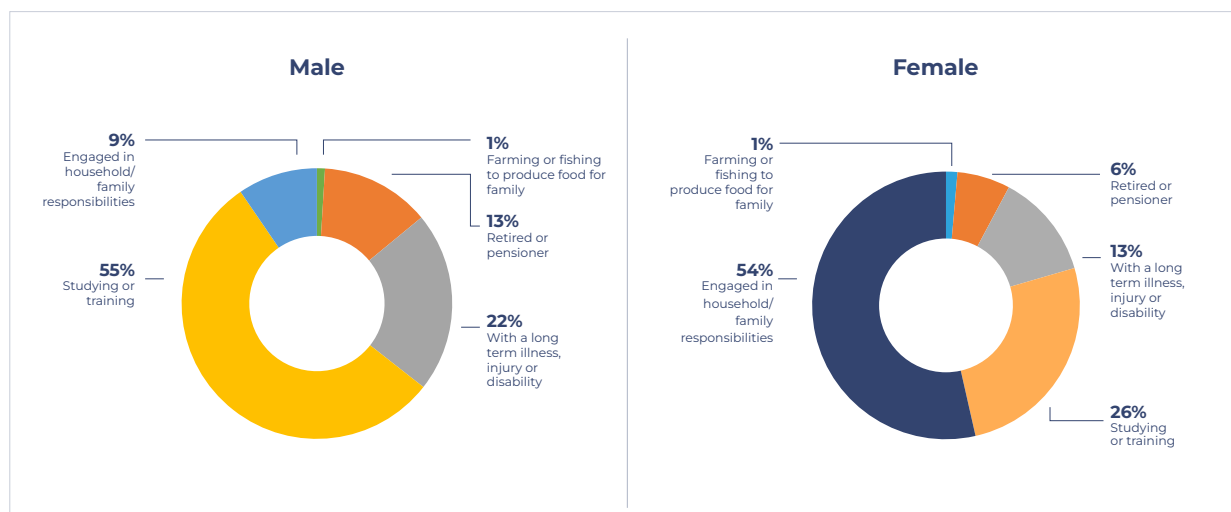


Figure 6: What best describes activity for others outside labour force by Sex, Q2-2025

Over half the women states “engaged in household or family responsibilities” as what best describes what they were doing at the time of the survey. This was followed by “studying or training”.

What men identified were quite different with over half the respondents stating “studying or training, followed by “with a long-term illness, injury or disability”. Unlike women a very few men (9%) stated “engaged in household or family responsibilities”. This difference is due to the care responsibilities that are mainly carried out by women in the society and is perceived as such.

Several of the people outside labourforce are also engaged in productive activities in forms of work other than employment. These include Own-use production work, Volunteer work, Unpaid trainee work, as described in the Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization (19th ICLS). These are not explored in detail in this surveys and will be captured through a proper time-use module in the upcoming surveys.



ANNEX I: DEFINITIONS

- 1. Working Age Population:** The population aged 15 years and older.
- 2. Labour Force:** The sum of all persons of working age who are employed and those who are unemployed.
- 3. Employed:** Persons in employment are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit.
- 4. Unemployed:** Persons in unemployment are defined as all those of working age who were not in employment, carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period and were currently available to take up employment given a job opportunity.
- 5. Potential Labour Force:** Individuals of working age who are not part of the labour force but may become part of it due to their willingness and ability to work.
- 6. Unavailable jobseekers:** Actively seeking employment, even though job opportunities are not readily available.
- 7. Available potential jobseekers:** Not currently seeking employment but are available and ready to commence work.
- 8. Persons Outside the Labour Force:** Individuals of working age who are not part of the labour force, including those not seeking employment and not available for employment.
- 9. Labourforce Participation Rate:** The labour force participation rate expresses the labour force as a percent of the working-age population.
- 10. Employment -to- population ratio/employment rate:** Expresses the number of persons who are employed as a percent of the total working age (15+) population.
- 11. Unemployment Rate:** Calculated by expressing the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the total number of persons in the labour force.
Unemployment Rate = (Persons Unemployed / Labour Force) x 100 where Labour Force = (Persons Employed + Persons Unemployed)

12. Time-related underemployed – Employed, but with insufficient working time

13. Labour underutilization indicator (LU1) = {(Unemployed person) / (Labour force)}
×100

14. Labour underutilization indicator (LU2) = {(Unemployed person) + Persons in
time-related underemployment) / (Labour force)}×100

15. Labour underutilization indicator (LU3) = {(Unemployed person) + Potential
labour force) / (Labour force + Potential labour force)}×100

16. Labour underutilization indicator (LU4) = {(Unemployed person) + Persons in
time-related underemployment + Potential labour force) / (Labour force + Potential
labour force)}×100



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