Republic
of Rwanda

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
STATISTICS OF RWANDA

Labour Force survey

Quarter 1, 2025

The Labour Force Survey report is produced by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR). Additional information about the Labour Force Survey 2025–Q1 report may be obtained from NISR:

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Foreword

The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) introduced the labour force survey (LFS) program to provide the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA), Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), International Labour Organization (ILO), and other key stakeholders, with needed labour statistics.

Labour statistics play an essential role in the efforts of the country to achieve decent work for all. These statistics are needed for the development of policies towards this goal and for assessing its progress. The government of Rwanda also needs updated information for monitoring progress on programmes and policies as stipulated in the second National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as vision 2050. To monitor progress towards these targets, relevant, reliable, coherent, timely and accessible labour statistics must be produced.

The ultimate goal of the Labour Force Survey is to provide data on the structure and trends of labour force, employment, and unemployment as well as other related labour market statistics for the implementation and evaluation of economic and social policies related to employment creation, income generation, skills development, and related decent work policies.

The Labour Force survey programme begun with a pilot survey conducted in February 2016. The first round of the survey was conducted in August 2016 and continued on a bi-annual basis until August 2018. Since 2019, the survey was re-designed to provide estimates of the labour market aggregates on a quarterly basis. The present report is for the first quarter (Q1) of 2025, and its data collection was conducted in February 2025.

NISR values the feedback from all data users on this publication. In this regard, we are committed to continuously enhancing the variety of our analyses and the presentation of results to better support the effective use of our findings.

NISR congratulates all those who contributed to this exercise. In particular, NISR expresses its gratitude to the survey coordinators, supervisors, analysts, team leaders, interviewers, drivers, and respondents for making this survey possible.

NISR also invites policy makers, program managers, researchers, and all users to use the valuable data showcased in the LFS rounds to contribute to enhancing Rwandans' Economic development.

MURENZI Ivan

Director General of NISR

Executive summary

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) is a household-based sample survey conducted by the NISR. It collects data on the labour market activities of individuals aged 14 years and older who live in private households in Rwanda. However, only persons aged 16 years and above are covered for reporting. In this report, the survey results are mainly compared for February of each year starting from 2019. However, the tables in a separate excel file published together with this report contain more observed data points of the labour force survey since 2019.

Labour force

In February 2025 (Q1), the working age population (16 years and above) was around 8.4 million of whom around 4.7 million were employed, 593 thousand were unemployed, and 3.1 million were out of labour force. The labour force comprises 5.3 million people, which includes both the employed and unemployed population. The proportion of working age population who were in the labour force has steadily increased since 2022. In February 2025, it was estimated to be 63.0 % which is 2 percentage points higher than the estimated value in February 2024 (61.0 %). The rate of the population outside labour force decreased to 37 % in February 2025 (Q1) from 39 % in February 2024(Q1).

Generally, the labour force participation rate has been higher among the male than the female population over time. In February 2021 (Q1), the gender gap in labour force participation rate was approximately 13 percentage points, it decreased by 1.6 percentage points as compared to the same quarter one year back.

Trends in labour force participation rate by sex
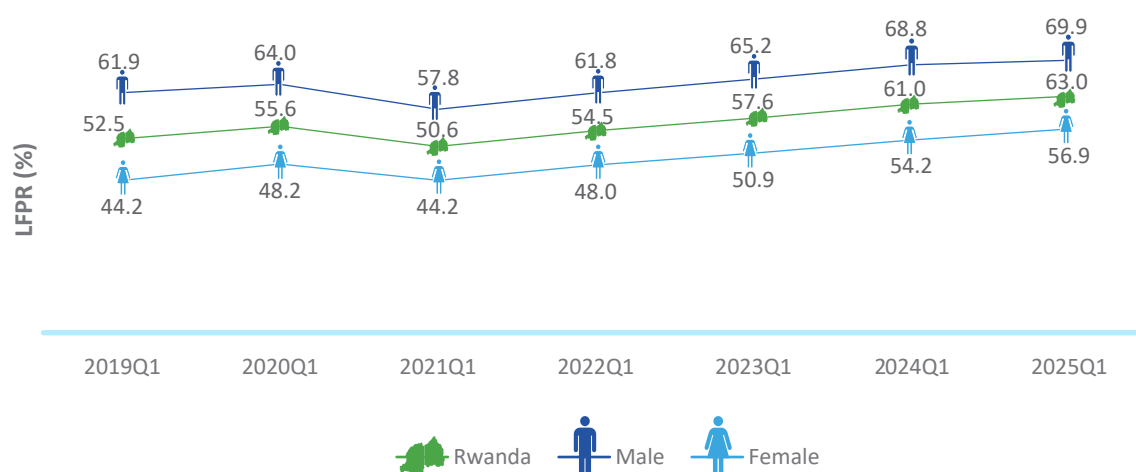
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Employment

The employment-to-population ratio (EPR) increased to 56 % in February 2025 (Q1) from 53.1 % in February 2024 (Q1). EPR increased for both males and females, by 2.1 and 3.5 percentage points respectively. In February 2025 (Q1), males had a higher EPR (63 %) compared to females (49.8 %). Additionally, the EPR was higher among adults aged 31 years old and above (60.1 %) than among youth aged 16-30 years old (50.5 %). The gender gap in the employment to population ratio was 13.2 percentage points in February 2025 (Q1) and it declined by 1.4 percentage points as compared to February 2024 (Q1).

Trends in employment to population ratio by sex
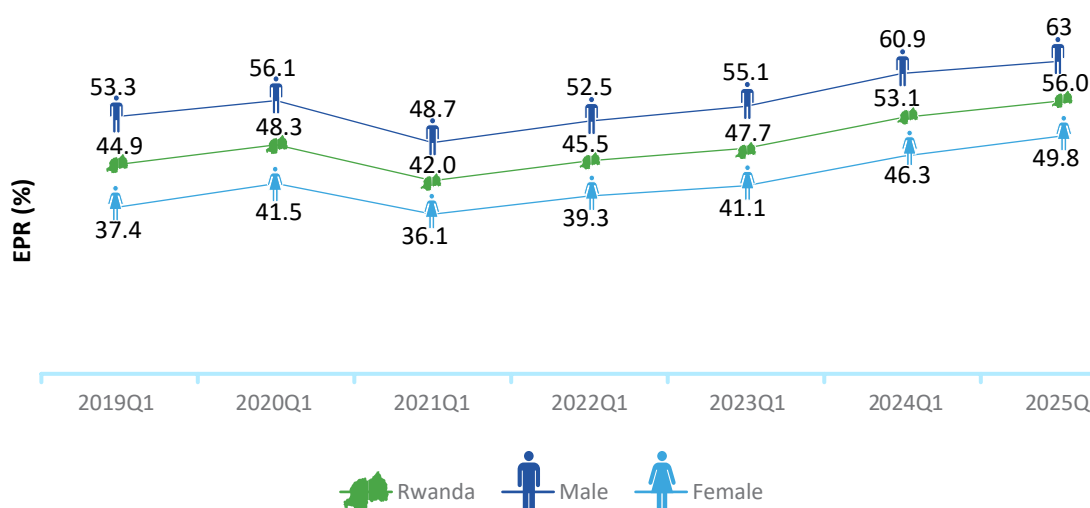
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The distribution of employed population by aggregated broad branches of economic activity revealed that the agriculture sector is employing majority of the employed population in LFS February 2025 (Q1). The level of employment in the agricultural sector decreased to 43.7 % in February 2025 (Q1) as compared to the same quarter last year (46.9 %). However, the share of employment in industry sector in February 2025 (Q1) remained relatively stable to 14.3 % as compared to February 2024 (Q1) while the percentage of employed population in the service sector increased to 42 % from 39.4 % observed in the same quarter one year back.

Distribution of employed population by board sector of economic activity
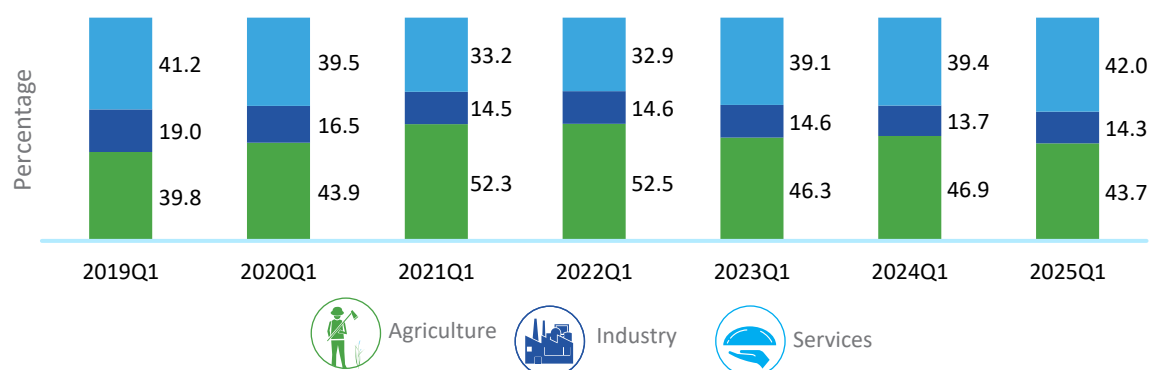
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Unemployment

In February 2025 (Q1), the unemployment rate stood at 11.1 % indicating that roughly for every 9 persons in the labour force, there was one person unemployed. This reflects a 1.8 percentage points decrease compared to the same quarter last year; and it was relatively lower as compared to the pre-COVID-19 estimate in the same quarter February 2020 (13.1 %). In February 2025 (Q1), the unemployment rate was higher among females (12.5 %) compared to males (9.9 %). Youth also experienced a higher unemployment rate (13.6 %) compared to adults (9.5 %). The unemployment was relatively even in rural areas (11 %) and in urban areas (11.5%).

The gender gap in unemployment rate was 2.6 percentage points in February 2025 (Q1), and it was relatively stable as compared to the same quarter last year.

Trends in unemployment rate by sex
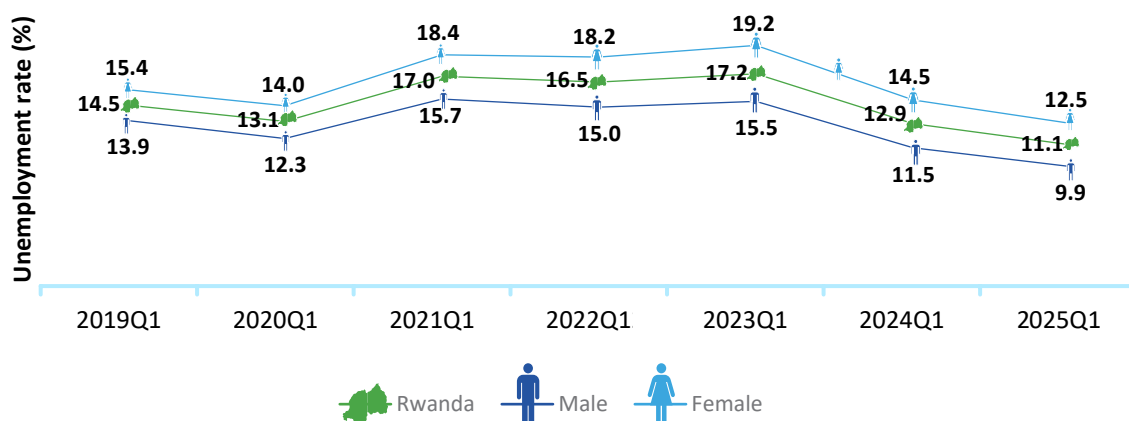
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Labour underutilisation

The unemployment rate is not the only component of the unmet needs for employment. They are other components including time-related underemployment and potential labour force.

The labour underutilization rate stood at 53.7 % in February 2025 (Q1). It was higher among females (59.8 %) than among males (47.2 %) and higher among youth (54.5 %) than adults (53.1 %). The labour underutilization rate increased by 4.2 percentage points in February 2025 (Q1) as compared to the same quarter of the previous year.

Trends in labour underutilization rate by sex
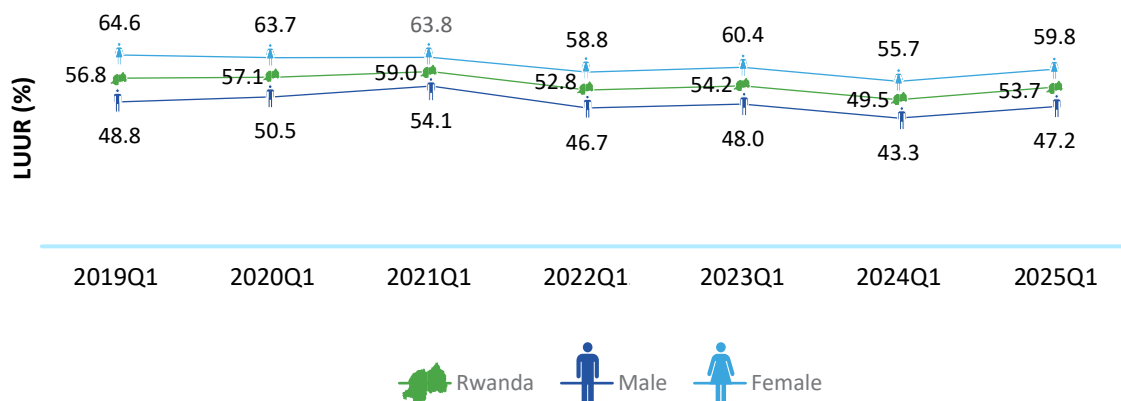
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Rwanda Labour force survey, February 2025 (Q1) Summary labour force indicators

Working age population 16 years old and over (WAP): 8,450,577persons

(This includes those who are in labour force and those out of labour force)

THE LABOUR FORCE

The sum of employed and unemployed	Labour Force Participation	5,323,552 Persons	63.0%

EMPLOYED
All who worked for pay or profit
4,730,124 persons

EMPLOYMENT TO POPULATION RATIO (EPR)
56%

UNEMPLOYED
All not employed but seeking and available to work for pay or profit
593,428 persons

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (UR)
11.1 %

$$UR = \frac{Unemployed}{Labour\ Force} \times 100$$

AGRICULTURE
Excluding subsistence foodstuff production — **43.7 %**

INDUSTRY — **14.3 %**

SERVICE — **42 %**

Share of unemployed but engaged in subsistence agriculture. — **59.1 %**

Other unemployed — **40.9 %**

OUT OF LABOUR FORCE

Out of Labour Force rate	37.0%

Population outside the labour force
(Not employed nor unemployed)
3,127,025

48.6 %
Subsistence agriculture
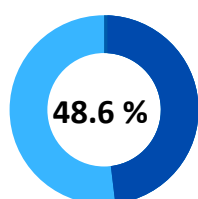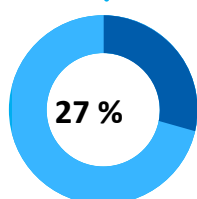
27 %
Exclusively Students
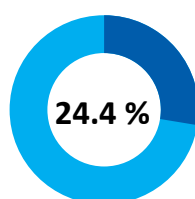
24.4 %
Other outside LF (Elderly, people with disabilities, discouraged job seekers)
1,814,828

Other out of labour force

Labour underutilization	3,560,815 persons

Composite measure of labour underutilization rate — **53.7 %**

Unemployed
593,428

Potential labour force
Portion of out of labour force)
1,312,197

They are available to work, but not searching for employment

Time-related underemployed
(Portion of employed)
1,655,190

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Rwanda Labour Force Survey (RLFS)

Chapter

1 Introduction

The Rwanda Labour Force Survey (LFS) started in 2016 with an annual sample spread into two rounds to provide bi-annual estimates of main labour market indicators at National level. From February 2019, the sample was spread into four rounds to provide estimates of labour market indicators at national level on a quarterly basis. The main objective of the survey is to provide data on the structure and trends of labour force, employment, and unemployment as well as other related labour market statistics for the implementation and evaluation of economic and social policies related to employment creation, income generation, skills development, and related decent work policies.

In February 2024, NISR decided to increase the sample size of the current LFS and update the sampling design to obtain more precise quarterly estimates at the National level and yearly estimates at districts and other sub national areas. The current findings are from the first quarter of LFS 2025, with data collected in February 2025.

The current LFS is designed according to a two-stage stratified design with a 2-2-2 rotational scheme. At the first stage of sampling, a stratified sample of 552 census enumeration areas, referred to as primary sampling units (PSUs) are drawn from the 2022 census sampling frame. The selection is based on probabilities proportional to size measured in terms of number of households according to the latest census of population. The sample includes 36 strata composed of the 24 administrative entire districts and 6 districts subdivided into urban and rural each. At the second stage of sampling, 12 households were selected from each of the sampled PSUs with equal probabilities. All household members in the sample are then selected for a survey interview. At the end of the data collection, the response rate was evaluated to 95.7%, which decreased as compared to the same quarter one year back (98.4%). The resulting estimates of the main labour force indicators at the national level have the standard errors of about 0.4 percent.

The focus of the present report is the analysis of trends of employment and labour underutilization. This includes unemployment at the national level by selected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics such as sex, age group, and educational attainment. This report compares the results of February 2025 (Q1) labour force survey with those of February 2024 (Q1). However, in some sections, the tables or figures are presented with the additional time series of results of the same quarters from February 2019 to February 2025. The excel file including the full quarterly time series of the main indicators is also published along with this report at the NISR website.

The survey results analysed in this report are presented into seven chapters, including this introduction. The other chapters cover the following:

- Labor market overview
- Characteristics of the population in the labour force
- Characteristics of employed population
- Unemployment and labour underutilization
- Population outside the labour force and Work in agriculture

Labor Market Overview

2.1 Labour force participation rate, employment to population ratio and unemployment rate

Figure 2.1 illustrates the trends of some key labour market indicators. In February 2025 (Q1), the unemployment rate declined to 11.1 % as compared to 12.9 % observed February 2024 (Q1).

The analysis of employment trends shows that in February 2025 (Q1), the employment-to-population ratio increased by 2.8 percentage points as compared to February 2024 (Q1) while the labour force participation rate increased by 2 percentage points in the same period.

It is important to note that the level of labour force participation and employment in February 2025 (Q1), exceeded pre-COVID-19 levels and the registered rate of unemployment in February 2025 (Q1) was signifcantly lower as compared to the one observed prior to COVID-19. This could be interpreted as a reflection of economic recovery and a reallocation of previously inactive labour force participants into employment.

Figure 2. 1. Trend Labour force participation rate, employment to population ratio and unemployment rate
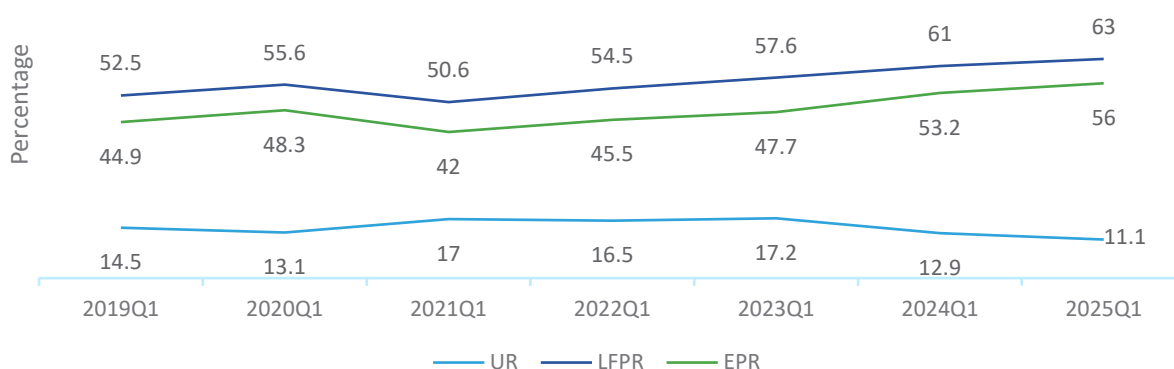
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

2.2 Trend of labour Underutilization

The LFS February 2025 (Q1) results were compared to the same quarter one year back. It explored the combined rate of unemployment and time-related underemployment (LU2), as well as the combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (LU3). Additionally, it looked at the composite measure of labour underutilization (LU4) that combines unemployment, time-related underemployment, and potential labour force.

The comparison of February 2025 (Q1) with the same quarter of the previous year shows that LU3 declined by 1.2 percentage points, while Time-related underemployment (TRUR) , LU2 and LU4 increased by 6.9 , 4.8 and 4.2 percentage points respectively. This indicates that although the labour market has recovered in terms of employment, there are still challenges in addressing labour underutilization, especially in terms of time-related underemployment.

Figure 2. 2 Trends of labour underutilization
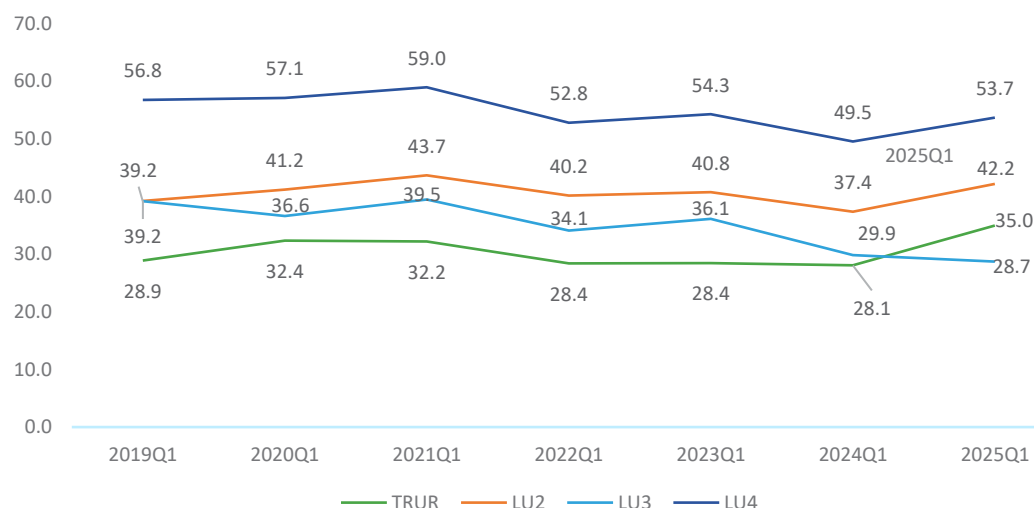
Source: *National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)*

2.3. Rate of population outside the labour force

Figure 2.3 presents the trends in rates of population outside the labour force according to different categories. The results show that the rate of population outside labour force in February 2025 (Q1) decreased by 2 percentage points, as compared to the estimated value in the same quarter one year earlier (February 2024).

Among the components of the population outside the labour force, available non-job seekers constitute a substantial category and in Rwanda, most of the population in this category are primarily subsistence farmers. The proportion of the working age population falling in this category in February 2025 (Q1) remained relatively stable compared to the estimate of the same quarter in the previous year (February 2024).

An important sub-category of the available non-job seekers is the discouraged jobseekers, these are people outside the labour force who did not "seek employment" for labour market-related reasons such as past failure to find a suitable job, lack of experience, qualifications or jobs matching the person's skills, lack of jobs in the area, considered too young or too old by prospective employers. In February 2025 (Q1), the proportion of discouraged jobseekers among the working age population remained relatively stable as compared to the same quarter one year back (February 2024).

Figure 2. 3 Trends of inactivity rates and potential labour force
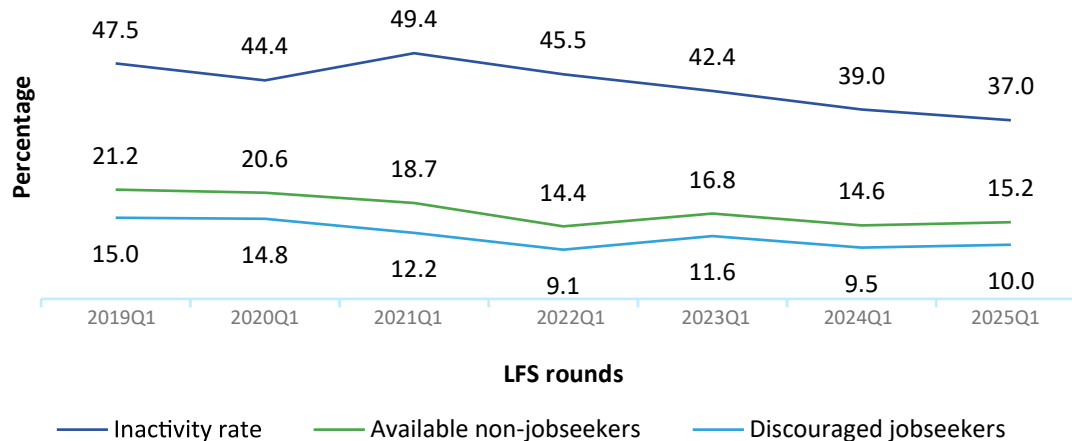
Source: *National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)*

Characteristics of the population in the labour force

3.1 Labour force participation among males and females

The labour force participation rate, which is the ratio of the labour force to the working age population expressed in percentage terms, increased by 2.0 percentage points in February 2025 (Q1) as compared to February 2024 (Q1). The observed increase during this period was lower among female than male population (1.1 and 2.7 percentage points respectively).

Generally, the labour force participation rate is higher among males than females over time. In February 2024 (Q1), the gender gap in labour force participation rate was 13 percentage points, showing a slight decrease compared to the same quarter one year back.

Figure 3. 1 Labour force participation rate by sex

LFPR (%)

	Rwanda	Male	Female
2019Q1	52.5	61.9	44.2
2020Q1	55.6	64.0	48.2
2021Q1	50.6	57.8	44.2
2022Q1	54.5	61.8	48.0
2023Q1	57.6	65.2	50.9
2024Q1	61.0	68.8	54.2
2025Q1	63.0	69.9	56.9
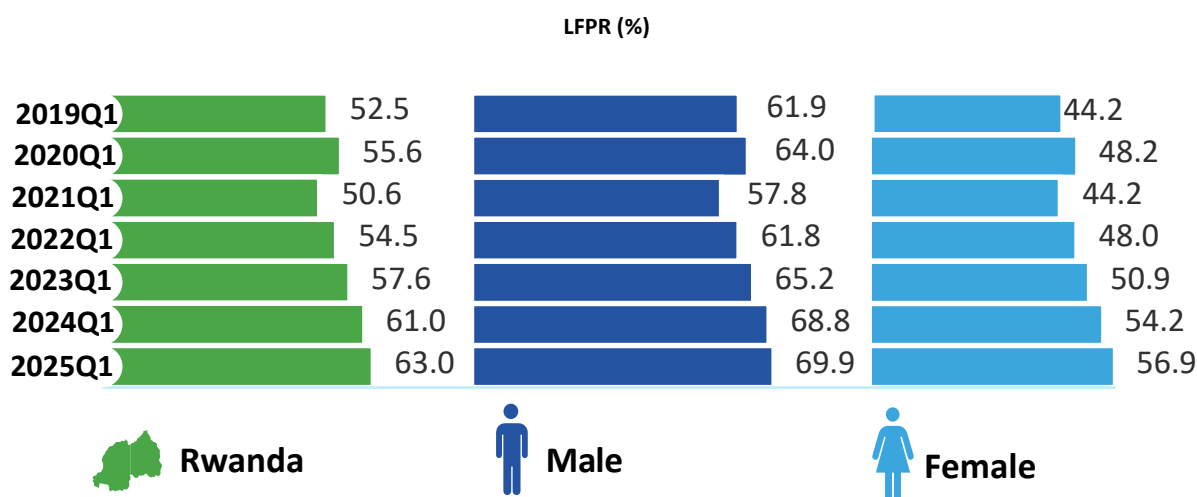
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

3.2 Labour force participation by education

The analysis of the labour force participation rate by educational attainment shows that it was higher among those with relatively higher levels of education compared to those with lower levels of education over time. A comparison of February 2025 (Q1) with February 2024 (Q1) shows that the labour force participation rate increased across all levels of education except for those with Lower secondary level of education where it decreased by 1.3 percentage points . The highest increase was observed among those with primary, no level of education and those with upper secondary level of education (5.1, 4.6 and 4.1 percentage points, respectively).

Figure 3. 2 Labour force participation rate by level of education

LFPR %

Legend: 2019Q1 | 2020Q1 | 2021Q1 | 2022Q1 | 2023Q1 | 2024Q1 | 2025Q1
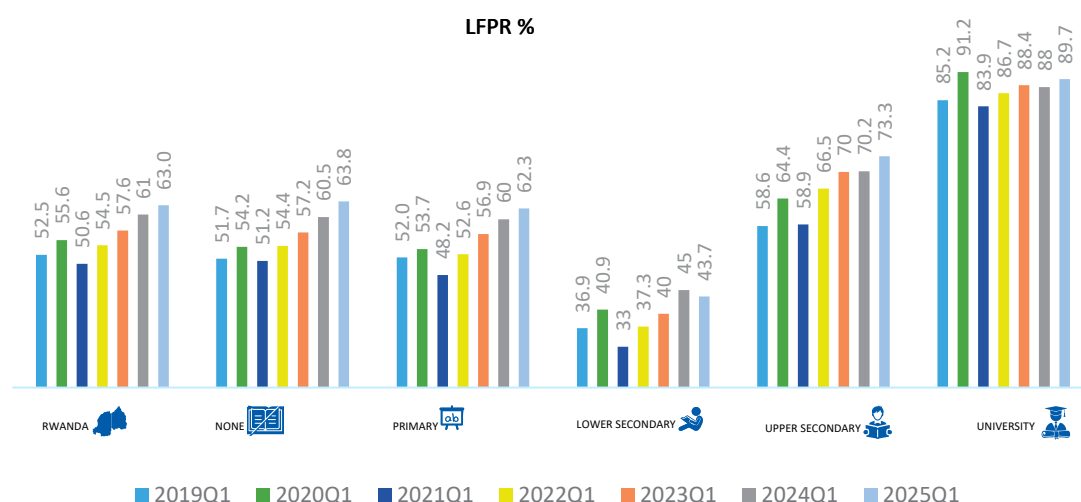
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

3.3 Labour force participation by age group

In February 2025 (Q1), the labour force participation rate among youth aged 16 to 30 years old was 58.5 %. It significantly increased by 1.3 percentage points as compared to the same quarter one year back (February 2024). In the same way, it increased by 2.3 percentage points among people aged 31 to 54 years old and 4.1 percentage points among those aged 55 years old and above.

Generally, the labour force participation rate is higher among population aged 31-54 years old group compared to the remaining age groups.

Figure 3. 3 Labour force participation rate by age group

LFPR (%)

	Rwanda	16-30_yrs	31-54_yrs	55+_yrs
2019Q1	52.5	50.4	64.8	30.0
2020Q1	55.6	53.2	67.7	32.4
2021Q1	50.6	46.1	64.9	27.8
2022Q1	54.5	49.5	71.4	28.2
2023Q1	57.6	53.9	71.4	31.9
2024Q1	61.0	57.2	74.4	36.3
2025Q1	63.0	58.5	76.7	40.4
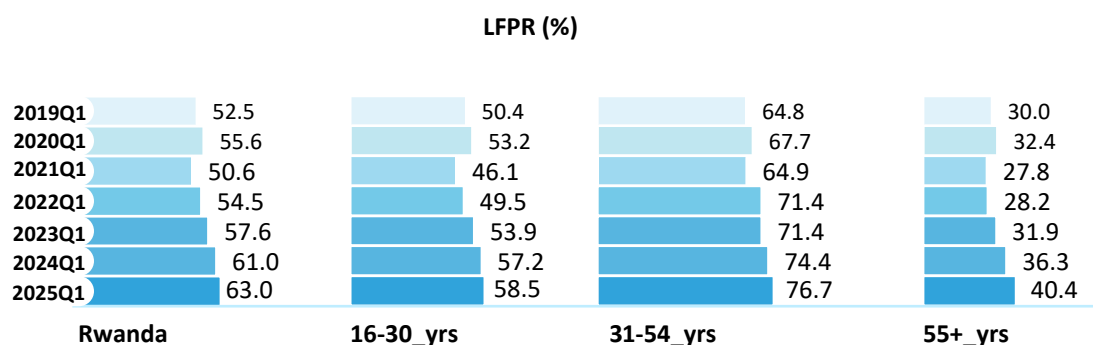
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

3.4 Labour force participation by area of residence

Labour force participation rate by area of residence (urban and rural) was higher in urban areas compared to rural areas. This may be attributed to the diversity of job opportunities in urban areas as compared to rural areas and to the fact that most people in rural areas are involved in subsistence agriculture. The gap between the labour force participation rate in urban and rural areas decreased from 13.9 percentage points in February 2024 (Q1) to 11.3 percentage points in February 2025 (Q1).

The comparison of February 2025 (Q1) and February 2024 (Q1) reveals that the labour force participation rate remained stable in urban and increased by 2.6 percentage points in rural areas.

Figure 3. 4 Labour force participation rate by area of residence
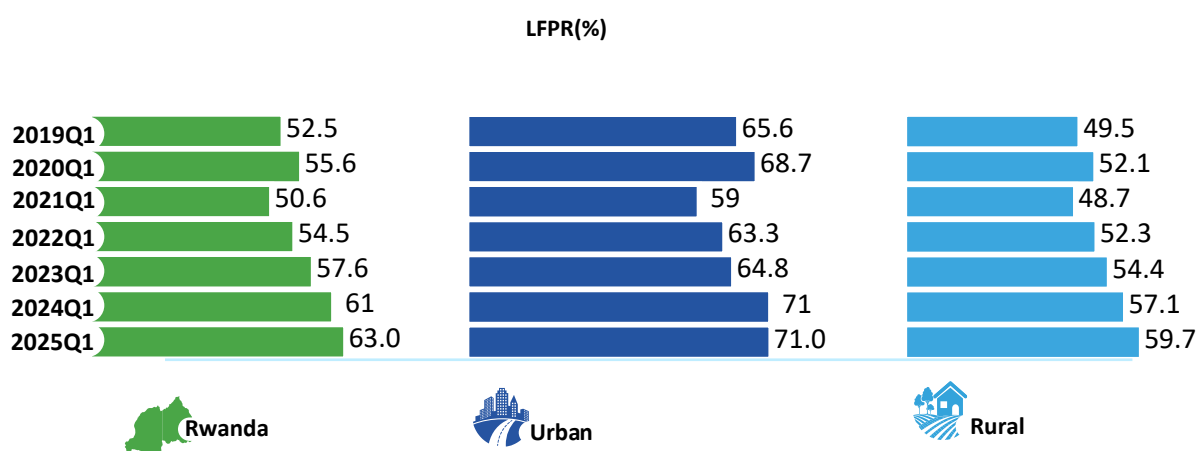
LFPR(%)

Year	Rwanda	Urban	Rural
2019Q1	52.5	65.6	49.5
2020Q1	55.6	68.7	52.1
2021Q1	50.6	59	48.7
2022Q1	54.5	63.3	52.3
2023Q1	57.6	64.8	54.4
2024Q1	61	71	57.1
2025Q1	63.0	71.0	59.7

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Characteristics of employed population

According to the resolution concerning statistics of work, employment, and labour underutilization as defined by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), held in 2013, persons of working age are classified as employed if, during a short reference period of 7 days or one week,

(i)   They did some work (even for just one hour) for profit or pay, in cash or in kind.

(ii)   They were attached to a job or had an enterprise from which they were 'temporarily' absent during this period.

4.1 Employment to population ratio (EPR)

Aggregate employment generally increases with growing population. Therefore, the Employment to Population Ratio (EPR) serves as an indicator of how well the economy is creating income-generating jobs for persons working age (16 years and above). It reflects the demand for labour in the economy, in terms of the number of workers.

An increase in the employment-to population ratio is often regarded as a sign of economic acceleration while a rise in total employment is considered as an indicator of economic stability. In February 2025, the Employment-to-population ratio was 56 % which is 2.9 percentage points higher than the observed rate in February 2024. The employment to population ratio increased by 1.9 percentage points in urban areas and by 3.2 percentage point in rural areas in the same period.

It is observed that the employment-to-population ratio is generally higher in urban areas as compared to rural areas across all rounds of the labour force survey. The gap between the employment-to-population ratio in urban and rural areas remained significant in February 2025 (Q1) (9.7 percentage points), down from 11 percentage points observed in February 2024 (Q1).

Figure 4. 1: Employment to population ratio (EPR) by area of residence.

EPR (%)

	Rwanda	Urban	Rural
2019Q1	44.9	55.3	42.5
2020Q1	48.3	58.8	45.6
2021Q1	42.0	46.1	41.1
2022Q1	45.5	52.1	43.9
2023Q1	47.7	54.5	44.6
2024Q1	53.1	61.0	50.0
2025Q1	56.0	62.9	53.2

Rwanda   Urban   Rural
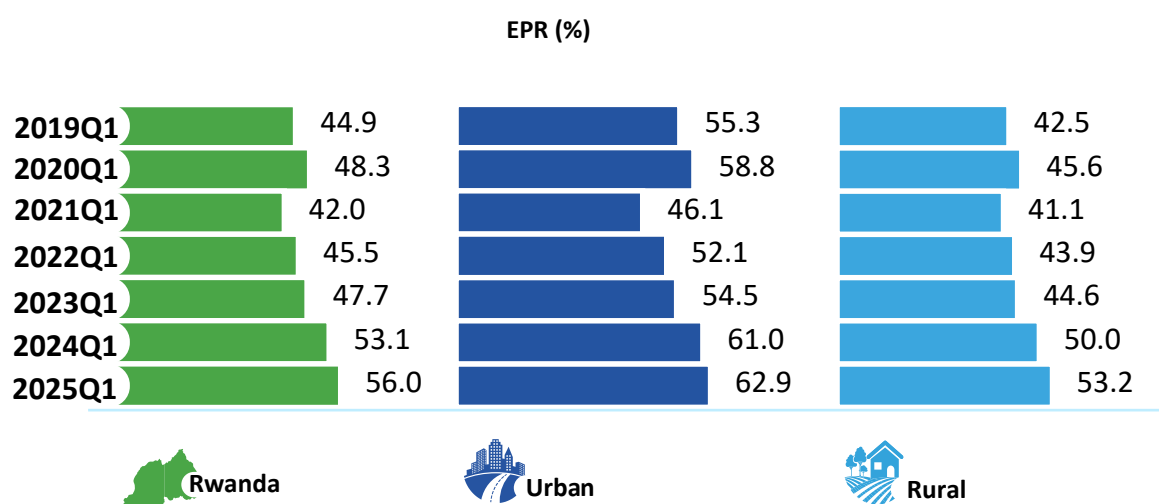
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Figure 4.2 shows the trend in the employment-to-population ratio for both male and female and there is a high gap between the employment-to-population ratio of males and females over time. In February 2025 (Q1) the employment-to-population ratio increased by 2.1 percentage points among males and 3.5 percentage points among females as compared to February 2024 (Q1). The gender gap in employment to population ratio in February 2025 (Q1), remained significant (13.2 percentage points), but it decreased by 1.4 percentage points as compared to the same quarter in the previous year (14.6 percentage points).

Figure 4. 2: Employment to population ratio by sex

EPR (%)

	Rwanda	Female	Male
2019Q1	44.9	53.3	37.4
2020Q1	48.3	56.1	41.5
2021Q1	42.0	48.7	36.1
2022Q1	45.5	52.5	39.3
2023Q1	47.7	55.1	41.1
2024Q1	53.1	60.9	46.3
2025Q1	56.0	63.0	49.8
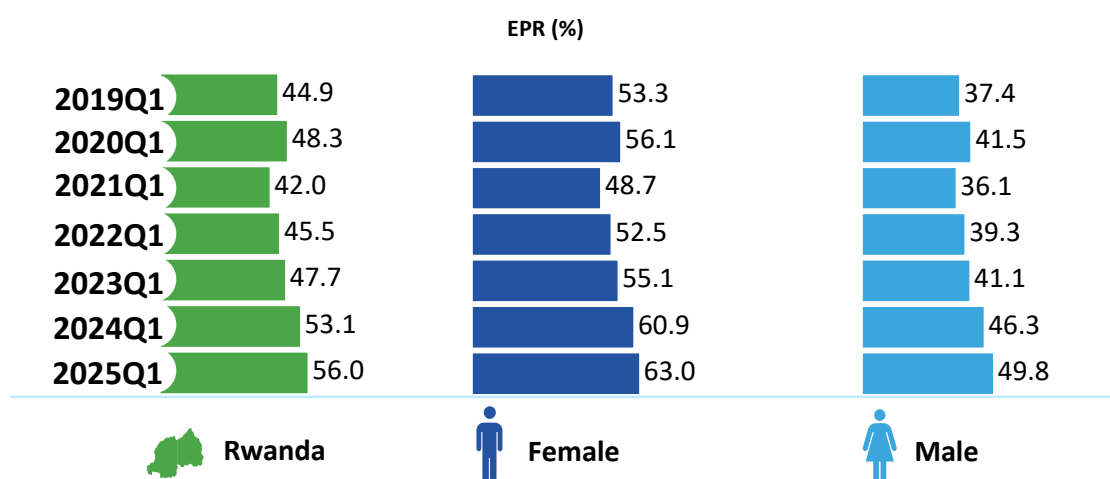
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Figure 4.3 below shows the trend in the employment-to-population ratio by different age groups and there is a high gap between the employment-to-population ratio of youth and adults aged 31-54 years old over time. In February 2025 (Q1), the employment-to-population ratio increased by 2.8 percentage points among adults in age group 31-54 as well as among youth compared to February 2024 (Q1). The employment to population ratio among the population aged 55 years old and above increased by 3.6 percentage points in the same period as other groups and the employment to population ratio in this group is relatively lower compared to the other age groups presented in the figure below, as some of the people in this age group are retiring.

Figure 4. 3: Employment to population ratio by age group.

EPR(%)

	Total	16-30	31-54	55+
2019Q1	44.9	40.7	57.4	27.6
2020Q1	48.3	44	60.7	30.1
2021Q1	42	36.1	55.8	24.7
2022Q1	45.5	38.8	61.8	25.2
2023Q1	47.7	42.9	60.3	28
2024Q1	53.1	47.7	66.2	34
2025Q1	56	50.5	69	37.6
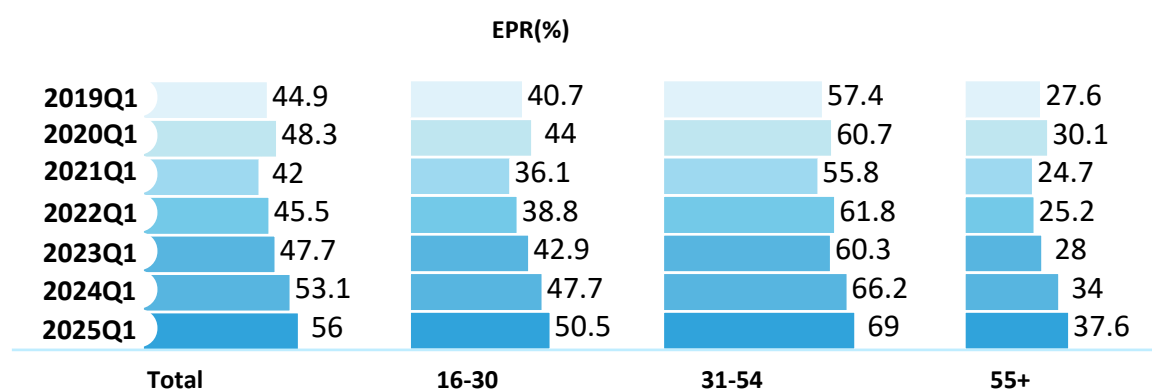
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

4.2 Status in employment

Since the launch of the Rwanda Labour Force Survey in 2016, status in employment has been reported using International Conference of Status in Employment (ICSE-93), which was adopted by the 15th International Classification of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in January 1993. However, starting in February 2025, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) Rwanda adopted the updated international classification of status in employment (ICSE-18) which replaced the old one (ICSE-93).

The main changes compared to ICSE-93 are summarized as follows:

ICSE-18 comprises 10 categories of status in employment compared to 5 in ICSE-93, to provide a more detailed and meaningful classification reflecting working relationships in the labor market. These 10 categories can be organized by the type of authority the worker is able to exercise or by the type of economic risk the worker is exposed to, as illustrated in the table below:

ICSE-18 versus ICSE-93

ICSE-18	ICSE-93
Independent workers	Self-employment jobs
Employers • Employers in Corporations • Employers in household market enterprises	Employers
Independent workers without employees • Owner-operators of corporations without employees	
• Own-account workers in household market enterprises without employees	Own-account workers
	Contributing family workers
	Members of producer cooperatives
Dependent workers	Paid employment Jobs
Dependent contractors	
Employees • Permanent employees • Fixed-term employees • Short-term and casual employees • Paid apprentices	Employees

Apart from providing more detail on existing ICSE-93 categories, ICSE-18 also includes a new category named 'dependent contractors', while the former category 'Members of producer cooperatives' is not recognized as an employment category in ICSE-18.

Dependent contract can be defined as an employed person who is not an employee but also not fully independent worker. They are classified in between of both categories. They are not employees because they are working under contractual arrangement and receive a compensation that is not a wage or salary and they are not benefiting any social security protection from their so called-employers. They are not classified as self-employed because they are not fully independent in their work as they may depend on a single main client for their income, do not have any authority to make strategic decision about the business or are subject to major economic dependency and operational control by other person or entity.

The design of LFS allows the production of status in employment based on both standards (ICSE-93 and ICSE-18) mainly to allow readers understanding the effect of dependant contractor category on the former distribution of employed population according to status in employment based on ICSE-93.

The results in Table 4.1 below present the distribution of employed population (,000) by status in employment as per ICSE-93. In February 2025 (Q1) the number of employed populations increased by 8.4 % as compared to February 2024 (Q1). It is observed that the category of employees and paid apprentices recorded the highest share of employment across all rounds of the labour force survey followed by own-account workers and contributing family workers. In February 2025 (Q1), the number of employees and paid apprentices increased by 4.6 % as compared to February 2024 (Q1). The number of own account worker (without regular employees) increased by 10.8 % while the number of contributing family workers increased by 60.5 %.

Table 4. 1:Distribution of employed population (,000) by status in employment as per ICSE-93

Status in employment	2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1	% change 2024Q1-2025Q1
Total	**3,569**	**3,205**	**3,586**	**3,804**	**4,366**	**4,730**	**8.4%**
Employee	2,449	2,400	2,696	2,664	3,036	3,176	4.6%
Employer	46	31	57	64	77	101	31.3%
Own account worker	923	719	769	965	1,123	1,244	10.8%
Member of cooperative	9	5	1	7	2	3	82.7%
Contributing family worker	143	50	62	104	128	205	60.5%

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Figure 4.4 reveals that the share of employees and paid apprentices in February 2025(Q1) was 67.2 % while it was 26.3 % for own account workers. Compared with February 2024 (Q1), the share of employees decreased by 2.3 percentage points while the share of own account workers increased by 0.6 percentage points.

Figure 4. 4: Distribution of employed population (%) by status in employment as per ICSE-93
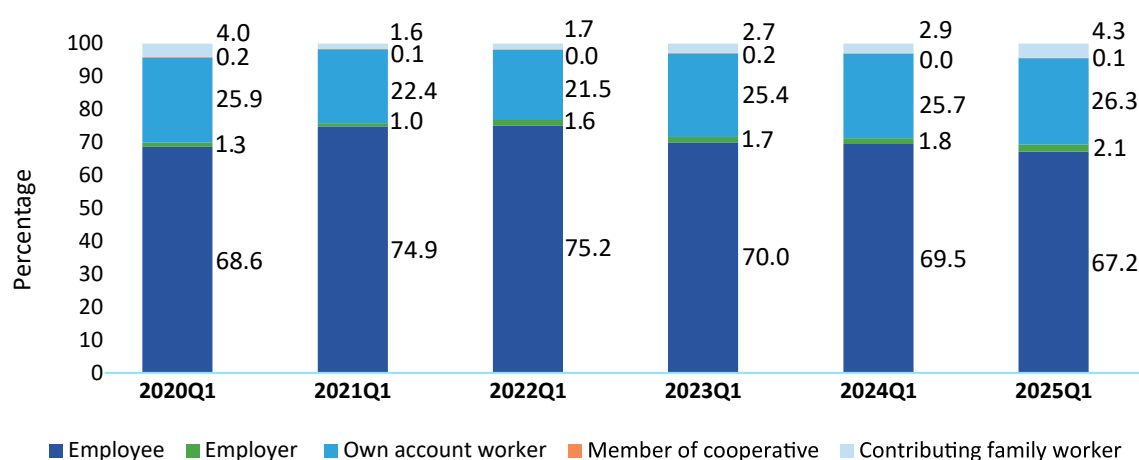
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

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Table 4.2 presents the number and percentage distribution of employed persons by status in employment, Sex and Residence area according to ICSE-18. The data indicated that as of February 2025 (Q1), employees accounted for the largest share at 61.7% followed by independent worker without employees (25.3%), Dependent contractors (8.0%), Contributing family workers (2.7%) and employers (2.3%).

Employees remained the largest employment category across all groups, accounting for 61.1% among males, 62.3% among females, 58.8% among urban areas and 63.0% among rural areas, they were followed by independent worker without employees, comprising   of 25.8% among males, females (24.8%), urban (28.2%) and rural (23.9%). Dependent contractors ranked third, representing 9.0% among males, females (7.0%), urban (6.5%) and rural (8.8%).

It is important to note that most of dependent contractors came from employee's category, as the proportion of employees according to the new classification is 6 percentage points lower than the estimate according to the former classification.

Table 4. 2: Number and percentage distribution of employed persons by status in employment (ICSE-18), Sex and Residence area.

Status in employment (ICSE-18)	Number					%				
	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Total	**4,730,124**	**2,502,421**	**2,227,703**	**1,532,239**	**3,197,885**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Employers	107,696	67,224	40,472	57,504	50,192	2.3	2.7	1.8	3.8	1.6
Independent worker without employees	1,197,259	645,259	552,001	432,259	765,000	25.3	25.8	24.8	28.2	23.9
Dependent contractors	380,514	224,493	156,020	100,066	280,447	8	9	7	6.5	8.8
Employees	2,916,503	1,527,970	1,388,533	900,891	2,015,612	61.7	61.1	62.3	58.8	63
Contributing family workers	128,151	37,474	90,677	41,518	86,633	2.7	1.5	4.1	2.7	2.7

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS-2025-Q1)

4.3 Main occupation

According to the results shown in Table 4.3, the highest share of employment was recorded in the group of elementary occupations, followed by service and sales workers, and craft-related trades workers, across all rounds of the labour force survey. The results also indicate that in February 2025 (Q1), the total employment increased by 8.4 %, and all occupational groups increased compared to February 2024 (Q1) except the group of managers, professional and Clerical support workers that decreased by 23.8, 5.7 and 4.7 percentage points respectively. Among the occupations with at least 5% of total employment, the highest increase was observed in Service and sales workers (27.9%), Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers (21.1%), Craft and related trades workers (13.7 %).

Table 4. 3: Distribution of employed population (,000) by occupations

Major Occupation group	2019Q1	2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1	%change 2024Q1-2025Q1
Total	3,186	3,569	3,205	3,586	3,804	4,366	4,730	**8.4%**
Managers	39	61	35	44	31	61	47	**-23.8%**
Professionals	181	215	172	211	202	284	267	**-5.7%**
Technicians and associate professionals	44	57	30	25	27	67	79	**17.2%**
Clerical support workers	29	33	28	24	34	46	44	**-4.7%**
Service and sales workers	603	625	466	507	675	700	895	**27.9%**
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	238	267	121	160	211	289	350	**21.1%**
Craft and related trades workers	261	299	218	254	285	319	363	**13.7%**
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	93	88	77	99	106	123	142	**14.8%**
Elementary occupations	1697	1924	2057	2261	2233	2476	2544	**2.7%**

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

4.4 Main Economic activity

According to the results in Table 4.4 below, the bulk of employed population was engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (43.7%) in February 2025 (Q1). Other sectors that employed a substantial number of populations were wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (13.5%), construction (7.6%), transportation and storage (6.5%), manufacturing (4.9 %), education (4.2 %), Activities of households as employers (3.6 %) and Accommodation and food services activities (3.5 %).

Table 4. 4: Percentage distribution of employed population by branch of economic activity.

ISIC High level	2019Q1	2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1
Agriculture forestry and fishing	39.8	43.9	52.3	52.5	46.3	46.9	43.7
Mining and quarrying	3.1	1.9	0.9	0.8	1.1	1.4	1.4
Manufacturing	6.4	5.5	4.5	4.4	5.1	4.6	4.9
Electricity gas stream and air conditioning supply	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1
water supply, gas and remediation services	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
Construction	9.1	8.7	8.8	9.2	8.1	7.4	7.6
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	14.4	11.8	10.5	10.0	13.0	11.6	13.5
Transportational and storage	4.9	4.4	4.1	4.7	5.4	6.2	6.5
Accommodation and food services activities	2.4	3.3	1.7	1.7	2.9	3.1	3.5
Information and communication	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
Financial and insurance activities	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9
Real estate activities	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.2
Professional, scientific and technical activities	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.7
Administrative and support activities	1.7	2.0	1.8	1.2	2.7	1.7	2.2
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.0	2.3	1.8
Education	3.4	3.6	3.0	3.7	3.8	4.6	4.2

Human health and social work activities	1.4	1.9	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.0
Arts, entertainment and recreation	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3
Other services	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.5	3.2
Activities of households as employers	5.9	5.1	4.1	3.6	3.9	4.1	3.6
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The results in Table 4.5 reveals that in February 2025 (Q1), 14 branches of economic activity increased as compared to February 2024 (Q1). The increase among the economic activities with at least 5 percentage of the total employment was observed in wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (26.3 %), Manufacturing (15.4 %), Transportation and storage (13.4 %), construction (11.9 %) and while the agriculture sector remained relatively stable.

Table 4. 5: Distribution of employed population by economic activities (,000)

Branch of Economic Activity	2019Q1	2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1	% change 2024Q1-2025Q1
Total	3,186	3,569	3,205	3,586	3,804	4,366	4,730	8.4%
Agriculture forestry and fishing	1,268	1,568	1,676	1,881	1,761	2,049	2,066	0.9%
Mining and quarrying	99	66	30	27	41	60	68	12.5%
Manufacturing	203	195	143	158	195	201	232	15.4%
Electricity gas stream and air conditioning supply	5	9	7	4	7	8	5	-40.4%
water supply, gas and remediation services	8	9	2	5	5	4	9	115.0%
Construction	291	310	281	329	307	323	361	11.9%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	459	423	336	360	493	506	639	26.3%
Transportation and storage	156	156	132	167	204	273	309	13.4%
Accommodation and food services activities	75	117	53	59	111	135	168	23.8%
Information and communication	7	7	12	10	16	13	17	38.5%
Financial and insurance activities	37	41	34	30	29	38	42	10.5%
Real estate activities	2	2	2	1	6	5	8	64.5%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	20	25	15	25	32	21	32	54.8%
Administrative and support activities	55	73	56	42	101	76	104	36.2%
Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	57	70	61	59	39	101	85	-15.4%
Education	109	127	97	134	145	201	201	0.0%
Human health and social work activities	46	68	43	47	47	56	49	-12.8%

Arts, entertainment and recreation	10	15	4	9	11	9	13	43.7%
Other services	78	97	89	103	106	109	153	40.2%
Activities of households as employers	188	182	130	131	147	177	169	-4.9%
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	13	9	3	4	4	3	2	-20.0%

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The figure 4.5 below shows that in February 2025 (Q1) most employees (66.3 %) had short term or casual contract. This phenomenon is higher in rural areas (77.9 %) than urban areas of Rwanda (40.3 %). The results shows that females had more short term or casual contract (68.4 %) than males (64.3 %). It was also observed that the proportion of employees who have short term or casual contract decreases as the level of education gets higher.

Figure 4.5: Length of employment contract (Only for the current quarter) by sex, area of residence and level of education attained.
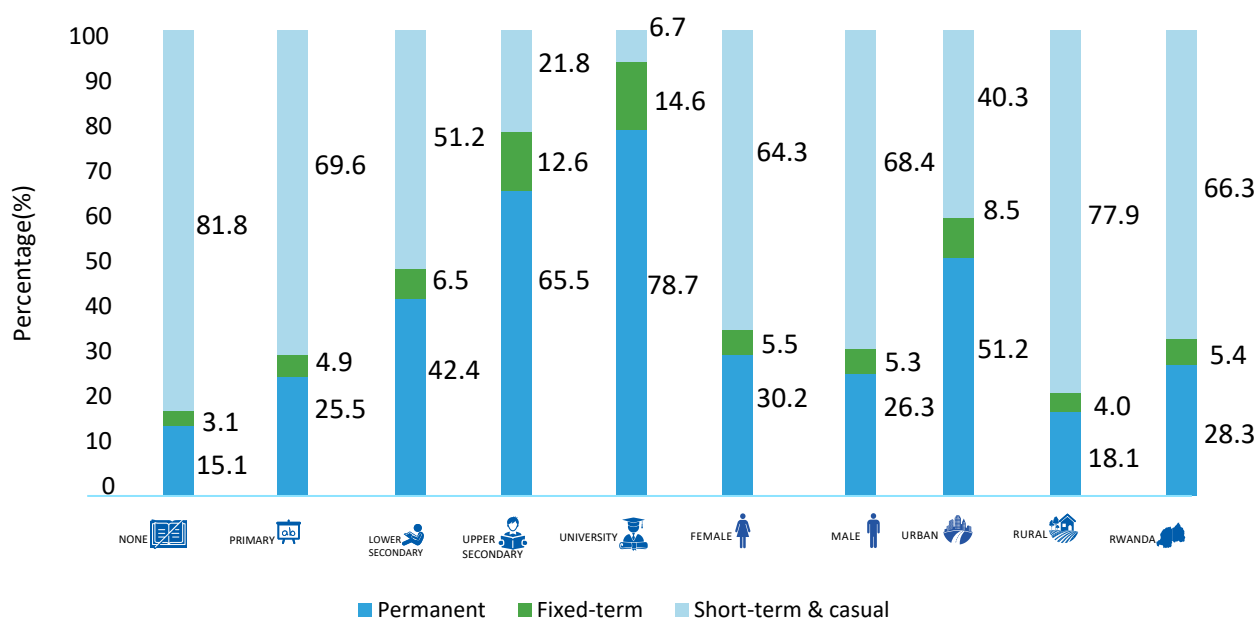
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

4.5 Means of transport by areas of residence.

Figure 4.6 below shows transport means used by employed people while commuting to and from work. It is observed that 84.9 % of employed persons walk from home to work and back again while only 8.1 % use public transport and 7% use private transport according to February 2025 (Q1) results. The figure also shows that 26.1 % of employed people who live in the City of Kigali use public transport while going to work and coming back home. This percentage remains higher in urban areas (12.7 %) and lower in rural areas (2.6 %) outside of Kigali**.**

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Figure 4. 6: Means of transport for employed people by province
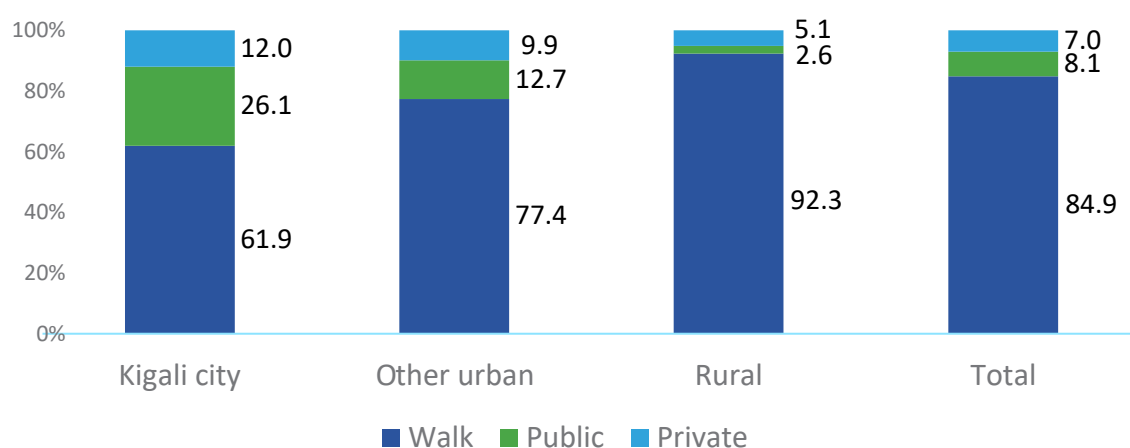
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

4.6 Actual hours worked.

Figure 4.7 below shows the average number of hours worked in the reference week. It is observed that the actual worked hours during the reference period in February 2025 (Q1) decreased by 2.5 hours compared to February 2024 (Q1). There was also a decrease in working hours among males and females, 2.6 hours and 2.4 hours respectively from February 2024 to February 2025. It was also observed that employed males are working around five hours more than the employed females weekly.

Figure 4.7: Average actual hours worked.
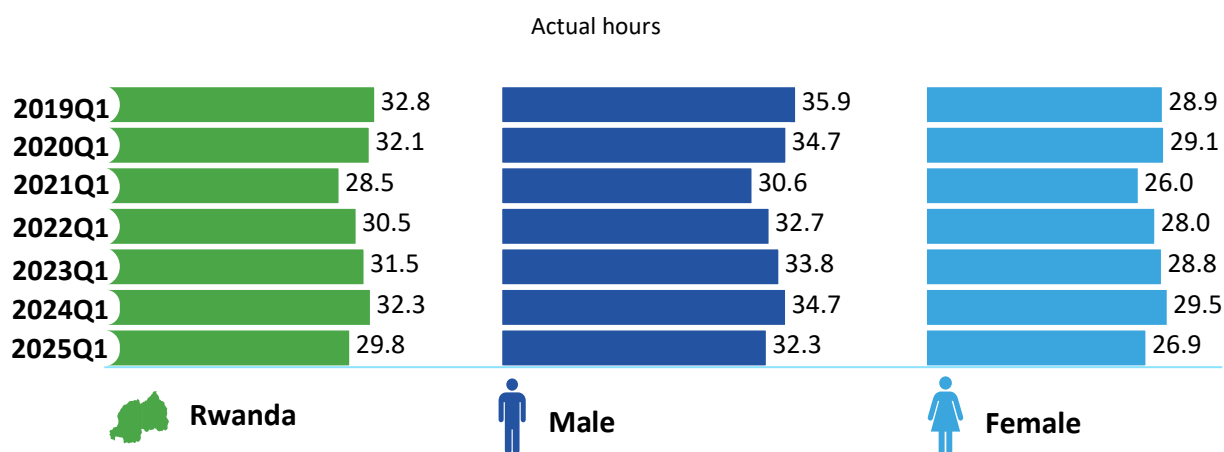
Actual hours

	Rwanda	Male	Female
2019Q1	32.8	35.9	28.9
2020Q1	32.1	34.7	29.1
2021Q1	28.5	30.6	26.0
2022Q1	30.5	32.7	28.0
2023Q1	31.5	33.8	28.8
2024Q1	32.3	34.7	29.5
2025Q1	29.8	32.3	26.9

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

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Unemployment and labour underutilization

Unemployment is a particular form of labour underutilization reflecting the pressure on the labour market. It is measured in terms of number of persons without employment, actively seeking and available for employment. Labour underutilization refers to mismatch between labour supply and demand resulting into an unmet need for employment among the population. It includes unemployment, time-related underemployment, and potential labour force. Potential labour force refers to the population not in employment who express an interest in this form of work, but for whom existing conditions limit their active job search or their availability for employment.

5.1 Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate is defined as the ratio of the number of unemployed persons to the labour force. It is the most commonly used indicator of the labour market and sometimes viewed in a general sense as an indicator of overall economic   health, beyond just the labour market. According to the LFS results of February 2025 (Q1), the unemployment rate in Rwanda was 11.1 % and it decreased compared to 12.9 % observed in February 2024 (Q1).

Figure 5.1 below shows that the unemployment rate was higher among female (12.5%) compared to male (9.9 %) in February 2025 (Q1). The unemployment rate decreased by 1.6 percentage points among males and 2.0 percentage points among female in comparison with observed estimates in February 2024 (Q1).

Figure 5. 1: Unemployment rate by sex.

Unemployment rate (%)

	Rwanda	Male	Female
2019Q1	14.5	13.9	15.4
2020Q1	13.1	12.3	14.0
2021Q1	17.0	15.7	18.4
2022Q1	16.5	15.0	18.2
2023Q1	17.2	15.5	19.2
2024Q1	12.9	11.5	14.5
2025Q1	11.1	9.9	12.5

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Figure 5.2 shows that in February 2025, the unemployment rate was higher among the population living in urban areas as compared to those living in rural areas of Rwanda (11.5 % and 11 % respectively). The comparison between the current quarter with the same quarter in 2024 shows that the unemployment rate decreased by 1.3 percentage points among population living in rural areas and by 2.6 percentage points among population living in the urban areas of Rwanda.

Figure 5. 2: Unemployment rate by area of residence.
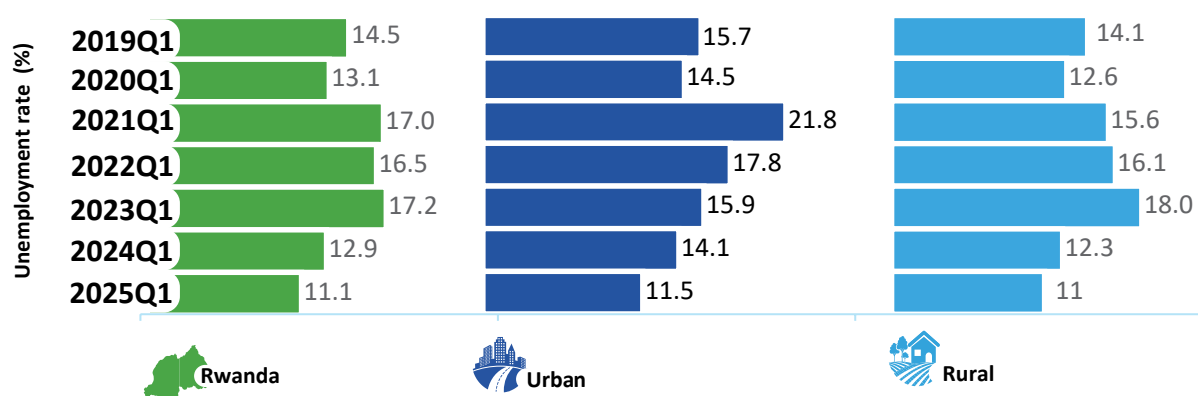
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Figure 5.3 shows the trend of the unemployment rate by different age groups. In Rwanda, the youth population is defined as persons with 16 to 30 years of age, the results show that the unemployment rate among the youth has been relatively higher than the adult unemployment rates over time. A comparison of the current survey results with the ones obtained one-year back shows that the unemployment rate decreased by 3 percentage points among youth population, and 1.1 percentage points among those aged 31-54 years while it remained relatively stable among adults aged 55 years and above.

Figure 5.3: Unemployment rate among youth and Adult
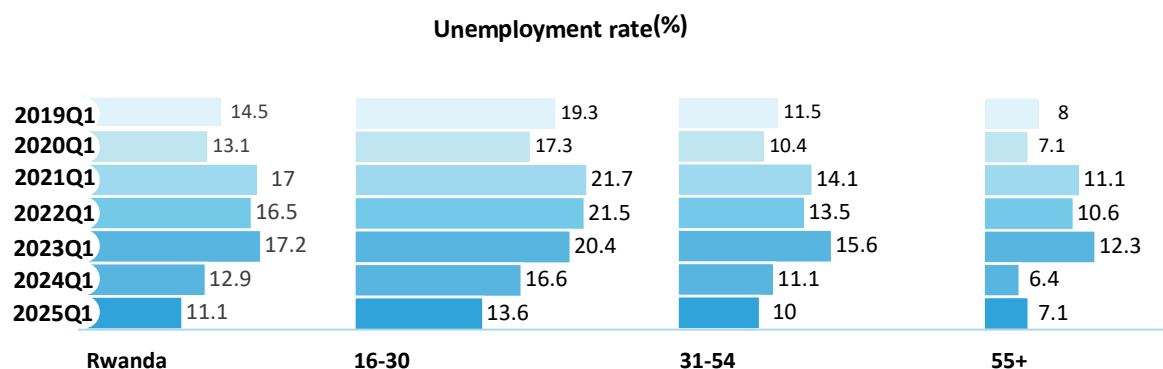
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

5.2. Labour Underutilization

Labour underutilization includes unemployment, 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 engage. 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 activities to seek employment).

The results presented in figure 5.4 illustrate that the composite measure of labour underutilization rate was 53.7 % in February 2025 (Q1), and it increased by 4.2 compared to February 2024 (Q1) results. The labour underutilization rate was higher among females (59.8 %) than among males (47.2 %). It increased by 3.9 and 4.1 percentage points among males and females respectively, from February 2024 (Q1) to February 2025 (Q1).

Figure 5. 4: Labour under-utilization rate by sex
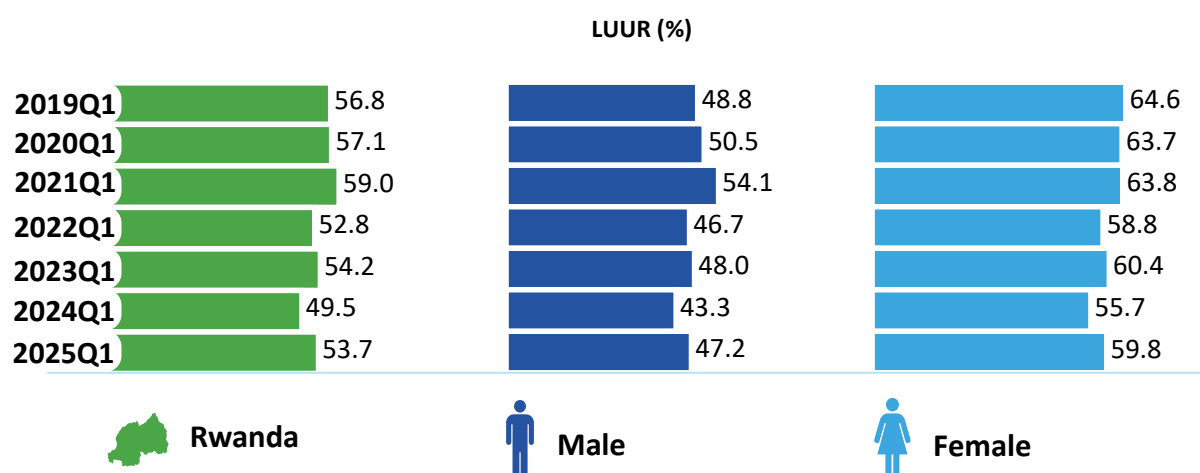
LUUR (%)

Year	Rwanda	Male	Female
2019Q1	56.8	48.8	64.6
2020Q1	57.1	50.5	63.7
2021Q1	59.0	54.1	63.8
2022Q1	52.8	46.7	58.8
2023Q1	54.2	48.0	60.4
2024Q1	49.5	43.3	55.7
2025Q1	53.7	47.2	59.8

Rwanda   **Male**   **Female**

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The results presented in figure 5.5 below illustrate that the labour underutilization rate was higher among the population living in rural areas than those living in urban areas of Rwanda. The comparison of February 2025 (Q1) and February 2024 (Q1) reveals that the labour underutilization increased by 4.6 and 3.9 percentage points among the population living urban and rural areas respectively.

Figure 5. 5: Labour under-utilization rate by area of residence.

LUUR(%)

Year	Rwanda	Male	Female
2019Q1	56.8	40.3	60.9
2020Q1	57.1	40.1	62.1
2021Q1	59.0	49.1	61.6
2022Q1	52.8	43.7	55.4
2023Q1	54.3	42.6	59.8
2024Q1	49.5	36.8	55.1
2025Q1	53.7	41.4	59.0

Rwanda   **Male**   **Female**
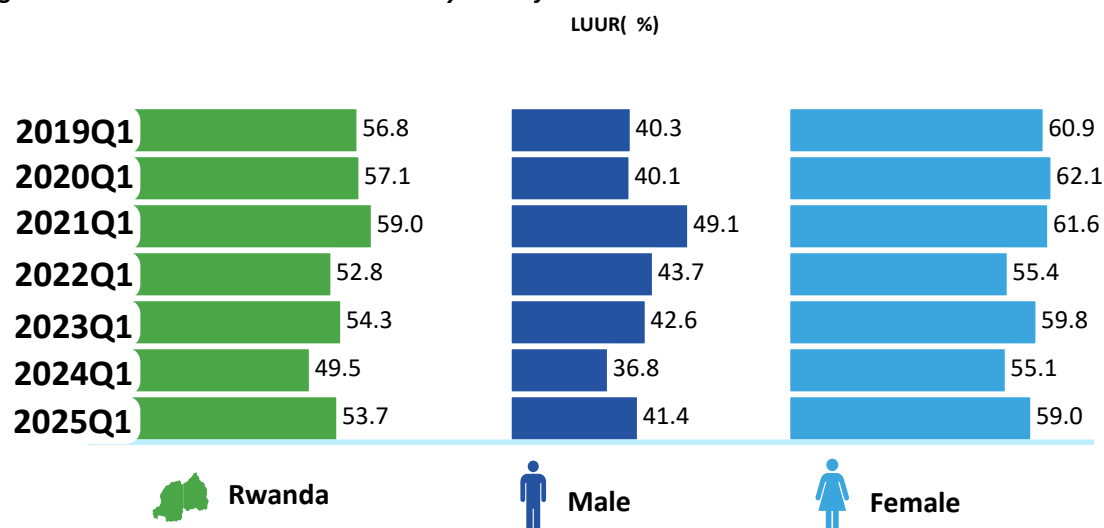
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Figure 5.6 presents the results of the labour underutilization rate by age group. It was observed that the labour underutilization rate among youth increased by 1.9 percentage points from 52.6% in February 2024 (Q1) to 54.5 % in February 2025 (Q1), by 5.5 percentage points among the people aged 31-54 years old and 6.7 among those aged 55 years.

Figure 5. 6: Trend in labour underutilization rate by Youth and Adult.

LUUR (%)

	Rwanda	16-30	31-54	55+
2019Q1	56.8	60.2	54.3	53.7
2020Q1	36.6	39.9	33	39.2
2021Q1	59	62.8	56.6	54.1
2022Q1	52.8	58.3	49.4	46.1
2023Q1	54.3	57.4	51.6	55
2024Q1	49.5	52.6	47.7	46.1
2025Q1	53.7	54.5	53.2	52.8
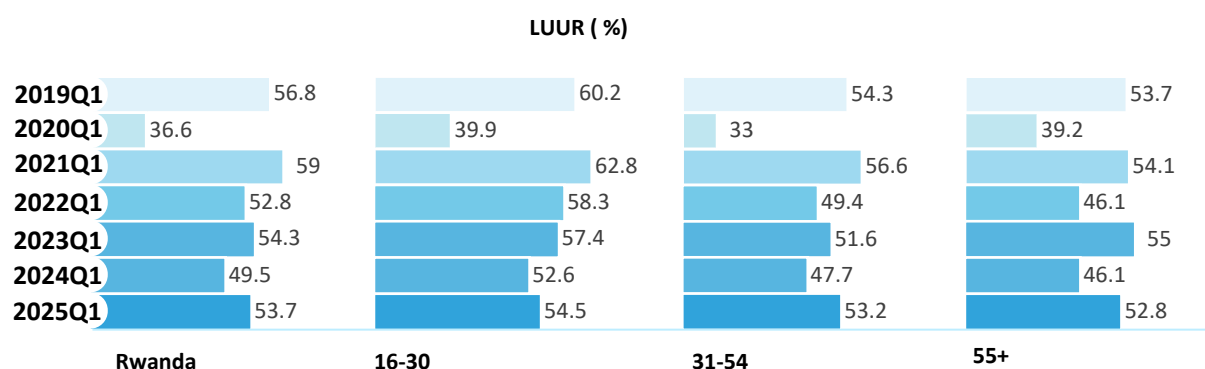
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

5.3 Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

Participation in employment, education or training is important for youth in their transition to the labour market and helps in the achievement of self-sufficiency. In February 2025 (Q1), the full count of the young population aged 16-30 years, who were neither in employment nor in education or training was estimated to 836,977 persons. The share of youth (16-30 years) neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET) was 23.0 % in February 2025 (Q1), with a higher rate among females (28.7 %) than males (17.0%). Comparing the current NEET rate with the results of the same quarter one year earlier, the NEET rate decreased by 5.4 percentage points at the national level. Similarly, it decreased by 4.9 and 5.7 percentage points among the male and female populations respectively.

Figure 5.7: NEET rate trend by sex

NEETYOUTH (%)

	Rwanda	Male	Female
2019Q1	34.4	26.1	42.0
2020Q1	34.2	28.6	39.4
2021Q1	34.4	28.4	40.1
2022Q1	31.6	27.6	35.3
2023Q1	33.2	27.4	38.7
2024Q1	28.4	21.9	34.4
2025Q1	23.0	17.0	28.7
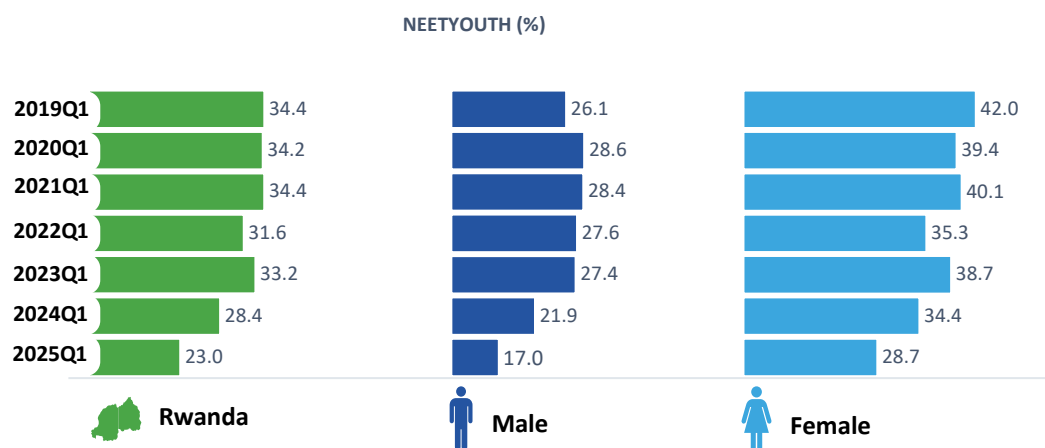
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Regarding the area of residence, the NEET rate was higher in rural areas (24.7 %) than in urban areas (19.4 %). The comparison of February 2025 (Q1) and the same quarter one year back shows that among the youth population living in urban areas, NEET rate decreased by 4.2 percentage points and 5.9 percentage points among youth population living in rural areas.

Figure 5.8: NEET rate trend by area of residence

NEETYOUTH (%)

	Rwanda	Urban	Rural
2019Q1	34.4	25.5	36.9
2020Q1	34.2	24.5	37.2
2021Q1	34.4	30.4	35.3
2022Q1	31.6	25.0	33.4
2023Q1	33.2	26.1	36.8
2024Q1	28.4	23.6	30.6
2025Q1	23.0	19.4	24.7
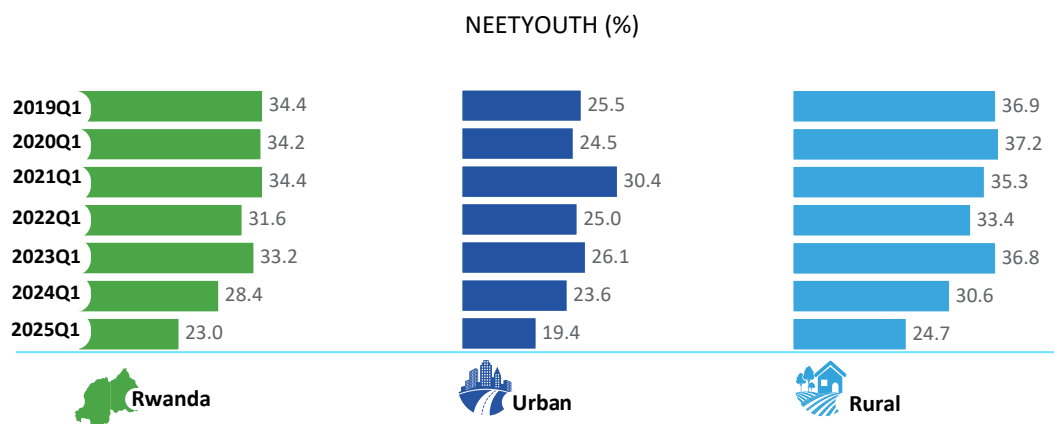
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Population outside the Labour

The population outside the labour force constitutes a large part of the working age population. It includes population engaged exclusively in activities for producing goods or services such as subsistence production of goods, own use production of services, volunteer production of goods or services and unpaid trainee or apprentice work who have not carried out any activity for pay or profit during the reference period. It also includes students who are enrolled in schools, persons who currently do not seek for employment opportunities (not job seekers) such as discouraged job seekers. A notable characteristic of countries with large subsistence foodstuff production is the substantial proportion of the working-age population that remains outside the labour force, which can result in a relatively smaller labour force.

The population outside the labour force stood at 37 of the working age population. The comparison of the current population outside labour force with the estimated value in the same quarter one year back reveals that it decreased by 2 percentage points.

This decrease of the population outside labour force coupled with the increase in employment to population ratio and the decrease in unemployment rate imply a significant positive net flow of people into labour force from outside the labour force, over the course of the year (From February 2024   to February 2025).

6.1 Main components of population outside the labour Force

The population outside labour force can be divided into three important components, namely, students, persons involved in subsistence agriculture and other outside labour force including largely population who are available to work but do not do anything to search for a job, retired persons, people unable to work because of illness or disability.

Figure 6.1 presents the main components of the population outside the labour force. In February 2025 (Q1), the population outside the labour force engaged in subsistence agriculture represented 48.6 %, students exclusively accounted for 27 % while the remaining 24.4 % fell into other categories. The comparison with the same quarter one year earlier reveals some changes in the distribution of the population outside labour force where the share of students increased by 2.7 percentage points and the share decreased by 3.2 percentage points among other outside labour force while it remained relatively stable for subsistence agriculture.

Figure 6. 1: Main components of Persons outside the labour force
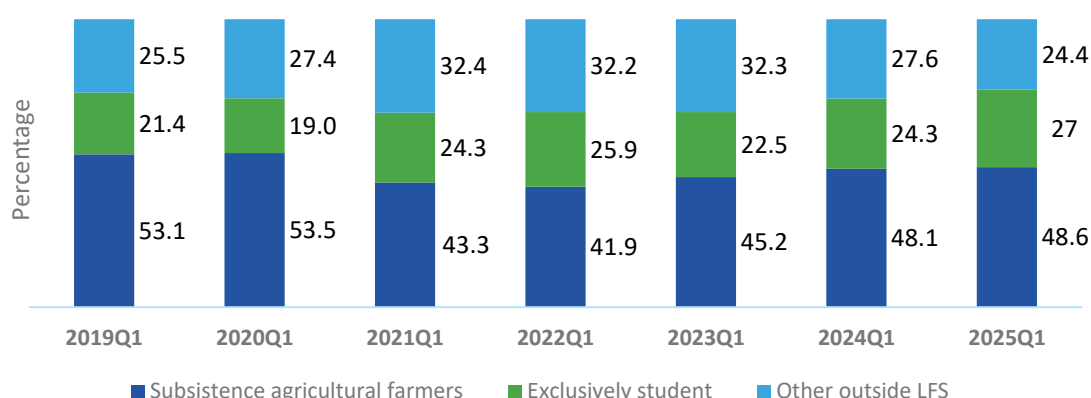
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

6.2 Population outside the labour force by area of residence

The results in figure 6.2 below are about the percentage of population outside labour force as proportion of working age population at the national level and in both urban and rural areas.

A comparison between February 2025 (Q1) and February 2024 (Q1) shows a reduction in the proportion of the population outside the labour force. Nationally, this rate decreased by 2 percentage points, with a drop of 2.7 percentage points in rural areas while it remained relatively stable in urban areas.

From figure 6.2, the proportion of the population outside the labour force is higher in rural areas than urban areas. In February 2025 (Q1), the urban-rural areas gap was around 11.2 percentage points compared to 13.9 percentage points recorded in February 2024 (Q1), indicating a decrease of 2.7 percentage point.

Figure 6. 2: Population outside Labour force by Area of residence
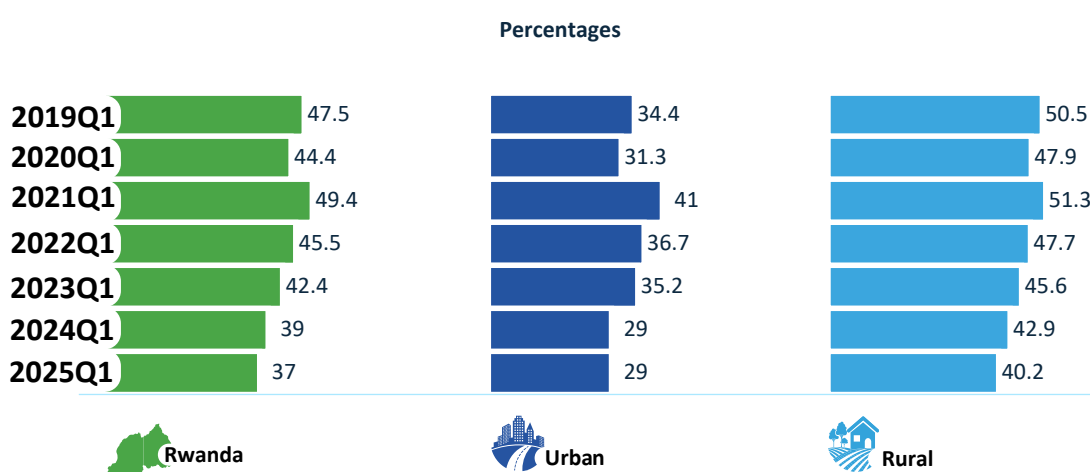
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

6.3 Population outside the labour force by age group

Figure 6.3 shows the rate of population outside the labour force by age groups. The results indicates that the rate is higher among the population with advanced age (55+ years old) partly due to retirement. In February 2025 (Q1), the rate among youth (16-30 years old) was higher than the rate among those aged 31-54 years old (41.5 % and 23.3% respectively). From February 2024 to February 2025, the proportion of population outside the labour force decreased by 1.3 and 2.3 percentage points among youth and those in 31-54 age group respectively.

Figure 6. 3: Population outside the Labour force by age group

Percentages

	Total	16-30	31-54	55+
2019Q1	47.5	49.6	35.2	70
2020Q1	44.4	46.8	32.3	67.6
2021Q1	49.4	53.9	35.1	72.2
2022Q1	45.5	50.5	28.6	71.8
2023Q1	42.4	46.1	28.6	68.1
2024Q1	39	42.8	25.6	63.7
2025Q1	37.0	41.5	23.3	59.6
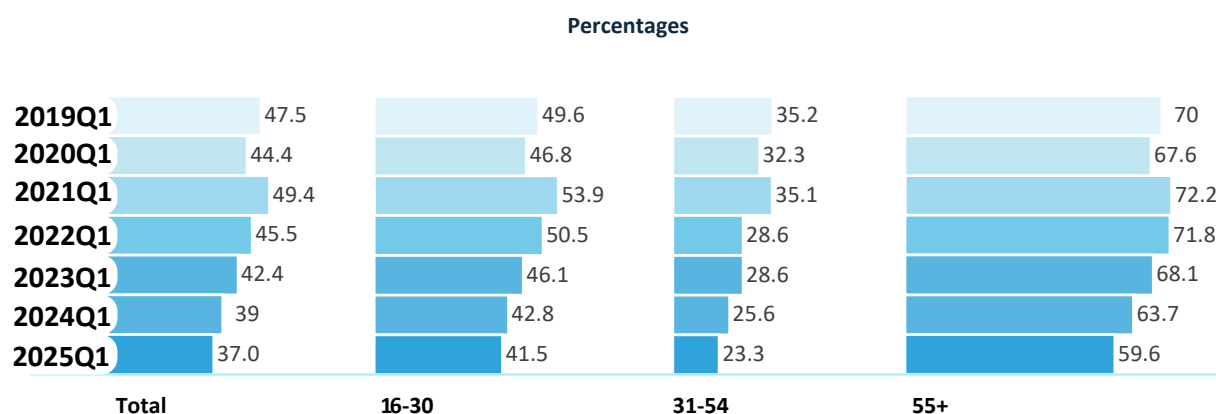
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

6.4 Population outside the labour force by level of educational attainment

According to the findings in the figure below, people with higher educational attainment had a lower fraction of the working-age population outside the labour force than people with lower levels of education. From February 2024 (Q1) to February 2025 (Q1), the rate of population outside the labour force decreased in all levels of education except for Lower secondary level of education where it increased by 1.3 percentage points.

Figure 6. 4: Population outside the Labour force by Education level attained.

	2019Q1	2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1
RWANDA	47.5	44.4	49.4	45.5	42.4	39.0	37.0
NONE	48.3	45.8	48.8	45.6	42.8	39.5	36.2
PRIMARY	48.0	46.3	51.8	47.4	43.1	40.0	37.7
LOWER SECONDARY	63.1	59.2	67.0	62.7	60.0	55.0	56.3
UPPER SECONDARY	41.4	35.6	41.1	33.5	30.0	29.8	26.7
UNIVERSITY	14.8	8.8	16.1	13.3	11.6	12.0	10.3
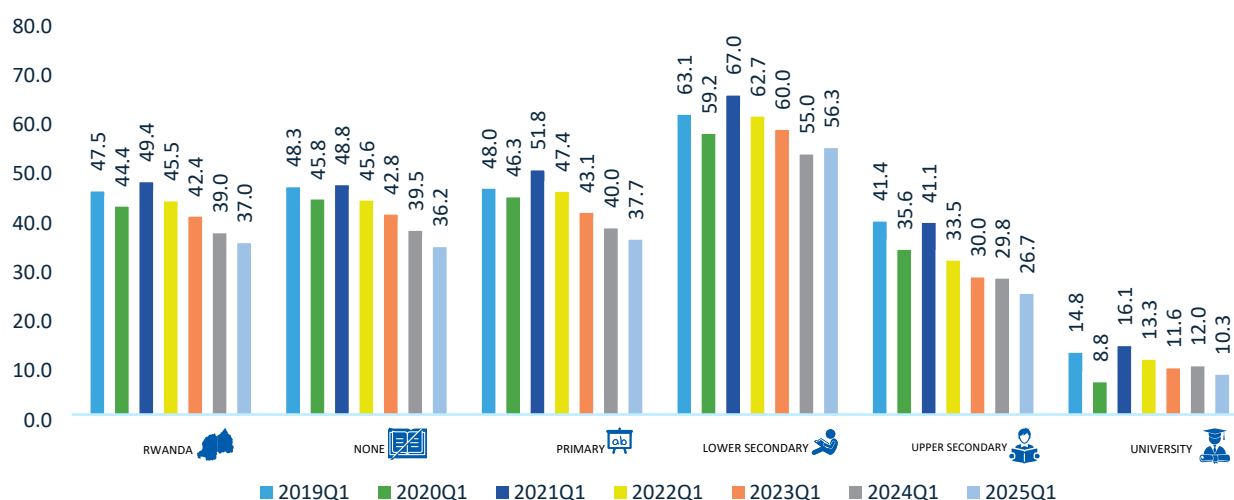
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Work in agriculture

Due to the importance of the agriculture sector for the Rwandan economy, special attention has been given to it in this report. The introduction of the 2013 standards on work, employment and labour underutilization statistics divided workers in agriculture occupation into two categories: market oriented and non-market-oriented workers. Workers in the former category are considered as employed while those in latter are not. In this report, all parts are brought together to analyse the agriculture sector as a whole.

7.1 Agricultural status of workers

Three categories of agricultural workers can be distinguished:

   a) those who worked exclusively in market-oriented agriculture for pay or as self-employed individual.
   b) Those who only engaged in subsistence agriculture.
   c) those whose primary occupation was outside of agriculture but who performed activities related to the production of food for their own consumption.

The full count of workers in the agriculture sector (market oriented and in subsistence agriculture) are presented in table 7.1. The findings show that in February 2025 (Q1), 56.7 % of the working age population were involved in agriculture activities, marking an increase of 1.6 percentage points as compared to February 2024 (Q1) (55.1%). The share of persons who exclusively participated in subsistence agriculture decreased by 2.8 percentage points while the share of those involved in market-oriented agriculture decreased by 2.1 percentage points compared to February 2024 (Q1). Dissimilarly, the share of those involved in subsistence agriculture as a secondary work significantly increased by 4.8 percentage points during the same period.

Table 7. 1: Works status in agriculture

Categories of agriculture	2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1
Market oriented agriculture as main job (a)	38	41.7	45.6	42.2	45.2	43.1
Subsistence agriculture exclusively (b)	49	48.2	45.6	46.7	41.8	39.0
Participated in Subsistence agriculture but have non-agriculture as main job (c)	13	10.1	8.8	11.1	13	17.8
Total (100%)	100	100	100	100	100	100
Count ('000s)	4,120	4,016	4,124	4,174	4,529	4,788
Proportion of working age population	55.8	52.7	52.4	52.3	55.1	56.7

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Note: The proportion computed here is subject to the agriculture workers not to the employed population.

7.2 Characteristics of agricultural workers

The focus of the section below is on workers with market-oriented agriculture as their main job and those involved exclusively in subsistence agriculture. The results reveal that a bulk of agricultural

workers were involved in subsistence agriculture with the higher proportion among female farmers than male farmers.

In February 2025 (Q1), the share of agricultural workers engaged in subsistence agriculture was 47.5 % and it remained relatively stable compared to February 2024 (Q1). In February 2025 (Q1), 57.2 % of male farmers were engaged in market-oriented agriculture, a proportion higher than that of females involved in the same activity (49.3%). Conversely, the proportion of female farmers engaged in subsistence agriculture was higher than of male farmers at 50.7 % and 42.8 %, respectively.

The results reveal that the engagement of male farmers in market-oriented agriculture remained relatively stable while it increased by 1.2 percentage points among female farmers between February 2024 and February 2025.

Table 7. 2: Trend of proportion of agricultural workers by sex.

		LFS rounds					
		2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1
Both	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Market oriented agriculture	43.7	46.4	50	47.4	52	52.5
	Subsistence agriculture	56.3	53.6	50	52.6	48	47.5
Male	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Market oriented agriculture	50.3	52.8	55.6	53.3	57.5	57.2
	Subsistence agriculture	49.7	47.2	44.4	46.7	42.5	42.8
Female	Total	100	100	100		100	100
	Market oriented agriculture	39.2	42	45.9	43.3	48.1	49.3
	Subsistence agriculture	60.8	58	5.1	57.7	51.9	50.7

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Table 7.3 below presents the trend of the share of market oriented and subsistence agricultural workers among youth and adult separately. The share of adults engaged in subsistence agriculture was higher than of youth population in the same activity (49 % and 44 % respectively) in February 2025 (Q1). The share of subsistence agriculture for both Youth and adults remained relatively the same from February 2024 to February 2025.

Table 7. 3: Trend of proportion of agricultural workers by age group

		LFS rounds					
		2020Q1	2021Q1	2022Q1	2023Q1	2024Q1	2025Q1
Both	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Market oriented agriculture	43.7	46.4	50.0	47.4	52.0	52.5
	Subsistence agriculture	56.3	53.6	50.0	52.6	48.0	47.5
Youth (16-30)	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Market oriented agriculture	46.7	49.3	53.9	52.1	55.1	56
	Subsistence agriculture	53.3	50.7	46.1	47.9	44.9	44
Adults (31+)	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Market oriented agriculture	42	44.9	48.1	45.3	50.5	51
	Subsistence agriculture	58	55.1	51.9	54.7	49.5	49

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The distribution of agricultural workers by education attainment, presented in table 7.4 shows that the higher the level of educational attainment, the lower likelihood of participation in agricultural activities for both market-oriented and subsistence agriculture.

Table 7. 4: Trend of proportion of agricultural workers by level of education attainment

		LFS Rounds					
		2020Q1	**2021Q1**	**2022Q1**	**2023Q1**	**2024Q1**	**2025Q1**
Both	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	None	62.1	58.1	58.1	59.6	58.8	61
	Primary	30.8	33.8	34.2	32.9	32.5	30.5
	Lower secondary	4.1	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.6	5.1
	Upper secondary	2.8	3.3	3.0	2.6	3.6	3
	University	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4
Market oriented agriculture	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	None	67.5	64.7	63.8	65	64.1	66.2
	Primary	27.3	30.4	31.5	30.2	30.3	27.6
	Lower secondary	3.2	3	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.7
	Upper secondary	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.0	2.0	2.0
	University	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.5
Subsistence agriculture	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
	None	58	52.5	52.5	54.8	53	55.3
	Primary	33.4	36.7	37	35.4	35	33.6
	Lower secondary	4.9	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.9	6.6
	Upper secondary	3.6	4.7	4.6	4	5.5	4.1
	University	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.4

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS).

7.3 Share of agriculture in the total work force

The total workforce is defined as the sum of all individuals engaged in paid or profit-oriented employment and those working in subsistence agriculture. Therefore, the share of agriculture workers in the total workforce refers to the proportion of individuals employed in agriculture relative to the entire workforce.

As shown in Figure 7.1 below, the proportion of agricultural workers in the workforce for February 2025 (Q1) was 59.6 % and this share was significantly higher among females, with 68.7 % of women working in agriculture, compared to 49.9 % of men.

When compared to the same quarter in the previous year, there has been a decrease in the proportion of agricultural workers with 3.4 percentage point decline at the national level, 3.3 percentage point among males and by 3.5 percentage points among females.

Figure 7. 1: Share of workers in agriculture by sex

Percentage

	Rwanda	Male	Female
2020Q1	64.2	54.0	73.5
2021Q1	70.3	60.6	79.1
2022Q1	68.8	60.1	77.1
2023Q1	64.5	54.8	73.5
2024Q1	63.0	53.2	72.2
2025Q1	59.6	49.9	68.7
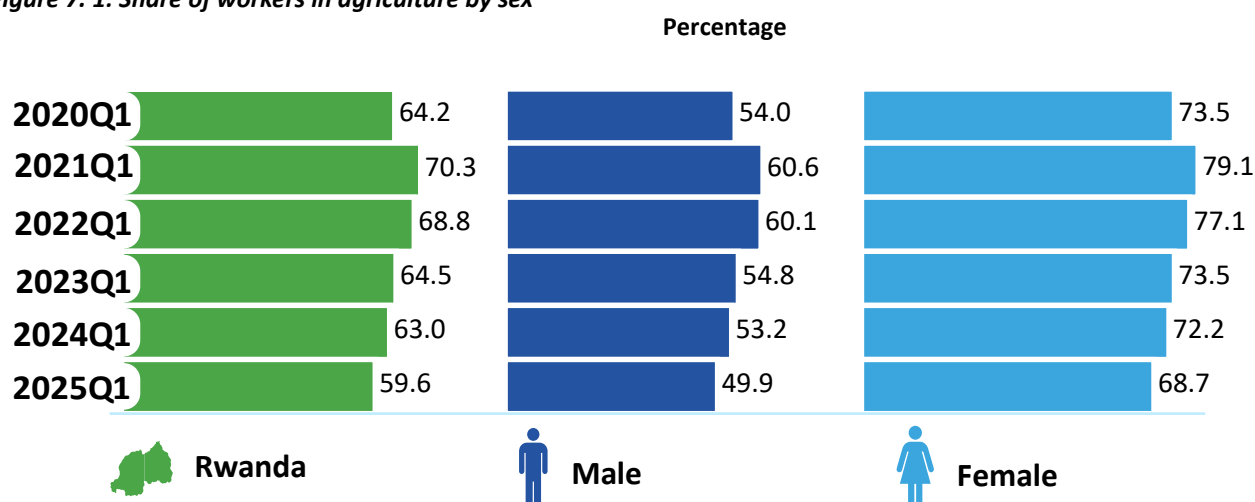
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The share of agriculture workers in total workforce is inversely correlated with the level of education attainment. Persons with lower level of educational attainment are more likely to join agricultural work compared to those with higher levels of education.

The result reveals a declining trend in the share of agricultural workers across all levels of education except for university level, compared to the same quarter one year earlier (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7. 2: Share of workers in agriculture by level of education attained.
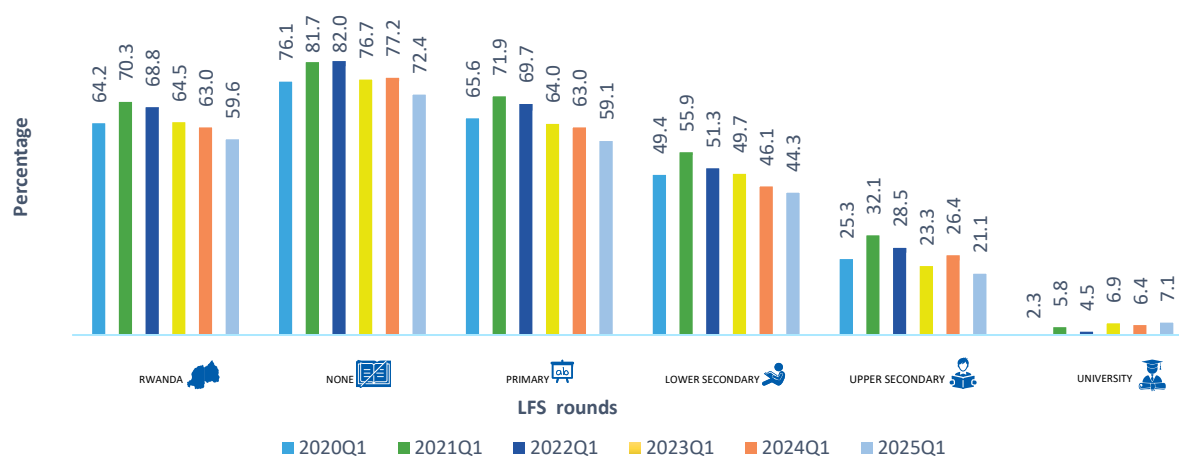
	RWANDA	NONE	PRIMARY	LOWER SECONDARY	UPPER SECONDARY	UNIVERSITY
2020Q1	64.2	76.1	65.6	49.4	25.3	2.3
2021Q1	70.3	81.7	71.9	55.9	32.1	5.8
2022Q1	68.8	82.0	69.7	51.3	28.5	4.5
2023Q1	64.5	76.7	64.0	49.7	23.3	6.9
2024Q1	63.0	77.2	63.0	46.1	26.4	6.4
2025Q1	59.6	72.4	59.1	44.3	21.1	7.1

LFS rounds

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)

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Standard errors, 95% confidence intervals, coefficient of variation (CV) and design effect of selected main labour force indicators

A.1: Unemployment rate according to sex, age, education, and areas of residence

	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
Unemployment rate	11.147	0.402	10.358	11.937	3.606	1.572
Sex						
Male	9.888	0.497	8.912	10.864	5.024	1.393
Female	12.520	0.559	11.421	13.619	4.467	1.317
Age						
Youth(16-30 yrs)	13.572	0.646	12.303	14.841	4.758	1.368
Adult(31+ yrs)	9.536	0.460	8.633	10.440	4.821	1.419
16-24 years	14.062	0.839	12.413	15.710	5.966	1.308
25-34 years	11.612	0.676	10.284	12.940	5.821	1.164
35-54 years	10.170	0.565	9.060	11.281	5.558	1.323
55 and over	7.069	0.977	5.149	8.990	13.827	1.449
Education						
None	8.968	0.530	7.927	10.010	5.911	1.563
Primary	12.193	0.671	10.874	13.512	5.507	1.219
Lower secondary	15.121	1.361	12.448	17.795	8.999	1.015
Upper secondary	15.267	1.236	12.838	17.696	8.098	1.204
University	10.881	1.512	7.910	13.852	13.898	1.134
Area of residence						
Urban	11.479	0.629	10.243	12.715	5.483	1.222
Rural	10.987	0.516	9.974	12.001	4.694	1.769

A.2: Labour force participation rate according to sex, age, education, and areas of residence

LFS 2025– Q1	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
Labour force participation rate	62.996	0.560	61.896	64.096	0.889	2.073
Sex						
Male	69.882	0.703	68.501	71.263	1.006	1.701
Female	56.884	0.665	55.577	58.191	1.170	1.474
Age						
Youth(16-30 yrs)	58.451	0.819	56.841	60.061	1.402	1.833
Adult(31+ yrs)	66.428	0.656	65.139	67.717	0.988	1.695
16-24 years	48.910	0.977	46.990	50.829	1.998	1.767
25-34 years	81.231	0.756	79.747	82.715	0.930	1.213
35-54 years	75.255	0.748	73.785	76.725	0.994	1.523
55 and over	40.434	1.136	38.202	42.665	2.809	1.330
Education						
None	63.810	0.666	62.501	65.119	1.044	1.378
Primary	62.272	0.891	60.523	64.022	1.430	1.581
Lower secondary	43.683	1.502	40.732	46.634	3.438	1.488
Upper secondary	73.342	1.510	70.377	76.308	2.058	1.631
University	89.658	1.459	86.791	92.524	1.627	1.240
Area of residence						
Urban	71.017	0.928	69.194	72.839	1.306	1.858
Rural	59.745	0.653	58.462	61.029	1.094	1.946

A.3: Employment to population ratio according to sex, age, education, and area of residence

	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
Employment to population ratio	55.974	0.578	54.838	57.110	1.033	2.092
Sex						
Male	62.972	0.740	61.519	64.425	1.175	1.700
Female	49.762	0.667	48.452	51.072	1.340	1.452
Age						
Youth(16-30 yrs)	50.518	0.833	48.881	52.155	1.649	1.842
Adult(31+ yrs)	60.093	0.675	58.768	61.419	1.123	1.666
16-24 years	42.032	0.964	40.138	43.927	2.294	1.765
25-34 years	71.798	0.895	70.040	73.557	1.247	1.282
35-54 years	67.601	0.804	66.021	69.181	1.190	1.496
55 and over	37.575	1.120	35.375	39.775	2.980	1.327
Education						
None	58.088	0.706	56.700	59.475	1.215	1.467
Primary	54.680	0.878	52.955	56.404	1.606	1.456
Lower secondary	37.078	1.397	34.333	39.822	3.768	1.357
Upper secondary	62.145	1.670	58.864	65.426	2.687	1.659
University	79.902	1.836	76.295	83.509	2.298	1.134
Area of residence						
Urban	62.865	0.961	60.978	64.752	1.528	1.757
Rural	53.181	0.684	51.837	54.525	1.286	2.060

A.4: LU2-Combined rate of unemployment and time-related underemployment (%) according to sex, age, education, and areas of residence

	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
LU2 - Combined rate of unemployment and time-related underemployment(%)	42.239	0.740	40.785	43.694	1.753	2.166
Sex						
Male	38.599	0.881	36.868	40.330	2.283	1.648
Female	46.209	0.913	44.416	48.002	1.975	1.545
Age						
Youth(16-30 yrs)	43.869	0.995	41.914	45.824	2.269	1.548
Adult(31+ yrs)	41.156	0.862	39.463	42.850	2.095	1.777
16-24 years	44.279	1.272	41.779	46.778	2.873	1.473
25-34 years	43.038	1.142	40.795	45.282	2.654	1.391
35-54 years	42.862	1.003	40.892	44.833	2.341	1.555
55 and over	33.182	1.732	29.779	36.584	5.219	1.348
Education						
None	47.213	0.938	45.371	49.055	1.986	1.602
Primary	44.227	1.122	42.022	46.432	2.538	1.479
Lower secondary	38.998	1.913	35.240	42.756	4.905	1.082
Upper secondary	28.912	1.622	25.727	32.098	5.609	1.304
University	16.296	1.808	12.743	19.848	11.096	1.153
Area of residence						
Urban	32.045	1.230	29.628	34.461	3.839	2.178
Rural	47.151	0.925	45.334	48.967	1.961	2.231

A.5: LU3-Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (%) according to sex, age , education and areas of residence

	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
LU3 - Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force(%)	28.718	0.574	27.590	29.845	1.999	1.940
Sex						
Male	22.534	0.695	21.169	23.900	3.085	1.624
Female	34.583	0.720	33.169	35.997	2.082	1.417
Age						
Youth(16-30 yrs)	29.890	0.841	28.239	31.541	2.812	1.604
Adult(31+ yrs)	27.953	0.658	26.661	29.245	2.353	1.567
16-24 years	32.685	1.088	30.548	34.822	3.328	1.547
25-34 years	24.568	0.890	22.818	26.317	3.624	1.315
35-54 years	27.310	0.779	25.779	28.841	2.854	1.435
55 and over	34.328	1.561	31.261	37.396	4.548	1.530
Education						
None	27.211	0.756	25.725	28.697	2.780	1.646
Primary	31.990	0.934	30.156	33.825	2.919	1.503
Lower secondary	32.864	1.758	29.411	36.317	5.348	1.249
Upper secondary	28.395	1.520	25.408	31.381	5.354	1.375
University	14.863	1.627	11.666	18.061	10.950	1.057
Area of residence						
Urban	23.730	0.803	22.153	25.308	3.384	1.301
Rural	30.883	0.733	29.443	32.323	2.374	2.117

A.6: LU4-Labour underutilization rate (%) according to sex, age, education and areas of residence

	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
Labour underutilization rate (%)	53.661	0.709	52.268	55.054	1.322	2.438
Sex						
Male	47.216	0.898	45.451	48.981	1.903	1.900
Female	59.775	0.789	58.225	61.326	1.320	1.603
Age						
Youth(16-30 yrs)	54.467	0.952	52.596	56.337	1.748	1.739
Adult(31+ yrs)	53.136	0.803	51.557	54.714	1.512	1.891
16-24 years	56.354	1.183	54.030	58.678	2.099	1.637
25-34 years	51.388	1.107	49.212	53.563	2.155	1.508
35-54 years	53.764	0.907	51.983	55.545	1.686	1.551
55 and over	52.781	1.647	49.546	56.016	3.120	1.540
Education						
None	57.791	0.846	56.129	59.453	1.464	1.671
Primary	56.802	1.047	54.745	58.859	1.843	1.675
Lower secondary	51.750	1.888	48.042	55.458	3.647	1.273
Upper secondary	39.926	1.696	36.594	43.258	4.248	1.451
University	20.036	1.829	16.442	23.629	9.130	1.055
Area of residence						
Urban	41.450	1.174	39.143	43.757	2.833	2.074
Rural	58.963	0.853	57.288	60.638	1.446	2.525

A.7: Rate of population out of labour force rate according to sex, age , education and areas of residence

	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
Rate of Out of labour force rate	37.004	0.560	35.904	38.104	1.513	2.073
Sex						
Male	30.118	0.703	28.737	31.499	2.334	1.701
Female	43.116	0.665	41.809	44.423	1.543	1.474
Age						
Youth(16-30 yrs)	41.549	0.819	39.939	43.159	1.972	1.833
Adult(31+ yrs)	33.572	0.656	32.283	34.861	1.954	1.695
16-24 years	51.090	0.977	49.171	53.010	1.913	1.767
25-34 years	18.769	0.756	17.285	20.253	4.025	1.213
35-54 years	24.745	0.748	23.275	26.215	3.024	1.523
55 and over	59.566	1.136	57.335	61.798	1.907	1.330
Education						
None	36.190	0.666	34.881	37.499	1.841	1.378
Primary	37.728	0.891	35.978	39.477	2.360	1.581
Lower secondary	56.317	1.502	53.366	59.268	2.667	1.488
Upper secondary	26.658	1.510	23.692	29.623	5.663	1.631
University	10.342	1.459	7.476	13.209	14.108	1.240
Area of residence						
Urban	28.983	0.928	27.161	30.806	3.201	1.858
Rural	40.255	0.653	38.971	41.538	1.623	1.946

A.8: Youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) rate according to sex, education and areas of residence

	Estimate (%)	Std. error (%)	95%CI lower bound	95%CI upper bound	CV	Design effect
NEET 16-30	23.023	0.643	21.759	24.286	2.795	1.553
Sex						
Male	16.980	0.830	15.348	18.611	4.890	1.577
Female	28.714	0.877	26.991	30.437	3.055	1.287
Education						
None	26.709	1.116	24.516	28.902	4.179	1.346
Primary	22.967	1.070	20.864	25.069	4.659	1.489
Lower secondary	14.486	1.040	12.443	16.530	7.181	1.058
Upper secondary	26.660	1.778	23.167	30.153	6.670	1.374
University	20.567	3.190	14.301	26.834	15.509	1.065
Area of residence						
Urban	19.386	0.906	17.606	21.166	4.674	1.112
Rural	24.721	0.833	23.085	26.356	3.368	1.689

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