



PRESS RELEASE
2021 Labour Force Survey Report

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the year 2021 was conducted in the months of November and December 2021. The LFS is being conducted annually to provide information on the key indicators and associated characteristics of the labour market in accordance with the International Labour Organization (ILO) standards.

The scope and coverage of the survey is at the national level. A total of 10,130 households were selected from twenty *Dzongkhags*, households were selected from twenty *Dzongkhags*, out of which about 32% (3,230 households) were from urban and 68% (6,900 households) were from rural areas.

Key Findings

1. Working-Age Population (aged 15 years and above):

The working-age population is estimated at 489,732 persons (238,310 males and 251,422 females). Of the total working-age population, 338,376 persons (51.5% males and 48.5% females) are economically active.

2. Labour Force Participation Rate:

The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), which is the economically active population expressed per 100 working-age population, is estimated at 69.1%. The LFPR for male population is 73.1% while it is 65.3% for females. The LFPR for rural areas (71.1%) is higher than that of urban areas (65.3%). About 67.8% of the economically active population resides in rural areas.

3. Economically Inactive Population:

Out of the total working-age population, 151,356 persons (30.9%) are economically inactive. The economically inactive population is comprised of 57.6% females and 42.4% males. About 61.7% of them are found in rural areas, while 38.3% reside in urban areas.

4. Employment:

The employment rate for Bhutan in 2021 is 95.2%. Of the total (322,122) employed persons, 222,766 persons (69.2 %) reside in rural areas and 99,356 persons (30.8%) in urban areas. The share of employed persons among males and females is



52.1% and 47.9% respectively. Among the employed persons, 40.6% are in the age range of 25-39 years.

5. Unemployment:

Out of 338,376 economically active persons, 16,254 persons were without work, and actively seeking and available for work during the reference period. This translates to an unemployment rate of 4.8%, which is down by 0.2 percentage points compared to the previous year. The unemployment rate for females (6.1%) is higher than that of males (3.6%). The unemployment is more of urban phenomenon with 8.9% which is almost three times higher than that of rural areas (2.8%).

Among *Dzongkhags*, Thimphu has the highest unemployment rate with 10.1%, followed by Paro (7.7%), Haa (6.1%), Punakha (5.1%) and Chhukha (4.8%) while Samdrup Jongkhar (1.0%) has the lowest unemployment rate, followed by Bumthang, Dagana, Gasa and Zhemgang *Dzongkhags* with the unemployment rate of 1.5% each. In terms of numbers, Thimphu *Dzongkhag* has the highest unemployed persons with 6,023 persons followed by Paro (1,489 persons), Chhukha (1,406 persons) and Samtse (1,313 persons) *Dzongkhags*.

6. Youth Unemployment (aged between 15-24 years):

The overall youth unemployment rate for Bhutan in 2021 is 20.9% (6,492 persons) which is down by 1.7 percentage points compared to 22.6% in 2020. Out of the total unemployed youth, about 38.6% are males and 61.4% are females. It varies by sex and by their place of residence. As in the previous years, youth unemployment is a urban phenomenon with 28.6% which is almost double than that of rural areas (15.8%). Thimphu *Dzongkhag* has the highest youth unemployment rate (32.6%) followed by Haa (29.1%), Trashi Yangtse (25.1%), Paro (24.4%), Chhukha (21.6%) and Trashigang (21.0%) *Dzongkhags*. While Gasa *Dzongkhag* has the lowest youth unemployment rate at 1.6%. Of the total youth unemployed, 47.2% has completed higher secondary education followed by bachelor's degree (27.8%) and then middle secondary (13.4%).

In general, the year 2021 saw an increase in employment in the major economic activity like 'construction', 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' and 'human health and social worker activities' compared to the previous year.



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NATIONAL STATISTICS BUREAU
ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN



The decrease in unemployment rate in 2021 could be attributed to the strategic interventions and programs initiated by His Majesty's Secretariat to stabilize the economy and to protect the poor and vulnerable groups from the socio-economic fallout of the pandemic.

The 2021 Labour Force Survey Report can be downloaded from www.nsb.gov.bt.



(National Statistics Bureau)
Thimphu
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