

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND MIGRATION

COUNTRY BRIEF: PERU



Youth labour market overview

With more than 8 million young people between 15-29 years of age, Peru has a large and heterogeneous young generation which represents 27.5 per cent of the total populationⁱ. The entry of this young generation into the labour market took place in the first decade of the 21st century, during which the country experience a quick economic growth in spite of the international crisis. In the past 10 years, thanks to buoyant sectors such as construction, mining and trade and in a context of growing globalization, Peru has scored the highest average growth rate in Latin America (almost 6 per cent) and is now classified as upper-middle income country.

In spite of this favourable economic background, young Peruvians face challenging labour market conditions. Their labour force participation rate is 66.4 per cent, as compared to 85.8 per cent for the population aged 30-65. Most young people work (44.2 per cent), while 22 per cent study; 16.9 per cent work and study and the remaining 16.9 neither work nor studyⁱ, which puts them most at risk of social exclusion.

Table 1. Economically active population in Peru (percentage)

	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	Youth
Economically active population	100.0	100.0	100.0
Unemployment	7.3	8.4	7.8
Underemployment	32.6	39.2	35.5
Underemployment by hours	5.9	8.1	6.9
Underemployment by income	26.7	31.2	28.6
Adequate employment	60.1	52.3	56.7

Source: National Institute of Statistics and Information (INEI), 2011. National household survey on living conditions and poverty 2011.

Youth unemployment is three times higher among youth than among adult workers (7.8



per cent versus 1.9 per cent) and two out of three unemployed are young. Youth living in rural areas and women are even more affected by unemployment. Because of the lack of public system for child care, women also leave school earlier and often remain engaged in unpaid family work. Most of all, integration of young people on the labour market is very precarious. Under-employment stood at 35.5 per cent in 2011. Young Peruvians work under formal contracts and do not benefit from social security or health insurance.

Main features of youth migration

In spite of the economic stability and general improvement of living conditions in the past ten years, the number of migrants leaving Peru was steadily increasing until 2010, when for the first time a slight reduction in the number of exits was reported, showing a potential change in trends.

Almost half of young people in Peru hope they will be able to migrate to another country, with young men slightly more motivated than women, and 38 per cent intend to do so in the next three yearsⁱ. The wish to quit the country is inversely proportional to age, dropping from 56.3 per cent for the 15-19 group to 36.5 per cent for the 25-29 age group. There is also an important difference between urban and rural youth: 51 per cent of young people from urban areas have migration expectations, for only 33.3 per cent in rural areas.

The main drivers for migration are “better economic perspectives” (49.5 per cent), “studies” (21.8 per cent), and “work contract”

(11.9 per cent). As can be expected, the percentage of young people who want to leave the country for academic purposes diminishes with age (from 25.7 per cent for the 15-19 age group to 14.4 per cent among the 25-29), whereas the improvement of economic conditions is increasingly motivating as young people grow older.

Nonetheless, all those who entertain migration perspectives do not take actual steps to realize their plans. Between 1994 and 2008, around 500 000 young people between the ages of 15 and 29 emigratedⁱ. In 2009 alone, 76.4 thousand young people left the country, which represents 53.8 per cent of all migrants leaving Peru for the first time that yearⁱⁱ.

Migration of young Peruvians is mainly related to job expectations: 70.2 per cent of young migrants leave Peru because of lack of work or because of poor working conditions in their countryⁱ. The greatest part declare that they are in pursuit of better living conditions (39.5 per cent), 20.2 per cent say that they want to escape from unemployment, and 10.5 per cent that they seek a regular work contract. Academic purposes are more often cited among potential youth migrants as a motivation to leave the country, but only 13.5 per cent of actual young migrants leave the country to study abroad. Another 14.5 per cent leave for family reasons (usually family reunification).

Young migrants are predominantly single (90 per cent), aged between 25 and 29 (41.9 per cent) and male (51.9 per cent). However, the share and number of young women migrants is increasing and surpassed seven thousand in 1994 to 37.6 thousand in 2009ⁱⁱ.

Chile is the favourite destination country and was chosen by 21.5 per cent of young migrants between 1994 and 2009, closely followed by Bolivia with 21.3 per cent. Whereas young men prefer countries in South America, young migrant women would rather migrate to Europe, the United States of America (USA) and Chileⁱⁱ.

According to an analysis of the population census in the USA, Spain, Argentina and Chileⁱⁱⁱ, 48.6 to 67.9 per cent of Peruvian migrants are in employment (the highest rate being for Spain and the lowest for the USA), while unemployment is lowest in Argentina and Spain (4.9 and 5.9 per cent respectively) and stands between 12.2 and 15.3 per cent in the USA and Chile. The number of Peruvian migrants with some form of tertiary education who work in non-professional jobs is high, reaching around 60 per cent in these destination countries where data is available. Overall, migrants tend to be more educated than the general population, as 31 per cent of emigrants had tertiary education, compared to only 16 per cent among all Peruvians.

Box 1

Examples of Peru's increased bilateral cooperation with destination countries

- In 2011, negotiations on a Convention on Cooperation and Technical Assistance on Labour Migration started with Italy and the agreement on Assistance and Technical Cooperation Framework on Migration between Colombia and Peru was signed in 2012. The agreements aim at increasing mutual support in the area of labour migration, jointly managing demand and labour supply on the labour markets of both countries, and fostering cooperation while encouraging the exchange of good practices on labour migration.
- Conventions and agreements on the implementation of conventions on social security in order to regulate the benefits linked to social security systems were signed between Peru and Argentina, Chile, Spain, Ecuador and China between 2008 and 2012.



Policies, programmes and institutional framework

Migration policies under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Migration policies in Peru are under the overall umbrella of the Ministry of Foreign affairs, which is in charge of implementing them as laid out in the sixth State Policy of the “National Agreement”: a) “Promote and defend the interests of the State, its nationals and enterprises abroad, and use the latter as means of attracting investments and resources for international cooperation” and b) “develop global migration policies that incorporate the promotion of employment opportunities”.

The government is therefore committed to take action to increase the links of migrant communities abroad with Peru and its history and culture, to facilitate migrants’ support towards their families and the development of the country, as well as to provide protection and assistance to all Peruvians abroad. Since 2004, the Law on Migration incentives was passed to promote the return of Peruvians that have spent more than five years abroad and intend to create an enterprise or start any other type of professional activities or in Peru.

A permanent multisectoral Commission “Mesa de Trabajo Intersectorial para la Gestión Migratoria” (“Intersectoral Working Committee for the Management of Migration”) was created in 2009 as a mechanism to promote the National Policy on migration. It works under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is composed of representatives from all concerned ministries and state

agencies. The Commission aims to coordinate, evaluate, propose, prioritize and monitor policies and actions related to the management of migration.

Since 2006, several programmes have been put in place to implement the migration policies. In particular, a programme encourages the productive use of remittances, i.e. facilitating access to credit and the development of micro enterprises or social cooperatives - Remittances represented 2.7 million dollars in 2011. The State of Peru also launched the Orientation Service for Migrants (INFOMIGRA) - institutionalized as a permanent service provided by the Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion through the “Ventanilla Única de Promoción del Empleo” (One-Stop shop for the Promotion of Employment).

The national employment policy

The National Employment Policy was adopted in 2011. It promotes decent work as well as gender sensitive and targeted strategies focusing on the most vulnerable populations, including youth and migrants (Box 2).

ⁱ Secretaría Nacional de la Juventud, 2012. *Perú – Resultados Finales de la Primera Encuesta Nacional de la Juventud 2011.*

ⁱⁱ Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI). *Encuesta Juventud, Empleo y Migración Internacional (ENJUV)*, 2009.

ⁱⁱⁱ Moreno Vigo Martín, 2011. *Consultoría para el desarrollo de cartillas de información para potenciales migrantes.*

*Box 2**Main strategies addressing labour migration in the National Employment Policy (2011)*

- Systematize information on the labour and training markets of the main countries of destination for migrants
- Promote bilateral and multilateral agreements on management of labour migration and related information, to ensure the protection of workers, migrant workers and their families
- Promote the return to the country of highly trained young people to integrate or re-integrate them into the labour market
- Promote the implementation of co-development projects linked to local and regional economic development.
- Foster policies to promote employment in border regions (...) and administrative agreements to regularize irregular migrant workers in border areas.
- Promote bilateral and multilateral agreements on social security, to ensure the protection of workers and migrant workers and their families
- Promote agreements to standardize certifications for work and occupational skills, as well as technical degrees or academic titles
- Articulate and promote tools and means of financing, including migrant remittances, businesses oriented to productive self-employment and the creation of formal enterprises.
- Develop specific actions to promote female employment and access to decent jobs with equal opportunities and conditions, focusing on the particular needs of (...) youth and migrants.
- Promote and strengthen the Intersectorial Working Committee for the Management of Migration in Peru, and the Permanent Multisectoral Working Group against Trafficking in Persons.
- Propose, consolidate and ratify agreements for cooperation between national institutions, social actors and international organizations, to ensure effective management of labour migration.



International
Labour
Office

Contact us:

Knowledge Management Facility
Youth Employment and Migration
4, route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland
Email: youth@ilo.org

