

# UGANDA

The ILO Work4Youth project worked with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) to implement two rounds of the School-to-work transition survey (SWTS) in 2013 and 2015 (both in February–April). The results of the first survey were published in Jimrex Byamugisha, Leyla Shamchiyeva and Takaaki Kizu (2014): *Labour market transitions of young women and men in Uganda*, Work4Youth Publication Series No. 24 (Geneva, ILO). A report on the second round results was published by UBOS (2016): *Labour market transition of young people in Uganda: Highlights of the school-to-work transition survey 2015* (Kampala). The objective of this country note is to offer a general summary of youth labour market trends in Uganda based on the SWTS. Youth is defined as 15–29.

## Main findings of the ILO SWTS

### *Human capital and mismatch*

- Most of the surveyed youth had attended school or a training programme at some point in their lives (93.9 per cent in 2015). However, less than half of the youth population had either completed school (9.4 per cent) or was attending school (33.3 per cent). The surveys showed a slight increase in the share of youth with no education or leaving education before completion (51.3 per cent in 2013 to 57.3 per cent in 2015), with higher shares for young women than men.
- SWTS results showed a strong correlation between the levels of education and a young person's labour market transition: the higher the educational attainment, the more likely a young person was to complete his or her labour market transition to stable and/or satisfactory employment.
- A vast majority of employed youth in Uganda are undereducated for the job they were doing (79.5 per cent in 2015). Rarely were the respondents classified as overqualified for their job (2.8 per cent).
- Students in Uganda showed strong preferences for finding future work in modern sector occupations, such as professionals (56.8 per cent) and technicians and associate professionals (17.8 per cent). However, the shares of youth working as professionals remained very low (3.3 per cent), thus signalling a labour market mismatch.

### *Underutilization of the youth labour potential remains a top concern*

- The youth labour underutilization rate in Uganda was high at 67.9 per cent in 2015, up from 62.7 per cent in 2013. The share of underutilized labour potential consisted of 48.9 per cent of the youth population in irregular employment (either in self-employment or paid employment with contract duration less than 12 months), 14.7 per cent unemployed and 4.2 per cent inactive non-students.

The ILO **School-to-work transitions surveys (SWTS)** are implemented as an outcome of the Work4Youth (W4Y) project, a partnership between the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation. The project has a budget of US\$14.6 million and will run for five years to mid-2016. Its aim is to “promote decent work opportunities for young men and women through knowledge and action”. The immediate objective of the partnership is to produce more and better labour market information specific to youth in developing countries, focusing in particular on transition paths to the labour market.

See the website [www.ilo.org/w4y](http://www.ilo.org/w4y) for more information.

- The youth unemployment rate (broad definition)<sup>1</sup> increased from 13.3 per cent in 2013 to 18.6 per cent in 2015. The youth unemployment rate (strict definition) also increased from 5.0 to 6.5 per cent. Rates are higher among young women and youth in urban areas.
- The length of unemployment among youth tends to be long. Two in five (38.8 per cent) unemployed youth was been looking for work for longer than one year in 2015.
- The share of youth neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) in Uganda was not high but did increase slightly between 2013 and 2015 (from 12.2 to 13.2 per cent). The share among young women was nearly three times that of young men at 18.6 and 6.6 per cent, respectively, and is explained primarily by the inability of many young women to go to school and the early age of marriage and family formation in the country.

#### *Low quality jobs remain a strong hindrance to the country's productive transformation*

- Nearly two in three (64.5 per cent) young Ugandans was employed in 2015, with too many working from a very young age; 17.2 per cent of young adolescents aged 15–17 were out of school and working.
- Nearly seven in ten (69.8 per cent) of youth remained in vulnerable employment in 2015 as own-account workers (43.1 per cent) or unpaid family worker (27.7 per cent). At the same time, almost four in five (78.4 per cent) of youth in paid employment were engaged without a written contract.
- Agriculture, although the smallest contributor to gross domestic product (GDP), continued to absorb the largest portion of Uganda's young workers (57.2 per cent), followed by service sector activities (32.1 per cent) and industry (10.9 per cent).
- Informal employment affected more than nine in ten (91.9 per cent) young workers in Uganda. This represented a very slight improvement from 2013 when the share was 92.2 per cent.
- Over one-third (39.5 per cent) of employed youth worked less than 20 hours during the reference week.

## Selection of data tables

**Table 1. Youth population by educational status and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Educational status	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Never attended school	4.2	6.1	3.2	4.2	5.2	7.7
Dropped-out before graduation or completion of school	47.1	51.2	41.9	46.8	51.8	54.9
Currently attending school	39.5	33.3	45.9	40.1	33.7	27.6
Education completed	9.2	9.4	9.0	8.9	9.3	9.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table 2. Key youth labour market indicators – traditional distribution by sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Employed	63.1	64.5	65.2	69.1	61.1	60.8
Unemployed	3.3	4.5	2.9	4.0	3.7	4.9
Inactive	33.6	29.8	31.9	25.7	35.2	33.2
Total youth population	100	100	100	100	100	100
Youth labour force participation rate	66.4	69.0	68.1	73.1	64.8	65.6
Youth unemployment rate (strict definition)	5.0	6.5	4.2	5.5	5.7	7.4

<sup>1</sup> The “strict” definition of unemployment refers to persons without work, available to work and actively engaged in a job search. The “broad” definition excludes the job search criteria. The youth unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons divided by the youth labour force (employed plus unemployed).

**Table 3. Key youth labour market indicators – alternative distribution by sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
In regular employment	14.0	15.4	19.0	21.0	9.5	10.7
In irregular employment	48.5	48.9	45.6	47.9	51.1	49.7
Unemployed (broad)	9.7	14.7	6.2	11.3	12.9	17.5
Inactive students	22.7	15.8	26.1	17.3	19.7	14.6
Inactive non-students	4.5	4.2	2.5	1.5	6.4	6.5
<b>Total youth population</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100
Youth unemployment rate (broad definition)	13.3	18.6	8.7	14.0	17.4	22.4
Youth labour underutilization rate	62.7	67.9	54.3	60.8	70.3	73.7

**Table 4. Youth neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) by composition and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Sex	2013			2015		
	NEET rate	of which:		NEET rate	of which:	
		Unemployed non-students	Inactive non-students		Unemployed non-students	Inactive non-students
Total	12.2	2.7	9.5	13.2	3.5	9.7
Male	7.1	2.3	4.7	6.6	2.5	4.1
Female	16.9	3.0	13.8	18.6	4.3	14.3

**Table 5. Employed youth by status in employment and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Status in employment	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Wage and salaried workers (employees)	24.6	24.9	32.9	32.4	16.6	17.8
Employers	2.6	3.9	3.5	5.1	1.7	2.8
Own-account workers	50.5	43.1	43.7	36.3	57.1	49.5
Contributing (unpaid) family workers	21.4	27.7	19.1	26.0	23.6	29.4
Members of producers' cooperatives	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.1
Not classifiable by status	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.7	0.4
Total employed youth	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table 6. Young wage and salaried workers by type of contract and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Type of contract	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Written agreement	21.1	18.4	18.8	16.5	25.4	21.6
Oral agreement	78.9	78.4	81.2	80.8	74.6	74.3
Unlimited duration	74.1	70.7	73.1	69.6	76	72.5
Limited duration	25.9	29.3	26.9	30.4	24	27.5
– Less than 12 months	20.0	20.1	21.6	22	17.1	16.8
– 12 months to less than 36 months	3.7	7.0	3.2	7.1	4.5	6.9
– 36 months or more	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.3	2.4	3.8
Total young wage and salaried workers	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table 7. Distribution of youth employment by sector, aggregate and 1-digit level, and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Sector	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
<b>Agriculture</b>	60.0	57.2	56.5	53.3	63.4	60.9
<b>Industry</b>	8.5	10.9	12.8	15.8	4.4	6.2
<b>Services</b>	31.4	32.1	30.5	30.7	32.2	33.0
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	60.0	57.2	56.5	53.3	63.4	60.9
Mining	0.5	1.1	0.8	1.0	0.2	1.2
Manufacturing	5.4	5.6	6.9	6.8	4.0	4.5
Electricity, gas, steam	0	0.3	0.1	0.3	0	0.2
Water supply	0.1	0.1	0	0.2	0.1	0
Construction	2.5	3.8	5.0	7.5	0.1	0.3
Wholesale and retail trade	16.6	14.4	13.8	12.7	19.3	16.0
Transport	3.1	4.7	6.1	9.2	0.1	0.4
Accommodation	1.7	1.5	0.8	0.9	2.6	2.0
Information and communications	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.2
Financial activities	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3
Real estate	0	0.1	0	0.2	0	0
Professional scientific activities	0	0.3	0.1	0.5	0	0.2
Administrative and support activities	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.2
Public administration	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.1
Education	3.4	3.4	2.7	2.4	4.0	4.3
Health and social work	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.9	0.6	1.0
Arts and entertainment	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.2
Other services	2.4	2.9	2.6	2.0	2.1	3.8
Private households	1.3	2.6	1.0	0.7	1.5	4.3
Activities of extraterritorial organizations	0.4	0	0.4	0	0.4	0

**Table 8. Youth informal employment by sex and composition, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Youth informal employment rate	92.2	91.9	91.9	90.8	92.5	93.0
<i>Of which:</i>						
– Informal employment outside the informal sector (share in informal employment)	12.3	20.3	16.5	24.7	8.3	16.1
– Employment in the informal sector (share in informal employment)	79.9	71.6	75.4	66.1	84.2	76.9

**Table 9. Employed youth by overeducation, undereducation or matching qualifications and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Qualifications mismatch	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Undereducated	75.6	79.5	71.0	75.2	79.5	82.3
Overeducated	1.2	2.8	1.3	4.1	1.2	3.2
Matching qualifications	21.5	17.5	26.0	20.8	17.7	14.2
Not classified	1.7	0.2	1.8	0	1.6	0.3
Total employed youth	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table 10. Youth unemployment rate by level of completed educational attainment and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Educational attainment	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Less than primary (including no schooling)	4.1	4.5	3.9	3.5	4.2	5.2
Primary	6.2	6.4	3.8	3.9	8.4	8.3
Secondary vocational	-	-	-	-	-	-
Secondary general	7.1	9.5	8.7	6.7	5.5	12.3
Post-secondary vocational	5.8	10.5	8.3	8.3	3.3	12.4
University and postgraduate studies	17.4	12.2	12.3	8.6	21.4	15.2

**Table 11. Unemployed youth by duration of job search and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Duration of job search	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Less than a week	2.4	2.8	0	0	4.0	4.7
1 week to less than 1 month	8.5	14.3	9.3	18.4	7.9	11.6
1 month to less than 3 months	11.0	17.2	15.2	16.9	8.0	17.3
3 months to less than 6 months	15.2	19.2	21.7	21.6	10.5	17.6
6 months to less than 1 year	13.3	7.0	5.6	9.2	18.8	5.5
More than a year	47.3	38.8	44.2	33.9	49.5	42.1
Not classified	2.4	0.7	4.1	0	1.1	1.3
Total unemployed youth	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table 12. Youth population by stages and subcategories of transition and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)**

Stage of transition	Total		Male		Female	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
<b>Transition completed</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>27.0</b>
Transited to stable employment	8.2	11.8	10.6	6.9	6.0	9.1
Transited to satisfactory temporary employment	0.7	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.9
Transited to satisfactory self-employment	13.5	14.2	11.4	19.4	15.5	17.0
<b>In transition</b>	<b>52.8</b>	<b>54.8</b>	<b>49.6</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>56.4</b>
Unemployed (broad definition)	7.7	5.3	4.6	12.7	10.5	9.4
In non-satisfactory temporary employment	4.2	5.2	5.8	2.2	2.7	3.6
In non-satisfactory self-employment	21.5	20.6	18.2	24.1	24.6	22.5
Active students	16.8	22.7	19.8	13.0	14.0	17.4
Inactive non-students with aim to work in the future	2.6	1.1	1.2	5.7	3.9	3.6
<b>Transition not yet started</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>16.6</b>
Inactive students	22.7	17.5	26.1	14.8	19.7	16.0
Inactive non-students with no plans to work in the future	1.9	0.4	1.3	0.8	2.5	0.6
<b>Total youth population</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: Unless other specified, the categories exclude current students.