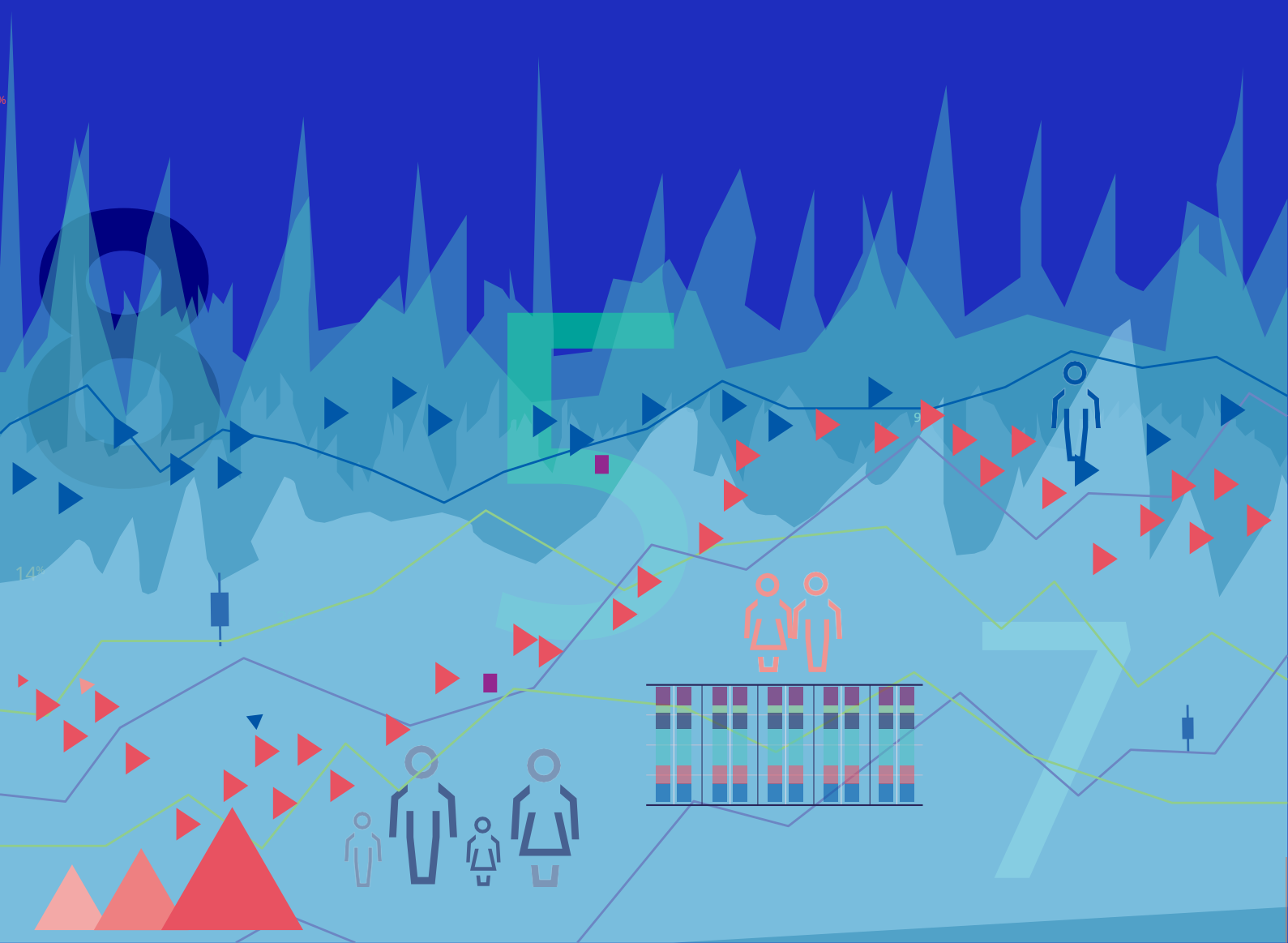




International
Labour
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► Quick guide on the communication of results after implementation of latest standards on statistics of work, employment, and labour underutilization

Practical visualization examples





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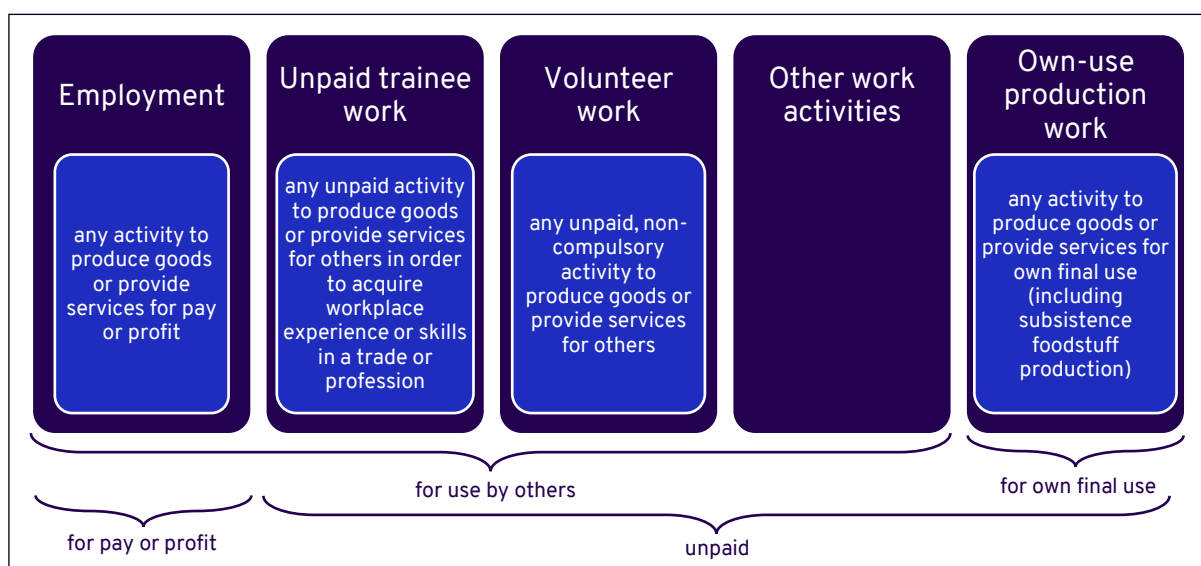
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► Introduction

In 2013, the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) adopted a resolution that laid the foundation for improved statistical labour standards by defining (or redefining) the core concepts used in labour statistics. Indeed, the [Resolution concerning statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Underutilization](#) revised and expanded the previous standards dated 1982 (amended in 2008) and 1998, to improve the measurement of all forms of work and of labour underutilization.

These are some of the key changes introduced by this core resolution:

- It redefines **employment** in a narrower way compared to previous standards, as work done for pay or profit and mainly intended for others. This excludes from employment people participating in subsistence agriculture and other own-use production work, who were previously considered employed.
- It establishes the first international statistical definition of **work**, which refers to any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use.
- Related to the core concept of work, it presents a **forms-of-work framework** distinguishing five forms of work (based on the intended destination of the work and the nature of the transaction): **own-use production work**, **employment**, **unpaid trainee work**, **volunteer work**, and **other work activities**.



- It determines a stricter definition of **unemployment** compared to previous standards. The relaxation of the job-search criterion is no longer accepted, establishing that the unemployed are those who are **not in employment, available for employment and seeking employment**.
- It introduces the concept of the **potential labour force**, comprised of persons outside the labour force (that is, neither employed nor unemployed) who are available for employment but not seeking employment (**available potential jobseekers**) and those seeking but not available (**unavailable jobseekers**). Linked to this, the resolution promotes the study of the degree of labour market attachment of persons outside the labour force.
- It provides additional measures of labour underutilization to complement the previously existing unemployment and time-related underemployment measures, establishing that at least two of the four measures proposed should be used:
 - **LU1** - Unemployment rate,
 - **LU2** - Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment,
 - **LU3** - Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force,
 - **LU4** - Composite measure of labour underutilization.

Thanks to all these improvements in the statistical measurement of people's participation in different forms of work and labour underutilization, the new standards enable a better depiction of the world of work in countries at all stages of development. In particular, the new standards enhance the relevance of labour statistics for particular population groups including [women](#), youth, and [workers in rural areas](#).

The standards adopted by subsequent ICLS should build on this core resolution to tackle specific priorities. In fact, the 20th ICLS held in 2018 updated the classification of status in employment to align with the 19th ICLS standards and better capture diverse and changing work relationships, and the 21st ICLS held in 2023 improved the measurement of the informal economy also in line with the 19th ICLS core resolution.

Implementing the fundamental [Resolution concerning statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Underutilization](#) adopted by the 19th ICLS has great benefits, including enabling a better understanding of the labour market situation and deficits. The improved statistical depiction of people's participation in the labour force and in different forms of work (both paid and unpaid) allows for deeper insights on labour markets' complexities, thus favouring analysis, research, and policymaking.

In fact, in order to have an accurate depiction of the labour market truthfully conveying its nuances and complexities, several key indicators must be used jointly. For instance, instead of analysing the employment-to-population ratio in isolation, it should be complemented with the subsistence foodstuff production rate and the rates of participation in other unpaid work (such as own-use provision of services, unpaid trainee work, and volunteer work). This enables a better assessment of participation in paid and unpaid work, increases visibility on the participation in different forms of work, and the interactions and differences among them. Similarly, complementing the unemployment rate with indicators related to time-related underemployment, the potential labour force, discouraged jobseekers, and the labour market attachment, will provide a much more comprehensive and detailed picture of labour underutilization. The 19th ICLS resolution lays the foundation for such integral analyses based on the use of several complementary indicators. What is more, the ICLS recognizes that single indicators are becoming more and more insufficient to depict a labour phenomenon, thereby setting an increasing trend in the number of core labour market indicators used.

Implementing this resolution entails a thorough revision of the data collection instruments used to produce official labour statistics, notably labour force surveys (LFS), as well as a strategy to ensure measurement of all the forms of work over time. This, in turn, requires resources to ensure a solid survey design adaptation and a smooth transition. To support countries in this implementation, the ILO has developed [a LFS questionnaire toolkit](#), periodically updated based on evidence from [ILO's LFS testing programme](#), emerging good practices, and new needs identified. The toolkit covers the content required to generate key labour market indicators based on the latest standards, as well as modular content for optional coverage of additional topics such as volunteer work and own-use provision of services.

The implementation of the latest labour statistics standards and the associated revision to the LFS (or relevant data collection activity) will improve the knowledge on labour market issues, but in so doing they can also cause breaks in series in key labour indicators. The depth of those breaks will depend on the labour market configuration and characteristics. That is, for example, the narrower employment definition will have a bigger impact on the employment figures of countries with greater prevalence of own-use production work such as subsistence foodstuff production. Likewise, the stricter unemployment definition will have a bigger impact on countries with high prevalence of available potential jobseekers where the relaxed unemployment definition without the job-search criterion was previously used. The benefits of implementing the new standards far outweigh the costs, enabling a more accurate interpretation of individuals' labour force situation with more detailed information on various types of labour underutilization, people's participation in different forms of work, and the pressure they put on the labour market. Nonetheless, the resulting breaks in series may not be well understood or received by users or the public. Therefore, the communication strategy for releasing the results after the implementation of new standards is crucial.

The effective communication of statistics is nothing short of challenging, but it is key to getting the best out of the data. In the context of implementing new standards, it is not only measurement and technical challenges which must be addressed, but communicational challenges as well. This will allow the public to take full profit of the efforts.

This guide aims to provide practical data visualization examples to convey clearly and intuitively the impact of methodological changes on key labour indicators following the implementation of the 19th ICLS resolution and

avoid misinterpretation of the results. For the purposes of providing these charting examples we use [ILOSTAT](#) data, noting that the goal here is not to analyse the data per se but to share ideas of which indicators to present and how. Still, some brief analysis is included to provide pointers of the interpretation of the statistics. The countries selected for the charting examples were chosen for illustration purposes only, with the intention of presenting countries with different labour market configurations to convey different impacts of implementing the new standards.

The ILOSTAT data used in this guide is based on national LFS which have been already updated in line with the 19th ICLS standards. From these surveys, data is published in ILOSTAT in two different databases: one following the 19th ICLS standards and one following the previous (13th ICLS) standards. LFS which implement the new standards are naturally not designed to produce indicators fully aligned with the definitions from the previous standards, but, depending on the questionnaire content, a close conceptual match with previous definitions is generally possible, and for comparability purposes these two databases were created. Therefore, for dissemination in ILOSTAT, some proxies are used, and assumptions are made to produce key labour indicators according to 13th ICLS standards from LFS already implementing 19th ICLS standards. The [Quick guide to understanding the impact of the new statistical standards on ILOSTAT databases](#) explains the organization and contents of these two ILOSTAT databases.

This guide makes use of these proxies to produce indicators based on previous standards from surveys designed following current standards since this is a clear and helpful way to convey which variations are due to labour market fluctuations and which ones are due to the methodological change. Indeed, following the overall objective of avoiding misinterpretation of the results and misrepresentation of the labour market situation, this guide provides charting examples to depict the impact of the new standards on employment, labour force status, and labour underutilization. These types of visualizations can be particularly useful in one-off publications at the time of the introduction of the new standards. This guide also presents data visualization examples to showcase the relevance of the new standards for particular population groups such as women and youth. Finally, it gives a suggestion of a summary table releasing key labour and world-of-work indicators that can provide inspiration for ongoing reporting of the new data series.

► Narrower employment boundaries

When the resolution adopted by the 19th ICLS in 2013 introduced five forms of work, it also revised the definition of employment (a specific form of work done for pay or profit), giving it a narrower delineation directly linked to remuneration. Some workers, such as subsistence farmers and other own-use goods producers who were previously considered employed, are no longer covered by the 2013 employment definition and are now in a separate form of work to be measured and reported on. This narrowing of the employment definition has an impact on key labour indicators such as the employment-to-population ratio and the unemployment rate as well as the informality rate.¹

Indeed, given the narrower employment definition which no longer includes own-use production work such as subsistence foodstuff production, the employment figures will be smaller and so will the employment-to-population ratio (unless there is no or minimal own-use production, in which case the figures will not budge). Also, given the typical situation of foodstuff producers (working in agriculture, in rural areas, long hours, as self-employed, in informality, etc.) their exclusion of the employment definition will also impact employment characteristics such as the share of employees, the share of time-related underemployed, and the share of informal employment. The extent of these impacts depends on the context, including the prevalence of agricultural activities and the degree of urbanization.

Keeping this in mind, when releasing survey results according to latest standards, it is important to present clearly and visually how the employment figures are not comparable with employment figures according to previous standards, for example by complementing them with comparable data on subsistence foodstuff production and by presenting a proxy of key labour indicators based on previous standards alongside.

¹[New standards, increased visibility: improving measurement of the informal economy.](#)

Employment and subsistence foodstuff production

As defined by the 19th ICLS resolution, subsistence foodstuff producers are an important subgroup of own-use producers of goods: all those who perform the activities to produce foodstuff from agriculture, fishing, hunting, and gathering, that contribute to the livelihood of the household or family (excluding those engaged in such production as recreational or leisure activities). The resolution recommends to present statistics on them separately for purposes of monitoring labour market performance, including insufficient access to markets or other factors of production, thus better serving policy needs.

Among other things, the standards recognize that people may engage in multiple activities during the same reference period. For example, an own-use producer may also have employment through other work for pay or profit, or a subsistence farmer may be looking and available for work, thus unemployed. This is highly relevant for policy-making purposes and a significant advancement from the 13th ICLS standards which only assigned all respondents to one of three statuses (employed, unemployed or not economically active), not accounting for participation in other forms of work than employment.

The following charts provide examples of data visualizations presenting the employment figures according to the latest standards alongside the proxy for employment figures according to previous standards and subsistence foodstuff producers (all from the same source and referring to the same time periods, thus being comparable). This presentation conveys clearly and intuitively that employment did not actually go down, but rather that employment is smaller according to the new definition and that people no longer considered employed are participating in a different form of work, worthy of its own analysis.

The LFS questionnaire design determines whether it is possible to distinguish subsistence foodstuff production from other own-use foodstuff production, and whether participation in all own-use production work is measured. The questionnaire flow also determines who the questions to identify subsistence foodstuff production activities are asked to. Ideally, those questions are asked to everyone, therefore allowing for the study of participation in subsistence foodstuff production of the employed, the unemployed, and those outside the labour force.

The following charts on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Myanmar, and Armenia show different ways in which national LFS approach this matter. All these charts convey the impact of the narrowing of the employment definition and communicate clearly on how the previous definition was composed. Comparing the charts, we can see how the extent of the impact of the narrower employment definition differs according to local circumstances. All of these charts also show how employment has increased over time, whether using the 13th ICLS or the 19th ICLS definition. However, the chart on Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that the difference between the new and the previous employment definition refers not only to subsistence foodstuff producers but also to other kinds of own-use producers, whereas in Myanmar this additional own-use production is not measured (the difference refers only to subsistence foodstuff producers). Also, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Myanmar participation in foodstuff production is measured only for those not in employment, whereas in Armenia it is measured for everyone. Therefore, since subsistence foodstuff producers may be also employed, we should be careful not to double-count them when charting employment alongside subsistence foodstuff production. Indeed, the chart for Armenia depicts separately subsistence foodstuff producers who are not in employment and those who do also have a job. This disaggregation of subsistence foodstuff producers by whether or not they are also in employment is highly relevant for policymaking and analytical purposes.

Looking at the chart for Bosnia and Herzegovina, we note that the narrowing of the employment definition did have a certain impact on the employment figures, although not massive. Indeed, in 2021, subsistence foodstuff producers represented around 7 per cent of employment according to the 13th ICLS definition. The chart also shows an increasing trend for employment between 2021 and 2023. Although both employment according to the 13th ICLS and employment according to the 19th ICLS increased in that period, the increase was faster for the former, driven by a notorious increase of subsistence foodstuff producers. While employment according to the 13th ICLS grew by around 6 per cent between 2021 and 2023, employment according to the 19th ICLS grew by around 4 per cent and the number of subsistence foodstuff producers grew by around 32 per cent.

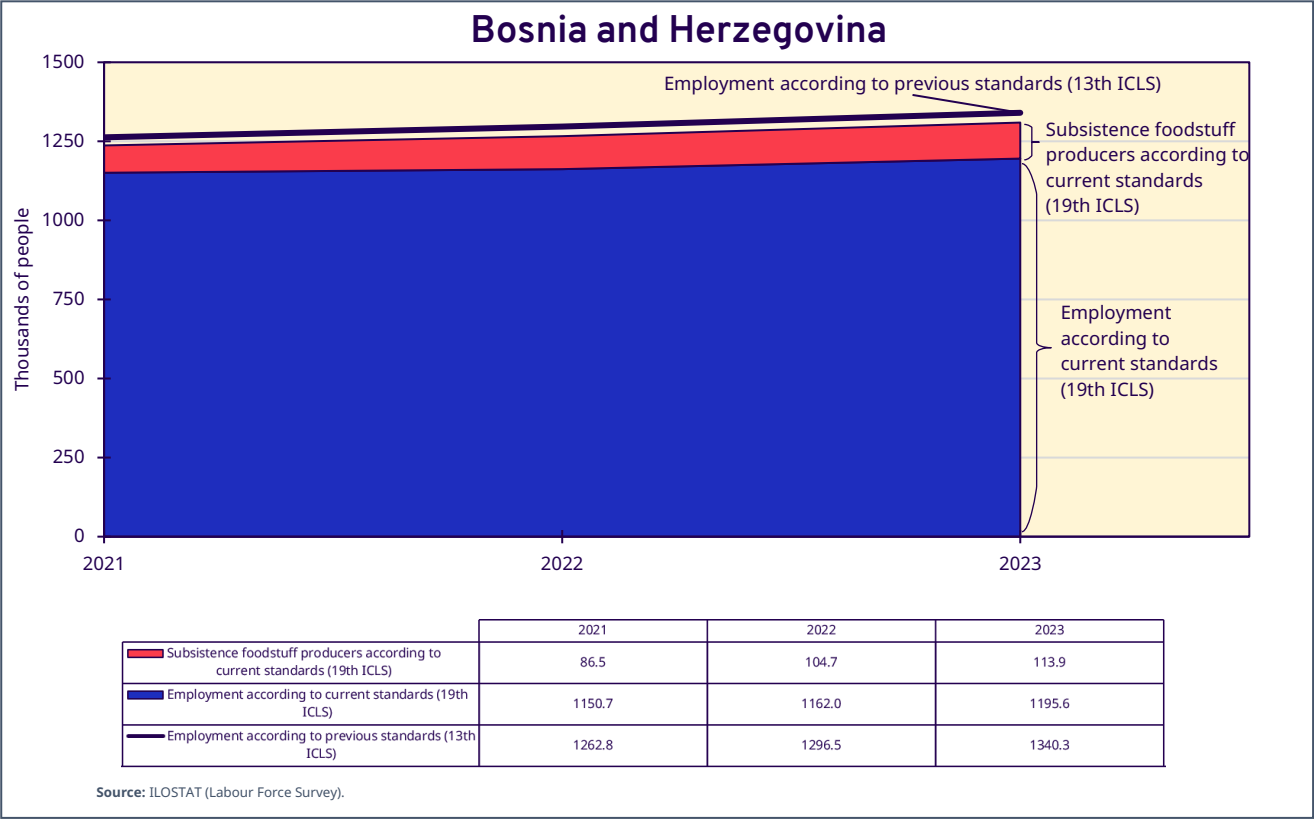
The chart for Myanmar conveys how, in that country, the impact of the new standards on the employment figures was even smaller than in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Subsistence foodstuff producers represented in 2017 a mere 1.5 per cent of employment according to the 13th ICLS standards. Comparing 2017 and 2020, the number of persons in employment has barely moved: employment according to the 13th ICLS standards grew by 0.04 per cent, while

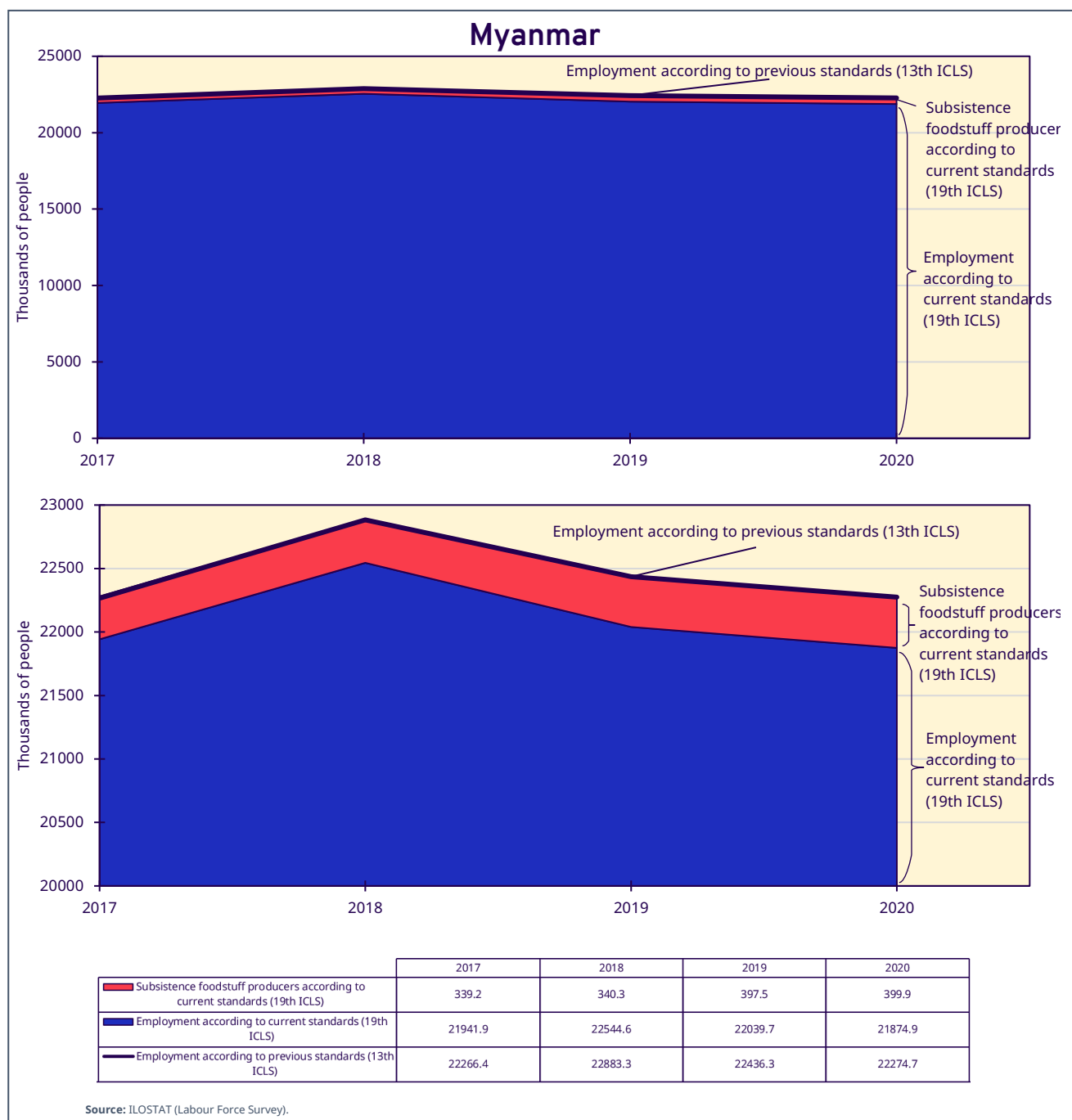
employment according to the 19th ICLS standards declined by 0.3 per cent. The number of subsistence foodstuff producers increased by almost 18 per cent. Although their number is very small in relation to employment figures, their growth rate is still remarkable. Also, although the 2017 and 2020 employment figures do not differ much, the evolution was not constant: there was an initial jump in 2018, when employment according to the 13th ICLS standards grew by almost 3 per cent compared to the previous year, and then a slight decrease the following years to reach close-to-starting levels by 2020.

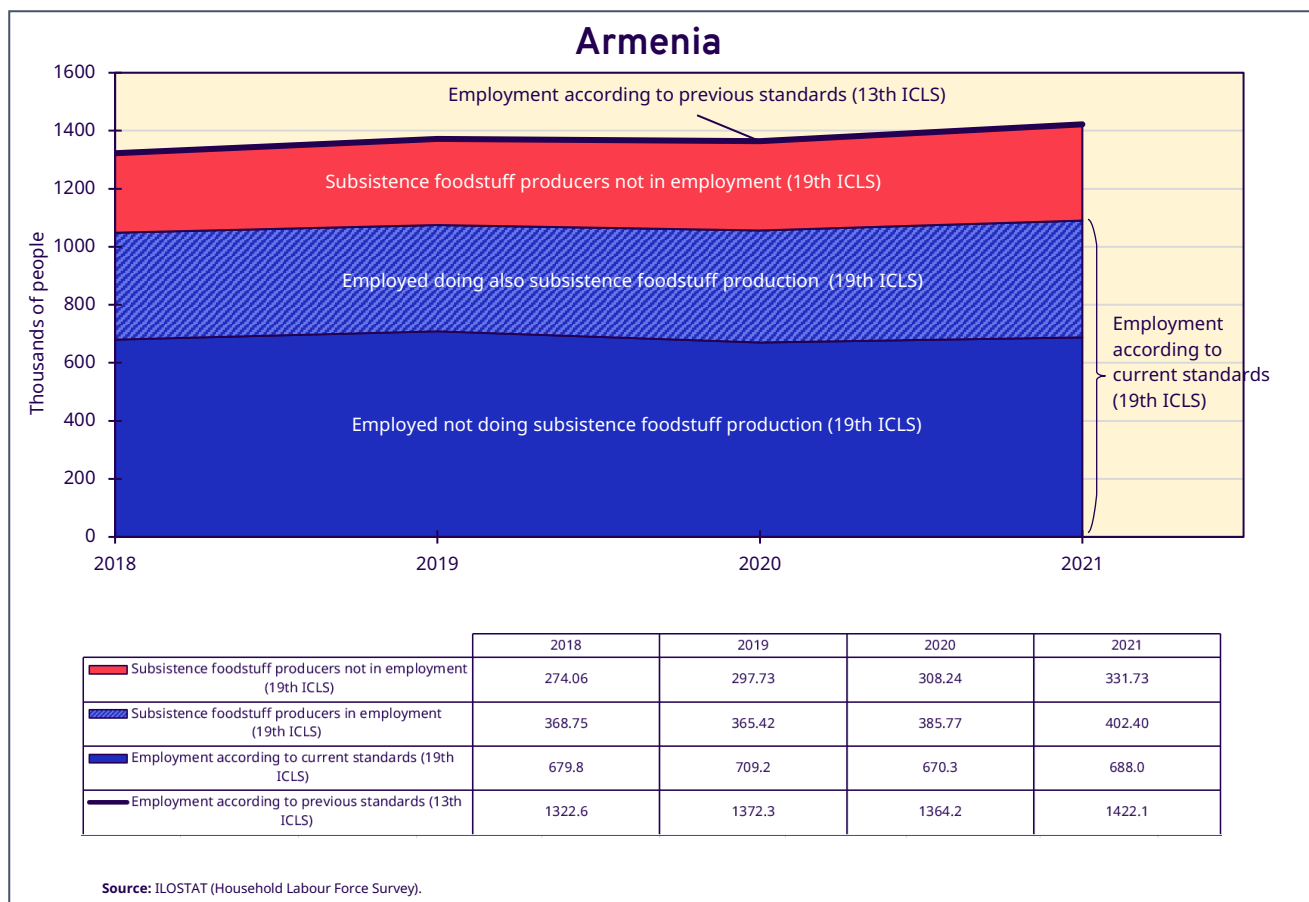
Given how small the number of subsistence foodstuff producers in relation to the number of employed is in Myanmar, it is difficult to read the evolution of these series in a traditional chart with a y-axis starting at 0. Therefore, in the example, we also included a second chart with a truncated y-axis, to cast light on the evolutions and the categories. It is worth noting that, although zooming in on a chart using a truncated y-axis can be useful to put the focus on a particular evolution or phenomenon, it may also be misleading as per their actual magnitude. A good practice to ensure the chart conveys the actual situation avoiding any misrepresentation is to present the traditional chart with a full y-axis starting from 0 accompanied by a second chart zooming in with a truncated y-axis, like we do in the example from Myanmar.

In the case of Armenia, the chart shows that the prevalence of subsistence foodstuff producers is much more significant than in the other countries used as examples, and therefore, the impact of the narrowing of the employment definition is bigger. In 2021, subsistence foodstuff producers (not in employment) represented a little over 23 per cent of employment according to the 13th ICLS definition, implying that employment according to the 19th ICLS represents only around 77 per cent of employment according to the 13th ICLS. This casts light on how the previous definition was pooling together individuals in very different work situations and with very different working conditions and how the new standards reveal the differentiated situation of subsistence foodstuff producers. The chart also conveys that employment, whether measured by 13th or 19th ICLS standards, has increased between 2018 and 2021. Just like in the case of the other countries used as examples, the increase was faster for employment according to the 13th ICLS than according to the 19th, driven by a notorious increase of subsistence foodstuff producers. While employment according to the 13th ICLS grew by around 7.5 per cent between 2018 and 2021, employment according to the 19th ICLS grew by around 4 per cent and the number of subsistence foodstuff producers (not in employment) grew by around 21 per cent. This fast increase in subsistence foodstuff producers (not in employment) is an interesting pattern to consider for policymaking.

The case of Armenia presents the added possibility of analysing the disaggregation of subsistence foodstuff producers by whether or not they are also in employment. This analytical added value is useful for policymaking purposes, since understanding the tendency to participate simultaneously in multiple activities (such as employment and subsistence foodstuff production) can better inform policy formulation. In Armenia, in 2018, around 57 per cent of subsistence foodstuff producers of working age were also in employment. This proportion decreased slightly to a little under 55 per cent in 2021 (in relation with the fast growth of subsistence foodstuff producers not in employment mentioned above). That is, more than half of all subsistence foodstuff producers have a job in addition to their own-use production activity. Also, in 2018, around 35 per cent of those employed (according to new standards) were participating also in subsistence foodstuff production, and their proportion increased to almost 37 per cent in 2021.

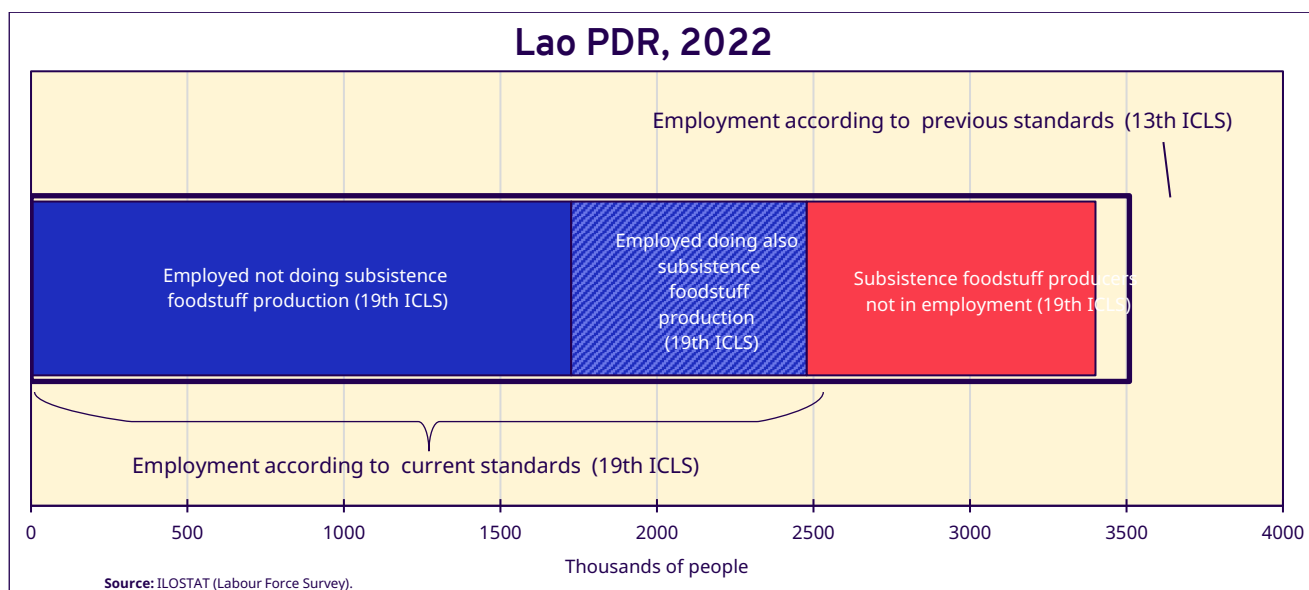






In the three examples presented above, line charts were chosen for the purposes of depicting the evolution over time. Indeed, as explained in more detail in [Visualizing Labour Markets: A quick guide to charting labour statistics](#), line charts are par excellence the type of chart to visualize timeseries.

If the goal is, however, not to visualize a timeseries, but rather one or two data points, other chart types can be used instead. The example below uses a stacked bar chart to visualize the same data items as before (employment according to two definitions and subsistence foodstuff producers) for a single data point for Lao PDR.



Looking at the chart on Lao PDR we note that, in that country, the narrowing of the employment definition had a massive impact, given the very high prevalence of subsistence foodstuff production. In 2022, subsistence foodstuff producers (not in employment) represented a little over 26 per cent of employment according to the 13th ICLS definition and other own-use producers of goods represented an additional 3 per cent, implying that employment according to the 19th ICLS represented only around 71 per cent of employment according to the 13th ICLS. This means that around 29 per cent of all individuals previously considered employed were actually not working for pay or profit. The new standards allow to make their situation visible, highlighting the difference in working and living conditions between people doing paid work and those working without pay for own use. This analytical added value enables targeted policymaking for each group given their differentiated circumstances.

In the case of Lao PDR, we can also analyse the disaggregation of subsistence foodstuff producers by whether or not they are simultaneously in employment. In Lao PDR, in 2022, around 45 per cent of subsistence foodstuff producers of working age were also in employment. Also, around 30 per cent of those employed (according to new standards) were participating also in subsistence foodstuff production.

Subsistence foodstuff producers

The 19th ICLS resolution recommends to present statistics on subsistence foodstuff producers separately for purposes of monitoring labour market performance, including insufficient access to markets or other factors of production, thus better serving policy needs. The statistics to be presented on subsistence foodstuff producers include headcounts and rates computed in relation to the working-age population, both of them applying all relevant disaggregations given national circumstances (such as gender, age groups, urban/rural areas, etc.). As mentioned before, it is also valuable to present the number and rate of subsistence food stuff producers disaggregated by their labour force status (that is, whether they are in employment -in addition to own-use production work-, unemployment, or outside the labour force).

In countries where subsistence foodstuff production is prevalent, it is recommended to produce statistics on it at the same frequency as on employment and the employment-to-population ratio, and to include them in a table of headline indicators, supplementing it with additional (more detailed) tables.

The charts below present visualization examples of the number of subsistence foodstuff producers and their distribution by labour force status, and the subsistence foodstuff production rate (calculated in relation to the working-age population). These charts include also some key disaggregations, namely by gender, age group, and rural/urban. They are presented for two different countries (Armenia and Lao PDR), to cast light on different prevalences and compositions of subsistence foodstuff production.

In Lao PDR in 2022, we note that there were 1.7 million subsistence foodstuff producers, the vast majority of them (unsurprisingly) in rural areas (82 per cent). There does not seem to be a gender pattern in the participation in subsistence foodstuff production: 51 per cent of subsistence foodstuff producers are women, while this is the same proportion that women represent in the working-age population. However, we do see a gender pattern in the labour force status of subsistence foodstuff producers. While 57 per cent of female subsistence foodstuff producers were outside the labour force, the share was 50 per cent for male. While 42 per cent of female subsistence foodstuff producers were simultaneously in employment, the share was 48 per cent for male. It is also interesting to note the higher likelihood of subsistence foodstuff producers to be also in employment in urban areas: 54 per cent of subsistence foodstuff producers have also a job in urban areas, compared to only 43 per cent in rural areas.

The second chart for Lao PDR shows that, in 2022, 31 per cent of the working-age population participated in subsistence foodstuff production (whether exclusively or in conjunction with other work). The incidence of subsistence foodstuff production does not change much by gender: the subsistence foodstuff production rate was 31 per cent for women and 31 per cent for men. Youth have a much lower participation rate of 28 per cent. In Lao PDR, subsistence foodstuff production is notoriously more prevalent in rural areas, where the participation rate is 39 per cent, compared to only 17 per cent for urban areas.

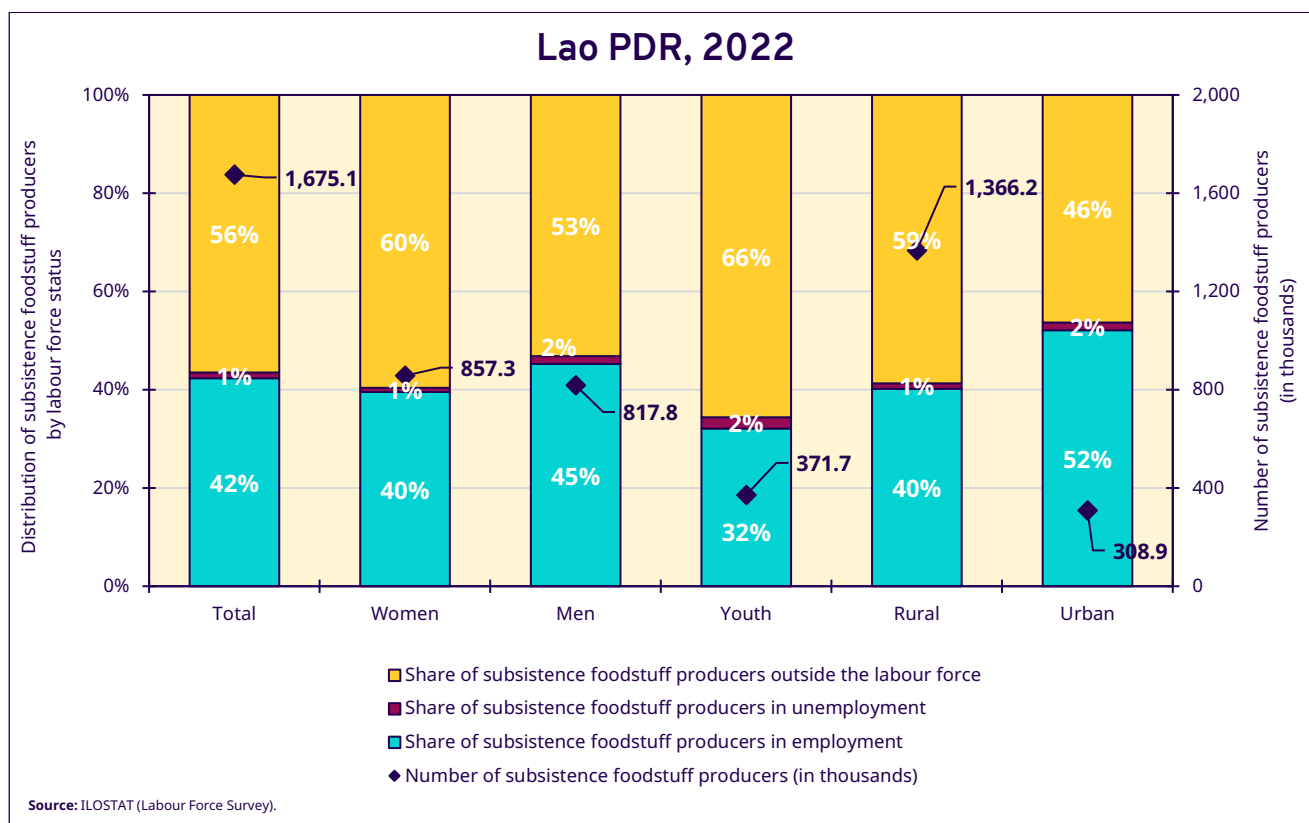
In Armenia in 2021, we note that there were around 734 thousand subsistence foodstuff producers. Although just like in Lao PDR the vast majority of them live in rural areas, the proportion is less extensive in Armenia (73 per cent). Also in contrast with Lao PDR, in Armenia we do notice a strong gender pattern in the participation in subsistence foodstuff production: in 2021, 67 per cent of subsistence foodstuff producers were women in Armenia, while they represent 55 per cent of the working-age population. The gender pattern is also accentuated on the labour force

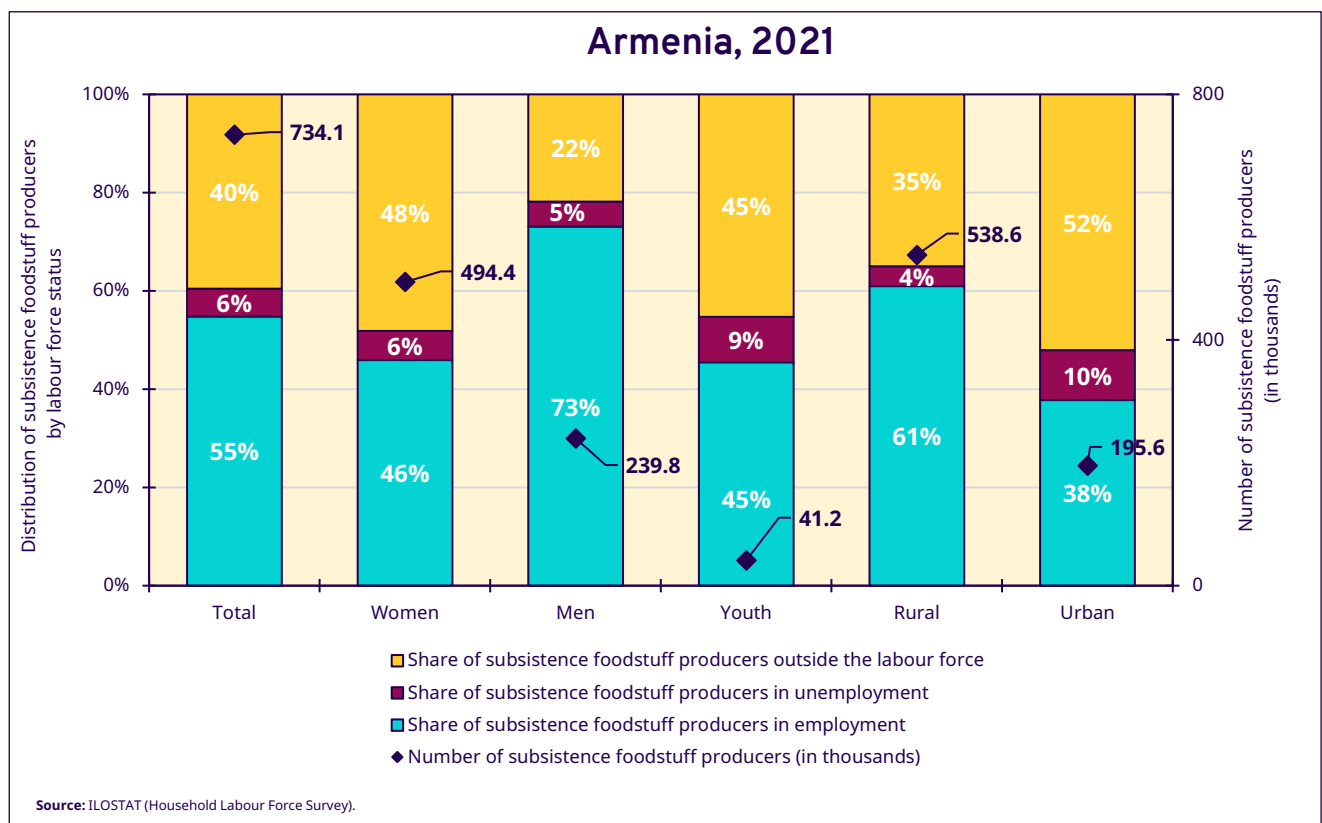
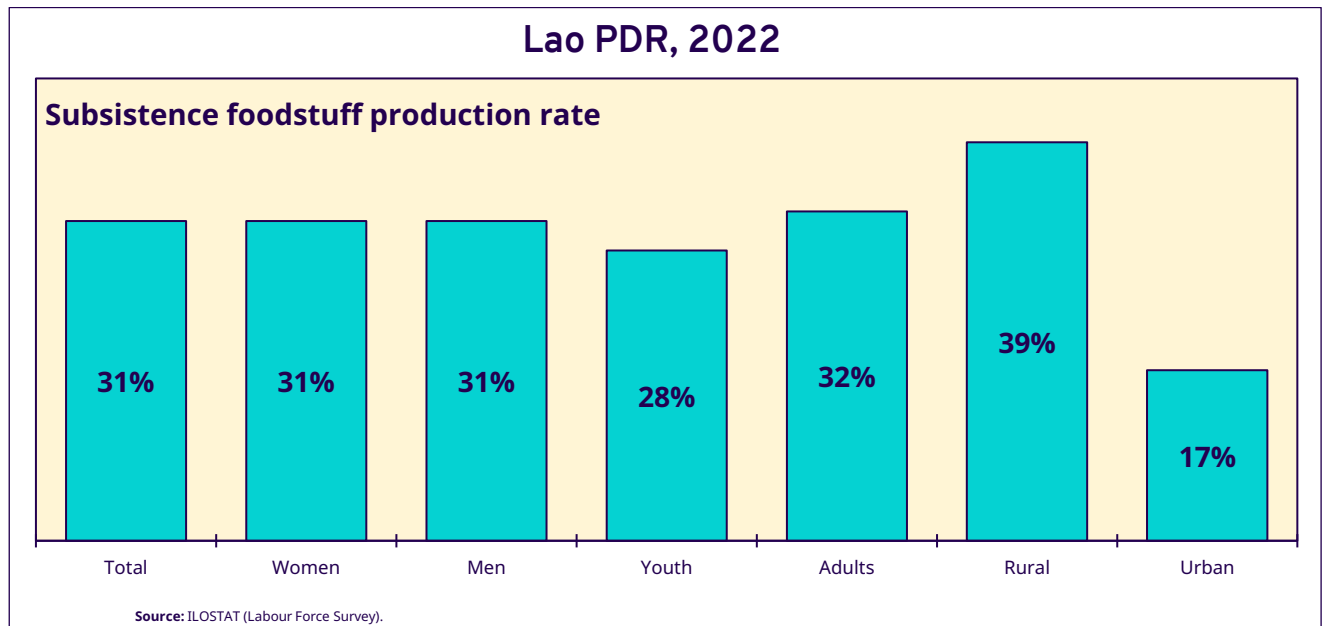
status of subsistence foodstuff producers. While 48 per cent of female subsistence foodstuff producers were outside the labour force, the share was 22 per cent for male. While 46 per cent of female subsistence foodstuff producers were simultaneously in employment, the share was a massive 73 per cent for male.

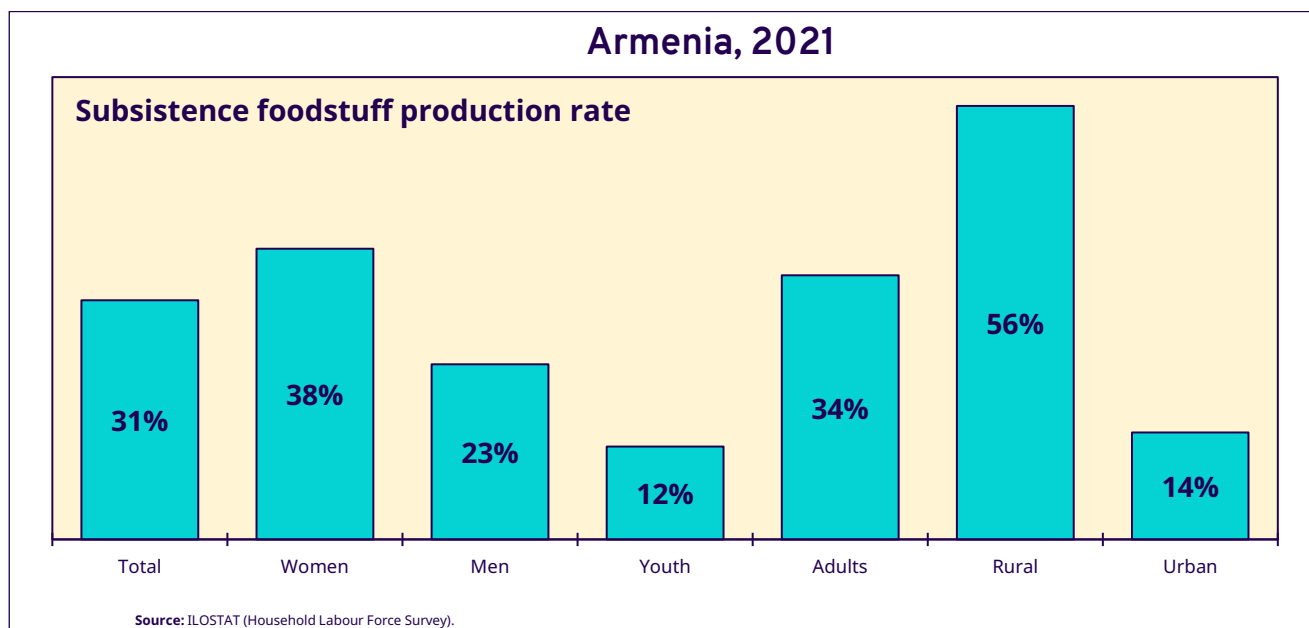
It is worth noting that, compared to Lao PDR, subsistence foodstuff producers in Armenia have a higher likelihood of being also in employment (55 per cent in Armenia in 2021 compared to 45 per cent in Lao PDR).

Contrary to what we saw for Lao PDR, in Armenia subsistence foodstuff producers in rural areas are more likely to be also in employment than those in urban areas: 38 per cent of subsistence foodstuff producers have also a job in urban areas, compared to 61 per cent in rural areas.

The second chart for Armenia shows that, in 2021, 31 per cent of the working-age population participated in subsistence foodstuff production (whether exclusively or in conjunction with other work). While the subsistence foodstuff production rate stood at 38 per cent for women, it scored only 23 per cent for men. Youth have a much lower participation rate of 12 per cent. Just as in Lao PDR, in Armenia subsistence foodstuff production is also notoriously more prevalent in rural areas, where the participation rate is 56 per cent, compared to only 14 per cent for urban areas.







Key employment characteristics

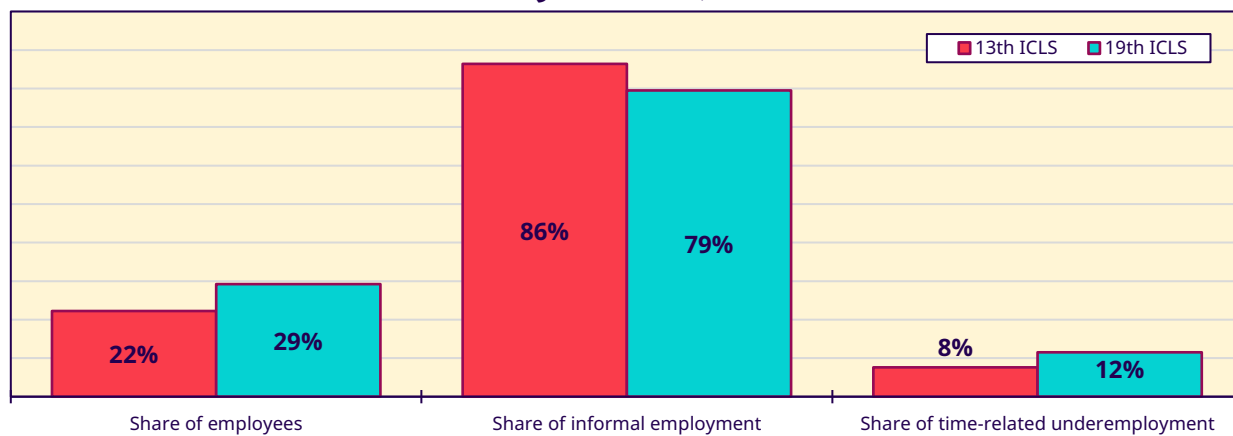
As previously stated, the narrower employment definition established in the 19th ICLS resolution also has an impact on employment composition, associated with the characteristics of those previously considered employed and no longer so.

For instance, data available in ILOSTAT for 79 countries show that persons considered employed under the previous standards who are no longer deemed employed under the 19th ICLS standards tended to be in informal employment. Hence, restricting the employment definition resulted in a smaller informal employment share. The extent of this impact depends on national contexts, but for 41 countries with available data, the informality rate is higher under previous employment measurement standards than under the 19th ICLS employment definition. For the remaining 38 countries with available data, the narrowing of the employment definition had no impact on employment statistics or informal employment statistics (since those countries are thought to have no workers in the situations previously considered employment and no longer so).²

Similarly, workers previously considered employed but no longer covered by the new employment definition have a lower tendency to be in time-related underemployment and to be employees, implying that the implementation of new standards typically leads to an increase in the time-related underemployment rate and the share of employees. The following charts show some examples of this for some countries with available data.

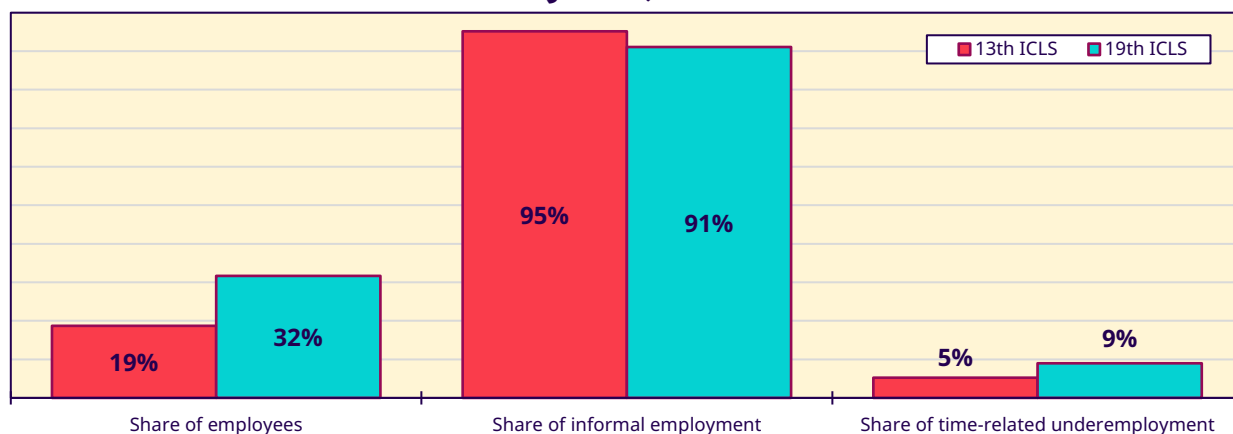
² <https://ilostat.ilo.org/blog/new-standards-increased-visibility-improving-measurement-of-the-informal-economy/>

Afghanistan, 2021



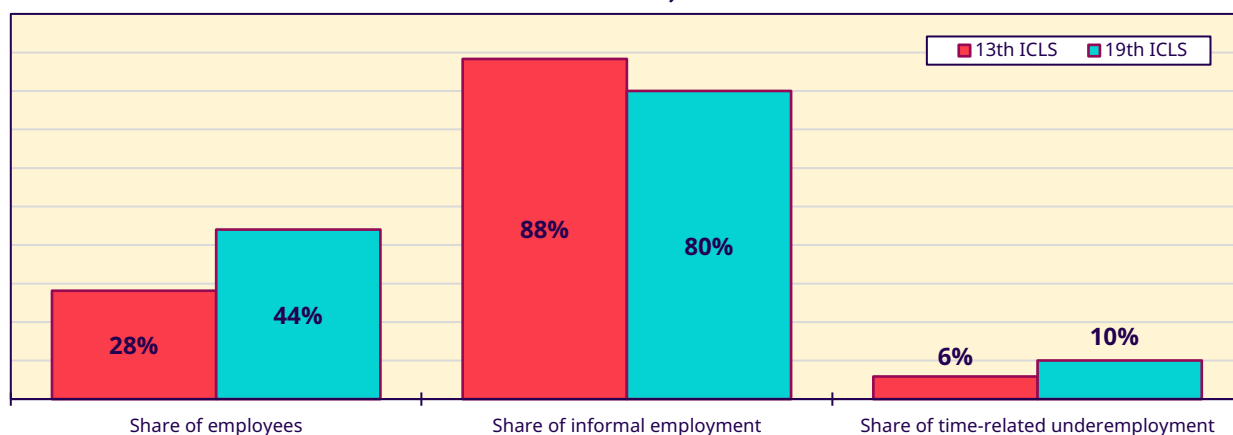
Source: ILOSTAT (Labour Force Survey).

Uganda, 2021



Source: ILOSTAT (National Labour Force Survey).

Zimbabwe, 2022



Source: ILOSTAT (Labour Force Survey).

► Labour force status of the working-age population

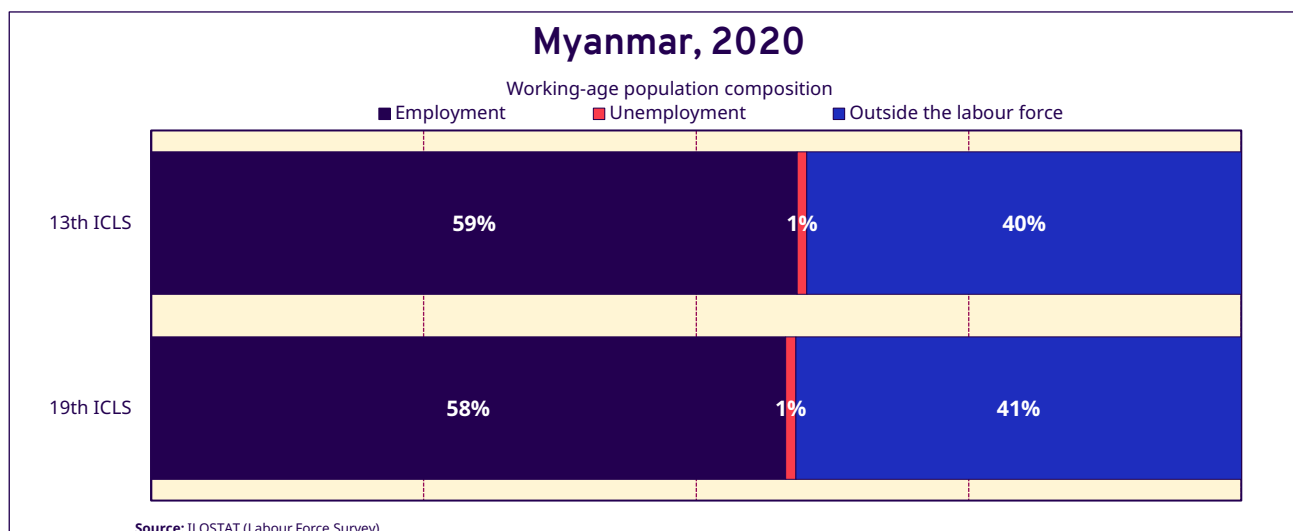
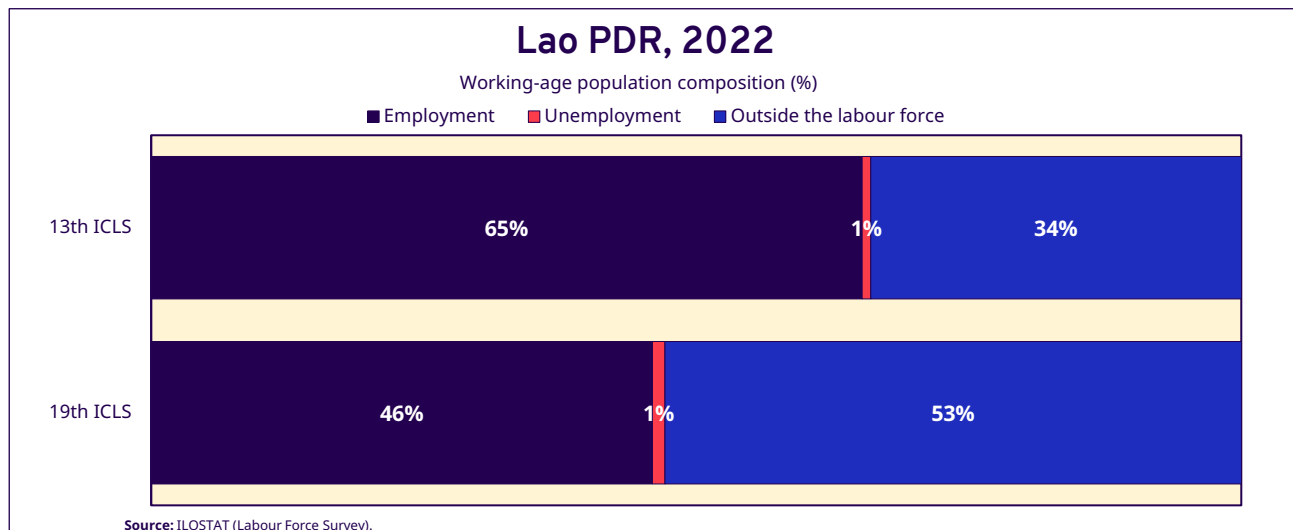
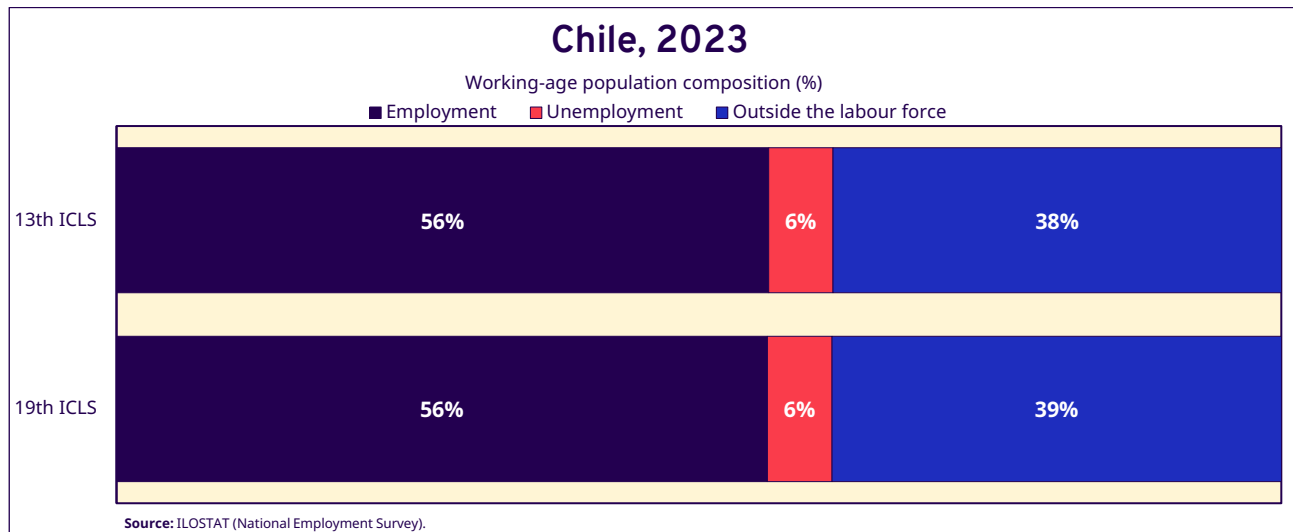
The 19th ICLS resolution introduces two core frameworks to study the working-age population: the forms of work and the labour force status. The working-age population can be classified according to individuals' main form of work (employment, own-use production, volunteer work, unpaid trainee work or other work activities) or to their labour force status (employment, unemployment or outside the labour force). People can participate in several forms of work at once (although one would be their main form of work), and as proposed in the standards it is essential to produce statistics on rates of participation and time spent in different forms of work at some frequency. Unlike participation in the different forms of work, the three categories of labour force status are mutually exclusive, meaning that individuals will be unequivocally assigned one and only one labour force status. Employment is both a form of work and a labour force status: people who are not in employment may or may not be in other forms of work, but regardless, they will be classified as unemployed or outside the labour force depending on whether they are available and seeking employment.

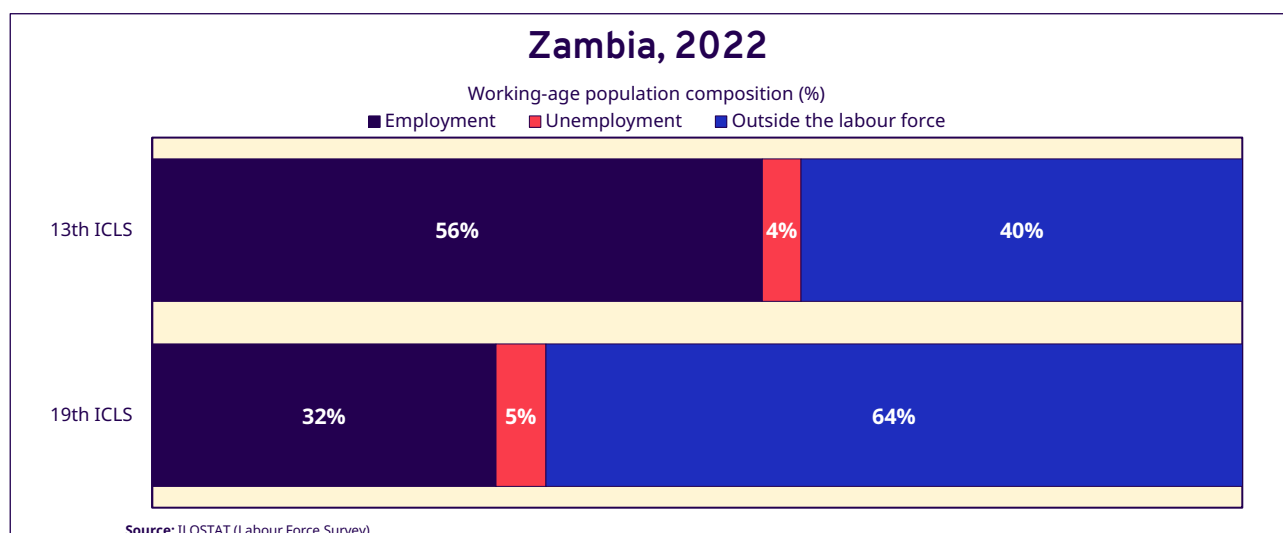
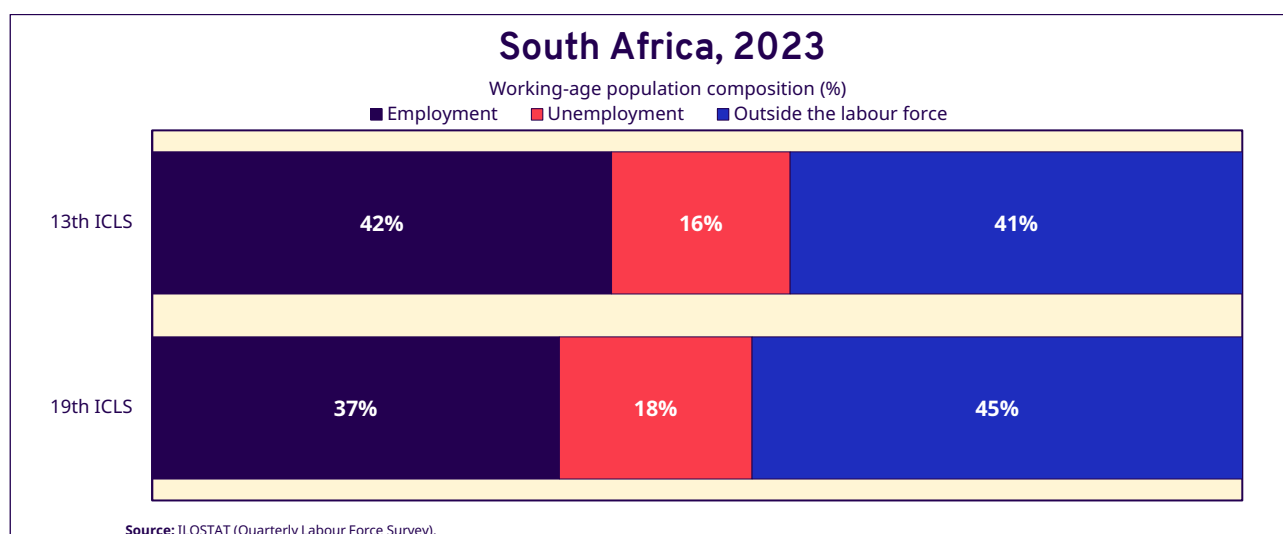
The narrowing of the employment definition has an impact on the composition of the working-age population by labour force status: those previously considered employed (who are no longer so) will be either unemployed or outside the labour force under new standards. The following charts present examples of the extent and nature of this impact in a number of countries with available data. In some, the impact is almost marginal, while in others the impact is significant. Where the impact is significant, this typically implies an increase of the share of persons outside the labour force, since those previously considered employed (subsistence foodstuff producers and other own-use production workers) do not tend to be available for and seeking employment (therefore will not be in unemployment). However, in some countries such as South Africa, the methodological change may lead to a significant increase in the unemployment share of the working-age population.

It is worth noting that the distribution or composition of the working-age population by labour force status gives three indicators: the share of employment in the working-age population is actually the employment-to-population ratio, the share of unemployment in the working-age population is actually the unemployment-to-population ratio, and the share of persons outside the labour force in the working-age population is actually the inactivity rate. The sum of these three amounts to 100 per cent, since they are all calculated with respect to the same denominator and represent the three mutually-exclusive categories of that denominator. The unemployment-to-population ratio is not to be confused with the unemployment rate, which is calculated as a percentage of the labour force and not of the working-age population. The unemployment rate being the widely-recognized headline indicator, in order to avoid confusion, it is best not to disseminate also the unemployment-to-population ratio (except as part of the working-age population composition by labour force status) or it should be done communicating clearly the difference.

In the following charts we can see that the impact of the new standards implementation on the distribution by labour force status was minimal in Chile, modest in Myanmar, a little larger but still moderate in South Africa, and significant in Lao PDR and Zambia. Among the countries used here as example, Lao PDR and Zambia are also the two with the largest proportion of people outside the labour force according to the 19th ICLS resolution.

In most of our country examples, the decrease in the share of employed due to the narrowing of the employment definition resulted in an almost proportional increase in the share of people outside the labour force, with no or minimal change in the share of unemployed. However, this was not the case for Zambia and South Africa, where both the share of unemployed and the share of those outside the labour force increased with the narrowing of the employment definition. This highlights the analytical relevance of the new standards: enough subsistence foodstuff producers previously considered employed were actually declaring being available for and actively seeking employment to budge the unemployment figures. The previous standards were failing to convey the true reality of these individuals, whose situation can now be better reflected in policymaking.





► Labour underutilization

One of the key strengths of the resolution adopted by the 19th ICLS is the introduction of new measures of labour underutilization, with the recognition that there is labour underutilization not only among the unemployed (explicitly) but also among the employed (when they are in time-related underemployment) and those outside the labour force (when they are in the potential labour force).

Data visualizations conveying the impact of the new standards on each type of labour underutilization and those charting various headline labour underutilization indicators together highlight the analytical value of the 19th ICLS resolution.

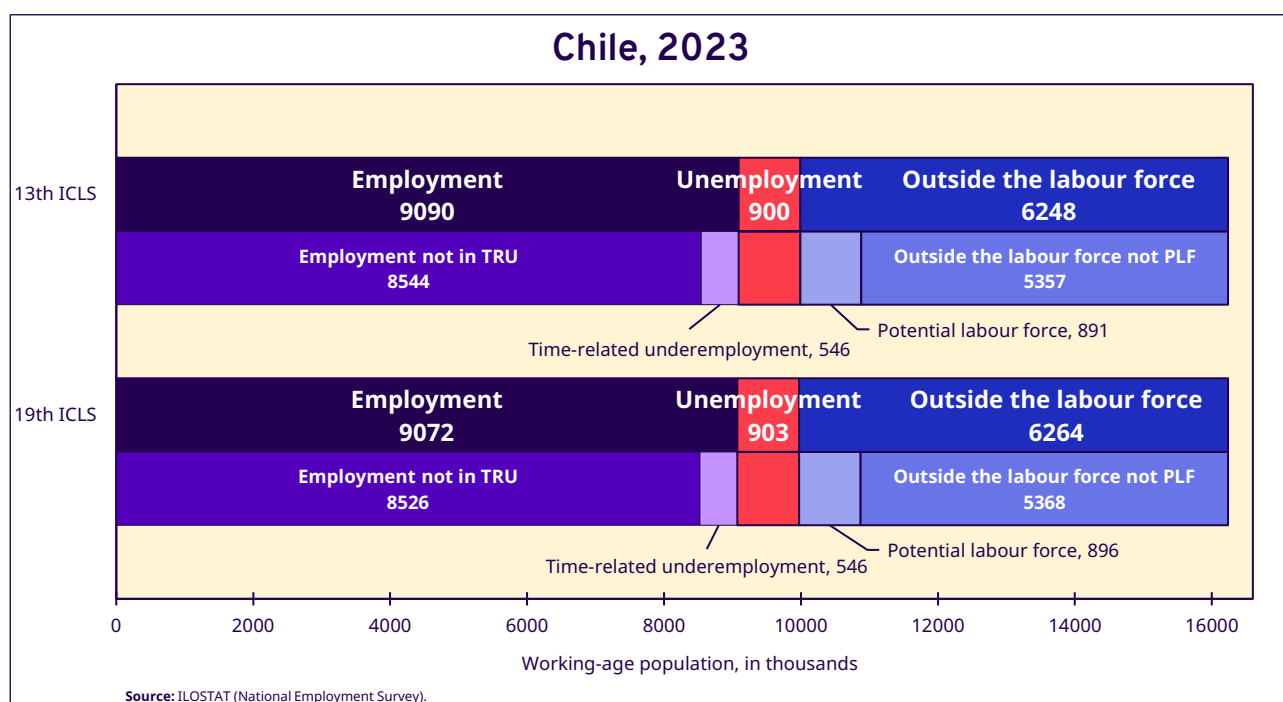
Labour force status of the working-age population and labour underutilization

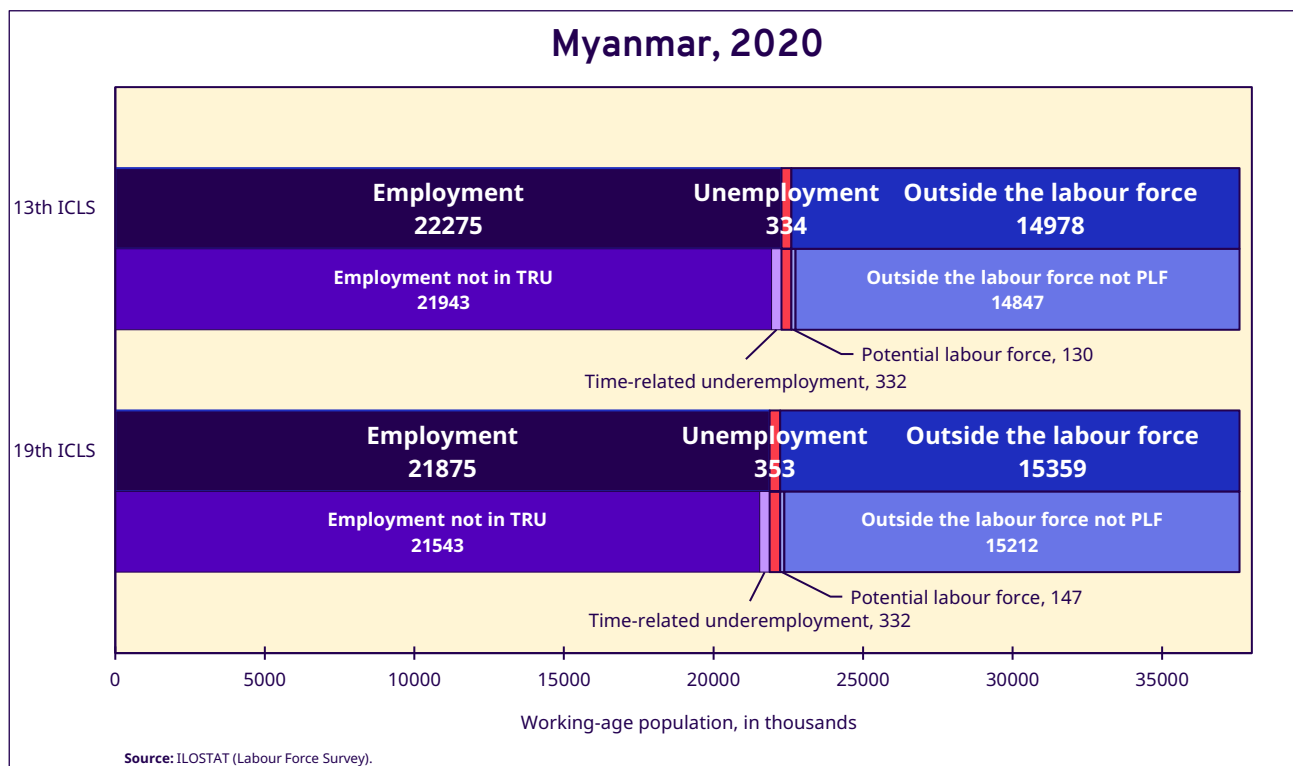
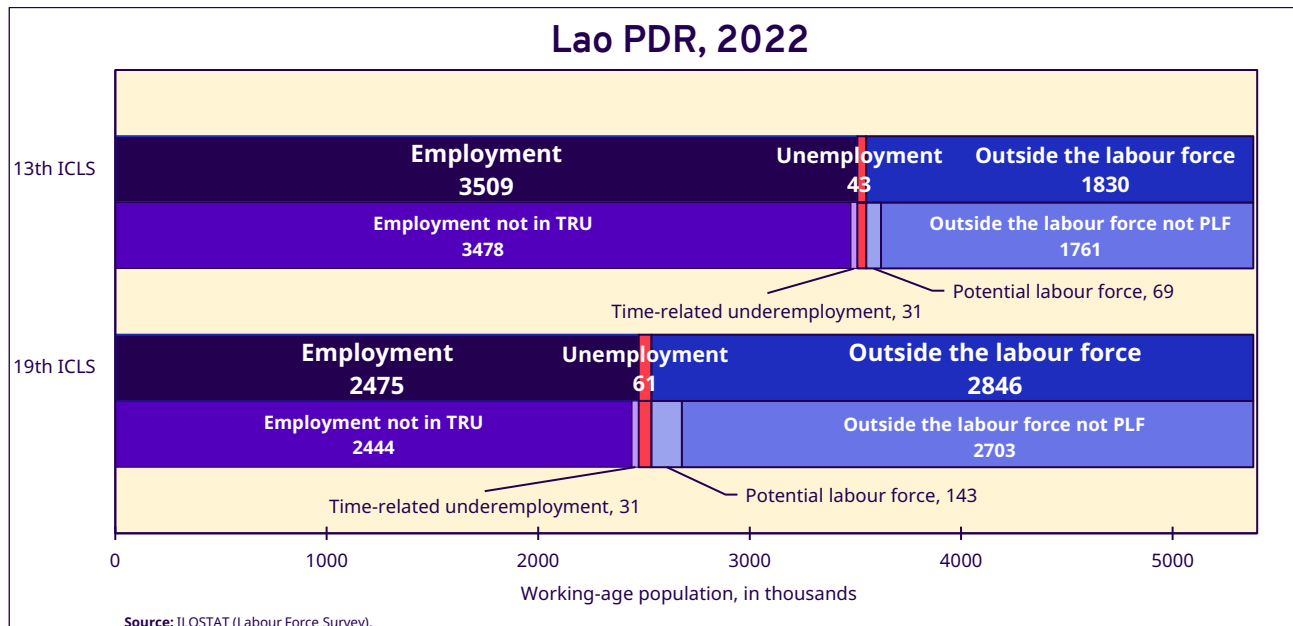
The following charts show how the composition by labour force status of the working-age population changed with the 19th ICLS standards, but also how the prevalence and composition of labour underutilization changed as well. Once again, these changes vary according to the context and labour market characteristics, as seen in the different country examples.

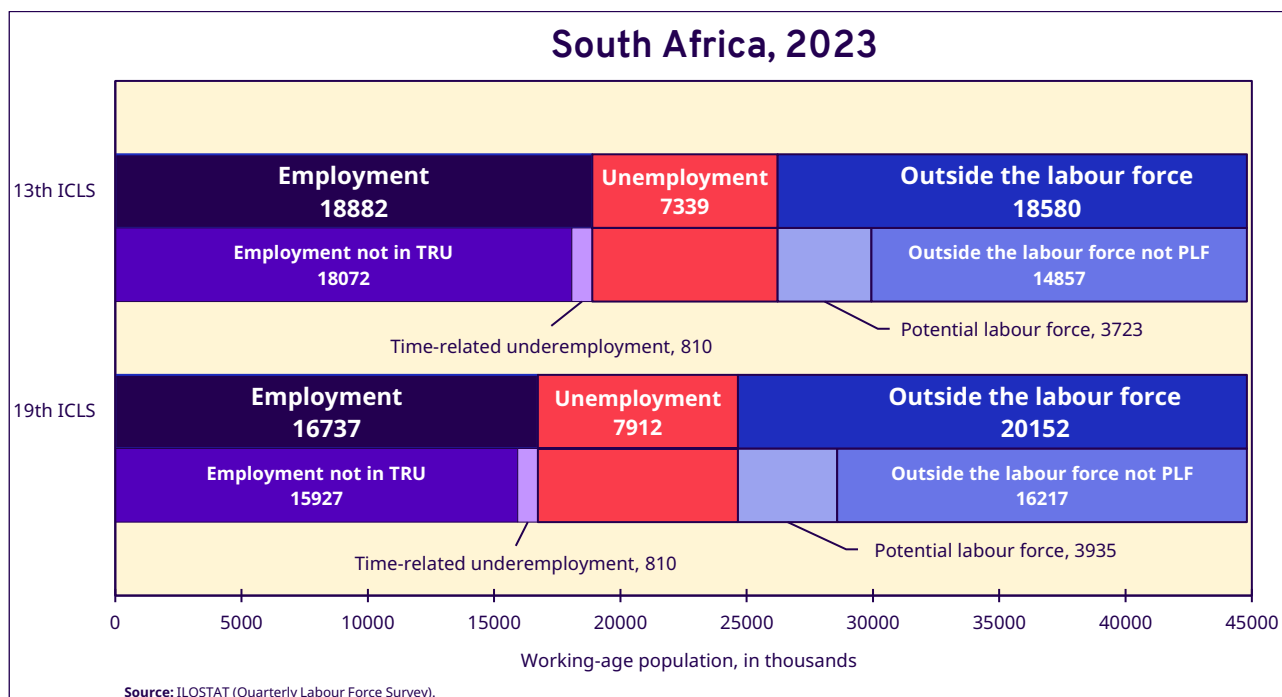
In doing labour market analysis, both headcounts and rates are valuable, as they each contribute a key piece of information. To provide a mix of possibilities, since the previous charts on labour force status were based on the distribution, the charts presented next visualize volumes (headcounts). Indeed, the absolute numbers convey the extent of the phenomena.

Looking at these charts, we note that, the prevalence of labour underutilization is rather small in Myanmar and Lao PDR, but larger in Chile, and significant in South Africa. Also, the impact of the new standards in terms of labour underutilization categories was seen in almost all example countries in an extension of the potential labour force (with minimal change in time-related underemployment and unemployment), with the exception of South Africa, where the number of unemployed increased more strongly than elsewhere following the narrowing of the employment definition.

Once again, the new standards allow for a more accurate depiction of people's situation to inform targeted policymaking. Indeed, those who were previously considered employed but are now in the potential labour or in unemployment are certainly expressing a need and desire for employment, overlooked when they were considered in employment although they did not receive pay or profit from their work.





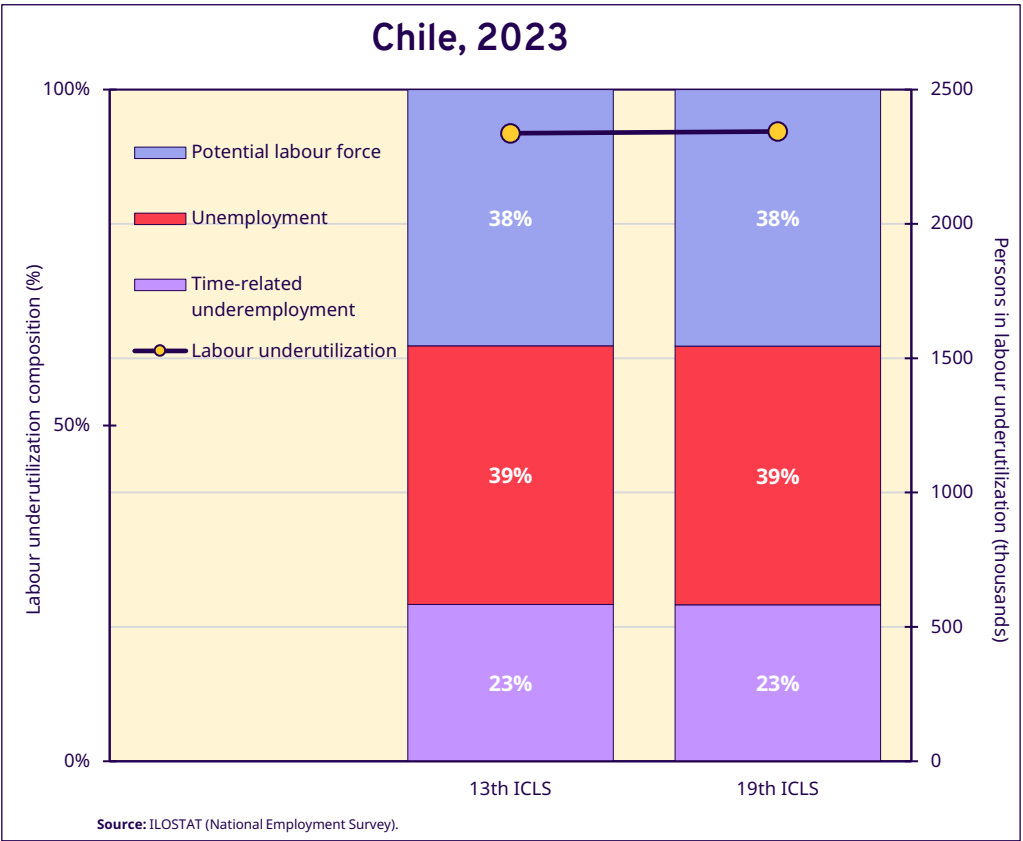
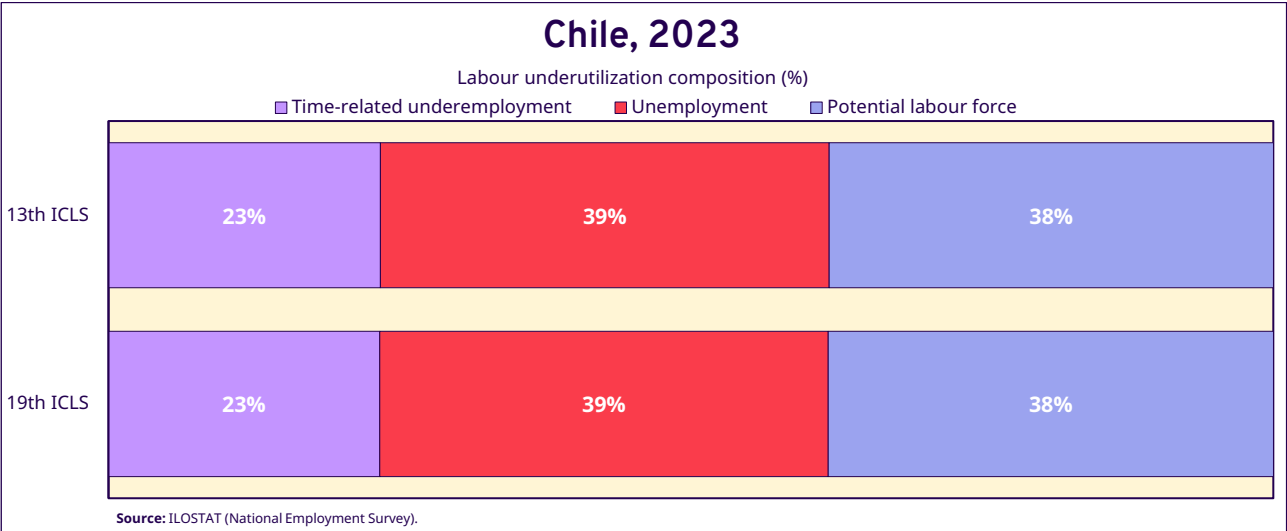


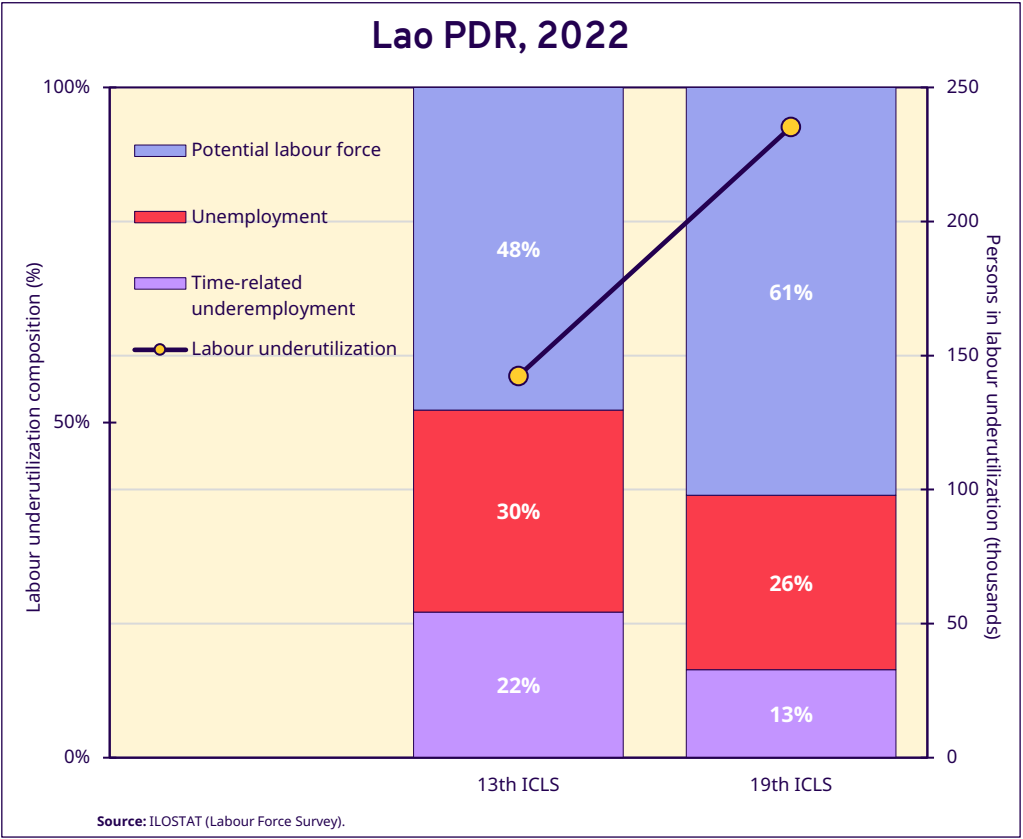
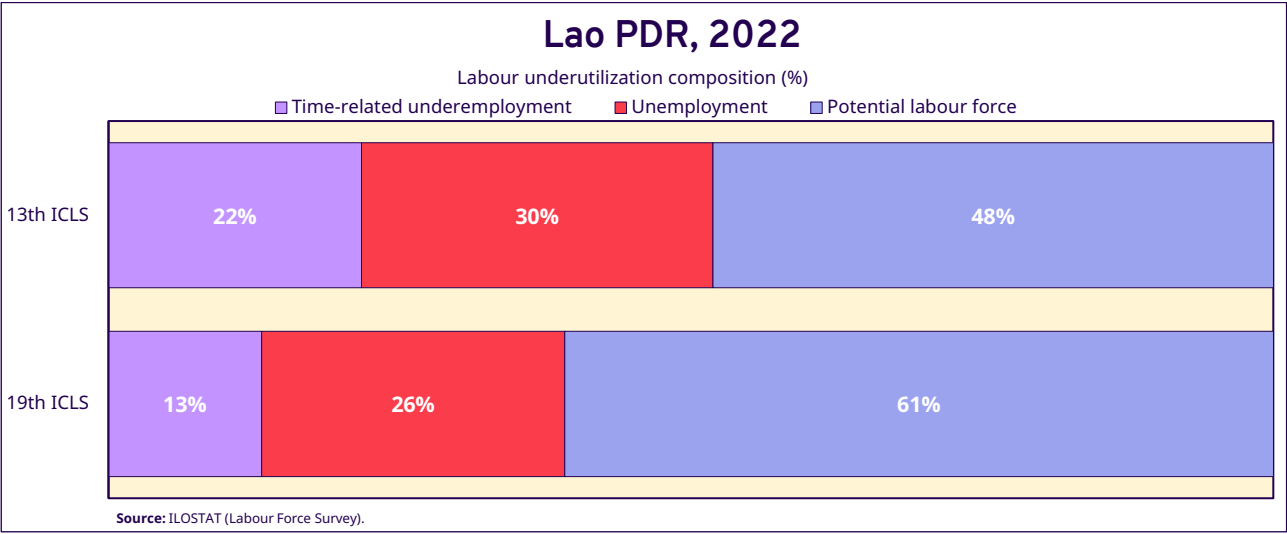
Labour underutilization composition

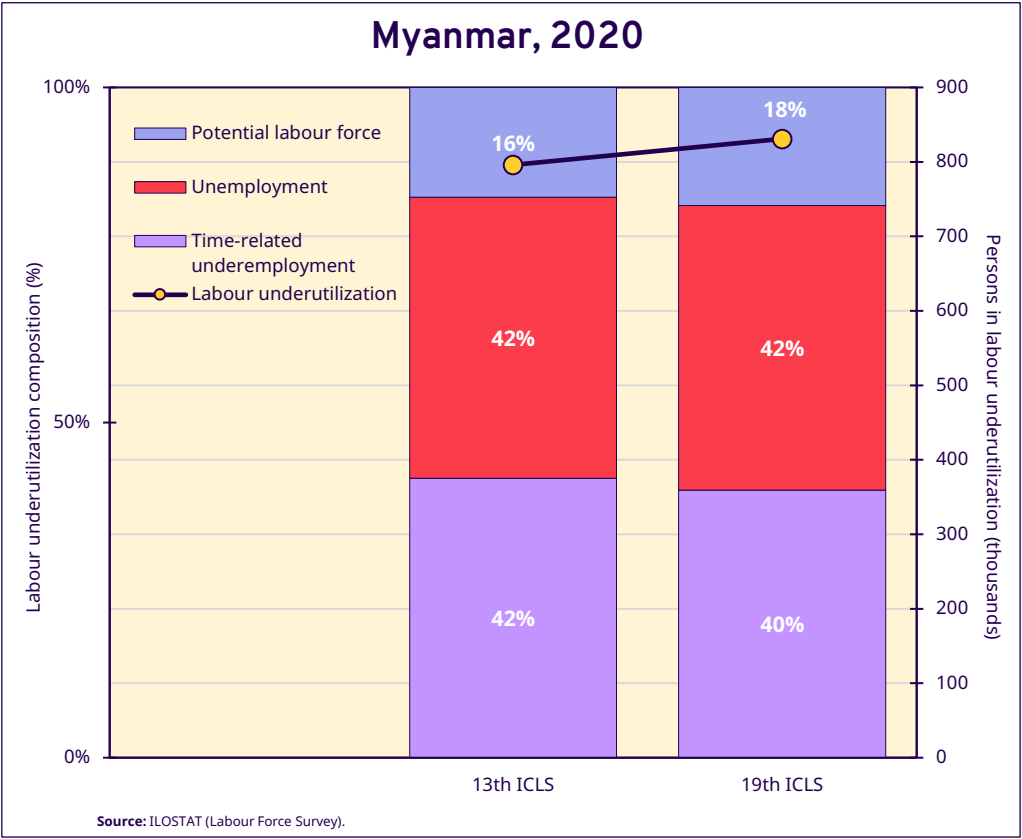
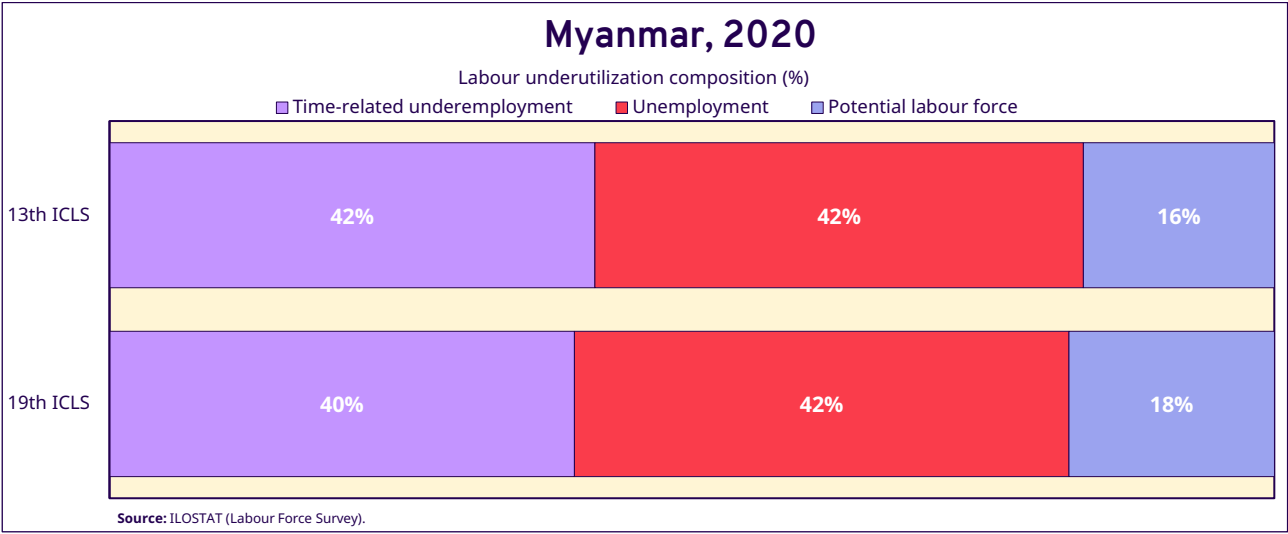
It can also be telling to analyze the impact of implementing the new definitions on the prevalence of labour underutilization and its composition by category of labour underutilization (time-related underemployment, unemployment, and the potential labour force). The following charts provide data visualizations conveying this impact, and how it differs from one country to the next according to the context.

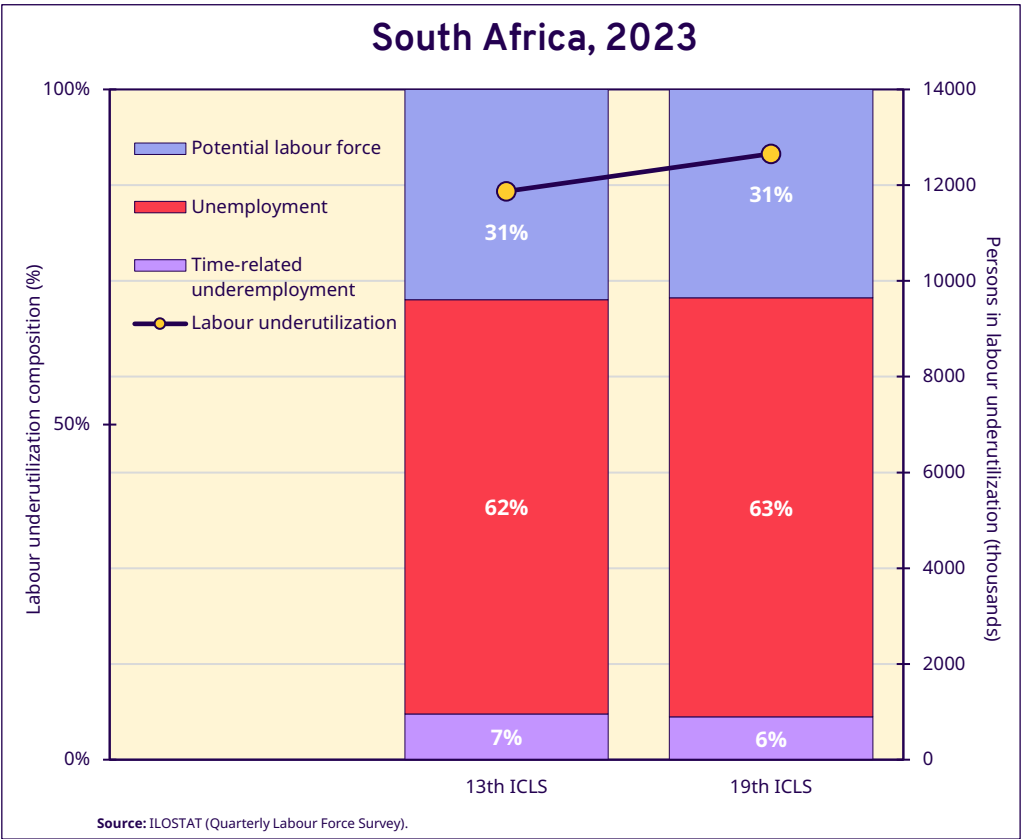
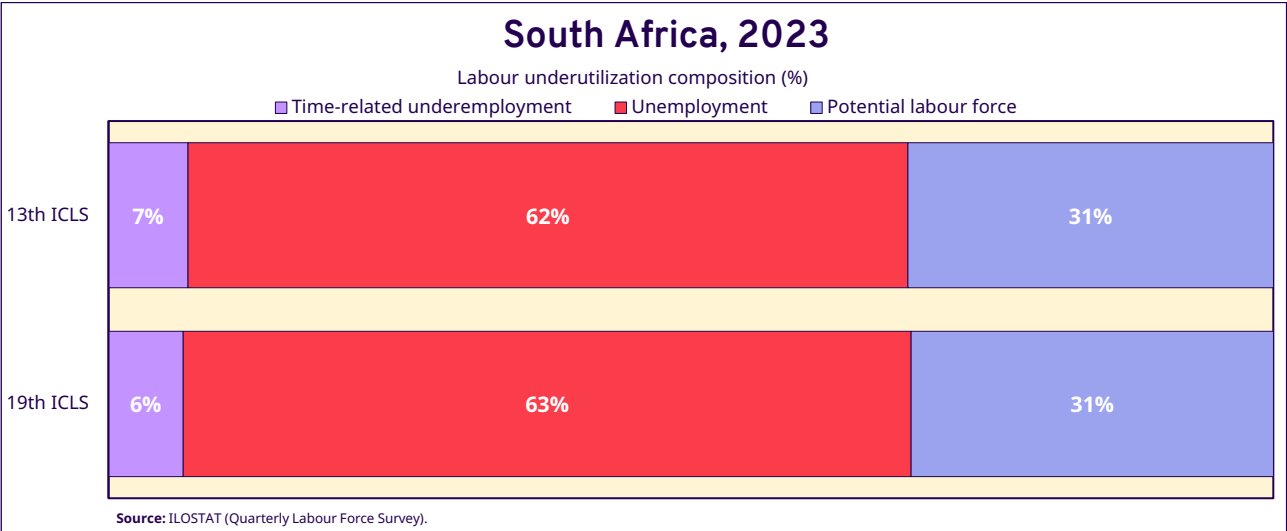
In all of the countries used as examples in the following charts, time-related underemployment is the smallest category of labour underutilization (in percentage terms), with the exception of Myanmar, where the prevalence of time-related underemployment in total labour underutilization (40 per cent) is close to that of unemployment (42 per cent).

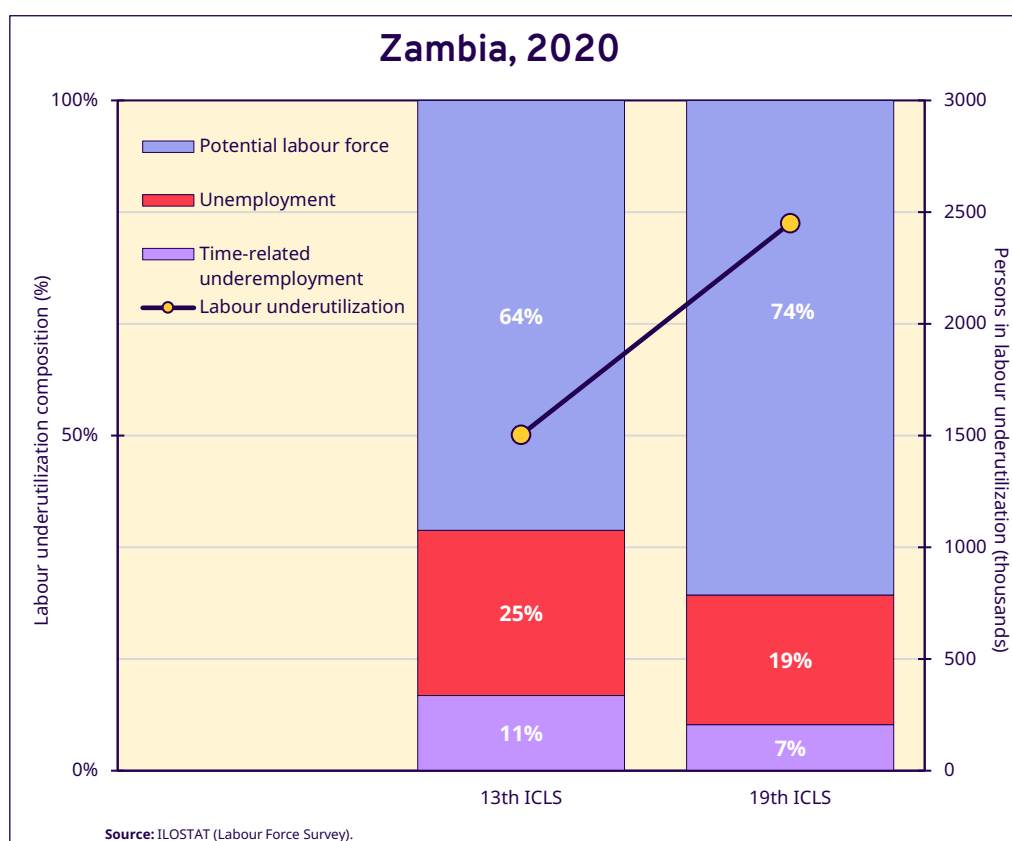
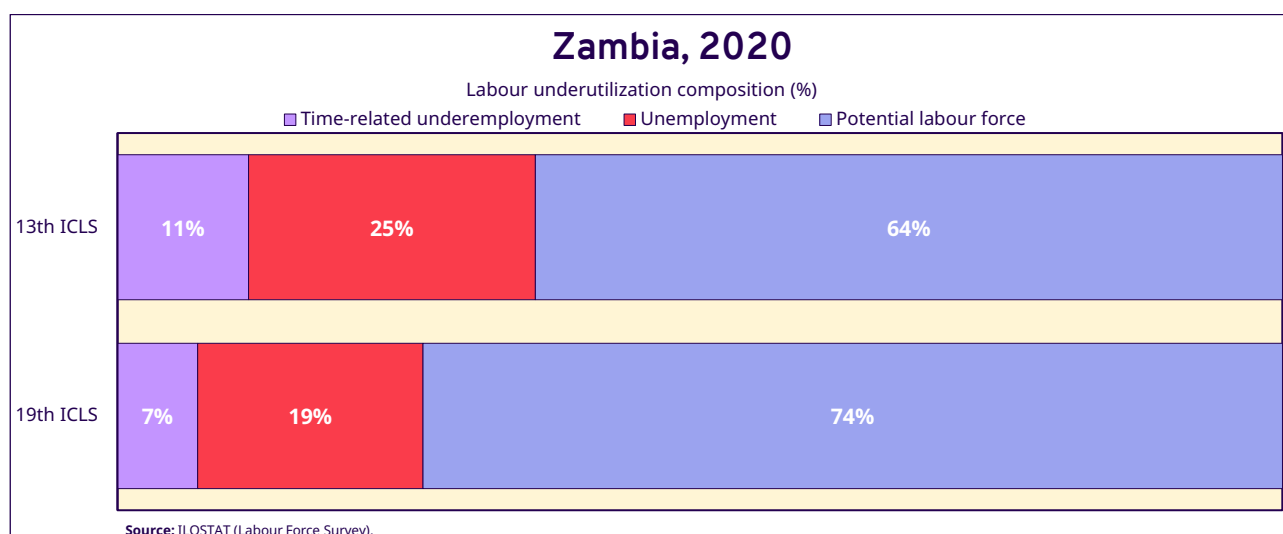
In Chile, there is not a markedly predominant form of labour underutilization: while 39 per cent of all people in labour underutilization are unemployed, 38 per cent are in the potential labour force and 23 per cent are in time-related underemployment (according to new standards). In Lao PDR and Zambia, however, the largely predominant form of labour underutilization is the potential labour force (with 61 per cent of all those in labour underutilization in the potential labour force in Lao PDR and 74 per cent in Zambia, according to new standards). In contrast, the main form of labour underutilization in South Africa is unemployment, with 63 per cent of people in labour underutilization being unemployed.











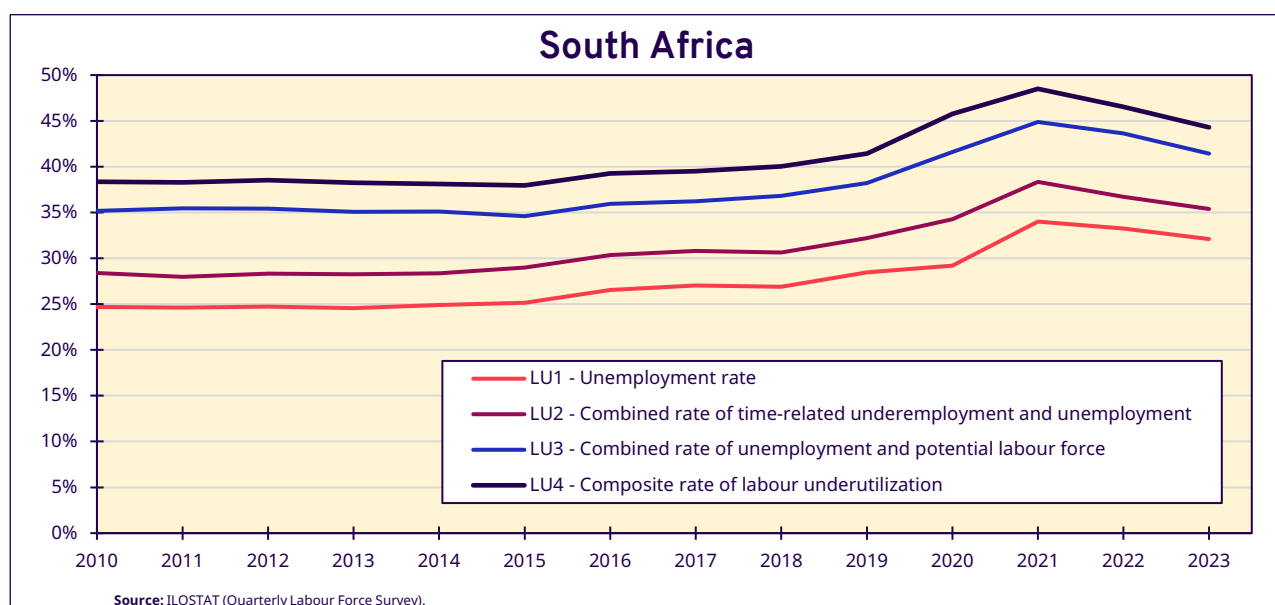
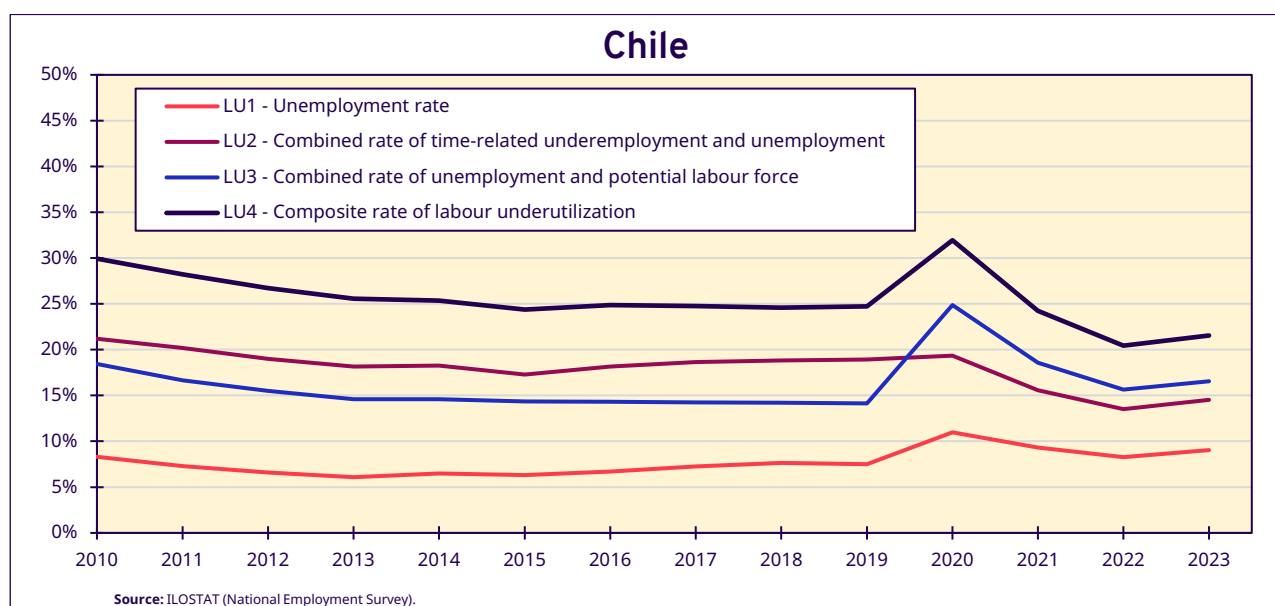
Headline labour underutilization measures

The 19th ICLS resolution calls for the use of more than one of the four headline labour underutilization indicators it introduces:

- **LU1** - Unemployment rate,
- **LU2** - Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment,
- **LU3** - Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force,
- **LU4** - Composite measure of labour underutilization.

Indeed, the full implementation of the 19th ICLS resolution enables the production of all four of them, thus providing a detailed and comprehensive picture of labour underutilization. The following charts provide examples of how these four indicators relate and their trend over time in Chile and South Africa. It is clear in these examples

that the additional measures provide a broader and more differentiated depiction of labour underutilization. In the case of Chile, the joint use of several labour underutilization measures enables a better understanding of the impact of the pandemic (and the workplace closures and mobility restriction measures implemented to contain it). Given that exceptional context, labour underutilization increased significantly, but more in the shape of the potential labour force (especially job-search discouragement) than unemployment and time-related underemployment. By contrast in South Africa similar trends can be seen in all 4 of the LU indicators over time, albeit with different levels.



► Degree of labour market attachment

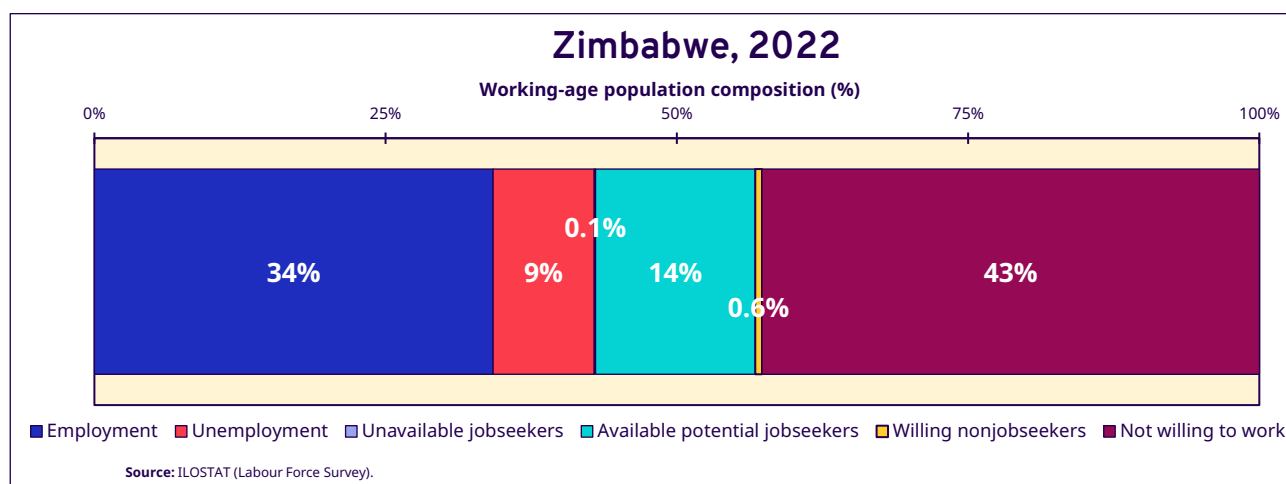
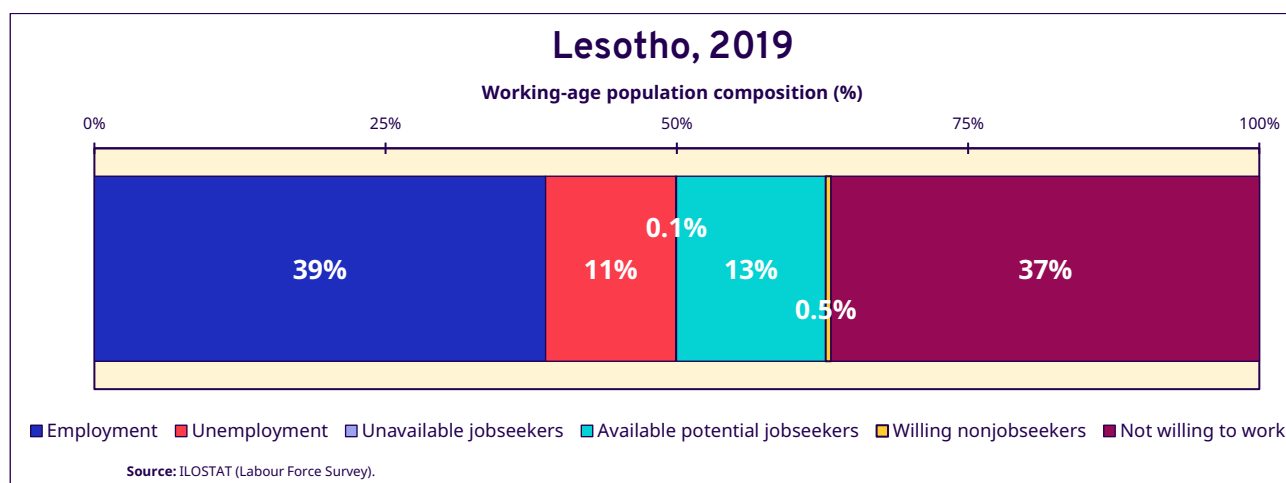
The 19th ICLS resolution recognizes that people who are not in employment may have varying degrees of labour market attachment, marked by their availability for employment, their participation in job-search activities, and their willingness to work. The degree of labour market attachment of persons not in employment sheds light on labour market deficits and is highly valuable to inform policymaking. The labour market attachment of the

unemployed is fairly explicit given their job search and availability for employment, and thus this group rightly remains a key policy focus. However, the degree of labour market attachment of those outside the labour force is more nuanced. The 19th ICLS resolution identifies four groups outside the labour force of interest for analysts and policymakers to understand socioeconomic barriers to employment. These are presented below in decreasing order of degree of labour market attachment.

- **Unavailable jobseekers** - persons seeking employment but not currently available,
- **Available potential jobseekers** - persons not seeking employment but currently available,
- **Willing non-jobseekers** - persons neither seeking employment nor currently available but willing to work, and
- **Persons not willing to work.**

The unavailable jobseekers and the available potential jobseekers together make up the potential labour force.

The study of these four groups informs on the degree of labour market attachment of persons outside the labour force. The working-age composition by labour force status specifying these four groups within the category outside the labour force provides insights into socioeconomic barriers to employment and lack of relevant infrastructure. The following charts provide examples of this composition in Lesotho and Zimbabwe, highlighting the extent to which labour underutilization would be underestimated if measured only via unemployment, and the importance of individuals' reasons not to search for a job when they are available.



► Relevance of new standards for specific population groups

Improving the relevance of statistics on work in countries at all stages of development and with all types of labour market configuration as well as their gender relevance was a key motivator of many of the changes introduced by the 19th ICLS resolution.

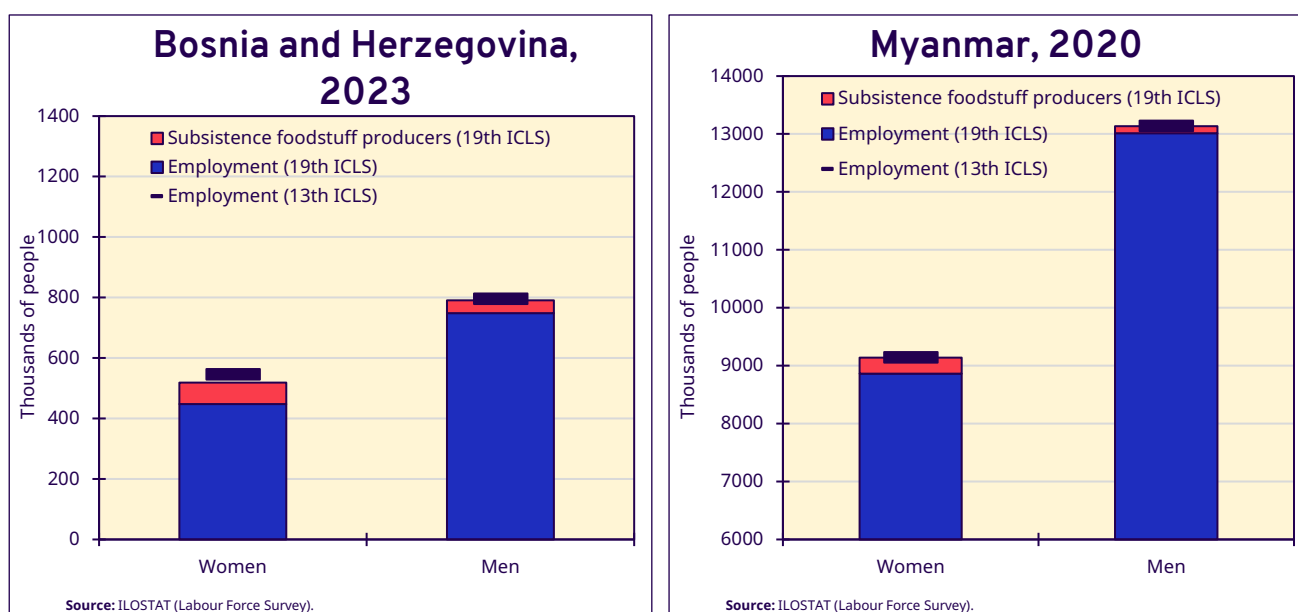
As stated in the ILO brief [Gender relevance of the 19th ICLS statistical standards](#), the new standards seek to address the unintentional gender bias inherent to the previous (wider) employment definition. The former lack of differentiation between paid and unpaid work masked the true scale of gender differences given the higher prevalence among women of unpaid work activities previously classified as employment. The 19th ICLS standards expand the range of analysis possible, enabling the more nuanced understanding of people's participation in paid and unpaid work, and the prevalence of labour underutilization. This is of particular importance for labour market analyses with gender perspective and for informing evidence-based policies to address additional barriers faced by women to access employment.

The 19th ICLS standards not only increased the gender relevance of work statistics, but they improved their relevance for other groups which were underserved by previous standards as well, such as young workers and workers in rural areas.

The following subsections provide examples of data visualizations showcasing the increased analytical value of the new standards by sex/gender and for youth, while also communicating clearly on the methodological changes. Similar visualizations could also be done disaggregating the statistics by rural and urban areas (or using any other disaggregation of interest to policymakers and the public in general).

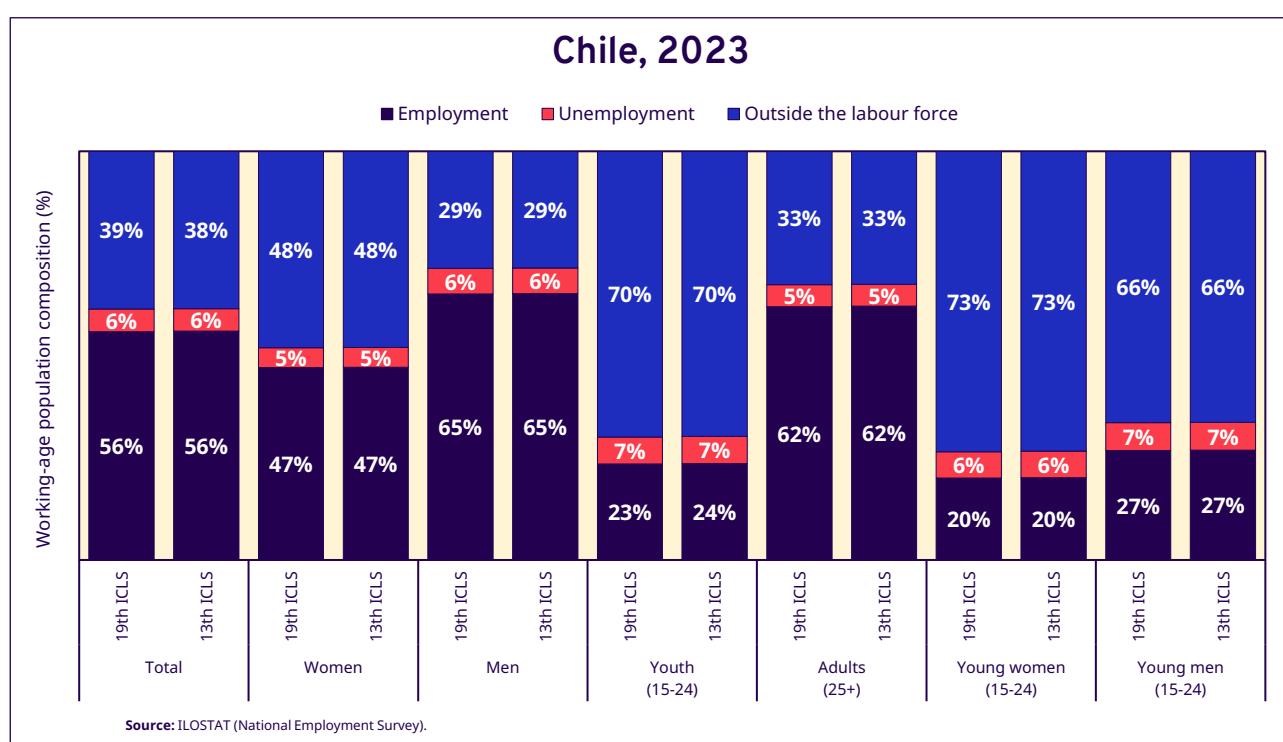
Narrower employment boundaries by sex

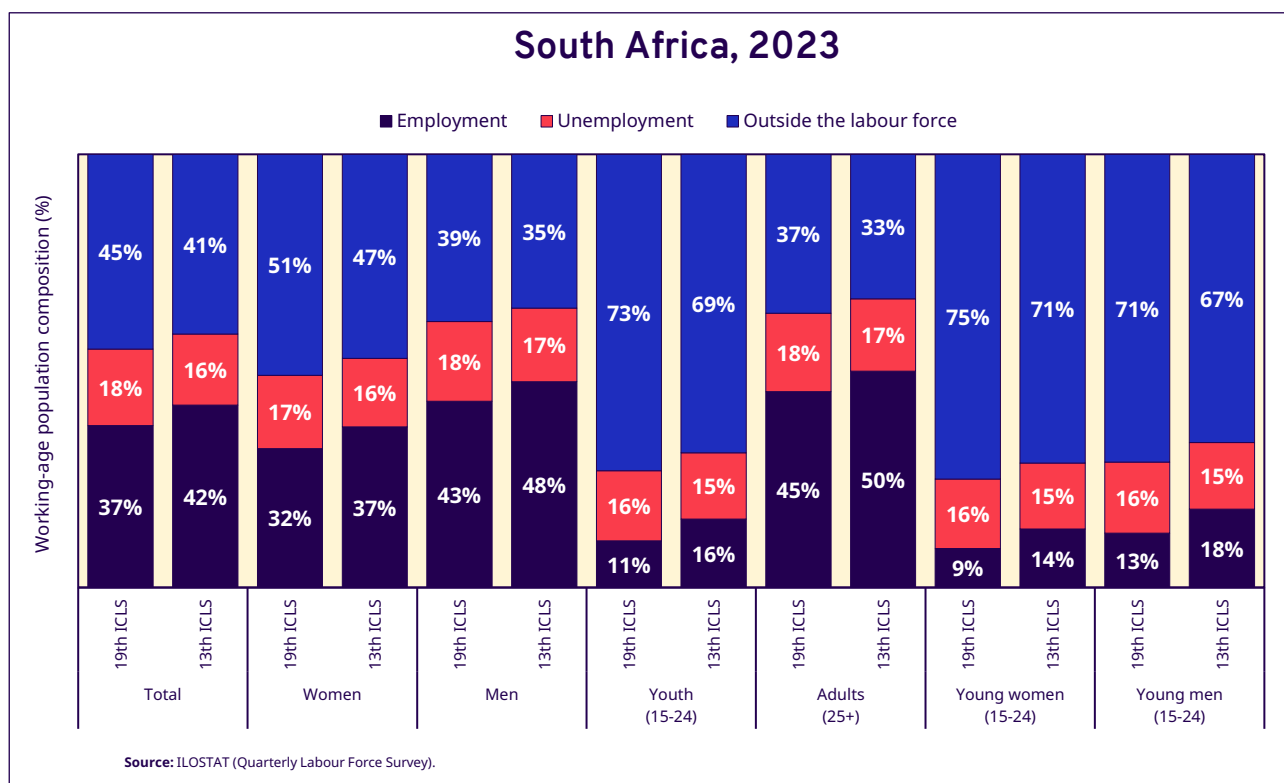
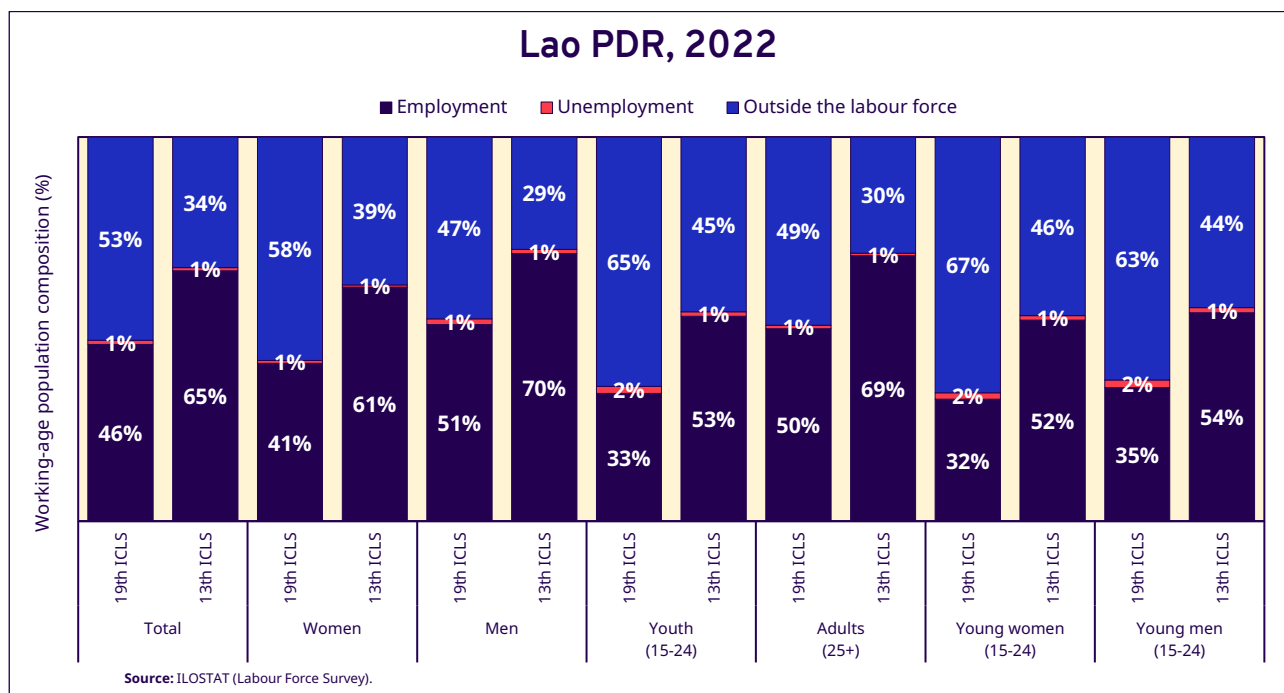
As previously stated, the impact of the narrower employment definition excluding own-use production work such as subsistence foodstuff production will depend on the context and labour market characteristics. This impact will be different for men and women, based on the differentiated prevalence of own-use production work amongst men and women. The charts below show examples of this differentiated impact in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Myanmar.



Labour force status of the working-age population by sex and youth/adults

As mentioned before, the working-age population can be classified into three mutually exclusive groups according to their labour force status: employment, unemployment and outside the labour force. The changes introduced by the 19th ICLS resolution (which include a narrower employment definition and a stricter unemployment definition) have an impact on the working-age population composition by labour force status. Once again, the extent and nature of this impact may be different for women than for men, and for youth than for adults (and seniors), depending on gendered social norms, gendered labour market patterns, youth participation in education or training, youth access to labour market, etc. The following charts provide examples depicting this impact in some countries with available data. The gender disaggregation is applied not only to the totals but also to youth estimates, since understanding the differentiated labour market characteristics and challenges of young women and young men is crucial for policymaking.



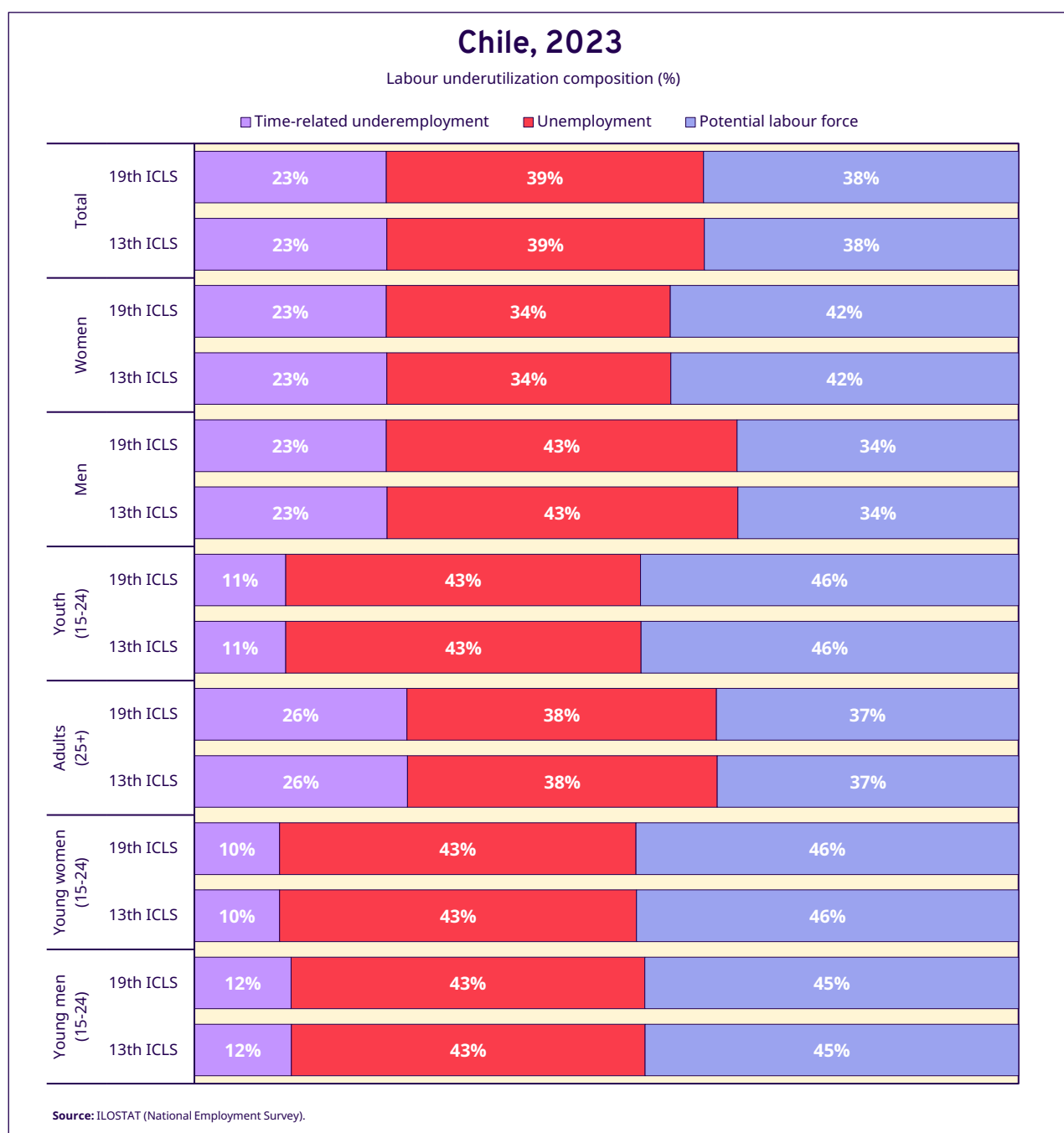


Labour underutilization composition by sex and youth/adults

The deeper understanding of labour underutilization enabled by the 19th ICLS is of particular importance for gender and youth analyses. Indeed, the barriers to become available for employment and to seek employment, including barriers to access job-search infrastructure, may vary according to people's gender and age, especially in relation to social norms, traditions, and expectations. The introduction of the concept of the potential labour force

greatly improves the gender relevance of labour underutilization measures, given the additional challenges women often face not only to access employment, but also to be available for it and seek employment.

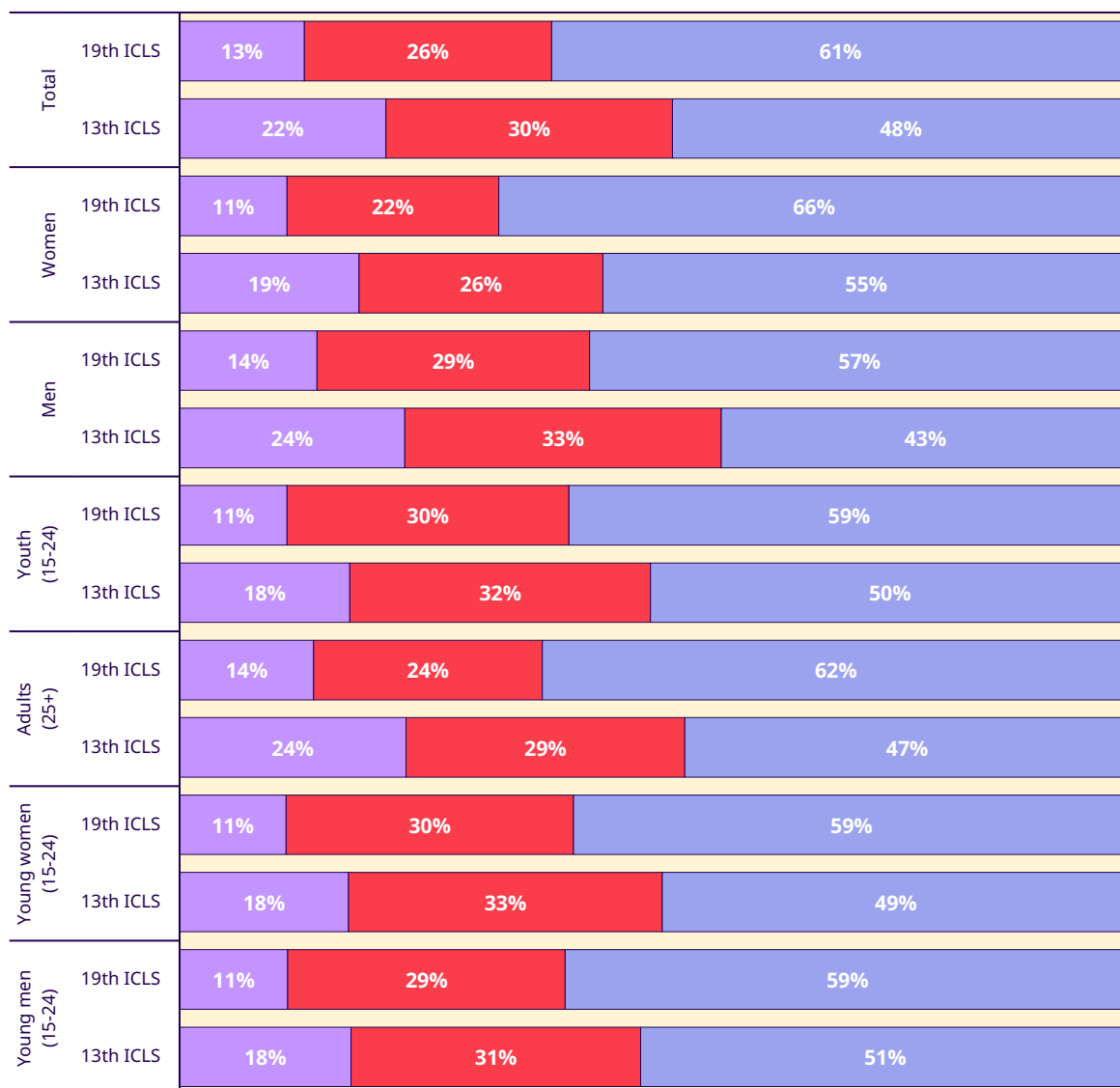
The following charts show the impact of the new standards on the labour underutilization composition by the three identified labour underutilization categories (time-related underemployment, unemployment, and the potential labour force) by sex and main age groups in some countries used as examples. The gender disaggregation is also applied here to the youth age group, to cast light on any potential differences between young women and young men. We seek here to highlight the situation of youth, which is why we use two broad age categories for youth and adults. In some contexts it may be relevant to go into further detail to study separately the situation for example of seniors or prime-working age individuals.



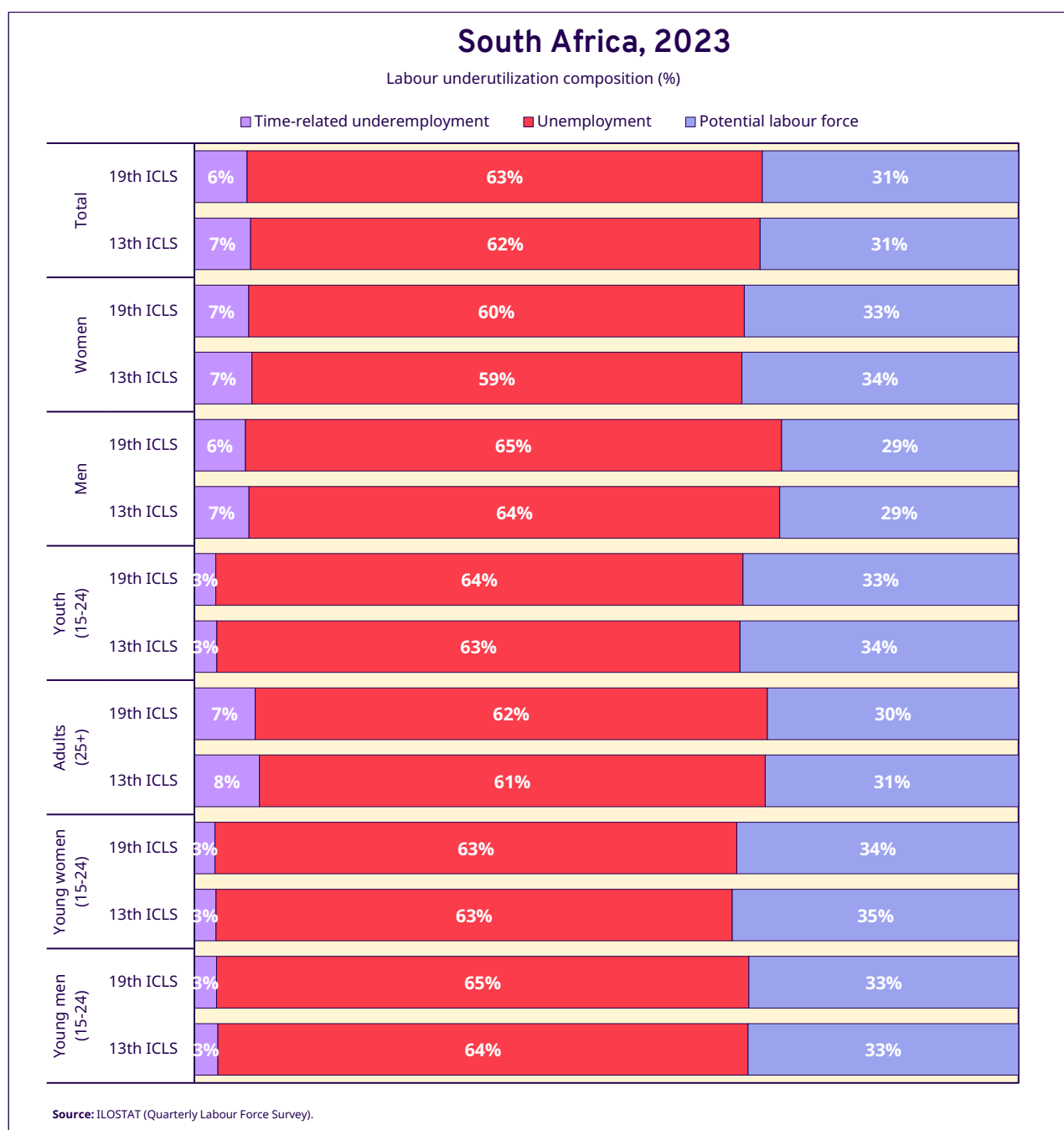
Lao PDR, 2022

Labour underutilization composition (%)

■ Time-related underemployment ■ Unemployment ■ Potential labour force



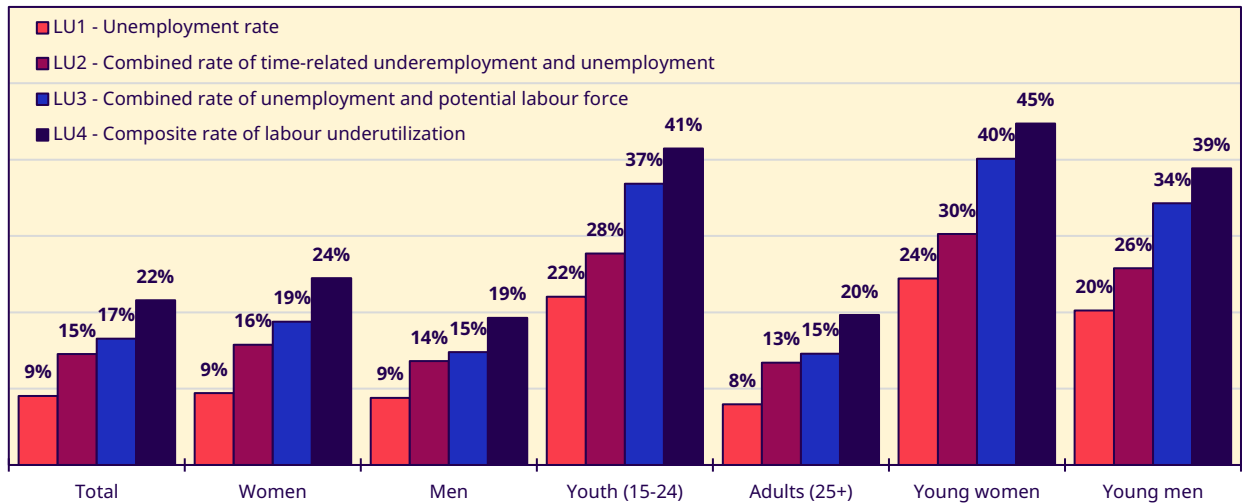
Source: ILOSTAT (Labour Force Survey).



Headline labour underutilization measures by sex and youth/adults

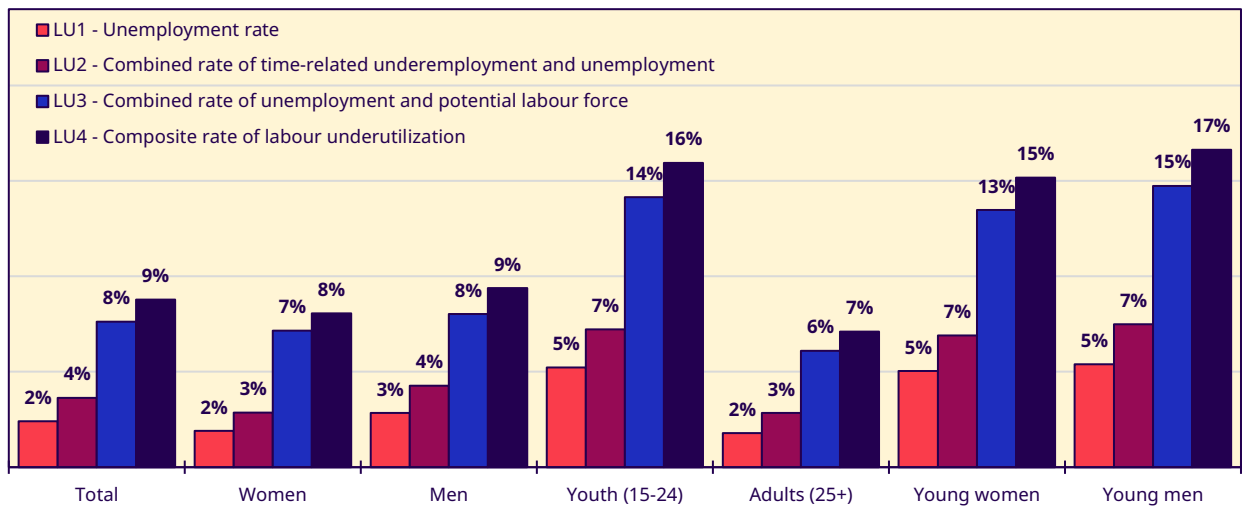
The call of the 19th ICLS resolution to use more than one of the four headline labour underutilization it introduces to reflect the nature of underutilization in different settings and phases of the economic cycle is especially relevant to understand gender and age patterns of labour underutilization. Focussing on some countries with data available as examples, the following data visualizations present the four labour underutilization indicators promoted by the 19th ICLS resolution by sex and main age group, communicating on the differences and the value of the joint analysis of these indicators.

Chile, 2023



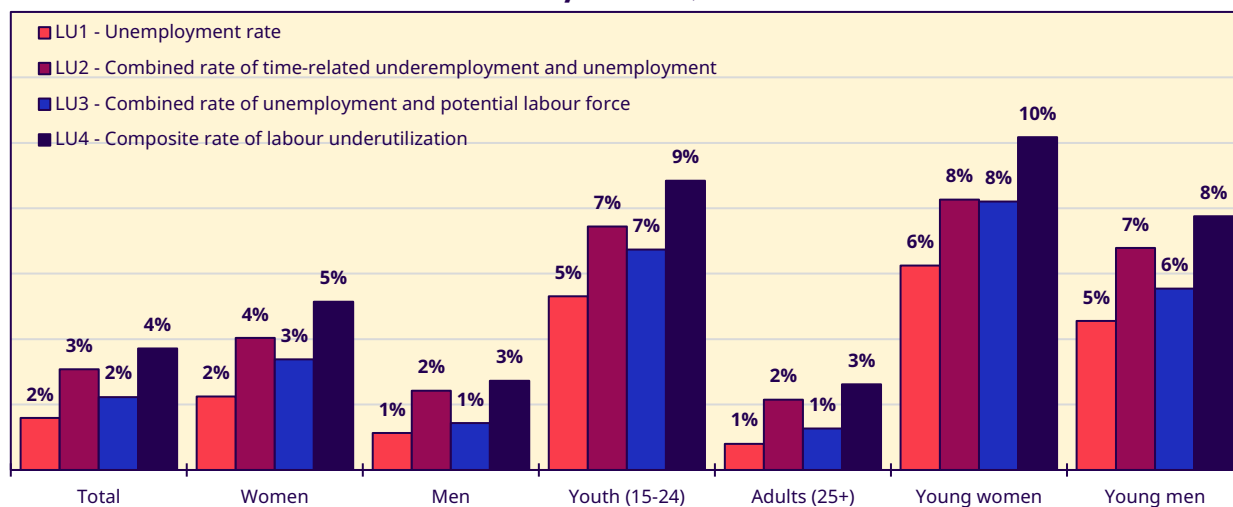
Source: ILOSTAT (National Employment Survey).

Lao PDR, 2022



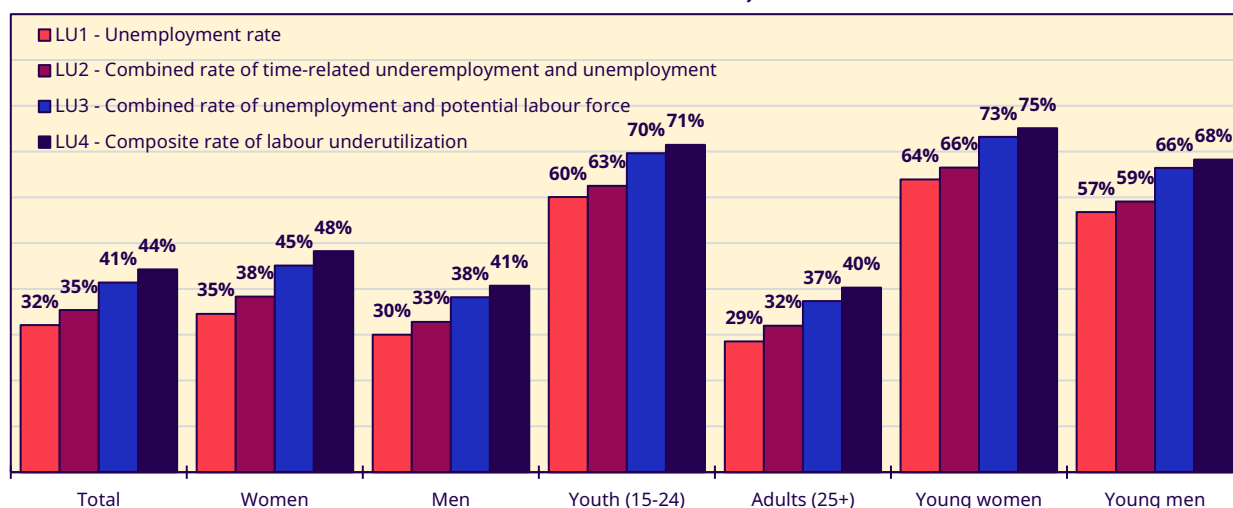
Source: ILOSTAT (Labour Force Survey).

Myanmar, 2020

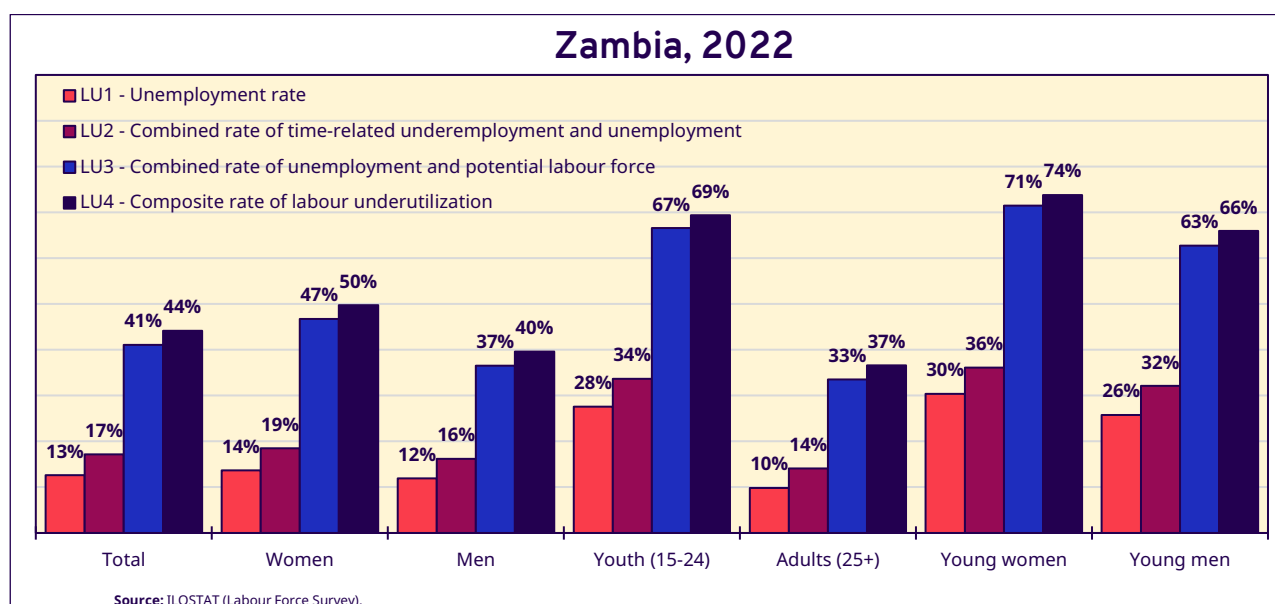


Source: ILOSTAT (Labour Force Survey).

South Africa, 2023



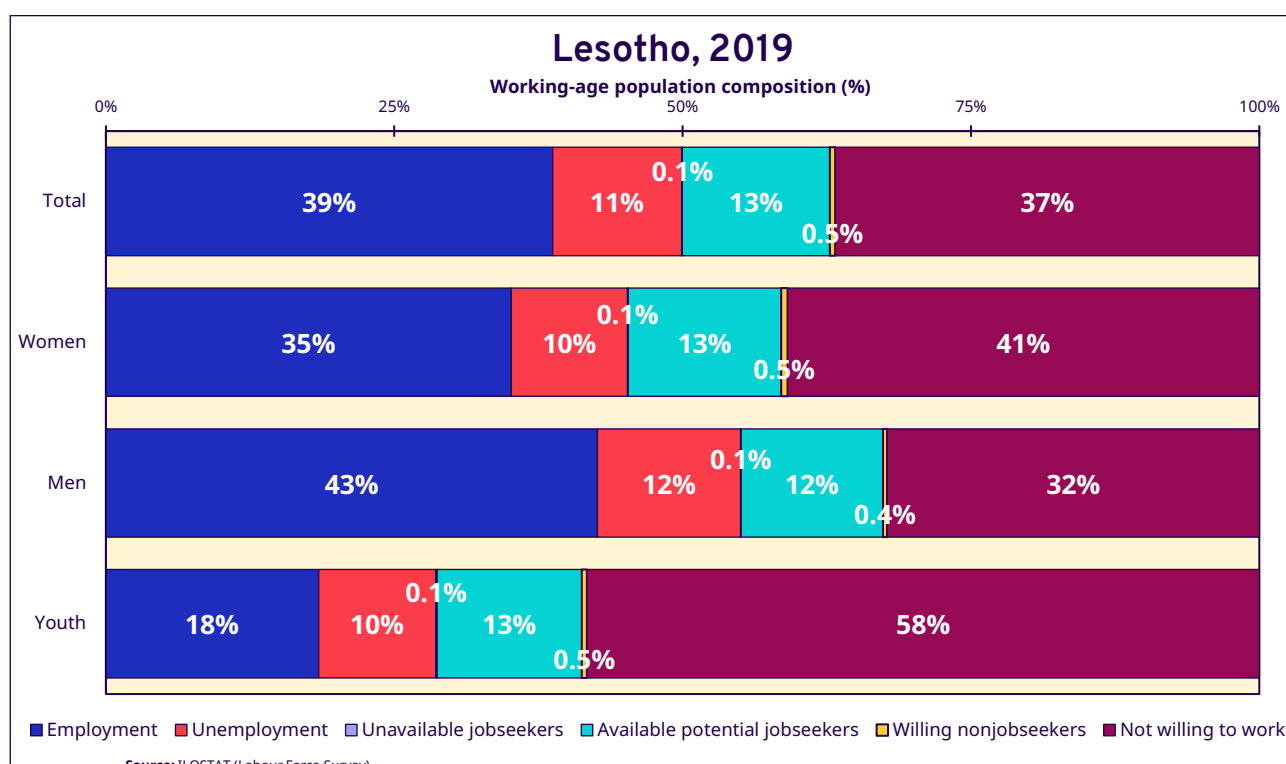
Source: ILOSTAT (Quarterly Labour Force Survey).

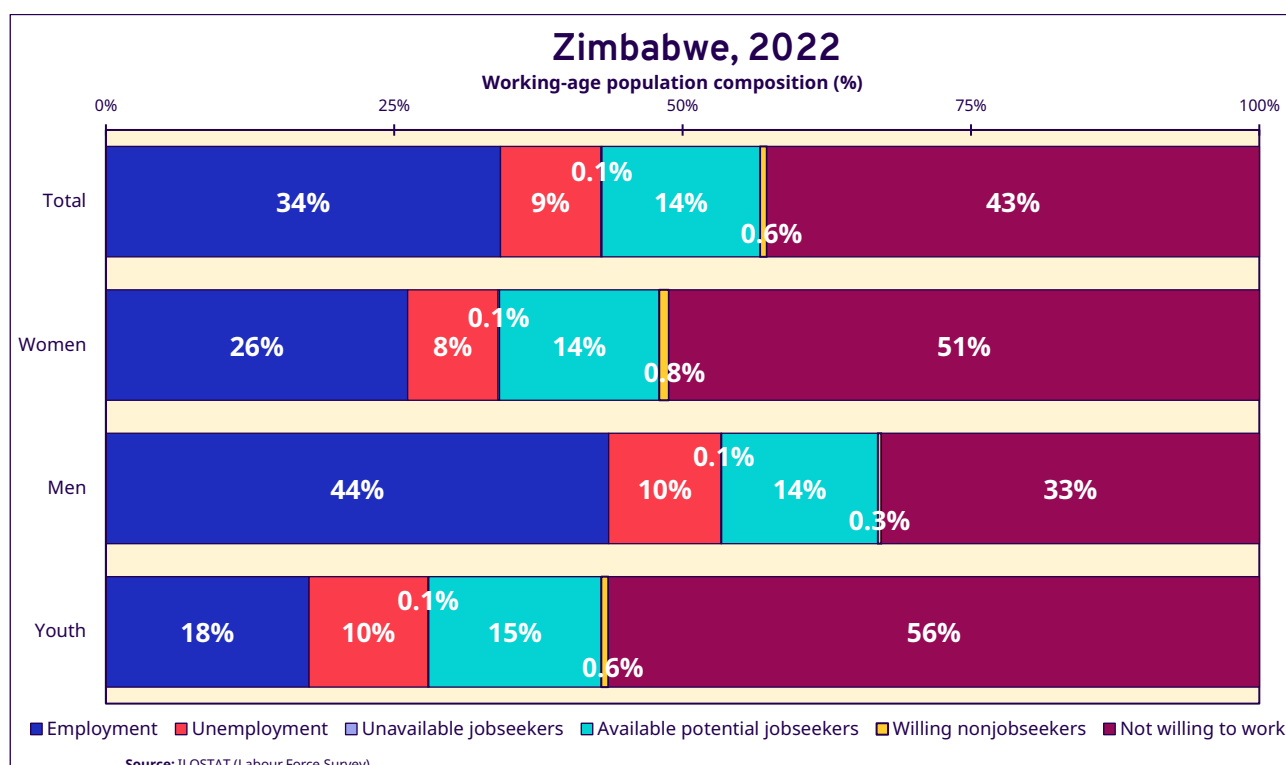


Degree of labour market attachment

Another pillar of the gender relevance of the 19th ICLS standards is the improved and more detailed measurement of the degree of labour market attachment of persons outside the labour force. In fact, this is not only highly relevant for analyses and policymaking with gender perspective but also for an increased understanding of the situation of other population groups such as youth.

The following charts convey for Lesotho and Zimbabwe the working-age composition by labour force status distinguishing within the category outside the labour force the unavailable jobseekers, the available potential jobseekers, the willing non-jobseekers, and those not willing to work, by sex and for youth. These data visualizations clearly depict how the degree of labour market attachment (and therefore, the pressure put on the labour market) differs for women, men, and youth.



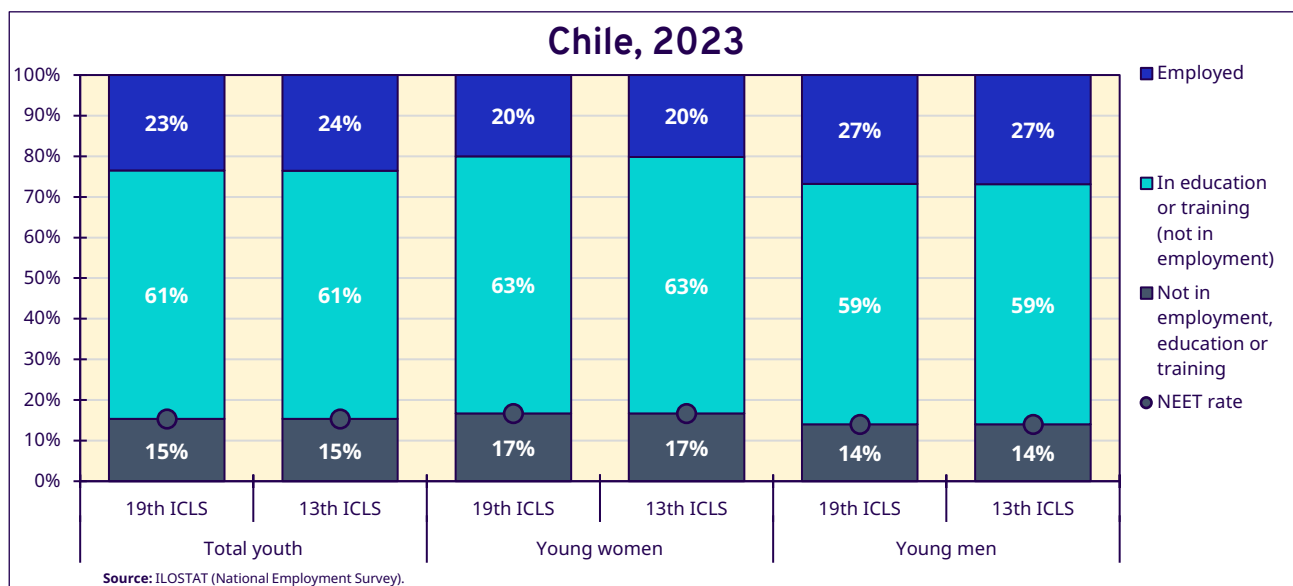
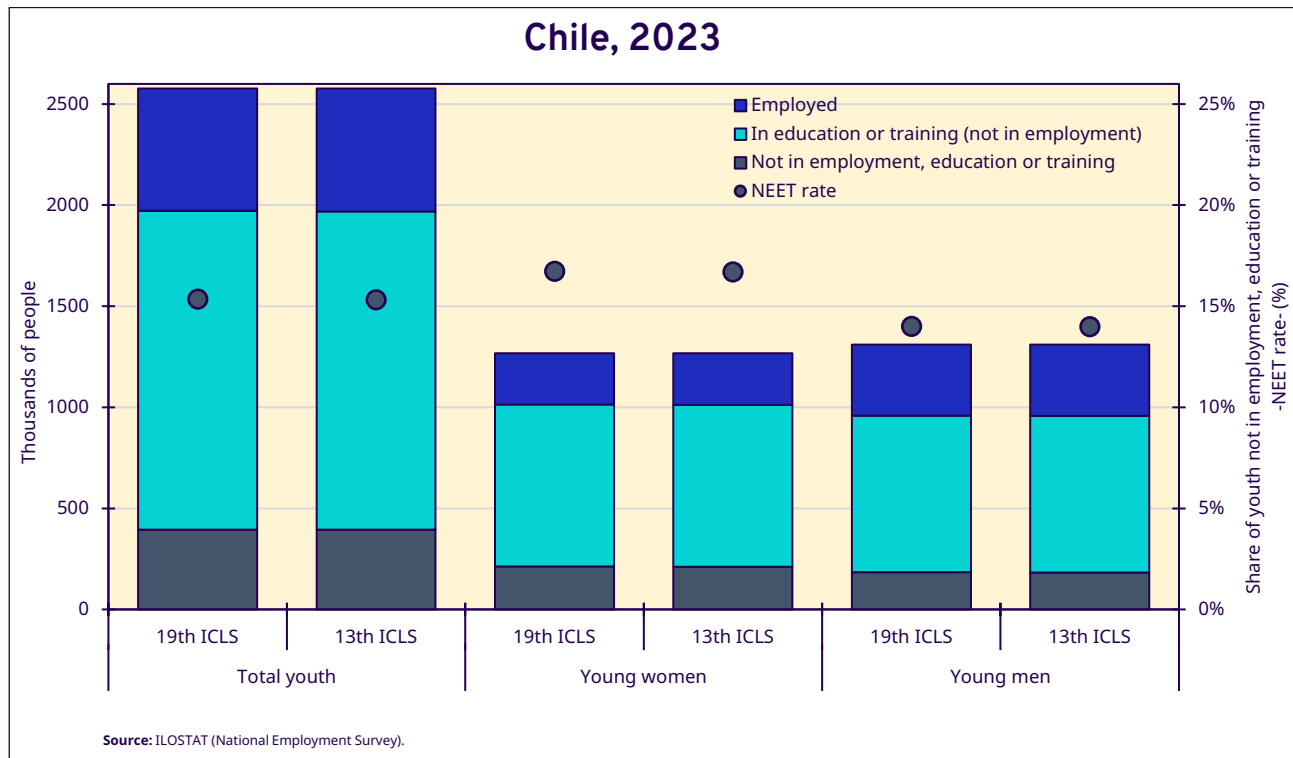


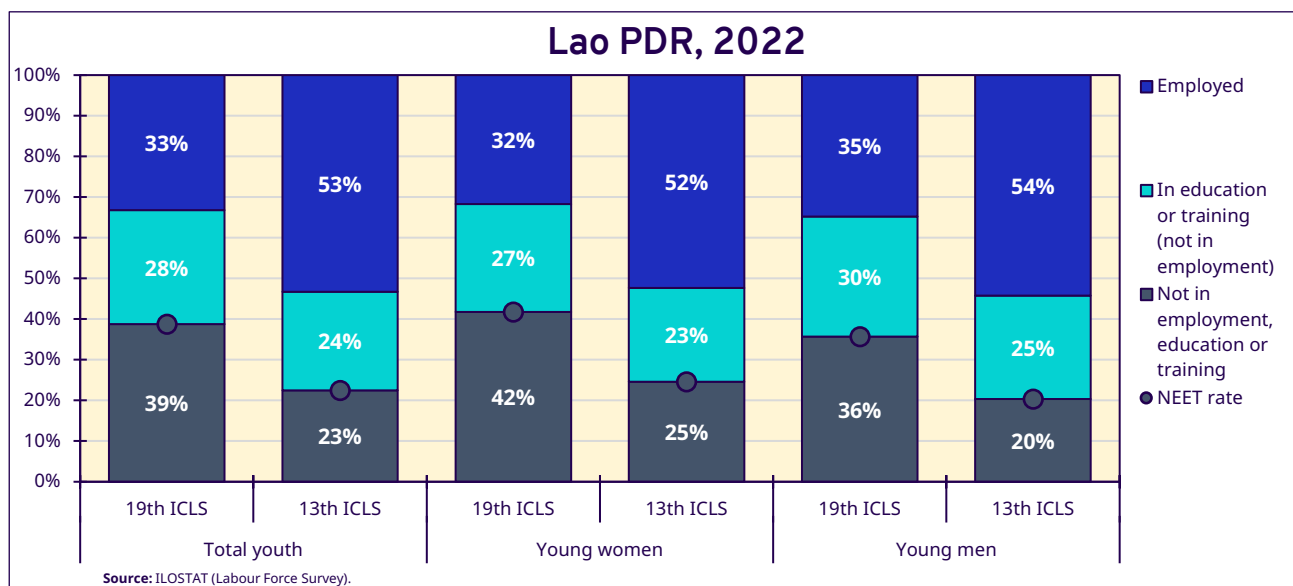
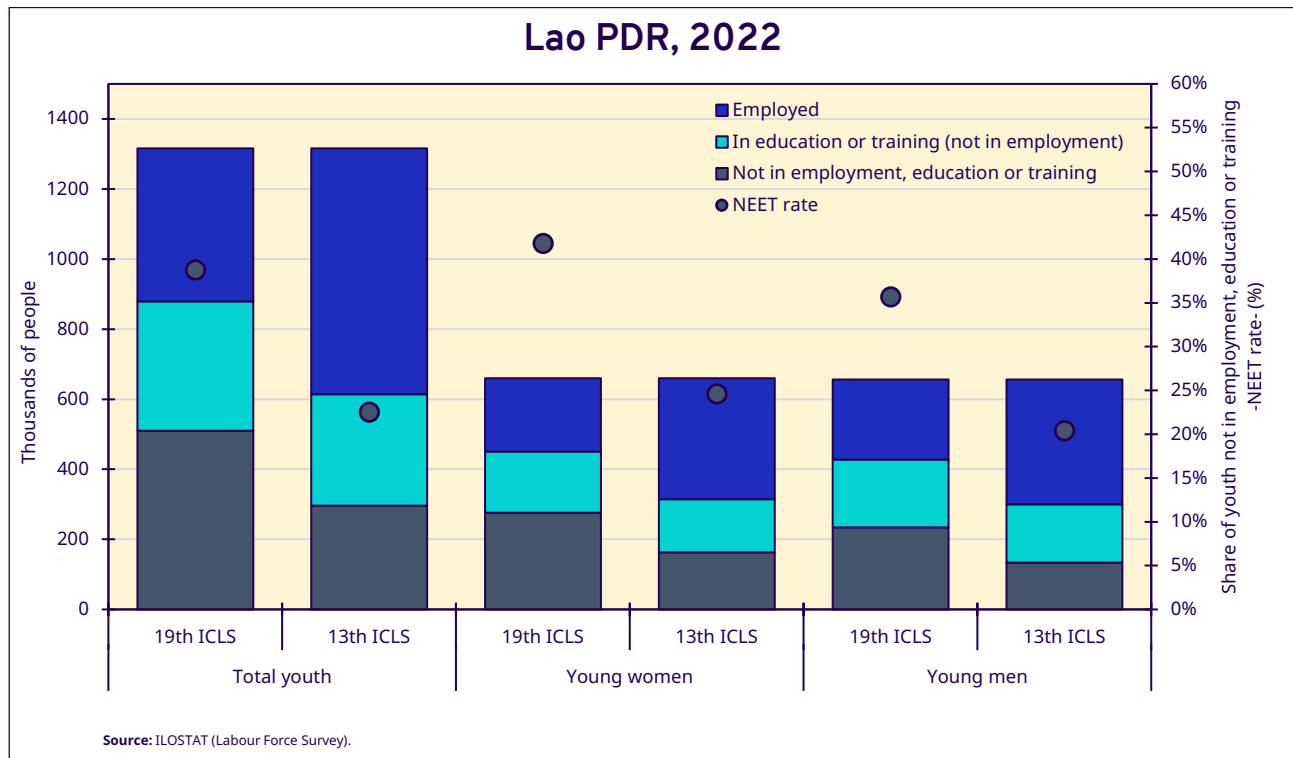
Youth not in employment, education, or training by sex

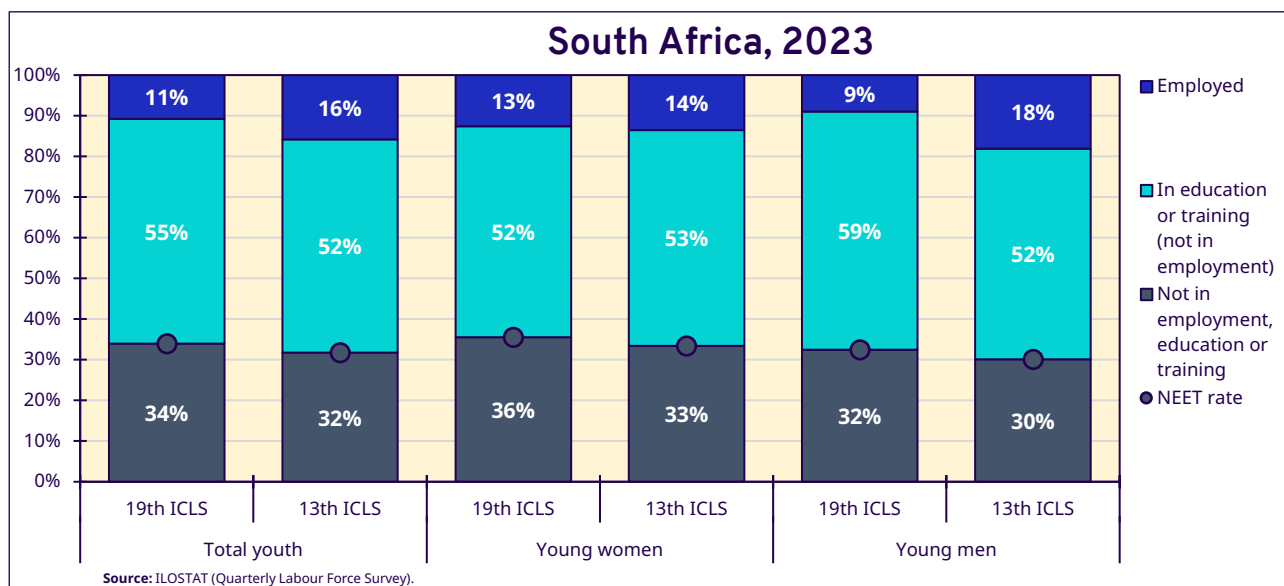
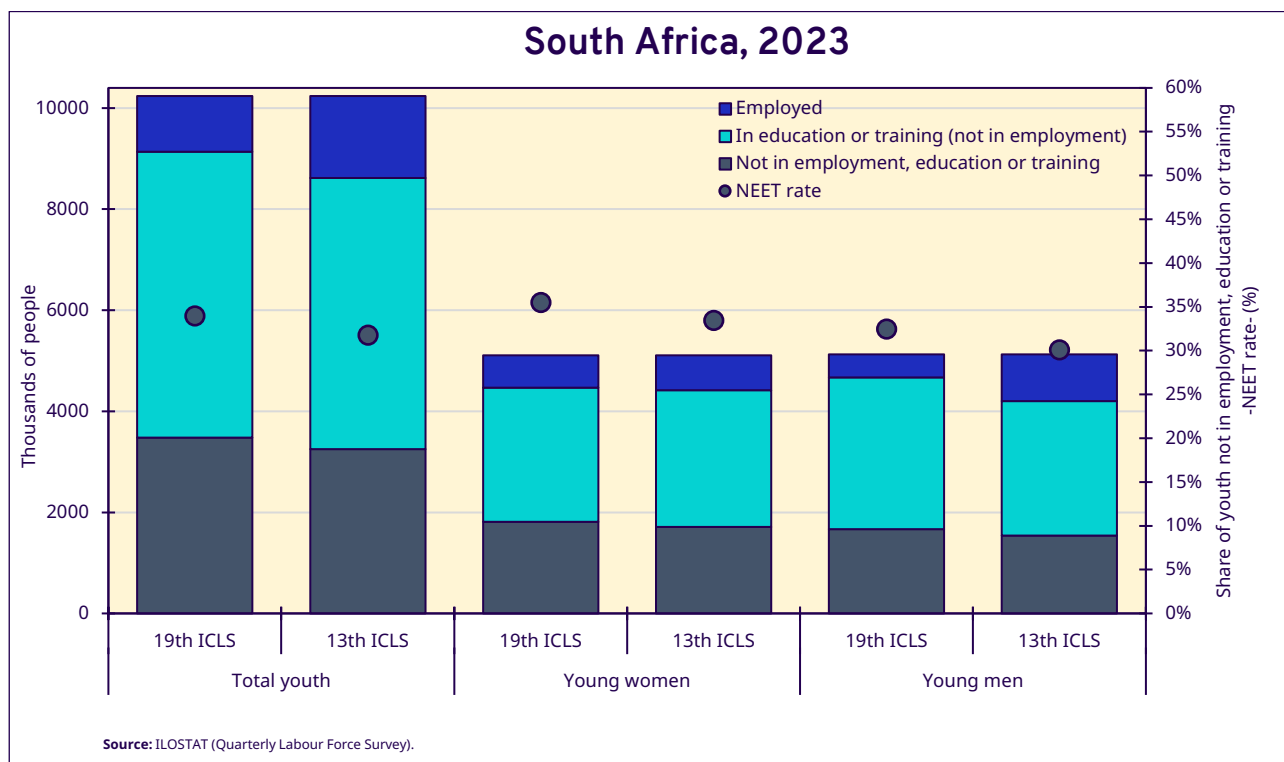
The narrower employment definition introduced by the 19th ICLS resolution has an impact on the key youth labour market indicator that is the share of youth not in employment, education, or training (youth NEET rate). Here too, the extent of the impact depends on the context and labour market characteristics, particularly the participation of youth in own-use production working activities previously considered as employment.

The following charts convey for Chile, Lao PDR, and South Africa the impact of the methodological change on the youth NEET rate by sex, as well as on the youth composition by participation in employment, in education and training (but not employment), and neither.

It should be noted that the NEET rate refers to participation in only one form of work: employment (in addition to participation in education or training). This means that young people classified as NEET may actually be participating (sometimes even intensely) in unpaid forms of work, such as unpaid care and domestic work or unpaid trainee work. For increased analytical value and more effective targeted policymaking, youth NEET rates by sex should always be interpreted alongside indicators on youth labour underutilization by sex, and (where available information allows) indicators on the participation in other forms of work by sex.







► Summary indicators table

Bringing together all the points raised in the previous sections, we can build a summary indicators table presenting in a clear and concise manner the key measures for a first approximation of the labour market. This summary table introduces at a glance the main Labour Force Survey results, including headcounts and rates. It also makes visible the impact of the methodological change associated with the implementation of new standards. The summary table below includes the disaggregation by sex, but, depending on the local context and policy needs, it could also be relevant to include columns for the disaggregation by rural areas and urban areas, and/or for youth and adults.

For ongoing publication purposes after the introduction of the new standards it is recommended to focus headline tables on indicators based on the 19th ICLS standards, while indicators based on the 13th ICLS standards could be presented as supplementary information in additional tables, or in a one off publication at the time of the introduction of the changes (as shown in this example).

	According to current standards (19th ICLS)		According to previous standards (13th ICLS)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
► Headcounts (thousands of people)				
Working-age population				
Labour force				
Employment				
Unemployment				
Outside the labour force				
Time-related underemployment				
Potential labour force				
Subsistence foodstuff producers				
► Key rates in relation to the working-age population (%)				
Labour force participation rate				
Employment-to-population ratio				
Inactivity rate				
Subsistence foodstuff production rate				
► Key rates in relation to employment (%)				
Share of informal employment				
Share of employees				
Time-related underemployment rate				
► Headline labour underutilization indicators (%)				
LU1- Unemployment rate (% of the labour force)				
LU2 - Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment (% of the labour force)				
LU3 - Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (% of the extended labour force)				
LU4 - Composite measure of labour underutilization (% of the extended labour force)				

► Concluding remarks

The [*Resolution concerning statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Underutilization*](#) adopted by the 19th ICLS in 2013 is a fundamental resolution, revolutionizing the way labour statistics are conceived with the overall goal of increasing their relevance and analytical power in all contexts and for all population groups.

The forms-of-work framework introduced in this resolution, together with the refined definitions of key concepts such as employment and unemployment, and the headline labour underutilization measures, all contribute to an improved depiction of the labour market and the world of work. The additional indicators which can now be produced and jointly analysed to have a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of participation in paid and unpaid work and labour underutilization enable more targeted research, and policymaking.

However, implementing this resolution entails a thorough revision of the LFS (or other relevant data collection) and fundamental changes in the way core items are measured. Thus, the implementation of the 19th ICLS standards will have an impact on long-standing indicators such as the employment-to-population ratio and the unemployment rate. The degree of this impact depends on the characteristics of the local labour market, but it should always be planned for.

The effective communication of statistics after the implementation of new standards is central to getting the best out of the data and the efforts. Indeed, applying a sound communications and dissemination strategy will ensure that the public understands the methodological changes and their impact, intuitively grasping which changes on key indicators are due to actual labour market fluctuations and which are due to the methodological changes.

To contribute to this endeavour, this guide aimed to provide practical data visualization examples to convey clearly the impact of methodological changes on key labour indicators following the implementation of the 19th ICLS resolution and avoid misinterpretation of the results. Charting examples to depict the impact of the new standards presented here ranged from employment to labour force status and labour underutilization, including examples to showcase the relevance of the new standards for particular population groups such as women and youth. This guide also introduced a suggested summary table to present key labour and world-of-work indicators when releasing results from a recently revised LFS.

This suggestions and examples can of course be expanded and improved or adapted to different local contexts and analytical needs. Nonetheless, they can still serve as a first approach to the visual presentation of the results after implementing potentially fundamental methodological changes.

In reality publications of data from labour force surveys would cover much wider range of indicators, and it is recommended to follow the recommendations of other statistical standards in compiling those indicators, including those adopted at subsequent ICLSs on topics such as work relationships and informality. [Guidance and tools](#), including model questionnaires, have been developed by the ILO to support countries in the implementation of the standards and the ILO is available to provide technical assistance and capacity building to support their use.