



► Statistical Brief

October 2024

The impact of care responsibilities on women's labour force participation

Key messages

- Worldwide, in 2023, 748 million people aged 15 and above were outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, of which 708 million were women and 40 million were men.
- Care responsibilities are the main barrier preventing women from participating in the labour force, while men usually cite other personal reasons such as education or illness.
- The share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities is 45 percent globally, with the highest shares in Northern Africa (63 per cent) and the Arab States (59 per cent).
- This includes two-thirds of, or 379 million, women of prime age (25-54 years) who are not in the labour force due to care responsibilities. This unequal distribution of unpaid care work between women and men hinders women's economic inclusion and effective labour market participation and widens gender gaps in the world of work.
- Urgent action is needed to ensure decent work in the care economy and to promote decent work by ensuring access to care for all, by giving effect to the ILO Resolution concerning decent work and the care economy (2024).

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Introduction

Care is central to human, social, economic and environmental well-being, and sustainable development. Care work, paid and unpaid, is essential to all other work (ILO 2024a). This recognition is at the heart of the [ILO Resolution concerning decent work and the care economy](#), adopted by governments, employers' and workers' organizations at the International Labour Conference in June 2024 (hereinafter the "ILO Resolution"). According to the ILO Resolution, a well-functioning care economy not only supports individuals and families, but also contributes to a healthier workforce, creates jobs and enhances productivity, positively impacting businesses, workers and society as a whole. This landmark tripartite agreement also highlights that women, especially those in vulnerable and marginalised situations, provide the major share of unpaid care work, which creates structural barriers to their participation, retention and progression in the labour force.

In 2018, ILO data showed that globally, 606 million women of working age were not participating in the labour market due to care responsibilities, while only 41 million men were outside of the labour force for the same reason (ILO 2018).¹ Globally, the principal reason given by women of working age for being outside the labour force was unpaid care work² (42 per cent). For men, it was "being in education, sick or disabled" (44 per cent).

The new ILO global and regional estimates presented in this brief indicate that care responsibilities remain the main reason for women to be outside the labour force. In 2023, 748 million people aged 15 and above (708 million women and 40 million men) cite care responsibilities as the reason for being outside the labour market. The deeply entrenched gendered division of care responsibilities continues to limit women's access to decent work, restricting their ability to engage in paid work and to advance in their careers.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these disparities and intensified the amount of unpaid care work provided by women and girls in particular. As a result, many women left the labour force or reduced their working hours. [In 2020, 2 million mothers left the labour force according to](#)

[ILO global estimates](#) (ILO 2022a). In many countries, the effects of the pandemic were profound, deepening gender inequalities in labour force participation (ILO 2020).

Changes in the world of work, demographic shifts, technological innovations and climate change are reshaping the demand for, supply of, and access to care services. Without policy action, these shifts are likely to worsen existing inequalities (ILO 2024b). Further, the rapid pace of population ageing in some countries and the impacts of climate change are increasing the demand for social protection and care services while simultaneously straining the supply of care workers and public services. These pressures add to existing decent work deficits among care workers (ILO 2024c).

The new estimates in this brief support ongoing global commitments³ by providing updated disaggregated data on the impact of care responsibilities on women's labour force participation. This data is essential for understanding the care economy, shaping effective policy, and efficiently monitoring efforts to transform the care economy through initiatives aimed at promoting decent work and gender equality.

This brief provides a detailed overview and analysis of the new ILO global and regional estimates of persons outside the labour force due to care responsibilities. The analysis includes a deeper look at how gender gaps and other disparities related to age, education and rural/urban location affect the share of women outside of the labour force due to care responsibilities. The brief also presents how women's labour market inactivity has changed over the last five years in selected countries with available data and spotlights care policy reforms that occurred during the review period. Lastly, the brief discusses policy implications, in particular the role of public investments in early childhood care and education (ECCE), as a key means to support labour force participation of unpaid carers and promote gender equality in the workforce. The annexes present the methodology used to generate these estimates and provide country data and related sources.

¹ ILO estimates in 2018 and 2024 are not comparable due to methodological enhancements, extended data availability and country revisions.

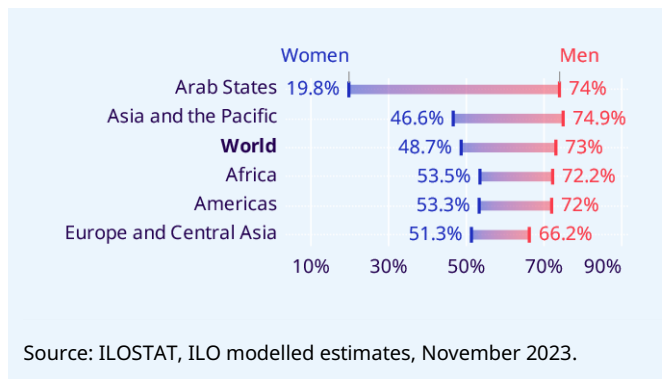
² Unpaid care work entails caring for children, older parents or other family members, or engaging in household tasks such as cleaning and cooking.

³ In addition to the ILO Resolution and other commitments, the Human Rights Council's Resolution on the centrality of care and support from a human rights perspective (2023), the United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution "Promoting care and support systems for social development" (2024) and the Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué (2024) that commits G7 countries to tackle the unequal gender distribution of care work and support 200 million more women to enter into the workforce by 2035 by investing in efforts to close the global gap in the availability of childcare (Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) 2024).

Persistent gender gaps in labour force participation

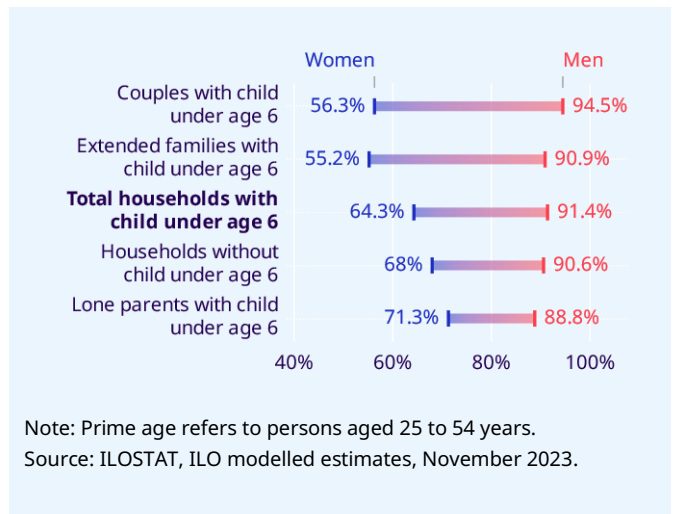
In 2023, women's global labour force participation rate stood at 48.7 per cent, significantly lower than the rate of 73.0 per cent for men—a gap of more than 24 percentage points (figure 1). This disparity varies across regions. In some high-income European countries, the gap tends to be smaller with women's participation exceeding 70 per cent, while men's rates are only slightly higher. However, in some parts of the world, such as the Arab States, Northern Africa, and Southern Asia, the gender gap widens dramatically, ranging from 46 to 54 percentage points.

► **Figure 1. Labour force participation rate by sex, 2023**



The gender gap in labour force participation in many parts of the world is often linked to societal expectations, gender norms and gender stereotypes around caregiving and work, where women are still considered the main “caregivers”, and men “breadwinners”. As such, women are often expected to prioritize family over employment. Data clearly shows that the presence of children, especially [young children \(under the age of 6\), significantly decreases women's likelihood of being in the workforce](#) (ILO 2023a). For women with young children living in couples or extended families, labour force participation is 12 to 14 percentage points lower than among those without young children. Meanwhile, men's participation is largely unaffected by the presence of young children and may even increase. The net result is stark gender gaps in participation—38 percentage points for couples and 36 percentage points for extended families with young children, compared to a 23-percentage point gap for those without children (figure 2).

► **Figure 2. Global prime-age labour force participation rate by sex and household type, 2023**



Care responsibilities are the main barrier to women's labour force participation

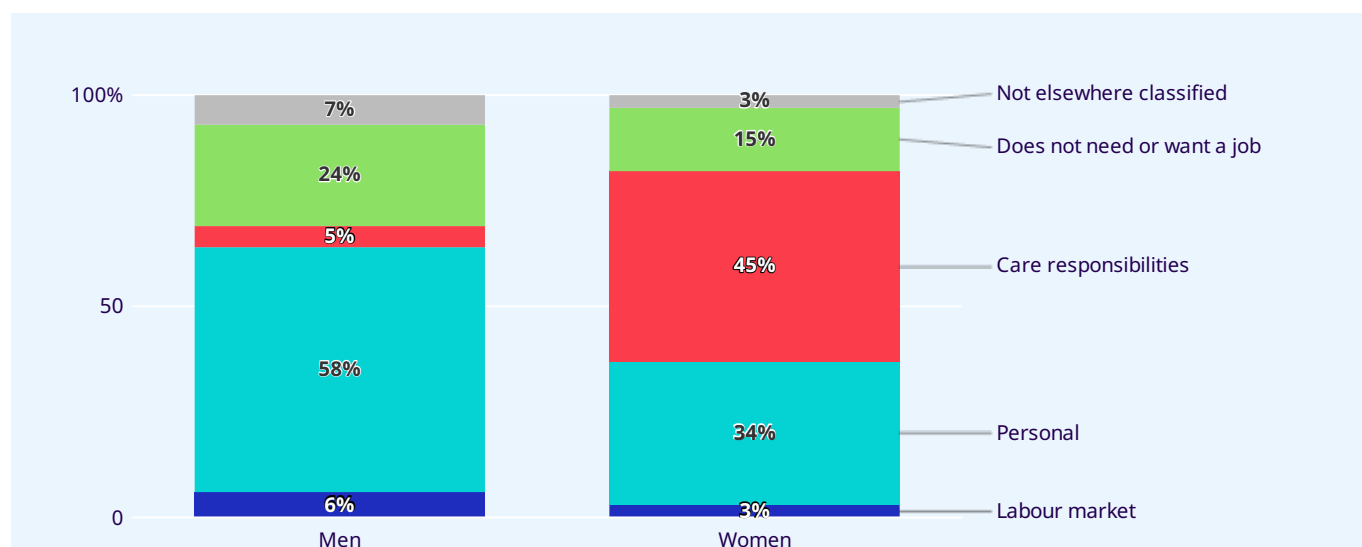
Worldwide, in 2023, 2.4 billion people aged 15 and above are not participating in the labour force, among whom 1.6 billion are women (66 per cent). While many are in education or retirement, a significant number want to work but face various barriers to employment. What factors contribute to this phenomenon? To shed light on these dynamics, the ILO used household surveys, especially labour force surveys, from 125 countries to derive data on labour force status, willingness to work, and reasons for being unavailable or not seeking employment. Data for missing countries were imputed to produce robust global and regional estimates. For additional details, refer to the methodology box in the annex.

Among those not in the labour force in 2023, 748 million people cite care responsibilities as the reason for being outside the labour force, accounting for over 30 per cent of inactive people globally. This underscores the magnitude of unpaid care work and its impact on labour market participation. Care responsibilities account for 45 per cent—or 708 million—of women outside the labour force globally (figure 3). In contrast, only 5 per cent of inactive men, or about 40 million, report caregiving as the reason for non-participation. This stark gender discrepancy highlights the disproportionate role that women take on in child-rearing, care and support for persons with disabilities, and those in need of long-term care, housekeeping and other care responsibilities. Men, on the other hand, most frequently cite personal reasons

(58 per cent), such as being in education or dealing with health-related issues, as factors keeping them out of the labour market. In fact, according to data from 108 countries, 60 per cent of men citing personal reasons were in education, compared to only 22 per cent of women. This suggests that other personal reasons beyond

education may be limiting women's participation in the workforce, such as cultural norms and societal expectations that discourage women from being in the labour market. Notably, the personal reasons category includes those whose partners do not want them to engage in paid work, as well as other involuntary reasons.

► **Figure 3. Global distribution of men and women outside the labour force by reason for inactivity, 2023**



Note: Persons citing labour market reasons include individuals unable to find work and discouraged jobseekers. Personal reasons refer to personal obligations or commitments and health-related issues such as illness and disability; they include students and trainees, those whose partner does not want them to work, and other involuntary reasons. Persons citing care responsibilities include individuals providing essential care to family members including but not limited to children. Lastly, persons who do not need or want to work include those who may be financially secure, retired or pursuing other interests.

Source: ILO estimates.

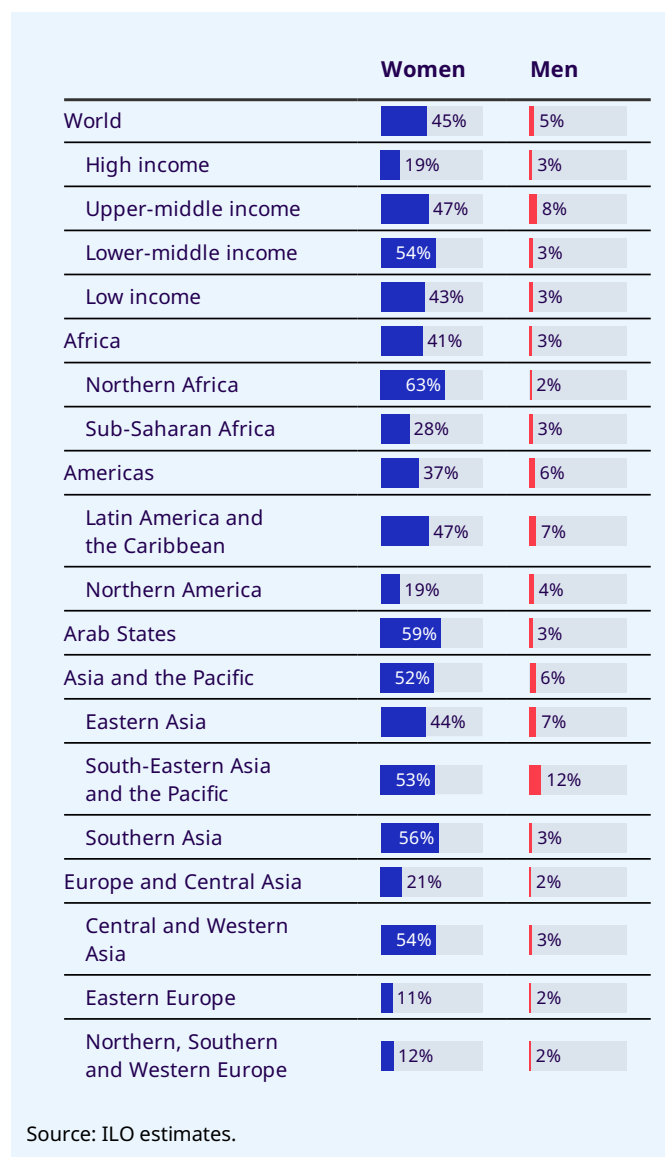
While these figures paint an overall picture, they mask considerable regional differences. Levels of development, economic and employment policies, social and care policies, and legal and cultural norms all play crucial roles in shaping women's availability to participate in the labour force. Women in parts of Africa and the Arab States have the highest shares outside the labour force due to care obligations. In Northern Africa, 63 per cent of inactive women cite caregiving reasons, while in the Arab States, the rate is 59 per cent (figure 4). These figures suggest that gender roles and a lack of care and support policies and systems, such as maternity protection, paid parental leave and affordable childcare, significantly limit women's labour force participation (ILO 2024d).

Sub-Saharan Africa presents a somewhat different picture, with only 28 per cent of women reporting caregiving as a barrier to labour force participation. Although female labour force participation rates are much higher, almost

all working women (90 per cent) are engaged in informal employment. This is often the only arrangement that provides some flexibility, autonomy and geographic proximity to home to allow women to combine paid economic activity with care responsibilities (ILO 2007; ILO and WIEGO 2020). In Asia and the Pacific, 52 per cent of women outside the labour force cite care obligations as the reason, with subregional rates ranging from 44 per cent in Eastern Asia to 56 per cent in Southern Asia. In the Americas, the variation between subregions is stark. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 47 per cent of inactive women report caregiving reasons. In contrast, the share in Northern America is much lower, at 19 per cent. Finally, in Europe and Central Asia, 21 per cent of inactive women attribute this to care responsibilities, with Eastern Europe having the lowest rate globally at 11 per cent. Historically, many countries in Eastern Europe had social policies and workplace practices that supported higher female labour force participation. However, the effectiveness of these

systems varies today, with some countries maintaining robust support while others have seen declines (Karu 2022; Avlijaš 2020; ILO, forthcoming-a).

► **Figure 4. Share of men and women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, 2023**

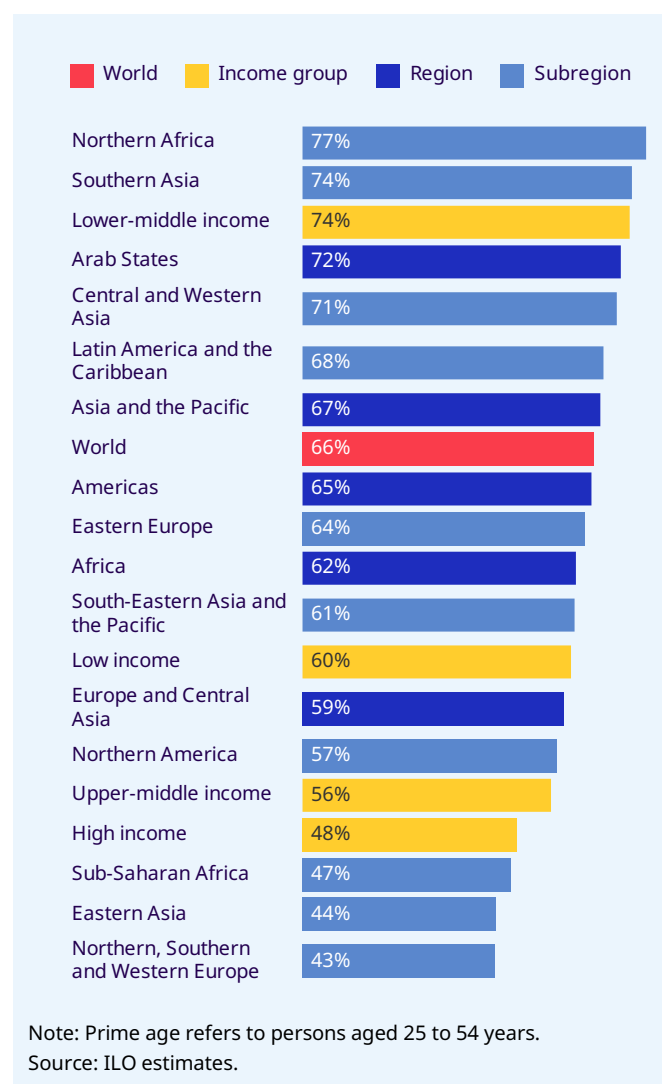


The effect of socio-demographics

Understanding the barriers to labour force participation for women requires a closer look at how various socio-demographic factors come into play, such as age, education level and geographic location (i.e. living in a rural or urban area). Unsurprisingly, age plays a crucial role in determining whether women cite caregiving responsibilities as the reason for being out of the workforce. By narrowing the focus to prime-age women (25 to 54 years old)—those more likely to be in childbearing and child-rearing stages, among other care responsibilities—the figures become even more striking.

Globally, two-thirds of prime-age women outside the labour force, namely 379 million women, cite caregiving responsibilities as the reason for their inactivity. In high-income countries, this rate stands at 48 per cent, while in lower-middle-income countries, it skyrockets to 74 per cent (figure 5). Across regions and subregions, this trend is most pronounced in Northern Africa, Southern Asia, the Arab States, and Central and Western Asia, where over 70 per cent of prime-age women outside the labour force indicate caregiving as the reason for inactivity. These figures underscore the challenges women face in balancing work and family across different socio-economic contexts and throughout their lives.

► **Figure 5. Share of prime-age women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, 2023**



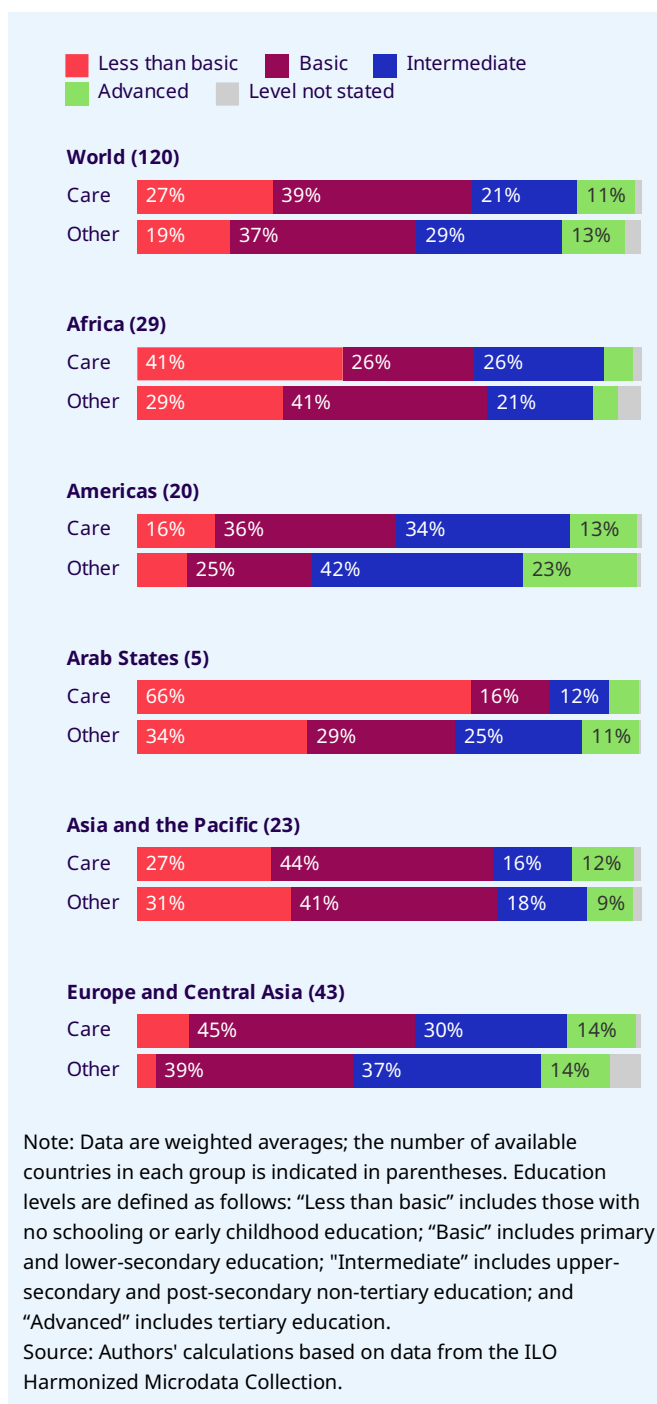
Educational attainment can also influence women's participation in the labour force, particularly among those reporting care-related reasons for inactivity. In most regions, women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities are more likely to have less than basic

education compared to those stating other reasons for their inactivity. This is especially pronounced in the Arab States, where 66 per cent (based on weighted averages for five countries) of inactive women citing care reasons had less than basic education, while only 34 per cent of those indicating other reasons had similarly low educational attainment (figure 6). This disparity highlights the need for increasing access and enrolment in education for women and girls, as well as supportive systems that empower women with lower educational attainment to enter and remain in the labour market.

Rural women in particular face multiple layers of disadvantage in the labour market. Often present in the informal economy, they often lack access to social protection and essential public services—such as healthcare, early childhood education and long-term care facilities— which limits their opportunities to participate in paid employment. Additionally, the adverse impacts of climate and environmental change in rural areas, along with the lack of gender-responsive mitigation and adaptation efforts, are further exacerbating the unequal gender distribution of unpaid care work (ILO 2024c; 2024e). Notably, except for Asia and the Pacific, rural women outside the labour force are more likely than their urban counterparts to attribute their inactivity to care-related reasons across regions. This trend aligns with the significantly higher rates of rural women who are NEET (not in employment, education or training), reflecting compounded barriers that hinder their engagement in both work and educational opportunities.

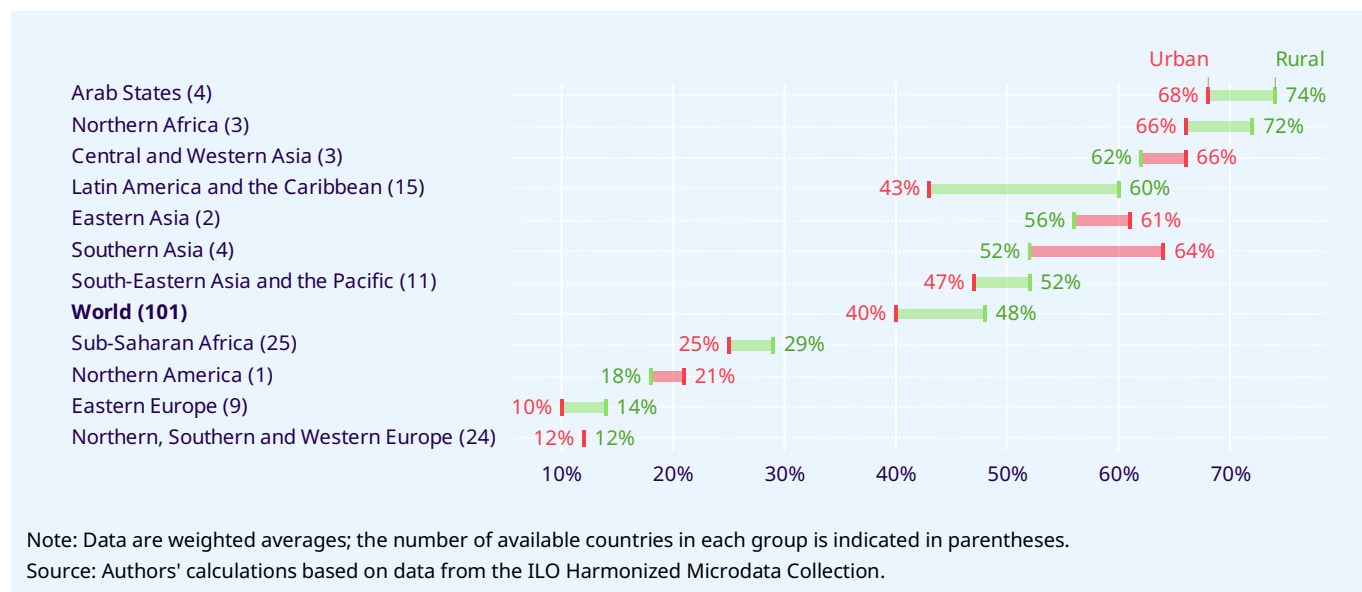
Across regions and subregions, the Arab States and Northern Africa have the highest shares (weighted averages) of rural women outside the labour force for care-related reasons, at 74 per cent and 72 per cent respectively, compared to 68 per cent and 66 per cent in urban areas (figure 7). The largest difference between rural and urban women is seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, with 60 per cent of rural women outside the labour force reporting that their inactivity is due to caregiving, versus 43 per cent in urban areas. In Southern Asia, rural women report a much lower share of care-related inactivity at 52 per cent, compared to 64 per cent among urban women, arising from complex socio-economic and cultural factors.⁴

► **Figure 6. Distribution of women outside the labour force by education level: care responsibilities vs. other reasons**



⁴ It is important to note too that rural women in Southern Asia are often engaged in the labour force as (unpaid) contributing family workers (Deshpande, Ashwini, and Naila Kabeer 2024).

► **Figure 7. Share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities: rural vs. urban areas**



Overall, care responsibilities seem to significantly hinder female labour force participation among prime-age women, those with lower levels of education, and rural residents. These findings underscore the importance of implementing integrated and coherent care and support policies and systems for decent work and gender equality to reduce barriers and facilitate greater participation for these groups. To this effect, the ILO Resolution advocates for care measures that address the needs of groups and persons in situations of vulnerability, including the development of community-based approaches also supported by social and solidarity economy (SSE) initiatives. It also encourages monitoring the impacts of climate change on care, including unpaid care work, and considering care issues in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies and actions (ILO 2024a).

Then and now: Changes since 2018

Since 2018, many countries have made progress in reducing the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities. Figure 8 shows changes in the share for 40 countries⁵ with comparable data for two years between circa 2018 and the most recent year. The chart illustrates that the share of women outside the

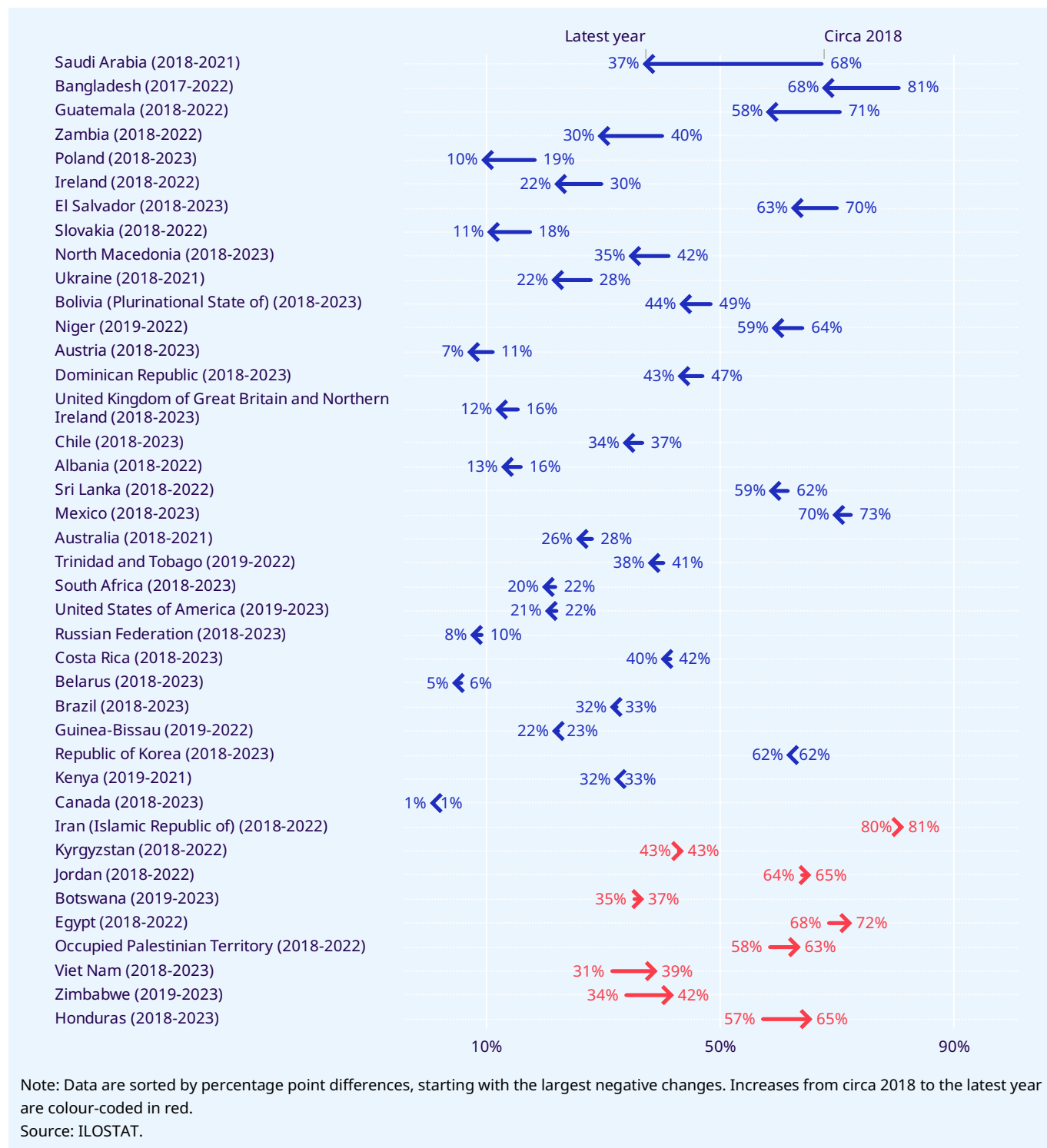
labour force due to care responsibilities has decreased in 31 countries. Notably, significant declines—defined as reductions between 10 to 30 percentage points—were recorded in Saudi Arabia (-30.5), Bangladesh (-12.9), Guatemala (-12.4), and Zambia (-11.0). Moderate reductions (less than 10 points) were more common, including in countries such as El Salvador (-7.6), Niger (-5.1), and Sri Lanka (-3.1).

Multiple factors – including policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, services, infrastructure, institutions, financing mechanisms and social norms – play a crucial role in shaping the provision and receipt of care and support across the life-course (ILO 2024a). These factors directly influence women's labour force participation by determining the availability, affordability and quality of care services, the distribution of unpaid care work and the societal expectations surrounding caregiving. A reduction in the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities could suggest that law and policy changes, aligned with the ILO 5R Framework for Decent Care Work,⁶ have enabled a more equal distribution of unpaid care work or improved access to care services, thereby lessening the role that care plays in keeping women outside of the labour force.

⁵ This represents 26 per cent of the global population of persons outside the labour force due to care responsibilities.

⁶ The 5R Framework for Decent Care Work is a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach to public policy. The Framework creates a virtuous circle that mitigates care-related inequalities, addresses the barriers preventing women from entering paid work and improves the conditions of all care workers and, by extension, the quality of care (ILO 2018).

► **Figure 8. Share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, latest year and circa 2018**



In Saudi Arabia, the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities decreased from 68 per cent in 2018 to 37 per cent in 2021. This coincides with policy reforms introduced under the *Vision 2030 Plan* launched in 2016, which have improved women's mobility and ability to access employment opportunities (Government of Saudi Arabia 2016). Policy changes also

include the development of the childcare sector, in response to the growing need for childcare as more women joined the workforce. This sector has expanded, providing both public and private childcare options, which could help reduce reliance on migrant domestic workers who currently support the provision of paid care work (UNESCWA 2022, ILO 2021). The *Early Learning Standards*

and *National Curriculum for early childhood care* aim to improve the quality of education for children aged 0 to 6 years (UNESCO n.d.-a). In July 2024, Saudi Arabia's government enacted reforms to the social insurance programme, introducing a 12-week maternity leave benefit paid at 100 per cent of previous earnings for Saudi and non-Saudi workers. It replaces an employer liability scheme with a contributory social insurance scheme, aligning with the requirements of the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) on the benefit level and the source of funding, while just falling short of the duration stipulated by the Convention of 14 weeks (ILO 2024f).⁷

In Guatemala, women's inactivity due to unpaid care work decreased from 71 per cent in 2018 to 58 per cent in 2022. The increased availability of public pre-primary schools – leading to an increase of net enrolment rates in pre-primary education from 22 per cent in 2018 to 27 per cent in 2023 (UNESCO n.d.-b) – and greater investments in healthcare, particularly services for older persons – have reduced the amount of home-based care, freeing up more time for unpaid carers, mainly women, to engage in paid work (PAHO 2022).

In Bangladesh, the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities dropped from 81 per cent in 2017 to 68 per cent in 2022. In addition to increasing literacy rates, lowering maternal and child mortality and improving gender parity in primary education, Bangladesh has made gender equality in labour force participation a priority. The *Child Daycare Centre Act of 2021* was enacted to support working parents, particularly mothers, by making childcare services⁸ more accessible and reliable, particularly in sectors such as manufacturing. The budgetary allocation for daycare centres rose by over 12 percent, from 216 million Bangladeshi taka (BDT) in 2018–2019 to BDT 242 million in 2023–2024, with a projected increase to BDT 332 million by 2026–2027 (ILO, forthcoming-b).

The combination of various social protection programmes and care policy interventions have supported the drop in the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities in Zambia—from 40 per cent in 2018 to 30 per cent in 2022. These measures include higher access to pre-primary education, with an increase in net enrolment rates from 19.7 per cent in 2018 to 28.5 per cent in 2023,

and the *Home-Grown School Meals programme*, which provides locally sourced meals to over one million children in pre-primary and primary schools in all ten provinces in Zambia (Zambian Ministry of General Education 2020). Moreover, the expansion of the *Social Cash Transfer programme*, as part of the national social protection system, increased coverage of beneficiaries from 880 thousand in August 2021 to 973 thousand by July 2022 (ILO, n.d.). This social assistance combined with nutrition and ECCE services help ease the economic and time pressures related to childcare and have supported more women to seek employment (Favero 2020).

Figure 8 also shows that some countries, such as Costa Rica, the Republic of Korea, Iran and Kyrgyzstan, exhibit both high shares of women outside the labour force (40 per cent or more) and relatively marginal changes (below 2 percentage points). This could indicate that while there have been some efforts to address care responsibilities, they have not been sufficient to make substantial differences in labour force inclusion for women and change social norms around the division of unpaid care work, or other potentially discriminatory norms.

On the other end of the spectrum, 9 out of 40 countries show increases in the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, with Honduras (+8.3), Zimbabwe (+8.0) and Viet Nam (+7.6) experiencing increases above 7 percentage points. This suggests that these countries, with relatively moderate shares of women outside the labour force due to unpaid care work (above 30 per cent), might be facing growing care needs – likely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic or ageing populations – alongside socio-economic challenges that exacerbate women's unpaid care work and hinder their participation in paid work.

Policy implications: The role of investments in early childhood care and education

The ILO Resolution recognizes that investing in the care economy can lead, among other benefits, to decent work and stronger female participation in the labour market (ILO 2024a). Therefore, it calls on ILO constituents to invest in and make available high-quality, affordable,

⁷ The amendments will come into effect in February 2025.

⁸ There are four kinds of childcare services outlined in this law: Daycare centres subsidized by the government; daycare centres operated by government entities, agencies, directorates, departments, statutory or autonomous bodies that offer services free of charge; commercial daycare centres run by individuals or organizations for profit; and non-profit daycare centres managed by individuals, organizations, non-governmental organizations, clubs, associations, corporations, or the industrial sector. The childcare services are monitored by the Women and Child Affairs Ministry (The Daily Star 2021).

adequate and accessible care services, including childcare services (ILO 2024a). ILO research shows that there is a strong investment case for paid childcare-related leave (maternity, paternity and parental leave) and ECCE. A study covering 82 countries finds that every US dollar invested in closing gaps in childcare-related leave and ECCE could result in an average increase of US\$3.76 in global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2035. The investment benefit is not limited to the potential return on investment, there are also benefits related to job generation and gender equality. Investment in transformative childcare policy packages could also have a potential to generate 96 million direct jobs in ECCE by 2035; reduce the global gender gap in monthly earnings from 20.1 per cent in 2019 to 8 per cent in 2035; and increase women's employment to a global average of 56.5 per cent in 2035, up from 46.2 per cent in 2019 (ILO 2023b). Children also have better developmental outcomes when the countries in which they live anchor a right to universal ECCE services into national legislation and provide these services in practice.

Figure 9 shows the relationship between government expenditure in pre-primary education as a percentage of GDP (UNESCO n.d.-b)⁹ and the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities for the latest year, in 50 countries with available data for both indicators. It illustrates that while women's inactivity due to care is driven by multiple factors, public investments in ECCE matter. In countries that invest more in pre-primary education, the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities tends to be lower than those in countries investing comparatively less. For instance, Iran, Egypt, Jordan, Mali and India have more than 50 per cent of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities and may need further investment in the care economy, particularly in ECCE. On the other hand, countries such as Belarus, Bulgaria, Latvia and Sweden have less than 10 per cent of women outside the labour force due to caregiving while investing around 1 per cent of GDP in ECCE.

An increasing number of countries are taking steps to increase investments in ECCE. Poland and Slovakia boosted investments in pre-primary education up to 0.76 and 0.62 per cent of GDP, respectively, from 2018 to 2021,

with corresponding reductions in women's inactivity due to unpaid care work (-9.0 and -7.2 percentage points, respectively). In addition, in Poland, the share of fathers using paternity leave increased from 60 per cent in 2022 to 67 per cent in 2023. As a result of the introduction of 9 weeks of paid parental leave reserved for each parent in 2023, 19 thousand fathers also took some parental leave in 2023 compared to 3,700 in 2022. A 2023 law establishing the Active Parent Programme is expected to facilitate parents' return to work after parental leave, by providing a benefit of €353 per month to cover daycare costs or hiring of a homebased childcare worker or a close relative (Kurowska, Godlewska-Bujok, and Michón 2024). In Slovakia, the parliament passed a law in 2023 to guarantee a place in kindergarten for any child aged 4 years by September 2024 and to any child aged 3 years by September 2025 (Dančíková 2024).

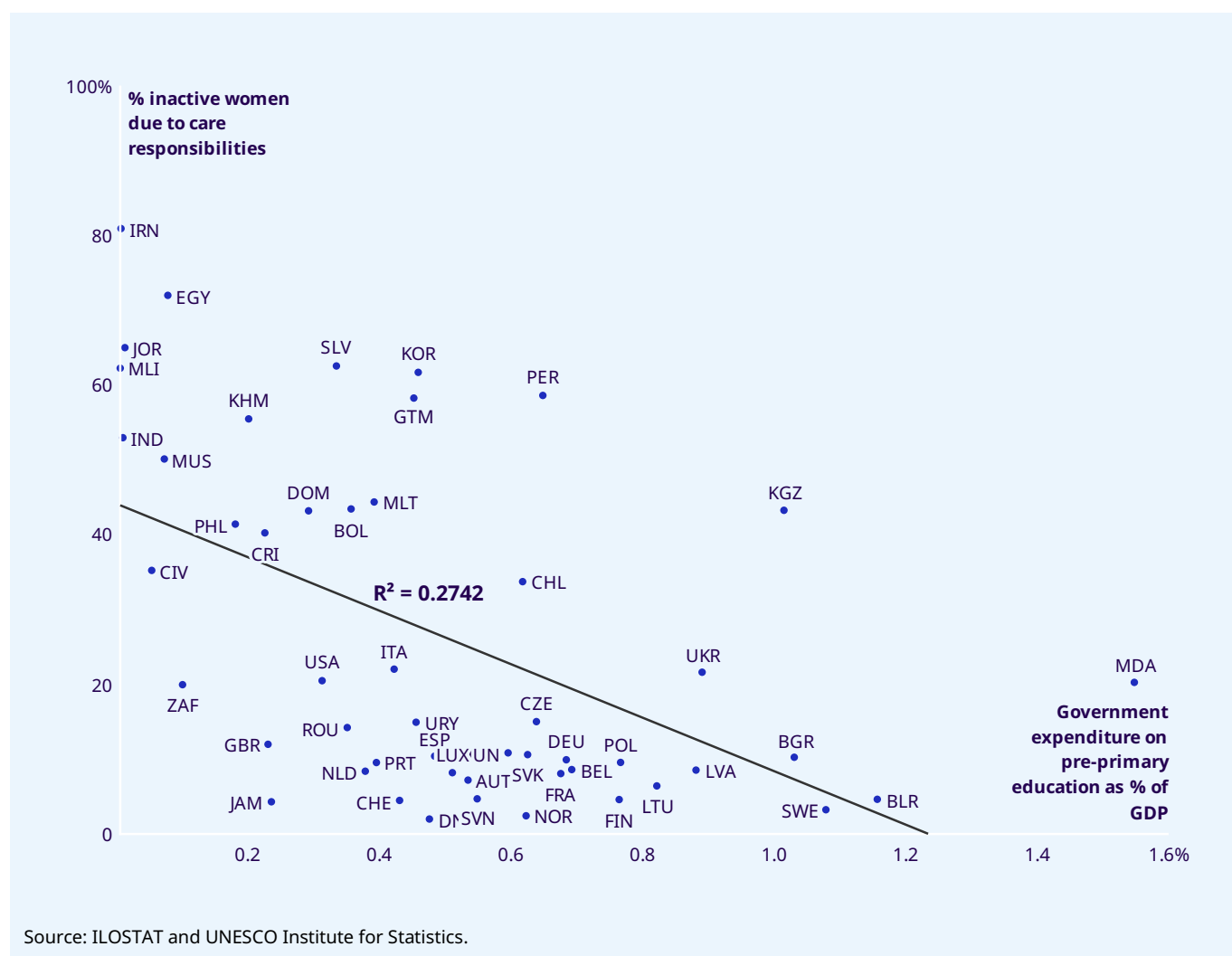
South Africa increased expenditure on pre-primary education between 2018 and 2023, from 0.08 to 0.10 per cent of GDP, and in the same period the share of women outside the labour force due to care decreased from 22 per cent to 20 per cent. In the Dominican Republic, the government increased the expenditure on pre-primary education to almost 0.3 per cent of GDP in 2023, while the share of women outside the labour force due to care decreased from 47 per cent to 43 per cent between 2018 and 2023. In 2016, advocacy of national union confederations led to the ratification of the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) (El Congreso Nacional de la República Dominicana 2014; ITUC 2024). As a result, in 2017, maternity leave was extended from 12 weeks to 14 weeks, paid at 100 per cent of previous earnings by social security (Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Social 2017; Business & Human Rights Resource Centre 2022). As part of a Joint UN Programme, the ILO supported the National Institute of Professional Technical Training (INFOTEP) in enhancing care training programs in line with the *National Qualifications Framework* as part of the *National Care System*. Key results included the development of a human-rights based personal assistance programme for people with disabilities and the implementation of the first cycle of an enhanced training and certification programme for early childhood and long-term care workers (United Nations 2024).

⁹ The most recent year was selected based on information availability. The information on the most recent government expenditure in pre-primary education as a percentage of GDP was obtained from UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the most recent value was selected from the period between 2021 and 2023. As in the case of the share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities, the latest value for government expenditure corresponds to 2023 (or alternatively, 2022 if information was not available for 2023, followed by 2021 if information was not available for 2023 or 2022). Only countries with information for both government expenditure and the share of women outside of the labour force due to care responsibilities for the period between 2021 and 2023 were considered (50 countries).

Despite its evident benefits, public investment in ECCE typically remains below 1 per cent of GDP among 50 countries with available data (figure 9). Overall, this is far below the investment requirements needed to address increasing childcare needs, promote child development and support women's employment opportunities. According to a 2022 ILO report, this investment gap would represent an average of 1.5 per cent of GDP globally by 2035, ranging between 1.1 per cent in Europe to 4.2 per cent in Africa (ILO 2022b). Current investment in the 50 countries with available data is also below the minimum benchmark of at least 1 per cent of GDP for Early

Childhood Education (ECE) financing, which is recommended in the [ILO Policy Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work for Early Childhood Education Personnel](#) to ensure quality and accessible pre-primary education on par with primary education and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 (ILO 2013). Only a few countries, including the Republic of Moldova, Belarus, Sweden, Bulgaria and Kyrgyzstan, have investments in ECCE ranging from 1 to 1.5 per cent of GDP.

► **Figure 9. Share of women outside the labour force due to care responsibilities and government expenditure on pre-primary education, latest year**



Conclusion

While unemployment statistics shed light on persons without employment, they do not capture the broader

segment of the population that is not looking or not available for employment. By focusing on individuals outside the labour force, this analysis provides insights into the social, economic and cultural factors that prevent or dissuade people from entering the labour market.

The new ILO global and regional estimates presented in this brief highlight the persistent challenges women face due to care responsibilities, which continue to be the major barrier to their full participation in the labour force, thereby aggravating gender-based inequalities in the labour market.

This analysis shows that a staggering 708 million women are outside the labour force due to care responsibilities. Socio-demographic disaggregation also highlights the interplay between age, education and geographic location, and underscores the vulnerability of certain groups of women in some regions. Care responsibilities disproportionately affect prime-age women (25 to 54 years old), particularly in lower-middle-income countries, where over 74 per cent of prime-age women outside the labour force cite care responsibilities as the reason for not being part of the labour force. Women with lower educational attainment are also more likely to be excluded from the labour market due to care responsibilities. Additionally, rural women face greater barriers, with care responsibilities accounting for higher labour force inactivity compared to urban women, especially in regions such as Northern Africa and the Arab States. The impact of climate change and demographic transitions could intensify these inequalities.

Some progress has been made in investing in care and support policies and systems in some countries, thus improving the inclusion of women in the labour force and promoting broader gender equality and equity. However, the care economy continues to be underfunded and inadequate care and support policies and systems keep millions of women and their families at a disadvantage. To mark the International Day for Care and Support (29 October), the ILO calls for urgent action to give effect to the ILO Resolution concerning decent work and the care economy. Ensuring decent work in the care economy; promoting equality of opportunity and treatment; and providing decent employment opportunities for women and men through adequate investments in care policies, services and systems are essential pathways to social justice. Integrated and coherent care policies and systems, grounded in international labour standards and social dialogue and framed by the ILO 5R Framework for Decent Care Work (recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and reward and representation of care workers), should be the foundation. Among others, the

ILO Resolution calls on governments, workers' and employers' organizations to:¹⁰

- **Promote the ratification and implementation of international labour standards** relevant to the care economy, including all fundamental Conventions.
- **Advance decent work in the care economy, based on a life-course approach to care**, embracing the 5R Framework for Decent Care Work.
- **Mainstream care into relevant public policies**, including employment, skills, macroeconomic, social and labour protection, migration and environmental policies, and ensure adequate public financing.
- **Promote employment and macroeconomic policies that create decent jobs in the care economy**, including through promoting formalization of informal care jobs and enterprises, including for domestic workers.
- **Ensure sufficient fiscal space for investment in the care economy and make available high-quality, affordable, adequate and accessible care services**, including childcare, health care and long-term care for all workers, including for workers in the informal economy.
- **Create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises and develop a conducive environment for SSE entities**, including gender-responsive policies that promote productivity, investment in education and skills development, and enhanced access to business opportunities, formalization and finance.
- Ensure appropriate responses to the needs of all workers with care responsibilities by ensuring **comprehensive maternity protection and care leave and protection policies**, including paternity, parental leave and long-term care leave.
- **Strengthen policies and measures facilitating work-life balance, paid work and care responsibilities**, including measures related to the organization, time and location of work, and other terms and conditions of employment.

¹⁰ For the comprehensive set of recommendations please refer to ILO 2024a.

- **Address the unequal gender distribution of paid and unpaid work, and promote women's economic inclusion and autonomy beyond caregiving**, including by changing social norms and gender stereotypes around caregiving roles.
- **Build and maintain universal social protection systems** that provide adequate protection to care workers in all types of employment and recognize unpaid care work **and ensure labour protection measures** for maximum limits on working time, adequate minimum wages, occupational safety and health, and preventing and addressing violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment.
- **Promote the voice and representation** of, and consult with, care worker organizations, organizations of employers of care workers and unpaid family carers.
- **Monitor the impacts of climate change and technological change on care, including unpaid care work**, and consider care issues in relation to emerging labour market governance issues and climate change adaptation and mitigation policies and actions.
- **Collect and disseminate data on unpaid and paid care work**, in line with existing international statistical standards and with international statistical standards that will be developed to provide an evidence base for policymaking.

The new ILO estimates provide a critical tool for understanding inequalities in the labour force generated by unequal care responsibilities and monitoring progress on the global commitments that aim to close these gaps. By implementing the ILO Resolution, countries can ensure that unpaid care work is no longer a barrier to women's employment, thereby advancing decent work and gender equality for all.

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Annex

Methodology

In or out of the labour force? Understanding key terms

In discussions surrounding employment and labour force participation, the concepts of "employment", "labour force," and "not in the labour force" are pivotal, yet often misunderstood. This section aims to clarify these terms to provide a foundational understanding for the methodological description that follows.

The statistics produced for this analysis are based on the concepts and definitions adopted by the [13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians](#) (ICLS) rather than those of the more recent 19th ICLS, in order to maximize country coverage. Users should also note that data may differ from national figures. The magnitude of the differences depends on the extent to which a country is applying international statistical standards, and which set of standards are applied. For more information, refer to the quick guides on [microdata processing](#) and [the impact of new statistical standards on ILOSTAT databases](#).

The **labour force** encompasses all persons of working age (i.e. aged 15 and above) who are either employed or unemployed. Specifically, this includes:

- **Employed individuals**, which refer to those currently engaged in employment (i.e. work for pay or profit), regardless of the nature of their employment. In other words, it includes persons in paid employment and self-employment, whether formal or informal.
- **Unemployed individuals**, which refer to those who are without work, currently available for work, and actively seeking work. All three criteria must be met. Future starters, that is, persons who did not look for work but planned for a future job

start are also counted as unemployed, as well as participants in skills training or retraining schemes within employment promotion programmes.

Conversely, individuals classified as **not in the labour force** include those who are not employed and either not actively seeking or not available to work. This group encompasses persons in a variety of circumstances, such as students, retirees, caregivers, discouraged workers, and persons unable to participate in the labour force due to physical or mental health challenges.

Leveraging microdata to uncover insights on labour force participation and non-participation

The ILO collects the underlying household survey (mostly labour force survey) datasets, also known as microdata, compiled by national statistical offices around the world. Currently, these microdata files are available for 177 countries and territories. Microdata allows for a granular analysis of the working-age population by capturing detailed information at the individual level.

A recent example of using the ILO's Harmonized Microdata Collection to delve into gender issues in the labour market is the production of labour force participation rates by household type including the presence of children. These new data provide insights into how much lower the participation of women with children is compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, the microdata enables the exploration of the nuanced reasons behind not participating in the labour market.

Capturing reasons for being outside the labour force

There is no standard practice in household surveys for capturing reasons for being outside the labour force. To facilitate international comparisons, the various reasons are regrouped into the following broad categories:

- **Labour market reasons:** This category includes individuals who are unable to find work or are discouraged jobseekers who have stopped actively searching for employment due to repeated rejections or a belief that no jobs are available for them. It also includes individuals who are too young or too old to work according to prospective employers, regardless of whether actual age restrictions prevent them from entering or staying in the labour market.
- **Personal or family reasons:** This encompasses individuals citing personal obligations, such as caregiving responsibilities, health issues, or family commitments, which prevent them from engaging in the labour market. It also includes students and trainees, those whose partner does not want them to work and other involuntary reasons.
- **Does not need or want to work:** This group includes individuals that do not require or desire employment; they may be financially secure, retired or pursuing other interests.
- **Not elsewhere classified:** This category captures individuals whose reasons do not fit into the other previously specified categories or who were **not asked**.

An important aspect of this categorization is the "Not asked" group who did not respond to the relevant question and thus fall into the "Not elsewhere classified" category. In many datasets, a significant portion of responses are classified here due to survey skip patterns. That is, some respondents may skip questions about their reasons for not participating in the labour force due to a prior answer. For example, the question may not be asked to persons above a certain age (e.g. those aged 75 and above in European countries) or persons indicating they are not willing to work.

If more than 15 per cent of inactive persons fall into the "Not elsewhere classified" category, the data are discarded since high rates of such responses obscure the true distribution of reasons for being outside the labour force. This ensures that the data used for statistical analysis is robust and reflects actual reasons for non-participation.

In addition, many of the household surveys contained information on whether "personal or family reasons" are specifically related to care, such as taking care of children, elderly adults and sick or disabled family members. As such, a dummy variable was created to identify if the reason is care-related or not. This is the basis of the indicators on the number and share of persons outside of the labour force citing care responsibilities as the reason for inactivity.

This brief provides information similar to that found in the 2018 ILO report [Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work](#), such as the figures on persons outside the labour force by reason. While the country-level data production process was comparable to what is outlined here, the earlier global findings were based on a smaller set of countries (90 countries with available data at that time) and the "Not elsewhere classified" category was not

directly addressed in the methodology. Consequently, the data from the two reports are not comparable.

Global and regional aggregates

The global and regional labour force participation rates presented in the brief are modelled estimates based on econometric models. For further information, refer to the [ILOSTAT database description on ILO Modelled Estimates](#).

Unless otherwise indicated, the remaining global and regional figures are ILO estimates. Data on the number and share of persons outside the labour force by reason, including due to care responsibilities, come from the household survey microdata for 125 countries, representing 71 per cent of inactive persons globally. For countries lacking data, we use ILO modelled estimates on persons outside the labour force as a benchmark. For the broad categories of reasons for being outside the labour force, we apply the weighted average share of inactive persons citing a specific reason as a percentage of total inactive persons from countries within the same income group that have available data. For care-related reasons, which are a subset of the category “personal or family reasons”, the information is not available for 12 of the 125 countries with data available for the broader category. For these missing countries, we calculate by income group the weighted average share of persons citing care as a percentage of those citing personal or family reasons across the 113 countries with both sets of information. These weighted averages are then applied to the observed rates of persons outside the labour force due to personal or family reasons for the 12 countries. For all categories, the resulting country-level figures, both directly sourced and estimated, are then aggregated by region and income group.

Groupings are based on ILO regions and subregions and World Bank income groups; for details, see the [country groupings page on ILOSTAT](#).

In the socio-demographic section, global and regional figures by education and by rural/urban areas are weighted averages based on countries for which data are available (using the latest year in each country), which is fewer than the total number of countries in each group.

Improving data collection on unpaid care work

Despite the insights gained from the available data, there remain significant challenges in accurately capturing the full scope of caregiving responsibilities in household surveys. From this exercise, we find that the high shares of inactive persons falling into the “Not elsewhere classified” category (because of survey skip patterns) suggest that existing surveys do not fully capture respondents' situations in many cases. Moreover, survey questions on reasons for being outside the labour force should be designed to capture a wider range of caregiving scenarios, including childcare, long-term care (or care for older persons), care and support for people with disabilities, and informal community care. We attempted to capture whether the reason for non-participation was specifically related to childcare; however, data with this detail were available for only 15 countries, making it insufficient to draw any meaningful or representative analysis at a global or regional level.

More importantly, countries should prioritize the measurement of unpaid domestic and care work, which is often overlooked. While various methods exist, diary-based approaches, such as independent diary-based time-use surveys, offer the best data quality. However, many countries lack experience with these surveys. As such, the 20th ICLS in 2018 tasked the ILO with developing guidance to integrate time-use measurement into labour force surveys, resulting in the publication of the [ILO Own-use provision of services measurement guide](#). This guide includes a ‘light’ time-use diary, balancing respondent burden and proven approaches, to gather high quality data on time use, aligned with the latest international statistical standards. In addition to a 24-hour diary, the module captures simultaneous activities and includes a recovery sequence targeted at unpaid care of family members, which ensures comprehensive coverage of unpaid domestic and care work. The ILO offers technical support for implementing the module in labour force surveys, including with a CSPro-based application for implementation through computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). By integrating such measurement tools, countries can improve their understanding of unpaid care work and better inform policies aimed at supporting caregivers both within and outside the workforce and monitor their impact.

► **Table 1. Share of women and men outside the labour force due to care responsibilities and to personal or family reasons**

| Country or territory | Survey (English label) | Latest year | Share outside the labour force due to care responsibilities (%) | | Share outside the labour force due to personal or family reasons (%) | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| | | | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Afghanistan | Labour Force Survey | 2020 | 61.5 | 0.9 | 78.6 | 34.5 |
| Albania | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 13.0 | 0.7 | 44.9 | 41.1 |
| Angola | Employment Survey | 2021 | ... | ... | 48.7 | 47.3 |
| Armenia | Households Living Conditions Survey | 2018 | 26.3 | 1.4 | 51.7 | 42.4 |
| Australia | Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey | 2021 | 25.8 | 6.3 | 42.8 | 36.0 |
| Austria | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 7.2 | 0.8 | 57.9 | 54.0 |
| Bahamas | Labour Force & Household Survey | 2019 | 13.3 | 2.5 (u) | 50.2 | 43.5 |
| Bangladesh | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 67.9 | 23.6 | 82.3 | 74.0 |
| Barbados | Labour Force Survey | 2019 | ... | ... | 29.2 | 28.5 |
| Belarus | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 4.6 | 0.7 | 29.5 | 43.4 |
| Belgium | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 8.6 | 0.9 | 44.8 | 40.4 |
| Benin | Monitoring Survey of the Modular and Integrated Survey of Household Living Conditions | 2022 | 27.5 | 2.9 | 69.4 | 68.8 |
| Bolivia (Plurinational State of) | Continuous Employment Survey | 2023 | 43.5 | 1.5 | 81.3 | 71.0 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Labour Force Survey | 2019 | 26.5 | 4.3 | 60.6 | 35.1 |
| Botswana | Multi-Topic Household Survey | 2023 | 36.5 | 17.7 | 71.9 | 71.7 |
| Brazil | Continuous National Household Sample Survey | 2023 | 31.6 | 4.2 | 92.7 | 87.8 |
| Bulgaria | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 10.3 | 2.6 | 34.9 | 38.0 |
| Burkina Faso | Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions | 2022 | 38.7 | 0.5 | 67.3 | 55.7 |
| Burundi | Living Standards Survey | 2020 | 7.5 | 4.8 | 85.1 | 85.1 |
| Cabo Verde | Continuous Multi-Objective Survey Employment and Labor Market Statistics | 2015 | 14.1 | (u) | 83.5 | 74.3 |
| Cambodia | Household Socio-Economic Survey | 2021 | 55.5 | 23.1 | 95.5 | 92.6 |
| Cameroon | Household Survey | 2021 | ... | ... | 60.3 | 65.9 |
| Canada | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 2.2 | 2.5 |
| Chile | National Employment Survey | 2023 | 33.8 | 3.6 | 69.0 | 56.1 |

| Country or territory | Survey (English label) | Latest year | Share outside the labour force due to care responsibilities (%) | | Share outside the labour force due to personal or family reasons (%) | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| | | | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Congo, Democratic Republic of the | Indicator Cluster Survey | 2020 | 18.6 | 1.7 | 59.3 | 52.9 |
| Costa Rica | Continuous Employment Survey | 2023 | 40.3 | 2.4 | 90.2 | 82.8 |
| Croatia | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 8.1 | 0.5 | 30.9 | 25.8 |
| Czechia | Labour Force Sample Survey | 2021 | 15.0 | 0.5 | 34.8 | 30.2 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | Living Standards Measurement Survey | 2022 | 35.5 | 0.3 | 72.0 | 68.8 |
| Denmark | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 2.0 | 0.3 | 24.1 | 25.5 |
| Dominican Republic | Continuous National Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 43.2 | 2.3 | 77.3 | 61.0 |
| Ecuador | National Survey on Employment, Unemployment and Underemployment | 2023 | ... | ... | 76.1 | 63.6 |
| Egypt | Labour Force Sample Survey | 2022 | 72.1 | (u) | 96.1 | 84.8 |
| El Salvador | Multi-purpose Household Survey | 2023 | 62.6 | 6.0 | 82.3 | 54.5 |
| Estonia | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 9.3 | 2.3 | 40.4 | 50.3 |
| Ethiopia | National Labor Force Survey | 2021 | 16.2 | 6.3 | 84.0 | 78.0 |
| Finland | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 4.6 | 0.8 | 32.2 | 33.3 |
| France | Employment Survey | 2023 | 8.1 | 0.8 | 32.4 | 28.9 |
| Gambia | Labour Force Survey | 2018 | 39.0 | 0.8 | 72.4 | 55.8 |
| Georgia | Labour Force Survey | 2020 | 31.6 | 3.4 | 50.6 | 38.5 |
| Germany | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 9.9 | 1.1 | 31.1 | 28.1 |
| Ghana | Living Standards Survey | 2013 | 19.9 | 4.5 | 79.0 | 75.2 |
| Greece | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 13.1 | 0.3 | 37.3 | 27.7 |
| Guatemala | Living Conditions National Survey | 2023 | 57.3 | 5.0 | 72.4 | 58.4 |
| Guinea-Bissau | Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions | 2022 | 22.0 | 0.5 | 68.4 | 62.1 |
| Haiti | Households Living Conditions Survey | 2012 | ... | ... | 50.9 | 63.4 |
| Honduras | Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey | 2023 | 65.3 | 5.7 | 88.5 | 64.1 |
| Hungary | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 10.9 | 2.8 | 34.4 | 40.6 |
| India | Periodic Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 53.0 | 1.1 | 97.8 | 91.4 |
| Indonesia | National Labour Force Survey | 2019 | ... | ... | 91.2 | 69.1 |
| Iran (Islamic Republic of) | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 81.0 | 2.2 | 94.6 | 45.8 |

| Country or territory | Survey (English label) | Latest year | Share outside the labour force due to care responsibilities (%) | | Share outside the labour force due to personal or family reasons (%) | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| | | | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Iraq | Labour Force Survey | 2021 | 72.5 | 6.0 | 92.3 | 66.3 |
| Ireland | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 19.1 | 3.7 | 48.3 | 43.8 |
| Italy | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 22.1 | 1.7 | 53.2 | 34.3 |
| Jordan | Employment and Unemployment Survey | 2022 | 65.1 | 0.8 | 95.4 | 61.4 |
| Kenya | Continuous household survey | 2021 | 32.3 | 1.4 | 83.1 | 77.7 |
| Kyrgyzstan | Employment and Unemployment Survey | 2022 | 43.3 | 4.2 | 68.8 | 55.8 |
| Latvia | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 8.5 | 2.2 | 37.4 | 47.4 |
| Lesotho | Integrated Labour Force Survey | 2019 | 60.0 | 45.6 | 89.4 | 89.3 |
| Lithuania | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 6.4 | 1.5 | 32.2 | 45.8 |
| Luxembourg | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 8.2 | 0.7 (u) | 38.0 | 33.6 |
| Madagascar | Periodic Household Survey | 2022 | 49.7 | 13.5 | 81.6 | 76.1 |
| Maldives | Household Income and Expenditure Survey | 2019 | 44.6 | 1.4 | 88.6 | 72.4 |
| Mali | Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions | 2022 | 62.3 | 2.1 | 80.6 | 59.1 |
| Malta | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 44.4 | 1.3 | 68.4 | 33.6 |
| Mauritania | Living Standards Survey | 2019 | 28.8 | 18.0 | 50.4 | 43.1 |
| Mauritius | Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey | 2023 | 50.2 | 0.2 (u) | 72.6 | 42.4 |
| Mexico | National Occupation and Employment Survey | 2023 | 69.7 | 12 | 88.2 | 55.1 |
| Mongolia | Labour Force Survey | 2018 | 28.4 | 7.1 | 59.9 | 57.2 |
| Myanmar | Labour Force Survey | 2020 | 62.8 | 3.9 | 96.5 | 84.5 |
| Namibia | Labour Force Survey | 2018 | 11.2 | 2.0 | 70.1 | 67.3 |
| Netherlands | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 8.4 | 1.5 | 32.9 | 29.1 |
| New Caledonia | Labour Force Survey | 2019 | 20.3 | 2.1 | 49.1 | 39.7 |
| Nicaragua | National Household Survey on Measuring Living Conditions | 2014 | 63.7 | 4.0 | 87.6 | 68.8 |
| Niger | National Survey on Household Living Conditions | 2022 | 59.5 | 1.0 | 78.4 | 47.4 |
| Nigeria | Unemployment, Under-employment Watch | 2022 | 29.7 | 0.2 (u) | 78.5 | 80.6 |
| North Macedonia | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 34.8 | 1.2 | 54.6 | 30.4 |
| Norway | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 2.4 | 0.3 (u) | 42.8 | 40.4 |

| Country or territory | Survey (English label) | Latest year | Share outside the labour force due to care responsibilities (%) | | Share outside the labour force due to personal or family reasons (%) | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| | | | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Occupied Palestinian Territory | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 63.3 | (u) | 94.3 | 74.7 |
| Panama | Labour Market Survey | 2023 | 43.6 | 3.3 | 73.7 | 58.3 |
| Papua New Guinea | Socio-Demographic and Economic Survey | 2022 | 34.9 | 15.1 | 84.1 | 75.5 |
| Paraguay | Continuous Employment Survey, Urban | 2016 | ... | ... | 91.3 | 74.6 |
| Peru | Permanent Employment Survey, National | 2023 | 58.7 | 18.1 | 87.4 | 68.6 |
| Philippines | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 41.5 | 4.7 | 90.6 | 80.1 |
| Poland | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 9.6 | 1.3 | 34.2 | 39.3 |
| Portugal | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 9.6 | 1.0 | 41.2 | 37.1 |
| Republic of Korea | Economically Active Population Survey | 2023 | 61.8 | 3.3 | 82.4 | 61.4 |
| Republic of Moldova | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 20.3 | 0.8 | 44.8 | 27.5 |
| Romania | Household Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 14.2 | 0.9 | 36.5 | 32.1 |
| Russian Federation | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 7.7 | 0.9 | 26.2 | 35.8 |
| Rwanda | Integrated Household Survey on Living Conditions | 2014 | 11.6 | 4.1 | 79.5 | 79.0 |
| Samoa | Labour Force Survey | 2017 | 51.1 | 35.2 | 75.1 | 75.7 |
| Saudi Arabia | Labour Force Survey | 2021 | 37.2 | 0.8 | 73.5 | 54.7 |
| Senegal | Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions | 2022 | 47.3 | 0.7 | 75.0 | 55.9 |
| Sierra Leone | Integrated Household Survey | 2018 | 13.6 | 1.3 | 60.0 | 60.3 |
| Singapore | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | ... | ... | 69.9 | 57.9 |
| Slovakia | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 10.6 | 1.0 | 39.6 | 40.5 |
| Slovenia | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 4.7 | 0.6 | 29.2 | 31.3 |
| Solomon Islands | Household Income and Expenditure Survey | 2013 | 24.5 | 4.0 | 62.7 | 68.9 |
| Somalia | Labour Force Survey | 2019 | 47.4 | 11.4 | 78.6 | 68.0 |
| South Africa | Quarterly Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 20.0 | 3.1 | 53.4 | 51.2 |
| Spain | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 10.4 | 1.3 | 41.0 | 35.0 |
| Sri Lanka | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 58.8 | 4.1 | 81.6 | 61.1 |
| Sudan | Labor Market Panel Survey | 2011 | 61.8 | 2.5 | 92.0 | 80.4 |
| Sweden | EU Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 3.2 | 0.4 | 37.8 | 36.6 |
| Switzerland | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 4.5 | 0.3 | 14.5 | 11.3 |
| Tajikistan | Living Standards Survey | 2009 | 64.5 | (u) | 79.4 | 42.3 |

| Country or territory | Survey (English label) | Latest year | Share outside the labour force due to care responsibilities (%) | | Share outside the labour force due to personal or family reasons (%) | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| | | | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Tanzania, United Republic of | Labour Force Survey | 2020 | 12.8 | 3.9 | 85.3 | 88.8 |
| Thailand | Household Socio-Economic Survey | 2019 | 75.7 | 51.2 | 96.3 | 87.5 |
| Timor-Leste | Labour Force Survey | 2021 | 38.0 | 20.6 | 73.5 | 67.0 |
| Togo | Living Standards Measurement Survey | 2022 | 19.5 | 0.4 (u) | 68.1 | 74.1 |
| Tonga | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 6.3 | 5.1 | 10.8 | 12.2 |
| Tunisia | National Population and Employment Survey | 2019 | 61.1 | 3.1 | 87.7 | 49.9 |
| Türkiye | Household Labour Force Survey | 2020 | 58.8 | 0.4 | 81.0 | 40.6 |
| Uganda | National Household Survey | 2019 | ... | ... | 85.3 | 79.4 |
| Ukraine | Labour Force Survey | 2021 | 21.6 | 6.3 | 33.4 | 28.5 |
| United Arab Emirates | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | ... | ... | 95.4 | 83.0 |
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 12.0 | 2.9 | 36.1 | 30.9 |
| United States of America | Current Population Survey | 2023 | 20.5 | 4.7 | 35.6 | 26.0 |
| Uruguay | Continuous Household Survey | 2023 | 15.0 | 0.9 | 36.9 | 33.1 |
| Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | Household Sample Survey | 2017 | 63.3 | 5.9 | 90.3 | 64.9 |
| Viet Nam | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | 38.8 | 10.8 | 75.6 | 64.3 |
| Yemen | Labour Force Survey | 2014 | 69.9 | 0.5 | 91.4 | 74.8 |
| Zambia | Labour Force Survey | 2022 | 29.5 | 5.8 | 73.6 | 66.6 |
| Zimbabwe | Labour Force Survey | 2023 | ... | ... | 79.8 | 73.1 |

Note: "..." indicates data are not available and "(u)" denotes data are unreliable. Care responsibilities are a subset of the "personal or family reasons" category. For further details, refer to the methodology section.

The table above displays the data available at the time of publication. Data are also available on [ILOSTAT](https://ilostat), the ILO's portal to labour statistics, where databases are continually updated. This table is directly available at:

https://rshiny.ilo.org/dataexplorer1/?id=EIP_RCAR_SEX_RT_A.

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