



BOTSWANA MULTI TOPIC HOUSEHOLD SURVEY 2024/5

Labour Force Preliminary Stats Brief

Private Bag 0024, Gaborone | Tel: +267 3671300 | Toll Free: 0800 600 200 | Four Thirty Square, Plot 54350 PG Matante Road, CBD, Gaborone



STATISTICS BOTSWANA

BOTSWANA
MULTI TOPIC HOUSEHOLD SURVEY 2024/25
Labour Force Preliminary Stats Brief

PREFACE

This Statistical Brief presents preliminary labour force results from the 2024/25 Botswana Multi Topic Household Survey (BMTHS). The survey comprised seventeen modules covering a broad range of socio-economic themes, including economic activity and poverty dynamics. Data collection was conducted over a twelve-month period from November 2024 to November 2025.

This brief provides key headline indicators, including estimates of the total population, labour force size, employment levels, unemployment levels, and core labour market rates. The release of these preliminary results reflects Statistics Botswana's continued commitment to providing timely, reliable, and official statistics that support evidence-based policymaking, planning, and accountability. At the national level, these findings are critical for monitoring progress under the National Development Plan (NDP), the Botswana Transitional Economic Programme (BTEP), and various sectoral policies aimed at employment creation and inclusive growth. Internationally, the results contribute to tracking Botswana's performance against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Africa Agenda 2063, and other regional and global frameworks to which the country is a signatory.

Employment creation remains a key Government priority. Continuous monitoring of labour market trends is essential for refining strategies and strengthening policy interventions. By releasing these preliminary findings, Statistics Botswana fulfils its mandate under the Statistics Act of 2009 to provide official statistics that inform Government, stakeholders, and the public. This brief compares results from the 2024/25 BMTHS with those from the 2015/16 BMTHS, which had a comparable sampling design and size. The findings indicate that the unemployment rate for persons aged 15 years and above increased from 17.6 percent in 2015/16 to 21.0 percent in 2024/25. A comprehensive analytical report will be released upon completion of the full data validation and analysis process. Additional reports covering other survey modules will follow.

I extend sincere appreciation to all respondents who participated in the survey and provided invaluable information.



Dr Khaufelo R. Lekobane
Statistician General
March 2026

1.0 Introduction

This brief presents key headline labour market indicators used to monitor employment performance and job creation in Botswana. Table 1 shows the total labour force, employed population, unemployed population, unemployment levels, and employment by sex, together with the resulting labour market indicators.

The Botswana Multi-Topic Household Survey (BMTHS) 2024/25 was conducted from November 2024 to November 2025. This brief presents a comparative analysis of findings from the 2024/25 round and the BMTHS 2015/16. The BMTHS is a nationally representative sample survey; therefore, all estimates are subject to sampling error. The survey is implemented continuously over a 12-month period to capture seasonal variations, particularly in labour market outcomes. In addition, the 2024/25 round utilised a larger sample size, thereby improving the precision, stability, and overall reliability of the estimates.

2. Population Increase

Accordingly, BMTHS population estimates are expected to be lower than projected national population figures for the same reference period. The total population increased from 2,073,675 in 2015/16 to 2,368,365 in 2024/25, representing an increase of 14.2 percent over the period. The figure is slightly more than the 2022 PHC estimate. It should be noted that the 2022 Population and Housing Census (PHC) provides a de facto count covering the entire population, including persons in institutions such as hospitals, schools, prisons, hotels, and military barracks. In contrast, the BMTHS excludes institutional populations. Accordingly, BMTHS population estimates are expected to be lower than projected national population figures for the same reference period.

3. Unemployment Rate at 21 percent

The 2024/25 BMTHS unemployment rate is estimated at 21.0 percent among persons aged 15 years and above. This represents an increase of 3.4 percentage points compared to the unemployment rate of 17.6 percent recorded in 2015/16.

4. Increase in the Employed Population

The employed population aged 15 years and above increased from 689,528 in 2015/16 to 804,663 in 2024/25, representing a growth of 16.7 percent. This increase is broadly consistent with overall population growth over the ten-year period. Further analysis of BMTHS data is on-going to reveal the sectors of economy contributing to the increase in employment.

5. Decrease in the Unemployed

Unemployed persons are persons who did not do some work in the reference period for payment (either in cash or in kind), profit or family gain. The unemployed people are those who have stated that they have been actively seeking work in the past seven days during the survey and are available to start work.

Discouraged job seekers are persons who did not do some work in the reference period and are available to work but were not actively seeking employment in the reference period. These persons usually stop looking for work because they have given up as they had no success in finding a job, hence the term "discouraged".

The 2015/16 Botswana Multi Topic Household Survey estimated total unemployed population at 280,482. Meanwhile the 2024/25 BMTHS reveals that there were 213,437 unemployed population.

2.

This is a decrease of 23.9 percent. A possible explanation to the drop can be attributed to either a growing number of the employed (transition to employment) or increase in the discouraged job seekers, yielding a contraction in the labour force base.

Extended unemployment rate, which is the combination of people actively seeking work and those who were willing to work but did not take steps looking for jobs, decreased from 32.5 percent to 27.3 percent, a decrease of 5.2 percentage points.

6. Youth Unemployment Increases

The youth (15–35 years) unemployment rate increased from 25.1 percent in 2015/16 to 28.9 percent in 2024/25. The rate was higher among young females, at 30.7 percent, compared to 27.2 percent for young males.

Over the same period, the youth labour force increased by 8.3 percent, rising from 427,089 in 2015/16 to 467,267 in the Botswana Multi Topic Household Survey 2024/25.

7. Proportion of Youth not in Education, not in Employment or Training

The Youth not in Education, not in Employment or Training (NEET Rate %) went down from 39.9 in 2015/16 to 37.1 percent between the two periods, a decrease of 2.8 percentage points.

8. Conclusions

The 2024/25 BMTHS preliminary results indicate that Botswana's labour market has expanded over the past decade, with notable growth in both the labour force and total employment. However, employment creation has not fully matched the pace of labour force growth, resulting in a higher unemployment rate compared to 2015/16. Youth unemployment remains elevated and continues to pose a structural challenge. These findings underscore the importance of sustained, employment-intensive growth and targeted labour market interventions to support inclusive and sustainable economic development.

NATIONAL HEADLINE LABOUR FORCE INDICATORS BMTHS 2015/16 & BMTHS 2024/25

Indicator/Statistics	Totals		BMTHS 2024/25			% Changes (BMTHS 2015/16 TO BMTHS 2024/25)
	BMTHS 2015/16		Total	Male	Female	
1 Total Population	2,073,675	2,368,365	1,135,204	1,233,161	14.2	
2 Population (15 years and above)	1,349,008	1,566,657	739,017	827,640	16.1	
3 Population Outside Labour Force (15 years and above)	512,274	548,558	224,242	324,316	7.1	
4 Labour Force (15 years and above)	836,734	1,018,099	514,775	503,325	21.7	
5 Employed Population	689,528	804,663	407,285	397,378	16.7	
6 Unemployed Population	147,206	213,437	107,490	107,947	45.0	
7 Population (18 years and above)	1,244,916	1,444,679	677,593	676,086	16.0	
8 Labour Force (18 years and above)	830,851	1,011,617	510,492	501,125	21.8	
9 Employed Population (18 years and above)	685,797	802,099	405,632	396,467	17.0	
10 Unemployed Population (18 years and above)	145,054	209,517	107,490	105,947	44.4	
11 Estimated Population of Youth (15 – 35 years)	747,635	739,760	363,093	376,667	-1.1	
12 Youth Labour Force	427,089	467,267	244,473	222,803	9.4	
Change (Percentage points)						
13 Employment to Population Ratio (EPR)	50.7	51.4	55.1	48	0.7	
14 Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)	61.5	65	69.7	60	3.5	
15 Unemployment Rate % (15 year and above)	17.6	21	20.9	21	3.4	
16 Unemployment Rate % (18 years and above)	17.5	20.5	20.9	20.7	3	
17 Extended Unemployment Rate % (15 years and above)	33.5	27.3	26.9	27.7	-6.2	
18 Youth Unemployment Rate (15-35 years)	25.1	28.9	27.2	30.7	3.8	
19 Youth not in Education, not in Employment or Training (NEET Rate %)	39.9	37.1	33.9	40.3	-2.8	



**Four Thirty Square,
Plot 54350**
PG Matante Road,
CBD, Gaborone

**Private Bag 0024,
Gaborone**
Tel: 3671300
Toll Free: 0800 600 200



STATISTICS BOTSWANA