

Unemployment rate for total population decreases to 3.5% in Q4 of 2024

According to estimates from the Labour Force Survey of the General Authority for Statistics, the overall unemployment rate (for Saudis and non-Saudis) recorded 3.5% in the fourth quarter of 2024. This marked a decrease of 0.2 percentage points compared to the third quarter of 2024, and a yearly increase of 0.1 percentage points compared to the fourth quarter of 2023. The overall labour force participation rate (for Saudis and non-Saudis) reached 66.4% showing a decrease of 0.2 percentage points compared to the third quarter of 2024 and a yearly decrease of 0.6 percentage points compared to the fourth quarter of 2023.

The Saudi unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2024 reached 7.0%, showing a 0.8 percentage points decrease compared to the third quarter of 2024, and a yearly decrease of 0.8 percentage points compared to the fourth quarter of 2023. On the other hand, the results indicated an increase in the employment-to-population ratio for Saudis by 0.1 percentage points compared to the third quarter of 2024, reaching 47.5%, and recording an annual increase of 1.0 percentage points compared to the fourth quarter of 2023. The labor force participation rate for Saudis in the fourth quarter of 2024 decreased by 0.4 percentage points compared to the third quarter of 2024, reaching 51.1%, and recording an annual increase of 0.7 percentage points compared to the fourth quarter of 2023.

Decrease of unemployment rate among Saudis (males and females)

In the fourth quarter of 2024, the labor market indicators in the Kingdom showed a decrease in the labor force participation rate for Saudi females by 0.2 percentage points, reaching 36.0%. Additionally, the employment to population ratio of Saudi females increased by 0.5 percentage points reaching 31.8%. At the same time, the unemployment rate of Saudi females decreased by 1.7 percentage points recording 11.9%, compared to the previous quarter of 2024.

Regarding Saudi males, the labor force participation rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points to the level of 66.2%. The employment to population ratio decreased to 63.4%. Also, the unemployment rate decreased to 4.3% compared to the previous quarter of 2024.

Increase of employment to population ratio for Saudi youth

In the fourth quarter of 2024, Saudi female youth aged (15-24 years) experienced a 0.3 percentage points increase in the employment to population ratio, reaching 13.9%. Additionally, there was a 0.7 percentage points decrease in the participation rate, reaching 17.3%. However, the unemployment rate decreased by 4.6 percentage points reaching 19.9% compared to the previous quarter of 2024. On the other hand, the employment to population ratio for Saudi male youth remained unchanged at the level of 29.7%, and recorded a 0.8 percentage points decrease in the labor force participation rate, reaching 33.8%. The unemployment rate decreased by 1.8 percentage points reaching 12.2% compared to the previous quarter of 2024. The results concerning labor market indicators for the Saudi population (both males and females) in the core working age group (25-54 years) during the fourth quarter of 2024 showed a 0.1 percentage points increase in employment to population ratio, reaching 64.9%, and a 0.2 percentage point decrease in the participation rate, reaching 69.2%. Also, the unemployment rate decreased to reach 6.2% compared to the previous quarter of 2024. For Saudis aged (55 years and above), the labor market indicators for the fourth quarter of 2024 indicated a decrease in the unemployment rate and the labor force participation rate compared to the previous quarter of 2024.

Active methods of job search for unemployed Saudis

Saudi job seekers use a variety of active job search methods, with an average of 5.0 active methods per job seeker. The method of asking friends or relatives about job opportunities was the most commonly used job search method, recording 86.9%, followed by directly applying to employers by 73.9%, and the use of the national unified employment platform (Jadarat) by 65.4%.

Additional indicators for unemployed Saudis

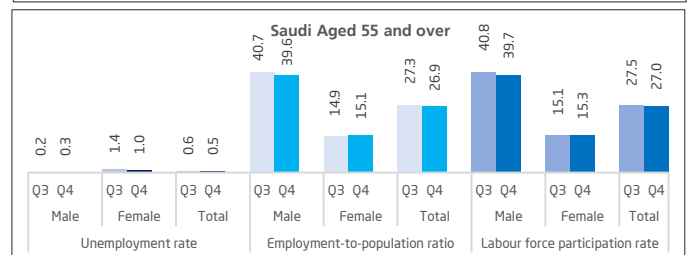
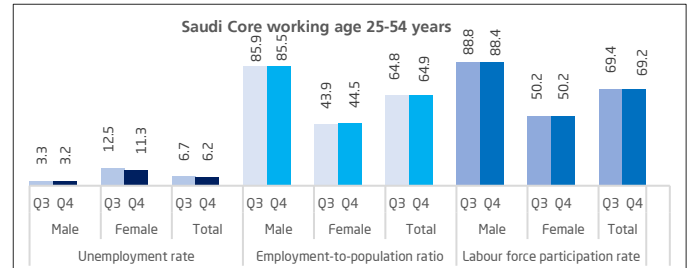
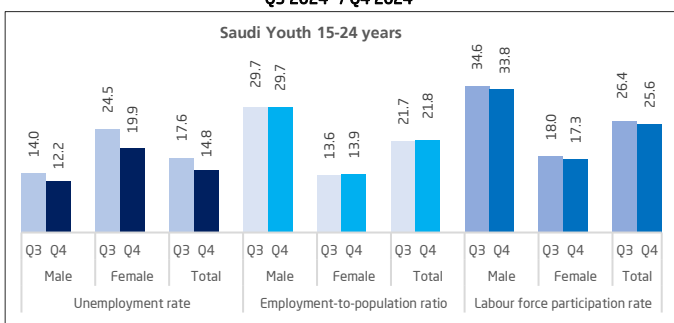
The results showed that 94.1% of unemployed Saudis are willing to accept job offers in the private sector. Additionally, 61.9% of unemployed Saudi females and 45.2% of unemployed Saudi males are willing to commute to work for at least one hour. Furthermore, 77.5% of unemployed Saudi females and 90.7% of unemployed Saudi males indicated that they are willing to work for eight hours or more per day.

Table 1: Key Indicators of Saudi labor Market by Quarter

Indicators	Fourth Quarter 2023			Third Quarter 2024			Fourth Quarter 2024		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Unemployment rate	1.8	11.1	3.4	2.0	11.9	3.7	2.0	10.4	3.5
Saudi	4.6	13.9	7.8	4.7	13.6	7.8	4.3	11.9	7.0
Non-Saudi	0.6	4.7	0.9	0.9	7.2	1.4	1.1	6.2	1.5
Employment-to-population ratio	82.6	30.8	64.7	82.3	29.6	64.1	81.9	30.0	64.0
Saudi	62.4	30.1	46.5	63.7	31.3	47.4	63.4	31.8	47.5
Non-Saudi	94.7	32.2	81.7	92.7	25.9	79.1	92.2	26.1	78.7
Participation rate	84.1	34.6	67.0	84.0	33.6	66.6	83.6	33.5	66.4
Saudi	65.4	35.0	50.4	66.9	36.2	51.5	66.2	36.0	51.1
Non-Saudi	95.3	33.8	82.5	93.6	27.9	80.2	93.2	27.9	79.9

Source: Estimated data from the labor Force Survey according to population estimates for the fourth quarter 2024- General Authority for Statistics

Figure1. Main labor Market Indicators for Saudis by Age Group Q3 2024 / Q4 2024



Source: Estimated data from the labor Force Survey according to population estimates for fourth quarter 2024- General Authority for Statistics

Notes

A- New population estimates based on the results of the 2022 census

- The General Authority for Statistics adopted population projections based on the Saudi 2022 Census from the first quarter of 2024 onwards, which had implications on the indicators of the labor Force Survey results.
- The historical time series is currently being reviewed to re-estimate previous labor Force Survey indicators and align them with the new population estimates, and estimates for the previous time series will be republished gradually. (See the Labor Market Statistics Methodology Report for more details)

B- Publishing labor Market Statistics through the Statistical Database Platform

The Statistical Database Platform is a unified electronic portal for publishing all statistical data produced by the General Authority for Statistics. It provides access to a wide range of time series for labor Force Survey statistics from the second quarter of 2016 to the latest release. <https://www.stats.gov.sa/statistics-tabs?tab=436312&category=417515>

C- Comparison between labor Force Survey Estimates and Employment Statistics from Administrative Records

The General Authority for Statistics publishes a labor Market Bulletin containing key indicators of labor market statistics based on the labor Force Survey. Additionally, it publishes statistics on the number of participants based on administrative data issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, the General Organization for Social Insurance, and the National Information Center.

There are differences in concepts, calculation methodology, and coverage between statistics based on administrative records and labor Force Survey estimates. Regarding coverage: labor Force Survey estimates cover all households and settled residents with usual residence within the Kingdom excluding institutions, while administrative records cover only registered individuals. There are also differences in the reference periods between the labor Force Survey and administrative records.

Since the coverage of the labor Force Survey is broader than that of administrative records, the absolute numbers from the different sources do not match and there are variations between them.

You can access labor market statistics based on administrative records at the following link: <https://www.stats.gov.sa/ar/814>

Methodology

The labor Force Survey sample for the quarter is designed based on the 2022 Census dwelling frame (see the labor Market Statistics Methodology Report for more details).

The labor Force Survey is a sample household survey with a sample size of about 96,000 dwellings per quarter.

Data is collected continuously throughout the quarter using both telephone and field interviews.

The survey provides estimates for the population within and outside the labor force. Some of the key indicators for the labor market include:

Unemployment rate: the number of unemployed individuals as a percentage of the labor force (unemployed employed) in the working-age (15 years and above).

labor force participation rate: individuals in the labor force as a percentage of the population of working age (15 years and above).

Employment-to-population ratio: employed individuals as a percentage of the population of working age (15 years and above).

The basic definitions according to the ILO standards used in producing these indicators are:

Employed: individuals (15 years and above) who, during the reference period (the reference week):

- Worked for at least one hour for pay or profit (cash or in-kind) as regular employees, temporary employees, employers, or self-employed individuals.
- Assisted a family member for at least one hour, with or without compensation, in any type of business or on a family farm.
- Were temporarily absent from work during the reference week due to vacation, illness, or any other reason and will return to work.
- Seasonal workers during the off-season if they continue to perform some job duties and responsibilities.

Unemployed: individuals (15 years and above) who were:

- Without work during the reference week.
- Actively looking for work during the four reference weeks prior to the interview.
- Available to start work or join the workforce in the reference week or the following two weeks.

labor force: Represents the labor force (total number of employed and unemployed). In addition to applying ILO standards, the General Authority for Statistics uses labor Market Policy Committee standards to validate labor Force Survey data using administrative records data.

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