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BENIN'S LABOUR MARKET IN 2025

SERIES ON LABOUR MARKET IN AFRICA



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Benin's Labour Market in 2025

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Summary

This report reviews the labour market in Benin in 2025. It covers the overall labour market, age groups and sex, status in employment, broad economic sectors, labour underutilization, a comparison with the other countries of Western Africa and the relation between economic growth, employment and output per worker. All figures come from public international databases. The methodological note at the end of the report specifies which figures are modelled estimates, national estimates or calculations by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche.

Employment increased in 2025

- Employment is estimated at 6.5 million people in 2025, an increase of 197,300 (3.1%) from 2024. In 2024, the change was 184,200 (3.0%).
- The unemployment rate was unchanged at 1.6% in 2025. The labour force participation rate increased from 76.3% in 2024 to 76.4% in 2025.

Groups of workers and structure of employment

- Youth employment (aged 15 to 24) changed by 3.0% and adult employment (aged 25 and older) by 3.1%. The youth unemployment rate was 2.9%, compared with 1.2% for adults.
- In 2025, agriculture accounted for 40.2% of employment, industry for 18.3% and services for 41.4%.

Regional comparison

- Among the 16 countries of Western Africa for which data exist, Benin ranked fifth for employment growth (3.1%) and had the second-lowest unemployment rate of the 16 countries (1.6%).

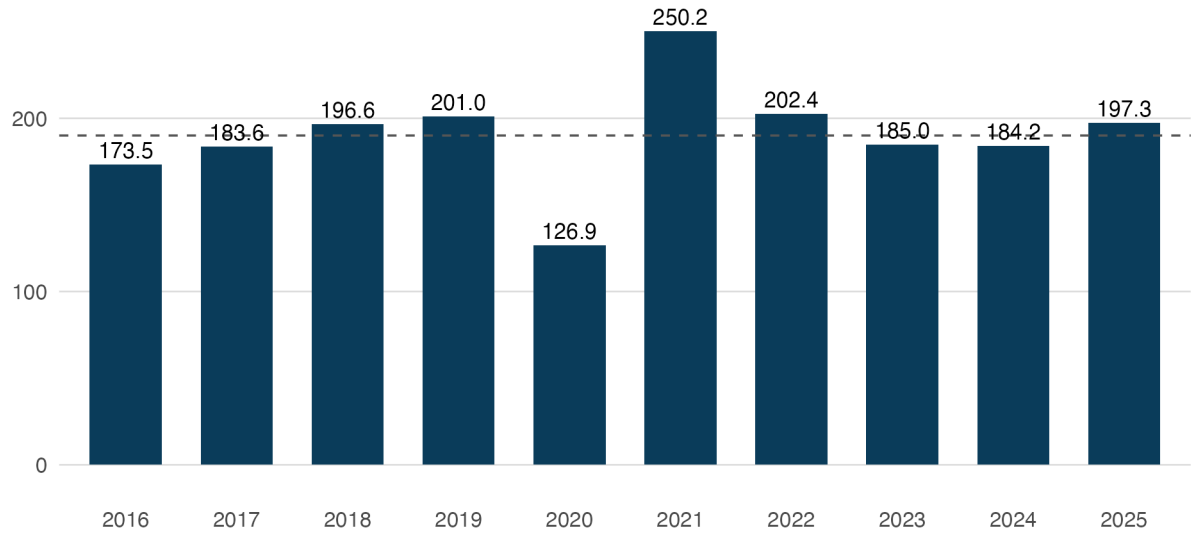
Economic growth and output per worker

- In 2025, real gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 8.1%, employment by 3.1% and GDP per person employed by 4.8%.

Employment increased by 3.1% in 2025

Employment of people aged 15 and older is estimated at 6.5 million in 2025, an increase of 197,300 (3.1%) from 2024. In the previous year, employment changed by 184,200 (3.0%). From 2016 to 2025, the average annual change was 190,100 (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Annual Change in Employment, Benin, 2016–2025 (thousands of persons)



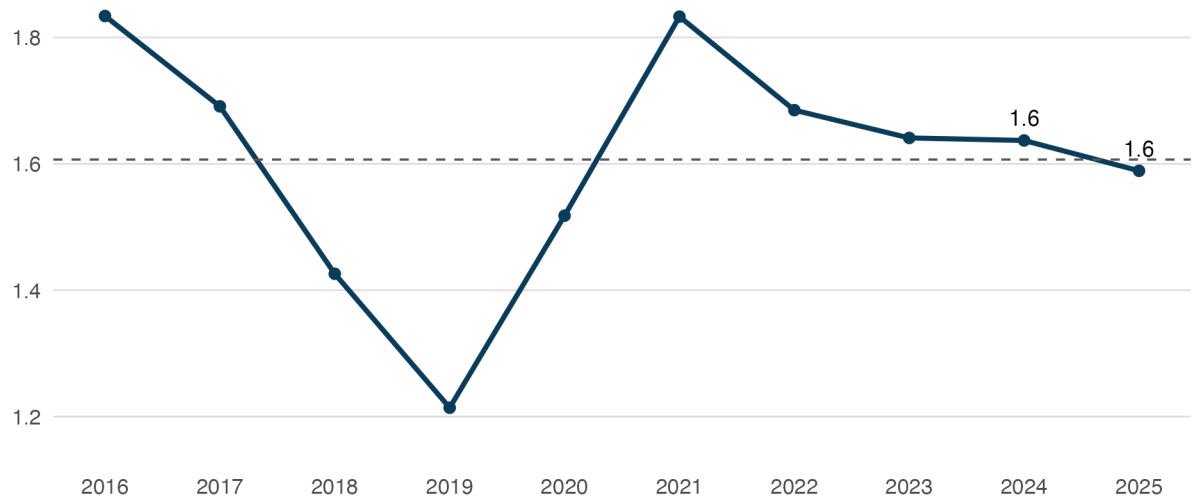
Note: Employment = labour force × (1 − unemployment rate). The dashed line shows the period average.

Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

The population aged 15 and older grew by 2.9% in 2025, more slowly than employment (3.1%). The employment-to-population ratio, which is the share of people aged 15 and older who are employed, increased from 75.0% in 2024 to 75.1% in 2025.

The number of unemployed people is estimated at 105,600 in 2025, compared with 105,500 in 2024. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 1.6% in 2025. This rate is equal to its 2016–2025 average of 1.6% (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Unemployment Rate, Benin, 2016–2025 (%)



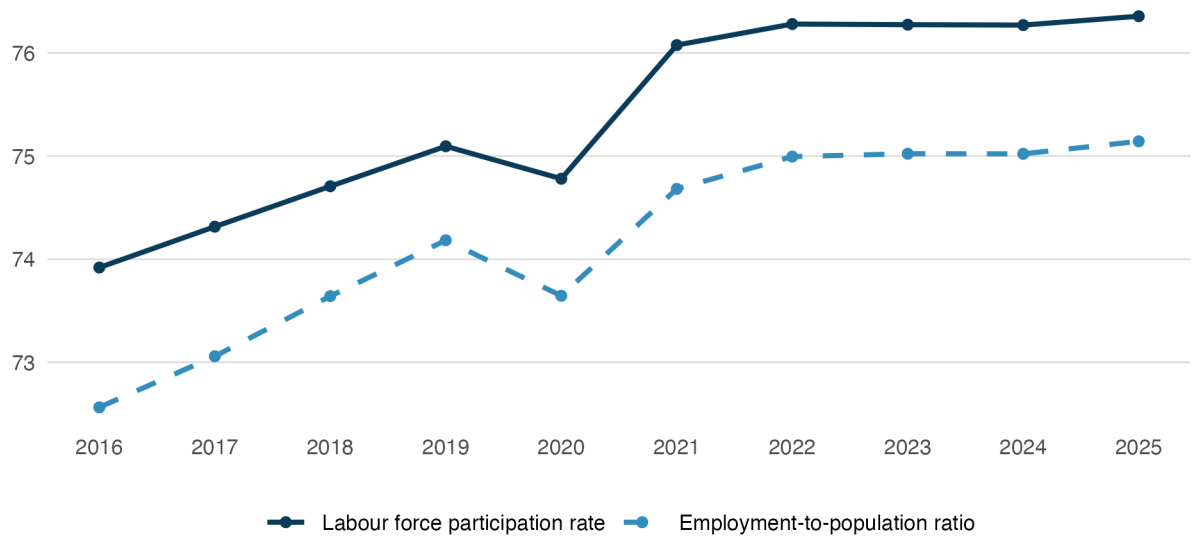
Note: Percentage of the labour force aged 15 and older that is without work, available for work and seeking work. International Labour Organization modelled estimates. The dashed line shows the period average.

Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

The unemployment rate should be interpreted with caution. In 2025, 78.5% of employed people in Benin were own-account workers or contributing family workers. Where these forms of employment are this widespread, the unemployment rate reflects only part of the shortage of jobs.

The labour force participation rate, which is the share of people aged 15 and older who are employed or looking for work, increased from 76.3% in 2024 to 76.4% in 2025 (Figure 3). It was 75.2% for women and 77.6% for men.

Figure 3 – Labour Force Participation Rate and Employment-to-Population Ratio, Benin, Population aged 15 and older, 2016–2025 (%)



Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

Outcomes by age group and sex

In 2025, employment of youth aged 15 to 24 changed by 43,700 (3.0%) and employment of adults aged 25 and older by 153,600 (3.1%) (Table 1). Among youth, the change was 3.1% for men and 2.9% for women.

The youth unemployment rate decreased from 3.1% in 2024 to 2.9% in 2025. The adult unemployment rate was unchanged at 1.2% in 2025. The gap between the two rates was 1.7 percentage points in 2025, compared with 1.9 percentage points in 2024.

Female employment changed by 3.2% and male employment by 3.0%. Women held 49.5% of all jobs. Their unemployment rate was 1.4%, compared with 1.8% for men.

Table 1 – Employment and Unemployment Rate by Age Group and Sex, Benin, 2023–2025

Age and Sex	Employment Change in 2025 (thousands)	Employment Change in 2025 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2023 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2024 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2025 (%)
Youth (aged 15 to 24)	**43.7**	**3.0**	**3.1**	**3.1**	**2.9**
Men	22.4	3.1	3.6	3.6	3.2
Women	21.3	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.6
Adults (aged 25 and older)	**153.6**	**3.1**	**1.2**	**1.2**	**1.2**
Men	74.1	3.0	1.3	1.3	1.4
Women	79.6	3.3	1.1	1.1	1.0
Total (aged 15 and older)	**197.3**	**3.1**	**1.6**	**1.6**	**1.6**
Men	96.5	3.0	1.8	1.8	1.8
Women	100.8	3.2	1.4	1.4	1.4

Note: Rates are International Labour Organization (ILO) modelled estimates; numbers of persons are calculated by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche (see the methodological note).

Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

Employment by economic sector

In 2025, employment increased in all three broad sectors (Table 3). The largest change in number was in services (130,900, or 5.1%). From 2015 to 2025, the share of agriculture in employment went from 43.2% to 40.2%, that of industry from 16.3% to 18.3% and that of services from 40.5% to 41.4% (Figure 4).

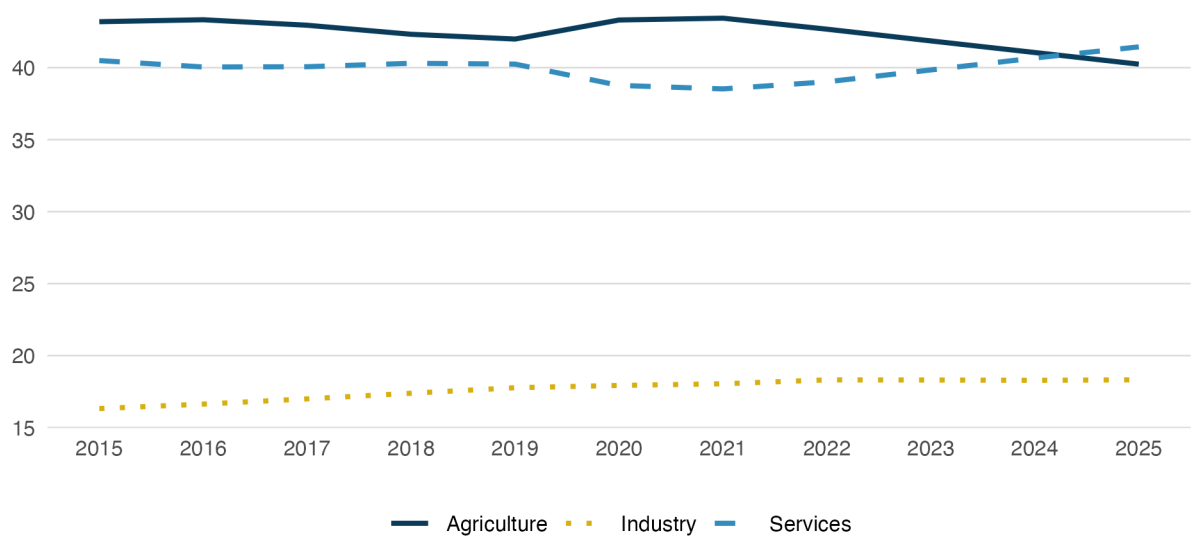
Table 2 – Employment by Broad Economic Sector, Benin, 2025

Sector	Share of Employment in 2025 (%)	Employment in 2025 (thousands)	Change in 2025 (thousands)	Change in 2025 (%)
Agriculture	40.2	2,631.4	28.1	1.1
Industry	18.3	1,197.7	38.3	3.3
Services	41.4	2,709.9	130.9	5.1
Total	**100.0**	**6,539.0**	**197.3**	**3.1**

Note: Rates are International Labour Organization (ILO) modelled estimates; numbers of persons are calculated by Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche (see the methodological note).

Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

Figure 4 – Distribution of Employment by Broad Sector, Benin, 2015–2025 (% of total employment)



Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

Comparison with West African Countries

Among the 16 West African countries for which data exist, Benin ranked fifth for employment growth (3.1%) and had the second-lowest unemployment rate of the 16 countries (1.6%). Among the 51 African countries for which data exist, the country ranked 16th for employment growth and fifth for the unemployment rate, from lowest to highest.

In 2025, employment increased in all 16 West African countries and the unemployment rate increased in six of the 16 countries (Table 4). In West Africa, employment changed by 2.9% and the unemployment rate was 2.9%. For Africa, these values were 2.8% and 6.1%.

Table 4 – Employment, Unemployment and Labour Force Participation in West Africa, 2023–2025

Country	Employment Change in 2025 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2023 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2024 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2025 (%)	Labour Force Participation Rate 2025 (%)
Niger	4.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	79.7
Mali	3.5	2.9	2.9	2.8	67.0
Senegal	3.4	2.8	2.8	2.7	52.0
Burkina Faso	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.5	70.0
Benin	**3.1**	**1.6**	**1.6**	**1.6**	**76.4**
Côte d'Ivoire	3.1	2.3	2.3	2.3	67.1
Guinea-Bissau	3.0	2.6	2.6	2.7	64.8
Mauritania	3.0	10.4	10.3	10.3	40.8

Country	Employment Change in 2025 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2023 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2024 (%)	Unemployment Rate 2025 (%)	Labour Force Participation Rate 2025 (%)
Gambia	3.0	6.5	6.5	6.5	47.5
Liberia	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	76.6
Nigeria	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.1	82.5
Togo	2.7	1.9	1.9	2.0	57.8
Guinea	2.6	5.1	5.1	5.2	52.6
Sierra Leone	2.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	53.4
Cabo Verde	1.5	11.9	11.9	11.9	57.0
Ghana	1.4	2.8	2.8	3.0	58.5
West Africa	**2.9**	**2.9**	**2.9**	**2.9**	**73.5**
Africa (51 countries)	**2.8**	**6.1**	**6.1**	**6.1**	**65.7**

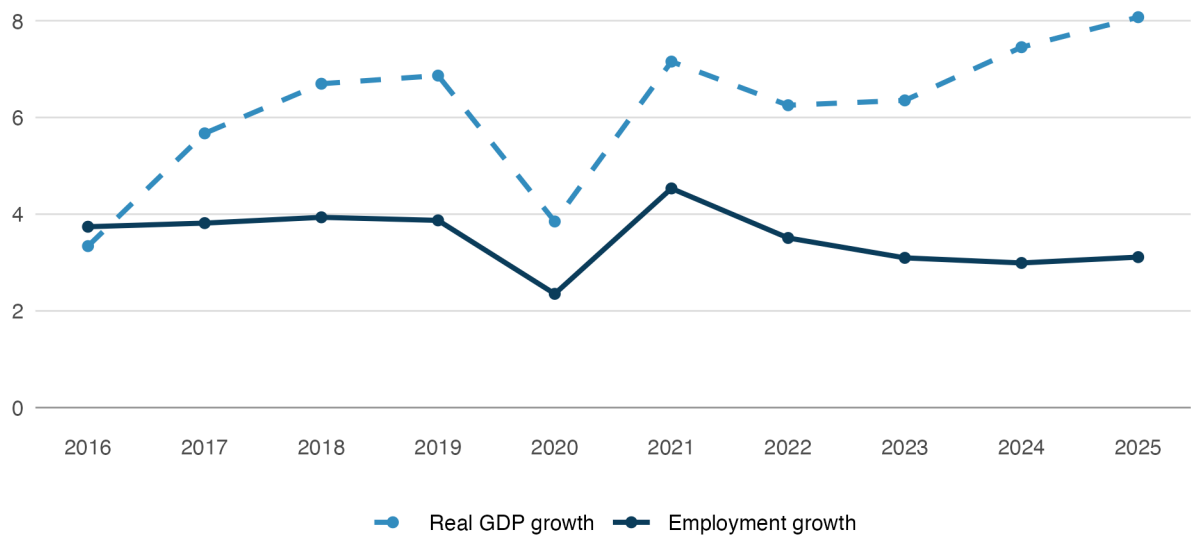
Notes: Countries are ranked by employment change. Aggregates are calculated by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche from the sum of country levels.

Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

Economic Growth, Employment and Output per Worker

In 2025, real GDP growth in Benin was 8.1% and employment increased by 3.1% (Figure 5). GDP per person employed, which measures output per worker, increased by 4.8%. From 2016 to 2025, average annual growth was 6.2% for real GDP, 3.5% for employment and 2.6% for GDP per person employed.

Figure 5 – Growth of Real GDP and Employment, Benin, 2016–2025 (%)



Source: Figure prepared by the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche using data obtained from World Bank, *World Development Indicators (database)*, accessed 18 November 2026.

Methodological Notes

Data used in this document were downloaded from two public sources: the World Bank's World Development Indicators, which redistribute ILO modelled estimates and national estimates, United Nations population estimates and national accounts; and, when it responds, the ILO's ILOSTAT database for survey indicators. Data were accessed on 18 November 2026.

The ILO modelled estimates cover labour force participation, employment and unemployment rates, and distribution by sector and status. The ILO produces them every year for all countries from available surveys and an econometric model. For years without a national survey, including the most recent years, these are estimated rather than observed values; they are revised every year.

National estimates are values from national surveys or censuses, available for some years only. They are always presented with their year.

Calculations from the *Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Publiques et de Recherche* (CAPPR) are based on the public databases referenced in this document. CAPPR reconstructs some of the numbers presented in this document using the following formulas:

- Employment = labour force × (1 − unemployment rate).
- Unemployed = labour force × unemployment rate.
- Population aged 15 and older = labour force ÷ labour force participation rate.
- Female employment = labour force × female share × (1 − female unemployment rate); the same calculation applies to men.
- Youth employment, by sex = population aged 15 to 24 × youth participation rate × (1 − youth unemployment rate).
- Adults (aged 25 and older) = total − youth.
- Employment by sector or status = employment × share of the sector or status.
- Aggregates for the subregion and Africa = sum of country levels; rates are recalculated on these sums.

Limitations

The analyses presented in this document may have the following limitations:

- Year-over-year changes are based on modelled estimates. They indicate a direction and an order of magnitude, not a survey measurement.
- Public data do not make it possible to cover wages, job vacancies, detailed occupations or regions within the country. These topics are therefore not included in the report.
- Youth levels combine ILO estimates and United Nations population estimates, which may be based on different revisions.
- African countries without data for 2025 and excluded from comparisons: Sudan, Seychelles, South Sudan.