

# LIVELIHOODS AND INCOME

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The vulnerability assessment collected information at both individual and household levels, then measured income opportunities among Syrian refugees. The first part of this chapter analyses income-generating activities for individuals who have worked during the week prior to the survey. To better understand the income-generating activities, type of work, wages earned, employment and unemployment levels, and number of days worked, questions were asked at the individual level for each household member aged 15 years and above. At the household level, questions addressed both the main income sources and what households rely on as the primary income source for living expenses. Results were compared to 2018 where feasible<sup>1</sup>.

- **The labour force participation rate is 38% in 2019;** 66% among men and 11% among women. The highest percentage of labour force participation is in Beirut (42%), El Nabatieh, South Lebanon and Mount Lebanon (41% each).
- **The unemployment rate among the labour force is 31% in 2019;** with a higher percentage among women (37%) compared to men (30%). The highest unemployment rate is found in Bekaa (62%), followed by Baalbek-El Hermel (49%).
- **59% of households had members working in the past 7 days,** with the lowest level of employment in Baalbek-El Hermel (30%) and Bekaa (36%). Only 47% of women-headed households had members working, compared to 61% of men-headed households.
- **The average weekly per capita income is US\$ 70** with the lowest income in Baalbek-El Hermel (US\$ 28) and Bekaa (US\$ 30). The highest income is found in Beirut (US\$ 109). Women-headed households have a much lower income (US\$ 47) than men-headed households (US\$ 69).
- **Main sectors of work remain construction (21%), agriculture (17%), and other services (13%).** Agriculture work is mostly found in Akkar and the South (35% each).
- **One third of refugees have a regular job and 13% have more than one job.**
- The two main sources of income for Syrian refugees are **WFP assistance (24%), and informal debt from friends and shops (22%),** indicating the challenges Syrian refugees have faced in covering expenses through employment.

### EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE LABOUR FORCE

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were used:

**Employment:** number of working-age individuals (15+ years old) who have worked during the past seven days for at least one hour.

**Unemployment:** number of working-age individuals (15+ years old) who were not employed during the past seven days for at least one hour, who are available to work immediately and within two weeks and actively searching for work.

**Outside labour Force:** number of working-age individuals (15+ years old) who were not employed during the past seven days for at least one hour, who are not available to work immediately and within two weeks or not actively searching for work.

**Labour Force:** Sum of employed and unemployed working-age individuals.

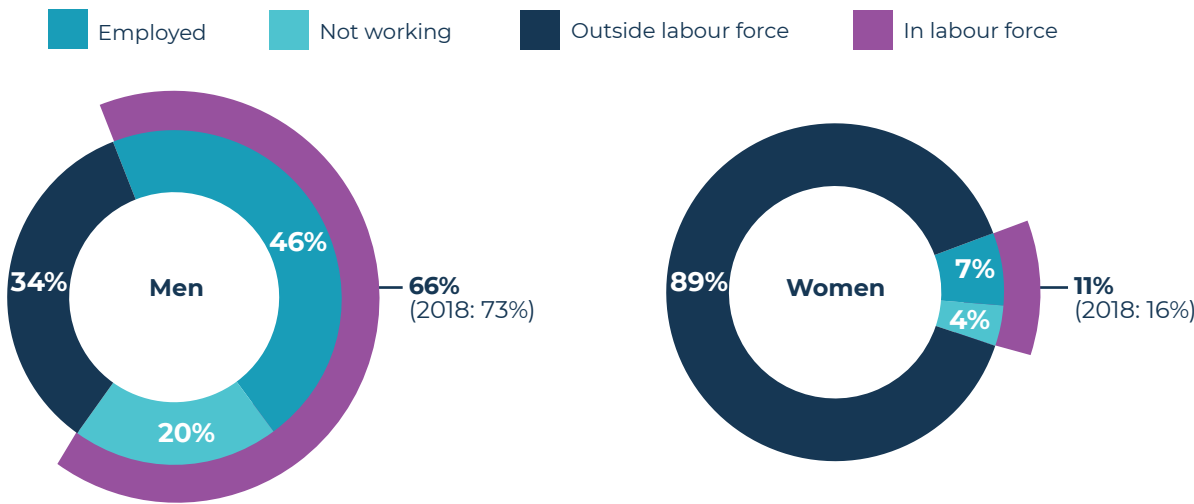
**Employment-to-Population Ratio (LPR):** the proportion of a country's working-age population that is employed.

**Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)**  
= (employed population + unemployed population) / total population aged 15+.

<sup>1</sup>The portions of analysis comparable with 2017 are: (i) prevalence of working members in the household, (ii) per capita income, (iii) number of working days per month, and (iv) household income sources.

The working age population represented 52% of all Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and it was composed of 52% women and 48% men. The labour force (individuals employed + not working) represented 66% of working age men and 11% of working age women. An estimated 46% of men, compared to only 7% of women were working in the last 7 days prior to survey data collection. 20% of men were unemployed and one third of men were out of the labour force. The majority of women (89%) were out of the labour force.

Figure 1: Employed, not working, and outside the labour force population



By governorate, labour force participation is highest in Beirut (42%) followed by El Nabatieh, South Lebanon and Mount Lebanon (41% each). The highest unemployment rate is found in Bekaa (62%) and Baalbek-El Hermel (49%).

Figure 2: Households with members working in the past 7 days, by gender

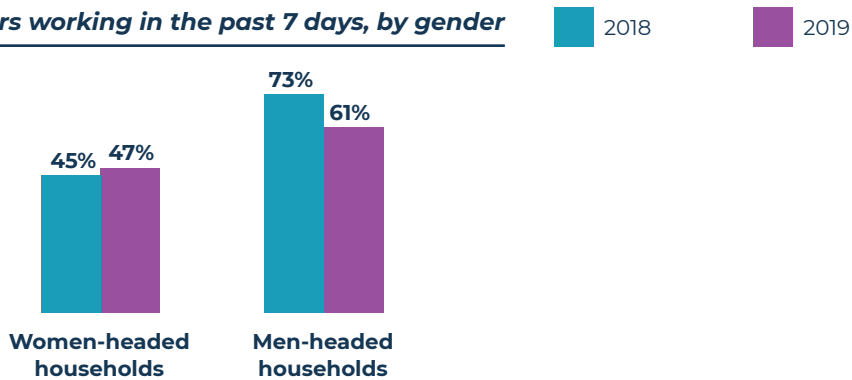
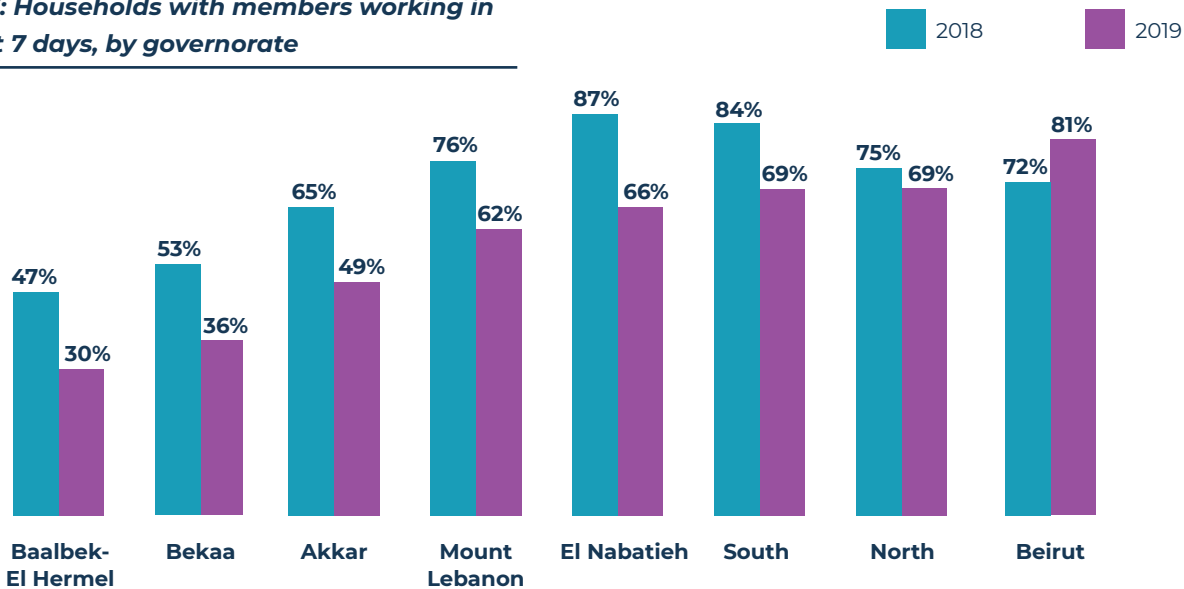


Figure 3: Households with members working in the past 7 days, by governorate

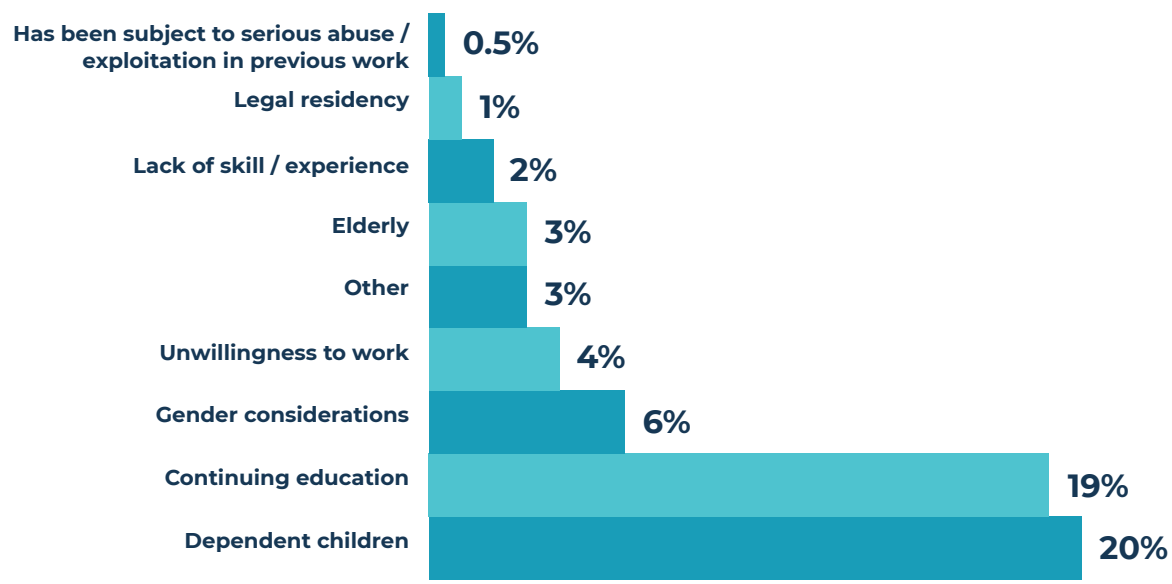


Unemployment is a major issue for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Only 59% of households have members working in the past 7 days in 2019, compared to 68% in 2018. Percent of households with at least one working member has declined in all governorates, except for Beirut (81% in 2019 vs 72% in 2018). By governorate, the lowest percentage of households with working members is in Baalbek-El Hermel, (one third), followed by the Bekaa (36%). This means that two thirds of households in Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel have no working members. Men-headed households with at least one working member decreased from 73% in 2018 to 61% in 2019, while among women, there was an increase of 2 percent (45% in 2018 vs 47% in 2019).

In terms of regular employment, only one-third of refugees have a regular job, with the lowest percent in Baalbek-El Hermel (17%). Sixty one percent of refugees have a regular job in Beirut, the highest percent by governorate. Half of youth (aged 15-19) and half of seniors (aged 65+) have a regular job.

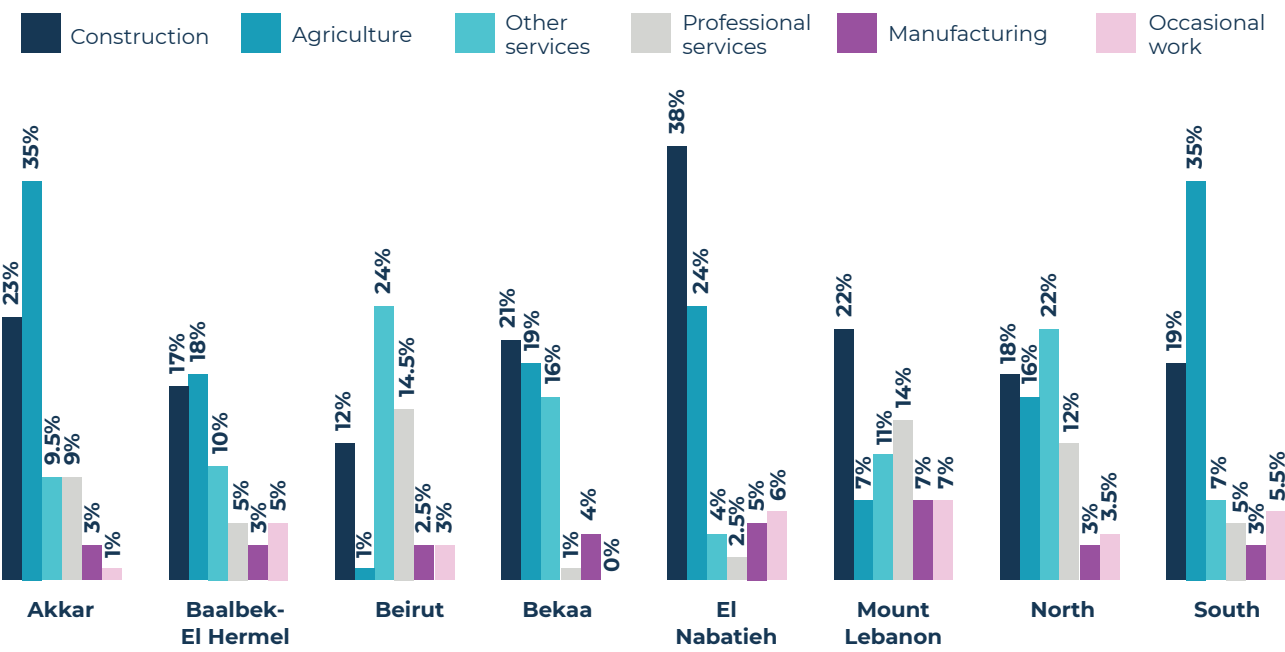
In Lebanon, only 13% of Syrian refugees have more than one job. Having more than one job most commonly takes place in Bekaa, and it's more commonly happening in men-headed households (14%) as opposed to the 6% among women-headed households.

**Figure 4: Reasons for unemployment**



When refugees were asked about reasons for unemployment, the main reasons mentioned were having dependent children (20%) and continuing education (19%). Those who mentioned dependent children are mostly in the age groups between 30 and 44 years. Continuing education was mainly mentioned by refugees aged either 15-19 years or 35-39 years.

Figure 5: Employment sectors by governorate



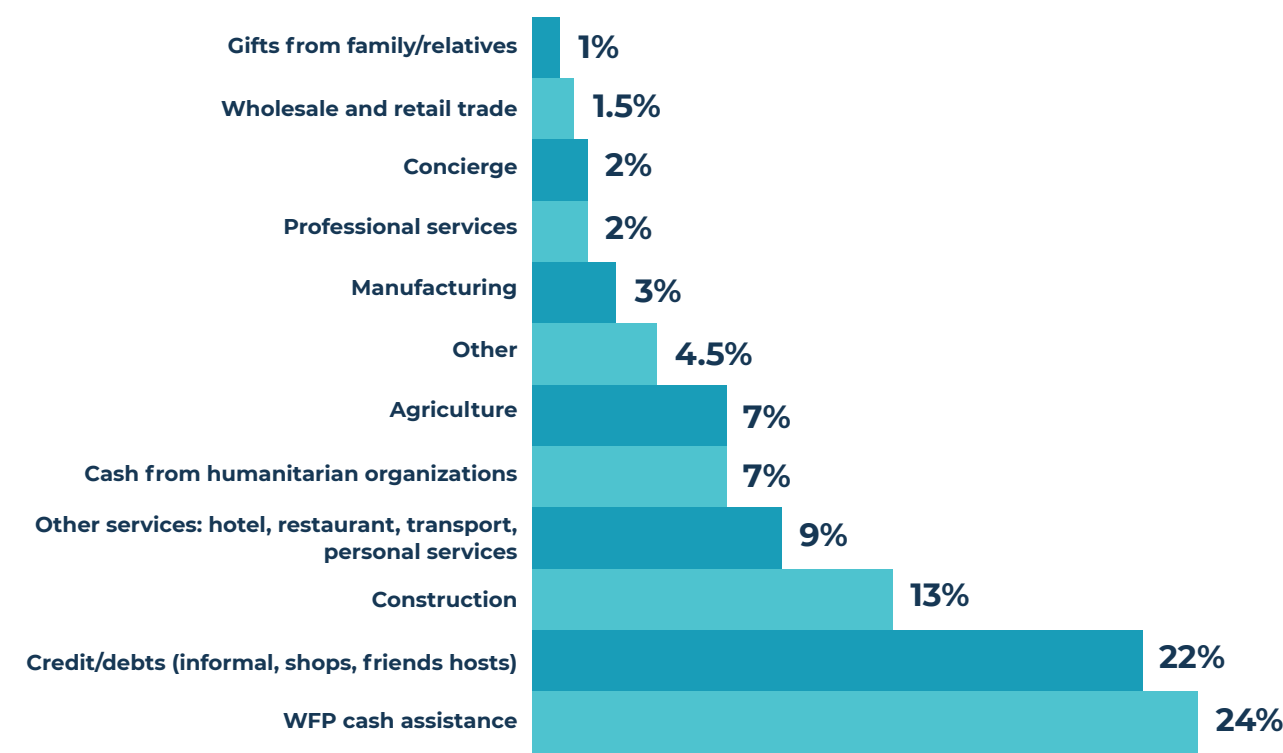
Syrian refugees are mainly engaged in construction (21%), agriculture (17%), and other services (13%). Agriculture is most commonly the main sector of work in Akkar and the South (35% each), while construction is primarily in El Nabatieh (38%). A quarter of all men-headed households is engaged in construction, while less than 1% of households headed by women is engaged in construction. A larger proportion of women-headed households (28%) is engaged in agriculture, as opposed to only 15% of men-headed households. In terms of age groups, people aged 60-64 are those more frequently involved in agriculture.

INCOME

The main source of income for Syrian refugees in Lebanon is WFP assistance in the form of e-cards (24%). Informal credit became the second main income source in 2019 (22%) compared to being the third main source of income in 2018 (16%). Construction dropped to being the third source of income in 2019 (13%) from being the second main source of income in 2018 (16%). By governorate, e-cards were most frequently mentioned as the main source of income in the Bekaa (52%), Akkar (51%) and Baalbek-El Hermel (47%). E-cards were considered as the main source of income for women-headed

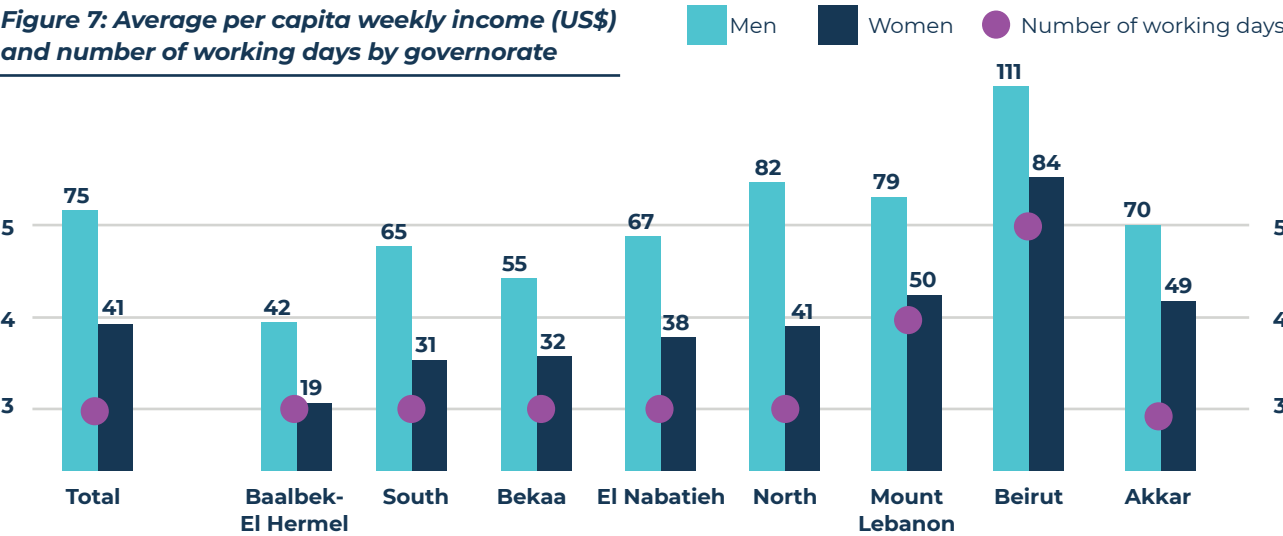
households (37%) more frequently than for men-headed ones (21%), indicating the high reliance of women-headed households on WFP assistance. Households living in non-permanent shelters rely highly on WFP assistance (51%) as opposed to those living in non-residential (25%) and residential (16%) shelters. Following WFP assistance, informal debt from friends, shops or similar sources was also frequently mentioned with 22% of households listing it as the main source of income. Informal debts are most commonly reported as the main source of income in El Nabatieh (33%), Bekaa (30%), and the North (28%).

Figure 6: Main household source of income



This figure includes data on the top 1 source of income.  
For a breakdown of the top 3 sources of income refer to tables on the VASyR website.

Figure 7: Average per capita weekly income (US\$) and number of working days by governorate



The average per capita weekly income of men is almost double that of women on the national level (US\$ 75 for men vs US\$ 41 for women). In all governorates, men’s weekly income exceeds that of women. The largest difference in incomes is found in North Lebanon (US\$ 82 for men vs US\$ 41 for women) and South Lebanon (US\$ 65 for men vs US\$ 31 for women). The average number of working days per week is 3 days on the national level, with highest averages in Beirut (5 days) and Mount Lebanon (4 days).

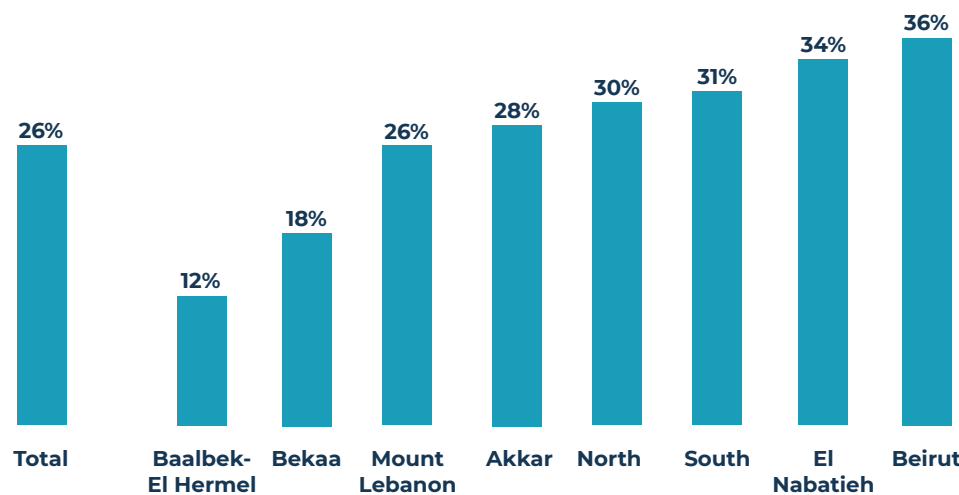
In terms of working conditions, men-headed households spend 7 more hours a week working than women-headed households. The highest number of hours worked was reported in Beirut with an average of 41 hours a week, 5 days a week. Refugees in other governorates spend significantly less time working (figure 7).

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY OF YOUTH

The share of youth aged between 15 to 24 who are economically active was found to be 26%. Economic activity increases with age: while 20% of youth between 15-18 were economically

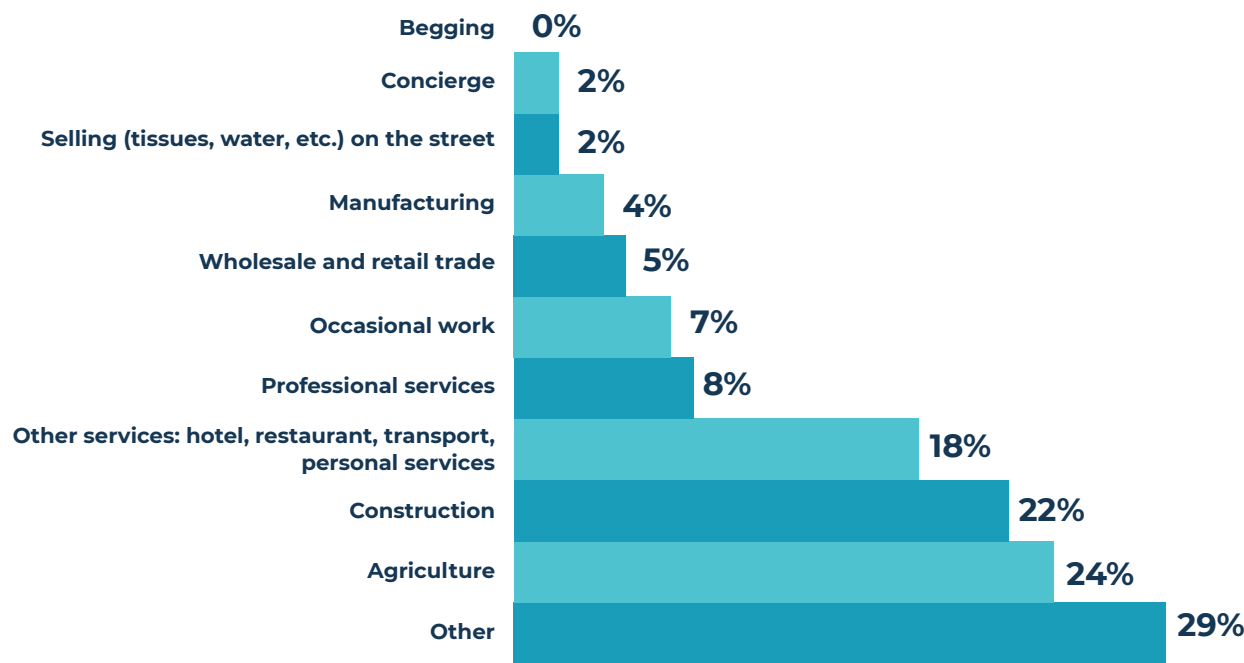
active, for those between 19-24, the economic activity was at 30%. Furthermore, there was a significant difference between boys and girls, 56% and 6% of whom were economically active, respectively. The below graph shows the economic activity rate across governorates.

Figure 8: Economic activity of Syrian youth (15 to 24 year old), by governorate



Among the youth who were economically active, the top three sectors where youth were working in included agriculture (24%), construction (22%), and other services such as hotels, restaurants, transport, and personal services (18%). The below graph shows the distribution of the different sectors.

Figure 9: Work sectors of economically active youth



Percentages calculated out of the total number of active youth 15-24 years old

Annex 25: Working household members, per capita income, and cash and income sources

Households wit members working in the past 7 days		Per capita income (US\$)	Cash and income sources reported by household (three main sources)									
		Mean	Agriculture	Begging	Cash from charitable humanitarian organizations	ATM cards/cash from humanitarian organizations	Concierge	Construction	Credit/debts (formal banks)	Credit/debts (informal: shops, friends hosts)	E-cards WFP FOOD	
Total		59.4%	70.45	12.3%	.4%	.5%	15.8%	2.5%	18.6%	.3%	64.0%	30.2%
Governorate												
Akkar		48.5%	65.28	24.5%	.4%	.2%	27.0%	.4%	17.0%	.4%	63.2%	60.5%
Baalbek-El Hermel		30.1%	39.45	4.7%	.4%	.7%	44.9%	.3%	4.4%	.4%	92.6%	65.6%
Beirut		80.6%	108.56	.9%	1.1%	.2%	1.3%	13.9%	13.6%	.2%	16.9%	1.7%
Bekaa		36.4%	48.89	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%	30.1%	.2%	6.3%	0.0%	92.1%	59.6%
El Nabatieh		65.9%	63.89	25.6%	.2%	.3%	12.0%	.7%	41.1%	2.3%	73.0%	19.3%
Mount Lebanon		61.6%	76.68	7.2%	.5%	.8%	2.0%	4.0%	27.2%	0.0%	38.2%	4.4%
North		68.8%	76.33	17.5%	.5%	.9%	3.7%	2.8%	20.9%	.2%	67.4%	13.6%
South		69.4%	59.28	36.4%	.2%	.8%	8.0%	3.8%	24.9%	1.3%	59.1%	14.1%
Expenditure												
>=125% MEB (>=143US\$)		69.3%		9.7%	.2%	.8%	4.0%	3.5%	23.9%	.2%	47.9%	7.4%
MEB- 125% MEB (114 - 142US\$)		68.5%		14.7%	.1%	1.5%	10.5%	1.8%	23.2%	.4%	54.2%	16.1%
SMEB-MEB (87-113US\$)		67.0%		16.5%	.3%	.8%	16.9%	1.7%	22.6%	.4%	60.8%	26.7%
< SMEB (87US\$)		54.0%		11.7%	.4%	.2%	20.2%	2.6%	15.3%	.3%	71.6%	41.4%
Food security classification												
Food secure		73.9%		11.5%	.0%	.9%	14.9%	3.5%	20.6%	0.0%	37.3%	21.9%
Mild food insecurity		59.9%		12.9%	.1%	.6%	19.3%	2.1%	20.3%	.4%	68.2%	35.3%
Moderate food insecurity		54.7%		12.0%	.5%	.3%	10.2%	2.7%	14.2%	.2%	68.4%	25.3%
Severe food insecurity		41.8%		7.4%	4.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	21.9%	.9%	63.7%	0.0%
Gender of the head of household												
Female		46.5%	41.47	8.4%	1.0%	1.4%	22.3%	.7%	5.3%	.3%	66.4%	44.3%
Male		61.3%	74.73	13.2%	.2%	.3%	14.3%	2.8%	21.6%	.3%	63.4%	27.1%
Shelter type												
Non-permanent shelter		45.3%		15.8%	.3%	.2%	36.2%	.2%	4.9%	.1%	85.0%	62.0%
Non-residential		58.6%		18.6%	.4%	.3%	18.1%	2.9%	19.9%	.5%	57.0%	30.9%
Residential		62.7%		10.3%	.4%	.7%	9.4%	3.1%	22.4%	.3%	58.9%	20.8%



Annex 25: Cash and income sources - continued

Cash and income sources reported by household (three main sources)													
	Gifts from family/relatives	Manufacturing	Other	Other services: hotel, restaurant, transport, personal services	Other types of sales	Professional services	Remittances	Sale of assets (car, bicycle, refrigerator, TV, jewelry)	Sale of crops	Sale of livestock and animal produce	Sale of non-food assistance	Wholesale and retail trade	Sale of food aid (food vouchers or parcels)
Total	6.0%	3.5%	7.6%	13.9%	.5%	3.2%	1.1%	1.1%	.1%	.1%	.1%	1.8%	.1%
Governorate													
Akkar	9.6%	1.0%	4.1%	8.8%	0.0%	1.8%	.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.8%	.2%
Baalbek-El Hermel	5.7%	1.1%	3.9%	2.6%	.0%	.8%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.1%	0.0%
Beirut	2.6%	2.2%	19.0%	28.8%	.6%	10.4%	1.3%	.2%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	.2%
Bekaa	9.6%	1.5%	4.5%	7.5%	.4%	.7%	.0%	.0%	0.0%	.1%	.1%	.6%	0.0%
El Nabatieh	4.8%	5.5%	8.9%	8.9%	.1%	.4%	1.5%	.3%	.5%	.4%	.4%	.3%	.2%
Mount Lebanon	4.8%	6.2%	11.3%	14.8%	.7%	6.0%	1.6%	3.1%	0.0%	.1%	.1%	4.0%	0.0%
North	3.8%	3.2%	2.3%	31.8%	.7%	2.8%	1.8%	.3%	.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	.1%
South	2.9%	4.8%	16.8%	11.6%	.6%	3.9%	1.0%	1.3%	.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	.2%
Expenditure													
>=125% MEB (>=143US\$)	5.8%	7.8%	9.8%	16.8%	.1%	6.3%	2.8%	1.4%	.1%	.3%	.3%	2.7%	.0%
MEB- 125% MEB (114 - 142US\$)	3.2%	1.9%	9.2%	20.4%	1.3%	6.3%	.9%	2.1%	.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	.2%
SMEB-MEB (87-113US\$)	5.0%	3.1%	8.2%	18.3%	1.2%	3.1%	1.1%	.6%	.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	.0%
< SMEB (87US\$)	6.5%	2.7%	6.5%	10.8%	.2%	1.9%	.6%	1.0%	.2%	.1%	.1%	.9%	.1%
Food security classification													
Food secure	3.5%	7.7%	12.4%	21.0%	.5%	5.5%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	.1%	.1%	4.5%	0.0%
Mild food insecurity	5.9%	3.5%	6.6%	13.0%	.4%	2.9%	1.1%	1.5%	.1%	.1%	.1%	1.7%	.0%
Moderate food insecurity	7.3%	2.6%	7.3%	13.5%	.4%	3.0%	1.0%	.8%	.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	.1%
Severe food insecurity	7.4%	.2%	14.4%	12.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Gender of the head of household													
Female	15.9%	2.5%	7.0%	15.1%	.1%	1.6%	.5%	.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	.1%
Male	3.8%	3.7%	7.8%	13.6%	.5%	3.6%	1.2%	1.3%	.1%	.1%	.1%	1.8%	.0%
Shelter type													
Non-permanent shelter	5.5%	1.6%	3.7%	3.4%	.0%	.4%	.4%	.2%	.0%	.1%	.1%	.2%	.1%
Non-residential	6.3%	2.7%	5.6%	14.4%	.2%	1.2%	.5%	.7%	.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	.2%
Residential	6.1%	4.2%	9.1%	16.9%	.6%	4.4%	1.4%	1.4%	.1%	.1%	.1%	2.3%	.0%

**Annex 26: Employment and unemployment**

Employment and unemployment							
	Employment to population ratio (employed/total person 15+)	Labour force participation rate (employed + unemployed/total persons >15)	Unemployment rate (unemployed over labour force)	Average number of days a person worked during the last 7 days for all jobs (mean)	Average number of hours per week a person usually works for all jobs (mean)	Individuals with more than one job	Individuals with regular work
Total	25.8%	37.5%	31.3%	3.4	26.7	13.3%	35.4%
Governorate							
Akkar	20.9%	29.8%	30.0%	3.0	21.5	7.4%	36.2%
Baalbek-El Hermel	13.6%	26.9%	49.3%	3.0	21.5	12.8%	17.2%
Beirut	35.4%	42.3%	16.5%	4.5	41.1	11.3%	61.0%
Bekaa	14.34	37.6%	61.9%	2.8	20.4	17.2%	23.5%
El Nabatieh	28.5%	41.2%	30.7%	2.6	19.9	12.5%	32.9%
Mount Lebanon	27.9%	40.7%	31.4%	3.7	31.7	15.5%	41.9%
North	29.3%	36.3%	19.3%	3.4	26.7	10.9%	30.8%
South	29.3%	41.2%	28.9%	3.0	21.9	12.6%	32.0%
Gender of the head of household							
Female	6.7%	10.6%	37.3%	3.4	21.4	5.8%	38.9%
Male	45.8%	65.7%	30.3%	3.3	27.6	14.4%	34.8%
Age 15-24							
No	27.86	40.22	30.73	3.5	28.0	14.0%	34.4%
Yes	21.34	31.82	32.95	2.9	22.9	10.5%	39.1%
ILO age groups							
15-19	17.4%	27.6%	36.9%	1.6	12.8	7.0%	51.1%
20-24	26.0%	36.9%	29.5%	3.8	30.4	11.5%	35.7%
25-29	24.9%	36.5%	31.8%	3.5	29.1	13.9%	29.0%
30-34	35.0%	47.8%	26.8%	3.7	29.1	16.1%	30.5%
35-39	34.9%	50.0%	30.2%	3.7	28.3	13.8%	37.3%
40-44	31.3%	44.4%	29.6%	3.9	32.5	13.3%	38.0%
45-49	23.4%	38.0%	38.5%	3.8	30.8	10.4%	41.1%
50-54	17.7%	30.4%	42.0%	4.0	29.9	7.0%	41.9%
55-59	13.9%	21.8%	36.5%	4.2	32.3	11.0%	43.3%
60-64	8.4%	13.3%	36.7%	4.0	27.5	13.7%	32.3%
65+	2.9%	4.6%	37.5%	4.3	20.3	28.7%	54.4%

Annex 27: Sectors of work

	Sectors of work									
	Agriculture	Construction	Concierge	Manufacturing	Retail (shops)	Begging	Professional services	Occasional work	Other services	Selling in the street
Total	16.9%	21.2%	3.0%	4.6%	4.2%	0.1%	9.7%	4.5%	13.4%	0.7%
Governorate										
Akkar	35.3%	22.5%	0.7%	3.3%	2.2%	0.4%	9.5%	1.1%	8.7%	0.4%
Baalbek-El Hermel	18.4%	16.7%	1.3%	2.6%	3.6%	0.0%	4.7%	5.2%	10.0%	0.0%
Beirut	1.4%	12.0%	12.7%	2.5%	4.5%	0.5%	14.5%	3.4%	24.1%	1.1%
Bekaa	18.8%	21.5%	0.4%	3.8%	0.8%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	16.4%	1.1%
El Nabatieh	24.0%	37.7%	0.3%	4.7%	0.7%	0.0%	2.5%	5.9%	4.3%	0.1%
Mount Lebanon	6.8%	22.1%	4.2%	7.0%	7.5%	0.0%	14.4%	6.9%	11.1%	0.9%
North	16.3%	18.1%	2.5%	3.3%	4.1%	0.0%	11.7%	3.5%	22.1%	0.4%
South	35.4%	19.3%	2.4%	3.2%	1.9%	0.0%	4.8%	5.5%	6.6%	1.0%
Gender of the head of household										
Female	27.6%	0.7%	0.4%	2.8%	4.3%	0.3%	6.1%	3.1%	23.5%	1.0%
Male	15.2%	24.5%	3.4%	4.9%	4.2%	0.0%	10.3%	4.7%	11.8%	0.6%
Age 15-24										
No	17.7%	23.8%	3.7%	5.2%	4.5%	0.1%	9.9%	4.7%	13.3%	0.6%
Yes	14.5%	13.7%	0.9%	2.9%	3.4%	0.0%	9.2%	3.8%	13.8%	1.0%
ILO age groups										
15-19	7.6%	3.6%	0.0%	1.9%	2.6%	0.0%	7.2%	0.6%	7.6%	1.5%
20-24	19.5%	21.1%	1.5%	3.6%	4.0%	0.0%	10.6%	6.2%	18.3%	0.6%
25-29	19.2%	24.8%	1.7%	4.4%	3.4%	0.0%	12.4%	4.3%	17.8%	0.1%
30-34	19.1%	29.0%	3.9%	5.9%	6.3%	0.2%	10.0%	5.0%	11.5%	0.1%
35-39	16.2%	28.4%	3.6%	6.0%	4.2%	0.0%	10.8%	4.7%	13.3%	1.3%
40-44	21.7%	15.7%	5.0%	4.4%	4.7%	0.0%	9.8%	6.7%	14.5%	0.7%
45-49	16.6%	25.6%	4.6%	5.8%	2.1%	0.0%	11.5%	6.0%	12.1%	0.3%
50-54	17.9%	10.7%	10.3%	4.3%	5.6%	0.0%	9.6%	0.9%	23.6%	0.7%
55-59	23.0%	20.1%	5.7%	11.9%	2.9%	0.0%	1.6%	7.3%	15.2%	0.0%
60-64	32.6%	2.4%	2.4%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	12.9%	8.8%
65+	2.6%	28.7%	1.8%	0.0%	21.7%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	17.7%	9.9%