

KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

LIBYA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Libya continues to grapple with deep-rooted political, economic and social instability, which has severely weakened its ability to provide quality education, create sustainable employment opportunities and modernise its workforce. The persistent divide due to two rivalling governments has further exacerbated institutional dysfunction, with both administrations vying for legitimacy and control over key state institutions. While real GDP growth reached 10.2 % in 2023 due to improved oil production, the country remains highly dependent on hydrocarbon revenues, which accounted for 60 % of GDP, 94 % of exports and over 90 % of fiscal revenues (World Bank, 2024a). At the same time, Libya is facing a severe humanitarian crisis, with 823 000 people – including 248 000 children – in urgent need of assistance (UNOCHA, 2023).

Libya's education sector continues to face difficulties due to infrastructure damage, governance fragmentation and teacher shortages. Years of underfunding and conflict have left many schools damaged, overcrowded or lacking basic resources, with at least 160 000 children and 5 600 teachers urgently needing support (UNICEF, 2023). In rural and conflict-affected areas, access to education remains particularly limited, and recent reforms have struggled to address regional disparities. Libya has been implementing policies to support education with the goal of modernising universities, vocational institutions and research centres to strengthen its education system. Additionally, VET (Vocational Education and Training) reforms are underway to improve workforce skills, but challenges persist, including outdated curricula, lack of private sector engagement and limited training infrastructure.

Libya's labour market remains dominated by the public sector, with high unemployment, particularly among youth, and high inactivity among women. The informal sector continues to absorb many workers, reflecting weak private sector growth and mismatches between workforce skills and job market needs. The reliance on hydrocarbon revenues has discouraged economic diversification, leaving sectors like manufacturing and agriculture underdeveloped. Additionally, Libya's employment structure is imbalanced, with services accounting for most of the employment (68 %), while industry employs only a relatively small share (23 %), despite the country's heavy reliance on oil production. Government initiatives, including wage reforms and targeted employment programmes, aim to stabilise the workforce, but their long-term effectiveness is uncertain due to ongoing economic and political instability.

Libya's progress in education, training and employment remains contingent on achieving political stability and implementing structural economic reforms. Addressing fragmented governance, investing in education infrastructure, and creating an environment that enables private sector growth will be crucial for sustainable development in the years ahead.

1. KEY POLITICAL, DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Political developments

Since the 2011 uprising and subsequent civil war, Libya has faced long-standing political and economic instability. Although a ceasefire has been in place since 2020, security challenges in the country persist, marked by episodes of violence and civil conflict. The political scene remains deeply divided, stemming from failed attempts to establish a unified political framework.

In 2019, General Khalifa Haftar, the commander of the Libyan Arab Army Forces (LAAF), launched a military offensive to capture Tripoli, escalating the conflict with the former Government of National Accord (GNA, replaced by GNU) and deepening political divisions. A year later, a UN-brokered ceasefire was established. However, political instability remained, impeded by unfulfilled milestones such as the UN-led Libyan Political Dialogue Forum's (LPDF) roadmap for presidential elections, which stalled due to disagreements on election procedures and governance reforms. In 2022, political stagnation deepened as a parallel government emerged in the East (the GNS), intensifying divisions and leaving critical issues, such as centralised governance and economic dependency on oil subsidies, unresolved. Despite initial progress by the 6+6 committee on draft election legislation, the rejection of the revised draft of the House of Representatives (HoR) by the High Council of State in March 2024 underscored enduring divisions, blocking a unified electoral pathway (Libya Observer, 2024a). Following these stalled efforts, Libya has entered a political deadlock with no agreed-upon electoral pathway. Attempts by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) in early 2024 to break the political silence by establishing a parallel roadmap to create a unified government also failed. Consequently, the political landscape remains fragmented, with the Government of National Unity (GNU), led by Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, maintaining control of the west in Tripoli, while the east remains under the influence of General Haftar and the House of Representatives (HoR) in Tobruk (The Arab Weekly, 2023; Atlantic Council, 2024).

Beyond direct political rivalries, control over Libya's key infrastructure, particularly oil and water, has become a major point of contention. The struggle for access to Libya's fossil fuel wealth and water systems has fuelled competition among armed groups, tribal factions and political elites, further entrenching divisions within society. Warring parties have sought not just to destroy but to control and leverage these resources, leading to repeated blockades, economic disruptions and the deepening of local grievances. The 2023 closure of oil fields by al-Zawi tribal protesters in response to a political abduction exemplifies how infrastructure is weaponised in internal disputes (Weinthal & Sowers, 2023). Furthermore, in August 2024, a dispute broke out over the leadership of the Central Bank of Libya (CBL), which led to a temporary disruption in banking operations and a shutdown in oil output and export. This underscores the need for sustained efforts to ensure lasting peace, stability and sustainable prosperity in Libya.

Demographics

In 2023, Libya's population was estimated at 6 888 388. For the past decade, the population number has been increasing, but the pace of growth started to slow down in 2019 (World Bank, 2024b). A similar trend has been observed in the share of the youth population, which has fluctuated slightly at around 27 % over the last five years (World Bank, 2024b). Nevertheless, the youth population remains significant in Libya and the country still struggles to integrate young people into the labour market.

Libya has historically been a destination country for labour migrants from neighbouring Arab countries as well as migrants from neighbouring sub-Saharan countries, especially before 2011. Now, it is one of the main corridors for migrants aiming to reach Europe as part of the Central Mediterranean Route (CMR), one of the deadliest in the world. Following the disruption during the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of emigrants has been rising. Furthermore, recent data from IOM point to an increase in immigration in the country, with 706 062 immigrants in January 2023 (IOM, 2023). According to IOM

(2023), the biggest share of migrants in Libya were nationals of neighbouring countries such as Niger (24 %), Egypt (23 %), Sudan (19 %) and Chad (12 %). However, migration in Libya remains lower than in 2011, prior to the onset of conflict, when the number of migrants was an estimated 2.5 million (IOM, 2023). On the other hand, the international migrant stock stood at 826 537 in 2020, 12 % of the population according to estimations (UN DESA, 2020).

Key economic developments

Libya's economy is heavily dependent on the oil and gas sector, which accounts for 60 % of GDP, 94 % of exports and more than 90 % of fiscal revenues in 2023 (World Bank, 2024a). In 2023, the country experienced real GDP growth (at constant market prices) of 10.2 % as oil production recovered due to improved security conditions (World Bank, 2024a). However, despite this growth, Libya's economic stability remains fragile, with political divisions affecting fiscal management. The inflation rate fell to 2.4 % in 2023, driven by better supply chains, but the current account surplus and fiscal surplus narrowed due to declining global oil prices (World Bank, 2024b).

While Libya's economy is heavily dominated by its industrial sector, particularly oil and gas, agriculture and manufacturing remain small. They accounted for just 1.6 % (2022) and 3 % (2018) of GDP, respectively. On the other hand, the services sector accounted for 47 % of GDP in 2022 (World Bank, 2024b). In 2022, the employment shares of agriculture (9.4 %) and services (70 %) were significantly higher than their output contribution to GDP, reflecting low productivity (AfDB, 2024). This imbalance highlights the need for economic diversification and productivity enhancements across sectors to create more sustainable and inclusive growth in Libya.

Key social issues

Libya continues to face a severe humanitarian crisis due to ongoing political instability, conflict and a deteriorating economy. An estimated 823 000 people, including 248 000 children, require humanitarian assistance (UNOCHA, 2023). This includes internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, conflict-affected individuals, host communities, refugees and migrants. Key humanitarian needs focus on protection and access to critical services such as healthcare, education, clean water, sanitation and basic household goods. Vulnerable groups, including refugees and migrants, face additional protection challenges, including human rights violations, discrimination and limited access to healthcare.

In recent years, the situation of internally displaced persons in Libya has improved. Displacement levels have overall decreased since 2014, reaching an estimated 134 700 IDPs in August 2022 compared to 270 000 in 2020. On the other hand, the number of returnees now exceeds that of IDPs, increasing from 448 573 in 2020 to 695 516 returnees in 2022, signalling a move towards greater stability. In September 2023, however, Storm Daniel struck north-eastern Libya, temporarily affecting the trend with the displacement of 44 862 individuals (IOM, 2023).

2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1 Trends and challenges

Education strategy and legal framework for education

Libya's education sector has been severely affected by years of conflict and instability, leading to systemic challenges that have reduced the quality and accessibility of education for millions of students. Since 2011, schools and universities across the country have sustained extensive physical damage; many facilities were partially or entirely destroyed, while others were repurposed for military use. This left numerous communities, particularly in conflict-affected areas, with limited or no access to functioning educational institutions. According to UNICEF, at least 160 000 children and 5 600 teachers urgently require support to access quality education amid the ongoing crisis. Infrastructure damage has disrupted the education of thousands, contributing to widespread dissatisfaction with the education system (UNICEF, 2023a). In 2023, Libya unveiled the draft of a 10-year higher education and research strategy (2024-2034) to reform universities and research centres, aligning with SDG 4 (Quality Education). The plan emphasises education for sustainable development, expanding university access, involving the private sector and enhancing research ethics and intellectual property rights (University World News, 2023).

Access, participation and early school leaving

This instability in Libya has resulted in a significant rise in the number of out-of-school children, especially in conflict-affected regions. Data from Libya's National Statistics and Census Bureau shows that around 2.3 million students are enrolled in 6 532 primary and secondary schools nationwide. However, many of these students face limited access to resources, qualified teachers and adequate facilities (BSC, 2023). The lack of unified governance has also impacted the education sector, with differing policies and priorities emerging from Libya's rival administrations in the east and west, making it difficult to set consistent educational standards or address the sector's pressing needs comprehensively.

Libya's education system faces numerous barriers that impair learning quality and accessibility across the country. One primary challenge is the deteriorated infrastructure of educational facilities, many of which remain damaged or poorly maintained due to years of conflict, making them unfit for enrolment. This is particularly evident in rural (the southern region) and conflict-affected areas, where schools experience overcrowding, inadequate classroom space and insufficient sanitation facilities. At the same time, many urban schools have had to implement double-shift systems to accommodate up to 2 000 students per school, while economic challenges have forced families to withdraw children from education, often requiring them to work (IOM, 2024). The lack of essential utilities, such as consistent electricity and safe drinking water, further exacerbates the challenges within the learning environment (Al-Marsad, 2024).

A shortage of qualified teachers also remains a pressing issue, significantly impacting the quality of education, particularly in specialised subjects like science, mathematics and technology. Since 2011, teacher attrition rates have been high, driven by the nation's economic instability, which has caused significant salary depreciation due to inflation and currency devaluation. Many educators, especially those in the public sector, have seen their purchasing power decline, often leading them to seek higher-paying opportunities in the private sector or as private tutors. This shortage has left many schools severely understaffed, forcing remaining teachers to manage larger class sizes, which dilutes the quality of instruction (Al Jazeera, 2019). Additionally, schools in rural and conflict-affected areas face even greater difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified teachers, further widening educational disparities across the country (REACH, 2024). The staffing shortfall has negatively impacted student engagement and learning outcomes, as overburdened teachers are unable to provide adequate support or focus on individual student needs.

One of Libya's latest initiatives that aims to modernise education infrastructure and expand access to quality learning is 'Schools of the Future'. In October 2024, the move into the second phase of the initiative was announced, including adding kindergartens to the initiative, as part of the plan to integrate early childhood education into the formal school system (Libya Observer, 2024). However, addressing Libya's challenges further will require increased investment and implementing a coherent national education strategy.

PISA results

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a worldwide study conducted by the OECD that evaluates 15-year-old students' abilities in reading, mathematics and science to assess education systems globally. It takes place every three years, with the latest assessment done in 2022. Libya has not participated in any PISA assessments so far (OECD, 2024).

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

NEETs (young people who are not in employment, education or training) represent a critical challenge in many countries, including Libya. In 2022, the proportion of youth in Libya categorised as NEETs was 29.4 %, showing a slight decrease from earlier years. However, a significant gender gap persists, with 23.9 % of young men and 35.3 % of young women being NEETs. This disparity underscores the continued need for targeted programmes that improve education-to-work transitions and address the specific barriers young women face in accessing opportunities. These barriers, including social and cultural factors, highlight the importance of creating more inclusive and accessible pathways to education and employment for young women in Libya.

2.2 Initial VET and adult learning

Strategic and legal framework for initial VET and adult learning

Libya's Vocational Education and Training (VET) system faces significant challenges but also holds potential for improving the country's workforce development. The governance of VET in Libya is fragmented, with responsibilities divided between different ministries. The Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education oversees public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, while the National Board of Technical and Vocational Education (NBTVE), operating under the Ministry of Higher Education, manages initial technical and vocational education separately from continuing education, which falls under the Ministry of Labour. This fragmented governance structure, combined with insufficient coordination between public and private sectors, creates challenges in implementing cohesive policies for VET (IOM, 2024).

VET governance and financing arrangements

Public funding for TVET is primarily sourced from the national treasury, with budget allocations managed by the Ministry of Finance. However, funding is often insufficient and not well-aligned with national development plans. TVET providers, particularly in the public sector, rely on minimal external resources, and learners contribute little financially. Additionally, there is a lack of financial incentives for private sector involvement in employee training. These financial and governance issues are compounded by outdated facilities and insufficient maintenance, leading to substandard learning environments for vocational students (IOM, 2024).

Qualifications, validation and recognition

Libya's formal education system requires students to complete a nine-year structured programme, consisting of six years in primary school followed by three years in preparatory school (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022). The public Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) system in Libya consists of three types of institutes. Intermediate institutes offer three-year programmes for students aged 15 and above who have completed basic schooling. Higher institutes provide courses for students aged 18

and above who hold a secondary school certificate. Technical colleges admit students with higher secondary school grades, offering four-year programmes leading to a technical bachelor's degree.

Qualifications, validation and recognition within the education and training sectors in Libya face significant challenges. According to a TVET report for IOM in 2023, the Ministry of Labour's Occupational Standards and Certification Centre (OSCC) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) were intended to ensure quality and relevance in the TVET sector. However, these bodies remain non-operational due to challenges including political instability and fragmented governance (IOM, 2024). There is also a lack of standardised processes for assessing and validating qualifications, which impacts the credibility of TVET programmes and their graduates. The absence of an effective qualifications framework leads to difficulties in aligning educational outcomes with the needs of the labour market, leaving a disconnect between the skills acquired through training and those sought by employers.

Quality and quality assurance

The quality assurance mechanisms for TVET in Libya are underdeveloped. While there have been efforts to standardise curricula and update training programmes to match labour market needs, many TVET institutions still face significant challenges in maintaining quality. Workshops and labs, vital for practical training, often lack the necessary equipment, and teacher training remains a critical gap. The absence of operational quality assurance bodies, such as the Quality Assurance and Vocational Education and Training Providers Approval Centre (QAVETPAC), further hinders efforts to ensure that vocational programmes meet the required standards. Moreover, collaboration between TVET providers and businesses is limited, restricting opportunities for work-based learning and apprenticeships (IOM, 2024).

The Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education (MoTVE) is responsible for overseeing all public, government-funded technical and vocational institutes across Libya, while the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (MoLR) develops related policies. The MoTVE manages 18 technical colleges, 111 higher technical institutes and 382 intermediate vocational institutes nationwide. Effective collaboration and information sharing between government entities and the labour market are essential to strengthen the TVET system and the broader education sector (UNICEF, 2023b).

Libya's TVET system faces several challenges that limit its effectiveness in meeting workforce needs. A major issue is the outdated TVET curriculum, which does not align with current industry requirements, leaving graduates without the skills demanded by employers. TVET institutions, under MoTVE, also struggle with limited resources. Despite the presence of multiple intermediate vocational institutes and technical colleges nationwide, these institutions lack adequate facilities, modern equipment and sufficiently qualified teaching staff (UNICEF, 2023b).

The strong preference for public sector employment in Libya, which employs a large portion of the workforce, has also shaped attitudes towards TVET careers. Many Libyans favour public sector jobs, creating a cultural barrier to private sector and vocational training careers. For instance, only 19 % of Libyans express interest in private sector roles, which discourages enrolment in TVET programmes tailored for non-governmental employment (GPlusss, 2024). Additionally, TVET reform efforts remain fragmented, with workforce policies divided across multiple ministries and limited coordination between MoTVE and MoLR. The lack of unified direction hampers policy implementation and reduces the system's adaptability to economic and labour market demands.

In 2023, the GNU enacted Law No 21 to establish a unified framework for TVET in Libya. This law aims to align TVET programmes with labour market demands in sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture and services. It introduces a structured pathway from basic to advanced technical education, emphasising dual training programmes that combine theoretical and practical skills. Under this framework, TVET institutions now have greater autonomy to design curricula based on labour market needs. This includes technical colleges, higher technical institutes and a National Academy for Technical Education focused on postgraduate studies and research. Private vocational institutions are also permitted to operate under the MoTVE's supervision to ensure quality and alignment with national economic goals. The law further emphasises inclusive education by expanding technical training

access for women and individuals with disabilities, thereby broadening Libya's skilled workforce (Law Society of Libya, 2023a).

The GNU and MoLR supported various initiatives to promote vocational and crafts training across Libya. A series of training sessions and workshops, delivered through 30 specialised training packages, aimed to prepare 6 700 individuals for the labour market. Ministry data show that these programmes included 193 trainees with disabilities and 2 144 female participants, highlighting a focus on inclusivity for job seekers, women and individuals with disabilities. Training programmes were offered in 32 municipalities, emphasising alignment with labour market needs (Al-Wasat, 2024). Additionally, the ministry equipped trainees with essential tools for workforce entry in high-demand fields, such as vehicle diagnostics, air conditioning and refrigeration, mobile phone maintenance and pump repair, with a focus on women's empowerment, including training sessions for managers of women's empowerment offices across municipalities (Al-Wasat, 2024).

The GNU has established international partnerships to enhance vocational training, including the Libyan-German and Libyan-Turkish centres for training, focusing on skill development and aligning with global standards. Additionally, collaborative projects with the EU, South Korea and NGOs have provided targeted training for vulnerable populations, such as former combatants and women, supporting economic reintegration and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

Work-based learning arrangements

The mismatch between the skills developed in educational institutions and the needs of the labour market underscores the importance of expanding work-based learning arrangements. For Libyan youth, practical training and skills acquisition have been highly valued, as noted in the IOM TVET study in 2023 (IOM, 2024). By integrating more hands-on experiences into curricula, students can gain valuable skills that directly align with what employers are seeking. Schools can enhance these opportunities by collaborating with local businesses, non-profit organisations and community groups, allowing students to gain real-world exposure and better understand workforce expectations. These partnerships can foster a closer connection between education and employment and ensure that students are better equipped to meet the evolving demands of the job market.

Digital education and skills

Despite some progress in recent years, digitalisation in Libya has been slow and remains far from meeting its full potential. However, Libya has launched several programmes aimed at modernising the curriculum and developing digital skills to bridge the skills gap. In August 2024, the EU4Skills project, a EUR 7.15 million initiative led by the EU and implemented by INGO Expertise France, was launched to align Libya's education and training systems with labour market needs. This project aims to equip students with digital competencies, preparing them for employment in sectors like the green and blue economies and supporting SME growth through improved financial literacy. EU4Skills also prioritises digital transformation, establishing curricula that integrate digital skills with practical, market-oriented training, particularly for youth entering the workforce (eNable, 2024).

Local entities also received EU funding to support vocational training through digitalisation and soft skills development. Implemented by the Libyan company 'Libyan Spider', the Mahara 'Skills' School project – funded by the EU in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – provides programming and technical skills training to young Libyans in cities such as Tripoli, Benghazi and Sabha. With training tracks in full-stack web programming and mobile application development, Mahara prepares participants for the digital workforce. The project also includes career readiness support, linking participants with potential employers to enhance employability within Libya's technology sector, aligning with MoLR and MoTVE objectives of advancing digitalisation with international backing (LANA, 2023).

Education and training statistics

According to the 2022 Joint Education Needs Assessment in Libya, conducted by REACH and UNICEF, it was reported that 1 774 614 students were enrolled in basic education as of May 2022. Of these, 1 766 481 students (99 %) were attending regular public schools, while 3 780 were home-schooled, 1 427 were receiving evening education and 2 926 were studying at home. In secondary education, the total number of students was 317 222 as of May 2022, with 172 094 following the scientific track, 36 870 in the literary track, 108 237 enrolled in first secondary school and 21 attending religious secondary education. Among secondary education students, nearly all (98 %) were enrolled in regular schools, with 5 876 receiving home-based education and 297 attending evening classes.

More recent data coming from Libya's National Statistics and Census Bureau shows that 2.3 million students are enrolled in 6 532 primary and secondary schools across the country (BSC, 2023). In urban schools, double-shift systems are used to accommodate up to 2 000 students per school (IOM, 2024). However, many schools continue to struggle with overcrowding, limited resources and inadequate facilities, including poor sanitation and unreliable access to basic utilities such as electricity and clean water. These challenges significantly impact the quality of education that students receive.

Despite regular nationwide data collection exercises in Libya, such as the Displacement Tracking Matrix led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) conducted by REACH, significant gaps remain in critical areas of education. To remedy this, in 2023, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education (MoE) rolled out the Education Management and Information System (EMIS), which aims to provide relevant data on enrolment, transition and completion of schooling for all children in the formal education sector to help inform effective programming. This information system will also help identify children at risk of dropping out of the school system and children with disabilities, enabling timely and targeted intervention (UNICEF, 2023c).

3. LABOUR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT

3.1 Trends and challenges

Labour market characteristics

Libya's labour market faces significant challenges, primarily due to its reliance on the public sector, lack of economic diversification and ongoing political instability. The limited opportunities in the private sector, coupled with a mismatch between the qualifications of job seekers and market demands, constrain job creation. Many young people, particularly young women, struggle to transition from education to stable employment, resulting in high unemployment rates. Migrants, both from within the region and beyond, add another layer of complexity to the labour market. Many migrants face barriers to formal employment, often forced into the informal sector due to legal and documentation challenges. This further intensifies competition for scarce job opportunities and highlights the vulnerability of these populations. On the other hand, Libya's large informal labour market, with an estimated 2.1 million foreign workers, presents challenges for oversight and wage equality. This plays a significant role in the country's economy, with many expatriates employed in unregulated roles across sectors like construction, agriculture, domestic services and informal trade (NAN Media, 2024). The lack of official licensing or regulation for these workers creates difficulties in ensuring fair wages. Reports indicate that expatriate workers often receive higher wages than Libyans for similar jobs, fuelling tensions and calls for stricter controls on labour pricing, particularly in regions heavily reliant on expatriate labour.

Additionally, there is a broader challenge in aligning education and training with the skills required by employers, which limits the ability of the workforce to meet the demands of a changing economy. Global disruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain issues stemming from the war in Ukraine, have compounded Libya's labour market difficulties, making recovery efforts even more challenging. Political instability continues to hinder efforts to diversify the economy, leaving many Libyans and migrants without stable and sustainable employment opportunities.

Labour market and employment statistics

In 2022, according to the Labour Force Results report for Libya, the activity rate (aged 15+) was 49.1 %, with a significant gender disparity: 58.2 % for males compared to just 39.6 % for females. The employment rate for the same year stood at 45.2 %, reflecting limited formal employment opportunities and significant untapped potential in the labour force. According to the Bureau of Statistics, Libya's employment by sector in 2022 was highest for the services sector, followed by industry and agriculture.¹ The ILO also estimates that the services sector had the highest share of employment in 2022 (68 %), followed by industry (23 %) and agriculture (9 %). This employment structure reflects an oil-rich but undiversified economy, where most jobs are in services and government employment, while the capital-intensive oil industry generates wealth but employs relatively few people. The lack of industrial diversification and reliance on foreign labour in key sectors such as construction and infrastructure could further explain the imbalance.

In Libya, self-employment accounted for 14.8 % of employment in 2022, while 13 % of workers were in vulnerable employment, remaining relatively stable since 2015. The unemployment rate (aged 15+) was 15.3 % in 2022, with a slightly higher share for men. The leading causes of unemployment include the scarcity of private sector job opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers and a mismatch between job seekers' qualifications and the labour market demands (IOM, 2024).

Libyan youth face higher unemployment and low participation, with many struggling to transition into stable employment. Based on the Labour Force Results 2022 report for Libya, the youth unemployment rate was 23.1 %, with young women experiencing a more significant unemployment

¹ Aggregation of 20 sectors in the Labour Force Results 2022 report resulted in total values higher than 100 %: 98 % for the services sector, 6 % for industry and 0.1 % for agriculture.

rate at 39.2 %, compared to 18.9 % for young men. The proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (NEETs) slightly decreased, reaching 29.4 % in 2022. There is however a gender gap of 12.6 percentage points (23.9 % for male NEETs compared to 35.3 % female NEETs). This underscores the continued need for targeted programmes to improve education-to-work transitions and address barriers, particularly for young women.

Data from the Bureau of Statistics and Census in Libya in 2022 indicates that individuals with the lowest level of education (illiterates and those with basic literacy skills) experience the highest unemployment rates (Salih B.T. and Yildiz, 2024). Conversely, those with above-secondary but below-university qualifications face the lowest unemployment rates, highlighting a strong demand for vocational and technical education graduates in Libya's labour market. This pattern underscores the correlation between higher educational attainment and improved job prospects.

3.2 Employment policy and institutional settings

Strategy and legal framework in the employment policy field

There are currently two functioning ministries in Libya, both with priorities and an interest in tackling the stalling labour market issues: the Government of National Unity (GNU) and Government of National Stability (GNS) ministries of labour and rehabilitation (MoLRs). This duplication has historically resulted in inefficiencies and blurred lines of accountability in labour management. Both have aimed to formulate policies in order to tackle the overwhelming number of unemployed individuals, putting additional pressure on the public market.

Libya's labour regulations, primarily outlined in Law No 12 of 2010 Concerning Labour Relations, provide a framework for employment practices while highlighting areas in need of further review and refinement. Key provisions include incentives for hiring nationals, wage and benefits regulations and unemployment protections. However, enforcement gaps remain; reports indicate that some private employers bypass formal contracts to circumvent mandatory social security contributions. Although the labour code mandates formal employment contracts and in-house training for nationals, the specifics regarding social contributions and training obligations are often vague. Working hours are capped at 48 per week, with additional restrictions and non-wage benefits for female workers, such as maternity leave, intended to support female workforce participation. However, certain regulations limiting female employment by sector and working hours, alongside unclear rules for setting minimum wages, show the need for a more robust policy framework (Security Legislation Libya, 2010).

Additionally, the labour code provides generous leave entitlements, including hajj² and family leave, which may impose financial strains on employers, particularly within the private sector. Dismissal procedures are highly regulated, requiring employer justification, public authority review, advance notice and severance pay, which can introduce rigidity into labour market dynamics. A thorough review of these regulations is essential to align labour policy with Libya's objectives of increasing private-sector employment and job creation (Security Legislation Libya, 2010).

In the East region, the GNS MoLR drafted a strategy to address labour market challenges, but it has not been fully implemented. In April 2023, a draft was created to tackle issues including organisation of expatriate workers, recruitment processes, rehabilitation and training programmes and support for small, medium and micro-enterprises. One of the critical areas addressed by the strategy is the longstanding overlaps resulting in inefficiencies and blurred lines of accountability in labour management (Libya Observer, 2023). The draft was passed to the Jordanian Advisory Committee for review and finalisation. The collaboration resulted in a five-year strategic plan, addressing 15 integrated files such as resolving overlaps between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Civil Service, refining training initiatives and organising labour market functions. In July 2024, the finalised plan was officially handed over to the ministry in a ceremony in Jordan (Libya Witness, 2024). However, since then, there have been no updates on the plan's implementation.

² Hajj, in Islam, is the annual pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia (Britannica, 2024).

The GNU MoLR, on the other hand, focused more on immediate initiatives, including boosting salaries, though this has not made much of an impact due to currency depreciation. Law No 18 of 2023 focused on enhancing transparency and efficiency in public sector compensation. Key changes include the implementation of graded salary scales, ranging from LYD 1 000 to LYD 4 320, and the introduction of performance-based bonuses in sectors like healthcare and oil, reaching up to 50 % of the base salary. Additionally, annual salary increments linked to position and length of service, ranging from LYD 11 to LYD 50, are now in place (Law Society of Libya, 2023c). While these reforms are positive, currency depreciation has affected their impact.

Initiatives to boost employment

In response to economic instability, the GNU announced a series of measures in 2023 to address unemployment and enhance economic equity. Enacted under Laws No 18 and No 34, these reforms aim to address economic challenges reflected in household spending trends. Law No 18 standardises salaries within a range of LYD 1 000 to LYD 4 320, with sector-specific bonuses of up to 50 % in key fields (Law Society of Libya, 2023b). Additionally, Law No 34 amended this framework to increase salaries for academic staff, with performance allowances reaching 200 % for senior professors (ILO, 2023). These measures seek to strengthen economic security for public sector employees, particularly in high-impact areas such as education and healthcare, which form the foundation of public services in the country.

A common issue in Libya is the overlap of job positions between the MoLR and other ministries, particularly the Ministry of Civil Service, due to overlooked duplication. To address this, the GNU MoLR introduced Resolution No 38 of 2024, establishing a dedicated General Department within the Ministry of Civil Service to manage surplus employees. This department is responsible for creating a unified database of job data, coordinating redeployment efforts and implementing early retirement programmes. It also encourages the involvement of displaced public employees in small and medium enterprise (SME) initiatives, facilitating their transition into the private sector (Law Society of Libya, 2024d).

Job duplication has been a central focus of reform efforts, with a new strategy aimed at providing jobs for youth. In December 2023, the GNU MoLR Minister announced the implementation of a 'unified standard' to address dual employment within the public sector, which reached 45 124 cases in 2023. Ministry inspection campaigns resulted in 19 124 suspensions and 22 675 cases referred for settlement. To strengthen oversight, the Ministry also activated an electronic monitoring system to track public sector spending and ensure compliance with employment regulations on a monthly basis (Libya Observer, 2024f; Libya Observer, 2024h).

Circular No 3 of 2024 of the Prime Minister of the GNU provides more straightforward guidelines for stabilising employment conditions within the public sector (Law Society of Libya, 2024a). This circular emphasises clear eligibility criteria for promotions, particularly for employees covered by Cabinet Resolution No 888 of 2023 (focused on issuing provisions regarding the executive regulations of Law No 12 of 2010). It ensures that professional experience is properly recognised and standardises promotion timelines, streamlining processes for greater administrative efficiency (Law Society of Libya, 2023). The aim is to benefit public sector employees by guaranteeing fairness and transparency in their career advancement.

Tackling unemployment has been a key target for the GNU MoLR in the past few years, with a focus on providing opportunities for young job seekers and capacity building. In 2024, the GNU MoLR initiated a campaign called 'Kafeel' to address duplication and provide jobs for 200 000 young job seekers nationwide (Fawasel Media, 2024). Additionally, in October 2024, the Ministry initiated the 'Open Employment Day Initiative' with the University of Tripoli to integrate job seekers into the private sector and provide practical training, addressing immediate labour market gaps (Al-Wasat News, 2024c). In June 2024, the GNU formalised an agreement with Tunisia to expedite a memorandum of understanding on workforce organisation and labour rights (Al-Wasat News, 2024b). Earlier in 2023, the GNU MoLR also launched specialised training courses for job seekers in remote cities like Murzuq, supporting reconstruction and labour market organisation in the underdeveloped southern

region. The Ministry reported training 6 700 individuals, including 193 people with disabilities, across 9 public and 56 private training institutions in 2023. Inspection visits to these facilities ensure adherence to quality standards (Libya Observer, 2024e). Most of these initiatives aim to attract more young generations to enrol formally in both public and private sectors in the country.

The GNU also made efforts to stabilise the labour market for vulnerable groups in the past period. Not to overlook other layers in the community, the GNU MoLR issued Resolution No 38 in 2022, which established the High Commission for the Care of People with Special Needs. This commission provides a range of services, including education, rehabilitation and social support. Through this initiative, individuals with disabilities gain access to essential resources, improving their integration into the labour market (Law Society of Libya, 2022). Nothing reported in the years after was relevant to this resolution.

The GNU's labour policy reforms also focused on the private sector, aiming to streamline company establishment for individuals. Resolution No 148 of 2024, issued by the MoLR, outlines detailed conditions for establishing labour services companies. This aims to support key labour market participants, including unemployed individuals from troubled or dissolved companies, housewives seeking to provide domestic services and job seekers registered with the Ministry. Notably, this resolution prioritises Libyan ownership and management, with stringent requirements for contributors, such as Libyan nationality and relevant professional qualifications (Law Society of Libya, 2024e). The resolution aims to encourage young professionals to start up their own businesses, although funding support mechanisms are unclear.

To address the informal labour market, the GNU MoLR launched an electronic platform in 2023 to register foreign workers. This platform aims to regulate their presence and employment by creating a centralised system for registration and oversight (Fawasel Media, 2024). Additionally, the GNU MoLR launched a 'labour housing' initiative to further regulate foreign workers by creating a system to register foreigners with official entrance visas and medical examinations. One incentive is to provide housing to those who seek official routes to enter the country (Libya Observer, 2024g). However, the plan appears ambitious, as foreign workers fill critical gaps in the private labour market while often remaining unregulated. Many prefer to remain unregulated to facilitate immigration. As of the writing of this report, the informality of foreign labour, lack of capacity among national staff and weak labour protections in Libya all contribute to the current critical status quo.

4. The role of VET and skills development in recovery and reconstruction

Impact of the Libya crisis on education

The persistent conflict in Libya has hindered progress across all sectors, causing significant disruption to an already vulnerable education and training system. Many school-aged children have been forcibly displaced, denied access to basic goods and services and left in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. As of April 2024, around 160 000 children and 5 600 teachers were estimated to be in urgent need of support related to access or quality of education (REACH, 2024). A significant proportion of students have dropped out of school, facing numerous barriers that prevent their return to the classroom and causing some of them to never complete their education. Obstacles include insufficient equipment, teacher strikes, outdated curricula and electricity cuts (REACH, 2023).

Additionally, many schools are no longer safe or usable. Hundreds of schools have been targeted and destroyed by armed forces, while others have been repurposed as shelters for displaced families. Consequently, students need to travel to other communities to be able to access education. These journeys often involve unsafe travel conditions and place additional strain on already limited resources, further compromising the quality of learning environments.

The economic downturn has emphasised financial constraints towards covering essential educational needs such as school uniforms, stationery and school bags. Furthermore, children from low-income families face difficulties in paying the high fees for remedial courses in private non-formal education centres in the context of upcoming national exams, enhancing inequality in educational outcomes. This is exacerbated by children in precarious situations often engaging in paid work, affecting attendance and increasing fatigue (REACH, 2024).

A shortage of teachers and inadequate working conditions present another significant challenge to Libya's education environment. Teachers often lack specialised training, as a university degree is commonly accepted without requiring graduation from a teaching programme. While there is some in-service training, it is infrequent and narrow in scope, leaving newly hired teachers with limited pedagogical knowledge and few opportunities for continuous professional development. Teachers also report insufficient training in technology. Furthermore, low salaries, delayed payments and the absence of health insurance or transportation support exacerbate the challenges faced by teachers in the country (REACH, 2023).

Marginalised groups are also disproportionately affected by the crisis in Libya. A 2020 UNICEF study identified disability as the leading factor contributing to educational deprivation, with 16 % of children with disabilities experiencing deprivation, compared to 6 % of the general school-aged population in Libya (MoP, BoS, UNICEF, Social Policy Research Institute, 2020). This disparity is primarily attributed to the absence of tailored provisions for students with disabilities in schools, as reported in 82 % of schools assessed in the 2019 Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA), along with a shortage of trained teachers to support the learning needs of these children.

In September 2023, Storm Daniel devastated north-eastern Libya, displacing tens of thousands and disrupting critical services, including the education system.

The importance of VET for recovery and reconstruction

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (VET) plays a critical role in the recovery and reconstruction of conflict-affected societies, including Libya. It equips young people with the practical skills necessary for reintegration into the labour market and fosters economic recovery. However, Libya's VET system has suffered from years of underinvestment, outdated infrastructure and a shortage of trained educators, all of which hinder its effectiveness. The conflict has also led to the destruction of many educational facilities, further complicating the ability to provide quality education to youth. Moreover, limited resources and fragmented governance structures have exacerbated the

challenges facing the VET sector, leaving it underprepared to meet the needs of the current labour market. The Libyan labour market, already struggling due to the economic and political crisis, faces significant challenges in absorbing youth graduates and providing decent employment opportunities. The private sector, which could offer alternative pathways, remains underdeveloped and unable to absorb the growing number of VET graduates. At the same time, the public sector, traditionally the largest employer, is oversaturated, with limited positions available. This situation underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive approach to VET reform, ensuring that programmes are better aligned with the demands of the labour market, particularly in emerging sectors such as digital technology, healthcare and renewable energy.

A key barrier to effective VET implementation in Libya is the lack of reliable labour market data. This data gap prevents the VET system from adapting to current needs, leaving many graduates ill-prepared for employment. The National Board of Technical and Vocational Education (NBTVE) and other relevant bodies lack the capacity to gather and analyse data on market trends, making it challenging to update curricula and align training programmes with economic demands. Without an efficient data collection system, the VET sector cannot effectively contribute to Libya's recovery by producing skilled workers in the areas most critical to the country's rebuilding efforts. Additionally, marginalised groups, including women, youth with disabilities, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), face specific barriers to accessing VET. Social norms, discrimination and lack of access to necessary resources limit the opportunities available to these groups. Women, for example, are often excluded from certain vocational sectors, such as construction and engineering, due to cultural attitudes and gender-specific restrictions. Refugees and IDPs, many of whom are already vulnerable due to displacement, face additional challenges, such as financial barriers and lack of documentation, that prevent them from participating in VET programmes.

In response to these challenges, there is growing recognition of the potential of VET to play a transformative role in Libya's recovery and reconstruction. By reforming and modernising the VET system, aligning it with labour market needs and making it more inclusive, Libya can rebuild its workforce and contribute to economic recovery. International partners have emphasised the importance of strengthening VET, particularly through public-private partnerships, which could provide a more effective and targeted approach to skills development. The integration of new technologies into VET programmes could also improve the relevance of training and make it more appealing to youth. These efforts would not only address the skills gap but also offer marginalised groups, including women and refugees, greater access to training and employment opportunities, helping to integrate them into the socio-economic fabric of the country.

By investing in and modernising the VET system, ensuring it is aligned with labour market demands and promoting inclusivity, Libya can rebuild its workforce, provide youth with meaningful employment opportunities and contribute to the country's long-term socio-economic stability. VET is not only a tool for economic recovery but also a means to foster social cohesion, stability and resilience in post-conflict Libya.

Labour Market Disruption and Recovery Pathways

Years of conflict and political uncertainty have undermined the Libyan economy and its labour market. Notably, the significant unemployment and inactivity levels hamper the country's socio-economic development. In 2022, Libya's unemployment rate was 15.3 %, with youth among the most affected groups. A rise in population growth and failures in the education and training system to supply a skilled workforce that meets labour market demands are some of the factors behind unemployment challenges.

Moreover, Libya's unstable political environment and state policies have impeded the growth of the private sector. The conflict has profoundly undermined private enterprises by weakening the rule of law, enabling the dominance of state-owned firms and limiting foreign investment. Regulatory unpredictability, poor governance and substandard infrastructure have further reduced competitiveness, discouraging innovation and increasing reliance on imports. As a result, the private sector remains weak and offers few attractive employment opportunities. At the same time, public

sector workers lack skills and do not substantially impact economic growth. Excessive public-sector employment has decreased the productivity of the labour force, elevated wage expectations and shifted educational choices away from practical skills. Because new government jobs are declining, many public employees must now transition into a weak private sector that is ill-equipped to absorb them.

As the formal labour market in Libya fails to generate sufficient jobs, it has led to a large informal sector that accounts for an estimated 40-60 % of total employment. About 1.6 million people are informally employed, mainly in agriculture, construction and retail, accounting for a significant share of the population, including many with basic education. This sector, characterised by diversity and adaptability, plays a critical role in meeting labour market demand and shaping employment outcomes.

Libya would benefit from developing a comprehensive human resource strategy that aligns the education system with real-world economic needs. This entails coordinating efforts among educational institutions, relevant authorities and industry representatives to identify skill gaps and craft appropriate responses. Bolstering institutional capacity and governance is also key to bridging the divide between workforce supply and demand. Upgrading educational infrastructure, improving training programmes and offering continuous professional development can ensure that graduates have the skills necessary for emerging job opportunities.

Close collaboration with private enterprises will help foster a more vibrant private sector. Employers can be involved in designing modern curricula, establishing practical learning experiences and offering internships or apprenticeships that enable smooth transitions from the classroom to the workplace. An emphasis on upskilling and reskilling is crucial for adapting to shifting market demands. By creating mechanisms to recognise existing skills and retrain workers in new areas, Libya can better respond to economic changes and diversify employment opportunities.

In parallel, promoting economic diversification and streamlining administrative processes can open fresh investment and job creation avenues. Strengthened infrastructure, improved financial services and a supportive regulatory environment will encourage growth, innovation and long-term socio-economic progress.

STATISTICAL ANNEX – LIBYA

The Annex includes annual data from 2015, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023, or the last available year.

	Indicator	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	Total population (in thousands) ⁽¹⁾	6192.2	6569.1	6653.9	6735.3	6812.3	6888.4
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15-24 and denominator age 15-64, %) ^{(1) c}	26.3	26.6	26.6	26.7	26.7	26.7
3	GDP growth rate (%)	-0.8	-6.0	-58.3	153.5	1.3	-1.7
4	Gross value added by sector (%)	Agriculture	4.4	2.0	3.1	1.4	1.3
		Industry	34.8	48.0	58.1	82.9	92.8
		Services	72.4	64.5	64.7	35.7	34.8
5	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
7	Adult literacy (%)	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
8	Educational attainment of total population (aged 15+) (%)	Low	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Medium	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		High	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
9	Early leavers from education and training (aged 18-24) (%)	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
10	Total NET enrolment rate (%)	Lower secondary	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Upper secondary	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
11	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
12	Low achievement in reading, mathematics and science – PISA (%)	Reading	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Mathematics	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Science	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
13	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%) ^c	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	49.1	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	58.2	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	39.6	M.D.
14	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%) ^c	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	50.9	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	41.8	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	60.4	M.D.
15	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%) ^c	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	45.2	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
16	Employment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	Low	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Medium	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		High	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
17	Employment by sector (%) ^{(2) c}	Agriculture	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	0.1	M.D.
		Industry	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	6.0	M.D.
		Services	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	98.0	M.D.
18	Incidence of self-employment (%) ^{(1) c}	15.1	14.8	15.0	14.9	14.8	M.D.
19	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%) ^{(1) c}	13.2	13.0	13.1	13.1	13.0	M.D.
20	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%) ^c	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	15.3	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	18.4	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	13.3	M.D.

	Indicator		2015	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
21	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	Low	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Medium	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		High	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15-24) (%) ^c	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	23.1	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	18.9	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	39.2	M.D.
23	Proportion of people aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%) ⁽¹⁾	Total	30.3	29.3	31.1	29.8	29.6	29.4
		Male	24.1	23.3	25.5	24.3	24.0	23.9
		Female	36.9	35.6	37.0	35.7	35.4	35.3
	Proportion of people aged 15-29 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%)	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
24	Participation in training/lifelong learning (% aged 25-64)	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
25	Human Development Index		0.749	0.756	0.737	0.746	0.746	M.D.

Last update: 07/10/2024.

Sources:

Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4: The World Bank, World Development Indicators database

Indicators 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 22, 24: Bureau of Statistics and Census – LIBYA data (Labour Force Results 2022 report)

Indicators 18, 19, 23: ILOSTAT modelled estimates

Indicator 25: UNDP

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Estimation.

⁽²⁾ Aggregation of 20 sectors in the Labour Force Results 2022 report resulted in total values higher than 100 %.

Legend:

C = ETF calculations

N.A. = Not Applicable

M.D. = Missing Data

ANNEX: DEFINITIONS OF INDICATORS

	Description	Definition
1	Total population (in thousands)	The total population is estimated as the number of people having their usual residence in a country on 1 January of the respective year. When information on the usually resident population is not available, countries may report legal or registered residents.
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15-24) (%)	This is the ratio of the youth population (aged 15-24) to the working-age population, usually aged 15-64 (or 15-74 or 15+).
3	GDP growth rate (%)	Annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. Aggregates are based on constant 2010 U.S. dollars. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources.
4	Gross value added by sector (%)	The share of value added from Agriculture, Industry and Services. Agriculture corresponds to ISIC divisions 1-5 and includes forestry, hunting and fishing, as well as cultivation of crops and livestock production. Value added is the net output of a sector after adding up all outputs and subtracting intermediate inputs. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or depletion and degradation of natural resources. The origin of value added is determined by the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), revision 3 or 4. Industry corresponds to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) tabulation categories C–F (revision 3) or tabulation categories B–F (revision 4), and includes mining and quarrying (including oil production), manufacturing, construction and public utilities (electricity, gas and water). Services correspond to ISIC divisions 50-99 and they include value added in wholesale and retail trade (including hotels and restaurants), transport and government, financial, professional and personal services such as education, healthcare and real estate services. Also included are imputed bank service charges, import duties and any statistical discrepancies noted by national compilers as well as discrepancies arising from rescaling.
5	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of GDP. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans, as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of total public expenditure. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans, as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
7	Adult literacy (%)	Adult literacy is the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write a short simple statement on his/her everyday life and understand it. Generally, 'literacy' also encompasses 'numeracy' – the ability to make simple arithmetic calculations.

8	Educational attainment of total population (aged 15+) (%)	Educational attainment refers to the highest educational level achieved by individuals expressed as a percentage of all persons in that age group. This is usually measured in terms of the highest educational programme successfully completed, which is typically certified by a recognised qualification. Recognised intermediate qualifications are classified at a lower level than the programme itself.
9	Early leavers from education and training (aged 18-24) (%)	Early leavers from education and training are defined as the percentage of the population aged 18-24 with lower secondary education at most, who were not in further education or training during the four weeks preceding the survey. Lower secondary education refers to ISCED 1997 levels 0-2 and 3C short (i.e. programmes lasting under two years) for data up to 2013 and to ISCED 2011 levels 0-2 for data from 2014 onwards.
10	Total NET enrolment rate	Total number of students of the official age group for a given level of education who are enrolled in any level of education, expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.
11	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	Total number of students enrolled in vocational programmes at a given level of education (in this case, upper secondary), expressed as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled in all programmes (vocational and general) at that level.
12	Low achievement in reading, maths and science – PISA (%)	Low achievers are the 15-year-olds who are failing to reach level 2 on the PISA scale for reading, mathematics and science.
13	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%)	The activity rate is calculated by dividing the active population by the population of the same age group. The active population (also called 'labour force') is defined as the sum of employed and unemployed people. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
14	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%)	The inactivity/out of the labour force rate is calculated by dividing the inactive population by the population of the same age group. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
15	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed people by the population of the same age group. Employed people refers to every individual who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated.
16	Employment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed people by the population of the same age group. Employed people refers to every individual who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated. Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: low (ISCED level 0-2), medium (ISCED level 3-4) and high (ISCED 1997 level 5-6 and ISCED 2011 level 5-8).
17	Employment by sector (%)	This indicator provides information on the relative importance of different economic activities with regard to employment. Data are presented by broad branches of economic activity (i.e. Agriculture/Industry/Services) based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC). In Europe, the NACE classification is consistent with ISIC.
18	Incidence of self-employment (%)	The incidence of self-employment is expressed by the self-employed (i.e. employers + own-account workers + contributing family workers) as a proportion of the total employed.
19	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%)	The incidence of vulnerable employment is expressed by the own-account workers and contributing family workers as a proportion of the total employed.

20	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15-64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment; or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months).
21	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15-64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work (had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment; or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months). Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: low (ISCED level 0-2), medium (ISCED level 3-4) and high (ISCED 1997 level 5-6 and ISCED 2011 level 5-8).
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15-24) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15-24 who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment; or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months).
23	Proportion of people aged 15-24/15-29 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%)	The indicator provides information on young people aged 15-24 who meet the following two conditions: first, they are not employed (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to the ILO definition), and second, they have not received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey. Data are expressed as a percentage of the total population of the same age group and gender, excluding the respondents who have not answered the question on participation in education and training.
24	Participation in training/lifelong learning (% aged 25-64)	Participants in lifelong learning refers to people aged 25-64 who stated that they had received education or training in the 12 months preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator is the total population of the same age group, excluding those who did not answer the question on participation in education and training. The information collected relates to all education or training, whether or not it is relevant to the respondent's current or possible future job. If a different reference period is used, this should be indicated.
25	Human Development Index	The index is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living.

KEY DONOR PROJECTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

The European Union has been supporting Libya through different projects. The **EU4Skills**³ initiative aims to better align the skills of Libya's workforce with labour market needs by promoting technical skills for private sector growth and strengthening public institutions. The programme focuses on the blue/green economy, digitalisation and the financial sector. Following recent floods in Derna, it will also prioritise disaster recovery skills and community resilience. Additionally, the initiative will integrate disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and sustainable development into its framework.

Within the scope of the **EU Libya Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Delivery and Development Project**, in partnership with the British Council, the EU has been actively engaged since 2013 in improving the quality and relevance of training provided by selected VET schools. Additionally, efforts have been made to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders representing the demand side of the labour market, including employers' organisations and trade unions.

During the 2019-2023 period, the **EU for Private Sector Libya (EU4PSL)**⁴ project was implemented, providing technical support to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Libya along with 12 public universities. The project included support for creating a task force on employability, enhancing entrepreneurship and innovation centres in universities, introducing an entrepreneurship curriculum within universities in Libya as an accredited course and emphasising digitalisation and access to finance.

The UN also supports the Libyan education and labour markets through the work of different agencies and programmes. The **UNDP Country Programme for Libya (2023-2025)**^{5, 6} focuses on sustainable growth, job creation and peacebuilding initiatives. Its employment and training projects aim to create job opportunities and enhance vocational training infrastructure, particularly for women, youth and marginalised groups. **UNICEF** is working with Libya's Ministry of Education (MoE) to improve learning opportunities for children by supporting in-service teacher training, curriculum enhancements and infrastructural improvements. From 2024, a two-year teacher training programme was planned to refresh pedagogical approaches for teachers, ultimately benefiting 50 000 children. Life skills are being integrated into the national curriculum, aiming to equip students with critical 21st-century competencies. In 2023, UNICEF trained 219 educators on inclusive education and helped establish 50 Montessori rooms in schools to support children with disabilities. The MoE also adopted UNICEF's Learning Passport, a digital platform that supports both in-school learning and emergency response for displaced students. To make education more accessible, UNICEF improved water, safety and health facilities in 12 schools, provided prefabricated classrooms in Wadi Atba and established five youth centres in the South. They also rehabilitated 12 schools for 10 150 children, supplied early childhood education kits to 22 500 children and partnered with the private sector to refurbish five football fields for youth engagement. Following the September floods in eastern Libya, UNICEF distributed school-in-a-box kits and early childhood education kits to reach 13 000 children, cleaned and refurbished damaged schools and set up 10 temporary learning spaces. Training for 54 Master Trainers – who will support 250 teachers – ensured psychosocial and well-being services for frontline workers and teachers in flood-affected areas.

Education Cannot Wait (ECW) Multi-Year Resilience Programme (2022-2024)⁷ aims to provide inclusive, equitable quality education to children affected by conflict and instability in Libya. It supports internally displaced, returnee, refugee and host community children. The programme includes child

³ [EU4Skills – Promoting Skills and Employability for Private Sector Development.](#)

⁴ [03162df0-a192-4b57-b231-3be37c1e2576.](#)

⁵ [UNDP Libya 2023 Annual Report | United Nations Development Programme.](#)

⁶ [Libya | United Nations Development Programme.](#)

⁷ [https://www.educationcannotwait.org/resource-library/ecw-multi-year-resilience-programme-libya-2022-2024.](https://www.educationcannotwait.org/resource-library/ecw-multi-year-resilience-programme-libya-2022-2024)

safeguarding training, mental health and psychosocial support, and extensive community engagement efforts to strengthen the learning environment in schools.

IOM Libya's⁸ Labour Mobility and Social Inclusion (LMI) programme included vocational training and job placement services, particularly through the Youth Employment One Stop Shop (YESS) centres, thus supporting hundreds of Libyan and non-Libyan youths in enhancing their employment prospects and fostering social cohesion. A pivotal roundtable on Labour Migration Governance was organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, bringing together 50 participants, including diplomatic representations from various countries and relevant Libyan line ministries.

⁸ <https://libya.un.org/en/275957-iom-libya-annual-report-2023>.

ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
BoS	Bureau of Statistics
BSC	Bureau of Statistics and Census
CBL	Central Bank of Libya
CMR	Central Mediterranean Route
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
EU	European Union
GNA	Government of National Accord
GNS	Government of National Stability
GNU	Government of National Unity
HoR	House of Representatives
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JENA	Joint Education Needs Assessment
LANA	Libyan News Agency
LPDF	Libyan Political Dialogue Forum
LYD	Libyan Dinar
MoE	Ministry of Education

MoLR	Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoTVE	Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NBTVE	National Board of Technical and Vocational Education
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OSCC	Occupational Standards and Certification Centre
PES	Public Employment Service
QAVETPAC	Quality Assurance and Vocational Education and Training Providers Approval Centre
REACH	REACH Initiative
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO-UNEVOC	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya

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