

18 February 2026
ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS
2025

14.3% OF SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS IN ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE AND 11.4% IN ORGANISATIONAL DEPENDENCE

Of the total of 773.0 thousand self-employed workers in 2025, 14.3% (110.9 thousand; 0.7 percentage points (pp) less than in 2024) had a client which represented 75% or more of their income (after taxes), an indicator of economic dependence. From that total, 11.4% (87.9 thousand; same share as in 2024) stated that their working hours are determined by their clients, an indicator of organisational dependence. Combining these two types of dependence, it can be said that 1.9% (14.8 thousand; 0.8 pp less) of the self-employed workers were, simultaneously, economically and organisationally dependent.

Of the total of 8,035.2 thousand people aged 16 to 74, 11.9% (957.1 thousand; 0.2 pp more than in 2024) attended formal education and 30.7% (2,465.7 thousand; up 2.0 pp) attended a non-formal education course in the last 12 months. Combining these two types of education, it was observed that 37.4% (3,006.4 thousand; up 1.9 pp) of that population participated in at least one type of education and training activities in the past 12 months.

Of the total of 5,275.3 thousand employed people, 51.1% (2,696.0 thousand; 0.4 pp more than in 2024) assessed their general health status as good. Nevertheless, 0.7% (38.6 thousand; down 0.1 pp) considered themselves to be severely limited by health problems, for at least 6 months, to perform activities or tasks considered usual for most people.

In the context of Portugal 2030 Strategy, the share of unemployed adults aged 25 to 64 with a learning experience in the last four weeks stood at 19.5%, 0.5 pp from the minimum target of 20% set for 2025.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2021, a new series of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) began, introducing some changes to this statistical operation, of which stand out, for the purposes of this Press Release, the introduction, redefinition and elimination of variables, as well as the identification of a set of structural variables, *i.e.* that are stable over the quarters, allowing countries that so choose to collect them at a periodicity other than quarterly and using a sub-sampling strategy (also known as 'the wave approach').¹

¹ For a more detailed analysis of the new features introduced by the new series of the Labour Force Survey, see the note attached to the Press Release "Employment Statistics - 1st quarter 2021" available at <http://www.ine.pt/xurl/dest/472918526>.

Between the 1st quarter of 2021 and the 4th quarter of 2023, Statistics Portugal collected these structural annual and biennial variables using the above-mentioned strategy and began collecting them on a quarterly basis in the 1st quarter of 2024.² However, since the weighting factors of persons in the subsample wave approach are adjusted to a set of selected variables to ensure their consistency with the weighting factors for the annual averages obtained from the complete sample, it is possible to make a direct comparison between the estimates collected using the wave approach strategy (from 2021 to 2023) and those collected on a quarterly basis in the overall quarterly sample (from 2024 onwards).³

In this Press Release, Statistics Portugal analyses some of these structural variables, whose annual study is sufficient, as well as the evolution of education indicators estimated Labour Force Survey data towards their targets set within the scope of the Portugal 2030 Strategy are also analysed.⁴

2. ECONOMICALLY DEPENDENT SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS

In the Labour Force Survey, it is analysed the impact of clients on the activity of self-employed workers, namely the existence of clients who alone account for a high share of the worker's income and who have the possibility of defining the worker's working hours.

From the total of 773.0 thousand self-employed workers in 2025, 69.5% (537.4 thousand) had 10 or more clients and none of them was considered dominant, that is, none of them represented individually 75% or more of the worker's income (after paying taxes). That share is 0.6 percentage points (pp) lower than in 2024.

Additionally, 8.0% (61.6 thousand) of self-employed workers stated that, in the last 12 months, they only had one client (which represents a decrease of 0.3 pp from the previous year), 4.5% (34.9 thousand; same share as in 2024) had between 2 and 9 clients, one of which dominant, and 1.9% (14.4 thousand; 0.3 pp less) had 10 or more clients, also one of which was dominant. In other words, 14.3% (110.9 thousand) of self-employed workers had a dominant client in 2025, which represents a decrease of 0.7 pp from 2024.

When self-employed workers have only one client or, if they have two or more clients, one of them is dominant, this is considered as "economic dependence". In 2025, this is more frequent among men (15.1%) than among women (13.1%), young people between 16 and 34 years old (20.7%), individuals with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (18.6%), and those working in the agriculture, farming of animals, hunting and forestry sector (47.3%).

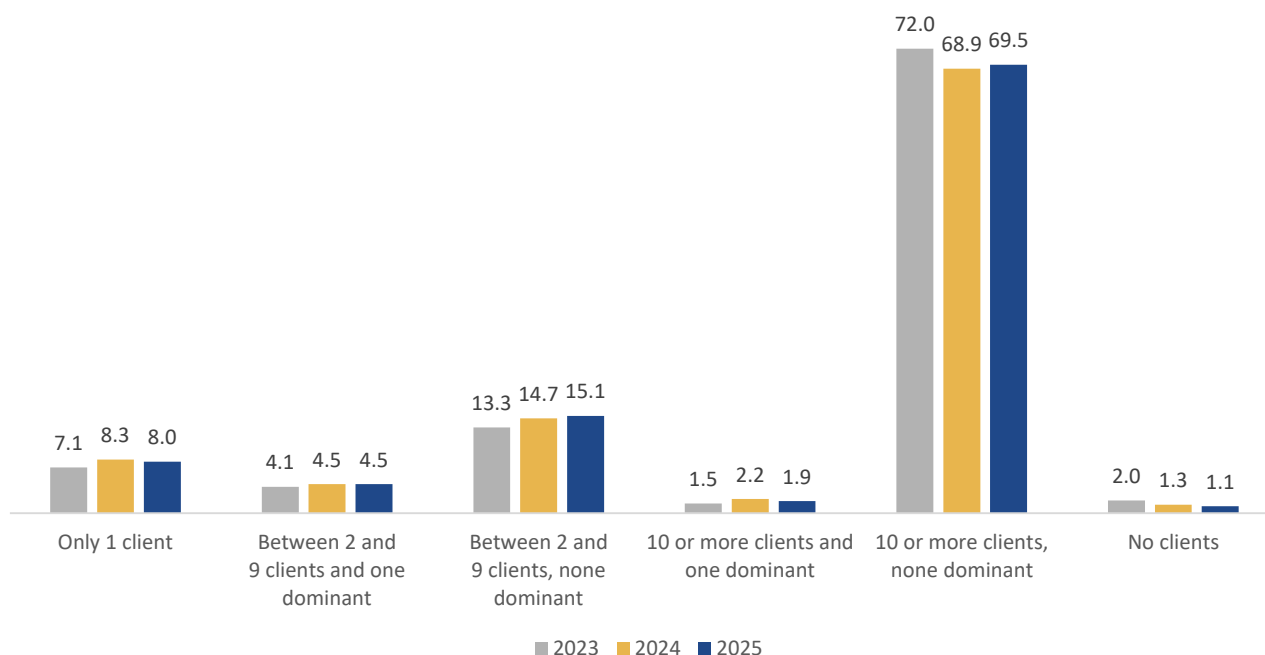
² For further information on the reasons behind this change, please refer to the Press Release "Annual Employment Statistics – 2024" available at <http://www.ine.pt/xurl/dest/695023356>.

³ Nonetheless, to ensure simple and legible graphics, the Figures presented refer to the last three years.

⁴ Other structural variables are available on request and subject to an analysis of the reliability of the estimates obtained.

Figure 1

SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS BY NUMBER AND IMPORTANCE OF CLIENTS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS (%)



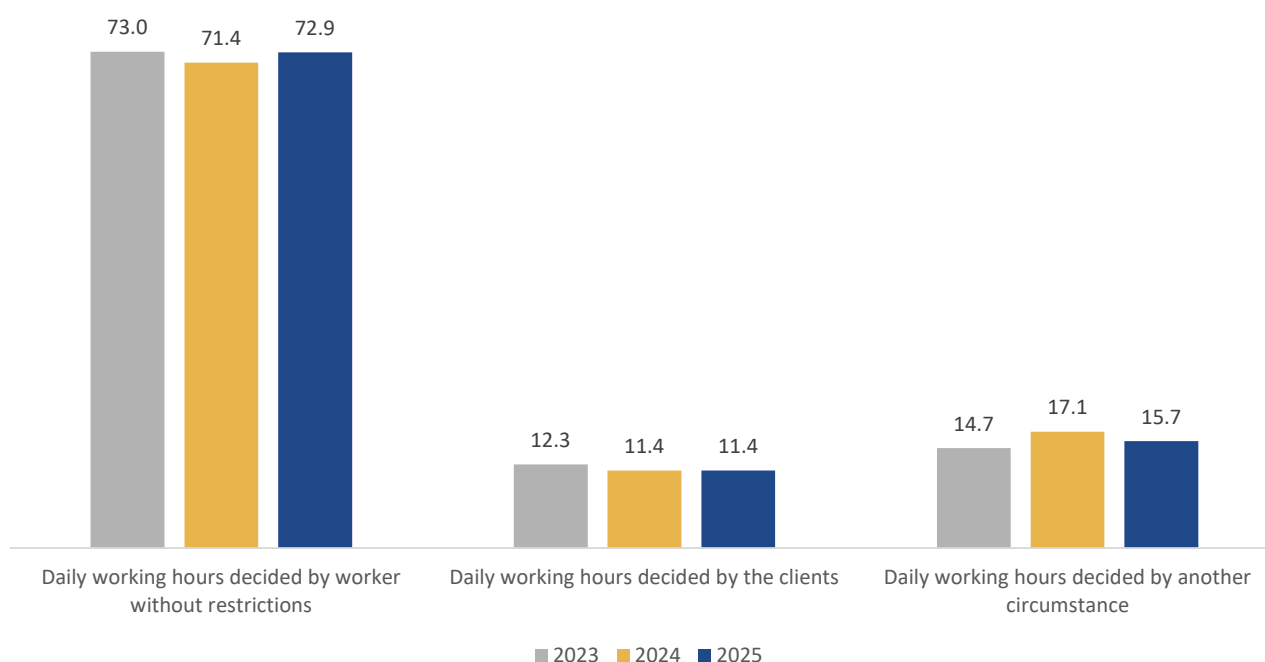
Another measure that allows for the analysis of the impact of clients on the self-employed workers' activity is related to the determination of daily working hours.

In 2025, of the total of 773.0 thousand self-employed workers, 72.9% (563.4 thousand) considered that they determine their daily working hours without restrictions, a higher share than in 2024 (up 1.5 pp), while 15.7% (121.6 thousand; down 1.4 pp) reported that their working hours are determined by circumstances other than their clients (for example, legal provisions) and 11.4% (87.9 thousand; same share as in 2024) stated that it is their clients who establish their working hours.

When clients determine the working hours, this is understood as "organisational dependence". Similarly to economic dependence, in 2025, organisational dependence was more common among young people between 16 and 34 years old (17.1%). However, it was higher among women (12.5%) than men (10.7%), among those with upper secondary and post-secondary education (13.3%), and in the services sector (12.7%).

Figure 2

SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS ACCORDING TO WHO DECIDES THE DAILY WORKING HOURS (%)



The two measures analysed, economic dependence (a single client or the existence of a dominant client) and organisational dependence (clients who determine the daily working hours), are part of the indicator on “economically dependent self-employed workers”, which considers the number of self-employed workers economically dependent on a single client or on a dominant client, with that client determining the daily working hours.⁵

In 2025, this indicator covered 14.8 thousand people, corresponding to 0.3% of the total employed population and 1.9% of the self-employed workers. Compared to the previous year, this indicator remained practically unchanged, covering a lower share of self-employed workers (2.1% in 2024). Their weight in the employed population has remained unchanged.

⁵ Eurostat, in its releases, restricts this indicator to the self-employed persons without employees. Considering this population group, in 2025, the indicator “economically dependent self-employed persons” covered to 13.5 thousand people, representing 0.3% of the total employed population, 1.7% of self-employed workers and 2.6% of self-employed workers without employees.

Table 1

SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS BY ECONOMIC AND ORGANISATIONAL DEPENDENCE

	2025					
	Total	Organisational dependence	Organisational independence	Total	Organisational dependence	Organisational independence
	Thousands			%		
Total	773.0	87.9	685.0	100.0	11.4	88.6
Economic dependence	110.9	14.8	96.0	14.3	1.9	12.4
Economic independence	662.1	73.1	589.0	85.7	9.5	76.2

3. ATTENDANCE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES BY ADULTS

The set of biennial questions previously collected in even years⁶ include a group of questions on the participation in education and training activities in the last 12 months (as in AES⁷), in addition to the quarterly questions about the last 4 reference weeks. These questions are fundamental for the calculation of public policy monitoring indicators in this area.

Thus, the population from 16 to 74 years of age was asked about the attendance, in the last 12 months, of formal education activities (that which confers an education level) or of non-formal education (those which, despite being institutionalized, only confer a certificate of attendance and not a level of education; for example, an English course at a language institute).⁸

In 2025, of the total of 8,035.2 thousand people aged 16 to 74, 11.9% (957.1 thousand; 0.2 pp more than in 2024) indicated having attended formal education activities and 30.7% (2,465.7 thousand; up 2.0 pp) a non-formal education course in the last 12 months.

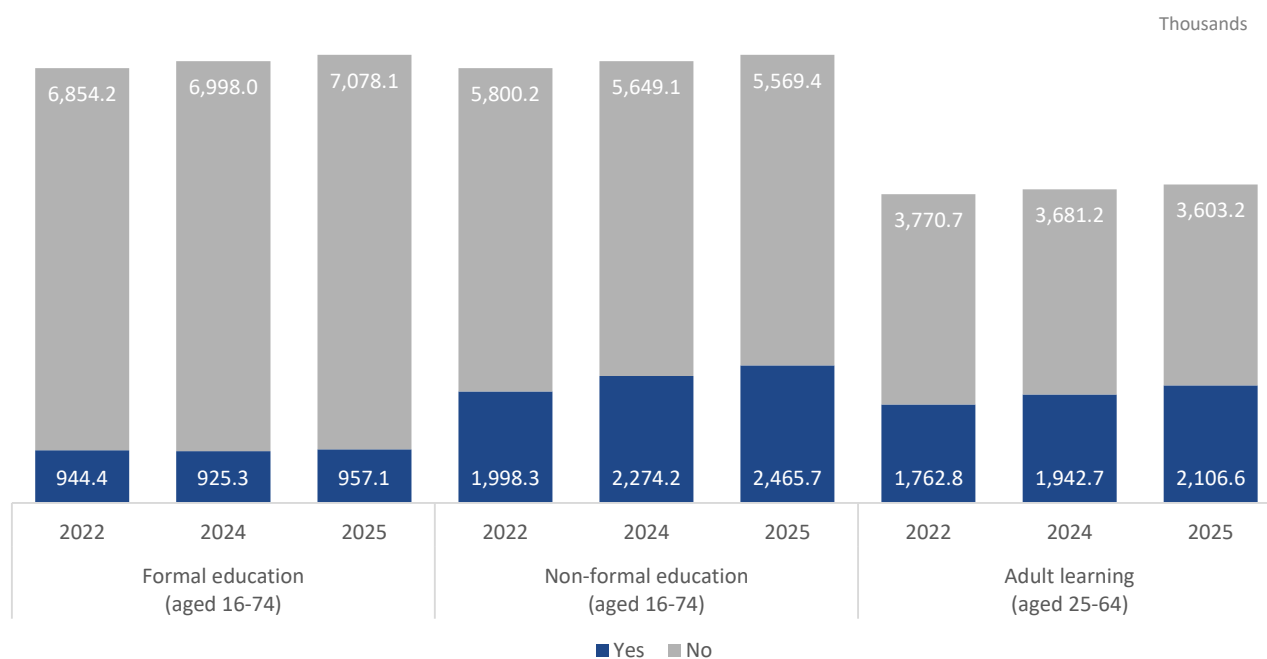
⁶ This is why, while the wave approach strategy was in place, they were only collected in 2022.

⁷ The Adult Education Survey (AES) is a survey of the European Statistical System, carried out every six years, with the main objective of analysing the participation of the adult population (aged 18 to 69) in education, training and learning activities. The results of the latest edition of this survey (AES 2022) can be found in the Press Releases of [17 October 2023](#) and of [22 March 2024](#).

⁸ A more precise definition of the concepts of formal and non-formal education can be found in the Technical Note at the end of this Press Release.

Figure 3

ATTENDANCE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



Attending formal education was more common in Grande Lisboa region (13.4%; 213.7 thousand), similar among men (11.8%; 458.1 thousand) and women (12.0%; 499.0 thousand), in the 16 to 24 age group (71.0%; 705.0 thousand) and among the inactive population (25.7%; 629.2 thousand). However, 5.2% (270.5 thousand) of the employed population stated having attended one of these activities. Of these, 91.4% (247.3 thousand) were employees, 84.7% (229.1 thousand) worked in the service sector and 37.8% (102.3 thousand) were professionals.

The attendance of non-formal education activities was also higher in Grande Lisboa region (36.2%; 575.1 thousand), but more common among women (31.7%; 1,313.1 thousand) than men (29.6%; 1,152.6 thousand). The group of those aged 35 to 44 had the highest share of people who attended these courses (40.0%; 541.3 thousand) and participation in this type of activities occurred more frequently among the employed population (38.1%; 1,999.8 thousand), unlike what was observed in the attendance of formal education activities. The profile of the set of employees who attended non-formal education activities in the last 12 months was similar to that of those who attended formal education: 89.2% (1,783.4 thousand) were employees, 79.6% (1,592.8 thousand) worked in the service sector and 36.1% (721.1 thousand) were professionals.

Combining the answers on the attendance of these two types of education allows to conclude that, in 2025, from the total of 8,035.2 thousand people aged between 16 and 74 years, 37.4% (3,006.4 thousand; 1.9 pp more than in 2024) attended education and training activities in the last 12 months, either formal education or non-formal

education. Restricting the analysis to those aged between 25 and 64 years, it is possible to determine the indicator “Adult learning”, which covered 2,106.6 thousand people, 36.9% of the population in this age group (up 5.0 pp).⁹

4. HEALTH STATUS PERCEPTION AND ITS IMPACT IN THE LABOUR MARKET

With the start of the new Labour Force Survey data series, a biennial (even years)¹⁰ module on health was also introduced and it is composed of three questions, addressed to the population aged 16 to 89, on the perception of their general health, the existence of limitations due to health problems and their duration. In this Press Release, the responses of the employed population are analysed.¹¹

In 2025, of the total of 5,275.3 thousand employed people, 51.1% (2,696.0 thousand; 0.4 pp more than in 2024) assessed their general health as good and 25.9% (1,363.9 thousand; down 1.0 pp) said it was fair (neither good nor bad). Almost one in every five (19.1%; 1,006.7 thousand; up 0.5 pp) considered themselves to be in very good health, a much higher proportion than those who considered their health to be poor (2.7%; 142.3 thousand) or very poor (0.6%; 29.2 thousand), 0.4 pp less and 0.1 pp more than in the latest data collection.

It was in the *Península de Setúbal* region that a greater share of employed people rated their general health as very good (23.2%) and in the *Grande Lisboa* region it was most classified as good (53.2%). In *Região Autónoma da Madeira*, a high share of the employed population assessed it as fair (34.6%).

Both men (51.8%) and women (50.4%) tended to rate their general health as good, although the proportion of men who assessed their health between very good (20.4%) was 2.7 pp higher than that of women (17.7%). As expected, the perception of a very good general health decreases with increasing age: 35.1% among those aged 16 to 24 and 7.7% among those aged 65 to 89.

Considering the occupation status, both employees (51.8%) and the self-employed workers (47.5%) assessed their general health as good, while 41.8% of unpaid family workers rated their health as fair. By economic activity, the rating “very good” was higher among those working in the tertiary sector (20.3%) than among those in the secondary (16.1%) and primary (11.3%) sectors. All occupation groups perceive their general health as good, especially the ‘Technicians and associate professionals’ (55.9%).

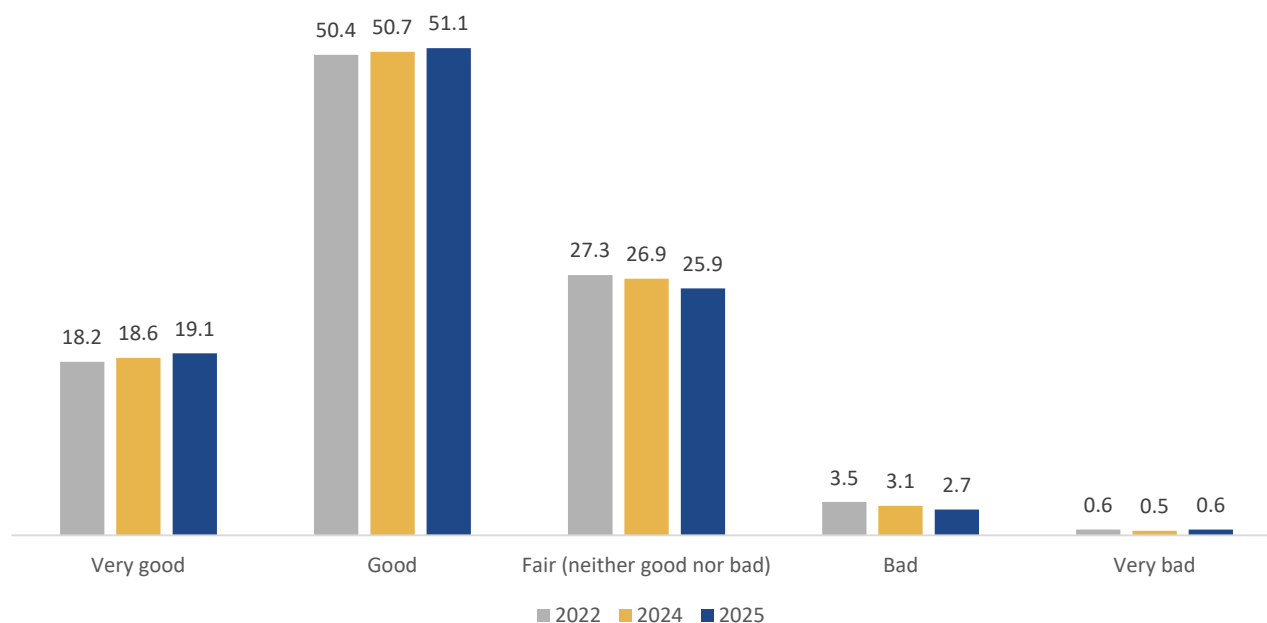
⁹ This indicator is similar to the better known “Lifelong Learning” indicator. The difference between them concerns to the reference period: Adult learning refers to the last 12 months, while Lifelong Learning focuses on the last 4 weeks. In 2025, the Lifelong Learning rate was 16.9%, 0.8 pp more than in 2024.

¹⁰ This is why, while the wave approach strategy was in place, they were only collected in 2022. From 2024 onwards, this module is collected on a quarterly basis.

¹¹ The above mentioned questions are also included in the Statistics on Income and Living Conditions survey ([EU-SILC](#)), which, due to its characteristics, serves as a benchmark for analysing health perceptions among the total population.

Figure 4

EMPLOYED POPULATION BY GENERAL HEALTH STATUS (%)



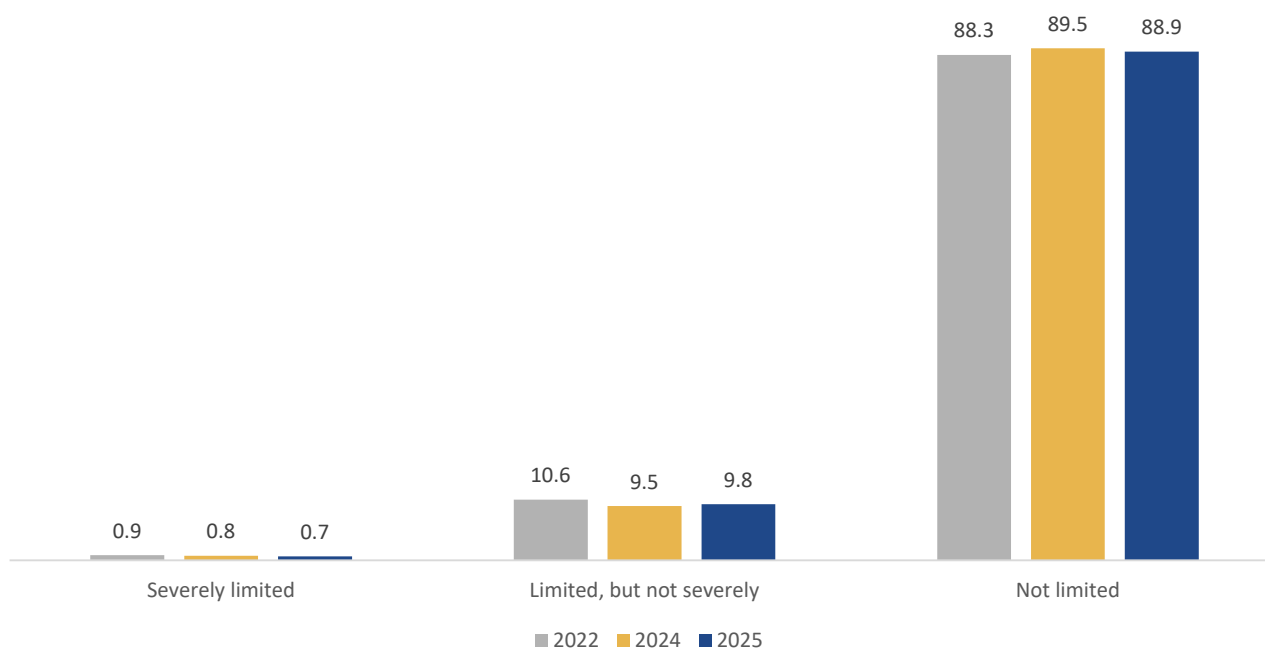
The two other questions in the Labour Force Survey module on health focused on the existence of limitations due to health problems that prevented the respondent, for at least 6 months, from carrying out activities or tasks considered usual for most people. In 2025, of the total of 5,275.3 thousand employed people, 88.9% (4,689.9 thousand; 0.6 pp less than in 2024) said that they had no limitation, while 9.8% (515.6 thousand; up 0.3 pp) said they were limited, but not severely, and 0.7% (38.6 thousand; down 0.1 pp) considered themselves to be severely limited.

The number of employed persons who reported being limited, but not severely, ranged between 8.1% in the *Grande Lisboa* region and 12.7% in the *Região Autónoma da Madeira*. More men reported not being limited than women (90.3% and 87.5%, respectively) and, as expected, as age increases there were more people stating to be severely limited or limited, though not severely (1.5% and 17.9%, respectively, among those aged 65 to 89).

Only 0.7% of the employees said they were severely limited, for at least 6 months, to carry out activities or tasks considered normal for most people, with more unpaid family workers indicating that they had some limitation, albeit not severe (20.3%). By economic activity, it is in the Agriculture, farming of animals, hunting and forestry sector (16.6%) that most employed people report having limitations, albeit not severe, which is also reflected in the analysis by occupation (Skilled agricultural and fishery workers: 19.2%).

Figure 5

EMPLOYED POPULATION BY LIMITATIONS DUE TO HEALTH PROBLEMS FOR THE PAST 6 MONTHS (AT LEAST) (%)



5. PORTUGAL 2030 STRATEGY

The Portugal 2030 Strategy¹² was set for the decade ending in 2030 and its programming was made around five strategic objectives of the European Union: a smarter, greener, more connected, and more social Europe that is closer to its citizens.

In this context, the following targets were set for three indicators on education, estimated with Labour Force Survey data:

- Increase the share of people aged 20 to 24 with at least an upper secondary qualification to 90% minimum (target set for 2030).
- Increase the rate of tertiary education attainment to at least 50% (target set for 2030).
- Increase to at least 20% the share of unemployed adults aged 25 to 64 who have attended education or training activities in the last four weeks (target set for 2025).

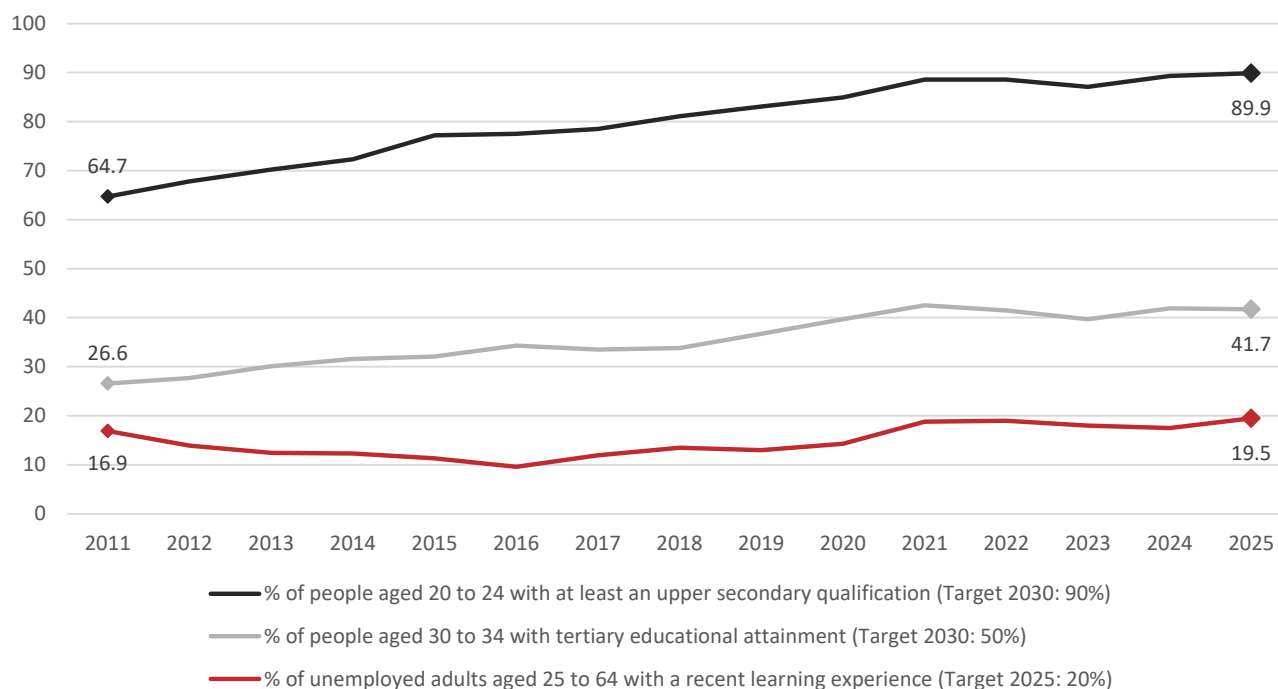
¹² For more information read: https://portugal2030.pt/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/11/RCM98_2020.pdf (only in Portuguese).

This last indicator was 0.5 pp below the target set for 2025, standing at 19.5%. In 2020, the proportion of the unemployed population aged 25 to 64 attending education or training activities in the last four weeks was 14.3%, 5.7 pp below the minimum target of 20%, which represents substantial progress over the last five years.

Of the other two indicators, in 2025, the one that came closest to its target was the share of people aged 20 to 24 with at least an upper secondary qualification (89.9%), which was 0.1 pp below the minimum target of 90%.

Figure 6

PORTUGAL 2030 STRATEGY – INDICATORS ON EDUCATION



TECHNICAL NOTE

The main purpose of the Labour Force Survey is to classify the population in terms of their participation in the labour market. It is a quarterly sample survey, addressed to all persons living in the national territory.

Most of the characteristics observed in this survey report to the situation in one pre-defined week (from Monday to Sunday), known as reference week. The reference weeks are uniformly distributed throughout the quarters and years. The interviews usually take place in the week following the reference week.

The information is obtained directly, through computer-assisted interview by using a mixed data collection mode: the initial interview is done face-to-face by an interviewer visiting the household and the other five interviews are done by telephone if certain requirements are met. However, it should be noted that, following the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures adopted by the competent authorities, Statistics Portugal has decided, between the first fortnight of March 2020 and the end of the collection of the 2nd quarter of 2022, to suspend the face-to-face collection mode, replacing it exclusively with telephone interviews. After analysing the impact of this suspension, Statistics Portugal decided to incorporate the variable "completed level of education" into the process of calibrating the individual weights of the samples for the 2nd quarter of 2020 to the 3rd quarter of 2023, in addition to the information usually used (monthly estimates of the resident population by sex, age group and region).¹³

The Labour Force Survey weights were calibrated by using the resident monthly population estimates calculated from the final results of Census 2021.

Together with this Press Release, two Excel files are published containing the analysed indicators and additional information.

Due to rounding, the totals in tables and diagrams do not always match the sum of parts.

For more detailed information consult the [Labour Force Survey methodological document](#) (only in Portuguese) available at <https://smi.ine.pt/> (tab *Documentação metodológica; tema "Labour market"*).

SOME CONCEPTS

Employed: person aged 16 to 89 who, during the reference period, was in one of the following situations:

- worked for at least one hour for a wage or salary, in cash or in kind (including unpaid family work);
- had a formal attachment to his/her job but was not at work temporarily.
- was in early retirement but working in the reference week.

¹³ For more information, see the "Methodological note on the revision of the Labour Force Survey data: the context of the COVID-19 pandemic", published on 8 November 2023 together with the [Press Release "Employment Statistics – 3rd quarter of 2023"](#).

Unemployed: person aged 16 and 74 who during the reference period met simultaneously the following situations:

- neither had a job nor was at work;
- had actively sought work, i.e. had actively searched for a paid or unpaid job during the specified period (reference period or the three previous weeks); and
- was available for a paid and unpaid job.

Self-employed person: an individual who pursues an independent occupation, alone or with 1, or various, associates, benefiting from a remuneration that is directly linked to profits (gained or potential) from goods or services produced and who, in general, does not hire employees to work with him/her. The associates may or may not be immediate family members.

Formal education: Intentional, institutionalized and planned education that materializes in education and training offers, confers an academic certification or a dual certification (academic and professional), comprises a hierarchical succession of education levels, and is provided by public or private entities recognized by the competent national authorities in matters of education and training.

Non-formal education: Intentional, institutionalized and planned education that adds and/or complements formal education in the context of lifelong learning process and assigns a certificate of attendance, but not a level of education.

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