

## Economically Active and Inactive Population

### 5.1 Introduction

Economic development largely depends on the population in the various economic activities. Every individual person in the population has the potential to contribute towards the sustenance of the economy in general and personal livelihood in particular. This Labour Force Survey collected information of individuals who are able to participate in economic activities and those who might not be able to, in order to assess the populations' extent of participation in the economic activities.

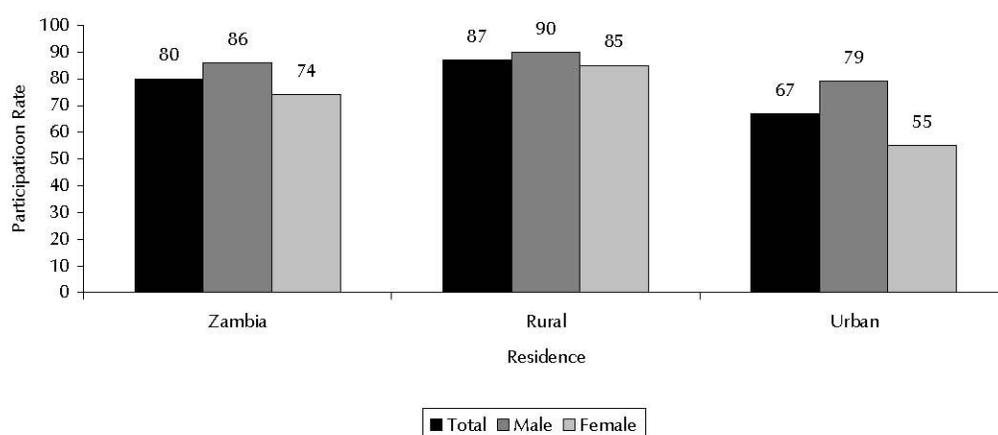
labour force. This labour market measure is therefore useful for targeting persons that are economically inactive but are of working age population, to encourage them to move into the economically active population since their active participation in production may result to higher standards of living and economic growth. It follows therefore that if economic participation is considered too high for certain age groups such as children, the priority would be to reduce their participation in the labour market since it would entail encouraging child labour.

### 5.2 Labour Force Participation Rates

Labour force participation rates measure the proportion of the working age population who are economically active. It distinguishes between those that are economically active (the employed and the unemployed) and those that are economically inactive (students, homemakers, pensioners, retired, incarcerated etc). Low activity rates imply that a large proportion of individuals are not participating in the

Overall, the labour force participation rate in Zambia is high as the results presented in Table 5.1 show. Out of 6.2 million persons aged 15 years and above, 80 percent were economically active while 20 percent were economically inactive. Eighty-six percent of the males and 74 percent of the female population were economically active. In terms of residence, there were 87 percent economically active persons in rural areas while in urban areas 67 percent of the eligible population was economically active. There were more males than females that were economically active in both rural and urban areas.

**Figure 5.1: Labour Force Participation Rates Among Persons Aged 15 Years and above By Sex and Rural/Urban, Zambia, 2005**



Labour force participation rate by province show that was recorded at 90 percent and Northwestern in relation to the respective provincial populations, province which recorded 88 percent while Western Luapula province recorded the highest rate of 91 province recorded 87 percent. The provinces that percent, which when disaggregated by sex, registered recorded the least inactivity rates were Copperbelt and more males (95 percent) than females (87 percent). It Lusaka provinces at 64 and 66 percent, respectively. was followed by Eastern province whose inactive rate

**Table 5.1: Labour Force Participation Rates among Persons Aged 15 Years and Above By Sex, Rural/Urban and Province, Zambia, 2005.**

Residence/Province	Economically Active			Economically Inactive		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
All Zambia	80.0	86.0	74.0	20.0	14.0	26.0
Rural	87.0	90.0	85.0	13.0	10.0	15.0
Urban	67.0	79.0	55.0	33.0	21.0	45.0
<b>Province</b>						
Central	77.0	85.0	70.0	23.0	15.0	30.0
Copperbelt	64.0	74.0	54.0	36.0	26.0	46.0
Eastern	90.0	93.0	88.0	10.0	7.0	12.0
Luapula	91.0	95.0	87.0	9.0	5.0	13.0
Lusaka	66.0	79.0	54.0	34.0	21.0	46.0
Northern	90.0	93.0	86.0	10.0	7.0	14.0
Northwestern	88.0	89.0	87.0	12.0	11.0	13.0
Southern	82.0	89.0	76.0	18.0	11.0	24.0
Western	87.0	88.0	87.0	13.0	12.0	13.0

Source:

Labour Force Survey, 2005

The economically inactive population includes fulltime students, house wives, prisoners, beggars and invalids. The highest inactivity rate was recorded in Copperbelt Province at 36 percent. Lusaka Province recorded the second highest inactivity rate at 34 percent. On the other hand, Luapula and Northern provinces recorded the lowest inactivity rate at nine percent and 10 percent, respectively, implying that quite substantial proportions in these provinces were economically active. In terms of sex, there were higher proportions of females that were economically inactive than there were males.

Table 5.2 shows that in nearly all the provinces, twice as many females as males were economically inactive. Northern Province, one of the less urbanized provinces, registered 14 percent of females and 7 percent of males as being economically inactive. At the same time, Copperbelt province, which is mainly

urban, recorded 46 percent inactivity rates among females compared to 26 percent inactivity rates among males.

Analysis of the results by age group shows that 90 percent of persons between the ages of 40 and 54 years were the most active in the labour market while persons in the age group 15 to 19 years were the least active in the labour market at 60 percent participation rate. Looking at the sex differential, there were more males than females that were economically active between the ages of 30 and 44 years with 98 percent of the males in this age group being economically active whereas the females in the same age group participation rates were in the range of 77 to 81 percent. The lowest participation rate among males was recorded in the age group 15 to 19 at 59 percent as was that for the females at 60 percent.

**Table 5.2: Labour Force Participation Rates among Persons Aged 15 Years and Above By Sex, Rural/Urban and Province, Zambia, 2005.**

Age-group	Participation Rates									Number of persons 15 Years and Above
	Total			Rural			Urban			
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	
All Zambia	80	86	74	87	90	85	67	79	55	6,183,803
15-19	60	59	60	73	72	73	39	39	40	1,321,038
20-24	79	86	73	89	90	87	64	79	53	1,093,526
25-29	85	95	76	92	98	87	77	92	62	964,531
30-34	88	98	77	93	98	87	81	97	62	714,909
35-39	88	98	78	92	99	86	80	96	64	514,987
40-44	90	98	81	95	99	90	81	96	62	391,708
45-49	90	97	83	94	98	91	81	96	66	330,137
50-54	90	96	84	95	98	92	80	93	66	234,866
55-59	88	93	83	94	97	92	78	88	63	184,739
60-64	85	87	83	92	93	90	64	72	51	141,460
65+	76	81	71	83	86	79	45	58	31	291,902

Source:

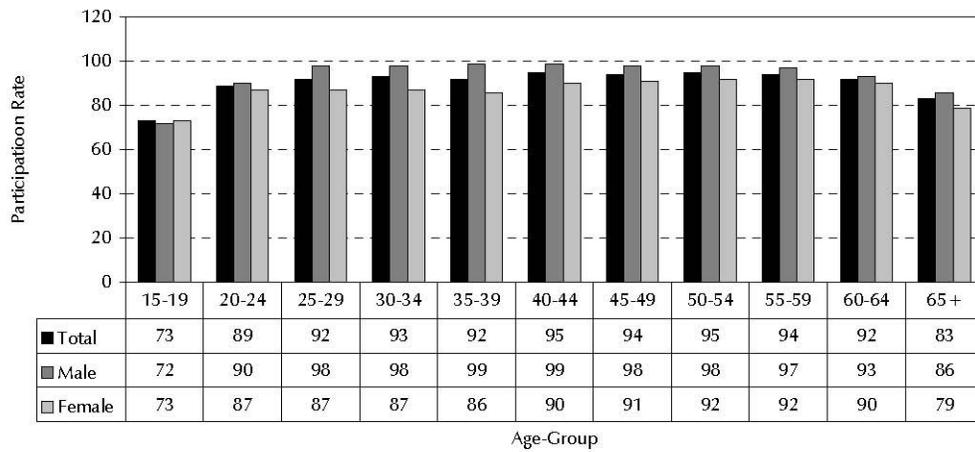
Labour Force Survey, 2005

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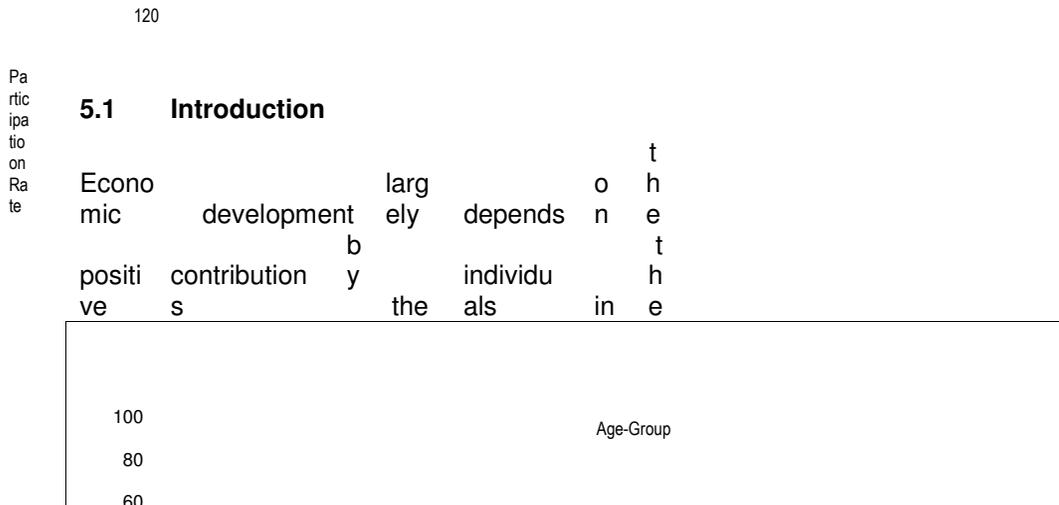
Figures 5.2 and 5.3 illustrate the participation in rural and urban areas by sex and age. The results show that there were more rural residents than urban residents that were economically active. Eight-seven percent of rural residents compared to 67 percent of urban residents were in the labour force. Most of the rural residents that were economically active were those aged 40 to 44 years and those aged 50 to 54 years accounting for participation rates of 95 percent for both age groups. In contrast, most of the economically

active urban residents were those aged between 30 and 34 years as well as those between the ages of 40 and 49 years who accounted for 81 percent. The lowest participation rates among those aged 15 to 19 years in rural and urban areas were recorded at 73 percent and 39 percent, respectively. Other low participation rates in rural areas were recorded among persons aged 65 years and older at 83 percent while those in the same age group in urban areas accounted for 45 percent

**Figure 5.2: Labour Force Participation Rates Among Persons Aged 15 Years and above By Sex and Age-Group, Rural, 2005**



**Figure 5.3: Labour Force Participation Rates Among Persons Aged 15 Years and above By Sex and Age-Group, Urban, 2005**



### 5.3 Persons in the Labour force

The economically active population refers to all persons aged 15 years and above of either sex whose main economic activity was to render labour for production of economic goods and services during the time of the survey. The current economically active population refers to those who performed work for at least an hour per day in the seven days prior to the survey. Similarly, the usually economically active population refers to those who performed some work in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Of the total eligible population of 6.2 million, 4,918,788 persons were in the labourforce. Half of the labourforce in rural areas were male; whereas just

over half of the urban labourforce (58 %) were male and 42 percent were female.

Table 5.3 shows that the only age group that had more females than males in urban areas was 15 – 19 year, 52 percent represented females and 42 percent represented males. Age groups 20 –24 years or higher had more males than females. Representation by age group in rural areas was slightly different as higher age groups such as 20 – 24, 40 - 44, 45 – 49, 50-54 and 560 – 64 years had more females than males. Slightly over half of the rural labourforce were females. This could be attributed to the fact that able-bodied and educated males could have migrated to urban areas in search of a better livelihood.

**Table 5.3: Current Economically Active Population Aged 15 Years and Above By Age Group, Residence and Sex, 2005.**

	Rural				Urban				Number of Persons In the Labour Force
	Male		Female		Male		Female		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
<b>All Zambia</b>	1,672,374	50	1,679,808	50	912,592	58	654,014	42	4,918,788
<b>Age Group</b>									
15 - 19	291,853	50	296,097	50	96,283	48	104,617	52	788,850
20 - 24	278,340	47	307,767	53	150,708	54	126,608	46	863,423
25 - 29	254,975	52	238,987	48	187,873	57	140,003	43	821,838
30 - 34	210,819	54	179,812	46	149,931	63	87,554	37	628,116
35 - 39	146,766	51	142,436	49	99,858	61	62,607	39	451,667
40 - 44	116,142	49	121,741	51	74,387	66	38,985	34	351,255
45 - 49	103,907	49	106,494	51	50,042	58	36,230	42	296,673
50 - 54	69,821	49	73,698	51	41,325	61	25,995	39	210,839
55 - 59	51,367	45	61,670	55	32,587	65	17,353	35	162,977
60 - 64	45,422	46	52,348	54	15,744	70	6,769	30	120,283
65 +	102,962	51	98,758	49	13,854	66	7,293	34	222,867

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2005

### 2005.

Table 5.4 shows currently economically active population by province and sex of which 53 percent were male and 47 percent were female at national level. The table further shows that provinces that have a direct link via the main line of rail recorded higher male representation of the labour force than provinces without a direct link with the main line of rail. Lusaka and Copperbelt provinces had the highest male representation of the labour force, with 59 and 58 percent male; and 41 and 42 percent female,

respectively. Of the total labour force size of 478,480 in Central province, 53 percent were male while 47 percent were female. However, fifty-four percent of the labour forces in Western province were female compared to 46 percent males. Northwestern province recorded 53 percent of its labour force as female and 47 percent as male. Eastern province had a labour force size totaling 704,202, out of whom 50 percent were male and 50 percent were female.

**Table 5.4: Currently Economically Active Population aged 15 Years and Above by Province, Residence and Sex, 2005.**

	Male		Female		Number of Persons In the Labour Force
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
<b>All Zambia</b>	2,584,966	53	2,333,822	47	4,918,788
<b>Province</b>					
Central	251,646	53	226,834	47	478,480
Copperbelt	399,108	58	289,206	42	688,314
Eastern	354,436	50	349,766	50	704,202
Luapula	208,531	49	214,137	51	422,668
Lusaka	363,253	59	250,545	41	613,798
Northern	365,491	52	341,871	48	707,362
Northwestern	146,470	47	163,228	53	309,698
Southern	309,172	52	282,519	48	591,691
Western	186,859	46	215,716	54	402,575

Labour Force Survey, 2005

Source:

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Data were also analyzed to assess the educational levels of the labourforce. It was established that not all who were part of the labourforce possessed some educational level.

Results show that out of those who had no education at all but were in the labour force, 24 percent were male and 76 percent were female as table 5.11 indicates. The gender imbalances cut across all educational levels with those with no educational level

recording the widest (52 percentage points) gender imbalance towards females. The second widest gender imbalance was exhibited at those with grade 10-12 educational level, where more male at 68 percent compared to 32 percent female were in the labour force. Those with grade 1-7 educational level constituted 50 percent female and 50 percent male. Results also indicated that degree educational level was dominated by male with 63 percent while 37 percent were female.

**Table 5.5: Currently Economically Active Population aged 15 Years and Above by Educational Level, and Sex, 2005.**

	Male		Female		Number of Persons In the Labour Force
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
All Zambia	2,584,966	53	2,333,822	47	4,918,788
<b>Educational Level</b>					
None	339	24	1,077	76	1,416
Grade 1-7	1,150,866	50	1,157,763	50	2,308,629
Grade 8-9	496,936	61	322,562	39	819,498
Grade 10-12	580,901	68	274,601	32	855,502
A level	22,455	59	15,695	41	38,150
Degree	84,146	63	50,479	37	134,625
Not stated	249,323	33	511,645	67	760,968

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2005

2005.

#### 5.4 Growth of the Labour Force

When comparing the results of the two Labour Force Surveys, users must note that the 1986 Labour Force Survey defined economically active persons as all persons aged 12 years and above who were working or not working but available for work. In contrast, the 2005 Labour Force Survey defined the economically active population as all persons aged 15 years and above who worked for at least one hour per day or were not working but were available for work in the seven days prior to the survey.

The size of the labour force grew from 2.4 million in 1986 to 4.9 million in 2005. The percentage of employed persons however, declined from 87 percent in 1986 to 84 percent in 2005, largely as a result of the increase in age for the threshold of inclusion in employment. Similarly, the proportion of unemployed persons registered a marginal increase from 13 percent to 16 percent over the same period.

**Table 5.6: Comparison of Labour Market Indicators for 1986 and 2005 Labour Force Surveys**

Year Survey Undertaken	Total Number	Employed		Unemployed		Economically Inactive	Not Stated
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
1986	2,717,610	2,364,253	87	353,357	13	1,081,744	12,564
2005	4,918,788	4,131,531	84	787,006	16	1,236,761	28,505

Source: Labour Force Surveys, 1986 and 2005

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