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Burundi

Labour Market Profile

2014

This Labour Market Profile is a yearly updated report that provides a broad overview of the labour market's situation and development. The report is based on the latest data available and following trends. Each section has also accesses to the sources' links that can be used to go more in-depth on selected themes.



Burundi - Labour Market Profile 2014

Executive Summary

Burundi has been scarred by a long period of social unrest (1962-1993) and is often characterized as an extreme poor country, with a very high population density, low production, small foreign direct investment, bad governance, high level of corruption, and violation of rights. Despite the huge development challenges, some noteworthy improvements are present, e.g. in recent years the capital formation has increased fast, improving doing business, and very high primary school enrolment.

Work opportunities for the working population come mainly from the informal sector, especially farming, which is unpredictable both in productivity and wages. It is estimated that the informal economy absorbs at least 90% of the work force. Most jobs in the formal sector are in the public sector. Generally the country's economic development has not enabled sufficient job creation, and the rural under-unemployment and urban unemployment remain a worrying problem. Particularly the youth confronts weak entrepreneurial skills and job perspectives of public sector jobs carry limited expectations. Access to vocational training has increased in recent years, but remains lower than the Sub-Saharan Africa's average.

The Labour Code from 1993 has practically not been implemented. It was announced that the Labour Code be revised in 2013, but it has so far not been effectuated. Few systematic and formal tripartite structures exist. Some collective bargaining are present and at least four agreements are registered. So far estimations points towards a very slim coverage of CBAs at 0.4% of the labour force.

Most trade unions are public employee unions and the movement's activities are conducted on a voluntary basis. There has registered a significant growth of membership, especially the teachers' trade union (STEP) has increased fast in recent years, also affiliated members from the informal economy, and Journalist Union was registered. Around 16% of trade union members are females and the total trade union density of the labour force is estimated at 1.3%.

In general, trade unions have built good working relations with civil society organizations and the media and play an active role in campaigning against policies restricting rights and in demanding for improvements in living conditions. This has increased trade union visibility and recognition.

When the social unrest was stopped in 1993 and democracy was initiated a high influx of immigrants were registered. It is mainly due to refugees that returned to their country. Today, more leave than enter Burundi looking for opportunities for more decent jobs.

The minimum wage has not been revised since 1988, and is too low to have practical application. Wages are particularly low in the public sector and there are large differences in wages for similar jobs in different ministries and parastatal institutions. Trade unions have pushed for harmonization of wages in public sector and for the development of a new wage policy.

Due to increased costs of living, the government increased its expenditure on overall social protection expenditure. It remains low in absolute terms. Public social protection expenditure, excluding health, covers only US\$4.5 per Burundian. The health social protection coverage reaches 28% of the population, but the expenditure has experienced a decrease almost at 5% per year in the period 2007-2011.

Burundi has low education and human capital. Over 57% of the population have no schooling at all. Free primary education has been implemented and enrolment in primary schools has soared, reaching 100%. But education at all levels suffers from a lack of qualified teachers, teaching materials, and adequate infrastructure. It is also informed that one out of four (26%) children is in child labour.

Trade union confederations have criticized authorities' constant interference in trade union affairs. Also the government-controlled unions, which harassed workers to join the ruling party and quit any union of which they were already a member, appear to lose support.

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Trade Unions

Trade unions in Burundi (2013)	
Number of trade unions	59
Dues (median)	N/A
Members of trade unions (COSYBU+CSB)	59,111
Trade union members share of labour force	1.3 %
Trade union members to waged workers	24 %
Female member share of trade unions (COSYBU+CSB)	16 %
Affiliated trade unions from the informal economy (membership) (COSYBU)	32,000
Number of CBAs	4+
Workers covered by CBAs (COSYBU)	16,412
Share of workers covered by CBA	0.4 %
Labour force (2013) ¹	4,666,000

The Labour Law provides for the right of workers to form and join independent unions. A union must have at least 50 members. Most civil servants may unionize, but they must be registered with the Ministry of Civil Service, Labor, and Social Security. Police, the armed forces, public sector employees, foreigners working in the public sector, and magistrates may not form or join unions.²

Trade union activity is conducted on a voluntary basis in Burundi. There is a general anti-union sentiment. Relations between the trade union movement and the government are strained, with government interferences in trade union activity. Establishment of government controlled rival trade unions and employers' organizations is part of this picture.

A total of 59 trade unions are registered by the Ministry of Public Functions, Labour and Social Security as of 2014. The *Confédération des Syndicats du Burundi* (COSYBU) has 31 affiliated unions and the *Confédération des Syndicale du Burundi* (CSB) has 10 affiliated unions. The remaining 18 unions are without affiliation to any national center, some of them being Government created 'yellow unions'.

Most trade unions are public employee unions, and virtually no private sector jobs are unionized. Trade union membership in COSYBU and CSB has increased significantly from around 44,000 in 2011 to 59,000 in 2013. Around 16% are female members. The trade union density of the labour force is 1.3%.

As most salaried work is in the public sector, the government is often involved in collective bargaining as the employer. There are registered two sectoral Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) in the public sector: The education sector/teachers and the health sector. There are also a CBA in the public sector with the University of Burundi. In the private sector there are also a number of CBA's, e.g. in the lake/maritime transport sector between the Transport Union and the association of ship owners. Data on CBAs is scarce, though.

***Confédération des Syndicats du Burundi*³ (COSYBU)**

In 1995 the national centre COSYBU broke away from the previous CSB that was originally formed in 1991. Today CSB and COSYBU are living door by door and collaborate and many issues. All trade union activity in COSYBU constitutes after-hours and voluntary work.

COSYBU consists of 31 affiliated unions and 53,611 members. The two strongest unions, the teacher union (STEB) and transport union (SYPROTAVEBU) represent 75% of all members. STEB reported in June 2014 that membership has gone up from 9,000 in 2011 to 25,000 in 2014. However, only around 20%-25% of members are paying membership contributions.

The COSYBU Congress in 2013 adopted amendments to the constitution, e.g. now including a Confederal Committee (two members from each affiliated union) and Provincial Committees (17 provinces) as well as a Women Committee and youth committee. A suggestion for having a full or part time salaried president or vice president was considered and a special committee was formed to discuss and resolve n the issue.

COSYBU is represented in National Committee on Social Dialogue and in the social security fund for civil servants.

***Confédération des Syndicale du Burundi* (CSB)**

CSB was formed in 1991 and has 10 affiliates. The organization has around 5,500 members with a female rate at 19%.

Trade Unions in Burundi⁴							
Members, Dues, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) and Occupational Safety and Health committees							
Trade Union / Trade Union Centre	Affiliation To national trade union centre	Total Members (2013, est. 2009)	Female Members (2013, est.)	Dues	Number of CBAs	Workers covered by CBAs	Number of OSH committees at workplaces
COSYBU Confédération des Syndicats du Burundi	31	53,611	8,366	-	3+	16,412 (est.)	-
CSB Confédération des Syndicale du Burundi	10	5,500 (2012)⁵	1,027	-	-	-	-
Independent unions	18	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	-
Total	59	59,511	9,339				
SIMEBU Trade union of workers in the Health sector	-	-	-	-	Health care sector workers (2009)		-
SYMEGEB Trade union of workers in the Health sector	-	-	-	-			-
SYNAPA National trade union of medical staff	COSYBU	3000	-	-			-
SNTS Trade union of workers in the Health sector	COSYBU	636	243	-			-
STEB Teachers' trade union	COSYBU	9000	-	-	Teachers (2002)		-
SLEB Teachers' trade union	COSYBU	-	-	-			-
SYTALOM Trade union for workers in the materiel agency sector	COSYBU	155	16	-	-	-	-
SLISODEC Free trade unions of SODECO	COSYBU	120	3	-	-	-	-
SYMABU Trade union of magisterial workers	COSYBU	720	-	-	-	-	-
STIG Trade union of workers of IGEBU	COSYBU	106	29	-	-	-	-
SYTOR Trade union of workers in the road, Transport office	COSYBU	54	13	-	-	-	-
AEDR Agricultural, environmental and rural, Development workers' trade	COSYBU	155	23	-	-	-	-
STI Trade union of workers of ISABU	COSYBU	237	41	-	-	-	-
SYTIS Trade union of workers in SOSUMO	COSYBU	421	31	-	-	-	-
SPTO Professional trade union of workers in the office of Café Burundi	COSYBU	93	34	-	-	-	-
SYTRAPEN Trade union of workers in prison administration	COSYBU	139	41	-	-	-	-
SLT/INSS Trade union of workers of INSS	COSYBU	205	91	-	-	-	-
STT Transport workers trade union (federation)	COSYBU	26000	-	-	-	-	-
SYPROTAVEBU Trade union of taxi drivers on velos. (Part of federation)	COSYBU	7379	-	-	-	-	-
STTS Social services workers' trade union	COSYBU	484	181	-	-	-	-
STAP Trade union of public	COSYBU	500	-	-	-	-	-

employees							
STUB Trade union of workers at the university of Burundi	COSYBU	776		-	-	-	-
SYRT Trade union for employees of Radio-Télévision du Burundi	COSYBU	256	-	-	-	-	-
STM Mine workers trade union	COSYBU	91	21	-	-	-	-
SYTRATHE Trade union of workers in the tea industry	COSYBU	819	151	-	-	-	-
SPI Trade union for workers in ISTEEDU	COSYBU	139	65	-	-	-	-
SYPMJ Trade union for non-magisterial staff	COSYBU	265	4	-	-	-	-
SLT/BRB Trade union of staff at the Banque de la République du Burundi	COSYBU	347	-	-	-	-	-
STIC Trade union for workers in the construction industry	COSYBU	-	-	-	-	-	-
STEIBU Syndicat des Travailleurs de l'Ecole Indépendante du Burundi	COSYBU	74	-	-	-	-	-
STABP Syndicat des Travailleurs de l'Agence Burundaise de la Presse	COSYBU	73	-	-	-	-	-
SYLCO Syndicat Libres des Travailleurs de la Cogesco	COSYBU	116	-	-	-	-	-
SPITS Syndicat des Travailleurs des Postes et telecommunications	COSYBU	1251	-	-	-	-	-
SYGECO – Syndicats General Des Commerçants	COSYBU	6000	-	-	-	-	-
ABJ - Journalists	COSYBU	101	-	-	-	-	-

Employers' Organisations

Association des Employeurs du Burundi (AEB)⁶

The Association of Employers of Burundi (AEB) was formed in 1964 and is the main employers' organization in Burundi. AEB is governed by a general assembly, a committee and run by a small secretariat. It is led by Secretary General Gaspard Nzisabira.

The main activities of AEB are to promote the interest of the private sector on labour market issues, e.g. on issues such as vocational training, social security, etc. The AEB participate in various meetings at the national level and are consulted on labour issues, often alongside COSYBU, e.g. in the tripartite National Employment Committee

The AEB recruits its majority of members in the private non-subsidiary sector. AEB has 280 members, 160 from the informal sector and 120 from the formal sector. It's members account for approximately 10% of companies in the non-subsidiary sector.

Centrale syndicale des employeurs du Burundi (CESEBU)

CESEBU is an organisation established by the government to represent employers at for example the International Labour Conference, as a rival to AEB. AEB claimed that CESEBU have no secretariat or affiliates independent of the government.⁷

Central Tripartite Structures

Few systematic and formal tripartite structures exist in Burundi. COSYBU and AEB frequently have participated in informal tripartite meetings with the government. During recent years establishment of more formal structures are present.

Since most salaried workers are civil servants, Government entities are involved in almost every phase of labor negotiations. Both the COSYBU and the CSB represented labor interests in collective bargaining negotiations, in cooperation with individual labor unions.

National Charter on Social Dialogue (CNDS)

In late 2012 government, employers and unions signed a National Charter on Social Dialogue, setting up bi-/tri-partite committees in all sectors, including the public and informal sector. The committees on Social Dialogue are meant as a means to prevent and resolve conflicts in the labour market as well as other types of conflicts. The committee will be tripartite at national level, whereas they can be either bi- or tripartite at other levels depending on the nature of the sector and the problems to be resolved. The charter is a consequence of the need for tripartite mechanism to handle different types of conflicts inclusive of labour market issues, e.g. Occupational Safety and Health issues. The charter is valid with a five years mandate. The establishment of the National Social Dialogue Committee was delayed due to discussions on Government interference in appointment of trade union and employers representatives. After resolving these issues the Committee started functioning. A budget has been allocated, a secretariat has been set up and a work plan has been adopted, including a plan for the decentralization of SD Committees to sectorial and provincial levels. There are regular quarterly meetings in the national SD Committee.

National Labour Council (Conseil national du travail)

The tripartite National Labour Council has to be consulted by the Minister of Labour on various issues and when changes are made to the labour law.

Labour Courts (Tribunaux du travail)

Burundi has two labour courts, in Gitega and Bujumbura. The labour courts consist of a president, a judge, an associate judge from the Trade Unions and an associate judge from the Employers' Organisations. The labour courts in Burundi is only used for solving individual cases, one handles disputes bound to the labour code, the other the general status of state employees. The Unions may assist members in their cases. The Labour Court system has been amended and revitalized to solve problems with the previous arbitration system (no lawyers, cases skipped). Nine assistant lawyers have been appointed by COSYBU and the Court has weekly meetings since March 2013 and consequently delays in handling cases have been reduced to a minimum.

Mediation and arbitration

Labour disputes are regulated by the labour code. After the establishment of the Social Dialogue Charter a number of disputes are referred to the tri-partite Social Dialogue Committees for resolution.

A National Committee on Employment and a Committee on Child Labour as well as a Committee on Job Perfection (skills development/on-the-job capacity building) were set up in late 2013.

Other bi/tripartite organs

- Commission for Minimum Salaries
- National Social Pension Fund
- National Social Protection Committee
- National OSH Fund

National Labour Legislation

Constitution⁸

The Constitution of 2005 recognizes the freedom of association, the right to strike, fair working conditions and equal pay for equal work.

Labour Code (Code du Travail)⁹

The labour code of 1993 establishes fundamental rights at work and the National Labour Council and it regulates wages, employment, labour disputes and industrial relations.

Even though the labour code refers to ILO conventions, the establishment of Occupational Safety and Health committees, among others, only few paragraphs of the labour law have been applied in practice. The labour code has not been changed since 1993.

In 2012 the Government announced a revision of the Labour Code based on funding from the World Bank. However, the political and financial priorities shifted and the process was stalled. The Government recently agreed to the need for revising the law. The revision is now pending on funding from other sources as the World Bank programme expired. The Burundian trade union movement finds it important to ensure that the law be modernized and brought up to date as it needs to reflect conventions ratified since 1993 and to address a number of issues in order to promote and safeguard workers' rights: Extend rights to informal economy, include ILO standards, payment in case of termination of employment, minimum wages and OSH committees.

The law also provides workers with a conditional right to strike if strict conditions are met, but it bans solidarity strikes as well as recognizes the right to collective bargaining, excluding measures regarding public sector wages, which are set according to fixed scales following consultation with unions. The law prohibits antiunion discrimination. The law does not specifically provide for reinstatement of workers dismissed for union activity. According to the U.S. report of human rights in practice, the government does not effectively enforce applicable laws. Resources for inspection and remediation were inadequate.¹⁰

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has registered a wide range of legal reservations of the law, e.g. private sector workers may not be members of the administration and management of a trade union unless they: i) are aged at least 25 years; ii) are able to read and write; iii) have not incurred a prison sentence without private final suspension of freedom exceeding six months' imprisonment; and iv) have practiced in the relevant trade for at least one year.¹¹

The Right to Organize and the Right to Strike in Civil Service Code¹²

The law from November 2002 established and regulates trade union rights and the right to strike. COSYBU state that the law contains many violations on the freedom of association and right to strike.¹³

Several other legislations exist which regulate and set standards and restrictions for the labour market.¹⁴

ILO Conventions

Ratified ILO Conventions ¹⁵		
Subject and/or right	Convention	Ratification date
Fundamental Conventions		
Freedom of association and collective bargaining	C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948	1993
	C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	1997
Elimination of all forms of forced labour	C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930	1963
	C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	1963
Effective abolition of child labour	C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973	2000
	C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	2002
Elimination of discrimination in employment	C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951	1993
	C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	1993
Governance Conventions		
Labour inspection	C081 - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	1971
	C129 - Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969	Not ratified
Employment policy	C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964	Not ratified
Tripartism	C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	1997
Up-to-date Conventions		
Working time	C014 - Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921	1963
Wages	C094 - Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949	1963
Industrial relations	C135 - Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971	1979
<p>Fundamental Conventions are the eight most important ILO conventions that cover four fundamental principles and rights at work. Equivalent to basic human rights at work.</p> <p>Governance Conventions are four conventions that the ILO has designated as important to building national institutions and capacities that serve to promote employment. In other words, conventions that promotes a well-regulated and well-functioning labour market.</p> <p>In addition, there are 71 conventions, which ILO considers "up-to-date" and actively promotes.</p>		

Trade Union Rights Violations

ITUC registered several cases of violation of trade unions rights in 2013 and so far none in 2014 (November).¹⁶ In February 2013 the government suspended the registration of the SGYECO, but repealed this decision after negotiations with the National Independent Human Rights Commission.

Teachers who took part in strike action lasting three to five days in June 2013 were deducted two to three months' pay on the pretext that they did not belong to a union. In a later case from August 2013, a company pushed anti-union discrimination as trade union members were dismissed because they took part in a strike.

The COSYBU's president also faced problems in the beginning of 2013 when the Government tried to restrict him from travelling to participate in trade union activities.

According to the U.S. report on human rights practices:¹⁷ The vice-president of the non-magistrates' union of the Justice Ministry (SPMJB) was suspended following his arrest on libel charges after an alleged corruption in the recruitment of staff at the Ministry of Justice in 2010. He has later been reinstated to his administrative position at the SPMJB. He was transferred from Bujumbura to Karuzir, which he appealed. The transfer has not been solved and he

remains unemployed. The criminal libel charge had not been concluded. Meanwhile he remains prohibited from leaving Bujumbura and has been readmitted to the SPMJB.

The COSYBU and the CSB have criticized authorities' constant interference in trade union affairs. Trade unions with close ties to the ruling party were created in the health and education sectors between 2007 and 2010. Many workers were harassed by their employers to join the ruling party, quit any union of which they were already a member, and join the government-controlled union. However, according to the COSYBU the government-controlled unions are losing support.

Reported by COSYBU the government obstruct and interfere in the check-off systems whereby trade union membership fees are deducted in salaries and transferred to trade union bank accounts by the employers. Membership lists are tampered, contributions are not transferred to the bank accounts and banks are told not to handle alternative check-off systems developed by the unions themselves. In a recent proposal for revising the bank sector legislation in Burundi it was suggested by Government that check-off systems should not be allowed. COSYBU and SYGECO have protested against this move.

Working Conditions

Wages and earnings			
Monthly average and legal minimum wages			
	Sources	Current Burundian Franc	2011 US\$
Average wages (2008)	Global Wage Database ¹⁸	81,707	73
Minimum wage (2011)		3,467	2.8
Domestic worker (2011)		26,000	21
Unskilled construction worker (2011)	U.S. Human Rights Report	91,000	74
Skilled construction worker (2011)		156,000	127
Minimum wage for 19-year old worker or apprentice (2013)	Doing Business ¹⁹	4,170	2.7
Ratio of minimum wage to value added per worker (2014)		0.07	
Wage Share Unadjusted (2007)		23 %	
Growth of real minimum wage (2000-2011)	Global Wage Database	- 62 %	
<i>The average value added per worker is the ratio of an economy's gross national income per capita to the working-age population as a percentage of the total population.</i>			
<i>The Wage Share is the share of GDP that goes to wages and other forms of labour compensation. It is not adjusted for the self-employed, and can therefore underestimate the amount of GDP that goes to workers, if there are many self-employed in the economy.</i>			

Most workers operate in the unregulated informal economy and are largely unprotected by labor law with the exception of laws regarding minimum wage. It is registered that there are no reports of enforcement of minimum wage laws in recent years.²⁰

Burundi has very low minimum wages and were set in 1988 to 160 Burundian Franc (BIF) (US\$1) per day for urban areas and 105 (US\$0.7) per day for rural areas.²¹ Real minimum wages have therefore stagnated considerably over the years.

The minimum wage has little or no practical application, and wages are negotiated at the workplace and rarely with a written contract. Wages are particularly low in the public sector and there are large differences in wages for similar jobs in different ministries and parastatal institutions. Trade unions spearheaded by the teachers union, STEB, and unions in the health sector, have pushed for harmonization of

wages in public sector and for the development of a new wage policy.

It is estimated that 62% of the population lives below the poverty line, who receive a daily wage of US\$0.50 in urban areas and US\$0.38 in rural areas. Estimations of the daily wages in the informal economy, which covers at least 90% of the labour force, measure that between US\$1.63 to US\$1.95 in Bujumbura and from US\$0.65 to US\$0.98 in the inland of the country.²²

A bi-partite task-force has been formed and has come up with joint recommendations. The Government has made some promises, but nothing has happened. The unions have been pushing for speeding up the process with STEB leading the protests by initiating monthly 3 day strikes. The case was referred to the National Social Dialogue Committee, but so far no progress has been registered and the teachers have eventually called off the monthly strikes.

In March 2012 nationwide strikes, trade unions and civil society organizations called for a tax reform for social justice and equity. In February 2013 a tax reform was passed in Parliament, introducing taxation on higher officials and dignitaries and softening taxation on low income earners. For ordinary people the limit for taxation has been raised. Before, any income above 40,000 BIF monthly (US\$26) was subject to taxation. Now the limit has been raised to 150,000 BIF (US\$100) monthly. For income exceeding 150,000 BIF monthly, taxation is progressive. Ordinary civil servants earn 150,000 BIF monthly and the reform thus affects very many people. For higher dignitaries the salaries and allowances reportedly have been increased to compensate the imposed taxation.

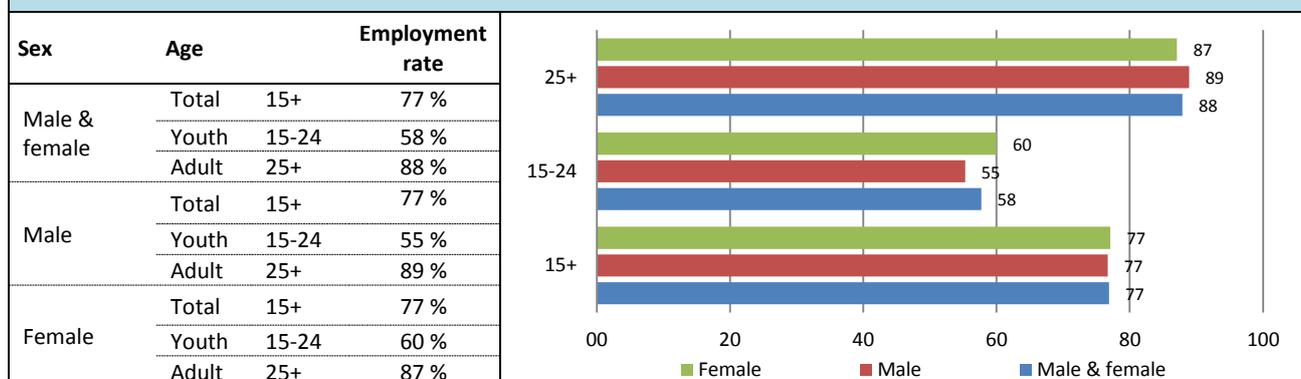
In general, wages are higher in the private sector compared to public sector. A domestic worker receives 1,000 BIF (US\$0.65) a day, and in the construction sector unskilled workers are paid 3,500 BIF (US\$2.3) a day and skilled/specialized workers get 6,000 BIF (US\$3.9) a day.²³

Legally the working time is limited to 8 hours a day; 40 hours a week; and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards are required at workplaces. There is rest period, including 30 minutes for lunch; but no statute of compulsory overtime. These laws are not enforced in practice, due to lack of resources and labour inspectorates.²⁴

Workforce

Employment rates (2013)²⁵

Age and Sex distribution, %



The employment-to-population ratio is defined as the proportion of a country's working-age population that is employed. A high ratio means that a large proportion of a country's population is employed, while a low ratio means that a large share of the population is not involved directly in market-related activities, because they are either unemployed or (more likely) out of the labour force altogether.

Working Poor (2006)²⁷

Age 15+

Region	Share of workers in total employment	
	1.25 US\$ a day	2 US\$ a day
Burundi (2006)	76 %	90 %
Sub-Saharan Africa (2006)	48 %	71 %
Sub-Saharan Africa (2013)	39 %	62 %

Working poor measures employed people living for less than US\$1.25 and US\$2 a day, as proportion of total employment in that group.

The total population is 10.4 million and the labour force at 4.7 million workers. The labour market in Burundi is characterized by the predominance of informal sector, low labour productivity, and low wages. The employment rate is estimated as 77% and quite equal among men and females. Overall, the participation rate is also very high, meaning that almost everyone works because unemployment is not a real option and instead Burundians have to find work to support themselves, no matter their situation.

It is also estimated in 2004 that 95% of Burundians were making unpaid family work or self-employed, i.e. vulnerable employment.²⁶

Almost all working Burundians are poor, with 76% living for under US\$1.25 a day and 90% for under US\$2. Based on other data, the middleclass is almost non-existent, with 0.4% Burundians living for US\$2-4 a day and 2.9% for US\$4-20 a day.²⁸

Unemployment

According to ILO 2013 estimations, the employment rate is 7% while it is 11% among youth. It is actually in line with the Sub-Saharan Africa's average that is estimated at 7% and 12%, respectively.²⁹

The labour force entering the labour market each year is high due to population growth, and the urban areas are not able to generate jobs to absorb them. Many sectors, which could have created jobs, have shrunk. Sectors such as telecommunications and banking are growing, though.³⁰

Interpretation of the open unemployment and employment rates as indicators of a well-functioning labour market is problematic in developing countries. When unemployment is not an option where a person can survive, work of some sort has to be found, often casual and informal work. Unemployment should therefore be understood in relation to the strength of social safety nets, the prevalence of informal employment and how much of informal employment is underemployment due to few formal employment possibilities.³¹

Sectoral employment

Employment (1998) ³² & GDP share (2013) ³³			
Sector & Sex distribution			
Sector	Male employment	Female employment	GDP share per sector
Manufacturing	31,824	10,240	11 %
Electricity, gas and water	1,946	68	0.4 %
Construction	13,209	0	3.9 %
Trade, restaurants and hotels	31,020	12,069	8.3 %
Transport, storage and communication	4,961	208	4.5 %
Finance, real estate and business services	8,499	3,792	16 %
Public services	45,359	15,048	8.0 %
Other sources	16,530	7,356	8.4 %
Agriculture	1,003,621	1,402,485	39,4 %

There are no updated statistics for sectoral employment in Burundi. The latest data are from 1998. Thus, the current situation should be interpreted with reservations. Agriculture was by far the dominating employment sector in Burundi, employing 92% of the workforce, which is high even for developing countries. It is contributing 39% of GDP. According to some estimations, 70% of 15-64 year-olds worked in farming in 2009, compared to 62% in 2006.

Other important sectors employing Burundians were manufacturing, public administration, and trade

Migration

Migration ²⁶		
Net migration (2008-2012)	Burundi	-20,000
Net migration to average population per year (2008-2012)	Burundi	- 1 : 2,309 inhabitants
	Sub-Saharan Africa	- 1 : 2,835 inhabitants
Personal transfers i.e. remittances received, % of GDP (2012)	Burundi	1.9 %
	Sub-Saharan Africa	2.4 %

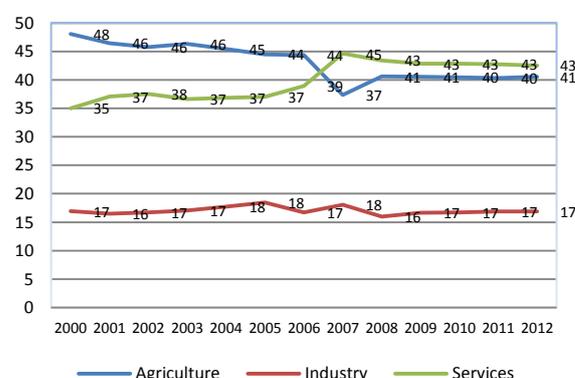
The previous very high influx of immigrants in Burundi from neighbour countries had little to do with labour migration and was mostly related to the returning half a million refugees from the civil war. Now the migration flow has turned into a negative net

restaurants & hotels. All non-agricultural sectors occupied more men than women, whereas three out of five working in the agriculture, were women. It shows clear gender segmentation on the labour market.

The economy confronts various constraints, including low investment, high production costs combined with low-skilled labour and an unattractive business environment.

It is observed that Burundi have experienced a sectoral shift after the end of the civil war in 2005, with services becoming a much larger share of GDP and agriculture diminishing.

Sector Share of value added (% of GDP)



migration, i.e. more 20,000 persons emigrated than immigrated, including both citizens and noncitizens.

Resourceful Burundians tended to flee the country and have not necessarily moved back to Burundi, leading to a general lack of skilled workers. The remittances are also low on an estimated US\$52 million in 2013.³⁴ Stated differently, the diaspora of Burundians does not contribute significantly to the Burundian economy.

In 2013 Tanzania expelled a high number of Burundians, who were considered illegal immigrants.

The East African Community will commit Burundi and its neighbours facilitating the free movement of persons and labour.

Informal Economy

Work opportunities for the working population come mainly from the informal sector, especially farming, which is unpredictable both in productivity and wages. Around 90% of workers are reported to be working in the informal 'sector', with an estimated non-agricultural informal sector employment at 78%, which is high even for Sub-Saharan Africa. This is partly because of the many Burundians working as subsistence farmers, partly because unemployment is not a realistic option in urban areas.³⁵

Associations from the informal economy have been formed to represent informal workers. These associations represent 32,000 members, within areas

such as drivers, street vendors, hairdressers, construction workers and agricultural workers.

A number of these associations seek registration as unions. For example, the Transport Workers Union has formed the federation of workers in informal 'sector' and so far affiliated unions from the informal economy have reached 26,000 members. Affiliates are still increasing in numbers as the unions are targeting informal economy associations directly.

COSYBU estimates that virtually no informal sector workers have written employment contracts.³⁶ And, government statistics suggest that only 5% of Burundian workers have employment contracts.³⁷

Child Labour

Working children			
Proportion of all children in age group			
Region	Year	Type	Proportion
Burundi (age 5-14) ³⁸	2008	Child labour	26 %
Sub-Saharan Africa ³⁹ (age 5-17)	2008	Children in employment	33 %
		Child labourers	25 %
		Hazardous work	15 %
<i>Children in employment include all children who conduct some kind of work, whereas child labourers are a narrower term without mild forms of work. Hazardous work is the worst form of child labour as defined in ILO C182.</i>			

Approximately one child in four is involved in labour to support the needs of their family, e.g. working on family farms, industrial plantations and in the services of the informal economy. Generally, young girls work for other families as domestic servants.⁴⁰

The law that protects child labour has not been enforced effectively, and no cases of child labour in the formal sector and conducted no child labour investigation have been investigated.⁴¹

Children orphaned due to parents having contracted HIV/AIDS are more likely to be engaged in child labour, and from 2006 to 2010, HIV/AIDS orphaned children,

are reported to have increased from 120,000 to 200,000.⁴²

Children working in domestic service are sometimes receiving food and shelter, instead of wages for their work, and are vulnerable to long working hours and physical exploitation by their employers. There are often heavy manual works in the agricultural sector and exposed to dangerous machinery, tools, and animals. Many children worked in the informal sectors, including family businesses, street vending, and small, local brick-making enterprises. In urban areas children worked as domestic servants.

A technical sub-committee of the National Multi-Sector Committee for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor was established to focus on the National Plan of Action's specific initiatives to combat the worst forms of child labor. Also a national tripartite Committee on Child Labour was established in 2013. On the other hand, the Government did not conduct any child labor inspections nor did it train inspectors on child labor law enforcement, as previously indicated. The Government has drafted at least three policies to provide greater protection to Burundian children, but none has yet been adopted for implementation.⁴³

Gender

Women face legal, economic and societal discrimination in Burundi. For example, discriminatory practices are present on a slowing adoption of an inheritance law to give women better access to land ownership. Another example is that by law women must receive the same pay as men for the same work, but frequently they don't.⁴⁴

In a previous section it was shown that women are similar as men in terms of the employment rates by 77%. Women's work is mainly in agriculture. Among the 3.000 registered formal-sector firms are about 13% run by women. It is estimated that women run 70% of informal traders.⁴⁵

Trade unions density of female membership is estimated at 16%. The highest share is in SPI, the trade

Youth

Young people looking for their first job are about 60% of the unemployed in Burundi. The few opportunities available are precarious and short-term, particularly in agriculture and the informal 'sector'. In total, the youth unemployment rate (persons aged 15 to 24) is 11%.

Young graduates have difficulties finding work, and in Bujumbura unemployment tends to rise with the level of educational attainment. It runs at 11% for workers who did not go to school, 14% for those who have primary education, 19% for those with secondary education, and 12 % for those with third-level education.⁴⁷

Compared to Rwanda, research suggests that young Burundians seek more opportunities through education and rural-urban migration, contributing to more young Burundians in the cities.⁴⁸

union for workers in the institute for economic studies (ISTEEBU), with 47% women. Women have a 4% points higher total employment rate, and a 5% point higher youth employment rate. The employment numbers from 1998 indicated that 58% of agricultural workers are women. Net primary school enrolment is higher for girls than boys, but gross secondary and tertiary school enrolment is lower for girls. Though Burundians in general have low education, women do have 25% less average years of education than men, a higher relative difference than the four neighbouring countries in the East African Community.

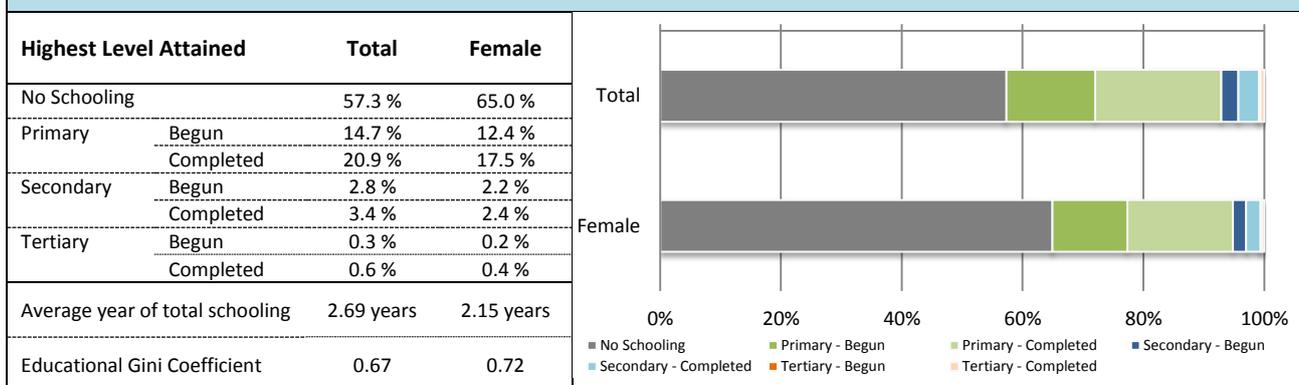
COSYBU is collaborating with the trade union confederation for the East African Community EATUC to promote gender equality, both within the labour movement and in Burundi.⁴⁶

Some of the biggest challenges of youth employment are the underdeveloped formal private sector and the civil service has a restricted wage bill, which makes it financially difficult to open up for new young employment. In addition, employers are reluctant to take on employees with no previous experience. These aspects, and the strong population growth, show how an imbalance of supply and demand in the labour market are ongoing, and becoming more apparent year by year. As far as jobseekers are concerned, their training is inappropriate and is often too theoretical, failing to foster entrepreneurial spirit, creativity, and short-term vocational training.

The Government is currently preparing a national youth employment strategy and intensifying support to entrepreneurs and the modernization of agriculture as a source of youth employment in rural and peri-urban areas.⁴⁹

Characteristics of the Working Age Population

Highest level attained and years of schooling in the population⁵⁰
(2010), Population 25+, Total and Female



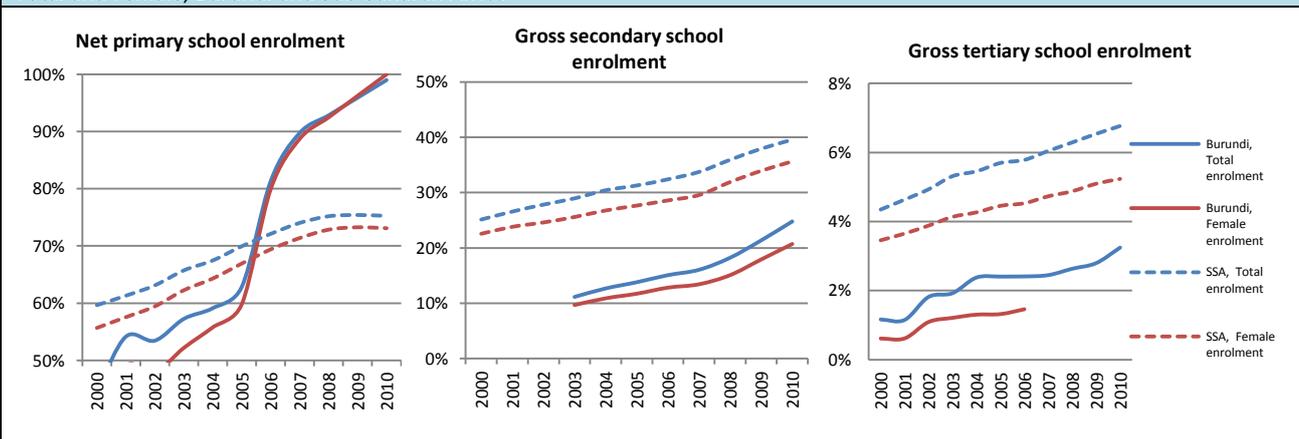
Primary, secondary and tertiary is the internationally defined distinction of education. In Denmark these corresponds to grundskole, gymnasium & university.

The educational Gini Coefficient is similar to the Gini Coefficient, but instead of measuring the distribution of income in a population, it measures the distribution of education measured as years of schooling among the population.⁵¹

Burundians have a very limited formal education, with less than three years of schooling per capita, and more than half the population have no schooling at all. Likewise the educational GINI is very high, showing that the years of schooling are unequally distributed among the population.

There is a large difference in male to female schooling as well, with women being underrepresented in all types of education, having less total schooling and a more unequal distribution of the education. The graph above shows the educational attainment of all Burundians above 25 years, therefore gives a glance of the human capital of the labour force.

Enrolment in Primary Secondary and Tertiary schools (2000-2010)⁵²
Total and Female, Burundi and Sub-Saharan Africa



Net enrolment is the ratio of children of official school age, who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. Gross enrolment is the ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the corresponding official school age. Gross primary enrolment is therefore sometimes higher than 100 %.

Though there are some missing data in the educational data for Burundi, there are notable trends in educational enrolment.

After the civil war, the government started implementing free primary education in late 2005, resulting in drastic increases in net primary school enrolment from 60% in 2005 to 90% in 2007, as high as 99% in 2010,⁵³ and with enrolment of girls as high

as boys. These enrolment rates are extremely high with the prevalence of child labour in Burundi in mind. They do only record enrolment, and primary school attendance is around 70%, which is still high for Sub-Saharan Africa, though.

The high enrolment rates stands in sharp contrast to the deficiency of education in the general population, where the majority have no schooling. The free primary school program does, however, have limited

Vocational training

Vocational Training (2012) ⁵⁴		
Pupils in vocational training	Burundi	17,384
Ratio of pupils in vocational training to all pupils in secondary education	Burundi	4.6 %
	Sub-Saharan Africa	5.9 %
Ratio of pupils in vocational training out of 15-24 year olds	Burundi	0.8 %
	Sub-Saharan Africa	1.7 %
<i>Ratio of pupils in vocational training to all pupils in secondary education in on average from the period 2009-2012.</i>		
<i>Ratio of pupils in vocational training out of 15-24 year olds is based on medium age group from 2010.</i>		

Pupils in vocational training were increasing in absolute terms since 2001 until 2011, but decrease slightly in 2012. The ratio of pupils in vocational training to all pupils in secondary education has decreased from 5.0% to 4.1%. It indicates that the vocational training centres are not absorbing as many students as the secondary education. With reference to the ratio of pupils in vocational training out of 15-24 year olds, the rate is also lower in Burundi than the Sub-Sahara Africa's average, with 0.8% and 1.7%, respectively.

Around 22% of firms are offering formal training, which is a quite low percentage in Sub-Saharan Africa, and indicates that youth do not receive enough possibilities of vocational training.

resources, ultimately decreasing the quality of education.

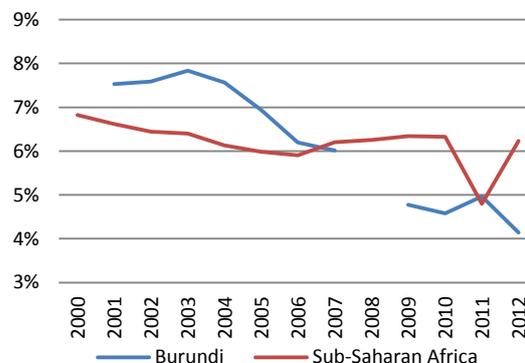
Unlike primary school, secondary and tertiary enrolments are low in Burundi and well below that of Sub-Saharan Africa's average.

Education at all levels suffers from a lack of qualified teachers, teaching materials, and adequate infrastructure. Disparities in education outcomes among gender and regions are large.

This is a problem for the quality of the labour force, and especially with the youth unemployment. It has become a major problem after the 2008 global financial crisis where many other developing countries indicate lack of quality vocational training as a structural reason for high youth unemployment.

Burundi has 104 professional schools. A National Committee on Employment and a Committee on Job Perfection (skills development/on-the-job capacity building) were set up in late 2013.

Ratio of pupils in vocational training to all pupils in secondary education trends (%)⁵⁵



Social Protection

Public spending on social protection schemes ⁵⁶ (2010)		
	Burundian Franc	51 billion
	US\$	42 million
Public social protection expenditure, excl. health	% of GDP	2.1 %
	per capita	4.5 US\$
	% of government expenditure	6.4 %
Public health care	% of GDP	2.9 %
Health social protection coverage	% of population	28 %
Trends in government expenditure in health	% changes per year (2007-2011)	-4.9 %

Benefits, coverage and contributions to pension schemes ⁵⁷ (2010-2011)		
Social benefits for the active age	% of GDP	0.2 %
Pensionable age receiving an old age pension (age 60+)	Proportion of total	4.0 %
Old age effective coverage as proportion of programs	Contributory	4.0 %
Active contributors to a pension scheme	15-64 years	4.5 %

Due to increased costs of living, the government increased its expenditure on overall social protection expenditure, reaching 4.9% of GDP in 2010. In terms of this expenditure, excluding health, it equals US\$41 million, which is very low in absolute terms. It covers only US\$4.5 per Burundian. The health social protection coverage reaches 28% of the population, but the expenditure has experienced a decrease almost at 5% per year in the period 2007-2011.

Notable contributory programs in Burundi are: The National Social Security Institute (INSS) for the public sector, which provides old age pension, disability, life insurance and work injuries, with 3% of salary paid by the employee and 4% paid by employer.⁵⁸ Another is the mutual fund for sickness and maternity insurance scheme (MFP) for public employees, with 4% of salary paid by the employee and 6% paid by employer. In addition, the National Pension and Works Place

Insurance Service (ONPR) cover civil servants, magistrates, and judicial officers.

A National Social Protection Policy was adopted in 2013. COSYBU is a member of the tripartite National Social Protection Committee. Committees are also set up at provincial level. The new policy holds provisions for mutual health insurance schemes for private sector (pension and professional risk/injury). The first scheme opened up in May 2014. It was an initiative by AEB and covers about 45 companies with over 7,500 workers.⁵⁹ Contributions are paid by workers (4%) and employers (6%).

Social protection schemes have so far not been open for informal sector workers, but following the National Social Security Policy and a revision in 2013 of the Social Security Code. A new law (application to 2002 law) is going to hold provisions on the possibility for informal sector workers to contribute to NSSF. Contributions are to be paid on basis of estimated income. The provisions for inclusion of informal sector workers are expected to be included in the revision of the Labour Code.

Different social protection programmes covers 3%-6% of their potential demographic, mainly in the form of contributory programmes. Just 4.0% of Burundians aged 60 or older, receive old age pensions. And all are contributories. Social protection is therefore for the select few in Burundi working in the formal and/or public sector.

The ILO convention 183 on maternity leave protection has not been ratified. Following the labour code of 1993 and Social Security Code of 1999, maternity leave is set at 12 weeks fully paid.⁶⁰

In 2014 COSYBU and AEB protested against plans for using social security (ISSF) funds for investment in a soft drinks production (AMANDA). The protests resulted in the President setting up a special committee to consider the issue. Later on the plans was definitively rejected.

General Economic Performance

Key Facts ⁶¹ (2013 est.)				
GDP US\$	GDP per capita (PPP)	GDP real growth	HDI (2012) ⁶²	Gini Index (2006)
2.7 billion	600 US\$ 225 of 228 countries	4.5 %	0.355 178 of 187 countries	33.3 49 of 141 countries (1998)
<p>The Human Development Index (HDI) measures the average of a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living.</p> <p>A Gini Index of 0 represents 'perfect equality', while an index of 100 implies 'perfect inequality'.</p>				

Doing business 2015 ⁶³	Control of corruption	Government effectiveness	Rule of Law
152 of 189 countries	-1.11 (2010) -1.46 (2012)	-1.10 (2010) -1.33 (2012)	-1.19 (2010) -1.09 (2012)
<p>A high ranking on the Ease of Doing Business Index means the regulatory environment is more conducive to the start-up and operation of a local firm.⁶⁴</p> <p>The selected Governance Indicators cover the years 2007 and 2012, and ranking from -2.5 to 2.5; i.e. negative tendencies below the zero mean and unit standard deviation, score negative measurements.⁶⁵</p>			

Burundi is one of the poorest countries in the world. It has one of the lowest GDP per capita measures in Purchasing-Power Parity (PPP) in the world as well as a very low ranking in the Human Development Index.

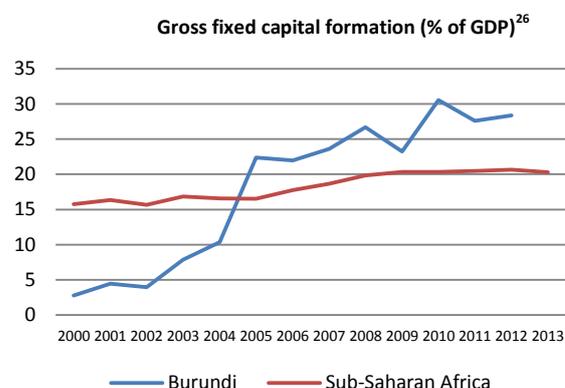
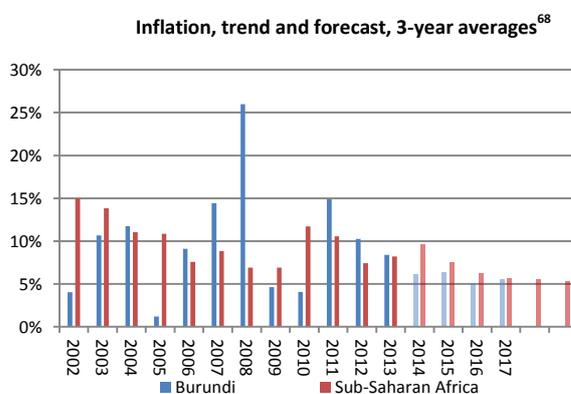
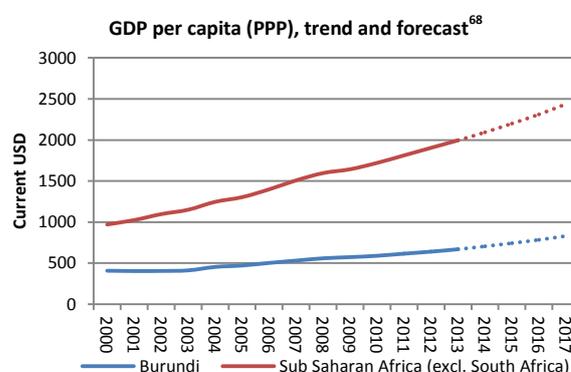
The country's lower economic development is to a large degree due to the 1993-2005 political crisis and civil war between Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups.⁶⁶ Burundi's GDP growth is estimated as 4.5% in 2013 and is slight below the other four countries in the free-trade area of the East African Community (EAC), which have an average growth at 6%. It is one of the best performing regions in the world. The country has almost reached its pre-war level of GDP, which fell by 40% from 1993-2005. The population is also growing fast at around 3% per year, in what is already one of the most densely populated countries in the world.⁶⁷

After the political crisis, the capital formation did increase from 9% in 2005 to 28% in 2012, showing that the increased political stability had a positive effect on domestic investment in new productive assets. Annual inflation has been curbed at around 6%.

The economy's expansion is affected by a dominant sector of subsistence farming with low productivity, poor infrastructure, regular power cuts and an underdeveloped industry and service sectors.

The GINI Index ranks Burundi as 49 out of 141 countries, which is a comparable level with Kenya and Russia, i.e. a medium-low equality rate. Due to the high poverty level, there is little to share.

The 2015 Doing Business Indicator ranked Burundi as 152 out of 189 countries. The country scores high on Starting a Business and with noteworthy improvements in Dealing with Construction Permits. Both Getting Electricity and Getting Credit a very low. Burundi also scores very low on the three governance indicators Control of Corruption, Government Effectiveness, and Rule of Law.



Trade

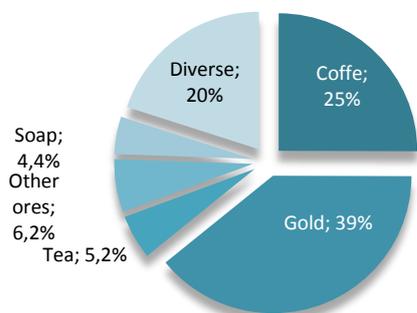
Trade and Foreign Direct Investment ⁶⁹ (2013 est.)			
Exports US\$	Imports US\$	FDI flow ⁷⁰ (Average 2008-12)	FDI Stock (2011)
123 million	867 million	2.4 million US\$	7 million US\$
4.6 % of GDP	32 % of GDP	0.1% of GDP	0.3% of GDP

Trade plays a modest role in Burundi's economy. It has exports at 4.6% of GDP and with a very low Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flow and stock.

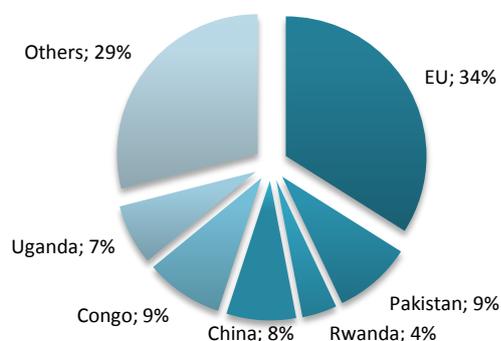
Exports are dominated by coffee and gold, with a small share of industrial products. Imports are six times larger than exports, and consist mainly of cars and other machineries.

Burundi's main export market partners are particularly European Union (EU) and then followed by Pakistan. It has relatively little export to its neighbours in the East African Community.

Burundi's main products share of exports (2012)⁷¹



Burundi's main export markets (2013)⁷²



Trade agreements

Burundi is part of the East African Community (EAC), which also includes Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania & Zanzibar and Uganda. The EAC free trade agreement from 1999 contains a labour provision with cooperation on employment and working conditions with an emphasis on gender equality and discriminatory law and practices. Likewise, the labour provision of the COMESA agreement extends to cooperation on employment conditions and labour law.⁷³

Burundi is also part of the 2000 Cotonou Agreement between EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, which reaffirms commitment to ILO's Fundamental Conventions and includes a labour provision on cooperation on various labour and social issues.

In 2005 the EAC established a customs union and in 2010 the EAC agreed to establish full common market with free movement for workers, goods, services and capital.

Freedom of association and collective bargaining is enshrined in the EAC common market in the sense that an EAC migrant worker has equal rights as a national.⁷⁴ The free movement of labour within the EAC opens up questions of how to achieve equal opportunities and equal social and labour rights for migrant workers, for example if workers can bring pensions with them across borders. On the other hand, the free movement of labour is also a source of concern in some of the EAC countries, as the countries workforces have differences in productivity and educational level (with Kenya enjoying a relatively mobile, well-educated workforce and entrepreneurship). However, the actual implementation of the economic integration have slowed down the last few years especially with regards to lifting barriers to trade and free movement of labour. Although formal tariffs are increasing abolished, trade is still challenged by non-tariff barriers and corruption.

Burundi together with Tanzania are the most reluctant partner states in implementing the EAC regional integration. In 2013 and 2014 this has caused Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda to form the so called "Coalition of the Willing" and moving on with joint infrastructure projects etc.

The objective of the East African trade union movement is to safeguard workers' interests in the EAC, ensure that ILO standards are upheld and member states' labour policies are harmonized and the tripartite model is institutionalized, while the free movement of labour is promoted. The trade union movement has reached observer status in the EAC in 2009, and along with employers' organizations they participate in ministerial summits, sectoral summits, and other summits that involve labour market issues. However, no meetings in the EAC Council of ministers have been conducted for the past 3-4 years, causing the social agenda in regional integration to move very slow.

Through the EAC, Burundi can export duty and quota free to EU since 2008, and will have to gradually remove duties and quotas from EU exports to Burundi on most products, except the products deemed to need protection from EU imports. These include agricultural products, wines and spirits, chemicals, plastics, wood based paper, textiles and clothing - the products which dominates Burundi's exports to EU. In late 2014 a new Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was concluded between the EU and the EAC, securing the EAC countries access to EU markets in number of commodities.

Since 2006, Burundi has benefitted from the United States' African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which is a Generalised System of Preferences. It allows duty and quota free access for some products. Burundi can be removed from AGOA, if the United States deems that Burundi among other human rights issues do not seek to uphold the ILO Core Labour Standards and have acceptable minimum wages, hours of work and occupational safety and health. Currently, Burundi does not have any Export Processing Zones, but are considering establishing them.

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)'s Member States have undertaken to set up structures to implement Council Decisions and legal instruments on the elimination of visas and enhance the free movement of persons. While Visa Protocol has been ratified by the countries, the implementation has been slow. Regarding the protocol of free movement of persons, Burundi is one of the so far four signed countries, and the only who has fully ratified it.⁷⁵

Exporting Processing Zones

Burundi's export processing zones were established in 1993 as part of the overall effort to encourage FDI, export diversification and promotion of non-traditional exports.⁷⁶

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- ⁷⁵ [COMESA, Fresh commitment towards free movement of persons in the region, 22 January 2014](#)
- ⁷⁶ [EAC, Investment Framework: Key features](#)