

LABOUR MARKET PROFILE NIGER – 2021/2022



This profile provides a comprehensive overview of the labour market's structure, development, and challenges.

*Danish Trade Union
Development Agency*



ULANDSSEKRETARIATET – DTDA
DANISH TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

PREFACE

Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA) is the development organisation of the Danish trade union movement. This agency was established in 1987 by the two largest Danish confederations – the Danish Federation of Trade Unions (Danish acronym: LO) and the Danish Confederation of Professionals (Danish acronym: FTF). These confederations merged to become the Danish Trade Union Confederation (Danish acronym: FH) in January 2019. Likewise, LO/FTF Council was replaced by DTDA.

The work of DTDA is in line with the global Decent Work Agenda (DWA) based on its pillars: creating decent jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection, and promoting social dialogue. The overall development objective is to eradicate poverty and support just and democratic societies by promoting the DWA.

DTDA collaborates with trade union organisations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. The programmes' immediate objective is to assist the partner organisations in becoming change agents in their own national and regional labour market context, capable of achieving tangible improvements in the national DWA conditions and the labour-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Labour Market Profile (LMP) format provides a comprehensive overview of the labour market's structure, development, and challenges. In the framework of DWA and SDGs, LMPs follow several central indicators addressing labour market development aspects, especially the unionism evolution, social dialogue and bi-/tri-partite mechanisms, policy development, and legal reforms status vis-à-vis ILO conventions and labour standards, among others.

Primary sources of data and information for LMPs are:

- As part of programme implementation and monitoring, national partner organisations

provide annual narrative progress reports, including information on labour market developments. Furthermore, specific data and information relating to central indicators are collected using a unique data collection tool.

- National statistical institutions and international databanks are used as a source for collection of general (statistical) data and information such as ILOSTAT and NATLEX, World Bank Open Data, ITUC Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights, the U.S. Department of State, as well as other internationally recognised labour-related global indexes.
- Academia and media sources (e.g., Labour Start, national news, among others) are furthermore used in the available research on labour market issues.

The profile is regularly updated. The current version covers the period from 2021 to 2022. Labour Market Profiles for more than 30 countries are available on DTDA's website: <https://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/>.

DTDA prepared the Labour Market Profile in collaboration with DTDA's sub-Regional Office in Togo and support from the *Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger* (USTN). If any questions arise to the profile, don't hesitate to contact Mr Kasper Andersen (kan@dtda.dk) from DTDA.

The cover photo represents members of the Women's Hairdressing Cooperative, which is affiliated with USTN. During making soap, they applied health preventive measures to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic's challenges. The photo was taken by Mr Souley Abdoulaye, Reporter Photographer.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Niger's economic growth hovered above 5% during the 2010s, supported by water management and irrigation developments to improve agricultural production. Although the country sticks to the lowest ranking in the Human Development Index, it demonstrated a significant poverty reduction in the last decade. However, many Nigerien workers were pushed closer to the poverty line or even crossed the threshold due to the economic downturn in 2020 caused by the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Few new labour-related laws have been approved in recent years, mainly the Law 2018/22 concerning the principles of social protection. Niger ratified ILO's two governance conventions on employment policy tripartism (C122 and C144) in 2018 and the convention on maternity protection (C183) in 2019. The national legal framework for protecting workers rights is flawed to international standards, and the compliance with labour rights deteriorated at the end of the 2010s. Trade agreements are evolving, including with labour clauses, but have not demonstrated significant pro-labour-conditions positive effects.

Several consultation bodies promote social dialogue but lacking coordination, and industrial relations remain relatively nascent. The application of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) has been in progress, with coverage at 4% of total employment in 2019 but stalled in 2020, resulting from the Covid-19 impact. The trade union movement is strong in the public sector and the narrow formal private sector. The first professional elections of trade union leadership were held in 2019, and five unions became eligible for government budgetary support. A high influx of organised workers from the informal economy backed the trade union density of employment at 5.2% in 2020.

The fast-growing population and the rise in life expectancy put intensifying pressure on the education system, job creation, and social protection. Just minor shifts in the employment

structure were detected during the 2010s caught in the dominating subsistence agricultural sector and low urbanisation. Unemployment is mainly an urban phenomenon for youth, clustered among better-educated groups. Instead, the scope of underemployment is a massive challenge; for example, the NEET rate was very high at 69% and far above all neighbouring countries.

Niger's complex migration flows link to seasonal labour and internally displaced people, not to mention a high influx of refugees reaching around 1% of the population in 2020. Niger's personnel remittances are lower than the sub-Saharan Africa average and significantly lesser than the foreign direct investments.

Equal labour opportunities by gender are spelt out in laws and policies. In practice, most workers in rural areas follow traditional customs, haunted by weak scorings in major gender indexes.

At least seven out of ten in employment have less than basic education. The literacy rate is on an upswing backed by rising enrolment at all education levels, including technical and vocational education and training. The education system struggles to absorb the mounting youth bulge: Over 50% of children aged 7-16 are not in school, aiding the high child labour rate at approximately 34%. Nigerien individuals using the internet are scarce, and mobile cellular subscriptions' demands continue with the lowest rate among the neighbouring countries. These facets place the country in a weaker position to accelerate labour productivity and international competitiveness.

Niger's health social protection coverage is relatively high compared to neighbouring countries, but other aspects of social protection are weak, e.g., 6% of older persons receive a pension. The new social protection law opens access to workers from the informal economy, but, so far, this group's access to private social security schemes continues at extremely low coverages.

The table below provides an overview of key labour market indicators' status in the Decent Work Agenda framework.

On the next page, Page iv, the second table presents an overview of the current value and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals' indicators concerning labour market issues.

Status of key labour market indicators in the framework of the Decent Work Agenda (DWA) in Niger

Creating decent jobs	
Policy reforms addressing creation of decent employment	Labour-related policies are active in employment, youth employment, skill development, minimum wages, poverty eradication, industrial policy, and employment policy in the health sector. Productivity and competitiveness policy is ongoing.
ILO standard setting on improvement of status of workers from the informal economy	Niger has not adopted a direct Tripartite National Informal Economy Forum. Policies addressing status of informal economy workers are linked to the Organisation for the Harmonisation of Corporate Law in Africa. The Law 2018-22 from 2018 determining the fundamental principles of social protection, including workers from the informal economy. However, the adoption of this law as well as its application decree did not define which branch of the social security system should be extended to workers in the informal economy.
Guaranteeing rights at work	
Growth in trade union members, %, 2017-2020	36% *
Violations of trade union rights	Not recorded in ITUC's Global Rights Index.
Labour legislation is improved according to ILO standards in recent years	The Labour Code from 2012 was last amended in 2017 and regulates employment, vocational training, remuneration, collective bargaining, labour representation and labour disputes. Decree No.2020-014 from 2020 sets the terms of application of Law No. 2018-22 from 2018 determining the fundamental principles of Social Protection. Niger also ratified Employment Policy Convention (C122) and Tripartite Consultation Convention (C144) in 2018, and Maternity Protection Convention (C183) in 2019.
Partner organisations with minimum 30% women representation in decision-making bodies.	Women in leadership positions and decision-making bodies in USTN reached 31% in 2020. Besides, the number of youth members (below 30 years of age) in leadership positions and decision-making bodies was 16% in 2020.
Extending social protection	
Percentage of total population covered by Health Social Protection.	53% in 2020.
Workers from the informal economy have access to national social security schemes	Yes, to private social security schemes, and their enrolment increased from 8,173 in 2019 to around 25,000 in 2020, equalling a growth of 206%. Ratio of informal workers affiliated to social security was extremely low at 0.1% in 2019 but up at 0.3% in 2020.
Promoting social dialogue	
Trade union density of total employment (%)	>5.2%.
Cooperation in labour-employer relations.	Not recorded in World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index.
Number of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs)	National data listed 17 CBAs in 2019 dropping to 16 in 2020.
Workers' coverage of Collective Bargaining Agreements to employees	Data from three trade union federation (USTN, UGSEIN, and CNT) registered around 4% of total employment in 2019. Data from 2020 from USTN suggested that the number of CBAs and coverage fell significantly mainly because of the economic disruption triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic.
Bi-/tri- partite agreements concluded	Twelve joint pacts/charters, four joint Memorandum of Understandings, and one joint guideline were registered in 2019. Few were listed in 2020, down to two joint guidelines/codes of good conduct were listed in 2020.
* This estimation covers only Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger (USTN). Sources: Niger's Ministry of Public Health; DTDA, Niger: data-collection tool 2019/2020 and own calculations on trade union membership growth, trade union density, and Ratio of informal workers affiliated to social security to vulnerable employment.	

Status of key Sustainable Development Goals in labour market related issues in Niger

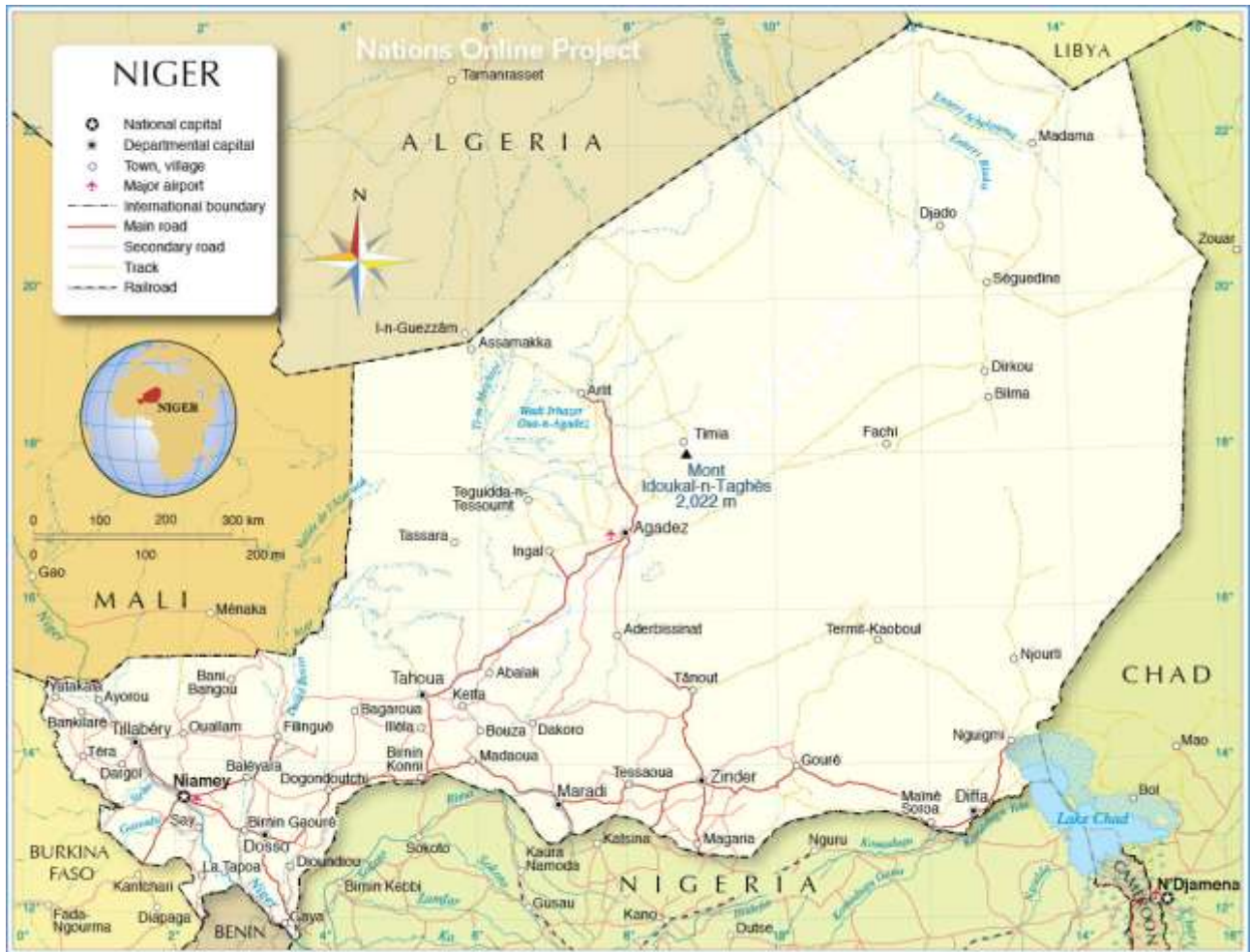
Indicators	Value	Year	SDG Targets
1.1.1: Working poverty rate (percentage of employed living below US\$1.9 PPP).	39%	2019	By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than US\$1.9 a day.
1.3.1: The population effectively covered by a social protection system, including social protection floors.	21% *	-	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.
5.5.2: Women share of employment in managerial positions (senior and middle management).	22%	2017	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.
8.2.1: Annual growth rate of output per worker (GDP constant 2011 international \$ in PPP).	1.7%	2019	Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.
8.3.1: Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment.	73%	2017	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, through access to financial services.
8.3.1: Women	84%	2017	
8.3.1: Men	67%	2017	
8.5.1: Average hourly earnings of women and men employees.	-	-	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
8.5.2: Unemployment rate (Total, 15+)	7.8%	2017	
8.5.2: Women, 15+	7.8%	2017	
8.5.2: Women, 15-24 years	18%	2017	
8.5.2: Men, 15+	7.8%	2017	
8.5.2: Men, 15-24 years	16%	2017	
8.6.1: Proportion of youth (15-24 years) not in education, employment, or training).	69%	2017	By 2030, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training.
8.7.1: Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in economic activity (Total).	34%	2012	Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms.
8.7.1: Girls	35%	2012	
8.7.1: Boys	34%	2012	
8.8.1: Frequency rates of fatal occupational injuries per 100.000 workers, annual.	-	-	Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
8.8.2: Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining)	1.30 **	2018	
9.2.2: Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment.	-	-	Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.
10.4.1: Labour income share as a percent of GDP.	31%	2017	Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

* Population covered by at least one social protection benefit (see more in Table 13).

** The level of national compliance with fundamental labour rights. It has a range from 0 to 10, with 0 being the best possible score.

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM); ILO, World Social Protection Report 2017-2019.

COUNTRY MAP



Source: The Nations Online Project.

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ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Niger is a landlocked, vast, arid state in the heart of the Sahel region surrounded by seven countries. It is a low-income country facing frequent droughts and widespread poverty, not to mention, more recently, a health challenge associated with the global Covid-19 pandemic. A security crisis in recent years accelerated at the borders to Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Mali, concerning armed groups carry out attacks against the security forces and civilians. The country has been challenged by an influx of refugees fleeing conflicts in the region, particularly in Nigeria and Mali (see more in the Migration sub-section).

During the 2010s, the government targeted its public investment policy to upgrade infrastructure in the energy, transport, and communications sectors. This programme prioritised water management and irrigation development to reduce the dependence of agricultural production on weather conditions, notably through the implementation of the 3N Initiative (Niger Feeds Niger). The economy is not well diversified and is predominantly a pastoral and agricultural country. Although agri-food production has been rising due to better irrigation, many workers lack fertile soil covered by the Sahara Desert.

The country demonstrated high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth during the 2010s hovering above 5% on average. GDP per capita is significantly lower than the regional average. Real growth dropped from 7% in 2018 to 5.9% in 2019 to a projected 1.2% in 2020, costing the global Covid-19 pandemic, including the closure of borders and increasingly violent terrorist attacks (see details in Table 1 and Figure 1).

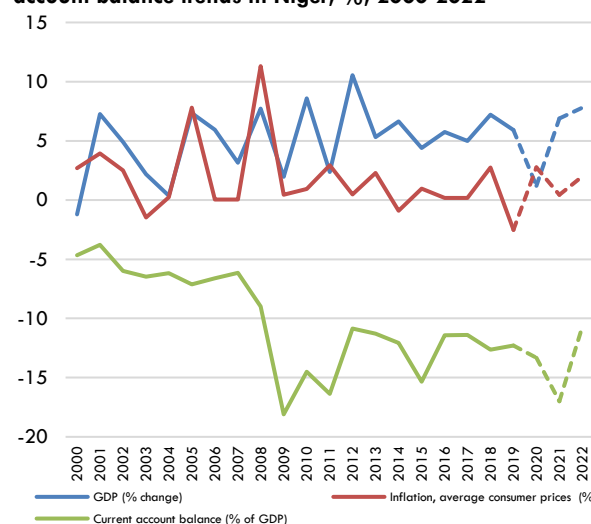
Inflation in consumer prices stood low during the 2010s, even fell to -2.5% in 2019. Projections suggest it accelerated to 2.8% in 2020, fuelled by supply disruptions and speculative behaviour, but staying below the West Africa Economic Market Union's (WAEMU) 3%-threshold (see Figure 1). To some extent, the relatively low inflation has protected the workers' income purchasing power.

Table 1: Niger's key economic data, projections, 2019-2022

Values	2019	2020	2021	2022
GDP (current, billion, US\$)	12.9bn	13.7bn	15.9bn	18.5bn
GDP per capita (current, US\$)	554	566	633	710
Total investment (% of GDP)	30%	31%	31%	25%
Gross national savings (% of GDP)	18%	18%	14%	15%
General government total expenditure (% of GDP)	22%	23%	23%	22%
General government gross debt (% of GDP)	40%	44%	45%	42%

Sources: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, April 2021.

Figure 1: Gross domestic product, inflation, and current account balance trends in Niger, %, 2000-2022



Sources: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook Database, April 2021.

The former interior minister was sworn in as president in April 2021, in Niger's first democratic transfer of power since independence in 1960. One of the new government's priorities is tackling the jihadist insurgency causing chaos in the west and broader Sahel regions.

Niger is one of the top five uranium producers in the world and, recently, a modest gold, coal, and oil producer. The construction of the pipeline for crude oil and the expected onset of oil exports in 2022 benefit the economy. The declining international oil prices at the end of the 2010s stained the oil exploitation profits. Niger recorded the current account's double-digit deficit since 2009, averaging -13% of GDP from 2009 to 2020. The widening deficit is linked to diminished export

earnings, mainly from uranium. Since international trade declined in 2020, the current account will further fall in 2021 but rebound in 2022 (Figure 1). On the supply side, the service and extractive industry sectors were most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic impact during 2020/2021. On the demand side, consumption and foreign investments declined sharply.¹

Gross fixed capital formation signals how much of the new economic value-added is invested rather than consumed. When the indicator's value increases, it suggests economic activities are in progress, potentially supporting economic development and job creation. Data shows Niger's gross fixed capital formation at 30% of GDP on average from 2010 to 2019, 12 percentage points higher than the 2000s and significantly above the sub-Saharan Africa average, at 21%.²

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) measures the net inflows of investment to acquire a lasting management interest in an enterprise operating in the economy other than the investor. In Niger, the FDI inflow was at 6.6% of GDP during the 2010s, significantly higher than the regional average, at 2.3%. The investments are mainly geared towards the construction, services (telecommunications) and mining sectors. The mining sector, in particular uranium, has traditionally taken the most significant share of FDI. There are also promoted major projects such as constructing the hydro-agricultural dam at Kandaji, the rehabilitation of Niamey airport, and the Garadawa cement plant construction. Besides, the China National Petroleum Corporation's construction of a 2,000 km pipeline is expected to enable Niger to become an oil exporter by 2023.

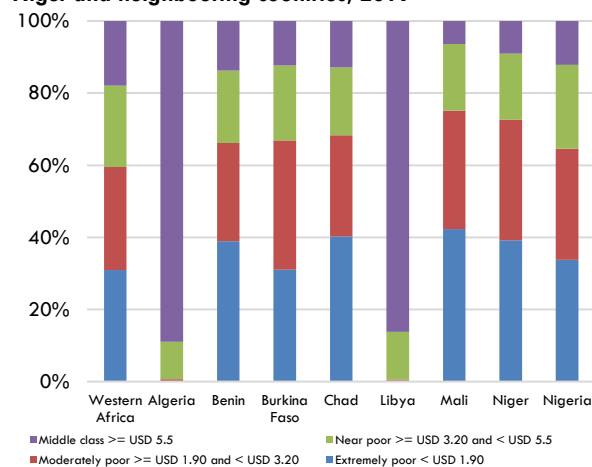
The Doing Business Index ranks Niger as 132 out of 190 countries (1st is best) in 2020, signalling cumbersome business procedures. Out of ten indicators, the country's best rankings are getting credit (48) and starting a business (56). Several of the scales were very poor, e.g., dealing with construction permits (180), paying taxes (169), and getting electricity (159). On the positive side, the country improved access to credit information by

expanding the coverage of the credit bureau and beginning to distribute data from utility companies; see more details in Appendix Table 18.

The Human Development Index (HDI) ranking the country at the rock-bottom, 189 out of 189 (1 is best) in 2020. Inequality in the distribution of family income dropped during the last two decades in Niger: Gini-indexed 44 in 2005 fell to 32 in 2011 but with a slight upsurge reaching 34 in 2014 (i.e., 0 represents perfect equality, while an index of 100 represents high inequality).³

Among Niger's employed population, estimations of working poor (living below US\$3.2 per day) fell from 83% in 2010 to 73% in 2019. Both the near-poor and the middle-class groups increased during the last decade, reaching a share of 18% and 9.1%, respectively. The economic growth was mainly pro-poor at the beginning of the 2010s, but it turned less inclusive in the latter period. Niger's employment distribution by economic class structure is like the neighbouring Western African countries but diverge significantly from the two Northern African neighbouring countries (see more details in Figure). Niger's broader poverty headcount ratio at the national poverty line measured a drop from 63% in 2005 to 41% in 2018, reaching the neighbouring countries, e.g., Benin (39%), Burkina Faso (41%), Chad (42%), and Nigeria (40%).

Figure 2: Projections of employment by economic class in Niger and neighbouring countries, 2019



Note: Data exclude the economically inactive population that cover around 28% of the population (aged 15+) (see more in the Unemployment sub-section). The value is measured at Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).

Sources: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Most Niger's poor live in rural areas where food insecurity is high and exacerbated by the effects of climate change. Reports found recent gains in combating poverty are challenged by the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, following a 3% drop in per capita income in 2020 and poverty rising by 1.3% among the extreme poor. Many Nigerien households lost income from layoffs, a drop in remittances, and a decline in human capital endowment. School closures are expected to lead to higher dropout rates, especially among girls and the most vulnerable (see more in the Education section). Based on projections, the country will not reduce its poverty rate to pre-Covid-19 levels before end-2023.⁴

Special Economic Zones (SEZs)

No data on special economic zones or export processing zones were found during this profile's research.

LABOUR LEGISLATION

Based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) register, Niger's legal framework of labour, social security, and human rights covered 235 different laws/decrees in May 2021.⁵ Few new laws have been listed since 2014. It was mainly an amendment to the Labour Code in 2017 and Law 2018-22 from 2018, determining the fundamental principles of social protection. Decree No. 2020-014 from 2020 sets the terms of application of Law No. 2018-22 (see more in Appendix Table 15).

The status of central labour-related legislation is summarised below.

Constitution

Niger's constitution of 2010 was amended in 2017, recognises and guarantees freedom of association, the right for labour to organise and strike, the right to work, non-discrimination at work and fair compensation. Companies are required to prioritise Nigeriens in employment. The constitution was a handover of power from the military regime to an elected civilian government.

Labour Code

The Labour Code from 2012 was last amended in 2017 and regulates employment, vocational training, remuneration, collective bargaining, labour representation and labour disputes. The code establishes the Consultative Commission for Labour and Employment, Labour Court, and regulates the Technical Consultative Committee for Occupational Safety and Health.⁶

The law provides freedom of association, but the government has not adopted regulations to enforce the law. While there were no provisions that limit collective bargaining in non-essential services, provisions restrict specific categories of public servants not engaged in government administration from exercising their right to collective bargaining. Furthermore, the law limits the right to strike by public servants in management positions and workers in certain "essential services" with a broader scope than the international standards (see more in the ILO Conventions sub-section). Legal restrictions usually involve requiring civil servants to report to work during a legally notified strike. There are no prohibitions on strikes in non-essential services. The government may call for mandatory arbitration instead of a strike.⁷

The law allows unions to conduct their activities without interference and prohibits antiunion discrimination, and provides for penalties but does not require reinstatement for workers dismissed for union activity. There are limitations on the law's applicability to public service employees.

International institutions assessed that Niger's government application of labour regulations in the public and private sectors varied. Penalties for violations include imprisonment and fines; these penalties are sufficient to deter violations in the formal sector.⁸ Besides, the definition and range of the prohibition on sexual harassment established by the law are too narrow, since they covered neither hostile work environment, sexual harassment, nor harassment committed by persons who do not exercise authority over the victim (work colleagues, clients, among others).

Social Protection Code

In 2013, a dialogue process started to build a social protection floor through the National Forum on Social Protection. In 2018, the country approved the law 2018/22, determining the fundamental principles of social protection, and Decree No. 2020-014 from January 2020 sets the terms (see more in the Social Protection section).

Observations on labour legislation

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) registered some flaws in Niger's legislation on the rights of freedom of association, the rights of collective bargaining, and the rights of strikes concerning the international standards:⁹

- The labour law does not explicitly protect workers from anti-union discrimination.
- Restrictions on the right to elect representatives and self-administer in full freedom.
- The Labour Code provides that workers over 16 years of age but under the age of majority may join trade unions. This provision excludes workers between 14 years of age and 16 years old to join or establish unions.
- There is no legal provision permitting the following categories of workers to join and form unions: judges, senior lecturers in universities and similar institutions, staff of administrations, services and public establishments of the State that are industrial or commercial, staff of customs, water and forestry services, and staff of the National School of Administration and Legal Service Training, local authorities, and the parliamentary administration.
- Absence of criteria or discretionary, unclear, or unreasonable criteria for determining representative organisations.
- No specific legal provisions guarantee the right to collective bargaining to public servants.
- Compulsory recourse to arbitration or too long and complex conciliation and mediation procedures before strike actions.

- Regulating the right to strike of state employees and local authority employees prevents public servants from striking.

Authorities generally respect freedom of association, the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining, and workers exercised these rights. For example, the tradespersons and storeowners in several markets throughout the country staged unobstructed strikes during 2019 to protest new taxes and high energy costs. Unions exercised the right to bargain collectively for wages above the legal minimum and more favourable working conditions.¹⁰

Another aspect of the labour-related laws' scope is that the informal economy is widespread dominated by micro- and small enterprises in the private sector marred by not applying the labour and business regulations in practice due to lack of awareness or incentives.

Ratified ILO Conventions

International principles and rights at work are enumerated in the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) conventions. Niger ratified 41 conventions: 37 of them are in force, two denounced, and four instruments abrogated. The latest ratified conventions were the Employment Policy Convention (C122) and Tripartite Consultation Convention (C144), both from 2018, and Maternity Protection Convention (C183) in 2019.

The list in Appendix Table 17 shows that Niger ratified the eight fundamental conventions and three Governance Conventions, leaving out the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention (C129). The country also ratified 30 Technical Conventions, and 15 of them are up-to-date and actively promoted.

The independent ILO body, the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), focused on Niger's status on 18 conventions. For example, to set Niger's Labour Code in line with the Freedom of Association

and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (C087), the committee requested the government to take the necessary steps to amend the bill, so workers over 16 years of age but under the age of majority may join trade unions. It ensures that the minimum age for membership to a trade union is the same as that fixed by admission to employment. For years, CEACR focused on Niger's regulating exercises of state employees and local authority employees' right to strike. The government took steps to determine the representativeness of employers' and workers' organisations based on occupational elections concerning revising the ordinance review mechanism. Although the government indicates that the occupational elections process is proceeding normally and remains open to negotiations with the social partners, they are invited to take all necessary measures to accelerate this process.

Regarding the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (C098), CEACR requested the government to take the necessary measures to adopt specific legislative measures providing adequate protection for public servants not engaged in the State's administration against acts of anti-union discrimination and interference to establish expeditious and effective penalties and procedures. The committee noted that the 2010 constitution recognises freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Several categories of personnel who are not governed by either the provisions of the Labour Code or the General Public Service Regulations have established trade unions.

The Sustainable Development Goal indicator 8.8.2 seeks to measure the level of national compliance with fundamental labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining (FACB)). Based on ILO textual sources and national legislation, Niger ranks at 1.30 from 2016 to 2018 (0 out of 10; 0 is best) but with some deterioration from 2015 at 0.55. Compared to neighbouring countries, the ranking is medium level (see more details in Table 2).

Table 2: Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) among Niger and neighbouring countries, 2018

Country	Value
Algeria	2.30
Benin	0.56
Burkina Faso	0.88
Libya	10.00
Mali	0.88
Niger	1.30
Nigeria	2.90

Note: The value has a range from 0 to 10, with 0 being the best possible score (indicating higher levels of compliance with FACB rights) and 10 the worst (indicating lower levels of compliance with FACB rights based on ILO textual sources and national legislation).

Sources: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Trade Agreements

Trade agreements regulate international trade between two or more nations. It may cover all imports and exports, specific categories of goods, or a single type. A trade agreement is an opportunity to open another part of the world to domestic producers. Generally, trade agreements, including labour provisions, are on the rise and becoming progressively more accepted. A broader study of labour clauses in regional trade agreements and effects on labour conditions revealed no evidence for the pro-labour-conditions effects of labour clauses in Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs).¹¹

Niger has been a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) since December 1996. The latest review of the trade policies and practices of Niger took place in October 2017.¹² Currently, no dispute cases were listed involving Niger.

Its location interconnects the main routes traversing Africa makes Niger a geographical hub for goods and services trade. The country shares direct borders with Algeria, Benin, Burkina Chad, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, and Nigeria. At the beginning of the 2010s, Western Africa experienced a solid economic growth. However, Niger's GDP share of imports and exports of goods and services started to dwindle, caused by the emerged crisis in Mali in 2012. It grew in intensity, spreading to Burkina Faso in 2014, exposing Niger to increasingly vicious cross-border attacks. Besides, the global Covid-19

pandemic since 2020 also closed borders periodically.

The Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) is an international public institution headquartered in Dakar, Senegal. It is linked to the West African Monetary Union (WAMU) with eight member states: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. The BCEAO has the exclusive right to issue currency throughout the member states of the WAMU. It issues banknotes and coins that are legal tender and redeemable throughout the member states of the Union.

Niger is part of the Economic Community of the West African States (ECOWAS). The treaty from 1993, revised in 2005, contains labour provisions with cooperation regarding harmonisation of labour law and social security and the consultation of the social partners.¹³ However, they do not embody minimum labour standards, nor do they require the application of national labour law but focus entirely on cooperation in labour matters.¹⁴ A new National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is in progress in line with ECOWAS's regional criteria to increase cross-border transparency in facilitating orderly and responsible migration and mobility. ECOWAS promotes a tripartite forum on social dialogue.

Niger is a West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) member, which established a common currency and a customs union between several ECOWAS countries. Apart from affirming that migrant workers of the member states can enjoy equal benefits as nationals, the WAEMU treaty did not include labour matters.¹⁵ WAEMU members have benefited from a stable exchange rate, low inflation, relatively low external borrowing costs and a depreciation of its real effective exchange rate.¹⁶ Niger also signed as a member of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) in 1998 to the framework for African integration in the Sahel region.

Forty-four African countries recently signed a framework protocol for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), included Niger in 2019.

Trading started in July 2020 to give member states time to adopt the pact's framework for trade in goods and services, intellectual property rights, investment, and competition. The free trade area can only affect when all protocols are finalised and ratified by at least 22 countries. The framework states that participating countries will need to remove tariffs on 90% of goods they produce by 2022 and eliminate non-tariff barriers to trade, such as long customs delays at the borders, import quotas, subsidies, and regulatory bottlenecks.¹⁷

The Cotonou Agreement set the European Union (EU) relations framework with African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries. It is the most comprehensive partnership agreement between developing countries and the EU, covering the EU's relations with 79 countries, involving 48 countries from sub-Saharan Africa, including Niger. The Cotonou Agreement aims to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty and contribute to the gradual integration of the ACP countries into the world economy. It is based on three pillars: development cooperation, economic and trade cooperation, and political dimension. The agreement reaffirms commitment to ILO's fundamental conventions and collaboration on various labour and social issues. Application to the Cotonou Agreement's extended to December 2020, and negotiation on the future deal are in progress. The negotiations work towards a substantially revised agreement with a common foundation at the ACP level combined with three regional tailored partnerships for Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. This deal expects to cover priority areas such as democracy and human rights, economic growth and investment, climate change, poverty eradication, peace and security, and migration and mobility.¹⁸ Niger is furthermore beneficiary to EU's Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) in the Everything but Arms (EBA) scheme where all imports to the EU from the LDCs are duty-free and quota-free, except for armaments.

The U.S. and the WAEMU, including Niger, signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) in 2002. The country was eligible for the U.S. African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) in

2020 and qualified for textile and apparel benefits. Niger was the U.S.' 160th largest supplier of goods imports in 2019.¹⁹

Niger is also eligible for tariff preferences under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) of several other countries: Australia, Belarus, Canada, Iceland, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Norway, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, and Turkey.²⁰

Niger is a member of the Organisation for the Harmonisation of African Business Law's (French acronym: OHADA), Common Court of Justice and Arbitration (CCJA), and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). As regards enforcing contracts, maximum time frames have been set for addressing disputes. Regarding the resolution of insolvency, OHADA's collective procedures for recovering ailing businesses have been adopted.

SOCIAL PARTNERS

Social partners are central to promote the realisation of core labour rights and social justice for workers by protecting freedom of association and collective bargaining in bi- and tripartite functions. These partners usually represent government institutions, trade unions, and employers' organisations.

Government

Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Protection (MELSP) manages the labour policy's fields. The ministry designs, controls, and monitors labour legislation geared for job promotion. The National Agency for Promotion of Employment is part of the ministry dealing with migration issues. MELSP's minister, Ben Omar, 55 years old, had died in May 2020 at the main hospital in the capital Niamey list by Covid-19.

Ministry of Youth Entrepreneurship is in liaison with other concerned ministries and is responsible for designing, developing, implementing, monitoring,

and evaluating the National Policy on Youth Entrepreneurship.

Administrative Public Agency (ANPE) is responsible, among other things, for jobseeker placements and contribution to the development and implementation of a national employment policy, through the implementation of programmes of integration and reintegration of the unemployed (see more in the Unemployment sub-section).

Trade unions

The 2010 constitution provides freedom of association and allows workers and employers to join and form unions regulated by the Labour Code. The *Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Niger* (UNTN), created in 1960, was the first union federation structure. Its name was changed to the *Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger* (USTN) in 1976. An upsurge of new trade union federations was initiated in 1996, peaking at thirteen since 2012. The main causes of division or formation of new federations are related to ideological, political, and leadership issues.²¹

Thirteen trade union federations are grouped in two alliances: Seven federations are united in the *Intersyndicale des Travailleurs du Niger* (ITN) that affiliate 245 trade unions. Six federations are coordinated in the *Convergence des travailleurs du Niger* (CTN), affiliating 69 trade unions (see also Appendix Table 16). During the 2010s, both alliances launched declarations concerning Niger's rising social tension.

Niger's trade union movement is strong, with around 70% of public sector workers and at least 50% in the formal private sector. Changes in the civil service structure during the 2010s caused many public employees to lose their jobs and affiliation to unions.

The government signed a memorandum of understanding with representatives of 12 trade unions organising the country's first professional elections of trade union leadership. According to the protocol, representatives of trade unions must

obtain at least 5% of all valid votes cast to be eligible for government budget support and sit on social dialogue bodies. Each elected representative will exercise a four-year mandate. The first election was held on July 31, 2019. According to the results compiled by the National Commission for Professional Elections, there were 45,283 voters, or a 24% participation rate, with five trade unions registering more than 5% of the vote and thus becoming eligible for government budgetary support.²²

Around 314 trade unions and twelve federations were registered in 2017. There are several independent trade unions, including Marche Katako, a large informal market in Niamey, which has its own union, the Union for Katako Tradespersons. Updated data of the federations membership rate are scarce. Roughly estimated trade union density reached 5.2% of employment in 2020 and 13% among employees (Table 3). Considering that several parts of the membership data are either missing or outdated, the results do not fully represent the trade union density (see Appendix Table 16). Other characteristics of the trade union movement are women's share of the total membership at 42% and affiliated organised workers from the informal economy to complete membership share at 84% (see more in the Informal Economy sub-section).

Table 3: Status of Trade Unions in Niger, 2020

Aspects	Values
Number of federations	13
Number of trade unions	>314
Trade Union Membership	>455.049 *
Trade union density (employment)	>5.2 %
Trade union density(employees)	>13 % **
Women's share of trade union members	42 %
Affiliated organised workers from the informal economy share of membership	84 % ***

* Data cover only from five federations (see Appendix Table 16).

** Excluding affiliated organised workers from the informal economy.

*** At least four out of five (84%) are affiliated in UGSEIN.

Note: The table use data just from USTN, CNT, CDTN, USPT, and UGSEIN.

Source: DTDA's Niger data collection tool, and own calculations.

An underdeveloped private sector challenges enrolment in trade unions. For example, USTN and

CDTN are mainly affiliating organised workers from the informal economy. From 2018 to 2020, USTN listed a membership growth from the formal sector at 10%, while 46% among affiliated organised workers from the informal economy. In the same period, CDTN registered a drop of 43% for the former group but a hike of 34% for the latter group, respectively.

An overview of the trade union federations status is available below and Appendix Table 16:

Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger (USTN)

USTN was established at independence in 1960 as UNTN. Its name was changed to the *Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger* in 1976 in connection with mergers. USTN has representation in eight regions and 71 districts; and had 56 affiliated unions with approximately 76,000 members from both the formal sector and the informal economy in 2020. The ratio of the number of paid-up members is 10%.

The organisation has promoted new policies focusing on the pooling of workers in the informal economy, a National Federation of Informal Economy Unions, and a sub-regional trade union caravan of informal economy workers and migrants. During 2020/2021, awareness-raising action on Covid-19 prevention measures was promoted by organised occupational safety and health committees. In addition, the USTN Young Trainers Network programme was implemented.

USTN is affiliated to ITN and internationally with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), and as a member of the Sub-Saharan Mediterranean Migrations Syndicate Network (RSMMS) and the Pan African Worker Education Program (PANAF). Furthermore, USTN is also a member of the central tripartite institutions supporting the social dialogue.²³

Women in leadership positions and decision-making bodies reached 31% in 2020. Besides, the number of youth members (below 30 years of age) in

leadership positions and decision-making bodies was 16% in 2020.

Confédération Démocratique des Travailleurs du Niger (CDTN)

CDTN was founded in 2001 as a breakaway member from USTN. It has 49 affiliated unions in the federation, with approximately 24,440 members in 2020. Nationally, CDTN is affiliated to ITN and internationally with ITUC.²⁴

Confédération Générale des Travailleurs du Niger (CGSL)

The CGSL was formed in 2006 and had around 35 affiliated unions. The organisation has demanded that committees for social dialogue be established in all administrations and enterprises and improvements in the conditions for maternity leave and working conditions in mines.²⁵Data are not available on the number of members. CGSL is affiliated with ITN.

Confédération Nigérienne du Travail (CNT)

CNT was founded in 1996 and has been one of the most prominent organisations affiliating 42 unions with around 75,000 members back at the beginning of the 2010s. Updated data of membership were not available. The organisation is nationally affiliated to ITN and internationally to ITUC. In recent years, the organisation has been involved in a debate about decentralising teachers' employment to the municipalities that face severe budget restraints putting teachers at risk of not receiving their salaries.²⁶

Union Générale des Syndicats de l'Économie Informelle du Niger (UGSEIN)

UGSEIN was established in 2006 and affiliated with 12 trade unions with approximately 252,000 members in 2020. All members are from the informal economy. UGSEIN is affiliated with ITN and internationally affiliated with the Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO).²⁷

Union Générale des Travailleurs du Niger (UGTN)

UGTN was established in 2001 and affiliated with 24 trade unions. Data are not available on the

number of members. CGSL is affiliated with the ITN. The organisation was involved in joint statements. For example, UGTN and USTN supporting the memorandum of understanding between ITN and the government in 2015 but emphasises the continued violations of worker's rights, turning attention to the Nigerien oil industry.²⁸

Union Syndicale Progressiste des Travailleurs (USPT)

USPT was established in 2006 and affiliated 32 trade unions with around 28,000 members back at the beginning of the 2010s. Updated data of membership were not available. USPT is affiliated with ITN.

Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT)

The organisation was established in 2009 and had 17 affiliated unions. No data were available on the number of members. CGT is affiliated with CTN.

Union Nationale des Syndicats des Agents Auxiliaires du Niger (UNSAAN)

The organisation has 16 affiliated unions. No data were available on the number of members. UNSAAN is affiliated with CTN.

Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Niger (CSTN)

The organisation has 13 affiliated unions and was founded in 2009. No data were available on the number of members. CGT is affiliated with CTN.

Union des Syndicats Libres des Travailleurs (USLT)

The organisation has 13 affiliated unions and was established in 2010. Breakaway members from CNT founded it. No data were available on the number of members. USLT remains affiliated with CTN.

Union des Syndicats Libres des Auxiliaires du Niger (USLAN)

The organisation has 10 affiliated unions. No data were available on the number of members. USLAN is affiliated with CTN.

Union Démocratique des Travailleurs du Niger (UDTN)

No data were available on the number of unions and members. UDTN is affiliated with CTN.

Employers' Organisations

In 2020, employers constituted around 0.8% of Niger's total employment, significantly lower than the Western Africa average at 2.9% (see more in Figure 4 ahead).

An overview of employers' organisation status is available below.

Conseil National du Patronat Nigérien - (CNPN)

CNPN was created in 2001 during a General Assembly of Employers' Associations of Niger. The organisation is a union merged by the two largest employers' unions (SPEN and SYNAPEN) and now has 17 affiliated organisations. CNPN plays a role in developing the private sector and supporting its members. They are affiliated with the International Organisation of Employers (IOE).

Fédération des Organisations Patronales du Niger (FOP-Niger)

FOP-Niger was created in 2006 and now has several member employers' organisations joined together to defend and safeguard their interests and work for the country's socio-economic development. It held its 3rd ordinary general assembly in May 2017.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Niger (CCIN) plays a central part in coordinating various international trade operators. Since January 2007, they managed the Business Start-up Centre (CFE), supporting simplifying administrative formalities for new enterprises across Niger's regions. In 2014, the CFE was expanded to a Business Centre operated by the CCIN.

The National Network of Chambers of Agriculture of Niger (RECA) actively promotes agricultural products, including their export. The new Chamber of Craft Trades of Niger (CMANI) was set up in

2014 but does not yet have a website to publicise its products.²⁹

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Social dialogue encompasses all types of negotiation, consultation, or exchange of information between, or among, representatives of social partners on common interest issues relating to economic and social policy. It can be informal or institutionalised, and often it is a combination of the two. It can take place at the national, regional or enterprise level.³⁰

Niger ratified ILO's Tripartite Consultation Convention (C144) in 2018 and the Collective Bargaining Convention (C154) back in 1985 (revisit Appendix Table 17), and the Labour Code recognises the right to collective bargaining.

Nigerien organised employers and workers are represented in several essential social dialogue forums, including the International Labour Conference (ILC). The function of these forums has been challenged by weak coordination. Part of this involves that institutionalised national social dialogue remains relatively nascent. In 2015, the government launched the national dialogue, supported by an inter-ministerial committee on social protection and a technical committee to implement the National Social Protection Policy (NSPS). The process brought together national stakeholders and development partners. Consultations were conducted to analyse the existing social protection programmes and measures, identify guarantees to implement the NSPS and set the national social protection floor (see more in the Social Protection section).³¹

The right to collective bargaining has generally been respected by employers in the formal sector and the government, except specific employees in the public sector are prohibited from bargaining collectively.³²

In Niger, the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) application could be concluded for a definite or indefinite period. CBAs usually provides better

benefits to the worker than others provided in the labour regulation. A CBA's provisions cannot be enforced if it has less favourable than those provided under the Labour Code.³³ During the 2010s, CEACR noted with satisfaction the several major collective agreements concerning workers in both the public and private sectors. Niger's system is characterised by multi-employer bargaining at the sectoral level, e.g., in the transport sector: a CBA was agreed between the transport sector union and the government in August 2015, establishing minimum standards for labour contracts, wage rates, working hours, and social protection. The Nigerien Ministry of Transport in charge of the CBA's implementation with a coverage benefitting at least 20,000 taxies, bus, and truck drivers. The national register listed 17 CBAs in 2019, dropping to 16 in 2020. Other CBA data from three trade union federation (USTN, UGSEIN, and CNT) showed coverage of around 4% of total employment in 2019. Data from 2020 from USTN suggested that the number of CBAs and coverage fell significantly mainly because of the economic disruption triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is worthwhile to mention that the widespread informal economy and dominance of micro-enterprises in the private sector continue challenging collective action's effectiveness under the scale of institutionalised tripartite social dialogue.

Central tripartite institutions

Numerous consultation bodies are set to promote social dialogue and often meet regularly. The status of the central institutions is summarised below.

Consultative Commission on Labor and Employment (CCLE)

The commission was formed in September 2012. It serves as counsel to various labour and employment matters, such as reforming the labour code, working condition regulations, and issues related to labour inspections and collective bargaining agreements, including wages. They can further petition the minister of labour to examine irregularities of collective bargaining processes. CCLE is presided

by the minister of labour and an equal number of representatives from workers' and employers' organisations.³⁴ The commission meets two times per year.

Superior Council of Communication (SCC)

The council is an independent administrative authority. The institution supports the independence of communication from the press. The council is composed of fifteen members, among others one representative of the President of the Republic, one from the President of the National Assembly, one from the Prime Minister, three representatives elected by the socio-professional organisations of the media of the private sector including, at least, one woman, three representatives elected by the trade-union organisations of workers of the media of the public sector including a journalist, a producer and a technician with at least one woman, one representative elected by the trade union organisations of workers of the telecommunications sector.³⁵

National Private Investment Council (NPIC)

NPIC was established by law on public-private partnerships and established an agency to facilitate the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ESCC)

ESCC assists the government and the national assembly by providing its opinions. It is competent to examine projects and bills of economic, social, and cultural nature, excluding financial laws and trade unions, are represented.³⁶ The council meets two times per year.

National Commission for Social Dialogue (CNDS)

CNDS was launched in 2000 as a quadripartite body for consultation and permanent reflection between the partners on issues relating to social conflicts of all kinds. The commission's mission is to promote social dialogue in Niger. It meets at least two (2) times a year in ordinary sessions convened by its chairperson. It may meet in extraordinary sessions, at the initiative of the chairperson or the request of two-thirds (2/3) of its members. The

CNDS held its second session for the year 2020 on December 8, 2020, in Niamey.

Other bi/tripartite organs

- Comité Interministériel de Négociation avec les Partenaires Sociaux.
- Comité Technique Consultatif de Sécurité et Santé au Travail.
- Conseil National du Travail.
- Comité Consultatif de la Fonction Publique.
- Commission Consultative du Travail.
- Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale.
- Comité de Pilotage de la Mutuelle Générale de Santé.
- Comités Techniques Paritaires d'Avancement de Titularisation et de Discipline.
- Fonds d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle Continue et à l'Apprentissage.
- Commission Nationale des Droits Humains.
- Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l'Emploi.

Dispute settlement

Niger's dispute resolution system is managed by several institutions depending on severity: the inter-ministerial negotiation committee with the social partners, National Labour Council (CNT), National Council for Social Dialogue (NCSD), Consultative Council of the Civil Service, Mediator of the Republic as well as labour inspectors. For example, NCSD met two times in 2020.

The Labour Courts handle individual labour disputes. They are preceded by a professional magistrate and two judges from the workers' and employers' organisations. The courts are divided into business sectors when deemed necessary. Collective labour disputes have several consultation steps led by a labour inspector and can ultimately be settled by an arbitration council appointed by the Minister of Labour.³⁷ Data of dispute settlements at the Labour Court level was 76 cases in 2019 and 54 in 2020.³⁸

Contesting an arbitration award does not carry any consequences for the applicant party. Nevertheless,

there are still uncertainties about whether parties to a dispute may object to an arbitration award and the consequences of such objection. ILO's CEACR had observations on the procedure for objecting to awards. Recourse to compulsory arbitration to bring an end to a collective labour dispute and a strike, in the absence of an agreement by the parties, is only acceptable when the strike may be restricted or even prohibited in the case of disputes concerning public servants exercising authority in the name of the state, in conflicts in essential services in the strict sense of the term, or situations of acute national crisis.³⁹

TRADE UNION RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Reports listed the authorities generally respected freedom of association, the right to strike, and collective bargaining, and workers exercised these rights. For example, the tradespersons and storeowners in several markets throughout the country staged unobstructed strikes during the year to protest new taxes and high energy costs. Unions exercised the right to bargain collectively for wages above the legal minimum and more favourable working conditions.⁴⁰

Several cases of trade union discrimination have occurred in recent years dealing trade union representatives not reinstated despite legal ruling; students injured and arrested during the demonstration; clashes and arrests during a protest against 2018 finance law; arrest and sentencing of trade unionist and journalist Baba Alpha; teachers responding to trade union called for a boycott arrested; one killed, more than a hundred injured and over 300 arrested during student protest; and SYNACEB deputy general secretary arrested.⁴¹ Violations were also happening on workers' wages, overtime, and working conditions in the extractive sectors, including gold and uranium mines, oil fields and refineries. It was reported that their employers did not adequately inform trade union members of the hazards of their jobs. In the mining sector, this was primarily related to the use of cyanide which constitutes a severe health issue for both the workers and surrounding communities.⁴² Besides, murders of trade unionists occurred in Niger.⁴³

The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Labour and Civil Service made efforts to reach out to administrative heads and religious and traditional chiefs to discourage forced labour, especially traditional slavery. In February 2020, the High Court reaffirmed the illegality of *wahaya*, the traditional practice of selling girls as young as seven into forced marriages, which also perpetuates hereditary slavery. Nevertheless, enforcement of the law was sporadic and ineffective, particularly outside the capital. Forced labour remained a problem, especially in domestic work and agriculture.

The Tuareg, Zarma, Fulani, Toubou, and Arab ethnic minorities, particularly in remote northern and western regions and along the border with Nigeria, practised a traditional form of caste-based servitude or bonded labour. Persons born into a traditionally subordinate caste or descent-based slavery sometimes worked without pay for those above them in the social order. Such persons were forced to work without pay for their masters throughout their lives, primarily herding cattle, working on farmland, or working as domestic servants. Estimates of the numbers of persons involved in traditional slavery varied widely.⁴⁴ Estimations from the Global Slavery Index ranking Niger as 26 out of 51 African countries (1 is worst) with an estimated prevalence at 6.7 of victims per 1,000 population in 2018.⁴⁵ This index should be interpreted with reservations.⁴⁶ The government also opened the first shelter for victims of human trafficking in 2019, which can accommodate children.

Forced child labour occurred. Thousands of boys as young as four and mainly from poor, rural families were forced to beg on city streets instead of paying fees for religious education. Girls from poor rural families were sometimes forced into domestic servitude. In Zarma/Songhai communities, social stigma against descendants of hereditary slaves interfered with their right to marry freely, own property, practice independent farming or other economic activity, and participate in politics.

WORKING CONDITIONS

After consulting with the Consultative Commission on Labour and Employment, decrees issued by the Council of Ministers set the guaranteed minimum wage (SMIG) for salaried workers in the formal sector. Niger's minimum wage was last changed in 2012, set at 30,047 CFA francs per month (US\$54), staying among the group with the lowest minimum wages in Africa. The minimum-to-median wage ratio was around 9%, not to mention far below the cost of living (Table 4). The lowest minimum wage was above the official poverty income level.

Table 4: Status of wages in Niger, monthly

	Current West African CFA Franc	Current US\$
Minimum wage (2012-current)	30,047	54
Median salary (2020)	332,000	575
Living Wage Individual* (2018)	834,000	1,500
Real minimum wage growth (2010s)	-0.1%	

* Based on the cost of living for a predefined food basket with national food consumption patterns in per capita units, for housing and for transportation, with a margin for unexpected expenses.

Source: WageIndicator.org; SalaryExplorer.org; and ILO.

Labour-related policies are active in employment, youth employment, skill development, poverty eradication, industrial policy, and employment policy in the health sector. Productivity and competitiveness policy is ongoing.⁴⁷ In addition, Niger's personal income tax and social security contributions for a single minimum wage earner with no children was estimated at 1% and 5% of gross minimum wage, respectively.⁴⁸

The Labour Code sets that the employer is obligated to prohibit all forms of physical or psychological violence due to labour relations and ensure a medical service for the benefit of their workers. Where adequate protection against the risk of accident or injury to health cannot be achieved by other means, the employer shall provide and maintain personal protective equipment and protective clothing that can be reasonably required to enable workers to perform their work safely. Employers are required to organise occupational safety and health (OSH)

training to benefit newly hired workers and those who change their job or techniques. Workers and all other interested parties, including temporary workers, must be adequately informed of potential occupational hazards in the workplace and informed about the available means of prevention. The law does not foresee the provision and maintenance of sanitary installations or clean drinking water to workers. When several companies perform simultaneously at the same workplace, employers must cooperate to enforce OSH rules.⁴⁹ The authorities did not effectively protect employees in the non-unionised sectors and the informal economy, complicating exercising the right to remove themselves from dangerous working situations or demand sick leave without jeopardising their employment.⁵⁰

Under regulating officials' remuneration and material benefits in state public administrations and establishments, public officials do not benefit from family allowances and other benefits and bonuses on equal terms. The government is preparing measures geared for a new apparatus to incorporate the legislation for women public officials to be entitled to the family benefit, including where both spouses are public officials.⁵¹

The Ministry of Labour and Civil Service employed around 60 labour inspectors in Niger in 2016, equalling one labour inspector per approximately 6,500 employees. This latter group is just a tiny share of the total employment: around one inspector per 107,000 employed. ILO recommends one labour inspector per 40,000 workers in less developed countries and one per 20,000 workers in transitional economies.⁵² Not only were monetary sanctions not commensurate with those for similar crimes, but labour inspectors were often inhibited by limited resources for transportation, fuel, and other necessities to carry out tasks effectively. Reports found that the Ministry of Labour and Civil Service inconsistently enforced minimum wages and workweek laws in the regulated formal sector.⁵³ Instead, a large majority of workers operate in the informal economy, including receive less than the legal minimum wage.

The Labour Code sets the legal workweek 40 hours with a minimum of one 24-hour rest period; workweeks of up to 72 hours for certain occupations such as private security guards, domestic workers, and drivers. The law provides for paid annual holidays. Workers may work for two weeks beyond regular work hours, in compensation for which they are entitled to two weeks' rest. Employers must provide premium pay for overtime. The bill calls for a maximum of eight hours of overtime per week, but this was not enforced. See more details in Table 5.

Table 5: Status of employment conditions in Niger

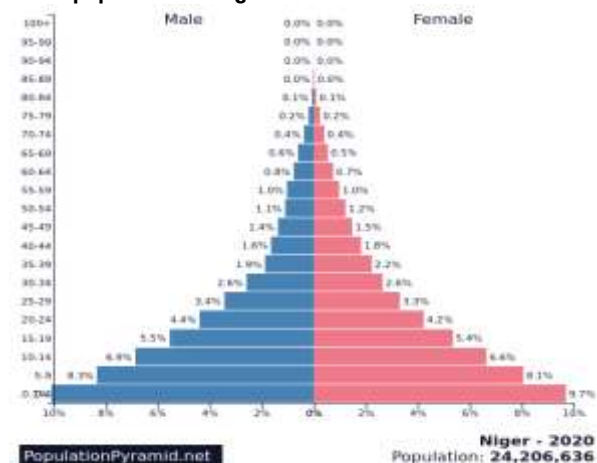
Indicators	Value
Fixed-term contracts prohibited for permanent tasks	Yes
Maximum length of a single fixed-term contract (months)	24
Standard workday	8 hours
Premium for night work (% of hourly pay)	37.5%
Premium for work overtime work (% of hourly pay)	10%
Paid annual leave (average for working days with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure, in working days)	22 days
Minimum length of maternity leave	98
Receive 100% of wages on maternity leave	Yes
Five fully paid days of sick leave a year	Yes
Unemployment protection after one year of employment	No

Source: World Bank, *Doing Business, Labor Market Regulation in Niger*.

WORKFORCE

Niger's population approximated 24.2 million people in 2020, growing annually at 3.9% during the 2010s. The fertility rate (births per women) fell just from 7.8 on average in the 1980s to 7.2 in the 2010s, placing one of the highest rates in the world. The life expectancy rate increased significantly from 41 years to 60 in the same period. Around 70% of the population are below 25 years old; 47% of the population is working age (15-64) (see more in Figure 3).

Figure 3: Population pyramid based on the age-sex structure of the population in Niger



Source: PopulationPyramid.net, Niger.

Projections suggested that Niger’s employment-to-population ratio stood at around 72% in 2020. Nigerien women have a significantly lower proportion than men, and the ratios are considerably elevated compared to the Western Africa averages (Table 6). Niger’s employment-to-population ratio dropped from 79% in 2010 to 72% in 2020, and its relatively high youth ratio is linked to the low school enrolment rates (see more in the Education section).

Table 6: Estimations of employment-to-population ratio in Niger and Western Africa, Age and sex distribution, 2019/2020

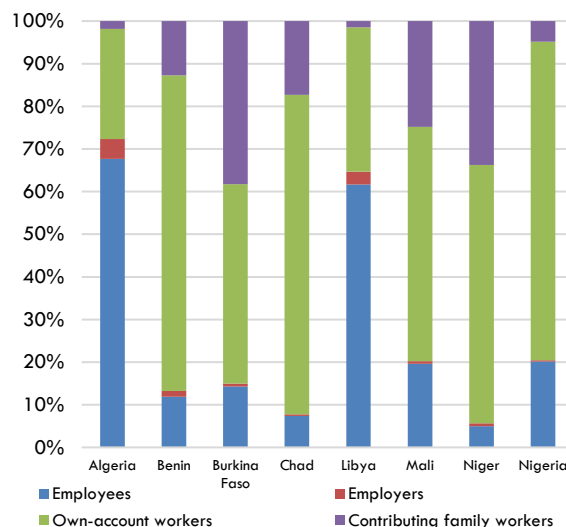
Sex	Age	Niger	Western Africa
Total	Total 15+	72 %	56 %
	Youth 15-24	61 %	34 %
Men	Total 15+	83 %	62 %
	Youth 15-24	71 %	36 %
Women	Total 15+	61 %	49 %
	Youth 15-24	50 %	31 %

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Imputed observations in Niger’s employment status suggested meagre changes and even worrying trends. The employees’ group appeared to drop from 10% at the beginning of the 2010s to 5% at the end of the 2010s, and employers stood flat at approximately 0.7%. Own-account workers dominate the employment at around 60% and contributing family workers at 34%, both in the rise on the margin during the 2010s and considered in

vulnerable employment. Indications suggest that the country has the lowest share of employees compared to the neighbouring countries (see more in Figure 4).

Figure 4: Projections of status in employment in Niger and neighbouring countries, %, 2019

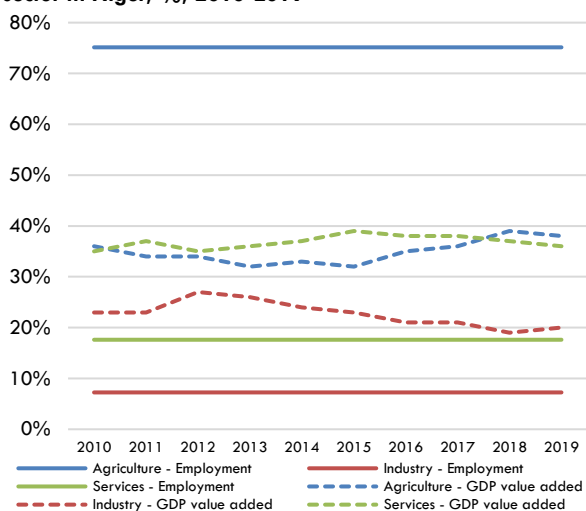


Note: The presented data are based on imputed observations and subject to uncertainty; it should only be used as proxy indicator.

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Projections suggest that Niger neither experienced significant sectoral employment changes during the 2010s. Around three out of four workers are in the agricultural sector, 7% in the industry sector, and 17% in the service sector in 2019. It is reflected in the low urbanisation rate (see more in the Migration sub-section). The sectoral aggregate GDP value-added detected some shifts: mainly the rise in the agricultural sector but a downturn in the industry sector. The former benefitted from better irrigation and a fast-growing workforce located in rural areas, while the latter suffered from declining international oil prices and security issues. The deep gap in the agricultural sector’s GDP value added to employment supports its relatively low labour productivity. The industry sector stayed underdeveloped, dominated by mining and the small-scale processing of agricultural products (see more details in Figure 5). This situation indicates that Niger does not move in the right direction to reach the SDG concerning inclusive industrialisation (see more in the SDG table, Indicator 9.2.2, on Page iv).

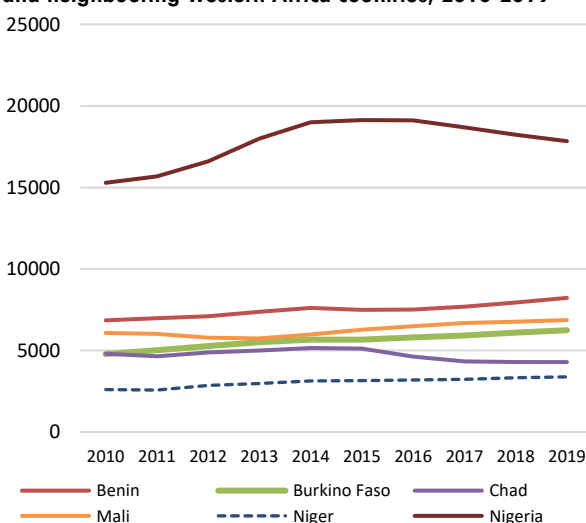
Figure 5: Employment and GDP value-added by aggregate sector in Niger, %, 2010-2019



Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM) and World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Niger's labour productivity grew slowly during the last decade and stayed significantly lower than the neighbouring Western African countries (see Figure 6). Niger's relatively low labour productivity is connected to work opportunities mainly from subsistence agriculture or unskilled activities in the service sector, a typical phenomenon in many sub-Saharan African countries. The country's industrialisation has been weak, reducing more access to formal productive jobs. The educational system fails to do enough to endow workers' skills demanded by the formal sector.

Figure 6: Projections of labour productivity trend in Niger and neighbouring Western Africa countries, 2010-2019



Note: Labour productivity is measured on GDP (in constant 2011 international dollars in PPP).

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Niger's public sector remains the leading employer for formal jobs. Only a few big companies are registered in the country. Besides, the national security factors closed several multinational and national companies during the 2010s. Generally, the private sector is nascent and poorly prepared to modernise production techniques and massive job creation. Data are scarce on the scope of micro-, small- and medium firms. The latest Enterprise Survey from 2017 showed a fragmented reality composed mainly of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) (more than 70% of registered actors in the country) in contrast with the widespread informal economy. Most firms are of recent formation, with less than 15 years of operation, and 86% of them formally registered when they started operations in the country. Most local SMEs do not use any licensed technology produced abroad. Additionally, they are the more reluctant agents to introduce innovation in the country, except for some small emerging realities.⁵⁴ The survey detected top ten business environment constraints mainly practising the informal economy and weak access to finance, electricity and/or to confront corruption, and cumbersome tax administration.

Unemployment and Underemployment

Niger's latest labour force survey estimated the unemployment rate at 7.8% in 2017, a hike by 5.6 percentage points since 2014. Projections of the unemployment rate based on household incomes surveys stayed below 1% since 2014 with minor gender gaps, not to mention holding much lower rates at all levels compared to the Western Africa averages (Table 7 and Figure 7). Unemployment is mainly an urban phenomenon for youth and is concentrated among workers with intermediate and advanced levels of education. Subsistence farming is occupied during planting and harvesting but not engaged full time during the entire year, creating some "disguised unemployment."

Table 7: Unemployment rate by sex and age, %, 2019/2020

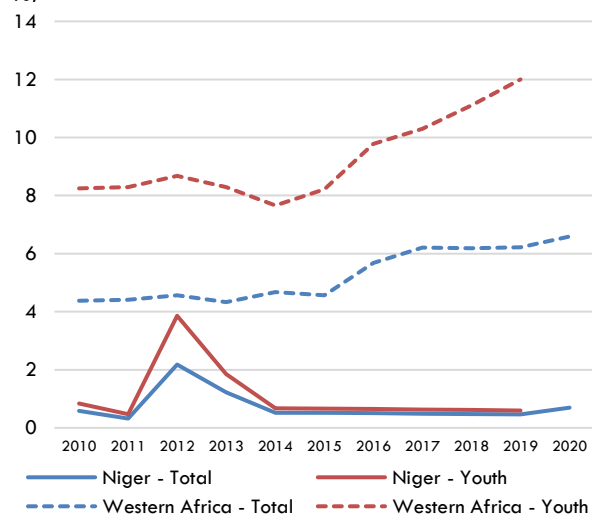
Type	Gender	Niger	Western Africa
Unemployment	Total	0.7 %	6.6 %
	Men	0.5 %	6.6 %
	Women	0.4 %	5.7 %
Youth Unemployment	Total	0.6 %	12%
	Men	0.4 %	12%
	Women	0.8 %	12%
Composite rate of labour underutilization *	Total	14 %	19 %
	Men	12 %	18 %
	Women	17 %	21 %

* The share of the extended labour force that are in unemployment, time-related underemployment, or the potential labour force.

Note: unemployment rates based on ILO modelled estimates.

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Figure 7: Unemployment trend in Niger and Western Africa, %, 2010-2020



Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Niger's broader composite rate of labour underutilisation was up to around 14%, with a gender gap at five percentage points and five percentage points lower than the Western Africa average (Table 7).

Although the economic slump in 2020, Niger's unemployment rate was not projected to rise fast as many other developed countries demonstrated. A majority operate in the informal economy, particularly subsistence agriculture, with no linkage to unemployment insurance schemes. Many others are pushed to casual activities in urban areas, often by lower hours, to survive.

The range of underemployment is a massive challenge: In 2008, an estimated 70% of the

employed worked less than 40 hours per week. Most of those were rural workers, making up the bulk of the Nigerien employment.⁵⁵ The occurrence of underemployment is particularly severe concerning payments, i.e., earned less than the minimum monthly wage. This position gives a glimpse of why many people remain working poor in Niger.

Another aspect is that unemployment is statistically part of the employed population, excluding persons outside the workforce. In Niger, around 28% of the working-age population was projected as inactive persons in 2019.

Migration

Seasonal migration has historically played an important role in Niger's economy and culture. Around a third of the rural population travel for seasonal labour during the Sahelian dry season. Destinations and work vary by community and ethnic groups.⁵⁶

The country's urbanisation rate stood at 16% during the 2010s while the neighbouring countries experienced upsurges at higher levels reaching: Algeria (73%), Benin (48%), Burkina Faso (30%), Chad (23%), Libya (85%), Mali (43%), and Nigeria (51%).⁵⁷ Urbanisation is driven mainly by poverty in most sub-Saharan African countries, searching for better job opportunities and better access to education and healthcare. It furthermore supports the fact of weak sectoral and status employment shifts in Niger. Urbanisation is driven mainly by poverty in most sub-Saharan African countries, searching for better job opportunities and better access to education and healthcare. Also, the Sahel region's outbreak of conflict during the 2010s triggered a growing Nigerien group of internally displaced people (IDPs), especially in Tillabery and Tahoua region, with around 300,000 IDPs in April 2021.

The country faced a higher outflow than the inflow of people during the 2000s seeking better labour opportunities in other countries. The net migration flow turned the scale during the 2010s facing a

higher in-migration (see details in Table 8 and Figure 8).

The country became a leading transit country for migrants travelling from Western Africa movements northwards towards Libya, Algeria, and the Mediterranean. Every year, up to 150,000 migrants enter Niger on their journey north. Migration often occurs in fragmented journeys, where crossing the border is only one step of the longer itinerary. In Western Africa, this tendency is evident in more complex and longer crossing times for regional traders and the criminalisation of regional migration.⁵⁸ The European Union (EU) external migration policies, supporting the implementation of restrictive migration practices and control measures, hindered some of Niger's out-migration flow.

Estimations suggest that around 402,000 Nigerien (1.7% of emigrants in total population) live abroad. Personal remittances accounted for approximately 2.2% of GDP on average from 2016 to 2020, standing lower than the sub-Saharan Africa average at 2.6%. Personal remittances mainly come from Nigeria, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and Burkina Faso; just around 2.9% of migrants are in the EU.⁵⁹

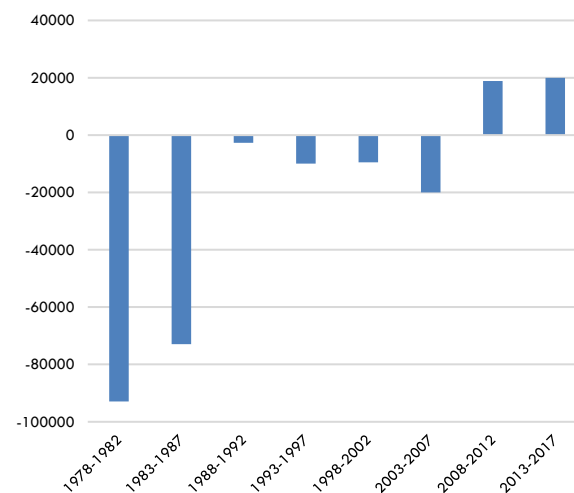
Table 8: Status of net migration flow, personal remittances, and refugee population in Niger

Theme	Value
Net migration rate per 1,000 population	0.18 (2020)
	0.21 (2015)
	-0.27 (2010)
Personal remittance (received), % of GDP (2016-2020 av.)	2.2 %
Refugee population (April 2021)	237,387

* Net migration is the net total of migrants during a period of five years, i.e. the total number of immigrants less the annual number of emigrants, including both citizens and non-citizens.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators; KNOEMA, Niger - Net migration rate; and UNHCR, Operational Data Portal.

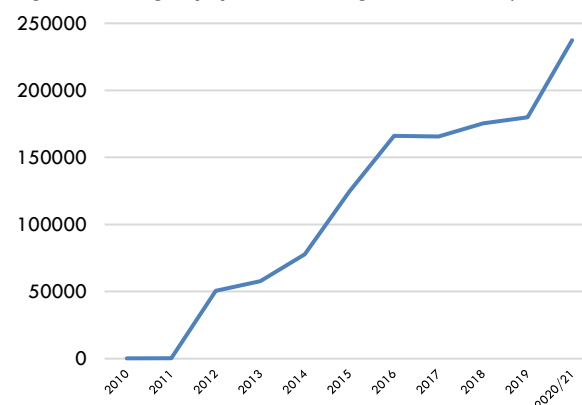
Figure 8: Net migration trend to average population in Niger, 1978-2017



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

The Sahel's deteriorating security situation introducing an accelerated influx of refugees in Niger: from close to zero at the beginning of the 2010s to 237,387 in April 2021, reaching approximately 1% of the population (see also Figure 9). Thousands of Western Africans have been returned to Niger from Algeria. Around 3,361 vulnerable persons in detention in Libya evacuated to safety in Niger since November 2017, as well as almost 36,000 returned Niger nationals from Nigeria.⁶⁰ Migrant flows into Niger continue.

Figure 9: Refugee population in Niger, 2010-2020/2021



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators; UNHCR.

After the Valetta Summit on Migration in November 2015, the government established an inter-ministerial committee to formulate a national policy on migration for Niger. The policy has not yet been published.

The government agreed with Saudi Arabia guaranteeing a minimum set of rights for workers from the Niger in Saudi Arabia (access to vocational guidance and training, the minimum age for admission to employment, employment of women, trade union membership and collective bargaining, remuneration, working hours, rest periods, paid leave, occupational safety and health measures, apprenticeship, and training). This agreement has been suspended for almost a year by Niger's government due to the Saudi Arabian government's failure to comply with specific clauses.⁶¹

ECOWAS established the main strategic framework regulating migration in Western Africa. Regarding the right of residence, a specific residence permit for ECOWAS citizens was not granted by Niger. African governments increasingly acknowledged migration as a strategic pillar in national development plans; all but two ECOWAS members – Benin and Guinea – cited migration in their national development strategies.⁶² The open borders in the ECOWAS cooperation legally allows migrants to go through Niger. Many face difficulties are getting across the border. For example, lots get stuck near the Nigerien border towns. It has become a significant source of economic activity as accommodation and travel-related services are growing in these areas.

The migration flows got disrupted during 2020/2021 as an impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Niger and its neighbouring countries closed their borders in several months. Many out-migrated workers got trapped in other countries and could not return. The global economic downturn most likely battered the personal remittances flow since many migrated workers lost their income.

Informal Economy

Agriculture and artisanal trade dominate Niger's labour market, embracing the widespread informal economy characterised by vulnerable employment conditions. Low education levels, weak social insurance coverage, not paying income tax, no contractual employment, and over-representation in

occupations receiving lower income than the minimum wage are features that stick to informality. These circumstances are associated with institutional weaknesses.

The scope of informal non-agricultural employment declined from around 91% in 2005 to 73% in 2017. The indicator demonstrated a significant gender gap for men and women, 67% vs 84%, respectively, supported by men dominating the formal sector (see more in the Gender sub-section). Nevertheless, this drop suggests the country takes some small steps of reaching the SDGs goal concerning development-oriented policies that support decent job creation and encourage the formalisation and growth of MSMEs through access to financial service (see more in the SDGs table, Indicator 8.3.1, Page iv). Another issue is that informal payment to public officials fell from 35% of firms in 2009 to 29% in 2017, the lowest rate among the neighbouring countries related to its narrow formal sector (Table 9).

Table 9: Status of Niger's informal economy, latest data

Indicators	%
The informal economy's share of GDP	65%
Informal employed in non-agricultural employment	73%
Informal payments to public officials (% of firms) *	29%

* Informal payments to public officials are the percentage of firms expected to make informal payments to public officials to "get things done" regarding customs, taxes, licenses, regulations, services, and the like.

Sources: Institut National de la Statistique – Niger; ILO's KILM, SDGs indicator 8.3.1; World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Other estimations suggest that the informal economy's contributing to GDP experienced a drop from 68% of GDP in 2012 to 63% in 2015 but rebounded at 65% in 2016. The fast-growing workforce, meagre economic and employment structural transformations, and the deterioration of the Sahel's conflicts at the end of the 2010s point to the stalled declining informal employment in non-agricultural employment.

In Niger, one of the noticeable disparities between the formal sector and the informal economy concerns wage gaps: On average, informal employees work approximately nine hours to earn what formal employees earn in one hour. Besides,

Nigerien informal workers are not covered by health insurance (see more in the Social Protection section).⁶³ Niger's high informality is also haunted by cumbersome business regulations (see Appendix Table 18). Some informality can also be a voluntary choice given their preferences, skills, competing earnings prospects, and job characteristics linked to cultural aspects.

Niger has not adopted a direct Tripartite National Informal Economy Forum, but broader policies address the status of informal economy workers. The country is one of the seventeen countries' signatory to the Organisation for the Harmonisation of Corporate Law in Africa (French acronym: OHADA). It operates with a policy on workers' status in the informal economy, directing actors' transition from the informal economy to the formal sector. It includes the legal status of an entrepreneur for a certain period (two years) with a private enterprise with a minimum capital of 102,000 CFA francs (US\$174). An assessment of this policy's results has not yet been available. In addition, workers in the informal economy were not covered by social security schemes until Law 2018-22 from 2018, determining the fundamental principles of social protection takes this category of workers into account (see more in the Social Protection section).

Organised workers from the informal economy are in progress. For example, two out of three (64%) unions in USTN affiliated organised workers from the informal economy, representing 56% of the federation's total membership in 2020. Aggregated affiliated organised workers from the informal economy of total trade union movement's membership reached 84% in 2020 with the women's share of 43%. This high share was driven by *Union Générale des Syndicats de l'Économie Informelle du Niger* (UGSEIN) representing at least 252,000 members in 2020.⁶⁴

During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, workers in the informal economy dramatically lost daily incomes and existential problems due to the weak coverage of social safety nets.

Child Labour

Around 51% of Niger's population is between 0-14 years old and growing fast; its median age of 15 years old. It signals an alarming youth bulge putting pressure on the education system and mounting job creation demands.

Niger ratified the two international conventions on effective abolition of child labour, C138 and C182 (see Appendix Table 17). The government promotes several policies related to child labour. The Labour Code prohibits the use of child labour and the employment of children younger than 14. The law does not apply to child's types of jobs or work outside an enterprise, such as self-employment or the informal economy. Children aged 12 or 13 may perform non-industrial light work for a maximum of two hours per day outside of school hours with a labour inspector's authorisation if such work does not impede their schooling. Children ages 14-15 are permitted to work (although there are limits on the hours and type of work) but are not permitted to join unions. In 2017, the minimum age for hazardous work was increased to 18; people under 18 can no longer work at jobs like quarrying, mining, welding, and construction.

Although Niger has a free and compulsory primary education, many children are working instead of attending school. The labour inspection system has a limited scope, reducing the ability to promote legislation and policies protecting children's rights to discourage child labour use. Besides, social programmes to combat child labour are insufficient to address the extent of the problem adequately.⁶⁵

Children in employment in Niger are often in the agricultural sector, regularly worked in subsistence farming from an early age, helping families try and maximise their food production. Many children work in mechanical repair, construction, street work such as market vendors, begging and scavenging garbage in more urban zones. Children also perform dangerous tasks in cattle herding. Many children engage in the worst forms of child labour, including in hereditary slavery and mining. Child labour is linked to poverty, weak implementation of social policies, and haunted by cultural aspects such

as loosely organised clandestine international networks forcing children in labour; forced begging by *talibes*–Quranic schoolchildren; hereditary slavery and largely unregulated artisanal mining operations or other bonded labour; not to mention children born into a traditionally subordinate caste or descent-based slavery became the property of their masters and could be passed from one owner to another as gifts or part of a dowry.

The statistical term ‘child labour’ is defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, potential, and dignity, harmful to physical and mental development.⁶⁶ Child labour’s scope is worrisome in Niger: Most recent data registered child labour was 34% from 2012 with no gender gap (Table 10). Child labour is more prevalent in rural areas than urban zones, 33% and 18%, respectively. Niger’s child labour rate is significantly higher than the African average but more in line with Western and Central Africa averages, 29% and 32%, respectively.⁶⁷ In addition, school attendance among Nigerien child labourers was up to 76%.⁶⁸ To achieve the SDG of eradicating child labour by 2025, the government needs to accelerate the efforts further (see more in SDG Table, Indicator 8.7.1, Page iv).

Table 10: Status of child labour in Niger and Africa, latest data from the 2010s

Country /Region	Type	Rate
Niger	Children in employment	-
	Child labour	34 %
	Hazardous work	-
Africa	Children in employment	27 %
	Child labour	20 %
	Hazardous work	8.6 %

Note: Children in employment: unpaid family workers are people who work without pay in a market-oriented establishment operated by a related person living in the same household. Child labour: work that is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling. Hazardous work: children in dangerous and unhealthy conditions that can lead to a child being killed, injured, or made ill because of poor safety and health standards or employment conditions.

Sources: UNICEF, Global Data Base, Child Labour; ILO, Global estimates of child labour: Results and trends, 2012-2016.

Gender

Niger ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) with some reservations. The country has not ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). In this Muslim-majority country, several traditions banned or deprecated the Protocol are common.

The legal framework spells out equality between the genders, but there is an unclear hierarchy between statutory, customary, and religious law. Most follow traditional practices where women have limited access to inheritance, land ownership, and child custody.⁶⁹ On the other hand, the government has promoted a gender policy during the last decade. Setting up institutions such as the National Observatory for the Promotion of Gender in 2015 created the Parliamentarian Gender Network to advocate for gender equality. Rising from just 1.2% in 1996 and 15% in the previous election, Niger’s level of women’s representation in the single-chamber parliament reached 26% in 2020. This shift attributed to the reform of the gender quota in 2019, which increased the quota target from 10% for elected positions and 15% for nominated offices to 25 and 30%, respectively.

Niger’s national strategy for preventing and responding to gender-based violence (2017–2021) does not explicitly address the question of sexual harassment in employment and occupation. Establishing a complaints procedure to enable victims to assert their rights effectively is considered necessary, considering the sensitive nature of this issue, and protecting the victims and any witnesses from reprisals.⁷⁰ On a broad view, gender discrimination persists based on complex cultural customs. For example, women spend much of their time on households’ care activities, especially in rural areas, reducing the possibility of income-generating activities, not to mention their relatively high illiteracy rate contesting job opportunities in the formal sector.

The global Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects the range of gender disparities, ranking Niger 154

out of 162 countries (1 is best) in 2019. This low ranking is mainly due to the relatively high maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rate, the significant gender gap among the population with at least secondary education and the labour force participation rate.⁷¹ The other Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) 2021 ranks Niger 138 out of 156 countries (1 is best). The country scores at medium-level concerning economic participation and opportunity (82) and political empowerment (97), low-medium at health and survival (124), and low level regarding educational attainment (151).⁷²

Table 11 displays gender gaps' scope in central employment indicators. Most men and women are in 'vulnerable employment' as unskilled labourers, traders, artisans, or subsistence farming with a relatively slight gender gap. Nevertheless, women are less likely to enter the labour market: when they work, they are more likely in informal part-time activities linked to time constraints from domestic chores. Some stark gender gaps are depicted in men dominating the employees and employers. During the 2010s, the employment-to-population ratio trend projected a drop, especially in rural areas for young men and women by 13 and 10 percentage points, respectively, linked the school enrolment rate on the rise (see more in the Education section).

Table 11: Estimation of workforce key indicators gender gaps in Niger, 2019

	Men	Women	Men/women ratio gap, percentage point (p.p.)
Employment	83%	61%	+22p.p.
Unemployment	0.5%	0.4%	+0.1 p.p.
Employees	7.3%	1.1%	+6.2 p.p.
Employers	1.1%	0.2%	+0.9 p.p.
Vulnerable employment *	92%	98%	-6 p.p.

* Aggregated own-account workers and contributing family workers.

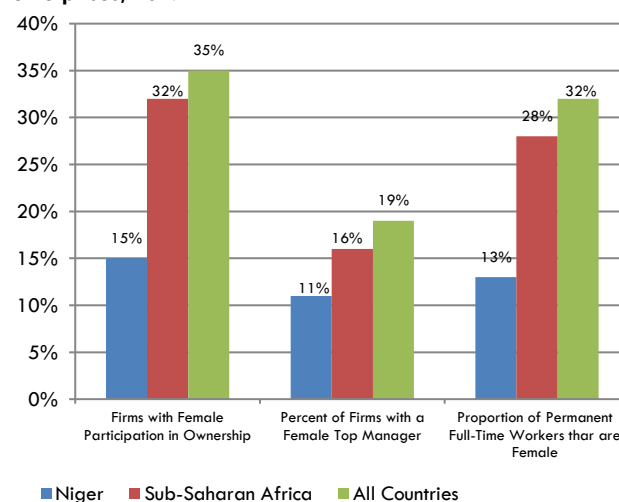
Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Studies found aspects that affected Niger's gender gaps in earnings and productivity. Plots owned by women yield 20% less per hectare than those managed by men caused by women-managed plots benefit from fewer hired labour days than men-managed plots and a lower incidence of

intercropping, use of irrigation, pesticide and use of fertilizer than do men-managed plots. In addition, enterprises owned by women show 61% lower profits than those owned by men. Gender gaps in profits are highest in textile manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and vehicle repair. Low levels of foundational skills and formality increase the gender gap. Unlike in agriculture, a driver of the gender gap in profits is low numeracy levels among women business owners. In addition, the gender gap in earnings is estimated at 29% when comparing similar men and women workers. In addition, to gaps in educational attainment, occupational segregation (the unequal distribution of female and male workers across positions and firm types) emerges as another important driver of the gender gap in wage earnings.⁷³

Gender disparities are also reflected in women's involvement in enterprises. Figure 10 shows that just 15% of firms in Niger had a woman participating in ownership, significantly lower than the sub-Saharan African average of 32%. Firms with a woman as top manager was just 11% and substantially lower than the regional average; by the same token Nigerien women are less likely to have a permanent full-time position, indicating that women are at greater risk of being vulnerable employment.⁷⁴

Figure 10: Women ownership and management of enterprises, 2017



Source: World Bank, Niger Enterprise Survey, 2017.

Youth

Niger's youth (15-24 years old) represent 20% of the population and around 33% of employment. Youths' insertion in the labour market and ability to engage in entrepreneurial initiatives is particularly acute.

Ministry of Youth and Sports and the National Youth Council (CNJN) oversee youth affairs for the government. Several policies promoted the economic integration of young people. Generally, most young people face difficulties entering the narrow formal labour market and finding other ways to support themselves.

Most young women live differently compared to young men. Young women self-definition is intertwined with socio-cultural values in terms of duties, responsibilities, and reputation. These factors are internalised for fear of being stigmatised, affecting their involvement in the labour market challenging them to achieve gender equality. For example, Niger has one of the highest child marriage prevalence rates globally, with 76% of girls married before 18 and 28% married before they turn 15.⁷⁵ Besides, the link between education and the prevalence of child marriage is particularly evident: 81% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 63% with only primary education were married or in a union at age 18, compared to only 17% of women with secondary education or higher.⁷⁶ In 2017, the government raised the mandatory school leaver's age for girls to 16.

A recent study found how Nigerien youths define themselves varies according to their local contexts. But in many cases, values and institutions that traditionally influence the youth's code of conduct are losing their influence. Nevertheless, socio-cultural norms often set the types of jobs that a young person can avail, depending on the social class. Two youth dynamics are emerging. First, some young people submit to the prevailing social rules to escape the pressure of society, i.e., following a trajectory valued by the youth's cultural values. Second, other young people either ignore traditional values' pressure or migrate to find new opportunities. Although public institutions are

present, some young people feel absent or often perceived as problematic.⁷⁷

Niger's trade union movement has been active in engaging with youths. For example, USTN implements policies and strategies on youth employment, mobilisation, and representation: 16% of youth (men/women below 30 years of age) are in leadership positions and decision-making bodies and put more emphasis on youth working in the informal economy.⁷⁸

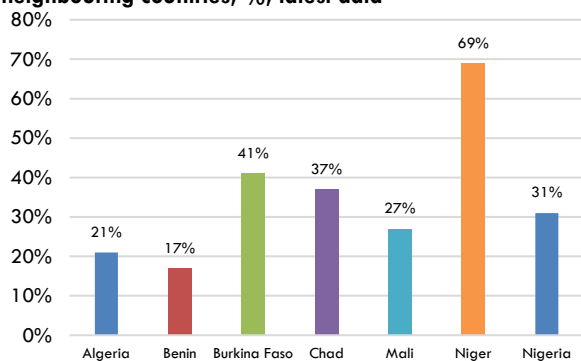
Like most countries worldwide, Nigerien youth stand in the precarious transition from education to work challenged by few new formal jobs available. The fast-growing population is creating pressure on the education system. Another issue is that rural youth have less access to education than their urban counterparts. It is in part due to lack of household income pushing families to send their youngsters to work. Lack of relevant education is another factor leading to young people in rural areas more frequent dropping out of school or migrating to cities.⁷⁹

The country's youth unemployment rate diverges significantly between the latest data from the labour force survey and household income survey, 17% and <1%, respectively, applying different methodologies. Still, unemployment is mainly an urban phenomenon coexist unemployment, underemployment, and a shortage of skilled labour, a source of frustration among youth. Most are stuck in vulnerable informal jobs where they often earn less than the minimum wage and social security coverage; others become economically inactive.

An overwhelming mismatch between job requirements and qualifications is present in Niger. Survey data found 40% of Niger's young jobseekers did not meet employers' needs as they were insufficiently qualified, with just 8% having received vocational training and 29% having no training. Besides, for long-term contracts, especially in a first job, 80% found that employers were hesitant to hire people without experience.⁸⁰ This situation is further reflected in youth's massive mismatch to the labour market: undereducated at

71%, matched at 25%, and overeducated at 4% in 2017. It places the country in a weaker position in shaping the economic and labour market outcomes, labour productivity, and competitiveness. Figure 11 shows that 69% of Niger's young people were not in employment, education, or training in 2017. Nigerien young men have a lower NEET rate than young women, 57% vs 77%, respectively. The NEET rate increased significantly during the 2010s and stood substantially higher compared to the neighbouring countries.⁸¹ The specific SDG goal targeting 2030 to reduce the NEET rate substantially, but as demonstrated, the data suggested that Niger is highly challenged to reach it (see more in SDG Table, Indicator 8.6.1, Page iv).

Figure 11: Projections of the NEET rate in Niger and neighbouring countries, %, latest data



Note: NEET rate is the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training.

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

Generally, the youth got hit harder by the economic downturn in 2020 as an impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, young people face a more adverse scenario for their opportunities for educational continuity and entry into the labour market. It will affect their social and labour inclusion trajectories, especially among those belonging to the low-income segment.

EDUCATION

During the last two decades, Niger's government launched several reforms to improve the education sector, including an education and training sector plan for 2014-2024 reaffirming the government's commitment to making education and training a priority.

The state's budget enhanced investments in the education sector: the government expenditure on education was 18% of total government expenditure on average in the 2010s, staying in line with Mali (18%) and Burkina Faso (19%), higher than Chad (11%) but lower than Benin (21%).

Schooling is free in the country, but many areas lack access to a school, reflected in the relatively low literacy rate: Among the youth (15-24 years old), the literacy rate increased from 20% in 2001 to 43% in 2018 while compared to people ages 15+ jumped from 14% to 35% in the same period. The latter literacy rate is higher than Chad (22%), in line with Mali (35%) but significantly lower than the other neighbouring countries. Table 12 illustrates that almost three out of four (72%) have less than basic education, 24% with basic education, just 0.8% in intermediate and 3.3% at the advanced level. All levels had significant gender gaps.

Table 12: Employment by education in Niger, 15+ age, %, 2017

	Less than basic	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Total	72 %	24 %	0.8 %	3.3 %
Men	70 %	25 %	0.8 %	3.9 %
Women	77 %	20 %	0.7 %	1.9 %

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM).

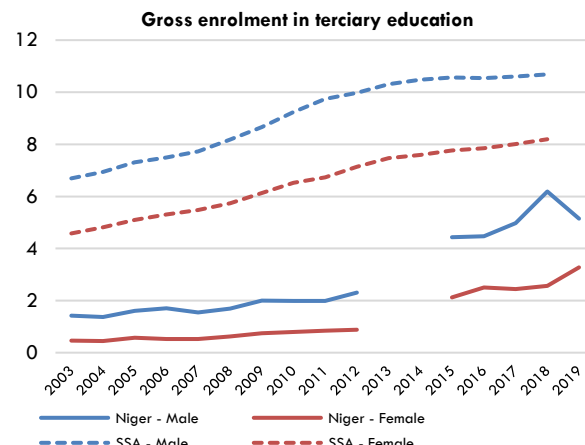
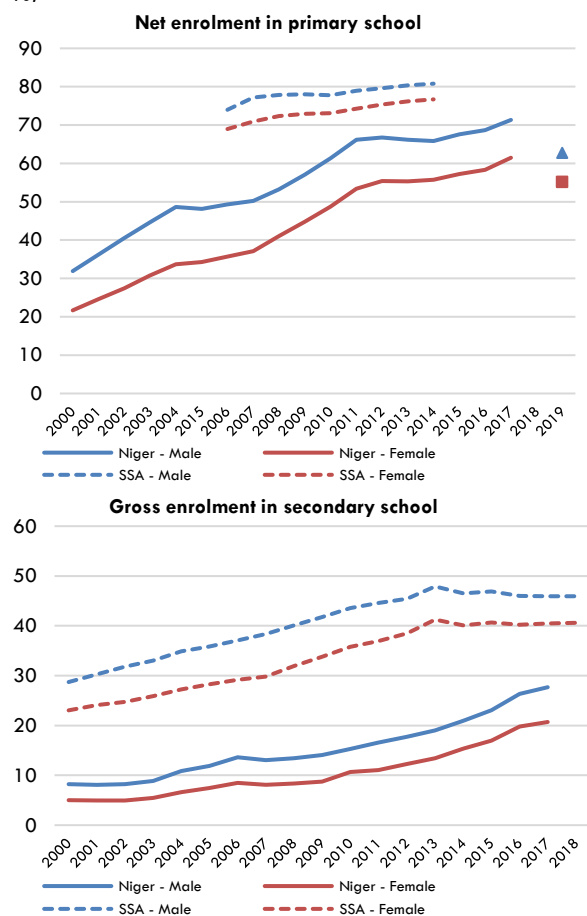
Schooling is compulsory for ages 7 to 15 for eight years. However, there is only about 25% of school attendance by primary-school-age children. Primary education lasts six years and is attended by children from the ages of 6 to 12. There has been a shift in the language used for primary school instruction – from French to one of the four different languages representing the ethnic group. Also, Koranic schools are widespread and continue their traditional teaching of Muslim theology, law, and history to preserve their heritage.

Figure 12 shows that net enrolment in primary school experienced an upsurge for both boys and girls during the last two decades, closing the gap to the regional average. Geographic gaps in school coverage and poor retention rates remain high; over 50% of children aged 7-16 are not in school.

The secondary school follows the French model of education. It is divided into a lower general secondary cycle that lasts four years, followed by a three-year upper cycle in which the student may specialise. The gross enrolment ratio to secondary education grew substantially from 7% in 2000 to 24% in 2017. A gender gap is present, but girls are following boys' enrolment tempo. A disparity to the regional average stays significant but declining. Safety concerns, the distance to school and child marriage prevent parents from enrolling their children.

Niger's foremost institution of higher education is the University Abdou Moumouni in the capital, Niamey, and the Islamic University. The gross enrolment ratio to tertiary education experienced a rapid upsurge during the 2010s with a widening gender gap. Niger's rates stay significantly lower than the regional averages.

Figure 12: School Enrolment in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education in Niger and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), %, 2000-2019



Note: 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 %. Source: World Bank, Education Statistics.

Projections suggest 1.2 million children will be ready for the first grade in 2030, up from 600,000 in 2020. To keep pace in creating more schools and the infrastructure, geopolitical instability and harsh weather put further pressure on the education system.⁸² Education's quality has worsened, and inequities have deepened, with the poorest and rural children least likely to attend school.⁸³ The primary school completion rate rose from 40% in 2010, peaked at 72% in 2016 but dropped to 62% in 2019.⁸⁴ On the positive side, the government took steps to reach more children by establishing tent schools or hut schools to serve the nomadic populations in the northern sector of the country. When the nomadic group moves, the school also moves, attempting to curb the attrition that the frequent mobility causes. The scale of this more flexible education was not available.

Niger's education system has struggled with low social demand for education tied to gender-based perceptions, especially female roles in the family. Especially in rural areas, females often expect to become responsible wives and mothers rooted in society. Factors that delay female's enrolment in education connect to gender roles, domestic responsibilities, child marriage and early pregnancies; inadequate learning environment; limited educational opportunities in rural areas; lack of qualified teachers, especially female teachers; and direct costs of education.⁸⁵

At the beginning of 2020, Niger was affected by the global Covid-19 pandemic. The government suspended classes in all schools across the country to limit the spread of the virus by March 28, 2020. It raised the school dropout risks and exacerbated the many other issues that children, especially those living in rural areas, girls, refugees, and internally displaced children. The application of remote learning was not an option for most students. Although some materials were distributed, the coverage was limited. Alternative solutions, such as radio programmes, were not developed to reach large numbers of children. Only a minority could stay linked to their schools through digital technology (see ahead). The majority, who live in rural areas, have not been able to continue their studies.⁸⁶ The government initially planned to reopen schools on October 1, 2020, but the floods of August and September 2020 forced it to delay it by 15 days.

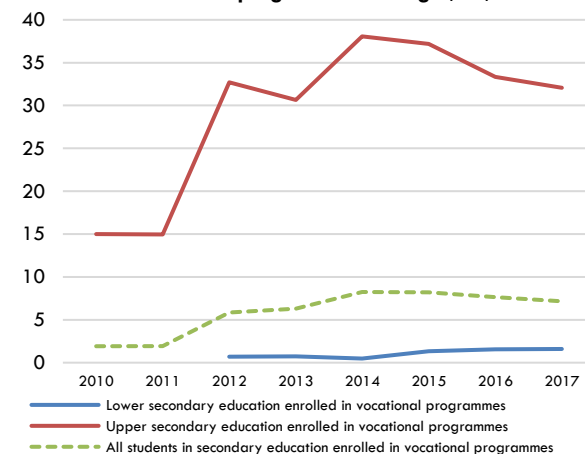
Vocational Training

Vocational training has been on the rise in Niger since the 2010s. As part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, a programme was promoted to develop higher education targeting vocational training or technical education in the basic cycle and short-term courses outside the school system. The government opened several new vocational and technical education centres, technical high schools, and technical high schools. In addition, the construction and outfitting of a Community Development Training Centre (CFDC) responsible for rural vocational training in every commune were planned to offer courses to artisans and farmers.⁸⁷

Nigerien students' enrolment in vocational training increased from 5,882 in 2010 to 56,458 in 2017, equalled a hike of 860%. Lower secondary education enrolled in vocational training continues extremely low while upper secondary education enrolment in vocational training grew significantly (see details in Figure 13). On the broader share of all students in secondary education enrolled in vocational programmes at 5.9% on average in the 2010s, the country in line with the sub-Saharan-Africa average (6.0%) and superseded several

neighbouring countries such as Benin (2.8%), Burkina Faso (3.2%), and Chad (1.4%). It is worth mentioning that Niger's relatively high share of all students in secondary education enrolled in vocational programmes connects to moderately lower enrolment in secondary education than the regional average (revisit Figure 12 above). Besides, the proportion of 15–24-year-olds enrolled in vocational education grew from 0.8% in 2014 to 1.0% in 2017. Nigerien teacher attrition rate from vocational secondary education reached 26% in 2017, with a significant gender gap of males at 29% and females at 12%.⁸⁸

Figure 13: Share of all students in secondary education enrolled in vocational programmes in Niger, %, 2010-2017



Source: World Bank, Education Statistics.

Niger's trade union movement has promoted short-term vocational training activities designed for workers in the informal economy, particularly for caterers and taxi bike riders. However, the trade union movement struggles to offer services outside of the capital area due to long distances and expensive transportation between regions.

In 2017, 27% of Niger firms offered formal training (firms offering formal training are the percentage of firms offering formal training programmes for their permanent, full-time employees). This rate fell by four percentage points since 2009 and stood below Nigeria (31%) but higher than Benin (20%), Burkina Faso (25%), and Mali (18%).⁸⁹ Formal firms continue being a minimal group compared to the widespread informal micro- and small enterprises.

The demand for technology services is increasing worldwide, which includes in Western Africa. However, Niger's education in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has been haunted by the digital divide at a slower tempo than other Western African countries and imbalances regarding the access to technology learning among the low-income/rural groups. Nigerien individuals using the internet increased from 0.8% of the population in 2010 to 5.3% in 2018, relatively low compared to neighbouring countries, for example, Benin (14%), Burkina Faso (16%), Chad (6.5%), Mali (13%), and Nigeria (7.5%). Demands for mobile cellular subscriptions increased significantly in the country from 22 in 2010 to 41 per 100 people in 2017, which was the lowest rate among all neighbouring countries. Computers' delivery practices to students are challenged by technical issues at the education level, e.g., lack of adequate computers, no connection of appropriate electric power, and no internet connection.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Niger has ratified two of six ILO's up-to-date social security conventions: Social Security Convention (C102) and Maternity Protection Convention (C183). ILO registered Niger's application of six out of eight social policy areas covering at least one programme: child and family, maternity (cash), employment injury, disability/invalidity, survivors, old age, but missing sickness (cash) and unemployment. Information on these programmes' status is scarce.

Niger's regulatory framework regarding social security comes from 1967 with several amendments. The right to social protection for all Nigerien was inscribed in the 2010 constitution. The National Social Protection Policy (NSPS) was launched in 2011 to reduce poverty and improve social protection, prioritising vulnerable groups. Besides, the Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES) 2017-2021 set the first five-year plan of Niger's Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth Strategy by 2035.

The National Forum on Social Protection in 2013 launched a dialogue process aiming at building a well-coordinated social protection floor. It seeks to balance a minimum but significant level of social protection for all, especially the poorest households and long-term financial sustainability for Niger. In 2018, the country approved Law No. 2018-22, determining social protection principles, including extending social protection to workers in the informal economy. However, the new legal framework did not define which branch of the social security system should be opened to workers in the informal economy. The potential branches of the social security system extended to the informal economy concerns: i) family benefits (in charge of maternity benefits), ii) work accidents and occupational diseases, and iii) pensions (disability, old age, death).

The social protection system lacks a strong information system and coordination. Data suggest that around 21% of Niger's population were covered by social protection focused mainly on vulnerable groups.⁹⁰ Proportion of older persons receiving a pension is below 6%. Besides, coverage of social insurance programmes is down to 1.4% of the population, reaching mainly the richest quintile and none among the poorest quintile (Table 13). These low coverages are haunted by the widespread informal economy, the state budget's limitations, and weak infrastructure for the rural population.

Table 13: Proportion of population covered by social protection systems in Niger, %, latest year

Indicator	Coverage
Population covered by at least one social protection benefit	21%
Employed covered in the event of work injury	6.9%
Poor persons covered by social protection systems	40%
Children/households receiving child/family cash benefits	4.2%
Persons above retirement age receiving a pension	5.8%
Vulnerable persons covered by social assistance	1.6%

Source: Niger's Ministry of Public Health, Report – 2020; ILO, World Social Protection Report 2017-2019; World Bank, World Development Indicators; DTDA, data collection tool 2021: Niger.

Niger’s health social protection coverage reached 66% of the population in February 2021, out of which 29% were enrolled in health insurance schemes. The percentage of population located more than five kilometres from health facilities, covered by mobile and outreach activities, rose from 50% to 53% from 2017 to 2020. These factors expose the challenges to reach the SDG’s social protection goal concerning, by 2030, achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable (see the SDG Table, Indicator 1.3.1, Page iv).

Social protection expenditures have more than doubled since the end of the 2000s. Part of this shift benefited the stabilisation of the political situation at the beginning of the 2010s. International donors returned, and new safety-net programmes were launched.

Niger adopted a National Health Financing Strategy for Universal Health Coverage in 2012, a work in progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) goals. International organisations registered more than 50% of the Nigerien population does not have access to health services. The quality of available health services and their coverage are both severely limited. Public health programmes are overstretched. Health service users must pay substantial charges. Overall, the health system is under-resourced.⁹¹ Table 14 shows that Niger’s health expenditures’ share of GDP was higher than the regional average but significantly lower concerning health expenditure per capita. Current health expenditure per capita was on the rise during the 2010s, peaking at US\$30 in 2018. It continues with the lowest average during the 2010s than the neighbouring countries. The country’s total health expenditure did not achieve a minimal US\$44 per capita level defined by the High-Level Task Force on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems (HLTF).⁹²

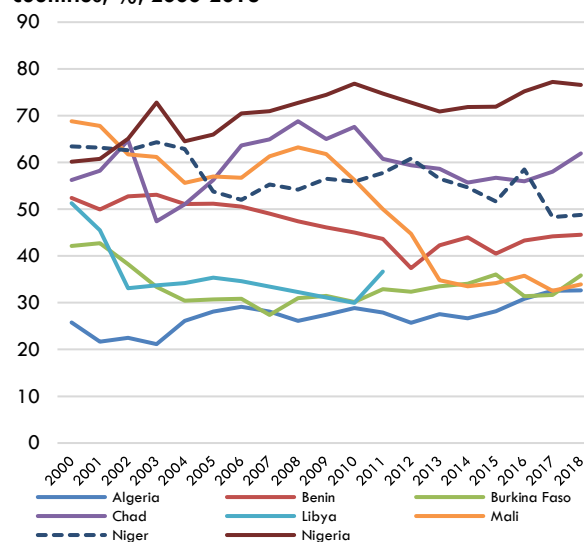
Table 14: Status of expenditure of health and social protection in Niger and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)(excluding high income), 2010-2018 average

Service	Niger	SSA
Total health expenditure (% of GDP)	6.6%	5.1 %
Current health expenditure per capita (US\$ current)	US\$ 25	US\$ 87

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Using health services has been on the rise in Niger: Maternal mortality fell from 663 in 2010 to 509 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2017, and infant mortality dropped from 61 in 2010 to 47 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019. There were also some headways regarding the access to drinking water rate, reaching 89% in urban areas and 77% in rural areas in 2014.⁹³ Figure 14 further depicts Niger’s share of health-care expenditure financed by private households’ out-of-pocket payments fell in the long run during the last two decades, supported by somewhat health expenditure per capita upsurge. The out-of-pocket payments reached 49% in 2018, landed in the middle of the neighbouring countries.

Figure 14: Out-of-pocket expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure on health in Niger and neighbouring countries, %, 2000-2018



Note: Out of pocket expenditure is any direct outlay by households, including gratuities and in-kind payments, to health practitioners and suppliers of pharmaceuticals, therapeutic appliances, and other goods and services whose primary intent is to contribute to the restoration or enhancement of the health status of individuals or population groups. It is a part of private health expenditure.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

Since 2005, medical maternity care has been free, including consultations, hospitalisation, care, caesarean sections, medical examinations, and procedures.⁹⁴ The physical access and geographical range limit the possibilities for pregnant women’s accessing proper health care. For example, only 10% of Nigerien roads are paved, and most transport in the country is pedestrian. Just 39% of the population had access to a health centre during the dry season, dropping

to 24% in the wet season within one-hour walking distance.⁹⁵ Moreover, maternity leave is mandated by law in Niger, with women receiving full compensation for the 98 calendar days those entitled in the formal sector. Considering the widespread informal economy, a large majority of women do not benefit from this right in practice.

The central actor in social protection is the *Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale* (CNSS), governed by the Ministry of Employment, Labour and Social Protection. Beyond the public sector's social insurance scheme, social protection has primarily focused on emergency assistance, often due to food shortages.⁹⁶ CNSS's social security schemes do not cover workers from the informal economy. But, after the approval of Law 2018-22, the fund initiated an ongoing review of the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy.

The contributory social security system provides income protection covering workers in the formal sector, thus a relatively small part of the population. The system comprises two schemes, one targeted at employees in the private sector by CNSS and the other targeted at public servants (*Fond National de Retraite*, FNR).

Nigerien workers from the informal economy have access to other private social security schemes, and enrolment increased from 8,173 in 2019 to around 25,000 in 2020, equalling a growth of 206%. In a broader view, the ratio of workers from the informal economy enrolment in social security schemes to vulnerable employment was extremely low at 0.1% in 2019 but up at 0.3% in 2020.⁹⁷

Around 15% of the Nigerien population is permanently food insecure and dependent on food assistance. In years of food crises, the share of

food-insecure households increased to about 50%. Between 2008 and 2017, the country suffered two severe droughts, which required massive international support to prevent famine. Simultaneously, the national prevalence of acute malnutrition ranged from 10 to 15%, shifting between the emergency and international alert thresholds.⁹⁸

The provision of social assistance varied greatly and was delivered as in-kind support in Niger. The Labour Code requires employers to provide severance pay to employees dismissed on economic grounds. The payment amount is one month of the employee's gross salary. Under collective agreement, employers also offer severance pay to employees with at least one year of continuous employment. The payment amount is a percentage of the employee's monthly salary for each year of service based on the length of service: 20% a year is paid for one to five years of service; 30% a year for six to 10 years; and 35% a year for more than 10 years of service.⁹⁹ Considering the narrow segment of formal employees with collective agreement guides a shallow coverage among Niger's workforce.

World Health Organisation argues that Niger, like many countries in the sub-region, faces the challenge of Covid-19 denial. Niger's intra-action review of the Covid-19 response in September 2020 identified several priority actions to be taken in the short term to improve the response and the response plan: i) the strong commitment of the government and technical and financial partners to support the fight against the pandemic, and ii) the involvement of different sectors, experts and layers of civil society has helped to improve decision-making and community engagement.¹⁰⁰

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL DATA

Table 15: List of approved labour related legislations in Niger, 2014-2020

Year / Theme	Law/decree
2014	
-	-
2015	
-	-
2016	
-	-
2017	
General provisions	Décret n° 2017-682/PRN/MET/PS du 10 août 2017 portant partie réglementaire du Code du Travail
2018	
Occupational safety and health	Law No. 2018-22 of April 27, 2018 determining the fundamental principles of Social Protection.
2019	
-	-
2020	
-	Decree No.2020-014 / PRN / MET/ PS of January 10, 2020, setting the terms of application of Law No. 2018-22 of April 27, 2018.
Occupational safety and health	Arrêté n° 0018/MET/PS/SG/DGT/DSST du 18 mars 2020 modifiant et complétant l'arrêté n° 0365 du 16 mars 2012 portant création, attributions et composition de la Coordination nationale des comités de sécurité et santé au travail.

Source: ILO, NATLEX, Country Profile, Basic Laws, Niger; DTDA, Niger: data-collection tool, 2021.

Table 16: Status of trade union federations in Niger

Inter-trade union federations	Trade Union Centers	Trade unions (2017)	Membership (2020)
Intersyndicale des Travailleurs du Niger (ITN)	USTN - Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger	48	75,748
	CNT - Confédération Nigérienne du Travail	42	75,000 *
	UGTN - Union Générale des Travailleurs du Niger	24	-
	CDTN - Confédération Démocratique des Travailleurs du Niger	44	24,400
	CGSL - Confédération Générale des Travailleurs du Niger	35	-
	USPT - Union Syndicale Progressiste des Travailleurs	32	27,513 *
	UGSEIN - Union Générale des Syndicats de l'Economie Informelle du Niger	20	252,348 **
Convergence of Workers of Niger (CTN)	CGT - Confédération générale du Travail	17	-
	UNSAAN - Union Nationale des Syndicats des Agents Auxiliaires du Niger	16	-
	CSTN - Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Niger	13	-
	USLT - Union des Syndicats Libres des Travailleurs	13	-
	USLAN - Union des Syndicats Libres des Auxiliaires du Niger	10	-
	UDTN - Union Démocratique des Travailleurs du Niger	-	-
Total		314	455,049

* Data from the 2010s. ** All are affiliated organised workers from the informal economy.

Source: DTDA, SRO data-collection tool, 2020; DTDA, Etude sur le mouvement syndical au Niger, 2017; ICTUR, Trade Unions of the World, 2016.

Table 17: Ratified ILO Conventions in Niger

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	1961
	C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	1962
Elimination of all forms of forced labour	C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930	1961
	C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	1962
Effective abolition of child labour	C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973	1978
	C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	2000
Elimination of discrimination in employment	C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951	1966
	C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	1962
Governance Conventions		
Labour inspection	C081 - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	1979
	C129 - Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969	Not ratified
Employment policy Tripartism	C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964	2018
	C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	2018
Technical Conventions (Up-to-date)		
Working time	C014 - Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921	1961
Wages	C095 - Protection of Wages Convention, 1949	1961
Social security	C102 - Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952	1966
Wages	C131 - Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970	1980
Industrial relations	C135 - Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971	1972
Vocational guidance and training	C142 - Human Resources Development Convention, 1975	1993
Occupational safety and health	C148 - Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977	1993
Labour administration	C150 - Labour Administration Convention, 1978	2015
Industrial relations	C154 - Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981	1985
Occupational safety and health	C155 - Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981	2009
Equality of opportunity and treatment	C156 - Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981	1985
Occupational safety and health	C161 - Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985	2015
Employment policy and promotion	C181 - Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997	2009
Maternity protection	C183 - Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)	2019
Occupational safety and health	C187 - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006	2009

Note: Fundamental Conventions are the eight most important ILO conventions that cover four fundamental principles and rights at work. Governance Conventions are four conventions that the ILO has designated as important to building national institutions and capacities that serve to promote employment. There are also 73 Technical Conventions, which ILO considers "up-to-date" and actively promoted.

Source: ILO, NORMLEX, Country Profiles, Niger.

Table 18: Ease of Doing Business in Niger, 2020

Topics	Value
Overall	132
Starting a Business	56
Dealing with Construction Permits	180
Getting Electricity	159
Registering Property	115
Getting Credit	48
Protecting Minority Investors	120
Paying Taxes	169
Trading Across Borders	126
Enforcing Contracts	114
Resolving Insolvency	114

Note: Doing Business 2020 indicators are ranking from 1 (top) to 190 (bottom) among countries.

Source: World Bank, Ease of Doing Business 2020 in Niger.

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