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Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

Workers in Informal Employment in Indonesia:

A Statistical Snapshot of 2019–2024



A street vendor in Solo selling food from his cart. Photo: Getty Images

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Indonesia's Labour Market 2019–2024

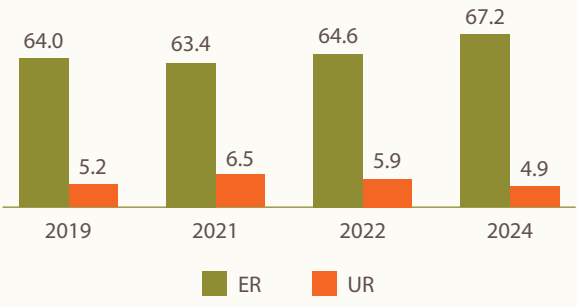
During the 2019–2024 period, Indonesia's labour market underwent three distinct phases:

2019–2021: Labour market conditions deteriorated, marked by a small decline in employment rates and rising unemployment rates.

2021–2022: Initial COVID-19 recovery phase, with employment beginning to increase and unemployment starting to decline.

2022–2024: Continued improvement, as employment rates surpassed pre-pandemic levels and unemployment fell below the 2019 level, indicating a strengthening labour market.

Employment (ER) and Unemployment Rates (UR) in Indonesia, 2019–2024 (%)





Jakarta's Pasar Senen market at night. Photo: Getty Images

Informality in Indonesia's Labour Market

There was little change in the share of informal employment in total employment, except in Jakarta.

Rates of informal employment

Geographic areas	2019	2021	2022	2024
Indonesia	74%	75%	75%	75%
Urban	64%	67%	66%	68%
Jakarta Metropolitan	49%	54%	53%	55%

2019–2021: During the pandemic, the net gain in the numbers employed reflected a structural shift in the labour market, with the creation of 3.6 million informal jobs alongside the loss of 1.3 million formal jobs.

-1.0M
men in formal employment

+2.7M
women in informal employment

2021–2022: In the subsequent recovery phase, the increase in women's employment outpaced that of men, particularly in informal employment. But in Jakarta, 17,000 women lost informal jobs, while 62,000 men gained informal jobs.

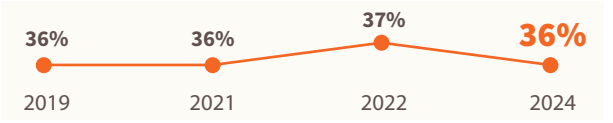
2022–2024: The increase in informal employment became more pronounced during 2022–2024, especially in the Jakarta Metropolitan area. In Jakarta, 164,000 women and 548,000 men lost formal jobs.

This flyer, based on WIEGO Statistical Brief No. 45, examines data on informal employment in Indonesia, with a focus on 7 groups of workers who are informally employed.

Industry Sectors of Informal Employment

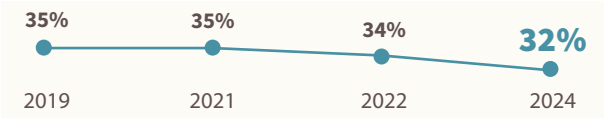
National level

Agriculture remained the dominant sector



Urban areas

Trade remained the dominant sector



Jakarta Metropolitan area

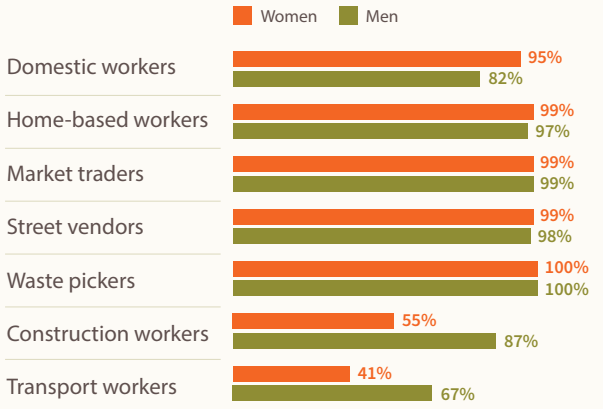
Trade remained the dominant sector



The Worker Groups

98% of workers in the seven groups covered in the analysis were employed informally.

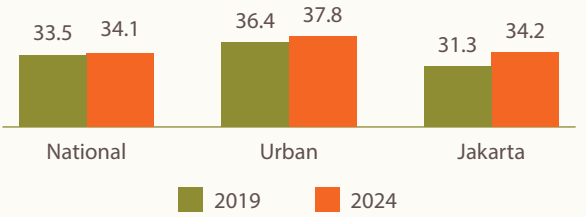
Worker groups: Share of informal employment in total employment, 2024



Worker groups (continued)

Nationally, the seven worker groups taken together accounted for around one-third of total employment throughout 2019–2024. Although there were year-to-year fluctuations, the share of the groups in total employment rose, from 36% to 38% in urban areas and 31% to 34% in Jakarta, while remaining at 34% nationally.

Share of the 7 Worker Groups in Total Employment, 2019 and 2024 (%)



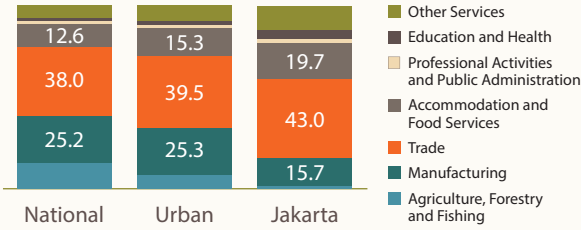
Between 2019 and 2024, the total number of workers in the seven worker groups increased from 43.1 million to 49.3 million. Women were consistently more concentrated in these groups than men. In 2024, the groups together accounted for 40% of employed women, compared with 31% of employed men.



A waste picker in Pasuruan. Photo: Getty Images

Home-based workers remained by far the largest group, increasing by 5.0 million workers – from 21.6 million in 2019 to 26.6 million in 2024. Home-based workers accounted for 16% of employment in Jakarta in 2024, 26% of women's employment and 10% of men's. The largest share of home-based workers was in the trade sector in all three areas during 2019–2024. In Jakarta, the trade sector was almost half of all home-based work in 2019, although it declined to 43% in 2024.

Share of Home-Based Workers by Sector, 2024 (%)



Worker Group Characteristics

- **Long working hours.** More than **40%** of workers nationally worked more than 48 hours per week. In Jakarta, just under **50%** worked more than 48 hours per week.
- **Gender earnings gap.** Average monthly earnings of women were lower than men across all geographic areas and worker groups.
- **Education.** Most workers had completed secondary education (**52-56% of women**; **58-64% of men**), with the largest gender gap among domestic workers in Jakarta (84% of men and 48% of women).
- **Age profile.** Most workers were aged 35–54 (**47–54% of women**; **47–50% of men**), with slightly more older women (65+) and younger men (15–24).
- **Second jobs.** Only a small share of workers in these groups (**12-14%**) had a second job.