NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT REPORT

2024-2025

Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship
Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

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Royal Government of Bhutan

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Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment
Royal Government of Bhutan

MINISTER

FOREWORD

Employment is not just a policy goal but the foundation of Bhutan's prosperity and self-reliance. As we present the National Employment Report 2024–2025, my colleagues and I take encouragement from the progress achieved under the Employment Responsibility System (ERS), which remains our central mechanism for a coordinated, whole-of-government and whole-of-economy effort to create meaningful and productive work for all Bhutanese.

In the first year of the 13th Five-Year Plan, 8,274 Bhutanese secured employment through our collective initiatives, including 1,334 jobseekers who gained valuable international experience under the Overseas Employment Program. These outcomes reflect a growing alignment between policy intent and real opportunities for our people.

Yet, the findings of this report remind us of the challenges that remain. While the overall unemployment rate of 3.2 percent remains broadly within an acceptable threshold, the youth unemployment rate of 17.2 percent and the lower labour-force participation of women call for deeper efforts to link education and skills with emerging opportunities and to make our labour market more inclusive. The world of work is evolving rapidly, and our strategies must evolve with it.

To meet these emerging realities, the Ministry is revitalizing the Employment Responsibility System to make it more adaptive, data-driven, and performance-oriented. In parallel, we are finalizing the Prospective Job Plan (2025–2029) to strengthen skills alignment with new industries, build robust labour-market intelligence, and forge deeper partnerships with the private sector, so that employment opportunities extend equitably across all Dzongkhags.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to our partners across government, the private sector, civil society, and international organizations for their continued support. Above all, I acknowledge the resilience and creativity of our youth, jobseekers, and entrepreneurs, who remain at the heart of our nation's progress.

Together, let us shape a future of work that is inclusive, forward-looking, and anchored in Bhutan's timeless values of balance, dignity, and purpose.

Lyonpo Namgyal Dorji

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Employment Responsibility System (ERS) continues to serve as the central framework for coordinating employment creation across key government agencies, private sector, and stakeholders. Established under the mandate of the National Employment Policy 2013 (NEP), the ERS reflects the Royal Government's long-term vision of achieving full and productive employment for all Bhutanese.

The ERS adopts a cluster-based framework with five Economic Cluster Agencies (ECAs) such as the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE), Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MoAL), Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MoIT), Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (MoENR), and Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and a structured "3P Strategy" Prepare, Promote, and Place to streamline workforce development and strengthen labour market outcomes. In FY 2024–2025, the ERS facilitated employment for 8,274 individuals, including 1,334 through the Overseas Employment Program. Of this total, 6,591 were placed through cluster agency initiatives, underscoring the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration.

Overall, the ERS has demonstrated measurable impact in its first year under the 13th FYP, building on the strong foundation established in earlier plans. Yet, persistent challenges including gendered participation gaps, high youth unemployment, and skills mismatches require sustained policy attention and adaptive interventions.

Looking ahead, the Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship (DoEE), MoICE is preparing a comprehensive Prospective Job Plan (2025–2029) to consolidate gains, strengthen inter-agency coordination, and position the ERS as a dynamic engine of inclusive and sustainable employment creation.

2. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Origin and Inception

The ERS is a strategic mechanism of the Royal Government of Bhutan, to bring together multiple agencies to work in harmony towards sustainable and inclusive employment creation. Its foundation lies in the NEP 2013, which mandates the establishment of a system that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of the agencies engaged in employment-related activities. This strategy reflects the Government's overarching commitment, to achieve "full and productive employment for all Bhutanese."

The origin of the ERS can be traced to 10th March 2015, during which the Cabinet mandated the formation of a Task Force on Employment Creation (Cabinet Order: C-3/68/710). The Task Force was entrusted with proposing strategic responses to boost job generation and stimulate economic growth. Its recommendations, presented in August 2015 by the then Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (MoLHR), aligned with the Government's Five Jewels of the Economy and identified nine key sectors for targeted job creation, including Renewable Natural Resources (RNR), Tourism, Mining, Cottage, and Small Industries (CSI), Hydropower, IT-enabled Services, Construction, Medium and Large Industries (MLI), and Trading.

The ERS was subsequently endorsed on 17th May 2019 (Cabinet Order: C-3/22/150), with implementation commencing in the 12th Five-Year Plan (FYP) (2018–2023). By the end of the plan period, the ERS had facilitated 103,032 job placements and employment opportunities, far exceeding the initial target of 52,930 (later revised to 26,609).

Since 2022, the ERS has undergone a strategic revision to align with the priorities of the 13th FYP (2024–2029) and the emerging Economic Cluster Approach. This revision introduced five Economic Cluster Agencies (ECAs) namely MoICE, MoAL, MoIT, MoENR, BCCI as key implementing partners. It also replaced the earlier nine sectors with an integrated cluster-based framework and adopted the "3P" strategy: Prepare, Promote, and Place. These changes were operationalized through the endorsement of a revised ERS in June 2023, accompanied by a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and a Concept Note developed in consultation with all cluster agencies and focal officers of respective agencies.

In its first year of implementation, FY 2024-25, under the 13th FYP, the ERS facilitated employment for approximately 8,274 individuals under the economic cluster agencies including Overseas Employment Program (OEP), under the DoEE. Building on this momentum, the DoEE is preparing a comprehensive Job Plan (2025–2029) to further streamline and expand employment creation opportunities, ensuring that the ERS continues to serve as a dynamic and results-oriented mechanism for addressing Bhutan's evolving labour market needs.

SN	Program	Male	Female	Total
1	Economic Cluster Agencies	3,652	2,940	6,591
2	Unspecified ERS	125	224	349
3	Overseas Employment Program	488	846	1,334
	Total	**4,264**	**4,010**	**8,274**

Table 1. Summary of placements recorded in the 2024-25 FY, across ECAs, individuals not recorded under the ERS, including those placed under the OEP.

1.1.1 Labour Market Trends and Indicators 2024-25 FY

This section presents an analytical overview of the labour market indicators for Bhutan for the fiscal year 2024-2025, based on data derived from the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) reports. It covers labour force participation, employment structure, unemployment, wage levels, and sectoral employment patterns. The labour market performance in fiscal year 2024-2025, as analyzed through QLFS data and supplemented by information from the Bhutan Labour Market Intelligence System (BLMIS), highlights several critical trends.

1.1.1.1 Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)

LFPR is a key indicator of labour market engagement. The average LFPR for FY 2024–2025 stood at 64.9%, with a significant gender disparity - 74.1% for males and 54.7% for females. Rural participation was 67.7%, higher than 60.2% in urban areas, reflecting the continued labour intensity of rural economies. The participation rate remained relatively stable across the quarters, with a slight increase in the final quarter (Q4), indicating seasonal and possibly agricultural employment effects.

Quarter	Overall (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1st Quarter (Jul-Sep 2024)	65.1	75.7	53.5	68.7	59.1
2nd Quarter (Oct-Dec 2024)	64.8	74	54.6	67.1	61
3rd Quarter (Jan-Mar 2025)	64.3	73.3	54.4	67.1	59.8
4th Quarter (Apr-Jun 2025)	65.3	73.5	56.3	68	60.7
Average for 2024-2025	**64.9**	**74.1**	**54.7**	**67.7**	**60.2**

Table 2. LFPR trend over four quarters of the 2024-25 FY (by gender and geographical location).

1.1.1.2 LFPR by Sex and Age group (Q4, FY 2024-25)

This quarter's disaggregated analysis reveals age-specific participation rates by sex: Labour force engagement increases significantly with age, peaking in the 30-44 age group. The highest participation was observed among males aged 35 - 44 (96.3%), whereas female participation reached its highest among the 40 - 44 age group (76.5%). Youth (15–24) participation remained low, particularly for the 15–19 age group (5.9%).

Age Group	Male	Female	Overall
15-19	6.2	5.6	5.9
20-24	54.1	51.7	52.8
25-29	84.7	66.5	76.3
30-34	95.1	67.5	82.1
35-39	96.3	69.8	83.2
40-44	96.3	76.5	87.8
45-49	95.9	75.3	86.1
50-54	95.9	70.2	84.2
55-59	94.6	63.4	74.3
60-64	70	53.4	62.3
65+	43.6	31.5	37.6
Total	**73.5**	**56.3**	**65.3**

Table 3. LFPR trend over four quarters of the 2024-25 FY (by age and gender).

1.1.2 Employment by Sector (FY 2024-2025)

Employment distribution across the three broad sectors - Primary (agriculture and forestry), Secondary (industry), and tertiary (services) for FY 2024-2025 was as such: Primary sector (42.3%), Tertiary sector (42.7%), and Secondary sector (15.0%). This structure reflects Bhutan's gradual economic transition, with a slight decline in primary sector employment from Q1 to Q2, offset by growth in services. The tertiary sector consistently employed a large share, suggesting continued urbanization and service-led development.

Quarter	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)
1st Quarter (Jul-Sep 2024)	44.08	15.5	40.42
2nd Quarter (Oct-Dec 2024)	39.9	16.9	43.2
3rd Quarter (Jan-Mar 2025)	41.7	12.5	45.9
4th Quarter (Apr-Jun 2025)	43.47	15.15	41.38
Average for 2024-2025	**42.3**	**15.0**	**42.7**

Table 4. Quarterly employment summary by broad sector (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

1.1.3 Unemployment Rate (FY 2024-2025)

The national unemployment rate averaged 3.2% for FY 2024–2025, with females (4.3%) facing higher unemployment than males (2.5%). Urban areas experienced a higher rate (5.4%) compared to rural (2.0%), emphasizing urban job mismatch and youth unemployment concentration. Q3 had the highest quarterly unemployment (3.6%), suggesting seasonal or structural factors at play.

Quarter	Overall (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1st Quarter (Jul-Sep 2024)	3.1	2.4	4.2	2.1	5.1
2nd Quarter (Oct-Dec 2024)	3.11	2.3	4.4	1.8	5.5
3rd Quarter (Jan-Mar 2025)	3.6	2.7	4.9	2.4	5.7
4th Quarter (Apr-Jun 2025)	2.9	2.4	3.5	1.6	5.4
Average for 2024-2025	**3.2**	**2.5**	**4.3**	**2.0**	**5.4**

Table 5. Unemployment rate by gender and residential location (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

2.2.3.1 Unemployment Rate by Age Group and Gender (Q4, FY 2024-2025)

Youth unemployment remains a major concern. The 15–19 age group recorded a national unemployment rate of 17.2%, with a sharp difference between males (7.3%) and females (30.6%). The 20–24 age group also experienced high unemployment at 17.3%, suggesting persistent barriers to entry into the labour market. Unemployment was negligible beyond the age of 50.

Age group	Male	Female	Total
15-19	7.3	30.6	17.2
20-24	14.9	19.3	17.3
25-29	5.7	3.4	4.8
30-34	2.5	2.9	2.7
35-39	0.7	0.2	0.5
40-44	0.9	0.8	0.9
45-49	0.0	1.1	0.5
50-54	0.0	0.0	0.0
55-59	0.0	0.0	0.0
60-64	0.0	0.0	0.0
65+	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 6. Unemployment rate by age group and gender (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

1.1.4 Youth Unemployment Rate (FY 2024-2025)

Youth unemployment, defined for individuals aged 15-24, remains a key concern. The average youth unemployment rate during FY 2024–2025 was 17.2%, with females (20.7%) significantly more affected than males (13.8%). Urban youth unemployment was substantially higher (20.4%) compared to rural (14.1%), indicating continued urban saturation in employment opportunities and gendered barriers in job access.

Quarter	Overall (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1st Quarter (Jul-Sep 2024)	16.5	11.9	21.8	13.8	20.1
2nd Quarter (Oct-Dec 2024)	17.7	14.5	21.2	15.5	19.8
3rd Quarter (Jan-Mar 2025)	17.1	14.8	19.5	14.3	19.7
4th Quarter (Apr-Jun 2025)	17.3	13.8	20.3	12.8	22
Average for 2024-2025	**17.2**	**13.8**	**20.7**	**14.1**	**20.4**

Table 7. Quarterly youth unemployment rate by gender and residential location (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

1.1.5 Weekly Hours Worked and Income (FY 2024-2025)

Average hours worked per week and income levels are important indicators of labour market quality: The average working hours per week stood at 49 hours, with minor quarterly variations. Median monthly income remained constant at Nu. 20,000 across the first three quarters, but Q4 median income data was unavailable. The mean income averaged Nu. 24,789.3, indicating slight disparities above the median, possibly driven by higher earnings in urban or skilled sectors.

Quarter	Avg. Weekly Hours	Median Income (Nu.)	Mean Income (Nu.)
1st Quarter (Jul-Sep 2024)	50	20000	25820
2nd Quarter (Oct-Dec 2024)	50	20000	25070
3rd Quarter (Jan-Mar 2025)	48	20000	24545
4th Quarter (Apr-Jun 2025)	48	-	23722
Average for 2024-2025	**49.0**	**20000.0**	**24789.3**

Table 8. Weekly working hours and income earned (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

1.1.6 Employment by Major Economic Activity (FY 2024-2025)

The largest employment share was in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing, averaging around 160,000+ workers per quarter, illustrating the continued dominance of subsistence and semi-commercial agriculture.

Other major employing sectors included:

- Public Administration and Defence, peaking in Q3 (35,486),
- Education, with steady employment (~23,000–25,000),
- Wholesale and Retail Trade, with over 38,000 workers in Q1.

Industry-specific employment showed seasonal trends in Construction and Manufacturing, while emerging sectors like Information & Communication and Professional Activities maintained lower but consistent engagement.

Major Economic Activity	Q1 (Jul-Sep) 2024	Q2 (Oct-Dec) 2024	Q3 (Jan-Mar) 2025	Q4 (Apr-Jun) 2025
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	167,056	149,663	156,934	166,642
Mining and Quarrying	3,089	4,910	1,666	1,197
Manufacturing	23,283	26,159	18,644	27,028
Construction	26,328	27,557	19,456	24,758
Electricity and Gas Supply	5,952	4,343	6,501	5,007
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management	100	258	733	79
Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles	38,904	43,677	36,743	33,826
Transportation and Storage	15,105	14,966	19,178	16,640
Accommodation andFood Service Activities	16,982	17,214	18,117	19,212
Information and Communication	4,745	2,522	2,281	3,691
Financial and Insurance Activities	4,880	4,433	5,128	5,282
Real Estate Activities	918	156	1,309	361
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	2,114	2,305	1,313	1,634
Administrative and Support Service Activities	4,950	6,121	5,826	4,844
Public Administration and Defence	25,214	28,333	35,486	35,516
Education	23,169	23,916	25,331	22,569
Human Health and Social Work	8,127	8,518	8,768	8,297

Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2,538	1,203	3,573	1,031
Other Service Activities	4,565	7,796	9,113	5,486
Activities of Households as Employers	90	245	567	101
Activities of Extraterritorial Organizations and Bodies	913	408	97	126
Total	**379,022**	**374,705**	**376,764**	**383,327**

Table 9. Employment trends by major economic activity (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

2. Jobseeker Trends from the Bhutan Labour Market Information System (BLMIS)

While the LFS data provides a comprehensive picture of employment and unemployment dynamics across the economy, the BLMIS offers real-time insights into the active supply side of the labour market capturing those who are formally registered as jobseekers and actively seeking opportunities.

The jobseeker registration data from BLMIS for the fiscal year 2024-2025 reveals a total of 12,871 individuals who registered during the year of which the DoEE has recorded a total of 7,567 as employed (including 1,334 placed through the OEP). This volume correlates with the LFS findings on persistently high youth unemployment and gender disparities in labour force participation and job access.

2.1 Monthly Jobseeker Registrations

Registrations varied significantly by month, with a noticeable spike in the first quarter of 2025 (January–March). The highest number of new jobseekers was recorded in March 2025 (1,607), reflecting post-academic year transitions and graduation cycles. There was a gradual decline in registrations in the last quarter, possibly due to seasonal employment, program placements, or reduced outreach.

Month	Female	Male	Total
July,2024	583	546	1,129
August, 2024	387	524	911
September, 2024	337	492	829
October,2024	556	512	1,068
November, 2024	374	418	792
December, 2024	502	503	1,005
January,2025	578	783	1,361
February, 2025	639	710	1,349

March, 2025	763	844	1,607
April,2025	542	682	1,224
May, 2025	379	483	862
June, 2025	275	459	734
Total	**5,915**	**6,956**	**12,871**

Table 10. Overview of monthly jobseeker registration trend July 2024 to June 2025 (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

Though more males registered than females overall (6,956 vs. 5,915), the gender gap remained relatively narrow, supporting the LFS observation of increasing female engagement in the job market despite higher unemployment.

2.2 Jobseekers by Educational Qualification

The educational profile of registered jobseekers further substantiates the LFS findings regarding youth employment challenges. A significant proportion of jobseekers are Class XII pass-outs (4,569) and bachelor's degree holders (2,450).

Qualification	Male	Female	Total
PhD	2	2	4
Master's Degree	80	57	137
Bachelor's Degree	1258	1192	2450
Post Graduate	25	18	43
Diploma	291	132	423
Certificate	149	69	218
Class XII	2181	2388	4569
Class XI	125	79	204
Class X	1128	956	2084
Class IX & Below	956	601	1557
Monastic Education	52	2	54
NFE	37	26	63
No Education	672	393	1065
Total	**6,956**	**5,915**	**12,871**

Table 11. Jobseekers by educational qualification (Q4, FY 2024-2025).

This data emphasizes the critical need for skills alignment, enhanced career guidance, and employment facilitation programs to help bridge the gap between education outcomes and employment opportunities especially for youth and new graduates.

3. THE 3P FRAMEWORK OF THE ERS

The ERS adopts a structured "3P Framework" Prepare, Promote, and Place to address Bhutan's employment challenges in a coordinated and results-oriented manner. Each pillar plays a distinct yet interconnected role in ensuring that the Bhutanese workforce is equipped, informed, and successfully integrated into the labour market.

3.1 Prepare

The "Prepare" pillar focuses on building a workforce whose skills, qualifications, and work readiness match the evolving needs of the labour market. A key challenge identified in Bhutan's employment landscape, is the persistent mismatch between the skills possessed by jobseekers and those required by employers. This mismatch remains one of the leading causes of unemployment, even when job opportunities are available.

To address this component emphasises capacity-building, targeted skilling, and structured guidance to facilitate smooth school-to-work transitions. Initiatives include promoting internships, apprenticeships, and industry-based learning; providing short-term engagement opportunities for work exposure; delivering targeted training and industry attachments; and offering career counselling and advocacy to align aspirations with labour market demand. Through these measures, it works to close the skills gap, improve employability, and create a job-ready workforce adaptable to changing economic needs.

This component is a new addition to the ERS reports, highlighting the efforts of the respective economic cluster agencies as well as the DoEE. To better understand the link between labour market employability, skills, and job outcomes, the PREPARE component captures training and skill development initiatives implemented by the Ministry of Education and Skills Development

(MoESD), along with other cross-sectoral programs focused on training and development. The following sections outline how the ERS has implemented the PREPARE component across various agencies.

3.1.1 Skilling Program under the MoESD

A total of 101 different training programs were offered across eight Technical Training Institutes (TTIs) and Institute of Zorig Chusums (IZCs) training over 3,000 individuals in 2024-25 FY under the MoESD. The programs span construction, electrical trades, automotive technology, hospitality, ICT, agriculture, food processing, and traditional arts, with levels ranging from introductory courses, certificates level and diplomas.

The most common trades across institutions include welding, masonry, carpentry, plumbing, domestic wiring, and automotive technician training. Beyond traditional trades, emerging courses in cloud computing, EV technology, robotics, solar PV, and digital marketing are gradually expanding Bhutan's skill base.

In addition, the two Institutes of Zorig Chusum (IZC) contribute significantly to Bhutan's traditional arts and crafts training. Together, the TTIs and IZCs will supply Bhutan's labour market within 1–2 years with a pool of skilled and semi-skilled workers across multiple sectors such as construction and infrastructure (masonry, carpentry, plumbing, welding, heavy machinery operation), electrical and mechanical services (domestic wiring, electricians, mechanical fitters, HVAC specialists), automotive and EV sector (mechanics, auto electricians, EV technicians, supervisors), ICT and digital skills (cloud computing, digital fabrication, robotics, networking, digital marketing), hospitality and tourism (bakers, chefs, bartenders, hotel supervisors, tour operators), agriculture and food processing (culinary, floriculture, landscape technology, product development), and cultural and creative industries (painting, sculpting, carving, embroidery, traditional arts).

These skilling programs from TTIs and IZCs represent a direct contribution to the PREPARE pillar of the Employment Responsibility System (ERS). They ensure that jobseekers acquire certified, industry-relevant, and future-oriented skills that align with national economic priorities. Through these programs, Bhutan builds a job-ready workforce, fosters participation in

both modern and traditional sectors, and strengthens the country's pathway towards inclusive and sustainable employment creation.

3.1.2 Agency Specific Skills Development Initiatives

3.1.2.1 *Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (MoENR)*

MoENR is responsible for sustainable management and development of Bhutan's energy, water, mining, forestry, and environmental sectors. In the 2024–25 FY, the MoENR achieved significant milestones across hydropower, renewable energy, mining, water, forestry, and climate initiatives, while simultaneously contributing to ERS by developing workforce skills, facilitating industry attachments, and promoting employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Key activities under PREPARE component include:

1. Energy Sector Training and Skills Development
    - Conducted specialized programs such as Mines Foreman and Blasters Training and Mines Supervisor Training, with private sector involvement in mineral and emission testing.
    - Launched an 8-day Solar Mini-Grid Technology training under the STAR-C initiative at the College of Science and Technology (CST), in collaboration with the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and MoENR, to enhance capacity in solar energy system design, operation, and maintenance.
    - Continued training support for hydropower and renewable energy projects, with periodic reviews of VTIs and college programs for relevance to current market demands.
2. Mining and Minerals Sector
    - Advanced geological mapping, mineral exploration, and airborne geophysical surveys to improve technical skills in mineral resource assessment and modern exploration methods.
    - Integrated Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) components in mines and quarries as per the Mines and Minerals Management Regulation 2022.
3. Forestry and Eco-Tourism

- Implemented infrastructure development for community-based eco-tourism and forest-based enterprises.
- Planned the establishment of OHS guidelines under the Forest & Nature Conservation Act to ensure safe working environments.
- Skills enhancement programs targeted at forest management, plantation maintenance, and biodiversity conservation.

4. Water and Waste Management
    - Delivered practical training in water management and watershed assessment, including handover of specialized equipment to CST for B.Sc. Water Curriculum students.
    - Supported skills development for waste management systems, private sector engagement, and carbon trading initiatives.
5. Internships and Industry Exposure
    - Provided internship opportunities across MoENR departments to facilitate hands-on experience and early career exposure in energy, water, mining, and forestry sectors.

3.1.2.2 Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MoAL)

Under the ERS 3P framework, Prepare initiatives by the MoAL in 2024–25 FY were designed to equip jobseekers, youth, women, and Open Air Prisoners (OAPs) with practical skills and knowledge for meaningful employment and entrepreneurship in the agrifood sector. A major intervention was the establishment of large-scale commercial farms, beginning with the Yarjugang farm in collaboration with the Royal Bhutan Police, which provides hands-on agricultural experience and generates income for OAPs. Further commercial farms are planned in Pemathang and Samrang, Samdrupjongkhar, expected to create additional employment opportunities.

Training and skill development were also delivered through Chirup Farms, providing income-generating opportunities in agriculture and livestock, and through targeted programs like the Bhutan Agri-Trade Investment Fair (BATIF), Innovation Challenge, and World Food

Forum, which engaged youth in agrifood system transformation. The Ministry facilitated internships for students and Class 12 graduates, providing practical exposure to farming, livestock management, and agribusiness operations. Business development support, including proposal reviews similar to Loden Fund and EPD programs, helped aspiring agri-preneurs formalize their enterprises.

In addition, career guidance, counseling, and registration of agri-preneurs in the Employment Exchange Registry (EER) linked participants directly to labor market opportunities. Collectively, these interventions prepared hundreds of youth, women, and OAPs for employment and entrepreneurship in the agrifood sector, enhancing their employability, skill sets, and readiness for emerging opportunities in Bhutan's growing agribusiness landscape.

3.1.2.3 Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MoIT)

The MoIT, a critical Economic Cluster Agency (ECA) under ERS, drives economic growth through sustainable infrastructure development, aviation services, and transportation networks.

Aligned with Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP), the sector prioritizes climate-resilient infrastructure, renewable energy integration, and enhanced connectivity. Strategic goals include modernizing transport systems, promoting green technology, and strengthening disaster resilience to support socio-economic progress. This sector is a cornerstone of Bhutan's economy, contributing to GDP through large-scale projects (e.g., roads, airports, energy) and enabling tourism, trade, and regional connectivity. It addresses critical gaps in rural accessibility and sustainable urbanization.

As an ECA, the sector directly supports ERS goals by generating employment via infrastructure projects, skill development programs, and industry partnerships, ensuring job creation aligns with national workforce targets.

Growth is anticipated in green infrastructure (e.g., solar projects), aviation services, and climate-resilient construction. Emerging roles in EV maintenance, renewable energy, and technical engineering offer robust opportunities, demanding a skilled, adaptable workforce.

Initiatives to Enhance Workforce Employability

The sector implemented comprehensive programs to equip jobseekers with industry-relevant skills, focusing on technical training, school-to-work transitions, and practical experience:

- Construction & Engineering: Over 500 trainees received On-Job Training (OJT) in road/bridge construction, masonry, carpentry, plumbing, electrification, welding, and tiling. Specialized courses covered surveying (50 trained), blasting (30), Bailey Bridge launching (40), and climate-resilient infrastructure design (60).
- Aviation: Issued/converted 120+ licenses (e.g., Aircraft Maintenance, Air Traffic Control) and conducted ICAO English proficiency checks for pilots. Trained 80+ personnel in EV maintenance and developed EV curricula for TVET institutes.
- Sustainability: Trained 70 field assistants in topographic/housing surveys and climate data application for disaster management.
- Internships: Accepted 200+ interns from colleges and Class 12 graduates in engineering, aviation, and renewable energy.
- Projects: Facilitated solar energy initiatives (e.g., DSPSI's Paro Airport project), creating 50+ deployment roles.
- Exposure: Organized 30+ airport/site visits for students and agencies to foster career awareness.
- Soft Skills & Counseling: Provided career guidance and soft skills training to 300+ jobseekers.
- Contractor Development: Induction courses upskilled 100+ new contractors; registered 200+ firms (consultants, builders).
- Online & Networking: Facilitated e-learning and networking events to broaden employability.

These initiatives directly prepared 1,500+ Bhutanese jobseekers for technical and aviation roles, enhancing workforce readiness and aligning skills with sector demands.

3.1.2.4 Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MoICE)

The MoICE plays a central role in strengthening the skills and employability of the Bhutanese workforce to meet the evolving needs of the labour market. Aligned with the 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP), the ministry's PREPARE initiatives focus on improving qualifications, promoting school-to-work transitions, facilitating short-term engagements, and enhancing practical experience through training, skilling, internships, on-the-job training (OJT), dual training programs, and career counselling.

- **Key Interventions**

Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDP): Entrepreneurship-focused programs, including Entrepreneurship Development Training (EDT) and Training of Trainers (ToT) on New Business Creation, equip individuals with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. In FY 2024–25, 957 participants completed EDT, gaining practical skills in business planning, financial literacy, and market orientation, while 50 participants completed ToT programs, building a qualified pool of trainers to cascade knowledge across communities. Collectively, 1,008 participants were prepared to pursue entrepreneurship or industrial roles.

Youth Engagement and Livelihood Program (YELP): YELP strengthens employability by providing structured work experiences, internships, and community service placements. Short-term engagements of one to twelve months were facilitated for 1,949 youth in private sector roles, mainly in accommodation and food services, manufacturing, and health and social work sectors. Internship opportunities were provided for 210 participants through government agencies, SOEs, corporations, and CSOs, while 378 youth participated in social service or non-profit projects for up to 24 months. These interventions enhance school-to-work transitions, provide industry exposure, and develop practical skills.

Skill Development and Career Support: MoICE emphasizes dual training, OJT, and industry attachments to improve job readiness. Career counselling, soft skills training, and advocacy initiatives were integrated into programs to guide youth in aligning their skills with labour market requirements. Participants received guidance to explore employment opportunities,

develop market-relevant competencies, and build confidence for both entrepreneurial and employment pathways.

Impact: Through PREPARE interventions, MoICE successfully prepared over 1,000 individuals, strengthened school-to-work transitions, promoted short-term industry engagements, and enhanced workforce skills aligned with national economic priorities. These programs foster a culture of innovation, practical skill development, and adaptability, contributing to a skilled, employable, and resilient Bhutanese workforce.

3.2 Promote

The "Promote" pillar seeks to enhance the visibility, accessibility, and attractiveness of employment opportunities, both domestically and internationally. It acknowledges that the existence of jobs alone does not guarantee employment unless jobseekers are aware of them and encouraged to apply. It also addresses the tendency of many jobseekers to focus on public-sector roles by promoting the potential of private-sector, entrepreneurial, and emerging-sector employment.

The "Promote" pillar of the ERS seeks to enhance the visibility, accessibility, and attractiveness of employment opportunities. It recognises that jobs alone do not lead to employment unless jobseekers are aware of them, understand the potential benefits, and feel encouraged to apply. . The pillar also addresses the prevailing preference for public-sector employment by showcasing viable career prospects in the private sector, entrepreneurship, and emerging industries.

The EPD under the DoEE plays a central role in this effort. EPD is responsible for cultivating an enabling ecosystem for entrepreneurship, facilitating market linkages, providing business development services, and promoting private-sector innovation. In FY 2024–25, EPD, in collaboration with government agencies, the private sector, civil society, and international partners, implemented a series of events and programmes aimed at inspiring entrepreneurial thinking, connecting talent with opportunity, and supporting enterprise creation.

3.2.1 Entrepreneurship Promotion and Events

Throughout the year, 27 major events were organised, reaching thousands of participants and generating both employment and self-employment outcomes. Flagship events such as Druk Tshongrig Gatoen 2024 attracted over 31,000 online viewers and 250 in-person participants, launching the Bhutan Economic Dialogue, Bhutan Food Dialogue, and an online Tshongrig platform for entrepreneurs. The Global Entrepreneurship Week 2024, themed "Entrepreneurship is for Everyone", brought together global and local speakers to inspire diverse audiences.

Targeted market and startup events had a tangible economic impact. The Entrepreneur Fair in Samtse enabled small businesses to sell out most products within two days, creating sustained local market linkages. The Zhemgang Startup Bootcamp trained 46 participants, producing 9 new business ideas , of which 3 received seed funding. Regional trade promotion was achieved through the 11th Bhutan–India Regional Friendship Trade Fair, hosting 60 exhibitors (20 Bhutanese, 40 Indian) and boosting the visibility of "Made in Bhutan" products.

Youth and grassroots engagement was prioritised through the National Startup Weekend & Bootcamp, which included the Little CEOs programme, training 67 school students in entrepreneurial skills, and the Samdrup Jongkhar Bootcamp, which trained 22 agri-entrepreneurs using CEFE methodology. Media outreach through the WoW Bhutan TV series featured 36 entrepreneurs, including 9 women, normalising entrepreneurship as a viable career choice.

Sector-specific events also demonstrated direct market impact: the 4th Made in Bhutan Exhibition and 2nd Watermelon Festival hosted 40+ exhibitors and sold 10 metric tonnes of watermelon from rural cooperatives, supporting farmers' incomes. Innovation-focused platforms like the Social Hackathon 2025 engaged 90+ youth to develop 10 social venture ideas, while Jabchor 2.0 connected 10 curated startups with 15+ investors, securing 8 investment agreements.

Capacity-building was sustained through accelerators such as SpringBoard Plus (supporting 11 early-stage startups) and the Nature-Based Accelerator (training 15 entrepreneurs in agriculture, livestock, and forestry). The International Hackathon brought together 70 participants to

develop blockchain-based applications, positioning Bhutan as a player in emerging digital markets.

In total, FY 2024–25's "Promote" interventions trained over 3,800 participants, facilitated 8 investment agreements, created market linkages across multiple districts, and generated measurable outcomes such as agricultural sales, funded startups, and increased entrepreneurial visibility through national media. The integration of entrepreneurship events, labour market intelligence, and career guidance under DoEE's leadership has directly expanded career pathways, boosted private-sector engagement, and contributed to an inclusive, innovation-driven economy.

3.2.2 Labour Market and Intelligence

In FY 2024–25, the Department strengthened labour market intelligence to bridge information gaps between employers, jobseekers, and policymakers, ensuring better alignment of workforce supply and demand.

The Employers' Forum was introduced to raise awareness of the Bhutan Labour Market Information System (BLMIS) and update employer–employee data. The first forum, held in Thimphu and replicated in other regions, enhanced the accuracy of labour market data, improving accessibility for policymakers, employers, and jobseekers.

In partnership with the Asian Development Bank, the Department launched the Youth Entrepreneurship Study to address the challenge of rising youth unemployment—where young people are four times more likely to be unemployed than those aged 25–34. The study assessed Bhutan's entrepreneurship ecosystem and provided evidence-based recommendations to position entrepreneurship as a strategic solution to unemployment, particularly in the underdeveloped non-farm private sector.

To directly connect talent with opportunities, 11 GOWA events were conducted—8 community-based and 3 school-based—offering on-the-spot recruitment, product displays, and career pathway guidance. Five career sessions were held in Technical Training Institutes,

schools, and institutions, covering labour market trends, labour laws, CV building, and interview skills, while linking participants to one-to-one career coaching.

The Career Bootcamp reached 2,600 Gyalsups across the four Gyalsung Training Academies, bringing together universities, skills organisations, and professionals to deliver practical guidance and mentorship. Feedback confirmed improved career clarity among participants.
Additionally, the Career Compass Toolkit was designed to support school counsellors in delivering structured guidance through 21 career-related programmes under four themes: Self-Discovery, Career Exploration, Career Planning, and Career Preparation.
These initiatives not only strengthened the quality and accessibility of labour market data but also actively promoted employment opportunities, career readiness, and entrepreneurship—helping jobseekers make informed decisions and employers connect with the right talent.

This component encompasses advertising job openings through multiple channels, facilitating referrals and job placements, organising job fairs and recruitment events, promoting post-skilling and reintegration efforts, and conducting awareness campaigns to highlight opportunities in high-growth sectors such as renewable energy, ICT, creative industries, tourism, and agri-business. “Promote” thus strengthens labour market connectivity, expands career options, and motivates wider workforce participation.

3.3 Place

Following the strategic interventions under the "Prepare" and "Promote" pillars of the ERS, this section presents the "Placement" outcomes assessing how many jobseekers were actually absorbed into the labour market during the fiscal year 2024-2025. The data presented here provides a performance measure of the ERS interventions during the fiscal year and reflects the national capacity to translate employment preparation and promotion into tangible placements.

The “Place” pillar represents the culmination of the ERS process, focusing on the actual placement of jobseekers into the labour market. It measures the effectiveness of preparation and promotion efforts by recording confirmed employment outcomes. This is achieved through the

BLMIS, which serves as the central platform for informing, connecting, tracking and validating placements across sectors and agencies.

"Place" functions as a performance indicator for the ERS, reflecting the national capacity to convert awareness, training, readiness, and opportunity promotion into sustainable employment. It closes the policy-to-practice loop, ensuring that employment generation strategies translate into real jobs that contribute meaningfully to Bhutan's socio-economic development.

Together, the three pillars; Prepare, Promote, and Place form a comprehensive framework that not only addresses unemployment but also builds a resilient, skilled, and adaptable workforce capable of thriving in a dynamic labour market.

This component is central to the ERS, as it operationalizes the transition from skills development to actual employment. By facilitating placements across multiple economic cluster agencies, it demonstrates a structured approach to linking trained jobseekers with industry demand. The 2024–25 FY data indicates that **8,274 jobseekers** were placed, with near gender parity (4,264 males and 4,010 females), reflecting strong inclusivity and outreach in the placement process.

Economic Cluster Agencies	Major Economic Activity	Male	Female	Total
MoENR	Mining and Quarrying	48	15	63
	Electricity and Gas Supply	63	22	85
MoAL	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	86	57	143
	Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management	5	11	16
MoIT	Construction	216	72	288
	Transportation and Storage	56	16	72
	Real Estate Activities	11	29	40
MoICE	Manufacturing	1,393	575	1,968
	Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles	226	100	326
	Accommodation and Food Service Activities	742	1120	1,862
	Education	75	152	227
	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	54	56	110
	Information and Communication	132	108	240
	Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	83	51	134
	Other Service Activities	461	556	1,017
	Overseas Employment Program (OEP)	488	846	1,334
Unclassified Sectors	Financial and Insurance Activities	16	15	31
	Administrative and Support Service Activities	25	36	61
	Public Administration and Defence	65	134	199
	Human Health and Social Work	17	38	55
	Activities of Households as Employers	2	1	3

Activities of Extraterritorial Organizations and Bodies	0	0	0
Grand Total	**4,264**	**4,010**	**8,274**

Table 12. Employment responsibility system (ERS), placement by major economic activity. (FY 2024-2025).

3.3.1 Strengths

PLACE successfully connects skills training to employment outcomes, ensuring that individuals who participate in PREPARE initiatives such as YELP, EDP, and sector-specific training programs have tangible pathways into the labor market. The diversity of sectors ranging from manufacturing, construction, and agriculture to services, education, and overseas employment illustrates an inclusive placement strategy that caters to varied skills, qualifications, and career aspirations. The high placements under MoICE (especially in manufacturing, accommodation, food services, and overseas employment) highlight the ministry's capacity to absorb a large volume of skilled and semi-skilled labor, contributing significantly to national employment targets.

3.3.2 Gaps and Challenges

Despite the overall success, critical gaps remain. Employment is heavily skewed towards certain sectors such as manufacturing and accommodation/food services, while emerging sectors like renewable energy, professional services, and information and communication employ fewer individuals relative to their growth potential. This may indicate either a mismatch between skills supply and market demand or limited outreach and capacity in these high-value sectors. Similarly, MoIT and MoAL, while offering vital placements in construction, transport, and agriculture, show lower absolute numbers, suggesting potential underutilization of available trained workforce or structural constraints within these sectors.

Additionally, while gender parity is evident overall, sector-specific disparities exist. For instance, female participation is concentrated in accommodation, food services, and overseas employment, whereas male participation dominates construction and technical sectors. This

highlights the persistent challenge of achieving equitable access to non-traditional roles for women, particularly in technical or infrastructure-related employment.

3.3.3 Implications for Policy and Practice

The PLACE component effectively operationalizes employment facilitation, but to maximize impact, future interventions should:

1. Strengthen alignment between PREPARE initiatives and sector-specific demand, particularly in emerging and high-skill industries.
2. Address structural barriers that limit female participation in technical and high-growth sectors, through targeted skilling, mentorship, and advocacy programs.
3. Expand monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track job retention, career progression, and the quality of placements, ensuring that employment outcomes are sustainable and meaningful.
4. Foster stronger linkages with private sector and industry associations to diversify placement opportunities beyond traditional or high-volume sectors.

PLACE is a critical pillar of Bhutan's ERS framework, translating workforce development into measurable employment outcomes. While it demonstrates inclusivity, sectoral diversity, and significant scale, critical gaps in sectoral alignment, gender equity in technical roles, and long-term career progression indicate areas where policy and programmatic refinements are necessary. Addressing these gaps will strengthen the effectiveness of PLACE, ensuring that Bhutanese jobseekers not only gain employment but also achieve sustainable, high-quality career outcomes.

3.4 Overseas Employment Program (OEP)

OEP was launched in 2013, with the objective to skill Bhutanese youth overseas and contribute back to the country after the completion of the engagement overseas. This as well helps jobseekers earn and get foreign exposure and opt self-employment avenues while back in the

country. A total of 1,680 jobseekers were placed overseas, with around 60% female, and 40% male. Similarly, the majority of the jobseekers were placed in the Middle East.

Sector of Engagement	Total Placement
Agriculture	6
Education/Skills Development	12
Finance and Accounts	38
General	5
Health	2
Retail and Sales	349
Tourism and Hospitality	922
Grand Total	**1334**

Going by the sector of engagement, the majority of the jobseekers were placed in tourism and hospitality, retail, and sales sectors. This program also, is recorded to have supported mostly class XII and class X graduates.

4. OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENTS

According to BLMIS records, a total of 8,274 employee appointments were made across various economic sectors in the 2024-25 FY (ERS: 6,940, OEP: 1,334). These appointments include both male and female employees and reflect placements in both public, private sectors as well as overseas employment programs of the DoEE. The data captures those employers and jobseekers who are registered and actively reporting in the BLMIS and as for OEP figures, data obtained from the BLMIS has been used.

However, it is important to note that the figure includes duplicate entries, where individuals changed jobs within the year and thus appear under multiple employer records. This duplication, rather than a data flaw, offers meaningful insights into Labour mobility, signaling increased flexibility and access to better opportunities.

Job Change Type	Male	Female	Total	Frequency
No job change	3450	2838	6,288	6,288
Changed job once	280	278	558	279
Changed job twice	42	48	90	30
Changed job thrice	4	0	4	1
Total	**3,776**	**3,164**	**6,940**	**6,598**

Table 13. Overview of jobseeker mobility over the 2024-2025 FY.

Note: The analysis covers only those recorded under the ERS (6,940) and exclusive of OEP.

Thus, the actual number of unique individuals employed during the fiscal year is estimated at 6,598, accounting for labour mobility.

4.1 Placement by Major Economic Sector and Gender

Sectoral distribution of employment highlights the key industries driving job creation. The Accommodation and Food Service sector led placements (1,862), followed by Manufacturing (1,968) and Other Services (1,017). These sectors reflect growing demand for both skilled and semi-skilled workers.

The table below presents the distribution of newly appointed employees by major economic sector and gender. This gives insight into sectoral absorption capacity and gender-based access to employment opportunities.

Major Economic Industry	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	86	57	143
Mining and Quarrying	48	15	63
Manufacturing	1,393	575	1,968
Construction	216	72	288
Electricity and Gas Supply	63	22	85
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management	5	11	16
Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles	226	100	326
Transportation and Storage	56	16	72
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	742	1120	1,862
Information and Communication	132	108	240
Financial and Insurance Activities	16	15	31
Real Estate Activities	11	29	40
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	83	51	134
Administrative and Support Service Activities	25	36	61
Public Administration and Defence	65	134	199
Education	75	152	227
Human Health and Social Work	17	38	55
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	54	56	110
Other Service Activities	461	556	1,017
Activities of Households as Employers	2	1	3
Activities of Extraterritorial Organizations and Bodies	0	0	0
Total	**3,776**	**3,164**	**6,940**

Table 14. Placement by major economic activity and gender.

Note: From the 6940 Placement, 2537 were facilitated by the Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship through the YELP Program. The majority of 1,334 placed overseas were in the Accommodation and Food Service sector.

Notably, the Accommodation and Food Service sector was the most gender-inclusive, employing more women than men, while Manufacturing and Construction remained male-dominated.

4.2 Employment Status of Appointed Employees

Of the 6,940 employees appointed in FY 2024–2025, the BLMIS also tracks their current employment status. This status helps measure retention and sustainability of employment.

Of the total appointed, 5261 employees (76%) were actively employed at the time of reporting. A significant number of resignations (1526) and terminated (125) were recorded, suggesting mobility and turnover within certain sectors or roles.

Current Status	Male	Female	Total
Active	2994	2267	5,261
Deceased	16	12	28
Resigned	709	817	1,526
Terminated	57	68	125
Total	**3,776**	**3,164**	**6,940**

Table 15. Employment status of appointed employees.

The data can be used to assess job retention and quality, and potentially align future policies to address causes of job exits, such as lack of career growth or job dissatisfaction.

4.3 Placement by Employer Type

The BLMIS system currently records employment placements from non-government entities including private businesses, corporations, NGOs/CSOs, foreign direct investments (FDIs), joint ventures, and individual employers.

Government-employed individuals, particularly those recruited through the Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC) or armed forces, are not captured in the BLMIS database as they are managed through separate administrative systems. However, a small number of entries categorized under “Government” within BLMIS reflect contract staff, interns, or those working in government-affiliated institutions (e.g., Royal University of Bhutan, hydropower projects, and other state-linked agencies), rather than formal civil servants.

As such, this data represents only the share of employment facilitated through BLMIS-tracked employers, with the private sector accounting for 86% of total appointments.

Employer Type	Male	Female	Total
Corporation	171	86	257
Foreign Direct Investment	158	160	318
Government	33	126	159
Individual	29	31	60
Joint Venture	66	41	107
NGO/CSO	27	48	75
Private Business	3291	2672	5,963
Missing	1	0	1
Total	**3,776**	**3,164**	**6,940**

Table 16. Placement by employer type and gender.

Note: The "Government-affiliated" category includes:

- *Contract, temporary staff like interns directly under ministries or government agencies (not under RCSC appointment); and*
- *Employees of institutions affiliated with the government but operating outside the formal civil service system, such as the Royal University of Bhutan, hydropower projects, and similar entities.*

4.3.1 Placement by Nature of Employment

During the fiscal year 2024–2025, a total of 6,940 individuals were placed across various forms of employment as recorded in the BLMIS. The placement distribution by nature of employment is as follows:

Placement by Nature of Employment	Male	Female	Total
Casual/Freelance	81	48	129
Contract	572	469	1,041
Intern	56	69	125
Own account worker (non-agriculture)	11	6	17
Regular	3022	2497	5,519
Training and Employment	26	70	96
Unpaid Family worker	8	5	13
Total	**3,776**	**3,164**	**6,940**

Table 17. Placement by nature of employment.

4.3.1.1 Observations and Insights

- Presence of high regular employment indicates strong demand for stable, long-term roles, primarily in private businesses and corporate institutions.
- Increasing contract employment indicates a moderate reliance on time-bound roles, commonly in government-affiliated projects and development programs.
- Internship and training-based employment opportunities reflect ongoing efforts to school to work transition efforts.
- In addition, a small number of placements under casual/freelance, own-account workers, or unpaid family workers, indicates minimal absorption into informal or subsistence-oriented work through formal referral systems.

4.3.1.2 Implications

The dominance of regular and contract placements suggests that the current employment environment is skewed towards relatively stable employment forms. However, the low representation of entrepreneurial or self-employment as well as freelance workers highlights an area for further policy support, particularly in youth enterprise promotion, strengthening digital or platform-based industries in the light of the rapidly increasing gig economy.

4.3.2 Placement by Dzongkhags

Geographically, the employment placements were spread across all 20 Dzongkhags, with notable concentration in urban and economically active regions:

Placement by Dzongkhag	Male	Female	Total
Bumthang	33	23	56
Chukha	790	414	1,204
Dagana	47	28	75
Gasa		1	1
Haa	13	19	32
Lhuentse	2		2
Mongar	14	37	51
Paro	327	357	684
Pemagatshel	64	55	119
Punakha	59	86	145
Samdrupjongkhar	197	129	326
Samtse	564	169	733
Sarpang	168	262	430
Thimphu	1297	1398	2,695

Trashigang	21	17	38
Trashiyangtse	50	19	69
Trongsa	4	16	20
Tsirang	28	34	62
Wangdue Phodrang	51	56	107
Zhemgang	46	44	90
Missing	1	0	1
Total	**3,776**	**3,164**	**6,940**

Table 16. Placement by dzongkhag and gender.

6 OBSERVATIONS AND INSIGHTS

- Thimphu accounted for 39% of total employment placements, reaffirming its position as the dominant employment hub, particularly in services and corporate sectors.
- Chukha and Samtse recorded high placements, likely linked to industrial zones, manufacturing, and hydropower-related projects.
- Eastern and some central Dzongkhags saw significantly lower placements, which may reflect fewer job opportunities, limited business presence, or lower reporting rates.

6.1 **Implications**

The regional concentration of employment placements underscores the need for balanced regional development and localized employment generation strategies. Interventions such as local skills training, enterprise support, and decentralization of industries may be critical to improving employment outcomes in underrepresented Dzongkhags.

6.1.1 Limitations and Data Integrity Notes

- Unregistered Employers/Informal Sector: The data may not capture informal or unregistered employment not reported to BLMIS.
- Partial Reporting: Some employers may delay or skip updating employment status changes, affecting the accuracy of active/resigned figures.

CONCLUSION

The ERS has demonstrated significant progress in its inaugural year under the 13th Five-Year Plan (2024–2029), reinforcing its role as Bhutan's cornerstone framework for coordinated, inclusive, and sustainable employment creation. By mobilizing the collaborative strength of five Economic Cluster Agencies (ECAs) and implementing the structured "3P Strategy" (Prepare, Promote, Place), the ERS facilitated 8,274 job placements in FY 2024–2025, including 1,334 through the Overseas Employment Program. This achievement underscores the effectiveness of inter-agency synergy and targeted interventions in addressing labor market needs.

Despite these gains, persistent challenges remain. Youth unemployment (17.2%) and gendered disparities in labor force participation (LFPR: Male 74.1% vs. Female 54.7%) and unemployment (Female 4.3% vs. Male 2.5%) highlight critical structural gaps. Skills mismatches, urban-rural divides, and sectoral imbalances further underscore the need for adaptive policy responses. The concentration of employment in Thimphu (39% of placements) and male-dominated sectors (e.g., construction, manufacturing) versus female-dominated roles (e.g., hospitality, overseas work) reveals opportunities for deeper regional inclusivity and gender equity.

Looking ahead, the Department of Employment and Entrepreneurship (DoEE) is poised to launch the Comprehensive Job Plan (2025–2029)**,** which will consolidate gains and drive forward three strategic priorities:

1. Enhanced Skills Alignment: Strengthening linkages between education, training, and emerging high-growth sectors (e.g., renewable energy, ICT, green infrastructure).
2. Inclusive Opportunities: Addressing youth unemployment through targeted programs, expanding women's participation in technical roles, and decentralizing job creation to underserved Dzongkhags.
3. Dynamic Labor Market Connectivity: Scaling up the "Promote" pillar to amplify private-sector engagement, entrepreneurship, and digital platforms while refining BLMIS data integrity to track retention and career progression**.**

The ERS stands as a testament to Bhutan's commitment to "full and productive employment for all." By embedding resilience, equity, and innovation into its next phase, the system will continue to evolve as a dynamic engine of socioeconomic transformation, ensuring every Bhutanese citizen can contribute to and benefit from the nation's prosperous future.