

Education and Economic Activity in Nauru

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This factsheet is a brief analysis of education and labour force data from the 2019 Nauru mini census. It presents the findings in relation to education and labour force participation of the Nauru population. Education is a key element of human capital and a basic factor in promoting individual productivity. There are strong links between educational attainment and labour market outcomes, which provide important context in the understanding of productivity, the quality of labour inputs and labour market dynamics.

Figure 1 includes information on the structure of the education system according to national education classification. The education system in Nauru has four levels: early childhood education (ECE) (playschool, pre-school and preparatory school), primary school (Years 1–6), secondary school, including both middle school and lower secondary (Years 7–9), and upper secondary school (Years 10–12). Post-secondary education includes USP foundational courses and serves youth and adults receiving learning and skills development and training (TVET). Education services up to upper secondary in Nauru are provided by the government freely and school attendance is compulsory for all persons up to the age of 16, including ECE. Nauru is one of the only few Pacific Island countries to make ECE compulsory.

Age	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Grade	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Level	Pre-school		Primary						Secondary					
Number of schools	4 early childhood centres		3 schools						2 public secondary schools and 1 private school in Nauru					

Figure 1: Structure of the Education System in Nauru

Education Participation and Attendance

At the time of the mini-census (November 2019), 3,298 people of the total enumerated population attended school; 1,676 males and 1,622 females. The distribution of those attending a school or institution by education level is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Education attendance by education level, Nauru: 2019

	ECE	Primary school	Secondary school	Tertiary/University	Other level	Total
Total	357	1,787	980	107	67	3,298
Male	184	945	461	46	40	1,676
Female	173	842	519	61	27	1,622

In 2019, there were 357 children attending schools across the two years of ECE. Of this total number, boys and girls were split similarly (184 boys and 173 girls), with the majority of children enrolled in the final year of ECE, preparatory school. Gender disparities are not apparent in ECE attendance.

There are four government schools in Nauru, offering three years of ECE: playschool, pre-school and preparatory school, serving children aged 3–5.

While attendance numbers *per se* provide useful information, from a planning and policy perspective attendance ratios represent more important information as they capture the proportion of the population of a specific age group that is actually attending school.

The **gross attendance ratio** (GAR) is defined by as the number of students attending a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education. The school attendance ratios for Nauru population aged 3 and over are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Gross school attendance ratio by age and by sex, Nauru: 2019

	Population			Attending school			Gross attendance ratio %			Gender parity index (GPI)
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	
Early childhood (age 4–5)	636	335	301	357	184	173	56%	55%	57%	1.04
Primary (age 6–11)	1,769	925	844	1,787	945	842	101%	102%	100%	0.98
Secondary (age 12–17)	1,376	723	653	980	461	519	71%	64%	79%	1.25
Tertiary/TVET (age 18–22)	1,083	549	534	174	86	88	16%	17%	17%	1.00

In 2019, the ECE gross attendance ratio for persons aged 4–5 years old was 56% (55% for males and 57% for females), indicating a significant proportion of children having attended ECE from the official age group. Therefore, continued efforts are required to ensure universal ECE attendance in Nauru.

The Gross Attendance Rate in Nauru for primary school is 101% but is lower for secondary schooling (71%). Furthermore, the Gross Attendance Rate for secondary schooling was 64% for males and 79% for females, indicating a higher proportion of females than males at secondary school. Data on Tertiary/TVET Gross Attendance shows no difference between males or females.

Table 3: Net school attendance ratios by age and by sex, Nauru: 2019

	Population			Attending school			Gross attendance ratio %			Gender parity index (GPI)
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	
Early childhood (age 4–5)	636	335	301	338	176	162	53%	54%	53%	0.98
Primary (age 6–11)	1,769	925	844	1,341	683	658	90%	88%	91%	1.03
Secondary (age 12–17)	1,376	723	653	656	311	345	41%	38%	45%	1.18

The **net attendance ratio** (NAR) is defined as the number of students of official school age attending a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school age population corresponding to the same level of education.

The Net Attendance Rate (children aged 6–11) in Nauru is high for primary school at 90%, but dramatically lower for secondary schools (41%). Furthermore, the Net Attendance Rate for secondary schooling was 38% for males and 45% for females, indicating a higher proportion of females than males at secondary school.

NAR: Early childhood



NAR: Primary school



NAR: Secondary school

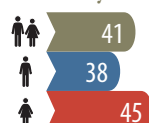


Figure 2: Attendance ratios by level and by sex, 2019

Out of School Children

The percentage of out of school children in a country shows the proportion of children who are not currently participating in the education system, and therefore missing out on the benefits of school. Tables 4 and 5 show the percentage of children out-of-primary and secondary school, respectively. In Nauru, 13% of males of the primary school population (aged 6–11) are out of school compared to 9% of females. For secondary school age (12–17), 1 in 4 children are not in school (28% male; 21% female).

Table 4: Out of School children aged 6–11, by sex, 2019

	Total	Male	Female
Out of school	185	113	72
Population (6–11)	1,734	903	831
Out of school %	11%	13%	9%

Table 5: Out of School children aged 12–17, by sex, 2019

	Total	Male	Female
Out of school	343	204	139
Population (12–17)	1,376	723	653
Out of school %	25%	28%	21%

Educational attainment

Table 6 summarises the highest level of education attended by the Nauruan population aged 25 and older. Highest level of educational attainment is defined as the highest formal educational level completed (primary school, secondary school or university/college) at the time of the 2019 mini-census¹.

Table 6: Ever attended school for population aged 25 and older, by sex, Nauru: 2019

Ever attended school					
	Total	Yes	Yes%	No	No%
Total	5,083	4,857	96%	226	4%
Male	2,507	2,388	95%	119	5%
Female	2,576	2,469	96%	107	4%

Table 7: Highest level of education attended for population aged 25 and older, by sex, Nauru: 2019

Highest level attended							
	Total	None	Pre-school, kindergarten	Primary school	Secondary school	Tertiary/ University	Other level
Total	4,857	3	1	100	4,423	291	39
Male	2,388	2	0	73	2,146	146	21
Female	2,469	1	1	27	2,277	145	18

A total of 4,857 people aged 25 and older have attended school in Nauru. The highest level attended was secondary school with over 90%, while 4% of the population aged 25 and older have never attended school.

All post-secondary qualifications at certificate, diploma or degree level have been recorded as 'tertiary' or 'other'. Respondents were recorded only once: someone with a university diploma is recorded as having 'tertiary' level education despite the fact that he/she has also completed a full six years of secondary education.

Table 8: Highest level of education attended by Head of Household for population aged 25 and older, by sex, Nauru: 2019

Highest level attended by Head of Household								
	Total	None	Pre-school kindergarten	Primary school (Class 1–Class 6)	Lower secondary (Form 1–Form 3)	Upper secondary (Form 4–Form 7)	Tertiary/ University	Other level
Total	1,608	0	1	36	220	1,215	118	18
Male	981	0	0	28	136	719	84	14
Female	627	0	1	8	84	496	34	4

¹Note, we cannot calculate highest level of completion as these data were not collected.

Nauru's labour market

In Nauru, the 2019 mini-census included three questions on labour market activity. Enumerators were instructed to ask each respondent aged 15 and older what their main activity status was.

Studying or training

Working in farming, raising animal or handicraft

Working in fishing or gleaning seafood

Working in another sector

Looking for work

Taking care of the household or family

Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)

Long-term illness, injury or disability

Retired or pensioner

Other activity not elsewhere classified

Table 9: Main activity status in population aged 15 and older, by sex, Nauru: 2019

Activity status	Total	Total %	Male	Male %	Female	Female %
Studying or training	682	9%	321	9%	361	10%
Working in farming, raising animal or handicraft	12	0%	9	0%	3	0%
Working in fishing or gleaning seafood	23	0%	21	1%	2	0%
Working in another sector (government, NGO, hotels)	3,719	51%	2,191	61%	1,528	42%
Looking for work	826	11%	472	13%	354	10%
Taking care of the household or family	1,295	18%	236	7%	1059	29%
Voluntary work (community, village, church, etc.)	74	1%	43	1%	31	1%
Long-term illness, injury or disability	95	1%	50	1%	45	1%
Retired or pensioner	243	3%	92	3%	151	4%
Other activity not classified	275	4%	172	5%	103	3%
Total	7,244	100%	3607	100%	3637	100%

There were 826 people in Nauru aged 15 and older that were looking for work, 13% were males and 10% were females. Figure 3 illustrates the share of main activity status to highlight the types of main activity in a chart where the predominant activity status is represented by larger rectangles.

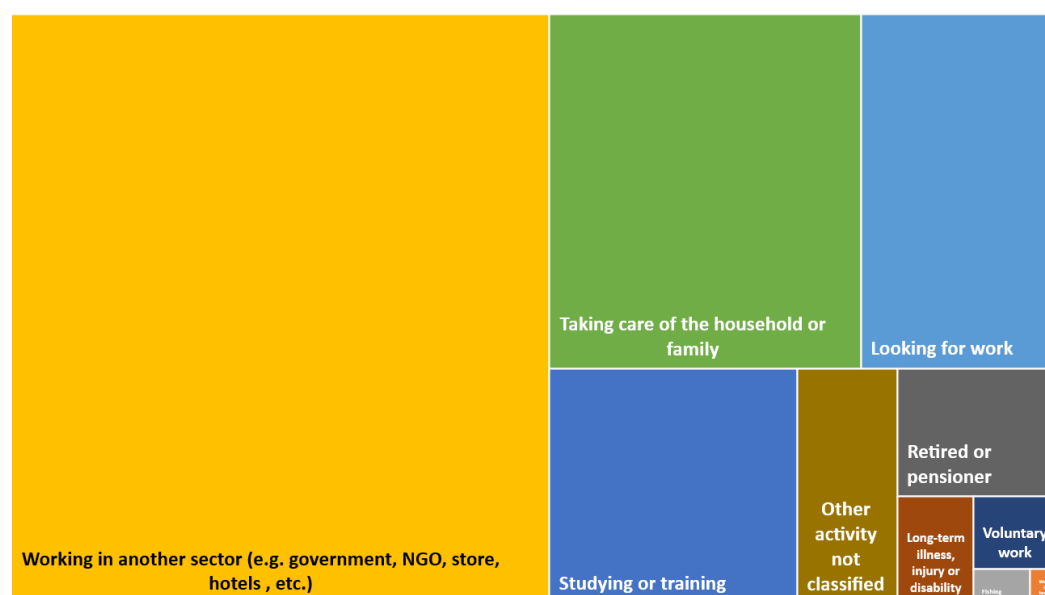


Figure 3: Main activity status, Nauru: 2019

Based on the categories listed in main activity, data collected have been assigned to the three categories of:

- **employed** (those who: work for pay, or produced goods mainly for sale, or produced goods mainly for own consumption, or those doing voluntary work or unpaid family work);
- **unemployed** (those who (1) did not work in the week prior to the census (other than those who had a job but were not at work during the reference week), but (2) spent some time looking for work, and (3) were available to work if a job was offered to them); and
- **not in the labour force** (those not employed or unemployed).

Note, if the person did not work and did not spend some time looking for work or looked for work but was not available to work, they were classified as economically inactive (not in the labour force).

Table 10: Labour market activity in population aged 15 and older, by sex, Nauru: 2019

Labour market activity	Total	Male	Female
Population	11,550	5,871	5,679
Working-age population (15+)	7,244	3,607	3,637
In the labour force	4,580	2,693	1,887
Employment	3,754	2,221	1,533
Unemployment	826	472	354
Not in the labour force	2,664	914	1,750
Youth (15–24) not in Emp., Edu. or training (NEET)	799	335	464

Economic activity is measured only for persons aged 15 years and older. In Nauru there were 7,244 people in the working-age population (15 years and older) split between 3,607 males and 3,637 female. The economically active population (labour force) comprises both employed and unemployed persons. There were 4,580 people in the labour force in Nauru with 2,693 male (59%) and 1,887 (41%) female.

Main activity status relates to whether or not a person aged 15 and older was working or looking for work in the week before census. Rather than a simple indicator of whether or not someone was currently in employment, it provides a measure of whether or not a person was an active participant in the labour market. This is an indicator of their status or availability for employment – whether employed, unemployed, or their status if not employed and not seeking employment.

Table 11: Labour market activity in population by age groups, Nauru: 2019

Labour market activity	15–24	25–54	55–64	65+	Total
Working-age population (15+)	2,161	4,298	553	232	7,244
In the labour force	1,080	3,192	265	43	4,580
Employment	679	2,790	245	40	3,754
Unemployment	401	402	20	3	826
Outside the labour force	1,081	1,106	288	189	2,664
Youth (15–24) not in Emp., Edu. or training (NEET)	799	-	-	-	799

Table 12: Proportion of labour force indicators by sex, Nauru: 2019

Labour force	Total %	Male %	Female %
Labour force participation rate	63%	75%	52%
Employment population ratio	52%	62%	42%
Employment rate	82%	82%	81%
Unemployment rate	18%	18%	19%
Outside the labour force	37%	25%	48%
Youth (15–24) not in Emp., Edu. or training (NEET)	37%	30%	44%

The **labour force participation rate (LFPR)** is the number of people in the labour force by a given age and sex, divided by the corresponding total population with the same characteristics, multiplied by 100. The LFPR is a measure of the proportion of an economy's working-age population that is economically active.

The **employment population ratio (EPR)** is the number of people employed in cash work by a given age and sex, divided by the corresponding total population with the same characteristics, multiplied by 100. As an indicator the EPR provides information on the ability of an economy to create jobs and also provides a better picture of the employment available in the economy.

The **unemployment rate** is the number of people unemployed by a given age and sex, divided by the population in the labor force with the same characteristics, multiplied by 100.

The LFPR is calculated at 63% in Nauru in 2019. At the same time the EPR was 52%, and the unemployment rate for Nauru was 18% (Table 10). The LFPRs were considerably higher for males (75%) than for females (52%), so was the employment population ratio with 62% and 42% for males and females respectively. The unemployment rate was marginally higher for females (19%) than males (18%).

Table 13: Proportion of labour force indicators by age groups, Nauru: 2019

	15–24	25–54	55–64	65+	Total
Labour force participation rate	50%	74%	48%	19%	63%
Employment population ratio	31%	65%	44%	17%	52%
Employment rate	63%	87%	92%	93%	82%
Unemployment Rate	37%	13%	8%	7%	18%
Outside the labour force	50%	26%	52%	81%	37%
Youth (15–24) not in Emp., Edu. (NEET)	37%	-	-	-	

Labour force indicators can vary according to sex, age group and other characteristics of the population. Table 13 lists these by the various age groups. The labour force participation rate (74%) is much higher in those aged 25–54 as is the employment to population ratio (65%).

Table 14 lists the main job types in Nauru by the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) of all economic activities. This refers to the type of work done by the person employed irrespective of where (the industry), or under what status of employment it is being done. Own use production, public administration and mining and quarrying dominate the main types of industry in Nauru.

Table 14: Main Job by ISIC classification and by Sex, Nauru: 2019

ISIC - Rev. 4 - Main job	Total	Male	Female
ISIC - A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing	26	17	9
ISIC - B - Mining and quarrying	310	246	64
ISIC - C - Manufacturing			
ISIC - D - Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	132	106	26
ISIC - E - Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1	1	0
ISIC - F - Construction	9	8	1
ISIC - G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	46	26	20
ISIC - H - Transportation and storage	103	64	39
ISIC - I - Accommodation and food service activities	13	8	5
ISIC - J - Information and communication	9	4	5
ISIC - K - Financial and insurance activities	17	3	14
ISIC - M - Professional, scientific and technical activities	4	2	2
ISIC - N - Administrative and support service activities	189	100	89
ISIC - O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1,555	739	816
ISIC - P - Education	12	0	12
ISIC - Q - Human health and social work activities	168	98	70
ISIC - R - Arts, entertainment and recreation	1	0	1
ISIC - S - Other service activities	4	2	2
ISIC - T - Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods-and services-producing households for own use	1,110	763	347
ISIC - Not elsewhere classified	10	4	6
Total	3,719	2,191	1,528

Table 15: Main organisation work in by Sex, Nauru: 2019

Organisation working in	Total	Male	Female
Government	1,268	579	689
Ronphos	208	174	34
NRC	102	72	30
EHC	254	136	118
NUC	127	103	24
Nauru Airlines	84	49	35
Private sector	1,110	763	347
Other	566	315	251
Total	3,719	2,191	1,528

Table 15 lists the main organisations where people work in by sex in Nauru.

