

"Characteristics of the Palestinian Labour Force in Lebanon"

Some findings from

**Fafo's 2006 Study on the Employability of
Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon**

Åge A. Tiltnes, Fafo

About the study

- **Suggested in consultations between Lebanon's Minister of Labour and the Norwegian Ambassador to Lebanon**
- **Three components**
 - Household survey
 - 1st Qualitative fieldwork: people in camps and gatherings (only a few professionals)
 - 2nd Qualitative fieldwork: professionals inside and outside of the refugee camps
- **Implemented by Fafo**
- **Mainly funded by the Norwegian Government**
- **Additional support from the Canadian IDRC**

The household survey

Sample:

- Sample frame from the 1998 Census of Palestinians in all refugee camps and many gatherings (57 areas altogether)
- 2,706 households selected to allow reporting on three regions: North (Tripoli + Bequaa), Beirut and the South (Saida and Tyre)
- Update of buildings + interviewing all “new” households
→ 2,801 households

Fieldwork: mid June to end October (interrupted by the July war)

The household survey (cont'd)

- **All households without Palestinian refugees (103 households) filtered out in analysis → reporting on 2,698 households**
- **9% of these households have at least one non-refugee household member**
- **Information about 12,736 individuals**
 - 98% Palestinians; 1.5% Lebanese; 0.5% Syrian and other
 - 98% of Palestinians registered with UNRWA in Lebanon
 - 1% of Palestinians registered with UNRWA elsewhere
 - 98% of Palestinians registered with the Lebanese Directorate of Palestinian Affairs
- **Information from 2,990 RSIs**
 - One from each household + all with post-secondary education

1st Qualitative fieldwork

- **In-depth interviews with 52 individuals**
 - 21 women; 31 men
 - 19 self-employed; 17 wage-earners in private sector, with UNRWA and organisations; 8 in agriculture; 4 unemployed; 3 daily workers; 1 migrant
 - Average of 36 years for women, 41 years for men
- **3 focus group sessions**
- **Meetings with UNRWA and NGOs**
- **Areas covered:**
 - Burj el-Barajneh (Beirut)
 - Nahr el-Bared (Tripoli)
 - Wavel (Baalbek)
 - Rashidyieh (Tyre)
 - Shabriha & Naameh (outside Tyre & Saida, respectively)
- **Fieldwork mid May to eruption of the war in June (cut short)**

2nd Qualitative fieldwork

- **In-depth interviews with 74 professionals**
 - 12 women; 62 men
 - 4 out of 10 < 35 years of age
 - 22 engineers; 6 medical doctors; 4 dentists; 5 pharmacists; 10 accountants; 9 nurses; 11 teachers; 7 lawyers
 - 4 out of 10 reside in a refugee camp
 - 4 out of 10 work in a refugee camp; 6 in 10 employed outside a camp
 - 75% full-time employed in their profession
 - 42% from Beirut; 30% from the north; 23% from the south; 5% from the Bequaa
- **Interviews with 25 representatives of professional associations and trade unions**
- **Meetings with UNRWA and NGOs**
- **Fieldwork June-October (only a few interviews during the war)**

Topics to be covered (data from survey only)

1. Labour force participation

- How to measure? Who are the “active”?

2. The employed

- Some key characteristics

3. The unemployed

- Some key characteristics

4. The underemployed /underutilized

- Expanded/”relaxed” definition of unemployment

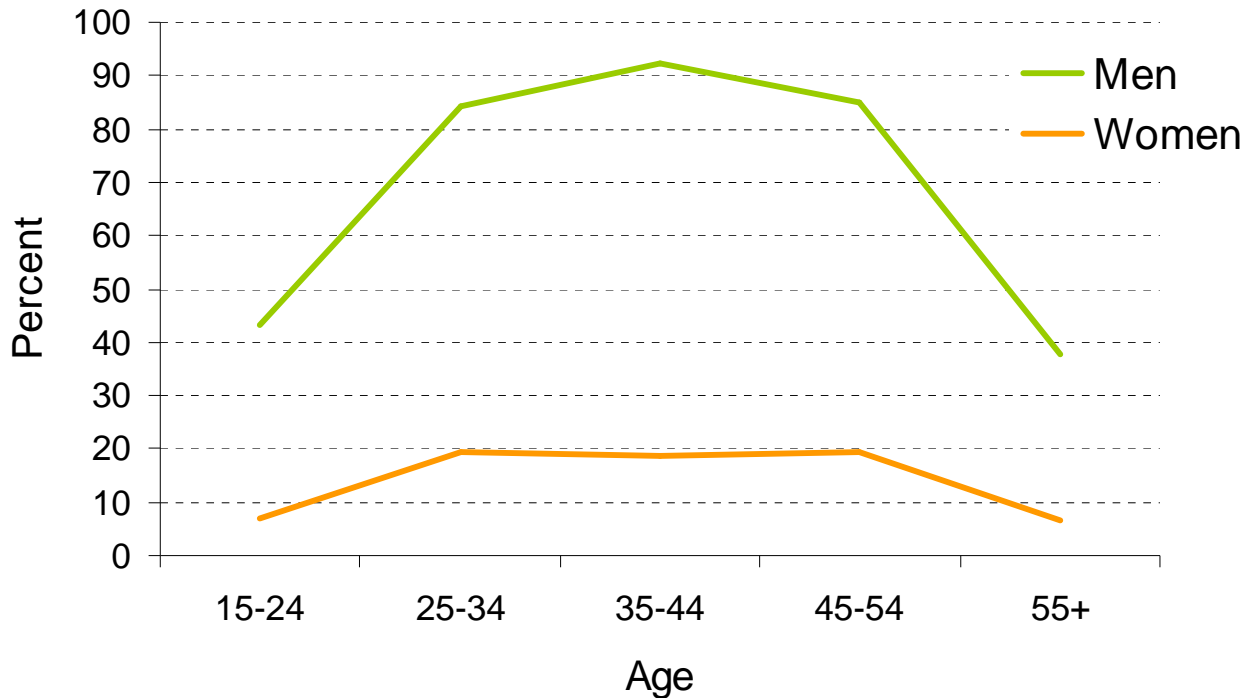
1. Labour force participation

- **How to measure?**
- **Who are the economically “active”?**

The ILO labour force framework

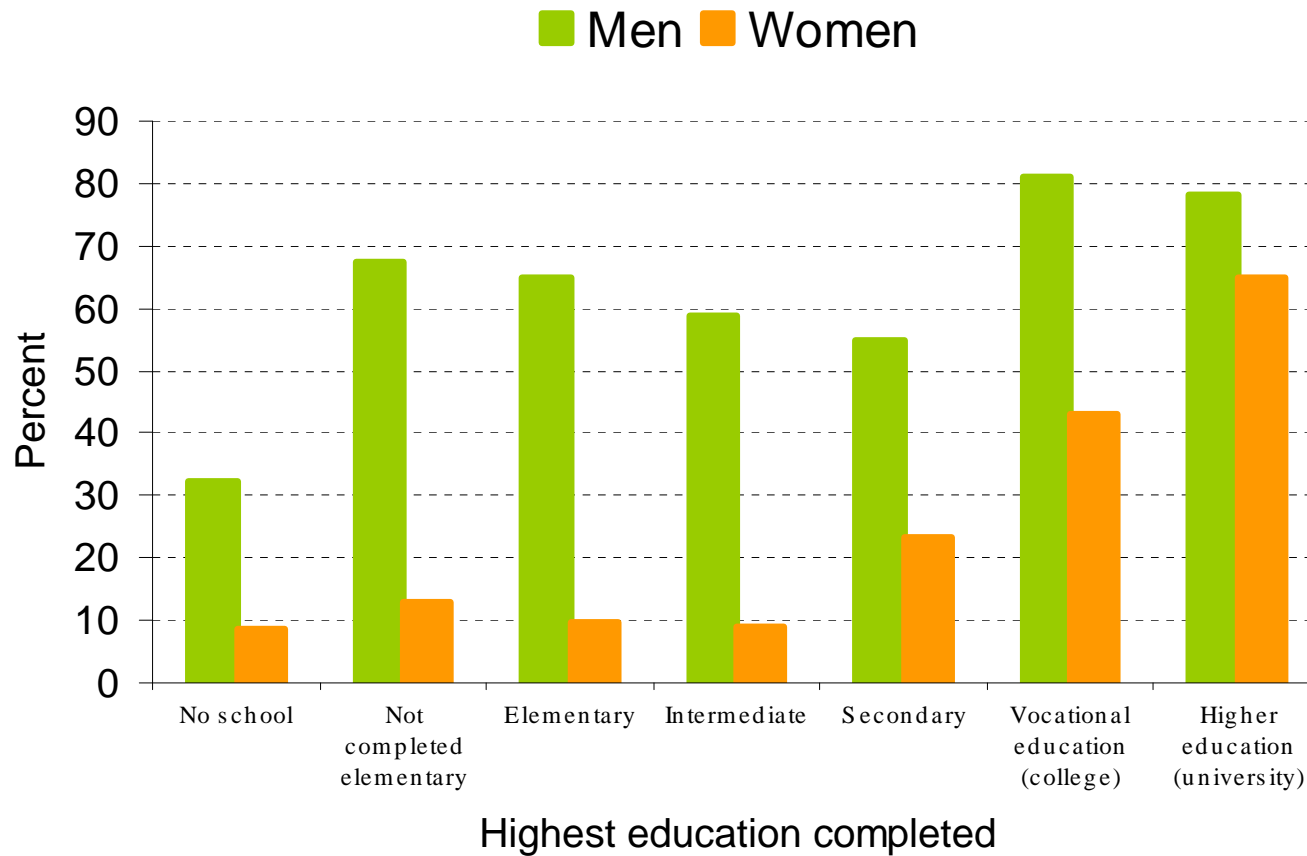
Total population				
Working age population 15 years or older (69%)				Persons below 15 years (31%)
Persons included in the labour force (economically "active") (37%)			Adults not in the labor force (63%)	
Employed persons (90%)			Unemployed persons (10%) Not employed. Sought, and available for work	i.e. not employed, not unemployed. Did not seek work
Full time (≥35 hrs per week)	Part time (≤34 hrs per week)	Temporarily absent		

Overall labour force participation of 37%, but wide gender difference



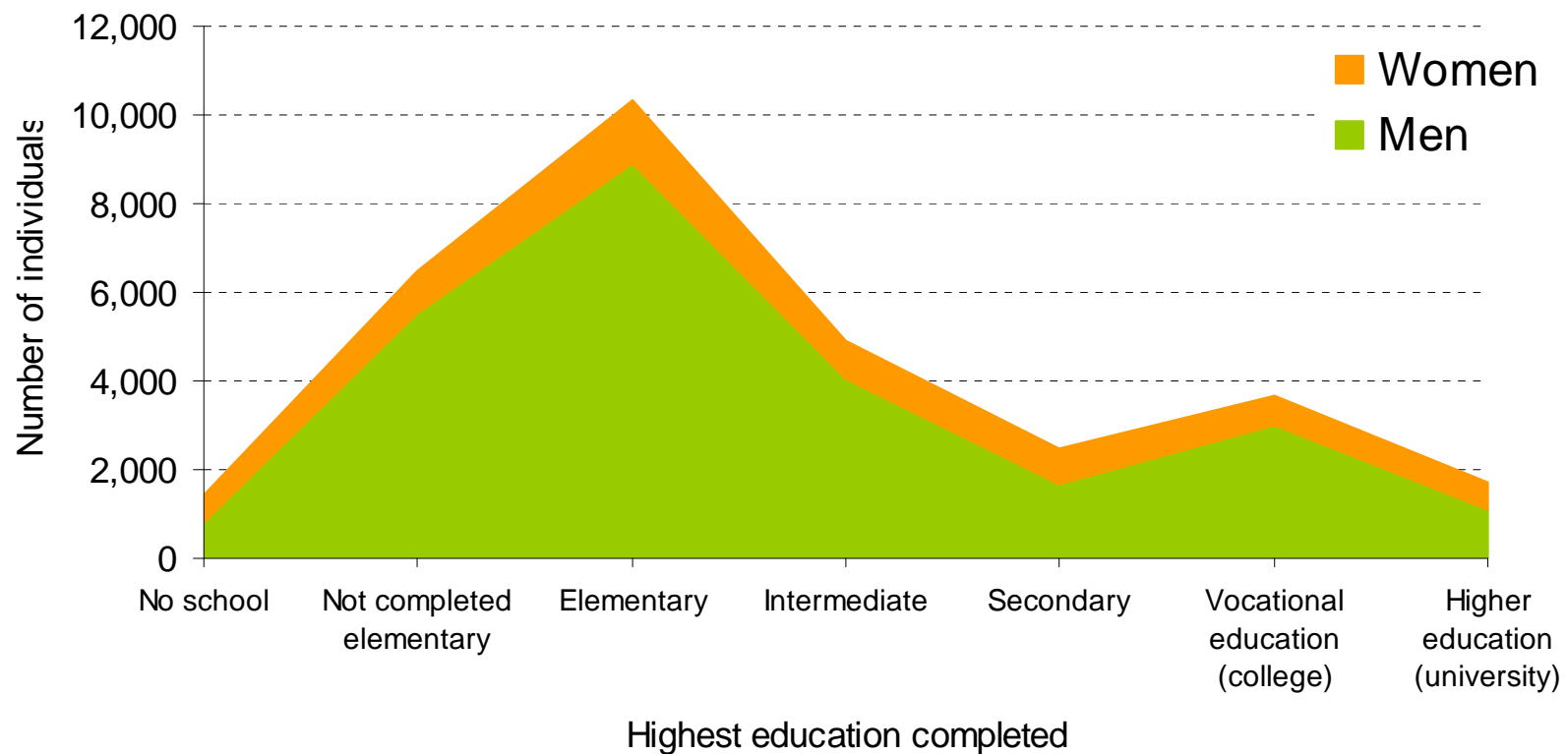
- **63% men in labour force**
- **13% women in labour force**
- **Marriage cuts labour force participation in half – for women**
...
- **... but increases it slightly for men**
- **Insignificant regional variation**

Education with huge impact on women's participation

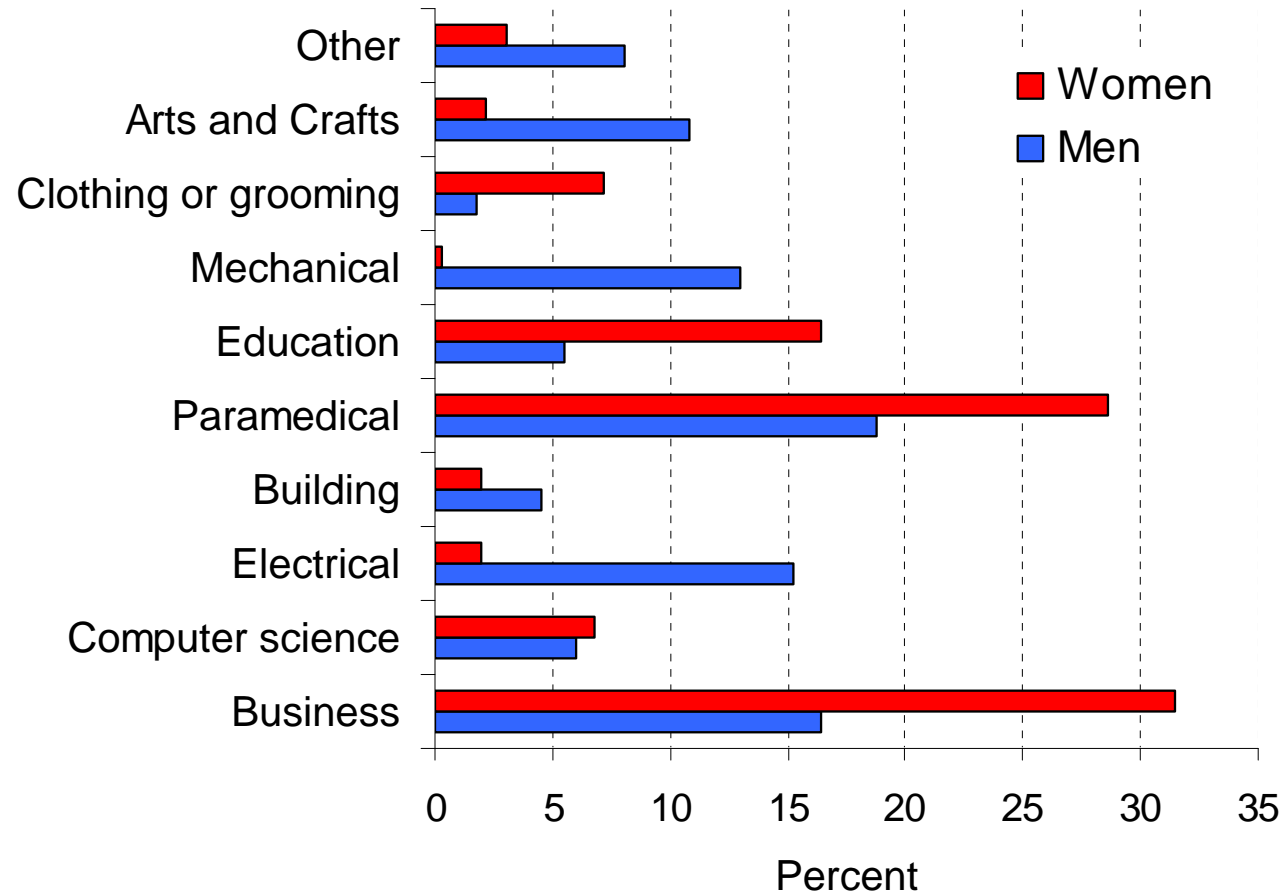


But 3 out of 4 (74.5%) have less than secondary education

- ✓ Only 5.5% of the Palestinian labour force have university education

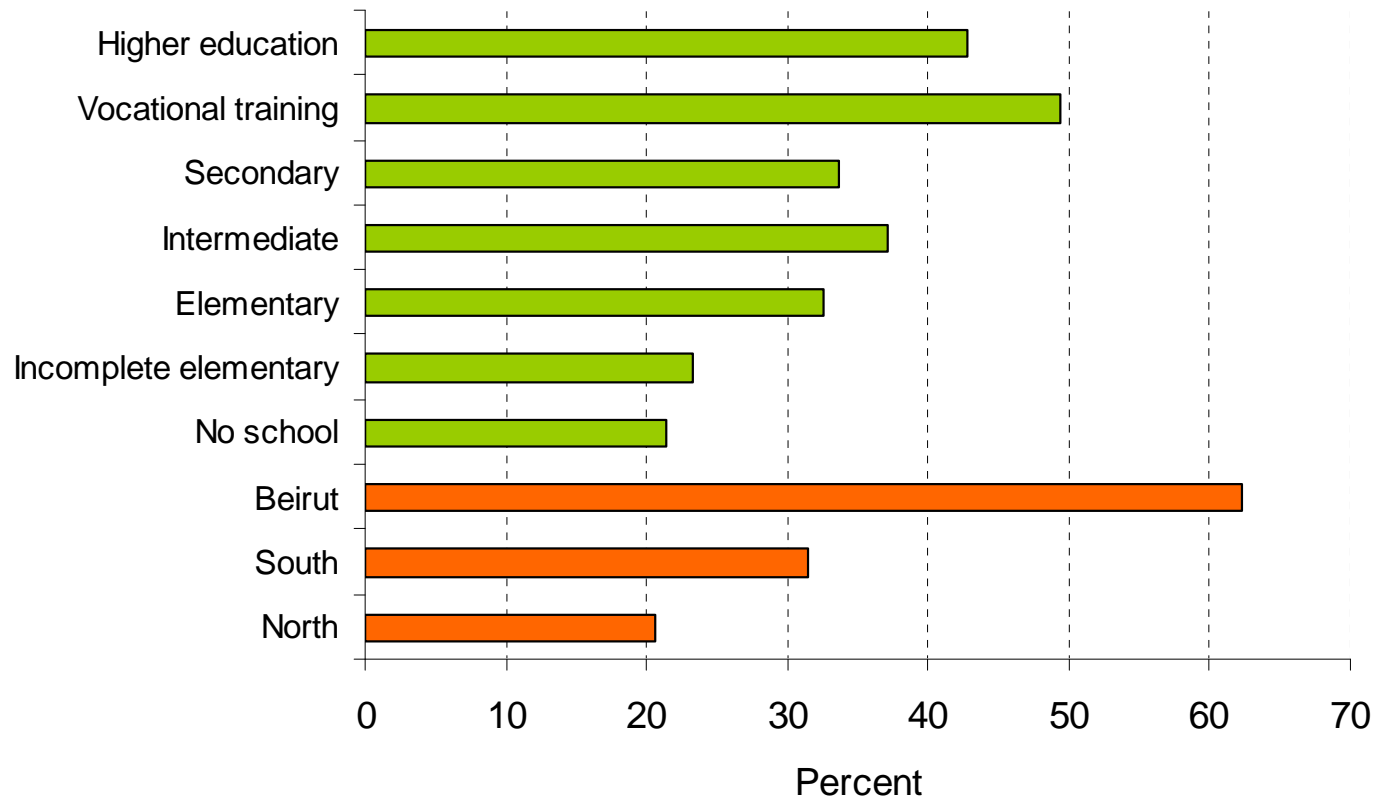


12% of the Palestinian labour force have acquired vocational skills through the formal educational system



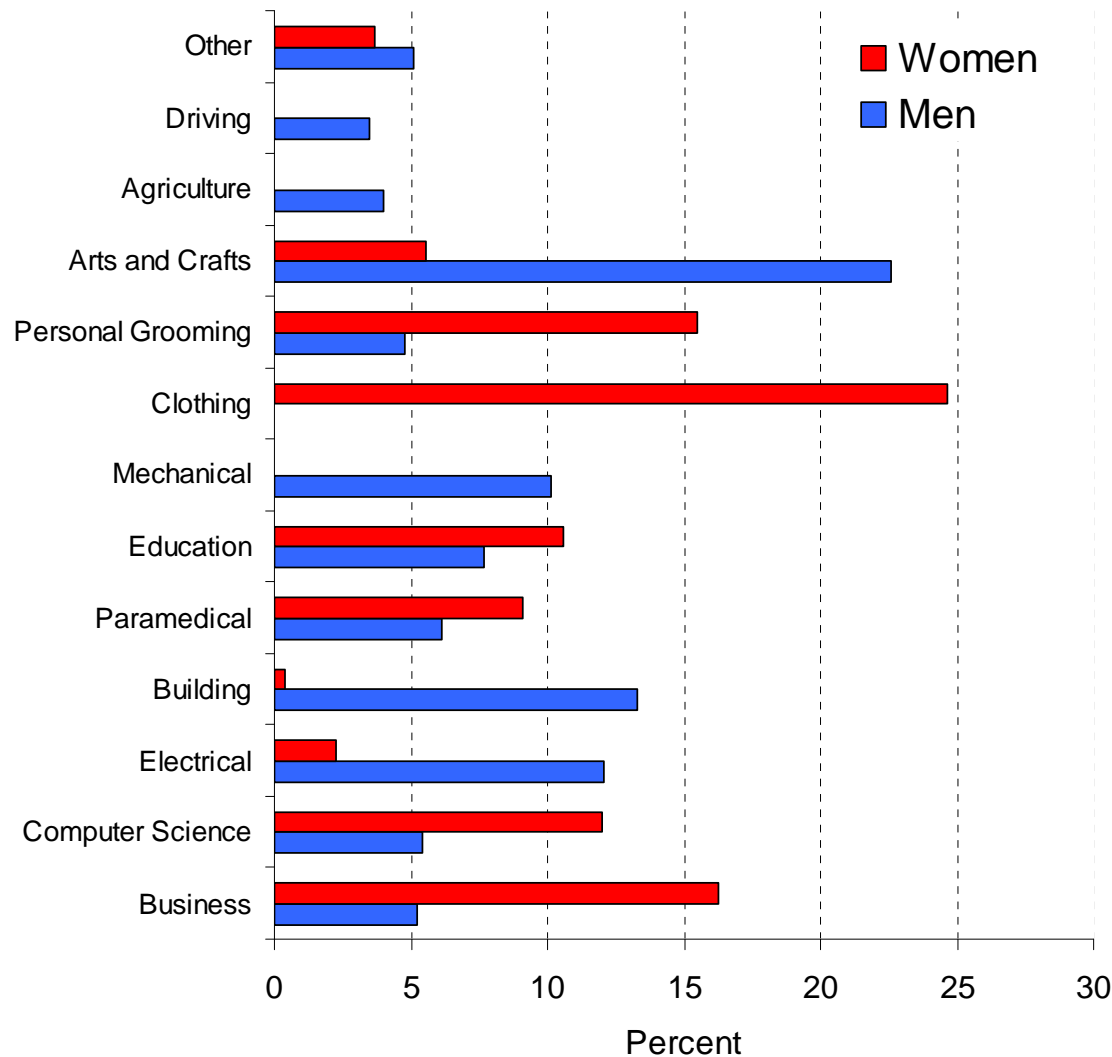
- But only 7% in Beirut
- No gender difference in prevalence

33% of the labour force have vocational training outside the formal educational system, or have received on-the-job training



- Much more common in Beirut than elsewhere
- No gender difference

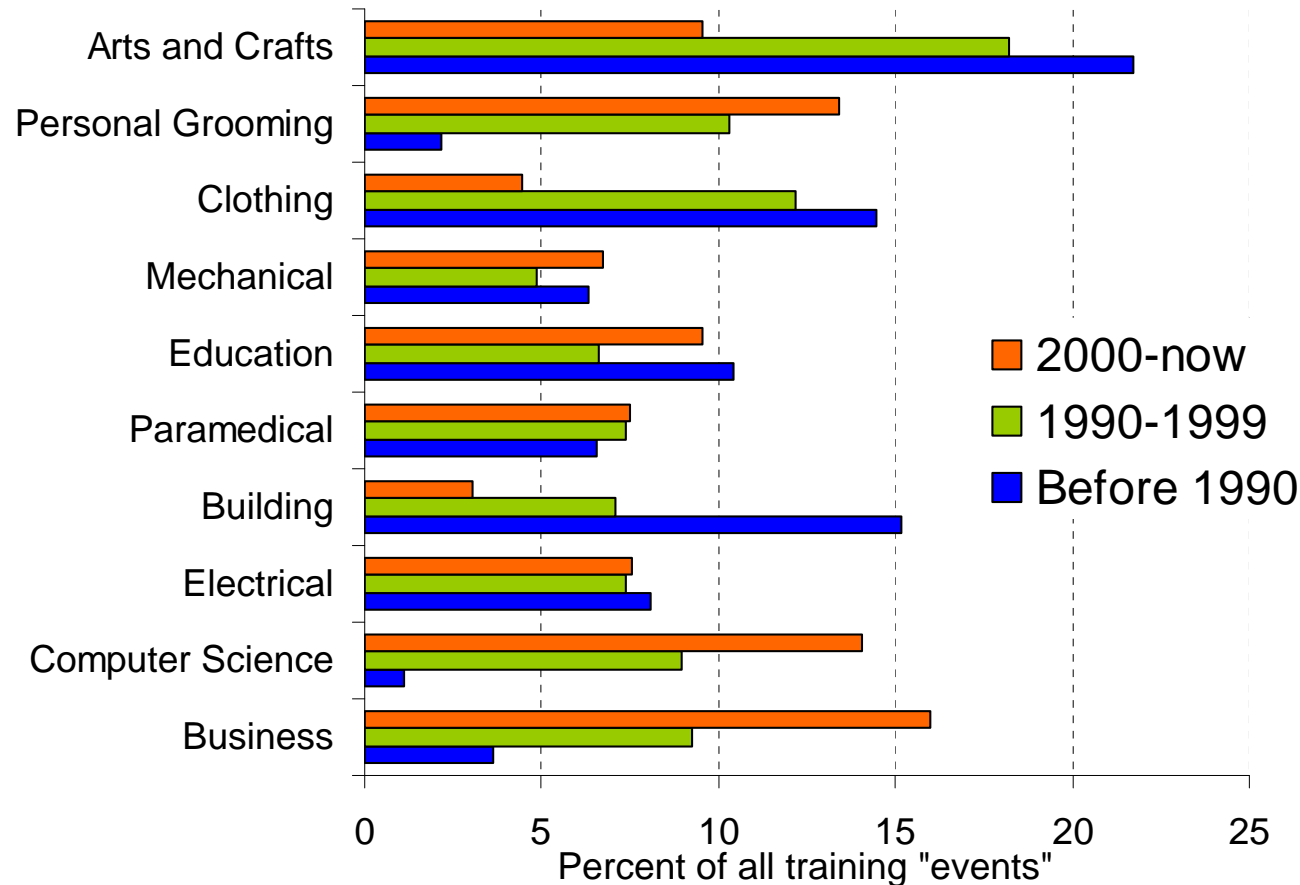
Subjects of training follow traditional gender roles



- ... as did training in the formal educational system

- Computer science and business more popular among women

But 'popularity' of subjects have changed over time



- Arts & crafts, Clothing and Building less popular than before

- Business, Computer science and Personal grooming more common skills

2. The employed

Some characteristics ...

Industry of work – variation by gender and region

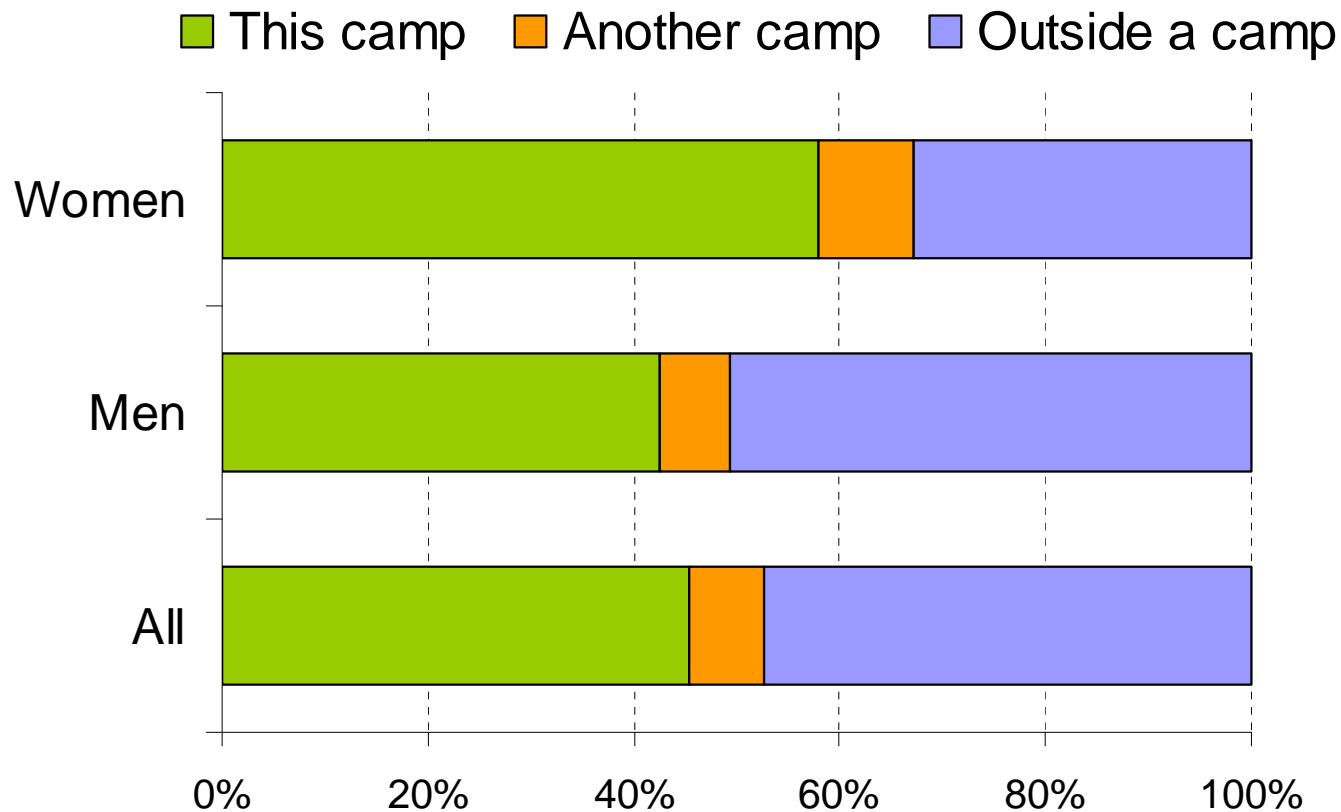
	Agriculture, fishing	Manufact., mining	Construc. electricity, gas	Trade, hotels & restaurants	Transport, storage and commun.	Financial intermed., real estate	Education, health and social work	Community, social services & other	Total
All	11	12	17	27	4	1	12	16	100
Men	11	12	21	28	5	1	7	14	100
Women	8	8	1	23	0	1	30	28	100
North	3	12	24	33	4	1	14	10	100
South	17	11	13	22	5	1	11	20	100
Beirut	2	14	23	34	4	2	8	13	100

(Retail trade and repair of household goods and cars etc. common employment; work in hotels and restaurants less so)

Occupation – variation by gender and education

	Professionals & managers	Clerical workers	Service & sales workers	Skilled agricultural, fishery workers	Crafts & related workers	Plant & machine operators	Elementary occupations	Total
All	17	2	22	2	33	5	20	100
Male	12	1	20	2	39	6	19	100
Female	36	3	29	1	9	0	22	100
No school	2	0	27	5	17	1	48	100
Some elementary	1	0	20	2	37	6	34	100
Elementary	2	1	26	1	44	7	19	100
Intermediate	13	3	23	2	37	5	17	100
Secondary	42	3	24	1	15	4	11	100
Vocational training	43	3	19	1	27	2	5	100
Higher education	93	1	4	-	2	-	-	100

Location of work – almost one-half work where they live (45%), and in a refugee camp (52%)



- Mean travel time 21 minutes (15 minutes for women)

- Median travel time 15 minutes

-

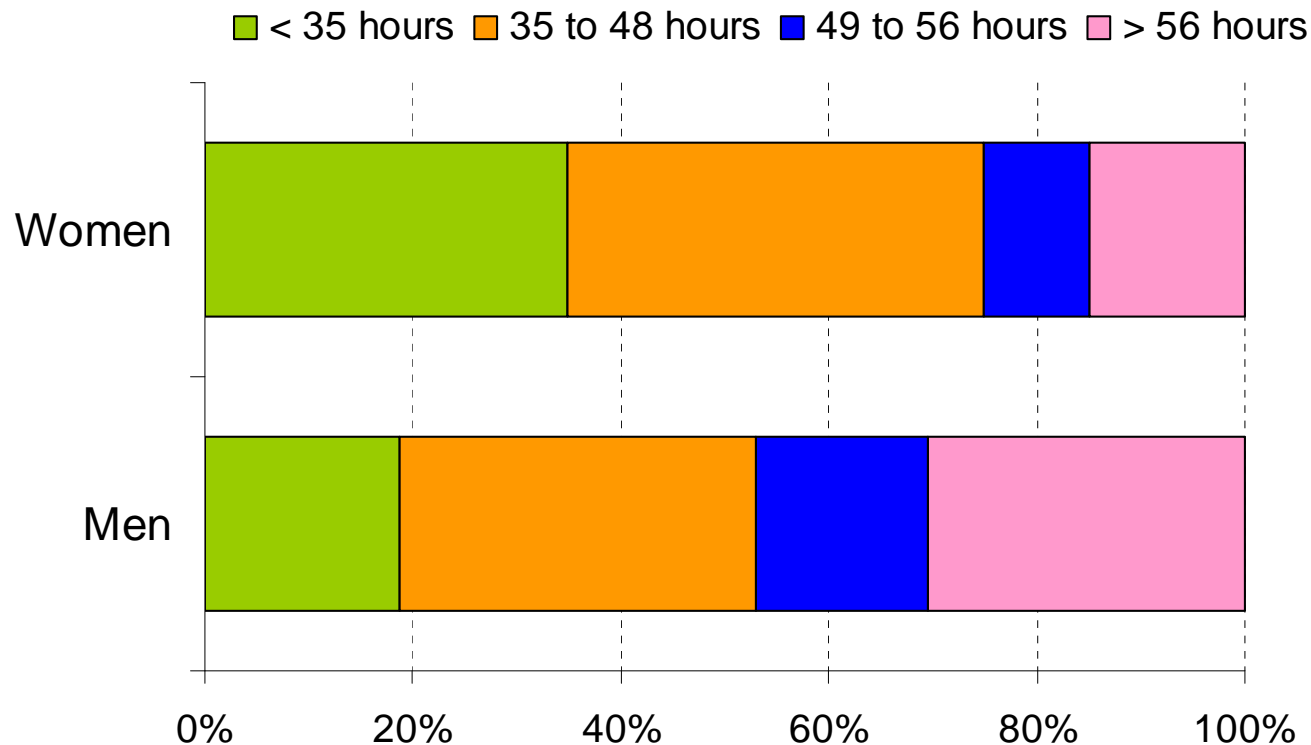
UNRWA, organizations employ almost 1 in 5 Palestinian refugees, ...

... and 1 in 3 women

- PLO, political factions employ more than 1 in 10 in the South

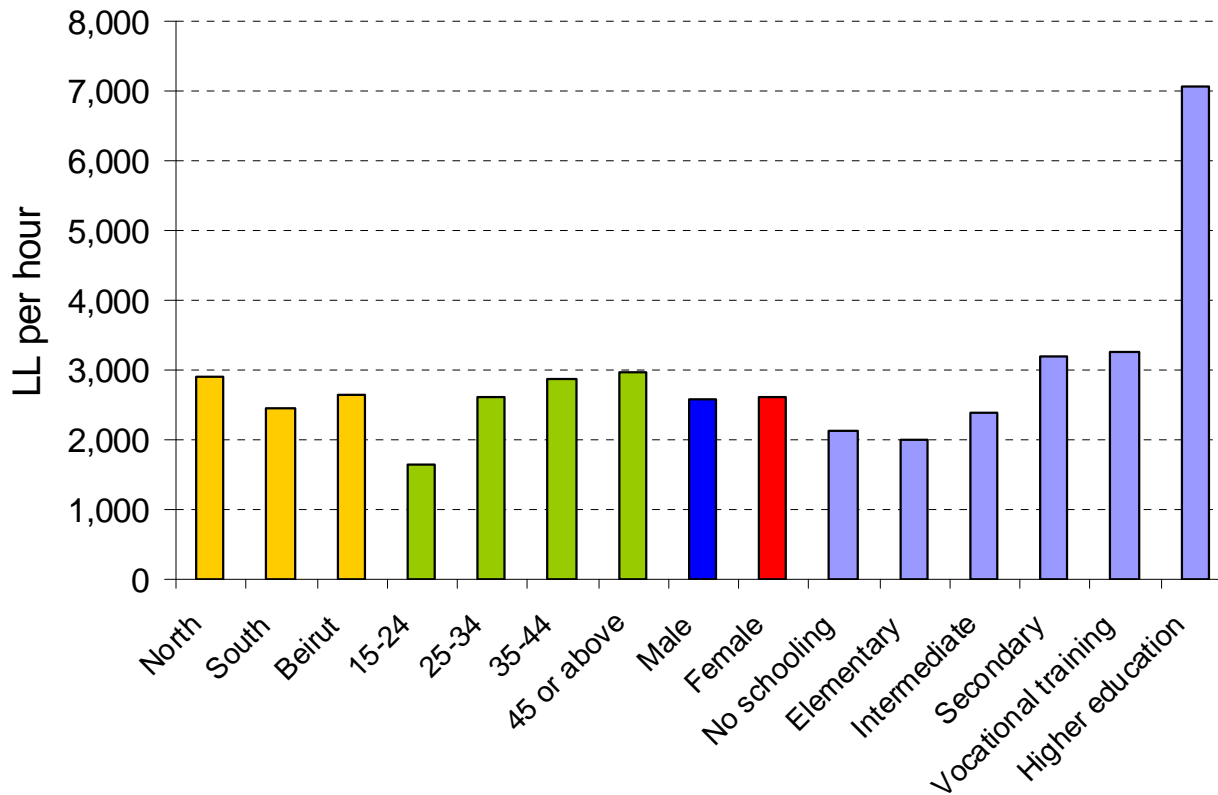
	UNRWA	PRCS	Other NGO	PLO, pol. faction	Public sector	Private company	Family business	Private household	Other	Total
All	6	2	3	8	1	70	4	2	4	100
Men	5	1	2	6	1	75	4	1	5	100
Women	12	5	6	13	3	50	4	6	1	100
North	9	1	5	3	1	70	6	0	5	100
South	6	2	3	11	2	67	3	2	5	100
Beirut	3	3	1	3	0	86	3	0	0	100

Long work hours (in main job) not uncommon



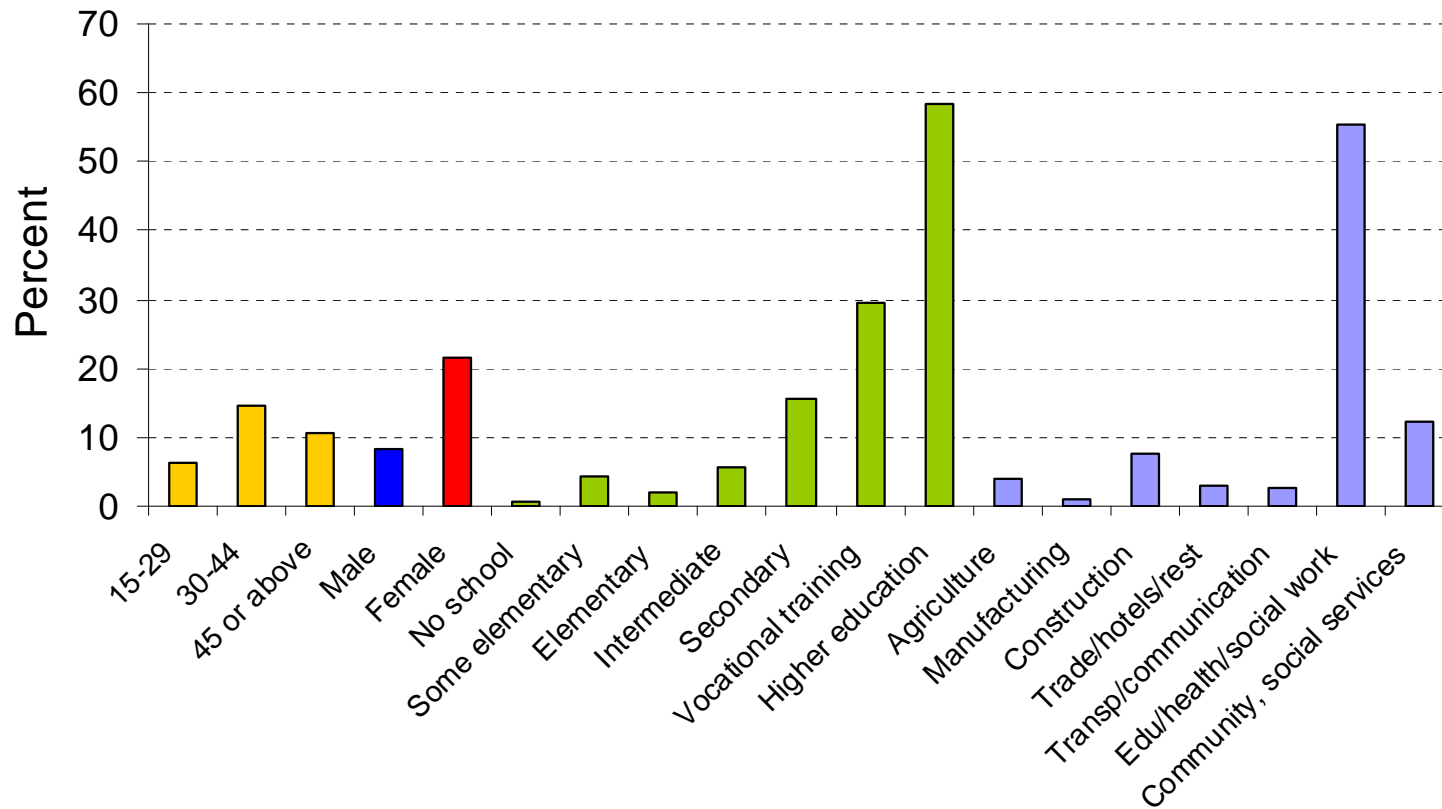
- People in agriculture work less hours
- People in services (trade, hotels, restaurants) and taxi drivers work the longest hours
- 1% hold more than one job
- ... but 4% of those with higher education do

Low pay: Mean hourly wage = 2,600 LL (< 2 USD)



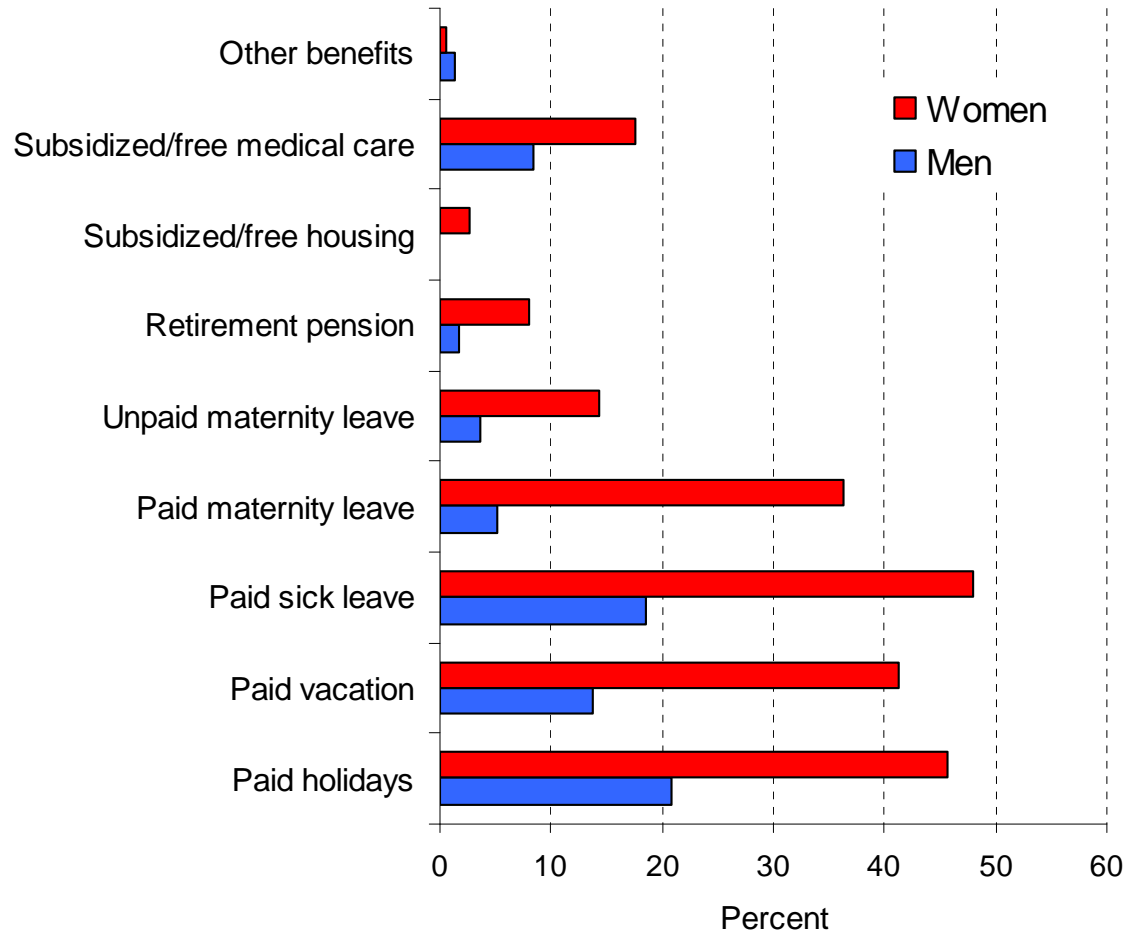
- Professionals & managers report 4,600 LL per hour
- Clerical workers 3,800 LL
- Other (grouped) occupations earn around 2,000 LL

Small minority (11%) have written work contract



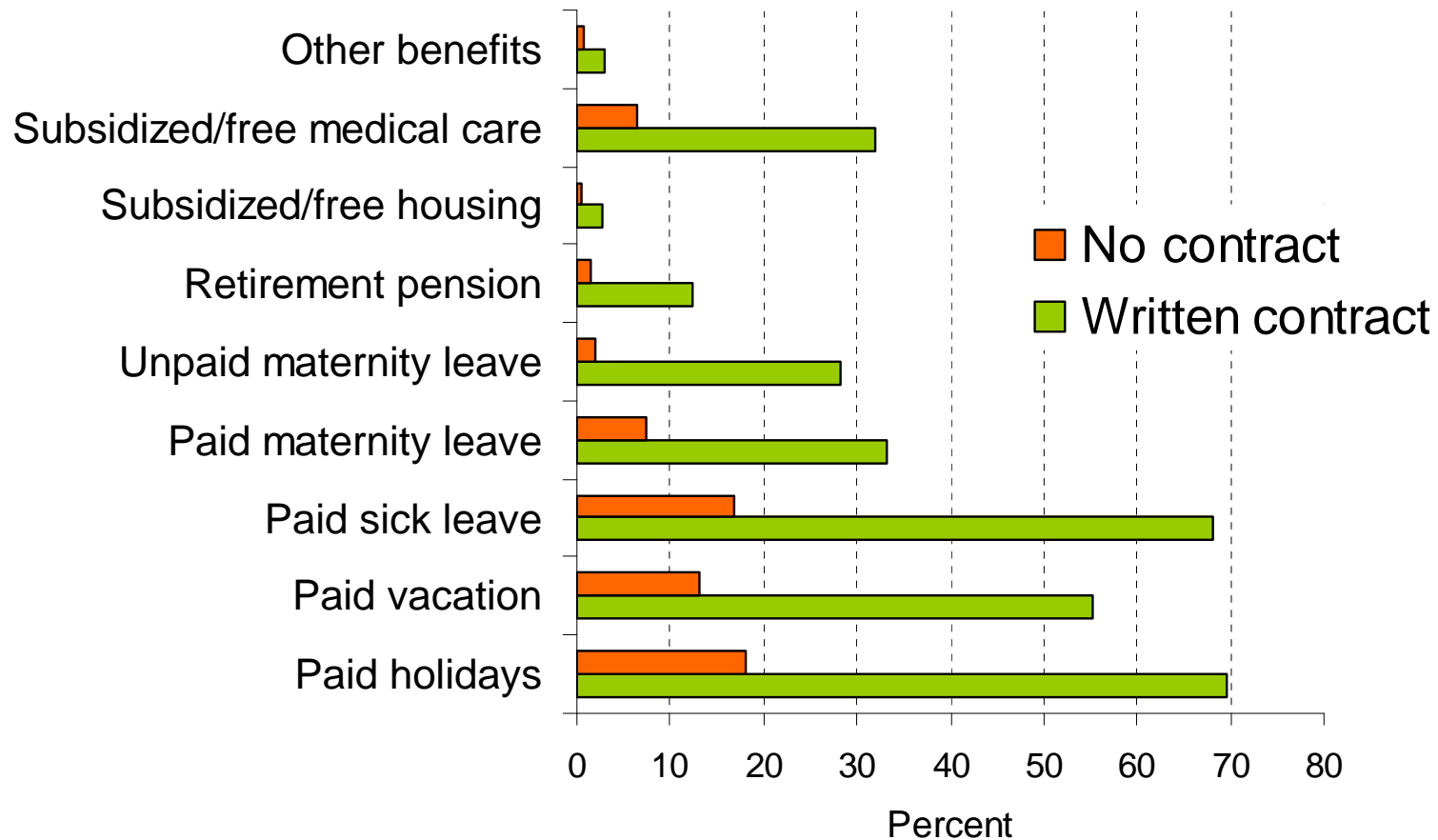
• No regional variation

About 1 in 4 of salaried workers report paid vacation and sick leave



- Women have much better access to non-payment benefits

Strong association between signed contract and benefits



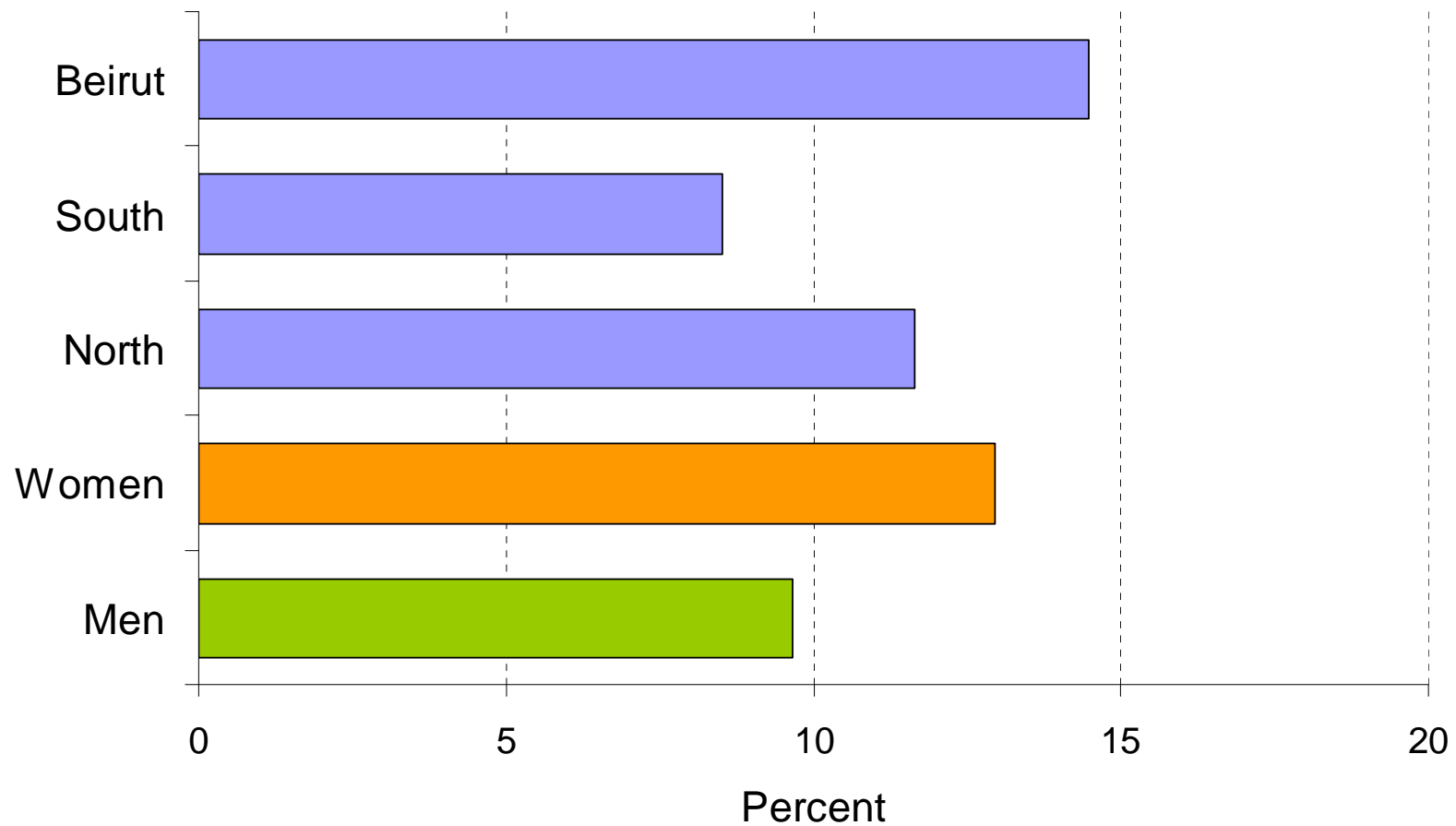
3. The unemployed

Definition:

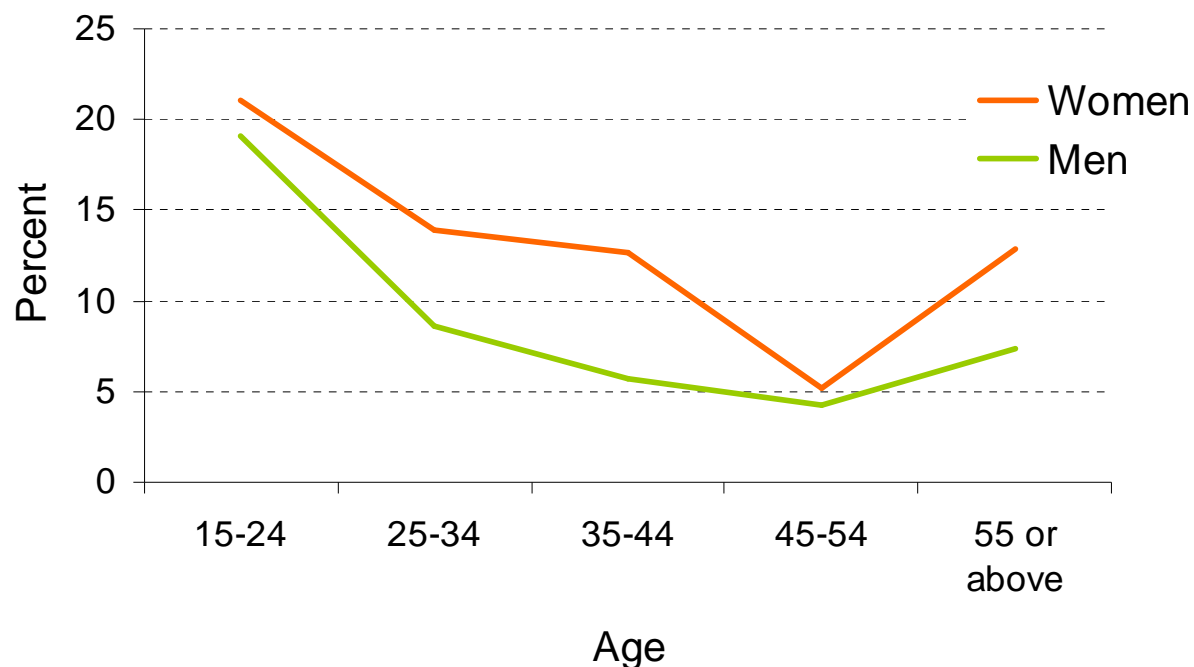
Not working one hour last week but actively seeking employment and ready to work

Some characteristics ...

ILO unemployment not that high, "only" 10%



Highest unemployment among the young



- 2 in 3 of all unempl. are < 35 yrs
- 43% of the unempl. are <25 yrs
- 1 in 4 (24%) unempl. are women
- No significant variation across education
- Mean time seeking work = 11 mths
- Median time seeking work = 18 mths
- 40% have been unemployed > 1 year

4. The underutilized (not ILO)

Definition:

The unemployed +

The discouraged (want to work but do not seek work because they believe none is to be found) +

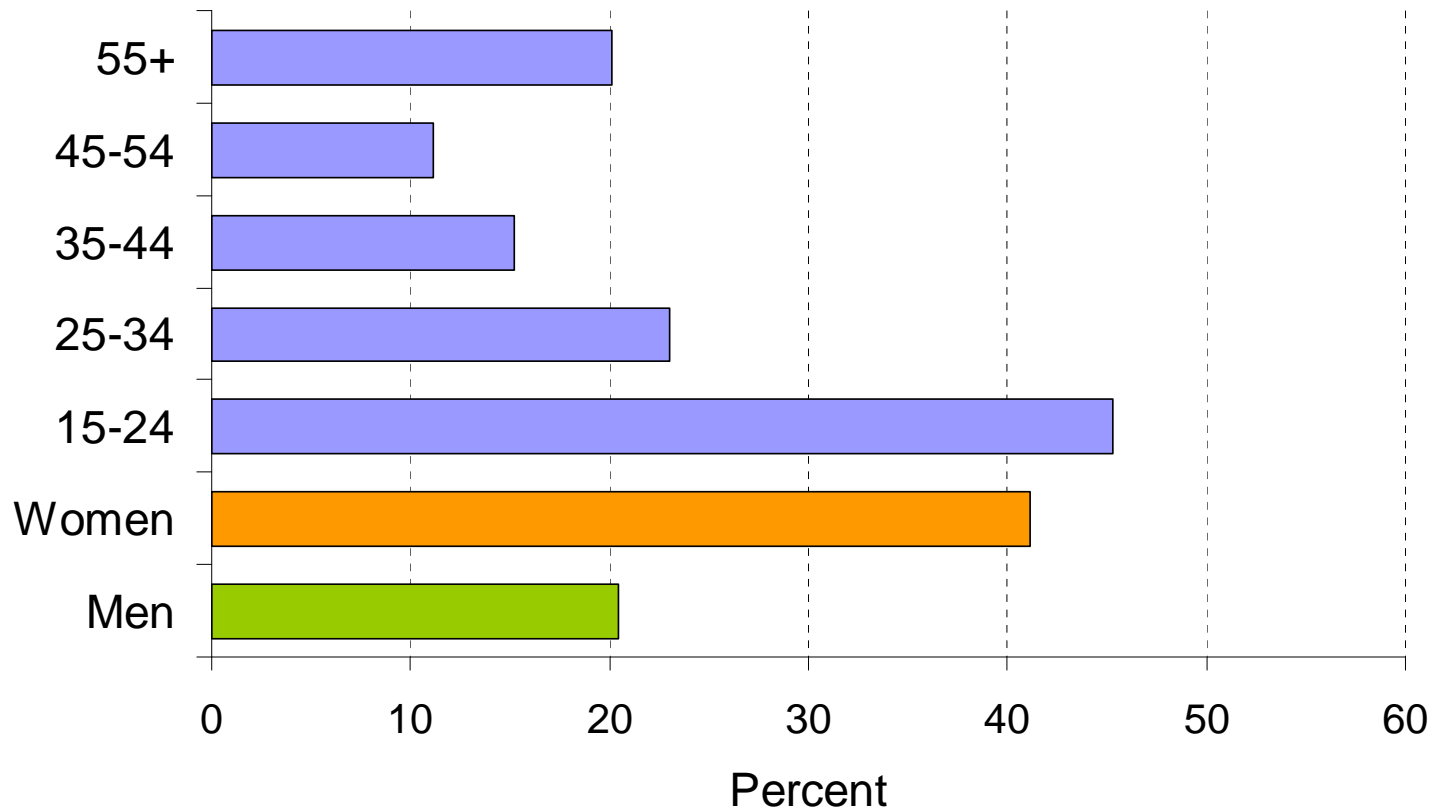
The visibly underemployed (work less than full time (35 hrs) and wants to work more) +

The invisibly underemployed (low-productivity jobs + the over-qualified)

	Not in labor force	In labour force				
		Discouraged	Unemployed	Visibly under-employed	Invisibly under-employed	Employed
All	53	8	4	1	1	32
Men	24	9	6	3	3	55
Women	79	7	2	0	0	12

- Many discouraged among the young (12% of those aged 15-24)

Unemployment of 25% according to "relaxed" definition



'Discouraged worker' is defined as 'unemployed' to calculate the relaxed unemployment rate

31% underutilized

