



Street vendor in Mexico City.
Photo by Lorena Reyes Toledo



Informal Workers in Mexico: A Statistical Snapshot

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In Mexico City and urban Mexico, women comprise 42 per cent and men 58 per cent of the labour force (**table 1**).¹ In Mexico nationally, women's share is slightly lower at 39 per cent. Between 2013 and 2019, employment in Mexico increased by more than 5 million workers but women's share of employment did not increase significantly.

Table 1. Employment in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico by sex, 2013 and 2019: Numbers and per cent of total employment

Numbers and per cent (in parentheses)	2013			2019		
	Total employment Women	Total employment Men	Total employment	Total employment Women	Total employment Men	Total employment
Mexico City	3,546,385 (41.5)	5,004,300 (58.5)	8,550,685	3,938,085 (42.0)	5,440,392 (58.0)	9,378,477
Urban Mexico	9,072,209 (41.5)	12,793,107 (58.5)	21,865,316	10,885,184 (41.7)	15,207,540 (58.3)	26,092,724
Mexico	18,962,245 (38.5)	30,333,984 (61.5)	49,296,229	21,486,902 (39.1)	33,449,817 (60.9)	54,936,719

¹ The data in this brief are based on the second quarter of the 2013 and 2019 Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo (ENOE), a quarterly survey of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI). The 2nd quarter was selected because it has the most extensive questionnaire: 2013 was selected for historical comparison because it introduced a new occupational classification that is consistently used through to the 2019 ENOE. The geographic areas refer to the following: **Mexico City** to the metropolitan area comprising Mexico City itself and the adjacent municipalities of the state of Mexico; **Urban Mexico** to the largest cities in each of the 32 states; **Mexico** to the nation.

Informal employment refers to economic activities that are not covered or insufficiently covered in law or in practice by formal arrangements through work – such as contribution to pensions and medical insurance or entitlement to paid sick leave or annual leave.

In 2013, informal employment represented 52 per cent of all employment in Mexico City, 48 per cent in urban Mexico and 59 per cent in Mexico nationally (**table 2**). By 2019 the percentage had decreased slightly to 51 per cent in Mexico City, 45 per cent in urban Mexico and 56 per cent in Mexico nationally.

A somewhat larger share of women's than men's employment is informal in each of the geographic areas. For example, in Mexico City in 2013, 54 per cent of women's employment was informal in comparison to 50 per cent of men's. Between 2013 and 2019, in all geographic areas the share of employment that is informal decreased by a few percentage points for both women and for men. In 2019, informal employment as a share of total employment was lowest in urban Mexico: representing 48 per cent of women's employment and 43 per cent of men's.



WIEGO photo from the 1st Domestic Workers' Regional Exchange on Social Protection that took place in Mexico City in 2017.

This fact sheet focuses on six worker groups: *domestic workers, home-based workers,*² *market traders, street vendors, informal construction workers and informal transport workers.* These often overlooked groups of workers are essential to the functioning of cities. As table 5 will show, with the exception of construction and transport workers, these worker groups are predominately informal. Construction and transport are predominately informal among men, but not among women. For this

reason, only the informal workers in these two groups are included in table 3.

Together these worker groups comprise a major source of employment in Mexico. They represent 2.9 million workers or 31 per cent of

² In this brief, only non-agricultural workers who work in or near own home are identified as home-based workers. In cases where the worker produces goods for the market – even when only a small amount of processing, preserving or production is performed to give added value, priority is given in the survey instructions to manufacturing rather than agriculture. As a result, there were few workers in agriculture in the survey who designated in or around own home as the place of work. Those who did were likely to be engaged in subsistence production and would not be considered as home-based.

Table 2. Informal employment as a share of total employment in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico by sex, 2013 and 2019

Per cent	2013			2019		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Mexico City	54.1	49.8	51.6	52.8	50.2	51.3
Urban Mexico	50.8	45.7	47.8	47.7	43.3	45.2
Mexico	59.8	58.3	58.9	57.3	55.7	56.3

total employment in Mexico City, 6.9 million workers or 27 per cent in urban Mexico, and nearly 15 million workers or 27 per cent nationally (**table 3**). Combined, they account for a significantly higher share of women's employment in Mexico nationally – 32 per cent – compared to 24 per cent for men. However in urban Mexico and Mexico City, the differences between women and men are less significant. In urban Mexico, they comprise 28 per cent of women's employment and 26 per cent of men's; and in Mexico City 31 per cent of women's employment and 30 per cent of men's.

There are fairly consistent differences in the worker groups of women and men across the three geographic areas. *Home-based work* is the largest source of employment for women in all geographic areas, representing from 11 to 14 per cent of women's total employment. *Domestic work* is second in importance, comprising 9 per cent of women's employment in Mexico City and urban Mexico and 10 per cent nationally.

In all three geographic areas, *home-based work*, *informal construction* and *informal transport* are the main worker groups for men. In Mexico City each accounts for little more than 7 per cent of men's total employment. In urban Mexico, *home-based work* comprises about 7 per cent, *informal construction* around 8 per cent and *informal transport* around 5 per cent of men's employment. In Mexico nationally *home-based work* is around 6 per cent, *informal construction* 10 per cent and *informal transport* 4 per cent of men's employment.

Table 3. Groups of workers by sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019: Numbers and per cent of total employment

	Numbers and per cent (in parentheses)					
	Women		Men		Total	
Mexico City						
Domestic workers	347,621	(8.8)	50,051	(0.9)	397,672	(4.2)
Home-based workers	450,135	(11.4)	405,222	(7.4)	855,357	(9.1)
Manufacturing	66,830	(1.7)	113,607	(2.1)	180,437	(1.9)
Trade	201,459	(5.1)	70,345	(1.3)	271,804	(2.9)
Food & beverage preparation	42,699	(1.1)	9,658	(0.2)	52,357	(0.6)
Professional services	72,196	(1.8)	105,463	(1.9)	177,659	(1.9)
Vehicles maintenance & other services	66,951	(1.7)	106,149	(2.0)	173,100	(1.8)
Market traders	173,929	(4.4)	201,788	(3.7)	375,717	(4.0)
Goods other than food and beverages	131,145	(3.3)	154,061	(2.8)	285,206	(3.0)
Food and beverage	42,784	(1.1)	47,727	(0.9)	90,511	(1.0)
Street vendors	229,135	(5.8)	211,747	(3.9)	440,882	(4.7)
Goods other than food and beverages	153,022	(3.9)	129,359	(2.4)	282,381	(3.0)
Food and beverage	72,186	(1.8)	46,713	(0.9)	118,899	(1.3)
Services	3,927	(0.1)	35,675	(0.7)	39,602	(0.4)
Informal construction workers*	10,723	(0.3)	399,129	(7.3)	409,852	(4.4)
Informal transport workers*	13,558	(0.3)	384,011	(7.1)	397,569	(4.2)
Total	1,225,101	(31.1)	1,651,948	(30.4)	2,877,049	(30.7)
Urban Mexico						
Domestic workers	954,270	(8.8)	113,410	(0.7)	1,067,680	(4.1)
Home-based workers	1,225,193	(11.3)	1,008,491	(6.6)	2,233,684	(8.6)
Manufacturing	220,087	(2.0)	251,758	(1.7)	471,845	(1.8)
Trade	489,075	(4.5)	188,011	(1.2)	677,086	(2.6)
Food & beverage preparation	186,895	(1.7)	49,380	(0.3)	236,275	(0.9)
Professional services	155,214	(1.4)	234,075	(1.5)	389,289	(1.5)
Vehicles maintenance & other services	173,922	(1.6)	285,267	(1.9)	459,189	(1.8)



An informal vendor in Oaxaca, Mexico.
Photo by Marty Chen

In Mexico City, *street vending* comprises around 6 per cent of women's and 4 per cent of men's employment and *market trade* about 4 per cent of both women's and men's employment. In urban Mexico and Mexico national, *street vending* represents 4 and 5 per cent, respectively, of women's employment and 3 per cent of men's in both locations. Market trade is slightly less significant than street vending at 3 and 2 per cent of women's employment and 2 and 1 per cent of men's.

* Includes all informal workers in the general industry category. All other groups include both formal and informal workers.

Table 3 (Continued). Groups of workers by sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019: Numbers and per cent of total employment

Market traders	320,667	(2.9)	334,656	(2.2)	655,323	(2.5)
Goods other than food and beverages	213,284	(2.0)	239,631	(1.6)	452,915	(1.7)
Food and beverage	107,383	(1.0)	95,025	(0.6)	202,408	(0.8)
Street vendors	473,262	(4.3)	426,990	(2.8)	900,252	(3.5)
Goods other than food and beverages	315,988	(2.9)	256,681	(1.7)	572,669	(2.2)
Food and beverage	143,740	(1.3)	101,836	(0.7)	245,576	(0.9)
Services	13,534	(0.1)	68,473	(0.5)	82,007	(0.3)
Informal construction workers*	30,446	(0.3)	1,243,669	(8.2)	1,274,115	(4.9)
Informal transport workers*	31,323	(0.3)	750,044	(4.9)	781,367	(3.0)
Total	3,035,161	(27.9)	3,877,260	(25.5)	6,912,421	(26.5)
Mexico	Women		Men		Total	
Domestic workers	2,162,505	(10.1)	210,935	(0.6)	2,373,440	(4.3)
Home-based workers	3,034,703	(14.1)	1,951,395	(5.8)	4,986,098	(9.1)
Manufacturing	905,024	(4.2)	623,539	(1.9)	1,528,563	(2.8)
Trade	1,036,416	(4.8)	341,699	(1.0)	1,378,115	(2.5)
Food & beverage preparation	542,192	(2.5)	107,500	(0.3)	649,692	(1.2)
Professional services	217,250	(1.0)	316,934	(0.9)	534,184	(1.0)
Vehicles maintenance & other services	333,821	(1.6)	561,723	(1.7)	895,544	(1.6)
Market traders	503,770	(2.3)	468,520	(1.4)	972,290	(1.8)
Goods other than food and beverages	299,142	(1.4)	316,996	(0.9)	616,138	(1.1)
Food and beverage	204,628	(1.0)	151,524	(0.5)	356,152	(0.6)
Street vendors	1,030,049	(4.8)	835,639	(2.5)	1,865,688	(3.4)
Goods other than food and beverages	692,217	(3.2)	545,361	(1.6)	1,237,578	(2.3)
Food and beverage	314,679	(1.5)	180,577	(0.5)	495,256	(0.9)
Services	23,153	(0.1)	109,701	(0.3)	132,854	(0.2)
Informal construction workers*	47,256	(0.2)	3,334,624	(10.0)	3,381,880	(6.2)
Informal transport workers*	52,233	(0.2)	1,291,791	(3.9)	1,344,024	(2.4)
Total	6,830,516	(31.8)	8,092,904	(24.2)	14,923,420	(27.2)

Home-based Workers by Industry

Unlike the other worker groups, *home-based workers* – those who declare own home or area adjacent to or near own home as their place of work – are found in several major industry sectors of the economy. In Mexico, *home-based workers* are in manufacturing or in one of the three sub-categories of services: professional, trade and other services (**table 4**).

In all three geographic areas, trade represents the largest percentage of women *home-based workers*, accounting for almost half (45 per cent) of women in *home-based work* in Mexico City, 40 per cent in urban Mexico and 34 per cent in Mexico nationally.

Trade is less significant among men *home-based workers*, accounting for 17-18 per cent of *home-based work* for men in the three geographic areas. Manufacturing and other services each represent around 30 per cent of women *home-based workers* in the national data.

Among men *home-based workers* in Mexico City, roughly equal shares – a little over one quarter

– are in manufacturing, professional and other services. In urban Mexico the percentages of men in professional work and manufacturing are slightly less than in Mexico City, while the percentages in other services is significantly higher. In Mexico nationally, the share of men *home-based workers* in professional services is significantly lower and the shares in manufacturing and other services constitute around one-third of men *home-based workers*.

Professional work is a smaller share of women's *home-based* employment than men's: 16 per cent of women's and 26 per cent of men's in Mexico City, 13 per cent of women's and 23 per cent of men's in urban Mexico and only 7 per cent for women but 16 per cent of men's nationally.

Informal Employment

Employment in the six groups of workers is overwhelmingly informal (**table 5**, page 6). With only a few exceptions, over 75 per cent of both women and men workers in these worker groups are informal. In *domestic work*, *market trade* and *street vending* all, or nearly all, workers are informal. The main exceptions



Home-based worker in Mexico.
Photo from WIEGO

are women employed in *construction* and in *transport* in all three geographic areas. While the overall sector of *construction* and *transport* is large, the focus here is only on those workers who are informal. Relatively few women are employed in these industries but among those who are, around three-quarters have formal employment arrangements.

Among men in *transport* and *construction* outside of Mexico City, the share who are informal is somewhat lower than in Mexico City but remains at least one half of the workers in these worker groups.

Table 4. Industry of home-based workers in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico by sex, 2019 (per cent distribution)

	Women				Men			
	Manufacturing	Professional services	Trade	Other services	Manufacturing	Professional services	Trade	Other services
Mexico City	14.8	16.0	44.8	24.4	28.0	26.0	17.4	28.6
Urban Mexico	18.0	12.7	39.9	29.4	25.0	23.2	18.6	33.2
Mexico	29.8	7.2	34.2	28.9	32.0	16.2	17.5	34.3

Table 5. Total employment and groups of workers by whether informally employed and sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019 (per cent)

Mexico City	Women	Men	Total
Total employment	52.8	50.2	51.3
Domestic workers	99.3	94.2	98.6
Home-based workers	91.9	77.5	85.1
Market traders	100.0	100.0	100.0
Street vendors	100.0	99.1	99.6
Informal construction workers	26.4	75.4	71.9
Informal transport workers	11.4	72.9	71.5
Urban Mexico	Women	Men	Total
Total employment	47.7	43.3	45.2
Domestic workers	98.0	87.2	96.9
Home-based workers	92.4	79.8	86.7
Market traders	98.5	97.9	98.2
Street vendors	99.1	98.0	98.6
Informal construction workers	27.0	71.5	68.6
Informal transport workers	24.5	63.7	59.9
Mexico	Women	Men	Total
Total employment	57.3	55.7	56.3
Domestic workers	98.5	89.2	97.6
Home-based workers	95.7	81.6	90.2
Market traders	27.9	80.1	78.0
Street vendors	28.0	63.7	60.7
Informal construction workers	6.5	74.6	71.9
Informal transport workers	10.2	49.7	46.4

³ Few employers were identified in informal construction and informal transport. This may be because in Mexico, construction and transport businesses are generally registered with national authorities and thus not part of the informal sector. However, at least some of the employees are not in the social security system so are informal.

Status in Employment

Self-employment with no employees, referred to as own account work, is the predominant status for women and for men in *home-based work*, *market trade* and *street vending* (**table 6**, page 7).

In the three geographic areas, over 80 per cent of women and around 70 per cent of men *home-based workers* are own account. Among *street vendors*, in the three areas over 75 per cent of both women and men in *street vending* are own account. Somewhat fewer but still substantial proportions of *market traders* are own account workers: a little over 60 per cent of both women and men in Mexico City, around 60 per cent among women and men in urban Mexico, and 60 and 54 per cent among men and women, respectively, in Mexico nationally.

Employee is the predominant status for women and men in the other three groups – *domestic worker*, *informal construction worker* and *informal transport worker* – in all three geographic areas. All *domestic workers* are employees. Among *construction* and *transport workers*, higher percentages of women than men are employees in all three areas. For example, in Mexico City, 68 per cent of women in *informal construction* and 58 per cent of men are employees; in *informal transport*, 75 per cent of women are employees in comparison to 59 per cent of men.³

Around 20 per cent of women *market traders* and 11 per cent of women *street vendors* are contributing family workers. In both groups, a lower percentage of men are contributing

Table 6. Groups of workers by status in employment and sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019 (per cent)

	Women				Men				Total			
	Employer	Own account	Contrib. family worker	Employees	Employer	Own account	Contrib. family worker	Employees	Employer	Own account	Contrib. family worker	Employees
Mexico City												
Domestic workers	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Home-based workers	2.5	85.2	5.3	7.1	10.0	70.3	2.0	17.7	6.0	78.1	3.7	12.1
Market traders	4.5	62.2	18.0	14.3	7.0	65.0	5.1	22.9	5.9	63.7	11.0	19.0
Street vendors	2.5	79.3	10.3	7.9	4.3	76.8	3.9	15.1	3.4	78.1	7.2	11.3
Informal construction workers	8.0	24.0	0.0	67.9	9.0	33.1	0.0	57.9	9.0	32.9	0.0	58.2
Informal transport workers	0.0	13.5	0.0	74.7	0.8	40.7	0.0	58.5	0.8	39.8	0.0	59.0
Urban Mexico												
Domestic workers	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Home-based workers	2.5	84.2	6.3	7.0	9.3	71.3	3.0	16.4	5.6	78.4	4.8	11.2
Market traders	5.6	57.4	18.5	17.6	9.6	61.0	5.4	24.0	7.7	59.2	11.8	20.9
Street vendors	2.6	78.1	10.9	8.3	5.9	75.6	4.6	13.9	4.1	76.9	8.0	11.0
Informal construction workers	3.8	9.8	7.0	76.6	10.9	29.1	0.2	59.8	10.7	28.6	0.4	60.2
Informal transport workers	2.9	15.1	5.4	70.7	1.2	39.6	0.0	59.2	1.2	38.6	0.2	59.7
Mexico												
Domestic workers	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Home-based workers	2.4	82.7	8.4	6.4	9.3	67.6	5.3	17.8	5.1	76.8	7.2	10.9
Market traders	6.4	53.7	20.1	19.2	9.6	59.1	7.8	23.5	7.9	56.3	14.2	21.3
Street vendors	2.6	77.4	11.2	8.7	5.8	74.3	5.7	14.2	4.0	76.0	8.7	11.2
Informal construction workers	2.8	7.3	5.3	81.4	11.7	21.9	0.2	66.1	11.6	21.7	0.3	66.3
Informal transport workers	1.8	13.9	4.7	74.0	1.6	33.5	0.1	64.8	1.6	32.7	0.3	65.2



Shoe shiner in Mexico City.
Photo by Lorena Reyes Toledo

family workers: in Mexico City, 5 per cent of men *market traders* and 4 per cent of men *street vendors*; in urban Mexico, around 5 per cent in both groups; and in Mexico, 8 per cent of *market traders* and 6 per cent of *street vendors*. Among *home-based workers*, as well as *informal construction* and *informal transport workers*, less than 10 per cent of women are contributing family workers; the percentage is even lower for men.

Few workers in any of these worker groups are employers. In *market trade*, 6 per cent of women workers are employers in urban Mexico

and Mexico national and around 5 per cent in Mexico City. Men are somewhat more likely to be employers: from 7 to 11 per cent among *home-based work*, *market trade* and *informal construction* across the three geographic areas.

Education

In each geographic area, well over half of workers in each of the groups — both women and men — have completed at least a secondary education (**table 7**). Across the geographic areas, men are more likely to have tertiary education than women among *domestic workers*, *home-based*

workers, *market traders* and *street vendors*, but not among *informal construction* and *transport workers*. Just over half of women in *informal construction* across the three areas have some tertiary education, compared to only 22 per cent of men in Mexico City and 17 and 14 per cent in the other two areas. In *informal transport* in Mexico City, 46 per cent of women and 36 per cent of men have some tertiary education; in urban Mexico, 53 per cent of women and 34 per cent of men have some; in Mexico nationally, the percentages are 55 per cent among women and 30 per cent among men. These findings suggest that women in *construction* and *transport* are in office positions rather than in physical construction activities or transport driving.

On the opposite end of the education hierarchy, a smaller percentage of men than women in *domestic work*, *home-based work* and *market trade* have completed only primary education or less in all three geographic areas. For example, among *domestic workers* in Mexico City, 45 per cent of women and 39 per cent of men have such low levels of education; among *market traders*, the percentages are 39 per cent for women and 25 per cent for men. Among *home-based workers*, the differences between men and women in Mexico City are small but are larger in urban Mexico and Mexico nationally. But for *informal construction* and *informal transport*, significantly larger percentages of men than women are in the lowest education categories. Among *street vendors*, the percentages of women and men with low levels of education are similar.

Generally, both women and men in each of the worker groups have higher levels of education in Mexico City than in urban Mexico and Mexico

nationally. This is shown clearly in the share who have some tertiary education and who have completed only primary education or less.

Table 7. Groups of workers by highest level of education and sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019 (per cent)*

	Women				Men				Total			
	None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Mexico City												
Domestic workers	17.3	27.4	38.9	16.1	7.8	31.5	19.4	41.3	16.1	27.9	36.4	19.3
Home-based workers	6.8	13.7	39.3	39.7	4.0	14.9	31.3	49.4	5.4	14.3	35.5	44.3
Market traders	11.1	27.4	39.8	21.7	5.4	20.0	45.7	28.9	8.0	23.4	43.0	25.6
Street vendors	13.9	25.4	38.8	21.9	13.5	26.5	31.7	28.3	13.7	25.9	35.4	24.9
Informal construction workers	0.0	14.8	32.1	53.2	14.4	26.0	38.0	21.5	14.1	25.7	37.9	22.3
Informal transport workers	0.0	0.0	54.0	46.0	3.1	15.9	45.2	35.5	3.0	15.4	45.5	35.9
Urban Mexico												
Domestic workers	16.6	29.7	40.5	13.0	9.1	28.6	33.4	28.9	15.8	29.5	39.8	14.6
Home-based workers	8.0	16.3	38.9	36.5	5.0	15.3	32.3	47.1	6.6	15.9	36.0	41.3
Market traders	10.2	26.0	41.9	22.0	6.9	20.3	44.8	27.9	8.5	23.1	43.4	25.0
Street vendors	15.0	24.5	39.5	21.1	15.4	27.1	34.7	22.7	15.2	25.7	37.2	21.8
Informal construction workers	5.2	14.4	26.3	54.1	14.2	29.9	39.1	16.7	14.0	29.5	38.8	17.6
Informal transport workers	1.5	4.8	41.2	52.5	3.9	17.1	44.7	34.1	3.8	16.6	44.6	34.8
Mexico												
Domestic workers	19.3	29.7	39.6	11.4	14.7	25.0	35.7	24.6	18.9	29.3	39.2	12.6
Home-based workers	16.9	20.0	36.4	26.5	10.9	18.1	33.3	37.5	14.5	19.3	35.2	30.8
Market traders	11.4	25.8	42.8	20.1	8.0	19.7	44.8	27.4	9.7	22.9	43.8	23.6
Street vendors	18.9	24.3	38.3	18.3	18.4	26.1	34.3	21.2	18.7	25.1	36.5	19.6
Informal construction workers	6.5	13.3	29.2	51.0	16.4	30.5	38.7	14.2	16.3	30.3	38.6	14.8
Informal transport workers	0.9	7.6	36.2	55.3	5.2	19.0	45.2	30.4	5.0	18.6	44.9	31.4

* The levels of education in Mexico within each of the table categories are: **None** – less than completed primary; **Primary** – completion of 6th grade; **Secondary** – completion of an additional 3 years; **Tertiary** – some years of post secondary or college (*licenciatura*) and higher.

Hours of work

The majority of men in these worker groups work at least 40 hours a week and a substantial percentage work considerably longer (**table 8**, page 11). In Mexico City, a work week of more than 48 hours is the norm for 25 per cent of men in *home-based work*, around one-third in *street vending* and *informal construction*, 45 per cent in *market trade*, and almost 60 per cent in *domestic work* and *informal transport*. In urban Mexico and Mexico nationally, the percentages of men working more than 48 hours per week are a little less than in Mexico City but still over 30 per cent; in *informal transport* around 65 per cent work these long hours. The exception is *home-based work* in urban Mexico and Mexico nationally, where a lower but still significant percentage of men (around 21 per cent) work over 48 hours a week.

A smaller but still significant proportion of women work more than 48 hours a week: in Mexico City, 12 per cent of women in *domestic work*, 29 per cent in *market trade*, 13 per cent in *street vending*. However in *informal construction* and *informal transport*, the percentage of women working more than 48 hours per week is fairly comparable to that of men: in Mexico City, 38 per cent of women in *informal construction* and 67 per cent in *informal transport*; in urban Mexico, 27 per cent and 48 per cent, and in Mexico nationally, 33 per cent and 52 per cent respectively. As with men, a smaller percentage of women work as many as 48 hours in *home-based work*: around 10 to 12 per cent in all three geographic areas.

A far higher percentage of women than men work fewer than 15 hours per week in each of the worker groups. One third of women *home-based workers* work fewer than 15 hours each week and just over one-quarter of women *street vendors*. Only in *home-based work* does the proportion of men working less than 15 hours account for more than 10 per cent.

Age

The majority of both women and men workers in all worker groups in the three geographic areas are in the peak employment years of ages 35-54 (**table 9**, page 12). This large age group accounts for around 40 to 54 per cent of workers.

For all worker groups, the share of men working in the youngest ages, 15-24 years, was higher in Mexico nationally than in Mexico City or urban Mexico. Among men in the national data, this age group accounts for 11 per cent of *informal transport*, 12 per cent of *domestic workers*, 14 per cent of *home-based workers*, 16 per cent of *street vendors*, 18 per cent of *market traders* and 19 per cent of *informal construction*. Among men in Mexico City and urban Mexico the share at the youngest ages was less in all worker groups but remained at 14 to 16 per cent of workers in *market trade*, *street vending* and *informal construction*.

The pattern among women is similar with generally higher shares of workers in the youngest ages in the national data than in the other geographic areas, except in *informal construction* and *informal*



A non-salaried musician in Mexico City. Photo by Lorena Reyes Toledo

transport. While there are relatively few women in these worker groups, the share in the youngest category is quite high. Young women account for 17 per cent of women in *informal construction* and 26 in *informal transport* in Mexico City; 23 per cent and 18 per cent respectively in urban Mexico and 19 per cent for both worker groups in the national data.

A substantial share of women and men continue to work at older ages in each worker group and across the three geographic areas. For the age

categories 55 years and older, from 20 to 32 per cent of women and men in each worker group with the exception of *informal construction* and

informal transport are still employed. At ages 55 to 64, women in these two worker groups account for less than 7 per cent of these

Table 8. Hours worked per week by groups of workers and sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019 (per cent)

	Women					Men				
	Less than 15 hours	15 to 34 hours	35 to 39 hours	40 to 48 hours	More than 48 hours	Less than 15 hours	15 to 34 hours	35 to 39 hours	40 to 48 hours	More than 48 hours
Mexico City										
Domestic workers	16.1	41.0	7.2	21.0	11.9	0.0	11.1	3.7	26.1	59.1
Home-based workers	32.9	36.0	7.9	8.6	12.0	14.7	25.6	7.4	24.6	25.7
Market traders	18.4	25.4	12.0	14.0	29.0	4.2	20.4	6.4	24.0	44.7
Street vendors	26.4	32.1	8.2	16.7	12.8	2.0	26.5	5.8	30.3	32.4
Informal construction workers	17.5	9.3	0.0	35.1	38.0	3.7	19.9	5.1	28.2	36.6
Informal transport workers	7.5	5.5	0.0	20.4	66.6	3.2	7.5	5.5	24.8	57.8
Urban Mexico										
Domestic workers	16.1	39.1	7.4	25.7	9.0	3.2	14.6	3.8	33.3	43.8
Home-based workers	32.3	35.1	7.0	10.6	10.6	14.4	26.4	7.7	25.2	21.6
Market traders	19.0	30.3	10.7	16.5	21.4	5.8	23.3	7.9	26.0	36.0
Street vendors	27.2	33.4	9.1	14.4	11.7	5.6	25.9	7.2	27.0	30.6
Informal construction workers	10.2	24.8	1.5	35.1	27.3	3.4	17.1	3.8	38.4	32.6
Informal transport workers	7.7	13.7	2.5	27.1	48.1	2.7	7.8	4.2	20.7	62.7
Mexico										
Domestic workers	18.1	38.0	7.2	24.8	9.9	6.4	16.7	5.4	28.5	41.7
Home-based workers	32.3	33.8	7.4	10.7	11.5	14.7	26.5	8.4	25.2	21.3
Market traders	17.2	30.8	10.2	19.9	20.0	5.5	24.7	7.6	25.1	35.9
Street vendors	29.4	35.6	7.8	12.9	11.2	7.3	24.9	7.9	24.1	32.9
Informal construction workers	8.6	20.0	3.2	34.3	33.3	3.3	17.1	3.5	37.9	34.5
Informal transport workers	6.2	15.8	3.1	22.2	52.2	2.7	8.4	3.3	18.0	65.1

workers and at ages 65 and older less than one per cent. Among men the pattern is similar except that a large share of men (around 20 per cent) in *informal construction* and in *informal*

transport continue to work at these older ages in Mexico City and urban Mexico and a little less in Mexico nationally.

Table 9. Groups of workers by age and sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019 (per cent)

	Women					Men				
	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-54 years	55-64 years	65 + years	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-54 years	55-64 years	65 + years
Mexico City										
Domestic workers	7.6	14.2	52.4	19.1	6.7	1.8	16.2	54.5	23.9	3.6
Home-based workers	9.1	17.1	42.6	22.5	8.3	6.9	15.0	49.3	18.1	10.8
Market traders	10.5	18.3	38.9	25.1	7.1	14.4	23.1	42.7	14.7	5.1
Street vendors	8.3	15.5	54.0	12.3	9.9	13.6	18.4	40.5	16.1	11.3
Informal construction workers	16.7	36.3	46.9	0.0	0.0	14.2	19.6	44.1	13.3	8.4
Informal transport workers	26.2	14.6	53.8	5.4	0.0	5.7	21.5	51.5	14.8	6.4
Urban Mexico										
Domestic workers	8.0	14.1	53.4	18.1	6.3	9.1	15.7	47.8	19.5	7.2
Home-based workers	9.6	18.9	44.9	17.9	8.5	11.1	17.3	45.6	16.3	9.5
Market traders	11.5	18.7	41.0	21.3	7.5	16.3	21.4	41.6	13.5	6.9
Street vendors	9.5	16.1	49.4	14.7	10.2	13.6	16.4	41.4	16.3	12.1
Informal construction workers	23.1	30.0	43.1	3.8	0.0	15.6	20.1	44.9	13.8	5.4
Informal transport workers	18.1	24.0	48.7	6.8	1.2	7.8	20.4	51.3	14.7	5.8
Mexico										
Domestic workers	10.9	17.1	52.1	14.7	5.2	12.1	15.1	44.3	18.6	9.5
Home-based workers	11.2	19.3	43.5	16.2	9.8	14.3	18.3	42.9	15.1	9.3
Market traders	12.5	19.8	43.4	17.7	6.6	18.4	20.5	41.8	12.3	6.8
Street vendors	10.5	17.6	45.9	16.2	9.7	15.5	17.1	40.6	15.2	11.3
Informal construction workers	19.3	31.5	41.8	6.9	0.5	19.2	22.0	43.3	11.5	3.8
Informal transport workers	18.5	29.0	44.8	6.1	0.7	10.9	20.6	49.9	13.5	5.1

Income from Employment

The average hourly earnings for all employed in urban Mexico (40 pesos) are higher than in Mexico City (36 pesos) and in Mexico national

(39 pesos)(table 10). The worker groups featured in this brief have lower average hourly earnings than the average earnings for all workers. Only men in *home-based work* have significantly higher hourly earnings than the average for

all workers across the three geographic areas. This is due to the relatively large share of men in *home-based work* (tables 3 and 4) who are in the higher-earning professional and technical work categories.

More detailed tabulations, not presented in table 10, show that in all three geographic areas, both women and men in professional *home-based work* have higher hourly earnings than *home-based workers* in other activities. Further, among professional *home-based workers* in Mexico City, men earn more than twice as much per hour than women: 129 pesos in comparison to 50 pesos. In urban Mexico and Mexico nationally, among professional *home-based workers*, men's average hourly earnings are about 30 pesos higher than women's.

In Mexico City, women *domestic workers* earn more than men: 32 pesos per hour among women and 28 among men. In the other geographic areas, there is no difference between women and men *domestic workers*. Among *street vendors*, women have higher hourly earnings than men in Mexico City (29 pesos in comparison to 26 pesos for men) and in urban Mexico (30 pesos for women and 29 for men), but in Mexico national there is no difference. Women also have higher earnings than men among *informal construction workers* nationally (37 compared to 34 pesos); the hourly earnings are similar in urban Mexico while in Mexico City, men have higher hourly earnings (31 compared to 33 pesos).

Table 10. Hourly earnings for all employed and by groups of workers and sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019*

Mexican pesos (MXN)	Women	Men	Total
Mexico City – all workers	MXN 35	MXN 37	MXN 36
Domestic workers	32	28	31
Home-based workers	34	68	52
Market traders	26	31	30
Street vendors	29	26	27
Informal construction workers	31	33	33
Informal transport workers	23	29	29
Urban Mexico – all workers	MXN 38	MXN 42	MXN 40
Domestic workers	31	31	31
Home-based workers	36	57	47
Market traders	32	34	33
Street vendors	30	29	29
Informal construction workers	37	37	37
Informal transport workers	29	30	30
Mexico – all workers	MXN 34	MXN 35	MXN 35
Domestic workers	27	27	27
Home-based workers	28	43	35
Market traders	31	33	32
Street vendors	29	29	29
Informal construction workers	37	34	34
Informal transport workers	26	27	27

* Since contributing family workers are not paid, they are excluded from this table.



Street vendors in Mexico City.
Photo by Lorena Reyes Toledo

Another way to understand earnings is in relation to the legal daily minimum wage (**table 11**).

The minimum wage in Mexico is based on the daily earnings of employees only, not the self-employed; however the data in table 11 include the earnings of all worker groups in this brief. The majority of women workers in all groups except *informal transport* and *informal construction* earn the minimum wage or less. In Mexico City, 40 to 50 per cent of women in all but these two groups earn the minimum wage or less and percentages in the other geographic areas are similar.

Among men, the percentages of those earning less than the minimum wage are much lower, ranging from 10 to 36 per cent; this is true across the three areas and across all worker groups. Across all geographic areas, men earning 1 to 2 times the minimum wage constitute the largest percentages. Further, in all geographic areas, more women than men in *market trade*, *street vending* and *informal transport* receive no income because they work as contributing family workers: around 19 per cent of women in *market trade* compared to only 5 to 8 per cent of men; 10 per cent of women *street vendors* compared to 4 to 6 per cent of men; and 11 per cent of women in *informal transport* compared to very few or no men.

Table 11. Earnings of groups of workers in relation to the minimum wage by sex in Mexico City, urban Mexico and Mexico, 2019 (per cent)*

	Women						Men					
	Up to a minimum wage	More than 1 to 2 min. wages	More than 2 to 3 min. wages	More than 3 min. wages	Does not receive income	Not specified	Up to a minimum wage	More than 1 to 2 min. wages	More than 2 to 3 min. wages	More than 3 min. wages	Does not receive income	Not specified
Mexico City												
Domestic workers	39.3	36.7	12.7	1.7	0.0	9.5	9.2	17.0	28.6	3.6	0.0	41.6
Home-based workers	50.2	22.0	4.9	3.8	5.3	13.7	19.6	24.8	17.7	14.9	2.0	21.0
Market traders	46.9	28.2	3.3	0.0	19.0	2.6	21.9	39.2	17.8	9.2	5.1	6.9
Street vendors	46.5	28.5	6.2	1.4	10.3	7.1	36.2	27.9	16.9	3.3	3.9	11.7
Informal construction workers	31.8	18.4	20.0	29.8	0.0	0.0	11.3	45.7	26.0	7.0	0.0	10.1
Informal transport workers	7.5	54.1	26.7	0.0	11.8	0.0	11.9	41.7	28.4	7.7	0.0	10.3
Urban Mexico												
Domestic workers	38.6	40.2	11.9	1.6	0.0	7.7	15.1	26.8	26.5	7.5	0.0	24.1
Home-based workers	48.7	21.0	7.1	4.7	6.3	12.2	18.2	25.5	19.1	16.0	3.0	18.2
Market traders	41.2	27.1	6.2	1.3	19.3	4.9	21.6	36.1	17.9	9.5	5.4	9.4
Street vendors	47.8	25.7	5.7	1.7	11.0	8.1	33.5	29.4	15.9	4.9	4.6	11.6
Informal construction workers	22.4	27.1	14.8	15.9	9.8	9.9	9.8	37.6	31.7	10.4	0.2	10.1
Informal transport workers	14.5	38.9	19.7	8.3	11.3	7.3	10.7	36.1	29.2	11.7	0.0	12.2
Mexico												
Domestic workers	47.4	38.0	7.7	1.0	0.0	5.9	24.3	31.9	23.2	4.8	0.0	15.8
Home-based workers	57.9	17.2	5.4	2.9	8.4	8.1	26.3	24.8	18.1	11.7	5.3	13.9
Market traders	37.0	28.0	7.3	1.8	20.7	5.2	21.0	33.4	18.1	9.3	7.8	10.4
Street vendors	52.2	22.4	5.3	1.4	11.2	7.5	31.8	31.1	15.5	5.2	5.7	10.8
Informal construction workers	19.6	25.8	15.9	14.1	8.5	16.2	11.0	40.9	32.2	8.1	0.3	7.5
Informal transport workers	22.7	38.4	16.0	7.0	10.3	5.5	13.0	38.7	25.9	10.6	0.1	11.7

* The data are based on minimum daily earnings.

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