



KEY FINDINGS REPORT ON THE MIGRATION INDICATORS

NATIONAL INTEGRATED HOUSEHOLD SURVEY
MIGRATION MODULE KEY FINDINGS 2024/25

September, 2026

Addis Ababa



Publication Note

This report presents the migration-related key findings of the National Integrated Household Survey (NIHS) 2024/25, using the migration key-finding presentation supplied for this assignment as the principal analytical source. The report retains the concepts, comparison periods, regional framing and major messages presented in that material.

The report is designed as a publication-ready analytical draft. It can be further updated after final statistical validation of the NIHS 2024/25 microdata, tabulation outputs, sampling errors, confidence intervals and final ESS editorial review.

Where a chart in the supplied presentation contains information that is visual rather than machine-readable, the report uses the chart itself as the source rather than reconstructing uncertain numerical values. This approach avoids introducing figures that cannot be verified from the supplied presentation.

Suggested citation

Ethiopian Statistical Service (ESS). 2026. National Integrated Household Survey (NIHS) 2024/25: Migration Key Findings Report. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Forward

Dear Colleagues, Data Partners, and Stakeholders,

As we release the key findings from our comprehensive migration statistics report, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Government for allocating the essential budget and resources to conduct this vital survey, reflecting an unwavering commitment to evidence based governance. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to local communities and respondents across the country for their invaluable cooperation and willingness to share accurate information, which serves as the absolute foundation of our national data framework.

This year's report delivers a holistic view of human mobility by bridging both international and national dimensions. On the international front, we track critical indicators encompassing outbound emigrants, returning citizens, and the deeply sobering realities captured by global monitoring of missing migrants along dangerous transit corridors. Locally, our national migration statistics capture internal migration, rural-urban shifts, and localized population dynamics that directly shape our labor markets, infrastructure planning, and regional development.

Accurate, reliable, and disaggregated data remain our most powerful tools to understand these multifaceted trends, moving us past assumptions to address human realities. With these comprehensive insights now publicly available, I warmly invite all data users, researchers, planners, and policymakers to actively utilize this data to inform their decisions, optimize social services, and design sustainable policies that effectively serve our population.

Sincerely,

Beker Shale (Ph.D)

Director General

Ethiopian Statistical Service

Executive Summary

The National Integrated Household Survey (NIHS) 2024/25 provides a broad statistical picture of migration in Ethiopia, covering recent internal migration, emigration, return migration and missing migrants. The survey was implemented with high national coverage: 2,833 of 2,880 planned enumeration areas were covered (98.37 percent), while 50,696 of 51,840 planned households were covered (97.79 percent). Rural coverage was 97.11 percent and urban coverage was 98.82 percent.

The survey estimates 5,244,131 recent migrants. Females account for 2,881,324 (54.9 percent) and males for 2,362,807 (45.1 percent). Urban residents account for 2,873,475 recent migrants (54.8 percent), compared with 2,370,656 (45.2 percent) in rural areas. Migration is strongly concentrated among young people, with the 20–29 age bracket accounting for more than 35 percent of recent migrants in both survey periods.

The regional distribution of recent migrants is led by Oromia, which accounts for 32.3 percent in NIHS 2024/25. The survey also shows diversified forms of migration: urban-to-urban, rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban and urban-to-rural movements all form meaningful components of recent mobility. The leading reason for internal migration is searching for work, followed by joining or living with family, conflict and marriage-related migration.

The labour-market profile of recent internal migrants shows a national employment rate of 62.8 percent and unemployment rate of 9.6 percent. Compared with 2021, employment increased from 60.6 percent to 62.8 percent, while unemployment declined from 11.8 percent to 9.6 percent.

Emigration has increased substantially. The NIHS 2024/25 presentation estimates 847,664 emigrants, of whom 547,355 are female and 300,309 are male. Rural females form the largest single emigrating cohort. Emigration is predominantly youth-oriented, with 80.3 percent concentrated in the main youth age range presented in the survey. Searching for work is the overwhelming reason for emigration.

Return migration is also strongly concentrated in the prime working ages. Females account for 54.1 percent of recent returnees, compared with 45.9 percent males. Deportation/expulsion has become a more prominent reason for return, while unemployment before migration increased substantially. The intention to re-migrate increased from 25.1 percent in 2021 to 38.1 percent in 2024/25.

Missing-migrant records remain strongly male-dominated: 86 percent male and 14 percent female in NIHS 2024/25, compared with more than 90 percent male in the 2021 comparison presented. The geographical distribution has also changed markedly, with the 2024/25 presentation identifying a much more dispersed pattern and highlighting Oromia, Amhara and Tigray as collectively accounting for 72.9 percent of recent missing migrants.

Key Indicators at a Glance

Indicator	NIHS 2024/25	Interpretation
EA coverage	2,833 / 2,880 (98.37%)	Very high national field coverage
Household coverage	50,696 / 51,840 (97.79%)	Strong national household response
Recent migrants	5,244,131	Female majority; urban majority
Female recent migrants	2,881,324 (54.9%)	Female migrants exceed males
Urban recent migrants	2,873,475 (54.8%)	Urban areas remain major destinations
Emigrants	847,664	Substantial increase from 2021
Female emigrants	547,355	Female majority among emigrants
Recent returnees	Female share 54.1%	Return migration remains female-led
Re-migration intention	38.1%	Up from 25.1% in 2021
Missing migrants	86% male; 14% female	Strong male concentration

These indicators summarize the main messages presented in the NIHS 2024/25 migration findings. They should be read together with the detailed chapters, which explain the underlying demographic, geographic, employment and migration-governance implications.

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Abbreviations

EAs	Enumeration Area(s)
ESS	Ethiopian Statistical Service
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LMS	Labour Force and Migration Survey
NGOs / Gov's	Non-Governmental Organizations / Governments
NIHS	National Integrated Household Survey
SNNP / SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples / Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
U.A.E.	United Arab Emirates

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1. Background and Rationale

Migration is an important component of Ethiopia's demographic and socioeconomic dynamics. People move within the country and across international borders for employment, family formation and reunification, education, security, livelihood and other reasons. Reliable migration statistics are therefore necessary for understanding population redistribution, labour-market change, urbanization, social protection needs, migration governance and the circumstances of migrants and their families.

The NIHS 2024/25 provides an opportunity to examine migration through a nationally implemented household survey framework. Its migration module supports measurement of several population groups that are often difficult to observe through a single statistical source, including recent internal migrants, emigrants, return migrants and missing migrants.

The 2024/25 results are particularly useful when compared with the 2021 Labour Force and Migration Survey (LMS). The comparison helps identify changes in the size and composition of migration, migration motivations, employment outcomes, return dynamics, documentation and missing-migrant profiles.

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to translate the migration findings presented in the NIHS 2024/25 key-finding presentation into a coherent analytical narrative for policymakers, migration-governance institutions, development partners, researchers and other users of official statistics.

Analytical principles

- Prioritize nationally comparable indicators and clearly identify the reference survey period.
- Distinguish internal migration, emigration, return migration and missing-migrant measures.
- Interpret sex, age, residence and regional patterns together rather than in isolation.
- Highlight changes between LMS 2021 and NIHS 2024/25 where the presentation provides a comparison.
- Avoid interpreting association as causation; reported reasons for migration are descriptive responses rather than causal estimates.

2. Survey Methodology and Coverage

The NIHS 2024/25 employed a two-stage household survey design. Enumeration areas constituted the first-stage sampling units, followed by the selection of households within sampled enumeration areas. The supplied presentation indicates a national plan of 2,880 enumeration areas and 51,840 households, equivalent to 18 planned households per enumeration area.

Field implementation achieved 2,833 covered enumeration areas and 50,696 covered households. National EA coverage was 98.37 percent. Rural EA coverage was 97.51 percent and urban EA coverage was 99.65 percent. Household coverage was 97.79 percent nationally, with rural coverage of 97.11 percent and urban coverage of 98.82 percent. The high coverage rate strengthens the basis for national-level migration estimates. Nevertheless, regional differences should be considered when interpreting highly disaggregated results.

2.1 Enumeration Area Coverage by Region

Region	Rural actual/planned	Urban actual/planned	Grand total coverage
Tigray	133/133 (100.00%)	68/68 (100.00%)	201/201 (100.00%)
Afar	72/72 (100.00%)	48/48 (100.00%)	120/120 (100.00%)
Amhara	253/288 (87.85%)	168/168 (100.00%)	421/456 (92.32%)
Oromia	332/336 (98.81%)	190/192 (98.96%)	522/528 (98.86%)
Somali	144/144 (100.00%)	72/72 (100.00%)	216/216 (100.00%)
Benishangul-Gumuz	69/72 (95.83%)	48/48 (100.00%)	117/120 (97.50%)
South Ethiopia	144/144 (100.00%)	72/72 (100.00%)	216/216 (100.00%)
Sidama	120/120 (100.00%)	48/48 (100.00%)	168/168 (100.00%)
South West Ethiopia	120/120 (100.00%)	48/48 (100.00%)	168/168 (100.00%)
Central Ethiopia	144/144 (100.00%)	71/72 (98.61%)	215/216 (99.54%)
Gambella	48/48 (100.00%)	48/48 (100.00%)	96/96 (100.00%)
Harari	48/48 (100.00%)	48/48 (100.00%)	96/96 (100.00%)
Addis Ababa	—	168/168 (100.00%)	168/168 (100.00%)
Dire Dawa	48/48 (100.00%)	48/48 (100.00%)	96/96 (100.00%)

2.2 Household Coverage by Region

Region	Rural actual/planned	Urban actual/planned	Grand total coverage
Tigray	2,393/2,394 (99.96%)	1,221/1,224 (99.75%)	3,614/3,618 (99.89%)
Afar	1,258/1,296 (97.07%)	850/864 (98.38%)	2,108/2,160 (97.59%)
Amhara	4,547/5,184 (87.71%)	3,003/3,024 (99.31%)	7,550/8,208 (91.98%)
Oromia	5,960/6,048 (98.54%)	3,399/3,456 (98.35%)	9,359/9,504 (98.47%)
Somali	2,589/2,592 (99.88%)	1,285/1,296 (99.15%)	3,874/3,888 (99.64%)
Benishangul-Gumuz	1,242/1,296 (95.83%)	863/864 (99.88%)	2,105/2,160 (97.45%)
South Ethiopia	2,592/2,592 (100.00%)	1,294/1,296 (99.85%)	3,886/3,888 (99.95%)
Sidama	2,160/2,160 (100.00%)	860/864 (99.54%)	3,020/3,024 (99.87%)
South West Ethiopia	2,147/2,160 (99.40%)	849/864 (98.26%)	2,996/3,024 (99.07%)
Central Ethiopia	2,556/2,592 (98.61%)	1,272/1,296 (98.15%)	3,828/3,888 (98.46%)
Gambella	864/864 (100.00%)	863/864 (99.88%)	1,727/1,728 (99.94%)
Harari	860/864 (99.54%)	844/864 (97.69%)	1,704/1,728 (98.61%)
Addis Ababa	—	2,973/3,024 (98.31%)	2,973/3,024 (98.31%)
Dire Dawa	858/864 (99.31%)	863/864 (99.88%)	1,721/1,728 (99.59%)

3. Migration Definitions and Analytical Scope

The migration findings use a set of statistical concepts designed to distinguish different forms of population mobility. The supplied presentation identifies internal migration, recent migration, emigration, return migration and missing migrants as major analytical categories.

Internal Migration

Internal migration refers to a change in usual place of residence within Ethiopia. For the statistical work underlying the presentation, the analytical focus is on recent migration during the defined reference period.

Recent Migrant

Recent migrants are persons identified as having moved during the recent five-year reference period used by the survey analysis. This reference period allows the survey to capture relatively recent population mobility while reducing the influence of very old migration events.

International Migration / Emigration

International migration involves movement across an international border associated with a change in usual residence. The emigration analysis in the presentation focuses on persons who left Ethiopia within the relevant reference period.

Return Migrant

Return migrants are persons who had previously migrated internationally and subsequently returned to Ethiopia during the relevant reference period.

Missing Migrant

Missing migrants are persons whose migration journey has resulted in a missing or unconfirmed status within the reporting framework used by the survey. The findings are therefore interpreted as statistical records rather than a complete administrative register of all missing persons.

4. Internal Migration

Internal migration is one of the largest components of population mobility captured by the NIHS 2024/25. The survey identifies 5,244,131 recent migrants, with females representing 54.8 percent and men 45.2 percent. The total is slightly lower than the 5,772,203 recent migrants shown for the 2021 comparison.

Table 4.1: Recent migrants by sex and residence: LMS 2021 and NIHS 2024/25

Survey	Sex	Total Count	Urban(%)	Rural(%)
NIHS 2024/25	Total	5,244,131	54.8	45.2
	Male	2,362,807	49.7	50.3
	Female	2,881,324	58.9	41.1
LMS 2021	Total	5,772,203	61.1	38.9
	Male	2,570,719	58.4	41.6
	Female	3,201,484	63.2	36.8

The sex composition indicates a female majority. This pattern is also reflected in the residence profile: female migrants have a higher urban share than male migrants in both survey periods. The result points to the importance of gender-sensitive analysis of internal migration and of urban opportunities and constraints affecting women.

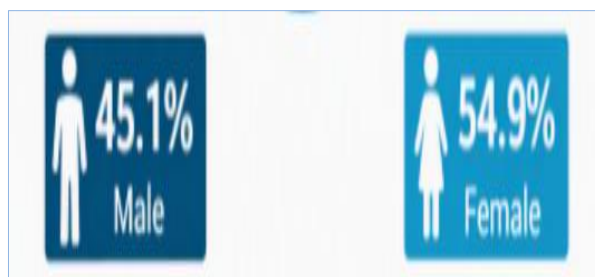


Figure 4.1: Gender distribution of recent migrants, NIHS 2024/25.

4.1 Urban–Rural Dynamics

Of the 5,244,131 recent migrants, 2,873,475 were residing in urban areas and 2,370,656 in rural areas. Thus, 54.8 percent of recent migrants were urban residents and 45.2 percent were rural residents.

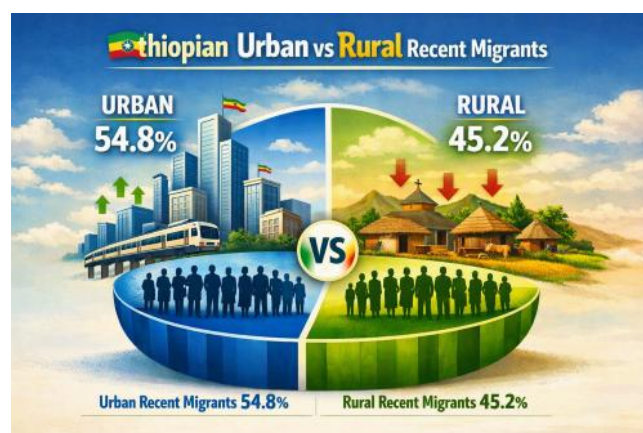


Figure 4.2: Urban–rural residence of recent migrants.

The urban majority is consistent with the role of towns and cities as destinations for employment, education, services and other opportunities. At the same time, the 45.2 percent rural share demonstrates that internal migration is not simply a rural-to-urban process. Rural-to-rural and urban-to-rural

movements remain important and require explicit consideration in policy and planning.

4.2 Age and Marital Composition

The age profile of recent migrants is strongly concentrated in young adulthood. The survey identifies the 20–29 age group as accounting for more than 35 percent of recent migrants in both LMS 2021 and NIHS 2024/25. The relative stability of the age structure indicates that young adults remain the principal group participating in recent internal migration.

Table 4.2: Age distribution of recent migrants

Age Group	NIHS 2024/25 (%)	LMS 2021 (%)
0-4	4.5	6.1
5-9	10.7	9.4
10-14	10.1	8.9
15-19	13.8	13.3
20-24	17.8	18.4
25-29	17.9	18.8
30-34	9.7	9.3
35-39	4.7	6.1
49-44	2.9	3.2
45-49	2.1	1.3
50-54	1.5	1.2
55-59	1.1	0.9
60-64	0.8	0.5
65+	1.4	1.5

The presence of children and adolescents among recent migrants also points to family-based mobility. The survey presentation explicitly notes the continued presence of the 0–14 age groups and interprets this as evidence of a continuing family dimension to recent migration.

Table 4.3: Marital status of recent migrants: 2021 and 2024/25

Marital status	NIHS 2024/25	LMS 2021
Never married	43.7	41.5
Married	48.1	49.4
Divorced	3.9	5.6
Separated	1.7	1.6
Widowed	1.9	1.6
Cohabited	0.7	0.3

The survey finding imply that there is no significant change in trend between the two surveys.

4.3 Regional Distribution and Forms of Migration

Oromia accounts for the largest reported share of recent migrants in NIHS 2024/25, at 32.3 percent. The finding also reports substantial shares for Amhara, Addis Ababa and Tigray regions. The reorganization of regional categories between survey periods limits direct historical comparison for some regions.

Table 4.4: Regional distribution of recent migrants.

Region	NIHS 2024/25 %	LMS 2021 %
Tigray	7.5	—
Afar	0.5	1.7
Amhara	29.0	34.8
Oromia	32.3	31.8
Somali	1.8	3.5
Benishangul Gumuz	1.8	1.6
South Ethiopia	5.4	—
Sidama	2.1	2.7
South West Ethiopia People	2.8	—
Central Ethiopia	4.8	—
Gambella	1.2	1.1
Harari	0.6	0.4
Addis Ababa	9.0	7.5
Diredawa	0.7	0.7

The forms of recent migration demonstrate that internal mobility is geographically diverse. Urban-to-urban, rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban and urban-to-rural movements all contribute to the national migration pattern. The survey emphasizes an increase in urban-to-rural and rural-to-rural migration since 2021, while urban-to-urban migration remains an important component.

Table 4.5: Forms of recent migration.

Forms of Migration	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Urban - Urban	28.9	28.6	29.1	26.9	26.5	25.5
Urban -Rural	17.9	21.0	15.4	13.7	17.0	11.0
Rural -Urban	25.9	21.1	29.8	29.2	29.2	34.6
Rural -Rural	27.3	29.3	25.7	23.4	22.7	24.0

4.4 Net Migration

The NIHS 2024/25 regional net-migration comparison shows considerable geographic differentiation. Addis Ababa recorded the highest positive value in the comparison table at 43.5, followed by Gambella at 43.6. Harari also recorded a positive value of 28.1, while Dire Dawa recorded 20.5.

Several regions moved from positive values in the 2021 comparison to negative values in 2024/25. Afar changed from 5.8 to -6.8, Oromia from 1.0 to -5.6, Somali from -0.6 to -5.1, and Sidama from 0.6 to -4.2. Benishangul-Gumuz moved from -25.8 to 6.1, while Amhara increased from 1.2 to 3.7.

Table 4.6: Regional net migration comparison: LMS 2021 vs NIHS 2024/25

Regions	NISH 2024/25	LMS 2021
Gambella	43.6	2.2
Addis Ababa	43.5	9.6
Harari	28.1	23.4
Diredawa	20.5	30.9
Benishangul Gumuz	6.1	-25.8
Central Ethiopia	4.7	—
Amhara	3.7	1.2
South west Ethiopia	-3.4	—
South Ethiopia	-3.8	—
Sidama	-4.2	0.5
Tigray	-5.0	—
Somali	-5.1	-0.5
Oromia	-5.6	1.0
Afar	-6.8	5.7

These results indicate that the balance of population movement differs sharply across regions. The pattern has direct implications for spatial planning, service provision and the design of interventions addressing both destination pressures and origin-area conditions.

4.5 Reasons for Recent Internal Migration

Searching for work is the leading reported reason for recent internal migration, accounting for 36.1 percent in the national table. Joining or living with family accounts for 27.3 percent, followed by conflict at 10.8 percent, marriage-related migration at 10.2 percent and education/training at 6.9 percent.

Table 4.7: Reasons for recent internal migration, NIHS 2024/25.

Reason	Country Total	Urban	Rural
Search for work	36.1	41.2	29.9
To join/ live with family	27.3	24.3	30.9
Conflict	10.8	9.2	12.6
Marriage related	10.2	9.0	11.7
Education/training	6.9	7.6	6.1
Job transfer/Have got job	3.5	4.4	2.5
Family/peer influence	1.5	1.4	1.6
Health related	1.4	1.3	1.5
Shortage of land	1.2	0.4	2.2
Others	0.5	0.6	0.4
Drought/Natural hazard	0.4	0.3	0.4
Famine	0.2	0.2	0.1

The comparison with LMS 2021 shows an increase in the prominence of searching for work, from 28.4 percent to approximately 36.1 percent in the comparative table. Conflict also increased markedly, while marriage-related and education/training reasons declined. These changes indicate that economic and security considerations have become particularly important in the recent migration profile.

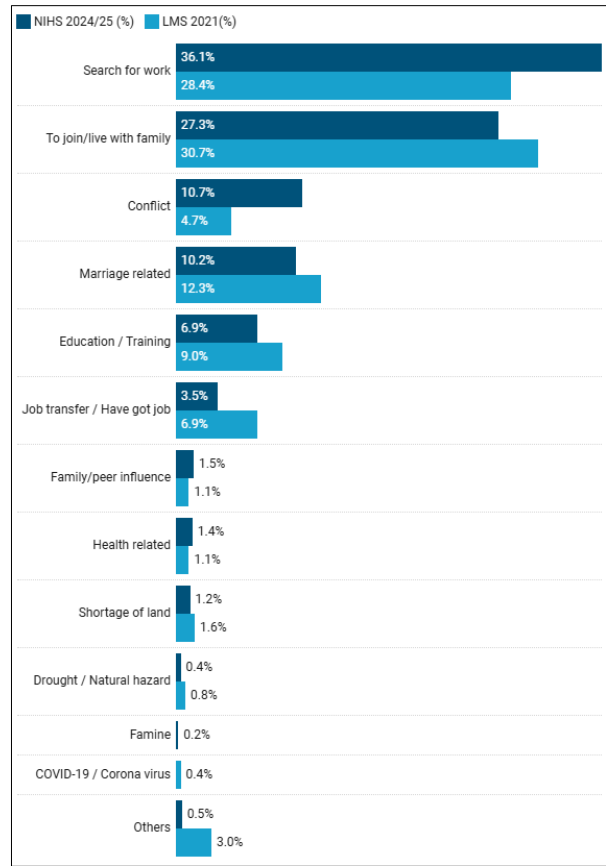


Figure 4.3: Migration drivers: LMS 2021 vs NIHS 2024/25.

4.6 Employment Outcomes of Internal Migrants

The NIHS 2024/25 employment profile shows a national employment rate of 60.5 percent, unemployment of 12.3 percent and the remainder outside the labour force. Male recent migrants have a higher employment rate than female recent migrants. The urban–rural differences are also pronounced.

percent. Urban employment increased from 55.5 percent to 59.1 percent, while rural employment remained comparatively high.

Table 4.8: Employment status of internal migrants, NIHS 2024/25.

Region	Sex	Employed	Unemployed	Outside labour force
Country Total	Total	60.5	12.3	27.1
	Male	74.8	9.1	16.1
	Female	49.3	14.9	35.8
Urban	Total	55.2	14.4	30.4
	Male	69.7	10.8	19.5
	Female	46.0	16.7	37.4
Rural	Total	67.3	9.8	22.9
	Male	79.9	7.4	12.6
	Female	54.5	12.2	33.3

Table 4.9: Employment status of internal migrants, LMS 2021

Region	Sex	Employed	Unemployed	Outside labour force
Country Total	Total	64.2	8.5	27.3
	Male	77.7	5.5	16.8
	Female	43.6	10.9	35.5
Urban	Total	58.3	12.5	29.2
	Male	73.5	7.4	19.1
	Female	46.0	16.6	37.4
Rural	Total	70.5	4.3	25.3
	Male	82.4	3.3	14.3
	Female	61.5	5.0	33.6

Compared with 2021, national employment among recent migrants slightly decreased from 64.2 to 60.5 percent and national unemployment increased from 8.5 to 12.3

5. Emigration

The NIHS 2024/25 presentation estimates 847,664 emigrants, compared with 508,638 in the 2021 comparison. The increase is substantial and is accompanied by a great change in the sex composition of emigration.

Females account for 547,353 emigrants and males for approximately 300,311. Women therefore constitute the majority of emigrants. The rural female population is especially prominent: 426,099 rural females are identified among emigrants, making rural females the single largest sex-by-residence cohort in the presentation.

Table 5.1: Emigrants by sex and residence

Residence	Total	Male	Female
Total	847,663	300,311	547,352
Urban	192,125	70,872	121,253
Rural	655,538	229,439	426,099

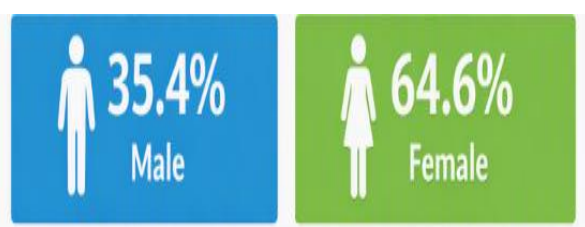


Figure 5.1: Emigrants by sex

The sex and residence profile has important implications for safe migration programming. Women from rural areas represent a particularly important population for accurate information, regulated recruitment,

documentation, protection and skills development.

Table 5.2: Emigrants by sex and residence for NIHS 2024/25 vs LMS 2021

Survey	Sex	Country Total	Urban	Rural
NIHS 2024/25	Total	847,664	192,125	655,538
	Male	300,311	70,872	229,439
	Female	547,353	121,253	426,099
LMS 2021	Total	508,638	121,778	386,860
	Male	262,064	47,391	214,672
	Female	246,574	74,387	172,188

5.1 Age and Educational Profile of Emigrants

Emigration is strongly concentrated among young people. The presentation reports that 80.3 percent of emigrants are concentrated in the main youth age range shown in the age-distribution figure. This indicates that international migration is closely linked to the economically active population.

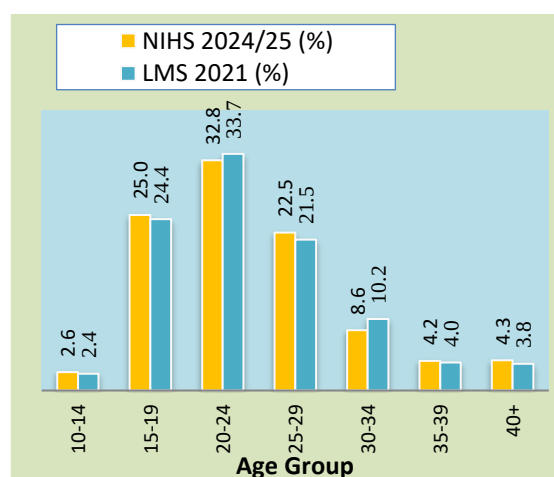


Figure 5.2: Age distribution of emigrants

The educational profile also shows a shift. The share of emigrants with secondary education increased from 21.5 percent in LMS 2021 to 30.0 percent in NIHS 2024/25. At the same time, the share who had never attained education declined from 15.1 percent to approximately 9.6 percent as presented.

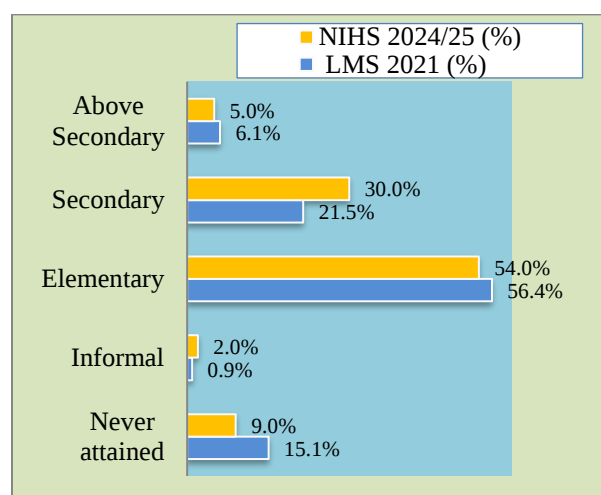


Figure 5.3: Educational attainment of emigrants in percentage

The changing educational composition suggests that migration policy should account for a broader range of skills and qualifications. Safe-migration information and recruitment systems should therefore be accessible to both lower-skilled and more educated potential migrants.

5.2 Regional Distribution of Emigrants

Oromia remains a major source of emigrants, but its share declined from 43.18 percent in the 2021 comparison to 31.60 percent in NIHS 2024/25. Amhara increased from 26.11 percent

to 28.63 percent. Central Ethiopia, reported as a separate regional category in the 2024/25 presentation, accounts for 22.20 percent.

Table 5.3: Regional distribution of emigrants

Region	NIHS 2024/25 Total	LMS 2021 Total	NIHS 2024/25 Share (%)	LMS 2021 Share (%)
Total	847,664	508,638	100.0%	100.0%
Tigray	58,399	-	6.9	-
Afar	3,149	7,655	0.4	1.5
Amhara	242,699	132,816	28.6	26.1
Oromia	219,611	219,611	31.6	43.2
Somali	8,585	11,764	1.0	2.3
Benishangul-Gumuz	1,126	2,082	0.1	0.4
SNNP	-	95,339	-	18.7
Sidama	34,03	1,609	0.7	0.3
Central Ethiopia	188,185	-	22.2	-
South Ethiopia	26,439	-	3.1	-
South West Ethiopia	3,104	-	0.4	-
Gambella	549	1,414	0.1	0.3
Harari	1,759	1,408	0.2	0.3
Addis Ababa	39,821	31,566	4.7	6.2
Dire Dawa	2,651	3,374	0.3	0.7

The regional distribution indicates that emigration is not confined to a small number of origin regions. The changing regional pattern also means that safe-migration communication; recruitment monitoring and reintegration preparation should be geographically targeted.

5.3 Drivers and Facilitators of Emigration

Searching for work is the dominant reason for emigration, accounting for 95.2 percent in the NIHS 2024/25. Education/training, job transfer, marriage-related migration and family reunification account for much smaller shares.

Table 5.4: Main drivers of emigration

Main Reason	NIHS 2024/25 (%)	LMS 2021 (%)
Search for work	95.2	90.5
Education/Training	1.5	2.3
Job transfer/Have got job	0.8	1.9
Marriage related	0.6	2.2
To join/live with family	0.6	1.8
Drought/Natural hazard/Health	1.1	1.2

Family and friends is the largest reported facilitation channel at 36.2 percent in 2024/25. Self-facilitation accounts for 23.4 percent, individual brokers for 25.4 percent, government for 6.2 percent and private agencies in Ethiopia for 7.0 percent. The survey result highlights a decline in reliance on individual brokers compared with the 2021 comparison.

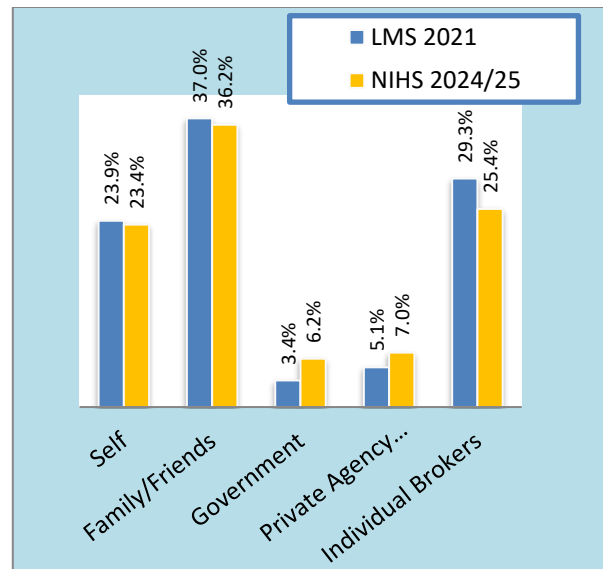


Figure 5.4: Facilitators for emigrants.

The results show that social networks continue to play a major role in international migration. At the same time, regulated channels and reliable public information remain important because family networks may not provide complete information on legal status, contracts, recruitment fees, and documentation or protection mechanisms.

5.4 Documentation and Compliance

Documentation is a major concern in the emigration profile. The NIHS 2024/25 result reports that 32.6 percent of emigrants were categorized as having no document. The rate is particularly high among male emigrants and peaks among rural male emigrants.

Table 5.5: Documents fulfilled by emigrants by residence and sex, Percentage: NIHS 2024/25

Residence and Sex	Passport, Visa, Travel Ticket and Invitation Letter	Passport, Visa and Travel Ticket	Passport and Visa	Passport only	No document	Do not know	No response
Country total							
Total	4.7	12.6	18.5	25.7	32.6	2.0	3.9
Male	4.4	5.0	6.7	14.6	61.1	2.1	6.1
Female	4.9	16.8	25.0	31.7	17.0	2.0	2.7
Urban							
Total	14.5	15.1	19.1	22.9	23.9	1.2	3.3
Male	16.6	11.5	10.1	15.6	38.4	1.8	5.9
Female	13.3	17.2	24.4	27.2	15.4	0.9	1.7
Rural							
Total	1.9	11.9	18.3	26.5	35.2	2.3	4.0
Male	0.7	3.0	5.6	14.3	68.1	2.2	6.1
Female	2.5	16.7	25.1	33.0	17.4	2.3	2.9

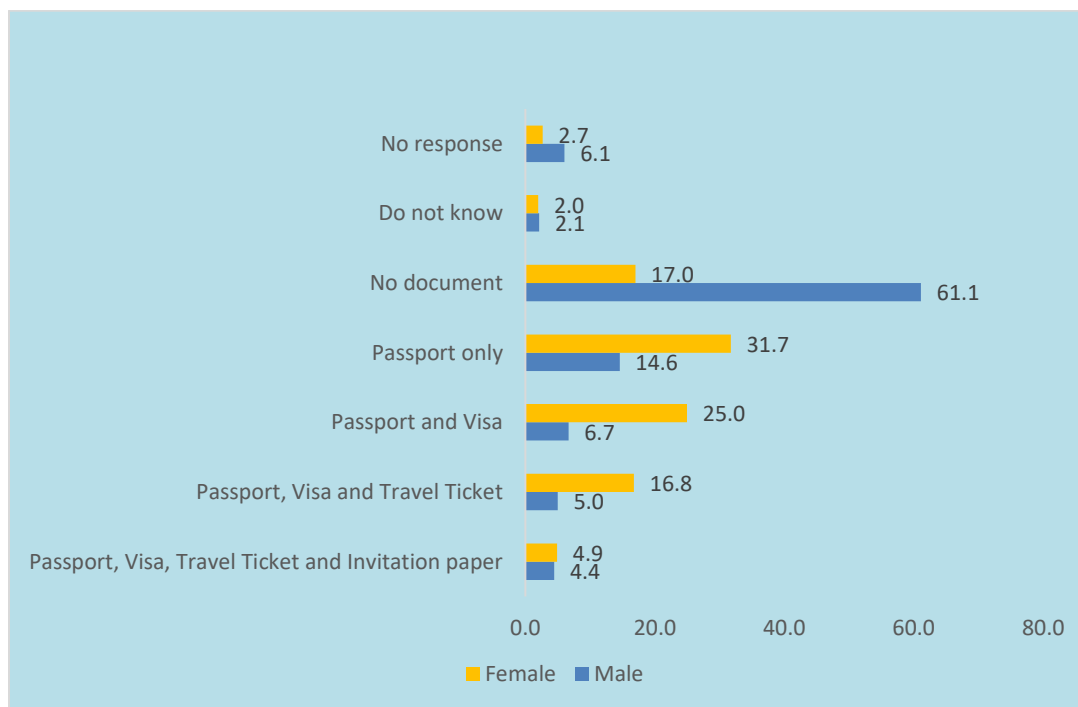


Figure 5.5: Documents fulfilled by emigrants by sex, Percentage: NIHS 2024/25

The documentation findings should be interpreted as an important migration-governance signal rather than as evidence that all undocumented migrants are necessarily irregular in the legal sense

6. Return Migration

Return migration is an important part of the international migration cycle. The NIHS 2024/25 survey estimates 355,647 returnees in the last five preceding years. Among those females account for 54.1 percent and males are 45.9 percent. In 2021, females accounted for 62.0 percent.

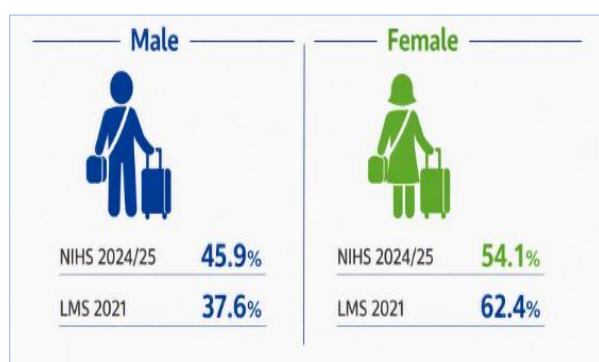


Figure 6.1: Recent returnees by sex: NIHS 2024/25 vs. LMS 2021

The continued female majority demonstrates the need for gender-responsive reintegration. Returning female may have distinct livelihood, family, documentation, protection and social-support needs that should be reflected in reintegration programs.

6.1 Destination Regions and Reasons for Return

Oromia and Amhara remain major destination regions for returnees. The 2024/25 findings also show Tigray emerging as a major destination, accounting for 12.8 percent in the

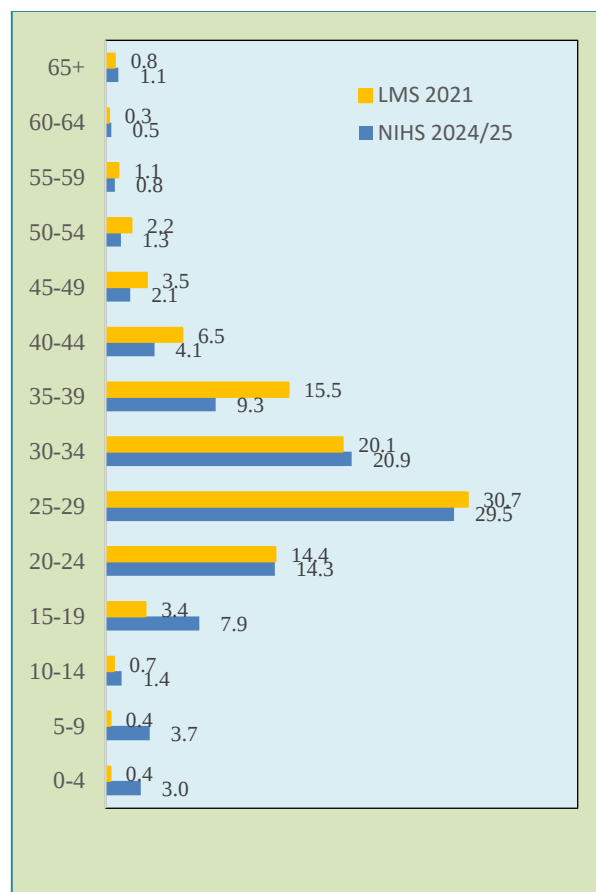


Figure 6.2: Age distribution of returnees by Percentage: NIHS 2024/25 vs. LMS 2021

The age distribution is strongly concentrated in the prime working ages. The 20–29 cohorts alone represent around 43.9 percent in NIHS 2024/25 of returnees. While the share of returning children below age 15 increased between 2021 and 2024/25.

presentation. This changing geographic pattern has implications for reintegration planning and resource allocation.

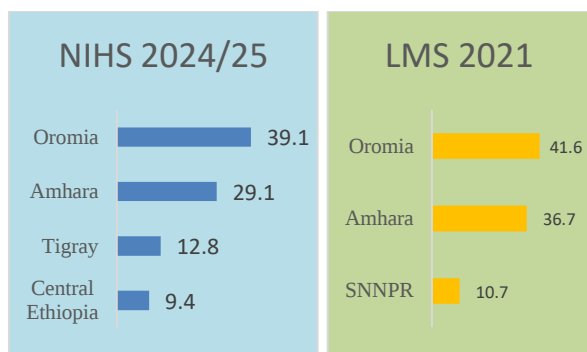


Figure 6.3: Major destination regions of returnees NIHS 2024/25 Vs. LMS 2021

The reasons for return have also changed. Deportation or expulsion increased from 29.9 percent to 37.4 percent, while end of contract declined from 26.6 percent to 16.6 percent in the comparison presented. Family reunification is another important reason.

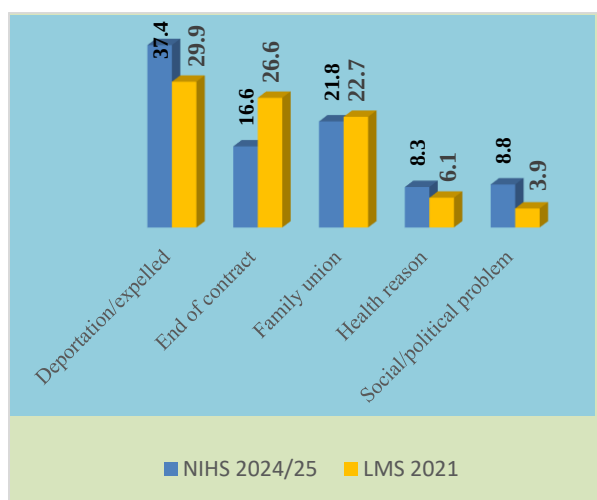


Figure 6.4: Main reasons for return by percentage: NIHS 2024/25 Vs. LMS 2021

The increasing importance of involuntary return suggests that many returnees may

It also highlights the value of destination-country administrative data for complementing household-survey estimates.

arrive without adequate preparation and with fewer resources. Reintegration support therefore needs to include immediate assistance as well as medium-term livelihood and employment interventions.

6.2 Main Countries of Departure

The countries from which returnees arrived have changed across the two survey periods. The finding identifies Saudi Arabia and other countries in the Middle East as major sources of return migration.

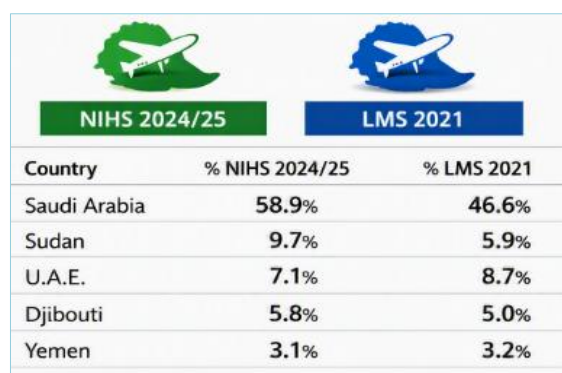


Figure 6.5: Top departure countries of return migrants NIHS 2024/25 Vs. LMS 2021

The concentration of returnees from particular destination countries reinforces the importance of bilateral and regional cooperation on labour migration, recruitment, protection, return and reintegration.

6.3 Pre-Migration Employment Status and Documents fulfilled to go abroad

The employment situation of return migrants before leaving Ethiopia changed considerably. The survey result shows that unemployment before migration increased from 43.9 percent in 2021 to 65.7 percent in 2024/25. This is a major indication of the link between international migration and domestic labour-market conditions.

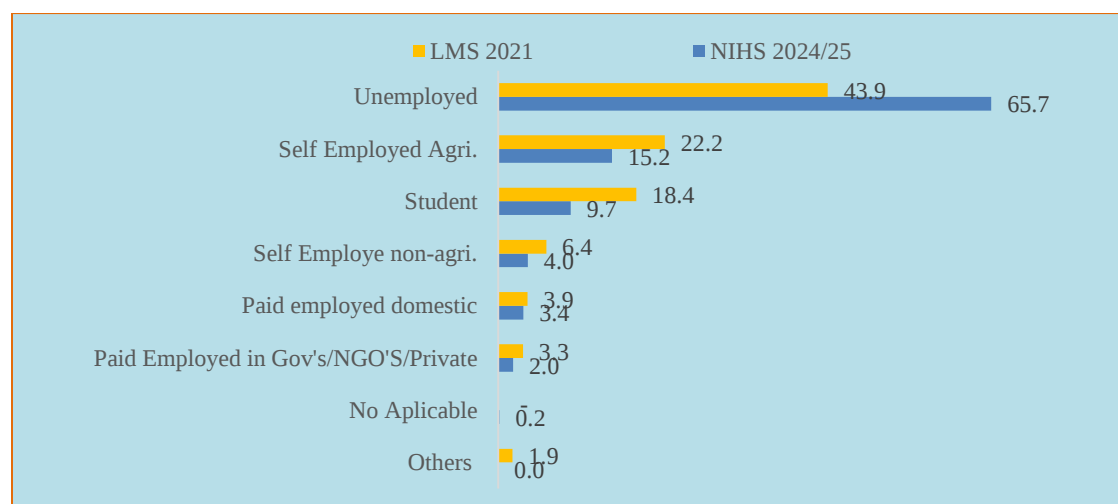


Figure 6.6: Activity status before migration: LMS 2021 vs NIHS 2024/25

Table 6.1: Documents fulfilled by recent return migrants: percentage: NIHS 2024/25

Documents fulfilled	Country total			Urban			Rural		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Passport, Visa, Travel Ticket and Invitation letter	0.6	1.2	0.2	0.7	1.2	0.4	0.6	1.2	0.0
Passport, Visa and Travel Ticket	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.4	1.2	1.4	0.9
Passport and Visa	2.0	0.6	3.3	2.7	1.0	3.8	1.6	0.4	2.8
Passport only	46.8	15.0	73.7	54.9	29.2	70.7	41.3	7.6	76.3
No document	40.6	69.9	15.9	28.8	51.6	14.6	48.8	79.4	17.0
Do not know	1.9	3.3	0.8	2.2	3.6	1.4	1.7	3.1	0.4
No response	7.2	9.1	5.5	10.4	13.1	8.8	4.9	7.0	2.7

The table shows that 46.8% of recent return migrants had a passport only, while 40.6% had no documentation. Documentation status varied considerably by sex and residence: 73.7% of females

had a passport only compared with 15.0% of males, while 69.9% of males reported having no documentation compared with 15.9% of females. By residence, 54.9% of urban return migrants had a passport only compared with 41.3% of rural migrants, whereas 48.8% of rural migrants had no document compared with 28.8% of urban migrants. Overall, the findings indicate substantial documentation gaps, particularly among male and rural return migrants, highlighting the need for improved access to travel documentation and related support services.

6.4 Re-Migration Intentions

One of the most significant findings is the increase in the proportion of return migrants who plan to leave Ethiopia again. The share increased from 25.1 percent in 2021 to 38.1 percent in 2024/25, representing a 13-percentage-point increase.

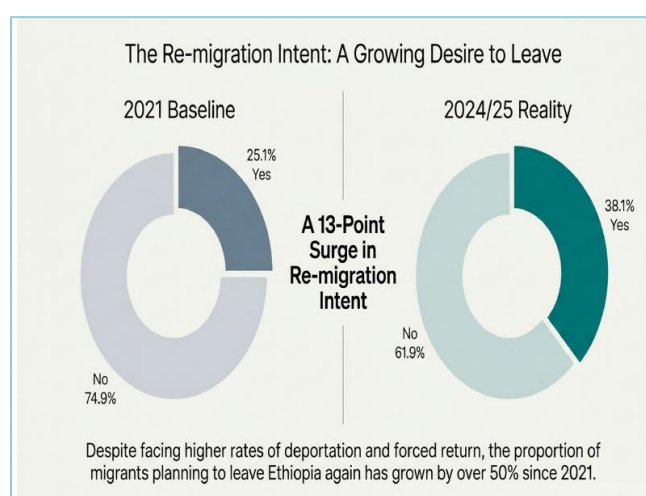


Figure 6.7: Re-migration intention: NIHS 2024/25 vs LMS 2021

The increase indicates that return migration does not necessarily mark the end of the migration process. Continued economic pressures, limited employment opportunities, family strategies and expectations about opportunities abroad may contribute to renewed migration intentions. The finding reinforces the importance of reintegration programmes that address structural livelihood constraints rather than providing only short-term return assistance.

7. Missing Migrants

The NIHS 2024/25 survey results provide a specific statistical profile of missing migrants. The records are strongly male-dominated: 85.7 percent male and 14.3 percent female. In comparison, the female share is higher than in 2021, which recorded more than 90 percent male cases.

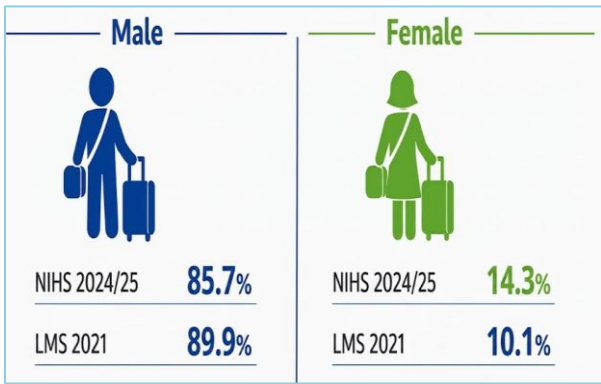


Figure 7.1: Missing migrants by sex

The strong male concentration reflects the continued exposure of young men to irregular and high-risk migration routes. However, the increase in female representation is also significant because it may indicate changing participation in migration corridors and differences in tracking visibility.

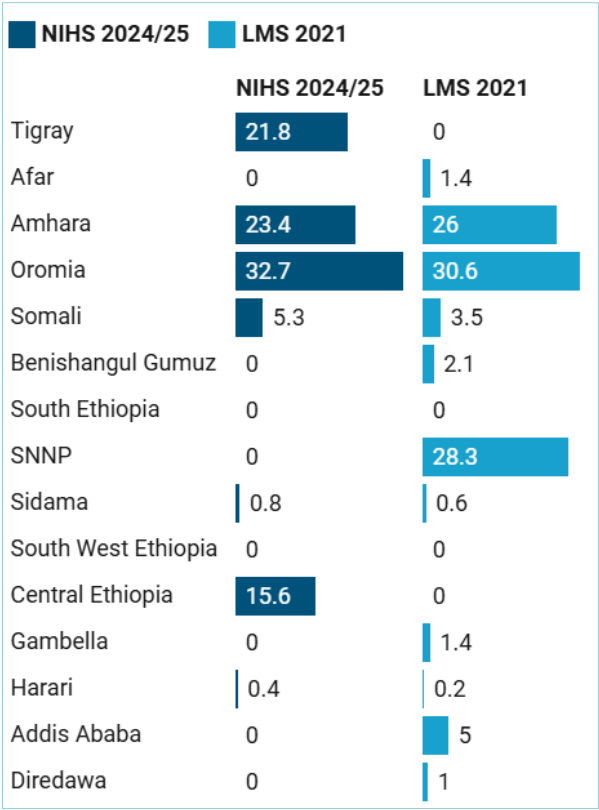


Figure 7.2: Regional distribution of missing migrants by percentage: NIHS 2024/25 Vs LMS 2021

The geographical profile has changed substantially. The 2024/25 presentation identifies Oromia, Amhara and Tigray as collectively accounting for 77.9 percent of recent missing migrants. This differs markedly from the 2021 pattern, in which SNNP accounted for most recorded cases.

7.1 Missing Migrants: Status and Sex Patterns

The merged comparison presented in the NIHS 2024/25 material shows that confirmed deaths remain extremely male-concentrated, with male representation reaching 100 percent in the 2024/25 comparison. Disappeared cases are also strongly male-dominated at 94.6 percent. The unknown-status category shows a more diversified sex distribution.

Missing Migrant Status	NIHS 2024/25			LMS 2021		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent	
Disappear	16,447	56.7	3.2	28,784	48.8	7.5
Confirmed Death	3,652	13.3	0.0	8,429	12.6	3.9
Unknown	7,365	15.7	11.1	13,868	23.2	4.0

Table 7.1: Merged comparison of missing-migrant status by sex

7.2 Education, Drivers and Intended Destinations

These findings also compare the educational profile of missing migrants. Primary education remains a major attainment category, while the share with secondary education changes between survey periods. The 2024/25 findings also identify above-secondary education as an emerging category.

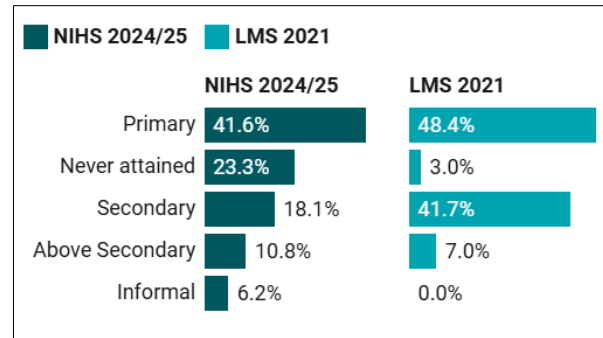


Figure 7.3: Educational attainment among missing migrants: NIHS 2024/25 vs LMS 2021

Economic migration remains the dominant motivation. The presentation identifies the search for employment as the primary driver across the compared datasets, while political conflict appears as a secondary push factor.

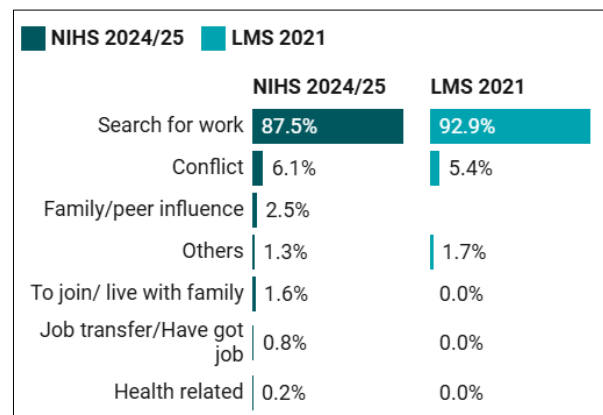


Figure 7.4: Motivational drivers and push-pull factors for missing migrants

The intended-destination profile shows a major shift from the southern route in the LMS 2021 comparison toward an eastern-route pattern in NIHS 2024/25. Saudi Arabia is presented as the dominant intended destination in the contemporary cohort.

Table 7.2: Intended destination of missing migrants: NIHS 2024/25.

Country	Total	Male	Female
Total	27,464	23,527	3,936
Canada	292	292	-
Eritrea	352	352	-
England	387	387	-
Israel	2,177	2,177	-
Kenya	1,653	1,653	-
Lebanon	1,531	-	1,531
Libya	270	270	-
Saudi Arabia	14,803	12,398	2,405
Somalia	1,300	1,300	-
South Africa	2,748	2,748	-
Sudan	365	365	-
Yemen	595	595	-
Don't know	989	989	-

8 Conclusions

The NIHS 2024/25 migration findings demonstrate that migration remains a major dimension of Ethiopia's demographic and socioeconomic change. Internal migration involves more than five million recent migrants, with women and urban residents accounting for the larger shares. Young adults dominate the migration profile, and employment remains a central driver.

International migration has also expanded. The 847,664 emigrants identified in the presentation represent a substantial increase over the 2021 comparison. The predominance of women, especially rural women, highlights the importance of safe migration and gender-responsive protection. The strong concentration of emigration among young people and the overwhelming importance of searching for work reinforce the connection between migration and employment.

Return migration is increasingly shaped by involuntary return, particularly deportation or expulsion. The rise in unemployment before migration and the increase in re-migration intentions suggest that many returnees continue to face economic constraints. Reintegration therefore needs to move beyond short-term assistance toward sustainable employment and livelihood solutions.

Missing-migrant findings demonstrate continued high-risk migration along routes where men are particularly exposed, while the changing female share points to evolving migration patterns and possible gaps in tracking visibility. Strengthening data sharing, reporting and cross-border cooperation is essential.

Overall, the NIHS 2024/25 findings support a migration-governance approach that is evidence based, gender responsive, employment oriented, regionally differentiated and supported by integrated statistical systems.

Annex 1. Survey Coverage Tables

A1.1 Enumeration areas

Region	Rural	Urban	Total	Coverage
Tigray	133/133	68/68	201/201	100.00%
Afar	72/72	48/48	120/120	100.00%
Amhara	253/288	168/168	421/456	92.32%
Oromia	332/336	190/192	522/528	98.86%
Somali	144/144	72/72	216/216	100.00%
Benishangul-Gumuz	69/72	48/48	117/120	97.50%
South Ethiopia	144/144	72/72	216/216	100.00%
Sidama	120/120	48/48	168/168	100.00%
South West Ethiopia	120/120	48/48	168/168	100.00%
Central Ethiopia	144/144	71/72	215/216	99.54%
Gambella	48/48	48/48	96/96	100.00%
Harari	48/48	48/48	96/96	100.00%
Addis Ababa	—	168/168	168/168	100.00%
Dire Dawa	48/48	48/48	96/96	100.00%

National: 2,833 of 2,880 planned enumeration areas were covered, equivalent to 98.37 percent.

A1.2 Households

Region	Rural	Urban	Total	Coverage
Tigray	2,393/2,394	1,221/1,224	3,614/3,618	99.89%
Afar	1,258/1,296	850/864	2,108/2,160	97.59%
Amhara	4,547/5,184	3,003/3,024	7,550/8,208	91.98%
Oromia	5,960/6,048	3,399/3,456	9,359/9,504	98.47%
Somali	2,589/2,592	1,285/1,296	3,874/3,888	99.64%
Benishangul-Gumuz	1,242/1,296	863/864	2,105/2,160	97.45%
South Ethiopia	2,592/2,592	1,294/1,296	3,886/3,888	99.95%
Sidama	2,160/2,160	860/864	3,020/3,024	99.87%
South West Ethiopia	2,147/2,160	849/864	2,996/3,024	99.07%
Central Ethiopia	2,556/2,592	1,272/1,296	3,828/3,888	98.46%
Gambella	864/864	863/864	1,727/1,728	99.94%
Harari	860/864	844/864	1,704/1,728	98.61%
Addis Ababa	—	2,973/3,024	2,973/3,024	98.31%
Dire Dawa	858/864	863/864	1,721/1,728	99.59%

National: 50,696 of 51,840 planned households were covered, equivalent to 97.79 percent.

Annex 2. Selected Comparative Indicators

A2.1 Recent internal migration

Indicator	Value
Recent migrants, LMS 2021	5,572,203
Recent migrants, NIHS 2024/25	5,244,131
Female share, NIHS 2024/25	54.9%
Male share, NIHS 2024/25	45.1%
Urban share, NIHS 2024/25	54.8%
Rural share, NIHS 2024/25	45.2%
Employment, 2021	60.6%
Employment, 2024/25	62.8%
Unemployment, 2021	11.8%
Unemployment, 2024/25	9.6%

A2.2 Emigration and return migration

Indicator	Value
Emigrants, NIHS 2024/25	847,664
Emigrants, LMS 2021	508,638
Female emigrants, NIHS 2024/25	547,355
Rural female emigrants	426,099
Female returnees, NIHS 2024/25	54.1%
Male returnees, NIHS 2024/25	45.9%
Re-migration intention, 2021	25.1%
Re-migration intention, 2024/25	38.1%
Missing migrants, male	86%
Missing migrants, female	14%

References and Source Materials

Ethiopian Statistical Service. (2025). *National Integrated Household Survey (NIHS) 2024/25: Migration Key Finding Presentation*. User-supplied presentation used as the principal source for this report.

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International Labour Organization. (2026). *Technical work supporting policy-relevant use of NIHS 2024/25 labour-market and migration data*.

Note: External sources are included only for institutional/source context. The substantive estimates and findings in this report are derived from the supplied NIHS 2024/25 migration presentation.