

Second Regional Report on Jobs and Growth in North Africa (2018 -2021): Developments through the COVID-19 Era

Prepared By: Caroline Krafft, Samia
Mohamed Nour, and
Ebaidalla M. Ebaidalla

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The Case of Sudan



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Jobs and growth policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

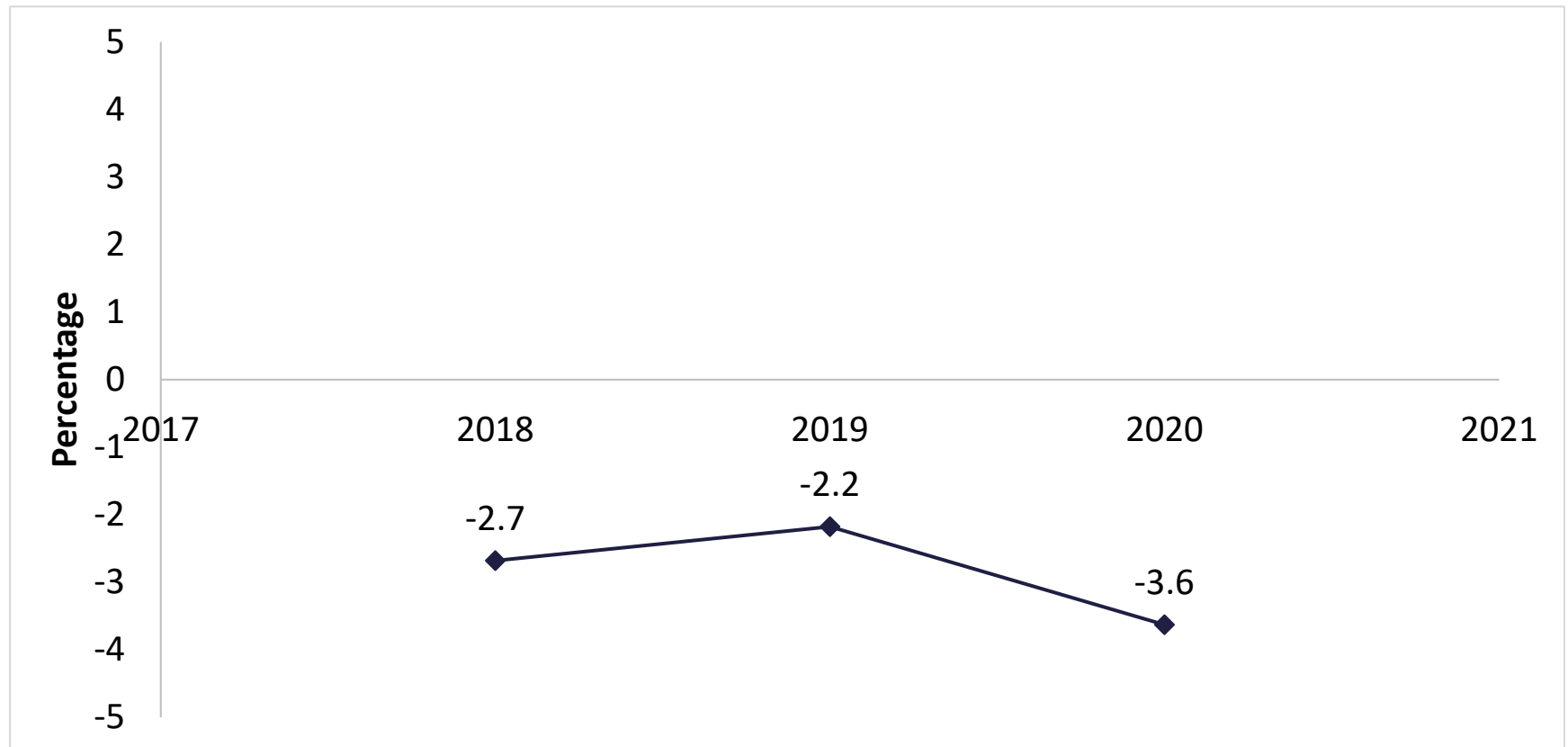
- High level emergency committee coordinated response
- Initial shutdown of schools and borders, some internal restrictions/lockdowns
 - Initially relatively stringent
 - By fall 2020 less stringent
- Paired with actions to support the economy
 - Increased public sector salaries
 - Wage subsidies to affected small firms
 - Unemployment benefits to laid off
 - Bank/loan support
 - Some cash, food, hygiene assistance during lockdown
 - Sudan Family Support Programme ('Thamarat') roll out in 2021

Challenging economic and political situation

- At the same time as the COVID-19 pandemic, Sudan faced a number of economic and political challenges that constrained the COVID-19 response
 - High levels of debt, inflation, currency devaluation
 - Inflation was 81.3 per cent for 2020
- Ongoing political instability
 - 25 October 2021 military detained members of the civilian transitional government
 - Followed by counter-protests, attempts to reinstate civilian leaders

Economic contraction, both before and during COVID-19

Real annual GDP growth rate (percentage), 2018–20



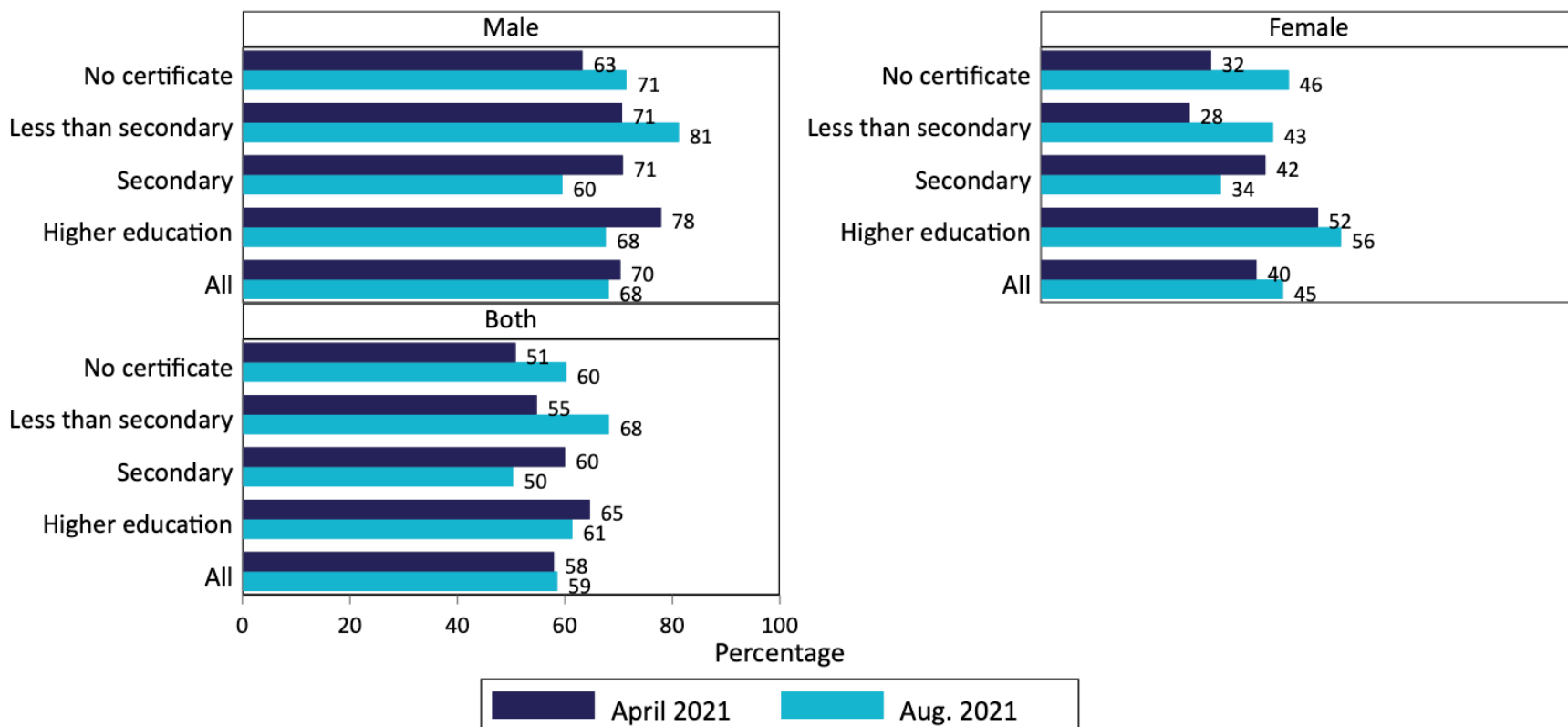
Source: Authors' elaboration, based on data from World Bank 2022

COVID-19 MENA Monitor Data on the Labour Market in Sudan

- Last labour survey in 2011 in Sudan
 - No official labour force statistics from pandemic era
- Therefore rely on COVID-19 MENA Monitor household survey
 - Waves in April 2021 and August 2021
 - Mobile phone survey
 - Adults aged 18-64

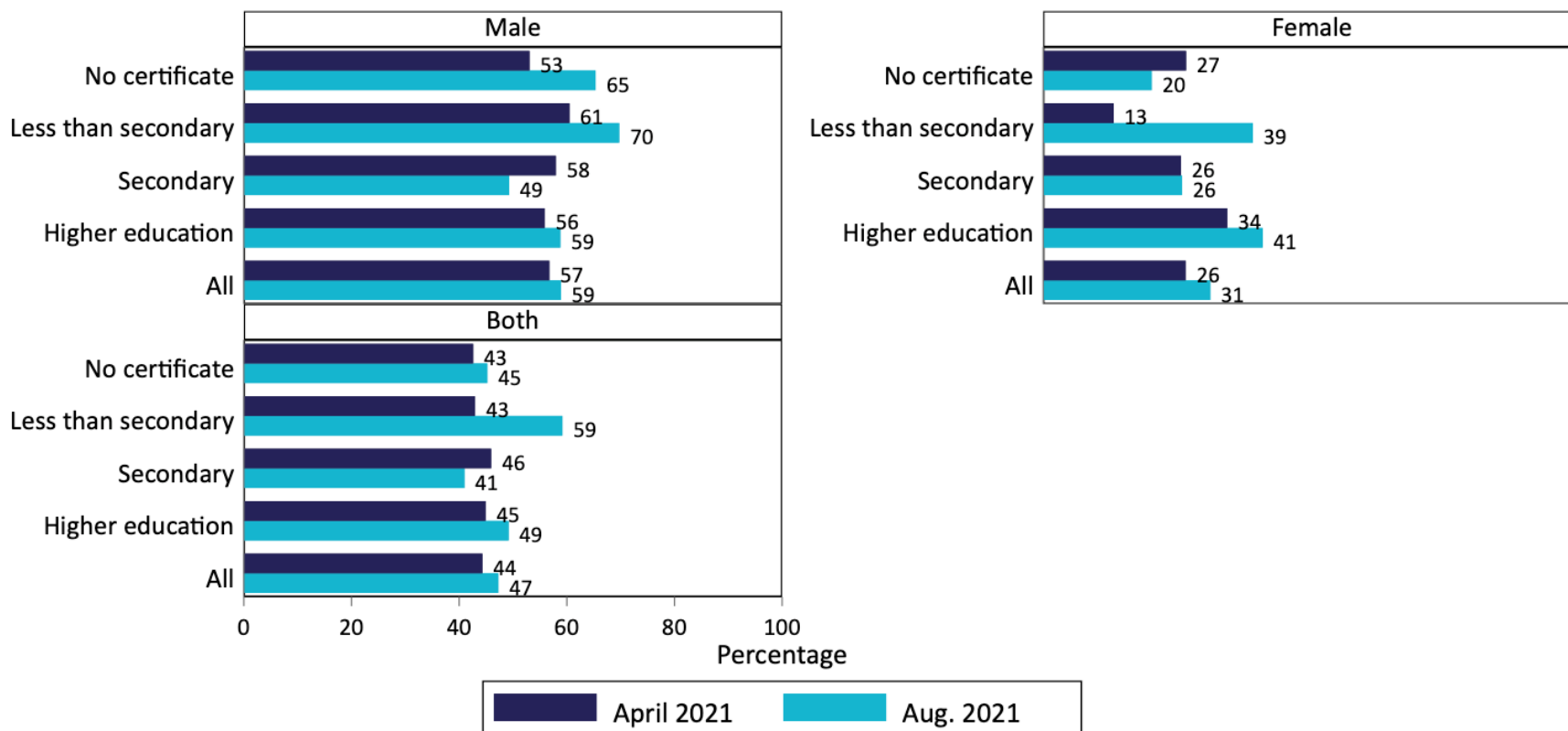
Labour force participation stable in 2021, not large differences by education, persistent gender inequality

Labour force participation rate (percentage of population aged 18–64), by wave, educational attainment and sex



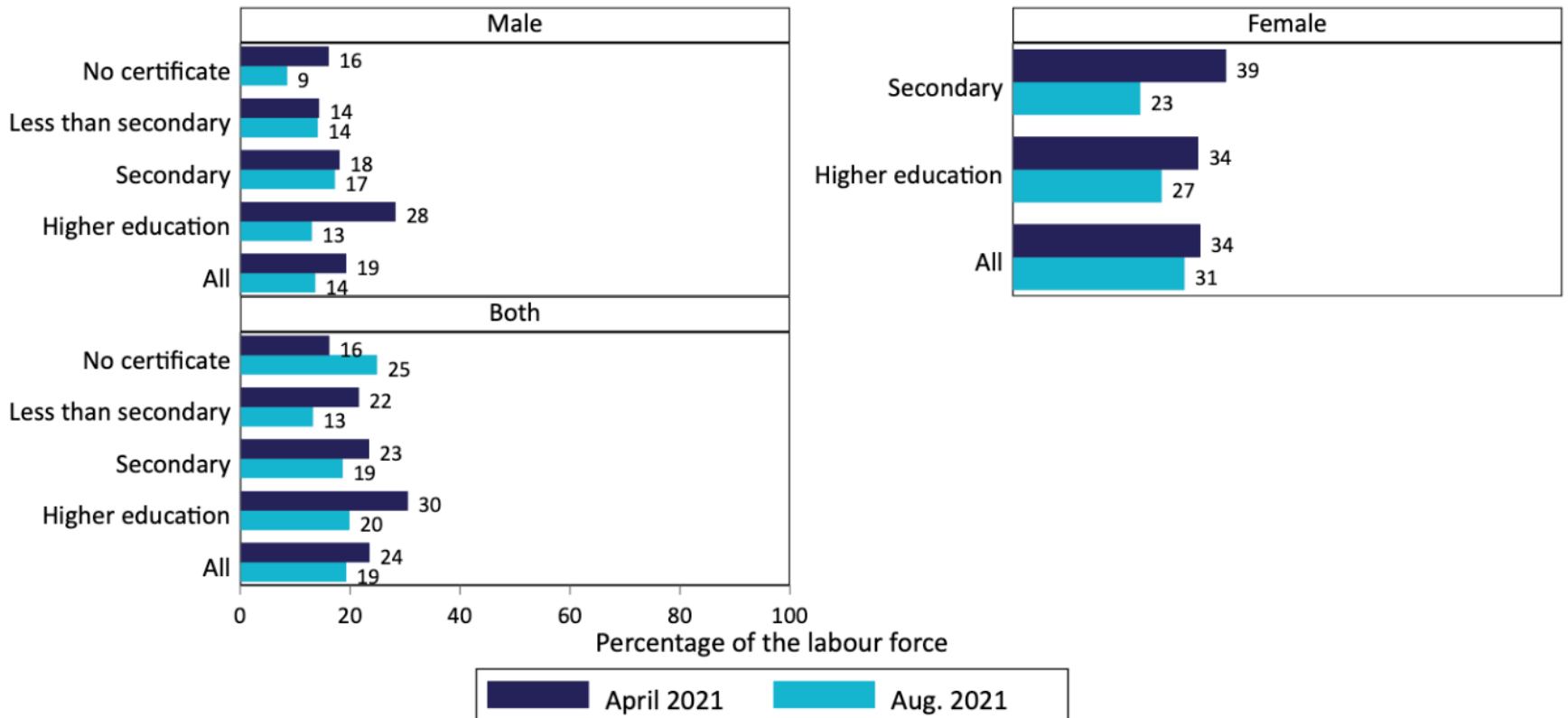
Employment rate shows large gender gap, limited differences by education

Employment-to-population ratio (percentage of population aged 18–64), by wave, educational attainment and sex



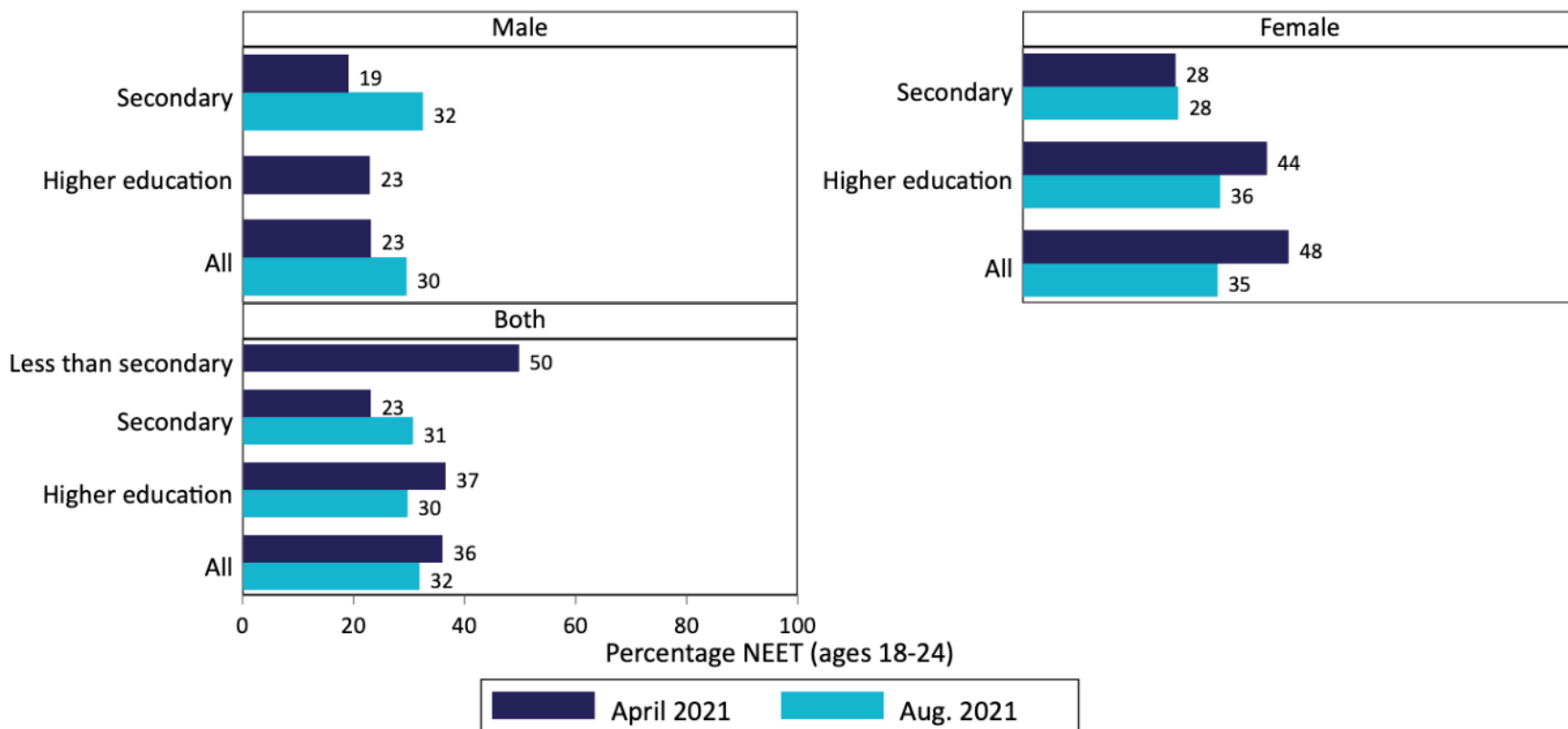
Unemployment rate decreased slightly, still higher for women than men

Standard unemployment rate (percentage of labour force aged 18–64), by wave, educational attainment and sex



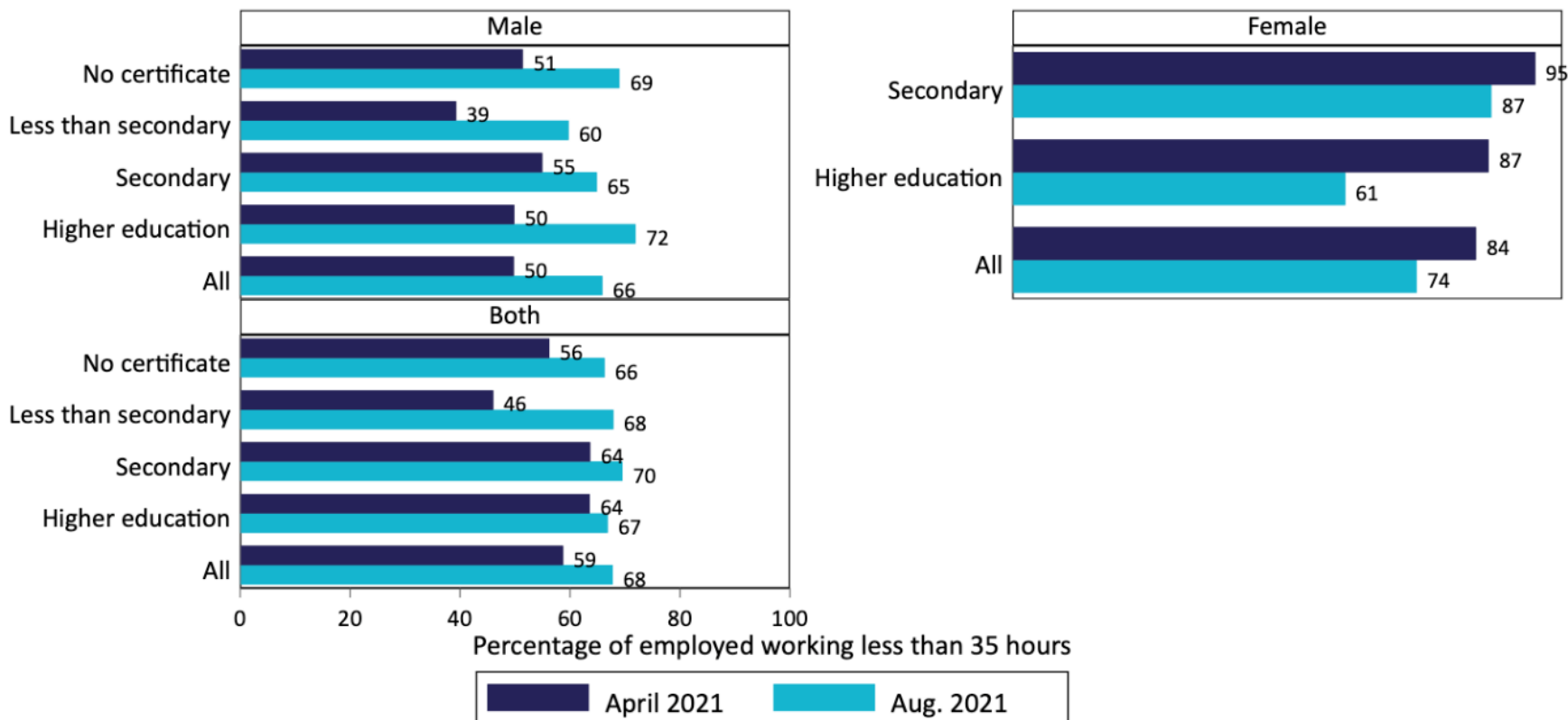
A large share of youth are not in employment or education

Not in employment or education rate (percentage of population aged 18–24), by wave, educational attainment and sex



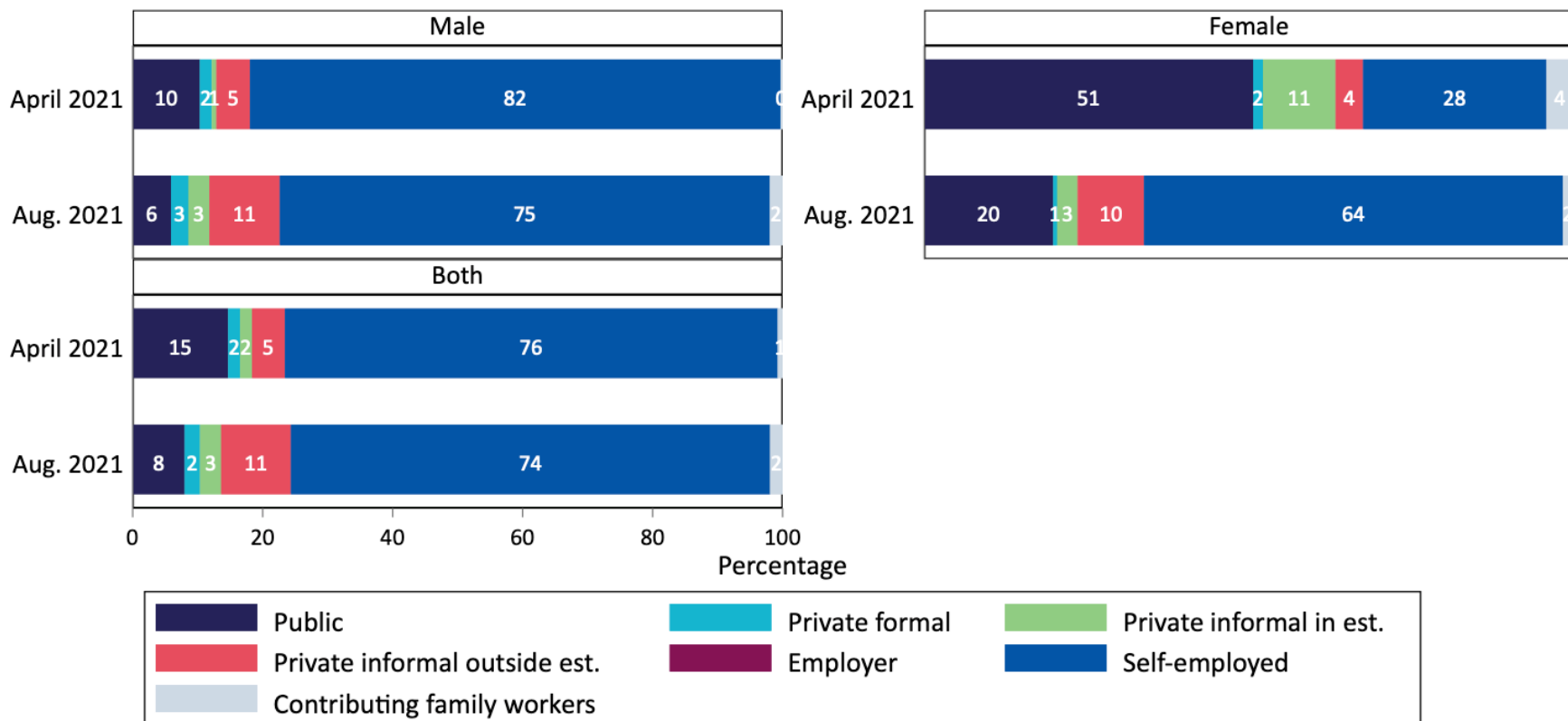
Underemployment is common

Time-related underemployment rate (percentage of the employed aged 18–64), by wave, educational attainment and sex



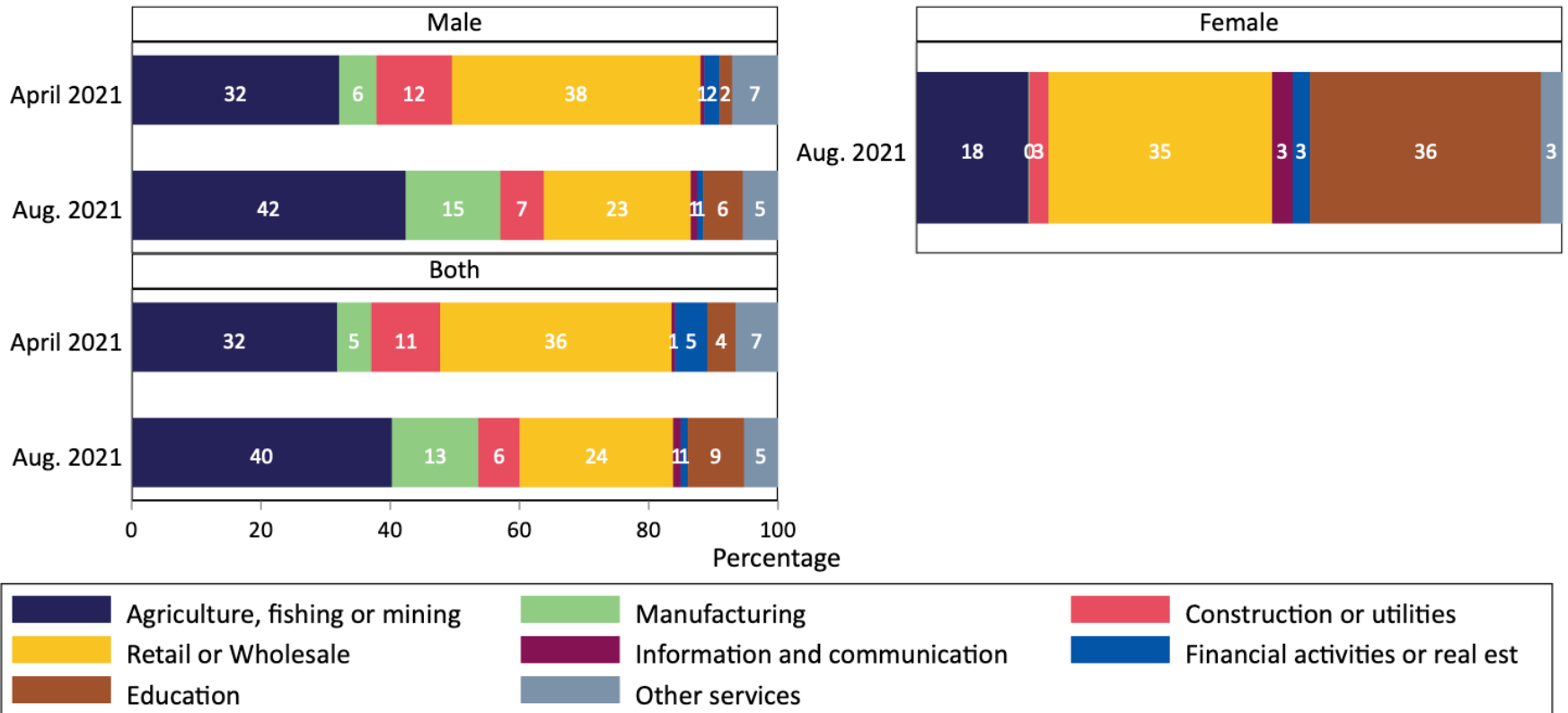
Most workers are self-employed

Distribution of employment (percentage of the employed aged 18–64), by wave, type of employment and sex



Agriculture & retail are central to the economy

Distribution of employment (percentage of the employed aged 18–64), by wave, economic activity and sex



Conclusions

- GDP has been contracting
 - Even pre-pandemic, although pandemic may have worsened situation
- Persistent gender inequality in the labor market
 - Lower labor force participation, employment, higher unemployment for women
- Limited differences in key indicators by age, education
- High rates of youth not in education or employment
- Very high rates of time-related underemployment
- Employment primarily self-employment, in agriculture and retail
- Hard to separate impacts of pandemic from economic, political challenges

Thank you for your attention!

Questions?!



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