



Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research

QUARTERLY JOB VACANCY ANALYSIS REPORT

Nigeria's Formal Labour Market · January – March 2026

778

Job Vacancies
Recorded

10

Sectors
Covered

14

States
Represented

6

Geo-Political
Zones

Q1 2026 Quarterly Labour Market Report



DATA SOURCES

The Guardian

The Nation

The Punch

Note To Readers

Driven by the debilitating issue of unemployment affecting the Nigerian economy, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE) considers the establishment of a National Labour Market Information System (NLMIS) as a veritable tool for curtailing this phenomenon. On the part of the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), the regular release of a Job Vacancies Analysis (JVA) report is a useful tool that can be used to link employers and job seekers on the NLMIS platform so as to cushion the socio-economic effect of unemployment on the Nigerian economy. The JVA report published by NISER both quarterly and annually will serve as a medium of connecting employers with prospective job seekers that meet their requirements and expectations.

Data Limitation: *The data analysed in this report are from vacancies published in three national newspapers. While these newspapers have a national reach, NISER is making efforts to include more newspapers with published vacancies and to expand data sources to online channels. This will make the data set more representative and thus give the JVA report a more robust national outlook.*

Three Structural Realities Defining Nigeria's Formal Labour Market — Q1 2026

1 CONCENTRATION

- Administrative/Support Service sector accounts for 56.17% — more than all other sectors combined
- South West geo-political zone holds 67.63% of all regional opportunities
- Social Sciences & Business graduates dominate demand at 57.3% of fields
- Lagos alone accounts for 34.23% of all state-coded vacancies

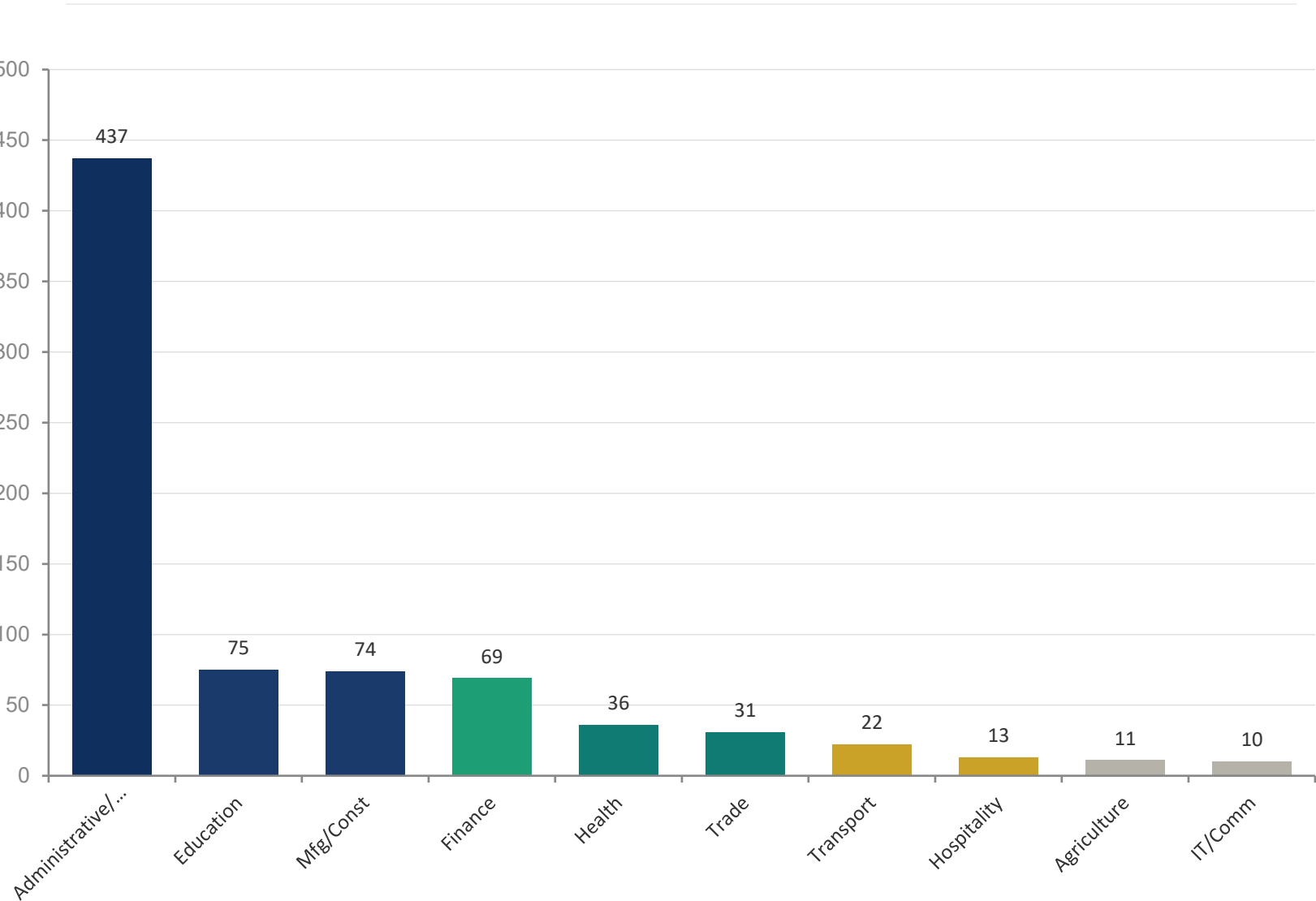
2 INFORMALITY

- Agriculture employs 35%+ of Nigeria's workforce yet shows just 1.41% of vacancies
- IT/Communication — Africa's largest tech hub — recorded only 10 formal vacancies
- Gig economy workers in Logistics are entirely absent from formal data capture
- Much of Trade, Hospitality & Real Estate hiring is through social media or word-of-mouth

3 IMBALANCE

- North West and North East zones: Were recorded under multiple location in Q1 2026
- 22 of Nigeria's 36 states were captured under multiple from formal job advertisement data
- Only 36 Health vacancies recorded for a nation of over 220 million people
- South East represents just 3.02% despite being a significant economic zone

778 Job Vacancies Across 10 Sectors — Q1 2026



56.17%

Administrative/Support Service Sector

9.64%

Education — 2nd sector, mostly South West universities

8.87%

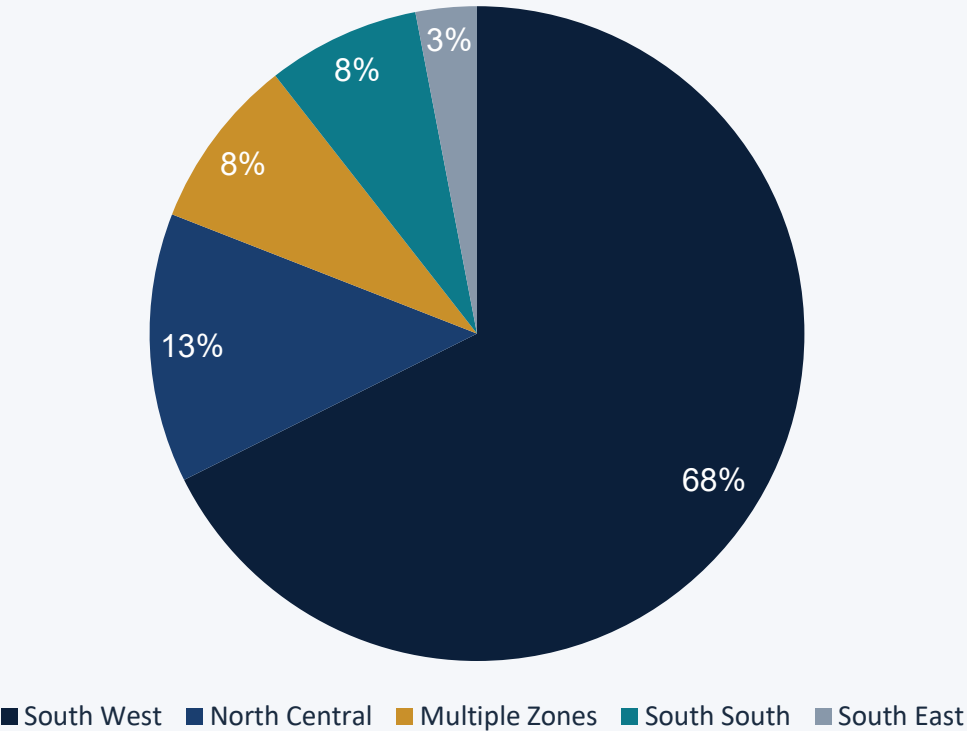
Finance — 3rd sector, concentrated in Lagos & Abuja

1.29%

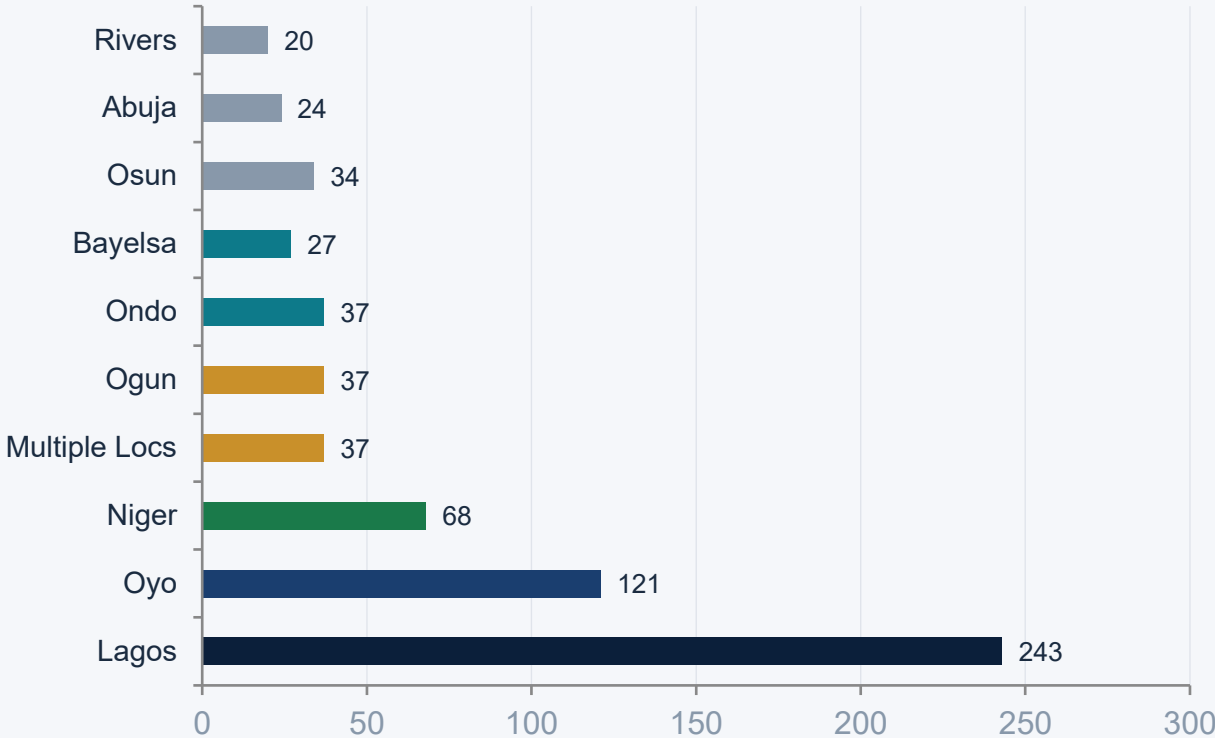
IT/Comm — vastly undercounted; tech hiring is entirely digital

Formal Employment Opportunity is Overwhelmingly Anchored in the South West

Vacancies by Geo-Political Zone (n=729*)



Top States by Vacancy Count (n=710*)



*** NOTE ON ZONE DATA**

- Grand Total = 729 (zone-coded vacancies).
- "Multiple Zones" (62 vacancies, 8.51%) represents roles advertised across all geo-political zones simultaneously — spanning every zone including North West and North East.
- **North West & North East recorded ZERO dedicated single-zone vacancies.**

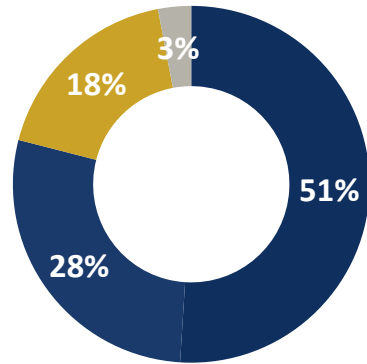
⚠ CRITICAL FINDING

22 of Nigeria's 36 states had ZERO recorded formal job advertisements in Q1 2026.

"Multiple Locations" (37 vacancies) = roles open across all states simultaneously. Lagos + Oyo alone account for 51.27% of all state-coded vacancies.

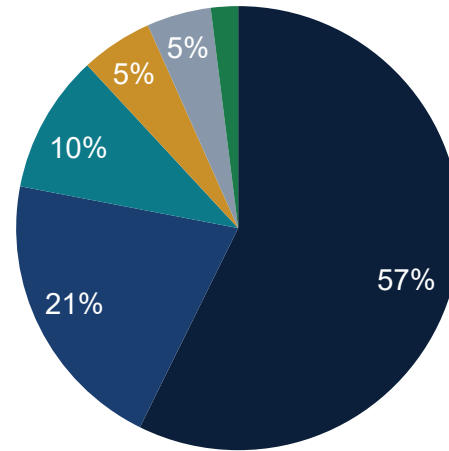
Who Employers Are Hiring — Credential, Field & Experience Profile of Q1 2026 Vacancies

Degree Requirements (n=496)



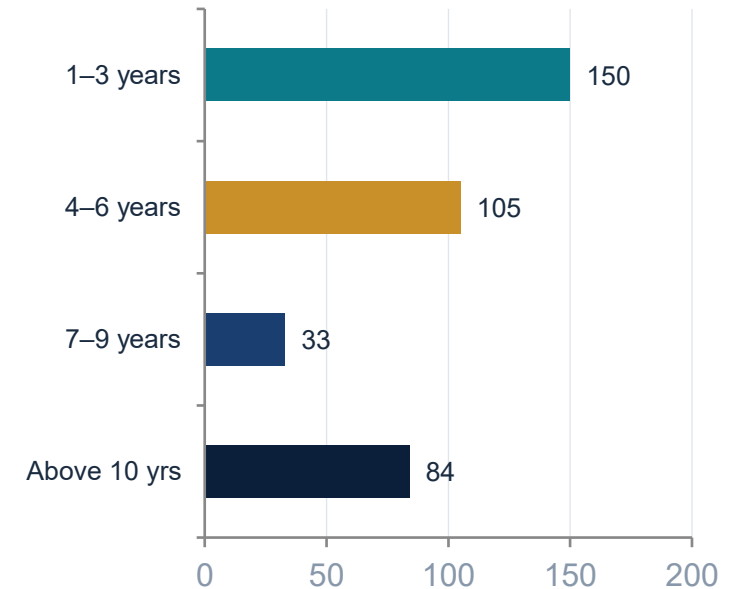
■ First Degree ■ Mid-level (NCE/ND) ■ Post-Graduate ■ O-Level

Educational Field Required (n=555)



■ Soc. Sci/Business ■ Engineering/Tech ■ Health/Medical
■ STEM ■ Education ■ Agriculture

Experience Required (n=372)



51.21%

First Degree is the primary requirement — the era of O-Level-only formal employment is essentially over

57.30%

Social Sciences/Business field dominates — aligned with Service & Finance sector concentration

68.55%

Combined 1-6 years experience required — formal market most accessible to early-to-mid career professionals

Where Nigeria's Critical Employment Gaps Are Most Severe

HEALTH SECTOR

36 vacancies (4.63%)

⚠️ Only 36 vacancies for a nation of 220 million people

Japa syndrome depletes doctors & nurses faster than formal recruitment replaces them.

AGRICULTURE

11 vacancies (1.41%)

⚠️ 35%+ of the workforce — just 1.41% of formal ads

Almost exclusively institutional. No agri-tech, agribusiness or food-processing roles visible.

IT / COMMUNICATION

10 vacancies (1.29%)

⚠️ Africa's largest tech ecosystem = 10 newspaper vacancies

Entire sector invisible in this data. Hiring happens via LinkedIn, Jobberman, referrals.

SERVICE SECTOR

437 vacancies (56.17%)

⚠️ 100% Administrative/Support — zero strategic hiring

Employers filling operational gaps, not building leadership depth. Structural fragility risk.

MANUFACTURING & CONSTRUCTION

74 vacancies (9.51%)

⚠️ \$3 trillion infrastructure gap — 74 formal hires in a quarter

Demands 10+ years experience. Fresh engineering graduates cannot enter this sector directly.

TRANSPORT / LOGISTICS

22 vacancies (2.83%)

⚠️ E-commerce boom absorbed by invisible gig workforce

Platform hiring (riders, drivers) bypasses formal data entirely. No social protection for workers.

Seven Systemic Imperatives for Nigeria's Labour Market Policy Framework

01 Geographic Deconcentration Policy

Establish a Federal Employment Dispersion Index. Tie NDE/NAPEP allocations to states with the lowest vacancy density to actively redistribute formal employment opportunity.

02 Modernise Labour Market Intelligence

Mandate the NBS to produce monthly Labour Market Bulletins integrating newspaper data, online job boards (Jobberman, LinkedIn), recruitment agencies and the NESS framework.

03 National Skills-to-Vacancy Alignment

NBTE, NUC & NITDA to publish an annual Joint Skills Gap Report mapping employer demand from vacancy data to current curriculum outputs across all tertiary institutions.

04 Gender & Inclusion Monitoring

Require all publicly advertised vacancies to capture and report gender, disability status and age data to NSITF and the Ministry of Labour for evidence-based inclusion policy.

05 NYSC Deployment Alignment

Redesign the NYSC Primary Assignment system to formally match corps members' qualifications to sector and state vacancy deficits identified in quarterly Labour Market Reports.

06 Incentivise Formal Advertising

Create a Federal Employer Registration Incentive (tax rebate or procurement advantage) for employers who formally register vacancies with NBS-linked platforms.

07 North-South Employment Equity Compact

Target 20% of all FGN-funded institutional vacancies in North West and North East zones by 2028, backed by TETFUND, NITDA and FMBN investment programmes.

A Nigerian Labour Market Defined by Three Structural Realities: Concentration • Informality • Imbalance

"The recommendations in this report are designed to be actionable: they name specific institutions, specific funding mechanisms, and specific targets. What the data demands is not general aspiration — but precise, sequenced policy intervention."

The Q1 2026 data does not describe temporary anomalies — it describes structural features of the Nigerian economy that have hardened over decades of uneven development, inadequate infrastructure, and policy gaps. Employment opportunity is concentrated in the Service sector, in the South West zone, and in Social Sciences and Business graduates. Entire sectors of strategic national importance — Agriculture, IT/Communication, and Health — are either invisible in formal vacancy data or critically undersupplied relative to Nigeria's actual needs. Vast swathes of the country — the North West, North East, and South East — remain largely absent from the map of formal employment opportunity.

A quarterly job vacancy analysis of this kind — if institutionalised and expanded — can become one of Nigeria's most powerful tools for evidence-based economic governance. It converts the daily act of job advertising into a real-time signal of where the economy is growing, stagnating, or failing.

CREDITS

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