



Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey is designed to measure the levels and trends of employment, unemployment and labour force in Sri Lanka. This survey is being conducted quarterly, since the first quarter of 1990.

The field work of the survey for the third quarter 2012 was done in July, August and September in year 2012. This bulletin consists of summery statistics covering the whole country.

( Please log on to the DCS website ([www.statistics.gov.lk](http://www.statistics.gov.lk)) for detailed tables.)

### Labour force participation rate

Labour Force: Number of persons (age 10 & above) who were employed or unemployed during the reference week

Labour force participation rate: Labour force expressed as a percentage of population age 10 yr. & over

**Table 1: Economically active population by sex and sector - Third Quarter 2012**

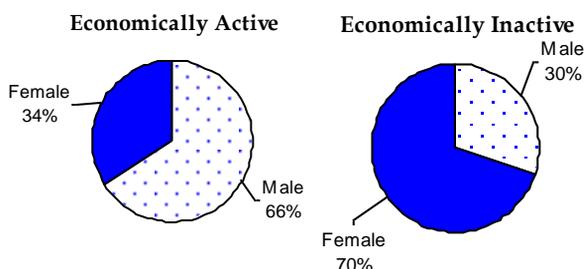
Sector	Economically active population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Total	8418106	100.0	5554158	66.0	2863948	34.0
Urban	1475194	100.0	981703	66.5	493491	33.5
Rural	6530114	100.0	4347159	66.6	2182955	33.4
Estate	412798	100.0	225295	54.6	187503	45.4

**Table 2: Economically Inactive population by sex and sector - Third Quarter 2012**

Sector	Economically inactive population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Total	9420072	100.0	2839652	30.1	6580420	69.9
Urban	1873899	100.0	599567	32	1274332	68.0
Rural	7205041	100.0	2111678	29.3	5093363	70.7
Estate	341133	100.0	128407	37.6	212725	62.4

The survey results revealed that (Table 1), the estimated economically active population (or labour force) was about 8.4 million in Third Quarter 2012. Of which 66 percent were males and 34 percent were females. Out of the economically inactive population 30.1 percent were males and 69.9 percent were females (Table 2) .

**Figure 1: Distribution of Economically active/Inactive population**



**Table 3: Labour Force Participation Rate by sex & year**

Year	Labour force participation rate		
	Total	Male	Female
2000	50.3	67.2	33.9
2001	48.8	66.2	31.9
2002	50.3	67.9	33.6
2003	49.7	67.5	32.6
2004	49.6	67.2	33.0
2005	49.3	67.3	32.6
2006	51.2	68.1	35.7
2007	49.8	67.8	33.4
2008	50.2	67.9	34.3
2009	49.2	66.7	33.7
2010	48.6	67.3	32.1
2011	48.8	66.7	32.8
2012 Q2	47.2	66.7	29.8
2012 Q3	48.1	66.7	31.6

Table 3 provides the information on labour force participation rates since year 2000. As can be seen from this table, male participation rate for the Third Quarter 2012 was about 66.7 percent and it was 31.6 percent for females. It is important to note that, male participation to the labour force was almost twice as that of females.

*Note: Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces*

**Table 4: Labour Force Participation Rate by age group & by sex - Third Quarter 2012**

Age group	Sex		
	Total	Male	Female
Total	47.2	66.2	30.3
15 - 19	15.0	21.2	8.5
20 - 24	53.3	74.1	34.6
25 - 29	64.8	94.4	41.1
30 - 34	64.7	96.9	38.6
35 - 39	68.3	96.4	45.4
40 - 44	72.4	96.4	48.6
45 - 49	67.9	94.0	44.4
50 - 54	65.1	91.1	44.2
55 - 59	57.1	80.5	38.1
60+	28.9	46.2	14.1

The distribution of labour force participation rate by age group and by sex depicts more male participation compared to female in all age groups.

Highest male participation rate was reported from age group (30 - 34) yrs, while in female highest participation rate was reported from age group (40 - 44) yrs.

## Employment

*Employed: Persons who are engaged in some kind of work for pay or profit or family gain during the reference week.*

**Table 5 : Distribution of Employed population by main industry, (Second Quarter 2011 - Third Quarter 2012)**

Year	Total	Major industry group		
		Agriculture	Industries	Services
April-May-June 2nd Qtr - 2011	7956518 100.0	2684299 33.7	1877724 23.6	3394495 42.7
July-Aug-Sept. 3rd Qtr - 2011	7943295 100.0	2609757 32.9	1916181 24.1	3417357 43.0
April-May-June 2nd Qtr - 2012	7609654 100.0	2288487 30.1	2049269 26.9	3271898 43.0
July-Aug-Sept. 3rd Qtr - 2012	7746663 100.0	2391021 30.9	1978624 25.5	3377016 43.6

*Note:*

\* *Excluding Northern province*

\* *Summery was not conducted in the fourth quarter 2011 & first quarter 2012 due to activities of population census.*

\* *The tabulation groups based on ISIC (Rev.3) are indicated as A,B,C.....Q..*

### Agriculture

1. Agriculture (A)
2. Forestry and Fishery (B)

### Industries

1. Manufacturing (D)
2. Construction (F)
3. Mining & Quarrying (C)
4. Electricity, Gas and Water supply (E)

### Services

1. Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles, Motorcycles and Personal and Household Goods (G)
2. Hotels and Restaurants (H)
3. Transport, Storage and Communication (I)
4. Financial Intermediation and Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities (J,K)
5. Public Administration and Defence, Compulsory Social Security (L)
6. Education (M)
7. Health and Social work (N)
8. Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities (O)
9. Private Households with Employed Persons (P)
10. Miscellaneous Labour work
11. Extra Territorial Organizations & bodies (Q)
12. Industries not adequately described

Table 5 shows the percentage distribution of employed population by main industry from Second Quarter 2011 to Third Quarter 2012. The total number of employed persons in Sri Lanka was estimated as about 7.7 million in Third Quarter 2012. Of which, about 43.6 percent engaged in services sector, 30.9 percent in agriculture sector, and 25.5 percent in Industries sector.

**Table 6 : Percentage distribution of employed population by employment status and Agriculture/ Non-Agriculture sector - Third Quarter 2012**

Employment Status	Total		Sector			
			Agriculture		Non Agriculture	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	8074808	100	2495858	30.9	5578950	69.1
Employee	4559820	100	777888	17.1	3781931	82.9
Public	1209015	100	114287	9.5	1094727	90.5
Private	3350805	100	663601	19.8	2687204	80.2
Employer	240303	100	54757	22.8	185546	77.2
Own account worker	2517126	100.0	1139229	45.3	1377897	54.7
Contributing family worker	757560	100.0	523984	69.2	233576	30.8

Table 6 shows that, comparatively higher percentage of employees both in private & public sector engage in non-agricultural activities. Also more employers were in non agriculture sector than in agriculture sector. But contributing family workers were more concentrated in agriculture sector.

**Table 7 : Distribution of Employed population by main industry & sex - Third Quarter 2012**

Major industry group	Total	Sex	
		Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	30.9	29.0	34.7
Industry	25.4	25.8	24.7
Services	43.6	45.1	40.6

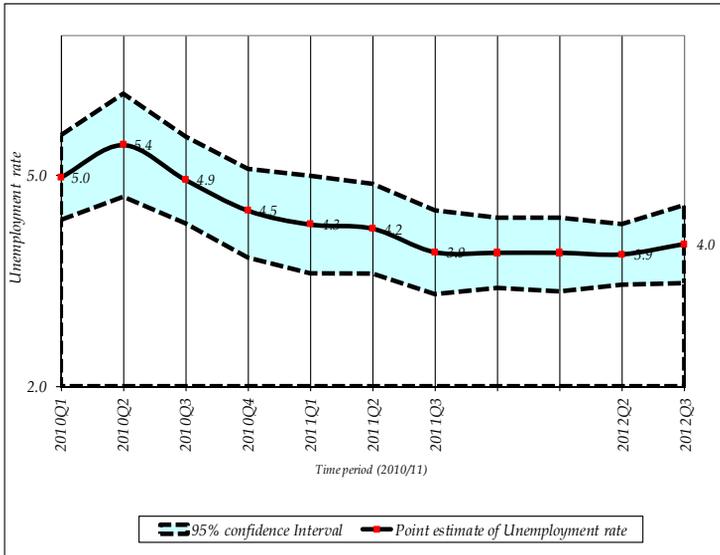
Table 7 depicts the distribution of male and female employed population by main industries. Regardless of sex, highest employment concentrated in service sector. Further among employed women about 34.7 percent was in agriculture sector while this share was 29.0 percent among males.

## Unemployment

**Unemployment Rate : The number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force**

**Unemployed : Persons who are seeking and available for work, but had no employment during the reference period**

**Figure 2 : Unemployment rates and it's 95% confidence intervals (2010 Q1 - 2012 Q3)**



**Note:**

•Survey was not conducted in the fourth quarter 2011 & first quarter 2012 due to activities of population census.

•Excluding Northern Province

The number of unemployed persons was estimated as about 343,298 during the Third quarter 2012.

The unemployment rate for the Third quarter 2012 was reported as 4.1 percent.

**Table 8: Unemployment rate by level of education - Third Quarter 2012**

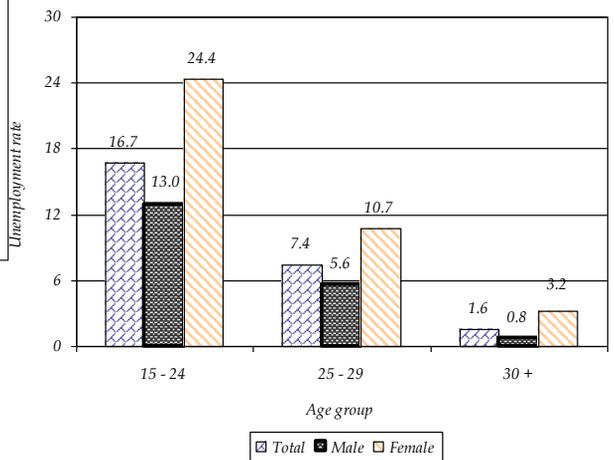
Level of Education	Unemployment rate		
	Total	Male	Female
Total	4.1	2.8	6.5
Below G.C.E. (O/L)	2.5	2.0	3.9
G.C.E. (O/L)	6.7	4.6	10.8
G.C.E. (A/L) & above	7.1	4.9	9.3



**Table 9: Unemployment rate by age group and sex - Third Quarter 2012**

Age group	Total	Sex	
		Male	Female
Total	4.1	2.8	6.5
15 - 24	16.7	13.0	24.4
25 - 29	7.4	5.6	10.7
30 +	1.6	0.8	3.2

**Figure 3 : Unemployment rate by age group and sex - Third Quarter 2012**



As can be seen from table 9, overall unemployment rate reported for female was 6.5 percent and it was 2.8 percent for male. Youth unemployment rate 15 - 24 yrs reported for Third quarter 2012 was 16.7 percent and that age group reported the highest unemployment rate. For both males (13.0) and females (24.4). Further the survey results revealed that the unemployment was severe among females than that of males, in all age groups.

The highest unemployment rate was reported from the G.C.E(A/L) and above group which was about 7.1 percent. There were 4.9 percent and 9.3 percent for males and females respectively. This shows the problem of unemployment is more acute in the case of educated females than educated males (Table 8).

**(1) Sampling error :**

When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, estimates differ from the true population values they represent. This difference, or sampling error, occurs by chance, and its variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. **For more details, please refer the explanatory note on the labour force link in the DCS website.**

**Selected Labour Force indicators (Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces)  
( 2003 - 2012 Q3)**

	Year											
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012Q2	2011Q3	2012Q3
<b>Labour force participation rate</b>												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	49.7	49.6	49.3	51.2	49.8	50.2	49.2	48.6	48.8	47.2	48.8	48.1
Male	67.5	67.2	67.3	68.1	67.8	67.9	66.7	67.3	66.7	66.7	67.5	66.7
Female	32.6	33.0	32.6	35.7	33.4	34.3	33.7	32.1	32.8	29.8	32.2	31.6
<i>by residential sector</i>												
Total	49.7	49.6	49.3	51.2	49.8	50.2	49.2	48.6	48.8	47.2	48.8	48.1
Urban	45.1	45.6	46.2	45.3	45.0	46.3	43.9	42.5	44.7	44.6	45.5	45.0
Rural	50.3	50.3	49.7	52.1	50.4	50.7	49.8	49.5	49.4	47.8	49.3	48.8
<b>Unemployment rate</b>												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	8.1	8.1	7.2	6.5	6.0	5.2	5.7	4.9	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.9
Male	6.0	6.0	5.3	4.7	4.3	3.6	4.3	3.5	2.7	3.0	2.5	2.8
Female	12.3	12.1	10.7	9.7	9.0	8.0	8.2	7.5	6.3	5.4	6.1	5.9
<i>by selected age groups(yr)</i>												
20 - 29	19.1	18.6	16.0	15.9	15.0	13.2	15.1	13.7	11.8	11.9	10.7	10.6
20 - 24	25.8	25.2	22.4	21.0	21.1	17.8	21.0	18.9	17.5	17.2	16.7	14.7
25 - 29	11.4	11.1	9.4	11.0	9.4	9.0	10.1	9.1	7.0	7.2	5.4	7.2
<i>by selected educational levels</i>												
G.C.E.(A/L) & above												
Both sexes	16.0	15.7	12.2	11.6	11.8	9.9	10.8	11.3	8.4	8.4	8.6	6.0
Male	10.1	9.6	7.9	6.9	6.6	5.6	6.6	7.5	5.1	5.2	5.4	4.1
Female	22.4	22.5	17.1	16.8	17.5	14.4	15.1	15.6	12.1	11.4	12.4	8.0
<b>Employed population</b>												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	6609466	6704006	6788119	7105322	7041874	7174706	7139537	7235641	7429794	7120518	7460963	7304238
Male	4496136	4512082	4546397	4610643	4653067	4663277	4609198	4770376	4855242	4780209	4935020	4815934
Female	2113330	2191924	2241722	2494679	2388807	2511429	2530339	2465265	2574552	2340309	2525943	2488304
<i>by industry (percentage)</i>												
Total	6609466	6704006	6788119	7105322	7041874	7174706	7139537	7235641	7429794	7120518	7460963	7304238
%	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	100
Agriculture	2223691	2215282	2059293	2287268	2202098	2344415	2318621	2353599	2445251	2120992	2462577	2246539
%	(33.6)	(33.0)	(30.3)	(32.2)	(31.3)	(32.7)	(32.5)	(32.5)	(32.9)	(29.8)	33.0	30.8
Industry	1539035	1663383	1787274	1889953	1873857	1888004	1822685	1777130	1841444	1963537	1845076	1881883
%	(23.3)	(24.8)	(26.3)	(26.6)	(26.6)	(26.3)	(25.5)	(24.6)	(24.8)	(27.6)	24.7	25.8
Services	2846740	2825341	2941552	2928101	2965919	2942288	2998231	3104913	3143100	3035990	3153310	3175816
%	(43.1)	(42.1)	(43.3)	(41.2)	(42.1)	(41.0)	(42.0)	(42.9)	(42.3)	(42.6)	42.3	43.5
<i>by no. of hours worked per week (percentage)</i>												
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0 •	7.3	5.3	4.9	6.7	6.5	7.4	7.9	6.1	5.2	3.7	4.2	5.8
1 - 9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.5	2.2	2.4	1.8	1.8	1.0	1.4	1.2
10 - 39	32.9	28.4	27.9	28.6	28.3	29.2	29.0	28.6	30.1	27.6	26.2	24.3
40+	58.0	64.7	65.7	62.8	63.7	61.2	60.8	63.5	62.8	67.6	68.2	68.7

• Has a job but not at work during the reference week

*Selected Labour Force indicators*  
( 2003 - 2012 Q3)

	Year											
	2003*	2004**	2005***	2006 #	2007#	2008*	2009*	2010*	2011*	2011***	2012Q2***	***2012Q3
<b>Labour force participation rate</b>												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	48.9	48.6	48.3	51.2	49.8	49.5	48.7	48.1	48.2	47.8	46.4	47.2
Male	67.2	66.7	67.1	68.1	67.8	67.8	66.6	67.1	66.5	66.2	66.5	66.2
Female	31.4	31.5	30.9	35.7	33.4	33.2	32.8	31.2	31.8	31.2	28.6	30.3
<i>by residential sector</i>												
Total	48.9	48.6	48.3	51.2	49.8	49.5	48.7	48.1	48.2	47.8	46.4	47.2
Urban	44.4	44.9	45.5	45.3	45.0	45.9	43.5	42.0	44.0	43.4	43.7	44.0
Rural	49.6	49.2	48.7	52.1	50.4	50.0	49.4	49.0	48.8	48.4	47.0	47.9
<b>Unemployment rate</b>												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	8.4	8.3	7.7	6.5	6.0	5.4	5.8	4.9	4.2	4.2	3.9	4.1
Male	6.0	6.0	5.5	4.7	4.3	3.7	4.3	3.5	2.7	2.7	3.0	2.8
Female	13.2	12.8	11.9	9.7	9.0	8.4	8.6	7.7	6.8	7.0	5.9	6.5
<i>by selected age groups(yr)</i>												
20 - 29	19.4	19.2	17.2	15.9	15.0	13.7	15.4	13.8	12.4	12.3	12.3	11.2
20 - 24	26.4	25.9	24.6	21.0	21.1	18.1	21.4	19.1	18.0	17.7	17.6	15.9
25 - 29	11.4	11.4	9.5	11.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	9.2	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.4
<i>by selected educational levels</i>												
G.C.E.(A/L) & above												
Both sexes	16.5	16.8	13.8	11.6	11.8	10.5	11.2	11.6	9.0	9.0	8.6	7.1
Male	10.4	10.5	8.9	6.9	6.6	6.0	7.0	7.9	5.4	5.4	5.5	4.9
Female	23.3	23.8	19.1	16.8	17.5	15.3	15.5	15.8	13.1	13.1	11.7	9.3
<b>Employed population</b>												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	7012755	7440226	7518007	7105322	7041874	7648305	7602414	7706593	7894439	8196927	7936294	8074808
Male	4833483	5087861	5134765	4610643	4653067	5033449	4963176	5131986	5227317	5460328	5410758	5396138
Female	2179272	2352365	2383241	2494679	2388807	2614856	2639238	2574608	2667123	2736599	2525535	2678670
<i>by industry (percentage)</i>												
Total	7012755	7394029	7518007	7105322	7041874	7648305	7602414	7706593	7894439	8196927	7936294	8074808
%	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
Agriculture	2384397	2474725	2306039	2287268	2202098	2489731	2475921	2519905	2601824	2708020	2377937	2495859
%	(34.0)	(33.5)	(30.7)	(32.2)	(31.3)	(32.6)	(32.6)	(32.7)	(33.0)	(33.0)	(30.0)	(30.9)
Industry	1611493	1781447	1928014	1889953	1873857	2004880	1910318	1866733	1915022	1977063	2127622	2054953
%	(23.0)	(24.1)	(25.6)	(26.6)	(26.6)	(26.2)	(25.1)	(24.2)	(24.3)	(24.1)	(26.8)	(25.4)
Services	3016866	3137857	3283954	2928101	2965919	3153693	3216175	3319955	3377593	3511844	3430734	3523996
%	(43.0)	(42.4)	(43.7)	(41.2)	(42.1)	(41.2)	(42.3)	(43.1)	(42.8)	(42.8)	(43.2)	(43.6)
<i>by no. of hours worked per week (percentage)</i>												
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0 •	7.5	5.2	4.7	6.7	6.5	7.2	7.9	6.0	5.3	5.2	3.5	5.7
1 - 9	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.5	2.2	2.3	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.1	1.2
10 - 39	32.6	28.7	27.6	28.6	28.3	28.9	28.8	28.5	29.7	30.0	27.7	24.6
40+	58.1	64.5	66.2	62.8	63.7	61.7	61.0	63.9	63.2	63.0	67.8	68.5

• Has a job but not at work during the reference week

\*Excluding Northern province

\*\* Excluding Mullativu & Kilinochchi districts

\*\*\*All the districts are included

# Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces