



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 First Quarter 2011 was done in January, February and March in year 2011. Even though it was planned to conduct the survey in Northern province, the survey was not conducted fully due to unsettled conditions in districts of Northern province, therefore this bulletin consists of summary statistics excluding Northern province.

### 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 - First Quarter 2011**

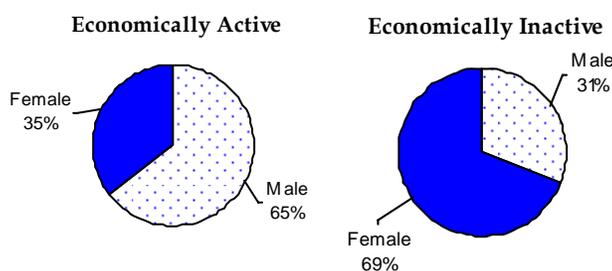
Sector	Economically active population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Total	8133459	100.0	5283825	65.0	2849633	35.0
Urban	931660	100.0	656085	70.4	275575	29.6
Rural	6801360	100.0	4409078	64.8	2392282	35.2
Estate	400439	100.0	218662	54.6	181777	45.4

**Table 2: Economically Inactive population by sex and sector - First Quarter 2011**

Sector	Economically inactive population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Total	8816313	100.0	2739314	31.1	6077000	68.9
Urban	1311166	100.0	406905	31.0	904262	69.0
Rural	7158839	100.0	2205091	30.8	4953748	69.2
Estate	346309	100.0	127318	36.8	218990	63.2

The survey results revealed that (Table 1), the estimated economically active population (or labour force) was about 8.1 million in First Quarter 2011. Of which 65.0 percent were males and 35.0 percent were females. Out of the economically inactive population 31.1 percent were males and 68.9 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 Q1	48.8	66.2	33.2

Note: Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces

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 First Quarter 2011 was about 66.2 percent and it was 33.2 percent for females. It is important to note that, male participation to the labour force was almost twice as that of females.

**Table 4: Labour Force Participation Rate by age group & by sex - First Quarter 2011**

Age group	Sex		
	Total	Male	Female
Total	48.0	65.9	31.9
15 - 19	16.8	22.9	10.7
20 - 24	54.5	73.7	37.5
25 - 29	64.3	92.9	41.9
30 - 34	65.6	95.8	40.0
35 - 39	69.1	95.7	45.8
40 - 44	74.0	96.6	51.4
45 - 49	70.1	93.9	51.4
50 - 54	65.0	88.9	43.4
55 - 59	58.9	81.3	37.9
60+	27.5	42.8	14.9

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 (40 - 44) yrs, while in female highest participation rate was reported from age group (40 - 44) yrs and (45 - 49) 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, (First Quarter 2010 – First Quarter 2011)**

Year	Total	Major industry group		
		Agriculture	Industries	Services
Jan-Feb-Mar 1st Qtr - 2010	7725753 100.0	2600463 33.7	1911428 24.7	3213861 41.6
April-May-June 2nd Qtr - 2010	7613267 100.0	2439391 32.0	1795204 23.6	3378672 44.4
July-Aug-Sept. 3rd Qtr - 2010	7578174 100.0	2367294 31.2	1850442 24.4	3360438 44.3
Oct-Nov-Dec 4th Qtr - 2010	7909178 100.0	2672472 33.8	1909857 24.1	3326849 42.1
Jan-Feb-Mar 1st Qtr - 2011	7783574 100.0	2511427 32.3	1951202 25.1	3320945 42.7

**Note: 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 First Quarter 2010 to First Quarter 2011. The total number of employed persons in Sri Lanka was estimated as about 7.8 million in First Quarter 2011. Of which, about 42.7 percent engaged in services sector, 32.3 percent in agriculture sector, and 25.1 percent in Industries sector.

**Table 6 : Percentage distribution of employed population by employment status and Agriculture/ Non-Agriculture sector - First Quarter 2011**

Employment Status	Total		Sector			
			Agriculture		Non Agriculture	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	7783574	100.0	2511427	32.3	5272147	67.7
Employee	4208368	100.0	727228	17.3	3481139	82.7
Public	1057555	100.0	110189	10.4	947366	89.6
Private	3150813	100.0	617039	19.6	2533774	80.4
Employer	239956	100.0	33672	14.0	206284	86.0
Own account worker	2484054	100.0	1152978	46.4	1331076	53.6
Contributing family worker	851196.1	100.0	597548	70.2	253648	29.8

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 - First Quarter 2011**

Major industry group	Total	Sex	
		Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	32.3	29.3	38.0
Industry	25.1	25.0	25.1
Services	42.7	45.6	36.9

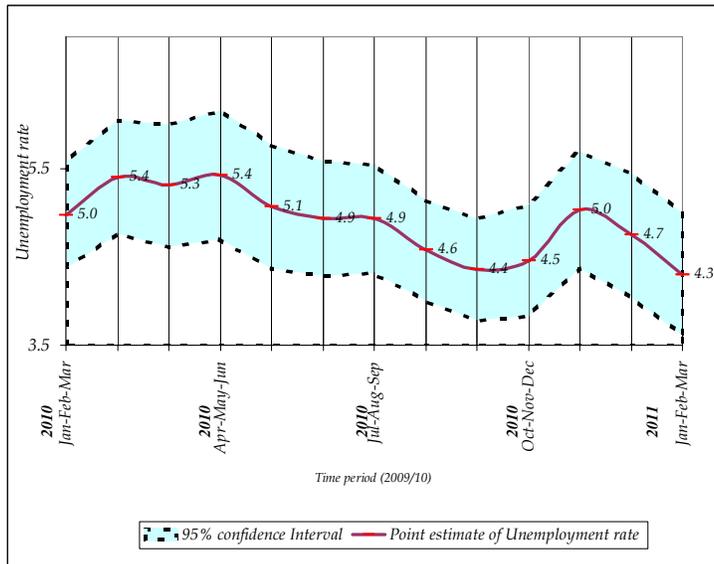
Table 7 depicts the distribution of male and female employed population by main industries. Regardless of sex, highest employment concentrated in service sector. Further among employed women about 38.0 percent was in agriculture sector while this share was 29.3 percent among males.

## 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 Jan. - 2011 March)**



The number of unemployed persons was estimated as about 349,885 during the First Quarter 2011.

The unemployment rate for the First Quarter 2011 was reported as 4.3 percent.

As seen in figure 2, it is very important to note that, there were no statistically significant difference between the unemployment rates reported in different time periods of 2009/2010, when *sampling error*<sup>(1)</sup> was considered.

**Table 8: Unemployment rate by level of education - First Quarter 2011**

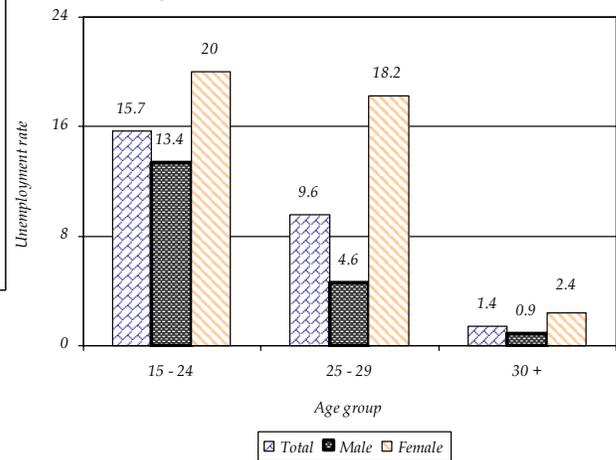
Level of Education	Unemployment rate		
	Total	Male	Female
Total	4.3	3.0	6.7
Below G.C.E. (O/L)	2.5	2.0	3.5
G.C.E. (O/L)	5.3	4.2	7.5
G.C.E. (A/L) & above	10.0	6.4	14.3



**Table 9: Unemployment rate by age group and sex - First Quarter 2011**

Age group	Total	Sex	
		Male	Female
Total	4.3	3.0	6.7
15 - 24	15.7	13.4	20.0
25 - 29	9.6	4.6	18.2
30 +	1.4	0.9	2.4

**Figure 3 : Unemployment rate by age group and sex - First Quarter 2011**



As can be seen from table 9, overall unemployment rate reported for female was 6.7 percent and it was 3.0 percent for male. Youth unemployment rate 15 - 24 yrs reported for First Quarter 2011 was 15.7. Highest unemployment rate was reported from age group 15 - 24 yrs, for both males (13.4) and females (20.0). 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 10.0 percent. There were 6.4 percent and 14.3 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).

<sup>(1)</sup> 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 - 2011 Q1)***

	Year										
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2010Q1	2011Q1	
<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	49.1	48.8	48.0
Male	67.5	67.2	67.3	68.1	67.8	67.9	66.7	67.3	67.8	66.2	65.9
Female	32.6	33.0	32.6	35.7	33.4	34.3	33.7	32.1	32.7	33.2	31.9
<i>by residential sector</i>											
Total	49.7	49.6	49.3	51.2	49.8	50.2	49.2	48.6	49.1	48.8	48.0
Urban	45.1	45.6	46.2	45.3	45.0	46.3	43.9	42.5	44.1	42.5	41.5
Rural	50.3	50.3	49.7	52.1	50.4	50.7	49.8	49.5	49.8	49.7	49.0
<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	5.1	4.2	4.3
Male	6.0	6.0	5.3	4.7	4.3	3.6	4.3	3.5	3.5	3.0	3.0
Female	12.3	12.1	10.7	9.7	9.0	8.0	8.2	7.5	7.9	6.3	6.7
<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	14.5	12.0	12.8
20 - 24	25.8	25.2	22.4	21.0	21.1	17.8	21.0	18.9	20.1	15.8	16.4
25 - 29	11.4	11.1	9.4	11.0	9.4	9.0	10.1	9.1	9.8	8.7	9.6
<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	11.9	9.2	10.0
Male	10.1	9.6	7.9	6.9	6.6	5.6	6.6	7.5	7.8	5.8	6.4
Female	22.4	22.5	17.1	16.8	17.5	14.4	15.1	15.6	16.4	13.1	14.3
<b>Employed population</b>											
<i>by sex</i>											
Both sexes	6609466	6704006	6788119	7105322	7041874	7174706.2	7139537	7235641	7287198	7351776	7783574
Male	4496136	4512082	4546397	4610643	4653067	4663277.5	4609197.5	4770375.9	4771572	4770710	5125488.9
Female	2113330	2191924	2241722	2494679	2388807	2511428.7	2530339.2	2465265.4	2515626	2581066	2658085.2
<i>by industry (percentage)</i>											
Total	6609466	6704006	6788119	7105322	7041874	7174706.2	7139536.7	7235641.3	7287198	7351776	7783574
%	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
Agriculture	2223691	2215282	2059293	2287268	2202098	2344414.8	2318620.6	2353598.6	2455665	2353311	2511427
%	(33.6)	(33.0)	(30.3)	(32.2)	(31.3)	(32.7)	(32.5)	(32.5)	(33.7)	(32.0)	(32.3)
Industry	1539035	1663383	1787274	1889953	1873857	1888003.5	1822684.8	1777129.7	1835359	1879606	1951202
%	(23.3)	(24.8)	(26.3)	(26.6)	(26.6)	(26.3)	(25.5)	(24.6)	(25.2)	(25.6)	(25.1)
Services	2846740	2825341	2941552	2928101	2965919	2942288	2998231	3104913	2996174	3118858.8	3320945
%	(43.1)	(42.1)	(43.3)	(41.2)	(42.1)	(41.0)	(42.0)	(42.9)	(41.1)	(42.4)	(42.7)
<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
0 •	7.3	5.3	4.9	6.7	6.5	7.4	7.9	6.1	3.8	3.7	4.1
1 - 9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.5	2.2	2.4	1.8	1.3	1.5	1.5
10 - 39	32.9	28.4	27.9	28.6	28.3	29.2	29.0	28.6	28.8	29.6	29.4
40+	58.0	64.7	65.7	62.8	63.7	61.2	60.8	63.5	66.0	65.2	65.0

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

\*Excluding Northern province

**Selected Labour Force indicators  
( 2003 - 2011 Q1)**

	Year								
	2003*	2004**	2005***	2006 #	2007#	2008*	2009*	2010*	2011Q1*
<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	48.0
Male	67.2	66.7	67.1	68.1	67.8	67.8	66.6	67.1	65.9
Female	31.4	31.5	30.9	35.7	33.4	33.2	32.8	31.2	31.9
<i>by residential sector</i>									
Total	48.9	48.6	48.3	51.2	49.8	49.5	48.7	48.1	48.0
Urban	44.4	44.9	45.5	45.3	45.0	45.9	43.5	42.0	41.5
Rural	49.6	49.2	48.7	52.1	50.4	50.0	49.4	49.0	49.0
<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	4.3
Male	6.0	6.0	5.5	4.7	4.3	3.7	4.3	3.5	3.0
Female	13.2	12.8	11.9	9.7	9.0	8.4	8.6	7.7	6.7
<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	12.8
20 - 24	26.4	25.9	24.6	21.0	21.1	18.1	21.4	19.1	16.4
25 - 29	11.4	11.4	9.5	11.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	9.2	9.6
<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	10.0
Male	10.4	10.5	8.9	6.9	6.6	6.0	7.0	7.9	6.4
Female	23.3	23.8	19.1	16.8	17.5	15.3	15.5	15.8	14.3
<b>Employed population</b>									
<i>by sex</i>									
Both sexes	7012755	7440226	7518007	7105322	7041874	7648305	7602414	7706593	7783574
Male	4833483	5087861	5134765	4610643	4653067	5033449	4963176	5131986	5125489
Female	2179272	2352365	2383241	2494679	2388807	2614856	2639238	2574608	2658085
<i>by industry (percentage)</i>									
Total	7012755	7394029	7518007	7105322	7041874	7648305	7602414	7706593	7783574.03
%	(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	2511427.02
%	(34.0)	(33.5)	(30.7)	(32.2)	(31.3)	(32.6)	(32.6)	(32.7)	(32.3)
Industry	1611493	1781447	1928014	1889953	1873857	2004880	1910318	1866733	1951202.06
%	(23.0)	(24.1)	(25.6)	(26.6)	(26.6)	(26.2)	(25.1)	(24.2)	(25.1)
Services	3016866	3137857	3283954	2928101	2965919	3153693	3216175	3319955	3320944.96
%	(43.0)	(42.4)	(43.7)	(41.2)	(42.1)	(41.2)	(42.3)	(43.1)	(42.7)
<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
0 •	7.5	5.2	4.7	6.7	6.5	7.2	7.9	6.0	4.1
1 - 9	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.5	2.2	2.3	1.7	1.5
10 - 39	32.6	28.7	27.6	28.6	28.3	28.9	28.8	28.5	29.4
40+	58.1	64.5	66.2	62.8	63.7	61.7	61.0	63.9	65.0

• 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