PREFACE

This publication is presented as the first Census of Trade & Services in Sri Lanka that successfully covered the entire island based on field enumeration carried out in two phases from October through November 2003 and from June through December 2006 respectively. Attempts made hitherto with prior detail preparation to collect information on Trade & Services were unsuccessful due to many constraints. This time, whilst addressing those constraints effectively the department firmly determined to accomplish the Census operation covering all the provinces of the country.

Due to several reasons, the Census of Trade & Services in Sri Lanka has received increased attention never than before. Firstly, the services sector is the largest economic sector that contributes around 59 percent to the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) at present. Secondly, the services sector generates the highest employment opportunities accounting more than 41 percent of the total employed population in the country. Of the total export earning, 21 percent has received from services sector is also another reason. The change in consumer preference, development of market access (eg. Trade Agreements) and expansion of e-commerce through the application of new information & communication tehnology (ICT) products (mobile phones, new computers, e-mail, satellites, websites etc.,) are also among the other factors that make this sector more significant. With the change of life styles in a competitive social pattern, people tend to spend considerable amount of their disposable income on services to make life more comfortable, secure, and enjoyable by increasing demand for service products. More importantly, the continuous increasing share of the services sector to the GDP over the past decades and specially commencing from the market liberalization regime to date is perceived as a favourable structural change in the development process of the country. The growing trend and economic importance of service activities and the dominance of their statistics are not exceptional economic phenomena confining to Sri Lanka. Over the globe, the prominence of Trade & Service activities in national economies is becoming more and more apparent. Hence, the UN too has shown keen interest in computing services statistics and recognized publishing services statistics as one of its immediate priority activities.

I do hope, the policy makers, the planners, entrepreneurs, managers, business executives, public officers, researchers, teachers and students, and other interested members of public would find this provisional publication useful as a preliminary source of services sector statistics for their respective purposes until the final report is made available.

ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS AND LOCAL BODIES UNDER WHICH THE CENSUS WAS OPERATED

District	D.S. Name	MC	UC	District	D.S. Name	MC .	UC
1 Colombo	Colombo	Colombo	•	2 Gampaha	Negambo	Negambo	
	Kolonnawa	-	Kolonnawa		Katana	-	Seeduwa - Katuna
	Hanwella	-	Seethawakapura		Miniwangoda		Minuwangoda
	Sri J'pura Kotte	Sri J'pura	•		Wattala	-	Wattala-Mabola
	Maharagama		Maharagama		Ja-ela	-	Ja-ela
	Thimbirisgasyaya	Colombo	-		Gampaha	Gampaha	
	Dehiwala Mt. Lav		_		Kelaniy	. '	Peliyagoda
	Moratuwa	Moratuwa			Attanagalla		-
	Ratmalana	Dehi.Mt.Lav.	_		Biyagama	-	_
	Homagama	-	-		Divulapitiya	_	
	Kaduwela	-	•		Dompe		-
	Kaduweia Kesbawa		-		Mahara	•	•
	Padukka		-		Mirigama	-	
3 Kalutara	Panadura	-	Panadura				
	Horana	-	Horana	4 Kandy	Kandy F. Gr.	Kandy	•
	Kalutara	-	Kalutara		Harispattuwa	Kandy	•
	Beruwela		Beruwala		Pathadumbara	Kandy	•
	Agalawatta		Deluwaia -		Udapalatha	-	Gampola
	Bandaragama	_	-		Yatinuwata	-	Kadugannawa
	Bulathsinhala		-		Pasbage	_	Nawalapitiya
		-	-		Akurana		Nawaiapinya
	Dodangoda	-	•		Deltota	-	•
	Ingiriya	-	-			-	•
	Madurawala	-	-		Doluwa	-	•
	Mathugama	-	•		Ganga Iha. Korale	•	•
	Millaniya	-	-		Hatharaliyadda	•	-
	Palindanuwara	-	-		Kundasale	~	
	Walallavita	_	-		Medadumbara	•	•
					Minipe	-	-
					Panvila	-	
5 Matale	Matale	Matale			Pathahewaheta	-	•
	Ukuwela	_	Matale		Poojapitiya	_	
	Ambanganga Kor.		. Iviataic		Thumpane		
	Dambulla	-	-		Udadumbara	_	•
	Galewela	•	-		Udunuwara	2	•
		-	•		Oduniwara	•	•
	Laggala-Palle.	-	-				
	Naula	-	•				
	Pallepola	-	-	7 Galle	Galle F.G.	Galle	-
	Rattota	-	-		Ambalangoda	-	Ambalangoda
	Wilgamuwa	-	-		Hikkaduwa	-	Hikkaduwa
	Yatawatta	•	•		Akmeemana	-	_
					Gonapinuwala	-	
					Baddegama	-	•
6 Nuwaraeliya	Nuwaraeliya	Nuwaraeliya			Balapitiya	_	
o manachya	•	Nuwaraciiya	Hanton Birton		Bentota	_	
	Ambagamuwa		Hattaon Dickoya		Bope-Poddala	-	•
	Hanguranketha	•	-				•
	Kothmale	•	-		Elpitiya	-	•
	Walapane	•	•		Habaraduwa	-	-
					Imaduwa	-	•
					Karandeniya	-	•
					Nagoda	-	•
8 Matara		Matara	-		Neluwa	-	-
	Weligama	-	Weligama		Niyagama	•	-
	Akuressa	-	-		Thawalama		_
	Athuraliya	-	-		Welivitiya-Divit,	_	~
	Devinuwara	_	-		Yakkalamulla	_	
	Dickwella		~				
	Hakmana	_	_				
	Kamburupitiya	•	-				
	Kirinda Puhul.	_	•	9 Hambantota	Hambantota	-	Hambantota
		-	-		Tangalle	-	Tangalle
	Kotapola	-	•		Ambalantota	•	-
	Malimbada	-	•		Angunakolapeles.	-	_
	Mulatiyana	-	•		Beliatta		-
	Pasgoda .	-	-		Katuwana	-	-
						•	-
	Pitabeddara	-	-				
		• •				-	•
	Pitabeddara Thihagoda	- - -	•		Okewela	-	-
	Pitabeddara Thihagoda	- -			Okewela Sooriyawewa	- - -	- -
	Pitabeddara Thihagoda	• • •	· ·		Okewela Sooriyawewa Tissamaharama	-	- - -
	Pitabeddara Thihagoda	- - -			Okewela Sooriyawewa	-	- - - -

10 Kurunegala	D.S. Name Kurunegala Kuliyapitiya West Alawwa		UC - uliyapitiya	11 Puttalam	Puttalam Chilaw Anamaduwa	• •	Puttalam Chilaw
10 Kurunegala	Kuliyapitiya West	-			•	-	
	Kuliyapitiya West Alawwa				A nomaduwa	_	
	Alawwa		-			=	
		-	-		Arachchikattuwa	•	
	Ambanpola	-	-		Dankotuwa	-	-
	Bingiriya	•	_		Kalpitiya	•	_
	Bamunukotuwa	•			Karuwalagaswewa	-	_
	Ehetuwewa	-			Madampe	• .	_
	Galgamuwa	-			Mahakoubukkadawala	•	_
	Ganewatta	-	-		Mahawewa	•	_
	Giribawa	-			Mundel	-	_
	Ibbagamuwa	•	-		Nattandiya	-	-
	Katupotha	-	-	•	Nawagattegama	-	-
	Kobeigane	-	•		Pallama	-	_
	Kotavehera	•			Vanathavilluwa	-	_
	Kuliyapitiya East		-		Wennapuwa	-	
	Maho	•					
	Mallawapitiya	•		13 Polonnaruwa	Dimbulagala	-	•
	Maspotha	-	-		Elahera	-	•
	Mawathagama	•	-		Hingurakgoda	-	•
	Narammala	-	•		Lankapura	•	-
	Nikaweratiya				Medirigiriya	•	•
	Panduwasnuwara				Thamankaduwa	•	•
	Pannala	•	•		Welikanda	-	•
	Polgahawela	-	-				
	Polpithigama	<u>-</u>	•	14 Badulla	Badulla	Badulla	- Bandarawela
	Rasnayakapura	-	•	.,	Bandarawela	-	Bandaraweia Haputale
	Rideegama	•			Haputale	-	•
	Udubaddawa	•	-		Ella	-	•
	Wariyapola	- ~	•		Haldummulla	-	-
	Weerambugedar				Haliela	-	-
12 Anuradhapur	a Nuwaragam P. C	en. Anuradhapur	a -		Kandeketiya	-	-
12 Anui aunapui	Nuwaragam P. Ea	st Anuradhapur	a -		Lunugala	-	•
	Mihintale	Anuradhapu	ra -		Mahiyanganaya	-	•
	Galenbindunuwe	wa -	-		Meegahakovula	-	•
	Galnewa	-	•		Passara	-	•
	Horowpathana	-	•		Rideemaliyadda	-	•
	Ipalogama	-	-		Soranathota	-	-
	Kahatagasdigi	liva -	-		Uva paranagama	•	•
	Kebithigollew		-		Welimada	-	•
	Kekirawa	•	•				
	Mahavilachch	iva -	-		a Badalkumbura	-	•
	Medawachchi		-	15 Moneragal	Bibile	-	-
	Nachchadoow		•		Buttala	-	-
	Nochchiyagar		-		Katharagama	-	-
	Padaviya	·-	•		Madulla	<u>.</u> .	•
	Palagala	-	•		Medagama	-	
	Palugaswewa	-	•		Moneragala	-	•
	Rajanganaya	-	•		Sevanagala		•
	Rambewa	-	•		Siyambalanduwa		<u>.</u>
	Thalawa	-	-		Thanamalvila	· <u>-</u>	· -
	Thambuttega	ma -	•			-	
	Thirappane	-	•		Wellawaya		
	Welioya	-	•		M. malla	_	Kegalle
	Welloya			17 Kegalle	Kegalle	_	-
16 Ratnapura	Ratnapura	Ramapura			Aranayaka		•
10 Mainapula	Balangoda	-	Balangoda		Bulathkohupitiya Dehiovita	-	•
	Ayagama	-	•		Demovita Deraniyagala	-	-
	Eheliyagoda	•	•		Galigamuwa	-	-
	Elapatha	-	-		Mawanella	-	-
	Embilipitiya	· -	•		Mawanena Rambukkana		-
	Godakawela		•		Ruwanwella	_	-
	Imbulpe	-	-		Warakapola		-
	Kahawatta	-	•		•	-	-
	Kalawana	-	•		Yatiyantota		
	Kiriella	-	•		1-00	Jaffna	-
	Kolonna	-	•	18 Jaffna	Jaffna Nollur	Jaffina	-
	Kuruwita	-	•		Nallur Thoumaradchy	-	Chavakachcheri
	Nivithigala	-	-		Thenmaradchy		Point Pedro
	Opanayaka	-	•		Vadamarachchy	Jorth -	Vavettiturai
	Pelmadulla		-		Vadamarachchi i	-	•
	Weligepola		•		Delft Island North (k	avis) -	•
							•
19 Mannar	Madhu	-	-		Island South (ve	- Initial)	•
	Mannar to	wn -	-		Karainagar	i Fast -	•
	Manthai w	est -	•		Vadamarachch	ם אטרי. פינע -	•*
	Musali	-	•		Vadamarachchi		
	Nanattan	•	•		Valikamam Ea	st - orth -	-
			Managine		Valikamam No)TUI -	
	* *	-	Vavuniya				-
20 Vavuniya	Vavuniya	- North -	vavunya -		Valikamam So	outh -	-
20 Vavuniya	Vavuniya Vavuniya Vavuniya		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		Valikamam So Valikamam Sou Walikamam V	th-West -	- -

District	D.S. Name	MC	UC	District	D.S. Name	MC	UC
21 Muliativu	Manthai East		-	23 Batticaloa	Munmanai North	Batticaloa	
	Maritimepattu	-	-		Kattankudy	-	Kattankudy
	Oddusuddan	_	-	-	Eravur Pattu	_	
	Puthukudiyiruppu	-	-		Eravur town	-	-
	Thunukkai	-	-		Koralai Pattu Central	-	-
					Koralai P. (Valachchenai) -	-
22 Kilinochchi	Kandavalai	-	-		Koralai P. N. (Vaharai)	-	-
	Karachchi	-	-		Koralai P. S. (Kiran)	-	-
	Pachchilaipalli	-	-		Koralai P. W. (Oddamav	adi) -	-
	Poonkary	-	-		Manmunai Pattu	-	-
					Manmunai S. & Eruvil P	-	-
24 Ampara	Kalmunai	Kalmunai	-		Manmunai SW.	-	-
-	Ampara	-	Ampara		Manmunai West	-	~
	Addalachchenai	-			Porativu Pattu	-	-
	Akkaraipattu	-	-	25 Trincomalee	20-1		m· •
	Alayadiwembu	-	-	25 Trincomaiee	Trincomalee Gomarankadawala	•	Trincomale
	Damana	-	•		Kantale	-	-
	Dehiattakandiya	•	-		Kinniya	-	-
	Irrakkamam	-	-		Kuchchaveli	-	-
	Kalmunai Tamil Div	-	•		Morawewa	•	-
	Karativu	-	•		Muthur	-	-
	Lahugala	-	•		Padavisripura	-	-
	Mahaoya	-	-		Seruvila	-	-
	Navithanveli	-	-		Thambalagamuwa	-	-
	Ninthavur	-	•		Trincomalee town & Gr.	-	•
	Padiyathalawa	-	•		Verugal/Eachcalamp.		-
	Pothuvil	-	-		verugar Lacitcalamp.	-	-
	Sainthamaruthu	-	-				
	Samanthurai	-	-				
	Thirukkovil	-	•				
	Uhana	-	-				
	Kalmunai Addl. G.A Div.	-	•				•

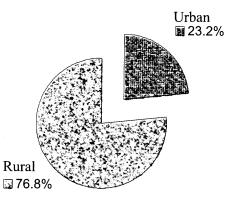
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past several decades, initiatives taken by the DCS to launch a Census of Trade & Services covering entire island have been unsuccessful due to unforeseen circumstances beyond its control. However, the DCS has successfully completed the "Census of Trade & Services 2003/2006" in December 2006 covering entire island for the first time in the history of the Census of Trade & Services. Prior to this census, the DCS had done a Census of Trade & Services and published a report entitled "Census of Trade & Services 1996/1999" in 2003. However, there are differences in coverage and compilation methodology between these two Censuses. The prominence of Trade & Service activities and its, contributions to the national economy is becoming, more and more apparent. The service sector contributes around 59 percent to the GDP being the highest among other two sectors namely Agriculture and Industry. Services sector has been generating employment opportunities ranging from 40 to 44 percent of the total labour force of the country for the last decade.

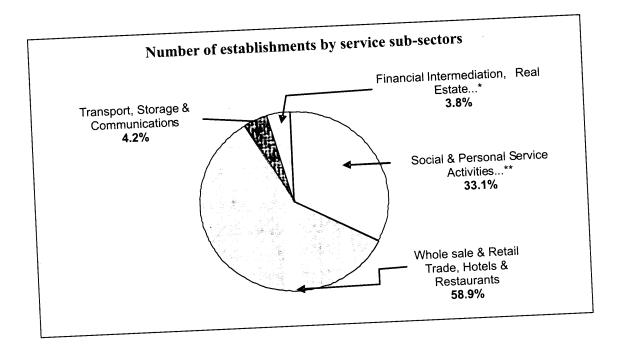
The total export earning from Services sector has grown up to 21 percent is a note worthy development of services sector. To measure trends and patterns of the behaviour of the services sector, it has been a long felt need to work out more realistic and robust estimations. The complete enumeration of services sector of this nature would indeed be the first step in measuring them. The sample frame which is automatically developed as a by-product of the Census could be used for wider ramification of further surveys of Trade & Services.

Number of establishments:

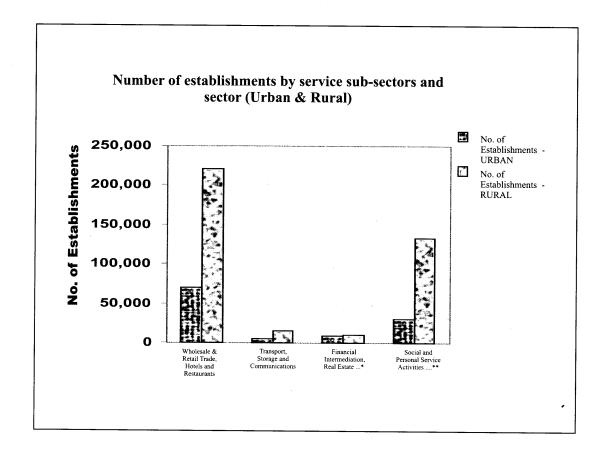
A total of 494,416 Trade and Service establishments were enumerated in the listing operation of the Census of Trade and Services 2003/2006. Of these 379,882 (76.8%) establishments were in rural sector, where as 114,534 (23.2%) were in urban sector. The distinct variation is visible between rural and urban sectors according to the number of establishments enumerated. The total number of establishments enumerated in rural sector is greater than that of urban sector.



The highest number of establishments i.e. 291,141(58.9%) were engaged in "Wholesale and Retail Trade, Hotels and Restaurant" industries while "Social and Personal Service Activities ...** "sub-sector has become the second highest number of establishments enumerated recording 163,532(33.1%). The "Transport, Storage & Communications" and "Financial Intermediation, Real Estate...*" sub-sectors recorded 3rd and 4th places accounting 20,855(4.2%) and 18,888(3.8%) respectively.

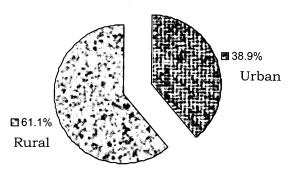


Distinct variations were also visible for the total number of establishments between rural & urban among the four service sub-sectors. The number of establishments for the "Wholesale & Retail Trade, Hotels and Restaurants" industry were rercorded as 221,066(75.9%) in rural areas, where as the balance 70,075(24.1%) establishments were enumerated in urban areas. The "Transport, Storage & Communications" and "Financial Intermediation, Real Estate...*" sub-sectors accounted 15,354(73.6%) and 10,534(55.8%) establishments in rural areas respectively. Whereas for the urban areas, those two sub-sectors respectively recorded 5,501(26.4%) and 8,354(44.2%) establishments against rural sector. The "Social & Personal Services Activities...**" sub-sector recorded the 132,928(81.3%) establishments in rural areas, while the balance 30,604(18.7%) establishments in this sub-sector were recorded in urban areas.

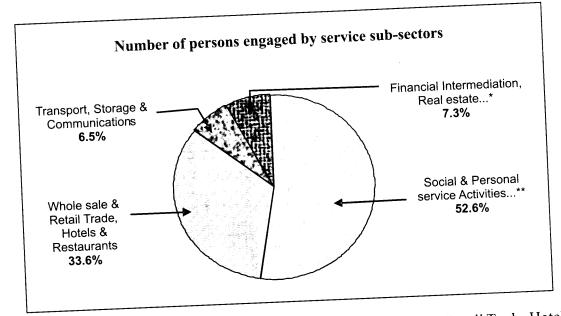


Number of Persons engaged:

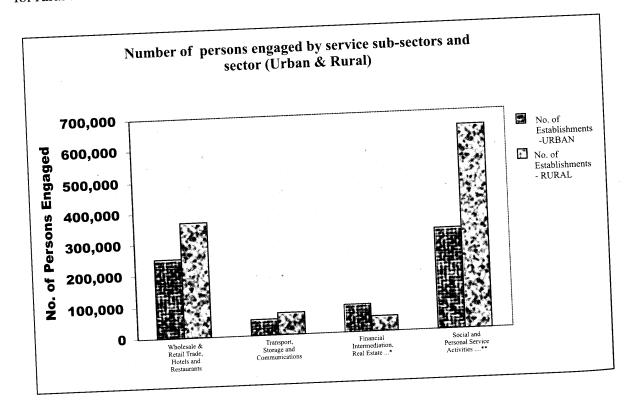
A total of 1,860,503 persons were enumerated as persons engaged in services sector. Of these 1,136,800(61.1%) were in rural sector and 723,703(38.9%) were in Urban sector.



The sub-sector "Social and Personal Services Activities...** "recorded as the highest number of persons engaged sector i.e.978,909 or (52.6%) to the total. The "Wholesale & Retail Trade, Hotels and Restaurants" has become the second largest sub-sector which accomodate 623,715(33.6%) persons. The "Financial Intermediation, Real Estate...*" and "Transport, Storage and Communications" sub-sectors employ 136,300(7.3%) and 121,579(6.5%) persons respectively.



In rural areas, each of these three sub-sectors, i.e. "Wholesale & Retail Trade, Hotels & Restaurants", "Transport, storage & communications" and "Social & Personal services Activities...** "provides employment more than 58% of their counter part in urban areas. On the contrary in urban areas, "Financial Intermediation, Real Estate...* "sub sector provides more employment nearly 66%, than that of rural sector. The "Social and Personal Service Activities ...**", employes the highest number of persons among other three sub-sectors in both rural and urban sector activities accounting 651,870(57.3%) and 327,039(45.1%) respectively. The "Wholesale & Retail Trade, Hotels and Restaurants" sub-sector records the number of persons engaged as 368,325(32.4%) for rural sector and as 255,390(35.3%) for urban sector.



Censuses of Trade & Services (1996/1999 - 2003/2006):

Since there was no census of Trade & Services carried out previously covering the entire island, the growth cannot be calculated considering all the districts. Northern and Eastern provinces were completely excluded at the Census of Trade & Services in 1996/99. Nonetheless, the growth could be measured using the districts with which were subject to the enumeration for both censuses (1996/1999 & 2003/2006). On the basis of this, the intercensal increase between two censuses is 144,046 establishments or 50 percent. In the urban sector the number of establishments enumerated has risen up by 43,947 or 80.1 percent. However, the increment for the rural sector is 100,099 establishments which is as low as 42.8 percent growth.

Anuradhapura district has shown a distinctive over all growth of 76% which is the highest among other districts. The urban sector of Anuradhapura District also showed the highest growth reporting 187% against previous census. It seems that the major cause behind the over all growth is rapid development of service industries in urban areas in the district. Badulla and Puttalam Districts recorded equally 68% over all growth. Colombo District recorded 67% growth. Lowest of all the Districts is the Matale recording 23% of over all growth and was minus (-3%) for its urban sector.

In urban sector there is a substantial growth of more than 50% could be observed for most of the districts except Kandy, Matale and Nuwaraeliya. On the contrary in rural areas, more than 50% of growth could only be observed in a few districts. They are Nuwaraeliya, Puttalam, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Badulla and Moneragala. However, Nuwaraeliya district has recorded the highest growth of 70 percent in its rural sector.

For both the Censuses of Trade & Services in 1996/1999 and 2003/2006, Colombo remained as Sri Lanka's largest number of establishments enumerated district. Gampaha district has secured the second place on the basis of number of establishments enumerated. Meanwhile Kurunegala has constituted as the third place according to the number of establishments enumerated district followed by Kandy and Kalutara.

Distribution of establishments by District and Sector:

(Census of Trade & Services 2003-2006)

Among 25 district, the highest number of establishments were enumerated in Colombo District accounting 64853(13%) followed by Gampaha, Kurunegala, Kandy and Kalutara Districts recording 52,297(11%), 42087(9%), 35014(7%) and 27262(6%) respectively. The ranking order for the most of the districts has more or less remain unchanged for both the Censuses. The lowest number of establishments (1%) were reported in each of the four districts, namely Mannar, Vavuniya, Mullativu and Killinochchi.

V.B. The number of persons engaged in the services sector were enumerated at establishment level at the Census of Trade & Services. A Quarterly Survey of Labour Force is conducted separately by the DCS at household level. It is not possible to compare the figures of persons engaged in the services sector at the Census of Trade & Services and the persons employed in the services sector estimated by the labour force surveys carried out by the DCS, as there are differences in their coverage, definitions, classifications and compilation methodology. Hence, the readers are kindly advised to be cautious about the obvious limitations of the employment figures of the Census of Trade & Services when they are used and interpreted.

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
ALL ISLANI	2	
Table 1.	Number of Establishments and Growth between two Censuses (1996/1999-2003/2006) in Trade & Services by District and Sector	07
Table 2.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka	08
Table 3.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC and Sector - Sri Lanka	09
Table 4.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC and Persons Engaged Size Class - Sri Lanka	10
Table 5.	Number of Establishments in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka	11
Table 6.	Number of Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka	12
Table 7.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri lanka	13 - 18
Table 8.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC, Persons Engaged Size Class and District - Sri Lanka.	19 - 23
ALL ISLANI	O URBAN SECTOR	
Table 9.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka (Urban)	27
Table 10.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC and Persons Engaged size class - Sri Lanka (Urban)	28
Table 11.	Number of Establishments in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka (Urban)	29
Table 12.	Number of Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka (Urban)	30
Table 13.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Janka (Urban)	31 - 36

Table 14.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC, Persons Engaged Size Class and District - Sri Lanka (Urban)	37 - 41
ALL ISLAND	RURAL SECTOR	
Table 15.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka (Rural)	45
Table 16.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC and Persons Engaged size class - Sri Lanka (Rural)	46
Table 17.	Number of Establishments in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka (Rural)	47
Table 18.	Number of Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri Lanka (Rural)	48
Table 19.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by District and Major Divisions of ISIC - Sri lanka (Rural)	49 - 54
Table 20.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC, Persons Engaged Size Class and District - Sri Lanka (Rural)	55 - 59
ALL ISLAI AND MUN	ND TABLES WITH DISTRICTS, DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT DIVISIONS ICIPAL / URBAN COUNCILS	
Table 21.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC, District and Divisional Secretariat Divisions - Sri Lanka	63 - 85
Table 22.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC, District and Municipal / Urban councils - Sri Lanka	87 - 95
Table 23.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC, District and Divisional Secretariat Divisions Sri Lanka (Rural)	
Table 24.	Number of Establishments and Persons Engaged in Trade & Services by Major Divisions of ISIC, District and Divisional Secretariat Divisions Sri Lanka (Urban)	121 - 131

CENSUS OF TRADE & SERVICES (2003 - 2006)

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) has successfully completed a Census of Trade & Services in December 2006, which covered entire Island for the first time in the history of Census of Trade & Services. The DCS had made several attempts to collect data in the Trade & Services sector in the past, but failed to accomplish the task due to various reasons beyond its control. The "Distribution Census" in 1968 was the first ever recorded attempt made to collect information on Trade & Services sector by the DCS. After this, a survey on "Distribution Trade Activities" was undertaken in 1987 in order to collect information on Trade & Services sector. The DCS was not able to cover the entire country of this exercise as expected. Except some information of these efforts of collecting services sector data, no records are available until mid 90s to write a much more complete account of the history of the Census of Trade & Services conducted by the DCS.

The "Census of Trade & Services 1996 - 1999" was designed to fill the lacuna ever existed and launched a listing operation of Trade & Services in 1996. Except Northern and Eastern provinces, this operation (Listing) was set in 1996 and completed in 1999. The areas come under the Municipal or Urban Councils were considered as Urban while rest of the areas have been considered as Rural. The details of Trade & Service establishments within the urban areas have been extracted from the records available in the respective urban office by the then Statistical Investigators (S.I.) of the DCS. However, the Trade & Service establishments which had not been registered in the urban offices and the establishments owned by the government which usually are not registered in the urban offices have not been entered in the list of Trade & Services. In the rural sector, Grama Niladhari officers (GNN) have carried out the listing operation.

The Census of Trade & Service (2003 - 2006) was designed to collect information across the country and to mitigate as much uncovered areas and establishments as possible. The operation of this Census began along with the listing operation of the Census of Industries which took place in 2003. The Trade & Service establishments of both rural and urban sectors were covered in Northern and Eastern Provinces. However, for the rest of the seven provinces, the DCS was able to list the Trade and Service establishments only in rural areas during the listing operation of the Census of Industries 2003. The Census of Trade and Services of urban sector was resumed in mid 2006 with a view to collect information which had not been collected during the operation of Industrial Census 2003. Polonnaruwa and Moneragala districts were not included in this urban census as those districts do not possess urban areas. These two districts were completely subject to listing under rural sector in the Census of Industries 2003. With the urban sector Census, all urban areas of 15 Districts were enumerated for Trade & Service activities.