



Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey was 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 2009 was done in January, February and March in year 2009. Even though it was planned to conduct the survey in Northern province, the survey was not conducted fully due to the prevailing uncertain conditions in districts of Northern province. In first quarter 2009 the survey was conducted also in the Eastern province, hence this bulletin consists of summary statistics computed by excluding Northern province.

Labour force participation rate

Labour Force: Number of persons 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 2009

Sector	Economically active population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Total	8160062	100.0	5234755	64.2	2925307	35.8
Urban	873486	100.0	586657	67.2	286829	32.8
Rural	7286576	100.0	4648098	63.8	2638478	36.2

Table 2: Economically Inactive population by sex and sector- First Quarter 2009

Sector	Economically inactive population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Total	8408622	100.0	2551075	30.3	5857548	69.7
Urban	1112771	100.0	344463	31.0	768308	69.0
Rural	7295851	100.0	2206611	30.2	5089240	69.8

The survey results revealed that (Table 1), the estimated economically active population (or labour force) is about 8.2 million in first quarter 2009. Of which 64.2 percent are males and 35.8 percent are females. Of the economically inactive population 30.3 percent are males and 69.7 percent are females (Table 2) .

Figure 1 : Distribution of Economically active/Inactive population

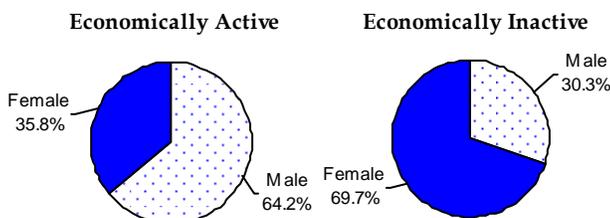


Table 3: Labour Force Participation Rate by sex & year

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 Q1	49.9	67.4	34.3

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 2009 is about 67.4 percent and it is 34.3 percent for females. It is important to note that, male participation to the labour force is as twice as that of females.

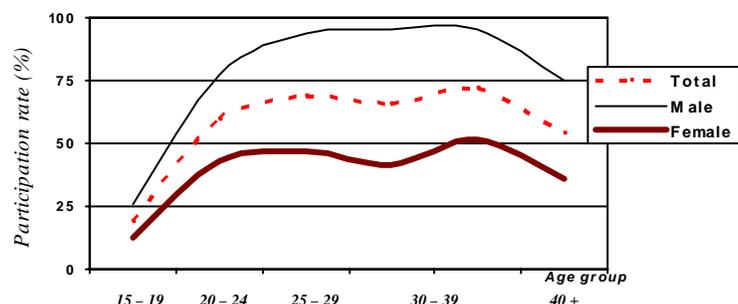
** Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces*

Table 4 : Labour Force Participation Rate by age group & by sex - First Quarter 2009

Age group	Sex		
	Total	Male	Female
Total	49.2	67.2	33.3
15 - 24	37.0	48.7	26.2
25 - 29	68.5	93.8	46.8
30 - 39	68.9	95.6	46.2
40+	54.2	75.4	35.6

Table 4 provides the labour force participation rates by sex and age group. Highest male participation rate (95.6) is reported from (30 - 39) age group while female highest participation rate (46.8) reported from age group (25-29).

Figure 2 : Labour Force Participation Rate by age group & sex - First Quarter 2009



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 2008 – First Quarter 2009

Year	Total	Major industry group		
		Agriculture	Industries	Services
Jan-Feb-Mar 1st Qtr - 2008	7581163 100.0	2410307 31.8	1989655 26.2	3181201 42.0
April-May-June 2nd Qtr - 2008	7563981 100.0	2264792 29.9	2068786 27.4	3230403 42.7
July-Aug-Sept. 3rd Qtr - 2008	7735132 100.0	2665917 34.5	2000537 25.9	3068678 39.7
Oct-Nov-Dec 4th Qtr - 2008	7712943 100.0	2617910 33.9	1960544 25.4	3134489 40.6
Jan-Feb-Mar 1st Qtr - 2009	7709784 100.0	2613350 33.9	1894279 24.6	3202155 41.5

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 2008 to first quarter 2009. The total number of employed persons in Sri Lanka is estimated as about 7.7 million in first quarter 2009. Of which, about 41.5 percent engaged in services sector employment, and 33.9% in agriculture sector.

When the distribution of employment between first quarter 2008 to first quarter 2009 is compared agriculture sector shows a marked increase in its relative importance, and for the service sector it is the opposite.

Table 6 : Percentage distribution of employed population by employment status and Agriculture/ non- agriculture sector - First Quarter 2009

Employment Status	Total		Sector			
			Agriculture		Non Agriculture	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	7709784	100.0	2613350	33.9	5096434	66.1
Employee	4403504	100.0	730122	16.6	3673382	83.4
Public	1231034	100.0	166729	13.5	1064305	86.5
Private	3172470	100.0	563394	17.8	2609076	82.2
Employer	201201	100.0	39563	19.7	161638	80.3
Own account worker	2210692	100.0	1180929	53.4	1029763	46.6
Unpaid family worker	894387	100.0	662735	74.1	231652	25.9

Table 6 shows that, about 83.4 percent of total paid employees are engaged in non-agricultural sector activities, while this percentage is only 16.6 percent for the agriculture sector. Further, about 82.2 percent of private sector paid employees are involved in non-agricultural activities, while this share is 17.8 percent regarding the agricultural activities.

It is important to see that, about 74.1 percent of unpaid family workers are in the agriculture sector, and the balance, 25.9 percent are in the non-agriculture sector.

Note (1): Please see the explanatory note under 'labour force' link in the DCS web site www.statistics.gov.lk for detailed concepts & definitions.

Table 7 : Distribution of Employed population by main industry & by sex - First Quarter 2009

Major industry group	Total	Sex	
		Male	Female
Total	100.0	65.1	34.9
Agriculture	100.0	61.9	38.1
Industry	100.0	65.2	34.8
Services	100.0	67.6	32.4

It is seen in the above table that, about 67.6 percent of services sector employment are males.

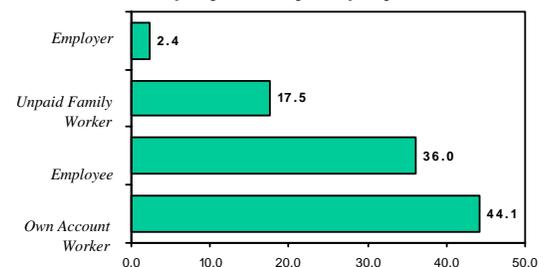
Table 8 : "Informal sector" employment by Agriculture/ Non-agriculture sector - First Quarter 2009

Sector	Total	Agriculture	Non-agriculture
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Formal	38.4	13.7	51.0
Informal	61.6	86.3	49.0

It is also important to see the distribution of the employed population according to the formal and informal sector classification. Table 8 shows that, 61.6 percent of the total employment is in the informal sector. Further 86.3 percent of the agriculture sector employment is in informal sector, while it is about 49 percent for non agriculture sector.

Further, 44.1 percent of those employed in the informal sector are own account workers, while 36.0 percent of them are paid employees. (Figure 3).

Figure 3 : Percentage Distribution of informal sector employment by Employment status



Underemployment ⁽¹⁾

Table 9 : Underemployment rate by sex - First Quarter 2009

Rate	Sex		Economic sector		Total
	Male	Female	Agriculture	Non-agriculture	
Underemployment rate	3.0	5.3	5.1	3.2	3.8

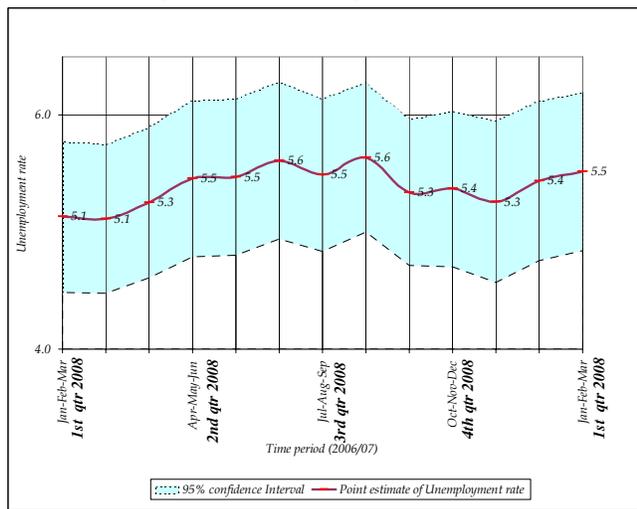
Table 9 reveals that, underemployment rate is higher for females than males. And also it is higher in the agriculture sector than as that of in non-agriculture sector.

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 4 : Unemployment rates and its 95% confidence intervals (2008 Jan. -Dec./ 2009 Jan. - Mar.)



The number of unemployed persons is estimated as about 450,000 during the first quarter 2009.

The unemployment rate for the first quarter 2009 is reported as 5.5 percent (Excluding Northern province).

As seen in figure 4, it is very important to note that, there is no statistically significant difference between the unemployment rates reported in different time periods of 2008/2009, when sampling error⁽²⁾ is considered.

Table 10 : Unemployment rate by level of education First Quarter 2009

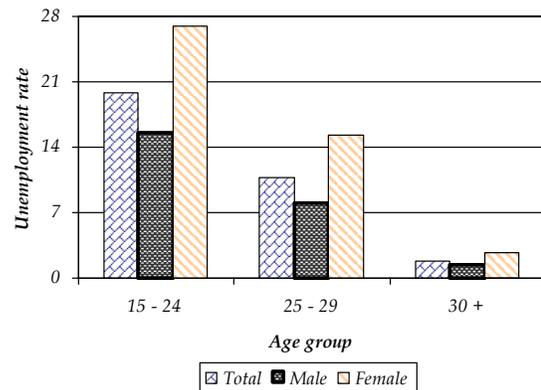
Level of Education	Unemployment rate		
	Total	Male	Female
Total	5.5	4.2	7.9
Below G.C.E. (O/L)	3.4	2.8	4.6
G.C.E. (O/L)	9.3	7.4	12.8
G.C.E. (A/L) & above	10.6	7.8	13.4



Table 11: Unemployment rate by age group and sex – First Quarter 2009

Age group	Total	Sex	
		Male	Female
Total	5.5	4.2	7.9
15 - 24	19.8	15.5	27.0
25 - 29	10.7	8.1	15.3
30 +	1.9	1.4	2.8

Figure 5 : Unemployment rate by age group and sex – First quarter 2009



As can be seen from table 11, the unemployment rate reported for females is 7.9 percent and 4.2 percent for males. Youth unemployment rate (15 - 24 yrs) reported for first quarter 2009 is 19.8. Highest unemployment rates is reported from age group (15 - 24 yrs), for both males (15.5) and females (27.0). Further the survey results reveal that the unemployment is severe among females than that of males, in all age groups.

The highest unemployment rate is reported from the G.C.E(A/L) and above group which is about 10.6 percent. That is 7.8 percent and 13.4 percent for males and females respectively. This shows that the problem of unemployment is more acute in the case of educated females than educated males (Table 10).

Table 12: Literacy rate by sex & sector

Sex & sector	1 st quarter 2008	1 st quarter 2009
Total	92.1	91.4
Male	93.8	93.1
Female	90.6	90.0
Urban	95.5	94.9
Rural	92.4	91.7
Estate	76.0	75.3

Literacy ⁽³⁾

Table 12 shows that, during the first quarter of 2009, the literacy rate is about 91.4, and also the male literacy rate (93.1) is higher than that of females (90.0). Further, the survey results reveal that literacy level of estate sector (75.3) is relatively lower than urban (94.9) and rural (91.7) sectors.

⁽²⁾ 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.**

⁽³⁾ Please see the explanatory note under 'labour force' link in the DCS web site www.statistics.gov.lk for detailed concepts & definitions.

Selected Labour Force indicators (Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces)
(2000 - 2009 Q1)

	Year											2009Q1*
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2008Q1	2009Q1	
Labour force participation rate												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	50.3	48.8	50.3	49.7	49.6	49.3	51.2	49.8	50.2	49.8	49.9	49.2
Male	67.2	66.2	67.9	67.5	67.2	67.3	68.1	67.8	67.9	67.3	67.4	67.2
Female	33.9	31.9	33.6	32.6	33.0	32.6	35.7	33.4	34.3	34.2	34.3	33.3
<i>by residential sector</i>												
Total	50.3	48.8	50.3	49.7	49.6	49.3	51.2	49.8	50.2	49.8	49.9	49.2
Urban	44.9	44.2	46.0	45.1	45.6	46.2	45.3	45.0	46.3	45.9	44.5	44.0
Rural	51.2	49.6	50.9	50.3	50.3	49.7	52.1	50.4	50.7	50.3	50.6	50.0
Unemployment rate												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	7.6	7.9	8.8	8.1	8.1	7.2	6.5	6.0	5.2	5.1	5.3	5.5
Male	5.8	6.2	6.6	6.0	6.0	5.3	4.7	4.3	3.6	3.3	4.1	4.2
Female	11.1	11.5	12.9	12.3	12.1	10.7	9.7	9.0	8.0	8.2	7.5	7.9
<i>by selected age groups(yr)</i>												
20 - 29	17.4	18.4	20.1	19.1	18.6	16.0	15.9	15.0	13.2	13.4	14.8	15.2
20 - 24	23.0	24.4	27.0	25.8	25.2	22.4	21.0	21.1	17.8	18.4	19.7	20.3
25 - 29	10.9	11.3	11.6	11.4	11.1	9.4	11.0	9.4	9.0	8.7	10.4	10.7
<i>by selected educational levels</i>												
G.C.E.(A/L) & above												
Both sexes	14.9	15.3	16.8	16.0	15.7	12.2	11.6	11.8	9.9	11.0	10.1	10.6
Male	8.8	10.1	10.8	10.1	9.6	7.9	6.9	6.6	5.6	6.9	7.4	7.8
Female	21.5	21.5	23.0	22.4	22.5	17.1	16.8	17.5	14.4	15.6	12.8	13.4
Employed population												
<i>by sex</i>												
Both sexes	6310247	6235588	6519415	6609466	6704006	6788119	7105322	7041874	7174706	7148318	7250951	7709784
Male	4241546	4248877	4395164	4496136	4512082	4546397	4610643	4653067	4663277	4653377.8	4669522	5015959
Female	2068701	1986711	2124250	2113330	2191924	2241722	2494679	2388807	2511429	2494940.2	2581429	2693825
<i>by industry (percentage)</i>												
Total	6310247	6235588	6519415	6609466	6704006	6788119	7105322	7041874	7174706	7148318	7250951	7709784
%	(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	2274153	2033343	2247602	2223691	2215282	2059293	2287268	2202098	2344415	2272031.3	2459978	2613350
%	(36.0)	(32.6)	(34.5)	(33.6)	(33.0)	(30.3)	(32.2)	(31.3)	(32.7)	(31.8)	(33.9)	(33.9)
Industry	1490795	1491408	1459194	1539035	1663383	1787274	1889953	1873857	1888004	1890286.3	1806035	1894279
%	(23.6)	(23.9)	(22.4)	(23.3)	(24.8)	(26.3)	(26.6)	(26.6)	(26.3)	(26.4)	(24.9)	(24.6)
Services	2545299	2710837	2812619	2846740	2825341	2941552	2928101	2965919	2942288	2986000	2984938	3202155
%	(40.3)	(43.5)	(43.1)	(43.1)	(42.1)	(43.3)	(41.2)	(42.1)	(41.0)	(41.8)	(41.2)	(41.5)
<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 •	7.2	4.3	5.6	7.3	5.3	4.9	6.7	6.5	7.4	4.1	5.3	5.4
1 - 9	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.5	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.1
10 - 39	32.7	28.2	32.0	32.9	28.4	27.9	28.6	28.3	29.2	31.1	29.3	29.0
40+	58.2	66.1	60.9	58.0	64.7	65.7	62.8	63.7	61.2	62.9	63.3	63.5

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

* Including Eastern province

Note: However it is to be noted that the difference between corresponding figures in any given two quarters may not necessarily be statistically significant.

**Selected Labour Force indicators
(2000 - 2009 Q1)**

	Year										
	2000#	2001#	2002#	2003*	2004**	2005***	2006 #	2007#	2008*	2008 Q1*	2009Q1*
Labour force participation rate											
<i>by sex</i>											
Both sexes	50.3	48.8	50.3	48.9	48.6	48.3	51.2	49.8	49.5	49.1	49.2
Male	67.2	66.2	67.9	67.2	66.7	67.1	68.1	67.8	67.8	66.9	67.2
Female	33.9	31.9	33.6	31.4	31.5	30.9	35.7	33.4	33.2	33.0	33.3
<i>by residential sector</i>											
Total	50.3	48.8	50.3	48.9	48.6	48.3	51.2	49.8	49.5	49.1	49.2
Urban	44.9	44.2	46.0	44.4	44.9	45.5	45.3	45.0	45.9	45.6	44.0
Rural	51.2	49.6	50.9	49.6	49.2	48.7	52.1	50.4	50.0	49.6	50.0
Unemployment rate											
<i>by sex</i>											
Both sexes	7.6	7.9	8.8	8.4	8.3	7.7	6.5	6.0	5.4	5.1	5.5
Male	5.8	6.2	6.6	6.0	6.0	5.5	4.7	4.3	3.7	3.2	4.2
Female	11.1	11.5	12.9	13.2	12.8	11.9	9.7	9.0	8.4	8.6	7.9
<i>by selected age groups(yr)</i>											
20 - 29	17.4	18.4	20.1	19.4	19.2	17.2	15.9	15.0	13.7	13.4	15.2
20 - 24	23.0	24.4	27.0	26.4	25.9	24.6	21.0	21.1	18.1	18.4	20.3
25 - 29	10.9	11.3	11.6	11.4	11.4	9.5	11.0	9.4	9.5	8.7	10.7
<i>by selected educational levels</i>											
G.C.E.(A/L) & above											
Both sexes	14.9	15.3	16.8	16.5	16.8	13.8	11.6	11.8	10.5	11.1	10.6
Male	8.8	10.1	10.8	10.4	10.5	8.9	6.9	6.6	6.0	6.9	7.8
Female	21.5	21.5	23.0	23.3	23.8	19.1	16.8	17.5	15.3	15.8	13.4
Employed population											
<i>by sex</i>											
Both sexes	6310247	6235588	6519415	7012755	7440226	7518007	7105322	7041874	7648305	7581163	7709784
Male	4241546	4248877	4395164	4833483	5087861	5134765	4610643	4653067	5033449	5004644	5015959
Female	2068701	1986711	2124250	2179272	2352365	2383241	2494679	2388807	2614856	2576519	2693825
<i>by industry (percentage)</i>											
Total	6310247	6235588	6519415	7012755	7394029	7518007	7105322	7041874	7648305	7581163	7709784
%	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
Agriculture	2274153	2033343	2247602	2384397	2474725	2306039	2287268	2202098	2489731	2410307	2613350
%	(36.0)	(32.6)	(34.5)	(34.0)	(33.5)	(30.7)	(32.2)	(31.3)	(32.6)	(31.8)	(33.9)
Industry	1490795	1491408	1459194	1611493	1781447	1928014	1889953	1873857	2004880	1989655	1894279
%	(23.6)	(23.9)	(22.4)	(23.0)	(24.1)	(25.6)	(26.6)	(26.6)	(26.2)	(26.2)	(24.6)
Services	2545299	2710837	2812619	3016866	3137857	3283954	2928101	2965919	3153693	3181201	3202155
%	(40.3)	(43.5)	(43.1)	(43.0)	(42.4)	(43.7)	(41.2)	(42.1)	(41.2)	(42.0)	(41.5)
<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
0 •	7.2	4.3	5.6	7.5	5.2	4.7	6.7	6.5	7.2	4.0	5.4
1 - 9	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.5	2.2	1.8	2.1
10 - 39	32.7	28.2	32.0	32.6	28.7	27.6	28.6	28.3	28.9	30.7	29.0
40+	58.2	66.1	60.9	58.1	64.5	66.2	62.8	63.7	61.7	63.6	63.5

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

*Excluding Northern province

***All the districts are included

** Excluding Mullativu & Kilinochchi districts

Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces