The economically active population or the labour force comprises all persons of working age who are either "employed" or "unemployed" during the reference period (The week before the survey period).

\[ \text{Labour force} = \text{Employed} + \text{Unemployed} \]

In the past, information on labour force characteristics, employment and unemployment etc. were collected through labour force and socio-economic surveys conducted at five year time intervals. However, the employment and unemployment data are required at very short intervals to monitor the programmes implemented in the employment generating policies of the government. Therefore, to satisfy this need, the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) designed a labour force survey on a quarterly basis, to measure the levels and trends of employment, unemployment and labour force in Sri Lanka on a continuous basis. Hence, the survey was commenced from the first quarter of 1990 and is being continued by the DCS.

This bulletin is based on an annual sample of 25,000 housing units covering all districts of the country. In 2014 the survey was conducted from January to December.

1. LABOUR FORCE: HIGHLIGHTS - 2014

Working Age Population

All persons above specific age limit (15 years and above) of either gender are identified as working age population. This population consists with two groups namely economically active & inactive.

Economically Active Population (Labour Force)

The economically active population or the labour force comprises all persons of working age who are either "employed" or "unemployed" during the reference period (The week before the survey period).

Labour force = Employed + Unemployed

Table 1.1: Labour Force participation rate by gender - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Economically active population (No.)</th>
<th>Labour Force Participation rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,804,548</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5,728,383</td>
<td>74.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3,076,165</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2: Distribution of economically active / inactive population by gender - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Economically active population</th>
<th>Economically inactive population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,804,548</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5,728,383</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3,076,165</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported labour force participation rate is 53.3 in 2014 (Table 1.1). Given the estimated counts in Table 1.2 in 2014, estimated economically active population is around 8.8 million. About 5.7 million (65.1%) of economically active population are males. Economically inactive population accounts for about 7.7 million and of that majority are females (74.8%).
2. EMPLOYMENT: HIGHLIGHTS - 2014

Table 2.1: Employment statistics by gender - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Statistic</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed population</td>
<td>8,423,994</td>
<td>5,548,131</td>
<td>2,875,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Force</td>
<td>8,804,548</td>
<td>5,728,383</td>
<td>3,076,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment rate</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employed: During the reference period, persons, who worked as paid employees, employers, own account workers or contributing family workers are said to be employed.

This also includes persons with a job but not at work during the reference period.

Table 2.2: Percentage distribution of employed population by major industry group - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector/Province</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Major Industry Group</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agri.</td>
<td>Ind.</td>
<td>Serv.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>68.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Estate</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>40.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>46.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>North Western</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uva</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabaragamuwa</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agri. - Agriculture sector,  
Ind. - Industries sector,  
Serv. - Service sector

Table 2.3: Percentage distribution of employed population by employment status & gender - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own account worker</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing family worker</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>78.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.1: Percentage distribution of employment status by gender – 2014
3. UNEMPLOYMENT: HIGHLIGHTS - 2014

Table 3.1: Unemployment rates by age groups and gender - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group (Years)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 24</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 29</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 40</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The unemployed population, reported in 2014 is 380,554. Survey reports that overall unemployment for males and female are 3.1 percent & 6.5 percent respectively. Among all age groups, unemployment rates of females are higher than those of males. Youth unemployment (age 15 – 24) rates are higher for both sexes, compared to other age groups (Table 3.1).

Table 3.2: Unemployment Rates by level of education & gender – 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade10 &amp; below</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.C.E. (O/L)</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.C.E. (A/L) &amp; above</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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</table>

According to the table 3.2, the unemployment rate among the educated group (G.C.E(A/L) and above) is reported as 8.1 percent. It is 5.3 percent and 11.0 percent for male and female respectively.

Table 3.3 and Table 3.4 show the distribution of unemployment by sector, province & district respectively. Highest unemployment is reported from Southern Province and Sabaragamuwa province. Higher female unemployment rates are reported from Eastern & Northern provinces. Highest unemployment is reported from Kegalle District.

Table 3.3: Unemployment rates by gender, sector and province - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector / Province</th>
<th>Unemployment rate (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estate</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Western</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uva</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabaragamuwa</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV (Coefficient of variation) values are high.

Table 3.4: Unemployment rates by district - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Unemp. rate (%)</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Unemp. rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colombo</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Kilinochchi</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gampaha</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Batticaloa</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalutara</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Ampara</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Trincomalee</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matale</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuwara eliya</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Puttalam</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galle</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Anuradapura</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matara</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>Polonnaruwa</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hambantota</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Badulla</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaffna</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Monaragala</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannar</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Rathnapura</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vavunia</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Kegalle</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mullativu</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV (Coefficient of variation) values are high.

Unemployed: Persons available and/or looking for work, and who did not work and taken steps to find a job during last four weeks and ready to accept a job given a work opportunity within next two weeks are said to be unemployed.
### Selected Labour Force Indicators...

#### Labour force participation rate

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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#### Unemployment Rate

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Gender</td>
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<td>5.4</td>
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<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
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<td>11.6</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.3</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
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<td>5.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>By Gender</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,628,683</td>
<td>7,579,835</td>
<td>7,696,142</td>
<td>7,883,817</td>
<td>7,791,831</td>
<td>8,070,542</td>
<td>8,186,305</td>
<td>8,118,362</td>
<td>8,417,674</td>
<td>8,423,994</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,474,446</td>
<td>2,459,824</td>
<td>2,512,546</td>
<td>2,593,048</td>
<td>2,412,066</td>
<td>2,390,884</td>
<td>2,699,244</td>
<td>2,513,673</td>
<td>2,504,310</td>
<td>2,399,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
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<td>2,002,805</td>
<td>1,904,722</td>
<td>1,864,538</td>
<td>1,914,671</td>
<td>2,042,262</td>
<td>2,125,376</td>
<td>1,976,711</td>
<td>2,117,286</td>
<td>2,202,159</td>
<td>2,229,810</td>
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<tr>
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<td>42.4</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>42.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>By no. of hours worked per week (percentage)</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>29.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>40 &amp; above</td>
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<td>61.8</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>68.6</td>
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<td>63.1</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**Including Eastern province but Excluding Northern province

Note: Age 15 years and over population is considered as working age population

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Web address: www.statistics.gov.lk

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