



Sri Lanka Labour Force Statistics Quarterly Bulletin

Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey 1st Quarter - 2017

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Highlights

- Labour force participation rate is 54.7% for the First Quarter of 2017.
- Unemployment rate for the survey period is 4.1%.

The Estimated working age household population (age 15 years and above) for the 1st quarter 2017 is about 15.7 million. This shows an increase of 0.3 million compared to 1st quarter 2016. This may be due to the increase in net migration (the highest over the past 10 years) and internal movements such as resettlement of population from institutions to households. As a result of increase in household population labour force too has increased by about 260,000 during this period.

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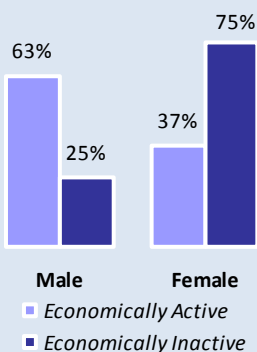


Figure 1 : Distribution of Economically active/Inactive population-

Department of Census and Statistics

Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs

Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey (LFS) is designed to measure the levels and trends of employment, unemployment and labour force in Sri Lanka. LFS has been conducted quarterly, since the first quarter of 1990.

This bulletin contains labour force, employment and unemployment statistics for the first quarter 2017 based on the data collected in January, February and March covering the whole country.

Labour Force

(Economically Active Population)

Table 1 : Economically active population by gender and sector – First Quarter 2017

Sector	Economically active population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Sri Lanka	8,583,082	100.0	5,381,244	62.7	3,201,838	37.3
Urban	1,417,031	100.0	914,609	64.5	502,423	35.5
Rural	6,732,711	100.0	4,241,120	63.0	2,491,591	37.0
Estate	433,340	100.0	225,516	52.0	207,824	48.0

Table 2 : Economically inactive population by gender and sector – First Quarter 2017

Sector	Economically inactive population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Sri Lanka	7,101,029	100.0	1,785,065	25.1	5,315,964	74.9
Urban	1,334,149	100.0	350,758	26.3	983,391	73.7
Rural	5,532,069	100.0	1,359,572	24.6	4,172,497	75.4
Estate	234,810	100.0	74,736	31.8	160,075	68.2

Table 3 : LFPR by gender and year

Year	Total	Male	Female
2011	52.9	74.0	34.3
2012	52.5	74.9	32.9
2013	53.7	74.9	35.4
2014	53.2	74.6	34.6
2015	53.8	74.7	35.9
2016	54.1	75.1	36.0
2014 Q1	53.4	74.4	35.3
2015 Q1	53.5	73.8	36.3
2016 Q1	54.1	75.5	36.3
2017 Q1	54.7	75.1	37.6

Table 3 provides the information on LFPRs since year 2011. Referring the Table 3, It is important to note that, male participation to the labour force is always higher than that of females.

Considering the Table 4, the distribution of LFPR by age group and by gender depicts high male participation compared to female in all age groups. The highest participation rate for male is reported from age group 35–39 years (96.0%), while that for female is reported from 45–49 age group (54.5%).

Labour Force

This is the currently economically active population. Which is the number of persons (age 15 years & above) who are employed or unemployed during the reference week.

Labour force participation rate (LFPR)

Labour force population expressed as a percentage of the population, age 15 years and over.

According to the Table 1, the estimated economically active population is about 8.6 million in the first quarter 2017. Of which 62.7 percent are males and 37.3 percent are females. Out of the economically inactive population 25.1 percent are males and 74.9 percent are females (Table 2).

Table 4 : LFPR by age group and gender - First Quarter 2017

Age group (Years)	Total	Male	Female
Sri Lanka	54.7	75.1	37.6
15 - 19	14.4	19.5	9.6
20 - 24	57.9	74.3	43.6
25 - 29	65.7	94.4	42.3
30 - 34	69.6	95.7	48.6
35 - 39	69.2	96.0	48.2
40 - 44	72.1	95.7	52.0
45 - 49	72.1	93.3	54.5
50 - 54	70.0	92.5	48.8
55 - 59	62.2	82.7	44.0
60+	32.9	52.1	17.7

Definition of 'Employed'

Persons, who worked at least one hour during the reference period, 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.

Reference Period :

Previous week of the survey week

The Employment Rate

The proportion of employed population to the total labour force.

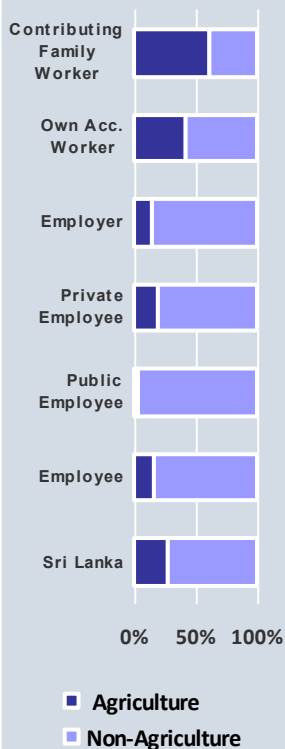


Figure 2 : Distribution of employed population by employment status and Agriculture/Non-Agriculture sector - First quarter 2017

Employment ...

Table 5 : Distribution of Employed population by main industry
(First Quarter 2016 – First quarter 2017)

Quarter	Sri Lanka	Major Industry Group		
		Agriculture	Industries	Services
2016 Q1 (No.)	7,968,931	2,274,722	2,068,453	3,625,756
(%)	100.0	28.5	26.0	45.5
2016 Q2 (No.)	7,815,280	1,961,818	2,121,365	3,732,097
(%)	100.0	25.1	27.1	47.8
2016 Q3 (No.)	7,999,821	2,168,982	2,144,808	3,686,032
(%)	100.0	27.1	26.8	46.1
2016 Q4 (No.)	8,006,700	2,209,976	2,055,386	3,741,339
(%)	100.0	27.6	25.7	46.7
2017 Q1 (No.)	8,230,207	2,221,761	2,306,398	3,702,049
(%)	100.0	27.0	28.0	45.0

Table 5 shows the percentage distribution of employed population by main industry from first quarter 2016 to first quarter 2017. During first quarter of 2017, the total number of employed persons in Sri Lanka is estimated as about 8.2 million. Of which, about 45.0 percent engaged in Service sector, 28.0 percent in Industries sector and 27.0 percent in Agriculture sector.

Table 6 : Distribution of employed population by employment status in Agriculture and Non-Agriculture sectors – First quarter 2017

Employment Status	Sri Lanka		Sector			
			Agriculture		Non-Agriculture	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sri Lanka	8,230,207	100.0	2,221,761	27.0	6,008,446	73.0
Employee	4,787,548	100.0	741,325	15.5	4,046,224	84.5
Public	1,215,187	100.0	30,106	2.5	1,185,081	97.5
Private	3,572,361	100.0	711,219	19.9	2,861,143	80.1
Employer	258,117	100.0	36,785	14.3	221,332	85.7
Own Account Worker	2,504,860	100.0	1,031,249	41.2	1,473,611	58.8
Contributing Family Worker	679,682	100.0	412,403	60.7	267,279	39.3

Table 7 : Percentage distribution of Employed population by main industry & gender – First quarter 2017

Major Industry Group	Sri Lanka	Gender	
		Male	Female
Sri Lanka	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	27.0	25.1	30.4
Industry	28.0	28.5	27.2
Services	45.0	46.4	42.5

Main industry categories and sub sectors

Agriculture

1. Agriculture Forestry and Fishery (A)

Industries

1. Mining & Quarrying (B)

2. Manufacturing (C)

3. Construction, Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply, Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (D, E,F)

Services

1. Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles (G)

2. Transportation and storage (H)

3. Accommodation and food services activities (I)

4. Information and communication (J)

5. Financial and insurance activities (K)

6. Professional, scientific and technical activities (M)

7. Administrative and support service activities (N)

8. Public administration and defense compulsory social security (O)

9. Education (P)

10. Human health and social work activities (Q)

11. Other service activities (S)

12. Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods and services - producing activities of households for own use (T)

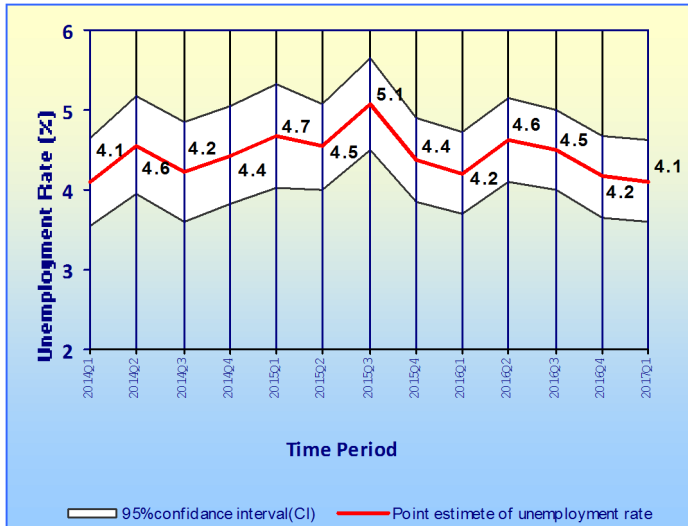
13. Real estate activities (L) Arts, entertainment and recreation (R) Activities of extra territorial organizations & bodies (U)

As could be seen from the Figure 2 & Table 6 contributing family workers are highly concentrated in Agriculture sector.

Table 7 depicts the percentage distribution of male and female employed population by main industries. Highest employment share is in service sector and this is true for both male & female, while the lowest shares are for agriculture sector. Among employed females 30.4 percent is in agriculture sector while this share is 25.1 percent for males.

Unemployment ...

Figure 3: Unemployment rates and its 95% confidence intervals (2014Q1 - 2017Q1)



¹Sampling error : When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, estimates differ from the true values of population they represent. This difference, or sampling error, occurs by chance, and its variability is measured by the sampling error of the estimate.

For more details, please refer the explanatory note given under the labour force link in the DCS website; www.statistics.gov.lk

Table 8: Unemployment rate by age group and gender – First quarter 2017

Age group (Years)	Sri Lanka	Gender	
		Male	Female
Sri Lanka	4.1	2.7	6.5
15–24	18.5	15.6	23.1
25–29	8.0	3.9	15.5
Over 30	1.6	0.8	2.9

These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV

As can be seen from Table 8, overall unemployment rate reported for female is 6.5 percent and it is 2.7 percent for male. Youth unemployment rate (age 15 – 24 years) corresponding to the first quarter 2017 is 18.5 percent and that reports the highest unemployment rate among all other age groups. Further rates for both males and females are 15.6 and 23.1 percent respectively for age group 15–24.

The survey results further revealed that the unemployment among females is higher than that of males, in all age groups. Youth and female unemployment contribute more to the overall unemployment of the country.

The highest unemployment rate is reported from the G.C.E (A/L) and above group which is about 7.8 percent. Corresponding percentages are 4.9 percent and 10.8 percent for males and females respectively. Female unemployment rates are higher than those of males in all levels of education.

Table 9: Unemployment rate by level of education – First quarter 2017

Level of Education	Unemployment Rate (%)		
	Sri Lanka	Male	Female
Sri Lanka	4.1	2.7	6.5
Below GCE O/L	2.4	1.7	3.9
GCE O/L	5.7	4.7	7.5
GCE A/L & above	7.8	4.9	10.8

This further shows that the problem of unemployment is more acute in the case of educated females than educated males, which was observed consistently over the results of previous survey rounds as well.

Definition of '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.

The Unemployment Rate

The proportion of unemployed population to the total labour force.

The number of unemployed persons is estimated as 352,875 during the first quarter 2017. The unemployment rate for the first quarter 2017 is 4.1 percent.

As shown in Figure 3, it is very important to note that, when sampling error¹ is considered there are no statistically significant drops/increases of unemployment rates reported in different time periods starting from First quarter 2014 to First quarter 2017.

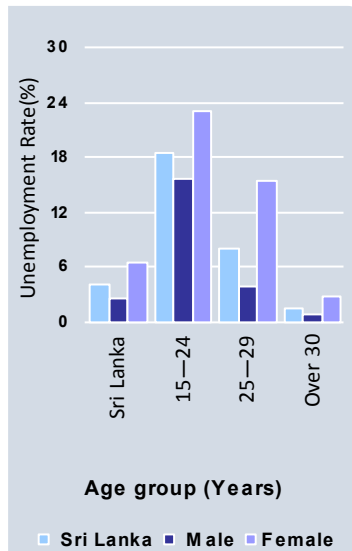


Figure 3: Unemployment rate by age group and gender – First quarter 2017

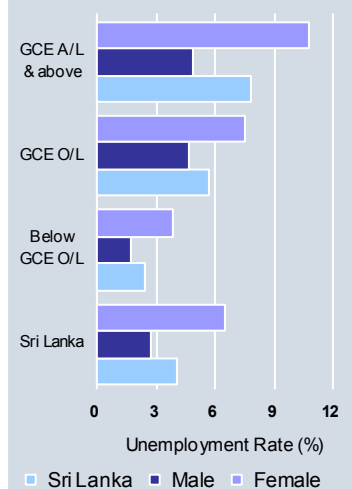


Figure 4: Unemployment rate by level of education and gender – First quarter 2017



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Vision of the DCS

"To be the leader in the region in producing timely statistical information to achieve the country's development goals."

Mission of the DCS

"Making contribution in the socioeconomic development of the country by providing accurate timely statistics, more Effectively by means of new technology, and utilizing the services of dedicated staff under a strategic leadership to become a prosperous nation in the globalized environment."

Selected Labour Force Indicators ...

Indicator	Year							
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2015Q1	2016Q1	2017Q1
Labour force participation rate								
By Gender								
Total	52.5	53.7	53.2	53.8	53.8	53.5	54.1	54.7
Male	74.9	74.9	74.6	74.7	75.1	73.8	75.5	75.1
Female	32.9	35.4	34.6	35.9	35.9	36.3	36.3	37.6
By residential sector								
Total	52.5	53.7	53.2	53.8	53.8	53.5	54.1	54.7
Urban	48.3	47.7	48.7	48.6	49.8	46.3	48.5	51.5
Rural	53.4	54.9	54.1	54.8	54.6	54.9	55.2	55.4
Unemployment Rate								
By Gender								
Total	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.7	4.4	4.7	4.2	4.1
Male	2.8	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.8	3.1	2.7
Female	6.3	6.6	6.5	7.6	7.0	7.9	6.1	6.5
By selected age Group (Year)								
20 – 29	11.3	13.1	13.6	14.2	14.2	14.0	14.2	12.5
20 – 24	16.7	19.3	19.9	19.7	19.9	20.4	19.7	17.4
25 – 29	6.6	7.6	8.2	9.4	9.2	8.6	9.4	8.0
By selected educational level								
GCE A/L and above								
Total	7.6	8.7	8.2	9.2	8.3	10.1	7.7	7.8
Male	4.6	5.7	5.4	4.7	4.7	5.3	5.9	4.9
Female	10.8	11.8	11.1	13.5	11.9	14.3	9.5	10.8
Employed population								
By Gender								
Total	7,488,704	7,681,279	7,700,489	7,830,976	7,947,683	7,800,070	7,968,931	8,230,207
Male	5,046,057	5,024,340	5,075,426	5,097,798	5,149,948	5,035,185	5,102,435	5,235,046
Female	2,442,647	2,656,938	2,625,064	2,733,178	2,797,735	2,764,885	2,866,496	2,995,161
By industry (Percentage)								
Total	7,488,704	7,681,279	7,700,489	7,830,976	7,947,683	7,800,070	7,968,931	8,230,207
%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	2,333,342	2,321,215	2,222,859	2,244,547	2,153,874	2,333,773	2,274,722	2,221,761
%	31.2	30.2	28.9	28.7	27.1	29.9	28.5	27.0
Industry	1,940,615	1,996,730	2,027,426	2,018,171	2,097,503	1,996,180	2,068,453	2,306,398
%	25.9	26	26.3	25.8	26.4	25.6	26.0	28.0
Services	3,214,746	3,363,334	3,450,205	3,568,259	3,696,306	3,470,118	3,625,756	3,702,049
%	42.9	43.8	44.8	45.6	46.5	44.5	45.5	45.0
By no. of hours worked per week (percentage)								
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0#	4.5	5.2	5.2	5.5	4.4	2.0	3.4	3.5
1 – 9	1.1	1.8	1.3	1.7	1.5	1.1	1.5	1.6
10 – 39	26.1	27.5	27.6	27.2	26.2	25.5	27.3	26.7
40 & above	68.3	65.5	65.9	65.7	67.9	71.5	67.7	68.1

has a job but not at work during the reference week

Note : Working age population considered as (age 15 & over population)