



# Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey

## Annual Bulletin - 2012

Department of Census and Statistics  
Ministry of Finance and Planning

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 19,420 housing units covering all districts of the country. In 2012 the survey was conducted from April till December for 9 months period, due to Census of Population & Housing 2011 the survey was not conducted during first quarter 2012.

### 1. LABOUR FORCE: HIGHLIGHTS - 2012

#### Economically Active Population (Labour Force)

All persons above a specific age (10 years and above) of either gender who furnish the supply of labour for the production of economic goods and services during a specified time (reference period; previous week of the survey).

**Labour force = Employed + Unemployed**

#### Distribution of Economically Active population

In 2012, estimated economically active population is around 8.5 million. About 5.6 million (67%) of economically active population are males (Table 1.1). Economically inactive population accounts for about 9.4 million and of that majority are females (70%).

Table 1.1: Distribution of economically active / inactive population by gender - 2012

Gender	Economically active population		Economically inactive population	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Total</b>	8,464,706	100.0	9,450,677	100.0
Male	5,636,947	66.6	2,806,553	29.7
Female	2,827,759	33.4	6,644,123	70.3

Table 1.2: Percentage distribution of economically active population by gender & district - 2012

District	Economically active population (%)		
	Total	Male	Female
<b>Total</b>	100.0	66.6	33.4
Colombo	100.0	66.6	33.4
Gampaha	100.0	68.0	32.0
Kalutara	100.0	68.9	31.1
Kandy	100.0	63.3	36.7
Matale	100.0	65.5	34.5
Nuwara Eliya	100.0	58.0	42.0
Galle	100.0	66.7	33.3
Matara	100.0	66.4	33.6
Hambantota	100.0	67.4	32.6
Jaffna	100.0	71.4	28.6
Mannar	100.0	82.3	17.7
Vavunia	100.0	68.7	31.3
Mullativu	100.0	74.9	25.1
Kilinochchi	100.0	77.8	22.2
Batticaloa	100.0	75.6	24.4
Ampara	100.0	77.8	22.2
Trincomalee	100.0	75.4	24.6
Kurunegala	100.0	65.5	34.5
Puttalam	100.0	71.4	28.6
Anuradhapura	100.0	60.1	39.9
Polonnaruwa	100.0	69.6	30.4
Badulla	100.0	59.9	40.1
Moneragala	100.0	65.7	34.3
Ratnapura	100.0	65.2	34.8
Kegalle	100.0	64.8	35.2

## 2. EMPLOYMENT: HIGHLIGHTS - 2012

Table 2.1 : Employment statistic by gender - 2012

Employment Statistic	Sri Lanka		Female
		Male	
Labour Force	8,464,706	5,636,947	2,827,759
Employed population	8,128,704	5,477,089	2,651,615
Employment rate	96.0	97.2	93.8

**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 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 - 2012

Sector/Province	Total	Major Industry Group		
		Agri.	Ind.	Serv.
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	100.0	31.0	26.1	42.9
Urban	100.0	6.2	27.6	66.2
Rural	100.0	33.5	26.7	39.7
Estate	100.0	73.7	10.9	15.4
<b>Province</b>				
Western	100.0	8.3	34.1	57.6
Central	100.0	40.5	20.2	39.3
Southern	100.0	37.9	26.5	35.6
Northern	100.0	31.1	23.0	45.9
Eastern	100.0	35.1	19.4	45.5
North Western	100.0	31.4	30.5	38.1
North Central	100.0	53.6	14.6	31.8
Uva	100.0	58.1	11.5	30.4
Sabaragamuwa	100.0	38.4	27.3	34.3

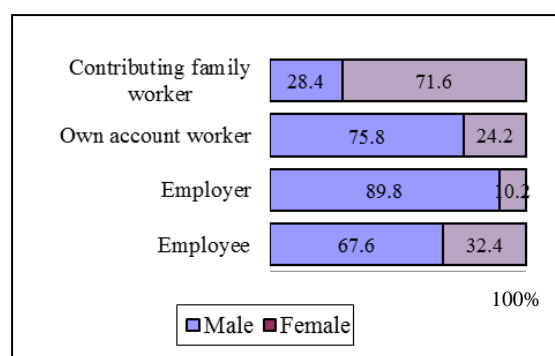
Agri. - Agriculture sector,  
Ind. - Industries sector,  
Serv. - Service sector

District	Total	Major Industry Group		
		Agri.	Ind.	Serv.
Colombo	100.0	3.5	30.1	66.4
Gampaha	100.0	6.7	40.8	52.5
Kalutara	100.0	19.3	29.2	51.6
Kandy	100.0	22.5	27.0	50.5
Matale	100.0	43.0	17.9	39.1
Nuwara eliya	100.0	67.4	10.8	21.8
Galle	100.0	34.6	30.0	35.4
Matara	100.0	35.4	26.1	38.6
Hambantota	100.0	45.6	22.3	32.1
Batticaloa	100.0	26.2	25.2	48.6
Ampara	100.0	39.0	15.4	45.6
Trincomalee	100.0	30.2	24.2	45.7
Jaffna	100.0	55.4	14.5	30.0
Mannar	100.0	37.9	21.6	40.5
Vavunia	100.0	34.0	22.4	43.6
Mulativu	100.0	36.8	19.7	43.5
Kilinochchi	100.0	33.7	15.5	50.8
Kurunegala	100.0	32.6	30.9	36.6
Puttalama	100.0	28.9	29.7	41.5
Anuradapura	100.0	54.1	12.8	33.1
Polonnaruwa	100.0	52.6	18.4	29.0
Badulla	100.0	58.7	11.6	29.6
Monaragala	100.0	57.0	11.2	31.7
Rathnapura	100.0	45.4	25.8	28.8
Kegalle	100.0	28.0	29.5	42.5

Table 2.3: Percentage distribution of employed population by employment status & gender - 2012

Employment status	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employee	56.4	56.6	56.1
Employer	2.8	3.8	0.9
Own account worker	31.9	35.9	23.6
Contributing family worker	8.9	3.7	19.4

Figure 2.1: Percentage distribution of employment status by gender - 2012



### 3. UNEMPLOYMENT: HIGHLIGHTS - 2012

**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.

Table 3.1: Unemployment rates by age groups and gender - 2012

Age group (Years)	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
<b>Total</b>	4.0	2.8	6.2
15 - 24	17.3	14.0	23.5
25 - 29	6.6	4.3	11.4
30-39	2.5	1.4	4.7
Over 40	0.8	0.5	1.5

Table 3.1 Survey reports that overall unemployment for males and female are 2.8 percent & 6.2 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 group.

Table 3.2: Unemployment Rates by level of education & gender – 2012

Level of Education	Total	Gender	
		Male	Female
<b>Total</b>	4.0	2.8	6.2
Grade10 & below	2.4	2.0	3.5
G.C.E. (O/L)	6.0	4.7	8.8
G.C.E. (A/L) & above	7.5	4.5	10.8

According to the table 3.2, the unemployment rate among the educated group (G.C.E(A/L) and above) is reported as 7.5 percent. It is 4.5 percent and 10.8 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 Northern Province and Eastern province is second place.

Table 3.3: Unemployment rates by gender for each sector and province - 2012

Sector / Province / District	Unemployment rate (%)		
	Total	Male	Female
<b>Sri Lanka Sector</b>	4.0	2.8	6.2
Urban	3.7	2.5	6.1
Rural	4.1	2.9	6.5
Estate	3.3	3.4	3.0
<b>Province</b>			
Western	3.5	3.0	4.3
Central	4.7	3.1	7.3
Southern	4.8	3.5	7.4
Northern	5.2	2.3	13.0
Eastern	4.9	3.1	10.9
North Western	3.8	2.5	6.7
North Central	3.4	2.1	5.8
Uva	3.0	1.9	4.8
Sabaragamuwa	3.8	2.8	5.7

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 - 2012

District	Unemp. rate (%)	District	Unemp. rate (%)
Colombo	2.9	Kilinochchi	7.2
Gampaha	3.7	Batticaloa	5.1
Kalutara	4.0	Ampara	5.2
Kandy	7.2	Trincomalee	4.4
Matale	2.8	Kurunegala	4.4
Nuwara eliya	1.8	Puttalama	2.6
Galle	2.3	Anuradapura	3.0
Matara	7.0	Polonnaruwa	4.3
Hambantota	5.3	Badulla	3.7
Jaffna	5.1	Monaragala	1.8
Mannar	5.1	Rathnapura	4.4
Vavunia	4.0	Kegalle	2.9
Mullativu	6.8		

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

## Selected Labour Force Indicators ( 2001 - 2012)

	Year											
	2001 <sup>1</sup>	2002 <sup>1</sup>	2003 <sup>2</sup>	2004 <sup>3</sup>	2005 <sup>4</sup>	2006 <sup>1</sup>	2007 <sup>1</sup>	2008 <sup>2</sup>	2009 <sup>2</sup>	2010 <sup>2</sup>	2011 <sup>4</sup>	2012 <sup>4</sup>
<b>Labour force participation rate</b>												
<b>by gender</b>												
<b>Both gender</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>47.2</b>
Male	66.2	67.9	67.2	66.7	67.1	68.1	67.8	67.8	66.6	67.1	66.2	66.8
Female	31.9	33.6	31.4	31.5	30.9	35.7	33.4	33.2	32.8	31.2	31.2	29.9
<b>by residential sector</b>												
<b>Total</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>47.2</b>
Urban	44.2	46.0	44.4	44.9	45.5	45.3	45.0	45.9	43.5	42.0	43.4	43.7
Rural	49.6	50.9	49.6	49.2	48.7	52.1	50.4	50.0	49.4	49.0	48.4	48.0
<b>Unemployment rate</b>												
<b>by gender</b>												
<b>Both gender</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.0</b>
Male	6.2	6.6	6.0	6.0	5.5	4.7	4.3	3.7	4.3	3.5	2.7	2.8
Female	11.5	12.9	13.2	12.8	11.9	9.7	9.0	8.4	8.6	7.7	7.0	6.2
<b>by selected age groups (year)</b>												
<b>20 - 29</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>11.3</b>
20 - 24	24.4	27.0	26.4	25.9	24.6	21.0	21.1	18.1	21.4	19.1	17.7	16.8
25 - 29	11.3	11.6	11.4	11.4	9.5	11.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	9.2	7.6	6.6
<b>by selected educational levels</b>												
G.C.E.(A/L) & above												
<b>Both gender</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>7.5</b>
Male	10.1	10.8	10.4	10.5	8.9	6.9	6.6	6.0	7.0	7.9	5.4	4.5
Female	21.5	23.0	23.3	23.8	19.1	16.8	17.5	15.3	15.5	15.8	13.1	10.8
<b>Employed population</b>												
<b>by gender</b>												
<b>Both gender</b>	<b>6,235,588</b>	<b>6,519,415</b>	<b>7,012,755</b>	<b>7,440,226</b>	<b>7,518,007</b>	<b>7,105,322</b>	<b>7,041,874</b>	<b>7,648,305</b>	<b>7,602,414</b>	<b>7,706,593</b>	<b>8,196,927</b>	<b>8,128,704</b>
Male	4,248,877	4,395,164	4,833,483	5,087,861	5,134,765	4,610,643	4,653,067	5,033,449	4,963,176	5,131,986	5,460,328	5,477,089
Female	1,986,711	2,124,250	2,179,272	2,352,365	2,383,241	2,494,679	2,388,807	2,614,856	2,639,238	2,574,608	2,736,599	2,651,615
<b>by industry (percentage)</b>												
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,235,588</b>	<b>6,519,415</b>	<b>7,012,755</b>	<b>7,394,029</b>	<b>7,518,007</b>	<b>7,105,322</b>	<b>7,041,874</b>	<b>7,648,305</b>	<b>7,602,414</b>	<b>7,706,593</b>	<b>8,196,927</b>	<b>8,128,704</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Agriculture	2,033,343	2,247,602	2,384,397	2,474,725	2,306,039	2,287,268	2,202,098	2,489,731	2,475,921	2,519,905	2,708,020	2,519,271
%	32.6	34.5	34.0	33.5	30.7	32.2	31.3	32.6	32.6	32.7	33.0	31.0
Industry	1,491,408	1,459,194	1,611,493	1,781,447	1,928,014	1,889,953	1,873,857	2,004,880	1,910,318	1,866,733	1,977,063	2,119,044
%	23.9	22.4	23.0	24.1	25.6	26.6	26.6	26.2	25.1	24.2	24.1	26.1
Services	2,710,837	2,812,619	3,016,866	3,137,857	3,283,954	2,928,101	2,965,919	3,153,693	3,216,175	3,319,955	3,511,844	3,490,388
%	43.5	43.1	43.0	42.4	43.7	41.2	42.1	41.2	42.3	43.1	42.8	42.9
<b>by no. of hours worked per week (percentage)</b>												
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
0 •	4.3	5.6	7.5	5.2	4.7	6.7	6.5	7.2	7.9	6.0	5.2	4.6
1 - 9	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.9	1.5	2.2	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.2
10 - 39	28.2	32.0	32.6	28.7	27.6	28.6	28.3	28.9	28.8	28.5	30.0	26.1
40+	66.1	60.9	58.1	64.5	66.2	62.8	63.7	61.7	61.0	63.9	63.0	68.2

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

<sup>1</sup> Excluding Northern & Eastern provinces

<sup>3</sup> Excluding Mullativu & Kilinochchi districts

<sup>2</sup> Excluding Northern provinces

<sup>4</sup> All the districts are included