

# Bulletin of Labour Force Statistics of Sri Lanka

First Quarter 2004



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**Introduction:** Arrangements were made to conduct the Sri Lanka Labor Force Survey also in the districts under Northern province, commencing from the first quarter 2004. However there were some constraints which compelled the Department of Census & Statistics to restrict survey operations only to Jaffna and Mannar districts in the first quarter 2004. (Vavuniya, Mullativu and Killinochchi districts were not covered, in the Northern province) It is hoped that these districts also could be covered in future quarters of 2004, so that all the districts are included in the future national labor force estimates. The national estimates given for the first quarter 2004 exclude Vavuniya, Mullativu & Killinochchi districts.

## 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.

Total estimated number in labour force is 7986926 in the first quarter 2004 and of this number 5369218 are males and 2617704 females.

**Table 1: Labour force participation rate by sex & age group – first quarter 2004**

Sex	Total	Age group				
		15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 39	40 +
Total	49.0	24.6	65.9	66.5	68.3	52.2
Male	67.4	28.7	83.0	96.0	95.9	75.5
Female	31.4	20.5	47.5	38.3	44.3	30.8

**Table 2: labour force participation rate by sex**

Year	Labour force participation rate		
	Total	Male	Female
1992	48.2	64.3	31.1
1993	49.1	65.3	33.1
1994	48.7	65.4	32.0
1995	47.9	64.4	31.7
1996	48.7	65.9	31.6
1997	48.7	65.7	32.0
1998	51.7	67.5	36.4
1999	50.7	67.7	34.1
2000	50.3	67.2	33.9
2001	48.8	66.2	31.9
2002	51.7	67.9	35.9
2003*	48.9	67.2	31.4
2004Q1**	49.0	67.4	31.4

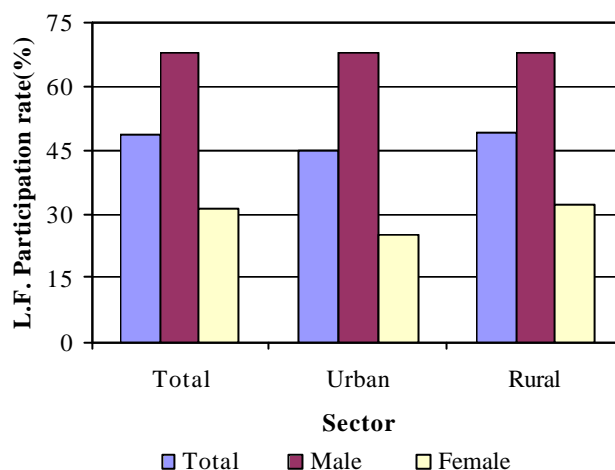
\* Excluding Northern province

\*\* Excluding Vavunia, Mullativu and Killinochchi districts

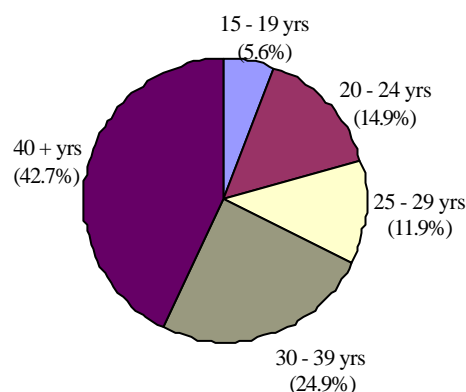
(Before 2003, estimates excluded both Northern & Eastern provinces)

A marked change in Labour Force Participation rate cannot be observed over the years.

**Figure 1: Labour force participation rate by sex & sector - first quarter 2004**



**Figure 2 : Percentage distribution of labor force by age group – first quarter 2004**



About 43 percent of labor force is reported in the age 40 yrs & above age group

Labour force participation rate in rural sector is nearly 50 percent while it is only 45 percent in the urban sector.

## Unemployment Rate

Unemployment Rate : The number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force

**Table 3: Unemployment rate by age group, sex & sector - first quarter 2004**

Age & Sector	Total	Age group(yrs)				
		15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 39	40 +
<b>Both sexes</b>						
Total	8.1	31.7	23.2	11.3	3.8	1.5
Male	6.2	27.7	20.1	7.1	1.9	1.3
Female	12.2	37.5	28.9	21.3	7.2	2.0
<b>Urban</b>						
Total	6.9	20.4	20.4	10.9	2.0	1.6
Male	4.5	16.5	12.3	7.7	1.6	1.7
Female	12.6	26.3	33.1	21.7	5.5	1.5
<b>Rural</b>						
Total	8.3	33.1	23.5	11.3	3.9	1.5
Male	6.4	29.1	21.1	7.0	1.9	1.2
Female	12.2	37.5	28.9	21.3	7.2	2.2

**Figure 3: Unemployment rate by age & sector – first quarter 2004**

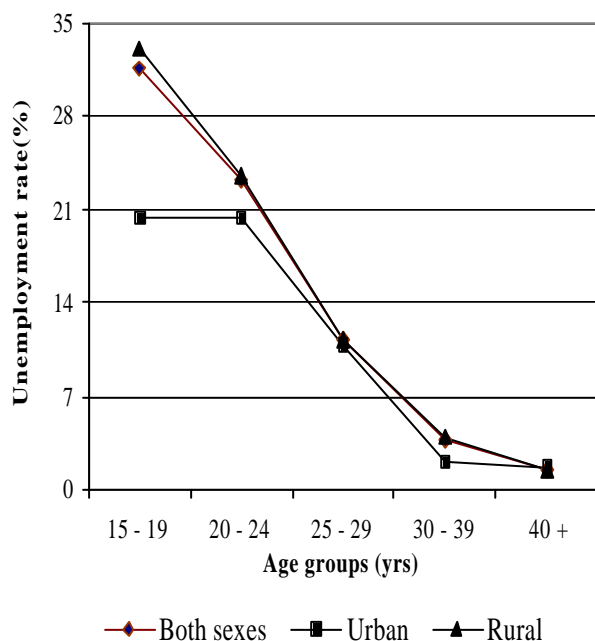


Table 3 shows that the higher rates of unemployment by age group and residential sector is reported by the females of 15 – 19 yrs age group in rural sector and the females in 20 – 24 yrs age group in urban sector respectively. At national level, persons in 15 – 19 yrs age group are most affected segment in the population by the employment problem.

**Table 4: Trend of unemployment rate over time by sex**

Year	Sex		
	Total	Male	Female
1992	14.6	10.7	22.2
1993	13.8	9.7	21.7
1994	13.1	9.7	20.1
1995	12.3	9.0	18.7
1996	11.3	8.2	17.7
1997	10.5	7.7	16.1
1998	9.2	6.5	14.0
1999	8.9	6.7	13.0
2000	7.6	5.8	11.1
2001	7.9	6.2	11.5
2002	8.8	6.6	12.9
2003 *	8.4	6.0	13.2
2004 Q1**	8.1	6.2	12.2

\* Excluding Northern province

\*\* Excluding Vavunia, Mulathivu, and Kilinochchi districts

(Before 2003, estimates excluded both Northern & Eastern provinces)

Overall unemployment rate is 8.1 percent in the first quarter 2004.

The estimated rate in the first quarter 2004 is relatively less than the 2003 annual rate.

**Table 5: Unemployment rate by level of education & sex – first quarter 2004**

Sex	Total	Level of education			
		Below Gr. 5	Gr. 5 - 9	G.C.E.(O/L)	G.C.E.(A/L) & above
Both sexes	8.1	2.5	7.3	11.6	14.6
Male	6.2	1.2	6.0	9.7	10.2
Female	12.2	4.7	11.0	15.7	19.5

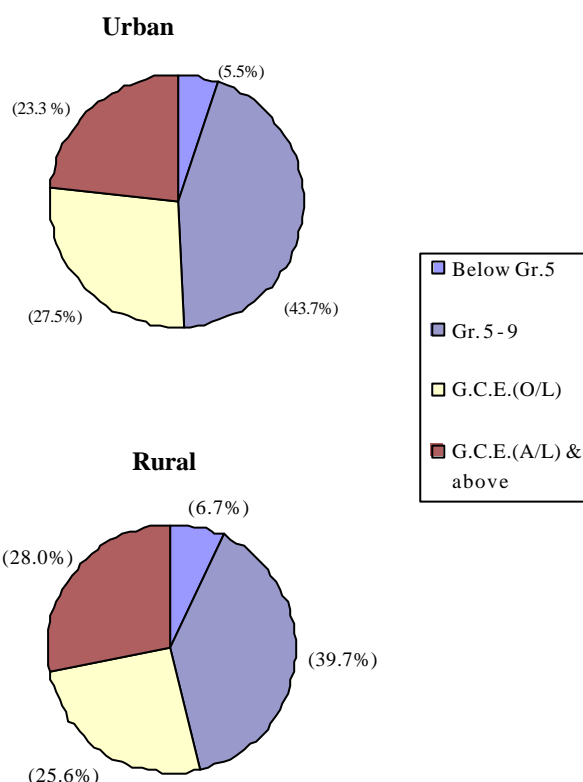
Females who have attained G.C.E.(A/L) & above qualifications have reported an unemployment rate about 20 percent. Corresponding proportion for males is 10 percent.

## Unemployed Population

**Unemployed : Persons who are seeking and available for work, but had no employment during the reference period**

Total number of persons unemployed is estimated at 650237 in the first quarter 2004. Of this number 331851 are males and 318387 are females.

**Figure 4: Unemployed population by level of education & sector – first quarter 2004**



∞ A slightly higher proportion of educated unemployed persons are residing in the rural sector as compared to urban sector.

**Table 6: Percentage distribution of unemployed population by duration of unemployment – first quarter 2004**

Sex	Total	Duration		
		Less than 6 months	6 to less than 12 months	12 + months
Both sexes	100.0	15.8	12.2	72.0
Male	100.0	20.5	11.2	68.3
Female	100.0	10.5	13.2	76.3

∞ More than 70 percent of unemployed persons have searched suitable job during a period of more than one year.

**Table 7: Percentage distribution of unemployed population by age & sex – first quarter 2004**

Age group(yrs)	Total	Male	Female
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0
15 - 19	21.6	21.9	21.4
20 - 24	42.4	47.0	37.5
25 - 29	16.5	14.3	18.8
30 - 39	11.5	7.5	15.7
40 +	8.0	9.3	6.6

∞ Proportion of unemployed females in 30 – 39 yrs age group is more than twice that of males in the same age group.

**Table 8: Percentage distribution of unemployed persons by reason for not seeking work – first quarter 2004**

Sex & Sector	Total	Reasons for not actively seeking work		
		Discouraged not able to get a job	Believe no suitable work available	Other reasons
Total	100.0	37.0	19.7	43.3
Male	100.0	41.7	23.2	35.2
Female	100.0	35.1	18.3	46.7
Total	100.0	37.0	19.7	43.3
Urban	100.0	43.5	..	56.5
Rural	100.0	36.8	20.4	42.8

.. Negligible

∞ 42 percent of males & 35 percent of females have not been seeking work because they were discouraged not being able to get a job.

## Employed Population

**Employed: Persons who are engaged in some kind of work for pay or profit or family gain during the reference week.**

Total estimated employed population is 7336708 in the first quarter 2004. Of this 5037384 are males and 2299324 are females.

**Table 9: Percentage Distribution of employed population by industry – first quarter 2004**

Industry group	Total	Male	Female
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture Forestry and Fishery (A,B)	32.1	29.4	38.1
Manufacturing (D)	16.9	13.3	25.0
Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Personal and Household Goods (G)	13.7	16.1	8.4
Financial Intermediation and Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities (J,K)	2.3	2.8	1.4
Public Administration and Defence, Compulsory Social Security(L)	7.8	7.7	7.9
Education (M)	4.0	2.3	7.9
*Other	23.1	28.5	11.4

\*Other : Construction (F), Hotel and Restaurants (H), Transport and Storage and Communication (I), Health and social work(N), Other community, Social and personal Service activities(O) , Private Households with Employed Persons ( P), Miscellaneous Labour work Other (C,E,Q), Mining & Quarrying ( C ) Electricity, Gas and Water supply ( E), Extra Territorial Organization & bodies (Q), Industries not adequately described

Proportion of females engaged in manufacturing sector industry is 25 percent while proportion for males is only 13 percent.

About 16 percent of males are categorized under trade sector. Proportion of females in this sector is only 8 percent.

Note: The tabulation groups based on ISIC (Rev.3) are indicated as A,B,C.....Q. Due to the limitations on reliability (based on CV), some of these groups have been combined.

**Table 10: Percentage Distribution of employed population by employment status & sex – first quarter 2004**

Sector	Total	Employment status			
		Employee	Employer	Own account worker	Unpaid family worker
Total	100.0	61.0	2.8	27.6	8.5
Urban	100.0	67.5	4.7	22.8	5.0
Rural	100.0	60.2	2.5	28.3	9.0

**Table 11: Percentage Distribution of employed population by occupation group – first quarter 2004**

Occupation group	Total	Male	Female
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0
Senior Officials and Managers	1.2	1.2	1.0
Professionals	6.3	4.2	10.9
Technical and Associate Professionals	5.3	5.3	5.4
Clerks	4.1	3.1	6.3
Proprietors and Managers of Enterprises	4.1	5.1	2.1
Sale and Service workers	10.2	10.9	8.7
Skilled Agricultural and Fishery workers	19.0	18.3	20.7
Craft and Related workers	15.2	14.7	16.3
Plant and Machine operators and Assemblers	6.8	9.1	1.8
Elementary occupations	26.8	26.8	26.7
Unidentified	0.9	1.3	0.1

Note: It is to be noted here that these occupation groups are based on ISCO - 88, but they are not necessarily the major groups of ISCO - 88 classification.

Proportion of persons who have worked in agriculture and elementary occupations is about 47 percent.

15 percent of persons are craft & related workers.

Proportion of employees in urban sector is 68 percent while corresponding proportion in rural sector is 60 percent.

Proportion of unpaid family workers is higher in rural sector than in urban sector.