**Labour force, Employment and Unemployment – First quarter 2011**

**Introduction**

1. This issue of Economic and Social Indicators (ESI) presents a set of estimates of labour force, employment and unemployment for the first quarter of 2011, based on the results of the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS) from January to March 2011. The estimates refer to the Mauritian population aged 16 years and above.
2. Annual estimates of labour force including foreign workers derived after integrating data from CMPHS with other sources are given at Annex 3.

**Key figures**



**Forecasts of employment and unemployment - Year 2011**



**Labour market overview, first quarter 2011**

1. Compared with the corresponding quarter of 2010, there has been an increase in the labour force (+11,700) with a rise in both employment (+11,200) and unemployment (+500).
2. Compared with the previous quarter, labour force increased by 4,800; employment decreased by 2,100 while unemployment increased by 6,900.

Chart 1: The Labour Market, 1st quarter 2011



**Labour force participation**

1. The activity rate for first quarter 2011 was 59.7%, up by 0.5 percentage point from 59.2 in the corresponding period one year earlier. The activity rates for male and female increased respectively by 0.9 percentage point to 76.3% and by 0.2 percentage point to 43.7%.
2. Compared with the previous quarter, the activity rate increased by 0.3 percentage point (from 59.4% to 59.7%) with male activity rate increasing by 0.5 percentage point and no change in the female activity rate.

**Employment**

1. From first quarter 2010 to first quarter 2011, employment rose by 11,200 (+2.1%) to 535,600; male and female employment increased respectively by 8,700 to 347,100 and by 2,500 to 188,500.
2. Compared with the previous quarter, employment decreased by 2,100 with a fall of 2,200 in male employment and a rise of 100 in female employment.

**Unemployment**

1. From first quarter 2010 to first quarter 2011, the number of unemployed persons increased by 500 to 48,500. This rise was the combined effect of an increase of 800 in the number of unemployed females and a decrease of 300 in the number of unemployed males.
2. The main characteristics of the unemployed as at first quarter 2011 were as follows:

(i) The 48,500 unemployed comprised 19,000 males (39%) and 29,500 females (61%).

* 1. Around 18,800 (39%) of them were aged below 25 years.

(iii) About 47% (23,000) of the unemployed were single. Among males, the majority (71%) was single while among females, the majority (68%) was ever married.

(iv) Some 10,000 or 21% had not reached the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) level or equivalent and a further 19,100 (40%) did not have the Cambridge School Certificate (SC) or equivalent.

(v) Around 30,700 (63%) had been looking for work for up to one year and the remaining 17,800 (37%) for more than one year.

1. About 31,400 (65%) had working experience and 17,100 (35%) were looking for a job for the first time.

(vii) Around 19,800 (41%) were registered at the Employment Service.

1. There were 9,900 (20%) young persons aged 16 to 24 years, not yet married and looking for a first job. Some 3,800 (38%) of them had not passed SC.
2. Ever married (including widowed, divorced or separated) unemployed persons aged 25 to 44 years and having worked before numbered 11,300. Among them, about 8,200 (73%) had not passed SC.
3. 6,600 or 14% of the unemployed were heads of households.
4. 6,400 (13%) lived in households with no employed persons.
5. The unemployment rate decreased marginally by 0.1 percentage point to 8.3% from first quarter 2010 to first quarter 2011. Female unemployment rate increased by 0.1 percentage point to 13.5% whilst male unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage point to 5.2%.
6. When compared with fourth quarter of 2010, the number of unemployed persons increased by 6,900 (+5,900 males and +1,000 females) and the employment rate by 1.1 percentage points.

Chart 2: Actual and seasonally adjusted unemployment rate by quarter, 1st quarter 2010 – 1st quarter 2011

 

1. Unemployment rate is usually higher in the first half of the year because of school leavers joining the labour market, and lower in the second half with more casual jobs being available mainly in the trade sector (street vendors, salespersons in shops, etc.) at the end of the year. In order to observe the real trend over time, adjustments have to be made for seasonal fluctuations. Seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the first quarter of 2011 was 7.7%, lower than the rate of 8.1% for the fourth quarter of 2010 and 7.8% for the first quarter of 2010.

**Economically inactive population**

1. The number of persons aged 16 years and over, not forming part of the labour force (inactive population) was estimated at 394,100 at first quarter 2011.
2. The inactive population was made up of 113,600 males and 280,500 females. Among inactive males, 42% were ‘retired or old persons’ and 37% were students. Among females, 57% were homemakers and 15% students.

**Sampling errors**

1. The estimates in this publication are based on the results of a sample survey and are thus subject to sample variability. Standard errors and confidence intervals give an indication of this variability.
2. The standard error of the estimates and the 95% confidence interval which represent a 95% chance that the true value lies within that interval, are given in the tables that follow.

Estimated labour force, employment and unemployment by sex, 1st quarter 2010 – 1st quarter 2011



Estimated labour force, employment and unemployment by sex, 1st quarter 2010 – 1st quarter 2011



Estimated labour force, employment and unemployment by sex, 1st quarter 2010 – 1st quarter 2011



**Longer time series**

1. The following graphs show the series for employment, unemployment and activity rate over a six year period.

Chart 3: Employment by quarter, 1st quarter 2004 – 1st quarter 2011



Chart 4: Unemployment rate by quarter, 1st quarter 2004 – 1st quarter 2011



Chart 5: Activity rate by quarter, 1st quarter 2004 – 1stquarter 2011



Chart 6: Actual and seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, 1st quarter 2004 – 1st quarter 2011



The following tables are available together with the web version of this publication and can be downloaded from the CSO website at <http://statsmauritius.gov.mu>. From the homepage, click on ‘Statistics by subject’ followed by ‘labour’ then select the appropriate publication under the heading ‘Publications – Economic and Social Indicators’.

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Central Statistics Office

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

Port Louis

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Contact persons: (1) Mr. C. K. Arianaick (Statistician)

 Email: carianaick@mail.gov.mu

 (2) Ms. C .Bandinah (Statistician)

 Email: cso\_cmphs@mail.gov.mu

 Central Statistics Office

 LIC Centre, Port Louis

 Tel: 2122316, 2122317 Fax: 2114150

Annex 1

NOTES

**Release of Labour Force data**

Labour Force statistics are compiled and published in the “Economic and Social Indicators” in March, June, September and December according to an advance calendar posted on the website of the Central Statistics Office (http://statsmauritius.gov.mu). This issue provides data for the first quarter 2011 compared to the same quarter a year ago.

However, where appropriate, historical series are also provided for the main indicators.

**The CMPHS Survey methodology**

**Data collection**

Face to face interviews of household members are carried out by qualified interviewers recruited by the office.

**Frequency of data collection**

Data collection is carried out monthly except in 2004 when it was carried out every quarter. Up to 2005, the reference period for data on labour force was the last week of the survey month. As from 2006, the reference week has been changed to the second week of the survey month so that estimates can be published within one quarter of the reference period, as required by the IMF Special Data Dissemination System (SDDS) to which the country expects to graduate by December 2011*.*

**Scope and coverage of collection**

All private Mauritian households in the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues are covered.

**Sampling method**

A Stratified two-stage sampling design is used. At the first stage, Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) are selected with probability proportional to size and at the second stage, a fixed number of households is selected from each selected PSU.

Prior to 2005, the first stage stratification factors were urban, semi urban and rural geographical locations. As from 2005, the Relative Development Index (RDI) is used as the spatial stratification factor. This index is based on 12 variables encompassing housing and living conditions, literacy and education, and employment derived from the 2000 Housing and Population Census to rank PSUs. A set of RDIs for administrative regions has been published in the series "Economic and Social Indicators" - Issue No. 393.

The second stage stratification criteria are community, household size and average monthly expenditure of the household.

**Sample size**

From 1999 to 2003, around 6,500 households were covered each year. In 2004, the sample was increased to 8,640 so that reliable quarterly estimates of labour force, employment and unemployment could be worked out. As from 2005, the sample for the year has been further increased to 11,280. Furthermore, in order to measure quarterly changes, 50% of the households sampled in a quarter are re-interviewed in the following quarter; for example, 50% of the households sampled in the first quarter of 2005 have been re-interviewed in the second quarter of 2005.

**Questionnaire**

The CMPHS questionnaire comprises three modules: a basic module common to all rounds of the survey covering the general characteristics of the population (b) a second module covering labour force with in-depth investigation and a core set of questions which are kept constant at all rounds of the survey and (c) a third module grouping other topics of interest but investigated in less details.

**Estimation and reliability of results**

Estimates worked out from household survey data are inevitably subject to sampling variability since they are based on information collected from only a sample of households rather than from all households. The Standard Error (S.E) which is a measure of this variability, used to set confidence intervals for any estimate (whether a total or a rate) derived from the sample. For example, a 95% confidence interval indicates that there is 95% chance that the upper and lower limits of the interval enclose the true value (which would be obtained if all households had been surveyed). Standard errors and confidence intervals are calculated for the main labour force estimates.

 Annex 2

**Definitions**

**Household**

A household is defined as either a person living on his/her own or a group of two or more persons, who may or may not be related, but who live together and make common provision for food and other essentials for living.

**Employment**

Employed population consists of Mauritians aged 16 years and above (16+) who have worked for pay, profit or family gain for at least one hour during the reference week of a month. It includes those who are temporarily absent from work for reasons such as leave with pay, leave without pay and temporary disorganisation of work (bad weather, break down of equipment, lack of order, etc.).

It is to be noted that as from year 2007, labour force estimates are based on population aged 16 years and above, following the amendment to the Labour Act in December 2006 whereby the minimum legal working age is 16 years, and the subsequent recommendation by the ILO to be in line with the amended Labour Act.

**Unemployment**

Unemployed population comprises all Mauritians aged 16+ who are not working but who are looking for work and are available for work during the reference period.

**Labour force**

Labour force or active population is made up of employed and unemployed population.

**Unemployment rate**

Unemployment rate is the ratio (%) of unemployment to labour force.

**Inactive population**

Inactive population includes all Mauritians aged 16+ years, not forming part of the labour force for reasons such as attendance at educational institutions, engagement in household duties, retirement, old age and infirmity/disablement.

**Activity rate**

Activity rate is the ratio (%) of labour force to population aged 16+ (active and inactive population).

**Employer**

An employer is a person who operates his/her own business or trade and hires one or more employees.

**Own account worker**

An Own account worker is a person who operates his/her own business or trade but does not hire employees. He/She may be working alone or with the help of contributing family workers.

**Employee**

An Employee is a person who works for pay for someone else, even in a temporary capacity.

**Apprentice**

An Apprentice is a person being trained for a job or trade and does not receive pay or may just receive some pocket money; an apprentice is considered as an employee.

**Contributing family worker**

A Contributing family worker is a person who works without pay in an enterprise operated by a family member.

**Educational attainment**

*Primary*: comprises persons who have studied up to a “Standard” between Standard 1 and the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) or equivalent.

*Secondary*: comprises persons who have studied up to a “Form” between Form 1 and the Higher School Certificate (HSC) or equivalent.

*Tertiary*: comprises persons who in addition to their secondary educational certificates (SC and HSC or equivalent) also possess either a certificate/diploma (which is above the HSC but below a first degree) or a degree.