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1. LABOUR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT 1990-1993
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MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
PORT LOUIS  
MAURITIUS

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# LABOUR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT 1990.- 1993

## Introduction

This publication is meant to bring together in one document, data from various sources relating to employment over the period 1990 to 1993. This set of estimates of labour force, employment and unemployment for the Republic of Mauritius (including Rodrigues), is being published for the first time and it is proposed to publish updated data at regular intervals. Revised figures for the years 1983 to 1989, in aggregate form, have also been included in the last two tables.

All the data presented here refer to the middle of the years mentioned.

## Coverage

The population considered covers all resident Mauritians aged 12 years and above (i.e. foreigners working on contract in Mauritius are not included).

Employment figures have been given for 'large' and 'other than large' establishments separately. Large establishments comprise sugar cane plantations of 10 hectares or more; tea plantations of 2 hectares or more; all 'flue-cured' tobacco establishments; other agricultural and non-agricultural establishments having 10 or more employees as well as all central and local government departments.

## Sources of data

Estimates of labour force (which is the total of employed and unemployed population) have been extensively based on the 1990 Population Census data.

Unemployment estimates have been worked out using information collected through censuses and surveys carried out by the Central Statistical Office, as well as the number of registered unemployed at the middle of each year as published by the Employment Service Division of the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs and Employment.

Employment in large establishments is obtained from the annual Survey of Employment and Earnings. Estimates of employment in establishments other than those covered by the Survey of Employment and Earnings have been based on data from the 1990 Population Census, the 1992 Census of Economic Activities in small establishments as well as information from various administrative records such as licences and permits.

## Activity rates

The activity rates (also known as participation rates) derived from the 1990 Population Census have been analysed in collaboration with manpower planners and it has been found that the census rates, specially for females, suffered from under reporting. The rates obtained at the 1986 Labour Force Sample Survey are believed to give a more accurate picture of the actual level of economic activity among the working population. The census activity rates for 1990 have therefore been adjusted accordingly, and, based on these adjusted rates for 1990, projections for the ensuing years have been made. Sex-age-specific activity rates for the years 1990 to 1993 are given in table 1.

The age specific activity rates for males obtained at the 1990 Population Census have been adjusted only marginally, and particularly for ages 50 years and above. The overall adjusted activity rate (defined here as the percentage of the population aged 12 years and above classified as economically active) among males works out to 76%. These same activity rates have been assumed for the years 1991 to 1993 except for a slight decrease at ages under 20 (because of increased availability of education and training facilities) and a slight increase for age group 20-24 (in line with the better employment prospects associated with the second phase of industrialisation).

Female activity rates observed at the 1990 Census have been adjusted for almost all age groups, while at the same time maintaining the age pattern of participation observed in 1990. The overall adjusted rate works out to 37%. During the period 1991 to 1993, the female participation rate has been assumed to have increased by around 2% annually. At this rate the proportion of women aged 12 years and above, who are believed to be active in 1993, is around 39%.

### **Labour force**

The labour force (or currently active population) by age-group has been estimated by applying sex-age-specific activity rates to the population figures in the different age brackets. These estimates of labour force by age group and sex are given in table 2.

In 1993, out of a total of 852,000 persons aged 12 years and above, 488,600 have been estimated to be economically active compared to 457,000 out of a total of 808,300 in 1990. The labour force has grown by 31,600 over the period even if the proportion of actives in the population has remained almost unchanged, i.e. at about 57%.

The increase in male labour force from 306,200 to 320,500 during the period is due to changes in the age structure of the population only, i.e., in 1993, compared to 1990, there are more persons in those age groups where activity rates are high. On the other hand, about half of the increase in female labour force, which stood at 150,700 and 168,000 in 1990 and 1993 respectively, is the result of rising economic activity among women.

### **Employment**

In 1990 there were about 444,500 persons with jobs. Thereafter, employment has been increasing by an average of about 11,500 each year to reach 479,500 in 1993. Analysis of the data by sex shows that male employment has increased by 6% over the period, that is from 297,000 in 1990 to 314,500 in 1993. Female employment on the other hand increased by about 12%, from 147,500 to 165,000. However, though female employment has been increasing at this faster rate, the proportion of males to females during the period has changed only slightly. In fact, from 33.2% in 1990, the proportion of women in total employment is 34.4% in 1993. Employment by sex for the various industry groups is given in table 4.

### **Employment by industry**

The employment figures have been distributed according to the major industrial divisions of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) of industrial activities. Classification into the various industry groups was based on the distribution obtained from the Survey of Employment and Earnings for large establishments. For employment outside large establishments, the distributions obtained at the 1990 Population Census and the 1992 Census of Economic Activities in small establishments, together with information obtained from administrative sources were considered. Employment figures by ISIC for 'large' and 'other than large' establishments separately are given in table 3.

It is to be noted that government employees enumerated at the 1990 Census were classified under various industry headings according to the type of activity performed at their respective places of work. In the present series of data, all government employees (in central and local administrations) have been grouped under 'Community, social and personal services' so as to be in line with the classification adopted for the Survey of Employment and Earnings where breakdown by industry group is not available.

In 1993, the manufacturing sector, with 29% of total employment, was employing the largest number of persons, followed by 'Community, social & personal services' with 23%. 'Agriculture & fishing' and 'Wholesale & retail trade and restaurants & hotels' accounted for 15% and 14% respectively.

#### ***Agriculture & fishing***

Employment in 'Agriculture & fishing' which was around 72,000 in 1990 dropped to 71,000 in 1993. This fall in the employment level which occurred mainly in large establishments, specifically in the Sugar Industry, resulted in a decrease in the percentage of total employment accounted for by the agricultural sector, from 16.2% in 1990 to 14.8% in 1993. Over 50% of agricultural workers are engaged in sugar cane cultivation. During the period 1990 to 1993, a reduction of 1,400 is noted in this category of employees while in the other agricultural activities employment has remained almost constant.

During the above period female employment in Agriculture has remained almost unchanged, at about 25,000. On the other hand, male employment has decreased by 1,500, reaching 46,100 in 1993 from 47,600 in 1990.

#### ***Manufacturing***

The manufacturing sector, with 138,300 employees, accounted for 31% of total employment in 1990. By mid 1993 it has gained about 800 more workers but its share in total employment has dropped to 29%. Figures in table 3 show that employment in large establishments of the manufacturing sector has gone down by 7,000 while in establishments other than large, an increase of 7,800 is noted.

Out of a total of 138,300 persons in this sector in 1990, 88,200 were employed by EPZ firms. In 1993, although still the main supplier of jobs in the manufacturing sector, EPZ manufacturing enterprises were employing some 83,500 persons, representing 60% of employment in 'Manufacturing', a significant drop from the 64% observed in 1990.

This decrease of 4,700 in EPZ employment was made up of 3,800 males and 900 females. EPZ establishments continue to employ a larger number of female workers. In fact it is estimated that at June 1993, there were about 59,000 females against 24,400 males employed, a ratio of 2.4 female to 1 male. In the overall manufacturing sector, this proportion remains about 1:1.

### *Wholesale, retail trade, restaurant & hotels*

During the period 1990 to 1993, a significant rise in employment is noted in the trade industries, specifically outside large establishments. In 1993, 47,100 out of the total of 66,800 employees in this sector are working outside large establishments, compared to 35,200 out of a total of 52,200 in 1990. While employment outside large establishments went up by nearly 12,000, the number of additional workers recruited by large enterprises was 2,700, mainly in hotels.

Male employment which was around 37,000 in 1990, increased by over 22% to reach 45,400 in 1993. Female employment grew at a faster rate to reach 21,400 in 1993 from 15,100 in 1990, an increase of nearly 42%.

### *Community, social and personal services*

'Community, social and personal services' accounted for 23% of the total number of persons employed in 1990, i.e. 102,000 out of 444,500. In 1993 employment in this sector has reached 113,200, which still represents about 23% of total employment.

In 1993, government (central and local) employees represent 53.4% of employment in 'Community, social and personal services' compared to nearly 58% in 1990. This follows the fact that total number of employees in government departments has remained nearly constant over the period, i.e., around 60,000, while employment in private services has increased by 10,000.

Male employment in 'Community, social and personal services' has increased by 5,600, i.e. from 69,500 to 75,100 over the period. Female employment which stood at 32,500 in 1990 has reached 38,100 in 1993, showing thus the same increase in number as for males.

### **Unemployment**

In the 1990 Census, the number of reported cases of 'unemployed' in the age-groups 12 years and above were 17,800 males and 6,600 among females, yielding unemployment rates of about 6% and 5% respectively. Registered unemployment data, the number of work permits issued to foreign workers by the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs and Employment and the number of vacancies reported by large establishments at the Survey of Employment and Earnings indicate overreporting of unemployed at the 1990 Census. On the basis of this information, unemployment rates of 3% for males and 2% for females respectively have been adopted for 1990. It has been assumed that from 1991 to 1993, these rates were of the order of 2% for both male and female. The number of unemployed persons by sex as well as corresponding unemployment rates for the years 1983 to 1993 are given in table 6.

Central Statistical Office,  
Ministry of Economic Planning and Development,  
PORT LOUIS.

August 1993

**Table 1 - Activity rates by age-group and sex, 1990-1993**

**Male**

Age (years)	Activity rates			
	1990	1991	1992	1993
12 - 14	11.2	9.5	9.5	9.5
15 - 19	52.0	51.5	51.0	50.5
20 - 24	92.5	93.0	93.5	94.0
25 - 29	96.5	97.0	97.0	97.0
30 - 34	97.5	98.0	98.0	98.0
35 - 39	98.0	98.0	98.0	98.0
40 - 44	97.0	97.0	97.0	97.0
45 - 49	95.0	95.0	95.0	95.0
50 - 54	91.2	91.2	91.2	91.2
55 - 59	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0
60 - 64	35.0	35.0	35.0	35.0
65 - 69	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
70 - 74	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
75 and above	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
12 and above	76.1	76.0	75.8	75.8
15 and above	81.9	82.1	82.1	81.9

**Female**

Age (years)	Activity rates			
	1990	1991	1992	1993
12 - 14	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.2
15 - 19	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0
20 - 24	50.0	51.0	52.0	53.0
25 - 29	48.0	49.0	50.0	51.0
30 - 34	51.0	52.0	53.0	54.0
35 - 39	52.0	53.0	54.0	55.0
40 - 44	47.0	48.0	49.0	50.0
45 - 49	43.0	44.0	45.0	46.0
50 - 54	38.0	39.0	40.0	41.0
55 - 59	30.0	31.0	32.0	33.0
60 - 64	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
65 - 69	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
70 - 74	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
75 and above	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
12 and above	37.1	37.8	38.4	39.2
15 and above	40.0	40.8	41.6	42.4

**Table 2 - Labour force by age-group and sex . 1990 - 1993**

Male

Age (years)	Labour force			
	1990	1991	1992	1993
12 - 14	3,686	3,261	3,397	3,415
15 - 19	25,605	25,599	26,195	27,066
20 - 24	48,497	46,664	46,083	44,503
25 - 29	51,813	52,999	53,062	52,035
30 - 34	46,524	47,174	48,081	49,049
35 - 39	40,460	40,785	42,447	42,830
40 - 44	29,224	32,697	34,782	36,665
45 - 49	20,814	21,366	22,712	24,577
50 - 54	16,838	16,800	16,853	16,737
55 - 59	13,179	13,469	14,045	14,116
60 - 64	5,166	4,851	4,632	4,575
65 - 69	2,826	3,008	3,085	3,132
70 - 74	972	1,001	1,043	1,104
75 and above	616	650	682	700
12 and above	306,220	310,324	317,099	320,504
15 and above	302,534	307,063	313,702	317,089

Female

Age (years)	Labour force			
	1990	1991	1992	1993
12 - 14	1,128	1,072	1,122	1,126
15 - 19	14,390	15,153	15,990	17,309
20 - 24	25,121	24,492	24,413	24,099
25 - 29	24,911	26,023	25,979	26,464
30 - 34	23,398	24,116	25,070	26,242
35 - 39	20,763	21,385	22,432	23,233
40 - 44	14,246	15,970	17,295	18,602
45 - 49	9,806	10,477	11,213	12,422
50 - 54	7,440	7,565	7,838	8,031
55 - 59	4,943	5,295	5,709	6,065
60 - 64	2,574	2,465	2,374	2,362
65 - 69	1,295	1,373	1,422	1,462
70 - 74	414	432	450	465
75 and above	230	230	243	246
12 and above	150,659	156,048	161,550	168,128
15 and above	149,531	154,976	160,428	167,002

**Figure 1- Labour force by age group, 1993**

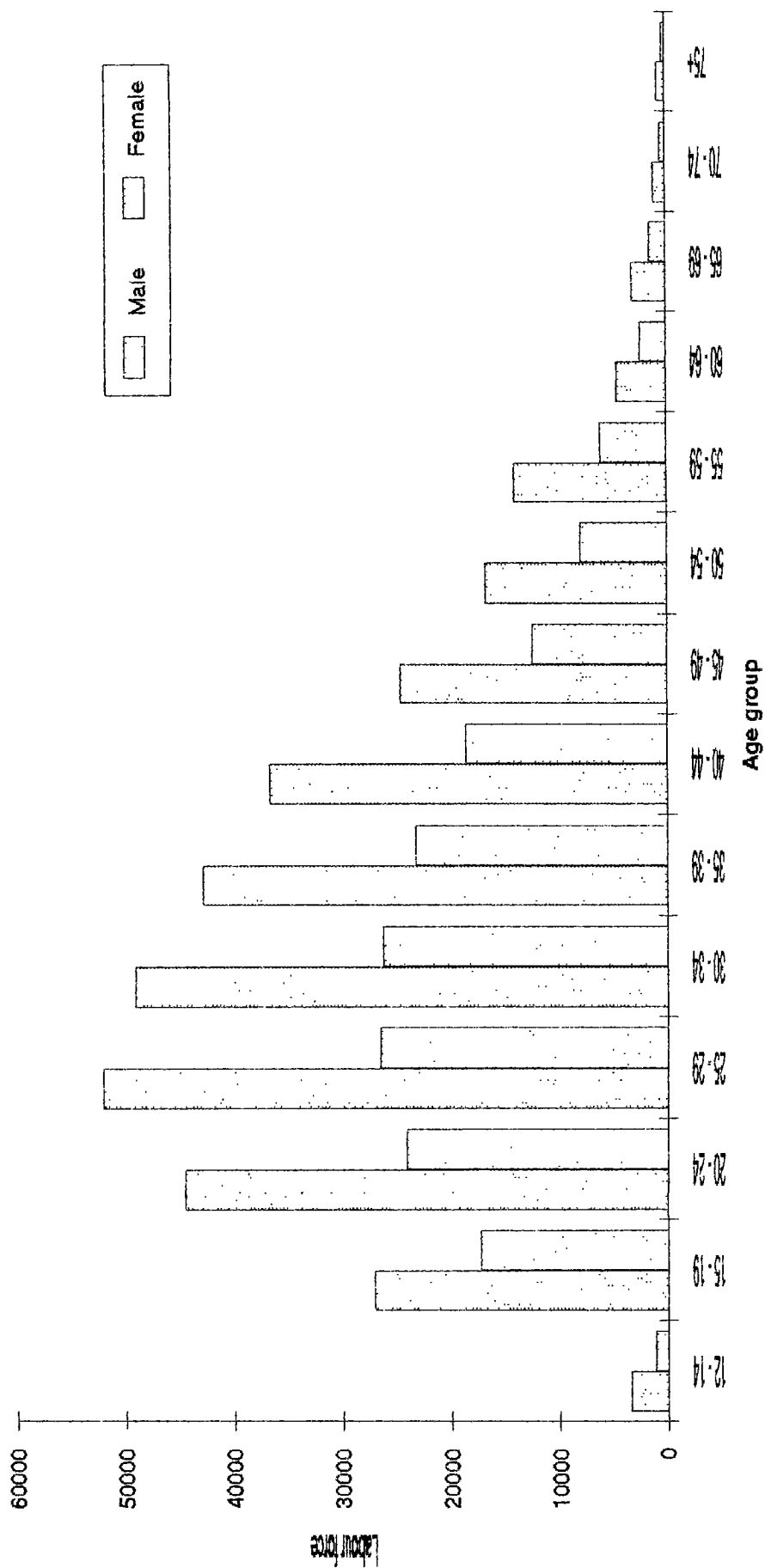




Table 3 - Employment (1) by industry and size of establishment, 1990 - 1993 (in thousands)

Industrial group	1990			1991			1992			1993		
	Large	Other	Total	Large	Other	Total	Large	Other	Total	Large	Other	Total
	Agricultural & fishing (2) of which sugar cane	37.7 (33.0)	34.4 (7.4)	72.1 (40.4)	38.1 (33.3)	33.9 (7.0)	72.0 (40.3)	37.0 (32.5)	34.5 (7.0)	71.5 (39.5)	36.0 (32.0)	35.0 (7.0)
Mining & quarrying	0.2	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.8	1.0	0.2	1.0	1.2	0.2	1.0	1.2
Manufacturing (3) of which sugar EPZ	117.1 (7.5) (85.2)	21.2 (-) (3.0)	138.3 (7.5) (88.2)	116.7 (7.4) (85.9)	22.7 (-) (3.0)	139.4 (7.4) (88.9)	115.8 (7.3) (86.0)	25.5 (-) (2.8)	141.3 (7.3) (88.8)	110.1 (7.2) (81.0)	29.0 (-) (2.5)	139.1 (7.2) (83.5)
Electricity & water	3.4	-	3.4	3.4	-	3.4	3.4	-	3.4	3.5	-	3.5
Construction	11.5	19.3	30.8	10.8	19.9	30.7	11.1	20.6	31.7	11.1	21.8	32.9
Wholesale & retail trade, restaurants & hotels	17.0	35.2	52.2	18.3	38.6	56.9	19.2	42.1	61.3	19.7	47.1	66.8
Transport, storage, & communication	12.7	15.9	28.6	13.6	17.4	31.0	13.7	19.8	33.5	13.6	21.1	34.7
Financing, insurance, real estate & business services	9.3	2.2	11.5	9.6	2.5	12.1	10.1	2.8	12.9	10.7	3.4	14.1
Community, social and personal services of which: central government local government	69.8 (54.1) (5.1)	32.2 (-) (-)	102.0 (54.1) (5.1)	71.7 (54.8) (5.1)	33.5 (-) (-)	105.2 (54.8) (5.1)	72.8 (54.8) (5.1)	35.0 (-) (-)	107.8 (54.8) (5.1)	74.3 (55.1) (5.3)	38.9 (-) (-)	113.2 (55.1) (5.3)
Activities n.e.c	4.8	-	4.8	4.4	-	4.4	3.6	-	3.6	3.0	-	3.0
Total	283.5	161.0	444.5	286.8	169.3	456.1	286.9	181.3	468.2	282.2	197.3	479.5

(1) Employment figures do not include foreigners working in Mauritius

(2) Excludes sugar and tea factories

(3) Includes sugar and tea factories

Fig II - Employment by size of establishment and sex, 1990 - 1993

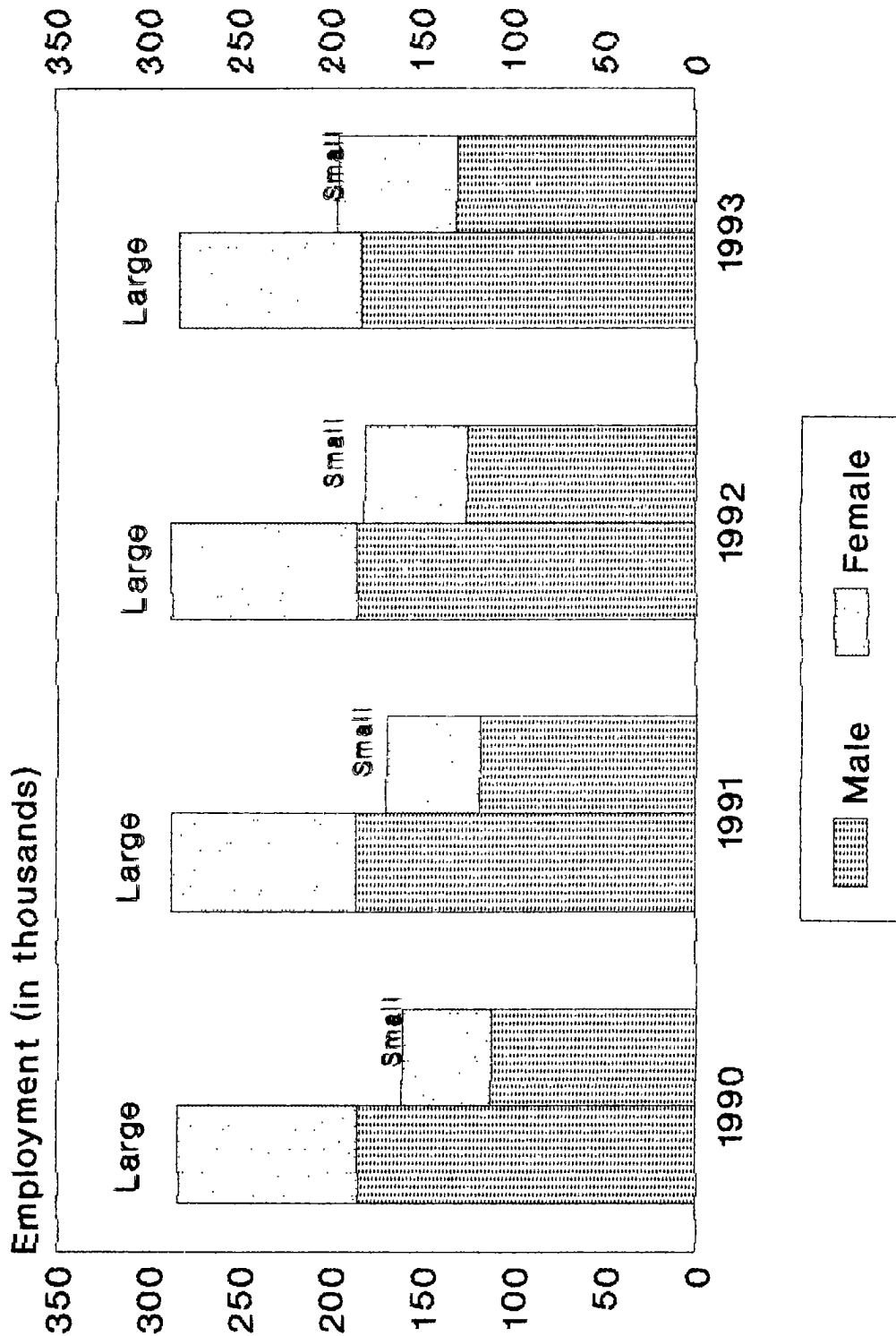


Table 4 - Employment (1) by industry and sex, 1990 - 1993 (in thousands)

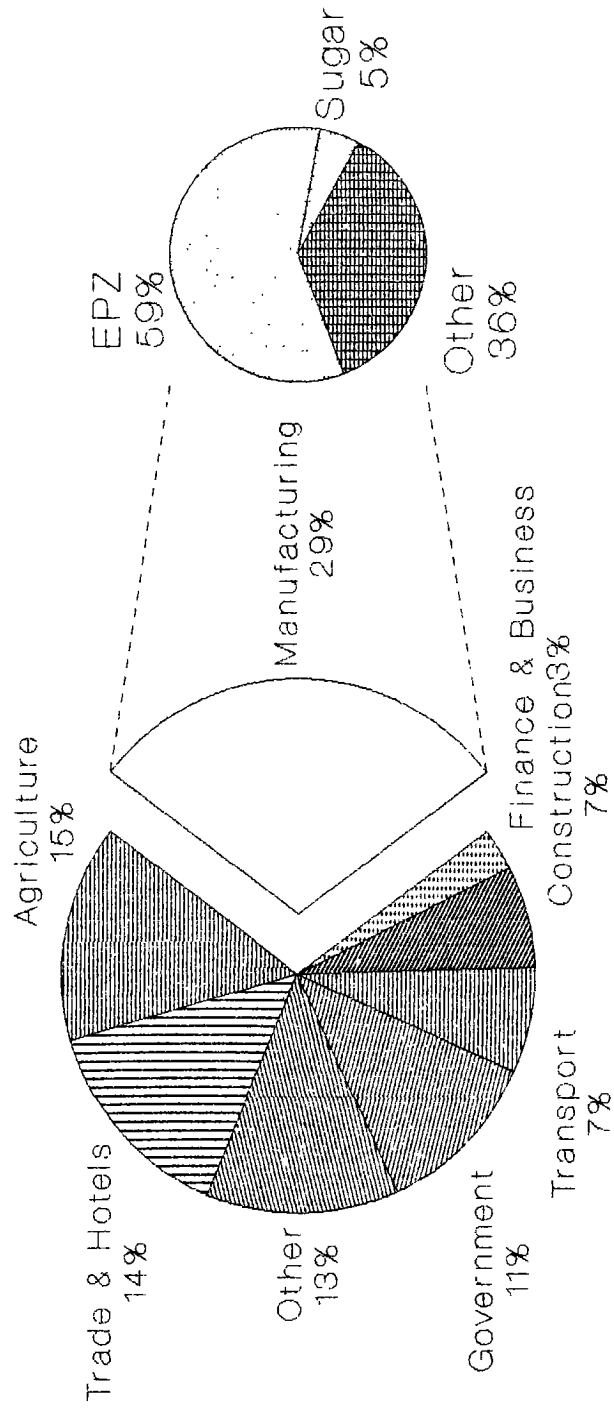
Industrial group	1990			1991			1992			1993		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agricultural & fishing (2) of which sugar cane	47.6 (28.5)	24.5 (11.9)	72.1 (40.4)	47.2 (28.2)	24.8 (12.1)	72.0 (40.3)	46.9 (27.4)	24.6 (12.1)	71.5 (39.5)	46.1 (27.0)	24.9 (12.0)	71.0 (39.0)
Mining & quarrying	0.7	0.1	0.8	0.9	0.1	1.0	1.1	0.1	1.2	1.1	0.1	1.2
Manufacturing (3) of which sugar EPZ	68.8 (7.1) (28.2)	69.5 (0.4) (60.0)	138.3 (7.5) (88.2)	68.0 (7.0) (27.5)	71.4 (0.4) (61.4)	139.4 (7.4) (88.9)	67.7 (7.0) (26.2)	73.6 (0.3) (62.6)	141.3 (7.3) (88.8)	65.8 (7.0) (24.4)	73.3 (0.2) (59.1)	139.1 (7.2) (83.5)
Electricity & water	3.3	0.1	3.4	3.3	0.1	3.4	3.3	0.1	3.4	3.4	0.1	3.5
Construction	30.5	0.3	30.8	30.5	0.2	30.7	31.5	0.2	31.7	32.7	0.2	32.9
Wholesale & retail trade, restaurants & hotels	37.1	15.1	52.2	40.8	16.1	56.9	43.0	18.3	61.3	45.4	21.4	66.8
Transport, storage, & communication	26.8	1.8	28.6	28.9	2.1	31.0	31.4	2.1	33.5	32.3	2.4	34.7
Financing, insurance, real estate & business services	8.0	3.5	11.5	8.5	3.6	12.1	9.0	3.9	12.9	9.7	4.4	14.1
Community, social and personal services of which: central government local government	69.5 (43.6) (4.6)	32.5 (10.5) (0.5)	102.0 (54.1) (5.1)	71.0 (43.9) (4.6)	34.2 (10.9) (0.5)	105.2 (54.8) (5.1)	72.7 (43.9) (4.5)	35.1 (10.9) (0.6)	107.8 (54.8) (5.1)	75.1 (43.8) (4.7)	38.1 (11.3) (0.6)	113.2 (55.1) (5.3)
Activities n.e.c	4.7	0.1	4.8	4.3	0.1	4.4	3.5	0.1	3.6	2.9	0.1	3.0
Total	297.0	147.5	444.5	303.4	152.7	456.1	310.1	158.1	468.2	314.5	165.0	479.5

(1) Employment figures do not include foreigners working in Mauritius

(2) Excludes sugar and tea factories

(3) Includes sugar and tea factories

**Fig III - Employment by industry**



**Table 5 - Labour force, Employment and Unemployment 1983-1993 (in thousands)**

Year	Population 12 years and above	Labour Force	Employment			Unemployment
			in large establishments	outside large establishments	Total	
1983	736	365	196	97	293	72
1984	746	377	200	111	311	66
1985	753	399	214	126	340	59
1986	764	418	235	140	375	43
1987	775	431	257	150	407	24
1988	784	442	273	153	426	16
1989	794	450	276	159	435	15
1990	808	457	284	161	445	12
1991	821	466	287	169	456	10
1992	838	478	287	181	468	10
1993	852	489	282	198	480	9

Table 5 (cont.) - Labour force, Employment & Unemployment, 1983-1993 (in thousands)

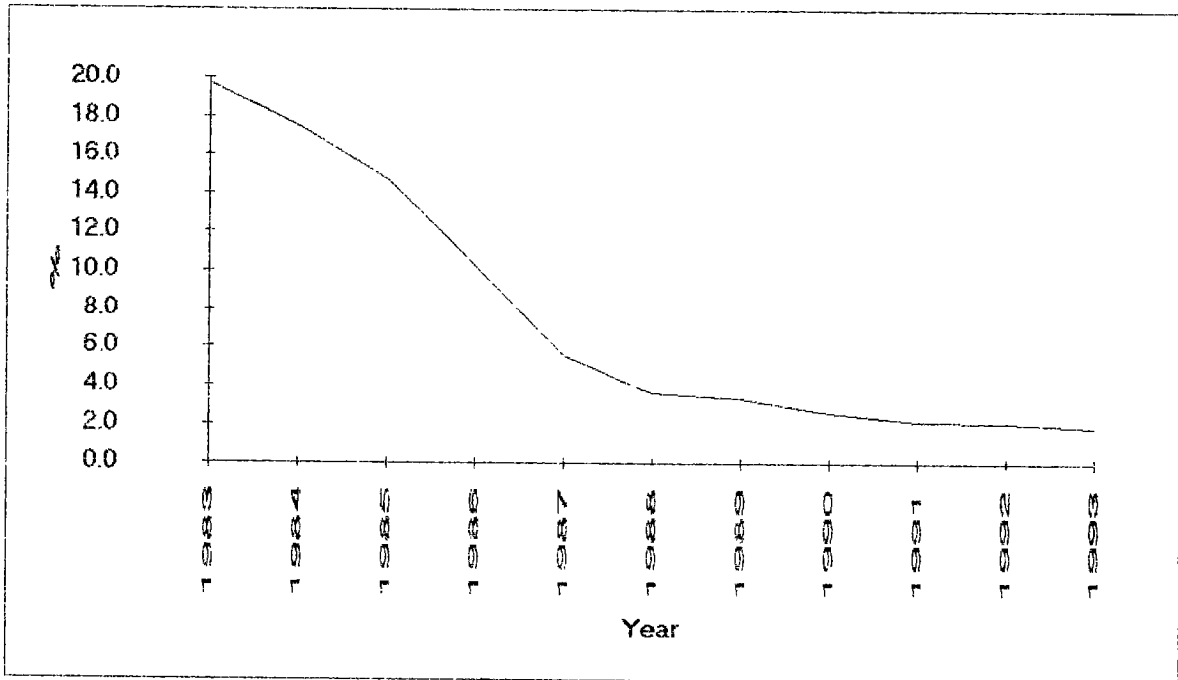
Year	Population 12 years and above	Labour Force	Employment			Unemployment
			in large establishments	outside large establishments	Total	
1983	365	269	143	74	217	52
1984	370	272	141	84	225	47
1985	375	280	147	93	240	40
1986	380	289	157	102	259	30
1987	386	295	170	107	277	18
1988	390	300	179	109	288	12
1989	395	303	180	112	292	11
1990	402	306	185	112	297	9
1991	408	310	185	118	303	7
1992	418	317	185	125	310	7
1993	423	321	182	133	315	6

Table 5 (cont.) - Labour force, Employment & Unemployment, 1983-1993 (in thousands)

Year	Population 12 years and above	Labour Force	Employment			Unemployment
			in large establishments	outside large establishments	Total	
1983	371	96	53	23	76	20
1984	376	105	59	27	86	19
1985	378	119	67	33	100	19
1986	384	129	78	38	116	13
1987	389	136	87	43	130	6
1988	394	142	94	44	138	4
1989	399	147	96	47	143	4
1990	406	151	99	49	148	3
1991	413	156	102	51	153	3
1992	420	161	102	56	158	3
1993	429	168	100	65	165	3

Female

**Figure IV : Unemployment rate 1983 - 1993**



**Table 6 - Unemployment rate by sex , 1983 - 1993**

Year	Unemployment (thousands)			Unemployment rate (%)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1983	52	20	72	19.3	20.8	19.7
1984	47	19	66	17.3	18.1	17.5
1985	40	19	59	14.3	16.0	14.8
1986	30	13	43	10.4	10.1	10.3
1987	18	6	24	6.1	4.4	5.6
1988	12	4	16	4.0	2.8	3.6
1989	11	4	15	3.6	2.7	3.3
1990	9	3	12	2.9	2.0	2.6
1991	7	3	10	2.3	1.9	2.1
1992	7	3	10	2.2	1.9	2.1
1993	6	3	9	1.9	1.8	1.8