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Quarterly Unemployment Statistics 2014-Q1

In the first quarter of 2014, the national unemployment rate was 4.2% and the labour force participation rate was recorded as 74.1%. The highest unemployment rate was among females (4.8%) compared to males (3.6%).

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National Bureau of Statistics

CARAVELLE HOUSE - MANGLIER STREET, P.O. BOX 206 - VICTORIA - MAHE - SEYCHELLES, Tel: +248 611650 - Fax: +248 225634/225339
E-mail: ceo@nbs.gov.sc, stats@nbs.gov.sc - Website: www.nbs.gov.sc

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1. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin presents a series of Quarterly Unemployment Statistics derived from a series of ongoing monthly Labour Force Surveys which started in January 2014. The objective is to provide a permanent platform to obtain regular quarterly unemployment figures for measuring labour market dynamics in Seychelles.

The unemployment figures are based on the population aged 15 years and above. The quarterly figures are obtained from a sample of 1200 households spread out into 400 households canvassed per month over the islands of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue.

2. RESULTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Persons in the working age population who during the reference week were not employed, were available to work and were looking for work are defined as unemployed.

Table 1 shows that 57% of the unemployed population is female, with this rate rising to 61% amongst the youth unemployed population.

The total unemployment rate is recorded at 4.2%, with females having the highest

unemployment rate (4.8%) compared to males (3.6%).

Table 2, shows unemployment rates by age group and sex, for the first quarter of 2014. It shows that the highest unemployment rate of 9.3% is in the below 25 years age group, with females having the highest unemployment rate (11.3%) in comparison to males (7.3%).

A high percentage of the unemployed persons (44%) were aged below 25 years with corresponding high percentages for males (40%) and females (46%). Overall the percentage of unemployed persons decreased with age.

The distribution of unemployed population by educational attainment and sex, as depicted in Table 3, shows that persons having secondary level or below as their highest educational attainment make up the highest proportion of the unemployed. The figure for both sexes is 54.1%, with females at 49.3% compared to males 60.8%, in this category. Persons in post secondary education are lower amongst the unemployed, with the situation amongst the sexes reversed (46.5% for females and 33.3% for males). Table 4 shows the distribution of unemployed population by duration of

unemployment whereas Table 5 shows the distribution of unemployed population by sex and by methods used to search for work. For the first quarter of 2014, it was recorded that longest period during which the unemployed population had been continuously without work and looking for work was less than 3 months, with a figure of 43.1% for both sexes.

The most common method of obtaining work was in the category of applying to prospective employers, 42% for both sexes, with comparative figures of 45% for females and 37%, for males.

It is often observed that youth unemployment rate is relatively higher than the national unemployment rate. A value of up to two times higher is considered normal; a value beyond two times, but below three times higher indicates a serious youth unemployment situation, whilst beyond three times higher is considered severe. Taking youths as those aged between 15-24 years, the youth unemployment situation in Seychelles is serious. From Table 6, the rate of youth unemployment is 2.6 times higher than the national unemployment rate with the female youth unemployment rate at 2.7 times higher and the male youth unemployment rate which is 2.3

times higher than their corresponding national rates. It can be concluded that youth unemployment is especially serious amongst the female youth population.

3. TABLES AND CHARTS

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Key Populations and Selected Key Indicators, Q1/2014

	Male %	Female %	Both Sexes %
Working age population			
National	47.4	52.6	100.0
Youth (UN)	48.9	51.1	100.0
Employed population			
National	50.2	49.8	100.0
Youth (UN)	50.6	49.4	100.0
Unemployed population (standard)			
National	43.1	56.9	100.0
Youth (UN)	38.9	61.1	100.0
Unemployed population (relaxed)			
National	41.7	58.3	100.0
Youth (UN)	42.0	58.0	100.0
Labour force (standard)			
National	49.9	50.1	100.0
Youth (UN)	49.3	50.7	100.0
Rates (%):			
Unemployment rate (Standard Definition)	3.6	4.8	4.2
Unemployment rate (Relaxed Definition)	9.0	12.3	10.7
Labour Force Participation Rate	78.0	70.6	74.1
Employment-to-Population Ratio	75.2	67.2	71.0
Youth unemployment rate (Standard Definition)	8.6	13.2	11.0
Youth unemployment rate (Relaxed Definition)	20.7	28.6	23.9

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, QLFS, Q1/2014

Notes: Youth UN refers to population aged 15-24 years

Table 2: Unemployment Rates by Age Group and Sex, Q1/2014

	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Age group (years)	%	%	%
15 < 25	7.3	11.3	9.3
25 < 55	1.9	3.4	2.6
55+	6.0	1.6	3.9
Total	3.5	4.7	4.2

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, QLFS, Q1/2014

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Population by Educational Attainment and Sex, Q1/2014

Educational Attainment	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	%	%	%
No schooling	5.9	4.2	4.9
Secondary & below	60.8	49.3	54.1
Post-secondary	33.3	46.5	41.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, QLFS, Q1/2014

Note: "Educational attainment " is defined here as "the highest level of formal education completed regardless of certification."

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Population by Duration of Unemployment and Sex, Q1/2014

Duration of unemployment	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	%	%	%
1 month to less than 3 months	46.9	40.0	43.1
3 months to less than 6 months	20.4	18.3	19.3
6 months & above	32.7	41.7	37.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, QLFS, Q1/2014

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Population by Methods Used to Search for Work and Sex Q1/2014

Methods used to search for work	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	%	%	%
Applied to prospective employers	37.0	44.9	41.7
Checked at factories and other work places	25.9	16.7	20.5
internet	5.6	2.6	3.8
Sought assistance or advice to obtain a job	27.8	10.3	17.4
Registered at private employment agency	3.7	14.1	9.8
Took steps to start own business comprising: <i>- Sought assistance or advice to start own business</i> <i>- Looked for inputs to set up own business</i> <i>- Applied for permit to set up own business</i>	0.0	11.5	6.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

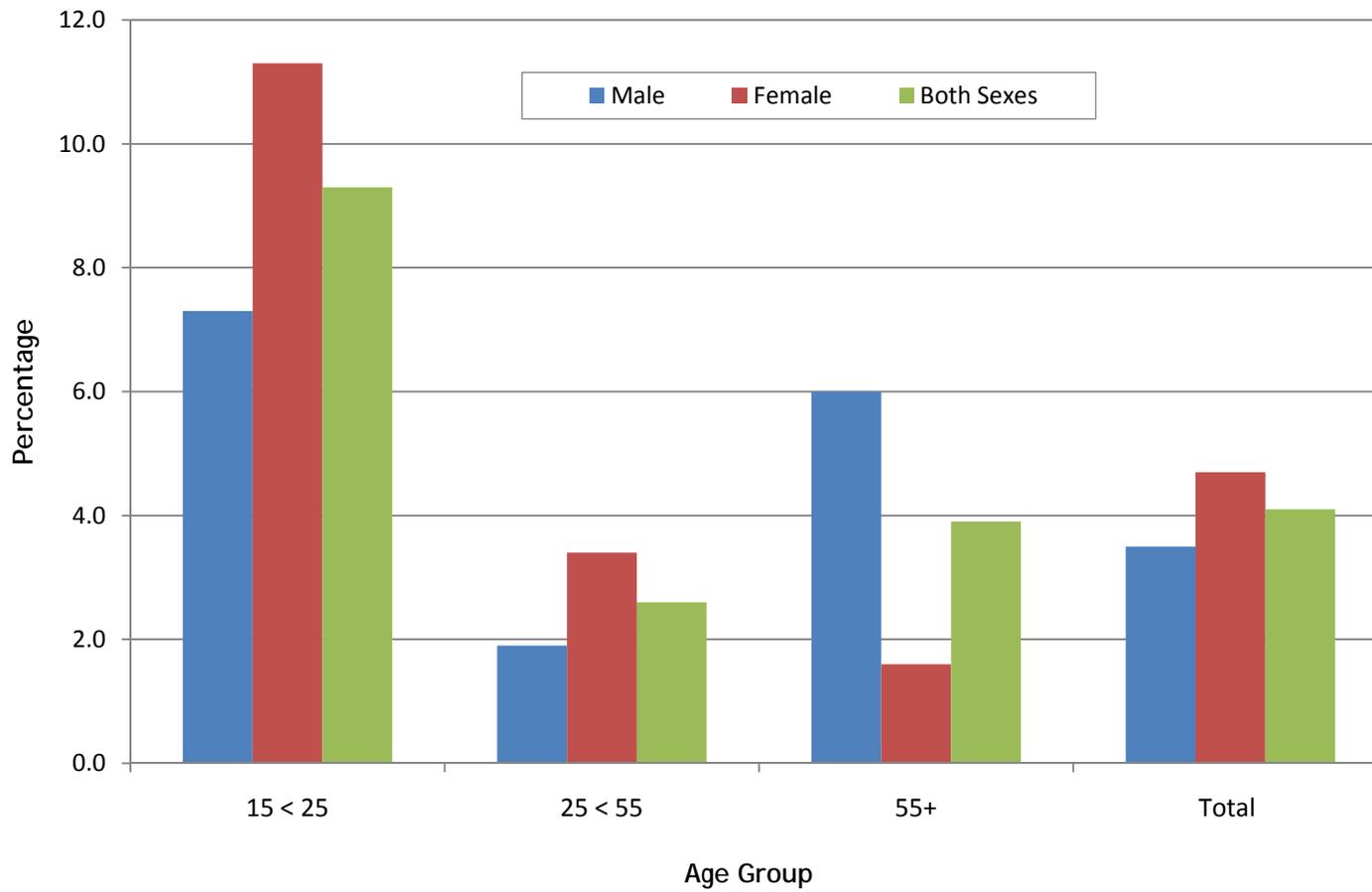
Source: National Bureau of Statistics, QLFS, Q1/2014

Table 6: Youth Unemployment to National Unemployment Rate, Q1/2014

	National Unemployment Rate	Youth Unemployment Rate
	%	%
Both sexes	4.2	11.0
Male	3.6	8.6
Female	4.8	13.2

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, QLFS, Q1/2014

Chart 1: Unemployment Rate by Age Group and Sex, Q1/2014



4. CONCEPTS, SOURCES AND METHODS

Data collection

Data collection was carried out over a period of one week every third week of each month for the first three months of 2014. Data on unemployment was collected relative to a current period (the previous calendar week). This was done by face to face interviews using paper questionnaires. Interviewers and supervisors were allocated districts and selected enumeration areas (EAs) to collect information from a list of sampled households. For the first quarter of 2014 eighteen districts were selected from different regions on Mahe, Praslin and La Digue and a 98% response rate was achieved.

Sampling method

The sample design used for the survey is the stratified two stage sampling. EAs served as primary sampling units (PSUs). At the first stage, the EAs were selected with probability proportional to size (i.e. the number of EAs in the respective district). At the second stage, a fixed number of 10 households were selected from each selected EA.

The sampling scheme which was adopted for the collection of unemployment

statistics was the Rotational Sampling Scheme. 400 households were selected on a monthly basis making up 1200 households in one quarter. Half of the households which were selected in quarter one will be re interviewed in quarter two, to provide a 50% overlap between quarters.

Questionnaire

One questionnaire was used for the collection of unemployment statistics. The questionnaire comprised two sections, LFS 1 and LFS 2. The former collected basic information on the socio-demographic characteristics of all members of the household. This section was used as a basis to determine those members who were eligible to move to LFS 2, which focused on labour force.

The second section of the questionnaire collected information on economic activities of household members who were 15 years and above. This included information on their current activity status, details of the current main job of those employed, their status in employment and the number of hours spent in employment. The last section collected detailed information on those who were unemployed.

DEFINITIONS

Employed population:

Persons of working age are classified as employed if, that person:

- (a) during a short reference period, was engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit, for at least an hour, or
- (b) was temporarily absent from work for work related reasons such as leave, illness, shortage of materials provided the person continued to have a job attachment or an enterprise that continued to exist

Unemployed population:

This refers to persons in the working age population, who during the reference week:

- (a) were not employed,
- (b) were available to take up such work if one was found
- (c) were actively looking for work during the previous 4 weeks.

Labour force:

The labour force is defined as all persons aged 15 years and above who, during the

previous calendar week, were either employed or unemployed.

A person who is neither employed nor unemployed is **outside the labour force**.

Labour force participation rate:

The labour force participation rate (LFPR) provides information about the relative size of the supply of labour currently available for the production of goods and services in an economy. It is a key indicator of the potential for economic growth.

Employment to population ratio:

Employment to population ratio is the number of employed persons to those in the working age population expressed as a percentage. Ages 15 and older are generally considered the working-age population.

Youth (UN definition)

The youth are defined as persons between the ages of 15-24 years.

Youth unemployment:

This is defined as the total unemployed youth divided by the youth labour force (employed and unemployed youth).

5. NEXT RELEASE

The next issue of the Unemployment Statistics Bulletin will be released on Tuesday 30th September 2014.

6. CONTACT US

For more information regarding this publication, please contact Kirsten Arnephy or Maria Payet on Tel :+(248)4 611 675/+ (248) 4 611 660 | Fax :+(248)4 225 634 or email: stats@nbs.gov.sc