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Quarterly Unemployment Statistics 2015-Q3

In the third quarter of 2015, the national unemployment rate was 4.2% and the labour force participation rate was recorded at 70.8%. The highest unemployment rate was among females (4.8%) compared to males (3.6%).

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1. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin presents 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

YEAR ON YEAR COMPARISON

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 in quarter three of 2015, 59% of the unemployed population was female. This shows an increase of 21.2% in the proportion accounted for by unemployed women compared to quarter three of 2014. Compared to the same

period in 2014, the male representation has decreased by 20% in quarter three of 2015. A reverse pattern can be observed among the youth unemployed population.

The total unemployment rate is recorded at 4.2% in quarter three of 2015, a decrease of 9.5% over the same period of the previous year. Unemployment rates of 3.6% and 4.8% have been reported for male and female respectively.

Table 2 presents unemployment rates by age group and sex, for the third quarter of 2015. The unemployment rate is highest among the youth aged below 25 years. Quarter three recorded a rate of 10.6% for this sub-group of the economically active population. This represents a 27.6% decrease from the same period in 2014. In the same age band, females have a slightly higher unemployment rate (10.8%) in comparison with males (10.5%). In this quarter, there has been a slight decrease in the unemployment rate amongst the 55-plus age group compared to quarter three of 2014. The rate decreased from 1.7% in quarter three of 2014 to 0.7% in the same quarter of 2015.

Less than half (42.3%) of the unemployed persons were aged below 25 years with a

higher proportion among the males (53.0%) compared to the female (34.8%) population in this category.

The distribution of unemployed population by educational attainment and sex is provided in Table 3. For half of the unemployed, the educational attainment does not go beyond secondary level. The distribution of unemployed population across educational attainment shows that male representation is higher than that of female (55.2% and 47.4% respectively). Table 4 presents the distribution of unemployed population by duration of unemployment whereas the distribution of the same population by sex and by methods used to search for work is shown in Table 5.

In quarter three of 2015, 44.8% of all unemployed persons remained so for 3 months or less. This reflects a change from corresponding quarter of 2014 where a higher percentage of unemployed persons (51.6%) remained so for 6 months or more.

Applying to prospective employers is still the most commonly used method for obtaining work. This method was the preferred one for 36.0% of job seekers,

with a slightly higher figure of 36.5% for females compared to 35.4% for males.

Year on year comparison shows that checking for work at factories and other work places was the method of job search that gained most popularity was. 19.3% of jobseekers reported using such services in quarter three of 2015 compared to 16.1% in the corresponding quarter of 2014.

Youth unemployment situation vis-à-vis national unemployment in Seychelles for quarter three 2015 was indicated as being serious compared to the same period in 2014 which was severe. From Table 6, the rate of youth unemployment is 2.5 times higher than the national unemployment rate, with female and male rates among the youth at about 2 and 3 times higher respectively than their corresponding national rates. For quarter three 2015, females have recorded an increase in unemployment rate of 2.8% compared to the corresponding period in 2014.

QUARTER ON QUARTER COMPARISON

Table 1 shows that in quarter three of 2015, 59% of the unemployed population was female. This shows an increase of 2.2% compared to quarter two of 2015.

Compared to the previous quarter, the male representation has decreased by 3.0%.

The total unemployment rate was recorded at 4.2% in quarter three of 2015, an increase of 4.0% from the previous quarter. There has also been a decrease of 17.7% in the youth unemployment rate over the previous quarter of 2015.

In this quarter, there has been a decrease in the unemployment rate amongst the youth aged below 25 years and the 55-plus age group compared to the previous quarter in 2015. The rate decreased from 12.9% to 10.6% for the former age group and dropped from 1% to 0.7% for the latter.

Jobseekers who remained unemployed for at least 3 months increased from 19.4% in the second quarter of 2015 to 44.8% in the third quarter of 2015 (Table 4).

Quarter on quarter comparison for the most common method of jobseeking shows that the proportion of those who registered at private employment agency, has doubled compared to quarter two of 2015 (Table 5).

Time-Related Underemployment

Underemployment enables us to have an insight into the extent to which available labour is underutilised. There is a proportion of the employed population who, although they have jobs, face a partial lack of work. The QLFS uses the time-related approach to measure underemployment with the threshold at 35 hours per week, for main jobs only.

Table 1 shows that in quarter three of 2015 1.5% of the employed population were underemployed. A higher proportion of males (2.7%) were underemployed compared to that of their female counterparts (0.4%).

The percentage distribution of underemployment by sex shows that more than three quarters of those who are underemployed are men.

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 second quarter of 2015. 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 third quarter of 2015, nineteen 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, 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 with 50% overlap for each quarter.

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, while the latter 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 for those in employment, their status in employment and the number of hours spent in employment. The last section collected detailed information on those who were unemployed.

DEFINITIONS

Working age population:

This comprises all persons aged 15 years and above.

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 work if such was found
- (c) Were actively looking for work during the previous 4 weeks.

Unemployed (Relaxed) population:

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

- (a) Were seeking employment, but not available (**unavailable job seekers**)
- (b) Were not seeking employment, but want and are available to work (Available non-job seekers OR discouraged job seekers)

Time related-Underemployment:

Persons in time related-underemployment are employed persons who were willing

and available to work additional hours, whose total number of hours actually worked during the reference period was below 35 hours per week.

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 proportion of a country's population that is employed. Persons aged 15 and older are generally considered the working-age population. It is the ratio of the number of employed persons to those in the

working age population expressed as a percentage.

Youth (UN definition):

It has often been observed that youth unemployment rate is relatively higher than the national unemployment rate. For the purposes of analysis in this publication, a value of up to two times higher is considered normal; a value beyond two times, but below three times higher will be considered a serious youth unemployment situation, whilst beyond three times higher will be deemed severe.

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 31st March 2016.

6. CONTACT US

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3. TABLES AND CHARTS

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Key Populations and Selected Key Indicators, Q1-Q3 2015

	Q1 2015			Q2 2015			Q3 2015		
	Male %	Female %	Both Sexes %	Male %	Female %	Both Sexes %	Male %	Female %	Both Sexes %
Working age population									
National	48.0	52.0	100.0	47.6	52.4	100.0	46.7	53.3	100.0
Youth (UN) (1)	49.6	50.4	100.0	50.0	50.0	100.0	48.7	51.3	100.0
Employed population									
National	50.6	49.4	100.0	51.6	48.4	100.0	48.9	51.1	100.0
Youth (UN) (1)	53.2	46.8	100.0	55.9	44.1	100.0	52.6	47.4	100.0
Unemployed population (standard)									
National	40.4	59.6	100.0	42.5	57.5	100.0	41.2	58.8	100.0
Youth (UN) (1)	37.6	62.4	100.0	49.8	50.2	100.0	51.7	48.3	100.0
Unemployed population (relaxed)									
National	39.5	60.5	100.0	43.4	56.6	100.0	41.9	58.1	100.0
Youth (UN) (1)	38.7	61.3	100.0	51.6	48.4	100.0	46.0	54.0	100.0
Labour force (standard)									
National	50.1	49.9	100.0	51.2	48.8	100.0	48.6	51.4	100.0
Youth (UN) (1)	50.4	49.6	100.0	55.1	44.9	100.0	52.5	47.5	100.0
Time-Related Underemployment (2)									
Actual Time-Related Underemployment	74.6	25.4	100.0	86.2	13.8	100.0	87.7	12.3	100.0
Usual Time-Related Underemployment	44.8	55.2	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Rates (%):									
Unemployment rate (Standard Definition)	4.3	6.4	5.4	3.4	4.8	4.1	3.6	4.8	4.2
Unemployment rate (Relaxed Definition)	7.8	11.7	9.7	7.6	10.2	8.9	7.1	9.2	8.2
Labour Force Participation Rate	73.6	67.6	70.5	76.3	66.1	70.9	73.7	68.3	70.8
Employment-to-Population Ratio	70.4	63.3	66.7	73.7	62.9	68.0	71.1	65.0	67.8
Time-Related Underemployment (2)									
Actual Time-Related Underemployment	2.8	1.0	1.9	2.2	0.4	1.3	2.7	0.4	1.5
Usual Time-Related Underemployment	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
Youth unemployment rate (Standard Definition)	13.2	22.3	17.7	11.7	14.4	12.9	10.5	10.8	10.6
Youth unemployment rate (Relaxed Definition)	18.2	28.5	23.4	20.4	23.4	21.8	15.5	19.3	17.4

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Notes:

(1) Youth UN refers to population aged 15-24 years

(2) Time related Underemployment is only recorded for persons in Full time employment (people working 35 hours per week)

Table 2: Unemployment Rates by Age Group and Sex, Q1-Q3 2015

Age group (years)	Q1 2015			Q2 2015			Q3 2015		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	%			%			%		
15 < 25	13.2	22.3	17.7	11.7	14.4	12.9	10.5	10.8	10.6
25 < 55	2.5	4.0	3.3	2.1	3.5	2.8	2.5	4.0	3.3
55+	3.7	1.0	2.5	0.4	1.9	1.0	0.0	1.6	0.7
Total	4.3	6.4	5.4	3.4	4.8	4.1	3.6	4.8	4.2

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Population by Educational Attainment and Sex, Q1-Q3 2015

Educational Attainment	Q1 2015			Q2 2015			Q3 2015		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	%			%			%		
Secondary & below	69.4	62.3	65.2	53.7	53.9	53.8	55.2	47.4	50.6
Post-secondary	30.6	37.7	34.8	46.3	46.1	46.2	44.8	52.6	49.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

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-Q3 2015

Duration of Unemployment	Q1 2015			Q2 2015			Q3 2015		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	%			%			%		
1 month to less than 3 months	28.9	32.3	30.9	22.2	17.4	19.4	45.3	44.4	44.8
3 months to less than 6 months	34.2	26.9	29.9	20.8	20.2	20.4	10.7	17.4	14.5
6 months & above	36.9	40.8	39.2	56.9	62.4	60.2	44.0	38.1	40.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Population by Methods Used to Search for Work and Sex, Q1-Q3 2015

Methods used to search for work	Q1 2015			Q2 2015			Q3 2015		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	%			%			%		
Applied to prospective employers	35.9	32.3	33.6	38.8	37.0	37.8	35.4	36.5	36.0
Checked at factories and other work places	31.4	21.2	25.1	17.2	17.7	17.4	27.4	12.9	19.3
Placed or answered advertisements or browsed the internet	0.0	8.8	5.4	9.1	18.1	14.1	8.0	15.8	12.3
Sought assistance or advice to obtain a job	7.3	9.1	8.4	21.9	13.4	17.2	8.0	7.4	7.7
Registered at private employment agency	18.2	22.3	20.8	13.0	5.8	9.0	15.1	17.5	16.4
Took steps to start own business comprising:	7.1	6.4	6.7	0.0	8.1	4.5	6.1	9.9	8.2
- Sought assistance or advice to start own business									
- Looked for inputs to set up own business									
-Applied for permit to set up own business									

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, QLFS, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Table 6: Youth Unemployment to National Unemployment Rate, Q1-Q3 2015

		Unemployment Rate (%)		Severity Youth:National (1)
		National	Youth	
Q1 2015	Both sexes	5.4	17.7	3.3
	Male	4.3	13.2	3.0
	Female	6.4	22.3	3.5
Q2 2015	Both sexes	4.1	12.9	3.2
	Male	3.4	11.7	3.5
	Female	4.8	14.4	3.0
Q3 2015	Both sexes	4.2	10.6	2.5
	Male	3.6	10.5	2.9
	Female	4.8	10.8	2.3

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

(1) The severity shows the number of times that the Youth unemployment rate exceeds the National unemployment rate

The scale can be analysed as follows:

- (≤ 2) Normal
- (> 2 ≤ 3) Serious
- (> 3) Severe

Unemployment Rates by Age group and Sex, Q1-Q3 2015

