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Quarterly Unemployment Statistics 2015-Q1

In the first quarter of 2015, the national unemployment rate was **5.4%** and the labour force participation rate was recorded at **70.5%**. The highest unemployment rate was among females (**6.4%**) compared to males (**4.3%**).

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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 one of 2015, 60% of the unemployed population was female. This shows an increase of 25.3% in the proportion accounted for by unemployed women compared to quarter one of 2014. Compared to the same period in 2014, the male representation has decreased by 22.9% in quarter one of 2015. Similar patterns can be observed among the youth unemployed population. The total unemployment rate is recorded at 5.4% in quarter one of 2015, an increase of 17.1% over the same period of the previous year. The unemployment rates of 4.3% and 6.4% have been

reported for male and female respectively.

Table 2 presents unemployment rates by age group and sex for the first quarter of 2015. The unemployment rate is highest among the youth aged below 25 years. Quarter one recorded a rate of 17.7% for this sub-group of the economically active population. This represents a 5% increase from the same period in 2014. However, compared to the previous year, there is a greater disparity between sexes in this age band. In the same age band, females have a higher unemployment rate (22.3%) in comparison with males (13.2%). In this quarter, there has been a slight decrease in the unemployment rate amongst the 55-plus age group compared to quarter one of 2014. The rate decreased from 2.8% in quarter one of 2014 to 2.5% in the same quarter of 2015.

Half (50.2%) of the unemployed persons were aged below 25 years with a higher proportion among the female (52.5%) compared to the male (46.7%) population in this category.

The distribution of unemployed population by educational attainment and sex is provided in Table 3. For about two thirds of the unemployed, the educational attainment does not go beyond secondary level. The female unemployed have a slightly lower proportion (62.3%) in this age group than their male counterparts (69.4%). 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 one of 2015, 39.2% of all unemployed persons remained so for 6 months or more, reflecting a slight increase in representation from 36.8% in the corresponding quarter of 2014.

Applying to prospective employers is still the most commonly used method for obtaining work. This method was the preferred one for 33.6% of job seekers, with a slightly lower figure of 32.3% for females compared to 35.9% for males.

Year on year comparison shows that the method of job search that gained most popularity was “Registered at private employment agency”. 20.8% of jobseekers reported using such services in quarter one of 2015 compared to 12.3% in quarter one of 2014.

The youth unemployment situation in Seychelles for quarter one of 2015 remained severe compared to the same period in 2014. From Table 6, the rate of youth unemployment is 3.3 times higher than the national unemployment rate with male and female rates among the youth at about 3 and 4 times higher respectively than their corresponding national rates. In quarter one of 2015, females recorded an increase in unemployment rate of 49.7% compared to the corresponding period in 2014.

QUARTER ON QUARTER COMPARISON

Table 1 shows that in quarter one of 2015, 60% of the unemployed population was female. This shows an increase of 16.2% compared to quarter four of 2014. Compared to the previous quarter, the male representation has decreased by 17.1% in quarter one of 2015.

The total unemployment rate was recorded at 5.4% in quarter one of 2015, an increase of 49.7% from the previous quarter. New entrants into the job market at the beginning of the year is likely to contribute to such high increase. This is confirmed by the 34.4% increase in the youth unemployment rate over the last quarter of 2014.

In this quarter, there has been a slight increase in the unemployment rate amongst the 55-plus age group compared to the previous quarter in 2014. The rate increased from 2.1% in quarter four of 2014 to 2.8% in quarter one of 2015.

Jobseekers who remained unemployed for at least 6 months decreased from 57.5% in the last quarter of 2014 to 39.2% in quarter one 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 agencies more than tripled compared to quarter four of 2014 (Table 5). For quarter one of 2015, females recorded an increase in unemployment rate of 68.4% compared to the previous quarter of 2014.

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.

Table 1 shows that in quarter one of 2015 1.9% of the employed population were underemployed. A higher proportion of males (2.8%) were underemployed compared to that of their female counterparts (1.0%).

The percentage distribution of underemployment by sex shows that 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 first 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 first 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, 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.

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

Working age population:

This comprises of all persons aged 15 plus years.

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

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 wanted and were 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 were 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. WHAT'S NEW IN THIS ISSUE

This bulletin contains data on Time-Related Underemployment. The collection of this data started in quarter one of 2015 and the figures are shown in Table 1.

Questions for measuring Time-Related Underemployment are found in Part E of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey questionnaire. The main objective of this is to further measure labour underutilization in Seychelles.

6. NEXT RELEASE

The next issue of the Unemployment Statistics Bulletin will be released on Tuesday 30th September 2015.

7. CONTACT US

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3. TABLES AND CHARTS

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Key Populations and Selected Key Indicators, 2014/Q1 2015

	2014 Q1			2014 Q2			2014 Q3			2014 Q4			Annual 2014			2015 Q1		
	M	F	Both Sexes	M	F	Both Sexes	M	F	Both Sexes	M	F	Both Sexes	M	F	Both Sexes	M	F	Both Sexes
	(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)		
Working age population																		
National	47.0	53.0	100.0	47.0	53.0	100.0	48.8	51.2	100.0	47.5	52.5	100.0	47.5	52.5	100.0	48.0	52.0	100.0
Youth (UN)	48.4	51.6	100.0	48.8	51.2	100.0	50.5	49.5	100.0	48.8	51.2	100.0	49.3	50.7	100.0	49.6	50.4	100.0
Employed population																		
National	48.9	51.1	100.0	49.0	51.0	100.0	51.4	48.6	100.0	51.3	48.7	100.0	49.9	50.1	100.0	50.6	49.4	100.0
Youth (UN)	49.4	50.6	100.0	48.2	51.8	100.0	53.7	46.3	100.0	52.8	47.2	100.0	51.3	48.7	100.0	53.2	46.8	100.0
Unemployed population (standard)																		
National	52.4	47.6	100.0	48.4	51.6	100.0	51.5	48.5	100.0	48.7	51.3	100.0	49.0	51.0	100.0	40.4	59.6	100.0
Youth (UN)	52.6	47.4	100.0	48.8	51.2	100.0	51.6	48.4	100.0	42.7	57.3	100.0	49.2	50.8	100.0	37.6	62.4	100.0
Unemployed population (relaxed)																		
National	49.1	50.9	100.0	44.1	55.9	100.0	50.3	49.7	100.0	43.7	56.3	100.0	45.1	54.9	100.0	39.5	60.5	100.0
Youth (UN)	45.8	54.2	100.0	47.5	52.5	100.0	52.5	47.5	100.0	47.8	52.2	100.0	45.9	54.1	100.0	38.7	61.3	100.0
Labour force (standard)																		
National	49.1	50.9	100.0	49.0	51.0	100.0	51.4	48.6	100.0	51.2	48.8	100.0	49.9	50.1	100.0	50.1	49.9	100.0
Youth (UN)	49.9	50.1	100.0	48.3	51.7	100.0	53.4	46.6	100.0	51.5	48.5	100.0	51.1	48.9	100.0	50.4	49.6	100.0
Time-Related Underemployment																		
Actual Time-Related Underemployment	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	74.6	25.4	100.0
Usual Time-Related Underemployment	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	44.8	55.2	100.0
Rates (%):																		
Unemployment rate (Standard Definition)	4.9	4.3	4.6	3.1	3.1	3.1	4.7	4.7	4.7	3.5	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.3	6.4	5.4
Unemployment rate (Relaxed Definition)	10.7	10.6	10.6	5.9	7.1	6.5	6.1	6.4	6.2	7.1	9.4	8.2	7.9	9.5	8.7	7.8	11.7	9.7
Labour Force Participation Rate	75.6	69.5	72.4	75.7	70.1	72.8	73.0	65.8	69.3	73.8	63.7	68.5	73.8	67.0	70.3	73.6	67.6	70.5
Employment-to-Population Ratio	71.9	66.5	69.0	73.4	67.9	70.5	69.6	62.7	66.0	71.2	61.2	66.0	70.9	64.2	67.4	70.4	63.3	66.7
Time-Related Underemployment																		
Actual Time-Related Underemployment																2.8	1.0	1.9
Usual Time-Related Underemployment																0.4	0.5	0.5
Youth unemployment rate (Standard Definition)	17.8	16.0	16.9	9.7	9.5	9.6	14.2	15.3	14.7	10.9	15.6	13.2	12.9	13.9	13.4	13.2	22.3	17.7
Youth unemployment rate (Relaxed Definition)	25.0	27.8	26.5	13.1	13.4	13.3	16.9	17.6	17.2	20.2	23.7	21.9	18.4	21.8	20.1	18.2	28.5	23.4

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Notes:

Youth UN refers to population aged 15-24 years

Time related Unemployment is only recorded for Full time employment in the public sector (people working 35 hours per week)

.. data not collected

Table 2: Unemployment Rates by Age Group and Sex, 2014/Q1 2015

Age group (years)	2014 Q1			2014 Q2			2014 Q3			2014 Q4			2014 Annual			2015 Q1		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)		
15 < 25	17.8	16.0	16.9	9.7	9.5	9.6	14.2	15.3	14.7	10.9	15.6	13.2	12.9	13.9	13.4	13.2	22.3	17.7
25 < 55	1.9	2.3	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.0	3.3	3.2	3.2	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.7	2.5	2.5	4.0	3.3
55+	4.5	1.0	2.8	0.9	0.5	0.7	1.6	1.9	1.7	2.7	1.5	2.1	2.7	1.6	2.1	3.7	1.0	2.5
Total	4.9	4.3	4.6	2.9	3.1	3.0	4.7	4.7	4.7	3.5	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.3	6.4	5.4

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Population by Educational Attainment and Sex, 2014/Q1 2015

Educational Attainment	2014 Q1			2014 Q2			2014 Q3			2014 Q4			2014 Annual			2015 Q1		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)		
No schooling	4.8	1.3	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	1.7	2.2	0.0	1.1	2.1	1.4	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary & below	47.8	58.3	52.9	52.6	58.4	55.7	58.0	62.7	60.3	64.0	76.8	70.5	54.2	62.1	58.3	69.4	62.3	65.2
Post-secondary	47.3	40.4	44.0	47.4	41.6	44.3	42.0	33.8	38	33.8	23.2	28.4	43.7	36.5	40.0	30.6	37.7	34.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	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

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, 2014/Q1 2015

Duration of unemployment	2014 Q1			2014 Q2			2014 Q3			2014 Q4			2014 Annual			2015 Q1		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)		
1 month to less than 3 months	45.6	32.5	39.5	19.8	24.8	22.4	19.2	29.9	24.4	26.3	25.9	26.1	28.6	28.3	28.4	28.9	32.3	30.9
3 months to less than 6 months	23.6	23.8	23.7	24.7	20.0	22.3	27.4	20.3	23.9	16.2	16.6	16.4	24.2	20.8	22.5	34.2	26.9	29.9
6 months & above	30.8	43.7	36.8	55.5	55.3	55.4	53.4	49.8	51.6	57.5	57.5	57.5	47.2	50.9	49.0	36.9	40.8	39.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	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 2014/Q1 2015

Methods used to search for work	2014 Q1			2014 Q2			2014 Q3			2014 Q4			2014 Annual			2015 Q1		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
	(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)			(%)		
Applied to prospective employers	36.4	34.5	35.4	47.4	43.3	45.2	32.2	34.0	33.0	35.6	54.2	44.4	32.5	35.9	34.3	35.9	32.3	33.6
Checked at factories and other work places	23.8	18.2	20.8	25.6	15.8	20.1	16.5	15.8	16.1	26.4	16.2	21.6	22.6	18.3	20.4	31.4	21.2	25.1
Placed or answered advertisements or browsed the internet	12.1	8.0	9.9	1.5	17.0	10.1	10.1	15.1	12.4	8.4	11.3	9.8	9.1	13.5	11.4	0.0	8.8	5.4
Sought assistance or advice to obtain a job	17.6	11.9	14.5	9.0	8.6	8.8	9.5	3.5	6.6	10.6	10.3	10.5	12.3	9.0	10.6	7.3	9.1	8.4
Registered at private employment agency	7.2	16.6	12.3	11.6	11.6	11.6	18.9	28.1	23.3	7.1	6.3	6.7	13.1	17.7	15.5	18.2	22.3	20.8
Took steps to start own business comprising: - Sought assistance or advice to start own business - Looked for inputs to set up own business - Applied for permit to set up own business	2.8	10.8	7.1	5.0	3.7	4.2	12.8	3.6	8.4	11.9	1.7	7.0	10.4	5.5	7.9	7.1	6.4	6.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	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 6: Youth Unemployment to National Unemployment Rate, 2014/Q1 2015

	Unemployment Rate (%)			Youth: National
		National	Youth	
2014 Q1	Both sexes	4.6	17.8	3.9
	Male	4.9	16.0	3.3
	Female	4.3	16.9	3.9
2014 Q2	Both sexes	3.1	9.6	3.1
	Male	3.1	9.7	3.1
	Female	3.1	9.5	3.1
2014 Q3	Both sexes	4.7	14.7	3.2
	Male	4.7	14.2	3.0
	Female	4.7	15.3	3.3
2014 Q4	Both sexes	3.6	13.2	3.7
	Male	3.5	10.9	3.1
	Female	3.8	15.6	4.1
2014 Annual	Both sexes	4.1	13.4	3.3
	Male	4.0	12.9	3.2
	Female	4.2	13.9	3.3
2015 Q1	Both sexes	5.4	17.7	3.3
	Male	4.3	13.2	3.0
	Female	6.4	22.3	3.5

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Unemployment Rates by Age group and Sex

