



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY

PRESS RELEASE

**Unemployment rate in March 2021 is estimated
at 7.1 percent**

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Table A-1. Results from the March 2021 Labor Force Survey (LFS)

Philippines	Mar 2021 ^P	Feb 2021 ^P	Jan 2021 ^P	Oct 2020 ^P	Jul 2020 ^F	Apr 2020 ^F
Labor Force Participation Rate (%)	65.0	63.5	60.5	58.7	61.9	55.7
Employment Rate (%)	92.9	91.2	91.3	91.3	90.0	82.4
Underemployment Rate (%)	16.2	18.2	16.0	14.4	17.3	18.9
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.1	8.8	8.7	8.7	10.0	17.6

Notes:

^P Estimates are preliminary and may change

^F Final Estimates

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, Labor Force Survey

Highlights of the March 2021 Labor Force Survey

- Unemployment rate fell to 7.1 percent in March 2021. This is the lowest reported rate covering the period of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic since April 2020. The number of unemployed Filipinos 15 years and over in March 2021 was estimated at 3.44 million, a reduction of about 747 thousand unemployed persons from February 2021. (Table A)
- Labor force participation rate (LFPR) bounced back to 65.0 percent in March 2021, or a total of 48.77 million Filipinos 15 years old and over who were either employed or unemployed. It was the highest LFPR since April 2014. (Table A)
- Employment rate rose to 92.9 percent in March 2021, from 91.2 percent in February 2021. This translates to a month-on-month increase of about 2.18 million Filipinos who had job or business, from 43.15 million in February 2021 to 45.33 million Filipinos in March 2021. (Tables A and D)

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- d. Underemployment rate in the country recorded a decline at 16.2 percent in March 2021, a change of -2.0 percentage points from 18.2 percent in February 2021. In terms of magnitude, about 7.34 million of the employed persons expressed the desire to have additional hours of work in their present job or to have additional job, or to have a new job with longer hours of work in March 2021. (Table A)

Of the 16.2 percent underemployment rate, 10.9 percentage points were visibly underemployed or employed persons who worked less than 40 hours in a week and wanted additional hours of work. On the other hand, 5.3 percentage points were invisibly underemployed or employed persons who worked more than 40 hours in a week and wanted additional hours of work. (Table A)

By broad industry group, underemployed persons were highest in the services sector, accounting for 44.3 percent of the 7.34 million total underemployed persons in March 2021. Underemployed persons in the agriculture sector accounted for 37.2 percent, while in the industry sector, 18.5 percent. The underemployment rate in the industry sector steadily decreased since January this year, while those in the agriculture and services sectors were erratic in the past three months. (Tables 3)

- e. Average weekly hours of work of an employed person improved in March 2021 at 39.7 hours compared to the 38.9 hours and 39.3 hours reported in February 2021 and January 2021, respectively. (Tables 2 and A)

Among the 45.33 million employed persons, 62.2 percent worked on an average of 40 hours and over in the past week, while 36.7 percent worked less than 40 hours. (Table 2)

- f. Among men and women, LFPR remained higher for men at 76.8 percent than for women at 53.1 percent in March 2021. The LFPR among men and women steadily increased since January 2021. (Table D)
- g. Employment rate among men (93.4 %) was higher compared to women (92.2 %) but men also had higher underemployment rate (18.1%) than women (13.4%). (Table D)
- h. By broad industry group, the services sector remained as the dominant employment hub accounting for 56.0 percent of the total employed persons in March 2021. This was followed by the agriculture sector which accounted for nearly one-fourth (24.6%), while the industry sector had a share of nearly one-fifth (19.4%) of the total employed persons in March 2021. (Table 1)

The top five (5) sub-industries with reported increases in the number of employed persons from February 2021 to March 2021 were as follows:

1. construction (846 thousand),
2. wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (672 thousand),
3. agriculture and forestry (623 thousand),
4. manufacturing (285 thousand), and
5. fishing and aquaculture (203 thousand). (Table B)

On the other hand, the sub-industries with reported large decreases on the number of employed persons from February to March 2021 were the following:

1. education (-248 thousand);
 2. transportation and storage (-194 thousand);
 3. other service activities (-149 thousand);
 4. human health and social work activities (-64 thousand); and
 5. information and communication (-62 thousand). (Table B)
- i. By occupation group, elementary occupation (laborers/unskilled workers or simple and routine tasks usually with handheld tools and considerable physical effort) remained to account for the largest proportion of employed persons (29.8%), followed by the service and sales workers (20.7%), and skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery workers (12.3%). (Table 1)



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Attachments:

1. *Table A – Key Employment Indicators, Philippines: March 2021^P, February 2021^P, and January 2021^P*
2. *Table B – Employment by Major Industry Group and Total Hours Worked, Philippines: March 2021^P, February 2021^P, and January 2021^P*
3. *Table C – Reasons for Working Less Than 40 Hours, Working More than 48 Hours, and with Job but not at Work: March 2021^P, February 2021^P, and January 2021^P*
4. *Table D – Key Employment Indicators by Sex, Philippines: March 2021^P, February 2021^P, and January 2021^P*
5. *Table 1 – Employed Persons by Sector, Occupation and Class of Worker, Philippines: March 2021^P, February 2021^P, and January 2021^P*
6. *Table 2 – Employed Persons by Sector, Subsector, and Hours Worked, Philippines: March 2021^P, February 2021^P, and January 2021^P*
7. *Table 3 – Underemployed Persons by Hours Worked and Sector, and Unemployed Persons by Age Group, Sex and Highest Grade Completed: March 2021^P, February 2021^P, and January 2021^P*
8. *Technical Notes of the March 2021 Labor Force Survey (LFS)*