

Wickramaratne employs correct statistics on gender gap in the labour force

FactCheck assessed the minister's claim using data from the Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey Annual Report - 2016 by the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) and the Global Gender Gap report by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

DCS data shows that LFP was 75.1 per cent for men and 35.9 per cent for women in 2016 (Exhibit 1). This is a gender gap of 39.2 percentage points. WEF also ranked Sri Lanka 131st out of 144 countries on the gender gap in LFP, making it the 14th largest gender gap. Therefore, the minister is correct on the figures he quotes on LFP.

DCS data also shows that in 2016, the group with the highest

unemployment were women aged 15-24 years (24.5%), 12.1 percentage points higher than men in the same age group, and 13.3 percentage points higher than women in the next highest group, aged 25 - 29 years (Exhibit 1).

State Minister Eran Wickramaratne was correct on both claims. Therefore, we classify his statement as TRUE.

*FactCheck's verdict is based on the most recent information that is publicly accessible. As with every fact check, if new information becomes available, FactCheck will revisit the assessment.

Exhibit 1: Labour Force Participation and unemployment rate by age and gender

| | | 2016 | | 2017 | |
|---------------------------------|---------|------|--------|------|--------|
| | | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Labour force participation rate | | 75.1 | 35.9 | 74.5 | 36.6 |
| Unemployment rate by age | 15-24 | 17.1 | 29.2 | 14.9 | 24.5 |
| | 25-29 | 5.1 | 15.9 | 5.8 | 15.7 |
| | 30-39 | 0.9 | 5.1 | 1.3 | 5.1 |
| | Over 40 | 0.5 | 1.3 | 0.6 | 1.6 |
| | All | 2.9 | 7.0 | 2.9 | 6.5 |