



**Results Labour Force Survey  
Sint Maarten 2009**

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## Summary

In June 2009, the employed population in St. Maarten increased by more than 650 persons, compared to March 2007. This is an increase of just over 3 percent. This increase can solely be attributed to the increase in the number of employed women. The male employed population decreased slightly. Also the increase concerned only persons born in Sint Maarten.

The number of unemployed persons increased with 21 percent. Because of this increase the unemployment rate went up from 10.6 percent in March 2007 to **12.2** percent in June 2009.

As a consequence of the increase in both the number of employed and in the number of unemployed, the number of persons in the labor force went up with 5 percent and the labor force now has a total of **24344** persons. The participation rate remained practically unchanged compared to 2007.

The youth unemployment rate increased to **29.4** percent of the youth labor force, mainly due to a large increase in the number of unemployed youth.

## Introduction

In June 2009, the Central Bureau of Statistics conducted a Labor Force Survey (LFS) in St. Maarten. The LFS is a sample survey among households with the aim to measure the recent developments on the labor market. The most important concepts in this survey are the unemployment rate, the development in the employed population, the development in the unemployed population and the degree of participation.

The survey is conducted every two years. The results of the survey of June 2009, are compared to the results of March 2007. They are *net results* of influx and efflux of the labor force and, therefore cannot relate to what happened *among* the various population groups during the year.

Between March 2007 and June 2009, the population increased by more than 1800 persons (6.4 percent), of which the increase consisted only persons 15 years and older. The youth population below 15 years, decreased in June 2009.

## Methodology

### Level of confidence and inaccuracy

The sample size of the Labor Force Survey is calculated to achieve a level of confidence of 90 percent for the unemployment rate and a margin of error of 1.35 percentage points. This calculation renders approximately 1250 households. In order to maintain this level of confidence, effort is made during the fieldwork to keep the non-response as low as possible.

The unemployment rate of the sample of 2009 achieved a margin of error of 1.50 percentage points with a level of confidence of 90 percent.

The results remain an estimate and this should always be taken into consideration when interpreting the figures.

### Sample design

The sample is a systematic sample, drawn with a random start number from the Population Registry.

As there is over coverage in the filing system of the Registry, such as addresses that no longer exist, untraceable addresses and places of residence that in the meantime have become businesses, the survey is oversampled with the expected percentage of non-response.

### Fieldwork

The fieldwork of the LFS lasts approximately two months. The interviews are conducted by 20 interviewers. It is important that all members of the household are interviewed face-to-face with a questionnaire about their situation on the labor market.

## Definitions

### **Employed persons:**

All persons 15 years and older with a job or their own business or who during the week prior the survey, worked 4 hours or more for a remuneration.

### **Unemployed persons:**

All persons 15 years and older who during the survey were unemployed, were actively looking for work the month prior to the survey and who can start working within 2 weeks, should there be a job available.

### **Labor Force (also called the economically active population)**

The number of employed and unemployed added together.

### **Economically not active**

All persons 15 years and older who are neither employed nor unemployed.

### **Unemployment rate**

The number of unemployed divided by the labor force multiplied by 100.

### **Youth unemployment rate**

The unemployment rate of persons in the age group 15 to 24.

### **Participation rate**

The labor force divided by the total population multiplied by 100. It indicates what proportion of the total population is economically active.

### **Employment to population rate**

The number of employed persons, divided by the population 15 years and older.

## Development of the population<sup>1</sup>

<b>Tabel 1 Development of the population by age group and gender</b>												
	<b>2007</b>		<b>2009</b>		<b>2007</b>		<b>2009</b>		<b>2007</b>		<b>2009</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Muta tions</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Muta tions</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Muta tions</b>	<b>Muta tions</b>
0 -14	4556	4555	-1	4776	4676	-100	9332	9231	-101			
15 - 24	2237	2519	282	2451	2691	240	4688	5210	522			
25 - 34	3201	2976	-225	3320	3151	-169	6521	6127	-394			
35 - 44	3933	4087	154	4350	4435	85	8283	8522	239			
45 - 54	2947	3184	237	3206	3595	389	6153	6779	626			
55plus	1961	2435	474	2075	2592	517	4036	5027	991			
Total	18835	19756	921	20178	21140	962	39013	40896	1883			

In order to obtain an insight into the developments in the labor force, it is also important to know how the population developed in the past period. In this case, it concerns the population between March 2007 and May 2009.

Developments in the population depend on the developments in the number of deaths, the number of births and migration. They determine the degree of influx and efflux of persons in the population and, with that, also the degree of influx and efflux in the labor force.

The population increased between March 2007 and May 2009. There was an increase in all age groups, except for the age group 25-34 years and the age group 0-14 years. The age group that increased the most is that of the ages 55 years and older.

<sup>1</sup> This concerns the population, excluding persons living in institutions such as the prison, relief centers, homes for the elderly, etc.

## Results of the Labor Force Survey

The tables 2, 3 and 4 describe the developments on the labor market that took place between June 2009 and March 2007. In the annex, the results of previous years (as from 1997) are given.

Table 2 relates the results for the total population and tables 3 and 4 give a breakdown of the results by gender and by age.

<b>Tabel 2 Development of the Population and of the Labor Force</b>					
<b>Total Population</b>		<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>	<b>Mutations</b>	<b>Percentage mutations</b>
1	Employed population	20720	21378	658	3.2
2	Unemployed population	2446	2966	520	21.3
(1+2) 3	Labor Force	23166	24344	1178	5.1
4	Economically not active	6601	7323	722	10.9
5	Population 15 years+	29767	31667	1900	6.4
6	Total population	39011	40898	1887	4.8
(3:6) 7	Participation rate (%)	59.4	59.5	0.1	
8	Unemployment rate (%)	10.6	12.2	1.6	
(1:6) 9	Employment to population rate	53.1	52.3	-0.8	

<b>Tabel 3 Development of the Population and of the Labor Force by gender</b>					
<b>Male</b>		<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>	<b>Mutations</b>	<b>Percentage mutations</b>
1	Employed population	11310	11233	-77	-0.7
2	Unemployed population	935	1312	377	40.3
(1+2) 3	Labor Force	12245	12545	300	2.4
4	Economically not active	2064	2656	592	28.7
5	Population 15 years+	14309	15201	892	6.2
6	Total population	18834	19757	923	4.9
(3:6) 7	Participation rate (%)	65.0	63.5	-1.5	
8	Unemployment rate (%)	7.6	10.5	2.8	
(1:6) 9	Employment to population ratio	60.1	56.9	-3.2	

<b>Female</b>		<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>	<b>Mutations</b>	<b>Percentage mutations</b>	
	1	Employed population	9411	10145	734	7.8
	2	Unemployed population	1510	1654	144	9.5
(1+2)	3	Labor Force	10921	11799	878	8.0
	4	Economically not active	4536	4667	131	2.9
	5	Population 15 years +	15457	16466	1009	6.5
	6	Total population	20177	21141	964	4.8
(3:6)	7	Participation rate (%)	54.1	55.8	1.7	
	8	Unemployment rate (%)	13.8	14.0	0.2	
(1:6)	9	Employment to population ratio	46.6	48.0	1.3	

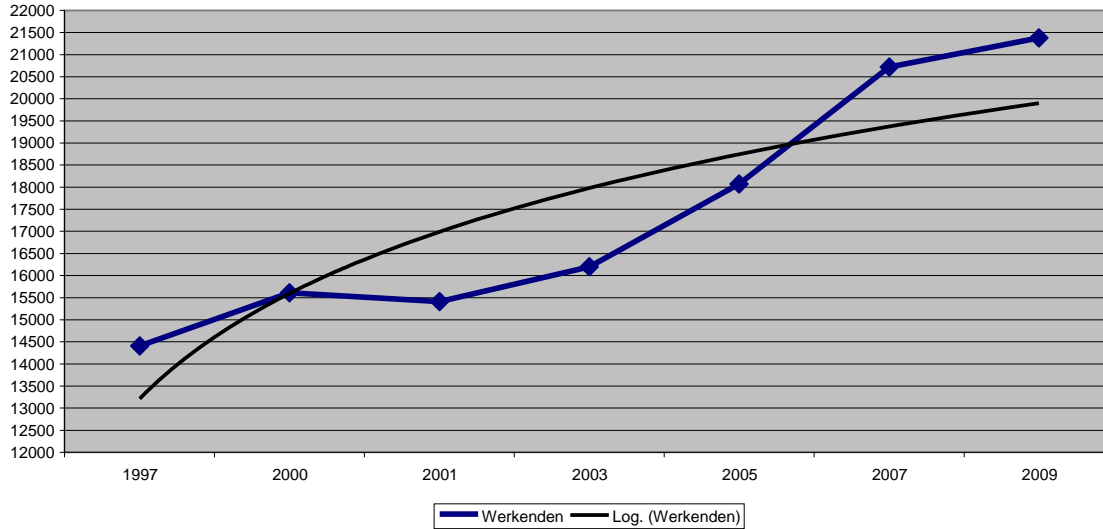
**Tabel 4 Development of the Population and of the Labor Force by age group**

<b>Age group 15-24</b>		<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>	<b>Mutations</b>	<b>Percentage mutations</b>	
	1	Employed population	1610	1977	367	22.8
	2	Unemployed population	567	825	258	45.5
(1+2)	3	Labor Force	2177	2802	625	28.7
	4	Economically not active	2510	2409	-101	-4.0
	5	Population 15 years+	4687	5211	524	11.2
(3:6)	7	Participation rate (%)	46.4	53.8	7.3	
	8	Unemployment rate (%)	26.0	29.4	3.4	
(1:6)	9	Employment to population ratio	34.4	37.9	3.6	

<b>Age group 25-44</b>		<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>	<b>Mutations</b>	<b>Percentage mutations</b>
1	Employed population	12081	11624	-457	-3.8
2	Unemployed population	1246	1402	156	12.5
(1+2) 3	Labor Force	13327	13026	-301	-2.3
4	Economically not active	1478	1624	146	9.9
5	Population 15 years+	14805	14650	-155	-1.0
(3:6) 7	Participation rate (%)	90.0	88.9	-1.1	
8	Unemployment rate (%)	9.3	10.8	1.4	
(1:6) 9	Employment to population ratio	81.6	79.3	-2.3	
<b>Age group 45plus</b>					
<b>Age group 45plus</b>		<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>	<b>Mutations</b>	<b>Percentage mutations</b>
1	Employed population	6942	7779	837	12.1
2	Unemployed population	633	739	106	16.7
(1+2) 3	Labor Force	7575	8518	943	12.4
4	Economically not active	2612	3289	677	25.9
5	Population 15 years +	10187	11807	1620	15.9
(3:6) 7	Participation rate (%)	74.4	72.1	-2.2	
8	Unemployment rate (%)	8.4	8.7	0.3	
(1:6) 9	Employment to population ratio	68.1	65.9	-2.3	

## I. Employed population

Employed population 1997-2009



The employed population of St. Maarten increased between 2007 and 2009 by more than 650 persons. The total number equaled **21,378** persons, 3 percent more than in 2007. Though there was an increase in the employed population between 2007 and 2009, this increase was much less than the increase between 2005 and 2007.

When described over a longer period of time, the trend line in graph 1 reveals a rising trend in the number of employed since 1997, though the trend appears to be slowly slanting.

### I.1. Employed persons by gender

The increase in the total number of the employed in 2009 is only due to the increase in the number of employed women. The number of employed men actually decreased slightly. The number of employed men in 2009 is **11,233**.

Contrary to the male population, the number of employed females increased with almost 8 percent compared to 2007. In June 2009 there were **10,145** employed women on the labor market, about 700 more than in 2007.

### I.2. Employed persons according to age group

The increase in the employed population between 2007 and 2009 is particularly visible in the youth population (15-24 years) and in the age group 45 years and older. On the other hand, the number of employed in the age group 25-44, decreased.

The number of employed youth (15-24 years) increased by more than 360 persons, an increase of almost 23 percent. The number now working is **1,977** persons.

The employed population in the age group 25-44 years decreased by more than 450 persons, almost 4 percent. There are now **11624** persons in this age group that are employed. The drop in the number of employed in this age group could partly be attributed to a decrease in the population between 25-34 years.

In the older ages (45 years and older), the number of employed persons increased by more than 800 persons, an increase of 12 percent. The size of the employed population is now **7779** persons.

### I.3 Employment to population ratio

The employment to population ratio reflects the economic resources of the population. The ratio in 2009 remained almost the same as in 2007, namely 53 percent (in March 2007 it was 52 percent). This development indicates that, compared to the growth of the total population, there is little development in the number of employed.

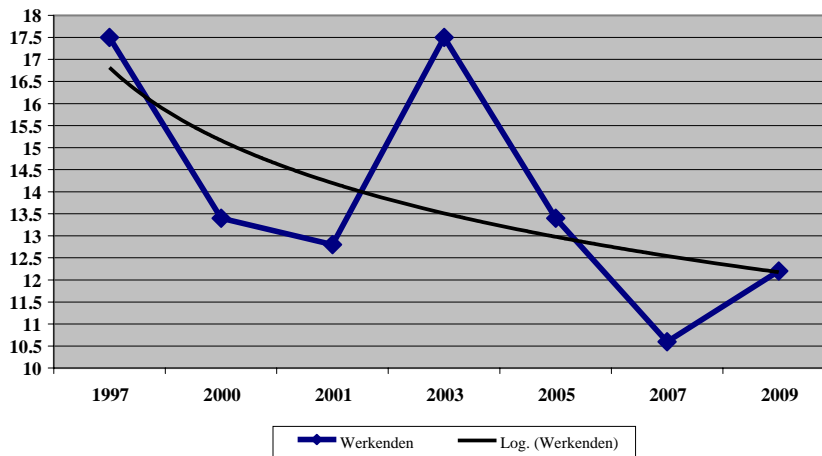
### I.4 Employed population by place of birth.

With regard to the variable 'place of birth', it appears from table 5 that the increase in the number of employed persons in 2009, concerned *only* persons born in Sint Maarten. In all other population groups, the numbers decreased.

<b>Tabel 5    Employed population by place of birth</b>			
	<b>Mar-07</b>	<b>Jun-09</b>	<b>Mutations 2007-2009</b>
Sint Maarten	3051	4470	<i>1419</i>
Other NA+Aruba	2901	2778	<i>-123</i>
Other	14766	14130	<i>-636</i>
Total	20718	21378	<i>660</i>

## II. Unemployed persons and unemployment rate

Unemployment rate 1997-2009



The number of unemployed persons increased in 2009 by more than 500 persons. In terms of percentage, this is an increase of more than 21 percent (table 2). The number is **2966** persons.

The increase in the number of unemployed was to be expected since figures from the Business Cycle Survey of the second half of 2008 show a decline in the number of businesses with positive expectations for the future. Figures of the Department of Labor in Sint Maarten also substantiate the findings in the Labor Force Survey.

### II.1 Unemployment by gender

It is remarkable that the rise in the number of unemployed in 2009 concerned mainly men. The number of unemployed men increased by more than 375 persons, from approximately 930 persons in 2007, to over **1300** in 2009, an increase of more than 40 percent. The unemployment rate increased from 7.6 percent in 2007 to 10.5 percent in 2009, an increase of almost 3 percentage points. The overall situation of males on the labor market in 2009 appears to be unfavorable compared to that of females. Because figures show, that also the number of economically not active males increased by almost 29 percent, compared to an increase of approximately 'only' 3 percent for the female population. This is an indication that males have also abandoned the labor force altogether in 2009.

Contrary to the situation by the men, the number of unemployed women increased with less, approximately 144 persons, which is an increase of approximately 9 percent. The total number is now **1654** persons. The unemployment rate remained almost the same as in 2007, which is **14.0** percent.

## **II.2 Unemployment by age group**

The unemployed population increased in all ages, but especially among the youth population (ages 15-24).

### **II.2.1 Youth unemployment**

The youth unemployment rate increased in June 2009 to **29.4** percent, 3 percentage points higher than in March 2007. The total number of unemployed youth is **825** persons. The ratio youth unemployment / total unemployment is 2.4. A ratio higher than 2 is considered high internationally.

## **III. Labor Force**

The Labor Force increased in 2009 by approximately 1170 persons, an increase of 5 percent compared to 2007. This increase can be ascribed to the increase in the number of employed (658) and in the number of unemployed (520). The labor force now consists of **24344** persons.

### **III.1. Labor force by gender**

The male labor force increased by 300 persons (2.4 percent). This can be wholly ascribed to the increase in the number of unemployed men. The male labor force consists of **12545** persons.

The female labor force also increased, by almost 8 percent. In absolute numbers, this is a rise of over 875 persons. Here, the increase in the size of the labor force is due to the rise in the number of employed and unemployed women. In June 2009, the female labor force consisted of **11799** persons.

### **III. 2. Labor force by age group**

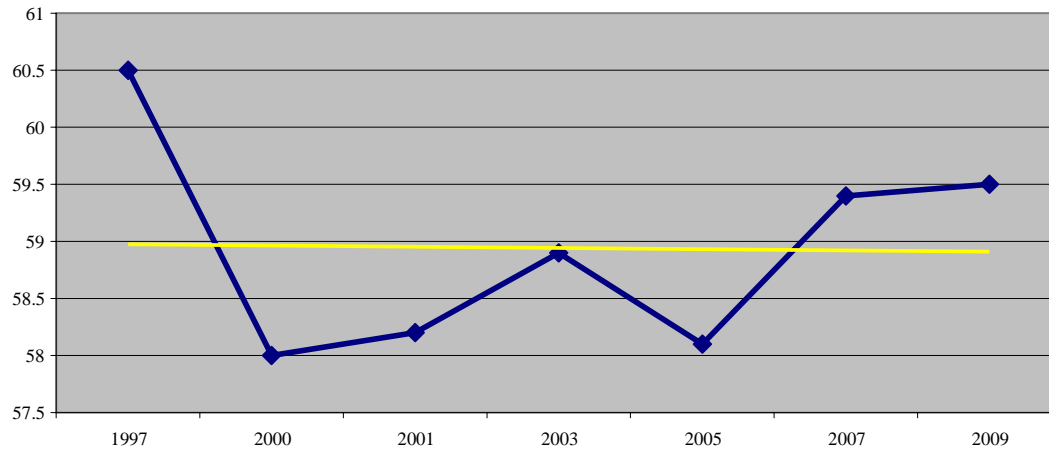
The labor force in the age group 25-44 years decreased with just over 300 persons; about 2 percent. The reason for this is the decrease in the employed population by more than 450 persons.

There are approximately **13000** persons economically active in this age group.

Besides the labor force in the age group 15-24, the labor force in the age group 45 years and older also increased in June 2009, compared to March 2007. The number of persons increased with more than 900, an increase of 12 percent, and the total size is now **8518**.

## IV. Participation Rate

Participation rate 1997-2009



The total participation rate remained practically the same as in 2007, which is **59.5** percent of the population. The labor force increased with almost just as much percentage as the total population. This accounts for the stabilization in the participation rate.

The above graph shows the development in the participation rate over a longer period. It becomes clear from the graph that the participation rate has hardly developed, but has remained almost the same for a long period of time (12 years).

### IV. Sex

The participation rate of the male population went down with 1.5 percentage points, from 65.0 percent in 2007 to **63.5** percent in 2009. The labor force increased proportionately less than the male population, which accounts for the drop in the participation rate.

Contrary to the developments by the male population, the female participation rate increased with 1.7 percentage points in 2009. Approximately **56** percent of the female population is economically active. The proportionately large increase in the female labor force is the reason for the increase in the participation rate.

### IV.2. Age

The youth participation rate soared in 2009 to **53.8** percent of the youth population. The reason for this increase is the relatively large increase in the youth labor force (28.7 percent) compared to a much smaller increase in the youth population (11.2 percent). It is worth mentioning that the number of economically not active young persons decreased with 4 percent in 2009, compared to 2007.

In both the age group 25-44 and the group 45 years and older, the participation rate went down. In the age group 25-44 years this was particularly due to the relatively large

decrease in the labor force, as was already mentioned. In the age group 45 years and older the participation rate went down because the population grew substantially, compared to the number of persons actually in the labor force.

## Annex: Tables

<b>Tabel 6 Development of the population and of the labor force.</b>							
	<b>March 1997</b>	<b>June 2000</b>	<b>Census 2001</b>	<b>March 2003</b>	<b>Oct. 2005</b>	<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
1 Employed	14424	15615	15413	16200	18073	20720	21378
2 Unemployed	3059	2411	2271	3433	2798	2446	2966
(1+2) 3 Labour Force	17483	18026	17684	19633	20871	23166	24344
4 Economically not-active	4224	5192	4812	5422	5997	6601	7323
5 Population 15 years+	21707	23218	22496	25055	26868	29767	31667
6 Total population	28908	31096	30369	33317	35910	39011	40898
(3:6) 7 Participation rate	60.5	58.0	58.2	58.9	58.1	59.4	59.5
8 Unemployment rate	17.5	13.4	12.8	17.5	13.4	10.6	12.2
(1:6) 9 Employment to population rate	49.9	50.2	50.8	48.6	50.3	53.1	52.3

<b>Tabel 7 Development of the population and of the labor force by gender</b>							
<b>Male</b>	<b>March 1997</b>	<b>June- 2000</b>	<b>Census 2001</b>	<b>March 2003</b>	<b>Oct. 2005</b>	<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
1 Employed	8157	8691	8280	8780	9714	11310	11233
2 Unemployed	1240	999	973	1545	1194	935	1312
(1+2) 3 Labor Force	9397	9690	9253	10325	10908	12245	12545
4 Economically not-active	1316	1655	1623	1850	2007	2064	2656
5 Population 15 years+	10713	11345	10876	12175	12915	14309	15201
6 Total population	14311	15282	14766	16203	17303	18834	19757
(3:6) 7 Participation rate	65.7	63.4	62.7	63.7	63.0	65.0	63.5
8 Unemployment rate	13.2	10.3	10.5	15.0	10.9	7.6	10.5
(1:6) 9 Employment to population rate	57.0	56.9	56.1	54.2	56.1	60.1	56.9

<b>Tabel 8 Development of the population and of the labor force by gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>		<b>March-1997</b>	<b>June-2000</b>	<b>Census 2001</b>	<b>March-2003</b>	<b>Oct. 2005</b>	<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
1	Employed	6267	6924	7133	7419	8359	9411	10145
2	Unemployed	1819	1412	1298	1888	1604	1510	1654
(1+2) 3	Labor Force	8086	8336	8431	9307	9963	10921	11799
4	Economically not-active	2908	3537	3189	3572	3990	4536	4667
5	Population 15 years+	10994	11873	11620	12879	13953	15457	16466
6	Total population	14597	15814	15603	17114	18607	20177	21141
(3:6) 7	Participation rate	55.4	52.7	54.0	54.4	53.5	54.1	55.8
8	Unemployment rate	22.5	16.9	15.4	20.3	16.1	13.8	14.0
(1:6) 9	Employment to population rate	42.9	43.8	45.7	43.4	44.9	46.6	48.0

<b>Tabel 9 Development of the population and of the labor force by age group</b>								
<b>Age group 15-24</b>		<b>March-1997</b>	<b>Jun3-2000</b>	<b>Census 2001</b>	<b>March 2003</b>	<b>Oct. 2005</b>	<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
1	Employed	1648	1485	1459	1362	1401	1610	1977
2	Unemployed	647	613	495	639	613	567	825
(1+2) 3	Labor Force	2295	2098	1954	2001	2014	2177	2802
4	Economically not-active	1548	1923	1638	1857	2210	2510	2409
5	Population	3843	4041	3592	3858	4224	4687	5211
(3:6) 7	Participation rate	59.7	51.9	54.4	51.9	47.7	46.4	53.8
8	Unemployment rate	28.2	29.2	25.3	31.9	30.4	26.0	29.4
(1:6) 9	Employment to population rate	42.9	36.7	40.6	35.3	33.2	34.4	37.9

<b>Tabel 10 Development of the population and of the labor force by age group</b>							
<b>Age group 25-44</b>	<b>March-1997</b>	<b>Jun3-2000</b>	<b>Census 2001</b>	<b>March 2003</b>	<b>Oct. 2005</b>	<b>March 2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
1 Employed	9624	6688	9641	9712	10934	12081	11624
2 Unemployed	1702	1308	1253	1977	1613	1246	1402
(1+2) 3 Labor Force	11326	7996	10894	11689	12547	13327	13026
4 Economically not-active	1108	1495	1326	1471	1403	1478	1624
5 Population	12434	9491	12220	13160	13950	14805	14650
(3:6) 7 Participation rate	91.1	84.2	89.1	88.8	89.9	90.0	88.9
8 Unemployment rate	15.0	16.4	11.5	16.9	12.9	9.3	10.8
(1:6) 9 Employment to population rate	77.4	70.5	78.9	73.8	78.4	81.6	79.3

<b>Tabel 11 Development of the population and of the labor force by age group</b>							
<b>Age group 45 plus</b>	<b>March-1997</b>	<b>June-2000</b>	<b>Census 2001</b>	<b>March-2003</b>	<b>Oct. 2005</b>	<b>March-2007</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
1 Employed	3135	4142	4313	5126	5737	6942	7779
2 Unemployed	702	490	523	816	572	633	739
(1+2) 3 Labor Force	3837	4632	4836	5942	6309	7575	8518
4 Economically not-active	1568	1774	1809	2094	2384	2612	3289
5 Population	5405	6406	6645	8036	8693	10187	11807
(3:6) 7 Participation rate	71.0	72.3	72.8	73.9	72.6	74.4	72.1
8 Unemployment rate	18.3	10.6	10.8	13.7	9.1	8.4	8.7
(1:6) 9 Employment to population rate	58.0	64.7	64.9	63.8	66.0	68.1	65.9