



Highlights

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The Labour Force

- 1 In 2000, there were 1.58 million Singapore residents (citizens and permanent residents) in the labour force. Compared with the 1.31 million economically active residents in 1990, the resident labour force had expanded by 1.8 per cent per annum.
- 2 The overall resident labour force participation rate was 63 per cent in 2000, unchanged from 1990. The male labour force participation rate declined marginally from 78 per cent in 1990 to 77 per cent in 2000. The female labour force participation rate rose marginally from 49 per cent to 50 per cent during the same period.
- 3 The male and female participation rates rose in all age groups except for the youngest and oldest age groups. There was a decline in participation rates for those aged 15–24 years and 65 years and over. Proportionately more resident youths were schooling and hence fewer joined the labour market. Among the elderly residents, there was an increased propensity to retire and withdraw from the labour market.
- 4 There were proportionately more married females in the resident labour force in 2000 than ten years ago. The participation rate of married resident females rose from 45 per cent in 1990 to 49 per cent in 2000. The age-specific rates for these females exhibited an emerging M-shape in 2000, with a distinct peak at the 25–29 age group and a smaller hump at the 45–59 age group.

The Workforce

- 5 In 2000, there was a total of 1.48 million working residents. Compared with the total of 1.29 million persons in 1990, the resident workforce had expanded by 1.4 per cent per annum. This was much slower than the increase of 9.4 per cent for the non-resident workforce. In absolute terms, the non-resident workforce grew from 248,200 in 1990 to 612,200 in 2000.
- 6 The growing sophistication of the economy and the improvement in educational attainment over time had led to significant upgrading of the resident workforce, with larger concentrations in more highly skilled and better-paid occupations. The proportion employed in managerial, professional and technical jobs increased from 27 per cent in 1990 to 44 per cent in 2000.
- 7 With the emerging trend towards a services-oriented economy, there were more residents working in business and financial services sectors in 2000 (19 per cent) than in 1990 (13 per cent). In comparison, the proportion of the resident workforce in the manufacturing sector declined from 26 per cent to 20 per cent.
- 8 Singapore residents had also become more enterprising, with more working persons venturing out to operate their own businesses. In 2000, 14 per cent of working persons were self-employed, up from 12 per cent in 1990.
- 9 The expanding economy had greatly improved the livelihood of resident working persons in the last decade, as reflected in the rising income from work. The median income for the resident workforce doubled from \$1,100 to \$2,200 per month over the last ten years.

The Unemployed

- 10 Reflecting the effects of the regional financial and economic crisis, unemployment had increased in 2000. A total of 97,500 persons were unemployed during the second quarter of 2000. This was a marked increase over the total of around 45,500 unemployed residents in the pre-crisis period.
- 11 Among Singapore residents, the unemployment rate rose to 6.0 per cent in the second quarter of 2000, from 4.9 per cent in June 1999 and 3.4 per cent in June 1998. However, the rate of increase in the number of unemployed residents had slowed down to 20 per cent between 1999 and 2000. Between 1998 and 1999, the number grew by almost 50 per cent.

The Economically Inactive

- 12 There were 918,000 economically inactive residents in 2000. Compared with the total of 764,200 economically inactive residents in 1990, the resident economically inactive population had increased by 1.9 per cent per annum.
- 13 Among the resident economically inactive population, there was an increase in the number of students and retirees. The retiree population had grown by 4.1 per cent annum in the last ten years to 247,800 in 2000. The student population also increased rapidly by 2.4 per cent per annum, to 217,200.

Fuller analyses of the trends in economic characteristics are available in the Department of Statistics' Home Page (www.singstat.gov.sg).

- Advance Data Release No. 4:
Economic Characteristics of Singapore Resident Population