

Current Labor Force Survey
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Fourth Quarter, 1999

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report contains the results of the Current Labor Force Survey (CLFS), Fourth Quarter (October-December), 1999, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). While the second and fourth quarters of 1998 and the first and second quarters of 1999 rounds of the CLFS included Saipan only, this particular round of the CLFS included Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. This round also included a health survey questionnaire. Because of the large number of health questions included, the number of questions in the labor force questionnaire was reduced in order to reduce interview time. Including Saipan, Tinian and Rota makes the results of the fourth quarter 1999 comparable with the 1995 Census. However, reducing the number of labor force questions reduced the number of variables that could be compared from this 4th quarter to previous rounds.

The report begins with a summary of results of the Fourth Quarter, 1999 Survey; the summary include a comparison of the Fourth Quarter to the Second Quarter, 1999 for Saipan only and a comparison of the Fourth Quarter to the 1995 Census. The detailed results of the survey are shown in the tables that make up the body of the report. Appendix I discuss the purpose and methodology of the Survey. And Appendix II describes variables used in the Survey.

This report was prepared by Mr. Wilhelm Maui and the staff of the Central Statistics Division (CSD), Department of Commerce, CNMI, led by Mr. Isidro R. Ogarto, Acting Director, under the general direction of Mr. Frank Villeneuve, Secretary of Commerce.

Mr. Justin Andrew, Mr. Paul Andrew, Ms. Bernie Dela Cruz, Mr. Ignacio Teregeyo supervised data collection activities for the Labor Force Surveys, Fourth Quarter, 1999. Mr. Jesse R. Aguon of CSD and Mr. Michael Stroot and Mr. Michael Levin of the US Census Bureau's International Programs Center (IPC) prepared the tabulations. Mr. Diego Sasamoto assisted in final table presentation for the surveys. Ms. Tina Sakisat assisted in formatting tables from IMPS into PageMaker. Administrative Officer Ms. Bernadita Palacios, and staff of the Administrative Services Office, coordinated publication planning and procurement for publications.

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SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the results of the CNMI Current Labor force Survey, Fourth Quarter (October-December), 1999, also referred to as round 8.

GENERAL POPULATION

Population. The estimated population in the CNMI in the Fourth quarter, 1999, was about 81,000. The estimated population in Saipan was about 73,000, about 4,400 in Rota and about 3,400 in Tinian. About 65,300 persons lived in Census Bureau-defined “urban” areas – places of 2,500 or more – and about 15,700 lived in rural areas (Table 1).

By Census-defined Districts within Saipan, District 11 had the highest estimated population (21,000) followed by District 10 (17,000), District 6 (11,800), District 8 (8,000). Although District 2, 3, 4, and 5 had relatively smaller populations as individual Districts, they are small contiguous densely populated Districts (Table 1).

The Census Districts are based on 1980 established boundaries where, Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 are Chalan Kanoa, District 5 is Susupe, District 6 is San Antonio-Afetna-Koblerville, District 7 is San Jose-Chalan Laulau, District 8 is Tanapag-Capitol Hill-As Teo-Kagman, District 9 is San Roque-As Matus-Marpi, and District 10 is Kagman-Papago-San Vicente-Dandan, and District 11 is Garapan-China Town-Navy Hill-Puerto Rico-Sadog Tasi.

Median age. The estimated median age of the CNMI’s population in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, was 28.4 year – half the population was older than 28.4 years and half was younger. The estimated median age of Saipan’s population was also 28.4 years, Tinian’s median age was 28.2 years and Rota’s was 29.4 years (Table 1). The median age for females in the entire CNMI at 27.6 years was younger than the males median age of 30.0 years (Table 22).

Median ages for Chamorros (22.8 years), Carolinians (21.5 years) and Micronesians were lower than the median age for Asians (31.4 years). The Asians were concentrated in the higher age groups compared to Chamorros, Carolonians, and Micronesians (Table 22). Similarly, median age for US citizens (17.3 years) was lower than for non-US citizens (32.6 years), that is, the US citizen population was relatively younger than the non-US citizens population (Table 24). The main reason for this was that most Asians were migrants in ages between 20 and 54 who came into the CNMI for employment. One the other hand, US citizens included children and persons below 20 years of age which bring down the median age for US citizens.

Sex ratio. In the CNMI, females (43,300) outnumbered males (37,800) by about 5,000. The sex ration, the number of males for each 100 females, was 87.1. This is particularly true in Saipan with about 39,000 females and 34,000 males, a surplus of over 5,000 females. The sex ratio in Saipan was about 85.8; Tinian, 87.3; and Rota, 106.4.

Ethnicity. The largest ethnic group in the CNMI in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, was Asians at about 41,000 persons (51 percent) of the total CNMI population. Among Asians, Filipinos were the largest, at over 23,000, followed by Chinese/Taiwanese at about 13,000. The largest islander group was Chamorro at about 20,000 (25 percent of total CNMI population). About 12,500 (one third) of total males were Filipinos and about 10,400 (27 percent) were Chamorros. About 11,200 (26 percent) of total females were Filipinos; 10,400 (24 percent) were Chinese; and 9,700 (22 percent) were Chamorros. It is significant to note that of the estimated 13,000 total Chinese in the CNMI, 80

percent of them were females. Asians clearly outnumbered Islanders between ages 20 to 54. However, Filipinos was the second largest ethnic group in age groups below 20 years of age, second to Chamorro (Table 22).

The largest ethnic group on Saipan in the Fourth Quarter, 1999 was Asians with almost 40,000 persons, 53.7 percent of Saipan's total population (Table 2). Among Asians in Saipan, Filipinos were the largest ethnic group at about 22,000, followed by Chinese/Taiwanese with about 12,800. The largest islander group was Chamorros at 16,000 persons, about 22 percent of Saipan's total population. More than 11,600 (over 1/3rd) of all males in Saipan were Filipinos and 8,300 (1/4th) were Chamorros. Chinese/Taiwanese and Filipinos females had about equal numbers, about 10,000 (25 percent) each in Saipan, followed by Chamorros about 7,500 (19 percent).

The largest ethnic group in Tinian in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, was Chamorro, about 44 percent of the estimated 3,400 total population in Tinian, followed by Asians, about 39 percent. Among the Asians in Tinian, Filipinos were the largest group, about 29 percent of the estimated total Tinian population. The largest ethnic group in Rota was Chamorro, 62 percent of the estimated 4,440 total Rota population, followed by Filipinos, 16 percent (Table 2).

Birthplace. In the Fourth Quarter, 1999, about 33,000 (40 percent) of the estimated 81,000 total CNMI population had been born in the CNMI; hence, 60 percent of the estimated total CNMI population were born outside the CNMI (Table 4). About 38,000 (47 percent) of the estimated total CNMI population were born in Asia and 4,500 (6 percent) were born in the Freely Associated States (Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands). About 28,700 (39 percent) of the estimated 73,000 total population in Saipan were born in the CNMI, 49 percent were born in Asia and about 6 percent were born in the Freely Associated States of Micronesia. About 1,700 (50 percent) of the estimated 3,400 total population in Tinian were born in the CNMI, 37 percent were born in Asia and about 3 percent were born in the Freely Associated States of Micronesia. About 2,700 (61 percent) of the estimated 4,400 total population in Rota were born in the CNMI, about 20 percent were born in Asia and about 3 percent were born in the Freely Associated States of Micronesia (Table 3).

Citizenship. About 39,000 (48 percent) of the estimated total CNMI population in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, were US citizens. Of the estimated 42,000 non-US citizens, about 36,700 (35 percent) reported themselves as temporary residents. Over 33,000 (46 percent) of the estimated total population in Saipan were US citizens while close to 40,000 (54 percent) were non-US citizens--34,000 (47 percent) were temporary residents. About 3,500 (79 percent) of the estimated 4,400 total population in Rota were US citizens while over 900 (21 percent) were non-US citizens--800 (18 percent) were temporary residents. About 2,000 (59 percent) of the estimated 3,400 total population in Tinian were US citizens while about 1,400 (40 percent) were non-US citizens--1,200 (36 percent) were temporary residents (Table 4).

Year of entry. Year of entry was collected for persons 15 years and over in the Fourth Quarter, 1999. About 27 percent of the 61,000 total 15 years and older persons were born in the CNMI. Of the estimated 44,000 adults born outside CNMI, close to half (46 percent) came to the CNMI between 1997 and 1999. Another 33 percent came earlier in the decade. As would be expected, about 40,000 (90 percent) of the 44,000 total born outside CNMI were non-U.S. citizens (Table 4). This is particularly true in Saipan where an estimated 90 percent of the CNMI total population reside. About 26 percent of the 56,000 total 15 years and older persons in Saipan were born in the CNMI. Of the estimated 41,000 adults in Saipan who were born outside CNMI, close to half (46 percent) came to Saipan between 1997 and 1999 and another 33 percent came earlier in the decade. Over 37,000 (90 percent) of the 41,000 total born outside CNMI in Saipan were non-U.S. citizens.

Similarly, of the estimated 1,500 adults in Tinian who were born outside CNMI, 51 percent came to Tinian between 1997 and 1999 and another 29 percent came earlier in the decade. About 1,300 (85 percent) of the 1,500 born outside CNMI in Tinian were non-US citizens. In Rota, however, less than half, 1,300 (45 percent) of the estimated 3,000 total 15 years and older persons were born outside CNMI. About 32 percent of adults born outside CNMI came to Rota between 1997 and 1999, another 45 percent came earlier in the decade. About 67 percent of all adults born outside CNMI in Rota were non-US citizens.

Reason for migration. The vast majority, about 36,000 (82 percent) of the 44,000 non-CNMI born adults immigrants came to the CNMI for “employment”. Smaller numbers came for “business”, as family members of an employed person, or as students. This is particularly true in Saipan where about 94 percent of the estimated 44,000 persons born outside CNMI reside: Over 34,000 (percent) of the estimated 41,000 total born outside CNMI in Saipan came for employment. In Rota, 72 percent and, in Tinian, 79 percent of total born outside CNMI came for employment (Table 4).

LABOR FORCE POPULATION

Labor Force Participation. Over 48,000 (81 percent) of the estimated 60,000 total persons 16 years and over were in the labor force in the CNMI, Fourth Quarter, 1999. Over 46,000 persons were employed in the CNMI during this period while about 2,000 (4.3 percent) were unemployed.

In Saipan, about 82 percent of the estimated 54,600 total persons 16 years and over were in the labor force in the Fourth Quarter, 1999; close to 43,000 persons were employed while about 1,800 (4.1 percent) of all persons in the labor force were unemployed. In Rota, about 2,000 (71 percent) of the 2,900 total 16 years and over were in the labor force during the same period; about 1,800 persons were employed while about 200 persons (8.7 percent) of all persons in the labor force were unemployed. In Tinian, about 1,800 (79 percent) of the 2,300 total 16 years and over were in the labor force during this period; about 1,700 persons were employed while about 100 persons (6.0 percent) of all persons in the labor force were unemployed.

Labor Force Participation by Citizenship. Labor force participation rate for non-US citizens (91 percent) was higher than US citizens rate (62 percent). Labor force participation rate for non-US citizens was also higher than US citizens across all age groups (Table 26 & 36). This is mainly because non-US citizens in the CNMI came for employment.

Labor Force Participation by Ethnicity. Chinese had the highest labor force participation rate (99 percent), followed by Filipinos (92 percent) and other Asians (79 percent). Micronesians (62 percent), Chamorros (59 percent), and Carolinians (54 percent) had comparatively lower labor force participation rates (Table 46).

Labor Force Participation by Birthplace. Persons born in Asian countries had higher labor force participation rates than those born in the Freely Associated States of Micronesia and the CNMI (Table 36).

Employment. An estimated over 46,000 total persons were employed in the CNMI economy in the Fourth Quarter, 1999. Majority of employed persons were within ages 20 and 54 with age-group 25 to 29 being the largest (Table 26).

Employment by Citizenship. About 76 percent of all employed persons were non-US citizens while 24 percent were US citizens, a ratio of four to one (Table 26).

Employment by Ethnicity. About 38 percent of all persons employed were Filipinos, 27 percent were Chinese, 14 percent were Chamorros, about 5 percent were Micronesians, and less than 3 percent were Carolinians (Table 46).

Employment by Birthplace. About 72 percent of the estimated over 46,000 employed persons were born in Asia countries--38 percent in the Philippines and 27 percent in China, 17 percent were born in the CNMI, and about 5 percent were born in the Freely Associated States of Micronesia (Table 36).

Employment by Industry. In terms of number of workers, the two largest industries, which had about the same number of workers, were "Services" with 32 percent and "Manufacturing" with 32 percent of the estimated 46,000 total employment, in the CNMI in the Fourth Quarter, 1999. These were followed by "Public administration" (10 percent), "Retail trade" (9 percent), "Construction" (6 percent), and "Transportation, communication & other utility" (4 percent). The survey showed total females (25,000) outnumbered total males (21,000) employed in the CNMI in the Fourth Quarter, 1999. Close to half, 45 percent, of the estimated 25,000 total employed females were in "Manufacturing", 33 percent were in "Services", 9 percent were in "Retail trade" and 8 percent were in "Public administration". Over 31 percent of the estimated 21,000 employed males were in the "Services" industry, 17 percent were in "Manufacturing", 13 percent were in "Construction", 12 percent were in "Public administration", and 10 percent were in "Retail Trade".

In all major industries, except in "Public administration", non-US Citizens constituted the majority of total workers. Also, in all major industries, except in "Public administration" and in "Transportation, communication & other utility", persons born in Asia constituted the majority of total workers (Table 37).

Filipinos outnumbered all other ethnic groups across all industries except in "Manufacturing" and "Public administration". Chinese constituted 75 percent of all workers in "Manufacturing" while Chamorro was the largest (60 percent) ethnic group in "Public administration" (Table 47).

Employment by Occupation. The largest number of workers (36 percent) were "operators, fabricators, and laborers", followed by "managerial and professional specialties" (18 percent), "Technical, sales, and administrative support" (17 percent), "Services" occupations (16 percent), "precision production, craft and repair" (11 percent), and "Farming, forestry, and fishing" (2 percent).

Non-US Citizens constituted the majority of total workers in all major occupational groups. Also, in all major occupational groups, persons born in Asia constituted the majority of total workers (Table 37).

Filipinos outnumbered all other ethnic groups across all occupation groups except in "Operators, fabricator, and laborers" where Chinese constituted 67 percent (Table 47).

Employment by Class of worker. About 84 percent of all employed persons were in "private for wage and salary workers" in the CNMI in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, 14 percent were "government workers", and less than 2 percent were "self-employed". Almost half (49 percent) of the estimated 11,000 US citizens employed in the CNMI were working for "private for wage and salary", 47 percent were in "government", about 3 percent were self-employed. About 96 percent of the estimated 35,000 employed non-US citizens were in "private for wage and salary" and only 4 percent were in government or self-employed (Table 37).

Unemployment. An estimated 2,000 persons were unemployed or an estimated unemployment rate of 4.3 percent in the CNMI in the Fourth Quarter, 1999. The estimated unemployment rate was 4.1 percent in Saipan, 8.7 percent in Rota, and 6.0 percent in Tinian (Table 6). Unemployment rate was relatively higher in lower and higher age groups while relatively lower in middle age groups. The estimated female unemployment rate for the entire CNMI of 3.7 percent was lower than the male unemployment rate of 5.0 percent. Female unemployment rate was higher than male unemployment rate in Saipan; however, in Rota and Tinian, female unemployment rates were higher than male unemployment rates (Table 6).

Unemployment by Citizenship. The estimated unemployment rate for non-US citizens (2.2 percent) was much lower than U.S citizens (10 percent). Unemployed US citizens were in younger age groups, with median age of 24.9 years, compared to unemployed non-US citizens whose median age was 37.2 years. Unemployed US citizens were more likely to be young persons entering the labor force for the first time while unemployed non-US citizens were likely to be displaced or other migrant workers in relatively older age groups (Table 26).

Unemployment by Ethnicity. Filipinos (2.4 percent) and Chinese (less than 1 percent) had lower estimated unemployment rates than Micronesians (13.6 percent), Chamorros (11 percent), and Carolinians (10 percent). Of the estimated 2,000 unemployed, about 39 percent were Chamorros, 20 percent were Filipinos, 16 were Micronesians, and 7 percent were Carolinians (Table 46).

Unemployment by Birthplace. The estimated unemployment rate of persons born in the CNMI (12.2 percent), Palau (11.8 percent), and FSM (10.7 percent), were higher than persons born in Asia (less than 2 percent)--born in Philippines (2.1 percent), China (less than 1 percent). Persons born in Guam/US had estimated unemployment rate of 6.0 percent. Of the estimated 2,000 unemployed persons, about 54 percent were born in the CNMI, 24 percent were born in Asia, and about 9 percent were born in the Freely Associated States of Micronesia (Table 36).

INCOME

Income was not collected in the Fourth Quarter, 1999.

CONCLUSION

FOURTH QUARTER vs SECOND QUARTER, 1999, SAIPAN ONLY

This part of the conclusion compares the results of the Fourth Quarter CLFS with the results of the Second Quarter, 1999 in Saipan.

Saipan's Fourth Quarter estimated total population of 73,000 was higher than the Second Quarter, 1999's estimated population of 70,000. Saipan's labor force participation rate in the Fourth Quarter of 82 percent was lower than the Second Quarters 83.9 percent. Unemployment rate in the Fourth Quarter of about 4.1 percent was lower than the Second Quarter's 4.8 percent. The close to 43,000 estimated total number of persons employed in Saipan in the Fourth Quarter was slightly higher than the Second Quarter's estimated 42,000. Industries that showed slight increases in number of workers in the Fourth from the Second Quarter include "Manufacturing", "Services", and "Public administration".

The increase in the estimated total population and number of persons employed in Saipan was due to population increases in households and group quarters. In the Second Quarter there were 14,945 persons counted in group quarters. The number increased to 15,419 persons counted in Fourth Quarter, 1999.

FOURTH QUARTER, 1999 vs 1995 CENSUS

The Fourth Quarter, 1999 Survey dropped some of the variables that were included in prior rounds of the CLFS, but it included Saipan, Tinian and Rota which makes the results of Fourth Quarter, at least some of the variables, comparable with 1995 CNMI Census results. In this part of the conclusion, the results of the Fourth Quarter, 1999 Survey are compared with the 1995 Census.

Population. The estimated 81,000 total population in the CNMI at the end of 1999 was a big increase from 58,846 total population counted in September 1995, an increase of over 20,000 persons or 36 percent from 1995.

Median Age. The estimated median age, 28.4 years, in the Fourth Quarter, 1999 was not too different from 1995 median age of 28.0 years.

Sex Ratio. The total number of females exceeded total males by a few hundreds in 1995; but at the end of 1999, estimated total females outnumbered total males by about 5,000, resulting in an estimated sex ratio of about 87 which was lower than the 1995 ratio of 99 males to every 100 females. This was primarily due to a large increase in the number of Chinese females from 5,277 in 1995 to an estimated 10,400 at the end of 1999.

Ethnicity. At the end of 1999, Asians were still the largest ethnic group in the CNMI. At the end of 1999, an estimated 51 percent of total CNMI population were Asians, slightly lower than in 1995 when over 52 percent of the total CNMI population were Asians. By single ethnic group, Filipino remained the largest ethnic group in the CNMI at about 29 percent of the total CNMI population. However, as a percentage of CNMI total population, Filipino declined (from 33 to 29 percent) while the Chinese increased (from 12 to 16 percent) from 1995 to 1999. It is significant to note that, similar to 1995, of the estimated 13,000 total Chinese in the CNMI at the end of 1999, 80 percent of them were females.

Citizenship and Birthplace. At the end of 1999, 52 percent of the estimated 81,000 CNMI total population were non-US citizens, not too different from 1995 when 53 percent of the CNMI's total population were non-US citizens. Similarly, at the end of 1999, an estimated 60 percent of the CNMI's total population were born outside the CNMI, not too different from 1995 when 62 percent of the CNMI total population were born outside.

Year of Entry. The pattern of the "year of entry" of the migrants into the CNMI in 1999 was similar to 1995. In 1995, 47 percent of all migrants came into the CNMI between 1994 and 1995, or within two years of census date; another 33 percent came between 1990 and 1993. Similarly, in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, 46 percent of all migrants came into the CNMI between 1997 and 1999 or within two years of the Survey period; another 33 percent came between 1990 and 1996.

Reason For Migration. Employment was still the number one reason people migrated into the CNMI in 1999, as it was in 1995. The Survey asked the "reason for migration" into the CNMI only for persons 15 years and older. Over 82 percent of the 15 years and older migrants came for employment.

Labor Force Participation. The estimated over 48,000 total persons in the labor force in the CNMI at the end of 1999 was 11,000 more than the number of persons counted in the labor force in 1995. The

estimated labor force participation rate of 81 percent in 1999 was lower than the 1995 participation rate of 85 percent.

Employed Persons. The estimated 46,000 total number of employed persons in the CNMI at the end of 1999 was about 12,000 more than the 34,812 total number of persons employed in 1995. Like in 1995, when 75 percent of all employed person in the CNMI were non-US citizens, an estimated 76 percent of all employed persons in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, were non-US citizens. Similar to 1995, Filipinos still constituted the largest single ethnic group of all employed persons in the CNMI at the end of 1999, followed by Chinese.

In 1995, the “Services” industry was clearly the biggest industry, in terms of number of workers in the CNMI economy. At the end of 1999, “Manufacturing” had become the same size as the “Services” industry--each industry had 32 percent, a combined total of 64 percent, of the estimated 46,000 total number of workers in the CNMI. However, it must be noted that the 1999 Fourth Quarter CLFS used the new industry classification NAICS (North American Industry Classification System, 1997) while the 1995 used the previous SIC (Standard Industrial Classification Manual, 1987) in classifying business establishments. The NAICS is a substantial revision of the SIC which makes comparison between the two period not fully complete.

In 1995 total employed males (18,337) exceeded total employed females (16,475) in the CNMI economy. But at the end of 1999, estimated total employed females (25,000) exceeded total employed males (21,000). Similar to 1995, employed females were still concentrated in “Manufacturing” and in “Services” industries while employed males were concentrated in the “Services” industry at the end of 1999.

Similar to 1995, in the Fourth Quarter, 1999, the vast majority, 84 percent of all persons in the CNMI, worked for “Private for wage and salary”; only about 14 percent were “Government workers” and less than 2 percent were self-employed or unpaid family workers.

Unemployed. The estimated 2,000 total number of unemployed persons in the CNMI at the end of 1999 was lower than 2,728 total unemployed in 1995. The estimated unemployment rate of 4.3 percent in the CNMI in Fourth Quarter, 1999 was lower than the 7.3 percent unemployment rate in 1995.