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DOF Economic Bulletin on the April 2021 Employment Situation

- As expected, the imposition of stricter quarantine measures in the NCR Plus Bubble dented employment figures. Compared with March, April figures show that employment declined by 4.55% while unemployment rose by more than 20%. Underemployment also rose by 1.6%.
- Regional data shows that the NCR Plus Bubble felt the brunt of the stricter quarantine measures. In January, the number of unemployed was less than 4 million; come April, the number rose to 4,138 thousand or an increase by 4.7%. Over the same period, NCR's unemployment rose from 506 thousand to 875 thousand, or an increase by more than 73%. CALABARZON's unemployment also rose by 8.4% while that of Central Luzon's, by less than 1%. Cagayan Valley and Central Visayas also have seen their unemployment increase over the period. All the other regions have registered decreases in their number of unemployed.

DOF View

- In April of last year, more than 8.7 million Filipinos were out of employment. Early this year, the number of employed recovered to its pre-pandemic level. By February, employment reached more than 43 million, higher than the 42.5 million employed as of January last year. This year, the recent imposition of stricter quarantine measures was more localized so that

its effects on employment were not as drastic compared to last year. As of April, employment is nearly 43.3 million which is still higher than its pre-pandemic level.

It is imperative that the health risks posed by the epidemic be managed effectively and efficiently and its transmission arrested. Otherwise, government will be forced to transition from risk management stance to risk avoidance posture and make the difficult and painful decision of re-imposing much stricter quarantines measures. In this instance, in the process of attempting to stem the spread of the disease, the risk of inadvertently killing the proverbial patient increases. Such potential unpleasant double-effect situation should be avoided. The vaccination of economic front-liners has finally commenced, an important step in protecting the population and the subsequent easing of restrictions.

Table 1 Selected Employment Indicators, Jan-21 and Feb-21

	Level ('000)						MOM % Change		
	Jan-20 ^F	Apr-20 ^F	Jan-21 ^P	Feb-21 ^P	Mar-21 ^P	Apr-21 ^P	Feb-21 ^P	Mar-21 ^P	Apr-21 ^P
Labor Force	44,934	41,058	45,201	47,341	48,772	47,407	4.73	3.02	(2.80)
Employed	42,543	33,830	41,248	43,153	45,332	43,269	4.62	5.05	(4.55)
Underemployed	6,299	6,398	6,589	7,850	7,335	7,453	19.15	(6.56)	1.60
Unemployed	2,391	7,228	3,953	4,187	3,441	4,138	5.93	(17.84)	20.27
Not in Labor force	27,906	32,664	29,532	27,262	26,257	27,563	(7.68)	(3.69)	(7.68)
	Ratio (%)								
	Jan-20 ^F	Apr-20 ^F	Jan-21 ^P	Feb-21 ^P	Mar-21 ^P	Apr-21 ^P			
Labor Force Participation Rate	61.69	55.69	60.48	63.46	65.00	63.23			
Employment Rate	94.68	82.40	91.25	91.15	92.95	91.27			
Underemployment Rate	14.81	18.91	15.97	18.19	16.18	17.22			
Unemployment	5.32	17.60	8.75	8.85	7.05	8.73			

Source of Basic Data: PSA

Note: F – Final; P – Preliminary

Table 2 Regional Employment Situation

Region	Employment ('000)			Unemployment ('000)			Employment Rate (%)			Unemployment Rate (%)		
	Apr-20 ^F	Jan-21 ^P	Apr-21 ^P	Apr-20 ^F	Jan-21 ^P	Apr-21 ^P	Apr-20 ^F	Jan-21 ^P	Apr-21 ^P	Apr-20 ^F	Jan-21 ^P	Apr-21 ^P
Philippines	33,830	41,248	43,269	7,228	3,953	4,138	82.40	91.25	91.27	17.60	8.75	8.73

NCR	4,720	5,244	5,189	665	506	875	87.65	91.21	85.56	12.35	8.79	14.44
CAR	514	720	754	174	49	48	74.69	93.65	94.04	25.31	6.35	5.96
Ilocos Region	1,677	1,990	2,112	482	203	172	77.68	90.72	92.48	22.32	9.28	7.52
Cagayan Valley	1,227	1,494	1,427	228	95	137	84.35	94.03	91.23	15.65	5.97	8.77
Central Luzon	3,243	4,642	4,555	1,219	434	438	72.67	91.45	91.23	27.33	8.55	8.77
CALABARZON	5,361	6,015	6,370	1,074	910	987	83.31	86.85	86.59	16.69	13.15	13.41
MIMAROPA	957	1,138	1,348	136	117	84	87.54	90.67	94.13	12.46	9.33	5.87
Bicol Region	1,847	2,060	2,237	345	264	169	84.26	88.65	92.96	15.74	11.35	7.04
Western Visayas	2,628	3,126	3,118	417	312	253	86.32	90.93	92.48	13.68	9.07	7.52
Central Visayas	2,589	3,125	3,397	519	237	304	83.30	92.94	91.79	16.70	7.06	8.21
Eastern Visayas	1,507	1,758	1,884	251	144	99	85.74	92.42	94.99	14.26	7.58	5.01
Zamboanga												
Peninsula	994	1,636	1,643	312	60	55	76.08	96.44	96.74	23.92	3.56	3.26
Northern Mindanao	1,881	2,070	2,322	236	157	135	88.86	92.95	94.52	11.14	7.05	5.48
Davao Region	1,615	1,928	2,057	351	110	91	82.14	94.59	95.77	17.86	5.41	4.23
SOCCSKARGEN	1,461	1,891	2,125	393	138	107	78.79	93.19	95.20	21.21	6.81	4.80
Caraga	902	1,024	1,191	127	101	74	87.65	91.00	94.17	12.35	9.00	5.83
BARMM	706	1,389	1,539	299	115	109	70.22	92.35	93.39	29.78	7.65	6.61

Source of Basic Data: PSA

Note: F – Final; P – Preliminary

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