



STATISTICAL PRESS RELEASE

17 February 2010

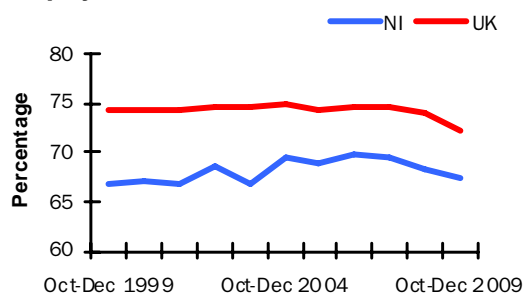
Coverage

Northern Ireland, unless otherwise stated

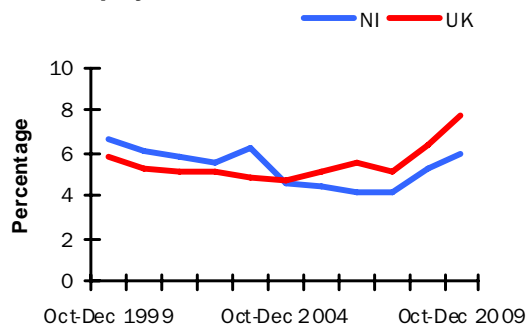
Theme

Labour Market

**Seasonally Adjusted Working Age
Employment Rate**



**Seasonally Adjusted
Unemployment Rate**



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Labour Market Statistics – February 2010

Seasonally adjusted Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for Northern Ireland for the period October – December 2009 estimated an increase over the quarter in the number of employed persons, while there were falls in the number of unemployed and economically inactive persons. However, the January Claimant Count recorded an increase of 1,400 over the month.

In the latest reference period, the working age employment rate was estimated at 67.3%, up 1.0 percentage points over the quarter, but down 1.2 percentage points over the year.

The unemployment rate, for October – December 2009, was estimated at 6.0%, down 1.0 percentage points over the quarter, but up 0.7 percentage points over the year. The NI rate remained below the UK rate of 7.8% and was also lower than the European Union (9.5%) and Republic of Ireland (12.9%) rates for November 2009.

The working age economic inactivity rate fell by 0.3 percentage points over the quarter, but increased by 0.6 percentage points over the year to 28.3%. The NI working age economic inactivity rate (28.3%) remained the highest of the twelve UK regions (UK rate was 21.3%).

The LFS is a sample survey with an associated degree of sampling error (see table 1 overleaf for details).

The more recent claimant count measure for January was 56,100, up 1,400 over the month and up 17,000 over the year. The percentage increase over the month in NI (2.6%) was the second highest of the twelve UK regions (the UK monthly increase was 1.5%). Over the year, the percentage increase in NI was 43.5%, which was higher than the equivalent UK increase (30.5%) and was the largest increase among the twelve UK regions.

The Department was notified of 512 proposed redundancies in the period mid January to mid February, compared with 248 proposed redundancies in the previous monthly period. In addition, there were 147 confirmed redundancies in January 2010, compared with 344 in December 2009.

NI seasonally adjusted data

	Reference period	Levels	Rates (%)	Levels	Rates (pps)
				Change on quarter	
Employment ¹	Oct-Dec 2009	765,000	67.3%	13,000	1.0
Unemployment ²	Oct-Dec 2009	49,000	6.0%	-8,000	-1.0
Economically Active ¹	Oct-Dec 2009	814,000	71.7%	5,000	0.3
Economically Inactive ¹	Oct-Dec 2009	573,000	28.3%	-2,000	-0.3
Employee Jobs ³	September 09	701,730	-	-5,010	-
				Change on month	
Claimant Count ⁴	January 2010	56,100	6.4%	1,400	0.1
Redundancies ⁵	January 2010	147	-	-	-

For footnotes, see 'Definitions' section (back page)

Labour Market

Statistical Press Release

Seasonally adjusted Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for Northern Ireland for the period October - December 2009 estimated an increase over the quarter in the number of employed persons, while there was a fall in the number of economically inactive and in the number of unemployed. The seasonally adjusted claimant count in January 2010 increased by 1,400 over the month to 56,100 and the Department was notified of 512 proposed redundancies in the latest reference period and 147 confirmed redundancies in January 2010.

Employment

The number of persons in employment in the period October - December 2009 was estimated at 765,000. This represented an increase of 13,000 over the quarter, but a fall of 5,000 over the year. The working age employment rate was estimated at 67.3%, up 1.0 percentage points over the quarter, but down 1.2 percentage points over the year. NI's working age employment rate remained well below the UK average (72.4%) and was the lowest of the twelve UK regions.

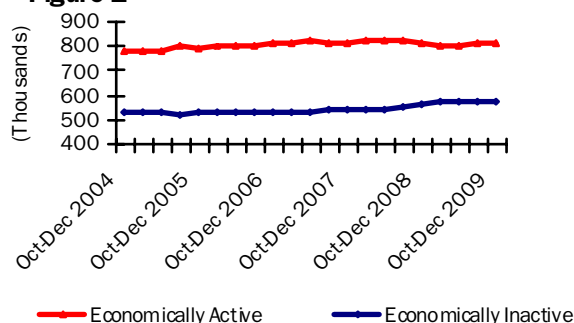
Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the period October - December 2009 was estimated at 6.0%, down 1.0 percentage points over the quarter, but up 0.7 percentage points over the year. The number of unemployed persons was estimated at 49,000, down 8,000 over the quarter, but up 6,000 over the year. The male unemployment rate (7.7%) was almost double the female rate (4.0%) in October - December 2009.

Unadjusted figures show that 40.0% of the unemployed have been unemployed for 1 year or more – up 6.4 percentage points over the year.

Seasonally Adjusted Labour Market Summary for Northern Ireland (16+)

Figure 1



They also estimate the unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds at 12.0% – down 1.4 percentage points over the year.

Economically Inactive

The seasonally adjusted number of economically inactive persons in the period October - December 2009 was estimated at 573,000. This figure has decreased by 2,000 over the quarter, but was up 12,000 over the year.

The working age economic inactivity rate for NI stands at 28.3%. This is significantly higher than the UK average rate (21.3%) and is the highest of the twelve UK regions.

Unadjusted figures show that while 91% of the inactive do not want work, the remaining 9% want employment but do not satisfy the full ILO job search criteria (by actively seeking work and being available to start a job). The number of economically inactive persons that want a job (50,000) is similar to the number officially classified as unemployed.

Northern Ireland Labour Market Summary (seasonally adjusted)

Table 1

	Period	Estimate	Sampling Variability of estimate	Change over year	Sampling Variability of change
Employment	Oct-Dec 2009	765,000	+/-22,000	-5,000	+/-28,000
Unemployment	Oct-Dec 2009	49,000	+/-9,000	6,000	+/-12,000
Economically inactive	Oct-Dec 2009	573,000	+/-20,000	12,000	+/-26,000
Unemployment rate	Oct-Dec 2009	6.0%	+/-1.2pps	0.7pps	+/-1.6pps
Employment rate ¹	Oct-Dec 2009	67.3%	+/-1.8pps	-1.2pps	+/-2.3pps
Economic inactivity rate ¹	Oct-Dec 2009	28.3%	+/-1.7pps	0.6pps	+/-2.2pps
Claimant Count	January 2010	56,100		17,000	

Note: pps = percentage points, ¹ Rates based on working age population (16-59/64), see Definitions for details.

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Estimates from the LFS have an associated degree of statistical error as they are based on a sample of the population. None of the annual changes for the main economic categories (in employment, unemployment and economic inactivity) were sufficiently large to be considered statistically significant (see table 1 and Section 9 for further details).

Unemployment Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI (6.0%) remained below the UK average rate (7.8%) and was the lowest rate among the twelve UK regions. The NI rate also compared favourably to the European Union rate (9.5%) and the Republic of Ireland rate (12.9%) for November 2009. The annual increase in the NI unemployment rate (+0.7 percentage points) was lower than the UK average increase (+1.4 percentage points).

Claimant Count

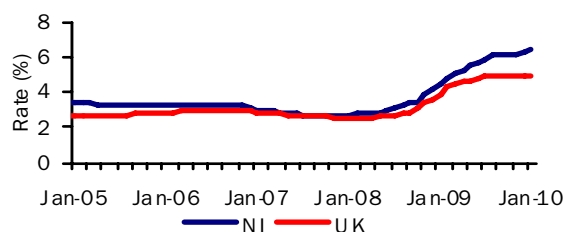
The more recent seasonally adjusted claimant count increased by 1,400 over the month to January 2010 to 56,100 (6.4% of the workforce). The latest monthly increase was higher than the increase recorded for the previous month (700) and was the largest increase since August 2009. The increase over the year was 17,000 (43.5%) and the workforce unemployment rate has increased by 1.9 percentage points over the same period.

Claimant Count Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted claimant count rate in NI (6.4%) was higher than the UK average rate (5.0%) and was the third highest rate among the UK regions. Over the month to January 2010 the NI Claimant Count level increased by 2.6%, while the UK average increased by 1.5% (Figure 2). This was the second highest monthly increase of the twelve UK regions. Over the year the NI Claimant Count level increased by 43.5%, which was higher than the UK average (30.5%) and was the highest annual increase among the twelve UK regions.

Seasonally Adjusted Claimant Count Monthly Rates

Figure 2



Claimant count rates for District Council Areas

Figure 3 (unadjusted numbers as a percentage of the resident working age population) show that the highest rates at January 2010 were in Strabane (7.3%), Derry (7.3%) and Limavady (7.1%). Those that showed the highest percentage increase in levels over the year to January 2010 were Castlereagh (77.7%), Newry and Mourne (64.0%) and Armagh (61.4%).

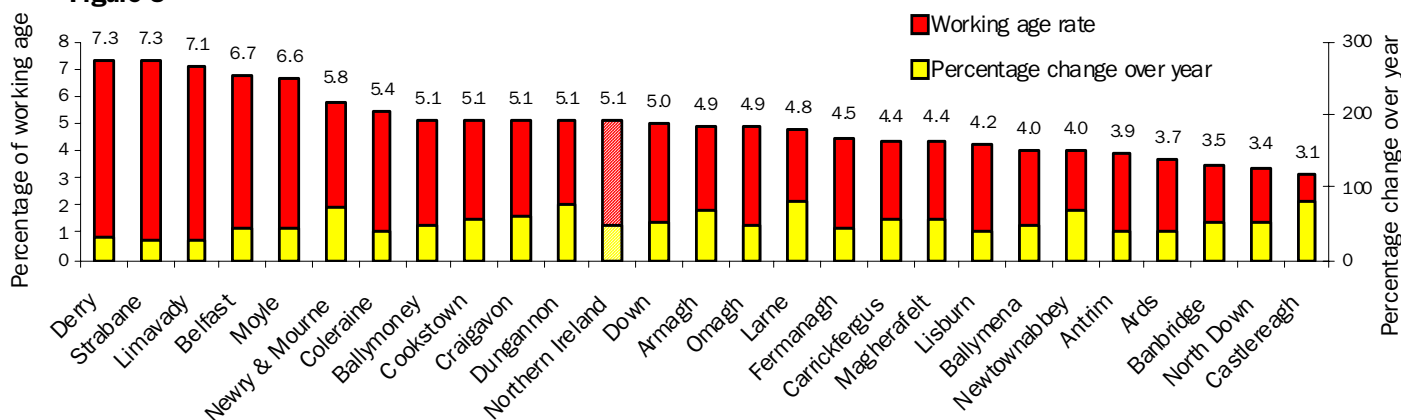
Employment and Training Measures

The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) provides a number of services and programmes to help jobseekers find work. In September 2008 Steps to Work, the Department's new flexible approach to helping people to find work, was introduced in Northern Ireland and subsumes the main New Deal programmes. Overall, there has been an increase of 99.1% (4,672 persons) to 9,388 over the year to January 2010 in the number of those claimants who are eligible for mandatory participation on Steps to Work. However, anyone over 18 years old (or lone parents aged 16 years old or over) who is not working (or working less than 16 hours each week) is eligible. New Deal statistics are currently accessible via the DEL web link below - Steps to Work statistics will be published when data is available.

www.delni.gov.uk/index/statistics-and-research/labour-market/new-deal-statistics.htm

Unadjusted Claimant Count Rates By District Council Area

Figure 3



Statistical Press Release

Redundancies

The Department was notified of 512 proposed redundancies over the period mid January 2010 to mid February 2010. This compares to 248 proposed redundancies notified to the Department in the previous monthly period.

There were 147 confirmed redundancies in the month of January (Figure 5). Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 4,410 confirmed redundancies, an increase of 47% from the previous year (2,998). The highest number of confirmed redundancies took place in Belfast District Council area which had 32.3% (1,424) of all redundancies over the year.

Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 5,166 proposed redundancies, an increase of 46% from the previous year (3,530).

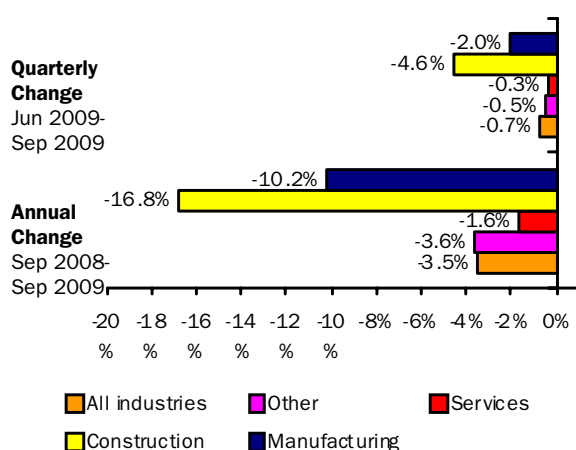
Currently there are 1,521 outstanding redundancies (that is, proposed but not confirmed), which is 24% lower than this time last year (1,996).

Note that since all proposed redundancies do not actually take place, the confirmed total provides a better indication of real job losses.

Quarterly Employment Survey (QES)

The QES provides an estimate of the number of jobs (rather than persons in employment) and is the preferred measure of change in employee jobs. The estimated seasonally adjusted employee jobs total in Northern Ireland at September 2009 was 701,730. This represents a decrease of 5,010 over the quarter and a decrease of 25,600 over the year.

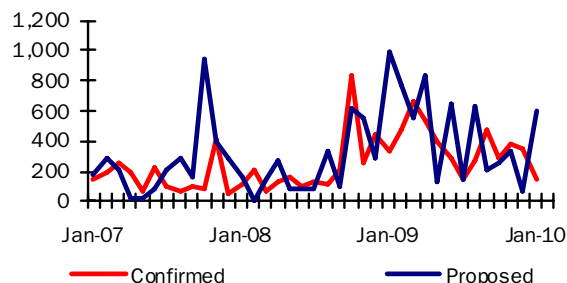
Annual and Quarterly changes in employee jobs (seasonally adjusted)
Figure 4



The seasonally adjusted quarterly change consisted of decreases in Manufacturing (-1,540), in the Service sector (-1,640) and in Construction (-1,720).

Confirmed and Proposed Redundancies January 07 - January 10

Figure 5

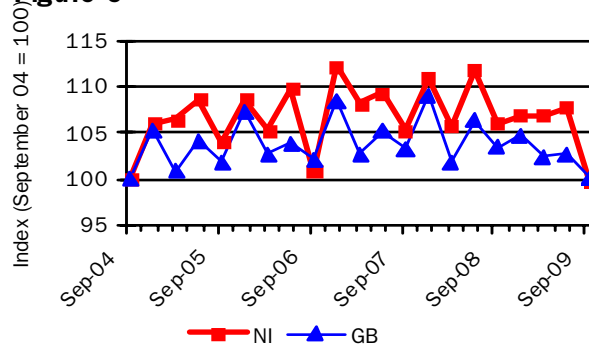


Hours Worked

The total workforce hours worked per week in Northern Ireland in September 2009 was estimated at 24.4 million hours, representing a decrease of 6.2% over the year (compared with a decrease of 3.2% in GB). Between September 2004 and September 2009, NI's total workforce hours worked per week decreased by 0.4%, compared with a 0.2% increase in GB (Figure 6). In the three months to November 2009, the average actual weekly hours worked in NI was 33.6 hours, compared with 32.6 hours in the UK.

Index of total workforce hours worked per week, NI & GB

Figure 6



Source: Employment, Earnings and Productivity Division, ONS

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

Earning results for April 2009, which were released on 12th November 2009, show that yearly growth in median gross weekly earnings for all employees (i.e. both full- and part-time) in NI was 3.4% (to £356.7) compared to 2.2% in the UK (to £397.3). NI full-time employees' gross weekly earnings in April 2009 were £439.1, which was approximately 90% of the figure in the UK (£488.7). NI full-time earnings increased by 5.1% over the period, compared with an increase of 2.0% in the UK.

Full-time private sector median gross weekly earnings in NI increased at a marginally faster rate (1.6% to £383.0) than in the UK, where growth was 1.0% over the year (to £464.7). This represented little change in the NI/UK private sector pay gap, from 82.0% of the UK figure at April 2008 to 82.4% at April 2009.

Statistical Press Release

**Labour Market Structure – Seasonally adjusted
Table 2**

(Thousands)

	Total aged 16 and over	Total persons of working age 16-59/64	All aged 16+				All working age 16-59/64		
			Total economically active	Total in employment	Unemployed	Economically inactive	Unemployment rate (%)	Activity rate 16-59/64 (%)	Employment rate (%) 16-59/64
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
ALL PERSONS									
Oct-Dec 2006	1,344	1,072	809	775	34	535	4.2%	72.9%	69.8%
Oct-Dec 2007	1,360	1,083	815	781	35	545	4.2%	72.8%	69.6%
Oct-Dec 2008	1,374	1,091	813	770	43	561	5.3%	72.3%	68.5%
Jan-Mar 2009	1,377	1,092	805	755	50	572	6.2%	71.3%	66.8%
Apr-Jun 2009	1,381	1,094	800	746	54	580	6.7%	70.6%	65.8%
Jul-Sep 2009	1,384	1,096	809	752	57	574	7.1%	71.4%	66.3%
Oct-Dec 2009	1,387	1,097	814	765	49	573	6.0%	71.7%	67.3%
Change on Quarter	3	2	5	13	-8	-2	-1.0	0.3	1.0
Change on Year	13	7	1	-5	6	12	0.7	-0.6	-1.2
MALES									
Oct-Dec 2006	650	552	441	421	21	209	4.6%	77.9%	74.3%
Oct-Dec 2007	659	558	446	425	21	213	4.7%	78.3%	74.5%
Oct-Dec 2008	666	563	446	413	33	221	7.4%	77.5%	71.7%
Jan-Mar 2009	668	564	440	406	34	228	7.7%	76.1%	70.1%
Apr-Jun 2009	670	565	437	400	37	233	8.6%	75.4%	68.8%
Jul-Sep 2009	671	566	442	401	42	229	9.4%	76.2%	68.8%
Oct-Dec 2009	673	567	445	411	34	228	7.7%	76.3%	70.3%
FEMALES									
Oct-Dec 2006	694	520	368	354	14	326	3.7%	67.5%	65.0%
Oct-Dec 2007	702	524	369	356	14	332	3.7%	67.0%	64.4%
Oct-Dec 2008	708	528	368	358	10	340	2.8%	66.8%	65.0%
Jan-Mar 2009	709	528	365	349	16	344	4.3%	66.2%	63.3%
Apr-Jun 2009	711	529	363	346	16	348	4.5%	65.6%	62.6%
Jul-Sep 2009	712	530	367	351	15	345	4.2%	66.3%	63.5%
Oct-Dec 2009	714	531	369	354	15	345	4.0%	66.8%	64.1%

Relationship between columns: A=C+F; C=D+E; G=E/C, H=economically active of working age/total population of working age, I=in employment of working age/total population of working age, * **A and B are underlying population estimates and are therefore not seasonally adjusted.**

Figures for Jun-Aug 2006 onwards have been revised to incorporate the latest population estimates.

Please see note on revisions policy in 'Definitions'.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Statistical Press Release

Seasonally Adjusted Regional Summary, October - December 2009

Table 3

	Labour Force Survey (LFS) ¹						Employee Jobs ³	Claimant count rate (%) ⁴	Claimant count level Percentage Change over the year	Claimant count level Percentage Change over the month	Jobs Density Indicator ⁵
	Employment		Unemployment		Economically Inactive						
	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²					
	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²					
North East	69.0	-0.9	9.3	0.9	23.7	0.2	1,003	7.3%	21.6%	0.9%	0.72
North West	70.4	-0.8	8.5	0.7	22.8	0.3	2,927	5.8%	26.3%	1.7%	0.80
Yorkshire & the Humber	70.7	-1.7	9.1	2.4	21.9	-0.3	2,124	6.1%	30.7%	1.2%	0.79
East Midlands	74.6	-1.6	7.2	0.9	19.4	0.9	1,836	5.1%	28.3%	0.4%	0.81
West Midlands	70.5	-1.1	9.4	1.4	21.9	-0.1	2,237	6.6%	26.1%	0.8%	0.81
East	76.2	-1.5	6.5	1.0	18.4	0.8	2,314	4.3%	33.2%	1.7%	0.81
London	68.7	-2.7	9.1	1.8	24.2	1.3	3,977	4.7%	34.7%	1.3%	0.93
South East	77.0	-1.6	6.2	1.2	17.7	0.6	3,629	3.6%	36.6%	1.4%	0.86
South West	75.5	-2.5	6.4	1.6	19.1	1.2	2,173	3.5%	30.0%	2.2%	0.86
England	72.6	-1.7	7.9	1.3	21.0	0.6	22,221	5.0%	30.0%	1.3%	0.84
Wales	68.9	-1.7	8.6	1.5	24.3	0.6	1,110	5.7%	22.7%	1.4%	0.76
Scotland	73.5	-1.8	7.6	2.4	20.2	-0.1	2,332	5.0%	34.8%	2.8%	0.84
Great Britain	72.5	-1.7	7.9	1.4	21.1	0.5	25,663	5.0%	30.0%	1.4%	0.83
N Ireland	67.3	-1.2	6.0	0.7	28.3	0.6	702	6.4%	43.5%	2.6%	0.78
United Kingdom	72.4	-1.7	7.8	1.4	21.3	0.5	26,365	5.0%	30.5%	1.5%	0.83

¹ Employment and economic inactivity rates are based on working age population (16-59/64); Unemployment rates are based on 16+ population.

² Data refer to percentage point change of respective rate.

³ As at September 2009 (thousands).

⁴ As at January 2010: percentage of the workforce.

⁵ Not seasonally adjusted – data relates to 2007. Jobs Density – total number of jobs in an area divided by the resident population of working age in that area.

Statistical Press Release

DEFINITIONS

Notes to Table on Front Page

pps=percentage points

¹ Levels for all persons aged 16 and over, rates for working age (16-59 females, 16-64 males)

² People aged 16 and over. Unemployment rate=total unemployed as a proportion of the economically active

³ Quarterly Employment Survey

⁴ Seasonally adjusted. Rates are as a percentage of the total workforce.

⁵ Confirmed redundancies in the calendar month.

ILO definition

The definition of unemployment used in the Labour Force Survey (LFS) is in accordance with that promulgated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The ILO unemployed include those without a job who were able to start work in the two weeks following their LFS interview and had either looked for work in the four weeks prior to interview or were waiting to start a job they had already obtained.

The definition of ILO employed applies to anyone (aged 16 or over) who has done at least one hour's paid work in the week prior to interview, or has a job they are temporarily away from (e.g. on holiday). Also included are people who do unpaid work in a family business and people on Government-supported employment training schemes.

The ILO measures are particularly useful for examining short term and long term trends over time and key LFS time series data are available both seasonally adjusted and unadjusted.

Sampling variability

The LFS is a sample survey, and as such, estimates obtained from it are subject to sampling variability. If we drew many samples each would give a different result. The ranges shown for the LFS data in table 1 represent 95% confidence intervals i.e. we would expect that in 95% of samples the range would contain the true value. These confidence intervals have been calculated using data that is unadjusted for seasonality, with the relevant sampling errors produced applied to the seasonally adjusted data.

If the 'annual change' for an estimate has increased or decreased by more than the 'sampling variability of the change', this change would be statistically significant. However, for the period October to December the annual change in the employment, unemployment and economic inactivity categories were not statistically significant at this level.

Please see attached link for further LFS notes and definitions.

[Labour Force Survey Notes and Definitions](#)

LFS revision

This month's Labour Market Report includes revisions to the LFS microdata. These revisions are being made in order to incorporate the latest population estimates and will effect LFS data from the period June to August 2006. The magnitude of the revisions are relatively small, with the revisions to the unemployment rate falling within +/-0.05 percentage points and the working age employment rate within +/- 0.1 percentage points. The procedures being applied to the NI LFS results are consistent with those applied by the Office for National Statistics to other UK regions

More information on the revision policy concerning labour market statistics can be found through the link below:

[Labour market statistics revisions policy](#)

Claimant Count definition

Claimant Count figures are derived from records of claimants held at Social Security Offices. The term 'claimants' in the claimant count is used to include those who claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and National Insurance credits. The figures include severely disabled claimants, but exclude students seeking vacation work and the temporarily stopped. The Claimant Count is a very up-to-date measure of those eligible to claim a specific unemployment related benefit and data are available for a range of geographical sub-regions (e.g. District Council Areas, Parliamentary Constituency Areas, Travel-to-Work Areas and Wards). It also provides seasonally adjusted and unadjusted data and as a result is a useful measure for examining both short-term and long-term trends.

Seasonally Adjusted claimant count figures are provisional when published and subject to revision, mainly the following month and are only available at Northern Ireland level. Seasonally Adjusted totals are subject to an annual update (usually April) to take account of latest assessment trends.

[Background Notes to the Quarterly Employment Survey \(QES\)](#)

[Definitions for the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings ASHE](#)

For Further Information:

AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THE LABOUR MARKET REPORT WITH ASSOCIATED HYPERLINKS IS AVAILABLE ON THE HOME PAGE OF THE BRANCH WEBSITE AT:

www.statistics.detini.gov.uk

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