



STATISTICAL PRESS RELEASE

14 October 2009

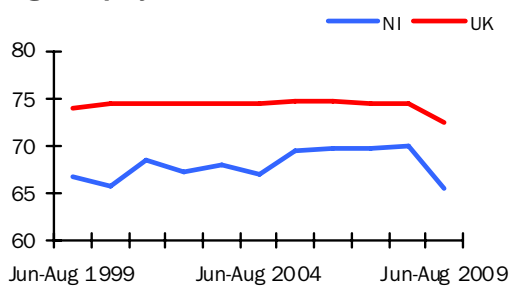
Coverage

Northern Ireland, unless otherwise stated

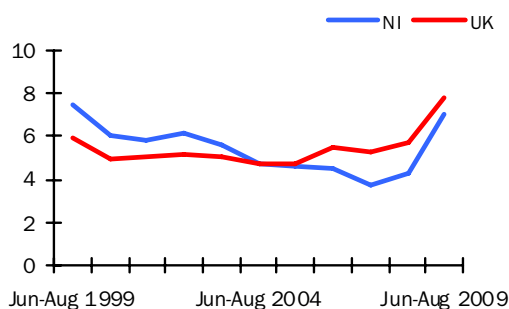
Theme

Labour Market

**Seasonally Adjusted Working
Age Employment Rate**



**Seasonally Adjusted
Unemployment Rate**



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Labour Market Statistics – October 2009

Seasonally adjusted Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for Northern Ireland for the period June - August estimated an increase over the quarter in the number of unemployed persons and a fall in the number economically inactive. There was little change in the number employed. The September increase in the Claimant Count was the 19th consecutive monthly increase since February 2008.

In the latest reference period, the working age employment rate was estimated at 65.6%, up 0.1 percentage points over the quarter, but down 4.4 percentage points over the year.

The unemployment rate was 7.1%, up 0.8 percentage points over the quarter and up 2.8 percentage points over the year. This represented the largest annual increase in unemployment since the LFS seasonally adjusted series began in 1995. It was the third largest increase of the UK regions. However, the NI rate remained below the UK rate of 7.9% and was also lower than the European Union (9.0%) and Republic of Ireland (12.5%) rates for July 2009.

The working age economic inactivity rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points over the quarter, but increased by 2.5 percentage points over the year to 29.3%. The NI working age economic inactivity rate (29.3%) remained the highest of the UK regions (UK rate was 21.0%).

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 September was 53,800, up 1,100 over the month and up 23,800 over the year. This represented a year on year percentage increase of 79.3%, which was higher than the UK increase (70.0%) and fourth highest among the UK regions. It was the highest percentage monthly increase of the UK regions.

There were 379 confirmed redundancies in September 2009. This was higher than in August 2009 (247) and higher than September 2008 (202). The total number of confirmed redundancies in the last twelve months was 4,993, up 178% from the previous year (1,798).

NI seasonally adjusted data

	Reference period	Levels	Rates (%)	Levels	Rates (pps)
				Change on quarter	
Employment ¹	Jun-Aug 2009	745,000	65.6%	1,000	0.1
Unemployment ²	Jun-Aug 2009	57,000	7.1%	7,000	0.8
Economically Active ¹	Jun-Aug 2009	802,000	70.7%	8,000	0.7
Economically Inactive ¹	Jun-Aug 2009	582,000	29.3%	-4,000	-0.7
Employee Jobs ³	Jun 09	709,040	-	-5,470	-
				Change on month	
Claimant Count ⁴	September 09	53,800	6.2%	+ 1,100	0.1
Redundancies ⁵	September 09	379	-	-	-

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 June - August estimated an increase over the quarter in the number of unemployed persons and a fall in the number economically inactive. There was little change in the number employed. The seasonally adjusted claimant count in September 2009 increased by 1,100 over the month to 53,800 and the Department was notified of 331 proposed redundancies in the latest reference period and 379 confirmed redundancies in September 2009.

Employment

The number of persons in employment in the period June - August was estimated at 745,000. This represented a marginal increase of 1,000 over the quarter, but was down 43,000 over the year. The working age employment rate was estimated at 65.6%, up 0.1 percentage points over the quarter and down 4.4 percentage points over the year. NI's working age employment rate remained well below the UK average (72.6%) and was the lowest of the UK regions.

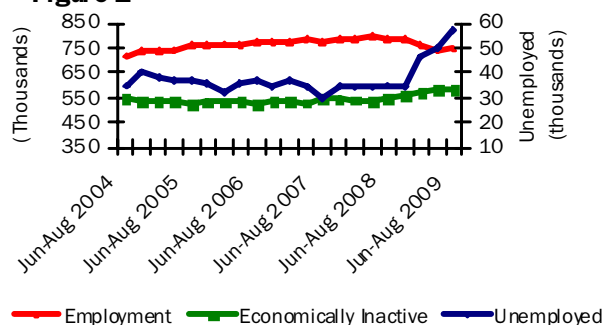
Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the period June - August was estimated at 7.1%, up 0.8 percentage points over the quarter and 2.8 percentage points over the year. The number of unemployed persons was estimated at 57,000, up 7,000 over the quarter and 21,000 over the year. This represented the largest annual increase in unemployment since the LFS seasonally adjusted series began in 1995.

Unadjusted figures show that 29.8% of the unemployed have been unemployed for 1 year or more – down 10.0 percentage points over the

Seasonally Adjusted Labour Market Summary of Northern Ireland

Figure 1



year. They also estimate the unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds at 19.0% – up 6.4 percentage points over the year.

Economically Inactive

The seasonally adjusted number of economically inactive persons in the period June - August was estimated at 582,000. This figure has decreased by 4,000 over the quarter, but was up 35,000 over the year.

The working age economic inactivity rate for NI stands at 29.3%. This is significantly higher than the UK average rate (21.0%) and is the highest of the 12 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 (54,000) 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	Jun-Aug 2009	745,000	+/-22,000	-43,000	+/-27,000
Unemployment	Jun-Aug 2009	57,000	+/-10,000	21,000	+/-12,000
Economically inactive	Jun-Aug 2009	582,000	+/-20,000	35,000	+/-25,000
Unemployment rate	Jun-Aug 2009	7.1%	+/-1.3pps	2.8pps	+/-1.5pps
Employment rate ¹	Jun-Aug 2009	65.6%	+/-1.8pps	-4.4pps	+/-2.2pps
Economic inactivity rate ¹	Jun-Aug 2009	29.3%	+/-1.7pps	2.5pps	+/-2.1pps
Claimant Count	September 2009	53,800		23,800	

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

Statistical Press Release

Estimates from the LFS have an associated degree of statistical error as they are based on a sample of the population. The annual changes for the main LFS categories of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity were tested for statistical significance. The results showed that the annual change in each of these categories was statistically significant i.e. the recorded change exceeded the variability expected from a sample survey of this size (see table 1 and Section 9 for further details).

Unemployment Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI (7.1%) remained below the UK average rate (7.9%) and was the equal fourth lowest rate among the UK regions. The NI rate also compared favourably to the European Union rate (9.0%) and the Republic of Ireland rate (12.5%) for July 2009. However, the annual increase in the NI unemployment rate (+2.8 percentage points) was higher than the UK average (+2.1 percentage points) and was third highest of the UK regions. (See table 3 for additional UK regional results.)

Claimant Count

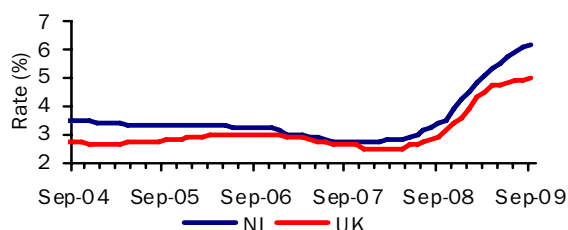
The more recent seasonally adjusted claimant count increased by 1,100 over the month to September 2009 to 53,800 (6.2% of the workforce). The monthly increase was less than the previous monthly increase (1,600) and was the smallest increase for 15 months. However, this month's increase is the nineteenth consecutive monthly increase since the lowest level of 23,500 in February 2008 (also reached in November 2007).

Claimant Count Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted claimant count rate in NI (6.2%) was higher than the UK average rate (5.0%) and was the third highest rate among the UK regions. Over the month to September 2009 the NI Claimant Count level increased by 2.1%, which was higher than the UK average (+1.3%). This was the sixth consecutive month in which Northern Ireland had the highest monthly increase among the UK regions. Over the year the NI

Seasonally Adjusted Claimant Count Monthly Rates

Figure 2



Claimant Count level increased by 79.3%, which was higher than the UK average (+70.0%) and fourth highest annual increase among the UK regions.

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 September 2009 were in Derry (7.2%), Strabane (7.1%) and Limavady (6.6%). Those that showed the highest percentage increase in levels over the year to September 2009 were Cookstown (151.1%), Dungannon (149.6%) and Magherafelt (137.2%).

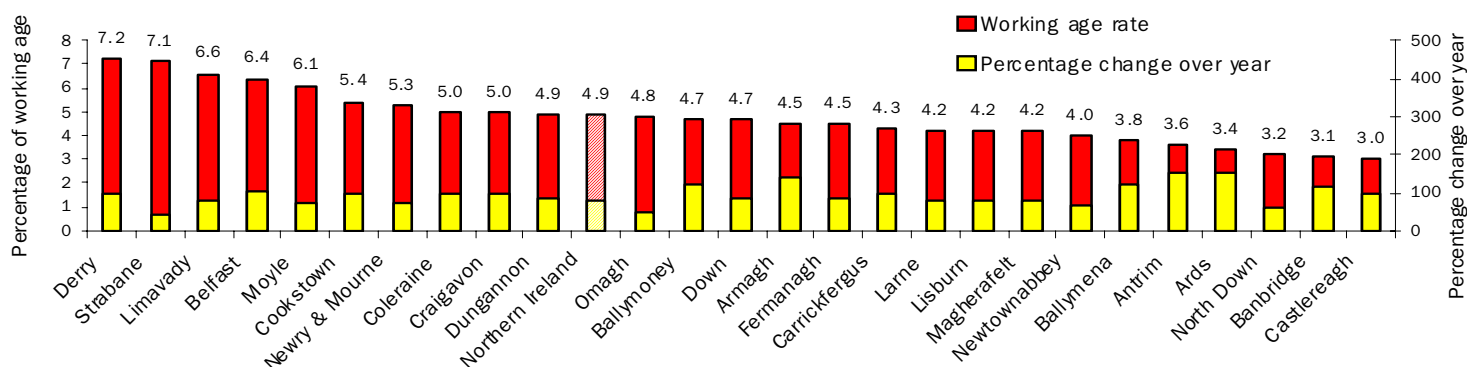
Employment and Training Measures

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 122.2% (4,563 persons) to 8,297 over the year to September 2009 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



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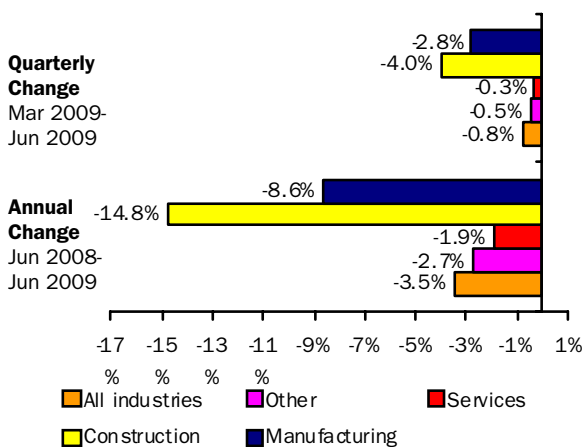
Redundancies

The Department was notified of 331 proposed redundancies over the period mid September 2009 to mid October 2009. This compares to 163 proposed redundancies notified to the Department in the previous monthly period. There were 379 confirmed redundancies in the month of September (Figure 5). Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 4,993 confirmed redundancies, an increase of 178% from the previous year (1,798). The highest number of confirmed redundancies took place in Belfast District Council area which had 26.9% (1,344) of all redundancies over the year. Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 6,346 proposed redundancies, an increase of 120% from the previous year (2,879). Since the start of 2009 to mid October there were a total of 5,035 proposed redundancies. 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)

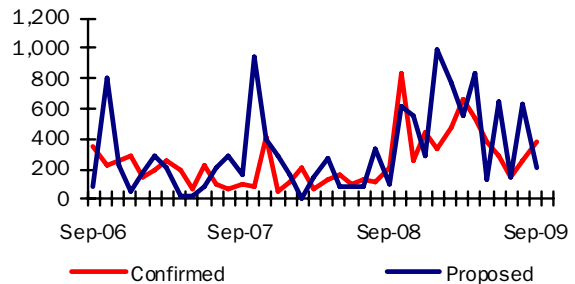
The QES provides an estimate of the number of jobs (rather than persons in employment) and is the preferred measure of change in employee jobs. The estimated seasonally adjusted employee jobs total in Northern Ireland at June 2009 was 709,040. This represents a decrease of 5,470 over the quarter and a decrease of 25,450 over the year.

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



The seasonally adjusted quarterly change consisted of decreases in Manufacturing (-2,190), in the Service sector (-1,600) and in Construction (-1,580).

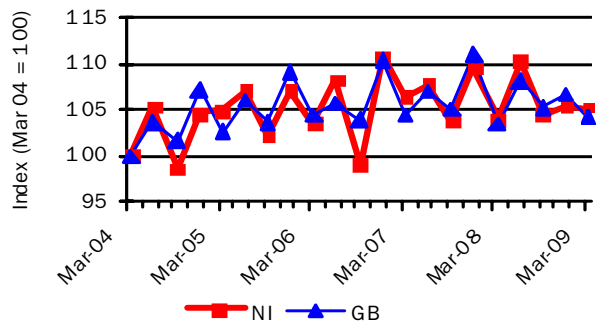
Confirmed and Proposed Redundancies
September 06 - September 09
Figure 5



Hours Worked

The total workforce hours worked per week in Northern Ireland in March 2009 was estimated at 26.1 million hours, representing an increase of 1.1% over the year (compared with an increase of 0.6% in GB). Between March 2004 and March 2009, NI's total workforce hours worked per week increased by 5.1%, compared with a 4.2% increase in GB (Figure 6). In the three months to July 2009, the average actual weekly hours worked in NI was 33.1 hours, compared with 32.3 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)

Earnings results for April 2008, which were released on 14th November 2008, show that yearly growth in median gross weekly earnings for all employees (i.e. both full- and part-time) in NI was 5.1% (to £346.5) compared to 3.3% in the UK (to £388.4). NI full-time employees' gross weekly earnings in April 2008 were £417.6, which was approximately 87% of the figure in the UK (£478.6). NI full-time earnings increased by 4.3% over the period, which was relatively similar to the increase in the UK (4.6%).

Full-time private sector gross weekly earnings in NI were £377.1, or 82.0% of the figure in the UK (compared to 82.7% in April 2007), reflecting a slight widening of the NI/UK private sector pay gap.

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**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									
Jun – Aug 2006	1,339	1,068	811	774	37	527	4.5%	73.3%	69.9%
Jun – Aug 2007	1,356	1,080	806	776	30	550	3.7%	72.4%	69.7%
Jun – Aug 2008	1,370	1,088	823	788	35	547	4.3%	73.3%	70.1%
Sep-Nov 2008	1,373	1,089	817	783	34	556	4.2%	72.8%	69.7%
Dec-Feb 2009	1,377	1,091	804	758	46	573	5.7%	71.5%	67.3%
Mar-May 2009	1,380	1,093	794	744	50	586	6.3%	70.0%	65.5%
Jun-Aug 2009	1,383	1,095	802	745	57	582	7.1%	70.7%	65.6%
Change on Quarter	3	2	8	1	7	-4	0.8	0.7	0.1
Change on Year	13	7	-21	-43	21	35	2.8	-2.5	-4.4
MALES									
Jun – Aug 2006	648	550	447	422	24	201	5.5%	79.2%	74.8%
Jun – Aug 2007	656	557	443	426	18	213	4.0%	78.0%	74.8%
Jun – Aug 2008	663	560	450	426	24	213	5.3%	78.6%	74.3%
Sep-Nov 2008	665	561	448	422	27	217	5.9%	78.2%	73.5%
Dec-Feb 2009	667	562	438	406	32	229	7.3%	76.2%	70.5%
Mar-May 2009	669	563	434	399	35	234	8.1%	75.1%	68.9%
Jun-Aug 2009	670	564	439	397	43	231	9.8%	75.8%	68.2%
FEMALES									
Jun – Aug 2006	691	518	364	352	12	327	3.4%	67.1%	64.7%
Jun – Aug 2007	700	524	362	350	12	337	3.3%	66.5%	64.2%
Jun – Aug 2008	707	527	373	362	11	334	3.0%	67.6%	65.5%
Sep-Nov 2008	708	528	369	361	8	339	2.1%	67.0%	65.6%
Dec-Feb 2009	710	529	366	352	14	344	3.8%	66.5%	64.0%
Mar-May 2009	711	530	360	345	15	352	4.1%	64.6%	61.9%
Jun-Aug 2009	713	530	362	348	14	351	3.8%	65.3%	62.8%

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 may not sum due to rounding.

Figures for 2006 onwards have been revised to incorporate the latest mid year population estimates.

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Seasonally Adjusted Regional Summary, June – August 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	Change ²	Rate	Change ²	Rate	Change ²					
North East	68.5%	-1.6	9.5%	1.8	24.1%	0.2	1,023	7.3%	53.1%	0.8%	0.72
North West	70.8%	-0.9	8.7%	2.2	22.1%	-0.9	2,962	5.8%	61.5%	1.1%	0.80
Yorkshire & the Humber	71.1%	-2.5	8.6%	2.4	22.0%	0.5	2,165	6.0%	69.2%	1.1%	0.79
East Midlands	75.0%	-0.5	7.1%	0.9	19.0%	-0.2	1,837	5.1%	76.9%	1.4%	0.81
West Midlands	69.9%	-2.2	10.4%	4.0	21.5%	-1.2	2,271	6.7%	68.1%	1.9%	0.81
East of England	77.3%	-0.3	6.7%	1.9	17.1%	-1.4	2,346	4.3%	80.7%	0.9%	0.81
London	69.2%	-1.6	8.7%	1.2	24.0%	0.7	4,025	4.7%	61.4%	1.8%	0.93
South East	76.8%	-2.4	6.1%	1.5	18.0%	1.1	3,668	3.5%	97.2%	1.5%	0.86
South West	76.2%	-2.4	6.6%	2.6	18.2%	0.2	2,204	3.5%	88.2%	1.1%	0.86
England	72.9%	-1.6	7.9%	2.0	20.6%	0.0	22,500	5.0%	71.0%	1.4%	0.84
Wales	68.8%	-3.1	9.1%	3.2	24.1%	0.7	1,125	5.8%	68.2%	1.4%	0.76
Scotland	74.0%	-2.1	7.1%	2.5	20.2%	0.0	2,363	4.7%	58.6%	0.2%	0.84
Great Britain	72.8%	-1.7	7.9%	2.1	20.7%	0.0	25,988	5.0%	69.7%	1.3%	0.83
N Ireland	65.6%	-4.4	7.1%	2.8	29.3%	2.5	715	6.2%	79.3%	2.1%	0.78
United Kingdom	72.6%	-1.8	7.9%	2.1	21.0%	0.1	26,703	5.0%	70.0%	1.3%	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 Mar 2009 (thousands).

⁴ As at September 2009: 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).

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. The key time series data also incorporates the latest mid year population estimates, however the more disaggregated 'microdata' has yet to be re-weighted to these totals (see link below for further details).

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. The annual changes in the main LFS categories of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity were all statistically significant at the 95% level in Jun – Aug 2009

Please see attached link for further LFS notes and definitions.

[Labour Force Survey Notes and Definitions](#)

Claimant Count Definition

Claimant Count figures are derived from records of claimants held at Job Benefit 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.

[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:

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