



## STATISTICAL PRESS RELEASE

**20 January 2010**

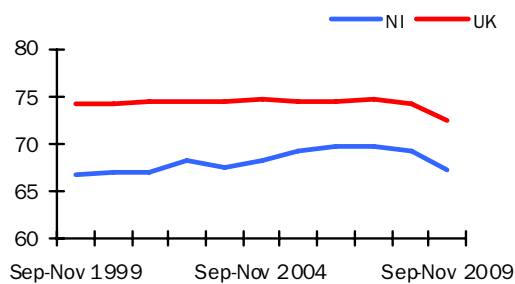
**Coverage**

Northern Ireland, unless otherwise stated

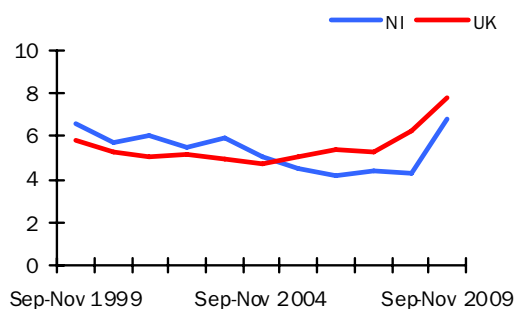
**Theme**

Labour Market

**Seasonally Adjusted Working  
Age Employment Rate**



**Seasonally Adjusted  
Unemployment Rate**



### Labour Market Statistics – January 2010

Seasonally adjusted Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for Northern Ireland for the period September - November estimated an increase over the quarter in the number of employed persons, while there were falls in the number of economically inactive and in the number of unemployed. The December Claimant Count showed an increase of 500 over the month.

In the latest reference period, the working age employment rate was estimated at 67.2%, up 1.4 percentage points over the quarter, but down 2.2 percentage points over the year.

The unemployment rate was 6.8%, down 0.3 percentage points over the quarter, but up 2.5 percentage points over the year. The NI rate remained below the UK rate of 7.8% and was also lower than the European Union (9.3%) and Republic of Ireland (12.8%) rates for October 2009.

The working age economic inactivity rate fell by 1.3 percentage points over the quarter, but increased by 0.4 percentage points over the year to 27.8%. The NI working age economic inactivity rate (27.8%) remained the highest of the twelve UK regions (UK rate was 21.2%).

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 December was 54,500, up 500 over the month and up 17,800 over the year. This represented a year on year percentage increase of 48.5%, which was higher than the UK increase (36.6%) and highest among the twelve UK regions. For the second consecutive month, NI was one of only two UK regions that recorded a monthly increase in claimants.

There were 343 confirmed redundancies in December 2009. This was lower than in November 2009 (379) and lower than December 2008 (451). The total number of confirmed redundancies in the last twelve months was 4,541, up 63% from the previous year (2,782).

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**Next publication date: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

**NI seasonally adjusted data**

	Reference period	Levels	Rates (%)	Levels	Rates (pps)
				Change on quarter	
Employment <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2009	764,000	67.2%	18,000	1.4
Unemployment <sup>2</sup>	Sep-Nov 2009	56,000	6.8%	-1	-0.3
Economically Active <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2009	820,000	72.2%	16,000	1.3
Economically Inactive <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2009	566,000	27.8%	-13,000	-1.3
Employee Jobs <sup>3</sup>	September 09	701,730	-	-5,010	-
				Change on month	
Claimant Count <sup>4</sup>	December 09	54,500	6.3%	500	0.1
Redundancies <sup>5</sup>	December 09	343	-	-	-

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 September - November 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 December 2009 increased by 500 over the month to 54,500 and the Department was notified of 248 proposed redundancies in the latest reference period and 343 confirmed redundancies in December 2009.

### Employment

The number of persons in employment in the period September-November 2009 was estimated at 764,000. This represented an increase of 18,000 over the quarter, but a fall of 16,000 over the year. The working age employment rate was estimated at 67.2%, up 1.4 percentage points over the quarter, but down 2.2 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.

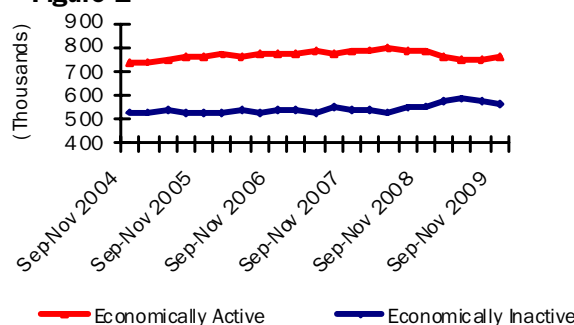
### Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the period September - November 2009 was estimated at 6.8%, down 0.3 percentage points over the quarter, but up 2.5 percentage points over the year. The number of unemployed persons was estimated at 56,000, down 1,000 over the quarter, but up 20,000 over the year. The male unemployment rate (9.1%) was more than double the female rate (4.0%) in September - November 2009.

Unadjusted figures show that 37.3% of the unemployed have been unemployed for 1 year or more - up 3.5 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 16.2% - up 3.7 percentage points over the year.

### Economically Inactive

The seasonally adjusted number of economically inactive persons in the period September - November 2009 was estimated at 566,000. This figure has decreased by 13,000 over the quarter, but was up 8,000 over the year.

The working age economic inactivity rate for NI stands at 27.8%. This is significantly higher than the UK average rate (21.2%) 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 (49,000) is almost as large as 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	Sep-Nov 2009	764,000	+/-22,000	-16,000	+/-28,000
Unemployment	Sep-Nov 2009	56,000	+/-10,000	20,000	+/-12,000
Economically inactive	Sep-Nov 2009	566,000	+/-20,000	8,000	+/-25,000
Unemployment rate	Sep-Nov 2009	6.8%	+/-1.3pps	2.5pps	+/-1.5pps
Employment rate <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2009	67.2%	+/-1.8pps	-2.2pps	+/-2.3pps
Economic inactivity rate <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2009	27.8%	+/-1.7pps	0.4pps	+/-2.2pps
Claimant Count	December 2009	54,500		17,800	

Note: pps = percentage points, <sup>1</sup> 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 unemployment rates was statistically significant i.e. the recorded change exceeded the variability expected from a sample survey of this size (see table 1 and 'Definitions' for further details).

## Unemployment Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI (6.8%) remained below the UK average rate (7.8%) and was the fourth lowest rate among the twelve UK regions. The NI rate also compared favourably to the European Union rate (9.3%) and the Republic of Ireland rate (12.8%) for October 2009. However, the annual increase in the NI unemployment rate (+2.5 percentage points) was higher than the UK average (+1.6 percentage points) and was the highest of the UK regions.

## Claimant Count

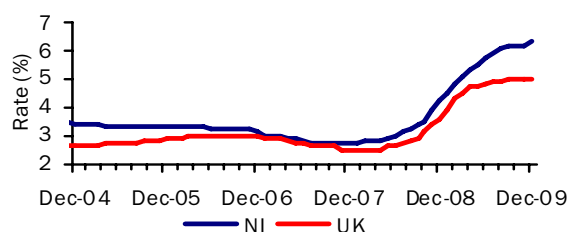
The more recent seasonally adjusted claimant count increased by 500 over the month to December 2009 to 54,500 (6.3% of the workforce). The latest monthly increase was higher than the increase recorded for the previous month (200). The increase over the year was 17,800 (48.5%) and the workforce rate has increased by 2.1 percentage points over the same period.

## Claimant Count Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted claimant count rate in NI (6.3%) was higher than the UK average rate (5.0%) and was the third highest rate among the UK regions. Over the month to December 2009 the NI Claimant Count level increased by 0.9%, while the UK average decreased by 0.9% (Figure 2). Over the year the NI Claimant Count level increased by 48.5%, which was higher than the UK average (+36.6%) 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 December 2009 were in Strabane (6.9%), Derry (6.9%), Limavady (6.6%) and Belfast (6.4%). Those that showed the highest percentage increase in levels over the year to December 2009 were Castlereagh (79.6%), Larne (79.1%) and Dungannon (77.6%).

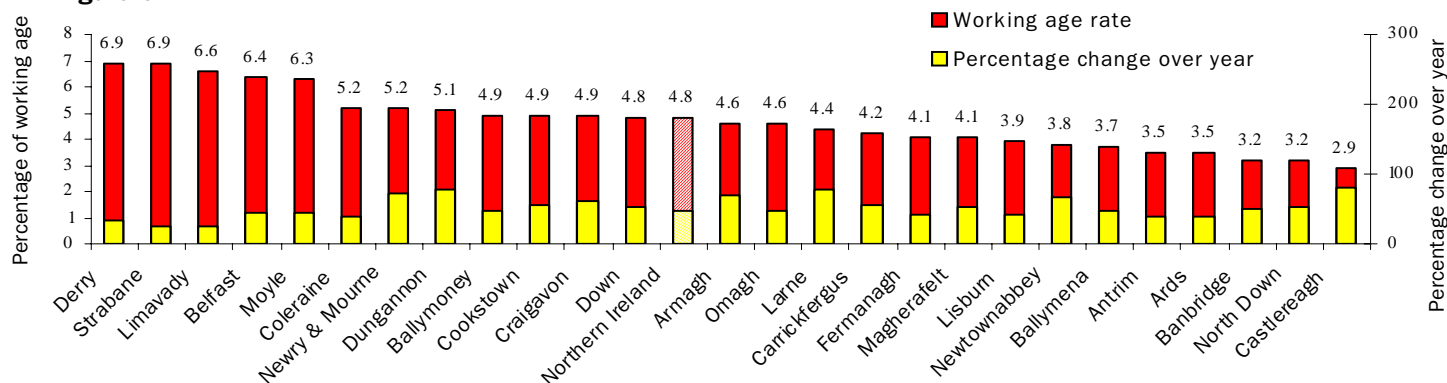
## Employment and Training Measures

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 103.5% (4,294 persons) to 8,441 over the year to December 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](http://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 248 proposed redundancies over the period mid December 2009 to mid January 2010. This compares to 294 proposed redundancies notified to the Department in the previous monthly period.

There were 343 confirmed redundancies in the month of December (Figure 5). During 2009 there were a total of 4,541 confirmed redundancies, an increase of 63% from the previous year (2,782). The highest number of confirmed redundancies took place in Belfast District Council area which had 32.5% (1,474) of all redundancies over the year. During 2009 there were a total of 5,549 proposed redundancies, an increase of 105% from the previous year (2,713).

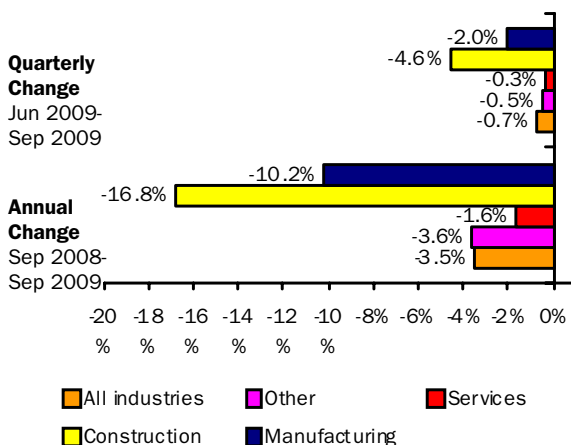
Currently there are 1,301 outstanding redundancies (that is, proposed but not confirmed), which is 15% lower than this time last year (1,526).

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)

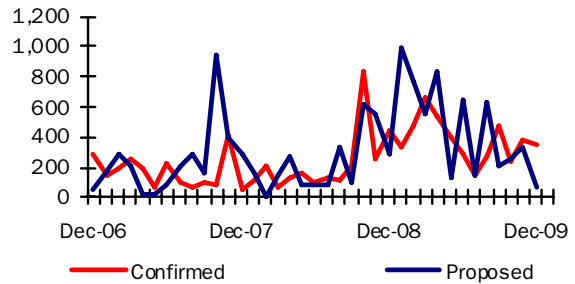
The QES provides an estimate of the number of jobs (rather than persons in employment) and is the preferred measure of change in employee jobs. The estimated seasonally adjusted employee jobs total in Northern Ireland at September 2009 was 701,730. This represents a decrease of 5,010 over the quarter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

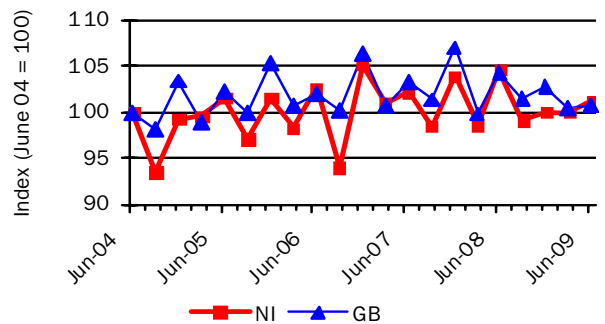
**Confirmed and Proposed Redundancies**  
**December 06 - December 09**  
**Figure 5**



## Hours Worked

The total workforce hours worked per week in Northern Ireland in June 2009 was estimated at 26.5 million hours, representing a decrease of 3.3% over the year (compared with a decrease of 3.4% in GB). Between June 2004 and June 2009, NI's total workforce hours worked per week increased by 1.2%, compared with a 0.8% increase in GB (Figure 6). In the three months to October 2009, the average actual weekly hours worked in NI was 33.0 hours, compared with 31.4 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
<b>ALL PERSONS</b>									
Sep - Nov 2006	1,343	1,071	807	773	34	536	4.2%	72.8%	69.7%
Sep - Nov 2007	1,360	1,082	817	781	36	543	4.4%	73.0%	69.7%
Sep - Nov 2008	1,373	1,090	816	780	35	558	4.3%	72.5%	69.4%
Dec - Feb 2009	1,376	1,092	804	757	47	572	5.8%	71.4%	67.2%
Mar - May 2009	1,380	1,094	796	746	51	583	6.4%	70.4%	65.8%
Jun - Aug 2009	1,383	1,095	803	747	57	579	7.1%	70.9%	65.8%
Sep - Nov 2009	1,386	1,097	820	764	56	566	6.8%	72.2%	67.2%
<b>Change on Quarter</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-13</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Change on Year</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-2.2</b>
<b>MALES</b>									
Sep - Nov 2006	650	552	442	421	21	208	4.7%	78.1%	74.4%
Sep - Nov 2007	658	558	446	424	22	213	4.9%	78.2%	74.3%
Sep - Nov 2008	666	563	448	421	28	218	6.2%	78.0%	73.1%
Dec - Feb 2009	668	564	439	406	33	228	7.5%	76.2%	70.3%
Mar - May 2009	669	565	437	401	36	233	8.2%	75.3%	69.0%
Jun - Aug 2009	671	565	441	398	43	230	9.7%	75.9%	68.4%
Sep - Nov 2009	673	566	447	406	40	226	9.1%	76.6%	69.5%
<b>FEMALES</b>									
Sep - Nov 2006	693	519	365	352	13	329	3.6%	67.1%	64.6%
Sep - Nov 2007	701	524	371	357	14	330	3.7%	67.5%	64.9%
Sep - Nov 2008	707	527	368	360	8	340	2.1%	66.8%	65.4%
Dec - Feb 2009	709	528	365	351	14	344	3.8%	66.4%	63.8%
Mar - May 2009	710	529	360	345	15	350	4.2%	65.1%	62.4%
Jun - Aug 2009	712	530	362	348	14	349	3.9%	65.5%	62.9%
Sep - Nov 2009	713	530	373	358	15	340	4.0%	67.5%	64.8%

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 for Jun-Aug 2007 onwards have been revised to incorporate the latest population estimates and the annual review of seasonal adjustment. Please see note on revisions policy in 'Definitions'. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

# Statistical Press Release

## Seasonally Adjusted Regional Summary, September – November 2009

Table 3

	Labour Force Survey (LFS) <sup>1</sup>						Employee Jobs <sup>3</sup>	Claimant count rate (%) <sup>4</sup>	Claimant count level Percentage Change over the year	Claimant count level Percentage Change over the month	Jobs Density Indicator <sup>5</sup>
	Employment		Unemployment		Economically Inactive						
	Rate	Annual Change <sup>2</sup>	Rate	Annual Change <sup>2</sup>	Rate	Annual Change <sup>2</sup>					
	Rate	Annual Change <sup>2</sup>	Rate	Annual Change <sup>2</sup>	Rate	Annual Change <sup>2</sup>					
North East	69.0	-1.4	9.8	1.6	23.1	0.1	1,003	7.2%	27.4%	-0.6%	0.72
North West	70.8	-0.5	8.2	0.6	22.6	0.0	2,927	5.6%	30.7%	-1.5%	0.80
Yorkshire & the Humber	70.8	-1.4	9.1	2.2	21.8	-0.4	2,124	6.0%	36.3%	-0.6%	0.79
East Midlands	74.5	-1.9	7.2	1.4	19.5	0.8	1,836	5.1%	37.8%	-0.6%	0.81
West Midlands	70.5	-1.2	9.6	2.3	21.6	-0.7	2,237	6.5%	33.0%	-1.3%	0.81
East	76.2	-1.3	6.3	0.8	18.6	0.7	2,314	4.2%	40.4%	-1.3%	0.81
London	68.8	-2.2	9.4	2.0	23.9	0.7	3,977	4.6%	38.9%	-0.7%	0.93
South East	76.8	-2.2	6.2	1.4	17.9	0.9	3,629	3.5%	47.7%	-1.4%	0.86
South West	75.2	-3.3	6.4	1.6	19.5	2.0	2,173	3.4%	37.2%	-2.2%	0.86
England	72.7	-1.7	7.9	1.5	20.9	0.5	22,221	4.9%	36.6%	-1.1%	0.84
Wales	69.1	-1.6	8.5	1.5	24.2	0.4	1,110	5.6%	29.8%	-1.6%	0.76
Scotland	74.0	-1.4	7.4	2.2	19.8	-0.4	2,332	4.9%	36.9%	0.4%	0.84
Great Britain	72.6	-1.7	7.9	1.6	21.0	0.4	25,663	4.9%	36.2%	-1.0%	0.83
N Ireland	67.2	-2.2	6.8	2.5	27.8	0.4	702	6.3%	48.5%	0.9%	0.78
United Kingdom	72.4	-1.7	7.8	1.6	21.2	0.4	26,365	5.0%	36.6%	-0.9%	0.83

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

<sup>2</sup> Data refer to percentage point change of respective rate.

<sup>3</sup> As at September 2009 (thousands).

<sup>4</sup> As at December 2009: percentage of the workforce.

<sup>5</sup> 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

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

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

<sup>3</sup> Quarterly Employment Survey

<sup>4</sup> Seasonally adjusted. Rates are as a percentage of the total workforce.

<sup>5</sup> 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 change in unemployment was statistically significant at the 95% level in the period September to November 2009. However, the annual change in the

employment 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

Next month's Labour Market Report will include 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.

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](http://www.statistics.detini.gov.uk)

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