



## STATISTICAL PRESS RELEASE

**19 January 2011**

**Coverage**

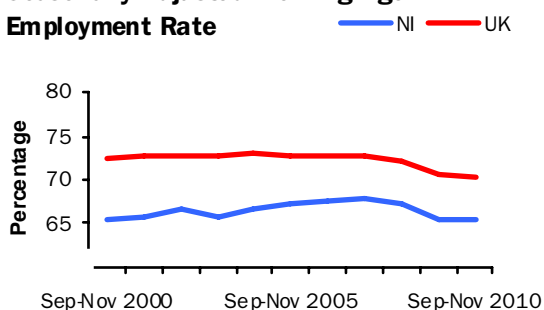
Northern Ireland, unless otherwise stated

**Theme**

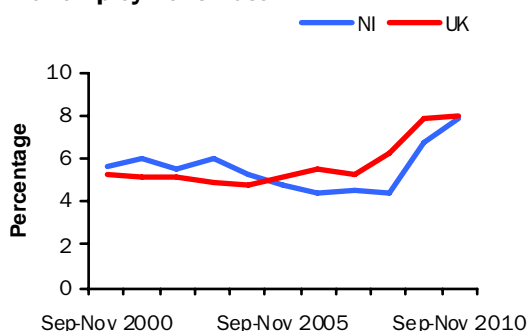
Labour Market

**Seasonally Adjusted Working Age**

**Employment Rate**



**Seasonally Adjusted  
Unemployment Rate**



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**Next publication date: 16<sup>th</sup> February 2011**



### Labour Market Statistics – January 2011

Seasonally adjusted Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for Northern Ireland for the period September - November 2010 reported quarterly increases in the estimates for unemployed and economically inactive persons, while there was a decrease in the number of employed persons. The December Claimant Count recorded an increase of 300 claimants from the revised figure for the previous month and now stands at 58,500.

In the latest reference period, the employment rate for those aged 16-64 was estimated at 65.3%, down 1.1 percentage points over the quarter and down 0.1 percentage points over the year.

The unemployment rate for the period September - November 2010 was estimated at 7.8%, up 0.9 percentage points over the quarter and up 1.1 percentage points over the year. The NI rate remained below the UK (7.9%), European Union (9.6%) and Republic of Ireland (14.1%) rates.

The economic inactivity rate for those aged 16-64 in NI stands at 29.0%, up 0.5 percentage points over the quarter, but down 0.7 percentage points over the year. The NI rate remains significantly higher than the UK average rate (23.4%) and is the highest of the twelve UK regions.

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

The more recent seasonally adjusted claimant count stood at 58,500 (6.5%) at December 2010, up 300 from the previous month's revised figure. Over the year the NI claimant count increased by 7.7%, whereas the UK decreased by 9.0%. NI had the largest percentage increase in claimants among the UK regions over the year. It also has the second highest Claimant Count rate of the twelve UK regions.

The Department was notified of 91 proposed redundancies in the period mid December to mid January and there were 185 confirmed redundancies in December 2010.

The total number of employee jobs in NI at September 2010 was estimated at 697,630 (Quarterly Employment Survey), down 940 jobs (-0.1%) over the quarter and 5,240 jobs (-0.7%) over the year.

**NI seasonally adjusted data**

	Reference period	Levels	Rates (%)	Levels	Rates (pps)
				Change on quarter	
Employment <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2010	768,000	65.3%	-12,000	-1.1
Unemployment <sup>2</sup>	Sep-Nov 2010	65,000	7.8%	7,000	0.9
Economically Active <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2010	833,000	71.0%	-5,000	-0.5
Economically Inactive <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2010	565,000	29.0%	8,000	0.5
Employee Jobs <sup>3</sup>	September 2010	697,630		-940	
				Change on month	
Claimant Count <sup>4</sup>	December 2010	58,500	6.5	+300	0.0
Redundancies <sup>5</sup>	December 2010	185		-	-

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 2010 showed an increase over the quarter in the estimates for unemployed and economically inactive persons, while there was a decrease in the estimated number of employed persons. The seasonally adjusted claimant count in December 2010 increased by 300 over the month to 58,500. The Department was notified of 91 proposed redundancies in the latest reference period and 185 confirmed redundancies in December 2010.

### Employment

The number of persons in employment in the period September - November 2010 was estimated at 768,000. This estimate decreased by 12,000 over the quarter, but was up 2,000 compared to the previous year. The employment rate for those aged 16-64 was estimated at 65.3%, down 1.1 percentage points over the quarter and down 0.1 percentage points over the year. NI's employment rate remained well below the UK average (70.4%) and was the lowest of the twelve UK regions.

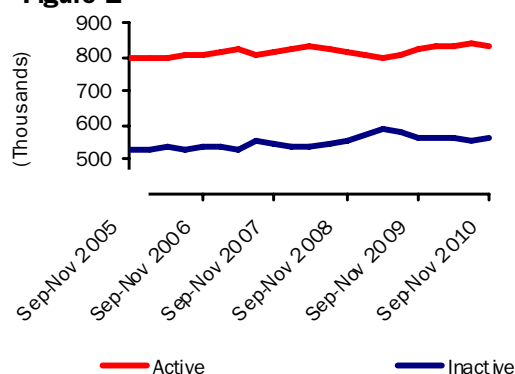
### Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the period September - November 2010 was estimated at 7.8%, up 0.9 percentage points over the quarter and up 1.1 percentage points over the year. The number of unemployed persons was estimated at 65,000, up 7,000 over the quarter and 10,000 over the year. The latest male unemployment rate (9.9%) was almost double the female rate (5.3%).

Unadjusted figures show that 49.8% of the unemployed have been unemployed for 1 year or more – up 12.5 percentage points over the year. They also estimate the unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds at 21.0% – up 5.0 percentage

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

Figure 1



points over the year.

### Economically Inactive

The seasonally adjusted number of economically inactive persons in the period September - November 2010 was estimated at 565,000. This figure increased by 8,000 over the quarter and by 1,000 over the year.

The NI economic inactivity rate for those aged 16-64 stands at 29.0%. This is significantly higher than the UK average rate (23.4%) and is the highest of the twelve UK regions. Unadjusted figures estimate that 27% of the economically inactive, aged 16-64, in NI are sick/disabled, 26% are students, 25% are looking after the family/home, 13% are retired and 9% are 'other' reason.

Unadjusted figures also show that while 91% of the inactive do not want work, the remaining 9% (52,000) want employment but do not satisfy the full ILO job search criteria (by actively seeking work and being available to start a job).

### 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 2010	768,000	+/-24,000	2,000	+/-29,000
Unemployment	Sep-Nov 2010	65,000	+/-12,000	10,000	+/-15,000
Economically inactive	Sep-Nov 2010	565,000	+/-21,000	1,000	+/-27,000
Unemployment rate	Sep-Nov 2010	7.8%	+/-1.4pps	1.1pps	+/-1.8pps
Employment rate <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2010	65.3%	+/-1.8pps	-0.1pps	+/-2.3pps
Economic inactivity rate <sup>1</sup>	Sep-Nov 2010	29.0%	+/-1.7pps	-0.7pps	+/-2.2pps
Claimant Count	December 2010	58,500		4,200	

Note: pps = percentage points, <sup>1</sup>Rates based on 16-64 population, 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 none of the annual changes in these categories were statistically significant i.e. the recorded change did not exceed the variability expected from a sample survey of this size (see table 1 and 'Definitions' for details).

## Unemployment Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted NI unemployment rate showed the largest annual increase (+ 1.1 percentage points) among the twelve UK regions (see table 20). However, the NI rate (7.8%) remained below the UK average rate (7.9%) and also compared favourably to the European Union rate (9.6%) and the Republic of Ireland rate (14.1%) for October 2010.

## Claimant Count

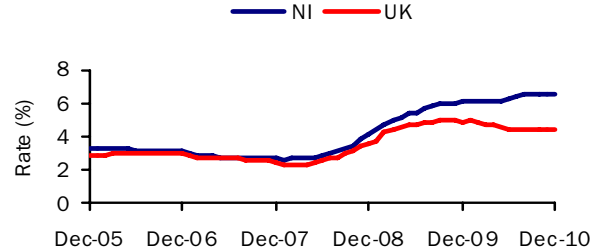
The more recent seasonally adjusted claimant count increased by 300 over the month to December 2010 to 58,500 (6.5% of the workforce). This compared to the revised fall of 200 in the previous monthly period. Over the last three months the Claimant Count in NI has increased by 300. Over the year it has increased by 4,200 (7.7%) and the workforce unemployment rate has increased by 0.4 percentage points.

## Claimant Count Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted claimant count rate in NI (6.5%) was higher than the UK average rate (4.5%) and was the second highest rate among the twelve UK regions. Over the month to December 2010 the NI Claimant Count level increased by 0.5% (300 claimants), while the UK average decreased by 0.3% (Figure 2). NI showed the second highest percentage monthly increase of all the UK regions. Over the year the NI Claimant Count level increased by 7.7%, compared to a fall of 9.0% in the UK. The annual change in NI was the highest 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 2010 were in Derry (7.3%), Strabane (7.0%) and Limavady (6.8%). Those that showed the highest percentage increase in levels over the year to December 2010 were Newry & Mourne (21.5%), Banbridge (18.0%) and North Down (14.5%). For further District Council data please see section 3 of the Labour Market Report.

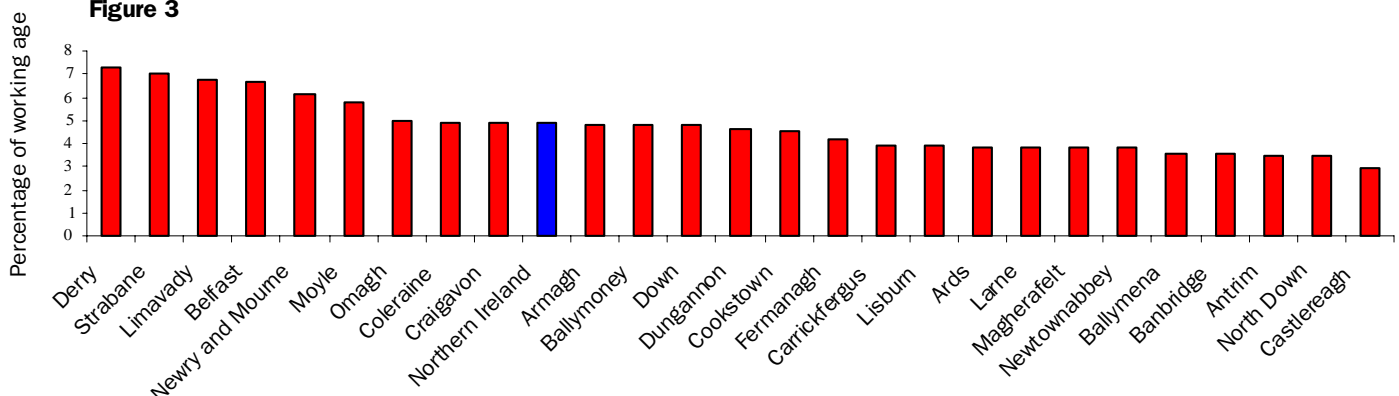
## Employment and Training Measures

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 42.4% (3,578 persons) to 12,019 over the year to December 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. Steps to Work and New Deal statistics are currently accessible via the DEL web link below:

[Steps to Work / New Deal statistics](#)

## Unadjusted Claimant Count Rates By District Council Area

Figure 3



# Statistical Press Release

## Redundancies

The Department was notified of 91 proposed redundancies over the period mid December 2010 to mid January 2011. This compares to 301 proposed redundancies notified to the Department in the previous monthly period.

There were 185 confirmed redundancies in the month of December (Figure 5). Over the latest twelve monthly period there were a total of 2,088 confirmed redundancies, a decrease of 55% from the previous year (4,596). The highest number of confirmed redundancies took place in Belfast District Council area which had 29.8% (623) of all redundancies over the year.

Over the latest twelve month period there were a total of 3,197 proposed redundancies, a decrease of 42% from the previous year (5,548). Currently there are 1,196 outstanding redundancies (that is, proposed but not confirmed), which is 8% lower than this time last year (1,301).

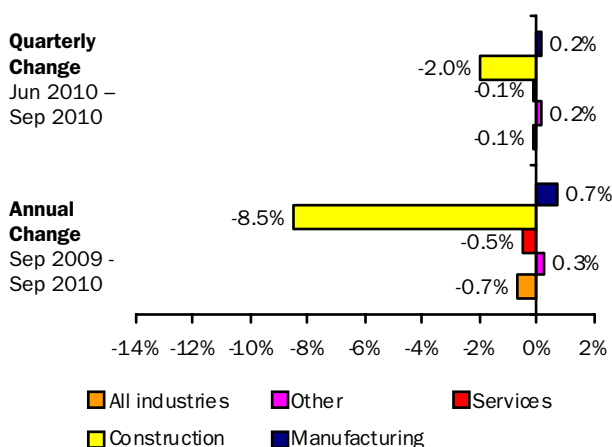
Note that since all proposed redundancies do not actually take place, the confirmed total provides a better indication of real job losses.

## Quarterly Employment Survey

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 2010 was 697,630. This represents a decrease of 940 over the quarter and a decrease of 5,240 over the year.

### Annual and Quarterly changes in employee jobs (seasonally adjusted)

Figure 4

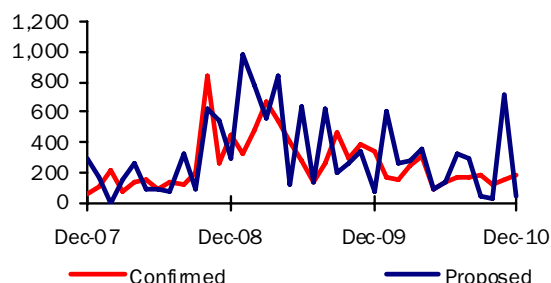


The seasonally adjusted quarterly change consisted of decreases in the Service sector (-410) and in Construction (-690). There were increases in Manufacturing (110) and Other industries (40) over the quarter.

## Confirmed and Proposed Redundancies

December 07 - December 10

Figure 5

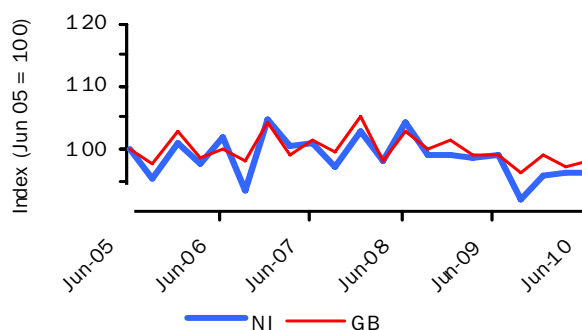


## Hours Worked

The total workforce hours worked per week in Northern Ireland in June 2010 was estimated at 25.6 million hours, representing a decrease of 3.0% over the year (compared with a decrease of 1.0% in GB). Between June 2005 and June 2010, NI's total workforce hours worked per week decreased by 3.8%, compared to a 1.9% fall in GB (Figure 6). In the three months to October 2010, the average actual weekly hours worked in NI was 32.9 hours – higher than the UK average (31.3) for the period.

### 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 2010, which were released on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010, show that yearly growth in median gross weekly earnings for all employees (i.e. both full- and part-time) in NI was 0.6% (to £356.6) compared to 1.8% in the UK (to £404.3). NI full-time employees' gross weekly earnings at April 2010 were £440.8, which was approximately 88% of the figure in the UK (£498.8). NI full-time earnings increased by 0.8% over the period, compared with an increase of 2.1% in the UK.

Full-time weekly private sector earnings increased by 0.6% to £383.4 and part-time earnings fell by 7.1% to £120.0 over the year in NI. This resulted in a further widening of the NI/UK private sector pay gap to 81.0% of the UK figure.

# Statistical Press Release

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

	(Thousands/Percentage)								
	Total aged 16 and over	Total persons of working age 16-64	All aged 16+					All working age 16-64	
			Total economically active	Total in employment	Unemployed	Economically inactive	Unemployment rate (%)	Activity rate 16-64 (%)	Employment rate (%) 16-64
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
<b>ALL PERSONS</b>									
Sep-Nov 2007	1,359	1,128	816	780	37	543	4.5	71.1	67.9
Sep-Nov 2008	1,373	1,137	815	779	36	558	4.4	70.4	67.2
Sep-Nov 2009	1,386	1,144	822	766	55	564	6.8	70.3	65.4
Dec-Feb 2010	1,389	1,146	829	775	54	560	6.5	70.8	66.1
Mar-May 2010	1,392	1,147	833	774	59	559	7.1	71.2	66.1
Jun-Aug 2010	1,395	1,149	838	779	58	557	7.0	71.5	66.4
Sep-Nov 2010	1,398	1,150	833	768	65	565	7.8	71.0	65.3
<b>Change on Quarter</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>-12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>-1.1</b>
<b>Change on Year</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>-0.1</b>
<b>MALES</b>									
Sep-Nov 2007	658	558	446	423	23	212	5.1	78.2	74.2
Sep-Nov 2008	666	563	448	420	28	218	6.3	77.9	72.9
Sep-Nov 2009	673	566	447	406	41	226	9.1	76.7	69.6
Dec-Feb 2010	674	567	451	411	40	223	8.9	77.3	70.3
Mar-May 2010	676	568	458	414	44	218	9.5	78.5	70.8
Jun-Aug 2010	678	569	459	417	41	219	9.0	78.7	71.4
Sep-Nov 2010	679	570	459	413	45	220	9.9	78.4	70.4
<b>FEMALES</b>									
Sep-Nov 2007	701	570	371	357	14	330	3.7	64.1	61.7
Sep-Nov 2008	707	574	368	360	8	340	2.1	63.0	61.6
Sep-Nov 2009	713	577	374	360	15	339	4.0	63.9	61.3
Dec-Feb 2010	715	578	377	363	14	337	3.7	64.4	62.0
Mar-May 2010	716	579	375	360	15	341	4.1	64.1	61.4
Jun-Aug 2010	717	580	379	362	17	339	4.5	64.4	61.5
Sep-Nov 2010	719	581	374	354	20	345	5.3	63.7	60.3

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.**

Please see note on revisions policy in 'Definitions'.

Working age rates based on 16-64 population for both males and females - see 'Definitions' for details.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

# Statistical Press Release

## Seasonally Adjusted Regional Summary, September – November 2010

**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>					
North East	66.1	-0.9	9.6	-0.3	26.8	1.3	1,015	6.6	-7.2	-0.6	0.69
North West	69.5	0.7	7.6	-0.6	24.7	-0.3	2,875	5.0	-11.3	-1.2	0.76
Yorkshire & the Humber	68.0	-0.9	9.2	0.1	25.0	0.9	2,138	5.5	-8.9	0.1	0.75
East Midlands	70.7	-1.7	8.1	0.9	22.9	1.0	1,801	4.4	-14.4	-0.1	0.75
West Midlands	67.9	-0.8	9.9	0.3	24.5	0.7	2,204	5.7	-13.0	-0.7	0.77
East	73.8	0.0	6.6	0.3	20.8	-0.4	2,342	3.7	-10.7	-0.6	0.77
London	68.3	0.5	9.2	-0.2	24.8	-0.3	3,986	4.4	-5.1	-0.6	0.90
South East	75.1	0.2	6.1	-0.1	19.9	-0.2	3,552	2.9	-16.0	-0.4	0.82
South West	74.2	1.3	5.9	-0.5	21.0	-1.0	2,144	3.0	-11.8	0.0	0.82
England	70.8	0.0	7.8	0.0	23.1	0.1	22,056	4.3	-10.7	-0.5	0.79
Wales	67.3	0.2	8.4	-0.1	26.2	-0.3	1,135	5.0	-10.1	-0.4	0.71
Scotland	70.7	-1.4	8.4	0.9	22.7	0.7	2,237	5.0	1.8	1.6	0.80
Great Britain	70.6	-0.1	7.9	0.0	23.2	0.1	25,428	4.4	-9.6	-0.3	0.79
N Ireland	65.3	-0.1	7.8	1.1	29.0	-0.7	698	6.5	7.7	0.5	0.76
United Kingdom	70.4	-0.1	7.9	0.1	23.4	0.1	26,125	4.5	-9.0	-0.3	0.79

<sup>1</sup> Employment and economic inactivity rates are based on working age population (16-64); 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 2010 (thousands).

<sup>4</sup> As at December 2010: percentage of the workforce.

<sup>5</sup> Not seasonally adjusted – data relates to 2008. Jobs Density – total number of jobs in an area divided by the resident population of working age in that area.

## 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 (16-64)

<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.

<sup>6</sup> Please note that it is possible for the number of unemployed to increase and the unemployment rate to fall during the same period, as the latter measure is a ratio e.g. if the number of economically active has increased at a faster rate than the number unemployed, the unemployment rate will fall.

### Unemployment

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.

Unemployment rate - the percentage of economically active people who are unemployed.

### Employment

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.

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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 for the main LFS categories of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity were tested for statistical significance. The results for September – November 2010 showed that none of the annual changes in these categories were statistically significant at the 95% level.

Please see attached link for further LFS notes and definitions.

[Labour Force Survey Notes and Definitions](#)

### LFS revisions

LFS microdata has recently been revised to incorporate the latest population estimates. The revision effect LFS data from the period June to August 2006 onwards and were first published in February 2010. The magnitude of the revisions were 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 were 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](#)

### Definition of 'working age'

The 'working age' definition, used in the calculation of employment and economic inactivity rates, was changed in August 2010 to include those aged from 16 to 64 for both men and women. Previously these rates were based on upper age limits of 59 for women and 64 for men, reflecting the state pension ages in the UK. However, between 2010 and 2020, the state pension age for women is increasing (by one month every two months) from 60 to 65, thereby making a change to the definition necessary.

The change in definition follows a UK wide public consultation on the issue and the approach being applied to Northern Ireland labour market statistics mirrors the approach that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) are applying to other UK regions. A consistent time series for the new headline rates has been produced and all future reference to working age rates will be based on the 16 to 64 definition. Please see link for further details

[http://www.detini.gov.uk/introduction\\_of\\_new\\_working\\_age\\_definition.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/introduction_of_new_working_age_definition.pdf).

For a limited period, employment and inactivity rates based on the old working age economic definition (i.e. 16-59/64) will be available on the DETI website at <http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-stats-index/stats-surveys.htm>.

Please note that there are no implications for the headline unemployment rate, which will continue to be based on the economically active population aged 16 and over.

### **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.

The 'Flows' data that is published in section three relates to the date the claimant actually joined or left the claimant count. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) use a different methodology when collating flows. They count flows based on the month in which the flow was added to the system regardless of the actual period to which the flow related. Since the majority of flows are recorded on the system in the month they actually happen, there is not much difference between these two methodologies.

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

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

### **Government Targets**

Data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) are used in the measurement of targets set in the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government (PSA targets) See [www.pfgbudgetni.gov.uk/finalpfg.pdf](http://www.pfgbudgetni.gov.uk/finalpfg.pdf) for further details. The LFS and QES data feed into productivity estimates for NI and are therefore indirectly used to measure progress towards PSA 1: Productivity growth. In addition, LFS data is used to measure the proportion of the working age population qualified to Skill levels 2 and 3. This data therefore feeds into the measurement of PSA 2: Skills for prosperity.

Details of progress towards these targets can be found at:

[www.pfgbudgetni.gov.uk/pfg\\_delivery\\_report\\_q4\\_08\\_09-final-pdf\\_version-5.pdf](http://www.pfgbudgetni.gov.uk/pfg_delivery_report_q4_08_09-final-pdf_version-5.pdf)

### **For further information:**

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