



## STATISTICAL PRESS RELEASE

**11 November 2009**

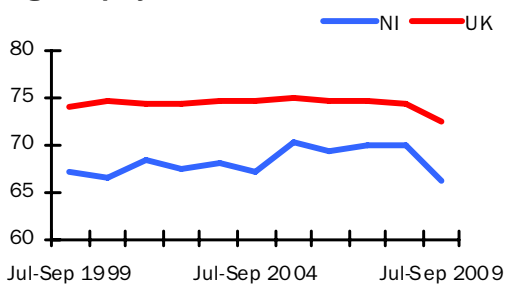
**Coverage**

Northern Ireland, unless otherwise stated

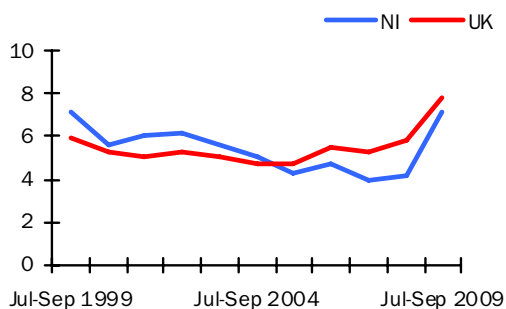
**Theme**

Labour Market

**Seasonally Adjusted Working  
Age Employment Rate**



**Seasonally Adjusted  
Unemployment Rate**



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### Labour Market Statistics – November 2009

Seasonally adjusted Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for Northern Ireland for the period July - September estimated increases over the quarter in the number of unemployed persons and in the number of employed. This was accompanied by a fall in the number of economically inactive. The October Claimant Count was unchanged over the month - this is the first month it has not increased since February 2008.

In the latest reference period, the working age employment rate was estimated at 66.1%, up 0.4 percentage points over the quarter, but down 3.7 percentage points over the year.

The unemployment rate was 7.2%, up 0.4 percentage points over the quarter and up 3.0 percentage points over the year. This represented the largest annual increase in unemployment since the LFS seasonally adjusted series began in 1995 and was the second largest increase of the UK regions. However, the NI rate remained below the UK rate of 7.8% and was also lower than the European Union (9.1%) and Republic of Ireland (12.5%) rates for August 2009.

The working age economic inactivity rate decreased by 0.8 percentage points over the quarter, but increased by 1.5 percentage points over the year to 28.7%. The NI working age economic inactivity rate (28.7%) remained the highest of the UK regions (UK rate was 21.1%).

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 October was 53,700, unchanged over the month, but up 22,200 over the year. This represented a year on year percentage increase of 70.5%, which was higher than the UK increase (62.8%) and fourth highest among the UK regions. However, the monthly change in NI was the third lowest percentage change of the UK regions.

There were 184 confirmed redundancies in October 2009. This was lower than in September 2009 (457) and lower than October 2008 (833). The total number of confirmed redundancies in the last twelve months was 4,428, up 74% from the previous year (2,541).

**NI seasonally adjusted data**

	Reference period	Levels	Rates (%)	Levels	Rates (pps)
				Change on quarter	
Employment <sup>1</sup>	Jul-Sep 2009	751,000	66.1%	6,000	0.4
Unemployment <sup>2</sup>	Jul-Sep 2009	58,000	7.2%	4,000	0.4
Economically Active <sup>4</sup>	Jul-Sep 2009	809,000	71.3%	10,000	0.8
Economically Inactive <sup>4</sup>	Jul-Sep 2009	575,000	28.7%	-7,000	-0.8
Employee Jobs <sup>3</sup>	Jun 09	709,040	-	-5,470	-
				Change on month	
Claimant Count <sup>4</sup>	October 09	53,700	6.2%	0	0.0
Redundancies <sup>5</sup>	October 09	184	-	-	-

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 July - September estimated an increase over the quarter in the number of persons unemployed and in the number employed. This was accompanied by a fall in the number economically inactive. The seasonally adjusted claimant count in October 2009 was unchanged over the month (remaining at 53,700) and the Department was notified of 147 proposed redundancies in the latest reference period and 184 confirmed redundancies in October 2009.

### Employment

The number of persons in employment in the period July - September was estimated at 751,000. This represented an increase of 6,000 over the quarter, but was down 34,000 over the year. The working age employment rate was estimated at 66.1%, up 0.4 percentage points over the quarter, but down 3.7 percentage points over the year. NI's working age employment rate remained well below the UK average (72.5%) and was the lowest of the UK regions.

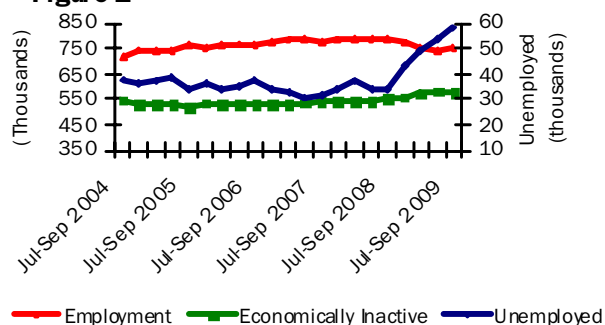
### Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the period July - September was estimated at 7.2%, up 0.4 percentage points over the quarter and 3.0 percentage points over the year. The number of unemployed persons was estimated at 58,000, up 4,000 over the quarter and 24,000 over the year. This represented the largest annual increase in unemployment since the LFS seasonally adjusted series began in 1995.

Unadjusted figures show that 32.7% of the unemployed have been unemployed for 1 year or more – down 5.6 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 20.4% – up 8.2 percentage points over the year.

### Economically Inactive

The seasonally adjusted number of economically inactive persons in the period July - September was estimated at 575,000. This figure has decreased by 7,000 over the quarter, but was up 23,000 over the year.

The working age economic inactivity rate for NI stands at 28.7%. This is significantly higher than the UK average rate (21.1%) and is the highest of the 12 UK regions.

Unadjusted figures show that while 90% of the inactive do not want work, the remaining 10% 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 (56,000) 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	Jul-Sep 2009	751,000	+/-22,000	-34,000	+/-28,000
Unemployment	Jul-Sep 2009	58,000	+/-10,000	24,000	+/-12,000
Economically inactive	Jul-Sep 2009	575,000	+/-20,000	23,000	+/-25,000
Unemployment rate	Jul-Sep 2009	7.2%	+/-1.3pps	3.0pps	+/-1.6pps
Employment rate <sup>1</sup>	Jul-Sep 2009	66.1%	+/-1.8pps	-3.7pps	+/-2.2pps
Economic inactivity rate <sup>1</sup>	Jul-Sep 2009	28.7%	+/-1.7pps	1.5pps	+/-2.1pps
Claimant Count	October 2009	53,700		22,200	

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 for employment and unemployment were 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 (7.2%) remained below the UK average rate (7.8%) and was the joint fourth lowest rate among the UK regions. The NI rate also compared favourably to the European Union rate (9.1%) and the Republic of Ireland rate (12.5%) for August 2009. However, the annual increase in the NI unemployment rate (+3.0 percentage points) was higher than the UK average (+2.0 percentage points) and was second highest of the UK regions.

## Claimant Count

The more recent seasonally adjusted claimant count in October 2009 was unchanged over the month and remained at 53,700 (6.2% of the workforce). This was the first occasion it has not increased since February 2008. The previous monthly increase was 1,000. However, the increase over the year was 22,200 (70.5%) and the workforce rate has increased by 2.6 percentage points over the same period.

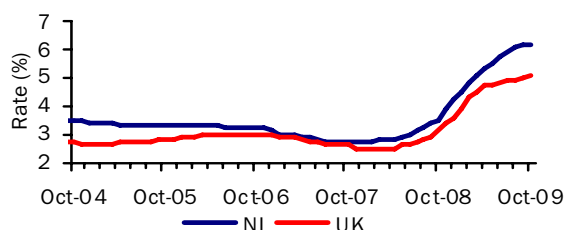
## Claimant Count Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted claimant count rate in NI (6.2%) was higher than the UK average rate (5.1%) and was the third highest rate among the UK regions. Over the month to October 2009 the NI Claimant Count level was unchanged, while the UK average increased by 0.8%.

Over the year the NI Claimant Count level increased by 70.5%, which was higher than the UK average (+62.8%) and was the fourth highest annual increase among the 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 October 2009 were in Strabane (7.1%), Derry (7.0%) and Belfast (6.4%). Those that showed the highest percentage increase in levels over the year to October 2009 were Dungannon (130.6%), Cookstown (124.7%) and Larne (113.0%).

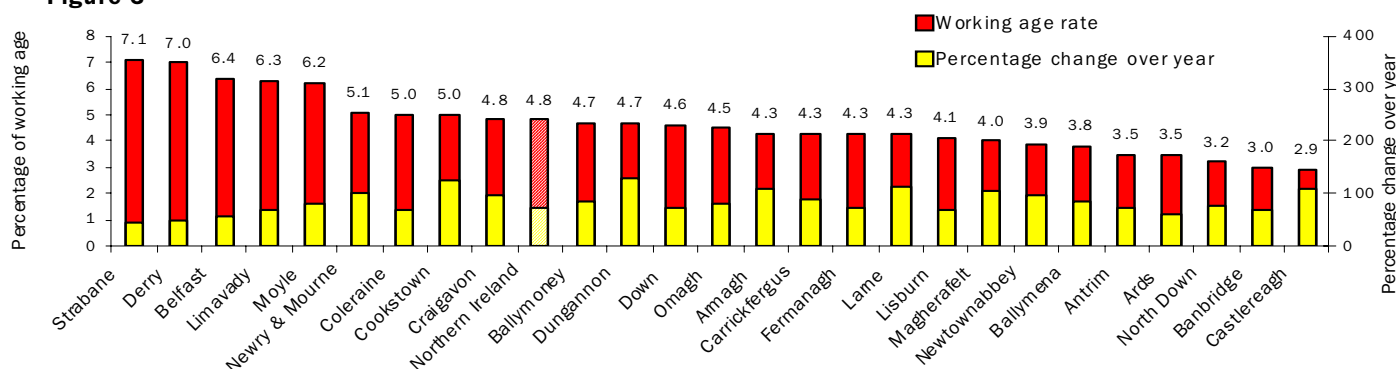
## Employment and Training Measures

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 118.6% (4,406 persons) to 8,122 over the year to October 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

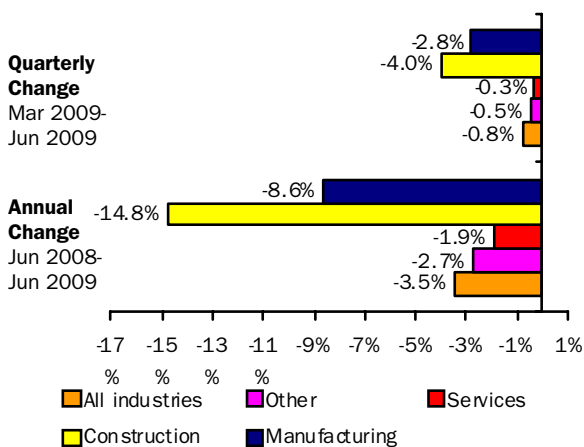
## Redundancies

The Department was notified of 147 proposed redundancies over the period mid October 2009 to mid November 2009. This compares to 331 proposed redundancies notified to the Department in the previous monthly period. There were 184 confirmed redundancies in the month of October (Figure 5). Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 4,428 confirmed redundancies, an increase of 74% from the previous year (2,541). The highest number of confirmed redundancies took place in Belfast District Council area which had 32.7% (1,450) of all redundancies over the year. Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 5,982 proposed redundancies, an increase of 134% from the previous year (2,555). Since the start of 2009 to mid November there were a total of 5,182 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)

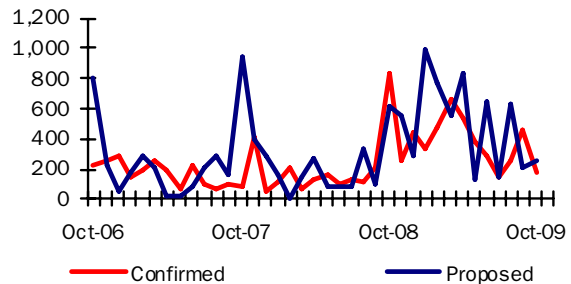
The QES provides an estimate of the number of jobs (rather than persons in employment) and is the preferred measure of change in employee jobs. The estimated seasonally adjusted employee jobs total in Northern Ireland at June 2009 was 709,040. This represents a decrease of 5,470 over the quarter and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

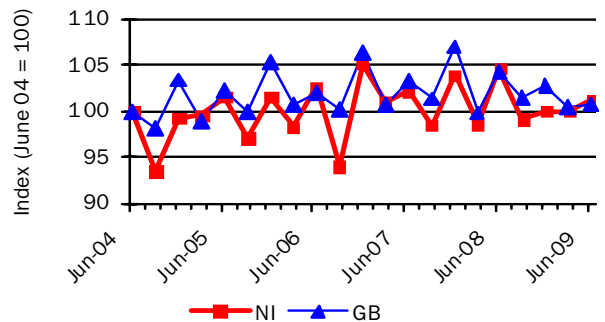
**Confirmed and Proposed Redundancies**  
**October 06 - October 09**  
**Figure 5**



## 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 August 2009, the average actual weekly hours worked in NI was 32.0 hours, compared with 31.3 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). 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.

New earnings results for April 2009 will be published at 9.30am on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009 on the DETI website.

# 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>									
Jul -Sep 2006	1,340	1,069	806	768	38	535	4.7%	72.8%	69.3%
Jul -Sep 2007	1,357	1,081	812	780	32	545	3.9%	72.8%	69.9%
Jul -Sep 2008	1,371	1,089	819	785	34	552	4.2%	72.9%	69.8%
Oct -Dec 2008	1,374	1,091	814	771	43	560	5.2%	72.4%	68.6%
Jan -Mar 2009	1,377	1,092	804	755	49	573	6.1%	71.3%	66.8%
Apr -Jun 2009	1,381	1,094	799	745	54	582	6.8%	70.6%	65.7%
Jul-Sep 2009	1,384	1,096	809	751	58	575	7.2%	71.3%	66.1%
<b>Change on Quarter</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-7</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Change on Year</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>-34</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>-3.7</b>
<b>MALES</b>									
Jul -Sep 2006	648	551	444	419	25	204	5.5%	78.7%	74.3%
Jul -Sep 2007	657	557	443	424	19	214	4.2%	77.8%	74.4%
Jul -Sep 2008	665	562	447	421	26	218	5.7%	77.9%	73.4%
Oct -Dec 2008	667	563	446	413	33	220	7.3%	77.6%	71.8%
Jan -Mar 2009	668	564	439	406	34	229	7.7%	76.0%	70.1%
Apr -Jun 2009	670	565	437	399	38	233	8.6%	75.3%	68.7%
Jul-Sep 2009	672	566	442	400	42	230	9.6%	76.1%	68.6%
<b>FEMALES</b>									
Jul -Sep 2006	692	518	362	348	14	330	3.8%	66.7%	64.0%
Jul -Sep 2007	700	524	369	356	13	331	3.5%	67.5%	65.0%
Jul -Sep 2008	706	527	373	364	9	333	2.3%	67.5%	66.0%
Oct -Dec 2008	708	528	368	358	10	340	2.7%	66.9%	65.1%
Jan -Mar 2009	709	528	365	349	16	344	4.3%	66.2%	63.3%
Apr -Jun 2009	711	529	362	346	16	348	4.5%	65.5%	62.5%
Jul-Sep 2009	712	530	367	351	16	345	4.3%	66.3%	63.4%

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 Section 9.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

# Statistical Press Release

## Seasonally Adjusted Regional Summary, July – September 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	Change <sup>2</sup>	Rate	Change <sup>2</sup>	Rate	Change <sup>2</sup>					
North East	68.0	-2.2	9.5	1.5	24.5	1.1	1,014	7.3%	47.8%	0.8%	0.72
North West	70.8	-1.0	8.6	1.8	22.3	-0.5	2,950	5.8%	54.5%	0.5%	0.80
Yorkshire & the Humber	71.2	-2.0	8.7	1.8	21.8	0.6	2,147	6.1%	62.2%	0.9%	0.79
East Midlands	74.9	-1.3	7.5	1.6	18.9	0.0	1,831	5.2%	69.6%	1.7%	0.81
West Midlands	70.0	-1.8	10.0	3.4	21.8	-1.0	2,250	6.7%	60.2%	0.4%	0.81
East	77.2	-0.3	6.5	1.6	17.3	-1.1	2,328	4.3%	71.6%	-0.2%	0.81
London	69.0	-2.2	9.0	1.6	24.0	0.9	3,994	4.8%	59.2%	2.0%	0.93
South East	77.0	-2.1	6.0	1.5	17.9	0.8	3,655	3.6%	85.6%	0.4%	0.86
South West	75.7	-3.1	6.6	2.3	18.7	1.2	2,190	3.5%	74.2%	-0.7%	0.86
England	72.8	-1.8	7.9	1.9	20.7	0.2	22,359	5.0%	63.8%	0.8%	0.84
Wales	69.2	-1.3	8.7	2.2	23.9	-0.4	1,121	5.8%	59.4%	0.4%	0.76
Scotland	73.9	-2.4	7.2	2.5	20.2	0.3	2,339	4.8%	53.4%	1.7%	0.84
Great Britain	72.8	-1.8	7.9	2.0	20.8	0.2	25,819	5.0%	62.6%	0.8%	0.83
N Ireland	66.1	-3.7	7.2	3.0	28.7	1.5	709	6.2%	70.5%	0.0%	0.78
United Kingdom	72.5	-1.9	7.8	2.0	21.1	0.2	26,528	5.1%	62.8%	0.8%	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 June 2009 (thousands).

<sup>4</sup> As at October 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 changes in the main LFS categories of employment and unemployment were statistically significant at the 95% level in July to September 2009. However, the annual change in the economically inactive

category was not statistically significant at this level.

Please see attached link for further LFS notes and definitions.

[Labour Force Survey Notes and Definitions](#)

### LFS revision

In line with the practice for the rest of the UK, LFS data for Northern Ireland have been revised this month. These revisions have taken place to incorporate the latest population estimates and the annual review of seasonal adjustment and date back to the three months starting June to August 2007.

The magnitude of the revisions are relatively small. Revisions to the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fall within the range +/-0.1 percentage points. However, the range is higher for both the employment and economic activity rates (+/-0.5 percentage points).

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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