



STATISTICAL PRESS RELEASE

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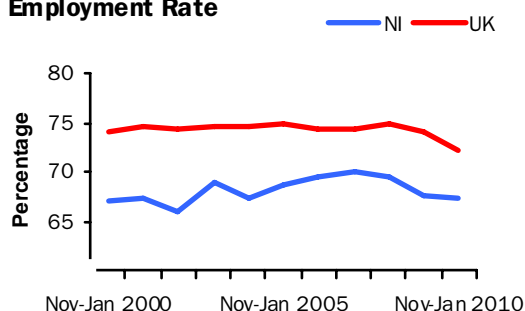
Coverage

Northern Ireland, unless otherwise stated

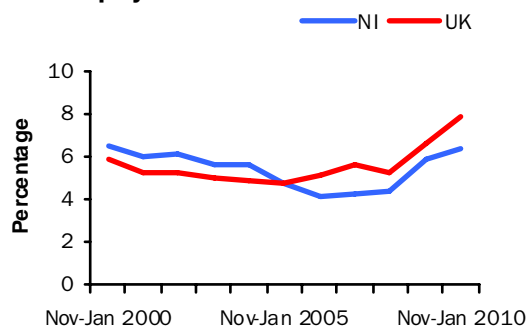
Theme

Labour Market

**Seasonally Adjusted Working Age
Employment Rate**



**Seasonally Adjusted
Unemployment Rate**



Issued by:

Statistics Research Branch, DETI,
Tel: 028 90529421

Email: statistics@detini.gov.uk

Enquiries by the media should be directed to:

Press Office, DETI,
Tel: 028 90529604

Email: pressoffice@detini.gov.uk

www.statistics.detini.gov.uk

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Labour Market Statistics – March 2010

Seasonally adjusted Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for Northern Ireland for the period November 2009 – January 2010 estimated falls in the number of unemployed and economically inactive persons. The February Claimant Count recorded an increase of 100 claimants from the revised figure for the previous month.

In the latest reference period, the working age employment rate was estimated at 67.3%, up 0.3 percentage points over the quarter, but down 0.4 percentage points over the year.

The unemployment rate was 6.3%, down 0.2 percentage points over the quarter, but up 0.4 percentage points over the year. The NI rate remained below the UK rate of 7.8% and was also lower than the European Union (9.6%) and Republic of Ireland (13.3%) rates for December 2009.

The working age economic inactivity rate (28.0%) fell by 0.2 percentage points over the quarter, but showed no change over the year. The NI working age economic inactivity rate (28.0%) remained the highest of the twelve UK regions (UK rate was 21.5%).

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 February was 55,700, up 100 over the month and up 13,700 over the year. The percentage increase over the month in NI (0.2%) was the only increase of the twelve UK regions (the UK monthly decrease was 2.0%). Over the year, the percentage increase in NI was 32.6%, which was higher than the equivalent UK increase (14.0%) and was the largest increase among the twelve UK regions.

The Department was notified of 258 proposed redundancies in the period mid February to mid March, compared with 512 in the previous monthly period. In addition, there were 141 confirmed redundancies in February 2010, compared with 161 in January 2010.

The total number of employee jobs in Northern Ireland at December 2009 was 699,310 (Quarterly Employment Survey), down 2,890 jobs (-0.4%) over the quarter and 20,840 jobs (-2.9%) over the year. However, this quarter's decline was the smallest decrease since the employee jobs series peaked in June 2008.

NI seasonally adjusted data

	Reference period	Levels	Rates (%)	Levels	Rates (pps)
				Change on quarter	
Employment ¹	Nov-Jan 2010	766,000	67.3%	6,000	0.3
Unemployment ²	Nov-Jan 2010	52,000	6.3%	-2,000	-0.2
Economically Active ¹	Nov-Jan 2010	818,000	72.0%	4,000	0.2
Economically Inactive ¹	Nov-Jan 2010	570,000	28.0%	-1,000	-0.2
Employee Jobs ³	December 2009	699,310	-	-2,890	-
				Change on month	
Claimant Count ⁴	February 2010	55,700	6.4%	100	0.0
Redundancies ⁵	February 2010	141	-	-	-

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 November 2009 – January 2010 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 February 2010 increased by 100 over the month to 55,700 and the Department was notified of 258 proposed redundancies in the latest reference period and 141 confirmed redundancies in February 2010.

Employment

The number of persons in employment in the period November 2009 – January 2010 was estimated at 766,000. This represented increases of 6,000 over the quarter and 4,000 over the year. The working age employment rate was estimated at 67.3%, up 0.3 percentage points over the quarter, but down 0.4 percentage points over the year. NI's working age employment rate remained well below the UK average (72.2%) and was the lowest of the twelve UK regions.

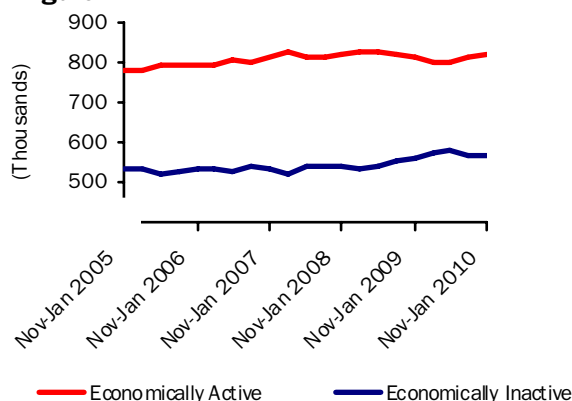
Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the period November 2009 – January 2010 was estimated at 6.3%, down 0.2 percentage points over the quarter, but up 0.4 percentage points over the year. The number of unemployed persons was estimated at 52,000, down 2,000 over the quarter, but up 4,000 over the year. The male unemployment rate (8.5%) was over double the female rate (3.7%) in November 2009 – January 2010.

Unadjusted figures show that 38.6% of the unemployed have been unemployed for 1 year or more – up 6.0 percentage points over the year.

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

Figure 1



— Economically Active

— Economically Inactive

They also estimate the unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds at 12.6% – down 1.2 percentage points over the year.

Economically Inactive

The seasonally adjusted number of economically inactive persons in the period November 2009 – January 2010 was estimated at 570,000. This figure has decreased by 1,000 over the quarter, but was up 5,000 over the year.

The working age economic inactivity rate for NI stands at 28.0%. This is significantly higher than the UK average rate (21.5%) and is the highest of the twelve UK regions.

Unadjusted figures show that while 92% of the inactive do not want work, the remaining 8% 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 (48,000) 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	Nov-Jan 2010	766,000	+/-22,000	4,000	+/-28,000
Unemployment	Nov-Jan 2010	52,000	+/-10,000	4,000	+/-13,000
Economically inactive	Nov-Jan 2010	570,000	+/-20,000	5,000	+/-26,000
Unemployment rate	Nov-Jan 2010	6.3%	+/-1.2pps	0.4pps	+/-1.6pps
Employment rate ¹	Nov-Jan 2010	67.3%	+/-1.8pps	-0.4pps	+/-2.3pps
Economic inactivity rate ¹	Nov-Jan 2010	28.0%	+/-1.7pps	0.0pps	+/-2.2pps
Claimant Count	February 2010	55,700		13,700	

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

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

Unemployment Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI (6.3%) remained below the UK average rate (7.8%) and was the third lowest rate among the twelve UK regions. The NI rate also compared favourably to the European Union rate (9.6%) and the Republic of Ireland rate (13.3%) for December 2009. The annual increase in the NI unemployment rate (+0.4 percentage points) was lower than the UK average increase (+1.2 percentage points).

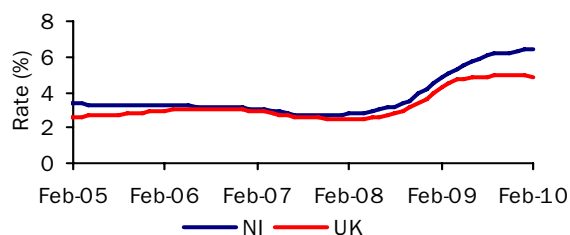
Claimant Count

The more recent seasonally adjusted claimant count increased by 100 over the month to February 2010 to 55,700 (6.4% of the workforce). The latest monthly increase was lower than the revised increase recorded for the previous month (900). The increase over the year was 13,700 (32.6%) and the workforce unemployment rate has increased by 1.6 percentage points over the same period.

Claimant Count Regional Comparison

The seasonally adjusted claimant count rate in NI (6.4%) was higher than the UK average rate (4.9%) and was the joint second highest rate among the twelve UK regions. Over the month to February 2010 the NI Claimant Count level increased by 0.2% (100 claimants), while the UK average decreased by 2.0% (Figure 2). This was the only monthly increase of the twelve UK regions. Over the year the NI Claimant Count level increased by 32.6%, which was higher than the UK average (14.0%) 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

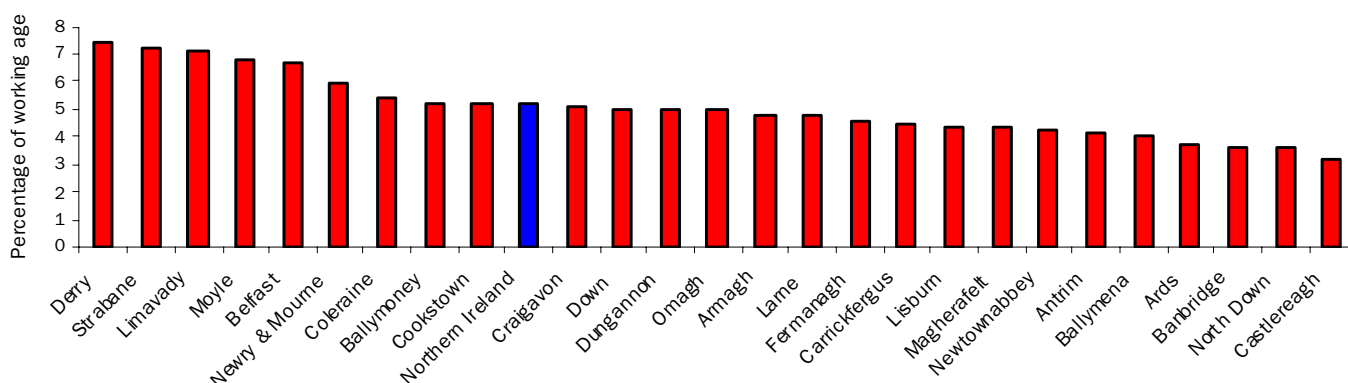
Figure 3 (unadjusted numbers as a percentage of the resident working age population) show that the highest rates at February 2010 were in Derry (7.4%), Strabane (7.2%) and Limavady (7.1%). Those that showed the highest percentage increase in levels over the year to February 2010 were Castlereagh (61.7%), Newry & Mourne (48.4%) and Newtownabbey (40.5%). 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 90.3% (4,569 persons) to 9,630 over the year to February 2010 in the number of those claimants who are eligible for mandatory participation on Steps to Work. However, anyone over 18 years old (or lone parents aged 16 years old or over) who is not working (or working less than 16 hours each week) is eligible. New Deal statistics are currently accessible via the DEL web link below - Steps to Work statistics will be published when data is available.

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

Unadjusted Claimant Count Rates By District Council Area
Figure 3



Statistical Press Release

Redundancies

The Department was notified of 258 proposed redundancies over the period mid February 2010 to mid March 2010. This compares to 512 proposed redundancies notified to the Department in the previous monthly period.

There were 141 confirmed redundancies in the month of February (Figure 5). Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 4,091 confirmed redundancies, an increase of 26% from the previous year (3,258). The highest number of confirmed redundancies took place in Belfast District Council area which had 32.6% (1,332) of all redundancies over the year.

Over the twelve monthly period there were a total of 4,655 proposed redundancies, an increase of 8% from the previous year (4,303).

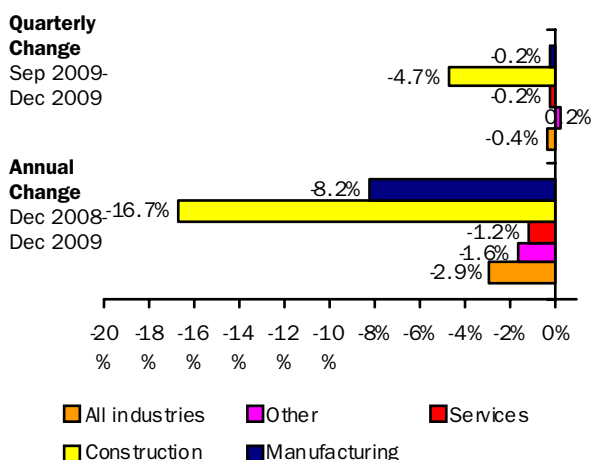
Currently there are 1,588 outstanding redundancies (that is, proposed but not confirmed), which is 29% lower than this time last year (2,236).

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

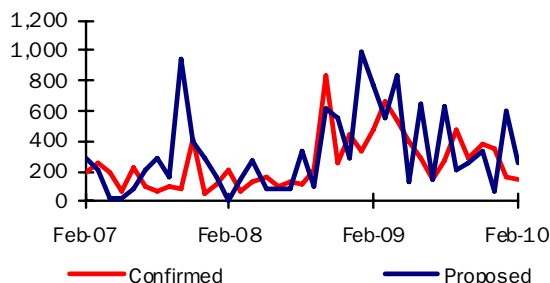
The QES provides an estimate of the number of jobs (rather than persons in employment) and is the preferred measure of change in employee jobs. The estimated seasonally adjusted employee jobs total in Northern Ireland at December 2009 was 699,310. This represents a decrease of 2,890 over the quarter and a decrease of 20,840 over the year.

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



The seasonally adjusted quarterly change consisted of decreases in Manufacturing (-120), in the Service sector (-1,110) and in Construction (-1,700). Other industries increased over the quarter (+40).

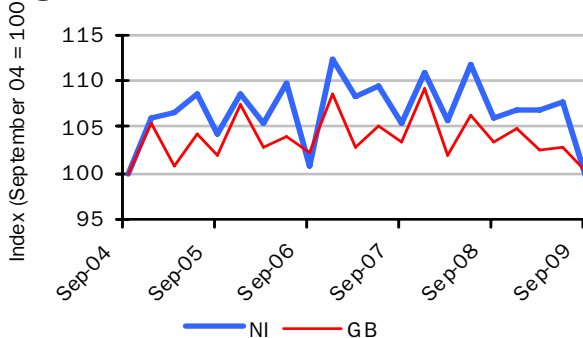
Confirmed and Proposed Redundancies February 07 - February 10
Figure 5



Hours Worked

The total workforce hours worked per week in Northern Ireland in September 2009 was estimated at 24.4 million hours, representing a decrease of 6.2% over the year (compared with a decrease of 3.2% in GB). Between September 2004 and September 2009, NI's total workforce hours worked per week decreased by 0.4%, compared with a 0.2% increase in GB (Figure 6). In the three months to December 2009, the average actual weekly hours worked in NI was 32.9 hours, similar to 31.9 hours in the UK.

Index of total workforce hours worked per week, NI & GB
Figure 6



Source: Employment, Earnings and Productivity Division, ONS

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

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

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

Statistical Press Release

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

(Thousands)

	Total aged 16 and over	Total persons of working age 16-59/64	All aged 16+					All working age 16-59/64	
			Total economically active	Total in employment	Unemployed	Economically inactive	Unemployment rate (%)	Activity rate 16-59/64 (%)	Employment rate (%) 16-59/64
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
ALL PERSONS									
Nov-Jan 2007	1346	1073	811	777	34	535	4.2	73.3	70.2
Nov-Jan 2008	1362	1083	819	783	36	543	4.4	72.9	69.6
Nov-Jan 2009	1375	1091	810	763	48	565	5.9	72.0	67.7
Feb-Apr 2009	1379	1093	802	752	50	577	6.3	71.0	66.4
May-Jul 2009	1382	1095	802	749	54	579	6.7	70.7	65.9
Aug-Oct 2009	1385	1096	814	760	53	571	6.5	71.8	67.0
Nov-Jan 2010	1388	1098	818	766	52	570	6.3	72.0	67.3
Change on Quarter	3	1	4	6	-2	-1	-0.2	0.2	0.3
Change on Year	12	6	8	4	4	5	0.4	0.0	-0.4
MALES									
Nov-Jan 2007	651	553	442	423	19	209	4.3	78.1	74.7
Nov-Jan 2008	660	559	450	426	24	210	5.3	78.7	74.4
Nov-Jan 2009	667	563	444	408	36	223	8.1	77.1	70.8
Feb-Apr 2009	669	564	439	404	35	230	8.0	75.8	69.6
May-Jul 2009	670	565	439	400	39	232	8.9	75.5	68.6
Aug-Oct 2009	672	566	444	405	39	228	8.8	76.4	69.5
Nov-Jan 2010	674	567	446	408	38	228	8.5	76.2	69.5
FEMALES									
Nov-Jan 2007	695	520	369	354	15	325	4.1	68.2	65.4
Nov-Jan 2008	702	525	369	357	12	333	3.3	66.7	64.4
Nov-Jan 2009	708	528	366	354	12	342	3.2	66.6	64.5
Feb-Apr 2009	710	529	363	348	15	346	4.2	65.9	63.1
May-Jul 2009	711	529	364	349	15	348	4.1	65.7	63.0
Aug-Oct 2009	713	530	369	355	14	343	3.8	66.8	64.3
Nov-Jan 2010	714	531	372	358	14	342	3.7	67.5	64.9

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

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

Please see note on revisions policy in 'Definitions'.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Statistical Press Release

Seasonally Adjusted Regional Summary, November 2009 - January 2010

Table 3

	Labour Force Survey (LFS) ¹						Employee Jobs ³	Claimant count rate (%) ⁴	Claimant count level Percentage Change over the year	Claimant count level Percentage Change over the month	Jobs Density Indicator ⁵
	Employment		Unemployment		Economically Inactive						
	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²					
	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²	Rate	Annual Change ²					
North East	68.5	-1.3	9.5	0.8	24.0	0.6	1,003	7.1	9.4	-2.3	0.72
North West	70.3	-1.4	8.6	0.9	22.9	0.8	2,927	5.6	11.9	-2.5	0.80
Yorkshire & the Humber	70.9	-1.4	8.7	1.5	22.1	0.1	2,124	6.0	15.5	-1.4	0.79
East Midlands	74.1	-1.9	7.5	1.0	19.7	1.1	1,836	4.9	9.9	-2.8	0.81
West Midlands	70.3	-1.0	9.5	1.1	22.1	0.0	2,237	6.4	10.0	-2.3	0.81
East	76.1	-2.0	6.6	0.9	18.4	1.3	2,314	4.1	11.9	-2.9	0.81
London	68.6	-2.8	8.8	1.3	24.6	2.1	3,977	4.6	20.5	-0.6	0.93
South East	76.7	-1.7	6.2	1.3	18.1	0.6	3,629	3.4	12.7	-3.5	0.86
South West	75.3	-2.8	6.2	1.0	19.6	2.1	2,173	3.3	7.7	-2.9	0.86
England	72.5	-1.9	7.8	1.1	21.2	1.0	22,221	4.8	12.9	-2.2	0.84
Wales	69.0	-1.0	9.2	1.5	23.7	-0.3	1,110	5.5	8.2	-2.4	0.76
Scotland	73.1	-2.3	7.6	2.5	20.6	0.3	2,332	4.9	22.1	-0.4	0.84
Great Britain	72.3	-1.9	7.9	1.3	21.3	0.9	25,663	4.8	13.4	-2.1	0.83
N Ireland	67.3	-0.4	6.3	0.4	28.0	0.0	702	6.4	32.6	0.2	0.78
United Kingdom	72.2	-1.8	7.8	1.2	21.5	0.9	26,365	4.9%	14.0	-2.0	0.83

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

² Data refer to percentage point change of respective rate.

³ As at September 2009 (thousands).

⁴ As at February 2010: percentage of the workforce.

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

Statistical Press Release

DEFINITIONS

Notes to Table on Front Page

pps=percentage points

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

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

³ Quarterly Employment Survey

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

⁵ Confirmed redundancies in the calendar month.

ILO definition

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

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

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

Sampling variability

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

If the 'annual change' for an estimate has increased or decreased by more than the 'sampling variability of the change', this change would be statistically significant. However, for the period November to January 2010 the annual change in the employment, unemployment and economic inactivity categories were not statistically significant at this level.

Please see attached link for further LFS notes and definitions.

[Labour Force Survey Notes and Definitions](#)

LFS 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 last month. The magnitude of the revisions are relatively small, with the revisions to the unemployment rate falling within +/-0.05 percentage points and the working age employment rate within +/- 0.1 percentage points. The procedures being applied to the NI LFS results are consistent with those applied by the Office for National Statistics to other UK regions

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

[Labour market statistics revisions policy](#)

Claimant Count definition

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

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

[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 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

For further information:

AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THIS DOCUMENT WITH ASSOCIATED HYPERLINKS IS AVAILABLE ON THE HOME PAGE OF THE BRANCH WEBSITE AT:

www.statistics.detini.gov.uk

You can also contact Statistics Research Branch by: -

Writing to:

Martin Monaghan
Statistics Research Branch, Room 110,
Netherleigh, Massey Avenue, Belfast BT4 2JP.

Tel: (028) 9052 9421

Fax: (028) 9052 9658

Textphone: (028) 9052 9304

Email: statistics@detini.gov.uk