

NORTHERN IRELAND LABOUR FORCE SURVEY: JANUARY TO MARCH 2009

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This report provides a detailed analysis of the most recent (January - March 2009) quarterly information from the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey. To allow detailed analysis most of the information used in the report is not seasonally adjusted unless otherwise stated for regional comparison purposes. The figures show:

- In Northern Ireland there are an estimated 729,000 persons of working age in employment. This figure has increased by 4.6% (32,000 persons) during the last five years, but has fallen by 3.8% (29,000 persons) during the last year.
- The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI was estimated at 6.1%. This has increased by 1.0 percentage points from the estimate for the previous quarter and is up 1.5 percentage points over the year. However, it remains below the UK rate (7.1%) and is the fifth lowest rate among the UK regions.
- The seasonally adjusted economic inactivity rate for all working age persons (28.6%) has fallen marginally in NI over the past five years (29.1% in 2004). However, it remains the highest of all the UK regions (the UK average rate is 20.7%).
- A higher proportion of economically inactive persons of working age in NI identify sickness or disability (32%) as their main reason for not wanting work, compared to the UK (25%).
- In October – December 2008, an estimated 80,000 persons or 11% of those in employment, worked mainly at or from home in their main job. The majority of these were self-employed (59,000 or 74%) with the remainder mainly being employees (21,000).



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Executive Summary

1

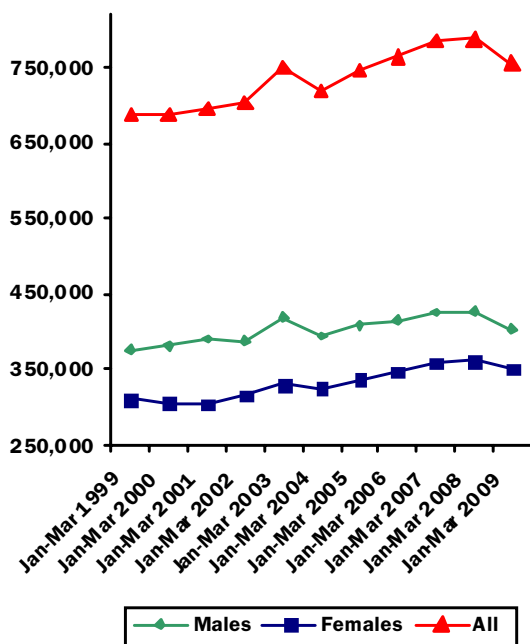
Introduction

The following estimates are based on the latest Labour Force Survey (LFS) January – March 2009 results. The LFS is a sample survey carried out by interviewing individuals in private households about their personal circumstances and work. It is the biggest regular household survey in Northern Ireland (NI) and provides a rich source of information on the labour force using internationally agreed concepts and definitions.

Employment

There are an estimated 756,000 persons in employment in NI. This figure has decreased by 4.2% (33,000 persons) during the last year. The seasonally adjusted working-age employment rate (66.9%) for NI is the lowest of all the UK regions and is 6.6 percentage points below the UK rate of 73.6% (South East region at 78.2% has the highest rate).

Employment (16+) 1999-2009



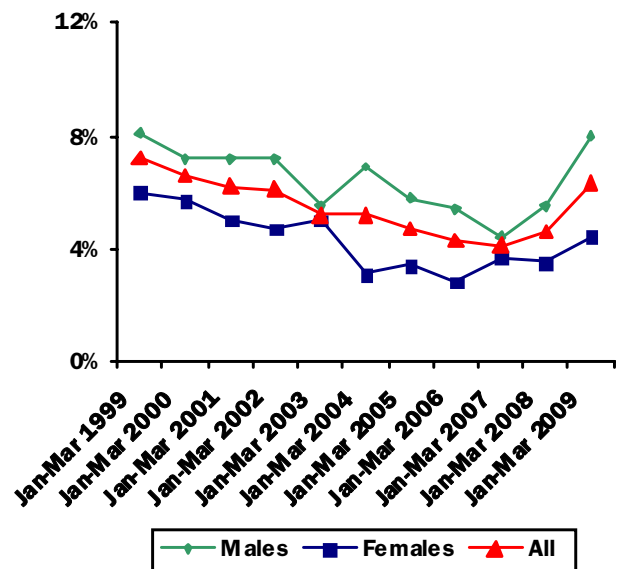
Up until the recent economic downturn, employment levels had generally been increasing during the last ten years. However, female employment increased at a slightly faster rate and the gap between male and female levels has narrowed over the period. The difference between the working age employment rate of males and females is currently estimated at 6.4 percentage points, compared to 10.0 percentage point difference 10 years ago.

Almost two-fifths (38%) of female employees work part-time compared to 8% of males. (This is similar to the figures of 37% for females and 8% for males five years ago.) Only 5% of females in employment are self-employed compared with 23% of males (5% and 23% respectively five years previously).

Unemployment

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI (6.1%) is up 1.0 percentage points from the previous quarter and up 1.5 percentage points from January - March 2008 (4.6%). However, it remains below the rate for the UK (7.1%) and is the fifth lowest rate of all the UK regions.

Unemployment Rate (16+) 1999-2009

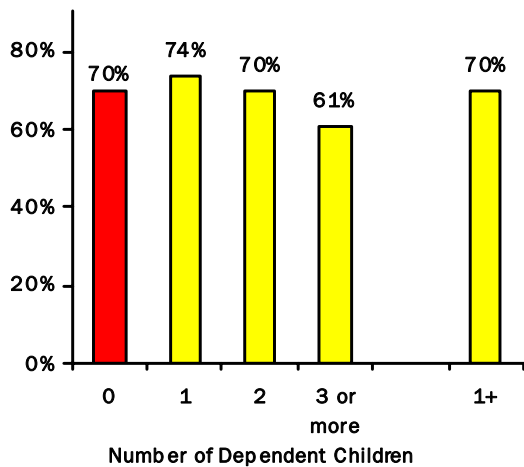


The unadjusted male unemployment rate (8.0%) has risen by 1.1 percentage points during the last five years, whilst the female rate (4.4%) rose by 1.5 percentage points during the same period. The unadjusted male unemployment rate of 8.0% is 3.6 percentage points above the female unemployment rate, compared to a 4.0 percentage point difference in the unemployment rates five years ago. Over two-thirds of unemployed men (69%) are short-term unemployed, which is more than the proportion five years ago (52%).

Economic Activity

There are an estimated 780,000 persons of working age economically active in NI at January - March 2009, up 43,000 from five years ago. The seasonally adjusted working age economic activity rate (71.4%) for NI is the lowest across the UK regions and is 8.0 percentage points below the UK rate of 79.3%. At 75.9% the working age economic activity rate for males is an estimated 9.6 percentage points higher than that for females (66.3%). The current 9.6 percentage point differential between the activity rates of males and females has narrowed from a 14.0 percentage point gap 5 years ago.

Female Economic Activity Rates by Number of Dependent Children

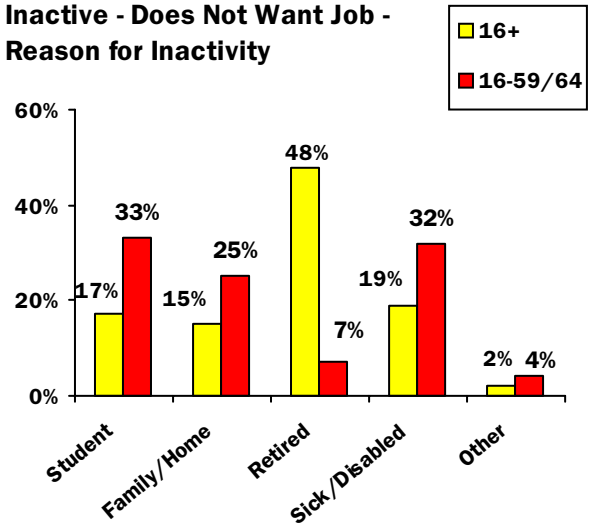


An estimated 70% of females of working age with dependent children under 16 were economically active, which is similar to the rate for those without dependent children (70%). In contrast, the UK rate for females without dependent children (80%) was significantly higher than the UK rate for those with dependent children (70%).

Economic Inactivity

At January - March 2009 there were 573,000 persons aged 16 and over who were economically inactive in NI, with a resulting economic inactivity rate of 42% for this age group. Around 8% of these economically inactive persons (43,000) wanted a job, but did not satisfy the criteria of being available for work and actively seeking work to be classified as unemployed.

Inactive - Does Not Want Job - Reason for Inactivity



The largest category of the economically inactive 16+ population that do not want a job were retired persons (48%). However, for those of working age the largest economically inactive category was students (33%). This is compared to the UK rate of 31% reflecting the younger population in NI. NI also has a higher percentage of economically inactive of working age that do not want a job because of sickness or disability (32%), compared to the UK rate of 25%.

Education and Training

In January - March 2009, 36% of economically inactive persons had no formal qualifications, compared to 16% of the economically inactive population. Only 7% of the economically inactive had a degree level qualification compared to 24% of the economically active. Of employees of working age, 9% had undergone job-related education or training in the last 4 weeks.

Disabled Persons in the Labour Market

One in five persons (20%) of working age in NI described themselves as having a current long-term disability, which is similar to the figure of 19% for the UK as a whole. Approximately 64% of working age persons with a disability are economically inactive compared to 20% of those without disabilities. Furthermore less than one third (31%) of disabled persons are in employment compared to 75% of non-disabled persons.

Special Feature: Home-Working

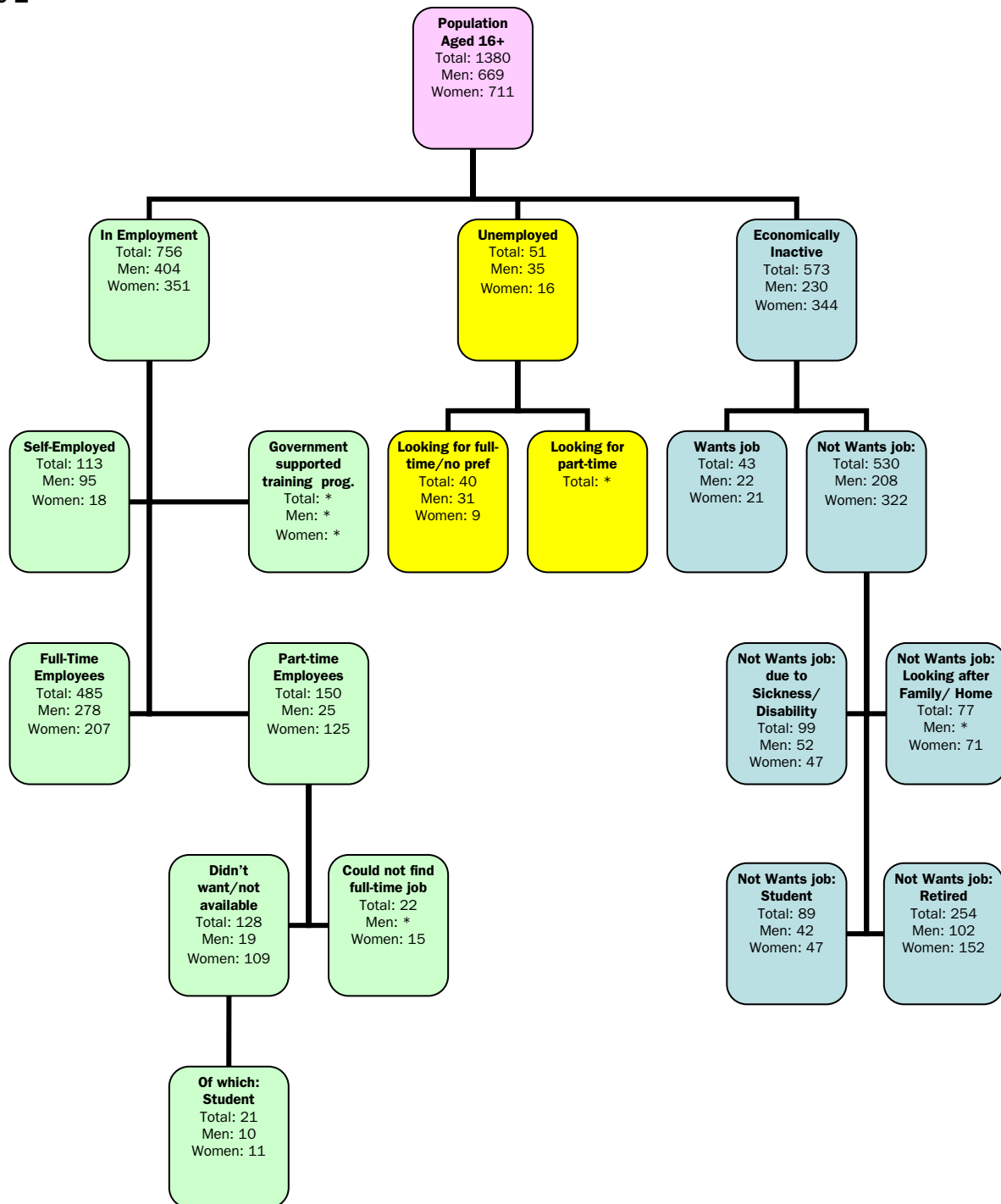
In October – December 2008, 80,000 persons or 11% of those in employment, worked mainly at or from home in their main job. The majority of these 80,000 persons were self-employed (59,000 or 74%) with the remainder mainly being employees (21,000). Three quarters (74% or 60,000) of those who worked at home were male, with the remaining 21,000 female home workers.

Over four fifths (83% or 67,000) of those working at home were in full-time employment, with 13,000 working part-time. Analysis of the occupational distributions, of those working at home, found that the largest group were those in Skilled trades occupations (43% or 35,000). Just over a third of those working from home were managers and senior officials, or were involved in professional or associate professional occupations.

Overall Labour Market Structure

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Overall Labour Market Structure (16+ Population), January – March 2009
Figure 1



Notes:

This chart illustrates the structure of the private household population in relation to the key ILO defined categories of in employment, unemployed and economically inactive (see Technical Notes for definitions).

* Too small for a reliable estimate (this explains why a gender split for some categories is omitted).

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

- **A higher proportion of men than women are in employment**

Table 1 and Figure 2 summarise the economic activity of the population in Northern Ireland (NI). It shows that 58% of LFS respondents aged 16 and over, were economically active (either in employment or seeking work). However, results for males and females differ significantly with 66% of males compared to 52% of females falling into this category.

- **A higher proportion of men than women are unemployed.**

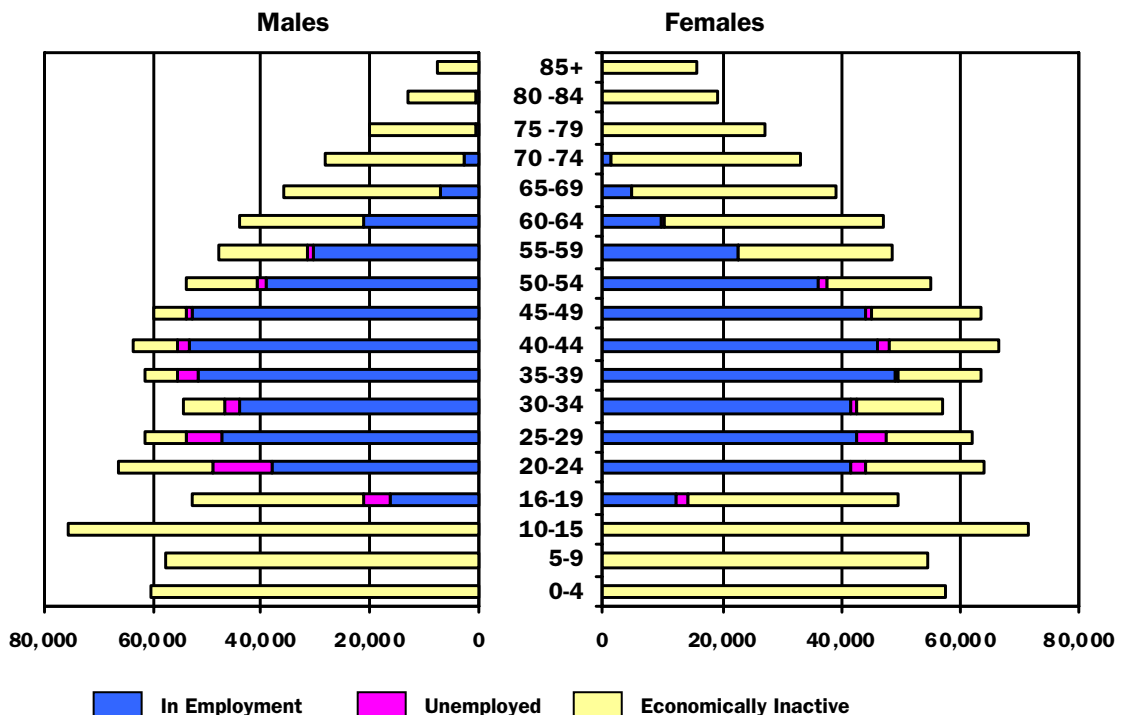
Overall, 4% of the population aged 16 and over are unemployed, however, again this differs for men and women – 5% of males are unemployed compared to 2% of females. In addition, 60% of the male population are in employment compared to 49% of the female population.

Private Household Population (16+) by Economic Status, January – March 2009
Table 1

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Economically active | 66% | 52% | 58% |
| In employment | 60% | 49% | 55% |
| Unemployed | 5% | 2% | 4% |
| Economically inactive | 34% | 48% | 42% |
| Total household population | 100% (669,000) | 100% (711,000) | 100% (1,380,000) |

Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

NI population structure by age, sex and economic activity
Figure 2



Economically Active

3

People aged 16 and over who are in employment or unemployed are classified as economically active. In January – March 2008 there were 807,000 economically active people in NI.

January – March 2009

**Economically active-male:
439,000 (66%)**

**Economically active-female:
367,000 (52%)**

**Economically active-all persons:
807,000 (58%)**

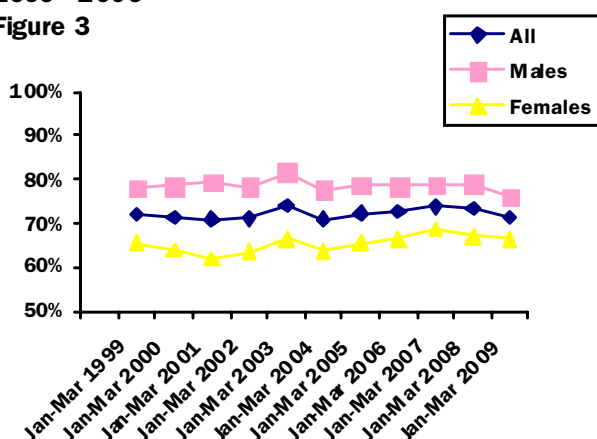
16+ population

- **The working-age economic activity rate for males is 10 percentage points higher than that for females.**

The economic activity rate is the proportion of persons in any specified age group who are economically active. The economic activity rate for persons of working-age was higher for males (76%) than females (66%) at January – March 2009. Figure 3 shows the economic activity rates for males and females of working-age from January – March 1999 to January – March 2009. The current 10 percentage point differential between the activity rates of males and females has narrowed from a 14 percentage point gap 5 years ago.

Economic Activity Rates (Working-age), 1999 - 2009

Figure 3



Economic Activity Rates (Working-age), 2004 – 2009

Table 2

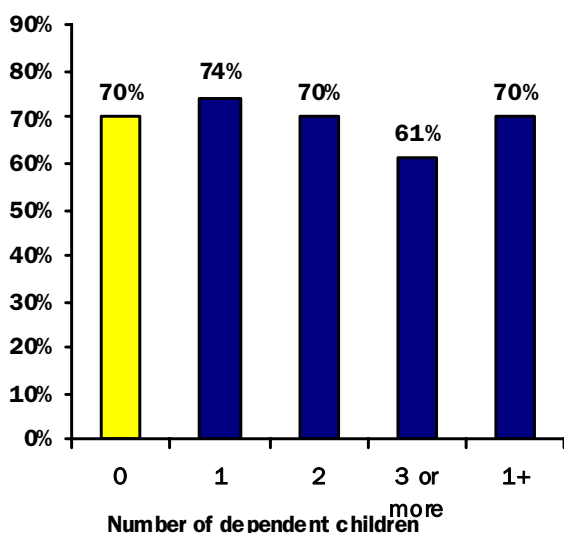
| | Economic Activity Rates | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | All |
| January – March 2004 | 77.6% | 63.7% | 70.8% |
| January – March 2005 | 78.8% | 65.5% | 72.3% |
| January – March 2006 | 78.5% | 66.3% | 72.6% |
| January – March 2007 | 78.7% | 68.5% | 73.7% |
| January – March 2008 | 79.0% | 67.1% | 73.2% |
| April – June 2008 | 78.9% | 67.1% | 73.2% |
| July - September 2008 | 78.1% | 68.1% | 73.3% |
| October – December 2008 | 77.6% | 66.7% | 72.3% |
| January – March 2009 | 75.9% | 66.3% | 71.3% |

The economic activity rate gap between males and females has been historically larger for NI than for the UK (in January – March 2004 the gap in NI was 14.0 percentage points, compared to 10.3 percentage points in the UK). However, for January - March 2009 the NI differential had narrowed to 9.6 percentage points, only marginally higher than the equivalent UK figure (9.5 percentage points).

- **Women with 3 or more dependent children have a 9 percentage point lower economic activity rate than those without dependent children.**

Economic activity rates are affected by the presence of dependent children aged under 16. This impact has different consequences for the male and female heads of family units¹. Males with dependent children had a higher economic activity rate (93%) than those without (70%), whereas females with dependent children have a similar economic activity rate as those without (70% for both categories). This compares to a UK activity rate of 70% for women with dependent children and 80% for those without. Having three or more dependent children resulted in a considerably lower economic activity rate (61%) for females in NI as shown in Figure 4.

Economic Activity Rates (Working age) for Females by Number of Dependent Children, January - March 2009
Figure 4

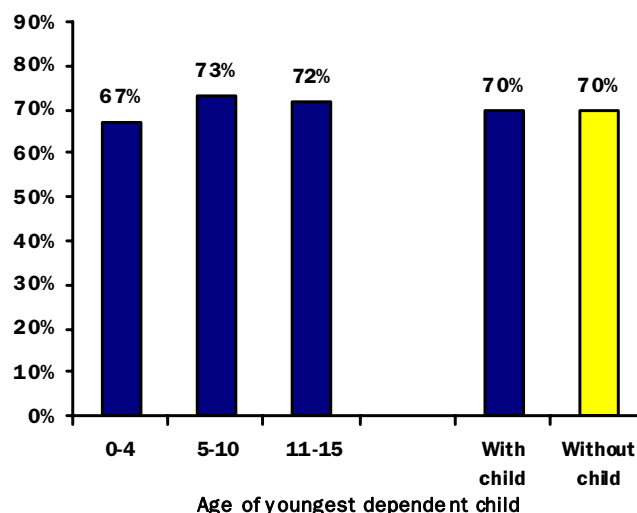


¹ The analysis on the effect of dependent children (under 16) on the economic activity rates of males/females is based on the head or partner of the head of family unit only. It does not include family members who are of working age but who do not have parental responsibilities such as an elder sibling.

- **Economic activity rates of the female head of family were affected by the age of the youngest dependent child.**

Economic activity rates for female heads of family were found to be influenced by the age of the youngest dependent child. When the youngest dependent child was aged 0-4 the activity rate (67%) was 5 percentage points lower than the rate for the 11-15 (72%) age group.

Economic Activity Rates for Females by Age of Youngest Dependent Child, January - March 2009
Figure 5



The household dataset affords the opportunity to examine the economic activity of lone parents with dependent children. At October - December 2008 there were an estimated 55,000 female lone parents of working age; the equivalent number for males was too small for reliable quotation. Two-thirds of these female lone parents (66%) were economically active while the remainder (34%) were classified as economically inactive. In all, 64% of lone parents were in employment.

In Employment

4

People in employment are defined as those aged 16 and over who did at least one hour's paid work in the reference week (either as an employee or self-employed); those who had a job which they were temporarily away from (on holiday for example); those participating in government employment or training programmes; and those doing unpaid family work.

January – March 2009

In employment-male:

404,000 (60%)

In employment-female:

351,000 (49%)

In employment-all persons:

756,000 (55%)

16+ population

- **There were 729,000 persons of working-age in employment in NI, an increase of approximately 32,000 in the last five years.**

Table 3 shows estimates of employment rates over a five-year period from January - March 2004 to January - March 2009 and provides a comparison of rates over the last four quarters. At January - March 2009 there were 729,000 persons of working-age in employment, with the working-age employment rate estimated at 66.7%. The number of working age persons in employment has fallen by an estimated 29,000 during the last year. However, the latest estimate of 729,000 is still 32,000 higher than the equivalent estimate five years ago (697,000 in January - March 2004).

Employment Rates and Numbers (Working age), 2004 – 2009

Table 3

| | Employment rate | Total in employment |
|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| January - March 2004 | 67.1% | 697,000 |
| January - March 2005 | 68.9% | 723,000 |
| January - March 2006 | 69.5% | 739,000 |
| January - March 2007 | 70.7% | 761,000 |
| January - March 2008 | 69.8% | 758,000 |
| April – June 2008 | 70.3% | 765,000 |
| July - September 2008 | 70.0% | 764,000 |
| October – December 2008 | 68.5% | 748,000 |
| January – March 2009 | 66.7% | 729,000 |

- **Fewer females than males work beyond the age of 60.**

Table 4 shows that the age distribution of employed males is very similar to that for employed females. The only apparent difference relates to the older age categories where slightly less females work beyond the age of 55, reflecting the current difference in the pension age for males and females.

Age Distribution of Those in Employment (16+), January – March 2009

Table 4

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 16-19 | 4% | 4% | 4% |
| 20-24 | 9% | 12% | 11% |
| 25-29 | 12% | 12% | 12% |
| 30-34 | 11% | 12% | 11% |
| 35-39 | 13% | 14% | 13% |
| 40-44 | 13% | 13% | 13% |
| 45-49 | 13% | 13% | 13% |
| 50-54 | 10% | 10% | 10% |
| 55-59 | 8% | 6% | 7% |
| 60+ | 8% | 4% | 6% |
| All 16+ | 100% (404,000) | 100% (351,000) | 100% (756,000) |

Percentages may not sum due to rounding

Table 5 provides an analysis of the private household population aged 16 and over who were in employment. The breakdown of employees into full-time and part-time employment is based on the respondent's own description of their main employment rather than on the number of hours actually or usually worked.

- **Only 5% of females in employment are self-employed, compared to 23% of males.**

It is noticeable that, while 23% of males in employment are self-employed, just 5% of females are in this category. The LFS also gathers information on persons with a second job in addition to their main activity and 3% of all employees stated that they had a second job.

Employment Status of Those in Employment (16+), January – March 2009

Table 5

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| All employees: | 75% | 94% | 84% |
| - Full-time employees | 92% | 62% | 76% |
| - Part-time employees | 8% | 38% | 24% |
| Self-employed | 23% | 5% | 15% |
| Govt. schemes | * | * | * |
| Total in employment | 100% (404,000) | 100% (351,000) | 100% (756,000) |

*Cell size too small for a reliable estimate

Percentages may not sum due to rounding

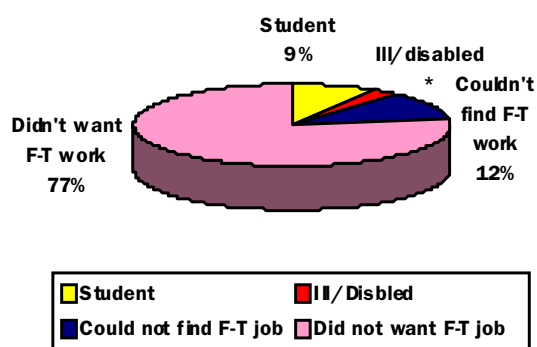
Total includes a small number of unpaid family workers.

- **Almost two-fifths (38%) of female employees are part-time compared to 8% of males.**

One of the main features of the NI labour market is the contribution which part-time jobs make to female employment. Of all female employees, 38% are part-time compared with just 8% of males. Figure 6 shows the reasons given by female employees for working part-time. The main reasons given by females for working part-time were that they did not want a full-time job (77%) and that they could not find a full-time job (12%).

Reasons For Females Working Part-time, January - March 2009

Figure 6



Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2007

The Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) is used in classifying business establishments and other statistical units by the type of economic activity in which they are engaged. It has been revised several times. Revision is necessary because, over a period of time, new products and new industries to produce them, emerge and shifts of emphasis occur in existing industries.

At 1st January 2008, the most recent revision brought about SIC (2007) from the existing SIC (2003). As such, Table 6 and related text are presented using the new SIC (2007) format.

Please note, that due to this revision, data are not directly comparable to those presented in earlier publications.

Employment by Industry (SIC 2007)

- **The largest industrial sections are Public administration, education & health (34%) and Distribution, hotels & restaurants (20%).**

Table 6 provides an analysis of persons in employment by industry (SIC 2007). The major industries in terms of employment were Public administration, education & health (34%) and Distribution, hotels & restaurants (20%). Relatively few persons were employed in the Energy and water industries.

- **Public administration, education and health is the largest sector for females (51%) and also for males (19%). High proportions of males are also employed in Construction (18%) and in manufacturing (17%).**

There are differences between males and females in terms of the industries in which they are employed. Over a third of males are employed in the Construction (18%) and Manufacturing (17%) industries. In contrast, over a half of females (51%) work in Public administration, education and health industries. However, similar proportion of males (10%) and females (12%) are employed in the Banking and Finance industry.

Persons in Employment by Industry Section, January – March 2009 (SIC 2007)

Table 6

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|---|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Agriculture forestry and fishing | 5% | * | 3% |
| Energy and water | * | * | * |
| Manufacturing | 17% | 5% | 11% |
| Construction | 18% | * | 10% |
| Distribution, hotels and restaurants | 17% | 23% | 20% |
| Transport and communication | 10% | 3% | 7% |
| Banking and finance | 10% | 12% | 11% |
| Public administration, education and health | 19% | 51% | 34% |
| Other services | 3% | 4% | 3% |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| All industries ¹ | (398,000) | (349,000) | (747,000) |

*Cell size too small for a reliable estimate
Percentages may not sum due to rounding

¹Total excludes those on college based government training and employment programmes and those who did not state industry.

Employment by Occupation

Table 7 provides an analysis of persons in employment by occupation using SOC2000 (Standard Occupational Classification) codes adopted since Spring 2001. These estimates are based on a different classification from those used previously and as a result, are not directly comparable.

- **Skilled Trade occupations accounted for the largest proportion of persons in employment (15%).**

Skilled Trade occupations were the largest group with 15% of persons in employment, followed by Administrative and Secretarial occupations (13%).

- **A large proportion of males (26%) work in Skilled Trade occupations whereas the largest group for females was Administrative and Secretarial (21%).**

There are obvious differences between males and females in terms of the occupations in which they are employed. Over one quarter of males (26%) work in Skilled Trade occupations, in comparison to just 3% of females. Conversely, 21% of females work in Administrative and Secretarial occupations compared to just 7% of males.

A higher proportion of males in employment are Managers and/or Senior Officials compared to females (13% for males as opposed to 10% for females).

Persons in Employment by Occupation, January – March 2009
Table 7

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Managers and/or Senior Officials | 13% | 10% | 12% |
| Professional Occupations | 11% | 13% | 12% |
| Assoc. Professional and Technical | 11% | 14% | 12% |
| Administrative and Secretarial | 7% | 21% | 13% |
| Skilled Trade | 26% | 3% | 15% |
| Personal Service | * | 16% | 8% |
| Sales and Customer Service | 4% | 11% | 7% |
| Process, Plant & Machine Operatives | 14% | * | 9% |
| Elementary | 11% | 11% | 11% |
| All occupations ¹ | 100% (399,000) | 100% (351,000) | 100% (750,000) |

*Cell size too small for a reliable estimate

Percentages may not sum due to rounding

¹Total excludes those on college based government training and employment programmes and those who did not state occupation.

Unemployment

5

The unemployed are defined as those without a job in the reference week who were available to start work within the next fortnight and who had either looked for work at some time in the last four weeks or were waiting to start a job already obtained.

| January - March 2009 |
|--|
| Unemployed-male: 35,000 (5%) |
| Unemployed-female: 16,000 (2%) |
| Unemployed-all persons: 51,000 (4%) |
| 16+ population |

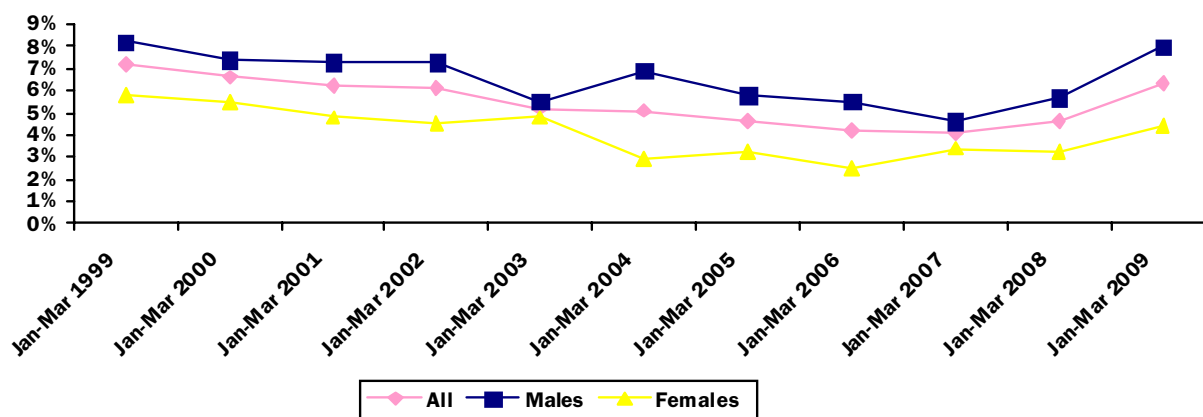
Overall, 4% of respondents aged 16 and over were unemployed and 5% of men were unemployed compared to 2% of women.

- **The unemployment rate for males is 8.0% compared to 4.4% for females.**

Unemployment rates can be obtained from the survey by expressing the number unemployed as a percentage of all those economically active (see Table 8). Unadjusted results show a 1.1 percentage point increase in the overall unemployment rate between October - December 2008 and January - March 2009.

Unemployment Rates, 1999-2009

Figure 7



Unemployment Rates, 2004 – 2009

Table 8 (Unadjusted for Seasonality)

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|-------------------------|------|--------|-------------|
| January – March 2004 | 6.9% | 2.9% | 5.1% |
| January – March 2005 | 5.8% | 3.2% | 4.6% |
| January – March 2006 | 5.5% | 2.5% | 4.2% |
| January – March 2007 | 4.6% | 3.4% | 4.1% |
| January – March 2008 | 5.7% | 3.2% | 4.6% |
| April – June 2008 | 5.0% | 2.5% | 3.9% |
| July - September 2008 | 5.8% | 2.6% | 4.3% |
| October – December 2008 | 7.5% | 2.5% | 5.2% |
| January – March 2009 | 8.0% | 4.4% | 6.3% |

Fluctuations in the unemployment rates from each quarter will be partly due to seasonal factors – please refer to the seasonally adjusted figures in Section 8.

The unemployment rate for January - March 2009 (6.3%) represented an increase of 1.7 percentage points from the same period one year ago.

- Over three-fifths (62%) of unemployed persons are aged 16-29.

Table 9 shows that over three fifths of unemployed persons are aged 16-29 (62%) with those aged 30 or over comprising the remaining 38%.

Age Distribution of the Unemployed, January - March 2009

Table 9

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|---------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 16-29 | 64% | 59% | 62% |
| 30+ | 36% | * | 38% |
| All 16+ | 100% (35,000) | 100% (16,000) | 100% (51,000) |

* Cell size too small for a reliable estimate

Duration of Unemployment

- Over two thirds (70%) of unemployed persons are short-term unemployed.

In January - March 2009, over two thirds (70%) of unemployed persons had been out of work and seeking employment for less than one year. 69% of unemployed males were classified as short-term unemployed, compared to 72% of females (i.e. less than one year) – see Table 11.

Duration of Unemployment in Northern Ireland, January - March 2009

Table 11

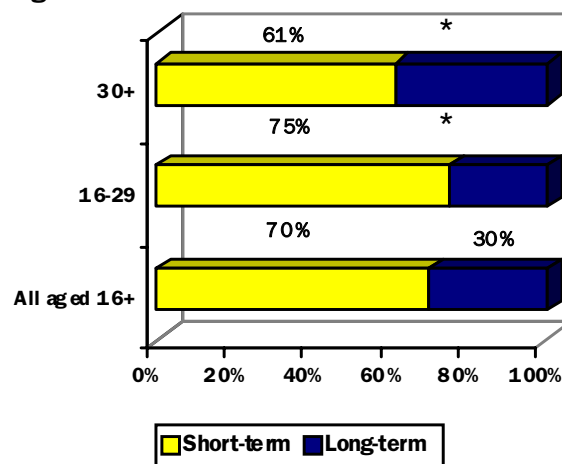
| | Male | Female | All persons |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Short-term unemployed | 69% | 72% | 70% |
| Long-term unemployed | 31% | * | 30% |
| All unemployed ¹ | 100% (35,000) | 100% (16,000) | 100% (51,000) |

*Cell size too small for a reliable estimate. Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

¹Excludes those that did not answer the questions on duration of unemployment.

The proportion of unemployed persons who were unemployed for one year or more is shown separately for younger and older age groups in Figure 8. Long-term unemployed accounted for 30% of the total unemployed and short-term unemployed for 70%. Of those aged 16-29, 75% were short-term unemployed and for those in the 30+ category, 61% were short-term unemployed.

Long-term and Short-term Unemployed by Age Group, Figure 8



Methods Used By The Unemployed To Seek Work

- The two main methods of looking for work are visiting JobCentre Offices and answering advertisements/ studying 'situations vacant' columns in newspapers and journals.

For unemployed persons, the two most common methods of looking for work were visiting JobCentre Offices (46%) and answering advertisements/studying 'situations vacant' columns in newspapers and journals (31%) as can be seen in Table 11. A small number of persons approached firms/employers directly and used personal contacts (such as asking friends, relatives and colleagues) to find out about the availability of work.

Main Method Of Seeking Work for Unemployed Persons (16+), January – March 2009

Table 11

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Advertisements/ Situations vacant | 33% | * | 31% |
| JobCentre Offices | 48% | * | 46% |
| Other methods | * | * | 23% |
| All methods | 100% (35,000) | 100% (15,000) | 100% (50,000) |

*Cell size too small for a reliable estimate.

Total includes those who were not seeking work in the previous four weeks because they were awaiting results of a job application, but excludes those who did not answer the question.

Occupation of Unemployed Persons in Last Job

The survey also asks unemployed persons their occupation in their most recent job, if applicable. Approximately 39,000 persons gave a previous occupational group. Estimates for a breakdown by occupational grouping were mostly too small to be reliably quoted. However, results did show that 12,000 had been in skilled trade occupations, whilst 9,000 had been in elementary occupations.

Economically Inactive

6

People aged 16 and over who are not in employment and are not unemployed are classified as economically inactive.

January - March 2009

Economically inactive-male:
230,000 (34%)
Economically inactive -female:
344,000 (48%)
Economically inactive -all persons:
573,000 (42%)

16+ population

In January - March 2009 there were 573,000 economically inactive people in NI – this represented 42% of the 16+ population.

- **Economic inactivity is highest for those aged 65 and over.**

For both males and females, economic inactivity is relatively high during the ages associated with full-time education (16-24), it drops during the “prime” working years and picks up towards retirement. For women this trend is affected by the impact of domestic commitments during the “prime” working years – see Table 12.

Age Distribution of the Economically Inactive NI, January - March 2009

Table 12

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|---------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 16-24 | 21% | 16% | 18% |
| 25-34 | 7% | 8% | 8% |
| 35-44 | 6% | 10% | 8% |
| 45-54 | 8% | 10% | 10% |
| 55-64 | 17% | 18% | 18% |
| 65+ | 41% | 37% | 39% |
| All 16+ | 100% (230,000) | 100% (344,000) | 100% (573,000) |

Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

- **Almost one half (49%) of the economically inactive in the UK are aged 65 or over.**

Table 13 shows the comparable age distribution of the economically inactive for the UK. It highlights that a higher proportion of the inactive in the UK are concentrated in the older age groups, with 49% being aged 65 and over, compared to 39% in NI. In contrast, the UK has a much lower proportion of their economically inactive population in the youngest age group (14% of the UK economically inactive population are aged 16-24, compared to 18% for NI). These differences are partly explained by NI's younger population structure.

Age Distribution of the Economically Inactive UK, January - March 2009

Table 13

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|---------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 16-24 | 17% | 13% | 14% |
| 25-34 | 4% | 8% | 7% |
| 35-44 | 4% | 9% | 7% |
| 45-54 | 6% | 8% | 7% |
| 55-64 | 15% | 17% | 16% |
| 65+ | 54% | 46% | 49% |
| All 16+ | 100% (7,063,000) | 100% (10,942,000) | 100% (18,006,000) |

Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

Reasons for Economic Inactivity

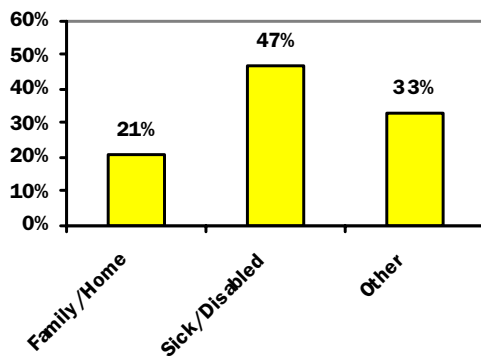
- **Around 8% of the economically inactive want a job.**

The economically inactive population is comprised of two main groups; those who do not want a job (92% in January - March 2009) and those who do want a job (8%). Equivalent figures for the UK show that 13% of the economically inactive want a job, whereas the remaining 87% do not. The main reasons given by those who want work in NI, but are not seeking work or available to start work are shown in Figure 9.

- **Sickness or disability is one of the main reasons for not looking for a job.**

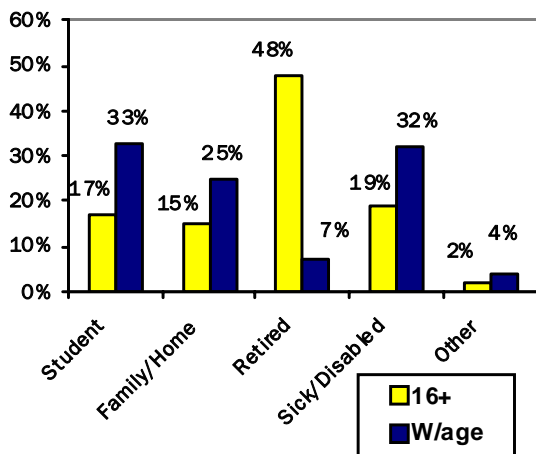
Of the economically inactive who want a job, 21% were not looking for work due to family/home commitments and 47% were not looking because of sickness or disability. "Other" includes students and discouraged workers (those not in a job who would like work and whose reason for not seeking work in the past four weeks is that they believe there are no jobs available).

Inactive - Wants Job (16+)
Figure 9



As mentioned previously, 92% of the economically inactive do not want a job and this group can be divided into the categories shown in Figure 10.

Inactive - Does Not Want Job - Reason for Inactivity (16+ and Working-age)
Figure 10



- **Of the 16+ population who do not want a job 48% are retired.**

Overall for the total population, the main reason for the inactive not wanting work was retirement (48%).

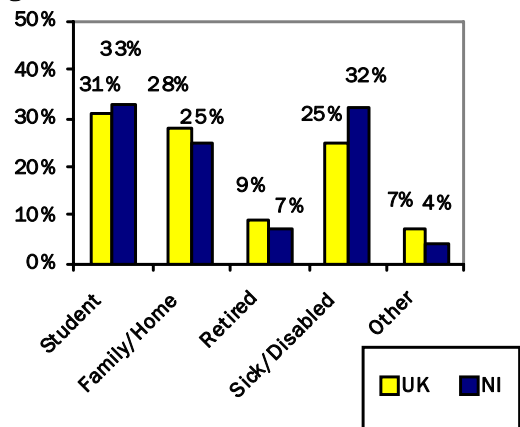
- **Approximately one-third (32%) of the working-age population who do not want a job are sick or disabled.**

For the working-age population the main reasons for not wanting work were students (33%), followed by sickness/disability (32%) and those with family and home responsibilities (25%). Men were more likely to cite sickness/disability as their main reason (41%) for inactivity and women family commitments (39%).

- **In comparison to the UK, NI has a higher percentage of the economically inactive, who do not want a job, because they are sick or disabled.**

Figure 11 compares the working-age inactive population of NI with the UK. NI has a higher proportion of those who identify sickness or disability (32%) as the main reason for not wanting work, compared to the UK (25%). NI also has a higher percentage of economically inactive people who do not want a job because they are students (31%) compared to the UK (33%) and this is partly a reflection of the younger population in NI.

Inactive - Does Not Want Job - Reason for Inactivity (UK and NI by Working age)
Figure 11



Education and Training

7

Qualifications of the Employed and the Unemployed

- Over a third (36%) of economically inactive persons had no formal qualifications at January – March 2009.

Table 14 shows that the qualification levels of those of working-age in employment or economically active are consistently higher than those who are economically inactive. Of those in employment 33% had higher qualifications, compared to 10% of the economically inactive. Conversely, 36% of economically inactive people had no formal qualifications, compared with 15% of those in employment. The economically active comprise the employed and the unemployed. The qualification levels of this group are higher than the economically inactive. Of the economically inactive, only 10% had degree and other higher qualifications, while 36% had no qualifications at all. This compares to figures of 32% and 16% for the economically active population.

Qualifications By Economic Activity (Working-age), January – March 2009
Table 14

| | In employment | Econ. active | Econ. inactive | All Persons |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| Degree or higher | 25% | 24% | 7% | 19% |
| Other higher below degree | 8% | 8% | 3% | 7% |
| A level or equivalent | 26% | 25% | 27% | 26% |
| GCSE A-C or equivalent | 20% | 20% | 22% | 20% |
| Other qualifications | 7% | 7% | 6% | 7% |
| No Qualifications | 15% | 16% | 36% | 22% |
| | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| All | (718,000) | (766,000) | (309,000) | (1,076,000) |

* Cell size too small for a reliable estimate.

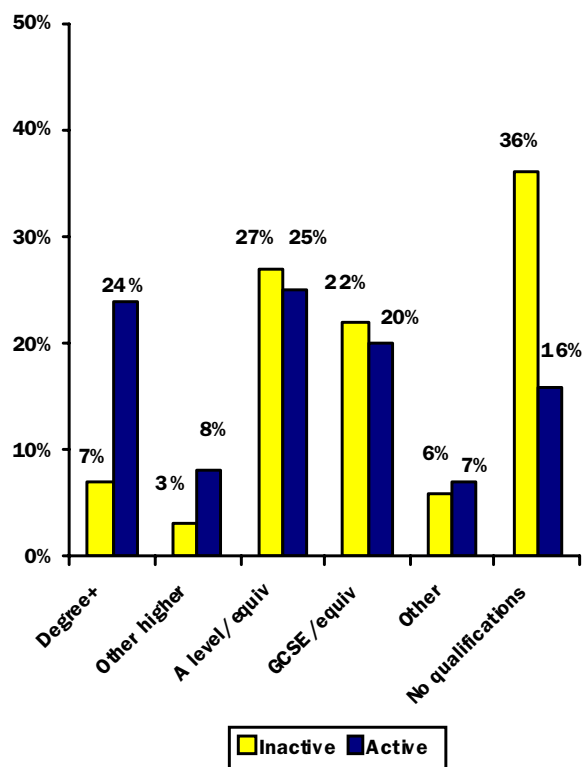
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Total excludes those who did not state their highest level of qualification.

Please refer to Technical Notes for full definition of educational attainment categories.

Only men and women of working-age, and those of any age with a job were asked the question on qualifications.

Qualifications By Economic Activity, January - March 2009
Figure 12



Job-related Training

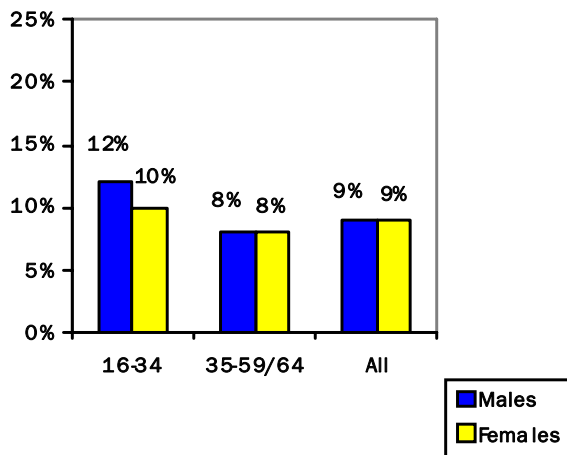
- A higher proportion of younger employees receive job-related training.

The LFS can be used to identify those employees who receive education or training connected with their job. Table 15 and Figure 13 overleaf show how the proportion of employees receiving job-related education or training varies with age and gender. In January - March 2009, 9% of employees of working-age had undergone some job-related training within the previous four weeks. For both males and females, those in the younger age group are more likely to be recipients than those in the older age group, with 12% of males and 10% of females in the 16-34 age groups having received such training.

Employees Receiving Job-related Training By Age Group (Working-age), January - March 2009
Table 15

| | Male | Female | All persons |
|----------|------|--------|-------------|
| 16-34 | 12% | 10% | 11% |
| 35-59/64 | 8% | 8% | 8% |
| All | 9% | 9% | 9% |

Employees Receiving Job-related Training By Working Age, January - March 2009
Figure 13



Regional and International Summary

8

Table 16 and Figure 14 provide some labour market comparisons on a seasonally adjusted basis between NI and other UK regions.

- **The unemployment rate in NI is lower than the UK average and is the fifth lowest of the UK regions.**

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI at January - March 2009 (6.1%) was lower than the UK average (7.1%) and fifth lowest of the UK regions. The NI employment rate for those of working-age (66.9%) was the lowest of all the UK regions. In contrast the region with the highest employment rate was the South East (78.2%).

- **The NI employment rate is 1.6 percentage points lower than the average rate for the EU 27.**

Figure 15 overleaf shows how the harmonised employment rate in NI compares to other employment rates in the European Union (based on those aged 15-64). The NI rate (64.8% - see Note 2 overleaf) is 1.6 percentage points lower than the EU average (66.4%). It is 0.8 percentage points below the current rate in the Republic of Ireland (65.6%).

The NI unemployment rate (6.1%) is 3.9 percentage points lower than the rate for the Republic of Ireland (10.0%) and 1.8 percentage points lower than the average rate for the EU 27 (7.9%).

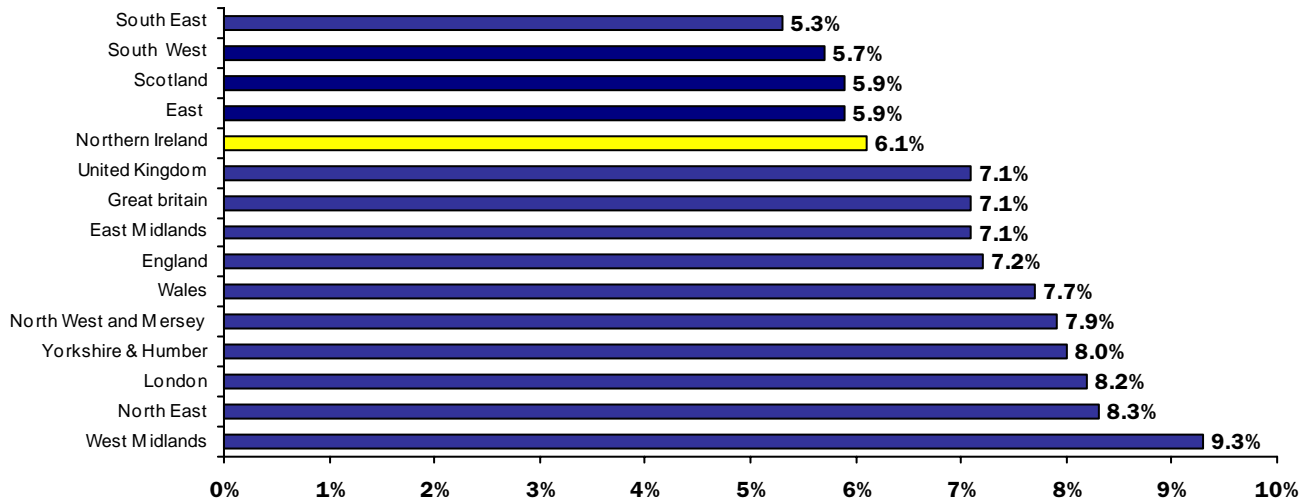
Regional Seasonally Adjusted Economic Activity Rates, January – March 2009

Table 16

| | Econ. activity rate (working-age) % | Employment rate (working-age) % | Unemployment rate % |
|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| North East | 76.3 | 69.8 | 8.3 |
| North West & Mersey | 77.8 | 71.5 | 7.9 |
| Yorkshire & Humber | 78.1 | 71.7 | 8.0 |
| East Midlands | 81.5 | 75.5 | 7.1 |
| West Midlands | 77.7 | 70.3 | 9.3 |
| East | 82.7 | 77.7 | 5.9 |
| London | 76.8 | 70.4 | 8.2 |
| South East | 82.8 | 78.2 | 5.3 |
| South West | 82.8 | 78.0 | 5.7 |
| England | 79.7 | 73.8 | 7.2 |
| Wales | 76.5 | 70.4 | 7.7 |
| Scotland | 79.8 | 74.9 | 5.9 |
| Great Britain | 79.6 | 73.8 | 7.1 |
| Northern Ireland | 71.4 | 66.9 | 6.1 |
| United Kingdom | 79.3 | 73.6 | 7.1 |

Regional Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates, January - March 2009

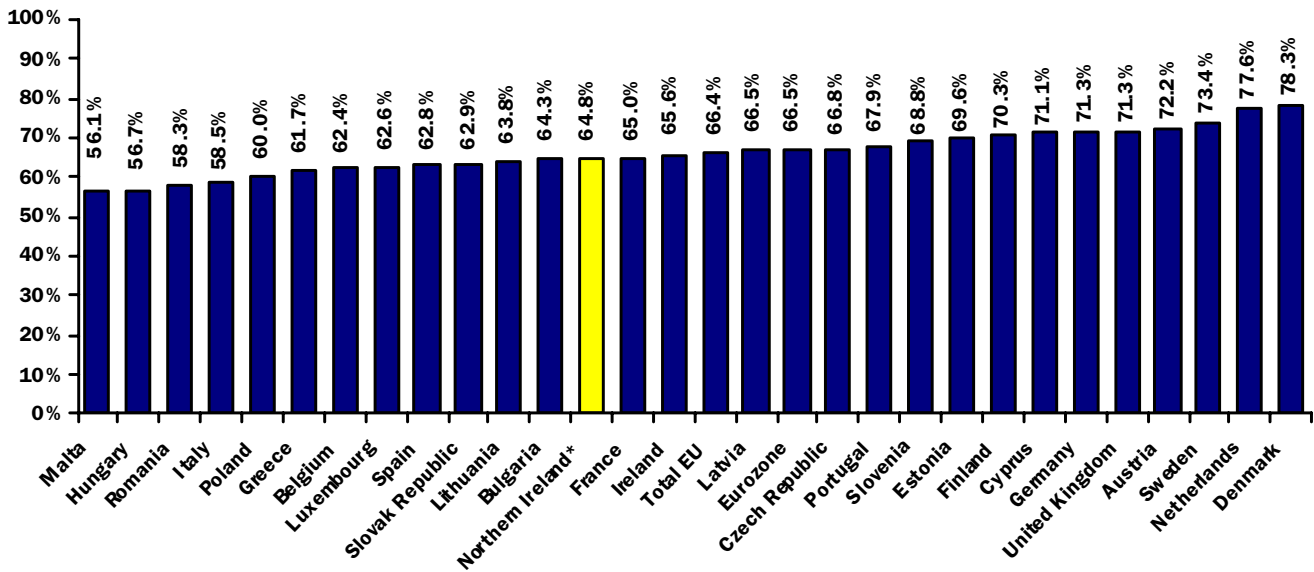
Figure 14



International Comparisons of ILO Employment

ILO Employment Rates (%) - Unadjusted¹

Figure 15



Source: Eurostat and StatBLS

¹ Employment rates are not seasonally adjusted.

The employment rates published by EUROSTAT are based on the population aged 15-64.

* A NI employment rate comparable to the EUROSTAT figures has been produced from the Calendar Quarter 4 2008 LFS dataset. It is based on the population aged 15-64 and differs from the working age rates (16-64 for men and 16-59 for women) published elsewhere in this publication, which take account of both the school-leaving and state pension age.

The employment rate for the UK as published by EUROSTAT will differ from the working age rate (16-59/64) published by ONS for the same reason.

Eurostat compiles 'harmonised' unemployment rates for most countries (but not NI and UK) by extrapolating from the most recent LFS data using monthly registered unemployment data. For further information see the Monthly Eurostat news release.

The "Total EU" series consists of all 27 EU countries. The Eurozone series consists of the following EU countries: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Spain.

Disability and the Labour Market

9

This section focuses on the characteristics and labour market experiences of people with disabilities. Disability as a concept is complex and can be defined in a number of ways and here it relates to current long-term disabilities among the working-age population that are covered by the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act and/or work-limiting disabilities – please refer to the Technical Notes section for a full definition.

Estimates of Numbers Disabled

- **One in five persons (20%) of working-age are disabled in NI.**

The January - March 2009 LFS estimates that one in five (20%) persons (217,000) of working-age in NI had a current long-term disability. This proportion was similar for both males (20%) and females (19%), equating to 115,000 disabled men and 102,000 disabled women.

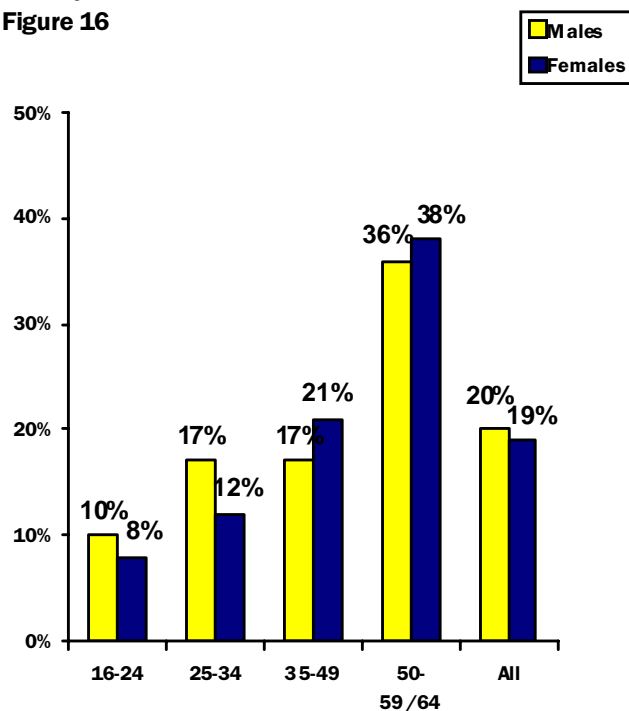
- **The likelihood of having a disability or health problem increases with age for both males and females.**

Figure 16 shows that the proportion of persons who have a long-term disability or health problem increases with age for both males and females. The proportion of males with disabilities increased from 10% for the 16-24 age group to 36% for the 50-64 age group.

For females the proportion with disabilities increased from 8% for ages 16-24 to 38% for ages 50-59.

Disability Rates By Age Group, January - March 2009

Figure 16



* too small for a reliable estimate

Qualifications of Persons With and Without Disabilities

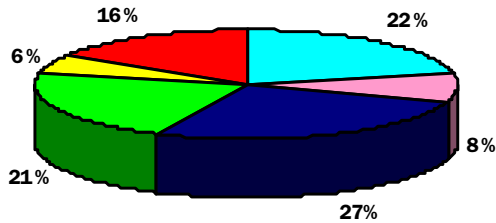
- **Over twice the proportion of disabled persons have no qualification compared to non-disabled persons at January - March 2009.**

Figure 17 shows the qualification levels held by disabled and non-disabled persons at January - March 2009. Overall, persons with a disability are less qualified than those without. In particular, only 7% of those with a disability held a degree or equivalent qualification compared with 22% of non-disabled persons. Over two-fifths (42%) of those with a disability had no qualifications, over twice the proportion of those without a disability (16%).

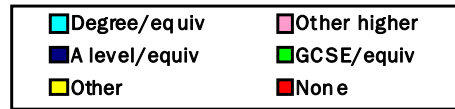
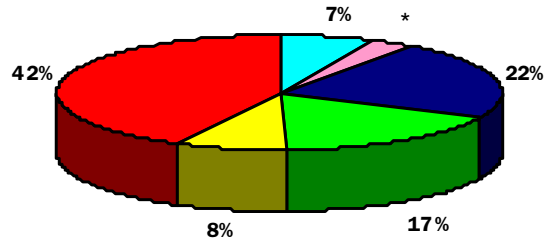
Qualifications Of Persons With Or Without Disabilities, January - March 2009

Figure 17

Without a disability



With a disability



Economic Activity of the Disabled and Non-Disabled

- **The employment rate for those without disabilities (75%) is over twice that of people with disabilities (31%).**

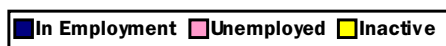
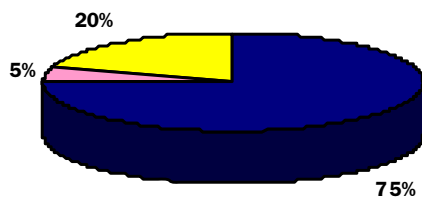
Please refer to Technical Notes for full definition of qualifications.
Excludes those who did not state their highest level of qualification.
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Figure 18 shows the relative importance of the three main economic categories for those of working age, with and without a disability, at January - March 2009. A much smaller proportion of those with a disability (31%) are in employment compared to those without (75%). Conversely, the majority of those with a disability (64%) are economically inactive, compared with 20% of those without a disability.

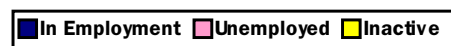
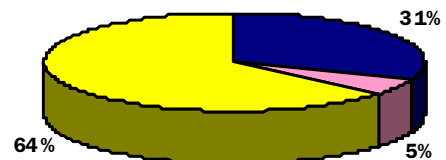
Economic Activity Of Those With and Without Disabilities, January - March 2009

Figure 18

Without a disability



With a disability



Special Feature: Home-Working

10

- **Of those in employment 11% work mainly at or from home.**

The LFS can provide information on the number of people that work at or from their own home. In October - December 2008, 80,000 persons, or 11% of those in employment, worked mainly at or from home in their main job. This proportion has varied very little over the preceding two years. The majority of the 80,000 persons were self-employed (59,000 or 74%) with the remainder mainly being employees (21,000). Three quarters (74% or 60,000) of those who worked at home were male, with the remaining 21,000 female home workers. This is as expected, because the self-employed are mainly male. Indeed, the characteristics of those working at home are influenced mainly by those of the self-employed. Over four fifths (83% or 67,000) of those working at home were in full-time employment, with 13,000 working part-time.

Place Of Work For Those In Employment, October - December 2008
Table 17

| | Number |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Own Home | 16,000 |
| Same grounds or building | 19,000 |
| Different place using home as base | 46,000 |
| Separate from home | 680,000 |
| All in Employment* | 760,000 |

*Total includes a small number for whom the question did not apply

Table 17 shows in further detail exactly where these persons worked. 34,000 worked in their own home or in the same grounds or buildings, with the remaining 46,000 working in a different place but using their home as a base.

- **14% of those who work from home were aged 60+.**

Figure 19 shows that the majority of those working at home were in the two middle age groups, with 77% of those working at home aged 30-59. However, 14% of home workers (11,000 persons) were aged 60 or over. In comparison just 6% of all persons in employment were aged 60 and over.

Distribution Of Those Working At Home By Age, October - December 2008
Figure 19

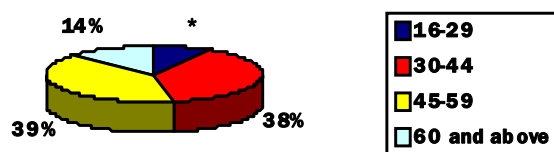


Table 18 shows the occupational distribution of those working at home. The largest group were Skilled trades occupations (43% or 35,000). Just over a third of those working from home were managers and senior officials, or were involved in professional or associate professional occupations.

Occupation Of Those Working At Home, October - December 2008
Table 18

| | Number /% |
|---|---------------|
| Managers and/or Senior officials | 10,000 (12%) |
| Professional and Assoc Prof and Technical | 18,000 (22%) |
| Skilled trades occupations | 35,000 (43%) |
| All other occupations* | 18,000 (22%) |
| All working at home | 80,000 (100%) |

* These comprise Administrative and secretarial, Personal service occupations, Sales and customer service occupations, Plant, process and machine operatives and Elementary occupations.

- **Agriculture and fishing accounts for just over one fifth of persons who work at home.**

Table 19 shows the distribution by industrial sector of those working at home. Service industries accounted for 46% (37,000) of those working at home. There were a further 17,000 persons (21%), working from home, employed in each of the Agriculture & fishing and Construction sectors, corresponding to the high proportion of self-employed in these sectors.

**Industry Sector Of Those Working At Home,
October - December 2008**

Table 19

| | Number/% |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Agriculture and fishing | 17,000 (21%) |
| Construction | 17,000 (21%) |
| All other non-service sectors* | 9,000 (11%) |
| Total services | 37,000 (46%) |
| All working at home | 80,000 (100%) |

* These comprise Manufacturing and Energy and water supply.

Technical Notes

11

Background

Following the UK's accession to the European Community, the Labour Force Survey (LFS) was carried out for the first time in 1973, under the terms of an EC Regulation. The Statistical Office of the European Communities co-ordinates information from all the Labour Force Surveys carried out by member states in order to assist in such matters as the allocation of Social Fund resources.

From 1973 to 1983, the LFS was carried out biennially in both Northern Ireland (NI) and Great Britain. Following a change in the requirements of the EC Regulation, from 1984 an annual survey was conducted and results referred to the spring months of each year. In March 1992 the GB portion of the survey moved onto a quarterly cycle and in December 1994 a quarterly survey was introduced in (NI).

As part of an EU requirement, where all member states must have an LFS based on calendar quarters, the NI Labour Force Survey moved to a calendar quarter basis from May 2006 onwards.

The LFS was previously based on seasonal quarters where, for example, the March – May months covered the Spring quarter, June - August was Summer and so forth. This has changed to calendar quarters where microdata will be available for January – March (Q1), April – June (Q2), July – September (Q3) and October - December (Q4). Initially, a back series of calendar quarter micro datasets will be available for the years 1997, 1999, 2001 – 2004, for Q2 and Q4, then for all quarters from 2005 onwards. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) are responsible for producing these back series and currently aim to have all periods revised and available as soon as possible.

The LFS is a sample survey carried out by interviewing individuals about their personal circumstances and work. It is the biggest regular household survey in NI and provides a rich source of information on the labour force using internationally agreed concepts and definitions. This statistics notice presents supplementary results from the January - March 2009 Quarterly LFS in Northern Ireland.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment is responsible for ensuring that the survey is conducted in NI and for the analysis and interpretation of the results. However, the day-to-day management of the fieldwork, including data collection and database creation, rests with the Central Survey Unit (CSU) of the NI Statistics and Research Agency. CSU are also in charge of the creation of a Computer Assisted Interviewing questionnaire (designed to mirror that used in GB), the sampling of addresses and the carrying out of fieldwork using a team of specialist interviewers.

Response Rates

The sample for the January – March 2009 LFS consisted of 2,528 addresses, (650 chosen at random from the Valuation & Lands Agency list of domestic properties, 1,878 carried forward from the previous quarter). A random start, fixed interval sampling technique of the addresses, which are ordered by District Council and Ward, is used. This ensures a proportional representation across the District Council areas in NI.

Only private household addresses were eligible since the LFS is a survey of the private household population. Every selected address is interviewed on five successive occasions, such that in any one quarter, a fifth of the sample will be receiving their first interview, one fifth their second and so on, with one fifth receiving their fifth and final interview. This results in an 80% sample overlap between quarters.

Response Rates, January - March 2009

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| | |
| Total addresses sampled | 2,528* |
| Fully and partially responding | 1,701 |
| Eligible sample | 2,226 |
| Response rate | 76.4% |

*Of the addresses sampled, a small number contained more than one household and some contained households which moved during the quarter. Residents in NHS hospital accommodation (formerly called nurses' homes) and students living in halls of residence or boarding schools are included to improve the coverage of young people.

Breakdown of Non-response and Ineligible Addresses, January – March 2009

| Non-response/non-contact: | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| - Outright refusal | 167 |
| - Circumstantial refusal | 71 |
| - Non-contact | 287 |
| Ineligible addresses: | |
| - Vacant/derelict/under construction | 236 |
| - Holiday accommodation | 19 |
| - Non-residential | 2 |
| - Second residence | 19 |
| - Other ineligible | 20 |
| - Household moves | 6 |
| Total | 827 |

Sampling

Because the LFS is a sample survey, results are subject to sampling error, i.e. the actual proportion of the population in private households with a particular characteristic may differ from the proportion of the LFS sample with that characteristic. Accordingly, although percentages in most tables are quoted to the nearest whole number, they should not be regarded as having this degree of accuracy, and indeed some apparent trends over time may be misleading due to sampling error. In general, the larger the group, the more precise (proportionately) is the LFS estimate.

The following table shows the proportions obtained from the January – March 2009 survey for some key LFS variables and indicates their sampling accuracy. The confidence intervals represent the ranges either side of the LFS proportions which are 95% certain to include the true values of the quantities estimated.

LFS Proportions Of Total Private Household Population (16+), Including 95% Confidence Intervals, January – March 2009

| | LFS Estimate | Confidence Interval |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Economically active | 58% | +/- 1.6% |
| In Employment | 55% | +/- 1.6% |
| Employees* | 84% | +/- 1.7% |
| Self-employed* | 15% | +/- 1.6% |
| Unemployed | 4% | +/- 0.6% |
| Economically inactive (16+) | 42% | +/- 1.6% |
| Unemployment rate | 6.3% | +/- 1.1% |

* As a percentage of all in employment.

Confidence intervals for other proportions produced in this publication may be obtained on request from addresses given at the end of this note.

Publication Threshold

It is the nature of sampling variability that the smaller the group whose size is being estimated, the (proportionately) less precise that estimate is. LFS estimates of under 8,000 are not published in this supplement as they are likely to be unreliable. This revised publication threshold came into effect from 1 September 1999 and estimates below this threshold contained in earlier publications should, therefore, be treated with caution.

Grossing To Population Totals

Most of the results presented in this report are expressed in terms of percentages, following the grossing of sample numbers to population levels. Each individual participating in the survey is given a weight or “grossing factor” which is related to that person’s age and sex. In this way the final grossed results give the population total for NI and reflect the distributions by sex and age shown by the population figures.

Re-weighting of LFS data to updated population estimates

LFS data back to 1992 was revised last year in order to incorporate the latest population estimates. The magnitude of the revisions are relatively small, with the revisions to the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate and the working age employment rate falling within +/- 0.02 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. Details of the 're-weighting' methodology used to adjust key LFS estimates was published in the May 2008 edition of Labour Market Trends and can be accessed via the link below:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/article.asp?id=1992>

Seasonal Adjustment

In conjunction with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and consistent with all other UK regions, seasonally adjusted LFS estimates for the UK regions (including NI) have been reintroduced from Winter 2002/3. The seasonally adjusted estimates are quoted in Section 1 and Section 8 of this publication. Estimates in all other sections of this publication are not seasonally adjusted.

The seasonally adjusted data have been 'weighted' to the latest population figures and therefore provide a better indication of the current labour market status.

Definitions

Working age

This refers to ages 16 to 59 for women and 16 to 64 for men.

In Employment

The LFS defines employment as those aged 16 and over who did at least one hour's paid work in the reference week (either as an employee or self-employed); those who had a job which they were temporarily away from (on holiday for example); those participating in government training and employment programmes; and those doing unpaid family work.

Employment Rate

The percentage of people aged 16 and over who are in employment.

Employees/Self-employed

The division between employees and self-employed is based on survey respondents' own assessment of their employment status.

Unpaid Family Workers

The separate identification of this group in the LFS is in accordance with international recommendations. It comprises persons doing unpaid work for a business they own or a business that a relative owns.

Full-time/Part-time

The classification of employees, self-employed, those on government work-related training programmes and unpaid workers in their main job as full-time or part-time is on the basis of self-assessment.

Full-time Education

In the LFS this includes those people over the age of 16 who state that they are still at school or in some other form of full-time education, including sandwich courses.

Unemployment

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) measure of unemployment refers to people without a job who were available 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. This definition of unemployment is in accordance with that adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, further clarified at the 14th ICLS, and promulgated by the ILO in 1987.

Unemployment Rate

The percentage of economically active people who are unemployed.

Duration of Unemployment

Duration of unemployment is defined as the shorter of the following two periods:

- (a) duration of active search for work; and
- (b) length of time since employment.

The short-term unemployed are those people who have been unemployed for less than 1 year, while the long-term unemployed are defined as those who have been unemployed for 1 year or more.

Educational Attainment Categories

Degree or higher = degree or degree equivalent and above incl. First degree, Postgraduate Diplomas and Professional qualifications.
Other higher below degree = other Higher Education below degree level incl. HND/HNC/BTEC (Higher), teaching and nursing qualifications.

A level or equivalent = incl. Trade Apprenticeships, vocational level 3

GCSE A-C or equivalent = incl. vocational level 2.

Other qualifications = incl. vocational level 1 and below.

Disabilities

Since Spring 1997, LFS working-age respondents have been asked questions to identify whether they have a current disability covered by the 1995 Disability Discrimination or a work-limiting disability (which affects either the kind or amount of paid work they can do) or both. This broad description covering any of these three definitions (defined as a current long-term disability) is used in this publication. This definition covers a wide range of impairments which themselves can differ greatly in severity.

Industry

The classification of respondents' industry of employment is based on the Standard Industrial Classification 2007: SIC(07)

Occupation

The classification of respondents' occupations are based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC), introduced in June 2000 which replaces SOC 90.

Further Information

Further information about the survey can be obtained by:

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