



NORTHERN IRELAND LABOUR FORCE SURVEY: OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2009

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This report provides a detailed analysis of the most recent (October - December 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 740,000 persons of working age in employment. This figure has decreased by 1.0% (7,000 persons) over the year, but is up compared with the estimate five years ago.
- The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI was estimated at 6.0%. This has decreased (by 1.0 percentage points) from the estimate for the previous quarter, but is up 0.7 percentage points from the previous year. However, it remains below the UK rate (7.8%) and is the lowest among the UK regions.
- The NI seasonally adjusted economic inactivity rate for all working age persons (28.3%) is higher than five years ago (27.2% in 2004). However, it remains the highest of all the UK regions (the UK average rate is 21.3%).
- NI has a higher percentage of economically inactive persons of working age who cite being a student (37%) as their main reason for not wanting work, compared to the UK (30%). This is partly a reflection of the younger population in NI. A higher proportion of economically inactive persons of working age in NI identify sickness or disability (30%) as a reason for not wanting work, compared to the UK (25%).
- The number of graduates of working-age in NI has increased by 55,000 (36%) from 152,000 in 2004 to 207,000 in 2009. In contrast, the total working-age population only increased by 5% during the same period.



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Executive Summary

1

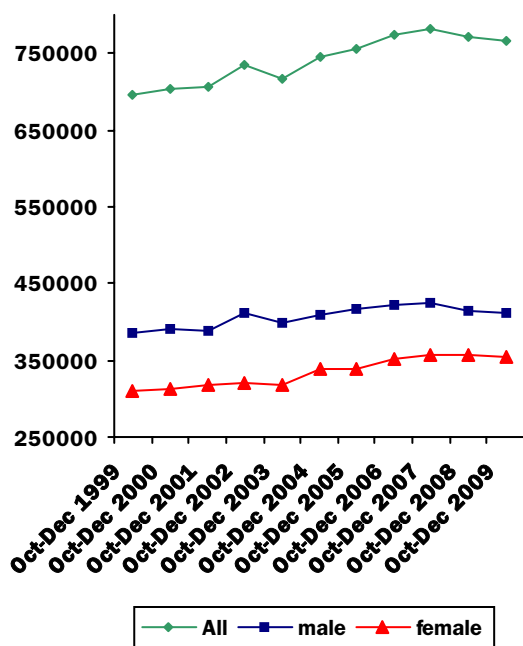
Introduction

The following estimates are based on the latest Labour Force Survey (LFS) October - December 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

In NI there are an estimated 740,000 persons of working-age in employment. This figure is down 1.0% (7,000 persons) over the last year, but is still up 2.1% (15,000 persons) compared with the estimate for five years ago. However, the seasonally adjusted working-age employment rate (67.3%) for NI remains the lowest of the twelve UK regions and is 5.1 percentage points below the UK rate of 72.4% (the South East region at 77.0% has the highest rate).

Employment (16+) 1999-2009



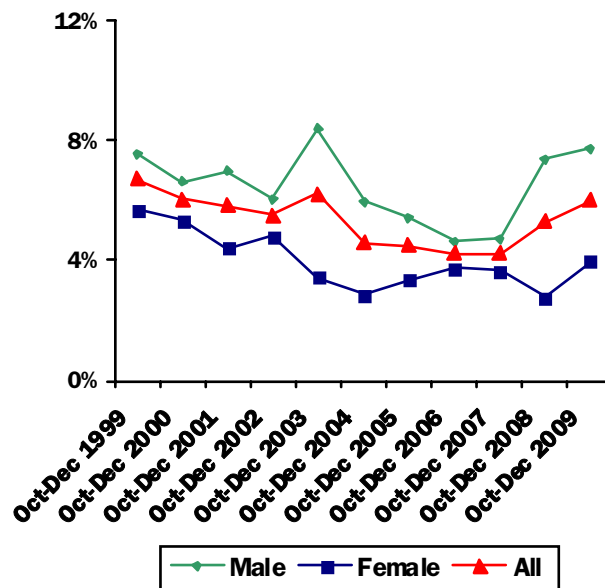
Up until the recent economic downturn, employment levels had generally been increasing for both males and females during the last ten years. However, female employment increased at a slightly faster rate and the gap between male and female levels has narrowed over the period. The difference between the working age employment rate of males and females is currently estimated at 6.0 percentage points, compared to an 11.8 percentage point difference 10 years ago.

Almost two-fifths (38%) of female employees work part-time compared to 10% of males. (This is similar to the figures of 39% for females and 8% for males five years ago.) Only 7% of females in employment are self-employed compared with 24% of males (6% and 23% respectively 5 years ago).

Unemployment

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI was estimated at 6.0%. This has decreased by 1.0 percentage points from the estimate for the previous quarter, but is up 0.7 percentage points from the previous year. It has remained below the UK rate (7.8%) and is the lowest among the UK regions.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate (16+) 1999-2009

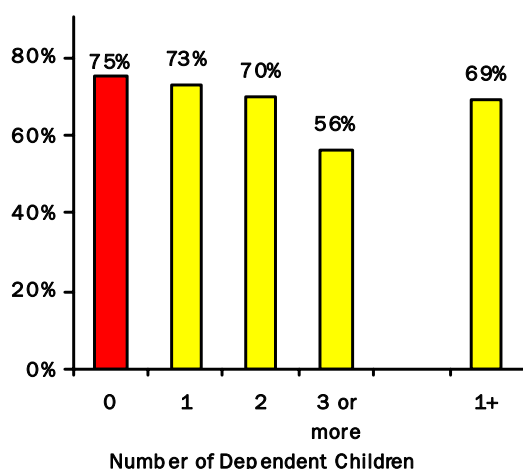


The unadjusted male unemployment rate (7.8%) has increased by 1.7 percentage points during the last five years whilst the female rate (3.6%) has increased by 0.9 percentage points during the same period. The unadjusted male unemployment rate of 7.8% is 4.2 percentage points above the female unemployment rate, compared to a 3.4 percentage point difference in the unemployment rates five years ago. Two-fifths of those unemployed (40%) are long-term unemployed, which is similar to the proportion five years ago (43%).

Economic Activity

There are an estimated 788,000 persons of working age economically active in NI at October - December 2009, up 27,000 from five years ago. The seasonally adjusted working age economic activity rate (71.7%) for NI is the lowest across the UK regions and is 7.0 percentage points below the UK rate of 78.7%. At 76.3% the working age economic activity rate for males is approximately 9.5 percentage points higher than that for females (66.8%). The current 9.5 percentage point differential between the activity rates of males and females has narrowed from a 12.8 percentage point gap 5 years ago.

Unseasonally adjusted Working Age Female Economic Activity Rates by Number of Dependent Children,

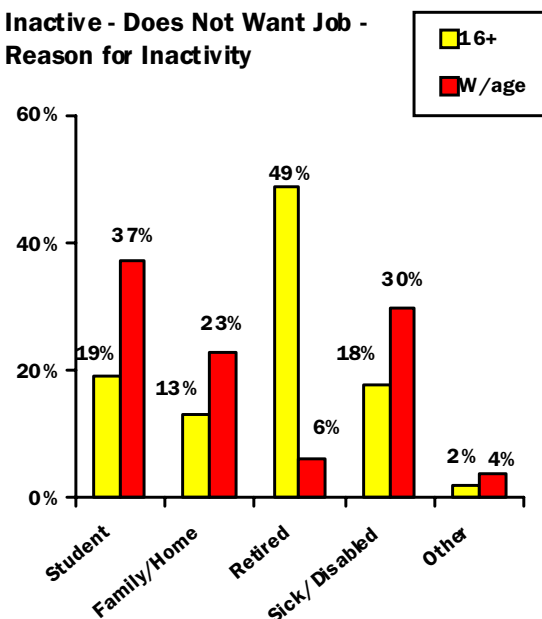


The working age economic activity rate fell from 73% for females with 1 dependent child to 56% for those with 3 or more. In contrast an estimated 75% of working age females without dependent children were economically active.

Economic Inactivity

At October - December 2009 there were 572,000 persons aged 16 and over who were economically inactive in NI, with a resulting economic inactivity rate of 41% for this age group. 9% of these economically inactive persons (50,000) wanted a job, but did not satisfy the criteria of being available for work and actively seeking work to be classified as unemployed. The importance of this grouping is emphasised when we consider that there are similar numbers of economically inactive persons who want a job as there are classified as unemployed (48,000).

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 (49%). However, for those of working age the largest economically inactive categories were students (37%) and those with sickness or disability (28%). NI has a higher percentage of economically inactive people who do not want a job because they are students (37%) compared to the UK (30%) and this is partly a reflection of the younger population in NI. NI also has a higher proportion of those who identify sickness or disability (30%) as the main reason for not wanting work, compared to the UK (25%).

Education and Training

In October - December 2009 thirty-five per cent of economically inactive persons had no formal qualifications. Only 10% of the economically inactive had degree level or other higher qualifications compared to 33% 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 (19%) of working age in NI described themselves as having a current long-term disability, similar to the figure of 19% for the UK as a whole. Approximately 63% of working age persons with a disability are economically inactive compared to 20% of those without disabilities. Furthermore one third (32%) of disabled persons are in employment compared to 76% of non-disabled persons.

Special Feature: Graduates

In Northern Ireland the number of graduates of working-age has increased by 55,000 (36%) from 152,000 in October-December 2004 to 207,000 in October-December 2009. As a result, the proportion of the working-age population who are graduates has increased from 15% in October-December 2004 to 19% in October-December 2008.

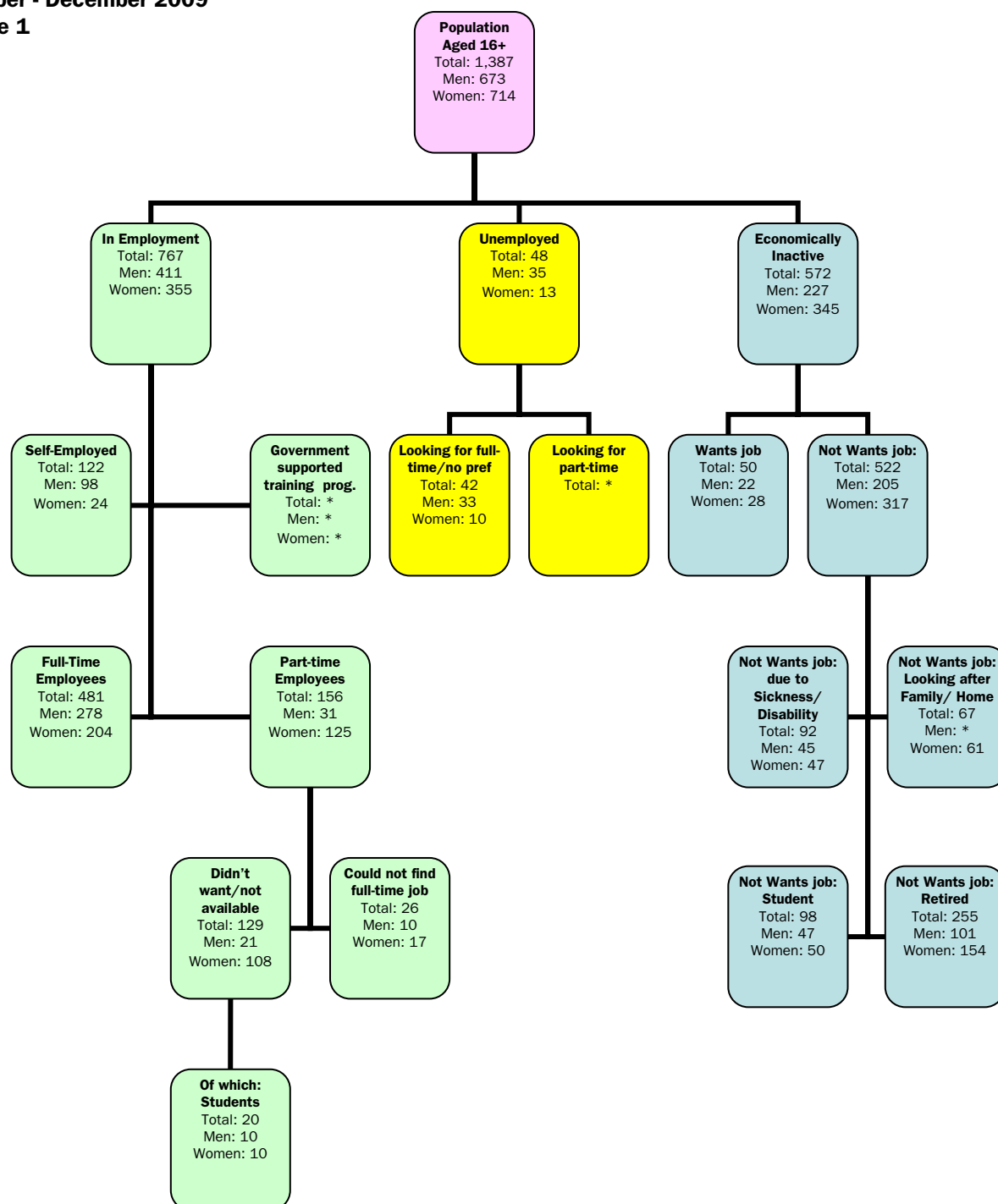
The working age employment rate for graduates (89.5%) is considerably higher than that for non-graduates (62.3%). Comparing with the UK, the employment rate for NI graduates is slightly above the UK average (89.5% for NI and 86.3% for UK). However, NI had the second lowest employment rate for non-graduates across the regions at 62.3% (the UK average was 68.7%).

Overall Labour Market Structure

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Overall Labour Market Structure (16+ Population in thousands),
October - December 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).

- **A higher proportion of men than women are economically active.**

Table 1 and Figure 2 summarise the economic activity of the population in Northern Ireland (NI). It shows that 59% 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.**

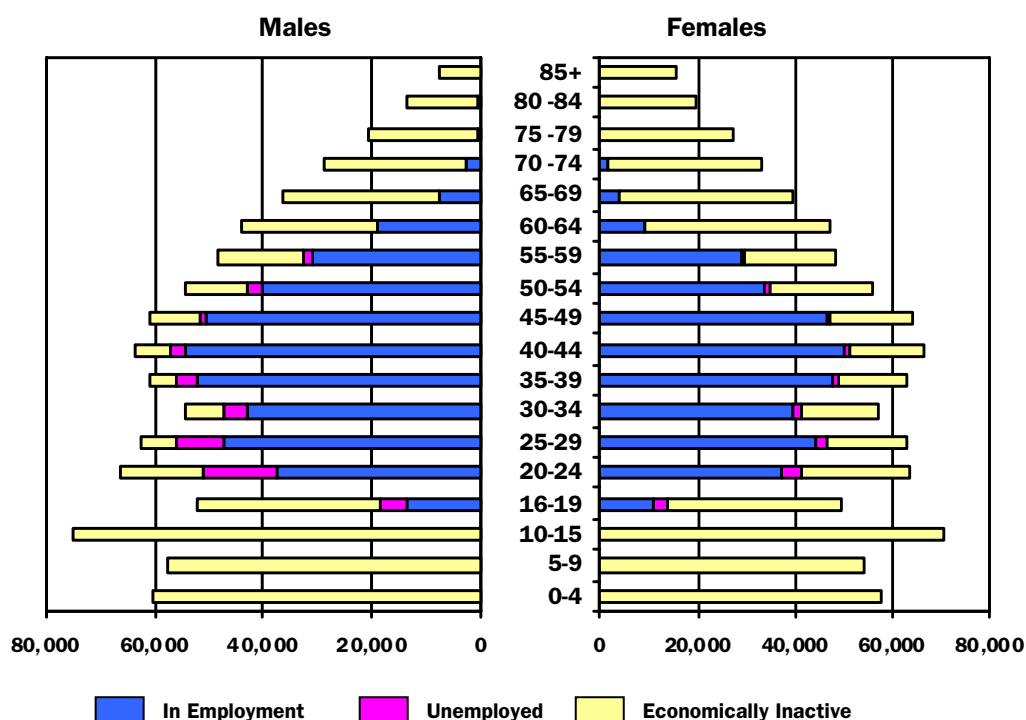
Overall, 3% of the population aged 16 and over are unemployed, however, again this differs for men and women – 5% of males are unemployed compared to 2% of females. In addition, 61% of the male population are in employment compared to 50% of the female population.

Private Household Population (16+) by Economic Status, October - December 2009
Table 1

	Male	Female	All persons
Economically active	66%	52%	59%
In employment	61%	50%	55%
Unemployed	5%	2%	3%
Economically inactive	34%	48%	41%
Total household population	100% (673,000)	100% (714,000)	100% (1,387,000)

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 October - December 2009 there were 815,000 economically active people in NI.

October - December 2009

Economically active-male:

446,000 (66%)

Economically active-female:

369,000 (52%)

Economically active-all persons:

815,000 (59%)

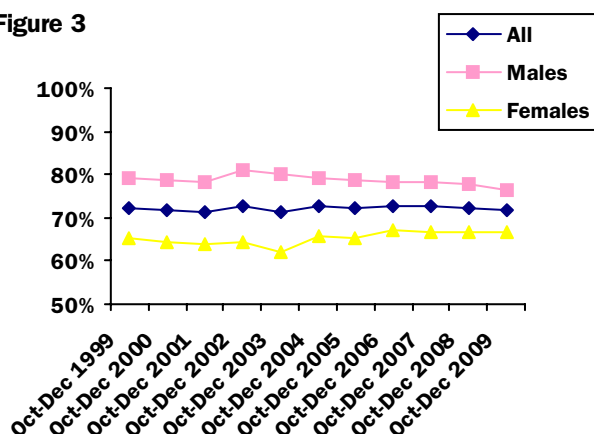
16+ population

- 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 (76.5%) than females (66.8%) for October - December 2009. Figure 3 shows the economic activity rates for males and females of working-age from October - December 1999 to October - December 2009. The current 10 percentage point differential between the activity rates of males and females has narrowed from a 14 percentage point gap 10 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
October - December 2004	79.3%	65.7%	72.7%
October - December 2005	78.8%	65.2%	72.2%
October - December 2006	78.1%	67.2%	72.8%
October - December 2007	78.4%	66.8%	72.8%
October - December 2008	77.6%	66.7%	72.4%
January - March 2009	76.0%	66.3%	71.3%
April - June 2009	75.2%	65.2%	70.3%
July - September 2009	76.4%	66.9%	71.8%
October-December 2009	76.5%	66.8%	71.8%

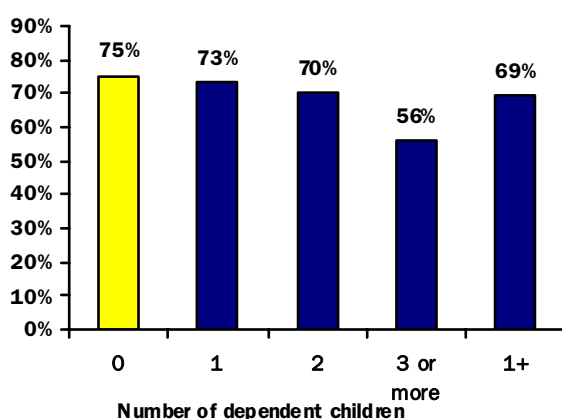
The working age economic activity rate gap between males and females has been historically larger for NI than for the UK (in October - December 2004 the gap in NI was 13.6 percentage points, compared to a 10.3 percentage point difference in the UK). By October - December 2009 the NI differential had narrowed to 9.7 percentage points, only slightly higher than the equivalent UK figure (8.3 percentage points).

- **Women with 3+ dependent children have a 19 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 (94%) than those without (71%), whereas the opposite is true for females as those with dependent children have a lower economic activity rate (69%) than those without (75%). This compares to a UK activity rate of 70% for women with dependent children and 80% for those without.

Having more than two dependent children resulted in a considerably lower economic activity rate (56%) for females as shown in Figure 4.

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

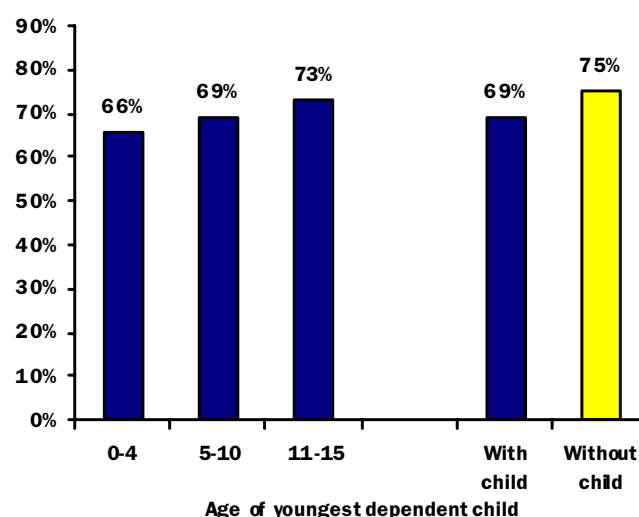


¹ The analysis on the effect of dependent children (under 16) on the economic activity rates of males/females is based on the head or partner of the head of family unit only. It does not include family members who are of working age but who do not have parental responsibilities such as an elder sibling.

- **Economic activity rates of the female head of family were also 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 (66%) was 7 percentage points lower than the rate for the 11-15 (73%) age group.

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



The household dataset affords the opportunity to examine the economic activity of lone parents with dependent children. Latest figures for April – June 2009 showed that there were an estimated 56,000 female lone parents of working age; the equivalent number for males was too small for reliable quotation. Over half of these female lone parents (56%) were economically active while the remainder (44%) were classified as economically inactive.

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.

October - December 2009

In employment-male:

411,000 (61%)

In employment-female:

355,000 (50%)

In employment-all persons:

767,000 (55%)

16+ population

- **There were 740,000 persons of working-age in employment in NI, down by 7,000 over the year.**

Table 3 shows estimates of employment rates over a five-year period from October - December 2004 to October - December 2009 and provides a comparison of rates over the last four quarters. At October - December 2009 there were 740,000 persons of working-age in employment and the corresponding working-age employment rate was estimated at 67.5%.

During the last year the number of working age persons in employment fell by 7,000 and the working age employment rate fell by 1.0 percentage points.

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

Table 3

	Employment rate	Total in employment
Oct-Dec 2004	69.3%	725,000
Oct-Dec 2005	68.9%	729,000
Oct-Dec 2006	69.7%	748,000
Oct-Dec 2007	69.7%	754,000
Oct-Dec 2008	68.5%	748,000
Jan-Mar 2009	66.7%	729,000
Apr-Jun 2009	65.7%	718,000
Jul-Sep 2009	66.5%	728,000
Oct-Dec 2009	67.5%	740,000

- **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 fewer females work beyond the age of 60, reflecting the current state pension age for females.

Age Distribution of Those in Employment (16+), October - December 2009

Table 4

	Male	Female	All persons
16-19	3%	*	3%
20-24	9%	12%	10%
25-29	12%	13%	13%
30-34	12%	11%	12%
35-39	13%	13%	13%
40-44	13%	14%	13%
45-49	13%	13%	13%
50-54	10%	10%	10%
55-59	8%	8%	8%
60+	7%	4%	6%
All 16+	100% (411,000)	100% (355,000)	100% (767,000)

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 7% of females in employment are self-employed, compared to 24% of males.**

It is noticeable that, while 24% of males in employment are self-employed, just 7% 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+), October - December 2009

Table 5

	Male	Female	All persons
All employees:	75%	93%	83%
- Full-time employees	90%	62%	76%
- Part-time employees	10%	38%	24%
Self-employed	24%	7%	16%
Govt. schemes	*	*	*
Total in employment	100% (411,000)	100% (355,000)	100% (767,000)

*Cell size too small for a reliable estimate

Percentages may not sum due to rounding

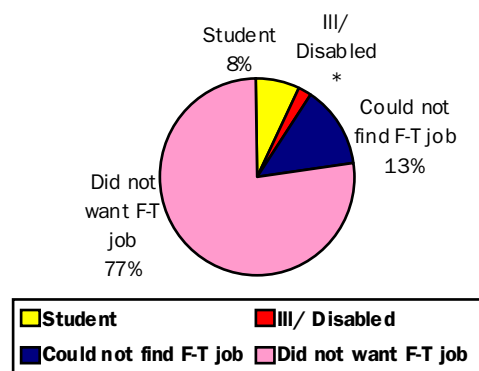
Total includes a small number of unpaid family workers.

- **Almost two-fifths (38%) of female employees are part-time compared to 10% 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 10% 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 (13%).

Reasons For Females Working Part-time, October - December 2009

Figure 6



Employment by Industry

- **The largest industrial sections are Wholesale and Retail Trade (14%), Health and Social Work (14%) and Public administration and defence (12%).**

Table 6 provides an analysis of persons in employment by industry (SIC03). The major industries in terms of employment were Wholesale and Retail Trade (14%), Health and Social Work (14%) and Public administration and defence (12%). Industries employing relatively few persons included Electricity, Gas & Water Supply, Mining & Quarrying and Fishing.

- **Manufacturing (18%) and Construction (16%) are the largest employment sectors for males, while Health and Social Work (26%) is the largest sector for females.**

There are obvious differences between males and females in terms of the industries in which they are employed. The proportion of males working in the Manufacturing sector was 18% compared with 5% of all females. Whilst 16% of males work in the Construction sector, the number of females working in the Construction industry was too small to be reliably quoted. In contrast, an estimated one quarter (26%) of females work in Health and Social Work compared to only 4% of males.

Persons in Employment by Industry Section, October - December 2009

Table 6

	Male	Female	All persons
Agriculture, hunting & forestry	6%	*	4%
Fishing	*	*	*
Mining and quarrying	*	*	*
Manufacturing	18%	5%	12%
Electricity, gas & water supply	*	*	*
Construction	16%	*	9%
Wholesale and retail trade	14%	13%	14%
Hotels and restaurants	4%	6%	5%
Transport, storage & communication	7%	*	4%
Financial intermediation	3%	5%	4%
Real estate, renting & business	9%	8%	9%
Public administration and defence	11%	13%	12%
Education	4%	13%	8%
Health and social work	4%	26%	14%
Community, social & personal services	3%	7%	5%
All industries ¹	100% (407,000)	100% (353,000)	100% (759,000)

*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 number of persons in employment (16%).**

Skilled Trade occupations were the largest group with 16% of persons in employment, followed by Professional Occupations (14%) and Administrative and Secretarial occupations (14%).

- **A large proportion of males (28%) work in Skilled Trade occupations whereas the largest group for females was Administrative and Secretarial (23%).**

There are obvious differences between males and females in terms of the occupations in which they are employed. Over one quarter of males (28%) work in Skilled Trade occupations compared with 3% of females. Conversely, 23% of females work in Administrative and Secretarial occupations compared to 6% of males.

A higher proportion of males in employment are Managers and/or Senior Officials compared to females (13% for males as opposed to 8% for females).

Persons in Employment by Occupation, October - December 2009

Table 7

	Male	Female	All persons
Managers and/or Senior Officials	13%	8%	11%
Professional Occupations	13%	15%	14%
Assoc. Professional and Technical	10%	15%	12%
Administrative and Secretarial	6%	23%	14%
Skilled Trade	28%	3%	16%
Personal Service	*	17%	9%
Sales and Customer Service	4%	8%	6%
Process, Plant & Machine Operatives	14%	*	8%
Elementary	11%	10%	10%
All occupations ¹	100% (408,000)	10% (355,000)	100% (763,000)

*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.

October - December 2009

Unemployed-male:

35,000 (5%)

Unemployed-female:

13,000 (2%)

Unemployed-all persons:

48,000 (3%)

16+ population

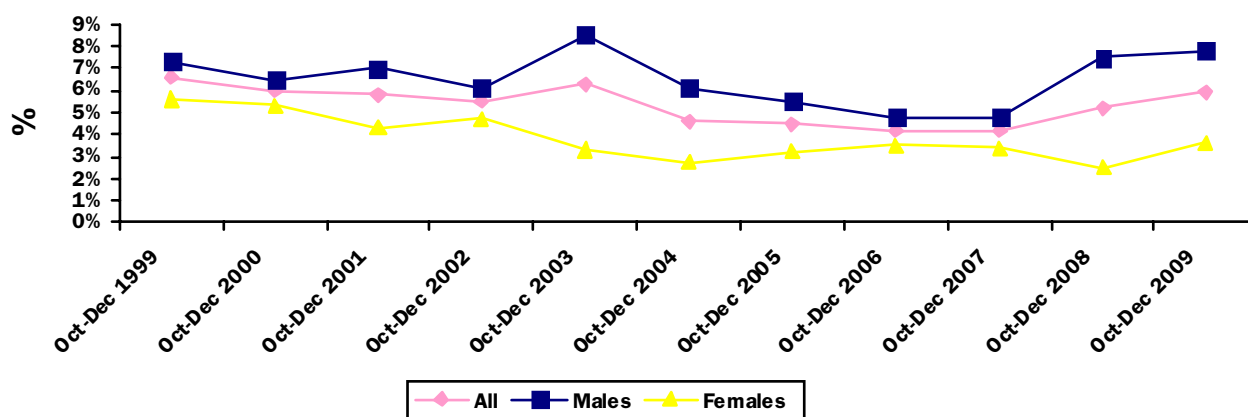
Overall, 3% of respondents aged 16 and over were unemployed and 5% of men were unemployed compared to 2% of women.

- **The unemployment rate for males is 7.8% compared to 3.6% 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 1.3 percentage point decrease in the overall unemployment rate between July - September 2009 and October - December 2009.

Unemployment Rates, 1999-2009

Figure 7



Unemployment Rates, 2004 – 2009
Table 8 (Unadjusted for Seasonality)

	Male	Female	All persons
Oct - Dec 2004	6.1%	2.7%	4.6%
Oct - Dec 2005	5.5%	3.2%	4.5%
Oct - Dec 2006	4.8%	3.5%	4.2%
Oct - Dec 2007	4.8%	3.4%	4.2%
Oct - Dec 2008	7.5%	2.5%	5.2%
Jan-Mar 2009	7.9%	4.4%	6.3%
Apr-Jun 2009	8.2%	4.4%	6.5%
Jul-Sep 2009	9.6%	4.4%	7.2%
Oct-Dec 2009	7.8%	3.6%	5.9%

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 October - December 2009 (5.9%) represented an increase of 0.7 percentage points from the same period one year ago.

- **Over half (53%) of unemployed persons are aged 16-29.**

Table 19 shows that over half of unemployed persons are aged 16-29 (53%) with those aged 30 or over comprising the remaining 47%.

Age Distribution of the Unemployed, October - December 2009

Table 9

	Male	Female	All persons
16-29	55%	*	53%
30+	45%	*	47%
All 16+	100% (35,000)	100% (13,000)	100% (48,000)

* Cell size too small for a reliable estimate

Duration of Unemployment

- **Two fifths (40%) of unemployed persons are long-term unemployed.**

In October - December 2009, forty per cent of unemployed persons had been out of work and seeking employment for more than one year – see Table 10.

Duration of Unemployment in Northern Ireland, October - December 2009

Table 10

	Male	Female	All persons
Short-term unemployed	61%	*	60%
Long-term unemployed	39%	*	40%
All unemployed ¹	100% (35,000)	100% (13,000)	100% (48,000)

*Cell size too small for a reliable estimate.

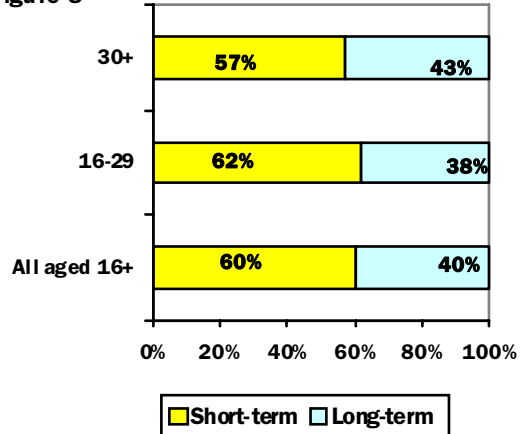
Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

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 40% of the total unemployed and short-term unemployed for 60%. Of those aged 16-29, 62% were short-term unemployed and 38% were long-term unemployed; of those aged 30+, 57% were short-term unemployed and 43% were long-term unemployed.

Long-term and Short-term Unemployed by Age Group, October - December 2009

Figure 8



Methods Used By The Unemployed To Seek Work

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

For unemployed persons, the two most common methods of looking for work were answering advertisements/studying 'situations vacant' columns in newspapers and journals (47%) and visiting JobCentre Offices (40%) as can be seen in Table 11.

Main Method of Seeking Work for Unemployed Persons (16+), October - December 2009
Table 11

	Male	Female	All persons
Advertisements/ Situations vacant	43%	*	47%
JobCentre Offices	43%	*	40%
Other methods	*	*	*
All methods	100% (35,000)	100% (13,000)	100% (48,000)

*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 38,000 persons gave a previous occupational group. Of these, 36% reported that their last occupation was a 'skilled trade'. This figure was higher for males; 46% of unemployed males indicated that their last occupation was a 'skilled trade'. Of those who reported that they had a previous job, 29% reported that this occupation was an 'elementary occupation'.

Economically Inactive

6

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

October - December 2009

Economically inactive-male:
227,000 (34%)
Economically inactive -female:
345,000 (48%)
Economically inactive -all persons:
572,000 (41%)

16+ population

In October - December 2009 there were 572,000 economically inactive people in NI – this represented 41% 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 family commitments during the “prime” working years – see Table 12.

Age Distribution of the Economically Inactive NI, October - December 2009

Table 12

	Male	Female	All persons
16-24	23%	18%	20%
25-34	4%	8%	6%
35-44	5%	8%	7%
45-54	8%	12%	10%
55-64	18%	16%	17%
65+	41%	38%	39%
All 16+	100% (227,000)	100% (345,000)	100% (572,000)

Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

* Too small for a reliable estimate.

- **Almost a 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. The UK also has a 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 20% for NI). These differences are partly explained by NI's younger population structure.

Age Distribution of the Economically Inactive UK, October - December 2009

Table 13

	Male	Female	All persons
16-24	17%	12%	14%
25-34	4%	8%	7%
35-44	5%	8%	7%
45-54	6%	8%	7%
55-64	15%	17%	16%
65+	53%	46%	49%
All 16+	100% (7,287,000)	100% (10,944,000)	100% (18,230,000)

Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

Reasons for Economic Inactivity

- **One in ten (9%) of the economically inactive want a job.**

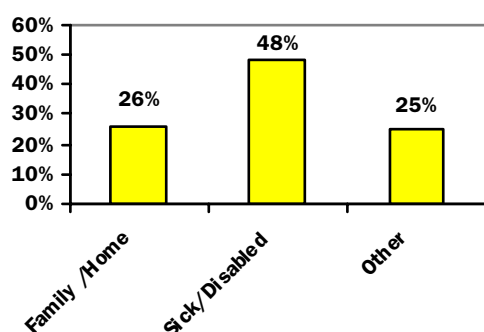
The economically inactive population is comprised of two main groups; those who do not want a job (91% in October - December 2009) and those who do want a job (9%). Equivalent figures for the UK show that 14% of the economically inactive want a job, whereas the remaining 86% do not. The main reasons 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, 26% were not looking for work due to family/home commitments and 48% 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+)

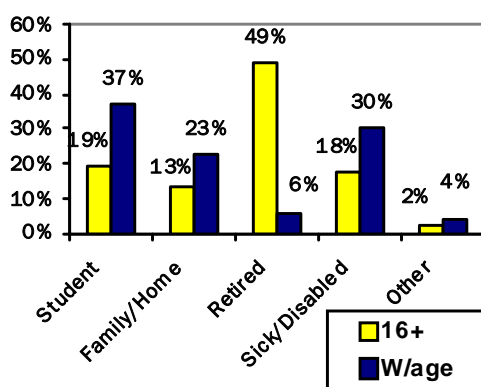
Figure 9



As mentioned previously, 91% 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 49% are retired.**

Overall for the total population, the main reason for the inactive not wanting work was retirement (49%).

- **Thirty-seven per cent of the working-age population who do not want a job are students.**

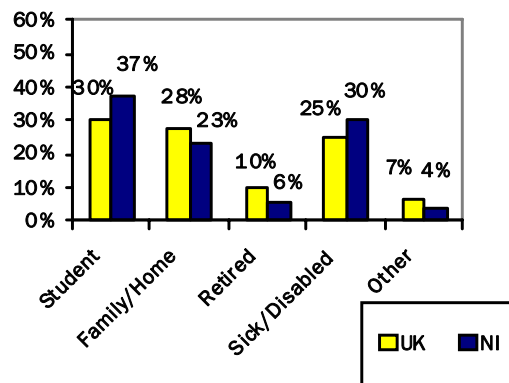
For the working-age population the main reasons for not wanting work were students (37%), sick/disabled (30%) and those with family/home commitments (23%). Men were more likely to cite being a student as their main reason (42%) for inactivity and women family commitments (37%).

- **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 or students.**

Figure 11 compares the working-age inactive population of NI with the UK. NI has a higher percentage of economically inactive people who do not want a job because they are students (37%) compared to the UK (30%) and this is partly a reflection of the younger population in NI. NI also has a higher proportion of those who identify sickness or disability (30%) as the main reason for not wanting work, compared to the UK (25%).

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

- **Thirty-five per cent of economically inactive persons had no formal qualifications at October - December 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 34% had higher qualifications, compared to 10% of the economically inactive. Conversely, 35% of economically inactive people had no formal qualifications, compared with 14% 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 35% had no qualifications at all. This compares to figures of 33% and 15% for the economically active population.

Qualifications By Economic Activity (Working-age), October - December 2009

Table 14

	In employment	Econ. active	Econ. inactive	All
Degree or higher	26%	25%	6%	19%
Other higher below degree	9%	8%	4%	7%
A level or equivalent	25%	25%	26%	26%
GCSE A-C or equivalent	20%	21%	24%	22%
Other qualifications	6%	6%	5%	6%
No Qualifications	14%	15%	35%	20%
All (000s)	100% (728)	100% (776)	100% (303)	100% (1,078)

* Cell size too small for a reliable estimate.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

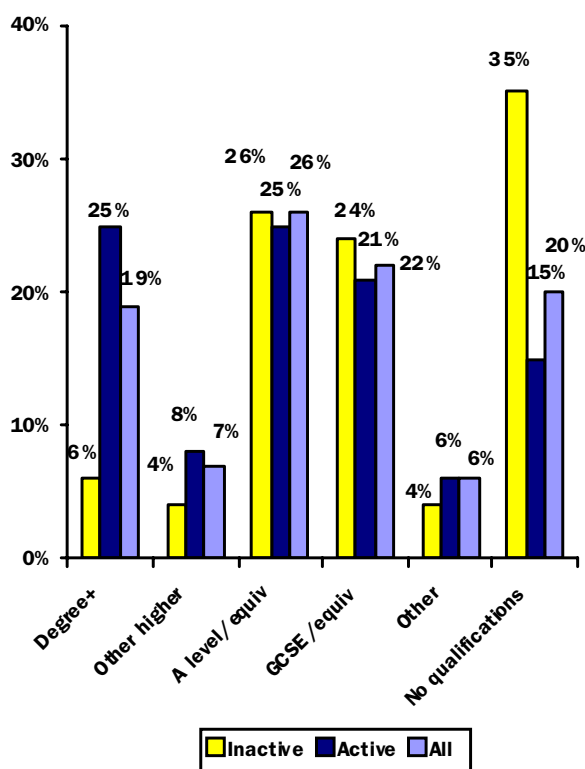
Total excludes those who did not state their highest level of qualification.

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, October - December 2009

Figure 12



Job-related Training

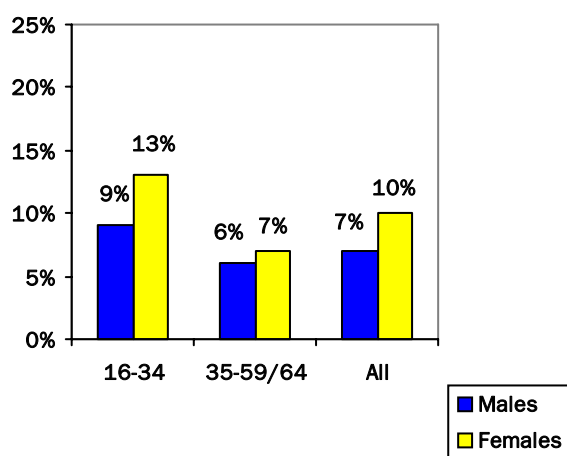
- **Approximately 9% of employees had received job-related training.**

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 October - December 2009, 9% of employees of working-age had undergone some job-related training within the previous four weeks.

**Employees Receiving Job-related Training By
Age Group (Working-age),
October - December 2009
Table 15**

	Male	Female	All persons
16-34	9%	13%	11%
35-59/64	6%	7%	7%
All	7%	10%	9%

**Employees Receiving Job-related Training
By Working Age,
October - December 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 was below the UK average and was the lowest of all the UK regions.**

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in NI at October - December 2009 (6.0%) was lower than the UK average (7.8%) and was the lowest of the twelve UK regions. The NI employment rate for those of working-age (67.3%) was also the lowest of the UK regions. In contrast, the NI (28.3%) working age economic inactivity rate was the highest of the regions (the UK average is 21.3%)

- **The NI employment rate is 1.5 percentage points lower than the average rate for the European Union.**

Figure 15 overleaf shows how the harmonised employment rate in NI compares to other employment rates in the EU (based on those aged 15-64). The NI rate (63.3% - see Note 2 overleaf) is 1.5 percentage points lower than the EU average (64.8%). However, it is 1.5 percentage points above the current rate in the Republic of Ireland (61.8%).

The NI unemployment rate (6.0%) is 6.9 percentage points lower than the rate for the Republic of Ireland (12.9%) and 3.5 percentage points lower than the average rate for the European Union (9.5%).

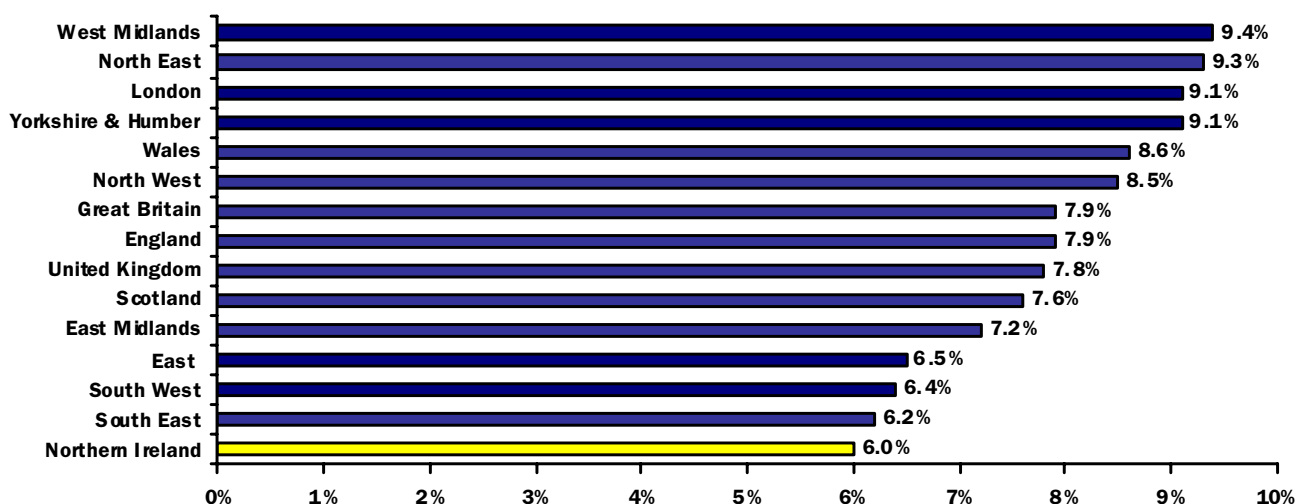
Regional Seasonally Adjusted Economic Activity Rates, October - December 2009

Table 16

	Econ. activity rate (working-age) %	Employment rate (working-age) %	Unemployment rate %
North East	76.3	69.0	9.3
North West & Mersey	77.2	70.4	8.5
Yorkshire & Humber	78.1	70.7	9.1
East Midlands	80.6	74.6	7.2
West Midlands	78.1	70.5	9.4
East	81.6	76.2	6.5
London	75.8	68.7	9.1
South East	82.3	77.0	6.2
South West	80.9	75.5	6.4
England	79.0	72.6	7.9
Wales	75.7	68.9	8.6
Scotland	79.8	73.5	7.6
Great Britain	78.9	72.5	7.9
Northern Ireland	71.7	67.3	6.0
United Kingdom	78.7	72.4	7.8

Regional Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates, October - December 2009

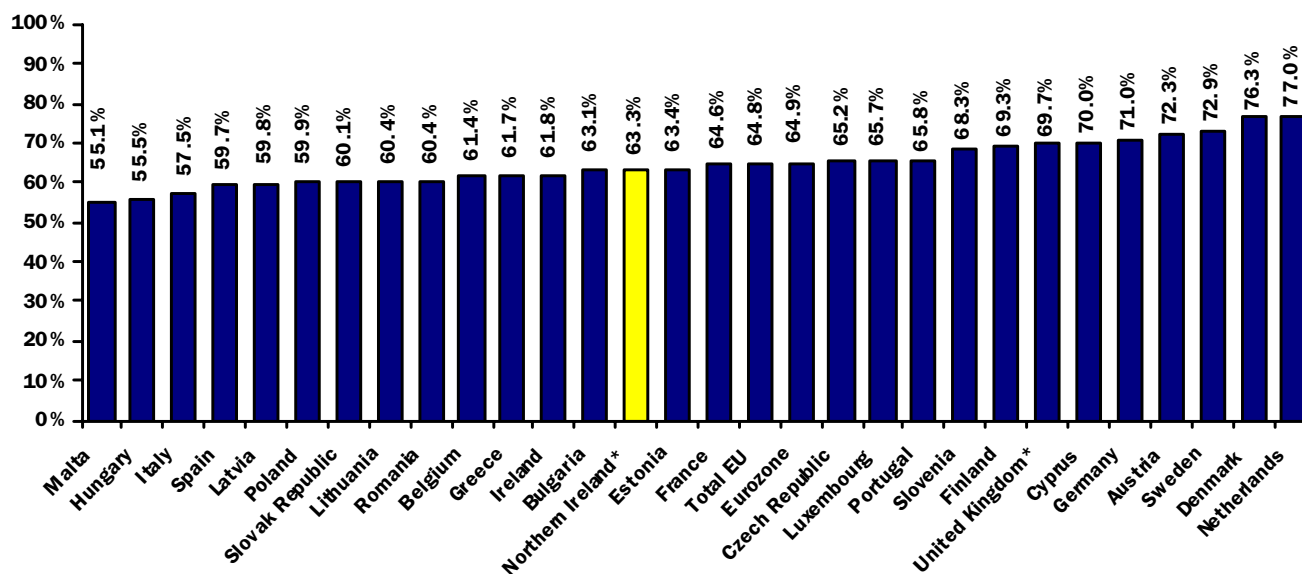
Figure 14



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 3 2009 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 compiles 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, 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 (19%) of working-age are disabled in NI.**

The October - December 2009 LFS estimates that one in five (19%) persons (208,000) of working-age in NI had a current long-term disability. This proportion was similar for both males (20%) and females (18%), equating to 111,000 disabled men and 97,000 disabled women.

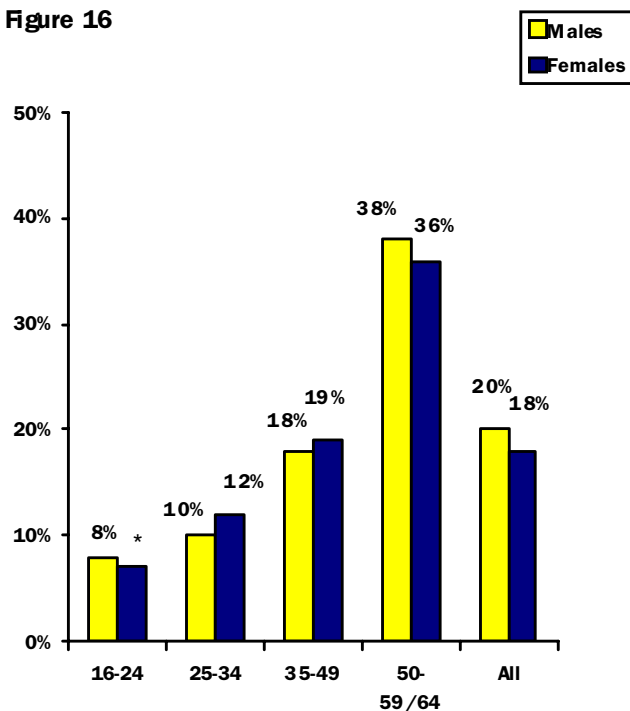
- **The likelihood of having a disability or health problem increases with age for both males and females.**

Figure 16 shows how numbers having a long-term disability or health problem increase with age for both males and females. The proportion of males with disabilities increased from 8% for the 16-24 age group to 38% for the 50-64 age group.

For females aged 16-24, the proportion with disabilities cannot be reliably quoted due to sample size constraints. For the remaining age groups rates increased from 12% for those aged 25-34, to 36% for those aged 50-59.

**Disability Rates By Age Group,
October - December 2009**

Figure 16



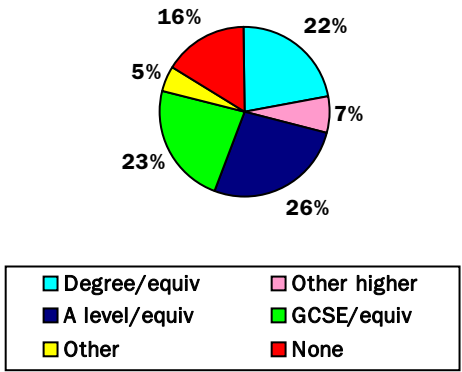
Qualifications of Persons With and Without Disabilities

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

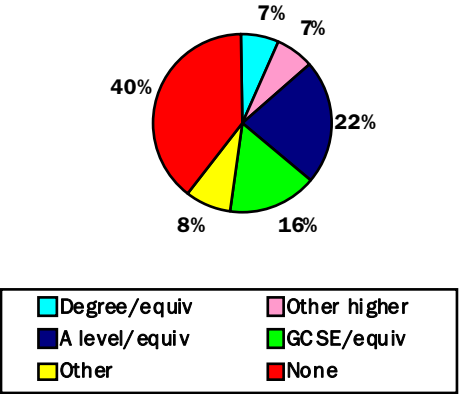
Figure 17 shows the qualification levels held by disabled and non-disabled persons at October - December 2009. Overall, persons with a disability are less qualified than those without. In particular, Only 7% of disabled persons held a degree or equivalent compared with 22% of non-disabled persons. Two-fifths (40%) of disabled persons had no qualifications, more than twice the proportion of non-disabled persons (16%).

Qualifications Of Persons With Or Without Disabilities, October - December 2009
Figure 17

Non-Disabled



Disabled



Economic Activity of the Disabled and Non-Disabled

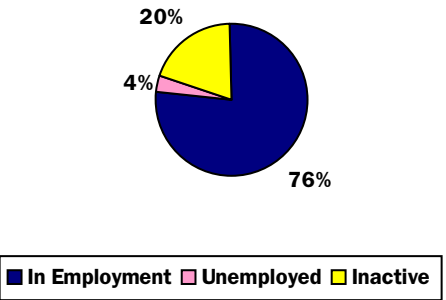
- **The employment rate for those without disabilities (76%) is over twice that of people with disabilities (32%).**

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.

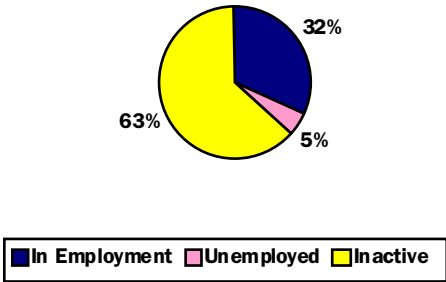
Figure 18 shows the relative importance of the three main economic categories for disabled and non-disabled persons of working age at October - December 2009. A much smaller proportion of the disabled (32%) are in employment compared with the non-disabled (76%). Conversely, the majority of the disabled (63%) are economically inactive, compared with 20% of the non-disabled.

Economic Activity Of Those With and Without Disabilities, October - December 2009
Figure 18

Non-Disabled



Disabled



Special Feature: Graduates

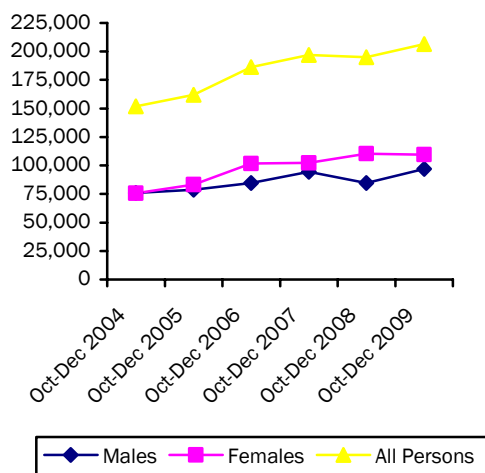
10

Number of NI graduates has increased by almost one-third in the last five years.

In Northern Ireland (NI) the number of graduates of working-age has increased by 55,000 (36%) from 152,000 in October-December 2004 to 207,000 in October-December 2009. In contrast, the total working-age population only increased by 5% during this time. As a result, the proportion of the working-age population who are graduates has increased from 15% in October-December 2004 to 19% in October-December 2009. Whilst females accounted for 50% of graduates in 2004, this proportion had risen to 53% by 2009.

Number of NI graduates of working age 2004 – 2009

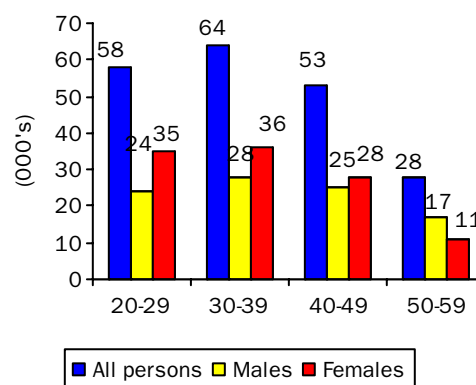
Figure 19



In NI at October-December 2009, the estimated 207,000 graduates represented 18.8% of the working-age population. This was lower than the equivalent proportion of graduates in the UK working-age population (22.0%). The proportion in NI was fifth lowest of the twelve UK regions. It was smaller than that in Scotland (19.8%) and was considerably lower than London, which had the highest proportion of graduates (34.2%).

Number of graduates of by age group October - December 2009

Figure 20

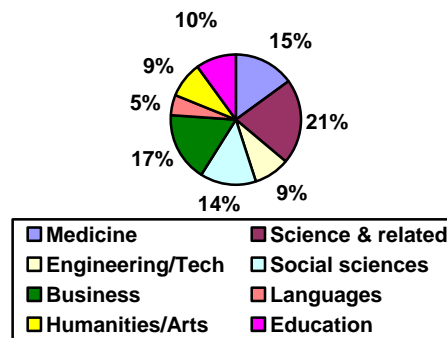


The 30-39 age group in NI had the largest proportion of graduates with 64,000 (31%) in October-December 2009. It is noticeable that there were more female graduates than male in the 20-29, 30-39 and 40-49 age groups, yet there were more males than females after the age of 50.

The main subject areas for degree holders were science and related degrees (21% or 44,000), followed by business degrees (17% or 35,000).

Subject Areas of Degrees (combined and single), October – December 2009

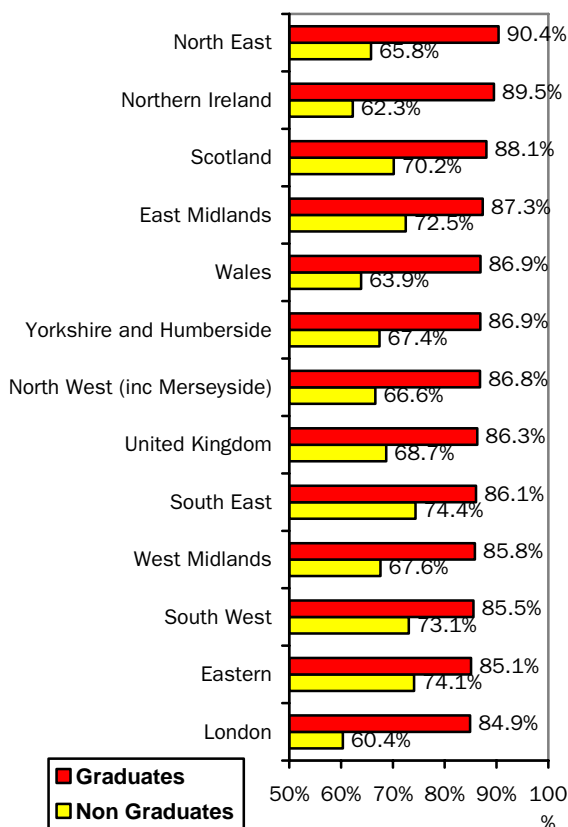
Figure 21



- The working age employment rate for graduates (89.5%) is considerably higher than that for non-graduates (62.3%).

At October – December 2009 the working age employment rate of graduates in NI (89.5%) was considerably higher than that for non-graduates (62.3%). For graduates, there were similar numbers of working age females in employment (88.6%) to males (90.6%). In contrast, the proportion of male non-graduates in employment (66.3%) was higher than the figure for female non-graduates (57.8%). The employment rate for NI graduates (89.5%) is above the UK average (86.3%). However, NI had the second lowest employment rate for non-graduates across the regions at 62.3%. This is over six percentage points lower than the UK average (68.7%).

Graduate & Non-graduate working age employment rates for UK regions, October - December 2009
Figure 22

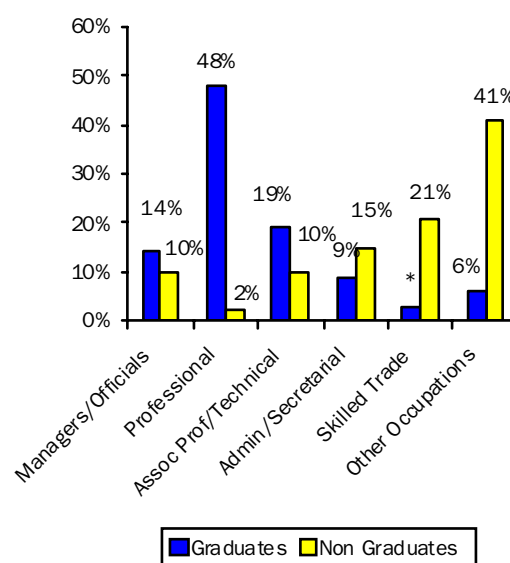


- Almost four-fifths (78%) of female graduates work full-time compared to just 58% of female non-graduates.

Overall, of those in employment the majority of both graduates and non-graduates were employees (89% and 82% respectively). However, non-graduates were more likely to be self-employed than graduates (17% and 11% respectively). Proportionately more graduates worked full-time than non-graduates (85% compared to 76%) and there was a notable difference for females with four-fifths (78%) of female graduates working full-time compared to just 58% of female non-graduates.

Just under one half of employed graduates (47%) worked in the public sector, compared to one-quarter (24%) of non-graduates. An estimated 82% of employed graduates work in the top three occupational groups, compared to 23% of non-graduates. 14% of graduates are employed as Managers and Senior Officials compared to 10% of non-graduates. The major difference occurs in Professional occupations, where 48% of graduates are employed, compared to only 2% of non-graduates.

Occupational groups for graduates and non-graduates, October – December 2009
Figure 23



Other occupations include: Personal Service occupations, Sales and Customer Services, Process, Plant and Machine operatives and Elementary Occupations

A higher proportion of graduates (88%) than non-graduates (70%) are employed in the Service Sector, with the Public Administration, Education and Health sectors accounting for approximately one half of employed graduates (51%). The proportion of non-graduates employed in these sectors is much lower (28%).

- **The median average gross weekly earnings of graduate employees is over 50% higher than those of non-graduate employees**

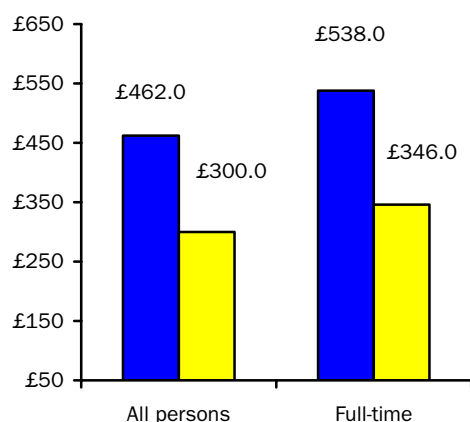
On average graduates earn approximately £8,000 per year more than non-graduates. Median average gross weekly earnings of graduates were 54% higher than those of non-graduates (£462 compared to £300 per week respectively) and the hourly rate for graduates (£14.2) was 75% higher than those of non-graduates (£8.1).

When comparing gross weekly earnings, it is beneficial to separate full-time and part-time employees, as the number of hours worked per week may differ significantly. When this split is examined, full-time graduates earn £538, which is 55% higher than the estimate for full-time non-graduates (£346).

Median gross weekly pay of graduate and non-graduate employees.

October – December 2009

Figure 24



Note: Weekly and Hourly Earnings are based on median figures

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 October - December 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 October - December 2009 LFS consisted of 2,519 addresses, (650 chosen at random from the Valuation & Lands Agency list of domestic properties, 1,869 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, October - December 2009

Total addresses sampled	2519*
Fully and partially responding	1694
Eligible sample	2254
Response rate	75.2%

*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, October - December 2009

Non-response/non-contact:	
- Outright refusal	188
- Circumstantial refusal	62
- Non-contact	310
Ineligible addresses:	
- Vacant/derelict/under construction	198
- Holiday accommodation	23
- Non-residential	1
- Second residence	21
- Other ineligible	16
- Household moves	5
Previously ineligible now eligible	1
Total	825

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 October - December 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, October - December 2009

	LFS Estimate	Confidence Interval
Economically active	59%	+/- 1.6%
In Employment	55%	+/- 1.7%
Employees*	83%	+/- 1.7%
Self-employed*	16%	+/- 1.7%
Unemployed	3%	+/- 0.6%
Economically inactive (16+)	41%	+/- 1.6%
Unemployment rate	5.9%	+/- 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 is revised periodically to incorporate the latest population estimates. This month's Quarterly Supplement includes revisions to the LFS microdata. These revisions are being made in order to incorporate the latest population estimates and will effect LFS data from the period June to August 2006.

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](#)

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 2003: SIC(03)

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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