

News Release



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Labour Market Statistics

Labour Force Survey: March-May 2006

There were no statistically significant changes in average employment and unemployment levels for the March-May 2006 period compared to last year.

The Labour Force Survey is an enquiry which is carried out using a random sample of 2,500 private households per quarter. The criteria used for this survey are on the same lines as international methodologies used by ILO as further explained in the methodological notes. All data contained within this release refers to persons 15 years and over.

These estimates are based on three-month rolling averages. Hence, figures for this release contain information on March, April and May 2006. Data has been grossed up separately for each month and a combined average for producing March to May 2006 data was worked out. For further details, the methodological notes on the end pages of this release should be consulted.

Labour Status

Labour Force Survey results indicate that the number of employed persons averaged 152,369 between March and May 2006, while the unemployed were estimated at 11,443. Both these figures imply no statistically significant changes compared to the same period of 2005. The number of inactive persons is estimated to have increased in a statistically significant manner.

These results entail that out of all persons aged between 15 and 64 years, 58.6 per cent were in the labour force while 54.4 per cent were employed between March and May 2006. The unemployment rate is estimated to have averaged 7 per cent during the period, implying no change over the same period of last year. Activity and employment rates continued to be lower for women, while their unemployment rate remained higher compared to that of men.

As with the total estimate for employed persons, Labour Force Survey results indicate no significant changes in the professional status of the employed during the survey period compared to last year. The proportion of self-employed persons stood at 14.5 per cent of the total employed between March and May 2006. Similarly, no significant changes can be discerned in the distribution of economic activity, with the services sector continuing to absorb just under 70 per cent of total employment ■

Theme:
**Population and Social
Conditions**

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Table 1. Labour status

Labour Status	Sex				Total	
	Men		Women			
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
March-May 2006						
Employed	103,983	64.6	48,386	29.1	152,369	46.5
Unemployed	7,052	4.4	4,391	2.6	11,443	3.5
Inactive	50,013	31.0	113,658	68.3	163,671	50.0
Total	161,048	100.0	166,435	100.0	327,483	100.0
March-May 2006 (Revised)						
Employed	105,081	66.4	47,131	28.5	152,212	47.1
Unemployed	7,238	4.6	4,176	2.5	11,414	3.5
Inactive	45,985	29.0	113,912	69.0	159,896	49.4
Total	158,304	100.0	165,219	100.0	323,522	100.0

Absolute changes between one survey and another, smaller than 1,800, may be due to sampling error.

Table 2. Activity rate

Labour force (15-64 years) as a percentage of the population of working age (15-64 years).

	Men	Women	Total
March - May 2006	78.5	38.2	58.6
Mar-May 2005 (Revised)	81.1	37.5	59.4

Table 3. Employment rate

Persons in employment (15-64 years) as a percentage of the population of working age (15-64 years).

	Men	Women	Total
March - May 2006	73.5	35.0	54.4
Mar-May 2005 (Revised)	75.9	34.5	55.2

Table 4. Unemployment rate

Unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force.

	Men	Women	Total
March - May 2006	6.4	8.3	7.0
Mar-May 2005 (Revised)	6.4	8.1	7.0

Table 5. Professional status of main occupation for total employed persons

Professional status	Sex				Total	
	Men		Women			
	Persons	%	Persons	%	No	%
March - May 2006						
Self Employed:	18,556	17.8	3,521	7.3	22,077	14.5
without employees	11,776	11.3	2,474	5.1	14,250	9.4
with employees	6,780	6.5	1,047 ^u	2.2	7,827	5.1
Employee	85,380	82.1	44,791	92.6	130,171	85.4
Family worker	46 ^u	0.1	74 ^u	0.1	120 ^u	0.1
Total	103,983	100.0	48,386	100.0	152,369	100.0
March - May 2005 (Revised)						
Self Employed:	17,084	16.3	3,921	8.3	21,005	13.8
without employees	10,752	10.2	2,953	6.3	13,705	9.0
with employees	6,332	6.0	968 ^u	2.1	7,300	4.8
Employee	87,998	83.7	43,142	91.5	131,140	86.2
Family worker	-	-	68 ^u	0.1	68 ^u	0.0
Total	105,081	100.0	47,131	100.0	152,212	100.0

^u - under-represented

Absolute changes between one survey and another, smaller than 1,800, may be due to sampling error.

Table 6. Economic Activity of main occupation for total employed persons

Economic Activity	Sex				Total	
	Men		Women			
	Persons	%	Persons	%	No	%
March - May 2006						
Agriculture	2,753	2.7	348 ^u	0.7	3,101	2.0
Industry	36,093	34.7	7,115	14.7	43,208	28.4
Services	65,137	62.6	40,923	84.6	106,060	69.6
Total	103,983	100.0	48,386	100.0	152,369	100.0
March - May 2005 (Revised)						
Agriculture	2,546	2.4	219 ^u	0.5	2,765	1.8
Industry	35,639	33.9	8,407	17.8	44,046	28.9
Services	66,896	63.7	38,505	81.7	105,401	69.3
Total	105,081	100.0	47,131	100.0	152,212	100.0

^u - under-represented

Absolute changes between one survey and another, smaller than 1,800, may be due to sampling error.

Methodological Notes

The Labour Force Survey is an enquiry which is carried out on using a random sample of 2,500 private households. The criteria used for this survey match international methodologies used by ILO as outlined underneath. The Labour Force Survey is carried out on an ongoing basis. The objective is to have a continuous assessment of labour market trends given that the reference weeks are evenly spread throughout the 13 weeks of the quarter.

The LFS is designed to satisfy the concepts and definitions as outlined by Eurostat, which is the EU Statistical Agency. This allows the comparability of the results with other EU member states and countries following ILO definitions of employment and unemployment. Occupations are classified according to the ISCO classification (International Standard Classification of Occupations) whilst the economic activity is classified according to the NACE classification (Nomenclature générale des activités économiques dans les Communautés européennes).

Revision to Population Estimates

As from 2006, the weighting procedures are based on 2005 population estimates. Data for 2005 were revised to correct for sample bias arising out of differential non response and non representative probabilities of selection. All data contained within this release refers to persons aged 15 years and over.

Under represented figures are indicated for each table and should be treated with caution .

Absolute changes between one survey and another, smaller than 1,800 persons might be the result of sampling error.

EMPLOYEE: The distinction between employees and self-employed is based on the respondent's own judgement as stated during the interview.

EMPLOYMENT: This comprises all persons above 15 years of age who, during the reference week, were in one of the following categories:

paid employment: includes those who during the reference week worked for at least one hour for a wage or salary, in cash or in kind.

were employees but were not at work and were: on paid or sick leave, did not work due to bad weather, were undergoing training or education, did not work due to a labour dispute, were absent from work for a period of less than 3 months, were absent from work for a period of more than 3 months and were still receiving some type of payment whilst being absent from work.

self-employed: a person who runs a trade or business, rather than working as an employee for someone else. A person is self-employed if s/he is a sole proprietor or a partner working in a business.

unpaid family workers: refers to people who worked without pay in a family business or farm. Excluded from this definition are housewives.

INACTIVE PERSONS: All persons who are not classified as employed or unemployed are defined as inactive.

LABOUR FORCE: This comprises persons in employment and unemployed persons.

REFERENCE WEEK - The week to which the collected data relate.

UNEMPLOYMENT: This comprises all persons above 15 years of age who, during the reference week, satisfied the following criteria:

without work

actively seeking work during the previous 4 weeks, e.g. includes contacting the ETC, applied directly with an employer, contacting a private employment agency, inserting or answering to an advert in a newspaper.

currently available for work – available to start work within 2 weeks of the reference week.

Included with the unemployed are persons who were without work and were not actively seeking work since they had found a job which would start later.

Sampling Variability

The data in this release are based on statistical samples, and as such, estimates carry a sampling error. A measure of the sampling error is the standard error. The standard error as a percentage of the estimate is referred to as the coefficient of variation (CV). The CV is generally computed and expressed as a percentage, which is then quantified by the sampling variability. The coefficient of variation and the sampling variabilities give indication of the confidence limits. The confidence limits are obtained based on the assumption that the data follows a normal distribution.

Sampling Variability of LFS figures

	Estimate	Coefficient of Variation	Variability
Employment	152,369	1.57	± 4680
Employment Rate (%)	54.4	1.48	± 1.57
Unemployment	11,443	7.68	± 1723
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.0	5.34	± 0.73
Inactive	163,671	1.46	± 4692
Activity Rate (%)	58.6	1.36	± 1.56

The above table gives indications on the coefficient of variation and sampling variability. For example the LFS estimate for employment is 152,369 and the coefficient of variation is 1.57%. For the three months to May 2006, the 95% confidence interval was ±4680 persons. Hence, the true figure lies between 147,689 and 157,049 persons.