

**Standard Report**  
**on**  
**Methods and Quality (v1)**  
**for**  
**Monthly Unemployment**

This documentation applies to the current reporting period:  
**2020**

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## **1 Overview**

This release provides a detailed series of monthly unemployment estimates. The release contains both monthly unemployment rates and monthly unemployment volumes. These outputs replaced the seasonally adjusted Standardised Unemployment Rate (SUR) as the definitive measure of monthly unemployment.

**In reviewing the content contained in this Standard Report for the Monthly Unemployment release, users should note that additional information specific to the LFS and the Live Register releases are available in the respective Standard Reports for those outputs.**

## **2 General Information**

### **2.1 Statistical Category**

Survey data from Primary Statistical survey (Labour Force Survey – LFS) together with Administrative Data from the Department of Social Protection (counts of persons on the Live Register)

### **2.2 Area of Activity**

Labour Market

### **2.3 Organisational Unit Responsible, Persons to Contact**

The Labour Market Analysis publication unit, which is part of the Social and Demographic Statistics Directorate, is responsible for the publication of the Monthly Unemployment Estimates release.

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### **2.4 Objectives and Purpose; History**

To provide monthly unemployment estimates: while the CSO has historically produced a seasonally adjusted Standardised Unemployment Rate (SUR) which was published in the Live Register monthly release, the CSO believed that the inclusion of this SUR estimate in the Live Register release led to confusion for users as the Live Register is not a measure of unemployment.

The CSO therefore began the publication of a new official Monthly Unemployment release in June 2015. This new release includes statistics that are the definitive measure of Monthly Unemployment and replace the SUR. The release contains a new series of both monthly unemployment rates and monthly unemployment volumes and adheres to international practice.

### **2.5 Periodicity**

Monthly

### **2.6 Client**

General national requirement.

## **2.7 Users**

- European Union/Eurostat
- Government departments (Department of the Taoiseach, Department of Finance, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Department of Social Protection, Department of Education etc)
- SOLAS – National Skills Training Agency
- Other research centres and universities involved in labour market research
- National media
- The public

## **2.8 Legal basis**

None

### **3 Statistical Concepts, Methods**

#### **3.1 Subject of the Statistics**

Labour market statistics.

#### **3.2 Units of Observation/Collection Units/Units of Presentation**

Units of Observation: Persons classified according to ILO Status from the LFS and Persons classified as being counted on the Live Register

Units of Collection: Inputs from LFS and Live Register

Units of Presentation: Unemployment volumes and rates by Sex and Broad Age Group

#### **3.3 Data Sources**

LFS statistical survey and Live Register administrative data

#### **3.4 Reporting Unit/Respondents**

Not Applicable

#### **3.5 Type of Survey/Process**

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) provides benchmark estimates of employment and unemployment for each quarter since the beginning of 1998. These quarterly benchmark estimates are then used to compile monthly data using the Proportional Denton method. The main characteristic of this method is that the monthly Live Register series is used as an indicator to disaggregate the quarterly LFS unemployment series into a monthly series in such a way as to minimise the differences between two consecutive months. It also ensures that the average of three months in a particular calendar quarter is equal to the corresponding LFS estimate.

For months where the quarterly unemployment data is not yet available, the ratio of the LFS monthly estimate to the Live Register monthly estimate (i.e. the benchmark to indicator ratio) is forecast forward in order to extrapolate a monthly LFS estimate. The monthly series is revised each quarter when the latest quarterly data becomes available. This approach adheres to agreed international practice.

The methodology for the employment series is slightly different from the one used for unemployment, as there is no register based figure available for employment (i.e. no

indicator variable). The Denton method can still be used to disaggregate the quarterly employment level into a monthly level, but the constraint of proportionality to the register-based series is ignored. The constraints instead are to minimise the differences between months and to ensure that the average of the monthly levels is equal to the quarterly level.

### **3.6 Characteristics of the Sample/Process**

#### **3.6.1 Population and Sampling Frame**

Not applicable.

#### **3.6.2 Sample Design**

Not applicable.

### **3.7 Survey Technique/Data Transfer**

Not Applicable.

### **3.8 Questionnaire (including explanations)**

Not Applicable.

### **3.9 Participation in the Survey**

Not Applicable

### **3.10 Characteristics of the Survey/Process and its Results**

A total of 8 series are produced from the Proportional Denton method described above:

- Unemployed Males Aged 15-24
- Unemployed Females Aged 15-24
- Unemployed Males Aged 25-74
- Unemployed Females Aged 25-74
- Employed Males Aged 15-24
- Employed Females Aged 15-24
- Employed Males Aged 25-74
- Employed Females Aged 25-74

Each of the 8 series is then seasonally adjusted (to remove the effects of seasonality in the series). The individual seasonally adjusted unemployment volumes are included in the release while unemployment rates are also generated from the various series.

For full details of published indicators please see the latest Monthly Unemployment release on [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie).

### **3.11 Classifications used**

- Sex
- Broad Age Group

### **3.12 Regional Breakdown of Results**

The seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment series is available at State level only.

## **4 Production of the Statistics, Data Processing, Quality Assurance**

### **4.1 Data Capture**

Not Applicable.

### **4.2 Coding**

Not Applicable.

### **4.3 Data Editing**

Not Applicable.

### **4.4 Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)**

Not applicable.

### **4.5 Grossing and Weighting**

Not Applicable.

### **4.6 Computation of Outputs, Estimation Methods Used**

All series are computed from the outputs of the Proportional Denton method described above. Outputs are also seasonally adjusted.

### **4.7 Other Quality Assurance Techniques Used**

Constant contact with the Department of Social protection (DSP) ensures timely and accurate reporting of data to the CSO.

## **5 Quality**

### **5.1 Relevance**

Wide usage across government departments and general public.

### **5.2 Accuracy and Reliability**

#### **5.2.1. Sampling Effect & Representativeness**

LFS: Benchmark data is sourced from the LFS which is a sample survey. Information regarding the sampling effect and representativeness of the LFS is presented separately in the Standard Report for the LFS.

Live Register: Fully representative administrative data source.

#### **5.2.2. Non-Sampling Effects**

LFS: Benchmark data is sourced from the LFS which is a sample survey. Information regarding the non-sampling effects of the LFS is presented separately in the Standard Report for the LFS.

Live Register: Fully representative administrative data source.

##### **5.2.2.1 Quality of the Data Sources used (other than survey register)**

LFS: Benchmark data is sourced from the LFS which is a sample survey. Information regarding the quality of the data sources used in LFS is presented separately in the Standard Report for the LFS.

Live Register: Fully representative administrative data source.

##### **5.2.2.2 Register Coverage**

LFS: Benchmark data is sourced from the LFS which is a sample survey. Information regarding the register coverage of the LFS is presented separately in the Standard Report for the LFS.

Live Register: Fully representative administrative data source.

### **5.2.2.3 Non-response (Unit and Item)**

LFS: Benchmark data is sourced from the LFS which is a sample survey. Information regarding non-response in the LFS is presented separately in the Standard Report for the LFS.

Live Register: Fully representative administrative data source.

### **5.2.2.4 Measurement Errors**

LFS: Benchmark data is sourced from the LFS which is a sample survey. Information regarding measurement errors in the LFS is presented separately in the Standard Report for the LFS.

Live Register: Fully representative administrative data source.

### **5.2.2.5 Processing Errors**

Processing errors are at a minimum as much of the data is imported from existing datasets and automation is used extensively.

### **5.2.2.6 Model-related Effects**

Time series forecasting is used to present results for which no LFS benchmark figures are yet available. This can lead to revisions where the model is subsequently updated with benchmark figures.

## **5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality**

### **5.3.1 Provisional Results**

No provisional outputs are published.

### **5.3.2 Final Results**

Monthly Unemployment estimates are issued on the Tuesday following the last week of the reference month where this last week is generally defined as being the last week of the month which contains a Thursday. Adjustments are made to the release schedule where the week scheduled for release contains a Public Holiday.

The indicators which are published in the release are seasonally adjusted unemployment data (volume and rate) classified by sex and age group.

## **5.4 Coherence**

Coherence checks are regularly carried out - for example the outputs produced for the system are checked for coherence with the actual sources used (LFS and Live Register).

## **5.5 Comparability**

To ensure comparability with other official statistics, standard classifications are used for monthly unemployment estimates. The age groups 15-24 years, 25-74 years and 15-74 years are comparable to the Eurostat age group classification.

## **5.6 Accessibility and Clarity**

### **5.6.1 Assistance to Users, Special Analyses**

All publications are available on the CSO website. Information on methodology is also available on the website. The publication contains the Monthly Unemployment series for the previous two years while the background notes provide some detail on the survey operation.

### **5.6.2 Revisions**

The seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment series is subject to revision caused by updates to the seasonally adjusted series whenever new monthly data are added. In addition, larger revisions can occur when the most recent Labour Force Survey (LFS) benchmarks are included. From October 2019 and on a quarterly basis afterwards, the CSO will be using the latest available quarterly LFS benchmarks, ahead of the LFS publication date. This eliminates the need to revise the Monthly Unemployment series when publishing the quarterly LFS.

### **5.6.3 Publications**

#### **5.6.3.1 Releases, Regular Publications**

Monthly Unemployment estimates are issued on the Tuesday following the last week of the reference month where this last week is generally defined as being the last week of the month which contains a Thursday. Adjustments are made to the release schedule where the week scheduled for release contains a Public Holiday.

#### **5.6.3.2 Statistical Reports**

The monthly unemployment estimate is a seasonally adjusted series and subject to revision monthly. Therefore, the series is not included in any long-term CSO publications i.e. Men and Women in Ireland, Measuring Ireland's Progress, the CSO Yearbook etc.

### **5.6.3.3 Internet**

All related publications can be found at:

<http://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/labourmarket/>

### **5.6.4 Confidentiality**

All data are treated as strictly confidential in accordance with Part V of the Statistics Act 1993.

## **6 Additional documentation and publications**

The main CSO Labour Market homepage can be found at the following link:

<http://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/labourmarket/>

Statcentral – Ireland’s portal to official statistics:

[http://www.statcentral.ie/viewstats.asp?type=Labour Market](http://www.statcentral.ie/viewstats.asp?type=Labour%20Market)

Eurostat issue releases which use the monthly unemployment data and the central repository for such data can be found as below:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour\\_market/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/labour_market/introduction)