

Guidelines concerning treatment in employment and unemployment statistics  
of persons on extended absences from work, endorsed by the Sixteenth International  
Conference of Labour Statisticians  
(October 1998)

*Employees on maternity leave*

1. (1) Women on maternity leave, who have an assurance of a return to work following the end of the leave, should be classified as employed if, during the reference period, they are in receipt of all or a significant part of their wage or salary from the employer or an equivalent payment from other sources received by virtue of being an employee. Women on maternity leave, who have an assurance of a return to work following the end of the leave, should also be considered as being employed during the compulsory period of the leave stipulated by national legislation to ensure that mothers before and after childbirth have sufficient rest, or for a period to be specified according to national circumstances.

(2) In countries where they are not classified as employed according to subparagraph 1(1), women on maternity leave should be classified as unemployed or not economically active, depending upon their current availability for work and recent job-search activity.

*Employees on unpaid leave initiated by the employer*

2. (1) Employees on unpaid leave initiated by the employer (including leave paid out of the government budget or social security funds) should be classified into labour force categories as follows:

- (a) persons having an agreed date for return to work should be considered employed if the elapsed duration of their leave falls within a time-limit to be specified according to national circumstances. Such persons may be classified as a separate category among employed persons; they should be included among persons in time-related underemployment if they satisfy the criteria of the definition of time-related underemployment as specified in the resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations adopted by the Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1998);
- (b) persons who have an agreed date for return to work but whose elapsed duration of leave is longer than the specified time-limit, as well as persons who have no agreed date for return to work but who are expecting to return to their work in the near future, should be considered as unemployed if they satisfy the criteria specified in paragraph 10 of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1982), otherwise, they should be considered as being not economically active;
- (c) persons who neither have an agreed date for return to work nor expect to be recalled to their work in the near future should be considered as being unemployed or not economically active, depending upon their current availability for work and recent job-search activity.

(2) The notion of expectation of returning to work "in the near future" should be specified in the light of the national circumstances and economic situation of each country.

*Employees on other types of extended leave*

3. (1) Employees on other types of extended leave such as parental leave, who have an assurance of a return to work with the same employer following the end of the leave, should be classified as employed if the employer continues to pay all or a significant part of the wage or salary of the person on leave, or if the duration of the leave does not exceed a time-limit to be specified according to national circumstances.

(2) Employees on other types of extended leave, who are not classified as employed according to subparagraph 3(1), should be classified as unemployed or not economically active, depending upon their current availability for work and recent job-search activity.

*Seasonal workers not at work during the off-season*

4. (1) Seasonal employees not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season should be classified as employed if they have an assurance of a return to work with the same employer at the beginning of the next season, and the employer continues to pay all or a significant part of their wage or salary during the off-season.

(2) Seasonal employees not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season who are not classified as employed according to subparagraph 4(1), as well as seasonal employers, own-account workers, members of producers' cooperatives and contributing family workers not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season, should be considered as unemployed if they satisfy the criteria specified in paragraph 10 of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1982).

(3) Seasonal workers not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season, who are not classified as employed or unemployed according to subparagraphs 4(1) and (2), should be considered as being not economically active.