

# LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

## LEGAL BASIS

The survey is carried out on the basis of the Law on Official Statistics ("Official Journal" number 104/09).

## METHODOLOGICAL BASIS

### Objective and scope of the survey

The Labour Force Survey is a survey that collects data on the main characteristics of labour force, which are used to estimate the total labour force in our country. It is primarily aimed at obtaining data on three basic, contingent and mutually exclusive categories of population: employed, unemployed and economically inactive persons. The data serve to monitor, measure and evaluate economic and social trends in the Republic of Serbia. The main areas that are measured are employment and unemployment, economic inactivity, as well as demographic, socio-economic, educational and other characteristics of population in each of the mentioned areas.

### Reporting units, statistical units

The unit of observation is every member of every randomly selected household, and the unit of selection is the household selected in the sample.

### Coverage of the survey

The Labour Force Survey covers all persons in individual, (non)institutional households on the territory of the Republic of Serbia, without the Region Kosovo i Metohija, which represent usual population.

### Sampling plan

*Sampling frame* is based on data of the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings that was carried out in the Republic of Serbia in 2011. It is formed by excluding all enumeration areas with 19 or less households. The frame has been reduced by 1.5%.

*Sample type.* A two-stage stratified, rotation panel sample is used in the Survey. The units of the first stage are enumeration areas, and those of the second stages are households.

*Stratification.* Enumeration areas, as primary units, are stratified by type of settlements, into urban and other settlements, as well as by territory covered by the administrative districts.

*Sample size.* The planned sample size for 2015 is approximately 56 000 households, and by quarter 13 500 households.

### Weighting method

The estimation was based on two-stage stratified sampling design, assuming that the selection procedure for the first stage is proportional to the size with replacement, and for the second stage it is simple random sampling without replacement.

The initial weights are results from the applied sampling design that was corrected for non-response. In order to reduce the effect of non-response and to obtain estimates for population that correspond to current demographic projections, the procedure of post-stratification was applied.

By the end of 2014 the post-stratification was provided by area level (NUTS 3 level) and by age groups (0-14 and 15+). From the beginning of 2015 the post-stratification was provided by area level (NUTS 3 level), by five-years age groups (14 groups) and by sex (two groups).

### Method, period and sources of data collection

Since 2015, the Labour Force Survey has been carried out continually, i.e. all the year round. Interviews last seven days, except on holidays and annual leaves when the interview period may be prolonged by additional seven days. The period of observation is the week preceding the survey, except in the case of prolonged interview when observed is the planned week. In the Labour Force Survey a week is defined as a seven-day period that begins on Monday and ends on Sunday.

The questionnaire is the main tool for obtaining responses. In 2015, laptops are used in field work and telephones in the call centre. The source of data is the responses provided to interviewers.

## Obligation to protect individual data

The results of the Survey are published as aggregates. Individual data on households and persons are confidential. The obligation to protect individual data is compulsory by Article 3 of the Provision on the Protection of Respondents, Articles, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48 and 49 of the Provision on Confidentiality of the Law on Official Statistics (“Official Journal of RS “, number 104/09).

## List of definitions of main characteristics - indicators

**Household** is: **a)** any family or other community of persons who states that they share residence and income for providing essentials for living (housing costs, food, etc.), whether all the members are, at the time of the interview, in the place where the household is settled or away from it; **b)** any person who lives alone (one-person household) and who does not have own household in another place, who lives in a separate or shared dwelling or as a single persons – subtenant, whether living in the same room with another single person or with the members of the landlord’s household or spending, but who only pays housing services without sharing income with them.

**Employees** are persons who performed a paid job (paid in cash or in kind) for at least one hour in the reference week, as well as persons who had an employment, but were absent from work in that week. Employees includes also, besides persons who have an employment in an enterprise, institution or any other organization, or work as entrepreneurs, family helpers as well as person who performed a job that they had found on their own and established an agreement (oral or written) without entering in employment and to whom this job was the only source of subsistence means. Therefore, the Survey does not take into account the respondent’s formal status, but the respondent’s employment status is determined on the basis of the actual activity she/he performed in the reference week.

According to the classification by status of employment, employees are broken down into self-employed, employees, and family unpaid family workers.

**Self-employed** are persons who operate independently their own enterprise, private shop or own agricultural holding, as well as persons who engages independently in a professional activity or any other job for own account.

**Employees** are persons who work for an employer in any sector of ownership, whether holding a formal employment contract or working on oral agreement. Household members who help in the family business and are paid for their work are not counted as employees.

**Unpaid family members** are persons who help another household member in operating the family business without being paid for the work.

**Unemployed persons** are persons who did not perform any paid job in the reference week nor held a job from which they were absent and to which they could to return after the absence, provided that they met the following criteria:

- They took active steps in the past four weeks in finding a job and they were ready to begin working within two weeks in case of a job offer;
- They did not actively seek a job in the past four weeks because they had found a job they were to start after the reference week, and not later than three months.

**Economically active population (labour force)** includes all employees and unemployed persons.

**Economically inactive population** are all persons aged 15 and more who are not classified in economically active population.

**Informal employees** are persons who work without formal employment contract. This category comprises employees in an unregistered enterprise, employees in a registered enterprise, but without formal employment contract and without social and pension insurance, as well as unpaid family members.

**Potential economically active population (potential labour force)** are persons who are actively seeking work, but are not ready to start working immediately or within two weeks, as well as persons being ready to start work immediately but are not actively seeking work. This contingent comprises also so-called “discouraged persons”, i.e. persons who do not seek work because they are convinced they cannot find one even being ready to start working immediately in case of a job offer.

**Subjective employment status** is the respondent’s employment status as she/he feels it, not according to her/his actual activity in the reference week.

**Activity rate** is the share of economically active population in the total population aged 15 and more.

**Employment rate** is the share of employees in the total population aged 15 and more.

**Unemployment rate** is the share of unemployed in the total number of economically active population.

**Inactivity rate** is the share of economically inactive population in the total population aged 15 and more.

## Harmonization with international recommendations, standards and practice

Methodological solutions, which are harmonised with the recommendations and definitions of the International Labour Organisation – ILO and Eurostat requirements have been used in this Survey, providing this way the most important source for international comparison of the data of the Republic of Serbia with other countries in labour statistics. Used were the definitions and recommendations published in the Council Regulation (EC) No 377/2008, Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98, Commission Regulation (EC) No 430/2005.

## Comparability

From 2008 up to and including 2013, the statistics are strictly comparable. However, changes of periodicity in 2014, when the Survey turned from semi-annual to be quarterly, broke data series.

Additionally, since the beginning of 2015 the Survey has turned to be conducted continuously and the weighting method has been improved, both according to Eurostat Regulations. It made the data incomparable with the year 2014, where after the SORS implemented the revision of 2014 data, with the aim to ensure the year over year comparability for the period 2014-2015.

## DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY MANAGEMENT

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### Bodies in charge of survey management (*responsible official statistics producers*)

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and the Institute of Statistics and Informatics of Belgrade is in charge of the preparation, organisation and carrying out of this survey, as well as of data processing. The persons directly involved in the survey are: **interviewers, supervisors and trainers**.

### Obligation (or non-obligation) to provide data

The obligation to provide data is laid down in Article 26 of the Law on Official Statistics (“Official Journal of RS No 104/2009). Penalty provisions in case of refusal, incorrect or incomplete data provided are laid down in Article 52 of the same Law.

### Timetable of the main stages of the survey, including data publication

The statistical release is issued in printed and electronic forms and is made available on the website of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia 45 days following the end of the survey, in line with the publication calendar.

The data are presented in an aggregate form on annual level, and are published at the end of March, in the edition “Bulletins”, also in printed and electronic forms.

## SURVEY TOOLS

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To carry out the Labour Force Survey the following methodological tools are used:

1. List of households selected in the sample (LFS),
2. Questionnaire (electronic), and
3. Instructions for filling in the questionnaire.

### List of nomenclatures and classifications used in the survey

(*with information where available*)

In coding and processing the data of this Survey, used are the following classifications:

1. Classification of Activities, which is comparable with the UN classification of activities (ISIC – rev. 4) and EU classification (NACE, rev. 2),
2. Classification of occupations, which is comparable with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO 08),
3. List of schools, which is comparable with international levels of education and training (ISCED 2011), and
4. Classification employees’ employment status, which is comparable with the International Classification in Employment (ICSE).

**List of publications where the methodology and results of the survey are published  
(in printed and/or electronic form)**

1. Statistical release (Labour Force Survey),
2. Bulletin (Labour Force Survey),
3. Methodological instructions (Labour Force Survey),
4. Statistical Yearbook, and
5. Statistical Pocket-book.

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