

United Kingdom - Labour Force Survey 2014

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Overview

Identification

ID NUMBER

GBR_2014_LFS_v01_M_ILO

Version

VERSION DESCRIPTION

Version 01

Overview

ABSTRACT

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a unique source of information using international definitions of employment and unemployment and economic inactivity, together with a wide range of related topics such as occupation, training, hours of work and personal characteristics of household members aged 16 years and over. It is used to inform social, economic and employment policy.

The LFS was first conducted biennially from 1973, then between 1984 and 1991 the survey was carried out annually and consisted of a quarterly survey conducted throughout the year and a 'boost' survey in the spring quarter (data were then collected seasonally). From 1992 quarterly data were made available, with a quarterly sample size approximately equivalent to that of the previous annual data. The survey then became known as the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS). From December 1994, data gathering for Northern Ireland moved to a full quarterly cycle to match the rest of the country, so the QLFS then covered the whole of the UK (though some additional annual Northern Ireland LFS datasets are also held at the UK Data Archive). Further information on the background to the QLFS may be found in the documentation.

A labour force survey is an inquiry directed to households designed to obtain information on the labour market and related issues by means of personal interviews. As it would clearly involve considerable expense to include all households (as in population censuses) labour force surveys are usually confined to a sample of households, the actual size of which depends primarily on the level of detail required in the survey estimates.

There are a number of advantages in using an approach of this kind in collecting labour market information. In the first place it affords the opportunity to obtain information on relevant labour market aspects across all sectors of the economy in a consistent manner. It also facilitates the interpretation of the information in a wider population setting, since the information collected need not necessarily be confined to persons in the labour force (i.e. those employed or unemployed), but can involve all other persons in the households covered. In current labour market circumstances this is an important additional dimension as analysis is increasingly concerned with those on the peripheries of the labour market.

KIND OF DATA

Sample survey data [ssd]

UNITS OF ANALYSIS

- Individuals
- Families
- Households

Scope

NOTES

The basic set of LFS questions sought information about household composition: i.e. for each usually resident individual member of the household, the relationship to the head of the household, sex, age, marital condition and nationality. For persons above the statutory school-leaving age information was sought about the main economic activity, any secondary economic activity, and economic activity one year previously.

For unemployed persons questions were asked about the type of employment sought, duration of unemployment and method of seeking employment, previous employment status and industry and whether or not registered as unemployed at an official employment office.

The European Community's supplementary set of questions in 1975 asked about vocational training in progress, travel-to-work and working conditions.

At the request of UK departments in 1975, questions were asked about length of time in the present occupation and on the previous occupation of persons who had changed their occupation during the previous year, as well as extra questions about vocational training.

TOPICS

Topic	Vocabulary	URI
Agriculture & Rural Development	ILO	
Economic Policy	ILO	
Education	ILO	
Environment	ILO	
Financial Sector	ILO	
Migration & Remittances	ILO	
Health	ILO	
Household Income	ILO	
Employment	ILO	
Informal Work	ILO	
Other Work Activities	ILO	
Unemployment	ILO	
Gender	ILO	

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The whole country.

UNIVERSE

- Households

- All persons normally resident in private households in the United Kingdom

Producers and Sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR(S)

Name	Affiliation
Office for National Statistics	United Kingdom

Metadata Production

METADATA PRODUCED BY

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation	Role
Department of Statistics	ILO	International Labour Organization	Producer of DDI

DATE OF METADATA PRODUCTION

2018-03-23

DDI DOCUMENT ID

DDI_GBR_2014_LFS_v01_M_ILO

Sampling

Sampling Procedure

Stratified multi-stage sample; for further details see annual reports. Until 1983 two sampling frames were used; in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, the Valuation Roll provided the basis for a sample which, in England and Wales, included all 69 metropolitan districts, and a two-stage selection from among the remaining non-metropolitan districts.

In Northern Ireland wards were the primary sampling units. In Scotland, the Address File (i.e. post codes) was used as the basis for a stratified sample. From 1983 the Postoffice Address File has been used instead of the Valuation Roll in England and Wales.

In 1984 sample rotation was introduced along with a panel element, the quarterly survey, which uses a two-stage clustered sample design.

The sample comprises about 90,000 addresses drawn at random from the rating lists in 190 different areas of England and Wales. With such a large sample, it will happen by chance that a small number of addresses which were selected at random for the 1979 survey will come up again. In addition, 2,000 addresses in 8 of the areas selected in 1979 have been deliberately re-selected again this time (me interviewers who get these addresses in their work will receive a special letter to take with them.)

The sample is drawn from the "small users" sub-file of the Postcode Address File (PAF), which is a list of all addresses (delivery points) to which mail is delivered, prepared by the Post Office and held on computer. "Small users" are delivery points that receive less than 25 articles of mail a day and include all but a small proportion of private households. The PAF is updated regularly by the Post Office but, as mentioned in Chapter 1, there was an interruption in the supply of updates in the period leading up to the 1988 survey. As a result one third of the sample was drawn from the PAF as at March 1986 and two thirds from the sample as at September 1986.

Sample sizes

Because of sampling variability, the smaller the group being estimated the poorer the precision of the estimate becomes, until eventually the estimate is not reliable enough to be used. (See Volume 1, in particular section 8 of the LFS User Guide for a detailed discussion.) For the two-quarter longitudinal datasets, the number of sample cases available for linkage is around 35,000. For the five-quarter dataset it is around 5,000, therefore the results are subject to greater variability due to higher attrition.

Deviations from Sample Design

One of the limitations of the LFS is that the sample design provides no guarantee of adequate coverage of any industry, as the survey is not industrially stratified. The LFS coverage also omits communal establishments, except NHS housing, students in halls of residence and at boarding schools. Members of the armed forces are only included if they live in private accommodation. Also, workers under 16 are not covered. As in previous years, the sample for the boost survey was drawn in a single stage in the most densely populated areas, in two stages elsewhere. The areas where the sample was drawn in a single stage were:

- (I) local authority districts in the metropolitan counties and Greater London;
- (II) districts which, based on the 1981 Census.

Response Rate

Method of calculating response rates

The response rate indicates how many interviews were achieved as a proportion of those eligible for the survey. The formula used is as follows:

$$RR = (FR + PR) / (FR + PR + OR + CR + RHQ + NC + RRI^*)$$

where RR = response rate, FR = full response, PR = partial response, OR = outright refusal, CR = circumstantial refusal, RHQ = refusal to HQ, NC = non contact, RRI = refusal to re-interview, *applies to waves two to five only.

The combined sample for the UK is over 63,000 households (60,000 for Great Britain). The sample size is intended to be sufficiently large to allow reliable information to be produced at the national and regional levels, and also to allow analysis of

fairly small subgroups of the population. The response rate achieved averaged between 80 and 85 percent.

Weighting

The LFS uses calibration weighting. The weights are formed using a population weighting procedure which involves weighting data to sub-regional population estimates and then adjusting for the estimated age and sex composition by region (income weighted separately). Household datasets have household weights.

The household weight variable on the LFS always starts with PHHWT followed by two numbers that indicate the year this weight was created. For the APS the household weight starts with PHHWT but then has an 'A' before the last two numbers. The LFS and APS reflect only a sample of the total population. All cases are therefore weighted on the basis of sub-national population totals by age and sex to give estimates for the entire UK household population. This weight shows how many people in the population they are representing on that dataset. When carrying out analysis, you should always apply the weight.

A "calibration" weighting method is used. This is an iterative algorithm designed to produce individuals' weights that are consistent with three sets of population totals, or "partitions". These partitions are:

- Local authority totals for people aged 16+, by gender;
- Great Britain and Northern Ireland totals by gender and by single year of age for 16-24s and totals for 0-15 and 25+; and
- Regional totals by quinary age bands and by gender.

New weight names have been introduced to reflect the reweighting of the datasets. Therefore, the person level weight for the annual LFS data is now variable PWT03. The '03' number at the end of the variable name denotes the weight used for the 2003/4 reweighting exercise. In addition to the new weight, the old person level weight, WEIGHT1 (applied at the last reweighting of these data in 1995) has also been left in the dataset.

Questionnaires

Overview

The questionnaire can be split into two main parts. The first part contains questions on the respondent's household, family structure, basic housing information and demographic details of household members. The second part contains questions covering economic activity, education and health, and also may include a few questions asked on behalf of other government departments (for example the Department for Work and Pensions and the Home Office).

Data Collection

Data Collection Dates

Start	End	Cycle
2014	2014	N/A

Time Periods

Start	End	Cycle
2014	2014	N/A

Data Collection Mode

Face-to-face [f2f]

Data Collection Notes

This questionnaire gives details of the calls made on a household, and the outcome of these calls. It is important to realise that this document is designed for use before the interview has started, as well as during the interview and after it has finished. It involves only a few direct questions of the respondent and is better thought of as a record of calls made and outcome achieved, than as a questionnaire. Each sampled address has a pre-printed E questionnaire which contains details of that address.

It is essential that you have the relevant E questionnaire with you when you make contact at the address. Face-to-face interviewers should also carry spare E questionnaires in case there is more than one household to interview. The first two pages deal with the calls made on the household in person or by telephone, and the outcome, if calls were made by telephone. The

third page appears to be out of sequence, since the question numbering skips from E6 to E18 and then back to E7 on the fourth page. This is NOT a mistake! The reason for this is so that the outcome of calls made in person on a household is on the back of the questionnaire: this should make it easier for face-to-face interviewers to handle the questionnaire.

The important thing to remember about the E questionnaire is that it is a record of the calls made on, and the outcome achieved for, one household. The great majority of the sampled addresses will contain only one household, and therefore one E questionnaire will be needed, but a few addresses will contain more than one household. The procedure for dealing with such addresses is dealt with in Section 3.4. This questionnaire also enables interviewers to cope with addresses on which calls were initially made by telephone, but which have subsequently been reissued to the Field. This might occur for one of a number of reasons, the main reasons being:

- (a) the outcome of the call made by telephone was a non-contact or a refusal;
- (b) the respondent does not wish to be interviewed by phone and will only be interviewed in person;
- (c) the household in the telephone sample is suspected of being in a multi-household address.
- (d) the phone number supplied is incorrect or unobtainable.

Questionnaires

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Data Collectors

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics	PCBS	Palestinian National Authority

Supervision

A person is considered to have supervisory responsibilities when they supervise the work of at least one (other) person. He/she takes charge of the work of other employees, directs their work and sees that it is satisfactorily carried out. Supervisory responsibility includes formal responsibility for directing other employees (other than apprentices), whom they

supervise directly, sometimes doing some of the work they supervise and excludes quality control (check output of services but not the work produced by other persons) and consultancy.

It should be considered the usual situation and not the situation only during the reference week. Sometimes job titles can be misleading. For example, a 'playground supervisor' supervises children not employees and so should be coded 2. Similarly, a 'store manager' may be a storekeeper and not a supervisor of employees.

Data Processing

Data Editing

Information Technology Centres provides one-year training and practical work experience course in the use of computers and word processors and other aspects of information technology (eg teletex, editing, computer maintenance).

Other Processing

The data were processed to the UK Data Archive's A* standard. This is the Archive's highest standard, and means that an extremely rigorous and comprehensive series of checks was carried out to ensure the quality of the data and documentation. Firstly, checks were made that the number of cases and variables matched the depositor's records. Secondly, checks were made that all variables had comprehensible variable labels and all nominal (categorical) variables had comprehensible value labels.

Where possible, either with reference to the documentation and/or in communication with the depositor, labels were accordingly edited or created. Thirdly, logical checks were performed to ensure that nominal (categorical) variables had values within the range defined (either by value labels or in the depositor's documentation). Lastly, any data or documentation that breached confidentiality rules were altered or suppressed to preserve anonymity.

All notable and/or outstanding problems discovered are detailed under the 'Data and documentation problems' heading below. The data were processed to the UK Data Archive's 'A' standard. A rigorous and comprehensive series of checks was carried out to ensure the quality of the data and documentation. The most important procedures were as follows. Firstly, checks were made that the number of cases and variables matched the depositor's records. Secondly, checks were made that all variables had variable labels and all nominal (categorical) variables had value labels. Where possible, either with reference to the documentation and/or in communication with the depositor, absent labels were created. Thirdly, logical checks were performed to ensure that nominal (categorical) variables had values within the range defined (either by value labels or in the depositor's documentation). Lastly, any data or documentation that breached confidentiality rules were altered or suppressed to preserve anonymity.

Data Appraisal

Estimates of Sampling Error

As with any sample survey, the results of the Labour Force Survey are subject to sampling errors. In addition, the results of any sample survey are affected by non-sampling errors, i.e. the whole variety of errors other than those due to sampling. As with all sample surveys, Labour Force Survey results are subject to sampling error. The survey consists of only one of a number of possible samples, and had a different sample been taken a different estimate would probably have resulted. Sampling error is the measure of this variation.

Sampling error can be reduced by stratifying the sample (although the increased error caused by clustering cannot be estimated by these means). The stratum III boost survey PSUS were stratified by the proportion of economically active men who were unemployed in the local authority district according to the 1981 Census, while in Scotland the strata II and III sample was stratified by the percentage of persons in employment who were working in manual occupations. These stratifications tend to reduce sampling error in relation to measurements of characteristics related to the factors used in stratification.

Hence it is inappropriate to calculate sampling error for the LFS assuming simple random sampling, and errors are, therefore, estimated taking account of the sample design. Standard errors for Great Britain were estimated (taking the complex sample design into account) by combining the variances for the major strata of the boost survey and for the quarterly survey weighted by the square of their respective sizes. Standard errors for a selection of variables are shown in the reports produced by OPCS.

Other forms of Data Appraisal

Day of birth and date of birth variables have been removed from the annual LFS datasets, in the same way that they have been removed from the quarterly LFS datasets from 1992 onwards, as this information is now considered to be disclosive. The variable AGEDFE (age at proceeding 31 August) has been added to all annual datasets.

Related Materials

Questionnaires

Questionnaire

Title Questionnaire
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-01-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Questionnaire.pdf

Reports

Report QLFS Quarter I

Title Report QLFS Quarter I
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-03-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q1_Report QLFS Quarter I.pdf

Report QLFS Quarter II

Title Report QLFS Quarter II
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-06-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q2_Report QLFS Quarter II.pdf

Report QLFS Quarter III

Title Report QLFS Quarter III
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-09-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q3_Report QLFS Quarter III.pdf

Report QLFS Quarter IV

Title Report QLFS Quarter IV
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-12-01

Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q4_Report QLFS Quarter IV.pdf

Technical documents

User Guide for Analysis Data Collected

Title User Guide for Analysis Data Collected
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-01-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_User Guide for Analysis Data Collected.pdf

User Guide from Eurostat

Title User Guide from Eurostat
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-01-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_User Guide from Eurostat.pdf

User Guide Variable Details

Title User Guide Variable Details
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-01-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_User Guide Variable Details.pdf

Data Archive Quarter I

Title Data Archive Quarter I
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-01-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q1_Data Archive Quarter I.pdf

Data Archive Quarter II

Title Data Archive Quarter II
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-04-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q2_Data Archive Quarter II.pdf

Data Archive Quarter III

Title Data Archive Quarter III
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-07-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q3_Data Archive Quarter III.pdf

Data Archive Quarter IV

Title Data Archive Quarter IV
Author(s) Office for National Statistics
Date 2014-12-01
Country United Kingdom
Language English
Filename GBR_2014_LFS_Q4_Data Archive Quarter IV.pdf
