

5



**LABOUR MARKET**

## **Economic Status**

In 2003, 1.86 million people aged 15 and over in the Republic of Ireland were economically active. This represented a participation rate of around 60%. The participation rate for people aged 16 and over in Northern Ireland in 2003 was marginally higher at 61%.

The overall numbers of labour market participants and the associated activity rates increased in both jurisdictions over the period 1998 to 2003. The rate of increase has been significantly greater in the Republic, reflecting both a rapid increase in the overall population of working age and a notable rise in the proportion of women, particularly married women, participating in the labour force.

In 2003, young people in Northern Ireland (46% of 16-19 year olds) were more likely to participate in the labour market than young people in the Republic of Ireland, where only 26% of 15-19 year olds were economically active.

## **Employment by gender and industry**

Over the period 1998 to 2003 employment rates for both males and females generally increased in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In both jurisdictions in 2003 more females were employed in a combined Education and Health sector than in any other industrial sector.

The industrial breakdown of employment was notably different between the two territories in a number of areas. The two most important sectors for employment in Northern Ireland in 2003 were Education and Health, and Public administration and defence. These sectors were closely followed by Wholesale and retail trade, and Other production industries. In the Republic of Ireland, Other production industries and the combined Education and Health sectors accounted for the largest shares in employment. The Wholesale and retail trade sector accounted for the third largest share of employment in the Republic of Ireland, but Public administration and defence accounted for the smallest share at 5.1%.

## **Earnings and hours worked**

In 2002, average gross weekly earnings of manual workers in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland were highest in the Electricity, Gas and Water Supply sector and lowest in the Manufacturing sector.

Between 1998 and 2003, the average hours worked per week in the Republic of Ireland has fallen from 39 to 37. Over the same period the average length of the NI working week has remained relatively constant at around 35 hours.

## **Unemployment**

Between 1998 and 2003 the unemployment rate in both jurisdictions decreased from approximately 8% to around 5%. In the ten year period between 1993 and 2003 the number of people who were long term unemployed changed quite markedly in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. At its peak the long term unemployed accounted for 61% of all those unemployed in the Republic of Ireland in 1994 and 61% of all those unemployed in Northern Ireland in 1995. In 2003, 33% of the unemployed in the Republic of Ireland had been unemployed for one year or more compared with 43% in Northern Ireland.

**Table 5.1 International Labour Organisation (ILO) economic status**

*Thousands*

Description	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>						
<b>Persons aged 15 years and over</b>						
In labour force	1,621	1,688	1,746	1,782	1,827	1,860
In employment	1,495	1,591	1,671	1,717	1,750	1,778
Unemployed	127	97	75	65	77	81
Not in labour force	1,249	1,227	1,217	1,236	1,248	1,264
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,870</b>	<b>2,916</b>	<b>2,963</b>	<b>3,017</b>	<b>3,075</b>	<b>3,124</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>						
<b>Persons aged 16 years and over</b>						
In labour force	741	747	732	755	762	791
In employment	687	693	681	708	721	750
Unemployed	53	54	51	47	41	41
Not in labour force	506	508	532	520	524	506
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>1,255</b>	<b>1,264</b>	<b>1,275</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>1,297</b>

*Sources* Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

# 5 LABOUR MARKET

**Table 5.2 Males by ILO economic status**

*Thousands*

Description	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>						
<b>Males aged 15 years and over</b>						
In labour force	979	1,007	1,035	1,054	1,066	1,081
In employment	900	947	990	1,014	1,017	1,029
Unemployed	79	59	45	40	49	51
Not in labour force	432	427	423	432	448	457
<b>Total Males</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,433</b>	<b>1,458</b>	<b>1,486</b>	<b>1,514</b>	<b>1,537</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>						
<b>Males aged 16 years and over</b>						
In labour force	425	418	418	430	425	448
In employment	386	383	385	399	399	422
Unemployed	38	35	34	32	26	25
Not in labour force	176	187	191	186	197	181
<b>Total Males</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>628</b>

Sources    *Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office*  
             *Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment*

**Table 5.3 Females by ILO economic status**

*Thousands*

Description	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>						
<b>Females aged 15 years and over</b>						
In labour force	642	681	711	728	761	779
In employment	595	644	681	703	733	749
Unemployed	48	38	30	26	28	30
Not in labour force	817	801	794	803	800	807
<b>Total Females</b>	<b>1,459</b>	<b>1,482</b>	<b>1,505</b>	<b>1,532</b>	<b>1,561</b>	<b>1,587</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>						
<b>Females aged 16 years and over</b>						
In labour force	316	329	313	324	337	343
In employment	301	311	296	310	322	328
Unemployed	15	18	17	15	15	16
Not in labour force	330	321	340	334	327	325
<b>Total Females</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>668</b>

Sources *Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office*  
*Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment*

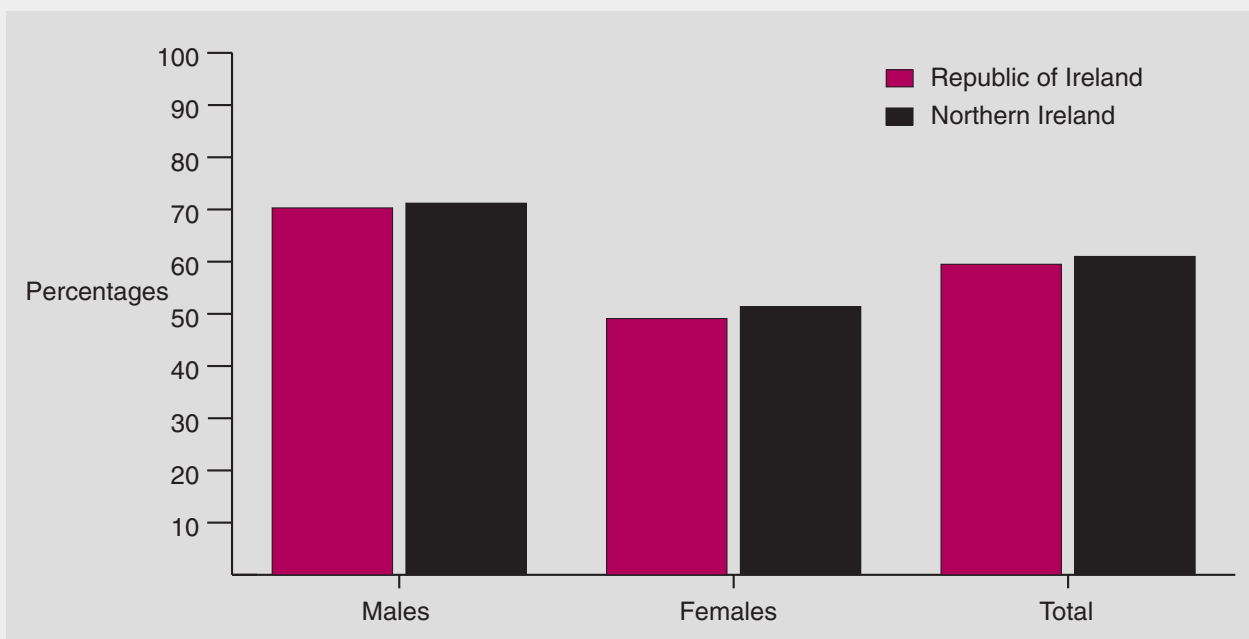
# 5 LABOUR MARKET

**Table 5.4 Labour force participation rates by gender**

Persons	Percentages					
	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>						
Males	69.4	70.2	71.0	70.9	70.4	70.3
Females	44.0	46.0	47.2	47.5	48.8	49.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>58.9</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>59.5</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>						
Males	70.7	69.1	68.6	69.9	68.3	71.2
Females	48.9	50.6	47.9	49.3	50.8	51.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>59.5</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>61.0</b>

Sources Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

**Figure 5.1 Labour force participation rates by gender, 2003**



**Table 5.5 Labour force participation rates by age**

Persons	Percentages					
	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>						
15-19	27.1	29.0	30.3	27.9	25.7	26.0
20-24	73.0	74.3	73.4	71.6	70.5	70.4
25-34	83.4	84.5	85.7	84.7	85.1	84.0
35-44	76.2	77.4	78.0	79.3	79.2	79.5
45-54	67.0	68.3	70.2	71.2	72.7	72.4
55-59	51.5	53.0	54.7	56.2	56.9	58.5
60-64	35.1	37.2	36.5	37.6	39.3	40.1
65 and over	8.1	8.0	8.0	7.8	8.2	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>58.9</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>59.5</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>						
16-19	47.8	44.1	39.0	47.2	38.2	46.0
20-24	81.6	75.3	75.6	73.6	72.1	80.2
25-34	81.7	80.2	79.3	81.0	84.9	81.5
35-44	77.9	79.6	77.1	81.3	77.5	78.7
45-54	72.5	76.0	73.8	72.3	75.9	77.6
55-59	53.1	55.0	55.8	52.9	55.7	62.1
60-64	31.0	31.5	28.3	34.1	35.3	37.2
65 and over	4.1	6.4	5.7	4.9	5.8	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>59.5</b>	<b>57.9</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>61.0</b>

Sources Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

# 5 LABOUR MARKET

**Table 5.6 Persons in employment by gender and industry, Spring 2003**

Industrial Sector	Thousands			Percentages		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>						
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	100	13	113	9.7	1.8	6.4
Other production industries	214	88	302	20.8	11.7	17.0
Construction	181	9	190	17.6	1.2	10.7
Wholesale and retail trade	127	124	251	12.3	16.6	14.1
Hotels and restaurants	49	67	115	4.7	8.9	6.5
Transport, storage and communication	84	27	111	8.1	3.6	6.2
Financial and other business services	116	111	227	11.2	14.9	12.8
Public administration and defence	50	41	91	4.9	5.4	5.1
Education	34	81	115	3.3	10.8	6.5
Health	33	135	168	3.2	18.0	9.4
Other services	42	54	95	4.0	7.2	5.4
<b>All industries</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>1,778</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>						
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	23	*	26	5.4	*	3.5
Other production industries	83	25	107	19.7	7.6	14.4
Construction	83	*	88	19.7	*	11.8
Wholesale and retail trade	58	53	112	13.9	16.3	15.0
Hotels and restaurants	17	17	34	4.1	5.2	4.6
Transport, storage and communication	25	10	35	5.9	3.1	4.7
Financial and other business services	28	27	55	6.6	8.4	7.4
Public administration and defence	57	70	127	13.6	21.4	17.0
Education and Health	30	100	130	7.2	30.6	17.4
Community, social and personal services	16	13	29	3.7	3.9	3.8
<b>All industries</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Sources *Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office*  
*Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment*



**Table 5.7 Persons in employment by gender and occupation**

*Thousands*

Occupation	2001			2002			2003		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>									
Managers and administrators	219	87	<b>306</b>	222	86	<b>308</b>	219	92	<b>311</b>
Professional	96	77	<b>173</b>	99	90	<b>188</b>	107	93	<b>199</b>
Associate professional and technical	67	81	<b>148</b>	65	90	<b>155</b>	70	94	<b>164</b>
Clerical and secretarial	52	161	<b>213</b>	54	170	<b>224</b>	51	165	<b>215</b>
Craft and related	219	14	<b>234</b>	212	12	<b>224</b>	227	14	<b>241</b>
Personal and protective service	68	96	<b>164</b>	72	97	<b>168</b>	73	110	<b>183</b>
Sales	55	87	<b>142</b>	54	90	<b>144</b>	54	92	<b>146</b>
Plant and machine operatives	147	46	<b>192</b>	143	40	<b>183</b>	136	36	<b>172</b>
Other	92	53	<b>146</b>	97	59	<b>156</b>	93	54	<b>147</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,014</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>1,717</b>	<b>1,017</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>1,778</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>									
Managers and senior officials	57	23	<b>80</b>	55	28	<b>83</b>	61	24	<b>85</b>
Professional occupations	42	31	<b>73</b>	45	39	<b>85</b>	38	34	<b>72</b>
Associate professional and technical	35	37	<b>72</b>	40	46	<b>85</b>	42	47	<b>89</b>
Administrative and secretarial	23	71	<b>94</b>	25	73	<b>98</b>	30	72	<b>102</b>
Skilled trade occupations	109	10	<b>119</b>	110	11	<b>121</b>	116	11	<b>127</b>
Personal service occupations	10	49	<b>59</b>	*	43	<b>51</b>	12	46	<b>58</b>
Sales and customer service occupations	17	33	<b>50</b>	16	33	<b>49</b>	19	38	<b>57</b>
Process, plant and machine operatives	58	13	<b>71</b>	62	10	<b>72</b>	54	10	<b>64</b>
Elementary occupations	45	42	<b>88</b>	38	40	<b>77</b>	45	43	<b>89</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>742</b>

Sources Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

# 5 LABOUR MARKET

**Table 5.8 Average gross weekly earnings of manual workers in selected industry sectors**

*Units as indicated*

Occupation	2000			2001			2002		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
<b>Republic of Ireland (€)</b>									
Mining and quarrying	561.6	289.3	549.3	645.9	399.5	631.7	721.1	314.4	700.3
Manufacturing	477.7	324.7	423.2	512.4	347.3	457.0	538.9	364.1	483.1
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	674.0	375.1	650.2	749.9	351.6	716.6	861.1	376.5	826.5
Construction	521.6	..	521.6	581.6	..	581.6	632.5	..	632.5
<b>Northern Ireland (stg£)</b>									
Mining and quarrying	325.9	*	325.9	333.8	*	333.8	338.2	*	338.2
Manufacturing	325.2	214.6	305.6	338.4	229.0	317.2	340.6	243.4	325.2
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	390.1	*	390.1	450.2	*	450.2	526.0	*	526.0
Construction	299.9	*	299.9	308.8	*	308.8	325.5	*	325.5

Sources *Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment*

**Table 5.9 Hours worked and trade union membership**

*Hours and percentages*

	Republic of Ireland	Northern Ireland
<b>Average hours worked per week</b>		
1998	38.8	35.1
1999	38.1	35.3
2000	38.0	35.4
2001	37.9	34.5
2002	37.7	35.1
2003	37.2	35.0
<b>Trade union membership</b>		
		% of workforce
2000	36.7	36.5
2001	37.6	40.3
2002	35.6	40.8

Sources Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

**Table 5.10 ILO seasonally adjusted unemployment rates by gender**

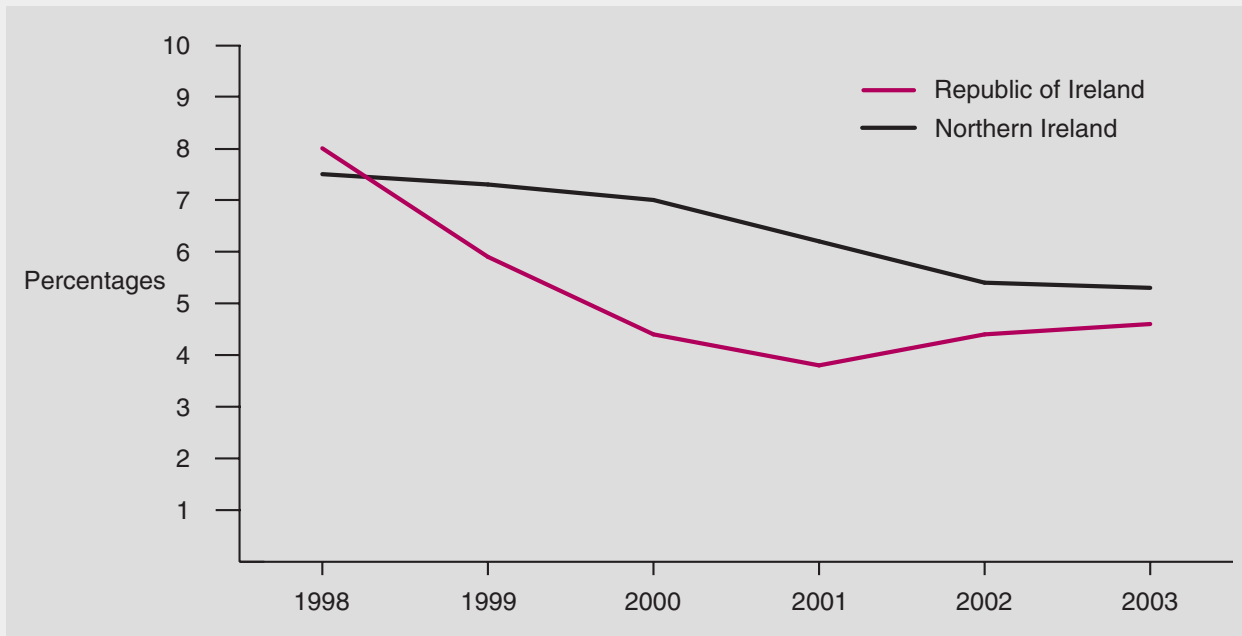
*Percentages*

Description	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 2000	Spring 2001	Spring 2002	Spring 2003
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>						
Males	8.2	6.0	4.5	3.9	4.7	4.9
Females	7.7	5.7	4.4	3.7	3.9	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.6</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>						
Males	9.0	8.3	7.9	7.2	6.0	5.6
Females	5.5	6.1	5.9	4.9	4.7	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5.3</b>

Sources Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

# 5 LABOUR MARKET

**Figure 5.2 ILO seasonally adjusted unemployment rates, 1998-2003**



**Table 5.11 ILO long-term unemployed**

Years	Republic of Ireland		Northern Ireland	
	Total long-term unemployed	Long-term as % of total unemployed	Total long-term unemployed	Long-term as % of total unemployed
1993	125,000	57.0	50,000	58.9
1994	128,000	60.8	47,000	59.1
1995	103,000	58.2	48,000	61.3
1996	103,000	57.7	38,000	55.6
1997	86,000	54.3	31,000	56.4
1998	64,000	50.2	24,000	45.8
1999	42,000	42.9	29,000	53.9
2000	27,000	36.6	20,000	39.8
2001	21,000	31.3	20,000	43.2
2002	22,000	28.0	16,000	37.9
2003	27,000	33.0	18,000	42.8

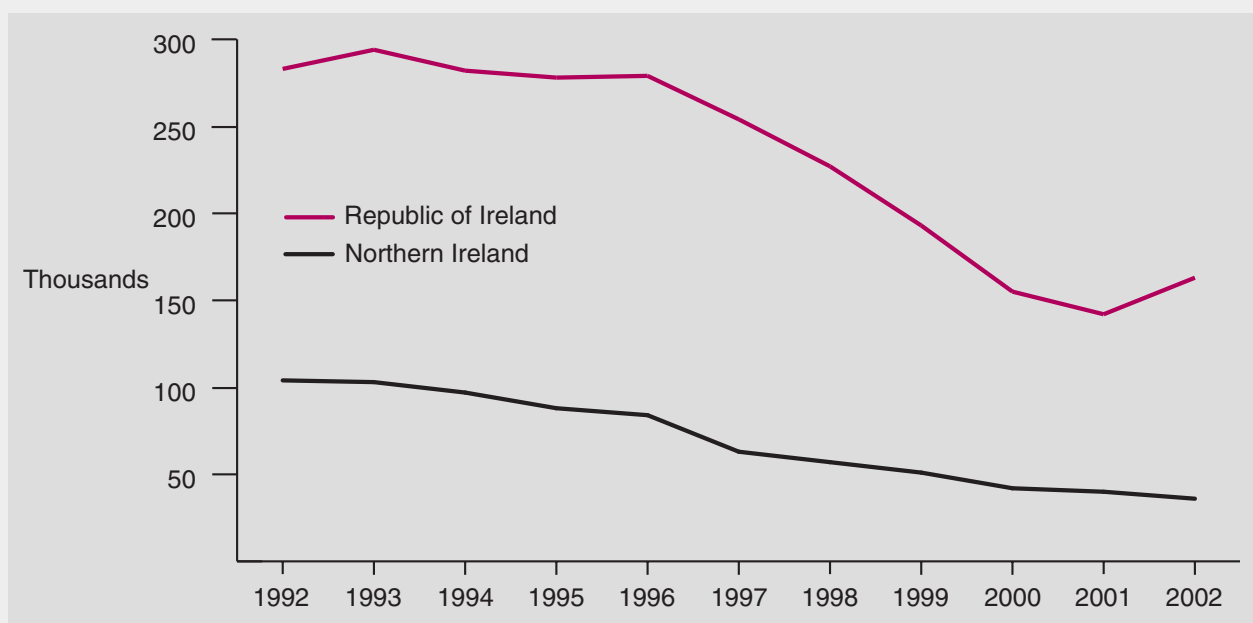
Sources Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

**Table 5.12 Claimants of welfare benefits associated with unemployment**

Years	Numbers					
	Republic of Ireland			Northern Ireland		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1992	187,200	96,000	<b>283,100</b>	80,500	23,700	<b>104,200</b>
1993	193,800	100,500	<b>294,300</b>	79,900	23,400	<b>103,300</b>
1994	184,400	98,000	<b>282,400</b>	75,100	21,700	<b>96,700</b>
1995	178,500	99,300	<b>277,800</b>	68,600	19,300	<b>87,800</b>
1996	175,600	103,600	<b>279,200</b>	64,900	18,900	<b>83,800</b>
1997	155,800	98,500	<b>254,400</b>	49,900	13,500	<b>63,400</b>
1998	135,700	91,400	<b>227,100</b>	44,800	12,600	<b>57,400</b>
1999	111,600	81,600	<b>193,200</b>	39,300	11,400	<b>50,700</b>
2000	88,700	66,700	<b>155,400</b>	32,000	10,100	<b>42,100</b>
2001	83,000	59,300	<b>142,300</b>	30,000	9,500	<b>39,500</b>
2002	96,300	66,200	<b>162,500</b>	27,800	8,600	<b>36,400</b>

Sources Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office  
Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

**Figure 5.3 Claimants of welfare benefits associated with unemployment, 1992-2002**



**Table 5.13 Youth claimants of welfare benefits associated with unemployment**

*Numbers*

Years	Republic of Ireland			Northern Ireland		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1992	47,598	31,583	<b>79,181</b>	19,877	7,948	<b>27,825</b>
1993	51,454	34,296	<b>85,750</b>	19,170	8,117	<b>27,287</b>
1994	48,013	32,411	<b>80,424</b>	17,330	7,066	<b>24,396</b>
1995	44,099	30,270	<b>74,369</b>	14,628	6,073	<b>20,701</b>
1996	41,615	29,581	<b>71,196</b>	14,110	5,864	<b>19,974</b>
1997	34,118	25,031	<b>59,149</b>	11,134	4,500	<b>15,634</b>
1998	27,733	20,656	<b>48,389</b>	10,143	4,106	<b>14,249</b>
1999	20,934	15,550	<b>36,484</b>	8,678	3,868	<b>12,546</b>
2000	14,687	11,427	<b>26,114</b>	7,493	3,361	<b>10,854</b>
2001	13,010	9,580	<b>22,590</b>	7,032	3,275	<b>10,307</b>
2002	17,836	11,809	<b>29,645</b>	7,598	3,069	<b>10,667</b>

Sources *Republic of Ireland: Central Statistics Office*  
*Northern Ireland: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment*

## **Technical Notes**

### **Tables 5.1-5.7 and 5.10-5.11**

*In Labour Force – Economically Active* – people aged 16 and over in Northern Ireland who are either in employment or ILO unemployed. In the Republic of Ireland, figures refer to persons aged 15 and over.

*In Employment* – In Northern Ireland those aged 16 and over who did at least one hour's paid work in the reference week (either as an employee or self-employed); those who had a job from which they were temporarily absent (on holiday for example); those participating in government training and employment programmes; and those working unpaid in family businesses. Republic of Ireland figures refer to persons aged 15 and over.

*ILO Unemployed* – the International Labour Organisation defines unemployment as those people without a job who were available to start work in the two weeks following their LFS interview, who had either looked for work in the four weeks prior to interview or were waiting to start a job they had already obtained. This definition of unemployment is in accordance with that adopted by the 14th International Conference of Labour Statisticians and promulgated by the ILO since 1987.

*Not in Labour Force – Economically Inactive* – people who are neither in employment nor unemployed. This group includes, for example, all those who were looking after a family/home or who were retired.

*Working Age* – working age refers to ages 16 to 59 for females and 16 to 64 for males in Northern Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland working age refers to ages 15 to 64 for both males and females.

*ILO Unemployment Rate* – the percentage of economically active people who are unemployed on the ILO measure. Figures for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are seasonally adjusted.

*Long-Term Unemployment Rate* – the number of persons unemployed for one year or more expressed as a percentage of the total labour force.

### **Tables 5.4 and 5.5**

Northern Ireland estimates are subject to sampling error.

### **Table 5.6**

\*denotes estimates below the minimum quotation level of 8,000 cases.

# 5 LABOUR MARKET

## Table 5.7

Northern Ireland estimates are subject to sampling error. NI totals exclude those who did not state their occupation. \*denotes estimates below the minimum quotation level of 8,000 cases.

## Table 5.8

In the Republic of Ireland, industry sectors are defined using the NACE categorisation. Manufacturing is defined by NACE codes 15-37, mining and quarrying by NACE codes 10-14, electricity, gas and water supply by NACE code 40. Data for males and females refer to adult rates of pay whereas data included in the total column refers to adult and non-adult rates.

In Northern Ireland, industry sectors are defined using the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC92). Manufacturing is defined by SIC code D, mining and quarrying by SIC code C, electricity, gas and water supply by SIC code E. Data refers to average gross weekly earnings of all full-time adult employees whose rates of pay were unaffected by absence.

## Table 5.10

Northern Ireland figures have been adjusted to reflect the 2001 Census of Population data.

## Table 5.12 and 5.13

In the Republic of Ireland, the Live Register is compiled from returns made directly to the Central Statistics Office by each local office of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. It comprises persons under 65 years of age in the following categories:

- ◆ All claimants for Unemployment Benefit (UB) excluding systematic short-time workers.
- ◆ Applicants for Unemployment Assistance (UA) excluding smallholders/farm assists and self-employed persons.
- ◆ Other registrants including applicants for credited Social Welfare contributions but excluding those directly involved in an industrial dispute.

NI claimant count unemployment figures are derived from records of claimants held at Social Security offices. The term "claimants" in the claimant count is used to include those who claim Jobseeker's Allowance and National Insurance credits. The figures include severely disabled unemployed, but exclude students seeking vacation work and those whose benefits have been temporarily stopped.

In Table 5.12, figures for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are annual averages. NI figures are seasonally adjusted.

## Table 5.13

Youth claimants refer to those claimants under 25 years old. Data for both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are April figures.