

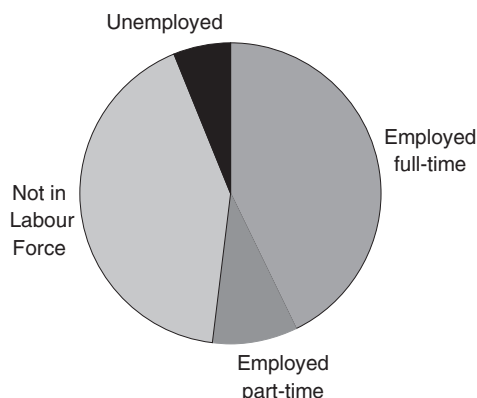
Based on the 1996 Census of Population figures
For figures based on the 2002 Census of Population see the revised QNHS series.

26 May 1998

Quarterly National Household Survey September - November 1997 First Results

Labour Force (ILO basis), September-November 1997

ILO Economic Status



	Males	Females	'000 Total
In Employment	881.4	590.9	1,472.3
Unemployed	99.8	71.7	171.6
Labour Force	981.2	662.6	1,643.9
Unemployment rate (%)	10.2	10.8	10.4
Participation rate (%)	70.3	45.9	57.9

Large increase in Labour Force

The first results from the new Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS), for the September to November 1997 quarter, indicate that there was a substantial increase in the labour force over the middle of last year.

When the QNHS results are compared directly with the April 1997 Labour Force Survey, using the international ILO classification system, an increase of over one hundred thousand in the labour force is observed. This increase, however, substantially overstates the underlying change.

A more detailed comparison of the two surveys (see below) indicates that seasonal movements in the labour force, coupled with questionnaire and survey methodology changes, account for a large proportion of the total increase. Allowing for these factors, the underlying increase over the six month period is estimated at between 30,000 and 40,000.

Comparing the LFS and the QNHS

Seasonal movements in the labour force are now being measured for the first time as the QNHS is carried out throughout the year. Interviewing is being done using laptop computers rather than paper questionnaires and this has required the re-formulation of some questions. Simultaneously, the opportunity was taken to improve the questionnaire. It is tentatively assessed that:

- ◆ Seasonal movements in the labour force account for some 10,000 to 20,000 of the total observed increase;
- ◆ Refinements in the questions on involvement in the labour force resulted in at least a further 50,000 being recorded as part of the labour force;
- ◆ Changes in the questions on full-time versus part-time working have increased the proportion indicating part-time involvement.

Further details are given in the Background Notes.

For more information contact Joe Treacy on ext 5305 or Michelle O'Mahony on ext 5490.

Published by the Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

Ardee Road
Dublin 6
Ireland

Skehard Road
Cork
Ireland

Tel: +353-1 497 7144
Fax: +353-1 497 2360

Tel: +353-21 359000
Fax: +353-21 359164

LoCall: 1890 313 414

Both offices may be contacted through any of these telephone numbers.

CSO on the Web: <http://www.cso.ie>

Director General: Donal Murphy

Enquiries:

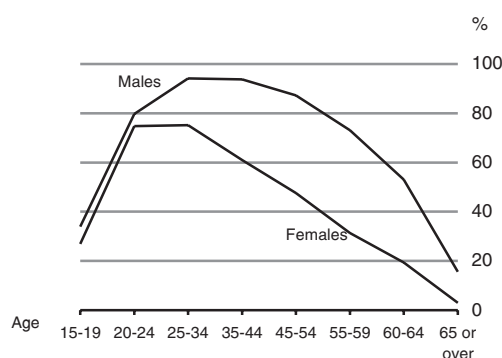
Labour Market Statistics Queries and Sales
Labour Market Section, ext 5486
Information Section, ext 5032
information@cso.ie

Diskette Service
Databank, ext 5301/5302
databank@cso.ie

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ILO Participation Rates by Age Group



Female ILO participation rates rise sharply

The higher numbers in the labour force result in higher participation rates for both males and females. The increase is most marked in the case of females where the rate increased from 42.0 to 45.9 between April and September–November 1997. While the greater part of this increase can be attributed to the seasonal and survey factors mentioned already, it is nevertheless clear that the upward trend in recent years has been more than maintained in 1997. *See Table 1.*

Comparing participation rates by age group with the annual LFS, the most notable differences are higher rates amongst those aged 15–19 and for married females in the age range 25 to 54. The higher rates for the younger persons obviously reflects the seasonal impact of students on the labour force. *See Table 3.*

Employment growth mainly in the services sector

A further decline was recorded in the numbers employed in Agriculture. Other production industries, and in particular Construction, recorded sizeable increases in the numbers at work. *See Table 2.*

However, over two thirds of the increase in the workforce was again due to a large increase in the services sector, particularly in the private services sector. Little or no change was recorded in the numbers employed in the public service sectors of Public Administration, Defence, Education and Health.

The growth in services employment was particularly strong in the Financial and Business Services sector which includes a wide range of private sector services (finance, computer-related services etc.). Some of the observed increase is due to better classification of workers in those sectors following the introduction in the QNHS of direct coding to the NACE activity classification. For more information see Background Notes.

Little change in ILO unemployment rates

Despite the large increase in the labour force there was a slight increase in the overall unemployment rate from 10.3% to 10.4%. Interestingly, different trends were observed for men and women. The male rate fell from 10.4% to 10.2% whereas the female rate rose from 10.3% to 10.8% between April and September–November 1997. *See Table 1.*

The 1997 change needs to be interpreted with care. Evidence from the UK Quarterly LFS would suggest that a seasonal increase in the ILO-based unemployment rate is to be expected during summer and autumn. This is particularly the case for the female unemployment rate.

All the increase in the numbers recorded as unemployed on the ILO basis was accounted for by the relatively sharp rise in the numbers seeking work on a part-time basis. There was a small decline in the numbers seeking full-time work. *See Table 1.* Furthermore, there was a fall in the numbers recording themselves as unemployed under the Principal Economic Status self-classification system. *See Table 9.*

Just over half (52.5%) of the unemployed are classified as long-term unemployed. This compares with over 60% in 1994. The long term unemployment rate fell slightly from 5.6% to 5.5% over the middle of 1997. *See Table 6.*

Fall in potential labour supply

Table 8 contains three new indicators of potential labour supply which take into account, in addition to the ILO unemployed, other groups outside the labour force who indicate some interest in obtaining work. In general, the indicators followed approximately the same trend as the unemployment rate in the years 1988 to 1997.

However, there was a marked fall in the indicators between April and September–November 1997. This reflects the rise in the recorded labour force being accounted for, to a significant extent, by a fall in those outside the labour force who want a job. Of course, the reservations expressed already regarding the comparability of the LFS and the QNHS must be borne in mind in interpreting these sub-annual trends.

Students numbers down

The number of students, measured using the self-classification Principal Economic Status (PES) basis fell by almost 15,000 between April and September–November 1997. The QNHS survey period corresponded with many students either being in temporary employment or in transition between education and the workforce. *See Table 9.*

Fall in numbers working in home

Over the last ten years, the number of persons classifying themselves as engaged on home duties has been falling, as more women participate in the labour force. The QNHS figure for September–November 1997 indicates a continuation of this downward trend although seasonal effects will also have had an impact on this figure. *See Table 9.*

Table 1 Persons aged 15 years and over classified by ILO Economic Status

'000

ILO Economic Status	Labour Force Survey				QNHS
	April 1994	April 1995	April 1996	April 1997	Sep-Nov 1997
Males					
In Labour Force	898.1	909.2	925.1	937.3	981.2
In Employment :	766.3	798.8	815.2	840.3	881.4
full-time	726.9	755.3	774.8	794.9	810.7
part-time :	39.3	43.4	40.4	45.4	70.6
<i>of which : part-time, not underemployed</i>	25.5	28.7	28.3	33.8	58.2
<i>part-time, underemployed</i>	13.8	14.7	12.1	11.6	12.4
Unemployed :	131.9	110.4	109.8	97.1	99.8
seeking full-time work	129.4	108.0	106.4	94.5	93.6
seeking part-time work	2.5	2.4	3.4	2.6	6.2
Not in Labour Force	422.9	427.9	433.7	445.8	413.7
Marginally attached to the Labour Force	16.8	15.9	10.8	15.0	7.8
Others	406.2	412.1	422.9	430.8	405.9
Total males aged 15 or over	1,321.1	1,337.1	1,358.8	1,383.1	1,394.9
Unemployment rate %	14.7	12.1	11.9	10.4	10.2
Participation rate %	68.0	68.0	68.1	67.8	70.3
Females					
In Labour Force	533.5	550.0	582.4	601.7	662.6
In Employment :	454.3	482.9	513.3	539.7	590.9
full-time	356.3	372.5	401.6	415.2	408.0
part-time :	98.0	110.5	111.6	124.6	182.8
<i>of which : part-time, not underemployed</i>	87.0	99.0	100.3	114.4	169.8
<i>part-time, underemployed</i>	11.0	11.5	11.3	10.2	13.0
Unemployed :	79.1	67.1	69.1	62.0	71.7
seeking full-time work	57.0	45.5	44.8	42.1	38.6
seeking part-time work	22.2	21.6	24.3	19.9	33.1
Not in Labour Force	832.8	836.3	825.5	830.3	782.3
Marginally attached to the Labour Force	13.0	11.6	9.4	10.3	9.9
Others	819.8	824.6	816.1	820.1	772.4
Total females aged 15 or over	1,366.2	1,386.3	1,407.9	1,432.0	1,444.9
Unemployment rate %	14.8	12.2	11.9	10.3	10.8
Participation rate %	39.0	39.7	41.4	42.0	45.9
All Persons					
In Labour Force	1,431.6	1,459.2	1,507.5	1,539.0	1,643.9
In Employment :	1,220.6	1,281.7	1,328.5	1,379.9	1,472.3
full-time	1,083.2	1,127.8	1,176.4	1,210.0	1,218.8
part-time :	137.4	153.9	152.1	169.9	253.5
<i>of which : part-time, not underemployed</i>	112.5	127.7	128.6	148.1	228.0
<i>part-time, underemployed</i>	24.9	26.2	23.5	21.8	25.4
Unemployed :	211.0	177.4	179.0	159.0	171.6
seeking full-time work	186.4	153.5	151.3	136.6	132.3
seeking part-time work	24.6	24.0	27.7	22.4	39.3
Not in Labour Force	1,255.7	1,264.2	1,259.2	1,276.1	1,196.1
Marginally attached to the Labour Force	29.7	27.5	20.2	25.2	17.7
Others	1,226.0	1,236.7	1,239.0	1,250.9	1,178.4
Total persons aged 15 or over	2,687.3	2,723.4	2,766.7	2,815.1	2,839.8
Unemployment rate %	14.7	12.2	11.9	10.3	10.4
Participation rate %	53.3	53.6	54.5	54.7	57.9

Table 2 Persons in employment (ILO) classified by NACE Economic Sector

' 000

Economic Sector (NACE Rev. 1)	Labour Force Survey				QNHS
	April 1994	April 1995	April 1996	April 1997	Sep-Nov 1997
Males					
A-B Agriculture,forestry and fishing	132.5	133.6	124.6	125.5	117.9
C-E Other production industries	178.1	184.4	188.3	200.4	203.4
F Construction	86.0	91.2	94.9	104.4	125.7
G Wholesale and retail trade	99.6	102.8	107.0	108.8	113.3
H Hotels and restaurants	31.1	30.6	32.2	32.7	36.5
I Transport, storage and communication	44.7	44.4	48.4	51.4	56.7
J-K Financial and other business services	61.7	67.5	70.9	71.4	80.4
L Public administration and defence	42.8	46.6	46.2	45.0	43.0
M-N Education and health	53.7	57.7	63.2	60.4	61.8
O Other services	36.1	40.0	39.7	40.4	42.7
Total males	766.3	798.8	815.2	840.3	881.4
Females					
A-B Agriculture,forestry and fishing	15.2	15.5	16.8	16.1	16.9
C-E Other production industries	74.0	79.5	78.2	88.1	96.2
F Construction	5.6	5.4	5.9	6.0	7.0
G Wholesale and retail trade	69.6	74.4	77.0	84.5	90.7
H Hotels and restaurants	37.3	40.0	41.3	43.7	52.5
I Transport, storage and communication	11.2	12.7	12.8	13.6	19.4
J-K Financial and other business services	52.6	58.9	64.4	63.3	80.2
L Public administration and defence	23.6	24.3	29.4	27.2	25.2
M-N Education and health	127.8	134.4	146.7	152.4	153.7
O Other services	37.5	37.8	40.7	44.8	49.0
Total females	454.3	482.9	513.3	539.7	590.9
All persons					
A-B Agriculture,forestry and fishing	147.7	149.1	141.4	141.5	134.8
C-E Other production industries	252.1	263.9	266.5	288.5	299.6
F Construction	91.5	96.6	100.8	110.4	132.7
G Wholesale and retail trade	169.1	177.2	184.1	193.3	204.0
H Hotels and restaurants	68.4	70.6	73.5	76.4	89.0
I Transport, storage and communication	55.9	57.1	61.2	65.0	76.2
J-K Financial and other business services	114.3	126.4	135.2	134.7	160.7
L Public administration and defence	66.4	70.8	75.6	72.2	68.2
M-N Education and health	181.5	192.1	209.9	212.9	215.5
O Other services	73.6	77.9	80.4	85.1	91.7
Total persons	1,220.6	1,281.7	1,328.5	1,379.9	1,472.2

Table 3 Labour Force Participation Rates (ILO) classified by Age Group and Marital Status, September-November, 1997

%

Marital Status	Age Group								Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-64	65+	
Males									
Single	33.9	79.5	91.9	87.1	74.4	59.6	48.7	23.7	65.3
Married	40.4	86.2	97.1	95.7	90.2	76.4	55.1	15.5	77.3
Separated or divorced	*	*	93.9	86.6	76.1	58.3	52.6	14.6	73.6
Widowed	*	*	100.0	85.2	73.4	66.2	38.1	6.5	22.0
Total males	33.9	79.7	94.1	93.7	87.2	73.1	53.0	15.6	70.3
Females									
Single	26.9	75.4	86.0	80.7	70.9	44.7	30.9	6.0	56.8
Married	21.6	67.2	66.7	57.4	44.4	29.5	17.0	2.9	45.0
Separated or divorced	*	*	68.3	64.4	58.9	49.7	36.6	9.3	58.2
Widowed	*	*	69.5	61.9	46.3	26.6	19.1	2.1	9.7
Total females	26.9	74.8	75.1	61.0	47.6	31.3	19.4	3.0	45.9
All persons									
Single	30.5	77.5	89.3	84.4	73.2	54.4	42.2	15.1	61.4
Married	28.5	72.7	80.0	76.3	67.6	53.8	37.0	10.2	61.2
Separated or divorced	*	*	74.6	72.4	65.2	53.7	44.2	11.7	63.8
Widowed	*	*	79.3	68.0	53.0	34.0	23.3	3.0	12.2
Total persons	30.5	77.3	84.5	77.2	67.6	52.5	36.1	8.4	57.9

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 4 Unemployment Rates (ILO) classified by Sex and Age Group, September-November, 1997

%

Sex	Age Group							Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-64	
Males	18.5	13.8	9.6	9.6	9.4	8.3	5.3	10.2
Females	19.5	12.2	9.2	11.0	10.5	7.8	5.1	10.8
Total	19.0	13.0	9.4	10.2	9.8	8.1	5.2	10.4

Table 5 Persons aged 15 years and over classified by Age Group and Duration of Unemployment (ILO)

'000

Duration	Labour Force Survey				QNHS Sep-Nov 1997	Sep-Nov, 1997 Age Group		
	April 1994	April 1995	April 1996	April 1997		15-24	25-44	45 or over
Males								
Less than 1 year	42.8	36.7	38.9	35.1	39.4	16.9	16.5	6.1
1 year and over	85.4	70.2	69.2	58.8	60.3	10.9	30.2	19.2
Not stated	3.7	3.5	1.7	3.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total males	131.9	110.4	109.9	97.1	99.8	27.8	46.8	25.3
Females								
Less than 1 year	33.6	31.4	33.0	31.9	41.7	15.3	19.7	6.7
1 year and over	42.9	33.1	34.0	27.5	29.9	6.8	16.2	6.9
Not stated	2.7	2.5	2.1	2.6	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total females	79.1	67.0	69.1	62.0	71.7	22.1	36.0	13.7
All persons								
Less than 1 year	76.4	68.1	71.8	67.1	81.1	32.1	36.2	12.8
1 year and over	128.2	103.3	103.3	86.3	90.2	17.7	46.4	26.1
Not stated	6.4	6.0	3.9	5.7	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2
Total persons	211.0	177.4	179.0	159.0	171.6	49.8	82.7	39.0

Table 6 Unemployment rate and Long-term Unemployment rate (ILO)

%

Period	Unemployment Rate	Long-term Unemployment Rate
April 1988	16.3	10.7
April 1989	15.0	9.8
April 1990	12.9	8.3
April 1991	14.7	8.8
April 1992	15.1	8.5
April 1993	15.7	8.9
April 1994	14.7	9.0
April 1995	12.2	7.1
April 1996	11.9	6.9
April 1997	10.3	5.6
Sep-Nov 1997	10.4	5.5

Table 7 Persons aged 15 years and over classified by detailed ILO Economic Status

' 000

Economic Status	Labour Force Survey										QNHS
	April 1988	April 1989	April 1990	April 1991	April 1992	April 1993	April 1994	April 1995	April 1996	April 1997	Sep-Nov 1997
In Labour Force	1,327.7	1,307.8	1,332.1	1,354.4	1,371.8	1,403.2	1,431.6	1,459.2	1,507.5	1,539.0	1,643.9
In Employment :	1,110.7	1,111.0	1,159.7	1,155.9	1,165.2	1,183.1	1,220.6	1,281.7	1,328.5	1,379.9	1,472.3
full-time	1,023.6	1,028.4	1,067.2	1,059.9	1,060.8	1,055.7	1,083.2	1,127.8	1,176.4	1,210.0	1,218.8
part-time :	87.1	82.6	92.5	96.0	104.4	127.5	137.4	153.9	152.1	169.9	253.5
<i>of which : part-time, not underemployed</i>	68.2	66.6	76.1	77.4	85.3	103.6	112.5	127.7	128.6	148.1	228.0
<i>part-time, underemployed</i>	18.9	16.0	16.4	18.6	19.1	23.9	24.9	26.2	23.5	21.8	25.4
Unemployed :	217.0	196.8	172.4	198.5	206.6	220.1	211.0	177.4	179.0	159.0	171.6
seeking full-time work	195.1	175.9	150.0	173.0	184.8	196.7	186.4	153.5	151.3	136.6	132.3
seeking part-time work	21.9	20.9	22.4	25.5	21.8	23.4	24.6	24.0	27.7	22.4	39.3
Not in Labour Force	1,209.0	1,228.3	1,219.1	1,230.7	1,251.9	1,253.9	1,255.7	1,264.2	1,259.2	1,276.1	1,196.1
Marginally attached to the Labour Force :	25.0	26.4	25.6	25.7	29.4	32.2	29.7	27.5	20.2	25.2	17.7
Discouraged workers	16.0	16.0	15.0	14.6	16.0	20.3	19.1	16.4	13.6	16.9	12.3
Passive jobseekers	9.0	10.4	10.6	11.1	13.3	11.9	10.6	11.1	6.6	8.3	5.4
Others :	1,184.0	1,201.9	1,193.5	1,205.1	1,222.9	1,221.7	1,226.0	1,236.7	1,239.0	1,250.9	1,178.4
Persons not in education, who want work	68.6	63.8	68.1	63.0	68.9	63.5	61.1	61.3	54.1	71.9	52.0
Persons in education, who want work	71.8	65.8	72.9	62.5	67.3	81.1	78.6	74.8	51.3	82.3	30.6
All other persons	1,043.6	1,072.3	1,052.5	1,079.5	1,086.2	1,077.0	1,086.2	1,100.7	1,133.6	1,096.6	1,095.7
Total persons aged 15 or over	2,536.7	2,536.1	2,551.2	2,585.1	2,623.7	2,657.1	2,687.3	2,723.4	2,766.7	2,815.1	2,839.8

NOTE : Persons who want work are those who are looking for work but are not available and those who say they want a job but are not looking for work.

Table 8 Indicators of potential labour supply

	%		
Period	S1	S2	S3
1988	17.3	21.9	23.2
1989	16.1	20.5	21.7
1990	13.9	18.7	19.8
1991	15.6	19.9	21.2
1992	16.0	20.7	22.0
1993	16.9	21.1	22.7
1994	15.9	19.8	21.5
1995	13.1	17.2	18.9
1996	12.7	16.0	17.5
1997	11.3	15.7	17.0
Sep-Nov 1997	11.1	14.1	15.6

NOTE : Definitions of indicators by reference to Table 7 :

S1 : Unemployed plus discouraged workers as a percentage of the Labour Force plus discouraged workers.

S2 : Unemployed plus marginally attached plus others not in education who want work as a percentage of the Labour Force plus marginally attached plus others not in education who want work.

S3 : Unemployed plus marginally attached plus others not in education who want work plus underemployed part-time workers as a percentage of the Labour Force plus marginally attached plus others not in education who want work.

Table 9 Population aged 15 years and over classified by Principal Economic Status¹

	'000			
	Labour Force Survey			QNHS
	April 1994	April 1995	April 1996	April 1997
				Sep-Nov 1997
At work	1,187.8	1,247.6	1,297.2	1,338.4
Unemployed	219.2	191.9	191.3	178.9
Student	329.9	337.1	353.0	358.0
On home duties	639.3	629.3	583.4	597.2
Retired	222.5	228.9	252.2	245.8
Others	88.6	88.7	89.6	96.7
Total	2,687.3	2,723.4	2,766.7	2,815.1
				2,839.8

¹ Classification based on respondent's own subjective assessment, see Background Notes.

Table 10 Persons aged 15 years and over classified by ILO Economic Status and by Principal Economic Status, September-November, 1997

¹ 000

Sex /	Principal Economic Status						
Economic Status	At work	Unemployed	Student	Home duties	Retired	Others	Total
Males							
In Employment :	848.3	5.5	20.7	0.3	3.3	3.2	881.4
full-time	802.1	2.6	3.2	0.1	0.7	2.1	810.7
part-time :	46.2	2.9	17.5	0.2	2.7	1.1	70.6
<i>of which : part-time, not underemployed</i>	35.8	1.3	17.4	0.2	2.6	0.9	58.2
<i>part-time, underemployed</i>	10.4	1.6	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	12.4
Unemployed :	1.4	90.6	3.8	0.6	1.7	1.8	99.8
seeking full-time work	1.3	88.7	1.3	0.3	0.7	1.4	93.6
seeking part-time work	0.1	1.9	2.5	0.3	1.0	0.4	6.2
Marginally attached to the Labour Force	0.9	5.6	0.1	0.0	0.7	0.4	7.8
Others	2.2	22.3	143.8	7.6	178.3	51.7	405.9
Total males aged 15 or over	852.7	124.0	168.4	8.6	184.1	57.2	1,394.9
Females							
In Employment :	538.4	2.5	23.6	23.0	0.6	2.7	590.9
full-time	399.1	1.2	2.8	2.9	0.1	1.9	408.0
part-time :	139.4	1.4	20.8	20.1	0.5	0.8	182.8
<i>of which : part-time, not underemployed</i>	128.3	0.5	20.4	19.4	0.5	0.8	169.8
<i>part-time, underemployed</i>	11.1	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.0	13.0
Unemployed :	0.9	31.7	4.7	33.2	0.4	0.8	71.7
seeking full-time work	0.7	26.4	1.1	9.8	0.1	0.5	38.6
seeking part-time work	0.3	5.3	3.6	23.4	0.3	0.3	33.1
Marginally attached to the Labour Force	1.0	1.7	0.2	6.6	0.4	0.1	9.9
Others	3.3	11.9	146.5	513.9	69.9	27.0	772.4
Total females aged 15 or over	543.6	47.8	175.0	576.6	71.3	30.6	1,444.9
All Persons							
In Employment :	1,386.7	8.0	44.3	23.3	3.9	6.0	1,472.3
full-time	1,201.2	3.8	6.0	3.0	0.8	4.0	1,218.8
part-time :	185.6	4.3	38.3	20.3	3.1	1.9	253.5
<i>of which : part-time, not underemployed</i>	164.1	1.7	37.8	19.6	3.1	1.7	228.0
<i>part-time, underemployed</i>	21.5	2.5	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.2	25.4
Unemployed :	2.3	122.3	8.5	33.8	2.0	2.6	171.6
seeking full-time work	1.9	115.1	2.4	10.1	0.7	1.9	132.3
seeking part-time work	0.4	7.2	6.1	23.7	1.3	0.7	39.3
Marginally attached to the Labour Force	1.8	7.2	0.3	6.6	1.1	0.6	17.7
Others	5.4	34.2	290.3	521.5	248.2	78.7	1,178.4
Total persons aged 15 or over	1,396.3	171.7	343.4	585.2	255.3	87.8	2,839.8

Background Notes

Purpose of Survey The Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) began in September 1997, replacing the annual April Labour Force Survey. The purpose of the survey is the production of quarterly labour force estimates and occasional reports on special social topics. The survey meets the requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No. 577/98, adopted in March, which requires the introduction of quarterly labour force surveys in EU Member States.

Reference Period Information is collected continuously throughout the year, with 3,000 households surveyed each week to give a total sample of 39,000 households in each quarter. The first results from the survey relate to the three months September-November 1997.

Data Collection Information is collected on laptop computers, using computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) software.

Sample design A two-stage sample design is used. This comprises a first stage sample of 2,600 blocks (or small areas) selected at county level to proportionately represent eight strata reflecting population density. Each block was selected to contain, on average, 75 dwellings and the sample of blocks is fixed for a period of about five years. In the second stage of sampling, 15 households are surveyed in each block to give a total quarterly sample of 39,000 households.

Households are asked to take part in the survey for five consecutive quarters and are then replaced by other households in the same block. Thus, one fifth of the households in the survey are replaced each quarter and the QNHS sample involves an overlap of 80% between consecutive quarters and 20% between the same quarter in consecutive years.

The survey results are weighted to agree with independent population estimates broken down by age, sex and region. The independent population estimates for April 1997 have been updated to the September-November 1997 reference period, using available data.

ILO Labour Force Classification The primary classification used for the QNHS results is the ILO labour force classification. Labour Force Survey data on this basis have been published since 1988. The ILO classification distinguishes the following main subgroups of the population aged 15 or over:

In Employment: Persons who worked in the week before the survey for one hour or more for payment or profit, including work on the family farm or business and all persons who had a job but were not at work because of illness, holidays etc. in the week

Unemployed: Persons who, in the week before the survey, were without work and available for work and had taken specific steps, in the preceding four weeks, to find work.

Inactive Population (not in labour force): All other persons.

The labour force comprises persons employed plus unemployed.

Participation and Unemployment Rates The rates given in this release are based on the ILO classification. The Participation Rate is the number of persons in the labour force expressed as a percentage of the total population aged 15 or over. The Unemployment Rate is the number of unemployed expressed as a percentage of the total labour force.

Duration of Unemployment The duration of unemployment is the length of time since a person last had a job or began looking for work, whichever is more recent. The long-term unemployment rate is the number of persons unemployed for one year or more expressed as a percentage of the total labour force.

Principal Economic Status Classification

Results are also available using the Principal Economic Status (PES) classification which was used in the Labour Force Survey and the Census of Population. The PES classification is based on a single question in which respondents are asked what is their usual situation with regard to employment and given the following response categories:

- At work
- Unemployed
- Student
- Engaged on home duties
- Retired
- Other.

NACE Industrial Classification

The QNHS sectoral employment figures are based on the EU NACE classification as defined in Council Regulation (EEC) No. 3037/90. Ten NACE sub-categories are distinguished in Table 2 of this release. About half of these categories correspond exactly or very closely with the sectoral breakdown formerly used in the LFS. However, there are some discontinuities between the old and new series. The CSO can provide tables showing the correspondence between the two classifications, using LFS data, to interested users.

NESF Recommendations on Unemployment Statistics

In May 1997, the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) published its report on unemployment statistics (Forum Report No. 13) which included a range of recommendations on unemployment statistics. The CSO broadly supported the recommendations and, using them as a basis, proposed a new form of presentation for labour force statistics to the *Strategy Group on Employment and Unemployment (SGEU)*. The Committee endorsed the CSO's proposal and it was agreed by Government in December, 1997.

The new presentation is reflected in the prominence now given to the ILO-based measures of employment and unemployment and in the introduction of a number of new summary labour market indicators.

New Labour Market Indicators

Table 8 contains three new indicators of potential labour supply. These indicators take into account, in addition to the unemployed, groups outside the labour force who have indicated some interest in obtaining a job. These extra groups include discouraged workers, (who are not looking for work as they believe they are not qualified or that no work is available), and other groups who want work but do not meet all the ILO criteria to be classified as unemployed. Persons who indicated that they were not available or not looking for work because they were in education were not included in the calculation of any of these new indicators. For each of the indicators, figures are given back to 1988, when the ILO classification was first included in LFS reports.

A further indicator, the percentage of households with children under 15 which have no person in employment, has been calculated for the years 1988 to 1997 and is available on request. This indicator will be published in due course in conjunction with a comprehensive analysis of quarterly household and family statistics from the QNHS.

Comparing the LFS and the QNHS

The LFS was conducted each year in April and involved the completion of a written questionnaire in each of the sample households. The QNHS, on the other hand, involves continuous surveying (of 3,000 households each week) so that the results reflect the average situation over the course of three months. The LFS paper questionnaires have been replaced by laptop computers, allowing some key questions (such as existence of a job in the week before the survey, full-time versus part-time jobs) to be refined and improved. The main factors affecting comparability of the two surveys are:

- Seasonal effects on numbers employed and unemployed
- The change from a point-in-time to a continuous survey (survey reference period)
- Changes in the questionnaire, which has increased the observed level of labour force participation, particularly in part-time jobs.

The following, in summary, is an indirect evaluation of the impact of these changes:

Seasonal effects and survey reference period

The September-November period marks the end of the summer tourist season and the start of the academic year. These and other seasonal effects on the labour force would, all other things being equal, cause the labour force to be between 10,000 and 20,000 higher in September-November than in April. The underlying change would have to exclude this difference. It will not be possible to formally calculate seasonal factors until the survey has been conducted for a number of years and this initial estimate of the seasonal effect must be taken as very tentative.

Questionnaire change effects

The QNHS questionnaire identifies a higher proportion of respondents with a job in the week before the survey. This relates especially to part-time jobs and to work done by relatives in family farms or businesses. A comparison of the trends in the ILO results, which show a strong increase in part-time workers, and the PES results indicate that an additional 50,000 persons approximately are now being recorded as having a job of some description. This difference should be treated as a once-off discontinuity in moving from the LFS to the QNHS.

The combined effect of the two factors mentioned above is most visible in the very large increase in the numbers in part-time employment (+83,600) and seeking part-time employment (+16,900) .

Overall, changes in survey methodology account for between 60,000 and 70,000 out of the overall increase in the labour force between April 1997 and September-November 1997. This is, however, only a first attempt to reconcile the data from the old and new surveys. Further analysis will have to await QNHS data from subsequent quarters.