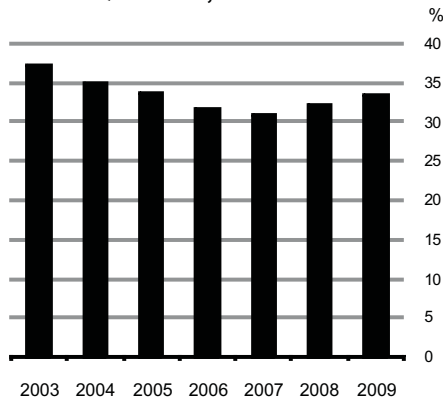




Percentage of employees who are union members, Quarter 2, 2003 to 2009



Quarterly National Household Survey *Union Membership* Quarter 2 2009

Just over one third of employees are union members

Just over one third of employees (34%) were union members in the second quarter of 2009. This represents an increase in the rate of union membership among employees from 31% in Q2 2007. These results are taken from the Quarterly National Household Survey. *See table 1, graph opposite and background notes.*

In Q2 2009, 37% of full-time employees stated that they were members of a union, compared with 20% of part-time employees. Among economic sectors the highest membership rate was in Public administration and defence (81 %) and the lowest rate was in Accommodation and food service activities (6 %). Among occupations the highest rate was in Associate professional and technical (50 %) and the lowest rate was in Sales (15%). Membership was highest in local units of over 100 (50%). Almost half (48%) of all employees who worked between 30 and 34 hours per week, were union members compared with just 7% of employees who usually worked between one and nine hours. *See table 3a.*

The youngest and oldest employees remain far less likely to be union members than other age groups. In Q2 2009, 47% of 45-54 year old employees were union members. Only 4% of employees aged 15-19, 16% of those aged 20-25 and 24% of those aged 65 or over were members. *See table 2b.*

Irish nationals were more than twice as likely to be union members as non-Irish nationals (37% compared with 14%). Female employees (35%) had a higher rate of membership than males (32%). Married employees (41%) had a far higher rate of membership than single employees (25%). Just over 40% of employees who were living as part of a couple with children were union members, compared with 24% of those who were not in a family unit. *See table 2b.*

Employees with higher levels of education were more likely to be members of a trade union. The highest rate was among those with third level education (40%), compared with 29% of those with only primary education or below. *See table 2b.*

Among regions, the highest rate of employees who were members of a union was in the Mid-West (38%) and the lowest (30%) was in the Mid-East. *See table 2b.*

As of the first quarter of 2009 the Quarterly National Household survey (QNHS) is now undertaken on a calendar quarter basis. Up to and including the fourth quarter of 2008 the QNHS operated on a seasonal quarter basis since its establishment in Q4 1997. This means that Quarter 2 previously referred to March-May, rather than the current calendar quarter of April-June. To reflect this change the tables in this release contain revised QNHS figures for all quarters from the second quarter of 2003 to the second quarter of 2007.

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Note on union membership estimates

The Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) includes the following question which is directed to all respondents who are employees at the time of interview:

Are you a member of a trade union or staff association which represents its members in labour and industrial relations issues?

1. *Yes*
2. *No*

This approach has been used over a period of years and therefore the results present a time-series which is consistent in terms of its scope, namely the number and percentage of employees in employment at the time of interview who are union members. In addition, the QNHS series provide a range of breakdowns which cannot be derived from other available sources such as union membership by gender, industry, occupation, age etc.

There are at least two sources of administrative data for trade union membership which differ in scope from the QNHS measure. The first is the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) register. The membership data collected by the ICTU includes all persons who are members of a trade union at a point in time based on the payment of subscriptions. The large majority of unions in Ireland are affiliated to the ICTU. The second source of data relating to union membership is the Registrar of Friendly Societies. Unions are required under law to make annual returns to the Registrar and are required to include in this the numbers of members.

The main differences between the QNHS data and the administrative data on union membership are:

- The QNHS union membership data does not include persons who are self-employed or unemployed at the time of the survey. Administrative sources may include self-employed members and members who have become unemployed but maintain their membership.
- It is up to individual respondents to the QNHS to correctly identify themselves as trade union members for the purposes of the survey. As proxy interviews are included in the QNHS, these interviews rely on the proxy respondent's knowledge to correctly identify a union member. Administrative data is collected directly from subscription records and as such does not rely on individuals to self-report their membership.
- It is possible that if one person is a member of two trade unions they would be counted twice in the administrative data but this would not arise in the QNHS as any given person can only be counted once.

It is not possible to quantify the specific effect of each of these differences but they should be borne in mind in comparing estimates of union membership from different sources.

Table 1 Employees aged 15 years and over classified by sex and whether they are members of a union, Quarter 2, 2003 to Quarter 2 2009¹

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Sex	Period	Union membership						Total	%	Unweighted Sample
		Yes	%	No	%	Not stated ²	%			
Male	Apr-Jun 2003	304	39	470	60	14	2	788	100	18,719
	Apr-Jun 2004	285	35	508	63	19	2	812	100	16,499
	Apr-Jun 2005	282	34	545	65	15	2	843	100	17,558
	Apr-Jun 2006	294	32	613	66	25	3	933	100	17,379
	Apr-Jun 2007	289	30	631	66	30	3	950	100	16,924
	Apr-Jun 2008	279	31	590	66	26	3	895	100	14,104
	Apr-Jun 2009	250	32	507	66	16	2	773	100	11,483
Female	Apr-Jun 2003	249	36	439	63	9	1	698	100	16,927
	Apr-Jun 2004	253	35	455	63	20	3	728	100	15,170
	Apr-Jun 2005	260	34	494	65	11	1	765	100	16,270
	Apr-Jun 2006	268	32	554	66	17	2	839	100	16,219
	Apr-Jun 2007	276	31	585	66	19	2	880	100	16,329
	Apr-Jun 2008	282	33	556	65	15	2	853	100	13,870
	Apr-Jun 2009	285	35	524	64	12	1	821	100	12,669
Total	Apr-Jun 2003	553	37	909	61	23	2	1,486	100	35,646
	Apr-Jun 2004	538	35	963	63	39	3	1,540	100	31,669
	Apr-Jun 2005	542	34	1,039	65	26	2	1,608	100	33,828
	Apr-Jun 2006	562	32	1,167	66	43	2	1,771	100	33,598
	Apr-Jun 2007	565	31	1,216	66	49	3	1,830	100	33,253
	Apr-Jun 2008	561	32	1,146	66	41	2	1,748	100	27,974
	Apr-Jun 2009	535	34	1,031	65	28	2	1,594	100	24,152

¹ Table contains revised figures.

² Note that the variation in the level of 'not stated' is due to methodological issues associated with the question on union membership.

Table 2a Employees aged 15 years and over classified by demographic profile and whether they are union members, Quarter 2, 2008

'000

Demographic profile	Union Membership 2008						Total	%	Unweighted Sample
	Yes	%	No	%	Not stated	%			
State	561	32	1,146	66	41	2	1,748	100	27,974
Region									
Border	50	29	116	67	5	3	172	100	3,003
Midland	36	37	57	58	4	4	97	100	1,614
West	53	34	103	65	2	2	159	100	2,321
Dublin	167	30	368	67	14	3	549	100	7,056
Mid-East	60	29	144	69	5	2	209	100	2,900
Mid-West	50	36	88	62	3	2	140	100	2,767
South-East	61	34	116	65	2	1	179	100	3,209
South-West	83	34	156	64	5	2	244	100	5,104
Sex									
Male	279	31	590	66	26	3	895	100	14,104
Female	282	33	556	65	15	2	853	100	13,870
Age group									
15-19	3	5	54	94	1	1	58	100	1,082
20-24	37	17	178	81	6	3	221	100	3,404
25-34	148	26	407	71	17	3	571	100	7,242
35-44	146	36	248	62	8	2	401	100	6,725
45-54	152	48	157	50	7	2	316	100	5,959
55-59	48	46	54	52	2	2	104	100	2,000
60-64	26	42	35	57	1	1	61	100	1,233
65 +	3	16	14	82	0	2	17	100	329
Nationality¹									
Irish nationals	517	36	888	62	32	2	1,437	100	24,567
Non-Irish nationals	44	14	258	83	9	3	311	100	3,407
Marital status									
Single	188	23	596	74	23	3	807	100	11,842
Married	342	40	495	58	17	2	854	100	14,571
Separated or divorced	22	34	43	65	1	2	66	100	1,160
Widowed	8	38	13	60	1	2	21	100	401
Family composition									
Member of a couple without children	104	33	206	65	6	2	316	100	5,004
Couple with children	276	41	389	57	13	2	678	100	11,554
Lone parent with children	45	28	114	69	5	3	165	100	2,702
Not in a family unit/Not stated	135	23	437	74	17	3	590	100	8,714
Highest education level attained									
Primary or below	36	30	82	68	2	2	120	100	2,190
Lower secondary	73	30	163	68	4	2	241	100	4,249
Higher secondary	145	29	340	69	10	2	496	100	7,970
Post leaving cert	54	31	114	66	5	3	172	100	2,803
Third level non degree	81	37	131	61	4	2	216	100	3,425
Third level degree or above	163	37	265	61	8	2	436	100	6,487
Other ²	9	13	51	76	7	11	68	100	850

¹ See Background Notes.

² Includes a small number of 'not stated'.

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 2b Employees aged 15 years and over classified by demographic profile and whether they are union members, Quarter 2, 2009

'000

Demographic profile	Union Membership 2009						Total	%	Unweighted Sample
	Yes	%	No	%	Not stated	%			
State	535	34	1,031	65	28	2	1,594	100	24,152
Region									
Border	53	34	97	63	4	3	154	100	2,235
Midland	31	36	52	60	3	4	87	100	1,243
West	52	34	98	64	2	2	152	100	1,924
Dublin	158	32	326	66	10	2	494	100	6,919
Mid-East	59	30	132	69	2	1	193	100	2,711
Mid-West	48	38	76	60	2	1	126	100	2,223
South-East	54	34	105	65	2	1	161	100	2,523
South-West	79	35	145	64	3	1	227	100	4,374
Sex									
Male	250	32	507	66	16	2	773	100	11,483
Female	285	35	524	64	12	1	821	100	12,669
Age group									
15-19	2	4	35	95	0	1	37	100	634
20-24	26	16	138	82	4	2	168	100	2,541
25-34	143	27	367	70	12	2	522	100	6,712
35-44	142	37	235	61	6	2	383	100	6,121
45-54	144	47	157	51	4	1	305	100	5,140
55-59	49	47	53	52	1	1	103	100	1,716
60-64	25	43	33	56	1	1	59	100	1,011
65 +	4	24	12	76	*	*	16	100	277
Nationality¹									
Irish nationals	498	37	820	61	23	2	1,341	100	21,079
Non-Irish nationals	37	14	212	84	5	2	253	100	3,073
Marital status									
Single	169	25	504	73	16	2	689	100	9,809
Married	337	41	475	58	11	1	823	100	12,988
Separated or divorced	23	35	41	64	1	1	65	100	1,058
Widowed	6	35	11	64	0	1	17	100	297
Family composition									
Member of a couple without children	105	34	201	65	4	1	310	100	4,557
Couple with children	277	41	388	58	9	1	674	100	10,637
Lone parent with children	40	28	103	71	3	2	145	100	2,265
Not in a family unit/Not stated	113	24	339	73	12	3	465	100	6,693
Highest education level attained									
Primary or below	27	29	66	70	1	1	95	100	1,538
Lower secondary	62	34	121	65	2	1	186	100	2,988
Higher secondary	128	30	293	69	6	2	427	100	6,538
Post leaving cert	56	30	126	68	4	2	186	100	2,853
Third level non degree	112	40	165	58	5	2	282	100	4,224
Third level degree or above	143	39	221	60	7	2	371	100	5,387
Other ²	6	13	38	81	2	5	47	100	624

¹ See Background Notes.

² Includes a small number of 'not stated'.

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 3a Employees aged 15 years and over classified by employment characteristics and whether they are union members, Quarter 2, 2008

'000

Employment characteristics	Union Membership 2008						Unweighted		
	Yes	%	No	%	Not stated	%	Total	%	Sample
ILO Economic Status									
In employment:	561	32	1,146	66	41	2	1,748	100	27,974
full-time	494	35	873	62	38	3	1,406	100	22,054
part-time	67	19	273	80	3	1	343	100	5,920
NACE economic sector									
A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2	8	20	90	*	2	22	100	354
B-E Industry	86	33	167	64	8	3	261	100	4,250
F Construction	41	25	122	72	5	3	168	100	2,632
G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	44	16	219	81	6	2	268	100	4,259
H Transportation and storage	33	49	34	49	1	2	68	100	1,131
I Accommodation and food service activities	8	7	101	91	2	2	111	100	1,641
J Information and communication	13	21	48	77	1	2	63	100	897
K-L Financial, insurance and real estate activities	30	31	66	67	3	3	98	100	1,446
M Professional, scientific and technical activities	12	13	73	83	3	3	88	100	1,318
N Administrative and support service activities	11	16	54	81	2	3	66	100	1,016
O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	82	80	19	19	2	2	102	100	1,743
P Education	83	60	54	39	2	1	139	100	2,409
Q Human health and social work activities	105	50	102	48	4	2	211	100	3,560
R-U Other NACE activities	11	14	69	84	2	3	82	100	1,318
Broad occupational group									
1. Managers and administrators	45	23	141	74	4	2	190	100	2,979
2. Professional	95	44	116	54	4	2	216	100	3,420
3. Associate professional and technical	80	48	83	50	3	2	166	100	2,631
4. Clerical and secretarial	88	35	157	63	5	2	250	100	4,063
5. Craft and related	58	29	136	68	7	3	202	100	3,165
6. Personal and protective service	69	30	158	68	5	2	233	100	3,770
7. Sales	25	15	141	83	3	2	170	100	2,719
8. Plant and machine operatives	52	36	88	61	4	3	145	100	2,363
9. Other	48	27	124	70	5	3	177	100	2,864
Unit size									
1-10	78	16	396	82	8	2	482	100	8,022
11-49	141	29	333	69	9	2	483	100	7,738
50-99	67	36	113	61	4	2	184	100	2,873
100+	259	50	253	48	10	2	521	100	8,164
Not stated	17	21	52	66	10	12	79	100	1,177
Usual hours of work per week									
1-9 hours	2	7	31	93	*	1	33	100	604
10-19	20	19	86	81	*	*	106	100	1,877
20-29	78	35	142	64	2	1	222	100	3,772
30-34	39	48	41	51	1	1	81	100	1,379
35-39	279	38	439	59	22	3	740	100	11,674
40-44	90	26	253	72	10	3	353	100	5,298
45 & over	31	25	89	73	2	2	121	100	1,859
Variable hours ¹	22	24	66	73	3	4	91	100	1,511
<i>Average hours per week</i>	36		35		38		35		

¹ Includes 'not stated'.

* Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Table 3b Employees aged 15 years and over classified by employment characteristics and whether they are union members, Quarter 2, 2009

'000

Employment characteristics	Union Membership 2009						Unweighted		
	Yes	%	No	%	Not stated	%	Total	%	Sample
LO Economic Status									
In employment:	535	34	1,031	65	28	2	1,594	100	24,152
full-time	464	37	754	61	25	2	1,243	100	18,596
part-time	70	20	277	79	3	1	351	100	5,556
NACE economic sector									
A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1	7	15	91	*	1	17	100	250
B-E Industry	68	29	158	68	6	3	232	100	3,521
F Construction	24	25	70	72	2	2	97	100	1,459
G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	37	16	198	83	4	2	239	100	3,621
H Transportation and storage	36	53	31	46	1	2	68	100	1,045
I Accommodation and food service activities	7	6	98	92	1	1	106	100	1,525
J Information and communication	15	23	49	75	1	2	65	100	928
K-L Financial, insurance and real estate activities	35	35	63	62	2	2	101	100	1,444
M Professional, scientific and technical activities	10	13	61	84	2	3	73	100	1,061
N Administrative and support service activities	9	17	46	81	1	2	56	100	858
O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	87	81	18	17	2	2	107	100	1,685
P Education	87	61	54	38	2	1	143	100	2,270
Q Human health and social work activities	107	50	105	49	2	1	214	100	3,330
R-U Other NACE activities	11	15	64	84	1	1	77	100	1,155
Broad occupational group									
1. Managers and administrators	44	24	139	74	4	2	187	100	2,831
2. Professional	96	45	111	53	4	2	210	100	3,168
3. Associate professional and technical	82	50	80	49	3	2	165	100	2,472
4. Clerical and secretarial	92	38	143	60	5	2	241	100	3,717
5. Craft and related	43	30	96	68	3	2	142	100	2,115
6. Personal and protective service	69	30	157	68	3	1	229	100	3,455
7. Sales	24	15	131	84	2	1	157	100	2,390
8. Plant and machine operatives	41	37	69	61	2	2	112	100	1,716
9. Other	43	29	105	69	3	2	152	100	2,288
Unit size									
1-10	73	17	357	82	6	1	436	100	6,697
11-49	138	32	282	66	5	1	425	100	6,447
50-99	67	40	97	59	2	1	167	100	2,524
100+	232	50	228	49	8	2	468	100	7,045
Not stated	25	25	67	68	7	7	98	100	1,439
Usual hours of work per week									
1-9 hours	2	6	30	94	*	*	32	100	527
10-19	21	19	88	80	1	1	110	100	1,792
20-29	81	35	146	64	2	1	230	100	3,599
30-34	41	47	45	52	1	1	87	100	1,344
35-39	263	40	381	58	15	2	659	100	9,845
40-44	82	28	203	70	6	2	291	100	4,264
45 & over	25	26	68	72	1	1	94	100	1,392
Variable hours ¹	20	22	69	76	2	2	91	100	1,389
<i>Average hours per week</i>	35		34		37		34		

¹Includes 'not stated'.

Sample occurrence too small for estimation.

Background Notes

Purpose of survey	The Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) began in September 1997, replacing the annual April Labour Force Survey (LFS). While the primary purpose of the survey is the production of quarterly labour force estimates, it also includes special modules on social topics. The survey meets the requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No. 577/98, adopted in March 1998, which requires the introduction of quarterly labour force surveys in EU Member States.
Reference period	<p>Information is collected continuously throughout the year from households surveyed each week to give a total sample of 39,000 households in each quarter. Up to and including the fourth quarter of 2008 the QNHS operated on a seasonal quarter basis since its establishment in Q4 1997. As of the first quarter of 2009 the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) is now undertaken on a calendar quarter basis.</p> <p>The reference quarters for survey results are: Q1 - January to March, Q2 - April to June, Q3 - July to September and Q4 - October to December.</p> <p>Questions on union membership are included in the core QNHS on an ongoing basis.</p>
Questionnaire	The question on union membership was asked to persons aged 15 and over who were in employment and classified as employees. The primary classification used for the QNHS results is the ILO (International Labour Office) labour force classification. According to the ILO classification, persons in employment are defined as 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.
Union membership	<p>Union membership is defined using the following question.</p> <p><i>Are you a member of a trade union or staff association which represents its members in labour and industrial relations issues?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Yes2. No
Statistical significance	All estimates based on sample surveys are subject to error, some of which is measurable. Where an estimate is statistically significantly different from another estimate it means that we can be 95% confident that differences between those two estimates are not due to sampling error.
Grossing effect	The QNHS grossing procedure aligns the distribution of persons covered in the survey with independently determined population estimates at the level of sex, five-year age group and region.
NACE Industrial Classification	The QNHS sectoral employment figures are based on the EU NACE Rev. 2 (Nomenclature generale des activites economiques dans les Communautés europeennes) classification as defined in Council Regulation (EC) no 1893/2006. Fourteen NACE sub-categories are distinguished in this release. From Q1 2009 NACE Rev. 2 has been adopted as the primary classification of industrial sectors for use in QNHS outputs. From Q4 1997 to Q4 2008 the NACE Rev. 1.1 classification had been in use.
Occupations	The occupation figures in this release are based on the UK Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) with some modifications to reflect the Irish labour market.
Size of local unit	The size of local unit figures presented in this release relate to the number of persons working in the respondent's place of employment including their employers. Place of employment refers to the location where the job is mainly carried out. A large company might have several locations (or local units).

Changes to Education Attainment question

Following consultation with users a new classification of educational attainment was introduced to the QNHS in Q2 2009. This classification is more detailed than that which was previously used. The main aim of the change was to ensure estimates could be produced in line with the national framework of qualifications (NFQ) which was not possible under the previously used classification. Specifically some of the previous answer categories related to multiple NFQ levels. The new classification has been specifically designed to ensure NFQ based estimates can now be produced. In particular the new classification is more specific and detailed in relation to qualifications outside the core educational system (i.e. various types of diplomas, certificates, trade based qualifications etc). The new data is not directly comparable to the old series in particular for post leaving cert and third level qualifications where various qualifications are now more accurately classified.

For information on the framework see: <http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/>. For information on the ISCED97 classification see: http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev_en.php?ID=7433_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC.

NUTS2 and NUTS3 regions

The regional classifications in this release are based on the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units) classification used by Eurostat. The NUTS3 regions correspond to the eight Regional Authorities established under the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993, which came into operation on 1 January 1994. The NUTS2 regions, which were proposed by Government and agreed by Eurostat in 1999, are groupings of the NUTS3 regions. The composition of the regions is set out below.

Border, Midland and Western NUTS2 Region		Southern and Eastern NUTS2 Region	
Border	Cavan Donegal Leitrim Louth Monaghan Sligo	Dublin	Dublin Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Fingal South Dublin
Midland	Laoighis Longford Offaly Westmeath	Mid-East	Kildare Meath Wicklow
West	Galway City Galway County Mayo Roscommon	Mid-West	Clare Limerick City Limerick County North Tipperary
		South-East	Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary Waterford City Waterford County Wexford
		South-West	Cork City Cork County Kerry

QNHS Social Modules

While the main purpose of the QNHS is the production of quarterly labour force estimates, there is also a provision for the collection of data on social topics through the inclusion of special survey modules. The selection of the major national modules undertaken to date has been largely based on the results of a canvas of users (over 100 organisations) that was conducted by the CSO in 1996, 2002, 2006 and most recently 2008. The results of the canvas are presented to the National Statistics Board and they are asked to indicate their priorities for the years ahead.

The schedule for social modules in any given year is based on the following structure:

Quarter 1	Accidents and Illness module, Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Survey.
Quarter 2	EU module (always covered under EU legislation).
Quarter 3	National module
Quarter 4	National module

The table below outlines the most recent social modules published in the QNHS:

Reference Quarter	Social module
Q2 2009	Cross-Border Shopping
Q2 2008	Educational Attainment
Q1 2008	Working Conditions
Q1 2008	ICT Household survey (as part of the Information Society and Telecommunications 2008 publication)
Q1 2008	Pension provision
Q4 2007	Childcare
Q3 2003	ICT household survey
Q2 2003	Life long learning
Q4 2002	Childcare
Q3 2007	Health
Q2 2007	Educational Attainment
Q2 2007	Union Membership
Q1 2007	Work-related Accidents and Illness (Q1 2003-Q1 2007)
Q1 2007	ICT household survey
Q4 2006	Crime and Victimization
Q3 2006	Sport and physical exercise
Q3 2006	Social capital
Q1 2006	ICT household survey
Q4 2005	Pension provision
Q4 2005	Special Saving Incentive Accounts (SSIAs)
Q3 2005	ICT household survey
Q3 2005	Recycling and energy conservation
Q2 2005	Reconciliation between work and family life
Q4 2004	Equality
Q1 2005	Childcare
Q3 2004	ICT household survey
Q2 2004	Union Membership
Q2 2004	Work organisation and working time
Q4 2003	Crime and Victimization
Q3 2003	Housing
Q3 2003	ICT household survey
Q2 2003	Life long learning

Social modules yet to be published:

Reference Quarter	Social module
Q3 2008	Lifelong Learning
Q4 2008	Travel to Work
Q1 2009	ICT Household Survey
Q1 2009	Accidents and Illness Module
Q2 2009	Entry of Young People into the Labour Market
Q3 2009	Caring
Q4 2009	Pension Provision