

Labour Market Statistics User Group 2022: Participant questions and areas of interest Theme: Labour Market January 2023

The Labour Market Statistics User Group took place online on Thursday 29th September 2022. This meeting included an overview of recent and planned developments in labour market statistics, and the presentation from this session is available from the [Labour Market Statistics User Group 2022](#) page on the NISRA website. To increase engagement with users and obtain feedback, we utilised Mentimeter software at various stages throughout the meeting.

Two general questions were asked:

1. What organisation are you from?
2. What is your go to labour market statistic(s)?

Followed by specific questions from Economic and Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) areas:

ELMS Area	Question
Labour Market	Feedback on the new HTML LMR publication?
	What would you like to see in a new topic paper?
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings	Did you see the ASHE Sctollytelling through Employee Earnings?
	What would you like to see from earnings statistics this year?
Business Register & Employment Survey	BRES published employment data for 2021. Did you use this data?
	We are proposing to change the way in which the margin of error is presented in the BRES output. Are you content with the proposed changes?

This document has a section for each of these area specific questions, where the responses from users are included (and grouped where applicable) and relevant replies provided by survey area (as applicable).

The final section includes how to get in contact with all Labour Market teams across ELMS branch.

Contents

Labour Market questions and responses.....	3
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings questions and responses	5
Business Register and Employment Survey questions and responses	7
Generic queries	9
Labour Market points of contact	11

Labour Market questions and responses

Feedback on the new HTML LMR publication?

- **The new format looks great – so clear**
- **New format looks great!**
- **Like the interactivity of the graphs**
- **I have found the new HTML version cleaner, clearer and easier to read and analyse**
- **Congratulations to all the team on the very clear changes. With some negative feedback on the NISRA site (and how hard it is to find stats) this is very simple to find data**
- **Looks good – will take time to get used to it when you're used to it being in the same way for some time!**
- **Like the interactivity**
- **I like the overview section having charts shown side-by-side with each paragraph of commentary, makes it easier to read and cross-reference**
- **Much more useable**
- **It is user friendly, however I like the pdf as it can be saved and referred back to as a source**
- **Modern**
- **Looks good**
- **Like key facts and mini charts**
- **Accessible and user friendly**
- **Looks fantastic – the way forward for NISRA publications**

The new HTML Labour Market Report (LMR) was developed in collaboration with NISRA Technology and Support lab. The aim of this project was to make use of [Reproducible Analytical Pipelines \(RAP\)](#) to automate the statistical and analytical process for the monthly LMR. Making our analysis automated and reproducible meets one of the key goals set out in the [GSS Quality Strategy](#) and helps us meet the quality, trustworthiness and value pillars of the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

Overall, feedback from users on the new HTML Labour Market Report was highly positive, supported by the summary of responses detailed above. The new HTML LMR can be found on the [NISRA website](#).

The new HTML LMR will be uploaded each month to the NISRA website and therefore users will still be able to source versions from previous months in order to make comparisons. Additionally, the HTML LMR can be downloaded and printed if required. [September 2022 LMR](#) marked the first in the series of HTML reports.

Labour Market questions and responses

What would you like to see in a new topic paper?

- **Working from home**
- **Green jobs**
- **Inactivity**
- **Tech jobs**
- **Skills**
- **Qualification levels**
- **Vacancy statistics**
- **Changes in industry**
- **Section 75 groups**
- **More on sectors struggling to refill jobs post COVID (is it a myth? Tourism/Taxis/Hospitality etc.)**

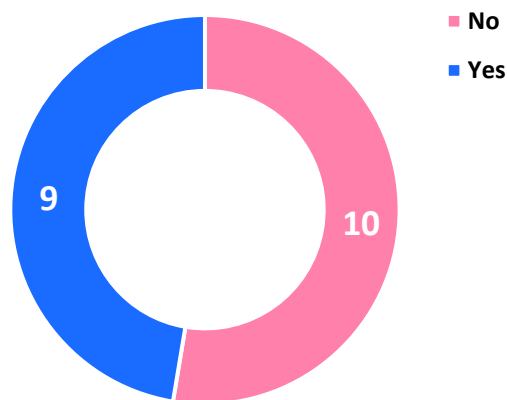
ELMS will consider the responses above from users of labour market statistics to decide on a theme for the upcoming topic paper. Previous papers produced using LFS data can be accessed via the [Labour Force Survey](#) and [Labour Force Survey Topic Papers](#) webpages.

Following the User Group meeting, the [LFS Annual Summary Report 2021](#) has now been released including breakdowns by industry, qualifications and labour market status-sub populations. Additional tables are also available at the [Highest qualification level held and participation in education/training](#) page. The [Digital Skills in Northern Ireland 2021/22](#) paper has also been released since the user group meeting.

As mentioned at the meeting, ELMS plan to publish reports on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and work quality over the next few months, in addition to the planned topic paper.

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings questions and responses

Did you see the Scrollytelling through Employee Earnings?



The 2021 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) Scrollytelling article was developed in collaboration with NIRSA Technology and Support lab. Scrollytelling, is a way to dynamically present statistics that unfold as you scroll through the article.

The article presents the distribution of employee earnings up to 2021, the distribution of earnings of those furloughed in 2020 and 2021, and the proportion of jobs paid around the national living wage. We would encourage users to take a look at the [Scrollytelling through Employee Earnings](#).

A new Scrollytelling article was published alongside the 2022 ASHE results and discusses how real earnings (which take inflation into account), have changed in Northern Ireland over the last ten years for different age groups. This is available to read at [Real Earnings in Northern Ireland](#).

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings questions and responses

What outputs would you like to see from earnings statistics this year?

- **Real earnings**
- **Gender pay gap**
- **Cost of living**
- **Section 75**
- **Disability**
- **Living wage**
- **Inequality**
- **Public and Private**
- **Scrollytelling (distribution by median)**

Users responded with a range of topics they would like to see from earnings statistics, detailed above.

ASHE currently publish statistics on some of the requested topics. Median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees in nominal and real terms is included in the ASHE publication. The 2022 publication includes a separate section with particular focus on real earnings, which can be found alongside all the detailed tables on the [ASHE publication page](#).

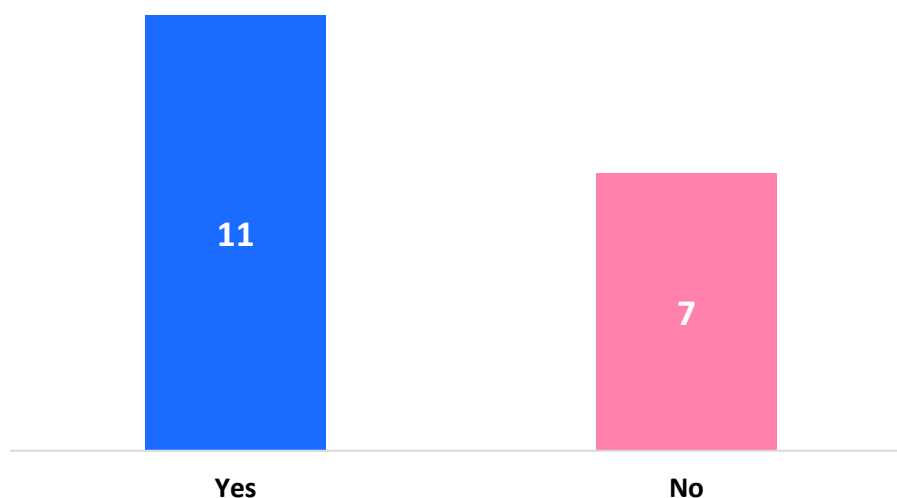
For statistics on the gender pay gap users can consult the Section 4 of the new ASHE HTML publication. A comparison of median gross weekly earnings for full-time employees in the public and private sectors, for Northern Ireland and the UK, can also be found in the ASHE statistical bulletin. Data tables for both these topics are available on the [ASHE publication page](#).

Detailed statistics on the distribution of earnings, including those jobs paid around the National Living Wage and the impact of furlough, is included in the statistical bulletin. This information is also summarised in the [2021 ASHE Scrollytelling article](#).

A new Scrollytelling article, which focuses on how real earnings (which takes inflation into account), have changed in Northern Ireland over the last ten years for different age groups, was published alongside the 2022 ASHE results. This is available to read at [Real Earnings in Northern Ireland](#).

Business Register and Employment Survey questions and responses

BRES published employment data for 2021. Did you use this data?

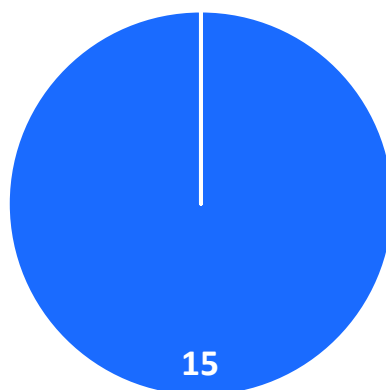


The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) reports on the number of employee jobs, both full-time and part-time, for males and females, by sector, industry and geography. BRES is an annual survey of employee jobs and includes a sample size of around 30,000 (big BRES) or a sample size of around 16,000 (small BRES), depending on the annual cycle.

The latest BRES publication was released on 30th June 2022 and relates to employee jobs for 2021. The statistical bulletin was published in both [HTML](#) and [PDF](#) format. A range of [detailed data tables](#) are also available online which include employee job estimates down to 5 digit SIC 2007, district council area, parliamentary constituency area and wards.

Business Register and Employment Survey questions and responses

We are proposing to change the way in which the margin of error is presented in the BRES output. Are you content with the proposed changes?



■ Yes

The BRES team asked users their view on proposed changes to how margin of error is presented in BRES outputs. The current practice is to present confidence intervals as a plus or minus value in output tables. An example of which can be seen in the [BRES 2021 detailed data tables](#). For 2022 onwards, the BRES team propose taking a similar approach to the ONS and presenting coefficients of variation using colour scales to indicate the level of accuracy around results. An example of which can be found on the [ONS website](#) and a side by side comparison of the current and proposed new method is shown in the 2022 [user group slides](#).

All users who responded to the proposed changes agreed that they were content with the new approach and this will be taken forward for the 2022 BRES.

Generic queries

A number of questions we asked of ONS, the questions and answers are below:

How do you deal with non-response rates and how do you deal with biases (ONS)?

Non-response

At the design stage we have implemented a structured trial-and-error approach to the adaptive survey design. We have identified under-represented strata and we have targeted them using the 'knock to nudge' (KtN) approach with the hope to convert more of these individuals to responders. If successful this should make the sample more representative to the population in terms of age, urban/rural proportions, and proportions based on Indices of Deprivation. This is the first attempt at reducing non-response bias. There is also a pre-calibration step at the weighting stage which acts as a non-response adjustment to the weighting systems, at the second stage. As the full adaptive and responsive design rolls out, there may be further developments to target non-responders based upon live updates during fieldwork activity.

Biases

We have designed the survey collection operation to reduce bias in the data through the implementation of the adaptive survey design but it is the estimation systems that then deal with any remaining biases left by calibration to population totals. This is the same approach to dealing with biases as in the LFS. We are hoping to eventually have more timely admin data to allow us to remove certain biases in the sample. For example, if there is a bias for tenure in the data and we can gain access to better administrative data on tenure then we can work to remove that bias from the estimate.

Do you expect there to be any breaks in the LFS (ONS)?

There are likely to be some breaks, yes, for multiple potential reasons including: mode changes, question changes, methodology changes, definitional changes, or possibly removal of certain questions. LFS weighting in recent years has been struggling due to the pandemic introducing certain biases as well. It will be hard for us to disentangle the different effects of these different impacts fully, especially for the variety of variables and breakdowns that are possible, so our main aim at first is to ensure the TLFS estimate is as accurate as possible so we know where the trend currently is. Then we would address discontinuity between the two surveys formally. Analytical work is underway to investigate both the quality of the transformed survey, and also to identify any potential structural breaks for further investigation, and we plan to release a summary position on the topic of discontinuity in Spring 2023. It is, of course, hoped that any potential breaks would be the result of improved methods or design and therefore represent an even more accurate position of the economy and population.

Further questions were asked of NISRA staff, the questions and answers are below:

Will the new HTML LMR format still allow for PDFs to be saved and/or printed? Will these be accessible to users?

Yes, the new HTML LMR will be uploaded each month to the NISRA website and therefore users will still be able to source versions from previous months in order to make comparisons. Additionally, the HTML LMR can be downloaded and printed if required. [September 2022 LMR](#) marked the first in the series of HTML reports.

Request for Scrollytelling link.

The latest scrollytelling article, [Scrollytelling through Real Earnings](#), as well as last year's article, [Scrollytelling through Employee Earnings](#), can be found on the NISRA website.

We would be interested in information relating to proportion of 16-64s living in Belfast skilled to Level 3-5 and those Level 6+. E.g. whether residents are qualified to take advantage of investment in new jobs.

Tables broken down by qualification level for both council area and parliamentary constituency can be found in the supporting tables to the [Labour Force Survey Annual Summary Report 2021](#).

Will the slide decks be shared?

Yes, the slides are published on our 2022 [Labour Market Statistics user engagement page](#).

Labour Market points of contact

To get in touch with the respective areas, please contact the email address provided below.

Area	Email
Labour Force Survey (LFS) Work quality	LFS@finance-ni.gov.uk
Claimant Count	claimantcount@finance-ni.gov.uk
Redundancies	redundancies@finance-ni.gov.uk
Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)	ashehelpline@finance-ni.gov.uk
HMRC RTI	Ashleigh.warwick@nisra.gov.uk (earnings) Ciaran.kerr@nisra.gov.uk (employees)
Business Register and Employment (BRES)	Arlene.connolly@nisra.gov.uk
Quarterly Employment Survey (QES)	Ciaran.kerr@nisra.gov.uk
ELMS dashboards	Aaron.maguire@nisra.gov.uk