

17th December 2019

Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey

Theme: Labour Market
Frequency: Quarterly
Geographical Area: Northern Ireland

Key Points

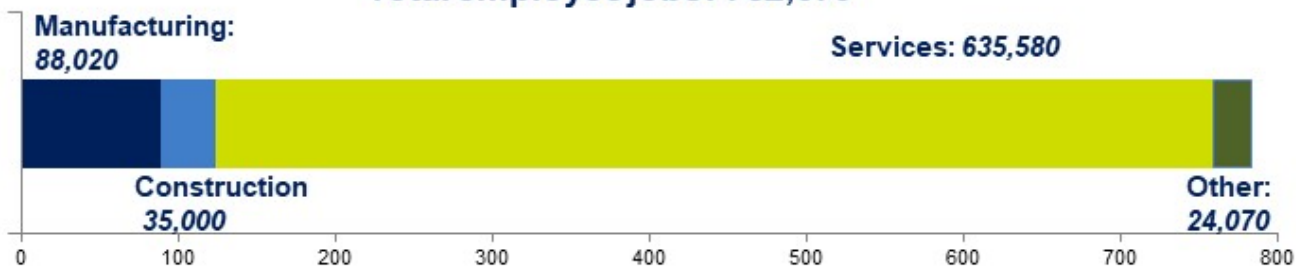
Employee jobs estimates are calculated from the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) aspect of the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS). The QES has a sample size of approximately 6,000 and covers all employers with 25 or more employees, all public sector employers, all businesses with more than one industry activity and a representative sample of smaller firms.

- The number of (seasonally adjusted) employee jobs in September 2019 was estimated at a record high of 782,670. This was an increase of 4,210 jobs over the quarter and 15,540 jobs over the year. The annual change in employee jobs was statistically significant i.e. the recorded change exceeded the variability expected from a survey of this size and was likely to reflect real change. Increases were experienced in all sectors over the year, with the services sector accounting for the majority of the growth.
- The numbers of (seasonally adjusted) employee jobs in the services (635,580 jobs) and other (24,070 jobs) sectors reached the highest levels on record in September 2019.
- Private sector jobs increased over the quarter (0.7% or 4,170 jobs) and the year (2.3% or 12,900 jobs) to their highest level (573,430) on record.
- Public sector jobs increased over the quarter (0.4% or 800 jobs) and the year (1.4% or 2,920 jobs). There are now 17,600 fewer public sector jobs than the series peak in September 2009 (-7.7%).
- In the last five years, employee jobs have increased by 8.3% (60,100 jobs) and by 13.2% (91,390 jobs) from the low in March 2012.
- The annualised growth rate of 1.8% in 2019 is below that seen in 2018 and 2017.

NISRA Labour Market Statistics

Quarterly Employment Survey – September 2019

Total employee jobs: 782,670



Change on quarter



Manufacturing
-0.2% (-200)



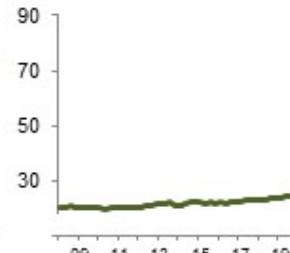
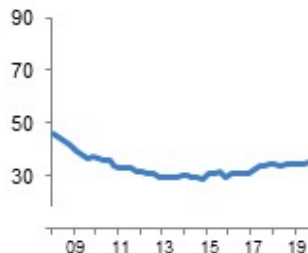
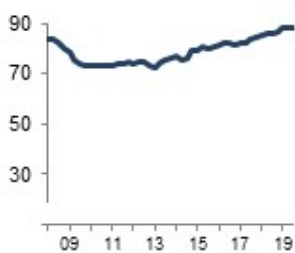
Construction
+0.5% (180)



Services
+0.6% (4,100)



Other
+0.5% (130)



Change on year



Manufacturing
+2.4% (2,070)



Construction
+2.3% (780)



Services
+1.9% (12,110)



Other
+2.5% (580)

All data seasonally adjusted and subject to future revisions.
Data published on 17th December 2019 by Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch (NISRA).

Northern Ireland employee jobs annual change by industry Q3 2018 - Q3 2019

Change by broad industry sector (seasonally adjusted)

Manufacturing



+2.4% (2,070 jobs)
total jobs 88,020

Construction



+2.3% (780 jobs)
total jobs 35,000

Services



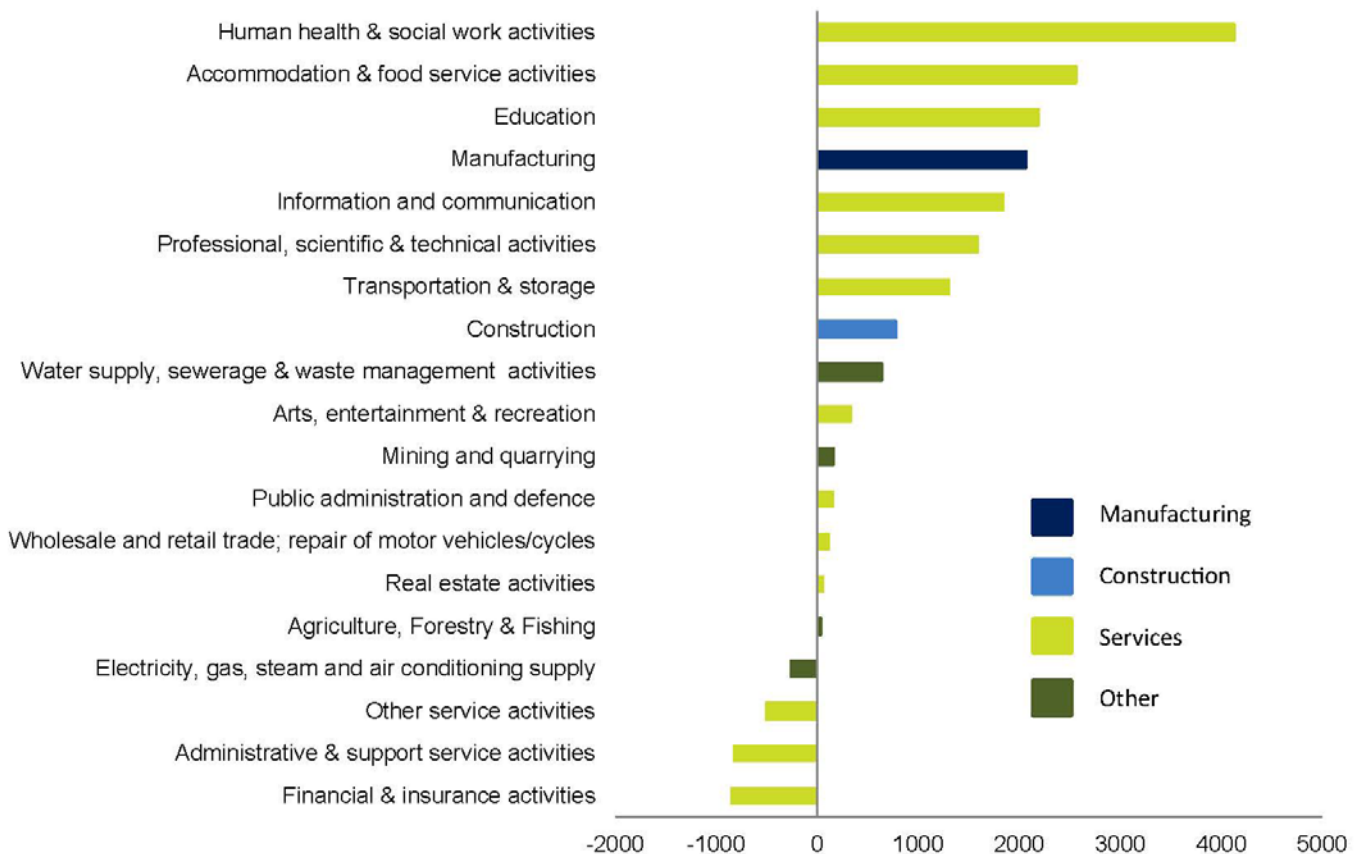
+1.9% (12,110 jobs)
total jobs 635,580

Other



+2.5% (580 jobs)
total jobs 24,070

Change by industry section (seasonally adjusted)



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NATIONAL STATISTICS STATUS



National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These statistics were designated as National Statistics in August 2010 following a full [assessment](#) against the [Code of Practice](#).

Since the assessment by the UK Statistics Authority, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Quantified the level of uncertainty around estimates by providing confidence intervals for headline estimates;
- Removed pre-release access to enhance trustworthiness and also brought the publication date forward as a result;
- [Consulted users](#) at Labour Market User Groups and streamlined outputs in line with the UK series;
- Reduced [business burden](#) by offering the option of online data returns.

1 Summary of Employee Jobs

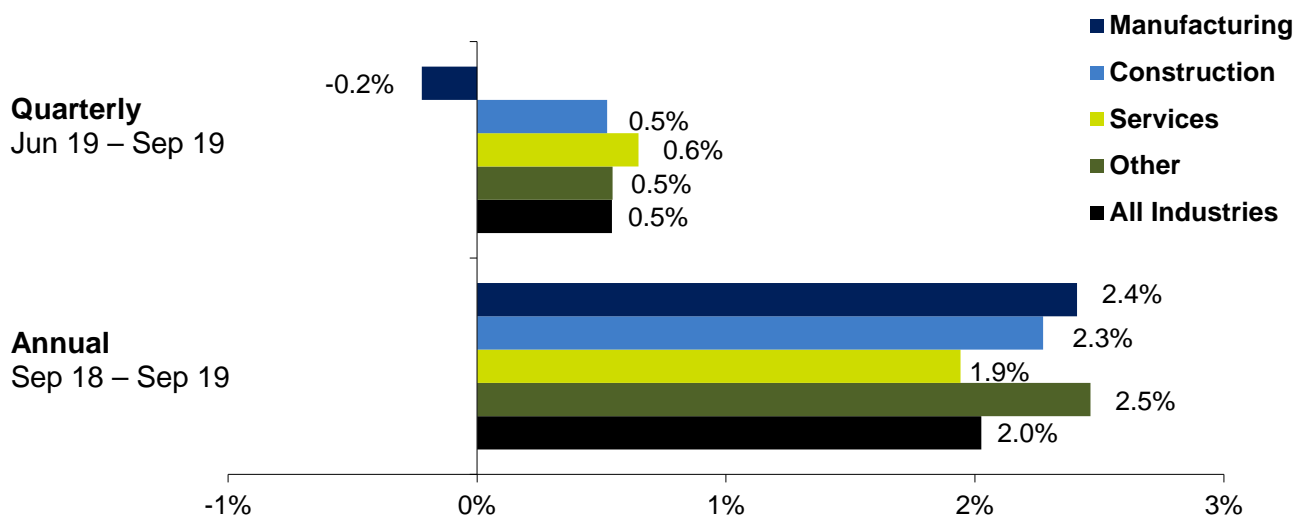
Updated December 2019

Change in employee jobs

The seasonally adjusted employee jobs estimate for Northern Ireland (NI) at September 2019 was 782,670 (+/- 7,050¹). This was:

- an increase of 0.5% (4,210 jobs) over the quarter from the revised June 2019 estimate of 778,460.
- an increase of 2.0% (15,540 jobs) over the year from the revised September 2018 estimate of 767,130. The annual increase in employee jobs was statistically significant.

Fig 1.1 Annual and Quarterly Changes in Employee Jobs at Section Level



[Download in excel](#)

Change over the quarter

Comparing seasonally adjusted September 2019 employee jobs to the revised June 2019 estimates showed:

- a decrease in the manufacturing sector of 0.2% (-200 jobs) to 88,020 jobs.
- an increase in the construction sector of 0.5% (180 jobs) to 35,000 jobs.
- an increase in the services sector of 0.6% (4,100 jobs) to 635,580 jobs.
- an increase in the other industries sector of 0.5% (130 jobs) to 24,070 jobs.

Change over the year

Comparing seasonally adjusted September 2019 employee jobs to the revised September 2018 estimates showed:

- an increase in the manufacturing sector of 2.4% (2,070 jobs) to 88,020 jobs.
- an increase in the construction sector of 2.3% (780 jobs) to 35,000 jobs.
- an increase in the services sector of 1.9% (12,110 jobs) to 635,580 jobs.
- an increase in the other industries sector of 2.5% (580 jobs) to 24,070 jobs.

¹ Represents 95% confidence interval around estimate. More information is available in the [QES Confidence Intervals User Guidance](#).

Comparing unadjusted data over the year, estimates showed:

- (i) Social work activities without accommodation; (ii) education and (iii) food and beverage service activities saw the greatest increases over the year accounting for 31.3% of all increases in employee jobs.
- (i) Office administrative, office support and other business support activities; (ii) financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding and (iii) retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles saw the greatest decreases over the year accounting for 44.4% of all decreases.
- Despite the decreases, there was a net increase of 15,510 in employee jobs.

Annualised change

Comparing the seasonally adjusted employee jobs data for Quarter 4 2017 – Quarter 3 2018 to Quarter 4 2018 – Quarter 3 2019 showed:

- an increase in the manufacturing sector of 2.6%.
- an increase in the construction sector of 1.4%.
- an increase in the services sector of 1.7%.
- an increase in the other industries sector of 3.5%.

Public / private sector changes

Seasonally adjusted employee jobs estimates for the public and private sectors at September 2019 showed:

- an increase of 0.4% (800 jobs) in the public sector over the quarter and an increase of 1.4% (2,920 jobs) over the year to 210,580 jobs.
- an increase of 0.7% (4,170 jobs) in the private sector over the quarter and an increase of 2.3% (12,900 jobs) over the year to 573,430 jobs.

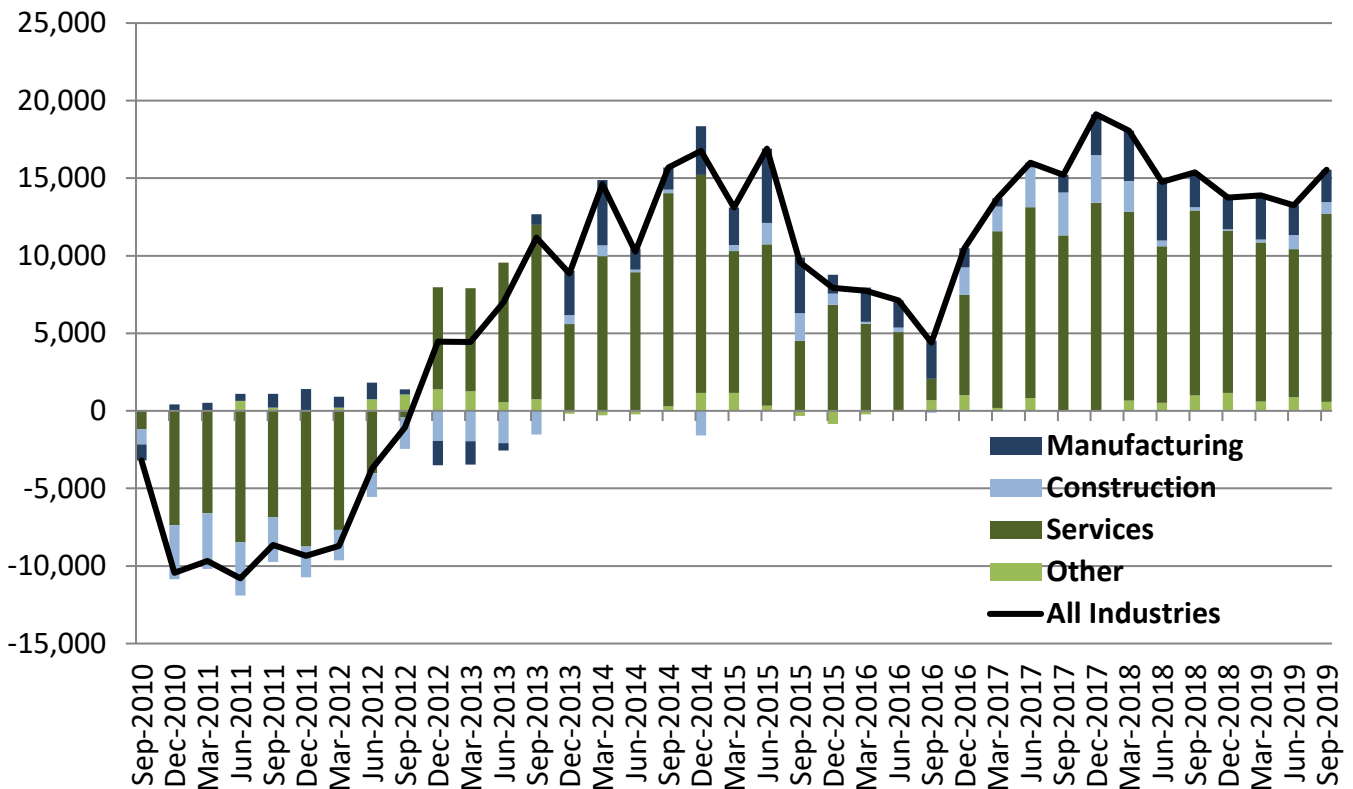
Commentary

Northern Ireland (NI) employee jobs increased over the quarter and the year to a record high of 782,670 in September 2019 (in the seasonally adjusted series). The number of jobs has shown quarter on quarter growth since December 2015. The growth in (seasonally adjusted) employee jobs from Q2 to Q3 2019 (0.5%) is bigger than the growth seen between these two quarters in 2016 (0.3%), 2017 (0.2%) and 2018 (0.3%).

All four broad industry sectors showed an increase over the year with the services and other sectors reaching record highs. The services sector, which accounts for 81% of jobs in NI, accounted for the majority of the total annual growth (78%). This is consistent with trends since recovery began in 2012 (Fig 1.2).

Over the quarter, increases in employee jobs were seen in the services, construction and other industry sectors, while the manufacturing sector showed a small decrease. This resulted in a net increase of 4,210 jobs over the quarter.

Fig 1.2 Annual Change in Employee Jobs in NI, September 2010 – September 2019



[Download in excel](#)

Private sector jobs continued to grow over the quarter and year and are now at a series high; 12% above the pre-downturn peak in June 2008. Public sector jobs showed an increase over the quarter and year to September 2019. There are now approximately 17,600 fewer public sector jobs than the series peak in September 2009.

The trend of increasing numbers of jobs in the NI economy is consistent with the UK experience, which is also reporting increases over the quarter and year to a record high (31 million).

Context

This bulletin presents data from the Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey (QES), which is conducted by the Economic & Labour Market Statistics (ELMS) Branch of the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA).

The QES provides short-term employee jobs estimates for Northern Ireland and covers all employers with 25 or more employees, all public sector employers, all businesses with more than one industry activity and a representative sample of smaller firms. As it is a sample survey, estimates are subject to sampling variability.

The QES excludes the self-employed, HM Armed Forces, private domestic servants, homeworkers and Training for Success trainees without a contract of employment (non-employed status). The survey collects information on the number of males/females in full-time and part-time employment by business activity and the results are collated into industry classes using the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC07). The number of jobs are counted rather than the number of persons with jobs. For example, a person holding both a full-time job and part-time job, or someone with two part-time jobs, will be counted twice.

All figures included in the QES are adjusted for seasonality, unless stated otherwise.

Figures from the QES are included in the [Labour Market Report \(LMR\)](#) alongside figures from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Claimant Count, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) and redundancies data.

QES employee jobs are also a component of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) quarterly [workforce jobs estimates](#) for the UK.

QES employee jobs are included in the [DfE Economic Commentary](#) which provides an overview of the state of the Northern Ireland economy, setting it in context with the UK and Republic of Ireland. The most up-to-date official statistics on the economy and labour market are available on the [Economic Overview section](#) of the website.

[Revisions](#)

Results are provisional and subject to revision as more up-to-date data becomes available (e.g. through late returns). Figures can also change as a result of the seasonal adjustment process, methodological changes or changes to classifications.

Further information on using QES employee jobs statistics can be found on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#).

Alternative measures of employment

QES is only one of the measures of employment for Northern Ireland. Other measures are summarised below.

[Business Register and Employment Survey \(BRES\)](#)

The BRES is a statutory business survey based on a larger sample than QES. Quarter 3 of the QES is taken at the same survey date as BRES. Breakdowns of employee jobs by geographical location and industry are available from BRES.

Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The LFS is a household survey carried out by interviewing individuals about their personal circumstances and work. The LFS defines employment as the number of people in work. This differs from the concept of jobs measured by business surveys as a person can have more than one job, and some jobs may be shared by more than one person. LFS employment figures are based on a rolling three month period whereas QES measures the number of jobs on a particular day. LFS employment figures include those who are employed, self-employed, unpaid family workers and those on government supported training programmes.

Farm Census

Figures for the number of employees in agriculture are available separately from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Farm Census. The Census is conducted in June of each year, with the results published in the January of the following year. The QES includes farm census figures in the total number of employee jobs.

Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Employee Bulletin

NICS employee jobs figures are included in the QES employee jobs figures and breakdowns can be found in Table 5.12 on the Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#) (in the historical data section).

Further information on NICS employee jobs can be found in the [NICS Employee Bulletin](#). This bulletin provides details on NICS staff numbers on a quarterly basis and provides comparisons with the previous quarter, the wider public sector, as well as a comparison with the previous year. The survey dates for the NICS Employee Bulletin differ from the QES survey dates. As such the figures for the NICS employee jobs may differ.

2 NI Employee Jobs

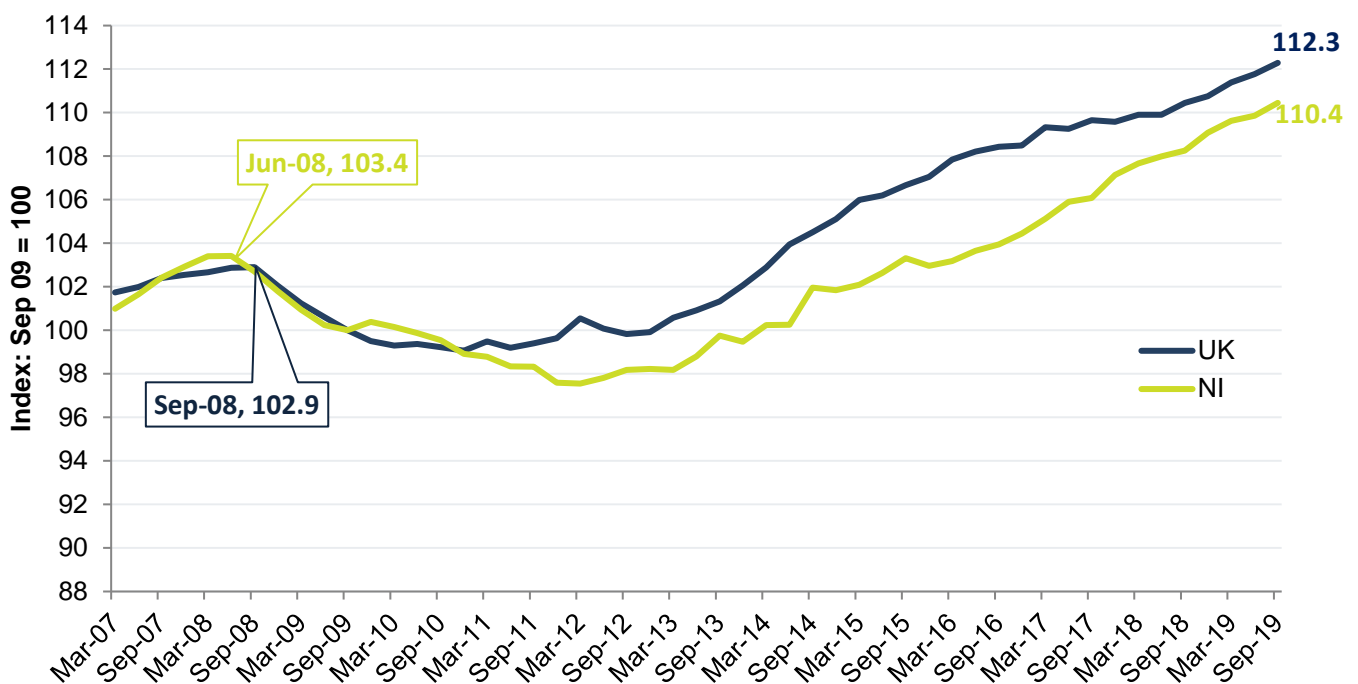
Employee: An employee is defined as anyone aged 16 years or over that is directly paid from a business's payroll for carrying out a full-time or part-time job or being on a training scheme in Northern Ireland.

The QES counts the number of jobs rather than the number of persons with jobs.

Key Findings:

- Employee jobs increased over the quarter by 0.5% (4,210 jobs) and over the year by 2.0% (15,540 jobs) to a series high of 782,670.

Figure 2.1: Index of Employee Jobs, March 2007 – September 2019



Figures are indexed to September 2009

[Download in excel](#)

Figure 2.1 shows the estimated seasonally adjusted employee jobs, indexed to allow comparison between NI and the UK. For NI the pre-downturn peak was in June 2008 and the UK in September 2008. The UK reached its lowest point in December 2010, more than a year before the NI low in March 2012. Both NI and the UK have surpassed their pre-downturn peaks; NI jobs are now 6.8% above their June 2008 level while UK jobs are 9.1% above their September 2008 level.

Employee Jobs

The September 2019 seasonally adjusted employee jobs total in NI was estimated at 782,670 which was:

- an increase of 0.5% (4,210 jobs) from the revised June 2019 estimate of 778,460.
- an increase of 2.0% (15,540 jobs) over the year from the revised September 2018 estimate of 767,130.

The annual increase in employee jobs was statistically significant.

Employee jobs by broad industry sector

The seasonally adjusted quarterly change consisted of:

- a decrease of 0.2% in the manufacturing sector (-200 jobs) to 88,020 jobs.
- an increase of 0.5% in the construction sector (180 jobs) to 35,000 jobs.
- an increase of 0.6% in the services sector (4,100 jobs) to 635,580 jobs.
- an increase of 0.5% in the other industries sector (130 jobs) to 24,070 jobs.

The seasonally adjusted annual change consisted of:

- an increase of 2.4% in the manufacturing sector (2,070 jobs) to 88,020 jobs.
- an increase of 2.3% in the construction sector (780 jobs) to 35,000 jobs.
- an increase of 1.9% in the services sector (12,110 jobs) to 635,580 jobs.
- an increase of 2.5% in the other industries sector (580 jobs) to 24,070 jobs.

The number of employee jobs has been increasing since December 2015 in the seasonally adjusted series, with the services sector accounting for over two thirds of the growth in employee jobs since this point.

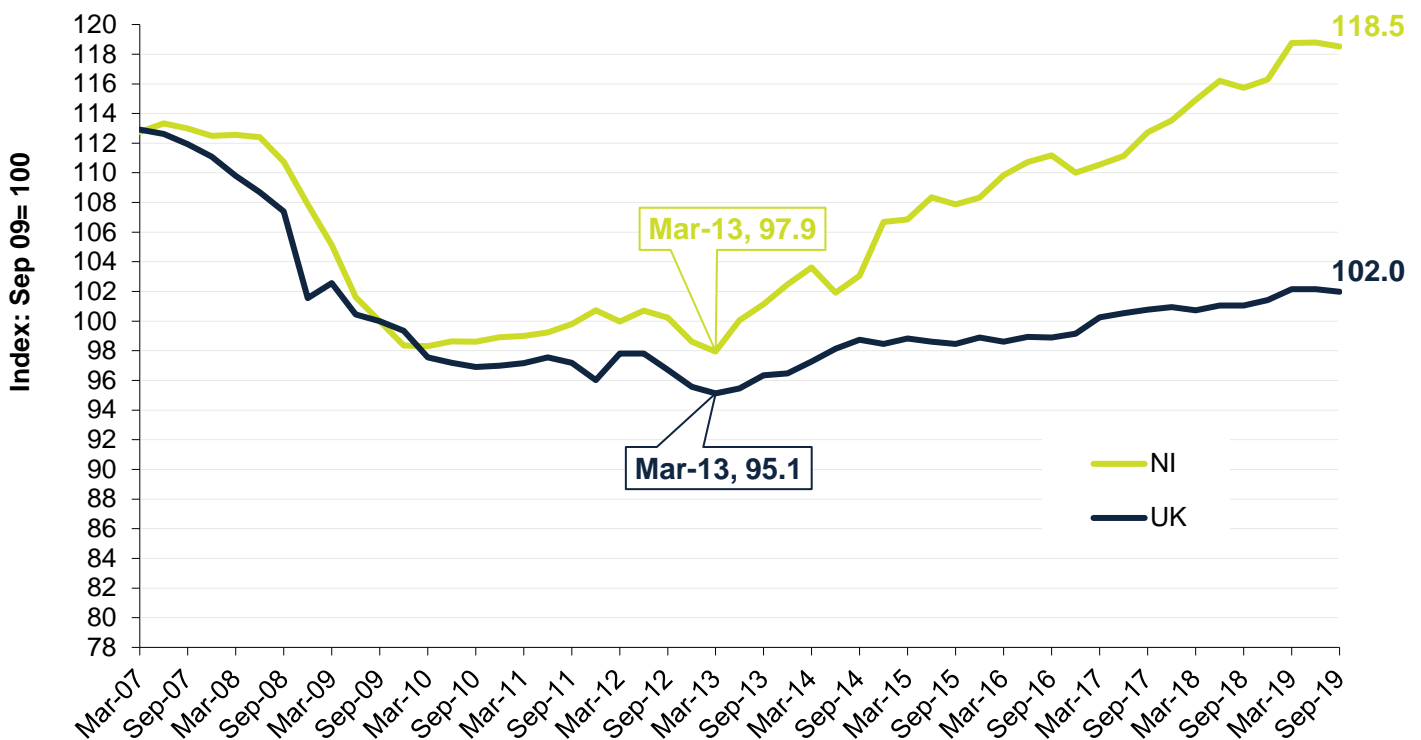
Manufacturing sector

Manufacturing sector: the manufacturing sector contains businesses which produce merchandise for use or sale. It also contains businesses with activity of printing and reproduction of recorded media and businesses that repair and install machinery and equipment. Manufacturing is part of the broader production sector.

Key Findings:

- The manufacturing sector accounted for 11.2% of all employee jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted figures showed a decrease of 0.2% over the quarter and an increase of 2.4% over the year to 88,020 jobs in September 2019.

Figure 2.2: Index of manufacturing employee jobs, March 2007– September 2019



Figures are indexed to September 2009

[Download in excel](#)

The manufacturing sector in NI experienced a period of sharp decline between June 2008 and December 2009 whilst the UK showed a sharp decrease in the number of employee jobs in the manufacturing sector between December 2007 and September 2010. Both NI and the UK reached a series low in March 2013, and NI jobs are now 21% above this level.

Key Findings

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the manufacturing sector decreased by 0.2% (-200 jobs) over the quarter and increased by 2.4% (2,070 jobs) over the year to 88,020 jobs.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC manufacturing data that have not been adjusted for seasonality. Please note that estimates at 2 digit SIC can fluctuate due to sampling variability and changes to industrial classification.

Changes over the year

Over the year to September 2019 the unadjusted figures showed an increase of 2.4% (2,070 jobs) in the manufacturing sector. The 3 largest contributors to this increase were:

- an increase of 9.5% (650 jobs) in the manufacture of machinery and equipment n.e.c..
- an increase of 60.8% (560 jobs) in the repair and installation of machinery and equipment.
- an increase of 2.5% (520 jobs) in the manufacture of food products.

The overall increase was partially offset by decreases in the manufacturing sector; the 3 largest decreases over the year being:

- a decrease of 9.5% (-280 jobs) in the manufacture of electrical equipment.
- a decrease of 5.8% (-230 jobs) in the manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers.
- a decrease of 12.9% (-220 jobs) in the printing and reproduction of recorded media.

For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#).

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 6 – Further Info.

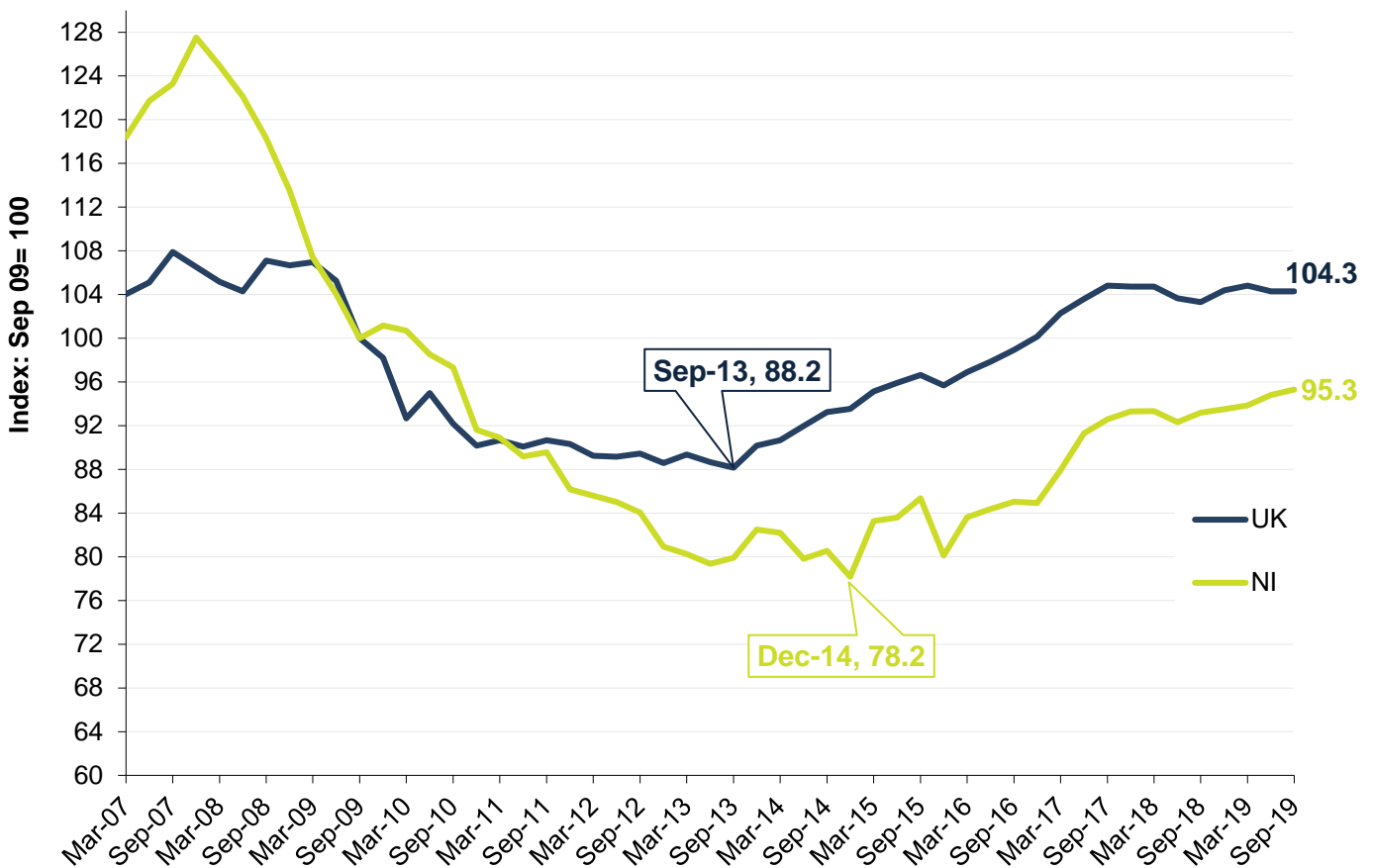
Construction sector

Construction sector: construction is the process of creating and building infrastructure or a facility. It differs from manufacturing in that manufacturing typically involves mass production of similar items without a designated purchaser and construction is typically done on location for a known client. The construction sector consists of businesses with activity in the construction of buildings, civil engineering or specialised construction activities.

Key Findings:

- The construction sector accounted for 4.5% of all employee jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted figures showed an increase of 0.5% over the quarter and an increase of 2.3% over the year to 35,000 jobs in September 2019.

Figure 2.3: Index of construction employee jobs, March 2007– September 2019



Figures are indexed to September 2009

[Download in excel](#)

The most recent series low in the construction sector was in December 2014 (28,710 jobs). Most recent estimates show a 21.9% improvement on this level; however the number of employee jobs in the construction sector is currently 25.3% lower than the series peak in December 2007. The UK has almost regained pre-downturn levels, with the most recent estimate showing that the UK construction sector is currently 3.3% lower than the series peak in September 2007.

Key Findings

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the construction sector increased by 0.5% (180 jobs) over the quarter and by 2.3% (780 jobs) over the year to 35,000 jobs.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC construction data that have not been adjusted for seasonality. Please note that estimates at 2 digit SIC can fluctuate due to sampling variability and changes to industrial classification.

Changes over the year

Over the year to September 2019 the unadjusted figures showed an increase of 2.2% (760 jobs) in the construction sector.

The following changes occurred over the year:

- an increase of 4.9% (390 jobs) in construction of buildings.
- an increase of 3.6% (300 jobs) in civil engineering.
- an increase of 0.4% (70 jobs) in specialised construction activities.

For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#).

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 6 – Further Info.

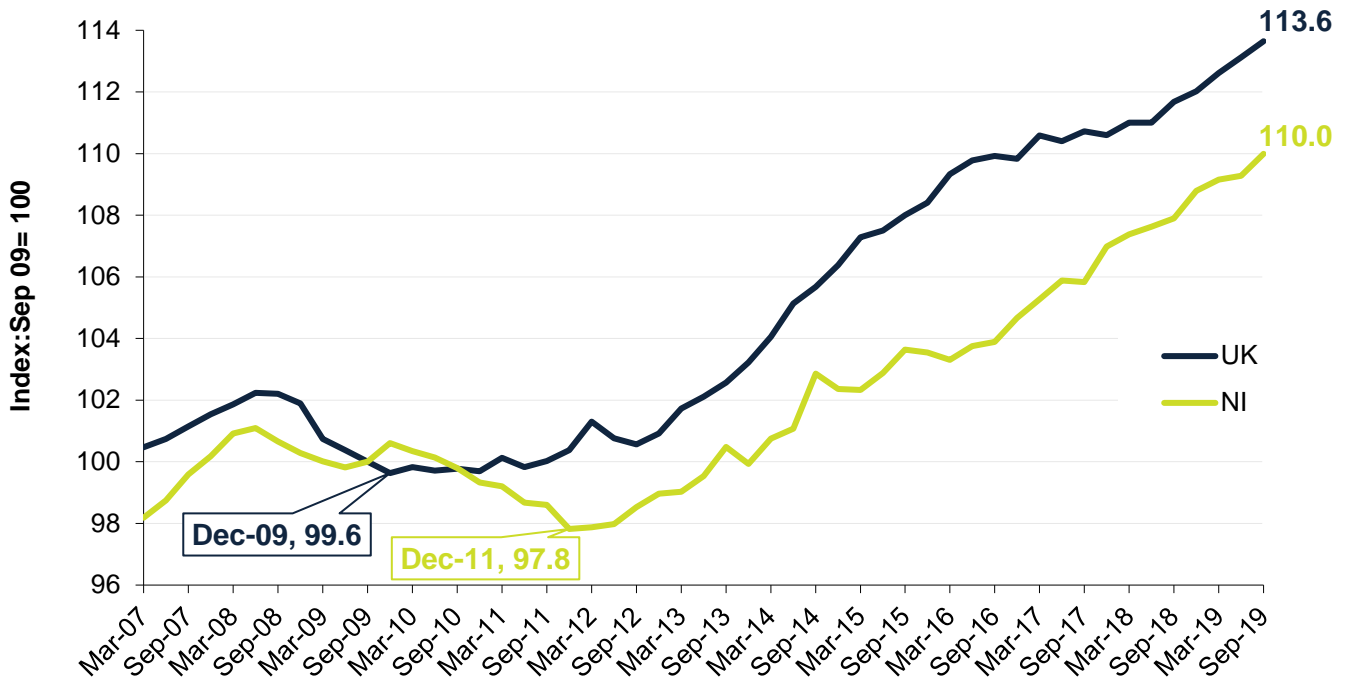
Services sector

The services sector contains businesses which sell services and skills; and includes education, public administration and health and social work activities. A full list of the industry sections G-S which are included in the services sector can be found in table 5.5 within the supplementary tables on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#).

Key Findings:

- The services sector recorded a peak number of employee jobs during September 2019 in the seasonally adjusted series.
- Seasonally adjusted figures showed an increase of 0.6% over the quarter to September 2019 and an increase of 1.9% over the year to 635,580 service sector jobs.
- The services sector accounted for the majority (77.9%) of total NI growth over the year and has been driving the recovery since the series low in employee jobs in March 2012.
- The services sector accounted for 81.2% of all employee jobs.

Figure 2.4: Index of services employee jobs, March 2007 - September 2019



Figures are indexed to September 2009

[Download in excel](#)

When considering the last five years, the services sector in both NI and the UK increased overall, with NI and the UK both recording a peak level in employee jobs in the most recent quarter. The number of employee jobs in the NI services sector increased by 41,220 over the last 5 years.

When considering the pre-downturn period, employee jobs in the services sector reached a peak in June 2008; declining to a series low in December 2011. The decline of 3.2% during this period is notably smaller than the declines experienced in the manufacturing or construction sectors during the downturn. There has been an increase of 12.4% in employee jobs in the services sector since the low in December 2011.

Key Findings

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the services sector increased by 0.6% (4,100 jobs) over the quarter and by 1.9% (12,110 jobs) over the year to 635,580 jobs in September 2019.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC services data that have not been adjusted for seasonality. Please note that estimates at 2 digit SIC can fluctuate due to sampling variability and changes to industrial classification.

Changes over the year

Over the year to September 2019 the unadjusted figures showed an increase of 2.0% (12,100 jobs) in the services sector. The 3 largest contributors to this increase over the year were:

- an increase of 10.1% (3,230 jobs) in social work activities without accommodation.
- an increase of 3.1% (2,140 jobs) in education.
- an increase of 4.7% (1,840 jobs) in food and beverage service activities.

The overall increase was partially offset by decreases in the services sector, the 3 largest decreases over the year being:

- a decrease of 9.9% (-1,160 jobs) in office administrative, office support and other business support activities.
- a decrease of 8.7% (-1,110 jobs) in financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding.
- a decrease of 1.2% (-1,060 jobs) in retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles.

For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#).

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 6 – Further Info.

Other industries sector

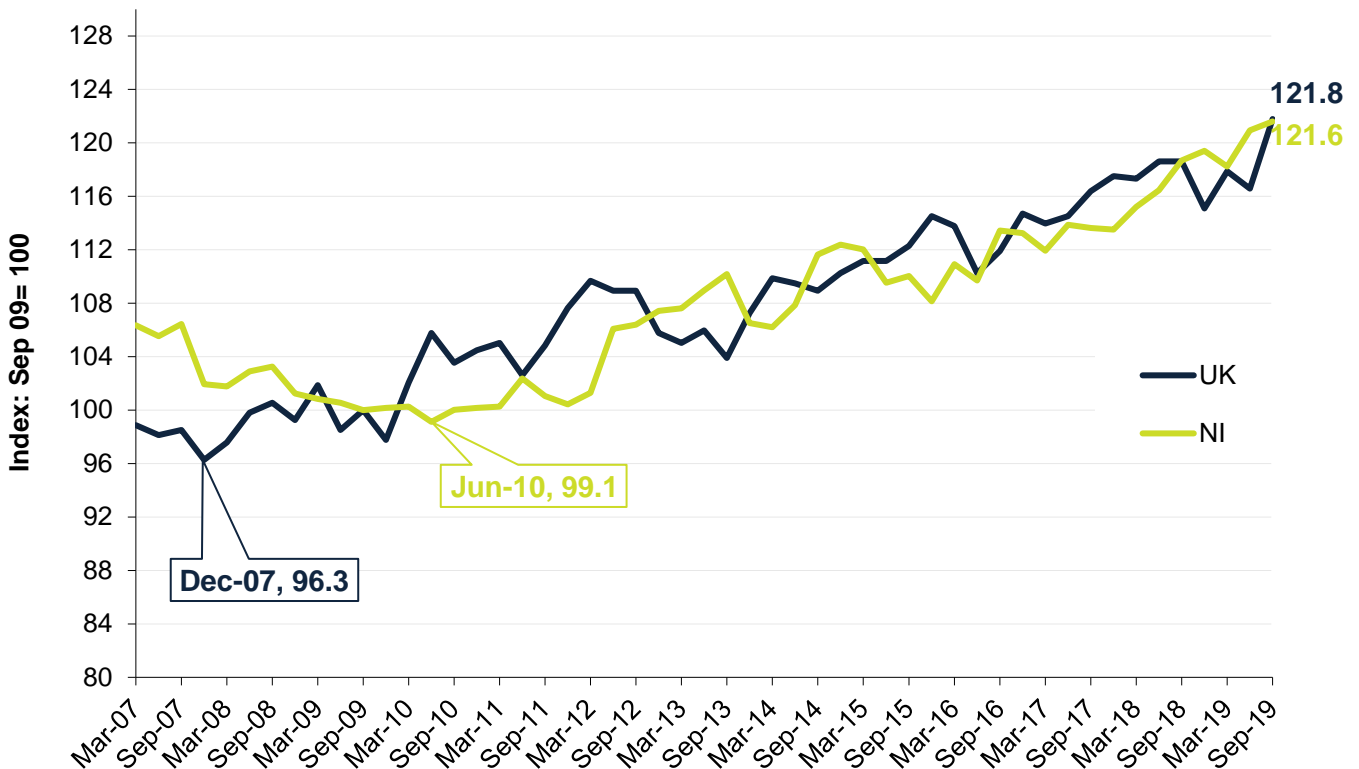
Other industries sector: this sector contains businesses with activity in agriculture, forestry and fishing, mining and quarrying, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply and water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (industry sections A,B,D and E).

Estimates from the annual Farm Census are included in industry section A (accounting for 91% of the employee jobs in the section). The Farm Census figures are published annually in January and relate to the previous June.

Key Findings:

- Seasonally adjusted figures showed an increase of 0.5% in the other industries sector over the quarter to September 2019 and an increase of 2.5% over the year to 24,070 jobs.
- The other industries sector made up 3.1% of all employee jobs.

Figure 2.5: Index of other industries sector jobs, March 2007- September 2019



Figures are indexed to September 2009

[Download in excel](#)

Over the last 10 years the other industries sector in NI and the UK increased overall. The number of employee jobs in the NI other industries sector increased by 4,280 over the 10 year period to September 2019. NI and the UK have followed similar trends in the other industry sector throughout the series, particularly in recent years.

Key Findings

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the other industries sector increased by 0.5% (130 jobs) over the quarter and by 2.5% (580 jobs) over the year to 24,070 jobs.

The following breakdowns are based on 2 digit SIC other industries data that have not been adjusted for seasonality. Please note that estimates at 2 digit SIC can fluctuate due to sampling variability and changes to industrial classification.

Changes over the year

Over the year to September 2019 the unadjusted figures showed an increase of 2.5% (580 jobs) in the other industries sector. The 3 largest contributors to this increase over the year were:

- an increase of 12.4% (590 jobs) in waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery.
- an increase of 5.7% (100 jobs) in other mining and quarrying.
- an increase of 48.8% (80 jobs) in fishing and aquaculture.

The overall increase was partially offset by decreases in the following other industries sectors:

- a decrease of 13.3% (-260 jobs) in electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply.
- a decrease of 13.9% (-30 jobs) in remediation activities and other waste management services.
- a decrease of 10.5% (-30 jobs) in forestry and logging.

For figures broken down by 2 digit SIC please see table 5.10 on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#).

When using table 5.10 please consider the notes on 'Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data' in section 6 – Further Info.

3 Public/Private Sector Employee Jobs

Public sector: The NI public sector can be broken down into five areas:

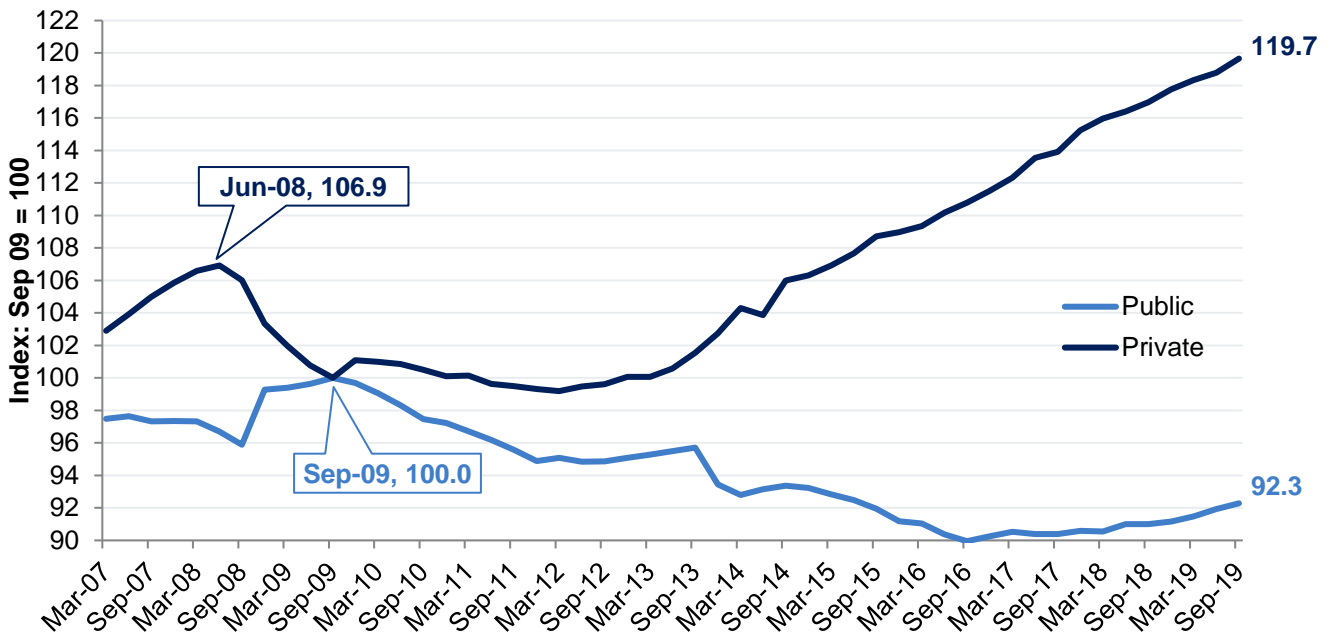
- NI central government
- Bodies under aegis of NI central government
- UK central government employees based in Northern Ireland
- Local government
- Public corporations

Private sector: The private sector encompasses all for-profit businesses (that are not owned or operated by the government) and the voluntary sector; which includes charities and other non-profit organisations.

Key Findings:

- The NI public sector made up 27% and the private sector made up 73% of all employee jobs. NI public sector jobs as a proportion of the NI population¹ was 11%. This compares to 8% in the UK.
- Seasonally adjusted employee jobs in the public sector increased over the quarter and year to 210,580 jobs.
- Seasonally adjusted employee jobs in the private sector increased over the quarter and year to a series high of 573,430 jobs.

Figure 3.1: Index of NI Private and Public Sector Jobs, March 2007 – September 2019



Figures are indexed to September 2009

[Download in excel](#)

The latest seasonally adjusted employee jobs figures estimate that there were:

- 210,580 employee jobs in the NI public sector.
- 573,430 employee jobs in the NI private sector.

¹ Latest population estimates available – [June 2018](#).

Changes over the quarter

The latest seasonally adjusted figures represented:

- an increase of 0.4% (800 jobs) in the public sector.
- an increase of 0.7% (4,170 jobs) in the private sector.

Changes over the year

The latest seasonally adjusted figures represented:

- an increase of 1.4% (2,920 jobs) in the public sector.
- an increase of 2.3% (12,900 jobs) in the private sector.

4 Composition of Employee Jobs

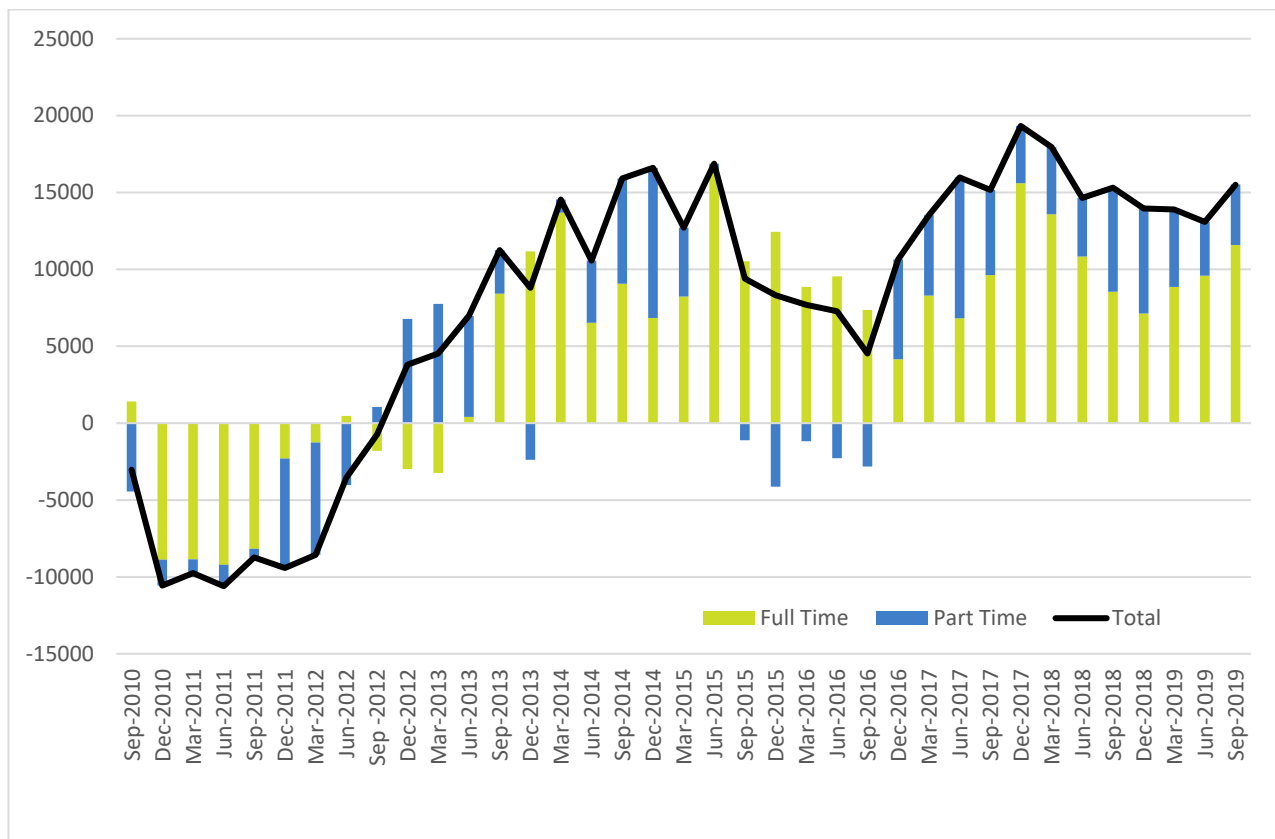
Please note: data in this section have not been adjusted for seasonality.

Part-time: Part-time means those who normally work 30 hours a week or less.
Full-time: Full-time means those who normally work more than 30 hours a week.

Key Findings

- Full-time jobs accounted for 75% of the growth in all employee jobs over the year.
- Increases were seen over the year in both full-time (2.3% or 11,580 jobs) and part-time jobs (1.5% or 3,940 jobs).
- Full-time jobs accounted for 66% of all employee jobs, with part-time accounting for 34% in September 2019.

Fig 4.1: Full-Time and Part-Time jobs annual change, September 2010 – September 2019



[Download in excel](#)

The latest estimates showed that:

- Part-time jobs increased by 11.1% (26,770 jobs) since the low point in March 2012.
- The low point for full-time jobs was a year later (March 2013) than for part-time jobs. The number of full-time jobs has increased by 14.8% (65,790 jobs) since this point.
- The number of full-time jobs was at a series high in September 2019.

Further information is available on the NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics [website](#).

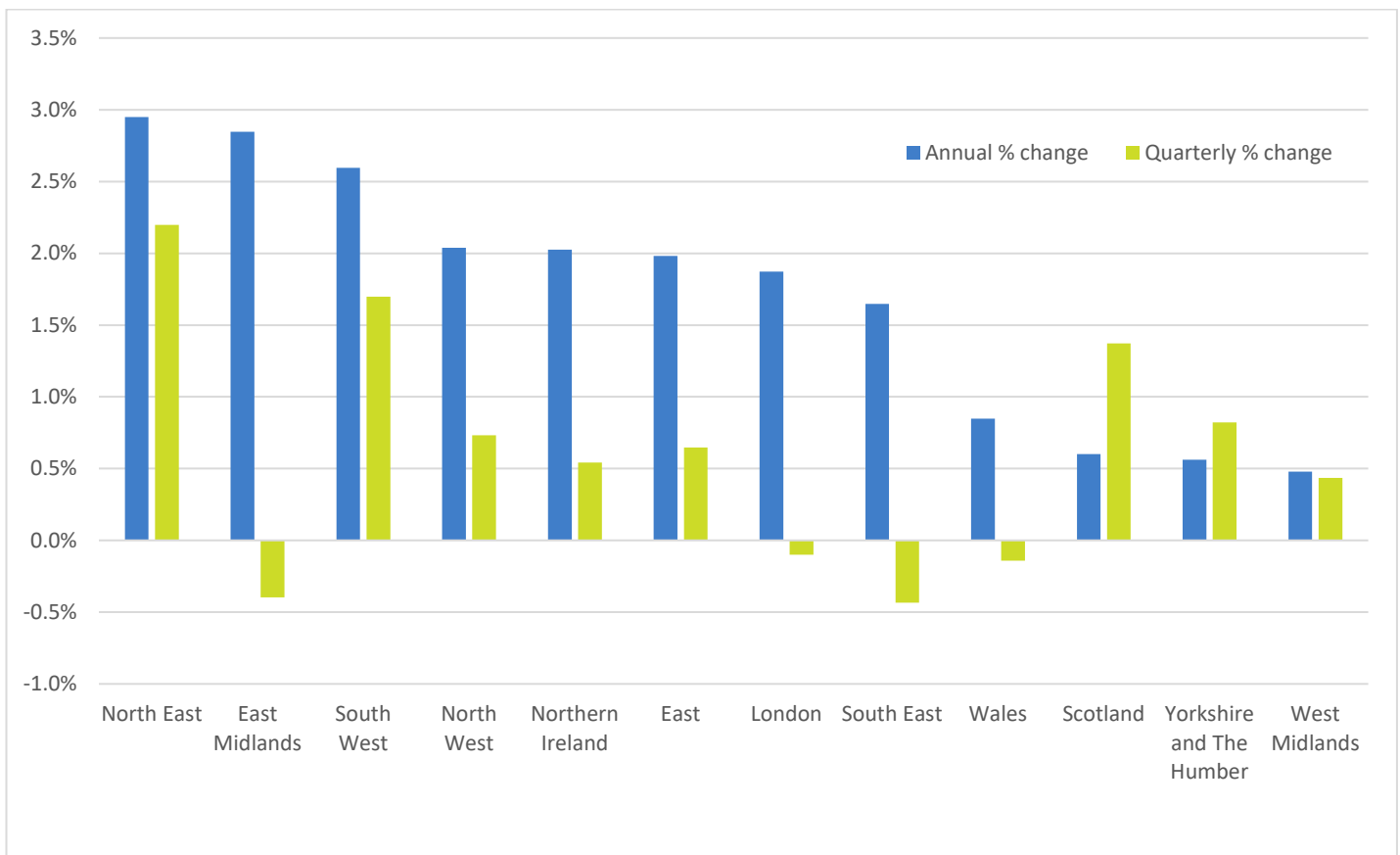
5 UK Comparisons

Employee jobs figures for GB regions are provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). ONS produces a publication on [Workforce Jobs by region](#). Unlike QES, Workforce Jobs include employee jobs, self-employed, government supported trainees and Her Majesty's Forces.

Key Findings

- The UK reported an increase in employee jobs over the quarter and year to a record high (31 million).
- Employee jobs increased over the quarter in eight of the twelve regions of the UK.
- Employee jobs decreased over the quarter in the South East of England (-0.4%), East Midlands (-0.4%), Wales (-0.1%) and London (-0.1%).
- Northern Ireland had the fifth largest percentage increase (2%) over the year.
- All UK regions showed an increase in employee jobs over the year.

Figure 5.1: Annual and Quarterly Percentage Change in Employee Jobs by UK Region, September 2018 – September 2019 and June 2019 – September 2019



[Download in excel](#)

6 Further Information

Background

Estimates of the number of employee jobs are obtained from the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS). The QBS is a statutory survey issued under the Statistics of Trade and Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 and is designed to collect information on employees and turnover. The main outputs are published in four quarterly publications – the [Quarterly Employment Survey](#) (QES), [Index of Services](#) (IOS), [Index of Production](#) (IOP) and [Quarterly Construction Enquiry](#) (QCE).

Sample

The QES, IOS, IOP and QCE are sampled independently and there is an overlap between QES and IOS/IOP/QCE of approximately 2,250 businesses.

The QES covers all public sector bodies, all private sector firms with 25 or more employees, all businesses with more than one industry activity and a sample of the remainder. QES covers all industrial sections apart from agriculture. Employee estimates for the agricultural sector are provided, on an annual basis (figures for June are provided in the January of the following year), from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Farm Census. Agriculture employees include all workers on agricultural businesses other than (a) part-time farmers and partners and (b) farmers' spouses. They include full-time, part-time and casual workers, both paid and unpaid.

The QES sample is drawn from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), as follows:

Employment Size/Sector	Coverage
0-9 employees	Sample (4%)
10-24 employees	Sample (9%)
Multiple Industry Activities	Full Count (100%)
25+ employees	Full Count (100%)
Public Sector	Full Count (100%)

As the QES is a sample survey, estimates obtained from it are subject to sampling variability i.e. if we drew many similar samples each would give a different result. [Confidence intervals](#) provide a measure of the size of the sampling variability. The 95% confidence interval for the September 2019 employee jobs estimate is 782,670 +/- 7,050. This means that in 100 similar samples we would expect 95 (95%) of the confidence intervals to contain the true population value of the number of employee jobs.

The survey collects information on numbers of persons in full-time and part-time employment. It should be noted that the survey counts the number of jobs rather than the number of persons with jobs. For example, a person holding both a full-time job and a part-time job, or someone with two part-time jobs, will be counted twice.

Employment results are collated into industry classes using the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). As a result, no individual business can be identified.

Updates to the sample frame

The annual Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) results are used to update employee and SIC code variables on the Inter Departmental Business Register annually in quarter 1. The impact of this update is greatest at 2 digit SIC level. Users should be aware that changes at this level may be due to a reallocation of jobs/businesses to SIC codes following the sample frame update.

Using 2 Digit SIC Level Data

The introduction of sample rotation from March 2014 contributed to the volatility of the series. To counteract these effects from March 2016 the number of businesses selected in SIC and size bands experiencing the greatest impact of rotation increased.

Volatility also arises when businesses inform NISRA of SIC code changes via business surveys, ONS and HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). This new information helps to improve the industry estimates of employee jobs each quarter but also adds volatility to quarterly and annual changes, particularly at 2 digit SIC level. SICs 74 (Other professional, scientific and technical activities) and 82 (Office administrative, office support and other business support activities) are most affected by updates to industry codes. More information can be found in Section 3 of the [Analysis of the Impact of Quarterly Employment Survey Data Revisions](#) document. It is therefore recommended that changes in employee jobs estimates at 2 digit SIC level are considered in the context of a longer time series.

Discontinuity

The sample coverage used to derive employee jobs estimates in NI was extended in 2009. This change was introduced to provide more comprehensive estimates of employee jobs and also to ensure a consistency of methodology between the QES and BRES. The extension in sample coverage has resulted in a discontinuity in the employee jobs series from the reference period Q3 2009 onwards.

Revisions Policy

QES estimates are revised quarterly to reflect the latest information provided by employers. The June 2019 seasonally adjusted estimate published in September 2019 has been revised down (-0.1%). Estimates for the latest quarter as well as the previous four quarters are provisional and subject to revision in light of (a) late responses to surveys and administrative sources, (b) where cross survey congruence checks provide more accurate data and (c) there are revisions to seasonal adjustment factors which are re-estimated every quarter. Only rarely are there avoidable 'errors' such as human or system failures, and such mistakes are made quite clear when they do occur.

Public Sector Reclassifications

Public sector jobs comprise Central Government (including Bodies under the aegis of Central Government), Local Government and Public Corporations. The following table summarises the changes announced by the Public Sector Classification Committee and the date the changes took place.

Date of change	Summary	Revision applied from
Dec 2006	NI Housing Executive reclassified from SIC 75 to SIC 70	Mar 2004
Jan 2012	Water service became a Government owned company, as a result employees transferred from "NI Central Government" to "Bodies under the Aegis of NI Central Government"	Apr 2007
Dec 2013	Royal Mail Plc reclassified to private sector	Oct 2013
Mar 2014	Lloyds Banking Group and its subsidiaries reclassified to private sector	Dec 2013
Sep 2017	Registered housing associations in NI reclassified to public sector	Sep 1992
Sep 2018	Registered housing associations in NI moved from section N to L in sections level data	Mar 2005 (in line with seasonally adjusted series)

Seasonal Adjustment

A seasonally adjusted series provides a better indication of underlying trends in employment. Time series data for seasonally adjusted employee jobs from 2005 to date for industry section (A-S) and main industrial sector are available on the [Quarterly Employment Survey webpage](#).

The following series are seasonally adjusted:

- Male employee jobs in Manufacturing (Section C); Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles (Section G); Transportation and Storage (Section H); Accommodation and Food Service Activities (Section I); Administrative and Support Service Activities (Section N); Public Administration and Defence, Compulsory Social Security (Section O); Education (Section P) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (Section R).
- Female employee jobs in Mining and Quarrying (Section B); Manufacturing (Section C); Construction (Section F); Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles (Section G); Accommodation and Food Service Activities (Section I); Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (Section M); Public Administration and Defence, Compulsory Social Security (Section O); Education (Section P); Human Health and Social Work Activities (Section Q) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (Section R).

Seasonal adjustment models are periodically reviewed as seasonal trends can change over time. The [latest review](#) was carried out in November 2018.

[Business Register and Employment Survey](#)

Information on employee jobs at a sub Northern Ireland level (e.g. District Council Area (DCA)) and at the 5-digit SIC07 level are available from the Northern Ireland Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). The QES sample size is designed so that estimates of total employee jobs are within +/- 1% of the BRES total.

Annualised or Rolling 4 Quarters

Annualised growth or rolling 4 quarters figures are calculated by taking the difference between the average over the most recent 4 quarters and the average over the same 4 quarters of the previous year, as a proportion of the average over the same 4 quarters of the previous year. For example annualised growth of 1.8% in 2019 reported in this publication is the average number of jobs from Q4 2018 to Q3 2019 minus the average number of jobs from Q4 2017 to Q3 2018, divided by the average of number of jobs from Q4 2017 to Q3 2018. This measure allows for comparison in growth to previous years and is useful in determining trends in the data.


Date of next publication

Forthcoming release dates are published in the [Economic & Labour Market Statistics Branch Publication Schedule](#). The next Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey publication is planned for March 2020.

Further information


If you require further information about the figures contained in this publication or the accompanying tables, please contact the Quarterly Employment Survey section using the details below:

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