



CSO statistical release, 05 December 2017, 11am

Monthly Unemployment

November 2017

	Seasonally adjusted number of persons unemployed	Seasonally adjusted unemployment rate (%)
November 2016	167,100	7.5
October 2017	141,500	6.3
November 2017	138,100	6.1
		Percentage Points
Change in month	- 3,400	- 0.2
Change in year	- 29,000	- 1.4

Monthly unemployment rate of 6.1% in November 2017

Figure 1 Monthly unemployment rate (ILO), November 2014 to November 2017



The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November 2017 was 6.1%, down from the revised rate of 6.3% in October 2017 and down from 7.5% in November 2016. The seasonally adjusted number of persons unemployed was 138,100 in November 2017, down from 141,500 when compared to the October 2017 figure and a decrease of 29,000 when compared to November 2016.

Additional information comparing new and previously published monthly unemployment rates are included in the background notes.

As part of a major modernisation project, the CSO discontinued the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in Q2 2017 and introduced a new Labour Force Survey (LFS) in Q3 2017. Work on finalising the LFS survey data for Q3 2017 is still underway and as a result, there are no published Q3 benchmark figures available to provide the basis for compiling the monthly unemployment series in the usual way. As the transition period between the old and new surveys is ongoing, this release will continue to use the same methodology, including the latest Live Register data but with adjustments to the historic QNHS series to create more up-to-date benchmarks.

Therefore the estimates contained in this release should be treated as preliminary, and will be revised in January 2018 when new data from the Q3 2017 LFS becomes available. Users should also note that because of the preliminary nature of these revisions, the CSO is not in a position to provide breakdowns of the estimates by gender or age in this release.

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In addition, the monthly unemployment release for reference month December 2017, which was previously scheduled to be issued on January 3rd, 2018, has been deferred. Updated monthly unemployment estimates, including breakdowns by gender and age, will be issued as part of the new finalised Q3 2017 LFS release, which is scheduled for publication on January 16th, 2018. See *background notes for further information*.

Table 1 Seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment by sex - All persons aged 15-74 years

		Number of persons	Unemployment rate (%)
2015	November	210,900	9.6
	December	207,300	9.4
2016	January	197,600	9.0
	February	194,500	8.8
	March	194,400	8.8
	April	197,300	8.9
	May	197,800	8.8
	June	196,000	8.7
	July	191,100	8.5
	August	187,300	8.3
	September	177,700	7.9
	October	171,000	7.6
	November	167,100	7.5
	December	165,300	7.4
2017	January	164,100	7.3
	February	162,400	7.2
	March	158,000	7.0
	April	150,900	6.7
	May	147,800	6.6
	June	145,300	6.5
	July	146,400	6.5
	August	144,300	6.4
	September	143,900	6.4
	October	141,500	6.3
	November	138,100	6.1

: Data not available. See background notes for additional information.

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Background Notes

Purpose

The purpose of this release is to provide a detailed series of monthly unemployment estimates. The release contains both monthly unemployment rates and monthly unemployment volumes. These outputs now replace the seasonally adjusted Standardised Unemployment Rate (SUR) as the definitive measure of monthly unemployment.

Calculation of Monthly Estimates

The Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) was used to provide benchmark estimates of employment and unemployment for each quarter since the beginning of 1998 until the second quarter of 2017. These quarterly benchmark estimates were then used to compile monthly data using the Proportional Denton method. The main characteristic of this method is that the monthly Live Register series is used as an indicator to disaggregate the quarterly QNHS unemployment series into a monthly series in such a way as to minimise the differences between two consecutive months. It also ensures that the average of three months in a particular calendar quarter is equal to the corresponding QNHS estimate.

For months where the quarterly unemployment data is not yet available, the ratio of the QNHS monthly estimate to the Live Register monthly estimate (i.e. the benchmark to indicator ratio) was forecast forward in order to extrapolate a monthly QNHS estimate. The monthly series is revised each quarter when the latest quarterly data becomes available. This approach adheres to agreed international practice.

Normally the November unemployment estimates would be based on Quarter 3 (Q3) QNHS data and Live Register data from October and November, and the retrospective monthly series would be revised to take account of the new Q3 QNHS data.

However, as part of a major modernisation project, the CSO discontinued the QNHS in Q2 2017 and introduced a new Labour Force Survey (LFS) in Q3 2017. Work on finalising the LFS survey data for Q3 2017 is still underway and this will not be published until January 16th, 2018. As a result, there are no published Q3 benchmark figures available to provide the basis for compiling the monthly unemployment series in the usual way.

During this transition period between the old and new surveys, the monthly unemployment estimates contained in this release continue to use the same methodology, including the latest Live Register data but include adjustments to the historic QNHS series to create more up-to-date benchmarks.

These adjustments are required to ensure comparability with the new LFS series which will be introduced with the publication of Q3 2017 data in January 2018. The adjustments are based on a comparison of QNHS and LFS data from a parallel run undertaken at the beginning of 2017.

The adjustments have resulted in changes to the absolute volumes and rates previously published but the underlying trend is largely unchanged.

Therefore, the estimates contained in this release should be treated as preliminary, and will be revised in January 2018 when new data from the Q3 2017 LFS becomes available. Users should also note that because of the preliminary nature of these revisions, the CSO is not in a position to provide breakdowns of the estimates by gender or age in this release.

In addition, the monthly unemployment release for reference month December 2017, which was previously scheduled to be issued on January 3rd, 2018, has been deferred. Updated monthly unemployment estimates, including breakdowns by gender and age, will be issued as part of the new finalised Q3 2017 LFS release, which is scheduled for publication on January 16th, 2018. This LFS publication will also take account of the new population estimates arising from the Census of Population 2016.

Comparison of new and previously published unemployment rates

The impact of the adjustments applied as a result of comparing the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) to the new Labour Force Survey (LFS) is illustrated below for all persons aged 15-74 below.

It can be noted that the previously published unemployment estimate for October 2017 has been revised by 0.3 percentage points from 6.0% to 6.3% while the rate for November 2016 has been revised from 7.0% to 7.5%. The previously published estimate for the number of persons unemployed for October 2017 has also been revised from 131,300 to 141,500.

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The full scale of these revisions for recent months is shown in the table below.

Previously published and revised monthly seasonally adjusted number of persons unemployed and unemployment rate (%) - all persons aged 15-74

		Number of persons		Unemployment rate (%)	
		Published - October 2017	Revised - November 2017	Published - October 2017	Revised - November 2017
2015	November	196,800	210,900	9.1	9.6
	December	193,200	207,300	8.9	9.4
2016	January	184,300	197,600	8.5	9.0
	February	181,000	194,500	8.4	8.8
	March	180,600	194,400	8.3	8.8
	April	183,000	197,300	8.4	8.9
	May	183,300	197,800	8.4	8.8
	June	181,600	196,000	8.3	8.7
	July	177,100	191,100	8.1	8.5
	August	173,600	187,300	7.9	8.3
	September	164,600	177,700	7.5	7.9
	October	158,100	171,000	7.2	7.6
	November	153,700	167,100	7.0	7.5
	December	151,800	165,300	6.9	7.4
2017	January	151,400	164,100	6.9	7.3
	February	150,000	162,400	6.8	7.2
	March	145,900	158,000	6.6	7.0
	April	139,500	150,900	6.4	6.7
	May	136,600	147,800	6.2	6.6
	June	134,300	145,300	6.1	6.5
	July	135,100	146,400	6.2	6.5
	August	133,300	144,300	6.1	6.4
	September	133,100	143,900	6.1	6.4
	October	131,300	141,500	6.0	6.3
	November	:	138,100	:	6.1

: Data not available

Seasonal Adjustment

To correct for typical seasonal patterns, the data series included have been concurrently seasonally adjusted. This seasonal adjustment is completed by applying the X-12-ARIMA model, developed by the U.S. Census Bureau. In the case of these monthly unemployment estimates, seasonal adjustment is conducted using the indirect approach, where each individual series is independently adjusted. To preserve consistency between the individual and aggregate series, the series for gender, age group and total monthly unemployed are then created from these component series. The series for monthly unemployment rates are likewise created from these component series.

One-Parent Family Payment (OFP)

The One-Parent Family Payment is a social welfare payment for men and women who are younger than 66 and bring up children without the support of a partner and meet certain other criteria. Claimants on this scheme are not counted as part of the Live Register.

From July 2013 new rules came into operation reducing the age limits for the One-Parent Family Payment. This means that some people no longer qualify for the payment and may avail of other schemes or supports.

As a consequence, approximately 2,800 people in July 2015 previously receiving the One-Parent Family Payment, made a claim for Jobseekers Allowance (JA) and are therefore included in the Live Register figures which are used to extrapolate a monthly QNHS estimate as the quarterly unemployment data is not yet available. It can be noted that the inclusion of these

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additional persons in July 2015 has a marginal impact on the production of the estimated monthly unemployment volume and rate.

Additional Background Information

Further information regarding the QNHS and Live Register series are available from each respective release while information regarding the new LFS will be available at the time of publication on January 16 2018.

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