

Labour Statistics

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Labour Force Statistics

Purpose

To provide relevant, reliable key annual and short-term labour force statistics for internal OECD users (in particular, the Economics Department), member country government agencies and other external users in academic institutions and private enterprise.

Objectives and outputs

The main objective is to provide long time series for key annual statistics on population, as well as annual and selected short-term indicators on the labour force such as employment and unemployment. Data are disseminated in the OECD Main Economic Indicators (MEI) database, a monthly press release on standardised unemployment and in the Annual Labour Force Statistics (ALFS) publication.

The MEI database contains monthly, quarterly and annual indicators on employment, unemployment, labour compensation and for some countries indicators on vacancies, hours worked, labour disputes, etc.

The ALFS database contains annual statistics for OECD member countries comprising: population, total employment, unemployment, civilian employment by sectors, part-time employment, duration of unemployment. Published output also includes participation and unemployment rates by gender and detailed age groups as well as comparative tables for the main components of the labour force.

Data are available for all 30 OECD member countries and for key series (civilian employment, unemployment, hourly earnings) aggregates for OECD-Total, Major seven, OECD-Europe, EU15 and Euro area.

In the MEI series are accompanied by summary metadata outlining key concepts, coverage, etc. In ALFS, published output are also accompanied by target OECD and ILO international statistical standards (definitions, etc) and summary methodological information (national definitions, coverage, collection, calculation, series breaks, sources) used by individual OECD member countries in the compilation of the statistics published in the ALFS.

A significant achievement in 2006 was the inclusion of ALFS data and associated metadata into OECD.Stat and MetaStore. An ALFS CD-ROM was also developed. The metadata were revised to ensure consistency between overlapping series in ALFS and MEI.

The labour force hierarchy was also reviewed and key series from the suppressed QLFS publication were incorporated into the MEI database primarily to meet the needs of the OECD Economics Department.

Non-member countries involved in the activity:

Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russian Federation, South Africa

Databases

ALFS_POP_VITAL ALFS_POP_LABOUR ALFS_EMP ALFS_SUMTAB

Main Developments for 2009

General aspects:

Further revision of explanatory text to incorporate (initial) summary reasons for differences between labour force estimates and estimates compiled by national accountants for labour input measures to national accounts.

Continuation of initiative for the 2008 publication where analytical metadata on key issues that impact on the comparability of headline labour series was presented.

Data collection:

Small number of countries slow at responding to the annual questionnaire will be requested to speed up their response. The collection of further data and metadata for NMEs, in particular, China and India.

Labour Statistics

Labour Market Statistics

Purpose

To provide statistical information to support analyses for discussion at international meetings on labour policies and for preparatory work for international statistical guidelines. To produce a comprehensive set of statistics to monitor developments in OECD labour markets, improving their international comparability.

Objectives and outputs

Collection, production and dissemination of labour statistics containing labour force, performance (i.e. earnings levels, earnings distribution, etc.) and institutional variables (i.e. minimum wages, ALMP data, EPL index, trade union membership, collective bargaining coverage, etc.) to support labour market analysis. Data are used to produce the statistical annex of the Employment Outlook and the internal and on-line Labour Force Statistics database. Some of the data series are also shown in the Annual Labour Force Statistics publication.

Non-member countries involved in the activity:

Brazil, Chile, China, Estonia, India, Indonesia, Israel, Russian Federation, Slovenia, South Africa

Databases

Labour Market Statistics

Main Developments for 2009

General aspects:

The expansion of the LFS database will gain momentum to improve country coverage and comparability regarding job tenure and wage earnings data and to compile data in the area of youth and workforce ageing, family related labour market statistics, statistics to characterise inactivity, etc.

Some work is underway to produce LFS estimates on labour dynamics to support work undertaken for a chapter in the Employment Outlook, with the aim of complementing, in the medium-term, labour force stock statistics with labour flow statistics.

Time permitting a closer look at statistics to characterise informal employment will be attempted based on existing international guidelines on this subject.

Work underway to consolidate earnings related statistics and to improve their comparability.

Continuation of the assessment of annual working time statistics to improve their international comparability with the aim of publishing of comparable estimates on annual hours actually worked per employed person in the statistical annex of the Employment Outlook.

Migration of remaining data and metadata related to labour market statistics to OECD.Stat for internal and external web based dissemination.

Data collection:

Where possible, development of capability for direct access to labour force survey (public use) microdatasets in non-EU countries.

Data management:

Migration of the database achieved in 2006 from the CDE to OECD.Stat and of the metadata to MetaStore. Most of the remaining statistics were transferred in 2007. The transfer of earnings data, started in 2008, will be completed in 2009.

Labour Statistics

Measuring hours worked

Purpose

The purpose of the activity is to identify comparable guidelines to measure hours worked for internal and external experts. The absence of comparable statistics on hours worked, particularly annual hours worked statistics, is one of the major impediments to the development of internationally comparable productivity measures.

Objectives and outputs

To collect necessary information from Non-EU OECD member countries with a priority for the United States, Canada, Australia and Japan based on a template to be delivered from DELSA.

To prepare a harmonized methodology (as much as possible) on hours worked for both National Accountants and Labour Statisticians and to prepare a working paper on hours worked jointly with DELSA.

Non-member countries involved in the activity:

Chile, Estonia, Israel, Russian Federation, Slovenia

Main Developments for 2009

General aspects:

Update of the 2005 survey on employment and hours worked in national accounts

Implementation of the harmonized methodology of hours worked to the non-EU OECD member countries.

Labour Statistics

Unit Labour Cost Indicators

Purpose

To maintain and expand the OECD System of Unit Labour Cost and Related Indicators, which brings together a wide range of data sources for all OECD member countries. A set of internationally comparable quarterly unit labour cost (ULC) indexes for eight economic sectors (ULC) indexes are produced together with annual series for ULC, Labour productivity, Labour Compensation (including PPP adjusted), Labour Income shares and Exchange rate adjusted ULC.

In addition the quarterly ULCs provide the inputs to the Economics Department for production of their real effective exchange rates competitiveness indicators.

Objectives and outputs

The key objectives of 2008 were to establish a production system to produce both the quarterly and annual indicators updated at quarterly frequency, establish a quarterly press release and commence work to develop series for non OECD EU countries based on a grant received by the European Commission.

In addition, annual data was prepared for publication in the OECD Productivity Compendium and OECD Factbook. New indicators of PPP adjusted Labour Compensation per employee and per hour (by economic sector) were also developed and published for the first time.

Main Developments for 2009

General aspects:

Major tasks in 2009 will involve the updating and maintenance of the high quality of the data compiled and disseminated.

Data collection:

Major task will be the incorporation of the very large number of new series into the on-going MEI data collection processes.