

Changes to the MEI “Labour” series

Labour market indicators have been reorganised and augmented in the OECD’s *Main Economic Indicators* (MEI) database and publications (paper and CD-ROM). This reorganisation principally concerns the addition of key series previously published in OECD’s *Quarterly labour force statistics* (QLFS) publication which was suppressed in 2005. In conjunction with including these series in the MEI database, the presentation of existing labour series has been reorganised so that the dissemination of all Labour series in the MEI database is more transparent and user-friendly. Furthermore, all short titles for labour series have been harmonised and made clearer for external users of the MEI CD-ROM.

The following labour force series (22 in total) are now kept in MEI products:

- Total labour force: all persons – males – females;
- Civilian labour force: all persons – males – females;
- Civilian employment: all persons – males – females;
- Civilian employment: agriculture;
- Civilian employment: industry including construction;
- Civilian employment: services;
- Employees, household survey;
- Unemployment level: survey-based (all persons – males – females);
- Unemployment rate: survey-based (all persons – males – females);
- Standardised unemployment rate: all persons – males – females (these time series are compiled by the OECD and Eurostat).

Labour force statistics are currently published on a monthly basis for Canada, the United States, Japan, Korea, Finland, Sweden, on a quarterly basis for New-Zealand, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom. Australia provides all the above time series on a monthly basis except for Civilian employment by sector and Employees (household survey), which are published on a quarterly basis. France provides all the above time series on a quarterly basis except for Total labour force, Civilian labour force (males and females), Civilian employment (males and females), Unemployment rate: survey-based (males and females), which are annual and for Unemployment rate: survey-based (all persons), which is monthly. Monthly or quarterly labour force statistics are currently unavailable in MEI products for Mexico, Turkey, Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Luxembourg and Netherlands.

Presentation of key series in the paper publication

All the above series are published in the MEI CD-ROM, although for space reasons only key series are included in the MEI paper publication, thus the following series have been excluded: Unemployment rate: survey-based (males and females); Standardised unemployment rate: males and females; Employees, household survey. In addition Civilian labour force is published at the exclusion of Total labour force in the case where both series are available for a country.

Labour series are now located in the MEI paper publication under the following titles:

- Labour force;
- Civilian employment;
- Employees: business survey;
- Unemployment;
- Labour compensation;
- Labour conditions.

In total, 270 additional time series from the former *Quarterly labour force statistics* (QLFS) publication are now published in this edition of the MEI paper publication, with 795 former QLFS series having already been introduced in the April 2006 release of the MEI CD-ROM.

The main objective is to publish timely series in the MEI paper publication and this is particularly important for the newly introduced series. Therefore, for the few countries listed below, one cannot yet publish all of the labour force series mentioned above in the MEI paper publication. However, in the case of series previously available but not recently updated, these series could be updated in the future and thus their historical data are available in the MEI CD-ROM.

For Germany, labour force series stop in Q4-2004. Indeed, in 2005, Germany launched a continuous Household labour force survey and its results have not been scheduled yet. The OECD intends to publish labour force series for Germany when the results of this continuous survey become available.

The United Kingdom has not yet provided the OECD with non-seasonally adjusted labour force series, adjusted to take account of the 2001 Census results. As soon as they are provided, the Secretariat will publish these series for the United Kingdom.

For the United States, data for Resident armed forces are unavailable from 2001. Therefore, Total labour force and Unemployment rate: survey-based (calculated with respect to total labour force) are unavailable from 2001. However, the latest data for the Standardised Unemployment Rates (calculated with respect to civilian labour force) are available. Moreover, Civilian employment by sector is not yet publishable due to concordance issues between the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) and the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC) Revision 3.