

Labour Market Statistics Headlines – February 2006

All data are seasonally adjusted. All data are for the UK unless otherwise stated.

This month's figures show falls in the number of people in employment and in the employment rate. The number of unemployed people and the unemployment rate have increased, but the claimant count has fallen. The number of job vacancies has increased. Growth in average earnings excluding bonuses is unchanged but growth in average earnings including bonuses has increased.

The **employment rate** for people of working age was **74.5%** in the three months to December 2005, down **0.4** percentage points from the previous three months and on the year. The total **employment level** was **28.77 million**, down **57,000** on the previous three months but up **183,000** on the same period a year ago.

The number of **Workforce Jobs** in September 2005 was **30.82 million**, up **9,000** on the quarter and up **261,000** over the year.

Manufacturing employee jobs fell by **106,000** to **3.09 million** in the three months to December 2005 when compared with a year earlier.

The **unemployment rate** was **5.1%** in the three months to December 2005, up **0.3** percentage points on the previous three months and up **0.4** percentage points on the year. The **unemployment level** was **1.54 million**, up **108,000** on the previous three months and up **123,000** on the same period a year ago.

The **claimant count** in January 2006 was **904,200**. This was down **2,000** compared with the December figure of 906,200 (revised November to December increase was **4,300**), and up **90,400** over the year. The **CC rate** for January 2006 was **2.9%** of the workforce, unchanged on the previous month but up **0.3** percentage points on the year.

The number of **claimants in the New Deal groups** (computerised claims only) in January 2006 were:

18-24 claiming for over 6 months	52,400 (-100 from the previous month)
25 and over claiming 18 months to 2 years	26,500 (unchanged from the previous month)
25 and over claiming for more than 2 years	39,900 (-200 from the previous month)
TOTAL	118,800 (-300 from the previous month)

The **economic inactivity rate** for people of working age for the three months to December 2005 was **21.4%**, up **0.1** percentage point from the previous three months and on the year.

The **number of economically inactive** people of working age was **7.95 million** in the three months to December 2005, up **59,000** on the previous three months and up **93,000** on the year. Of this total, **3.17 million** were men and **4.78 million** were women.

There were **616,800 job vacancies** on average in the three months to January 2006, up **12,100** from the previous three months but down **34,200** over the year.

There were **2.4** vacancies per 100 employee jobs, virtually unchanged from the previous quarter.

The **redundancy rate** for the three months to December 2005 was **5.7** per 1,000 employees, down **0.6** on the previous three months and down **0.1** on the year.

The GB whole economy **average earnings excluding bonuses** annual growth rate was **3.8%** in the three months to December 2005, unchanged from the November rate. The corresponding rate **including bonuses** was **3.6%**, up **0.2** percentage points from the November rate.

By industry group:	<u>Excluding bonuses</u>	<u>Including bonuses</u>
Public sector	4.1% (up 0.1 pp)	4.4% (up 0.2 pp)
Private sector	3.7% (down 0.1 pp)	3.3% (unchanged)
Manufacturing	4.1% (down 0.2 pp)	4.4% (down 0.1 pp)
Services	3.7% (unchanged)	3.4% (up 0.2 pp)
Private sector services	3.6% (unchanged)	3.0% (up 0.1 pp)

Briefing notes for Labour Market Statistics release – 15 February 2006

Overview

This month's figures show falls in the number of people in employment and in the employment rate. The number of unemployed people and the unemployment rate have increased, but the claimant count has fallen. The number of job vacancies has increased. Growth in average earnings excluding bonuses is unchanged but growth in average earnings including bonuses has increased.

Employment

The working age employment rate for the three months ending December 2005 was 74.5 per cent, down 0.4 percentage points both from the previous quarter and on the year. The total employment level fell by 57,000 over the quarter but rose by 183,000 over the year to reach 28.77 million. The number of full-time workers fell by 27,000 to 21.47 million and the number of part-time workers fell by 30,000 to 7.30 million.

The total number of hours worked per week was 922.0 million, down 2.7 million over the quarter but up 5.0 million over the year.

Manufacturing jobs

There were 3.09 million manufacturing employee jobs in the three months to December 2005, a fall of 106,000 (3.3%) compared with the same period a year earlier. This is the lowest level since comparable records began in 1978.

Vacancies

There were 616,800 job vacancies on average in the three months to January 2006, up 12,100 from the previous three months but down 34,200 compared with the previous year.

There were 2.4 vacancies per 100 employee jobs, virtually unchanged on the previous quarter but down 0.1 on the year.

Redundancies

In the three months to December 2005, 143,000 people said they were made redundant in the three months prior to their interview. This is down 15,000 from the previous three months and down 1,000 on the previous year.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate was 5.1 per cent for the three months ending December 2005. This is up 0.3 percentage points on the previous three months and up 0.4 percentage points on the year.

The number of unemployed people for the three months ending December 2005 was 1.54 million, up 108,000 over the quarter and up 123,000 over the year.

Claimant Count

The number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance benefit in January 2006 was 904,200, down 2,000 from the revised figure for December 2005 but up 90,400 on the year. The last time there was a monthly fall in the claimant count was January 2005, when it fell by 11,200.

Economic inactivity

The economic inactivity rate for people of working age was 21.4 per cent, up 0.1 percentage point both on the previous quarter and on the year. The number of inactive people of working age rose by 59,000 on the quarter to 7.95 million, the highest figure since comparable records began in 1971.

The inactivity rate for men was 16.5 per cent, unchanged over the quarter. The rate for women was 26.7 per cent, up 0.3 percentage points over the quarter.

Average earnings

Today we are publishing the average earnings index for December 2005. The whole economy annual growth rate, including bonuses, was 3.6 per cent in the three months to December, up 0.2 percentage points from the November rate. Excluding bonuses, the rate was 3.8 per cent, unchanged from the previous month.

Looking at the data by sector,

Private sector	3.3 per cent including bonuses, unchanged; 3.7 per cent excluding bonuses, down 0.1 percentage point.
Public sector	4.4 per cent including bonuses, up 0.2 percentage points; 4.1 per cent excluding bonuses, up 0.1 percentage point.
Manufacturing	4.4 per cent including bonuses, down 0.1 percentage point; 4.1 per cent excluding bonuses, down 0.2 percentage points.
Services	3.4 per cent including bonuses, up 0.2 percentage points; 3.7 per cent excluding bonuses, unchanged.

And, finally, private sector services

3.0 per cent including bonuses, up 0.1 percentage point;
3.6 per cent excluding bonuses, unchanged.

Manufacturing productivity and unit wage costs

Manufacturing productivity rose by 1.6 per cent in the three months ending December 2005 compared with a year earlier. In the three months to December 2005, manufacturing unit wage costs rose by 2.8 per cent compared with the same period a year earlier.

Labour Disputes

There were 15,000 working days lost during December 2005. In the twelve months to December 2005, there were 156,000 working days lost, the lowest calendar year total since comparable records began in 1891.

Overview

So to sum up, here is a reminder of this month's overview:

This month's figures show falls in the number of people in employment and in the employment rate. The number of unemployed people and the unemployment rate have increased, but the claimant count has fallen. The number of job vacancies has increased. Growth in average earnings excluding bonuses is unchanged but growth in average earnings including bonuses has increased.