

Labour Market Statistics Headlines – December 2008

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

There has been a fall in both the number of people in employment and the employment rate. The number of unemployed people, the unemployment rate and the claimant count have all increased. The number of inactive people of working age and the inactivity rate have increased. The number of vacancies has fallen. Growth in average earnings, both including and excluding bonuses, is unchanged.

The **employment rate** for people of working age was **74.2%** in the three months to October 2008, down **0.4** percentage points both on the previous three months and on the year. The total **employment level** was **29.38 million**, down **115,000** on the previous three months but up **57,000** on the same period a year ago.

The number of **workforce jobs** in September 2008 was **31.53 million**, down **134,000** on the quarter and down **71,000** over the year.

The number of **manufacturing employee jobs** in the three months to October 2008 was **2.83 million**, down **73,000** over the year.

The **unemployment rate** was **6.0%** in the three months to October 2008, up **0.4** percentage points from the previous three months and up **0.7** percentage points on the year. The **unemployment level** was **1.86 million**, up **137,000** on the previous three months and up **238,000** on the year.

The **claimant count** in November 2008 was **1.07 million**. This was up **75,700** compared with the revised October 2008 figure and up **257,500** over the year. The claimant count rate for November 2008 was **3.3%** of the workforce, up **0.2** percentage points from the previous month and up **0.8** percentage points on the year.

The number of **claimants in the New Deal groups** (computerised claims only) in November 2008 were:

18-24 claiming for over 6 months	41,500 (up 2,100 from the previous month)
25 and over claiming for 18 months to 2 years	21,500 (up 300 from the previous month)
25 and over claiming for more than 2 years	21,900 (down 500 from the previous month)
TOTAL	84,900 (up 1,900 from the previous month)

The **economic inactivity rate** for people of working age for the three months to October 2008 was **20.9%**, up **0.1** percentage point on the previous three months but down **0.2** percentage points on the year.

The **number of economically inactive people** of working age was **7.90 million** in the three months to October 2008, up **39,000** on the previous three months but down **33,000** on the year. Of this total, **3.24 million** were men and **4.66 million** were women.

The **number of job vacancies** was **562,000** in the three months to November 2008, down **49,000** from the previous three months and down **118,000** over the year.

There were **2.2** vacancies per 100 employee jobs, down **0.2** on the previous quarter and down **0.5** over the year.

The **redundancies level** for the three months to October 2008 was **180,000** people, up **41,000** on the previous three months and up **49,000** on the year.

The GB whole economy **average earnings excluding bonuses** annual growth rate was **3.6%** in the three months to October 2008, unchanged from the three months to September. The corresponding rate **including bonuses** was **3.3%**, unchanged from the previous period. The figures for the main industrial categories were:

Industry	Excluding bonuses	Including bonuses
Public sector	3.7% (down 0.2 pp)	3.8% (down 0.1 pp)
Private sector	3.6% (unchanged)	3.2% (unchanged)
Manufacturing	2.3% (down 0.2 pp)	2.9% (unchanged)
Services	3.8% (down 0.1 pp)	3.5% (unchanged)
Private sector services	3.9% (unchanged)	3.5% (up 0.1 pp)

Briefing notes for Labour Market Statistics release – 17 December 2008

Summary

There has been a fall in both the number of people in employment and the employment rate. The number of unemployed people, the unemployment rate and the claimant count have all increased. The number of inactive people of working age and the inactivity rate have increased. The number of vacancies has fallen. Growth in average earnings, both including and excluding bonuses, is unchanged.

Employment

The working age employment rate for the three months to October 2008 was 74.2 per cent, down 0.4 percentage points from the previous three months and on the year. The total employment level fell by 115,000 over the previous three months but rose by 57,000 over the year to reach 29.38 million. The total number of hours worked per week was 937.9 million, down 7.6 million from the previous three months and down 2.2 million over the year.

The number of people employed in the public sector was 5.76 million in September 2008, up 14,000 on the quarter and up 15,000 on the year. The number of people employed in the private sector was 23.61 million, down 128,000 on the quarter but up 43,000 on the year.

Jobs

The number of workforce jobs in September 2008 was 31.53 million, down 134,000 on the quarter and down 71,000 over the year. This is the largest fall in jobs since December 1992 (when there was a fall of 152,000)

There were 2.83 million manufacturing employee jobs in the three months to October 2008, down 73,000 (2.5 per cent) over the year. This is the lowest figure since comparable records began in 1978.

Vacancies

There were 562,000 job vacancies in the three months to November 2008. It is down 49,000 from the previous three months and down 118,000 compared with the previous year.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate was 6.0 per cent for the three months to October 2008, up 0.4 percentage points from the previous three months and up 0.7 percentage points on the year. The number of unemployed people was 1.86 million, up 137,000 from the previous three months and up 238,000 over the year.

Claimant Count

The number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance benefit in November 2008 was 1.07 million. It is up 75,700 from the revised figure for October 2008 and up 257,500 on the year.

Redundancies

In the three months to October 2008, 180,000 people became redundant in the three months prior to their Labour Force Survey interview. This is up 41,000 on the previous three months and up 49,000 on the year.

Economic inactivity

The economic inactivity rate for people of working age was 20.9 per cent for the three months to October 2008, up 0.1 percentage point from the previous three months but down 0.2 percentage points on the year. The number of inactive people of working age increased by 39,000 from the previous three months but fell by 33,000 over the year to reach 7.90 million.

Average earnings

The whole economy earnings annual growth rate, excluding bonuses, was 3.6 per cent in the three months to October 2008, unchanged from the three months to September. The corresponding rate, including bonuses, was 3.3 per cent, unchanged from the previous period.

Manufacturing productivity and unit wage costs

In the three months to October 2008, manufacturing productivity decreased by 0.9 per cent and manufacturing unit wage costs rose by 3.9 per cent compared with the same period a year earlier.

Labour Disputes

During October 2008, there were 5,000 working days lost due to labour disputes.