

# **Background to the Quarterly Employment Survey**

## **Overview**

The Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) is conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), Department of Finance (DoF) to provide short-term employee jobs estimates for Northern Ireland as a whole. It is a statutory survey which has been carried out, in various modified formats, since September 1978 by NISRA's Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch. The remit for the survey transferred from the Department for Economy (DfE) to the Department of Finance on April 1st 2011. It is also used by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to feed into the calculation of the quarterly workforce jobs estimates for the United Kingdom as a whole. In March 2016 the data collection process for the QES merged with the Index of Services (IOS) and Index of Production (IOP) to form the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS).

Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch currently publish the QES results in the monthly Labour Market Statistics Bulletin and in the quarterly QES Supplement. Updated QES results are released in mid March, June, September and December of each year and details of the publication dates which are notified at least twelve months in advance.

Each quarter the QES sample of approximately 5,700 companies is asked to supply the Department with employment data for each of their business activities. This information is then collated by Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch and from which employee jobs estimates are produced. Employee job estimates are produced by gender, working pattern (full/part-time) and industrial activity at the two-digit SIC level for Northern Ireland as a whole. Public & Private Sector totals are also available.

Seasonally adjusted figures are also available at section level, broad sector level (i.e. manufacturing, construction, services and other industries) and at public and private sector level. The results are accessible via the Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch website and more detailed ad hoc queries are dealt with as they arise.

The sample for inclusion in the survey is drawn quarterly from the Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR). The selection is actually taken in two parts so that there is an element which is effectively full coverage and also an element which is a statistical sample. The full coverage includes all public sector units, all private sector units with 25 or more employees and all private sector units with more than one industry activity and the sample is a stratified random sample of small businesses with less than 25 employees. The IDBR is a dynamic register, which is continuously updated to reflect the most recent information (i.e. it takes account of company births, deaths, mergers, etc.).

Information on employee jobs at a sub Northern Ireland level (e.g. District Council Area (DCA), Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA), Ward Level) and at the 5-digit SIC07 level are available from the Northern Ireland Census of Employment. Details of the Census of Employment results are available from Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch Tel: (028) 9052 9379.