

Labour Force Survey

Families and work in 2018

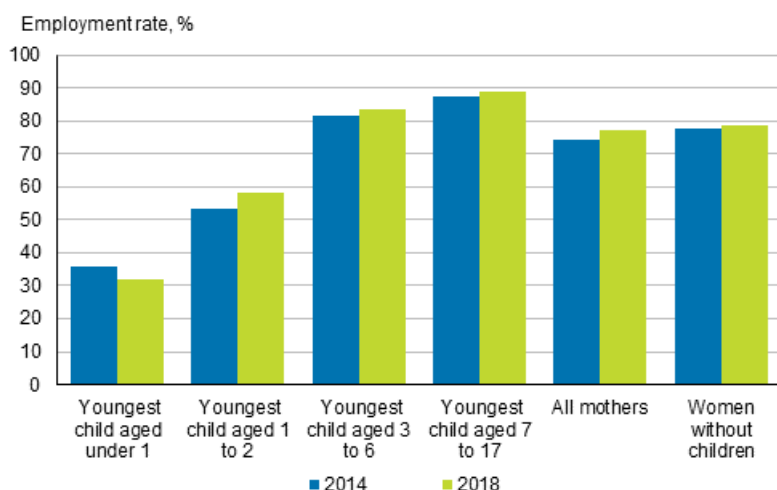
Mothers return to the labour market from family leaves more quickly than before

In 2018, more mothers with small children were employed compared to 2014. During four years, mothers' employment rate has increased by three percentage points. The increase has been biggest for mothers with children aged between one and two. These data derive from Statistics Finland's annual Labour Force Survey review Families and work 2018.

The employment rate of both men and women has improved significantly over the last couple of years. The employment rate of mothers with small children has increased more than that of women without children or fathers. The improved economic cycle is visible in mothers returning to work faster from family leave. At the same time, the proportion of mothers on family leave or taking care of their children at home with no employment contract has decreased.

Mothers of children aged under one are most often at home looking after their children, but mothers go back to work soon when children grow. Five years ago, 53 per cent of mothers with children aged between one and two were employed but in 2018 as many as 58 per cent. When the youngest child is aged between three and six, mothers' employment rate has risen from 82 to 84 per cent over the same period. The employment rate of mothers with older children also rose by two percentage points.

Employment rate for 20 to 59 year old mothers by age of their youngest child in 2014 and 2018, %



Mothers' education has a connection to employment. Mothers with tertiary level education often have a valid employment contract throughout their family leave and they also return to work faster than other mothers. Among mothers with tertiary level education, 65 per cent had returned to work when the youngest child in the family was aged between one and two in 2018. Among mothers of children in this age group who have not acquired post-basic level education only 21 per cent had returned to work and 53 per cent of mothers with upper secondary level qualifications.

If the mother had a job, 78 per cent of them regardless of the level of education returned to work when the youngest child was aged between one and two and nearly all mothers were working when the child was aged between three and six.

Among mothers without post-basic level education 54 per cent did not have a valid employment contract. Among those with upper secondary level qualifications, 22 per cent and 10 per cent of those with tertiary level education did not have a valid employment contract during their family leave.

Fifteen per cent of employed mothers and just under four per cent of fathers with children under the age of 18 worked part-time in 2018. Among mothers, part-time work was most common when the youngest child was aged between one and two. Approximately one in four mothers worked part-time at that stage. When the children grow, mothers usually start to work more full-time. For example, 11 per cent of mothers of school-age children worked part-time in 2018.

Fifty-six per cent of mothers with children under school-age that worked part time did so because of caring for children or other relatives. On the other hand, one quarter of mothers with children under school-age working part-time would have liked to have a full-time job, but it was not available. Thirty-eight per cent of mothers, whose youngest child was aged between 7 and 17 would have wanted to have a full-time job. The situation was, however, better than in 2014, when 45 per cent of mothers in the corresponding group worked part-time because no full-time job was available.

Links

Labour Force Survey tables in databases: http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/tau_en.html.

Information about changes in employment and employment relationships in 2018 can be found in earlier annual Labour Force Survey review Labour Force Survey 2018, time series data 2009 to 2018 [Labour Force Survey 2016, time series data 2007 to 2016](#)

The change in the definition of employed with an effect on the employment rate of mothers with small children is described in an article of the Tieto&trendit periodical (in Finnish) [Määritelmämuutos vuosilta 2008–2009 näkyy pienten lasten äitien työllisyydessä](#).

The employment of mothers of young children in Finland and Sweden has been compared in an article published in the Tieto&Trendit periodical (in Finnish) [Suomi–Ruotsi-vertailu: Pienten lasten äitien työssäolossa ei suuria eroja](#) .

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1 Introduction

This Labour Force Survey publication contains statistical data on families and work. This publication examines the changes that have occurred in the employment of mothers and fathers of families with children and in the use of family leaves between 2014 and 2018. The data are based on interview data derived from the household section of the Labour Force Survey. The publication is focused on the age group of those aged 20 to 59 because over 99 per cent of the parents of children aged under 18 belong to this age group. Families with children are families that have at least one child aged under 18 living in the same household. In this review, people without children are those who do not have children aged under 18 living in their household.

At the end of 2018, families with children numbered 562,000. The number of families with children declined by 4,300 from the year before. In the last decade, the number of families with children has decreased by an average of 2,000 families per year. Families with children had 1.85 children on average. Of these families, 43 per cent had one child, 39 per cent two children and 18 per cent at least three children. Of the families with underage children, 58 per cent were families formed of a married couple with children, around 20 per cent were cohabiting couples with children and 22 per cent were one-parent families with underage children. (Families 2018, Statistics Finland).

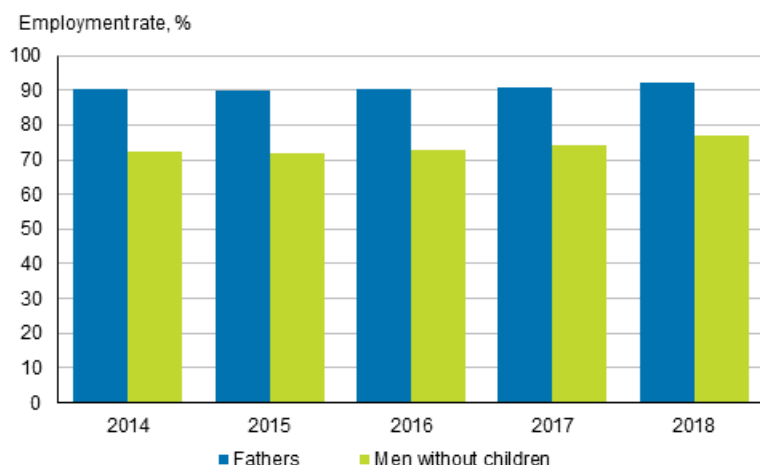
When assessing the employment status among parents of small children, the international definition of the employed used in the Labour Force Survey should be considered: In the Labour Force Survey, employed are those persons who have worked for at least one hour during the survey week. Employed are also those employees absent from work whose reason for absence is maternity or paternity leave, illness or accident or whose absence has lasted under three months. Self-employed persons are always included in employed even if they had not worked during the survey week.

Sections 2 and 3 of this publication describe the employment of the parents of families with children and Section 4 explains their activity in more detail. The concepts used and the household data for the Labour Force Survey are described in more detail in Sections 5 and 6. Appendix tables contain more detailed information about the employment of parents for years 2014 to 2018.

2 Employment of mothers and fathers has increased

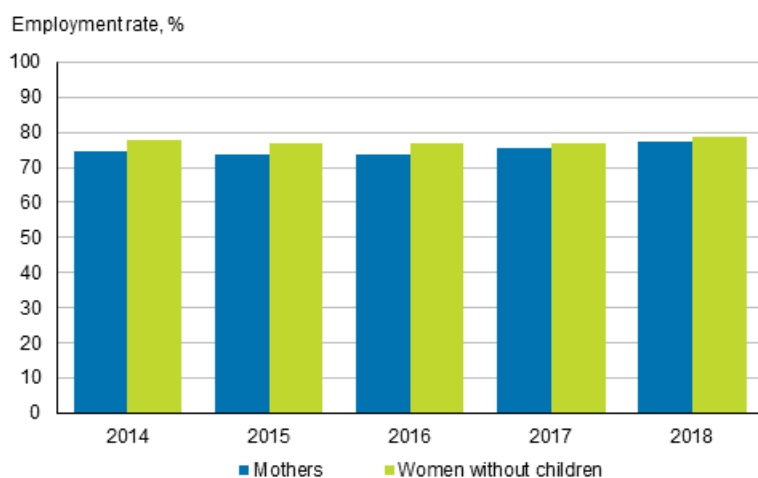
In 2018, the **employment rate** for men aged 20 to 59 was 82 per cent, on average, and 78 per cent for women in the same age group. The variation of the employment rate by family type is large for men: in 2018, the employment rate for fathers of families with children was 92 per cent, while for men without children it was 77 per cent. The employment rate of men without children has increased by five percentage points and the employment rate of fathers by two percentage points from 2014 to 2018 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Employment rates for fathers and men without children in 2014 to 2018, aged 20 to 59, %



Women's employment does not vary by family type as much as men's but the employment rate of women without children is slightly higher than that of mothers with children under 18 years of age. In 2018, the employment rate of women without children was 79 per cent and that of mothers was 77 per cent. The increase in women's employment rate is especially visible for mothers of families with children. In 2014, the employment rate of mothers was 3.3 percentage points lower than that of women with no children, but in 2018 the difference was only 1.3 percentage points (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Employment rates for mothers and women without children in 2014 to 2018, aged 20 to 59, %



In 2018, the **unemployment rate** for fathers of children aged under 18 was clearly lower (4%) than for men who did not have underage children (9%). The unemployment rate of mothers was five per cent and that of women without children was eight per cent.

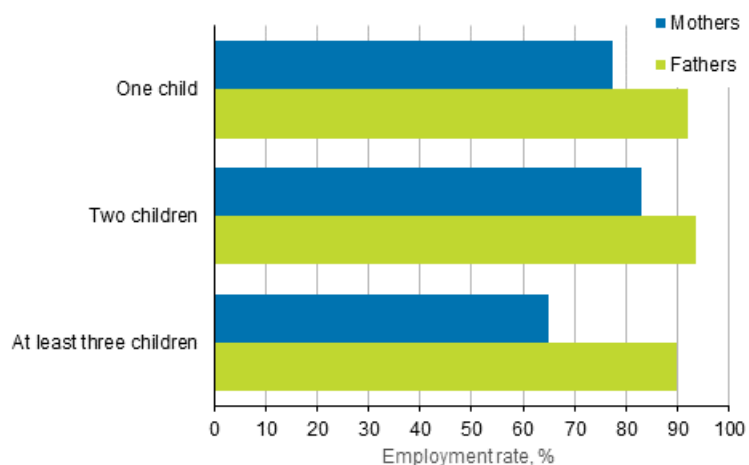
3 The number of children and their age affect mothers' labour market position

The number of children under the age of 18 in the family affect especially the employment of mothers. On average, 80 per cent of mothers with one or two children were employed, while of mothers with at least three children 65 per cent were employed in 2018.

The employment rate of mothers with two children aged under 18 rose most, from 78 per cent in 2014 to 83 per cent in 2018. The employment rate of mothers with three or more children increased by two percentage points over the same period, while that of mothers with one child remained unchanged at 77 per cent during both years.

The employment rate of fathers has for several consecutive years been around 90 per cent regardless of the number of children. (Figure 3.)

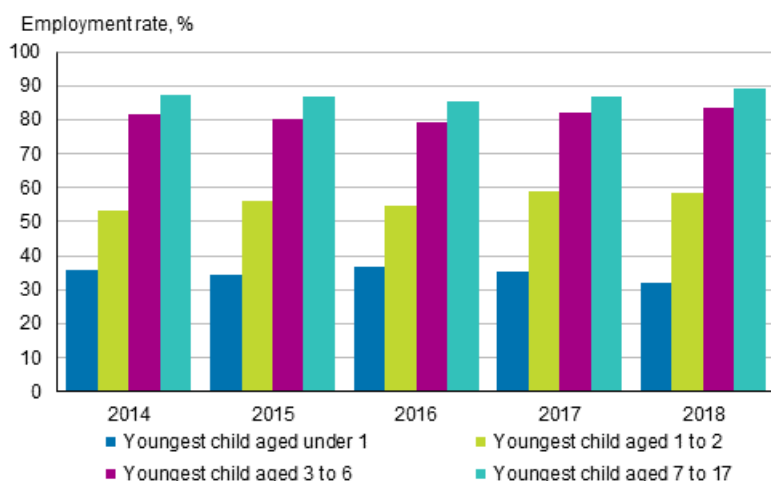
Figure 3. Employment rates for fathers and mothers aged 20 to 59 by number of children in 2018, %



The age of the youngest child in the family has an effect on the mother's employment, especially when the child is small. However, the employment rate of mothers rises quite quickly as the child grows (Figure 4, Appendix table 1). While 32 per cent of mothers with children aged under one were employed in 2018, this was so for 58 per cent of mothers with children aged one to two, and 84 per cent of mothers with children aged three to six. Among the mothers of school-age children 89 per cent were employed.

Twenty-four per cent of employed mothers with children aged one to two were working part-time in 2018. Mothers' full-time employment becomes more common as the children grow. Among employed mothers with school-age children (aged 7 to 17) only 11 per cent worked part-time in 2018. Fathers' part-time employment is very low.

Figure 4. Employment rates for mothers aged 20 to 59 by age of their youngest child in 2014 to 2018, %



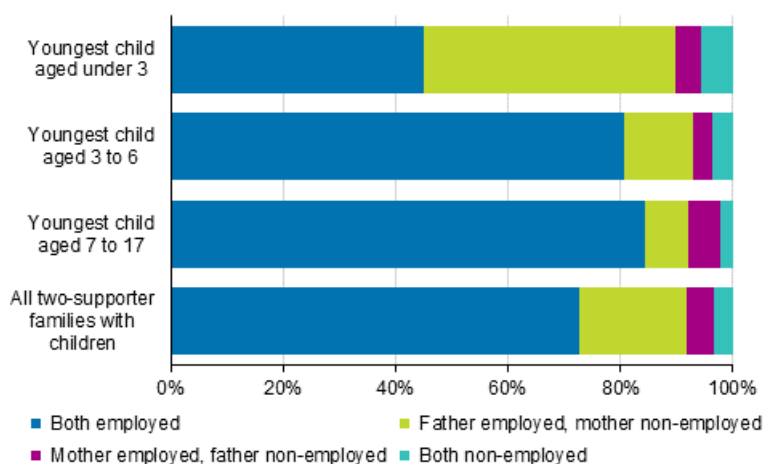
In families with underage children with two supporters, fathers usually take shorter family leaves than mothers. During paternity leave or parental or child care leave of under three months, fathers are classified as employed so family leaves have little impact on the employment rate of fathers.

The share of two-parent families where both parents are employed has grown in 2018 compared to 2014. In 73 per cent of all two-parent families with children both parents were employed in 2018 while in 2014 the share was 68 per cent. When the youngest child is between three and six years old, in 81 per cent of the two-parent families both parents were employed, and this is so for 85 per cent of families with school-age children. (Figure 5.)

Although mothers' employment increases rapidly after the youngest child turns one, it remains below the employment of fathers until the youngest child starts school. In 2018, the employment rate of mothers in two-parent families was 90 per cent when the youngest child reached school age.

Both parents were non-employed in three per cent of families with children with two supporters.

Figure 5. Labour market position of parents in families with children with two supporters aged 20 to 59 by age of youngest child in 2018, %



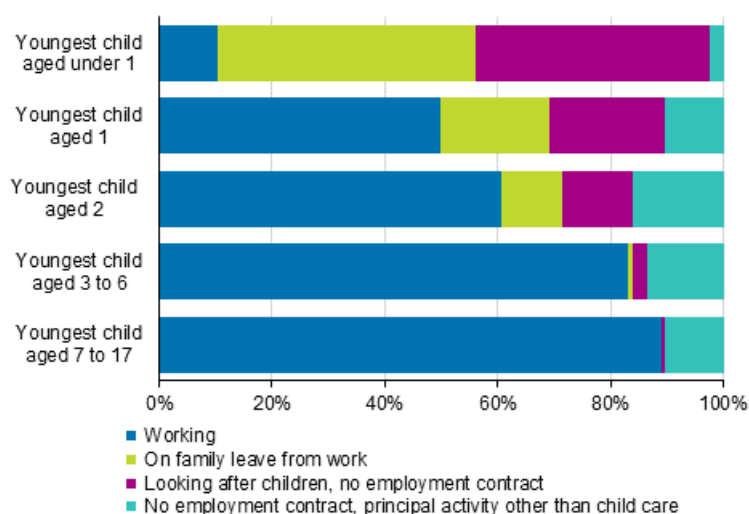
4 Working has become more common among mothers

However, the employment rate does not describe how many parents of young children actually work. In the Labour Force Survey employed are those who have worked for at least one hour during the survey week. In addition, employed are also those employees absent from work during the survey week who have a job and who are on maternity or paternity leave or whose absence has lasted under three months. Thus, especially among mothers with children under the age of one, many that are classified as employed are actually on maternity leave. Correspondingly, mothers that are on parental or child care leave from work are usually classified in the inactive population as parental or child care leave are usually taken after the maternity leave, which means the leave is over three months (see Kambur & Pärnänen, 2017a; Kambur & Pärnänen, 2017b). This section discusses parents who have been at work during the survey week.

Figures 6 and 7 show mothers who actually go to work as a separate group. It also describes separately the mothers on family leave (maternity, parental or child care leave) from work and those without a valid employment contract who are looking after their children at home. The fourth group consists of those who have said their principal activity is something else than child care. This group includes for example students and unemployed persons.

Very few mothers with children under the age of one were working in 2018, but as many as one-half of mothers with children aged one were working (Figure 6). In families where the youngest child was three to six years of age, a majority of mothers had returned to work. Among all mothers of school-age children 89 per cent were working.

Figure 6. Working and family leaves among mothers aged 20 to 59 by age of their youngest child in 2018, %



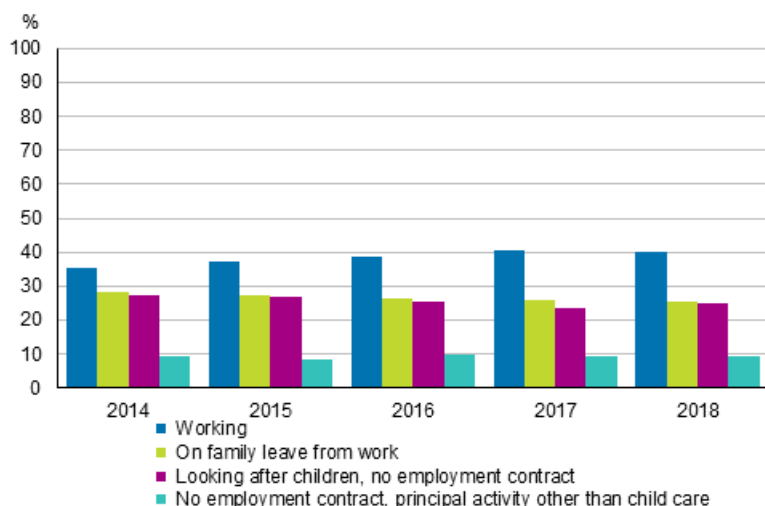
Fathers most commonly have family leaves when the family's youngest child is aged under one. At that time, seven per cent of fathers were looking after a child or children either on family leave from work or without an employment relationship.

The level of education affects the mother's working. Mothers with tertiary level education often have a valid employment contract throughout their family leave and they also return to work faster than other mothers.

In 2018, two-thirds of mothers with tertiary level education whose youngest child was aged between one and two years, had been working during the survey week, while slightly over one-half of mothers with upper secondary level qualifications had been working. Among mothers with tertiary level education, 91 per cent and among those with upper secondary level qualifications, 81 per cent were working when the youngest child was aged between three and six years. On the other hand, among mothers without post-basic level education under one-half were working at this stage.

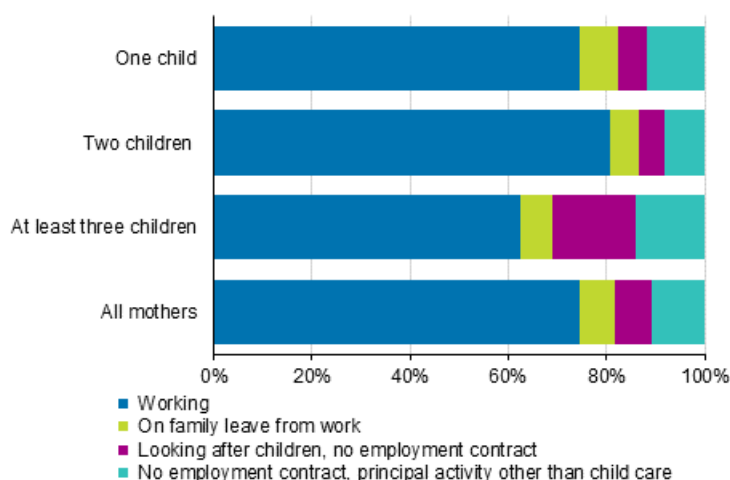
Figure 7 shows changes having taken place in recent years in work and family leaves among mothers of children aged under three years. Over the last five years the share of working mothers with children under the age of three has increased. In 2018, forty per cent of mothers with children under the age of three were working. The share has increased by five percentage points from 2014. At the same time, the share of mothers on family leave has decreased. In 2018, good one-third of mothers with children aged under three were at home without an employment relationship. This group includes both mothers that primarily care for children at home and those whose main activity is something else than caring for a child, such as studying or unemployment. (Figure 7.)

Figure 7. Working and family leaves of mothers aged 20 to 59 with children aged under three in 2014 to 2018, %



Mothers who have no valid employment relationship and who said their principal activity was child care can be considered stay-at-home mothers. Interpreted like this, five per cent of mothers with one or two children can be classified as stay-at-home mothers. Seventeen per cent of mothers with at least three children were stay-at-home mothers in 2018. Among all families with children, around one-fifth had at least three children. (Figure 8.)

Figure 8. Working and family leaves among mothers aged 20 to 59 by number of children in 2018, %



5 Concepts

Non-employed is a person that is unemployed or in the inactive population.

Parents of families with children - mothers and fathers - are women and men living in the same household with their own or their spouse's children aged under 18. As the sample contains only a few same-sex parents of families with children, they are not included in the analyses.

Persons without children are women and men without children aged under 18 living in the same household. Thus, they include

- Persons without any children;
- So-called remote parents whose child lives or is registered at the address of the other parent; and
- Parents whose children are aged over 18 or have already moved into their own household.

Age of the youngest child: Age of the family's youngest (only) child in years. A child aged one has turned one, but is under two. Correspondingly, a child aged two has turned two, but is not yet three.

Family leaves comprise maternity and paternity leave, parental leave and child care leave. They are leaves which the parents of small children are entitled to take by law in order to care for children until the youngest child reaches the age of three. Persons on maternity or paternity leave and persons whose other family leaves last under three months are classified as employed in the Labour Force Survey.

A person is *employed* if he/she has during the survey week been in gainful employment for at least one hour against pay in money or fringe benefits, or to make a profit. Employees temporarily absent from work during the survey week are also classified as employed if the reason for absence is maternity or paternity leave or own illness or the absence has lasted for under three months. Employees that have been on family leave continuously for at least three months are classified in the inactive population. A self-employed person or an unpaid worker in an enterprise of a family member is calculated in employed regardless of the length or reason for absence.

The *employment rate* is the ratio of employed persons to the population of the same age. The employment rate of the total population is calculated as the ratio of employed persons aged 15 to 64 to the population of the same age.

The *work attendance rate* is the percentage share of those at work in all employed persons.

The *unemployment rate* is the ratio of unemployed persons to the active population (labour force) of the same age, i.e. employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate of the total population is calculated as the ratio of unemployed persons aged 15 to 74 to the active population (labour force) of the same age.

Level of education: Those with *basic level qualifications* have at most nine years of education. They have qualifications from primary school, middle school or comprehensive school. Those with *upper secondary level qualifications* have 11 to 12 years of education. These qualifications include the matriculation examination, vocational qualifications attained in one to three years. *Tertiary level education* includes lowest level tertiary education (e.g. technician engineer, diploma in business and administration), lower level tertiary degrees (University of Applied Sciences (UAS) bachelor's degrees and lower university degrees), higher-level tertiary degrees (e.g. master, licentiate of medicine, University of Applied Sciences (UAS) master's degrees) and doctorate or equivalent level education (licentiate's and doctor's degrees).

6 The household section of the Labour Force Survey provides data on employment in families

The data presented in this publication are based on the interview data obtained in the Labour Force Survey. The data collected with the Labour Force Survey are used to compile statistics on labour force participation, employment, unemployment and working hours of the population aged between 15 and 74. The data content of the survey is based on an EU Regulation. In most European countries, the Labour Force Survey data are collected from a sample of households, which means that all members of a household living at the same address are interviewed at the same time. Besides Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Switzerland are the only other countries where the sample is based on individual persons, i.e. only the target persons drawn into the sample are interviewed.

However, the EU regulation also requires data concerning households and in Finland this has been solved by exploiting the panel nature of the Labour Force Survey. In the Labour Force Survey, the same person is usually interviewed five times during 18 months. In addition to the basic interview, a household interview is conducted in the fifth interview round to ascertain the members who belong to the household of the interviewee and the activity of the household members aged 15 to 74 on the labour market. The data obtained in this way enable examinations of, for instance, the joint status of both spouses on the labour market. However, this publication centres only on families whose parents belong to the age group of those aged 20 to 59.

In 2018, the household data comprised approximately 47,000 persons who formed 18,000 households. The household data for the Labour Force Survey have been collected by the present method since 2003 and the data can mainly be published starting from the year 2004.

Sources:

Kambur & Pärnänen, 2017a: Määritelmämuutos vuosilta 2008–2009 näkyy pienten lasten äitien työllisyydessä. (Definition change from 2008 to 2009 is visible in the employment of mothers with small children, in Finnish) Tilastokeskus, Tieto & Trendit, 2017. [Määritelmämuutos vuosilta 2008–2009 näkyy pienten lasten äitien työllisyydessä.](#)

Kambur & Pärnänen, 2017b: Suomi-Ruotsi-vertailu: Pienten lasten äitien työssäolossa ei suuria eroja. (Finland-Sweden comparison: No great differences in working among mothers of small children, in Finnish) Statistics Finland, Tieto & Trendit, 2017. [Suomi-Ruotsi-vertailu: Pienten lasten äitien työssäolossa ei suuria eroja.](#)

Appendix tables, time series 2014–2018

Appendix table 1. Employment rates by age of youngest child in 2014 - 2018, population aged 20-59

		Employment rate, %				
		Year				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Both sexes	Total	77,5	76,9	77,2	78,2	80,2
	Parents of children under 18 years total	81,9	81,6	81,5	83,0	84,4
	- youngest child under 3 years	68,3	69,4	67,9	69,9	69,2
	- youngest child under 1 years	62,8	62,2	62,8	62,6	60,9
	- youngest child between 1 and 2 years	71,3	73,5	70,7	73,6	73,4
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	85,4	84,5	85,2	86,7	88,0
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	88,9	87,9	88,0	89,0	91,1
	No children under 18 years	75,0	74,2	74,8	75,5	77,8
Males	Total	78,5	78,0	78,8	79,8	82,2
	Parents of children under 18 years total	90,1	89,9	90,1	91,0	92,1
	- youngest child under 3 years	90,0	91,2	87,8	89,7	89,6
	- youngest child under 1 years	90,5	90,5	89,1	90,7	90,2
	- youngest child between 1 and 2 years	89,7	91,6	87,0	89,2	89,3
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	89,3	89,2	91,6	91,5	92,8
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	90,5	89,4	90,7	91,6	93,3
	No children under 18 years	72,5	71,8	73,0	74,1	77,1
Females	Total	76,4	75,7	75,6	76,5	78,0
	Parents of children under 18 years total	74,4	73,8	73,6	75,6	77,2
	- youngest child under 3 years	47,2	48,2	48,6	51,0	49,5
	- youngest child under 1 years	35,6	34,3	36,7	35,1	31,8
	- youngest child between 1 and 2 years	53,4	56,0	54,9	58,8	58,3
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	81,7	80,0	79,2	82,1	83,5
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	87,4	86,6	85,6	86,8	89,1
	No children under 18 years	77,7	76,9	76,8	77,0	78,5

Appendix table 2. Employment rates by number of children in 2014 - 2018, population aged 20-59

		Employment rate, %				
		Year				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Both sexes	Total	77,5	76,9	77,2	78,2	80,2
	Parents of children under 18 years total	81,9	81,6	81,5	83,0	84,4
	- 1 child	82,4	81,3	81,1	81,2	84,3
	- 2 children	84,6	84,4	84,1	86,8	88,1
	- 3 or more children	75,9	76,5	77,4	79,0	77,0
	No children under 18 years	75,0	74,2	74,8	75,5	77,8
Males	Total	78,5	78,0	78,8	79,8	82,2
	Parents of children under 18 years total	90,1	89,9	90,1	91,0	92,1
	- 1 child	88,9	89,0	89,0	88,3	91,9
	- 2 children	91,6	90,8	91,4	93,3	93,6
	- 3 or more children	89,5	89,8	89,5	92,1	89,8
	No children under 18 years	72,5	71,8	73,0	74,1	77,1

		Employment rate, %				
		Year				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Females	Total	76,4	75,7	75,6	76,5	78,0
	Parents of children under 18 years total	74,4	73,8	73,6	75,6	77,2
	- 1 child	76,5	74,4	74,2	75,1	77,4
	- 2 children	77,8	78,2	77,1	80,7	83,0
	- 3 or more children	62,6	63,6	65,7	66,5	64,8
	No children under 18 years	77,7	76,9	76,8	77,0	78,5

Appendix table 3. Activity rates by age of youngest child in 2014 - 2018, population aged 20-59

		Activity rate, %				
		Year				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Both sexes	Total	84,3	84,5	84,2	85,1	86,0
	Parents of children under 18 years total	86,9	86,6	86,9	87,5	88,1
	- youngest child under 3 years	73,4	73,3	73,6	74,9	73,5
	- youngest child under 1 years	66,7	65,2	66,5	65,1	63,8
	- youngest child between 1 and 2 years	77,0	77,9	77,4	79,7	78,3
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	91,1	91,1	90,5	91,1	91,8
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	93,4	92,9	93,2	93,4	94,5
	No children under 18 years	82,8	83,3	82,7	83,8	84,7
Males	Total	86,2	86,2	86,3	87,3	88,3
	Parents of children under 18 years total	94,9	94,5	94,6	94,8	95,5
	- youngest child under 3 years	95,0	94,6	93,6	94,0	94,0
	- youngest child under 1 years	95,6	94,2	94,2	94,1	93,4
	- youngest child between 1 and 2 years	94,6	94,8	93,2	93,9	94,2
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	94,8	94,5	95,2	95,1	96,5
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	94,9	94,4	95,0	95,1	95,8
	No children under 18 years	81,7	81,9	82,0	83,5	84,6
Females	Total	82,2	82,7	82,0	82,9	83,5
	Parents of children under 18 years total	79,5	79,3	79,7	80,8	81,3
	- youngest child under 3 years	52,4	52,6	54,1	56,5	53,6
	- youngest child under 1 years	38,4	36,5	39,0	36,7	34,4
	- youngest child between 1 and 2 years	59,9	61,5	62,0	66,2	63,2
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	87,7	87,9	86,1	87,3	87,4
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	92,0	91,5	91,6	91,9	93,3
	No children under 18 years	83,9	84,8	83,4	84,2	84,9

Appendix table 4. Activity rates by number of children in 2014 - 2018, population aged 20-59

		Activity rate, %				
		Year				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Both sexes	Total	84,3	84,5	84,2	85,1	86,0
	Parents of children under 18 years total	86,9	86,6	86,9	87,5	88,1
	- 1 child	87,7	86,6	86,7	86,8	88,1
	- 2 children	89,1	89,1	89,5	90,4	91,1
	- 3 or more children	80,9	81,5	82,2	83,0	82,2
	No children under 18 years	82,8	83,3	82,7	83,8	84,7
Males	Total	86,2	86,2	86,3	87,3	88,3
	Parents of children under 18 years total	94,9	94,5	94,6	94,8	95,5
	- 1 child	94,2	93,6	93,8	93,3	94,7
	- 2 children	96,0	95,2	96,1	96,1	96,5
	- 3 or more children	94,1	94,7	93,6	95,1	95,1
	No children under 18 years	81,7	81,9	82,0	83,5	84,6
Females	Total	82,2	82,7	82,0	82,9	83,5
	Parents of children under 18 years total	79,5	79,3	79,7	80,8	81,3
	- 1 child	81,9	80,3	80,5	81,2	82,1
	- 2 children	82,6	83,3	83,2	85,1	86,0
	- 3 or more children	68,1	68,8	71,3	71,5	70,0
	No children under 18 years	83,9	84,8	83,4	84,2	84,9

Appendix table 5. Unemployment rates by age of youngest child in 2014 - 2018, population aged 20-59

		Unemployment rate, %				
		Year				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Both sexes	Total	8,0	9,0	8,3	8,2	6,8
	Parents of children under 18 years total	5,7	5,8	6,2	5,2	4,3
	- youngest child under 3 years	7,0	5,3	7,7	6,6	5,8
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	6,3	7,3	5,9	4,8	4,2
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	4,8	5,3	5,6	4,6	3,6
	No children under 18 years	9,4	10,9	9,5	9,9	8,2
Males	Total	8,9	9,6	8,7	8,6	6,9
	Parents of children under 18 years total	5,1	4,8	4,9	3,9	3,5
	- youngest child under 3 years	5,2	3,6	6,2	4,5	4,7
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	5,8	5,6	3,8	3,8	3,9
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	4,6	5,2	4,6	3,6	2,6
	No children under 18 years	11,3	12,4	11,0	11,3	8,9
Females	Total	7,1	8,4	7,8	7,7	6,6
	Parents of children under 18 years total	6,4	6,9	7,6	6,5	5,1
	- youngest child under 3 years	10,0	8,3	10,2	9,8	7,7
	- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	6,9	9,0	8,1	6,0	4,5
	- youngest child between 7 and 17 years	5,0	5,4	6,5	5,6	4,6
	No children under 18 years	7,4	9,3	7,9	8,4	7,5

Appendix table 6. Unemployment rates by number of children in 2014 - 2018, population aged 20-59

		Unemployment rate, %				
		Year				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Both sexes	Total	8,0	9,0	8,3	8,2	6,8
	Parents of children under 18 years total	5,7	5,8	6,2	5,2	4,3
	- 1 child	6,1	6,1	6,4	6,5	4,3
	- 2 children	5,1	5,3	6,0	4,0	3,3
	- 3 or more children	6,2	6,2	5,9	4,8	6,4
	No children under 18 years	9,4	10,9	9,5	9,9	8,2
Males	Total	8,9	9,6	8,7	8,6	6,9
	Parents of children under 18 years total	5,1	4,8	4,9	3,9	3,5
	- 1 child	5,7	4,9	5,1	5,3	2,9
	- 2 children	4,6	4,6	4,8	2,9	3,1
	- 3 or more children	4,8	5,2	4,4	3,1	5,7
	No children under 18 years	11,3	12,4	11,0	11,3	8,9
Females	Total	7,1	8,4	7,8	7,7	6,6
	Parents of children under 18 years total	6,4	6,9	7,6	6,5	5,1
	- 1 child	6,5	7,4	7,8	7,6	5,7
	- 2 children	5,7	6,1	7,3	5,1	3,5
	- 3 or more children	8,0	7,5	7,8	7,0	7,3
	No children under 18 years	7,4	9,3	7,9	8,4	7,5

Appendix table 7. Working and family leaves among 20 to 59-year-old mothers by age of their youngest child in 2018

	Total	Working	On family leave from work	Looking after children, no employment contract	No employment contract, principal activity other than child care
	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons
Mothers of children under 18 years total	523	390	37	40	57
- youngest child under 1 years	46	5	21	19	1
- youngest child between 1 and 2 years	93	51	14	16	12
- youngest child between 3 and 6 years	129	107	1	3	17

Appendix table 8. Working and family leaves among 20 to 59-year-old mothers by number of children in 2018

	Total	Working	On family leave from work	Looking after children, no employment contract	No employment contract, principal activity other than child care
	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons
Mothers of children under 18 years total	523	390	37	40	57
- 1 child	228	170	18	13	27
- 2 children	197	159	12	10	16
- 3 or more children	98	61	7	17	14

Quality Description: Labour force survey

1. Relevance of statistical information

The Labour Force Survey is a sample survey used in the compilation of monthly, quarterly and annual statistics on participation in the labour market, employment, unemployment and working hours among the population aged between 15 and 74. The data content of the Survey is based on an EU regulation, and the Survey sample includes approximately 12,000 persons every month. The information provided by the respondents is used to produce a picture of the activities of the entire population aged between 15 and 74 on the labour market during one week. In the basic classification of labour market status, the population is divided into the employed, the unemployed and the economically inactive. The active population (labour force) consists of the employed and the unemployed.

The Survey provides an up-to-date and comprehensive picture of the active population (labour force) and changes on the labour market. Public attention is focused each month especially on the changes in employment and unemployment from the corresponding month in the previous year. Seasonally adjusted figures are used to monitor the trend in the change. The Survey also provides information about persons of working age who are not employed or job seekers. Since 2003, information has also been obtained from a subsample on the structure of households and the activities of all members of a household aged 15 to 74 relative to the labour market. A description of the data content of the Labour Force Survey is available at http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/tyti_2008-02-19_tlu_001_en.html.

The monthly and quarterly results of the Labour Force Survey describe the seasonal and trend variation of employment. The Labour Force Survey time series describe long term changes in the labour market. Annual averages describe the active population, that is, the employed and the unemployed, and persons outside the labour force by, for instance, industry, occupation, education, age, gender and area.

The results of the Survey are used in preparing, among other things, labour market projections and plans, as support for decision-making and in the monitoring of the effects of different measures on employment. Key users of the results are ministries, authorities responsible for regional planning, employers' and employees' organisations, universities and research institutes, international organisations and the European Union. At Statistics Finland the data are used in, for instance, calculations of National Accounts. The Statistical Office of the European Communities, Eurostat, steers the content of the Survey and monitors its quality. Eurostat produces structural indicators and other statistics from the quarterly data that are submitted to it.

The concepts and definitions used in the Survey comply with the recommendations of ILO, the International Labour Organisation of the UN, and the regulations of the European Union on official statistics. The current data content of the Labour Force Survey is mainly based on the EU Regulations concerning Labour Force Surveys (Nos 577/98, 2257/2003 and 430/2005). A detailed description of the EU Labour Force Survey is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Labour_market_and_Labour_force_survey_\(LFS\)_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Labour_market_and_Labour_force_survey_(LFS)_statistics)

Since 1999 a harmonised EU ad hoc survey with an annually changing topic has been conducted in connection with the Labour Force Survey. Further information about the ad hoc surveys can be found (in Finnish) at: http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/tyti_2018-04-12_men_001.pdf.

Concepts:

- A person is **employed** if he/she has during the survey week been in gainful employment for at least one hour against pay in money or fringe benefits, or to make a profit, or has been temporarily absent from work. Persons absent from work during the survey week are classified as employed if the reason for absence is own illness or maternity or paternity leave or the absence has lasted for under three months. The employed are divided into employees, self-employed or unpaid family workers.
- A person is **unemployed** if he/she is without work during the survey week, has actively sought employment in the past four weeks as an employee or self-employed and would be available for work

within two weeks. A person who is without work and waiting for an agreed job to start within three months is also classified as unemployed, if he/she could start work within two weeks.

- The **active population (labour force)** comprises all persons who are employed or unemployed during the survey week.
- The **economically inactive population** consists of persons who are not employed or unemployed during the survey week. The economically inactive population can also be referred as persons outside the labour force. Explanations for other concepts of the Labour Force Survey can be found at: http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/kas_en.html.

The classifications used in the Labour Force Survey include the Standard Industrial Classification (TOL 2008, NACE Rev. 2), the Classification of Occupations 2010 (ISCO-08), the Classification of Socio-economic Groups 1989 (based on the Classification of Occupations 2010) and the Classification of Education 1997 (ISCED) as well as the regional classification into Major Regions, Regional State Administrative Agencies (AVI), Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centre) and Regions.

2. Methodological description of the statistical survey

The population of the Labour Force Survey consists of persons aged between 15 and 74 who are permanent residents of Finland. The population also comprises persons residing temporarily (for under one year) abroad as well as foreign nationals registered in the Finnish Population Information System whose stay in Finland will last for at least one year (<http://vrk.fi/en/registration-of-foreign-citizens>).

The sample of the Labour Force Survey is drawn twice a year as a stratified random sample from Statistics Finland's population database, which is based on the Central Population Register. The survey is a panel survey in which one person is interviewed five times. The interviews are conducted every three months, apart from the fourth interview which is conducted six months after the third interview. The first and last interviews are 15 months apart. The sample of each month consists of approximately 12,000 persons, which is, on the average, every 300th person in the population. The sample for one survey month consists of five rotation groups which have entered the survey at different points of time. The sample changes gradually so that different persons answer the questions during three consecutive months. In consecutive quarters three-fifths of the respondents are the same. In consecutive years the overlap is two-fifths. The data are collected from all weeks of the year.

The data content of the survey varies by survey round. Certain basic pieces of information are inquired in the first round and checks are then made in subsequent rounds to see whether they have remained unchanged. The data content is wider in the last, or the fifth, survey round which includes the household section, the annual ad hoc section with variable topics, as well as certain additional questions concerning the main job.

Statistics Finland's interviewers collect the data with computer-assisted telephone interviews. In 2016, around 101,000 persons were interviewed for the Labour Force Survey. The response rate of this survey was 70 per cent, on average.

The results from the sample are weighted to correspond to the entire population aged between 15 and 74. The effects of non-response on the results are corrected by using so-called weight calibration, in which weighting is used to produce the correct population distributions by area, gender and age. Information from the job seeker register of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is also used as supplementary data.

In most European countries the Labour Force Survey data are collected from a sample of households, which means that all members of a household living at the same address are interviewed at the same time. Besides Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Switzerland are the only other countries where the sample is based on individual persons, i.e. only the target persons drawn into the sample are interviewed. However, the EU regulation also requires data concerning households and in Finland this has been solved by exploiting the panel nature of the Labour Force Survey. In addition to the basic interview, a household interview is

conducted on the fifth interview round to ascertain the members who belong to the household of the interviewee and the activity of the household members aged 15 to 74 on the labour market. So that the data would describe the whole population, a supplementing sample is added to it of households in which all members are aged 75 or over. Children under the age of 15 and persons aged over 75 are not interviewed in the Labour Force Survey, but certain data are created for them based on register data to describe their status on the labour market.

The household data enable examinations of, for instance, employment in the family and the joint status of both spouses on the labour market. In 2018, the household data comprised approximately 47,000 persons who formed around 20,000 households. The household data for the Labour Force Survey have been collected by the present method since 2003 and the data can mainly be published starting from the year 2004.

Like all figures collected with a sample survey, the figures of the Labour Force Survey are so called estimates. An **estimate** is an estimation of a quality of the population derived by applying a mathematical procedure (estimation) to sample observations.

Statistical description of the reliability of estimation

The estimation procedure of the Labour Force Survey is based on the calibration of weights in which the original sample weights calculated on the basis of the sample design are adjusted with a regression model to get the desired population distributions.

The accuracy of estimates is evaluated on the basis of their standard error. **Standard error** (the square root of the sample variance) describes how neatly the value of the parameter estimated from the observations is concentrated around the parameter of the population. The magnitude of the standard error is affected by sample design, the number of observations in the relevant population or subgroup, variation due to the distribution of the research variable as well as properties of the mathematical formula.

Key figures of reliability derived from the standard error are the confidence intervals and relative standard error. **Confidence interval** describes the width of the range in which the real value of the parameter is relative to the estimate calculated from the sample. When calculating the confidence interval, the desired level of risk is fixed. The five per cent risk level applied in the Labour Force Survey means that if the samples were drawn again, in 95 cases out of one hundred the real value of the parameter would be within the confidence interval and in five cases out of one hundred it would be outside the confidence interval.

Relative standard error (variation coefficient) is the percentage share of the standard error of the estimate. Proportioning the standard error to the estimate's size removes the effect of the scale of the variable. Hence the values of the relative standard error of different variables and the values of the standard error of the same variable in different subgroups are easy to compare with one another.

3. Correctness and accuracy of data

The reliability of the figures of the Labour Force Survey are affected by non-response (see above), measurement errors and random variation due to sampling.

Measurement errors arise from, among other things, differences in interpreting or understanding of the questions, respondents' inability to recall or unwillingness to give certain information, or erroneous recording of answers. Development and testing of the questions, interviewer instructions and user interface, and training of interviewers are measures used to contain measurement errors.

Random variation due to sampling means that figures calculated from different samples differ somewhat from each other. When evaluating roughly the magnitude of random variation due to sampling in different situations, the main principle is that **1) the larger the sample is from which the figures are calculated and 2) the larger the population described by the figures is, the less uncertainty due to sampling there will be in the figures**. For instance, quarterly figures are more accurate than monthly figures in describing the same phenomenon, as quarterly data have been collected by interviewing three times the number of persons interviewed for monthly data. Annual figures are the most accurate. The latter principle means that the figures of the employed and the unemployed, that is the estimates, based on a sample of

the same size are the more accurate the larger the subgroup they apply to. As the relevant subgroup becomes smaller, random variation due to sampling increases. Therefore the numbers of the unemployed in different age groups or in different areas are not as reliable as the number of all the unemployed.

Inaccuracy due to sampling is assessed with the **standard error** of the estimate. The magnitude of the standard error is influenced by the size of the sample and the variance of the variable being investigated. Standard error can be used to calculate the **confidence interval**, within which the value of the population lies with a certain probability. The **95 per cent confidence interval** used in the Labour Force Survey **is the interval within which the real value of the characteristic being investigated lies with 95 per cent probability**. For instance, if the estimate for the number of unemployed persons in a certain month is 230,000 and its standard error is 7,700, the 95 per cent confidence interval of the number of the unemployed is $230,000 \pm 15,100$, i.e. 214,900 to 245,100 persons. The share to be added to the estimate or deducted from it is obtained by multiplying the estimate's standard error with the 1.96 coefficient of the 95 per cent confidence interval. This share describes uncertainty caused by sampling and is called the **margin of error**.

Examples of the accuracy of the number of the employed and the unemployed by size of subgroup

To illustrate the magnitude of random variation, examples of the estimates of different numbers of the employed and the unemployed, their margins of error and other key figures of reliability are presented below in Tables 1 to 2. The magnitude of random variation in the examples is a rough estimate of the upper boundary of random variation, when the figure being investigated is **a correspondingly large estimate of the number of the employed or the unemployed by gender and age of the youngest child**.

We can see from Table 1 that if the annual estimate of the employed in the subgroup is around 53,000 persons, the real number of the employed lies, with a probability of 95 per cent, within the range of $53,000 \pm 5,000$ persons. Estimates are the more accurate the bigger subgroup they concern. If, say, we compare two groups of mothers with children aged under 18 "youngest child aged one to two" and "youngest child aged 7 to 17", we see that the first group's 95 per cent confidence interval, $53,000 \pm 5,000$ persons, is bigger (relative standard error 4.8%) than for the latter group's estimate (relative standard error 1.9%) relative to the size of the estimate

The size and reliability of the estimates for the employed and the unemployed also has an effect on other key figures calculated on the basis of these estimates, such as estimates for employment and unemployment rates. The relative standard errors for the employment rates of these groups also differ considerably from each other.

Table 1. Examples of the accuracy of annual estimates for the household section of the Labour Force Survey: Mothers of children aged under 18, 20 to 59

		Annual estimate	Margins of error for the annual estimate (95% confidence interval)	Standard error	Relative standard error (%)
Employed, persons	Total	385 000	± 10 700	5 500	1,4
Age of youngest child	Under 1	19 000	± 2 900	1 500	8,0
	1 to 2	53 000	± 5 000	2 500	4,8
	3 to 6	97 000	± 6 200	3 200	3,3
	7 to 17	216 000	± 8 000	4 100	1,9
Unemployed, persons	Total	32 000	± 4 000	2 100	6,5
Age of youngest child	Under 3	8 000	± 2 100	1 100	13,0
	3 to 6	8 000	± 2 100	1 100	13,0
	7 to 17	15 000	± 2 700	1 400	9,3
Employment rate, %	Total	73,6	± 1,4	0,7	0,9
Age of youngest child	Under 1	36,7	± 4,8	2,4	6,6
	1 to 2	54,9	± 3,7	1,9	3,5
	3 to 6	79,2	± 2,6	1,3	1,7
	7 to 17	85,6	± 1,5	0,8	0,9
Unemployment rate, %	Total	7,6	± 0,9	0,5	6,2
Age of youngest child	Under 3	10,2	± 2,5	1,3	12,3
	3 to 6	8,1	± 2,0	1,0	12,4
	7 to 17	6,5	± 1,1	0,6	8,9

Table 2. Examples of the accuracy of quarterly estimates of different sizes: the numbers of the employed and the unemployed by gender, age and region.

		Annual estimate	Margins of error for the annual estimate (95% confidence interval)	Standard error	Relative standard error (%)
Employed, persons	Total	433 000	± 11 400	5 800	1,4
Age of youngest child	Under 1	45 000	± 4 700	2 400	5,3
	1 to 2	82 000	± 6 200	3 200	3,9
	3 to 6	106 000	± 6 600	3 400	3,2
	7 to 17	201 000	± 7 800	4 000	2,0
Unemployed, persons	Total	22 000	± 3 500	1 800	8,0
Age of youngest child	Under 3	8 000	± 2 300	1 200	14,0
	3 to 6	4000	± 1 500	800	18,0
	7 to 17	10 000	± 2 200	1 100	11,5
Employment rate, %	Total	90,1	± 1,0	0,5	0,6
Age of youngest child	Under 1	89,1	± 3,4	1,8	2,0
	1 to 2	87,1	± 2,8	1,4	1,6
	3 to 6	91,6	± 1,9	1,0	1,1
	7 to 17	90,7	± 1,3	0,7	0,7
Unemployment rate, %	Total	4,9	± 0,7	0,4	7,8
Age of youngest child	Under 3	6,2	± 1,6	0,8	13,5
	3 to 6	3,8	± 1,3	0,7	17,7
	7 to 17	4,6	± 1,0	0,5	11,2

4. Timeliness and promptness of published data

The results of the Labour Force Survey are released monthly, quarterly and annually. Quarterly and annual results are the averages of monthly results, i.e. they describe the situation on an "average" week during the survey period. Data on labour input are sums of the results of periods. The released data are final. Only seasonal adjustment slightly alters the latest seasonally adjusted monthly results. Monthly data are released approximately three weeks from the end of the survey month. Quarterly data are released simultaneously with the last monthly data of each quarter. Quarterly data are statistically more reliable than monthly data and contain more detailed data on employment and labour input by industry and more specific regional data. The most detailed results are published in annual statistics. Quarterly deliveries of data are made to Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Union, which are used to compile statistics on EU Member States.

5. Accessibility and transparency/clarity of data

The results of the Labour Force Survey are published in the Labour market series of Official Statistics of Finland. The key monthly, quarterly and annual results are released on predefined days on the Internet on the home page of the Labour Force Survey http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/index_en. The links on the home page lead to, among other things, a description of the statistics, concepts and definitions as well as the free of charge tables from the statistical databases of the Labour Force Survey (StatFin). Data are also available over the Internet from Statistics Finland's chargeable time series database (ASTIKA). Eurostat publishes quarterly and annual Labour Force Survey data on its own website.

The annual publication of Labour Force Statistics contains a review of the past statistical reference year, definitions of key concepts, descriptions of the classifications used, time series and annual tables as well as this Quality description of the Labour Force Survey. In addition, Labour Force Survey data are published regularly in the Statistical Yearbook of Finland and in the Bulletin of Statistics. Chargeable special compilations can be requested from the Labour Force Survey information service.

Labour Force Survey data are not released outside Statistics Finland in identifiable form (Statistics Act 280/2004, Personal Data Act 523/1999). Data can be released only on the basis of a separate application for licence to use statistical data and without identifiers for scientific research and statistical surveys. Data adjusted for the EU Labour Force Survey are delivered to Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Union without identifiers. The Labour Force Survey data are protected according to the protection class defined in Statistics Finland's data protection guidelines. A register description can be found (in Finnish) at: http://www.stat.fi/meta/rekisteriselosteet/rekisteriseloste_tyovoimatutkimus.html

Information service: tyovoimatutkimus@stat.fi and tel. +358 29 551 1000.

6. Comparability of statistics

A monthly Labour Force Survey, initially called Labour Force Inquiry, has been conducted since 1959. During this time the data content, data collection methods and methodology have been revised on several occasions. A comparable time series of the key data exists since 1989.

Initially, the inquiry with a somewhat limited data content was conducted as a postal survey. In 1976, the data content was expanded and the methodology modernised. During 1977 to 1993, the survey consisted of a monthly inquiry and supplementary annual interviews conducted over the telephone. The data collection of the monthly inquiry was changed in 1983 from a postal survey to telephone interviews, as a result of which non-response dropped from 30 to 4 per cent.

When Finland joined the European Union the Labour Force Survey was harmonised with the EU Labour Force Survey. At the beginning in 1995 to 1998, the data for the EU Labour Force Survey were collected as a separate interview survey in March to May. The monthly survey was gradually revised to correspond to the EU Labour Force Survey. In 1997, the contents of the monthly survey were extended, the data collection was changed into computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) and the concepts and definitions were harmonised to correspond better than before to the EU and ILO guidelines and recommendations.

The definition of an unemployed person was revised in May 1998 and the published time series were retrospectively revised to correspond with the new definitions starting from 1989.

In April 1999, the Labour Force Survey's data content was widened again with the combining of the monthly survey and the EU Labour Force Survey into a single, continuous Labour Force Survey. As of the beginning of 2000, the survey changed over into a continuous survey week, whereas previously data for each month had been collected in one survey week. This changeover affected data on working days and hours worked, which are not fully comparable with earlier data starting from the beginning of the year 2000. Starting from 2003 the data content of the survey widened with the so-called household module which is collected from a subsample. A new data collection questionnaire was introduced in 2008. In consequence of this the data content of the survey became slightly revised and collection of some of the data was started from a subsample, whose data are only used as annual data.

7. Coherence and consistency/uniformity

In addition to the Labour Force Survey Statistics Finland's statistics related to the labour market include the Job Vacancy Survey, the Quality of Work Life Survey, statistics on labour disputes, Occupational accident statistics as well as register-based employment statistics (RES).

Of these the RES provide data on the labour market activities of the population. The data in them differ from those of the Labour Force Survey due to the data collection method and the definitions of the employed and the unemployed. The RES are based on total data derived from the administrative data of different authorities. The RES data on a person's activities mainly describe the last week of the year. RES data on unemployment are based on the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment's register of unemployed job seekers. The statistics take good 18 months to complete, preliminary data are ready within about a year. Since the employment statistics represent total data, they offer better regional data (incl. data by municipality) as well as better data on small population groups, e.g. small industries and occupations, than the Labour Force Survey. The concepts of the employment statistics based on administrative registers are not internationally comparable.

Statistics Finland uses the Labour Force Survey data in the compiling of National Accounts. This is among the reasons why the definitions of the key concepts in the Labour Force Survey, such as population, employment and working hours, follow as closely as possible the recommendations for National Accounts (the UN System of National Accounts, SNA, and the European System of Accounts, ESA). The Labour Force Survey definition of the public sector is somewhat different from the classification of sectors in National Accounts. In National Accounts, conscripts are classified as employed according to ILO recommendations, whereas in the Labour Force Survey conscripts are outside the labour force.

The results from the Finnish Labour Force Survey published by Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Union, differ from those published in Finland in that conscripts are not included in the statistics published by Eurostat. In most EU countries conscripts are not included in the target group of the Labour Force Survey, i.e. population living in private households. This causes differences especially in the results concerning the 15 to 24 age group. In the figures published by Finland persons performing their conscript duty are included in the population outside the labour force. In some cases differences can arise from the fact that Eurostat's figures include the whole population living in private household whereas in Finland the figures only include those between the ages of 15 and 74.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment also publishes data on unemployed job seekers. The Ministry's data derive from register-based Employment Service Statistics, which describe the last working day of the month. The definition of unemployed applied in the Employment Service Statistics is based on legislation and administrative orders which make the statistical data internationally incomparable. In the Employment Service Statistics an unemployed person is not expected to seek work as actively as in the Labour Force Survey. There are also differences in the acceptance of students as unemployed. More detailed information about differences between the statistics is available at:

http://stat.fi/til/tyti/tyti_2019-09-13_men_001_en.html.

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Source: Labour Force Survey 2018. Statistics Finland