

Labour Force Survey

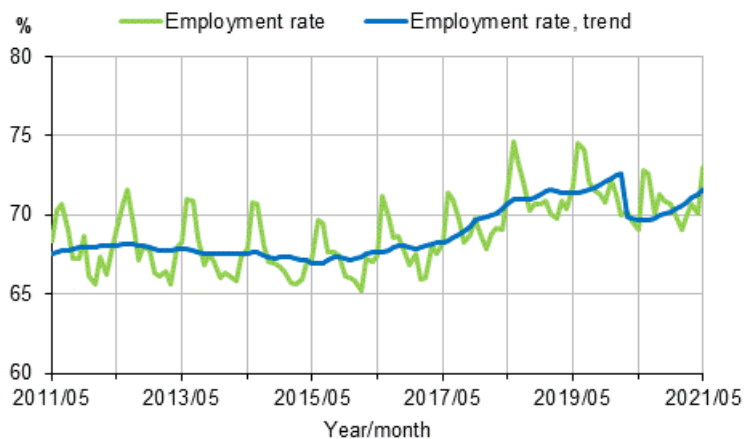
2021, May

Employment increased and unemployment decreased in May from one year ago

Corrected on 27 July 2021. Up-to-date trend figures can be found in the latest release. The corrections are indicated in red.

According to Statistics Finland’s Labour Force Survey, the number of employed people was 138,000 higher in May 2021 than one year ago. There were 6,000 fewer unemployed people than in May 2020. The trend of the employment rate was 71.6 per cent and the trend of the unemployment rate was 7.6 per cent.

Employment rate and trend of employment rate 2011/05–2021/05, persons aged 15–64



Employment and unemployment vary quite much by month and the change from the observation of the previous month mainly describes the seasonal aspect rather than the trend in development. Thus, the latest statistical data are compared to the corresponding period of the year before. By contrast, the figures of the trend series that are adjusted for seasonal and random variation are mutually comparable and phenomena associated with long-term development and cyclical changes are thus more easily observable from the trend of the time series.

The trend usually changes somewhat when the data of the following month are included in the time series. The preliminary nature of the latest trend figures should be considered when making conclusions. The fall in employment in spring 2020 was interpreted as a level shift in the seasonal adjustment model. The figures reported in this release are **not adjusted for seasonal variation** unless separately mentioned that they concern the trend. Find out more about the trend [here](#).

The data content, data collection and estimation method of the Labour Force Survey were revised at the beginning of 2021. Starting from the release for March and the first quarter of 2021, the data according to the new estimation method are final. The most important key figures from the time series according to the new method are published in the StatFin database service. Other revised time series will be published during 2021.

The final Labour Force Survey data concerning January and February 2020 and 2021 have been published in connection with the data for March and the 1st quarter.

The **trend** of the employment rate was 71.6 per cent in May and the trend of the unemployment rate was 7.6 per cent.

In May 2021, the number of **employed persons** was 2,580,000 (margin of error ±32,000), which was 138,000 higher than a year earlier. There were 61,000 more employed men and 76,000 more employed women than in May 2020.

In May, the **employment rate**, that is, the proportion of the employed among persons aged 15 to 64, stood at 73.0 per cent, having been 69.1 per cent one year earlier. From last year's May, the employment rate of men aged 15 to 64 rose by 3.2 percentage points to 73.7 per cent and that of women by 4.8 percentage points to 72.4 per cent. The employment rate of people aged 20 to 69 was 71.1 per cent, having been 67.8 per cent in the year before.

According to Statistics Finland's Labour Force Survey, there were **295,000 unemployed** in May 2021, i.e. **6,000** fewer than one year earlier. The number of unemployed men was **168,000** and that of women **126,000**.

In May, **the unemployment rate**, the proportion of the unemployed among the labour force stood at **10.3** per cent, having been 10.9 per cent one year earlier. **The unemployment rate for women fell by 1.5 percentage points from last year's May to 9.3 per cent. Men's unemployment rate remained unchanged at 11.1 per cent.**

In May, **the unemployment rate for people aged 15 to 24** stood at **31.2** per cent, which was **8.1** percentage points lower than one year previously. The trend of the unemployment rate among young people was 17.9 per cent. The share of unemployed young people aged 15 to 24 among the population in the same age group was **20.2** per cent.

There were **1,248,000** persons aged 15 to 74 in the **inactive population** in May 2021, which was **144,000** fewer than one year earlier.

Changes in employment 2020/05 – 2021/05 according to Statistics Finland’s Labour Force Survey, population aged 15 to 74 (Table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

	Year/Month		Change
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	1000 persons		Per cent, %
Population total	4 134	4 122	-0,3
Active population total	2 742	2 874	4,8
Employed	2 442	2 580	5,6
– employees	2 101	2 211	5,3
– self-employed persons and unpaid family workers	341	368	8,0
Unemployed	300	295	-1,9
Inactive population	1 392	1 248	-10,3
	Per cent, %		Percentage points
Employment rate, persons aged 15–64	69,1	73,0	4,0
Employment rate, persons aged 20–69	67,8	71,1	3,3
Unemployment rate	10,9	10,3	-0,7
Activity rate	66,3	69,7	3,4
Unrounded figures are used in the Change column. The data comply with the ILO/EU definition.			

Employment Service Statistics of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

At the end of May 2021, there were altogether 301,000 persons registered in accordance with the Employment Office Regulations as job seekers at the **employment and economic development offices** and in local government pilots. The number of unemployed job seekers was 132,000 lower than in May last year.

Unemployment fell in May from the corresponding period last year in the areas of all Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment: most in South Ostrobothnia (-44%), Ostrobothnia (-40%) and Pirkanmaa (-36%). The number of unemployed job seekers declined least in Uusimaa (-26%), Central Finland (-26%) and Häme (-28%). At the end of May, the number of fully laid off persons was 41,000, which was 117,000 fewer than twelve months earlier.

The number of persons engaged in services included in the activation rate totalled 113,000 at the end of May, which was 8,000 more than in May of the year before. Altogether, 4.0 per cent of the labour force was covered by labour market policy services.

There were 36,000 unemployed job seekers aged under 25. Their number was 20,000 lower than in last year's May. During May, 81,000 new vacancies were reported, which was 36,000 more than in May last year.

Changes 2020/05–2021/05 according to the Employment Service Statistics of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

	Year/Month		Change
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	1000 persons		Per cent, %
Unemployed job seekers	433	301	–30,4
– unemployed over a year	70	111	58,9
Services, total	106	113	7,3
– employed	21	28	29,8
– in labour market training, in training	24	25	3,9
– engaged in work/training trials	5	6	33,7
– as a job alternation substitute, in rehabilitative work, self-motivated studies supported by unemployment benefit	56	55	–1,9
New vacancies at employment and economic development offices	45	81	79,1

Unrounded figures are used in the Change column.

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Links

[Labour Force Survey tables in databases](#)

[Changes in the StatFin database:](#)

Changes to Labour Force Survey database tables on 4 May 2021 and 1 June 2021.

[About seasonally adjusted trend](#)

The accuracy of figures are explained in [the quality description of the Labour Force Survey](#).

[Comparison between the employment statistics of Statistics Finland and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment](#)

[Job vacancy survey](#)

[The latest seasonally adjusted employment figures published by the EU](#) and [the latest data on open job vacancies published by the EU](#) can be found on Eurostat's home page <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>.

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Appendix table 1. Key indicators in the Labour Force Survey by sex 2020/05 - 2021/05 (Appendix table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

		Year/Month		Change
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Indicator	Sex			
Employment rate, persons aged 15-64	Both sexes	69,1	73,0	4,0
	Males	70,4	73,7	3,2
	Females	67,6	72,4	4,8
Unemployment rate, persons aged 15-74	Both sexes	10,9	10,3	-0,7
	Males	11,1	11,1	0,1
	Females	10,8	9,3	-1,5
Activity rate, persons aged 15-74	Both sexes	66,3	69,7	3,4
	Males	69,3	72,8	3,5
	Females	63,4	66,6	3,3

Appendix table 2. Population aged 15-74 by labour force status and sex 2020/05 - 2021/05 (Appendix table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

		Year/Month		Change	Change
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Sex	Labour force status				
Both sexes	Population total	4 134	4 122	-12	-0,3
	Active population total	2 742	2 874	132	4,8
	- employed	2 442	2 580	138	5,6
	- unemployed	300	295	-6	-1,9
	Inactive population	1 392	1 248	-144	-10,3
Males	Population total	2 079	2 075	-4	-0,2
	Active population total	1 440	1 510	70	4,9
	- employed	1 280	1 342	61	4,8
	- unemployed	160	168	9	5,5
	Inactive population	639	565	-74	-11,6
Females	Population total	2 055	2 047	-8	-0,4
	Active population total	1 302	1 364	62	4,8
	- employed	1 162	1 238	76	6,6
	- unemployed	141	126	-14	-10,2
	Inactive population	753	683	-70	-9,3

Appendix table 4. Active population by sex and age 2020/05 - 2021/05 (Appendix table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

		Year/Month		Change	
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Sex	Age group				
Both sexes	15-74	2 742	2 874	132	4,8
	15-64	2 662	2 787	125	4,7
	15-24	359	392	34	9,4
	25-34	590	613	23	3,9
	35-44	617	638	21	3,4
	45-54	590	608	18	3,1
	55-64	506	535	30	5,8
	65-74	81	87	7	8,2
Males	15-74	1 440	1 510	70	4,9
	15-64	1 389	1 450	61	4,4
	15-24	192	196	4	2,1
	25-34	315	332	17	5,5
	35-44	334	339	5	1,5
	45-54	301	316	16	5,2
	55-64	248	267	19	7,8
	65-74	51	60	9	17,2
Females	15-74	1 302	1 364	62	4,8
	15-64	1 273	1 337	64	5,0
	15-24	167	196	30	17,8
	25-34	275	280	6	2,0
	35-44	284	300	16	5,6
	45-54	289	292	3	0,9
	55-64	258	269	10	4,0
	65-74	30	27	-2	-7,4

Appendix table 5. Activity rates by sex and age 2020/05 - 2021/05 (Appendix table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

		Year/Month		Change
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Sex	Age group			
Both sexes	15-74	66,3	69,7	3,4
	15-64	77,8	81,6	3,8
	15-24	59,0	64,7	5,7
	25-34	83,4	86,4	3,1
	35-44	87,0	89,6	2,5
	45-54	88,3	91,5	3,2
	55-64	69,5	74,0	4,5
	65-74	11,3	12,4	1,0
Males	15-74	69,3	72,8	3,5
	15-64	79,5	83,2	3,7
	15-24	60,4	62,9	2,5
	25-34	88,8	91,4	2,6
	35-44	91,5	93,4	1,9
	45-54	86,9	92,4	5,5
	55-64	68,3	73,6	5,3
	65-74	15,4	18,1	2,7
Females	15-74	63,4	66,6	3,3
	15-64	76,0	79,9	3,9
	15-24	57,5	66,7	9,2
	25-34	77,9	81,2	3,3
	35-44	82,3	85,6	3,3
	45-54	89,7	90,6	0,9
	55-64	70,6	74,3	3,7
	65-74	7,8	7,3	-0,5

Appendix table 6. Employed persons by sex and age 2020/05 - 2021/05

		Year/Month		Change	
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Sex	Age group				
Both sexes	15-74	2 442	2 580	138	5,6
	15-64	2 363	2 495	133	5,6
	15-24	218	270	52	23,9
	25-34	534	563	29	5,5
	35-44	582	596	14	2,4
	45-54	558	570	12	2,1
	55-64	470	496	26	5,5
	65-74	79	84	5	6,0
Males	15-74	1 280	1 342	61	4,8
	15-64	1 230	1 284	54	4,4
	15-24	117	136	19	16,7
	25-34	291	305	15	5,1
	35-44	313	316	3	1,1
	45-54	283	290	6	2,3
	55-64	227	237	10	4,5
	65-74	50	58	7	14,4
Females	15-74	1 162	1 238	76	6,6
	15-64	1 132	1 211	79	6,9
	15-24	101	134	33	32,3
	25-34	243	258	15	6,1
	35-44	270	280	11	3,9
	45-54	275	280	5	1,9
	55-64	243	259	16	6,4
	65-74	29	27	-2	-8,5

Appendix table 7. Employment rates by sex and age 2020/05 - 2021/05

		Year/Month		Change
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Sex	Age group			
Both sexes	15-74	59,1	62,6	3,5
	15-64	69,1	73,0	4,0
	15-24	35,8	44,5	8,7
	25-34	75,5	79,5	4,0
	35-44	82,1	83,7	1,6
	45-54	83,5	85,7	2,2
	55-64	64,6	68,5	3,9
	65-74	11,1	11,9	0,8
Males	15-74	61,6	64,7	3,1
	15-64	70,4	73,7	3,2
	15-24	36,7	43,6	7,0
	25-34	81,9	83,9	2,1
	35-44	85,8	87,2	1,4
	45-54	81,8	84,6	2,7
	55-64	62,6	65,4	2,8
	65-74	15,1	17,3	2,2
Females	15-74	56,5	60,5	3,9
	15-64	67,6	72,4	4,8
	15-24	34,9	45,5	10,6
	25-34	69,0	74,8	5,7
	35-44	78,3	80,1	1,8
	45-54	85,3	86,9	1,7
	55-64	66,5	71,5	5,1
	65-74	7,7	7,1	-0,5

Appendix table 8. Employed persons aged 15-74 by status in employment 2020/05 - 2021/05

	Year/Month		Change	Change
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Status in employment				
Employed persons total	2 442	2 580	138	5,6
Employees total	2 101	2 211	110	5,3
Self-employed persons and unpaid family workers	341	368	27	8,0

Appendix table 9. Employed persons aged 15-74 by employer sector 2020/05 - 2021/05

	Year/Month		Change	
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Employer sector				
Employer sector total (incl. employer sector unknown)	2 442	2 580	138	5,6
Private sector	1 845	1 928	83	4,5
Public sector	589	635	46	7,7
- central government	140	147	7	4,9
- local government	450	488	39	8,6

Appendix table 10. Employed persons aged 15-74 by Regional State Administrative Agencies (AVI) 2020/05 - 2021/05

	Year/Month		Change	
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Regional State Administrative Agencies				
Whole country (incl. Åland)	2 442	2 580	138	5,6
Southern Finland AVI	1 082	1 136	55	5,1
Southwestern Finland AVI	310	336	26	8,4
Eastern Finland AVI	220	236	16	7,2
Western and Inland Finland AVI	548	568	20	3,6
Northern Finland AVI	195	216	22	11,2
Lapland AVI	73	70	-3	-4,3

Appendix table 11. Part-time employed persons aged 15-74 by sex 2020/05 - 2021/05

	Year/Month		Change	
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Sex				
Both sexes	374	470	95	25,5
Males	145	172	27	18,8
Females	230	298	68	29,7

Appendix table 12. Proportion of part-time employed persons in all employed persons aged 15-74 by sex 2020/05 - 2021/05, %

	Year/Month		Change
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Sex			
Both sexes	15,3	18,2	2,9
Males	11,3	12,8	1,5
Females	19,8	24,1	4,3

Appendix table 13. Employees aged 15-74 by type of employment relationship 2020/05 - 2021/05

	Year/Month		Change	
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Employment relationship				
Employees total	2 101	2 211	110	5,3
- permanent full-time work	1 589	1 567	-22	-1,4
- permanent part-time work	215	235	20	9,4
- temporary (fixed-term) full-time work	211	273	62	29,2
- temporary (fixed-term) part-time work	86	136	50	58,7
Temporary (fixed-term) work total	297	409	112	37,8
Part-time work total	301	371	71	23,5

Appendix table 14. Employees aged 15-74 by type of employment relationship 2020/05 - 2021/05, %

	Year/Month		Change
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Employees total	100,0	100,0	0,0
- permanent full-time work	75,6	70,9	-4,8
- permanent part-time work	10,2	10,6	0,4
- temporary (fixed-term) full-time work	10,1	12,3	2,3
- temporary (fixed-term) part-time work	4,1	6,2	2,1
Temporary (fixed-term) work total	14,1	18,5	4,4
Part-time work total	14,3	16,8	2,5

Appendix table 15. Unemployed persons by sex and age 2020/05 - 2021/05 (Appendix table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

		Year/Month		Change	
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		1000 persons	1000 persons	1000 persons	Per cent, %
Sex	Age group				
Both sexes	15-74	300	295	-6	-1,9
	15-64	299	292	-7	-2,5
	15-24	141	122	-18	-13,1
	25-34	56	49	-6	-11,6
	35-44	35	42	7	20,6
	45-54	32	38	7	20,7
	55-64	36	40	4	10,6
Males	15-74	160	168	9	5,5
	15-64	159	166	7	4,5
	15-24	76	60	-15	-20,5
	25-34	24	27	3	11,2
	35-44	21	23	2	8,3
	45-54	17	27	9	52,6
	55-64	21	30	9	43,7
Females	15-74	141	126	-14	-10,2
	15-64	140	126	-15	-10,4
	15-24	65	62	-3	-4,5
	25-34	31	22	-9	-29,4
	35-44	14	19	5	38,9
	45-54	14	12	-3	-17,9
	55-64	15	10	-5	-34,4

Appendix table 16. Unemployment rates by sex and age 2020/05 - 2021/05 (Appendix table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

		Year/Month		Change
		2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
		Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Sex	Age group			
Both sexes	15-74	10,9	10,3	-0,7
	15-64	11,2	10,5	-0,8
	15-24	39,3	31,2	-8,1
	25-34	9,4	8,0	-1,4
	35-44	5,6	6,6	0,9
	45-54	5,4	6,3	0,9
	55-64	7,1	7,4	0,3
Males	15-74	11,1	11,1	0,1
	15-64	11,4	11,4	0,0
	15-24	39,3	30,6	-8,7
	25-34	7,8	8,2	0,4
	35-44	6,2	6,7	0,4
	45-54	5,8	8,4	2,6
	55-64	8,3	11,1	2,8
Females	15-74	10,8	9,3	-1,5
	15-64	11,0	9,4	-1,6
	15-24	39,3	31,8	-7,4
	25-34	11,4	7,9	-3,5
	35-44	4,9	6,5	1,5
	45-54	5,0	4,0	-0,9
	55-64	5,9	3,7	-2,2

Appendix table 17. Unemployment rates by Regional State Administrative Agencies (AVI) 2020/05 - 2021/05, persons aged 15-74 (Appendix table was corrected on 27 July 2021.)

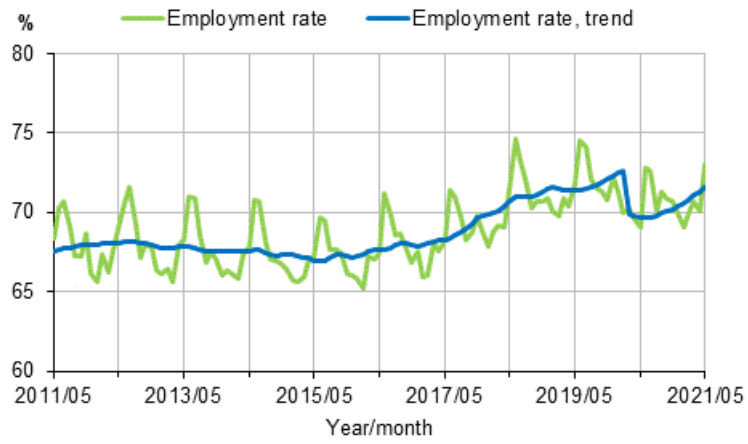
	Year/Month		Change
	2020/05	2021/05	2020/05 - 2021/05
	Per cent, %	Per cent, %	Percentage points
Regional State Administrative Agencies			
Whole country (incl. Åland)	10,9	10,3	-0,7
Southern Finland AVI	10,5	11,1	0,6
Southwestern Finland AVI	8,7	7,4	-1,3
Eastern Finland AVI	13,6	10,0	-3,6
Western and Inland Finland AVI	10,8	10,0	-0,8
Northern Finland AVI	13,9	10,7	-3,2
Lapland AVI	.	.	.

Appendix table 18 is not published. Up-to-date trend figures can be found in the latest release.

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Up-to-date trend figures can be found in the latest release.

Appendix figures 2021, May

Appendix figure 1. Employment rate and trend of employment rate 2011/05–2021/05, persons aged 15–64



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 89. The data content of the Survey is based on an EU regulation, and the Survey sample includes approximately 12,500 persons every month.

At the beginning of 2021, the data content, data collection and estimation method of the Labour Force Survey were revised. The content of the questionnaire was harmonised more closely than before between different EU countries to improve the comparability of the data. The data content also extended when questions were added to the inquiry concerning the flexibility of working hours, the number of self-employed persons' customers and the working hours of secondary jobs. In addition, persons aged 75 to 89 were included in the survey as a new age group. The sample size of this age group is small and therefore data on the age group are not published on the monthly and quarterly levels. The monthly and quarterly Labour Force Survey data still concern the 15 to 74 age group.

The data collection method of the survey was renewed by offering the respondents the possibility to respond not only with telephone and face-to-face interviews but also with a web questionnaire. The new EU legislation, increased non-response and changes to the data collection method were taken into account in the formation of the sample and the calculation method of the results.

The information provided by the respondents is used to draw a picture of the activities of the entire population aged between 15 and 89 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 Labour Force Survey provides an up-to-date and comprehensive picture of the active population (labour force) and changes on the labour market. Public attention focuses each month especially on the changes in employment and unemployment from the corresponding month of the previous year.

Seasonally adjusted time series and trend time series are used to monitor long-term development and cyclical variation. 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 the household relative to the labour market.

The Labour Force Survey contains continuously collected data that are used as monthly, quarterly and annual data and data asked from a subsample that are used only as annual data. From 2021 onwards, some annual data are collected every two years. The Labour Force Survey also includes a section with a yearly changing topic. The topic is related to the labour market, such as young people, transition from work to retirement, accidents at work or reconciliation of work and family life. Some topics are repeated regularly every eight years. Every four years the questions are connected to a topical subject to be decided separately.

A description of the data content of the Labour Force Survey is available at:
http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/tlu_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 the economically inactive persons 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 present data content of the Labour Force Survey is based on the European Union's Regulation on social statistics (1700/2019) and on Implementing Regulations 2019/2181, 2019/2240 and 2019/2241 concerning the labour force domain, on Delegated Regulation 2020/256 and on Delegated Regulation 2020/257.

A detailed description of the EU Labour Force Survey is available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/EU_labour_force_survey.

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.

Concepts:

- **Employed** are persons who during the survey week have worked at least one hour against pay or entrepreneurial income. Persons temporarily absent from work during the survey week are also classified as employed if the reason for absence is maternity or paternity leave, own illness, holiday or a working hour arrangement; or the absence lasts under three months.

Main changes in the definition of an employed person from the beginning of 2021:

- Persons on parental leave receiving earnings-related support are classified as employed, even if the absence from work would have lasted over three months.
- A self-employed person or an unpaid worker in an enterprise of a family member is calculated as employed only if the absence from work has lasted under three months. Previously, self-employed persons were counted as employed regardless of the length or reason of absence.
- A person is **unemployed** if he/she is without work during the survey week (not in paid employment or working as self-employed), 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. Persons laid off for the time being who fulfil the above-mentioned criteria are also counted as unemployed.
- All persons aged 15 to 89 who were employed or unemployed during the survey week belong to the **active population**. The concept of labour force can also be used of the active population.
- The **economically inactive population** consists of persons who are not employed or unemployed during the survey week. The concept of persons not in labour force can also be used of the inactive population.

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), the Classification of Education 2016 (ISCED 2011) and the Nomenclature of the Classification of Sectors 2012 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 statistics are based on sample data collected monthly. The monthly sample consists of some 12,500 persons.

The population of the Labour Force Survey consists of persons aged between 15 and 89 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 (<https://dvv.fi/en/foreigner-registration>).

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 12,500 persons, which is, on the average, every 370th 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.

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.

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. In the last round, that is, the fifth round, the data content is wider, and in addition to the basic survey, the inquiry also includes the household section and a section with a yearly changing topic. The household interview is conducted to ascertain the members who belong to the household of the target person and the activity of the household members aged 15 to 89 on the labour market. In order that the data would describe the whole population, a supplementing sample is added to it of households in which all members are aged 90 or over. Children under the age of 15 and persons aged over 89 are not interviewed in the Labour Force Survey, but certain information is formed 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 2019, the household data comprised approximately 45,000 persons who formed 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.

The Labour Force Survey data are collected with computer-assisted telephone interviews conducted by Statistics Finland's interviewers and partly by face-to-face interviews and from 2021 onwards with a web questionnaire. According to the interviewee's choice, either Finnish, Swedish or English is used as the language of the questionnaire (starting from the statistical reference year 2014).

In the survey, all respondents receive a weighting coefficient which is used to make the respondents as representative of the population of the survey as possible. The weighting coefficient includes for each respondent information on the sampling design used and the method for correcting non-response based on additional information. The raising effect of the weighting coefficient makes it possible to examine the results at the level of the population. Then the weighting coefficient can be interpreted so that the person who responds to the survey represents the number of persons in the population indicated by their weight.

The weighting progresses through basic weighting to reweighting. The basic weighting is the starting point for reweighting and it takes into account the sampling design of the survey and the stratification used in it, as well as the number of respondents by stratum. The reweighting method uses calibration of weights, where the basic weights are improved by utilising the latest available population data and additional information available from other register sources. Population data are gender, age, region and language. Other additional information is obtained from the Employment Service Statistics of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Statistics Finland's Register of Completed Education and Degrees, and the Tax Administration's Incomes Register. Calibration weights are formed with CALMAR2 software operating in SAS environment developed in France.

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. For example, the number of the unemployed published in a certain month is an estimate of the number of unemployed persons obtained by such a procedure.

Starting from 2021, a quarterly weight is used in the calculation of quarterly estimates, which is calculated by scaling the monthly weight of each month of the quarter in question to the average population of the quarter and by proportioning it to the number of survey weeks in the month. Annual estimates are averages of quarterly estimates.

Working days and hours worked are estimated basing on the number of calendar days in the month concerned. Quarterly and annual estimates of working days and hours worked are sums of monthly estimates.

The employment and unemployment figures of the Labour Force Survey vary relatively regularly in different months of the year. In addition to the original series, we also publish from the Labour Force Survey seasonally adjusted series, from which seasonal variation that occurs in similar ways from one year to the next has been removed, as well as so-called trends from which irregular random variation has also been removed in addition to seasonal variation.

The direction of long-term developments and cyclical variations are easier to see from a trend than from unadjusted monthly data. Due to the method used, the last data of the trend become slightly revised when the data of the following month are inserted into the time series. When using seasonally adjusted series and trend series it should be noted that in the Tramo/Seats method the latest months are partly based on model-based forecasts, so particular caution must be used in conclusions made based on them. Starting from June 2007, the trend components of the time series have been calculated with the Tramo/Seats method recommended by Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities. Further information about the trend and limitations in its use can be found at: http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tramo_seats_en.html.

3. Correctness and accuracy of data

The reliability of the figures of the Labour Force Survey is 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 the 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 deviate 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 e.g. 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. 214,900–245,100 persons. The share to be added to the estimate or deducted from

it, in this case 15,100, is obtained by multiplying the estimate's standard error with the 1.96 coefficient of the 95 per cent confidence interval. This share describes the inaccuracy caused by random variation due to sampling and is called the **margin of error**.

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 5 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 5 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.

In the monthly and quarterly data of the Labour Force Survey, the estimator of the standard error is the variance estimator of the generalised regression estimator (GREG). The statistical accuracy of the annual estimates and its evaluation is also affected by the fact that the sample of the Labour Force Survey changes gradually during the year. In consecutive quarters 60 per cent of the respondents are the same. During one year 90 per cent of the interviewees have been interviewed at least twice. The responses given by the same persons in different interviews during the year correlate to one another if the person's labour market status does not change between interviews. To account for this co-dependence of responses, the Labour Force Survey uses an approximation of single stage cluster sampling in which a cluster internal variance is calculated for persons interviewed several times during the year. Clusters are formed on the basis of interviewee's age. Cluster internal variance is zero if the interviewee's labour market status does not change during the year between different interviews.

For example, the standard error calculated for annual estimate of the unemployed in a subgroup of 230,000 persons is 3,600 persons and the confidence interval is $230,000 \pm 7,100$ persons. If the interviews on which the annual estimate is based had all been with different persons, the standard error of the estimate of the unemployed would have been 2,300 persons and the confidence interval $230,000 \pm 4,500$ persons. Interviewing the same persons again in different quarters of the year explains why the difference in the accuracy of the annual and quarterly data of the Labour Force Survey is not as large as could be expected on the basis of the number of interviews conducted.

4. Timeliness and promptness of published data

The results of the Labour Force Survey are released monthly, quarterly and annually. The monthly, quarterly and annual results describe the situation in the "average" week of the survey period in question. 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, among other things, 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 the Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, 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 final Labour Force Survey data concerning January and February 2020 and 2021 have been published in connection with the data for March and the 1st quarter. The previously released data were preliminary and part of them have been revised due to the adjustment of the estimation method. The data for March and the 1st quarter of 2021 are final.

Retrospectively corrected time series according to the new estimation method for the years 2009 to 2020 will be published during 2021.

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 a quality description. Results related to families and work are published every other year in the autumn. In addition to regular own publication activity, Labour Force Survey data are published in the Statistical Yearbook of Finland, the Women and Men in Finland pocket statistics, and in article publications on the labour market. 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 Communities without identifiers. The Labour Force Survey data are protected according to the protection class defined in Statistics Finland's data protection guidelines. A data protection description can be found at: https://www.tilastokeskus.fi/meta/tietosuojaselosteet/tietosuojaseloste_tyovoimatutkimus_en.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 1977–1993 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 1995–1998, the data for the EU Labour Force Survey were collected as a separate interview survey in March-May. The monthly survey was gradually revised to correspond to the EU Labour Force Survey. The contents of the monthly survey were extended, computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) were introduced in the data collection 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. Since 1999 a harmonised EU ad hoc survey with annually changing topics has been conducted in connection with the 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. The definitions of some concepts also changed. The revisions were based on the EU regulations and their aim was to improve the comparability of the Labour Force Surveys of different EU Member States.

At the beginning of 2021, the data content, data collection and estimation method of the Labour Force Survey were revised. The content of the questionnaire was harmonised more closely than before between different EU countries to improve the comparability of the data. The data content also extended when new questions were added to the questionnaire. The most important changes related to questions about working hours and when a person is defined as employed. In future, for example, persons on parental leave who receive earnings-related support are classified as employed regardless of the length of absence.

In addition, persons aged 75 to 89 were included in the survey as a new age group. The sample size of this age group is small and therefore data on the age group are not published on the monthly and quarterly levels. The monthly and quarterly Labour Force Survey data still concern the 15 to 74 age group.

The data collection method of the survey was renewed by offering the respondents the possibility to respond not only with telephone and face-to-face interviews but also with a web questionnaire. The new EU legislation, increased non-response and changes to the data collection method were taken into account in the formation of the sample and the calculation method of the results.

The final Labour Force Survey data concerning January and February 2020 and 2021 have been published in connection with the data for March and the 1st quarter. The previously released data were preliminary and part of them have been revised due to the adjustment of the estimation method. The data for March and the 1st quarter of 2021 are final.

Retrospectively corrected time series according to the new estimation method for the years 2009 to 2020 will be published during 2021.

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, statistics on accidents at work 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 Communities, 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.

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:

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

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Source: Labour force survey 2021, May. Statistics Finland