



A Selection of Labour Force Survey Results

Winter, the Year 1404¹ (22 December - 20 March)

Statistical Centre of Iran

1. It is the Iranian year which usually begins on the day of 21 March of Gregorian calendar. To find the corresponding year of Gregorian calendar, add 621 or 622 (depending on the time of the year) to a [solar Hijri](#) year. For example, the corresponding year of the year 1404 in Gregorian calendar is (21 March 2025-20 March 2026).

Iranian seasons and their equivalent in Gregorian calendar

Spring (21 March-21 June)

Summer (22 June - 22 September)

Autumn (23 September -21 December)

Winter (22 December - 20 March)

Introduction

The pair of concepts of employment and unemployment are so fundamental to national economies that any increase in the employment rate, which signifies a decrease in unemployment, is considered an indicator of national development. The unemployment rate is used to evaluate the national economic conditions. The information on the nation's market is gathered through the “Household Employment and Unemployment Characteristics Survey (HEUCS)” as of the year 1376. However, in order to enhance the quality of the HEUCS and align it with international concepts, particularly those of the ILO, the survey plan was revised to implement the current plan called the “Labour Force Survey”. The “Labour Force Survey” was first conducted in the year 1384 and has since been regularly conducted in the middle month of every season.

The “Labour Force Survey” is conducted to obtain information on the structure and current status of the labour force, as well as its changes. This objective is achieved through the estimation of “seasonal and annual labour force indicators at both national and provincial levels”, “the estimation of the annual number of the labour force at both national and provincial levels”, “the estimation of seasonal and annual changes in labour force indicators at national and provincial levels”, and “the estimation of annual changes in labour force indicators at provincial levels”.

The population covered in this survey includes people who, according to the definition, are members of private settled households or collective households in rural or urban areas. Therefore, members of private, unsettled households and institutional households are not included in this survey. The method used for conducting this survey is a two-stage stratified cluster sampling method. In addition to estimating current levels, changes are also estimated. Therefore, rotation sampling is used. Rotation sampling can provide the best estimate of current levels and changes by fixing some sample units between two quarters of the survey and changing the remaining units. With respect to the aim of the survey, the selected rotation pattern for this survey is a “2-2-2” pattern. This means that during the Master Sample period, each sample household is enumerated four times. Accordingly, that sample household is in the sample for two successive quarters and then excluded from the sample. Note that the optimal implementation of rotational sampling requires using a master sample. The master sample refers to the sample that can be used to select sub-samples to satisfy the needs of several surveys or rounds of a survey. In continuous surveys, utilizing a master sample enhances cost-effectiveness and allows for improved control of field operations and sampling overlap across various survey rounds. The sampling frame for the first stage, starting in spring, the year 1397, is the fourth master sample from household surveys based on the results of the 2016 National Population and Housing Census. The master sample includes the sampling units (clusters) of the first stage. Each cluster contains one block/village, part of a large block/village, or in some cases a combination of some small blocks/villages which were created from the 2016 National Population and Housing Census. With respect to the changes in population and housing units in urban areas and in order to prepare an appropriate and updated frame in urban areas, some households were listed within the master sample clusters in the winter of the year 1404, however, due to limited changes in population and housing units in rural areas, no listing was made in rural areas.

To conduct the Labour Force Survey for each quarter in the year 1404, 60,648 households were enumerated in both urban and rural areas throughout the country. After releasing the preliminary results of this survey, the SCI disseminates the detailed results annually and quarterly. Users, researchers, and planners can access the results of this survey for the winter of the year 1404, and download them in Excel format from www.amar.org.ir in the Month of Ordibehesht of the year 1405.

This survey's target population includes private settled households and collective households in urban and rural areas.

Data for this survey were collected through face-to-face interviews. The enumerator interviewed the most informed member of each household to complete the household questionnaire. Additionally, the enumerator interviewed every household member aged 10 and over to complete the individual questionnaire.

It is important to note that the definitions and concepts used in the Labour Force Survey were developed and implemented based on the 13th Resolution of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS13).

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It should be noted that since the spring of the year 1397, a 95% confidence interval has been provided for the unemployment rate indicator in the published survey results. From a statistical methodology standpoint, this confidence interval implies that if multiple samples were drawn from the target population using the same sampling method, and a confidence interval was calculated for each, we would expect 95% of those intervals to contain the true unemployment rate of the population.

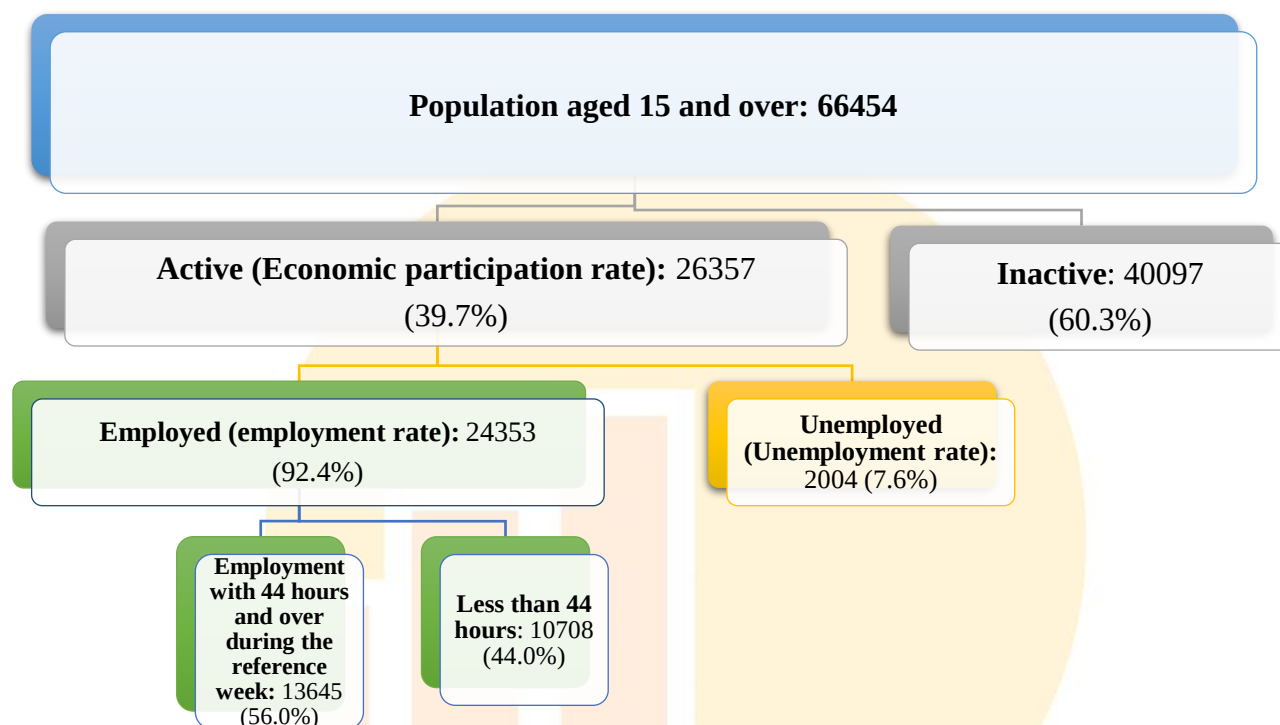
It is worth noting that, based on recent studies and evolving social patterns regarding the age of entry into the labour market across various countries, a minimum age of 15 has been adopted for evaluating key labour market indicators. Following similar developments in our country, major labour market indicators have been calculated and reported for the population aged 15 and over starting from the spring of the year 1398.



Findings

This report summarizes the results of a winter survey conducted in the year 1404, focusing on key indicators of the labour market and its changes compared to the same season of the last year (winter of the year 1403). The findings are presented in Table 1. Additionally, Table 2 provides a breakdown of the major labour market indicators by province. Figure 1 illustrates an overview of the major labour market indicators in winter of the year 1404 at a glance.

Figure 1. Major Indicators of Labour Market in Winter, the Year 1404 (Figures are in thousands)



A review of the economic participation rate (activity rate) for the population aged 15 and over reveals that 39.7% of the working-age population was economically active; meaning they were either employed or unemployed. Additionally, the results indicate that the economic participation rate was lower among women than men, and lower in urban areas relative to rural areas. Analysis of the trend in the national economic participation rate shows that this indicator decreased by 0.4 percentage points compared to the same season of the previous year (winter of the year 1403). Furthermore, the employment-to-population ratio for those aged 15 and over indicates that 36.6% of the working-age population was employed. This indicator was higher for men and rural areas compared to women and urban areas.

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TABLE 1. MAJOR LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS AND THEIR CHANGES BY SEX, URBAN AND RURAL AREAS; WINTER, THE YEAR 1404 COMPARED TO THE WINTER, THE YEAR 1403

(number person-rate, share and ratio: percent)

Labour force indicators		Total country			Male			Female		
		Winter, the year 1404	Winter, the year 1403	Changes	Winter, the year 1404	Winter, the year 1403	Changes	Winter, the year 1404	Winter, the year 1403	Changes
Population aged 15 and over ¹	Number	66454013	65628506	825507	33158552	32755636	402916	33295461	32872870	422591
Economic participation rate of population aged 15 and over	Rate	39.7	40.1	-0.4	67.2	67.3	-0.1	12.2	13.1	-0.9
	Number	26356714	26341239	15475	22279702	22032700	247002	4077012	4308539	-231527
Economically inactive population aged 15 and over	Number	40097299	39287267	810032	10878850	10722936	155914	29218449	28564331	654118
Employment rate of population aged 15 and over	Ratio	36.6	37.0	-0.4	63.0	62.9	0.1	10.4	11.3	-0.9
	Number	24352554	24295433	57121	20887970	20597133	290837	3464585	3698300	-233715
Unemployment of population aged 15 and over	Rate	7.6	7.8	-0.2	6.2	6.5	-0.3	15.0	14.2	0.8
	Number	2004160	2045806	-41646	1391732	1435567	-43835	612427	610239	2188
Unemployment of population aged 15-24	Rate	21.2	21.0	0.2	18.3	18.1	0.2	34.9	34.0	0.9
	Number	544040	541800	2240	389108	380391	8717	154933	161409	-6476
Unemployment of population aged 18-35	Rate	15.1	14.8	0.3	12.4	12.1	0.3	25.9	25.2	0.7
	Number	1304941	1355602	-50661	866087	883486	-17399	438855	472117	-33262
Unemployment of the population aged 15 and over graduated from higher education institutes	Rate	10.0	10.7	-0.7	6.9	7.6	-0.7	17.5	17.7	-0.2
	Number	732825	795513	-62688	354639	387060	-32421	378186	408452	-30266
Employment in agriculture sector	Share	13.2	12.7	0.5	13.8	13.2	0.6	9.8	10.0	-0.2
	Number	3211501	3096061	115440	2872907	2726146	146761	338594	369915	-31321
Employment in manufacturing sector	Share	32.5	33.5	-1.0	34.1	35.3	-1.2	22.9	23.5	-0.6
	Number	7925910	8144018	-218108	7132135	7276586	-144451	793775	867433	-73658
Employment in services sector	Share	54.2	53.7	0.5	52.1	51.4	0.7	67.2	66.5	0.7
	Number	13203709	13051619	152090	10875506	10591500	284006	2328203	2460119	-131916
Underemployment	Share	8.2	7.7	0.5	8.9	8.4	0.5	4.0	4.3	-0.3
	Number	2000917	1879990	120927	1863884	1720285	143599	137033	159704	-22671
The share of the unemployed (aged 15 and over) higher education graduates out of the total unemployed population	Share	36.6	38.9	-2.3	25.5	27.0	-1.5	61.8	66.9	-5.1
The share of the employed (aged 15 and over) higher education graduates out of the total employed population	Share	27.1	27.3	-0.2	23.1	23.0	0.1	51.5	51.3	0.2

The difference between the total employed persons and the sum of the employed persons in the three sectors is due to the unreported major sectors of economic activity..

- The difference is due to rounding.

1. The target population of the labour force survey is individuals of working age from private settled and collective households in urban and rural areas.

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TABLE 1. MAJOR LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS AND THEIR CHANGES BY SEX, URBAN AND RURAL AREAS; WINTER, THE YEAR 1404 COMPARED TO THE WINTER, THE YEAR 1403 (continued)
(number person, rate, share and ratio: percent)

Labour force indicators		Urban areas			Rural areas		
		Winter, the year 1404	Winter, the year 1403	Changes	Winter, the year 1404	Winter, the year 1403	Changes
Population aged 15 and over ¹	Number	52087624	51229134	858490	14366389	14399371	-32982
Economic participation rate of population aged 15 and over	Rate	39.3	39.9	-0.6	40.9	41.1	-0.2
	Number	20480406	20426551	53855	5876308	5914688	-38380
Economically inactive population aged 15 and over	Number	31607218	30802583	804635	849081	8484684	5397
Employment rate of population aged 15 and over	Ratio	36.2	36.7	-0.5	38.3	38.2	0.1
	Number	18848445	18790473	57972	5504109	5504959	-850
Unemployment of population aged 15 and over	Rate	8.0	8.0	0.0	6.3	6.9	-0.6
	Number	1631961	1636078	4117-	372199	409728	-37529
Unemployment of population aged 15-24	Rate	21.5	21.6	0.1-	20.3	19.4	0.9
	Number	410267	414662	4395-	133774	127138	6636
Unemployment of population aged 18-35	Rate	15.4	15.2	0.2	13.7	13.2	0.5
	Number	1063457	1104853	-41396	241484	250749	-9265
Unemployment of the population aged 15 and over graduated from higher education institutes	Rate	9.6	10.3	-0.7	14.2	15.1	-0.9
	Number	648428	703578	-55150	84396	91934	-7538
Employment in agriculture sector	Share	5.4	5.1	0.3	39.9	38.7	1.2
	Number	1015639	963101	52538	2195862	2132959	62903
Employment in manufacturing sector	Share	33.5	34.3	-0.8	29.4	30.9	-1.5
	Number	6308898	6444330	-135432	1617012	1699688	-82676
Employment in services sector	Share	61.1	60.6	0.5	30.7	30.4	0.3
	Number	11513037	11379307	133730	1690672	1672312	18360
Underemployment	Share	6.9	6.2	0.7	12.8	12.9	-0.1
	Number	1295992	1168243	127749	704925	711747	-6822
The share of the unemployed (aged 15 and over) higher education graduates out of the total unemployed population	Share	39.7	43.0	-3.3	22.7	22.4	0.3
The share of the employed (aged 15 and over) higher education graduates out of the total employed population	Share	32.3	32.6	-0.3	9.2	9.4	-0.2

The difference between the total employed persons and the sum of the employed persons in the three sectors is due to the unreported major sectors of economic activity.

- The difference is due to rounding.

1. The target population of the labour force survey is individuals of working age from private settled and collective households in urban and rural areas.

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A review of employment in major economic sectors indicates that the services sector holds the biggest share of employment with 54.2% of the total, followed by the industrial sector with 32.5% and the agriculture sector with 13.2%. In the winter of the year 1404, the contribution of the employed people to the services and agriculture sectors increased by 0.5 percentage points and the contribution of the employed people to the industrial sector has decreased by 1.0 percentage points in comparison with the last corresponding season (winter of the year 1403).

A review of the unemployment rate among the population aged 15 and over indicates that 7.6% of the economically active population was unemployed. Furthermore, based on a 95% confidence interval, the national unemployment rate ranges between 7.2% and 8.0%, with a point estimate of 7.6%. This means that, with a 95% confidence interval, this interval contains the true national unemployment rate. The results show that the unemployment rate is higher among women and in urban areas, compared to men and rural areas, respectively. An analysis of the trend for this indicator at the national level reveals a 0.2 percentage point decrease compared to the same season last year (winter of the year 1403).

The unemployment rate for youths aged 15–24 indicates that 21.2 percent of the economically active population in this age group was unemployed. This rate was higher among women and in urban areas than for men and rural areas. Additionally, an analysis of the trend in the national unemployment rate for this age group reveals an increase of 0.2 percentage points compared to the same period last year.

The unemployment rate among youths aged 18 to 35 indicates that 15.1 percent of the active population in this age group was unemployed. This rate was higher for women and in urban areas than for men and rural areas. A review of the trends for this group shows that the rate has increased by 0.3 percentage points compared to the same season last year (winter of the year 1403).

A review of the unemployment rate among higher education graduates aged 15 and over indicates that 10.0 percent of the active population in this group was unemployed. This rate was higher for women than for men, and higher in rural areas compared to urban areas. Furthermore, trend analysis shows that this rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points in winter 1404 compared to the same season last year (winter of the year 1403).

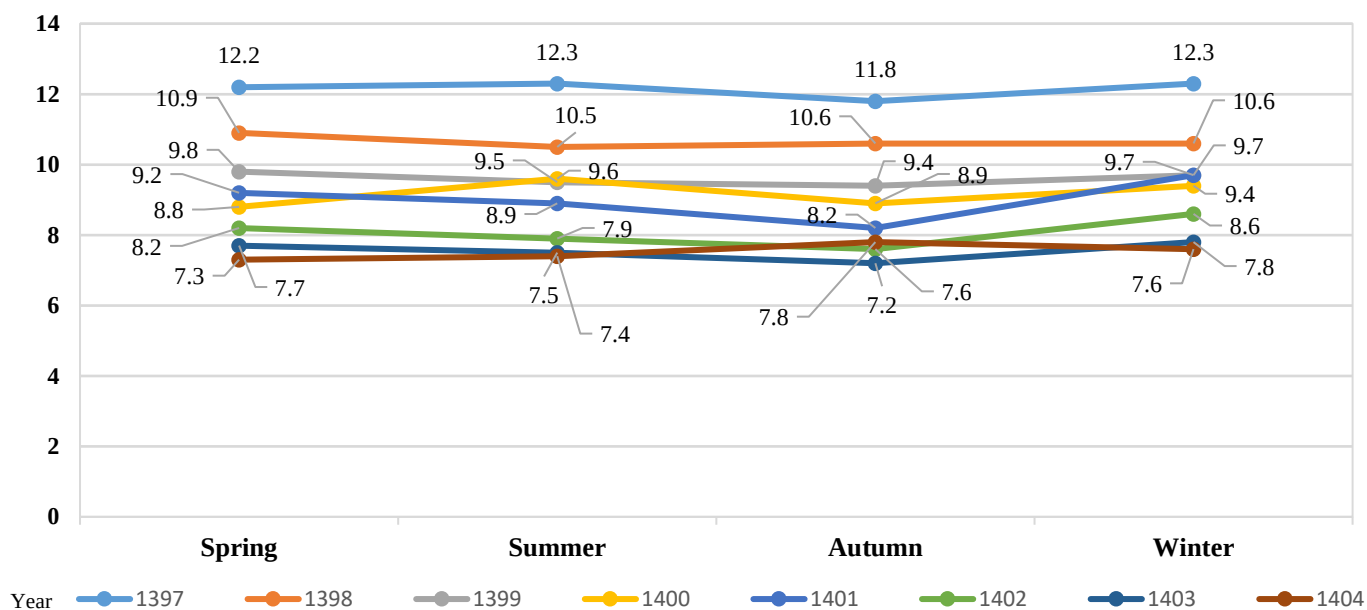
The underemployment share indicates that 8.2 percent of the employed population aged 15 and over was underemployed. This indicator was higher for men and in rural areas than for women and in urban areas. In winter 1404, the underemployment share increased by 0.5 percentage points compared to the same season last year (winter of the year 1403).

The study of the share of employed persons aged 15 and over, with usual working hours of 49 hours and over, shows that 36.9% of the employed typically work 49 hours or more per week. This indicator, which is one of the measures of decent work, demonstrates that a significant portion of the employed workforce works beyond the standard hours. This indicator experienced a 0.6 percentage point decrease compared to the last corresponding season (winter of the year 1403).

In the winter of the year 1404, the share of unemployed higher education graduates out of the total unemployed population was 36.6 percent. This indicator is higher for women and urban areas than for men and rural areas. A review of the changes shows that this indicator experienced a 2.3 percentage point decrease compared to the last corresponding season (winter of the year 1403).

In the winter of the year 1404, the share of employed higher education graduates out of the total employed population was 27.1 percent. This indicator is also higher for women and urban areas than for men and rural areas. A review of the changes shows that this indicator decreased by 0.2 percentage points over the last corresponding season (winter of the year 1403).

FIGURE 2. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF THE POPULATION AGED 15 AND OVER IN SUCCESSIVE SEASONS FROM THE YEAR 1397 TO THE YEAR 1404



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Table 2 shows some major labour market indicators for the population aged 15 and over in the winter, the year 1404 compared to the last corresponding season (winter of the year 1403).

TABLE 2- SOME MAJOR LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS FOR THE POPULATION AGED 15 AND OVER IN THE WINTER, THE YEAR 1404 COMPARED TO THE LAST CORRESPONDING SEASON (WINTER, THE YEAR 1403) (percent)

Province	Economic participation rate		Employment ratio		Unemployment rate		
	Winter, the year 1404	Winter, the year 1403	Winter, the year 1404	Winter, the year 1403	Winter, the year 1404		Winter, the year 1403
					Point-to-point estimation	The confidence interval (95%)	
Total country	39.7	40.1	36.6	37	7.6	(7.2-8.0)	7.8
East Azarbayejan	41.4	41.2	38.4	38.1	7.1	(5.9-8.3)	7.5
West Azarbayejan	38.4	38	35.9	34.5	6.4	(5.0-7.9)	9.1
Ardebil	46.5	44.7	42.1	38.8	9.5	(7.7-11.3)	13.1
Esfahan	39.3	39.5	35.5	35.5	9.6	(8.1-11.1)	10
Alborz	36.3	37.8	33.6	34.8	7.5	(5.6-9.4)	8
Ilam	30.4	31	27.7	29.1	9	(6.7-11.3)	6.1
Bushehr	39	40.5	36.5	37.8	6.4	(5.0-7.8)	6.7
Tehran	38.9	39.9	36.8	38.5	5.4	(4.1-6.8)	3.4
Chaharmahal & Bakhtiari	40	43.8	36.5	39.5	8.7	(6.3-11.1)	9.7
South Khorasan	39.8	38.1	38.1	36.4	4.4	(3.3-5.5)	4.6
Khorasan-e-Razavi	42.2	42.3	38.9	39.9	8	(6.8-9.2)	5.6
North Khorasan	44.5	45.5	40.5	41.8	9	(6.9-11.1)	8
Khuzestan	38.7	39.9	35.3	35	8.8	(7.2-10.4)	12.3
Zanjan	49.1	48	45.2	43.6	8.1	(6.5-9.7)	9.2
Semnan	37.2	37.9	34.9	35.9	6.2	(4.4-7.9)	5.4
Sistan & Baluchestan	33.1	35.5	30.3	31.9	8.6	(6.5-10.7)	9.9
Fars	37.1	37.5	35.3	34.6	5	(3.7-6.3)	7.7
Qazvin	43.4	41.3	40.3	38.6	6.9	(5.2-8.7)	6.5
Qom	38.3	38.6	35.8	35.4	6.6	(5.2-8.0)	8.2
Kordestan	41.8	41.5	35.9	35.9	13.9	(11.5-16.4)	13.7
Kerman	38.5	40.2	35.3	37	8.4	(6.4-10.5)	8
Kermanshah	40.9	41.9	34.2	35.6	16.5	(12.7-20.3)	15.2
Kohgiluyeh & Boyerahmad	32.3	31.8	30.3	29.6	6.1	(4.3-8.0)	7
Golestan	39.6	39.1	35.9	34.8	9.3	(7.5-11.1)	11.2
Gilan	40.9	43.5	37.1	39.7	9.3	(7.0-11.5)	8.8
Lorestan	40.1	41.2	35.3	36.7	11.9	(10.1-13.6)	11
Mazandaran	44.5	43.8	42.9	41.2	3.5	(2.4-4.7)	5.9
Markazi	37.4	35.7	34.7	33.3	7.2	(5.4-9.1)	6.8
Hormozgan	40.4	42.2	37.5	38.9	7.1	(5.5-8.7)	7.7
Hamedan	39.5	38.4	35.4	34.4	10.4	(8.4-12.4)	10.6
Yazd	43.7	39.7	41.5	38	5	(3.7-6.3)	4.3

Definitions and concepts

The Statistical Centre of Iran employs new international definitions and concepts based on the ICLS 1982¹ for measuring employment and unemployment in the Labour Force Survey.

Work: This key term is used to determine the status of the economic activity of the people. The term “work” refers to the group of economic activities (mentally or physically) which are done for earning income (cash or in-kind) and its objective is to produce goods or services. Generally, the people who work are divided into two groups: self-employed, who work for themselves, and wage and salary earners, who earn money for the work they do.

Statistical period (reference week): Refers to the second or third calendar week (Saturday to Friday) of the middle month of each season.

Employed: All people aged 15 or over who, according to the definition of work, have worked for at least one hour during the reference week or have temporarily left their job for one reason or another, are reckoned as employed. Persons who, without receiving any remuneration, work for a member of their household that is a relative (unpaid family workers); trainees who perform an activity in relation to the activity of the institute for apprenticeships during the training period, namely, they directly contribute to the production of goods or services, their activity is considered “work”; students who have worked during the reference week, according to the definition of work; and all people who are serving as a permanent and temporary cadre in the armed forces (armed forces, cadre personnel, soldiers, commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers of the military forces and the police) are considered employed.

Unemployed: The unemployed are all people aged 15 or over who have the following three criteria together:

1. have no job during the reference week (not engaged in a wage/salary job or self-employment),
2. have been seeking job during the reference week and the preceding three weeks (have taken specific steps to seek paid employment or self-employment),
3. are available to work during the reference week or the following week (available for a wage/salary employment or self-employment). All people who, because of expecting to start a job in future or return to their former job, have not been seeking a job, but have had no job and have been available to work - are also considered unemployed.

Labour force (active population): is the sum of persons in employment plus persons in unemployment.

Underemployment: The underemployed people are all employed people who have been present in or temporarily absent from the workplace and have worked less than 44 hours during the reference week due to economic reasons such as work recession, not finding a job with more hours, or non-work season, but have been willing and ready to do more work in the reference week.

¹ ILO, Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (Geneva, 1982).

Indicators

Economic participation rate (Economic activity rate)

The ratio of the active population (employed & unemployed) to the working age population multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Economic participation rate} = \frac{\text{Economically active population aged 15 and over}}{\text{Population aged 15 and over}} \times 100$$

Employment ratio: The ratio of the employed population to the total population at working age, multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Employment ratio} = \frac{\text{Employed population aged 15 and over}}{\text{Population aged 15 and over}} \times 100$$

Unemployment rate

The ratio of the unemployed population to the active population (employed & unemployed) multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Unemployment rate} = \frac{\text{Unemployed population aged 15 and over}}{\text{Active population aged 15 and over}} \times 100$$

Employment rate

The ratio of the employed population to the active population (employed & unemployed) multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Employment rate} = \frac{\text{Employed population aged 15 and over}}{\text{Active population aged 15 and over}} \times 100 = 100 - \text{unemployment rate}$$

Unemployment rate of the population aged 15-24

The ratio of the unemployed population aged 15-24 to the economically active population aged 15-24 multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Unemployment rate aged 15-24} = \frac{\text{Unemployed population aged 15-24}}{\text{Economically active population aged 15-24}} \times 100$$

Unemployment rate of the population aged 18-35

The ratio of the unemployed population aged 18-35 to the economically active population aged 18-35 multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Unemployment rate aged 18-35} = \frac{\text{Unemployed population aged 18-35}}{\text{Economically active population aged 18-35}} \times 100$$

Unemployment rate of higher education graduates

The ratio of unemployed higher education graduates to active higher education graduates multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Unemployment rate of higher education graduates} = \frac{\text{Unemployed higher education graduates}}{\text{Economically active higher education graduates}} \times 100$$

Share of unemployed higher education graduates aged 15 and over

The ratio of unemployed higher education graduates to the total unemployed population aged 15 and over multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Share of unemployed higher education graduates aged 15 and over} = \frac{\text{Unemployed higher education graduates aged 15 and over}}{\text{Unemployed population aged 15 and over}} \times 100$$

Share of employed higher education graduates aged 15 and over

The ratio of employed higher education graduates to the total employed population aged 15 and over multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Share of employed higher education graduates aged 15 and over} = \frac{\text{Employed higher education graduates aged 15 and over}}{\text{Total employed population aged 15 and over}} \times 100$$

Underemployment share of population aged 15 and over

The ratio of the underemployed population aged 15 and over to the employed population aged 15 and over multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Underemployment share of population aged 15 and over} = \frac{\text{Underemployed population aged 15 and over}}{\text{Employed population aged 15 and over}} \times 100$$