

Statistical bulletin

Working and workless households in the UK: October to December 2024

The economic status of households in the UK and the people living in them, where at least one person is aged 16 to 64 years. Taken from the Labour Force Survey.

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Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Data on working and workless households](#)
3. [Data sources and quality](#)
4. [Related links](#)
5. [Cite this statistical bulletin](#)

1 . Main points

- Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates have been affected by increased volatility, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes; this means that estimates of change should be treated with additional caution, and we recommend using them as part of our suite of labour market indicators alongside workforce jobs (WFJ), Claimant Count data, and Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) estimates.
- The LFS continues to be the sole source of data for unemployment, economic inactivity and self-employment, and provides a range of breakdowns that are only possible from LFS data.
- It is likely that some of the recent changes in LFS estimates are caused by the increased sample size and change in data collection methods taken over the last year, in addition to any underlying changes in the labour market.
- Although LFS headline estimates have been reweighted to later population estimates, LFS household estimates remain weighted to population estimates published in November 2023 for periods from October to December 2023 onwards; a discontinuity has been introduced at this point, so comparisons before this point are not possible.
- Of the estimated 21.62 million households (where at least one member is aged 16 to 64 years) in the UK, 59.4% had all household members aged 16 years and over in employment during October to December 2024.
- There were an estimated 26.7% of households with a mix of at least one working and one workless adult, and an estimated 14.0% of households where no member of the household was in employment.

These are [official statistics in development](#) and we advise caution when using the data. Ongoing challenges with response rates and levels mean that LFS-based labour market statistics will be badged as official statistics in development until further review. Read more in [Section 3: Data sources and quality](#).

2 . Data on working and workless households

[Households by combined economic activity status of household members: Table A](#)

Dataset | Released 5 March 2025

Quarterly and historical data on UK households by combined economic activity status of household members.

[People by age and combined economic activity status of household members: Table F](#)

Dataset | Released 5 March 2025

Quarterly and historical data on people living in UK households by age and combined economic activity status of household members.

[Children in households by combined economic activity status of household members: Table K](#)

Dataset | 5 March 2025

Quarterly and historical data on children living in UK households by combined economic activity status of household members.

[Employment rates of people by parental status: Table P](#)

Dataset | 5 March 2025

Quarterly and historical data on employment rates of people in the UK by parental status.

3 . Data sources and quality

Labour Force Survey (LFS) household datasets are used for analysis of family or household characteristics. For all analysis in this bulletin, a household is defined as containing at least one person aged 16 to 64 years. This bulletin focuses on the economic status of household members. For example:

- number of people in employment in the household
- number of people unemployed in the household
- number of people economically inactive in the household

Our [Comparison of labour market data sources methodology](#), published on 27 April 2022, compares our labour market data sources and discusses some of the main differences.

LFS headline estimates are weighted to 2022 mid-year population estimates for periods from January to March 2019. However, LFS household estimates from October to December 2023 onwards remain weighted to information on the size and composition of the UK population consistent with the population estimates published in November 2023. This creates a discontinuity from October to December 2023 onwards. Users should account for this discontinuity when considering movements in the series. Household estimates for July to September 2023 are not currently available. All estimates in this release are not seasonally adjusted.

Reweighting the LFS does not address the volatility seen in recent periods and that may be seen to some extent in the future. Therefore, we advise increased caution when interpreting changes in the series.

Increased volatility of LFS estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, means that estimates of change should be treated with additional caution. We recommend using them as part of our suite of labour market indicators, alongside workforce jobs (WFJ), Claimant Count data, and Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) estimates.

The longer-term broad coherence between WFJ and RTI, when looking at annual change, suggests that these sources are likely to provide a more reliable estimate of employment, particularly for employees. These sources continue to indicate that we have seen a sustained moderation of growth in employment over the last year.

Despite these coherence challenges, the LFS continues to be the sole source of data for unemployment, economic inactivity, and self-employment, and provides a range of breakdowns that are only possible from LFS data.

The LFS household estimates have not been weighted to the same populations as the LFS. Therefore, all LFS household tables will be inconsistent with those used for the LFS in the latest periods.

For further information, please see our [Impact of reweighting on Labour Force Survey key indicators: 2024 article](#).

Official statistics in development

These statistics are labelled as "official statistics in development". Until September 2023, these were called "experimental statistics". Read more about the change in our [Guide to official statistics in development](#).

The ongoing challenges with response rates and levels mean that LFS-based labour market statistics are now [official statistics in development](#) until further review. This is also in line with the [letter from the Office for Statistics Regulation \(OSR\)](#), stating that LFS statistics should not be published as accredited official statistics until the OSR has reviewed them.

4 . Related links

[Workless households for regions across the UK: 2023](#)

Bulletin | Released 28 October 2024

Annual information at a local level about households and the adults and children living in them, by their economic activity status.

[Children living in long-term workless households in the UK: 2023](#)

Bulletin | Released 30 October 2024

Annual UK estimates of the number of children living in households where all adults have not worked for at least 12 months.

5 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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