

Labour Force Survey performance and quality monitoring report: April to June 2025

Response rates, sample size and quality assessment of the Office for National Statistics quarterly Labour Force Survey.

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Notice

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From Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2025, we have improved the structure and content in this release to better meet accessibility standards and user needs. Supporting methodological information can be found in our [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\) user guide](#) and our [LFS quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

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1 . Main points

The achieved sample size, excluding imputed cases, for the UK Labour Force Survey (LFS) was 58,211 individuals in 26,647 households during Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025. This represents a decrease of 1.4% in household interviews and a decrease of 0.8% in achieved person interviews, compared with Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2025. This is partly a result of seasonal effects from the Easter and May bank holidays, which shortened the fieldwork period in certain weeks over this quarter. Response started to improve towards the end of the quarter.

The dataset size, including imputed households, for the UK LFS was 74,186 individuals in 33,235 households during Quarter 2 2025. This represents an increase of 6.2% in individual cases and an increase of 5.6% in household cases, compared with Quarter 1 2025.

In Quarter 2 2025, main response rates were as follows:

- the total response rate for Great Britain excluding imputed cases (Table 2) was 21.1%; this is down 0.2 percentage points on the previous quarter
- the response rate excluding imputed cases for Great Britain (Figure 3) was 33.5% in Wave 1 and 13.5% in Wave 5; this compares with 35.1% and 13.7%, respectively, in the previous quarter
- the total response rate for Great Britain including imputed cases (Table 3) was 26.6%; this is up 1.6 percentage points on the previous quarter
- the total response rate for the UK excluding imputed cases (Table 4) was 21.5%; this is down 0.3 percentage points on the previous quarter
- the total response rate for the UK including imputed cases (Table 5) was 26.8%; this is up 1.4 percentage point on the previous quarter
- non-contacts made up 16.3% of unproductive cases (Figure 4); this is up 1.4 percentage points on the previous quarter
- other unproductive cases included circumstantial refusals (4.2%, up 0.2 percentage points from the previous quarter), outright refusals (50.3%, up 4.6 percentage points on the previous quarter) and the remainder was other refusals
- the English region with the highest accumulated response rate across the five waves (Table 6) was the Rest of Yorkshire and Humberside (35.5%); the lowest was Inner London (20.1%)
- the overall proxy response rate (Table 7) was 37.2%; the highest proxy response rates were in the 16 to 17 years age group (95.9%), in males (41.6%), and in the combined total proxy response rate of all ethnic groups other than the White ethnic group (44.0%)
- the average income response rate (Table 8) was 83.3%
- the data on attrition rates (Table 9) show (in percentage change terms) that those who drop out of the survey are overrepresented in the 20 to 29 years age group, unemployed, in households with six or more people, and in the Merseyside region

Respondent characteristics proportions for age, tenure, and index of multiple deprivation (IMD) remained stable in Quarter 2 2025. More information can be found in [Section 5: Respondent characteristics](#).

There were no fieldwork or methodological changes in Quarter 2 2025. More information about fieldwork and methodological changes in previous quarters can be found in [Section 6: Quarterly changes and updates](#).

More information about the LFS and technical definitions can be found in our [LFS quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#) and our [LFS user guidance](#).

2 . Summary of quality

We introduced several collection measures in Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2023 and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) sample was increased from January 2024. Together, these two actions have incrementally led to increases in the achieved sample and subsequently, the quality of the data. The five-wave structure of the LFS means that some changes can take up to 15 months to fully feed through into survey estimates. Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2025 was the first period of data that reflected the full impact of the January 2024 sample increase. More information can be found in our [Labour Market transformation – update on progress and plans: April 2025 article](#) and our LFS quality update: May 2025 article.

We reweighted the LFS estimates from Quarter 1 2019 onwards, alongside the changes to the sample and data collection. The reweighted LFS estimates incorporate information on the size and composition of the UK population, based on our 2022 mid-year estimates. For England, Wales and Northern Ireland, they are projected forward using scaling factors from our 2021-based national population projections published in January 2024. For Scotland, they are projected forward using scaling factors from 2020-based national population projections published in January 2023. More information can be found in our [Impact of reweighting on Labour Force Survey key indicators: December 2024 article](#).

We are starting to see a reduction in the volatility we have observed in recent periods. However, we would advise users to continue to apply caution when interpreting short-term changes observed in the estimates from the data. We suggest users read our commentary on our LFS-based statistics, which will consider ongoing quality challenges.

We have seen an increase in the size of the final LFS quarterly dataset including imputation in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025, despite an observed reduction in achieved interviews during the quarter. This is a result of households that were interviewed in the previous quarter but refused or were not contactable in the current quarter being imputed as part of the survey design. Circumstantial refusals and non-contacts increased in Quarter 2 2025 and therefore the use of data brought forward imputation also increased. This resulted in a larger dataset size, compared with the previous quarter. More information about imputation on the LFS can be found in our [LFS User Guide Volume 1: Background and Methodology](#) and our [LFS quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

3 . Achieved sample

Table 1: Achieved sample by type of household, for April to June 2025
Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

	GB		UK	
	Includes imputed	Excludes imputed	Includes imputed	Excludes imputed
Private households	31,111	24,627	33,235	26,647
Individuals in private households	69,521	53,818	74,186	58,211
NHS Households	0	0	0	0
Individuals in NHS households	0	0	0	0
Total households	31,111	24,627	33,235	26,647
Total individuals	69,521	53,818	74,186	58,211

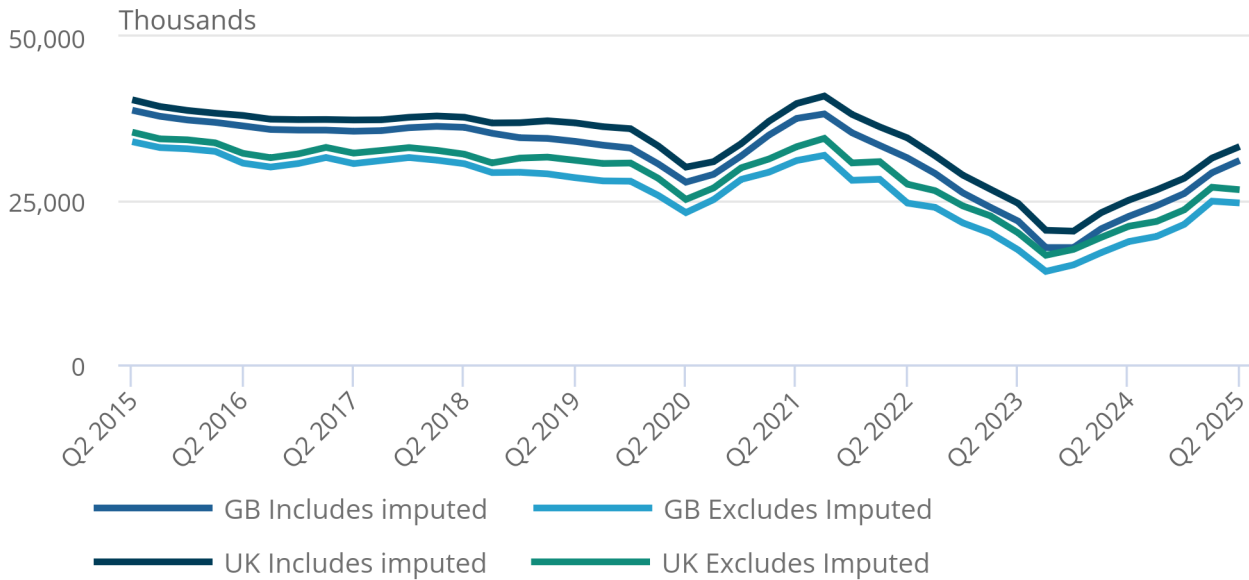
Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Figure 1: The achieved number of household interviews including imputed continued to increase in April to June 2025

Achieved household interviews, Great Britain and UK, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2015 to Quarter 2 2025

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Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

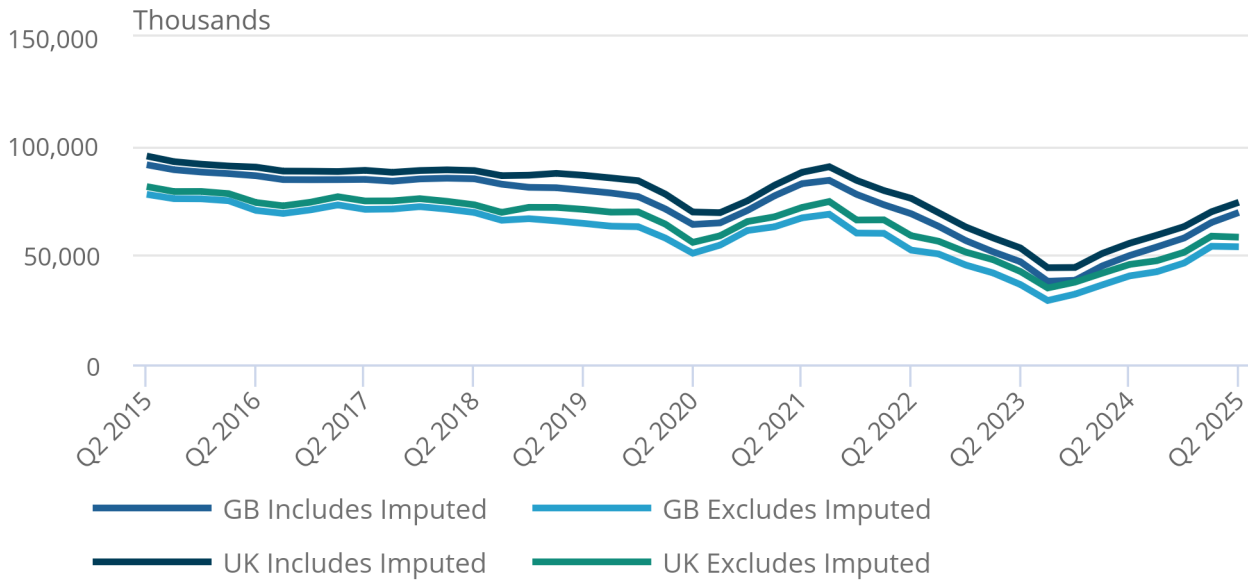
1. Q1 refers to January to March.
2. Q2 refers to April to June.
3. Q3 refers to July to September.
4. Q4 refers to October to December.

Figure 2: The achieved number of person interviews including imputed continued to increase in April to June 2025

Achieved number of person interviews, Great Britain and UK, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2015 to Quarter 2 2025

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Achieved number of person interviews, Great Britain and UK, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2015 to Quarter 2 2025



Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

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4 . Response rates

The total response rate is the aggregate response rate for the quarter across all waves, based on all eligible, in-scope households. For a full definition of response categories and the method used to calculate response rates, see [Section 7: Understanding response rates](#).

Table 2: Wave-specific response rates, excluding imputed households, for April to June 2025
Great Britain, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3		Wave 4		Wave 5		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Eligible households found at selected units	24,162	100.0	23,017	100.0	23,114	100.0	23,233	100.0	23,372	100.0	116,898	100.0
Responding units												
Total	8,095	33.5	5,111	22.2	4,485	19.4	3,786	16.3	3,158	13.5	24,635	21.1
Full	7,749	32.1	4,720	20.5	4,169	18.0	3,522	15.2	2,894	12.4	23,054	19.7
Partial	346	1.4	391	1.7	316	1.4	264	1.1	264	1.1	1,581	1.4
Non-responding units												
Circumstantial refusal	1,871	7.7	1,450	6.3	1,035	4.5	752	3.2	464	2.0	5,572	4.8
Outright refusal	7,265	30.1	8,853	38.5	9,755	42.2	9,001	38.7	8,244	35.3	43,118	36.9
Refusal to HQ	188	0.8	2,124	9.2	4,109	17.8	6,836	29.4	9,522	40.7	22,779	19.5
Non-contact	6,743	27.9	5,066	22.0	3,169	13.7	2,219	9.6	1,316	5.6	18,513	15.8
Addresses not issued for interviewing												
Refusal to re-interview	n/a	n/a	413	1.8	561	2.4	639	2.8	668	2.9	2,281	2.0
Co-operation rate		46.5		29.1		23.1		18.6		14.8		25.6
Contact rate		71.3		68.2		67.7		59.9		52.3		64.0

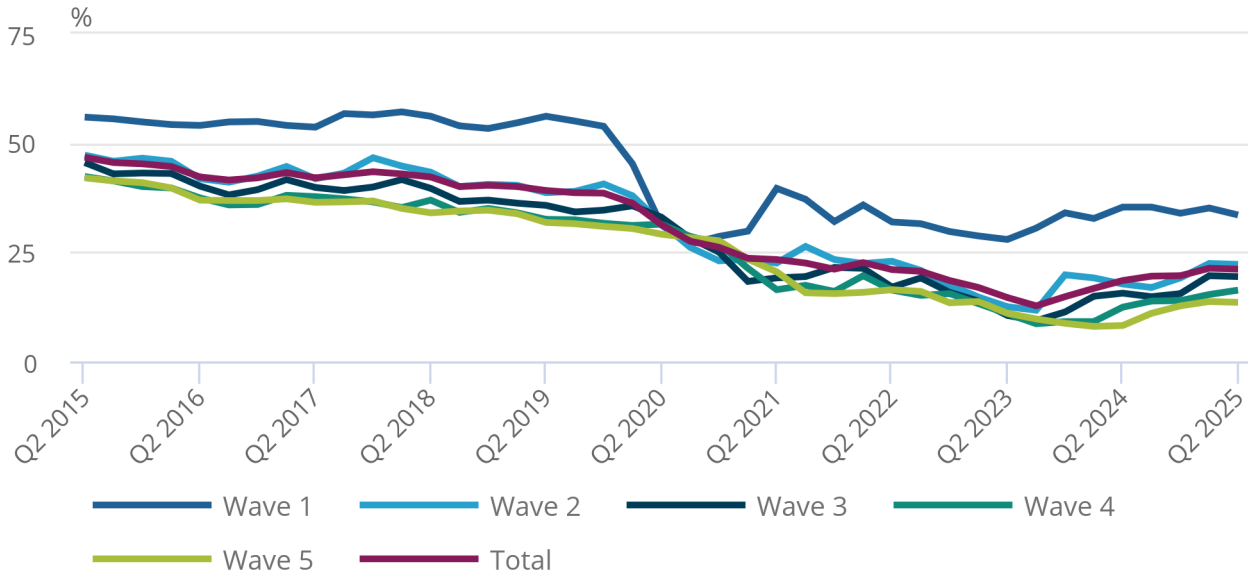
Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Figure 3: The response rate for Wave 1 decreased slightly in April to June 2025, while all other waves remained relatively stable

Wave specific response rates, Great Britain, excluding imputed households, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2015 to Quarter 2 2025

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Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

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4. Q4 refers to October to December.

Table 3: Wave-specific response rates, including imputed households, for April to June 2025
Great Britain, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3		Wave 4		Wave 5		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Eligible households found at selected units	24162	100	23017	100	23114	100	23233	100	23372	100	116898	100
Responding units												
Total	8,095	33.5	7,960	34.6	5,993	25.9	5,105	22.0	3,967	17.0	31,120	26.6
Full	7,749	32.1	4,720	20.5	4,169	18.0	3,522	15.2	2,894	12.4	23,054	19.7
Partial	346	1.4	391	1.7	316	1.4	264	1.1	264	1.1	1,581	1.4
Imputed	-	-	2,849	12.4	1,508	6.5	1,319	5.7	809	3.5	6,485	5.5
Non-responding units												
Circumstantial refusal	1,871	7.7	613	2.7	523	2.3	350	1.5	221	0.9	3,578	3.1
Outright refusal	7,265	30.1	8,853	38.5	9,755	42.2	9,001	38.7	8,244	35.3	43,118	36.9
Refusal to HQ	188	0.8	2,124	9.2	4,109	17.8	6,836	29.4	9,522	40.7	22,779	19.5
Non-contact	6,743	27.9	3,054	13.3	2,173	9.4	1,302	5.6	750	3.2	14,022	12.0
Addresses not issued for interviewing												
Refusal to re-interview	n/a	n/a	413	1.8	561	2.4	639	2.8	668	2.9	2,281	2.0
Co-operation rate		46.5		40.7		29.4		24.0		18.1		30.9
Contact rate		71.3		77.1		72.1		64.0		54.8		67.9

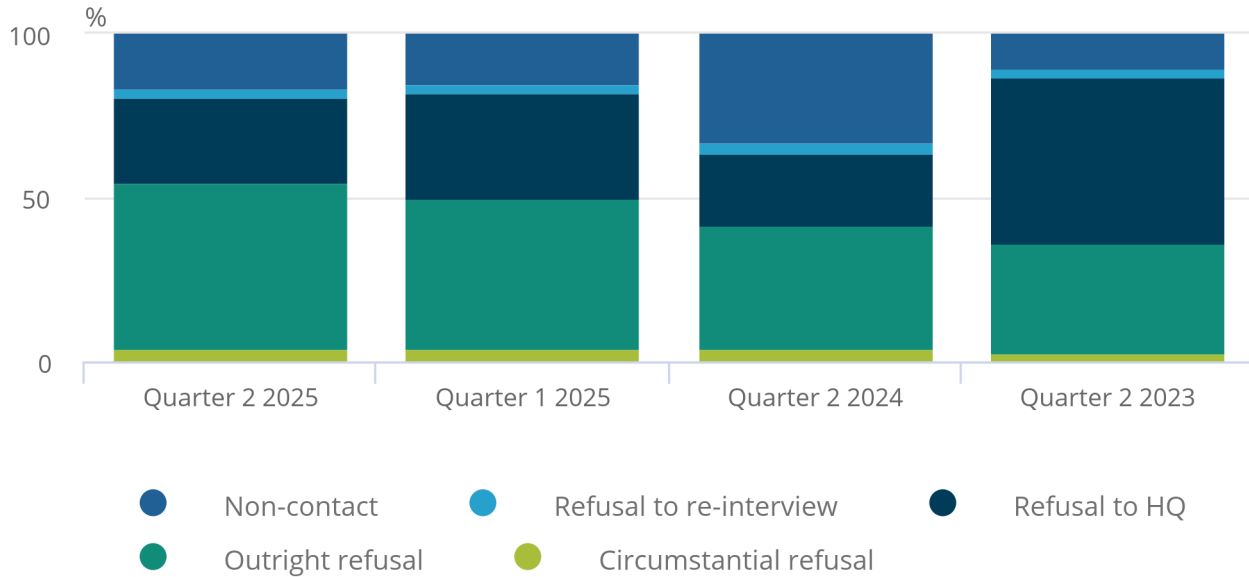
Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Figure 4: Non-response mainly comprised outright refusals in April to June, consistent with January to March 2025

Composition of non-response, Great Britain, including imputed households

Figure 4: Non-response mainly comprised outright refusals in April to June, consistent with January to March 2025

Composition of non-response, Great Britain, including imputed households



Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Quarter 1 refers to January to March.
2. Quarter 2 refers to April to June.

Table 4: Wave-specific response rates, excluding imputed households, for April to June 2025
United Kingdom, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3		Wave 4		Wave 5		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Eligible households found at selected units	25,099	100.0	24,144	100.0	24,469	100.0	25,119	100.0	25,655	100.0	124,486	100.0
Responding units												
Total	8,555	34.1	5,510	22.8	4,849	19.8	4,146	16.5	3,728	14.5	26,788	21.5
Full	8,155	32.5	5,076	21.0	4,511	18.4	3,846	15.3	3,273	12.8	24,861	20.0
Partial	400	1.6	434	1.8	338	1.4	300	1.2	455	1.8	1,927	1.5
Non-responding units												
Circumstantial refusal	1,929	7.7	1,468	6.1	1,044	4.3	760	3.0	471	1.8	5,672	4.6
Outright refusal	7,528	30.0	8,887	36.8	9,762	39.9	9,012	35.9	8,247	32.1	43,436	34.9
Refusal to HQ	197	0.8	2,127	8.8	4,109	16.8	6,838	27.2	9,522	37.1	22,793	18.3
Non-contact	6,890	27.5	5,163	21.4	3,221	13.2	2,261	9.0	1,370	5.3	18,905	15.2
Addresses not issued for interviewing												
Refusal to re-interview	n/a	n/a	989	4.1	1,484	6.1	2,102	8.4	2,317	9.0	6,892	5.5
Co-operation rate		47.0		30.6		24.5		20.0		17.0		27.1
Contact rate		71.8		68.5		68.1		60.5		53.3		64.5

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Table 5: Wave-specific response rates, including imputed households, for April to June 2025
United Kingdom, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3		Wave 4		Wave 5		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Eligible households found at selected units	25,099	100.0	24,144	100.0	24,469	100.0	25,119	100.0	25,655	100.0	124,486	100.0
Responding units												
Total	8,555	34.1	8,403	34.8	6,379	26.1	5,482	21.8	4,558	17.8	33,377	26.8
Full	8,155	32.5	5,076	21.0	4,511	18.4	3,846	15.3	3,273	12.8	24,861	20.0
Partial	400	1.6	434	1.8	338	1.4	300	1.2	455	1.8	1,927	1.5
Imputed	-	-	2,893	12.0	1,530	6.3	1,336	5.3	830	3.2	6,589	5.3
Non-responding units												
Circumstantial refusal	1,929	7.7	623	2.6	528	2.2	355	1.4	225	0.9	3,660	2.9
Outright refusal	7,528	30.0	8,887	36.8	9,762	39.9	9,012	35.9	8,247	32.1	43,436	34.9
Refusal to HQ	197	0.8	2,127	8.8	4,109	16.8	6,838	27.2	9,522	37.1	22,793	18.3
Non-contact	6,890	27.5	3,115	12.9	2,207	9.0	1,330	5.3	786	3.1	14,328	11.5
Addresses not issued for interviewing												
Refusal to re-interview	n/a	n/a	989	4.1	1,484	6.1	2,102	8.4	2,317	9.0	6,892	5.5
Co-operation rate		47.0		41.9		30.7		25.3		20.2		32.3
Contact rate		71.8		77.4		72.5		64.5		55.8		68.4

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Table 6: Wave-specific response rates, including imputed households, for April to June 2025
By region, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Total
Region						
Tyne and Wear	37.2	46.3	27.3	15.1	16.6	28.2
Rest of North East	40.6	38.9	30.6	19.7	17.7	29.5
Greater Manchester	25.1	27.5	21.2	19.2	14.5	21.5
Merseyside	26.8	25.8	17.2	19.2	12.1	20.2
Rest of North West	33.3	32.6	25.3	26.4	17.1	27.0
South Yorkshire	37.2	41.3	33.8	26.1	16.8	31.1
West Yorkshire	39.8	40.4	32.1	22.6	15.6	30.2
Rest of Yorkshire and Humberside	44.9	41.6	33.9	33.6	23.4	35.5
East Midlands	36.3	37.3	27.3	24.7	20.6	29.3
West Midlands Metropolitan Council	27.7	25.1	20.0	16.7	14.4	20.8
Rest of West Midlands	35.6	37.4	27.4	25.6	16.9	28.6
East of England	33.1	33.7	23.3	19.6	15.3	25.0
Inner London	21.0	27.0	21.6	17.7	13.4	20.1
Outer London	25.2	26.8	21.3	17.5	15.2	21.2
South East	36.3	35.5	27.6	22.9	17.6	28.0
South West	39.5	42.0	29.0	24.9	19.7	31.1
England	33.6	34.5	25.8	22.0	16.9	26.6
Wales	30.7	31.7	22.5	21.7	15.0	24.3
Strathclyde	33.0	37.5	27.3	21.2	17.8	27.4
Rest of Scotland	34.7	36.9	30.0	21.3	19.1	28.5
Scotland	34.0	37.2	28.9	21.2	18.6	28.0
Northern Ireland	49.1	39.3	28.5	20.0	25.9	29.7

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. Each wave reported here is an independent sample. For example, the Wave 2 response in Quarter 2 2025 is based on outcomes for the April to June 2025 collection period from the households initially sampled in Wave 1 in the previous quarter, Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar 2025).

Table 7: Proxy response for April to June 2025
Great Britain, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

		All responses Proxy %		
Age	Total (16+)	56,869	21,154	37.2
	16-17	1,701	1,631	95.9
	18-19	1393	1214	87.2
	20+	53,775	18,309	34.0
Sex	Total	56,869	21,154	37.2
	Male	27,218	11,324	41.6
	Female	29,651	9,830	33.2
Ethnicity	Total	56,869	21,154	37.2
	White	49,358	17,842	36.1
	All Ethnicities Other than White	7,478	3,291	44.0
	Refused	33	21	63.6
Economic activity (INECAC05)	Total	56,869	21,154	37.2
	Employees	29,621	11,532	38.9
	Self-Employed	4,903	1,963	40.0
	Government schemes	35	16	45.7
	Unpaid family workers	131	31	23.7
	ILO Unemployed	1397	604	43.2
	Inactive	20,782	7,008	33.7

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Table 8: Income response rates by National Statistics Socio-economic Classification for April to June 2025
National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC), Great Britain, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

	Wave 1 in Quarter 2 2025	Wave 5 in Quarter 2 2025	Total
NS-SEC	%	%	%
Higher managerial and professional	84.1	89.6	85.8
Lower managerial and professional	83.0	89.3	84.8
Intermediate occupations	79.3	87.5	81.6
Small employers and own account workers	70.0	80.0	75.0
Lower supervisory and technical	79.7	89.2	82.1
Semi-routine occupations	77.9	85.9	80.1
Routine occupations	76.2	90.3	79.8
Total	81.2	88.8	83.3

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. The percentages in Table 8 are based on all eligible in-scope respondents at Wave 1 and all eligible in-scope respondents at Wave 5.
2. The total response rate is the aggregate response rate for income for the quarter (Wave 1 and Wave 5), based on all eligible, in-scope respondents.

Table 9: Summary of attrition by characteristics for April to June 2025
Great Britain, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025

		Wave 1 in Quarter 2 2024	Wave 5 in Quarter 2 2025	Responds all waves	Non-responder
Age	<16	20.1	16.3	13.7	22.3
	16-19	4.2	3.6	3.6	4.6
	20-29	9.7	7.6	6.9	11.0
	30-39	13.9	11.7	10.6	15.2
	40-49	13.6	12.1	11.0	14.4
	50-59	14.9	15.7	15.9	14.5
	60-69	15.1	20.8	23.3	11.7
	70+	8.4	12.1	15.0	6.3
Sex	Male	48.8	48.2	48.9	49.1
	Female	51.2	51.8	51.1	50.9
Econ Activity (INECAC05)	Employees	43.8	42.5	41.0	44.5
	Self Emp	7.1	7.4	7.2	7.0
	GovTraining Scheme	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
	UPFW (Unpaid Family Workers)	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
	ILO Unemp	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.7
	Inactive	27.2	32.2	36.6	24.4
Number of people in household (TOTNUM)	1	10.7	13.7	15.5	9.0
	2	30.4	36.0	39.2	27.2
	3	21.6	19.8	18.2	22.7
	4	24.3	22.5	21.1	25.3
	5	9.3	6.5	4.7	10.9
	6 or more	3.6	1.5	1.2	4.9
	Region (GOVTOR)	Tyne and Wear	2.2	1.9	2.2
Rest of North East		3.4	2.6	2.4	3.8
Greater Manchester		3.5	3.8	3.7	3.4
Merseyside		1.7	1.2	1.2	2.0
Rest of North West		5.4	5.2	5.3	5.6
South Yorkshire		2.6	2.3	1.6	2.7
West Yorkshire		3.7	3.4	3.8	3.8

Rest of Yorkshire and Humberside	3.9	4.2	4.1	3.8
East Midlands	8.9	9.4	9.3	8.6
West Midlands Metropolitan Council	4.0	3.7	3.4	4.1
Rest of West Midlands	4.7	4.9	5.3	4.6
East of England	8.6	9.8	11.1	7.8
Inner London	3.0	2.6	2.4	3.3
Outer London	5.5	5.9	5.6	5.2
South East	14.7	14.9	15.2	14.6
South West	10.2	10.7	10.7	9.9
Wales	4.8	5.1	5.0	4.7
Strathclyde	3.7	3.5	3.0	3.9
Rest of Scotland	5.6	4.9	4.8	6.0

Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes

1. The column Wave 1 in Quarter 2 2024 Responds shows the percentage of responders in each characteristics category at Wave 1.
2. The column, Wave 5 in Quarter 2 2025 Responds, shows the percentage of responders in each characteristics category at Wave 5.
3. A substantial decline in the values between Waves 1 and 5 denotes a higher rate of attrition than where values are consistent between Waves 1 and 5 or higher at Wave 5.

5 . Respondent characteristics

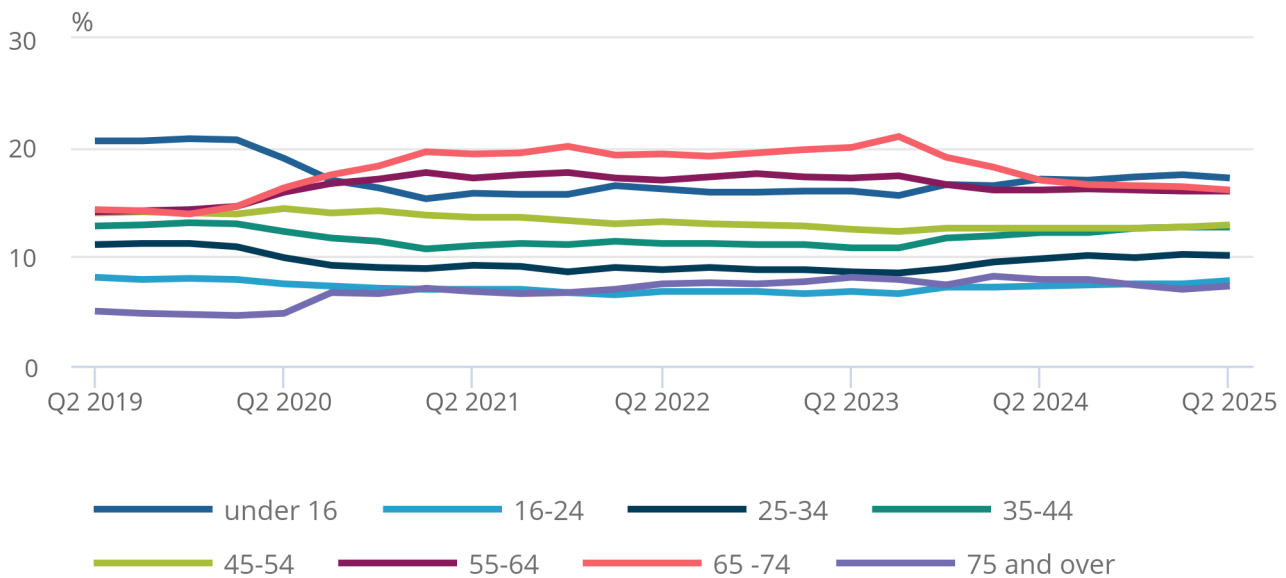
We monitor the distribution of the sample across a range of demographic characteristics on a quarterly basis to help identify potential biases in the data. We have seen changes to the make-up of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) sample since the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in March 2020. The following charts show the trends observed across all waves of the LFS in age, tenure, and index of multiple deprivation (IMD) quintile since Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2019.

Figure 5: The Labour Force Survey responding sample includes more people aged over 55 years and fewer people aged under 24 years, compared with pre-pandemic levels

Labour Force Survey (LFS) respondent breakdown by age band, all waves, UK, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2019 to Quarter 2 2025

Figure 5: The Labour Force Survey responding sample includes more people aged over 55 years and fewer people aged under 24 years, compared with pre-pandemic levels

Labour Force Survey (LFS) respondent breakdown by age band, all waves, UK, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2019 to Quarter 2 2025



Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

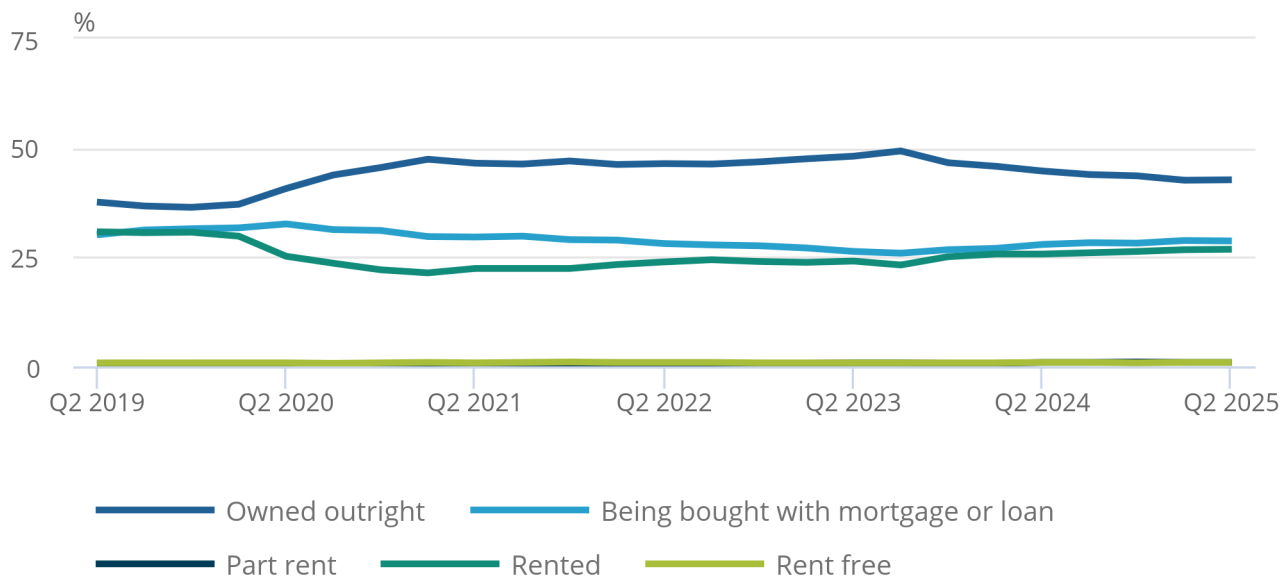
1. If a household is found at Wave 1 to contain only adults aged 75 and over who are economically inactive, then no further waves of interviews are conducted. More information can be found in [LFS User Guide volume 1: background and methodology \(PDF, 1.4MB\)](#).
2. Q1 refers to January to March.
3. Q2 refers to April to June.
4. Q3 refers to July to September.
5. Q4 refers to October to December.

Figure 6: The Labour Force Survey responding sample includes more people who own their home outright and fewer renters, compared with pre-pandemic levels

Labour Force Survey (LFS) respondent breakdown by tenure type, all waves, UK, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2019 to Quarter 2 2025

Figure 6: The Labour Force Survey responding sample includes more people who own their home outright and fewer renters, compared with pre-pandemic levels

Labour Force Survey (LFS) respondent breakdown by tenure type, all waves, UK, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2019 to Quarter 2 2025



Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

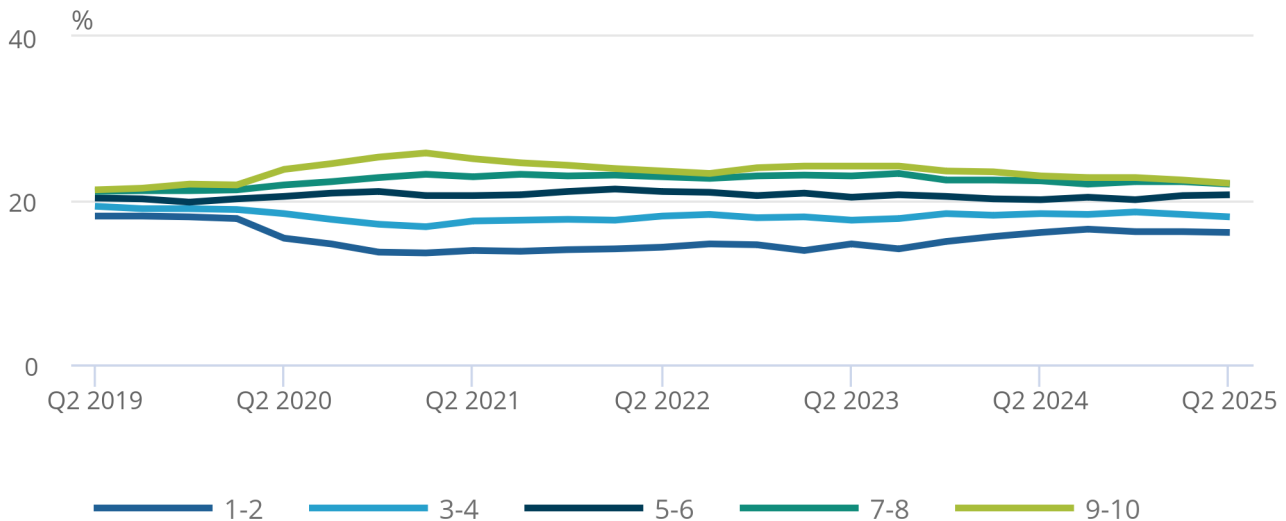
1. Q1 refers to January to March.
2. Q2 refers to April to June.
3. Q3 refers to July to September.
4. Q4 refers to October to December.

Figure 7: The difference between the proportion of Labour Force Survey respondents in the most and least deprived areas of Great Britain has returned closer to pre-pandemic levels since January to March 2024

Labour Force Survey (LFS) respondent breakdown by index of multiple deprivation (IMD), all waves, Great Britain, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2019 to Quarter 2 2025

Figure 7: The difference between the proportion of Labour Force Survey respondents in the most and least deprived areas of Great Britain has returned closer to pre-pandemic levels since January to March 2024

Labour Force Survey (LFS) respondent breakdown by index of multiple deprivation (IMD), all waves, Great Britain, Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2019 to Quarter 2 2025



Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. IMD decile monitoring is currently monitored for Great Britain LFS cases only.
2. Q1 refers to January to March.
3. Q2 refers to April to June.
4. Q3 refers to July to September.
5. Q4 refers to October to December.

6 . Quarterly changes and updates

This section details changes that may have had an impact on response rates and data included in the charts and tables in [Section 5: Respondent characteristics](#). Details of historical operational changes can be found in Volume 1: Background and methodology of our [Labour Force Survey user guidance](#).

April to June 2025 questionnaire changes

No questionnaire changes were made in Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2025. Please see Volume 2: LFS questionnaire and Volume 3: Details of LFS variables in our [2022 update to our LFS user guidance](#) for further details.

Methodological changes

In response to fluctuation in response rates since the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we made several adjustments to the size of the LFS Wave 1 sample in recent years. These adjustments included:

- doubling the Wave 1 sample in May 2020
- reducing the Wave 1 sample to 160% of pre-pandemic levels in April 2021
- reducing the Wave 1 sample to 150% of pre-pandemic levels in October 2021
- increasing the Wave 1 sample to 155% of pre-pandemic levels in April 2022
- reducing the Wave 1 sample to pre-pandemic levels in July 2023
- increasing the Wave 1 sample to 155% of pre-pandemic levels (25,800 addresses in total per quarter) in January 2024

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) are responsible for the LFS data collection in Northern Ireland. NISRA reduced the Wave 1 issued sample in Northern Ireland by 20% (from 1,287 to 1,040 addresses per quarter) in August 2024.

Fieldwork and operational changes

One of the measures previously in place since the start of the pandemic was to code out cases that were unproductive in two consecutive waves as refusals to headquarters (HQ). This measure was paused in October 2023 when LFS recovery measures were introduced. This resulted in an observed decrease in refusal rates in Waves 2 to 5. To improve our fieldwork operations, this practice was reintroduced in July 2024 after the Wave 1 sample increase led to an increase in unproductive cases in follow-up waves. This change in coding practice will be reflected in non-response data, including the composition of non-response (Figure 4).

7 . Understanding response rates

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is managed by the Social Surveys directorate of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in Great Britain, and by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) in Northern Ireland. Response rates for the UK are calculated by combining the achieved samples for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

More information and technical definitions can be found in our [LFS quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#) and Volume 1: Background and methodology of our [Labour Force Survey user guidance](#).

Method of calculating response rates

The response rate is how many interviews were achieved as a proportion of those eligible for the survey. The formula used is:

Response rate (RR) equals full response (FR) plus partial response (PR), divided by FR plus PR plus outright refusal (OR) plus circumstantial refusal (CR) plus refusal to headquarters (RHQ) plus non-contact (NC) plus refusal to re-interview (RRI) (for only Waves 2 to 5).

The calculation of response rates should take the panel design into account, because the LFS is a panel survey. Households may refuse further participation at any of the five quarterly visits they are due to receive.

Households that refuse further participation are not revisited at the next quarter, but they remain part of the eligible sample. The response rate for households is the ratio of the number of households responding at the current wave to the sum of the number of eligible households found at the same wave at the sampled addresses, plus any households that have refused outright to participate at a previous wave. Outright refusals are distinct from circumstantial refusals and non-contacts, which are revisited at the next wave. Outright refusals may occur either when the interviewer calls or asks for permission to re-call in three months.

This simple model does not take account of situations like net addition or subtraction of eligible households at sampled addresses at waves after Wave 1, for example by a net increase or decrease in occupation of household spaces. However, the definition of household spaces is fluid and does not provide a firm basis for response rate calculations. LFS response rates that take the panel design into account are based on the simple model.

Definitions of response outcome categories

Full response

A household in which each household member has answered all applicable questions.

Partial response

A household in which questions were not completed because someone refused to be interviewed, refused part way through the questionnaire, or refused to let someone else answer on his or her behalf. However, at least one question block must have been completed. If only part of the information has been collected for a one-person household, it is coded as a refusal or non-contact.

Outright refusal

A household that refuses to respond to the survey and the interviewer feels that there is no chance of an interview at the current wave or in any future wave.

Circumstantial refusal

A household where the respondent refuses to respond because of a temporary circumstance (for example, going on holiday or being too busy during the field period). A circumstantial refusal enables an interviewer to call back at the next wave.

Refusal to HQ

A household that contacts headquarters to refuse to participate in the survey in response to the advance letter.

Non-contact

When an address is occupied, but where it has not been possible to contact any member of the household in the field period.

Method of calculating income response rates

The income question is asked at Waves 1 and 5 only. The subset of respondents who are eligible for these questions includes individuals aged 16 to 69 years who are in employment in the reference week. The percentage response rates for the income questions are based on all eligible, in-scope respondents at Wave 1 and all eligible, in-scope respondents at Wave 5. The total response rate is the aggregate response rate for income for the quarter (Wave 1 and Wave 5), based on all eligible, in-scope respondents.

Proxy response

The LFS interviewers must complete fieldwork to a tight timetable and interview as many of the sampled households as possible. This leaves limited time for re-calls. LFS interviewers try to interview every adult (aged 16 years and over) in each sampled household. However, when a household member is unavailable for interview, interviewers accept information by proxy from another responsible adult in the household. The proxy respondents are normally people living with a partner on behalf of their partner, and parents on behalf of their adult offspring who live with them.

Attrition

Attrition is the term applied to respondents who begin the survey but then drop out. These respondents tend to have different characteristics to those who remain in all waves of the survey. This can result in attrition bias. For example, if respondents in a particular age group have a higher tendency to drop out (attrition rate) than respondents in other age groups, then they will be underrepresented in subsequent waves of the survey and in estimates.

Item non-response

Item non-response refers to the situation where a respondent fails to answer a specific question or item during the survey, even though they have completed other parts of the survey. This can occur for various reasons, such as the respondent not knowing the answer, choosing to skip a sensitive question, or misunderstanding the question. This type of non-response is distinct from unit non-response.

Unit non-response

Unit non-response refers to individuals in sampled households not participating in the survey. This can occur for a variety of reasons, such as the respondent refusing the survey, including circumstantial refusals and outright refusals, or being unable to reach or contact the selected respondent during the field period.

Imputed cases

If a respondent from one quarter is not available in the next consecutive quarter, then their responses from the earlier quarter may be carried forward (for one quarter only). This is referred to as "imputation". Response rates excluding imputed cases are the best measure of true response, as these are calculated based solely on actual responders as a proportion of eligible cases for the current quarter. Imputed cases are included in analytical datasets to provide a greater dataset size. We also report response rates including imputed cases in this methodology to show the extent of imputation for the current quarter. More information about imputation can be found in Section 12 of our [LFS User Guide Volume 1: Background and methodology \(PDF, 1.5MB\)](#).

8 . Timeliness and punctuality

Timeliness refers to the lapse of time between publication and the period to which the data refer. Punctuality refers to the time lag between the actual and planned dates of publication.

To the Office for National Statistics Labour Market and Households Division

- The scheduled delivery date for file is 18 July 2025.
- The achieved delivery date for file was 17 July 2025.
- The time lag between achieved delivery date and the end of the reference period was 18 days.

Data file for other users

The scheduled availability date for regional public and government normal release user files is 17 July 2025.

9 . Related links

[Labour Force Survey user guidance](#)

Methodology | Last revised 19 February 2025

Guidance about the background and methodology of the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

[Labour Force Survey performance and quality monitoring reports](#)

Methodology | Updated quarterly

Historical Labour Force Survey performance and quality monitoring reports from 2016 to present.

[Labour market overview. UK Statistical bulletins](#)

Bulletin | Release monthly

Estimates of employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and other employment-related statistics for the UK.

[Labour Force Survey Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#)

QMI | Last revised 15 October 2024

Quality and Methodology Information for the Labour Force Survey, detailing the strengths and limitations of the data, methods used, and data uses and users.

Methodology for the calculation of sampling variability in the Labour Force Survey (PDF, 175KB)

The formulas used for the calculation of standard errors (SEs) on the quarterly LFS and describe how the impact of the sample design and weighting are captured in these calculations.

[The National Online Manpower Information System \(NOMIS\)](#)

Web page | Updated regularly

Nomis is a service provided by the Office for National Statistics to give you free access to the most detailed and up-to-date UK labour market statistics from official sources.

[UK Data Archive. University of Essex](#)

Web page | Updated regularly

Home to the UK's largest collection of social, economic and population data for over 50 years.

10 . Cite this article

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 12 August 2025, ONS website, methodology, [Labour Force Survey performance and quality monitoring report: April to June 2025](#)