

## **European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS)**

**The entity that has organized the survey and is responsible for data collection – as well as key data on the entity's membership, governance arrangements, source of funding etc.**

The LFS is organized by Eurostat, the official statistical office of the European Union, situated in Luxembourg. Its main objective is to provide the EU with statistics that enable comparisons between the European countries and regions. Eurostat was established in 1953 and became a Directorate-General (DG) of the European Commission when the European Community was founded in 1958. Today, seven different DGs are responsible for different sectors of Eurostat activities. Eurostat is funded by the European Commission.

The national statistical institutes are responsible for selecting the sample, preparing the questionnaires, conducting the direct interviews among households, and forwarding the results to Eurostat in accordance with the common coding scheme.

### **A historical sketch of the initiation and origin of the survey**

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### **Internet links to the website of the responsible organization**

[The website of Eurostat](#)

[The subsite of the LFS](#)

### **The frequency or repetitions of the survey. Possible explanation of this.**

The LFS was an annual survey between 1983 and 1998, but in the period 1998-2005 it underwent a transition to a continuous survey: interviews are distributed across all weeks of the year, but results are aggregated on a quarterly basis.

### **A description of the survey's content, i.e. both focused rotational and / or core modules of the survey**

The LFS is mainly preoccupied with labour participation: employment, unemployment and inactivity. It also collects data on each respondent (sex, age, education level, economic activity, and so on) and makes aggregate indicators like employment rates, average age of retirement, and so on.

## **An outline of the type of sample and the main data collection methods used**

The specific samples are drawn by the national statistical institutes, but they have to use a random sample survey of persons in private households. The procedures vary from simple random sampling to complex stratified multi-stage cluster methods.

The total sample size is about 1,5 million people every quarter. The sampling rates vary between 0,2% and 3,3%. The target population is all people aged 15 and over in the EU, the EFTA (except Liechtenstein) and candidate countries.

The data is collected through face-to-face interviews in the first interview, whereas follow-up interviews may be conducted via telephone.

## **An account of the availability of the data to researchers, restrictions on access, etc.**

Direct access to the data is only provided by means of research contracts available upon application. This is due to the confidential character of the data. For details on how to submit an access request, who can access the data, and so on please refer to the [ELF microdata for scientific purposes: how to obtain them?](#)

## **Questionnaires, English version**

For a list of the nation- and round-specific questionnaires, please refer to the [Labour Force Survey Core Questionnaires](#).

## **The countries included in the different rounds**

The LFS is conducted in the 27 member states of the EU, the three candidate countries and three countries of the EFTA.

## **Cumulative file of the various rounds**

A cumulative file with the LFS microdata from 1983-2011 was released in November 2012.

## **Publications based on the data**

[Publications based on the LFS](#)

## **Analytical summary...**

**Sources**

Unless otherwise noted, all information is extracted from the website of the LFS/Eurostat.