

Unemployment and underemployment statistics for April – June 2018

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for April – June 2018) released today (July 19) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 2.8% in April – June 2018, same as that in March – May 2018. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.0% in the two periods.

Comparing April – June 2018 with March – May 2018, movements in the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) and underemployment rate in different industry sectors varied, but were generally small in magnitude.

Total employment increased by around 4 900 from 3 864 900 in March – May 2018 to 3 869 800 in April – June 2018. Over the same period, the labour force also increased by around 5 000 from 3 977 200 to 3 982 200.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) in April – June 2018 was 112 400, about the same as that in March – May 2018 (112 300). The number of underemployed persons in April – June 2018 was 41 400, also about the same as that in March – May 2018 (41 000).

Commentary

Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, said, "Labour market stayed tight in April – June 2018, with the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate holding steady at 2.8%. The underemployment rate likewise remained unchanged at 1.0%. Total employment sustained solid growth on a year-on-year basis."

"Changes in jobless rates for most sectors were minimal when compared to the preceding three-month period. On a year-on-year comparison to net out seasonal fluctuations, most of the major service sectors witnessed improvement in unemployment situation, particularly so in the trade- and tourism-related industries such as import and export trade, retail, and accommodation services."

Looking ahead, Dr Law said, "In the near term, the overall labour market is expected to remain tight on the back of a vibrant local economy. Yet, we will stay vigilant to the evolving external uncertainties and monitor their potential impact on the local labour market closely."

He noted that the Labour Department (LD) has adopted a series of on-going measures to promote the employment of elderly persons, such as setting up special counters at job centres to provide priority registration and job referral services for elderly job seekers, organising tailor-made employment briefings for the elderly, setting up a dedicated webpage for elderly job seekers on the Interactive Employment Service website and enhancing the functions of the vacancy search terminals to facilitate their access to

employment information and search for suitable vacancies.

On large-scale job fairs, the LD will stage the Kowloon West Job Fair on August 9 and 10 at the Lai Kok Community Hall in Cheung Sha Wan. About 40 employers would participate, offering around 3 400 vacancies from various industries. The LD will also organise the Job Fair for Middle-aged and Elderly Employment on September 20 and 21 at the Tuen Mun Town Hall. In addition, industry-based or district-based job fairs are regularly organised at the LD's industry-based recruitment centres and job centres located across the territory.

Further Information

The unemployment and underemployment statistics were compiled from the findings of the continuous General Household Survey.

The survey for April – June 2018 covered a sample of some 25 000 households or 75 000 persons, selected in accordance with a scientifically designed sampling scheme to represent the population of Hong Kong.

Data on labour force characteristics were obtained from the survey by interviewing each member aged 15 or over in the sampled households.

In the survey, the definitions used in measuring unemployment and underemployment follow closely those recommended by the International Labour Organization.

Detailed analysis of labour force characteristics is given in the "Quarterly Report on General Household Survey" which is published four times a year. The latest issue of the publication contains statistics for the quarter January – March 2018 while the next issue covering the quarter April – June 2018 will be available by end August 2018. Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001).

For enquiries about labour force statistics, please contact the Household Statistics Analysis Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2887 5508 or email: ghs@censtatd.gov.hk).