

# Unemployment and underemployment statistics for August – October 2024

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for August – October 2024) released today (November 18) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased from 3.0% in July – September 2024 to 3.1% in August – October 2024. The underemployment rate decreased from 1.2% in July – September 2024 to 1.1% in August – October 2024.

Comparing August – October 2024 with July – September 2024, the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) increased across most major economic sectors, with more distinct increases observed in the cleaning and similar activities sector; arts, entertainment and recreation sector; and transportation sector. As to the underemployment rate, decreases were mainly seen in the construction sector; and warehousing and support activities for transportation sector.

Total employment decreased by around 3 100 from 3 710 200 in July – September 2024 to 3 707 100 in August – October 2024. Over the same period, the labour force also decreased by around 2 200 from 3 830 100 to 3 827 900.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 800 from 119 900 in July – September 2024 to 120 700 in August – October 2024. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons decreased by around 3 700 from 46 000 to 42 300.

## Commentary

Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, said, "The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stayed low at 3.1% in August – October 2024, though edging up by 0.1 percentage point from July – September 2024. The underemployment rate declined slightly by 0.1 percentage point to 1.1%. The labour force and total employment decreased slightly, by 2 200 and 3 100 to 3 827 900 and 3 707 100 respectively. The number of unemployed persons increased slightly by 800 to 120 700."

Among the different sectors, more notable increases in the unemployment rates were seen in the cleaning and similar activities sector; the arts, entertainment and recreation sector; and the transportation sector. On the other hand, the unemployment rates of the retail sector and the food and beverage service activities sector eased back slightly. The unemployment rate of the construction sector stayed unchanged.

Looking ahead, Mr Sun said, "The labour market should remain tight in the near term alongside the continued economic growth, though the employment situation may continue to vary across sectors depending on their business

performances."

In August – October 2024, the Labour Department (LD) recorded a monthly average of 62 131 vacancies from the private sector, representing a year-on-year decrease of 36.7% and a decrease of 6.2% over the average figure in July – September 2024.

Job seekers may make use of LD's online platforms, such as the Interactive Employment Service website, for obtaining more information on available vacancies.

Further information

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

In the survey, the definitions used in measuring unemployment and underemployment follow closely those recommended by the International Labour Organization. The employed population covers all employers, self-employed persons, employees (including full-time, part-time, casual workers, etc.) and unpaid family workers. Unemployed persons by industry (or occupation) are classified according to their previous industry (or occupation).

The survey for August – October 2024 covered a sample of some 26 000 households or 68 000 persons, selected in accordance with a scientifically designed sampling scheme to represent the population of Hong Kong. Labour force statistics compiled from this sample represented the situation in the moving three-month period of August to October 2024.

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

Statistical tables on the latest labour force statistics can be downloaded at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/scode200.html](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/scode200.html)). More detailed analysis of the 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 report contains statistics for the quarter April – June 2024 while the next issue covering the quarter July – September 2024 will be available by end November 2024. Users can also browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1050001&scode=200](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1050001&scode=200)).

For enquiries about labour force statistics, please contact the General Household Survey Section (3) of the C&SD (Tel: 2887 5508 or email: [ghs@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:ghs@censtatd.gov.hk)).