

Unemployment and underemployment statistics for February – April 2024

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for February – April 2024) released today (May 20) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 3.0% in February – April 2024, same as that in January – March 2024. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.1% in the two periods.

Comparing February – April 2024 with January – March 2024, movements in the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) and underemployment rate in different industry sectors varied, but the magnitudes were generally not large.

Total employment increased by around 5 700 from 3 688 400 in January – March 2024 to 3 694 100 in February – April 2024. Over the same period, the labour force also increased by around 7 700 from 3 800 100 to 3 807 800.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 2 000 from 111 700 in January – March 2024 to 113 700 in February – April 2024. The number of underemployed persons in February – April 2024 was 40 500, about the same as that in January – March 2024 (40 000).

Commentary

Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, said, "the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stayed at a low level of 3.0% in February – April 2024, same as January – March 2024. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.1%. The labour force increased further by 7 700 to 3 807 800, and the total employment bounced back by 5 700 to 3 694 100. The number of unemployed persons increased slightly by 2 000 to 113 700."

The unemployment rates of various sectors remained low in general in February – April 2024, mostly showing only small changes compared with the preceding three-month period.

Looking ahead, Mr Sun said, "Continued economic growth is expected to keep the labour market tight in the near term."

In February – April 2024, the Labour Department (LD) recorded a monthly average of 75 425 vacancies from the private sector, representing a year-on-year decrease of 29.2% and a decrease of 2.7% over the average figure in January – March 2024.

On large-scale job fairs, the LD will organise the Embracing New Opportunities Job Fair at the Southorn Stadium in Wan Chai on May 30 and 31, 2024. About 60 employers will participate, offering a large number of vacancies. Job-seekers may also make use of the LD's 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 February – April 2024 covered a sample of some 26 000 households or 69 000 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 February to April 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). 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 October – December 2023 while the next issue covering the quarter January – March 2024 will be available by end May 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).

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).