

Unemployment and underemployment statistics for July – September 2023

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for July – September 2023) released today (October 19) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 2.8% in July – September 2023, same as that in June – August 2023. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.0% in the two periods.

Comparing July – September 2023 with June – August 2023, 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 5 800 from 3 714 500 in June – August 2023 to 3 720 300 in July – September 2023. Over the same period, the labour force also increased by around 7 700 from 3 826 600 to 3 834 300.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 1 900 from 112 100 in June – August 2023 to 114 000 in July – September 2023. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons decreased by around 1 000 from 38 900 to 37 900.

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 2.8% in July – September 2023, same as the level in June – August 2023. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.0%. Both the labour force and total employment increased further, by 7 700 and 5 800 to 3 834 300 and 3 720 300 respectively. The number of unemployed persons stayed low at 114 000."

The unemployment rates of the various sectors stayed low in general in July – September 2023, mostly showing only small changes compared with the preceding three-month period.

Looking ahead, Mr Sun said, "The continued growth of consumption- and tourism-related activities would continue to support the labour market."

On large-scale job fairs, the Labour Department (LD) will organise the "Seizing New Opportunities Job Fair" at Dragon Centre in Sham Shui Po on November 8 and 9, 2023. Over 40 employers will participate, offering a large number of vacancies. In July – September 2023, LD recorded a monthly average of 101 420 vacancies from the private sector, representing a year-on-year decrease of 8.2 % and a decrease of 3.6 % over the average figure in June – August 2023. Job-seekers may make use of the LD's online platforms, such as the Interactive Employment Service website, for obtaining such vacancy information.

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 July – September 2023 covered a sample of some 25 000 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 July to September 2023.

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 April – June 2023 while the next issue covering the quarter July – September 2023 will be available by end November 2023. 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).