

Unemployment and underemployment statistics for June – August 2018

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for June – August 2018) released today (September 18) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 2.8% in June – August 2018, same as that in May – July 2018. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.1% in the two periods.

Comparing June – August 2018 with May – July 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 9 700 from 3 872 700 in May – July 2018 to 3 882 400 in June – August 2018. Over the same period, the labour force also increased by around 12 400 from 3 987 400 to 3 999 800.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 2 700 from 114 700 in May – July 2018 to 117 400 in June – August 2018. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons also increased by around 1 400 from 44 100 to 45 500.

Commentary

Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, said, "Labour market remained tight in June – August 2018, with the unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) and underemployment rate staying unchanged at 2.8% and 1.1% respectively. Total employment registered a further solid growth on a year-on-year basis."

"Changes in sectoral unemployment rates were generally small when compared to the preceding three-month period. On a year-on-year comparison to net out seasonal fluctuations, most major service sectors showed improvement in the unemployment situation. In particular, unemployment rates in the information and communications, accommodation services, as well as retail sectors recorded visible declines."

Looking ahead, Dr Law said, "While labour market conditions will likely remain favourable in the near term, the Government will stay vigilant as to how developments in the external environment will affect the local labour market going forward."

He noted that the Labour Department (LD) is committed to providing comprehensive and free employment services through its job centres, industry-based recruitment centres and on-line platforms, with a view to providing appropriate support services which meet the needs of the job-seekers. The LD has also implemented special employment programmes for job-seekers who have special needs or difficulties in employment (such as the youth, mature

persons and persons with disabilities) to enhance their employability and facilitate their employment.

On large-scale job fairs, the LD will organise the Job Fair for Middle-aged and Elderly Employment on September 20 and 21 at the Tuen Mun Town Hall, with 44 participating employers offering around 5 200 vacancies from various industries. The LD will also organise the New Opportunities – New Terrain Job Expo on October 25 and 26 at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Besides, 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 June – August 2018 covered a sample of some 25 000 households or 74 000 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 April – June 2018 while the next issue covering the quarter July – September 2018 will be available by end November 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).