

Unemployment and underemployment statistics for June – August 2024

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for June – August 2024) released today (September 19) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 3.0% in June – August 2024, same as that in May – July 2024. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.2% in the two periods.

Comparing June – August 2024 with May – July 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 in June – August 2024 was 3 708 500, about the same as that in May – July 2024 (3 708 600). Over the same period, the labour force increased by around 4 400 from 3 826 400 to 3 830 800.

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) increased by around 4 500 from 117 800 in May – July 2024 to 122 300 in June – August 2024. The number of underemployed persons in June – August 2024 was 47 500, the same as that in May – July 2024.

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 3.0% in June – August 2024, same as May – July 2024. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 1.2%. The labour force increased further by 4 400 to 3 830 800. Total employment stayed largely steady at 3 708 500. The number of unemployed persons increased slightly by 4 500 to 122 300."

The unemployment rates of various sectors showed diverse movements in June – August 2024 compared with the preceding three-month period. The unemployment rate of the retail sector stayed unchanged at 4.3%. The unemployment rate of the accommodation services sector went up by 0.4 percentage point to 3.5%, and that of the food and beverage service activities sector edged up by 0.1 percentage point to 5.1%. The unemployment rates of some other sectors also increased, notably the decoration, repair and maintenance for buildings sector and the information and communications sector. On the other hand, the unemployment rates of some sectors declined, notably the insurance sector, the import/export trade and wholesale sector and the transportation sector.

Looking ahead, Mr Sun said, "The overall labour market should remain tight in the near term alongside the continued economic growth, though the employment situation in some sectors may be under pressure as their

businesses continue to face challenges."

In June – August 2024, the Labour Department (LD) recorded a monthly average of 68 209 vacancies from the private sector, representing a year-on-year decrease of 35.2% and a decrease of 4.9% over the average figure in May – July 2024.

On large-scale job fairs, the LD will organise the Job Fair for Residential Care Home Service Industry at the MacPherson Stadium in Mong Kok on September 26 and 27, 2024. About 30 employers will participate, offering a large number of vacancies. Job seekers may also make use of the 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 June – August 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 June to August 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 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).

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).