Contents

Note on coherence and availability of EU-LFS data published in LFS Main Indicators and Detailed Survey Results

With the entry into force of the new Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 on European statistics relating to persons and households, based on data at individual level collected from samples, and its Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2240 for the labour market domain, new methodologies to increase harmonization in the EU-LFS have led to breaks in the time series of labour market indicators. In order to provide users with break-free time-series for the most important indicators related to the labour market, countries that have observed a break in their time series have sent inputs to Eurostat to facilitate back-calculations of the most important indicators, which are published in the LFS main indicators section. A full overview of the approach and the methodology used by each country can be found here:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_labour_force_survey_-_correction_for_breaks_in_time_series

When deciding which EU-LFS estimates to use, please consider the following differences in the published data:

Detailed quarterly survey results and **detailed annual survey results** offer a high number of tables, with very detailed breakdowns on a quarterly and annual basis. The data in these tables are directly derived from the micro-data received from countries and are neither seasonally adjusted (quarterly results) nor break-corrected. They therefore correspond to the unadjusted LFS Main Indicators only; before 2021, they correspond to the unadjusted historical series, not to the break-corrected ones.

LFS main indicators - data from 2021 on and break-corrected data before 2021: Data from 2021Q1 on, as well as the break-free back-series from 2009Q1 on, are published in the current tables. The break-free data before 2021 are based on the correction input that is received from countries. Back-series became available between May 2021 and February 2022[1]. The EU and EA aggregates published during this year were based on the available information at each point in time. Fully break-free EU and EA aggregates were published for the first time in February 2022. Quarterly data in this collection is seasonally adjusted. For rates, cases with non-response in the numerator are not removed from the denominator. This is due to the fact that the main indicators are derived as a system of series, for which corrections and seasonal adjustment is done (so e.g. employment is corrected and adjusted only once).

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[1] For the table 'Unemployment by sex and age – monthly data (une_rt_m)' the delivery of back-series is scheduled to take place up to the April 2022 unemployment data release.

LFS main indicators - data before 2021: Eurobase provides tables with EU-LFS data that is derived directly from LFS microdata as collected under the regulation before 2021. This data remains accessible without changes (last regular update was with 2020 annual results). Tables are only be updated in case of revisions. Reasons for revisions are census revisions or weight revisions due to revised weighting routines. Table codes for these existing tables were changed and the letter 'h' for historical series was added (e.g., the table lfsi_emp_a changed to lfsi_emp_a_h with publication of 2021Q1 data). Table names were updated accordingly. Quarterly data in this collection is seasonally adjusted. For rates, cases with non-response in the numerator are not removed from the denominator. This is due to the fact that the main indicators are derived as a system of series, for which corrections and seasonal adjustment is done (so e.g. employment is corrected and adjusted only once). Users looking for comparable data for the period before 2009Q1 for all Member States are advised to use those historical datasets, separately from the current tables on Main Indicators.

Note on the availability of German EU-LFS data for 2020

From 2020 on, the EU-Labour Force Survey (LFS) has been integrated into the newly designed German microcensus[2] as a subsample. For the LFS, a new rotation scheme, a fixed reference week, and a full multi-mode-design were implemented along with completely new and complex IT tools for survey management and data collection. These changes have led to a break in the time series. In addition, technical issues during the system changeover have restricted the data collection since the beginning of 2020. Moreover, the COVID-19 crisis has had a large impact on data collection processes. These were the two main factors resulting in low response rates and a biased sample for the data collected in 2020. Overall, this limits the use of the data collected in the LFS subsample to such a degree that alternatives had to be considered.

The full sample of the whole microcensus contains information on a number of LFS variables; by using this data in addition to the LFS subsample, a restricted set of indicators has been estimated and used for the production of the LFS Main Indicators. These estimates have also been used in the calculation of EU and EA aggregates, and are published for some selected indicators[3] on a quarterly basis. A publication of results for the complete indicator set is at the moment only feasible for annual data. DESTATIS is further analysing the situation and working on retrospective improvement actions.

Available data of the LFS subsample only has been used to estimate EU and EA aggregates published in the detailed LFS results, which show more and different breakdowns than the LFS Main Indicators. As a consequence, small differences in the EU and EA aggregates in tables from both collections may be observed. Estimates for Germany for all quarters of 2020 are not published in the detailed quarterly results. Detailed annual results 2020 for Germany are available in the detailed annual results section of the Eurostat database.

For more information please contact the German Federal Statistical Office: arbeitsmarkt@destatis.de

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[2] https://www.destatis.de/EN/Press/2020/01/PE20_027_122.html
[3] Estimates are flagged as p – provisional, and u – unreliable.