Forecasting the LFS

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Title: Forecasting the LFS

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Subject area: Forecasting seasonal time series

Abstract: Each month, the UK Labour Force Survey produces labour market estimates for a rolling quarter (13 week period). The ONS has produced experimental monthly series for the key indicators of employment, unemployment and inactivity. These series are not fully representative and are considerably more volatile than the corresponding quarterly series. However, they are more timely and can be used to give more information about behaviour of the market in the near future. The paper describes the construction of the series, the problems overcome and the current experimentation of using the monthly series to produce forecasts of the rolling quarterly indicators. This could lead to initial estimates of key indicators up to 8 weeks earlier.