

For external users

Guidelines for Publishing LFS Data

The paper describes the guidelines for using data from the Danish Labour Force Survey, when data are made available in accordance with the rules for access to data under Statistics Denmark's research scheme or data are made available by other arrangements. The purpose is to ensure the quality of analyses made by external users and to ensure that data are used in the most expedient way. The user is responsible for ensuring that third parties also comply with the guidelines set out when the results are passed on to a third party. The guidelines are similar to those complied with by Statistics Denmark.

In general The Labour Force Survey is conducted as a sample survey. This gives rise to sampling variability with regard to the results. Consequently, absolute figures are always rounded to thousands when they are published (86.766 → 87.000).

Variability in relation to the number As the Labour Force Survey comprises a relatively high number of variables (about 400), which can potentially be cross-tabulated into a great variety of combinations, it is not considered expedient to calculate precise margins of variability for each estimate. The basis is that at least 20 persons participating in the sample must have replied to the question. As users of the statistics only *typically* know the number of persons to which the sample has been weighted, the following "rules of thumb" have been laid down with respect to when accuracy of the figures is too low for publication. The rules apply, irrespective of whether the figures are presented in the form of 1000-persons or as percentages. The guidelines are also complied with by Eurostat, when LFS data are published, and are shown below:

	Result	Instruction
Quarterly figures	Under 4,000 persons (weighted figures)	Figures are not published
	4,000-7,000 persons (weighted figures)	Figures can be published with the caution that figures are subject to some uncertainty*
Annual figures	Under 2,000 persons (weighted figures)	Figures are not published
	2,000 – 4,000 persons (weighted figures)	Figures can be published with the caution that figures are subject to some uncertainty*

* Figures in the group that can be published subject to caution should only be published in special cases. Statistics Denmark recommends that this is discussed before figures are published with employees from the Labour Force Survey.

Raising method and weighting The figures from the Labour Force Survey are raised to the entire population for the purpose of enhancing the representativeness of the figures as far as possible. This implies that each person participating in the LFS is provided with his/her own weight and thereby represent a specific segment of the population. It is essential that published figures are always weighted.

Caution in connection with change of raising method The raising method has been improved twice, resulting in minor changes to some data series¹. Consequently, caution should be made when conclusions are drawn with regard to developments throughout 2003 and throughout 2007. It is recommended to contact the staff of the Danish Labour Force Survey in cases of doubt.

Correction of non-response As with other sample-based surveys there is a certain degree of non-response with regard to the labour force survey. If there are sub-groups with a particularly high non-response, this may give rise to skewed results, and consequently conclusions should be drawn subject to caution.

¹ See papers on raising of figures at Statistics Denmark's website