

Harmonised Definitions for Business Data Variables

GSS Harmonised Definitions

Employment variables: Hours worked and full-time equivalents (FTE)

About This Document and Update History

GSS Harmonised Principle

About this document

This document forms part of a series of GSS Harmonised Principles, designed to provide approved harmonised questions, definitions and outputs for a variety of social and business related topics. The use of harmonised questions, definitions and outputs will provide greater consistency for survey producers and comparability when using data.

For more information, please see the Introductory Document, available on the GSS website:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/statistics/methodology-2/harmonisation/>

This is Version 1.1 published in April 2018

This document has been updated to Version 1.1 to reflect the change to the Harmonisation Team email address. There has been no change to the harmonised questions

Previous Versions:

Version 1.0 published in July 2017.

This document is part of a series of harmonised definitions for business variables.

Contact




GSS Harmonised Principle

Contact us

For more information about Harmonisation or to join our mailing list, please visit our website at:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/statistics/methodology-2/harmonisation/>

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Employment Variables – Hours worked and full-time equivalents (FTE)

Input - Definitions

This document is part of the set of Harmonised Principles for Business Data Sources. The harmonised versions of these variables are designed to meet best practice across the GSS, and adhere to national and international regulations in the collection and reporting of National and Official Statistics

This document details seven employment variables;

1. Total hours worked by employees
2. Total hours worked by self-employed persons
3. Total hours worked by employees and self-employed persons
4. Number of employees and self-employed persons full-time equivalents units

Note: *The question wording outlined in the following section is the suggested ways to ask these questions. To preserve harmonisation and minimise respondent burden we suggest that all question should have a harmonised style similar to that presented here, which includes the reporting date or period, the variable being collected and a reference to the business for which the data is being collected. It is also expected that variations in question wording and layout may be required based on the mode of collection.*

1. Total hours worked by employees

Definition of Total hours worked by employees

Total hours worked by employees represents the number of hours actually worked by employees, for the output of the statistical unit during the reference period. Total hours worked may be approximated by hours worked by employees, at least in industry (Appendix C, *Commission Regulation (EC) 1503/2006*).

Time spent on adjacent work, indirectly contributing to the output (e.g. planning, preparation, administrative and alike), as well as time spent without actual work, but deemed and remunerated as such by the statistical unit (e.g. short breaks, short disruptions due to slack in production, trainings and alike) is included.

Remunerated time spent without actual work and not deemed as such by the statistical unit (e.g. annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, official holidays, longer breaks, meal breaks, strikes, commuting and alike) is excluded.

Further explanations to the definition

The term “employees” has the same meaning as in the definition of the variable “Number of employees”. See Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Business Data: Employment Variables – number of employees and self-employed persons.

Example Question(s): Total hours worked by employees

During the reporting period (**DD/MM/YYYY – DD/MM/YYYY specific dates / specific period Month / Year**) what was the number of hours worked by employees for the business?

Guidance to respondent

Guidance should be given to the respondent to enable them to supply the required data. Wherever practicable the guidance should be placed as close to the question as possible.

Include	Exclude
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the total amount of all hours actually worked:<ul style="list-style-type: none">during regular working hours,overtime, whether paid or unpaidduring nights, Sundays or public holidays,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">hours paid but not worked due to annual leave, sickness, maternity leave, official holidays, longer breaks, strikes, lock outs etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">the time spent on tasks such as work preparation, preparing, maintaining and cleaning tools and machines and writing up work cards and reports,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">time spent for meal breaks,
<ul style="list-style-type: none">time spent at the place of work during which no work is done owing to, for example, machine stoppages, accidents or occasional lack of work but for which payment is made in accordance with the employment contract,	<ul style="list-style-type: none">commuting between home and work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">short rest periods at the place of work, including tea and coffee breaks	

If the exact number of hours actually worked is not known, it may be estimated on the basis of the normal number of working hours and the average rate of absences (sickness, maternity, etc.).

Further guidance may be given on the definition of “*employee*” if this question is asked in isolation from the “*Number of employees*” variable. The appropriate guidance can be taken from the variable “*Number of employees*”. See Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Business Data: Employment Variables – number of employees and self-employed persons.

2. Total hours worked by self-employed persons

Definition of Total hours worked by self-employed persons

Total hours worked by self-employed persons represents the number of hours actually worked by self-employed persons, for the output of the statistical unit during the reference period.

Further explanations to the definition

The term “*number of hours actually worked*” has the same meaning as in the definition of the variable “Total hours worked by employees”.

The term “*self-employed person*” has the same meaning as in the definition of the variable “*Number of self-employed persons*”.

Example Question(s): Total hours worked by self – employed persons

During the reporting period (**DD/MM/YYYY – DD/MM/YYYY specific dates / specific period Month / Year**) what was the number of hours worked by self – employed persons for the business?

Guidance to respondent

Guidance should be given to the respondent to enable them to supply the required data. Wherever practicable the guidance should be placed as close to the question as possible.

The guidance given to the respondent to report this variable “*Total hours worked by self – employed persons*” variable should be consistent with that supplied for the variable “*Total hours worked by employees*”.

However, further guidance may be given on the definition of “*self - employed*” if this question is asked in isolation from the “*number of self - employed*” variable. The appropriate guidance can be taken from the variable “Number of self-employed persons”. See Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Business Data: Employment Variables – number of employees and self-employed persons. [LINK](#)

3. Total hours worked by employees and self-employed persons (Output only)

Total hours worked by employees and self-employed persons

Definition

The “*Total hours worked by employees and self-employed persons*” is the sum of the variables “*Total hours worked by employees*” and “*Total hours worked by self-employed persons*”.

Further explanations to the definition

The variable “*Total hours worked by employees and self-employed persons*” corresponds to the concept “*Total hours worked*” in National Accounts (Regulation No 549/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European system of national and regional accounts in the EU (ESA 2010) paragraph 11.27).

4. Number of employees and self-employed persons full-time equivalents units

Definition

A “*full-time equivalent unit*”, sometimes abbreviated as FTE, is a unit to measure employed persons in a way that makes them comparable although they may work a different number of hours per week.

The unit is obtained by comparing an employee's average number of hours worked to the average number of hours of a full-time worker. A full-time person is therefore counted as one FTE, while a part-time worker gets a score in proportion to the hours he or she works. For example, a part-time worker employed for 20 hours a week where full-time work consists of 40 hours, is counted as 0.5 FTE.

Example Question(s): Number of employees and self-employed persons full-time equivalents units

During the reporting period (**DD/MM/YYYY – DD/MM/YYYY specific dates / specific period Month / Year**) what was the number of full-time equivalents for the business?

Guidance to respondent

Guidance should be given to the respondent to enable them to supply the required data. Wherever practicable the guidance should be placed as close to the question as possible.

Please convert part-time employees' hours into those worked by full-time employees. For example, if a part-time employee works 10 hours per week and the full-time working week in your organisation is 37 hours, the part-time employee would equate to 0.27 full-time equivalents (10 divided by 37).

Include	Exclude
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• full-time employees, counted as 1 full-time equivalent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• paid and unpaid overtime from full-time equivalent calculations.

Note: The term 'business' in the question and guidance may be replaced by a more appropriate descriptions depending on the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC 2007), for example if the respondent is a Registered Charity or Government Department, 'organisation' maybe a more appropriate term to use than 'business'