



Private Sector Employment Indicator: Quarter 3 (Aug-Oct) 2013

Introduction

As part of the Departmental Business Plan to support the Government's agenda to rebalance the economy across sectors and regions, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) developed an Indicator to monitor private sector employment growth in England. This indicator forms part of the performance framework for assessing the impact of the Department's policies and reforms. The Indicator shows whether, over time, dependency on the private sector for employment is increasing and how this rebalancing varies by region¹. Data for the Indicator are published quarterly.

Key Points

In Quarter 3 2013²:

- The Private Sector Employment Indicator for England was at its highest Quarter 3 level since the series began in 2008. The Indicator for England was an estimated 59.9 per cent, an increase of 0.9 percentage points (ppts) on Quarter 3 2012.
- Subnationally, the Indicator for the Greater South East increased by 1.6ppts to 62.7 per cent; underpinned by significant increases in the East of England and London +2.3 ppts to 63.4 per cent and +1.6 ppts to 61.7 per cent, respectively. The Indicator for the Rest of England was 57.7 per cent, with none of the constituent regions experiencing a significant increase.
- In 7 of the 9 regions public sector employment fell and private sector employment rose in Quarter 3 2013 compared to Quarter 2 2013. London and the North East were the two exceptions: in London, both public sector and private sector employment

¹ BIS monitors the change in the Indicator and its components of Private Sector and Public Sector Employment for England and the two regional groupings of the Greater South East (London, South East and East) and the Rest of England (North, Midlands and West); data are also published for all English regions.

² Quarter 3 refers to the period August to October. Comparisons are made with the same period in previous years to remove seasonal effects.

increased; and, in the North East, both public sector and private sector employment decreased.

- In England, from Quarter 2 2010 private sector employment has risen and public sector employment has fallen in each quarter when compared to the same period a year earlier. However, recent results indicate a slowing in the rate of fall in public sector employment.
- A seasonally adjusted indicator series is published for the first time in this release. This series allows users to make comparisons between Quarters in the same year, something which is not possible with the unadjusted series. It is BIS' intention to use the seasonally adjusted series as the headline statistics in each release from April 2014 onwards.

Table 1: Private Sector Employment Indicator: level and change by region, Quarter 3 2013

Aug-Oct 2013	Indicator	
	Share (%)	Annual change (PPTs)
England	59.9	0.9
Greater South East	62.7	1.6
Rest of England	57.7	0.4
North East	53.0	0.1
North West	55.9	0.1
Yorkshire & the Humber	57.4	1.1
East Midlands	60.1	1.0
West Midlands	56.7	0.1
East of England	63.4	2.3
London	61.7	1.6
South East	63.4	1.3
South West	61.5	-0.2

Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

Note

1. Annual changes are relative to the same quarter a year ago.
2. Significant changes are highlighted in bold and are based on a 95% confidence level.
3. Greater South East includes London, South East and East of England.
4. The Rest of England includes North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and South West.

Economic Context

This section provides contextual information on economic performance over Quarter 3 2013 (August to October) and in the preceding months to help the user to interpret the statistics.

Official statistics showed the value of the UK economy – Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – was estimated to have expanded in Quarter 3 (Jul-Sep) 2013 by 0.8% when compared with Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) 2013.³

Official business statistics indicate an improving outlook for the economy: estimates of retail sales for October 2013 showed growth. Compared with October 2012 the quantity bought (volumes) in the retail industry increased by 1.8 per cent⁴. Production and manufacturing output increased between October 2012 and October 2013 up 3.2 per cent and 2.7 per cent respectively⁵. Construction output rose by 5.3 per cent⁶ in October 2013 compared to October 2012 and the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) grew by 2.2 per cent in the year to October 2013, down from 2.7% in September 2013⁷. This remains above the Bank of England target rate of 2.0%.

The labour market also showed some improvement in the three months to October 2013 compared to the three months to July. The employment rate for those aged from 16 to 64 for August to October 2013 was 72.0%, up 0.4 ppts from May to July 2013. Over the same period, both unemployment and inactivity rates declined by 0.3 and 0.2 ppts to 7.4 per cent and 22.1 per cent respectively⁸.

Employment in the Private Sector has proved more resilient than the general economy. Private Sector Employment surpassed the Quarter 3 2008 level in Quarter 3 2012 and is 3.5 per cent higher in Quarter 3 2013, whereas the value of the economy exceeded its Quarter 3 2008 level in Quarter 3 2013 (+0.4%).

³ ONS national account tables Quarter 3 2013, revised GDP methodology
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/naa2/quarterly-national-accounts/q3-2013/stb-quarterly-national-accounts--q3-2013.html>

⁴ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/rsi/retail-sales/index.html>

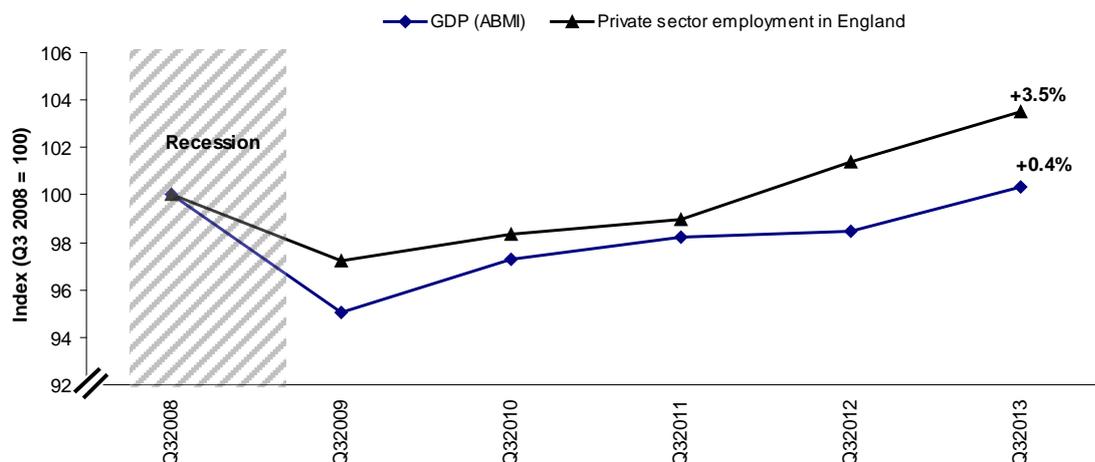
⁵ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/iop/index-of-production/index.html>

⁶ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/construction/output-in-the-construction-industry/index.html>

⁷ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/cpi/consumer-price-indices/index.html>

⁸ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/December-2013/index.html>

Chart 1: Index showing Private Sector Employment in England and UK Gross Domestic Product, Quarter 3 2008 to Quarter 3 2013

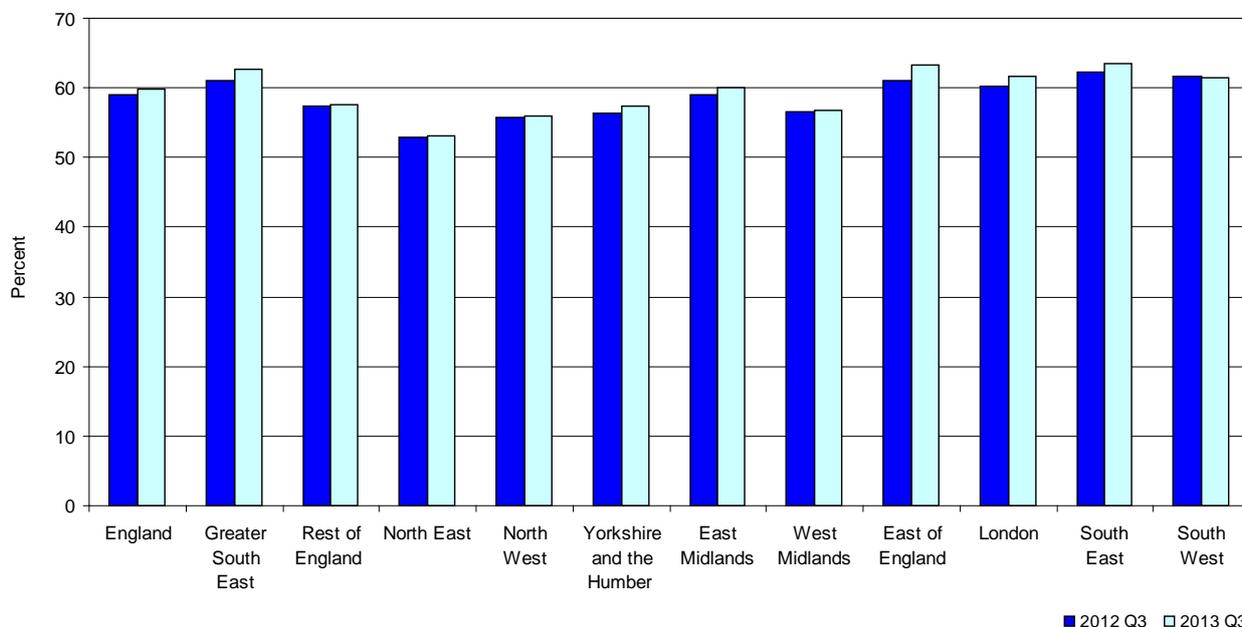


Source: BIS Private Sector Employment Indicator and ONS GDP ABMI series

Note

1. Data are indexed to Quarter 3 2008.
2. The time periods of the two data series are slightly different: GDP data are based on calendar quarters, while employment data relates to the following periods: Quarter 1 (Feb to April), Quarter 2 (May to July), Quarter 3 (Aug to Oct) and Quarter 4 (Nov to Jan).
3. GDP data are for the UK rather than England. However, England accounts for the majority of the UK's economy – ONS' Regional Accounts indicate that England accounted for 84.8 per cent of the UK's Gross Value Added in 2012.
4. ONS GDP chained volume measure ABMI series.

Chart 2: Private Sector Employment Indicator by region, Quarter 3 2012 and Quarter 3 2013



Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

Notes:

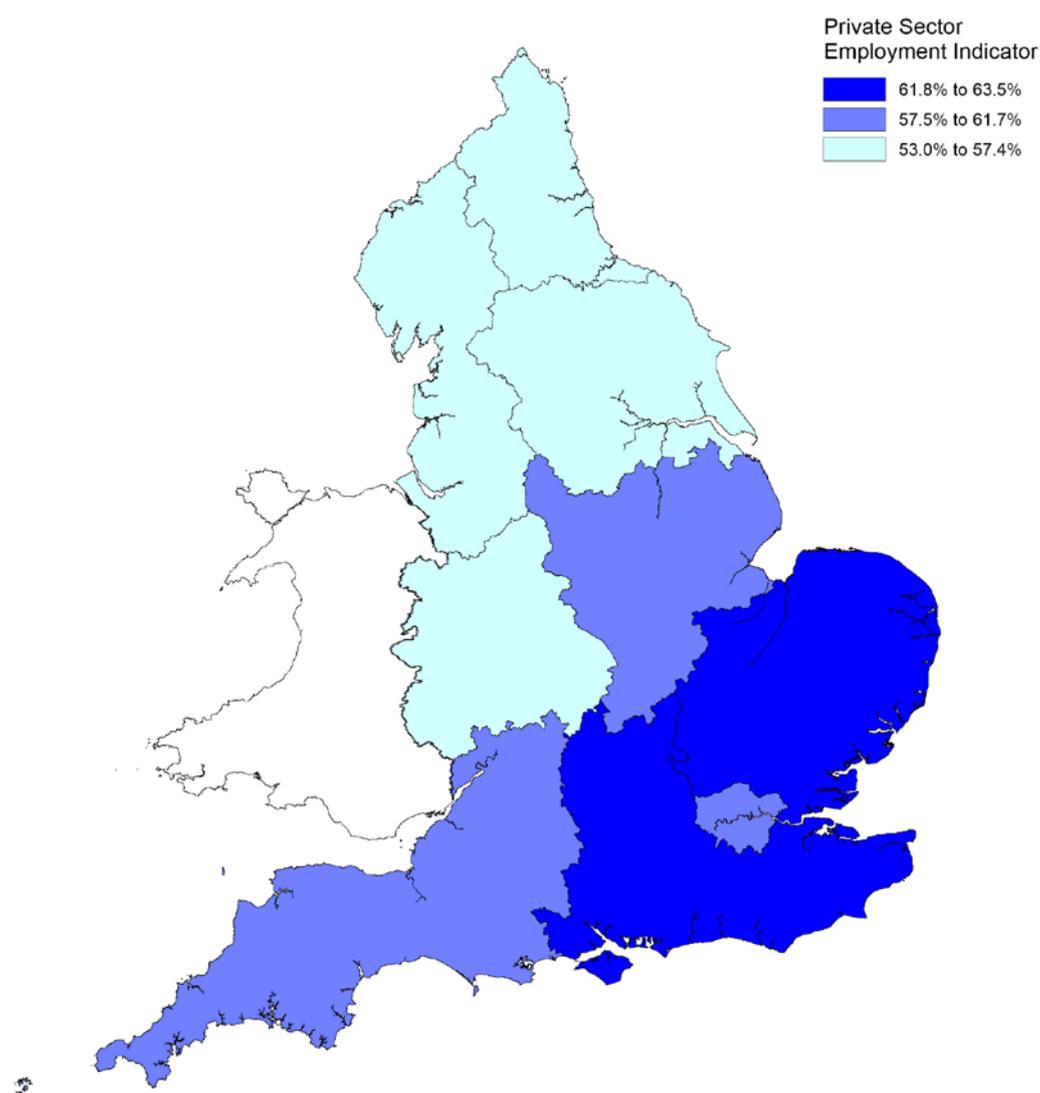
1. Workplace based employment excludes those working outside of the UK and some respondents who do not give a region of workplace. This is made up of both part-time and full-time employment and self-employment.
2. Greater South East includes London, South East and East of England.
3. The Rest of England includes North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and South West.

Quarter 3 2013

The Indicator in England showed an estimated increase of 0.9 ppts to 59.9 per cent on the same quarter a year ago, mainly as a result of rising private sector employment (+422,000); declining public sector employment (-50,000), unemployment (-111,000) and inactivity (-86,000). The number of people in private sector employment reached an estimated 20.6 million, the highest recorded level of employment since the series began in 2008.

Subnationally, the Indicator for the Greater South East increased by 1.6 ppts to 62.7 per cent; underpinned by significant increases in the East of England and London +2.3 ppts to 63.4 per cent and +1.6 ppts to 61.7 per cent, respectively. The Indicator for the Rest of England was 57.7 per cent, with none of the constituent regions experiencing a significant increase.

Figure 1: Private Sector Employment Indicator, English regions, Quarter 3 2013



Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

Table 2: Employment, unemployment and inactivity, Quarter 3 2013, thousands

	Private sector employment (16+)		Public sector employment (16+)		Unemployment (16+)		Inactivity (16-64)		Total	
	Level	Change	Level	Change	Level	Change	Level	Change	Level	Change
England	20,636	422	4,488	-50	2,077	-111	7,268	-86	34,469	175
Greater South East	9,438	317	1,821	-5	846	-73	2,944	-121	15,049	119
Rest of England	11,198	105	2,667	-45	1,231	-38	4,324	36	19,420	57
North East	886	-6	248	-6	133	8	405	-10	1,670	-14
North West	2,527	2	633	-9	266	-42	1,097	41	4,522	-8
Yorkshire & the Humber	2,009	54	493	-9	249	-3	747	-12	3,498	31
East Midlands	1,705	4	359	-4	164	-23	608	-19	2,836	-42
West Midlands	1,987	35	463	-12	244	0	808	31	3,501	53
East of England	2,287	129	421	-9	183	-44	718	0	3,609	76
London	3,764	121	747	8	391	-10	1,198	-76	6,100	43
South East	3,388	67	653	-4	271	-18	1,028	-45	5,340	0
South West	2,085	16	472	-5	176	21	660	4	3,392	37

Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

Notes:

1. Changes are relative to the same quarter in the previous year.
2. Significant changes are highlighted in bold and are based on a 95% confidence level.
3. Workplace based employment includes part-time and full-time employment and self-employment. It excludes those working outside of the UK and some respondents who do not give a region of workplace.
4. Unemployment and inactivity are residence based.
5. Greater South East includes London, South East and East of England.
6. The Rest of England includes North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and South West.
7. Tables may not sum due to rounding.

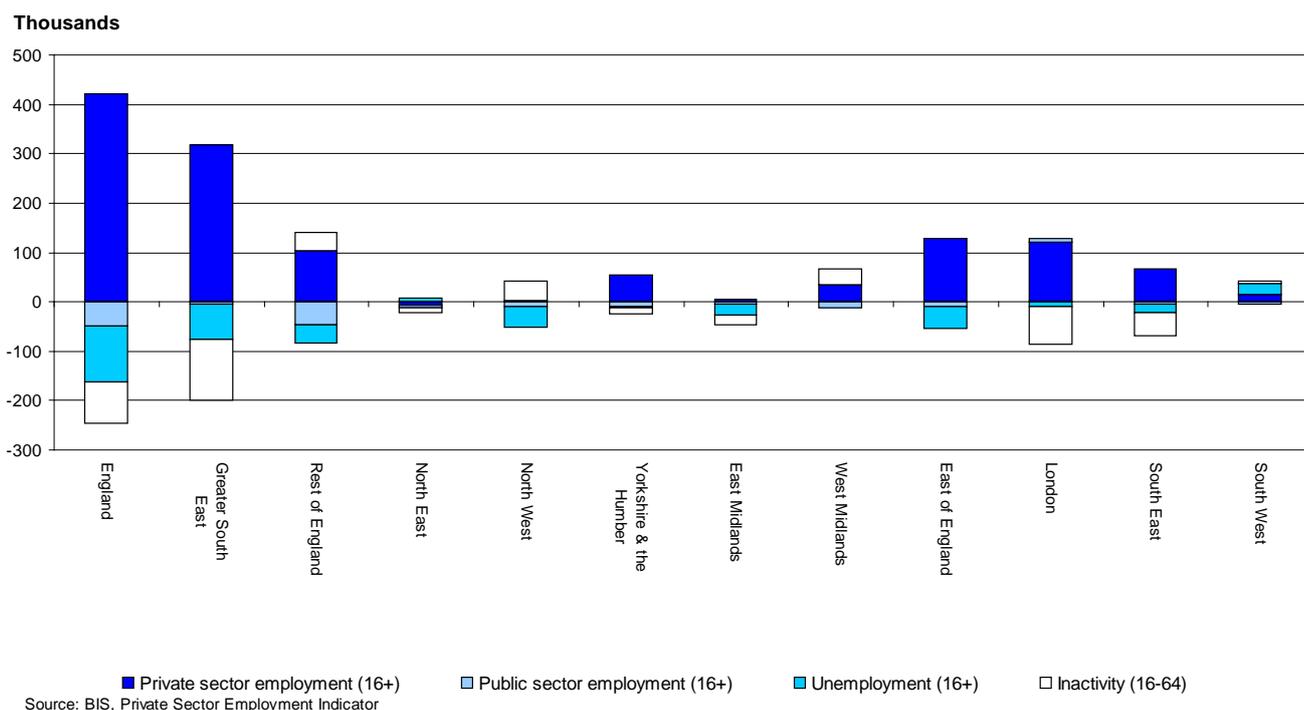
Greater South East (London, South East and East)

In Quarter 3 2013, the Indicator for the Greater South East reached an estimated 62.7 per cent, a rise of 1.6 ppts on the same quarter a year ago. There were an estimated 11.3 million people employed in the Greater South East, of which the private sector employed 9.4 million, an increase of 0.3 million on the same quarter a year ago. Increasing private sector employment (+317,000) outweighed the decline in public sector employment (-5,000). Unemployment (-73,000) and Inactivity (-121,000) also fell.

Rest of England

The Indicator for the Rest of England increased to 57.7 per cent, an increase of 0.4 ppts on the same period a year ago. Employment in the Rest of England stood at 13.9 million in Quarter 3 2013, of which the Private sector employed an estimated 11.2 million people. Private sector employment rose (+105,000) whilst public sector employment declined (-45,000). Over the same period unemployment fell (-38,000) but Inactivity rose (+36,000).

Chart 3: Annual Changes in Employment, Unemployment and Inactivity by regions, Quarter 3 2013



Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

Notes:

1. Changes are relative to the same quarter in the previous year.
2. Workplace based employment includes both part-time and full-time employment and self-employment. It excludes those working outside of the UK and some respondents who do not give a region of workplace.
3. Unemployment and inactivity are residence based.
4. Greater South East includes London, South East and East of England.
5. The Rest of England includes North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and South West.

Historical Analysis

All areas experienced a decline in the Indicator between Quarter 3 2008 and Quarter 3 2009, mainly due to the impact of the 2008/09 recession. England and 8 of the 11 sub-national areas began a sustained recovery in Quarter 3 2009, but this began later in Yorkshire and the Humber, the East Midlands and the West Midlands. The Indicator declined for 5 of the 9 regions between Quarter 3 2010 and Quarter 3 2011 and then increased in all areas except the North East in Quarter 3 2012 and Quarter 3 2013, with statistically significant changes in England, the Greater South east and 2 regions.

Table 3: Private Sector Employment Indicator, Quarter 3 2008 to Quarter 3 2013

	Quarter 3 2008	Quarter 3 2009	Quarter 3 2010	Quarter 3 2011	Quarter 3 2012	Quarter 3 2013
England	59.2	57.1	57.5	57.5	58.9	59.9
Greater South East	62.0	59.7	60.2	60.1	61.1	62.7
Rest of England	57.1	55.2	55.5	55.6	57.3	57.7
North East	51.5	48.5	50.3	49.8	53.0	53.0
North West	54.9	54.3	54.6	55.3	55.7	55.9
Yorkshire & the Humber	56.5	54.0	53.2	53.6	56.4	57.4
East Midlands	60.2	59.2	57.1	58.1	59.1	60.1
West Midlands	56.1	54.7	55.2	54.4	56.6	56.7
East of England	61.7	60.0	60.3	60.8	61.1	63.4
London	60.0	57.7	58.5	58.1	60.1	61.7
South East	64.4	61.7	61.9	61.7	62.2	63.4
South West	62.2	58.2	60.7	60.1	61.6	61.5

Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

Notes:

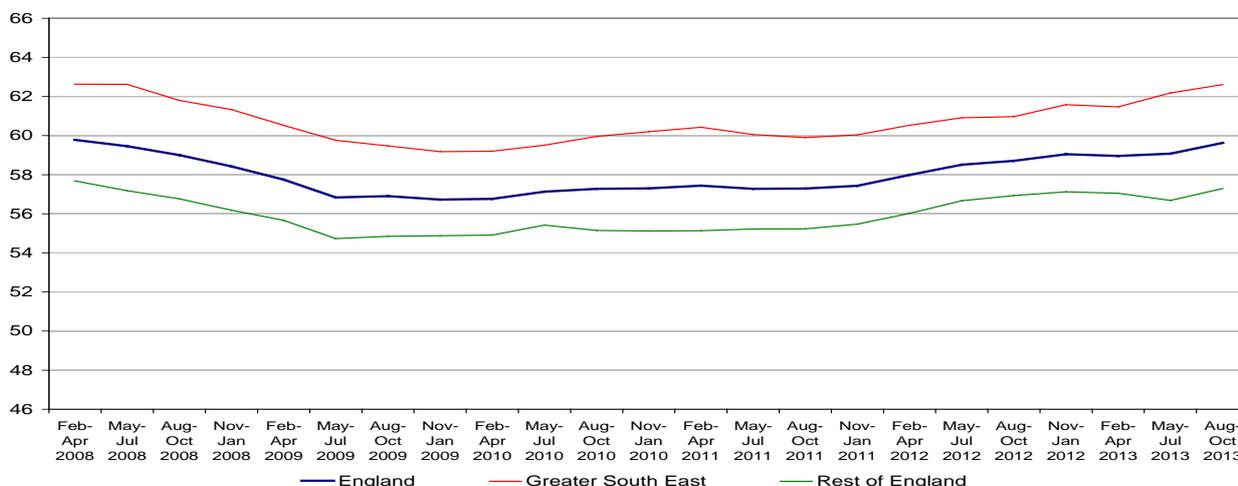
1. The latest quarter of the data can only be compared with corresponding quarters in previous years, because the labour market data are not seasonally adjusted.
2. Greater South East includes London, South East and East of England.
3. The Rest of England includes North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and South West.

Seasonally Adjusted Indicator Series - Quarter 3 2013

To enable users to make quarter on quarter comparisons, BIS have produced a seasonally adjusted Indicator series. This section provides limited commentary on the adjusted series, with Indicator values for each area from Quarter 1 2008 to Quarter 3 2013 contained in the tables that accompany the release. It is BIS' intention to focus on the adjusted Indicator series in future releases, starting with Quarter 4 2013. We would welcome any comments or suggestions from users on this development and ways in which to present the statistics.

The seasonally adjusted Indicator in England was 59.6 in Q3 2013, an increase of 0.6 pts since Quarter 2 2013; this is the second highest value since the series began in 2008. The difference between the Greater South East and the Rest of England narrowed to its closest point in Quarter 3 2012 (4.0ppts), but has since reached 5.5 ppts and 5.3 ppts in Quarter 2 2013 and Quarter 3 2013 respectively.

Chart 4: Seasonally Adjusted Private Sector Employment Indicator for England and select areas, Quarter 1 2008 to Quarter 3 2013, Per cent

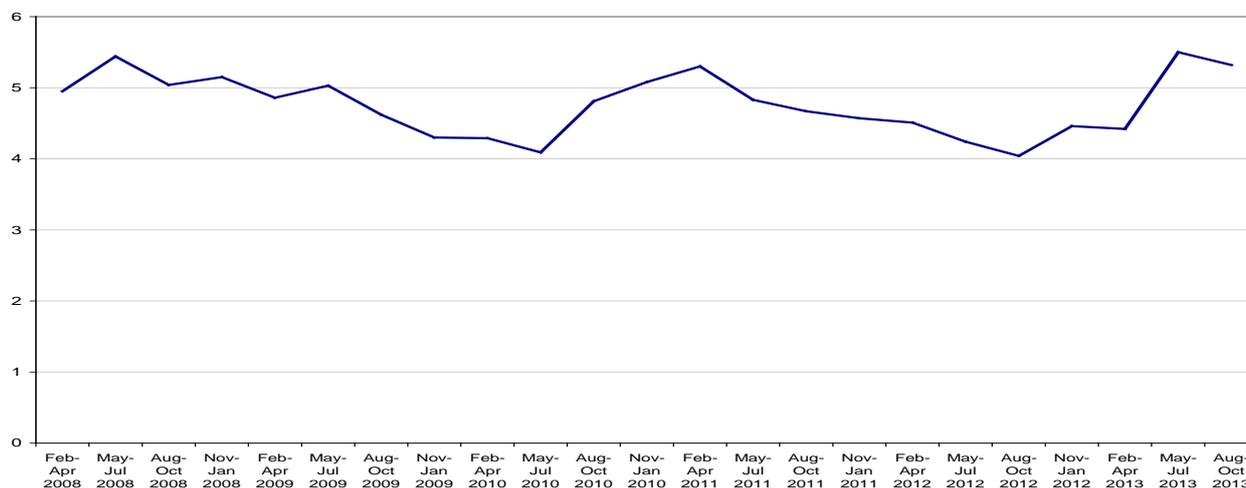


Notes:

Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

1. Workplace based employment includes both part-time and full-time employment and self-employment. It excludes those working outside of the UK and some respondents who do not give a region of workplace.
2. Unemployment and inactivity are residence based.
3. Greater South East includes London, South East and East of England.
4. The Rest of England includes North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and South West.

Chart 5: Difference between Indicator Greater South East and the Rest of England, Quarter 1 2008 to Quarter 3 2013, Percentage Points



Source: BIS, Private Sector Employment Indicator

Notes:

1. Data are seasonally adjusted.
2. A positive value indicates that the Greater South East value is greater than that of the Rest of England.
3. Workplace based employment includes both part-time and full-time employment and self-employment. It excludes those working outside of the UK and some respondents who do not give a region of workplace.
4. Unemployment and inactivity are residence based.
5. Greater South East includes London, South East and East of England.

In Quarter 3 2013, the Greater South East and 5 of 9 regions reached or surpassed their Quarter 1 2008 Indicator levels. However, the Indicator for England, the Rest of England, and the remaining regions were below their Quarter 1 2008 levels.

Comparing the Indicator for the Greater South East and its regions, London has been consistently below the Greater South East, the South East consistently above and the East of England generally followed the Greater South East trend. During 2012 there was convergence between the three regions, partly driven by rapid increases in the Indicator in London.

There have been some signs of convergence between the regions within the Rest of England, with the gap between the top performing region (South West) and worst performing (North East) narrowing. Over the length of the series, the South West and the East Midlands have had the highest Indicator values of regions in the Rest of England; in contrast the North East has had the lowest Indicator values. Yorkshire and the Humber, West Midlands and the North West have generally tracked the Indicator for the Rest of England.

Background Note

Official Statistics

This publication is produced by statisticians working in the Enterprise and Economic Development Analysis (EEDA) Team in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). These data are experimental official statistics working towards full compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. See the link below for further information about the [Code](#).

Data Sources and Methodology

The Indicator is formulated as follows:

$$\text{Private sector employment (16+)} * 100$$

$$\text{Private and public sector employment(16+) + Unemployment(16+) + Inactivity (16-64)}$$

Data are published for England and each English region; however, changes in the Indicator are also monitored for two regional groups in England:

- Greater South East (London, South East and East)
- Rest of England (North, Midlands and West)

The two English groups have been selected to minimise the distortions due to high levels of commuting between London, South East and East.

The Indicator is compiled from a mix of administrative and survey data. Public Sector Employment statistics are based on administrative data that are used to compile the Public Sector Employment (PSE) series. Regional Employment, Unemployment and Inactivity are survey data, sourced from the ONS quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Employment and PSE data used to derive the Indicator are workplace based, whereas unemployment and inactivity data are residency based. Due to the different basis (workplace or residence), a loss of jobs in one region may lead to an increase in unemployment in another, as a person might reside in a different region from where they worked.

Regional Workplace Employment is derived by ONS from the LFS and directly supplied to BIS each quarter. Private Workplace Employment is derived as the difference between Total Workplace Employment and Public Sector Employment. Workplace based employment excludes those working outside the UK and some respondents who do not give a workplace address. In Quarter 3 2013, 376,000 people worked outside the UK or did not give a workplace address. Private sector employment used for this publication includes both part-time and full-time employment and self-employment.

To ensure the periods to which the data relate are as closely aligned as possible, the data used in this publication align as follows (and is summarised in Table 4):

- Public sector data are obtained from administrative data for the months of March, June, September and December. Annual estimates use Quarter 2 estimates in accordance with the producer’s estimates.
- LFS estimates for Total Workplace Employment, Unemployment and Inactivity are based on quarterly averages for the periods: February to April; May to July; August to October; and November to January. Annual estimates are based on 4 quarter averages.

Table 4: Reference Period of Data Sources

Data Source	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
LFS	Feb-Apr	May-July	Aug-Oct	Nov- Jan (following year)
PSE	March	June	September	December

To ensure that the data, as closely as possible, covers the same population:

- Employment and unemployment figures are derived for all aged 16+.
- Inactivity is limited to those aged 16 to 64 to exclude people who are over 64 and are inactive.

This coverage means that changes in employment, unemployment and inactivity can be affected by migration; movements of 15 year olds into the work force (mainly in education and classified as inactive) and movements of those aged over 64 from employment or unemployment into inactivity.

Further information on the data sources can be found at the following websites:

ONS PSE Release:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/pse/public-sector-employment/index.html>

ONS LFS Release:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/index.html>

Alternative data sources

The Indicator is compiled from a range of data sources that allow timely monitoring of the rebalancing of England's economy across the English regions and from the Public to the Private sectors. Alternate sources of Public Sector and Private Sector employment data are published, but have not been used to compile this Indicator, these include:

- Business Register Employment Survey, which provides annual estimates of regional private and public sector employment. This data are not suitable for regular monitoring as they are only available annually. For further information on the Business Register Employment Survey see link: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/bus-register/business-register-employment-survey/index.html>
- The Labour Market Statistics release provides quarterly estimates of employment in both the private and the public sectors, but this information is not available for UK countries or English regions. For further information on labour market statistics see link: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/may-2013/statistical-bulletin.html>

Revisions

Policy

It is BIS' policy to be open and transparent with users about the reasons for revisions and how they are handled.

Revisions will be mainly due to changes in methodologies and source data. The Indicators are derived from surveys and administrative data sources. Changes to the underlying methods will cause revisions. These include changes in statistical methods, definitions, classifications and geographic coverage.

If revisions arising from changes to methodologies and source data are found to be insignificant, they will be published in the next planned publication. However, if these revisions are expected to have a large impact, then they will be introduced and published more quickly. A note will be added to the release to explain the revision and its impact.

Although robust procedures are in place to minimise errors in producing the statistics, errors may occasionally occur. When errors are found after the publication, their impact will be assessed. If these changes are significant, a corrigendum will be issued as soon as

practicable, while minor corrections will be included in the next planned release. In all cases a full explanation will be included as part of the next release.

Latest revisions

The Public Sector employment estimates used to compile the Indicator estimates have been revised in order to incorporate more accurate data in line with ONS' revision policy. PSE data for Quarter 2 2012 and for all earlier quarters back to Quarter 1 2008 have been revised. The change has resulted in a small increase (+265) in Public Sector employment and a corresponding decrease in Private Sector employment, for Quarter 2 2013 split across all regions. However, the revision has not affected the Indicator values for the majority of areas, with the North West (+0.1 ppt), Yorkshire and the Humber (-0.1 ppt), West Midlands (-0.1 ppt) East of England (+0.2 ppt) and London (-0.1 ppt) the only affected areas in Quarter 2 2013.

Relevance

The Indicator is used to monitor private sector employment growth in England as part of the Government's rebalancing agenda and is part of the Scorecard for assessing departmental performance. See the link below:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121205150610/http://www.bis.gov.uk/about/performance-reports/performance-indicators>

The publication may be used by other government departments, public bodies and research institutes to monitor the change in the labour market. We welcome feedback from users to improve the relevance of this publication; when providing feedback, please use the contact details at the end of the Release.

Accessibility

The publication is available through the BIS statistics website and the Publication Hub. Statistical First Releases, data tables and supporting documentation for the Indicator can be found on the BIS website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/private-sector-employment-indicator>

Comparability

The data time series start from Q1 2008. Data have begun to be seasonally adjusted in this release. When using statistics that are not seasonally adjusted users should only compare to the same quarter of earlier years, as annual comparisons will be largely unaffected by seasonality. It is BIS' intention to focus on the adjusted Indicator series in releases, starting in April 2014. We would welcome any comments or suggestions from users of the statistics on this development and ways in which to present the statistics. The reclassification of large organisations, such as banks, between public and private sectors may cause a discontinuity in the time series. Notes for such reclassifications will be published alongside the data.

Coherence

As outlined in the 'Methodology and Data Source' Section, Workplace Employment is used to calculate the Indicator and differs from residency based LFS employment data

published by ONS. Differences between regional workplace and residency based employment are more pronounced in some regions due to commuting and travel to work patterns. For example, many workers in London reside outside of London, giving rise to a high commuting flow between London and those regions.

Accuracy

Public Sector Employment statistics are mainly derived from a census of public sector organisations, so are not subject to sampling errors. However there is a potential small amount of non-response error. The Labour Force Survey is a household survey with sampling errors. Confidence intervals for the Indicators have been provided to enable significant changes to be identified given the methodology used to compile the data and the time period considered.

More information on quality of the Public Sector Employment statistics and Labour Force Survey can be found by accessing the following link:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/quality/quality-information/labour-market/index.html>

Strengths and Limitations

This publication utilises the best data sources available to compile a timely indicator to monitor the rebalancing process in terms of private sector job growth. Both the private sector and public sector employment data are workplace based, providing a consistent basis for calculating the Indicator. Confidence intervals have been produced to allow significant changes in the Indicator to be identified.

There are some limitations and caveats that should be understood before the data are used. Data can be affected by reclassifications of businesses from the public to the private sector. For example, the Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds Banking group were reclassified in October 2008 from the private to the public sector. This gave a small increase in the public sector employment compared to the period prior to the reclassification. These changes caused discontinuities in the time series. When large reclassifications occur these are highlighted in the footnotes accompanying the data.

Though effort and care have been applied when developing an appropriate Indicator, the method has limitations arising from underlying data sources and the definition used:

- Falling public sector employment is one of the factors that may cause a rise in the Indicator, and therefore an increasing Indicator does not necessarily reflect improved labour market conditions in all cases. Users should read the figures for the Indicator together with underlying components. The statistical release will explain the underlying causes for a change in the Indicator, highlighting any caveats.
- Whether a change is significant is determined by the magnitude of the change and the underlying sampling variances. The latter is also affected by the sample size. An area like England tends to have a large sample, leading to a relatively small sample

variation compared to regions like North England. So a small change is more likely to be identified as significant compared to a region with a small sample size.

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