

Employment and self-employment from the annual population survey, December 2015

Summary

At the national level, the employment rate declined between 2009 and 2011, but has since increased to reach 73.6% in 2015. For the North West, the 2015 result of 71.2% was somewhat below the national outturn.

Apart from 2014, the Lancashire-14 area out-performed the regional average employment rate between 2009 and 2015, whilst rates for the Lancashire-12 area have been in excess of those for Lancashire-14 over the seven-year period.

At the sub-Lancashire level, Chorley, South Ribble, Fylde district and Ribble Valley are authorities that consistently recorded high rates in excess of 70%, whilst Blackburn with Darwen has seen a pattern of low rates over the years.

For Great Britain, the percentage of people of working age who are self-employed, gradually increased over the years and has now settled at 13.8% for a number of months. The Lancashire level figures are more volatile, but over the years, the self-employment percentages are usually lower than the national average.

Introduction

The annual population survey (APS) is a survey of households in Great Britain with the purpose to provide information on key social and socio-economic variables between each census. The complete range of available data sets from the APS for all areas of the country can be downloaded from [Nomisweb](#). This article looks at local employment and self-employment results from the APS.

For the year to December 2015, there were 246,383 people surveyed in Great Britain, with 4,746 of these interviews taking place in the Lancashire-14 area. Broken down by the individual authorities, over half (2,592) of the Lancashire interviews were undertaken in the unitary authorities of Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. The remaining numbers varied between 260 interviews in Preston to just 101 in Ribble Valley. With such a relatively small number of interviews being undertaken in Lancashire districts, most of the results in Table 1 are open to some margin of error (up to +/- 2.1% on the employment rates for Lancashire and up to +/- 8.7% for the employment rates at the district level).

National and regional context

The employment rate is one of the economic indicators used to help understand the state of the economy. In this article, the employment rate is presented as the proportion of the population of working age (16-64 for both genders) who are in work. Other things being equal, areas with higher employment rates will benefit from having a higher percentage of the population generating an income.

The seven-year period from 2009 to 2015 revealed that at the national level, the employment rate declined between 2009 and 2011, but has since increased to reach 73.6% in 2015. The last economic slowdown reduced the employment rate, but since 2012 there has been a more positive outlook at the national level. For the North West, the 2015 result of 71.2% was somewhat below the national outturn.

Lancashire results

Tables 1 and 2 together present Lancashire employment rates and the number of working age people in employment over the past few years. Given the sample size of the survey, the rates at the district authority level should be viewed with caution, whilst the Lancashire, regional and national figures are far more robust.

For employment rates, it appears that, apart from 2014, the Lancashire-14 area out-performed the regional average between 2009 and 2015. Rates for the Lancashire-12 area have been in excess of those for Lancashire-14 over the seven-year period.

At the sub-Lancashire level, Chorley, South Ribble, Fylde district and Ribble Valley are authorities that consistently recorded high rates in excess of 70%, whilst Blackburn with Darwen has seen a pattern of low rates over the years.

Table 1 Employment rates, working age (16-64) 2009 to 2015

Area	Employment rate							Working-age	Population
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	In employment	Total (16-64)
								January 2015 to December 2015	
Burnley	65.2	71.4	74.1	68.6	64.8	62.1	71.4	39,900	55,900
Chorley	72.2	76.2	78.6	76.6	79.1	76.6	80.8	56,300	69,700
Fylde	72.3	74.1	83.3	72.5	71.8	79.7	78.5	33,900	43,200
Hyndburn	69.5	71.0	70.7	75.8	65.5	64.2	72.6	36,400	50,100
Lancaster	72.9	74.0	74.6	67.8	67.6	66.5	70.7	63,100	89,300
Pendle	64.5	72.0	69.1	67.9	59.5	62.5	74.2	39,900	53,700
Preston	63.5	65.7	66.7	68.6	71.4	65.5	69.0	64,100	93,000
Ribble Valley	75.5	81.0	82.4	80.4	68.7	72.9	85.8	29,700	34,600
Rossendale	61.7	59.4	65.0	78.1	67.5	68.9	73.0	32,600	44,600
South Ribble	74.2	79.7	75.4	73.4	73.5	74.3	78.5	53,100	67,700
West Lancashire	68.8	76.0	73.0	70.9	73.9	69.7	67.5	46,100	68,300
Wyre	73.5	72.2	67.2	64.1	69.8	77.0	70.5	44,200	62,700
Lancashire-12	69.5	72.7	72.9	71.3	69.8	69.7	73.6	539,300	732,700
Blackburn with Darwen	63.9	62.4	60.5	63.0	63.5	63.8	64.8	60,000	92,700
Blackpool	68.4	67.6	66.5	68.0	68.1	64.9	72.0	61,600	85,600
Lancashire-14	68.8	71.2	71.1	70.2	69.0	68.7	72.6	661,000	911,100
North West	68.0	68.8	68.3	68.8	68.9	69.2	71.2	3,209,300	4,505,900
Great Britain	70.7	70.3	70.1	70.7	71.3	72.4	73.6	29,118,100	39,554,800

Source Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics via [NOMIS](#)

The Lancashire-12 and Lancashire-14 employment totals were estimated to have increased significantly between 2014 and 2015, at a time when the national total rose by 550,000. The 2015 estimate of 661,000 in Lancashire-14 was the highest recorded over the seven-year period.

Table 2. Working Age in Employment (16-64 years), 2009 to 2015

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Lancashire-12	511,700	536,300	537,100	522,100	510,400	509,300	539,300
Lancashire-14	626,200	648,100	645,700	633,100	627,300	622,300	661,000
Great Britain	27,313,100	27,282,600	27,335,900	27,604,700	28,070,700	28,563,400	29,118,100

Source Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics via [NOMIS](#)

Self-employment, historical context and recent results

Table 3 measures the self-employment rate as a proportion of people aged 16-64 who are in work. At the national level, self-employment, as a proportion of the employed workforce aged 16-64, has grown over a number of years. This has been because of a variety of factors such as government incentives, the loss of traditional employment opportunities with large organisations, the expansion of the service sector where self-employment is more prevalent, the decline in direct manufacturing employment, and the shift towards contracting-out of services by firms of all sizes.

In general, the self-employed are more commonly associated with skilled trade occupations i.e., in the construction sector, and also in areas such as financial and insurance activities. Taxi-drivers and chauffeurs are other professions with high levels of self-employment.

Self-employment is generally entered into most frequently in the older age groups. This is partly due to the need for people to acquire sufficient experience and financial resources. The proportion of the self-employed therefore is found to increase with age.

Table 3. Percentage of people in employment aged 16-64 who are self-employed, 2007 to 2015

Date	Lancashire-12		Lancashire-14		Great Britain	
	numerator	percent	numerator	percent	numerator	percent
Jan 2007-Dec 2007	59,200	11.1	73,100	11.2	3,489,300	12.5
Apr 2007-Mar 2008	60,100	11.2	73,200	11.2	3,519,800	12.6
Jul 2007-Jun 2008	60,500	11.3	72,300	11.0	3,518,700	12.6
Oct 2007-Sep 2008	65,300	12.3	77,500	11.9	3,498,500	12.5
Jan 2008-Dec 2008	69,600	13.3	81,600	12.7	3,456,300	12.4
Apr 2008-Mar 2009	68,700	13.2	82,000	12.8	3,439,000	12.3
Jul 2008-Jun 2009	67,500	13.1	81,200	12.8	3,433,800	12.4
Oct 2008-Sep 2009	66,500	12.9	79,300	12.5	3,458,100	12.5
Jan 2009-Dec 2009	67,800	13.2	80,200	12.7	3,483,400	12.7
Apr 2009-Mar 2010	63,000	12.3	75,700	12.0	3,501,100	12.8
Jul 2009-Jun 2010	63,200	12.1	76,400	11.9	3,506,800	12.8
Oct 2009-Sep 2010	66,200	12.5	80,100	12.3	3,529,600	12.8
Jan 2010-Dec 2010	61,300	11.4	74,700	11.4	3,545,600	12.9
Apr 2010-Mar 2011	66,000	12.2	78,800	12.0	3,530,500	12.8
Jul 2010-Jun 2011	74,100	14.0	87,000	13.5	3,553,200	12.9
Oct 2010-Sep 2011	72,100	13.6	84,900	13.2	3,576,100	13.0
Jan 2011-Dec 2011	75,500	14.0	89,500	13.7	3,621,000	13.1
Apr 2011-Mar 2012	76,600	14.4	91,000	14.1	3,689,000	13.4
Jul 2011-Jun 2012	65,600	12.3	80,700	12.4	3,743,800	13.6
Oct 2011-Sep 2012	69,600	13.2	84,200	13.1	3,760,000	13.6
Jan 2012-Dec 2012	70,700	13.5	84,800	13.3	3,761,500	13.6
Apr 2012-Mar 2013	66,900	12.7	80,800	12.6	3,732,400	13.4
Jul 2012-Jun 2013	68,700	13.3	82,600	13.0	3,746,700	13.4
Oct 2012-Sep 2013	63,800	12.3	78,100	12.3	3,757,200	13.4
Jan 2013-Dec 2013	68,200	13.4	83,400	13.3	3,811,500	13.6
Apr 2013-Mar 2014	68,400	13.6	83,000	13.4	3,877,100	13.8
Jul 2013-Jun 2014	72,200	14.4	85,700	13.9	3,900,800	13.8
Oct 2013-Sep 2014	69,500	13.9	83,400	13.6	3,942,600	13.8
Jan 2014-Dec 2014	71,600	14.1	86,300	13.9	3,955,300	13.8
Apr 2014-Mar 2015	69,500	13.5	84,500	13.4	3,969,500	13.8
Jul 2014-Jun 2015	66,200	12.7	81,800	12.8	3,992,400	13.8
Oct 2014-Sep 2015	71,800	13.6	88,800	13.7	4,016,500	13.8
Jan 2015-Dec 2015	69,700	12.9	85,600	12.9	4,017,200	13.8

Source ONS: Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey via [NOMIS](#)

Table 3 has self-employment data for Great Britain and the two Lancashire areas. At the national level, the percentage of people of working age who are self-employed, gradually increased over the years and has now settled at 13.8% for a number of months. The

Lancashire level figures are more volatile, but over the years, the self-employment percentages are usually lower than the national average.

Last updated April 2016