

# Labour market

- Between spring 1971 and spring 2005, the number of economically active people in the United Kingdom increased by around 4.5 million to over 30 million. (Figure 4.1)
- In spring 2005, around 16 per cent of working-age households in the United Kingdom were workless – where no one of working age is in employment. (Figure 4.2)
- The UK employment rate of working-age men fell from 92 per cent in 1971, to 79 per cent in spring 2005, having reached a low of 75 per cent in 1993, while the rate for working-age women rose from 56 per cent to 70 per cent. (Figure 4.3)
- In spring 2005, 88 per cent of working-age people with a degree or equivalent in the United Kingdom were in employment compared with only 48 per cent of those with no qualification. (Table 4.5)
- Between spring 1994 and spring 2004, employment rates for lone parents in the United Kingdom increased by 12 percentage points from 42 per cent to 54 per cent. (Figure 4.7)
- In spring 2005, nearly one in five full-time employees in the United Kingdom usually worked over 48 hours a week, with a higher proportion of male employees (23 per cent) than female (11 per cent) usually working these longer hours. (Table 4.16)
- The UK male working-age inactivity rate rose from 5 per cent in spring 1971 to 17 per cent in spring 2005; although the female rate is higher, it fell from 41 per cent to 27 per cent. (Figure 4.24)

Most people spend a large proportion of their lives in the labour force, and so their experience of the world of work has an important impact on their lives and attitudes. However this proportion has been falling. Young people are remaining longer in education and older people, due to the increase in longevity, are spending more years in retirement. More women than ever before are in paid employment, and employment in service industries continues to increase while employment in manufacturing continues to fall.

### Labour market profile

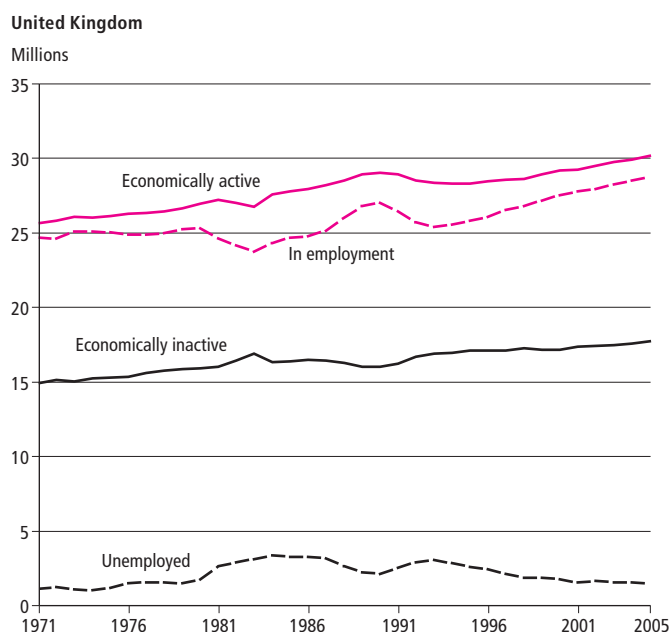
People are considered to be economically active, or in the labour force, if they are aged 16 and over and are either in work or actively looking for work. Between spring 1971 and spring 2005 the number of economically active people in the United Kingdom increased by around 4.5 million to over 30 million, whereas over the same period the number economically inactive (aged 16 and over and neither in work nor looking for work) increased by 2.7 million to 17.6 million (Figure 4.1). Since the early 1990s there has been a general increase in economic activity levels in the United Kingdom. This is because the increase in employment levels over the period has been steeper than the decrease in unemployment levels.

While there are overall increases in the numbers of economically active and inactive, there have been different trends between men and women. The increase in economic activity levels have largely been driven by women – between spring 1971 and spring 2005 the number of economically active women increased by around 4.3 million compared with an increase of 0.2 million men. Conversely the number of economically inactive women decreased by around 1.0 million over the period compared with an increase of 3.6 million men. In spring 2005 there were 28.7 million people in employment in the United Kingdom. This is the highest number of people in employment in spring recorded by the Labour Force Survey (LFS) since it began in 1971. Comparing the labour market in spring 2005 with spring 1971, the number of people in employment has risen by 4.1 million.

Over a quarter of employees were working part time in spring 2005 and around four in five part-time employees were women. However, more than two and a half times as many men as women were self-employed.

One of the consequences of the increasing levels of employment in the United Kingdom is a rise in the number of working-age households that are working – that is, households that include at least one person of working age and where all the people of working age are in employment. There were 10.8 million working households in spring 2005 out of a total

**Figure 4.1**  
**Economic activity levels<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> At spring each year. People aged 16 and over. Data are seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in autumn 2005. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting, and Historical LFS-consistent time series.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

of 18.8 million working-age households, an increase of almost 2 million working households since spring 1992. Working households as a proportion of all working-age households rose

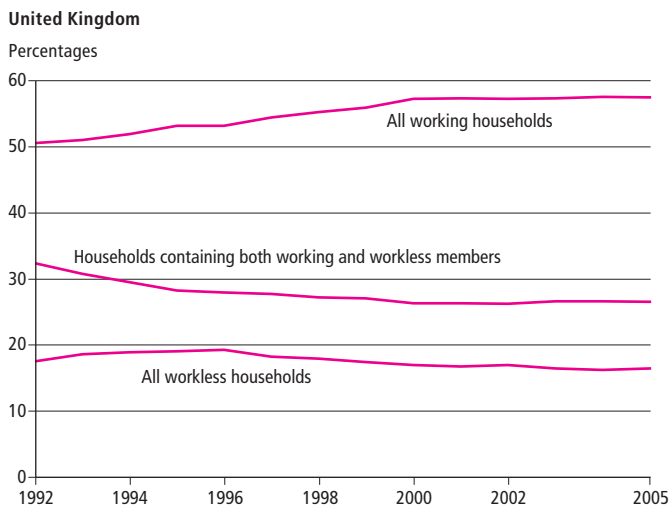
### Labour Force Survey (LFS) data

Since October 2002, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published aggregate LFS estimates consistent with the population estimates derived from the 2001 Census. In March 2004 the ONS also published reweighted LFS microdata consistent with the post-2001 Census population estimates (published in February and March 2003). Since then the population estimates have been further revised as a result of methodological improvements and population studies. The aggregate LFS estimates continue to be adjusted to stay in line with the latest population estimates. They were most recently updated in September 2005. Analysis by the ONS has shown that the effect of the adjustments has a greater impact on levels data than on rates. Generally, revisions to rates are within sampling variability, while those for levels are not. This chapter uses the latest interim adjusted data where possible. However, where adjusted data are not available, only rates have been used.

See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

## Figure 4.2

### Working-age households:<sup>1</sup> by household economic status



<sup>1</sup> Percentages have been adjusted to include estimates for households with unknown economic activity and are for spring each year. Data are as a percentage of working-age households. A working-age household is a household that includes at least one woman aged between 16 and 59 or a man aged between 16 and 64. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

from 50 per cent in spring 1992 to 57 per cent in 2000 – and remained at this level to spring 2005 (Figure 4.2). In spring 2005, around 16 per cent of working-age households were workless – that is, households where at least one person is of working age but no one is in employment.

The distribution of working and workless households varies considerably by household type. Working-age couple households with dependent children were the least likely to be workless in spring 2005 (5 per cent), whereas lone parents with dependent children were most likely (41 per cent). There is also variation in the distribution by region. Households in the South East were most likely to be working (64 per cent), while households in Inner London and Northern Ireland were least likely (48 per cent).

## Employment

Although Figure 4.1 showed an increase in the levels of employment in the United Kingdom, it is also important to consider these changes in relation to changes in the size of the population. The proportion of the working-age population in the United Kingdom who were in employment (the employment rate) decreased from the mid-1970s to a low of 68 per cent in spring 1983 (Figure 4.3 overleaf). Since then employment rates have generally risen. Although there was

## Glossary

**Employees** – a measure, obtained from household surveys of people aged 16 and over who regard themselves as paid employees. People with two or more jobs are counted only once.

**Self-employed** – a measure obtained from household surveys of people aged 16 and over who regard themselves as self-employed, that is, who in their main employment work on their own account, whether or not they have employees.

**In employment** – a measure obtained from household surveys and censuses of employees, self-employed people, participants in government employment and training programmes, and people doing unpaid family work.

**Government employment and training programmes** – a measure obtained from household surveys of those who said they were participants on Youth Training, Training for Work, Employment Action or Community Industry, or a programme organised by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in England, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (ELWa), or Local Enterprise Companies in Scotland.

**Unemployment** – the measure based on International Labour Organisation (ILO) guidelines, and used in the Labour Force Survey, which counts as unemployed those aged 16 and over who are without a job, are available to start work in the next two weeks, who have been seeking a job in the last four weeks or are out of work and waiting to start a job already obtained in the next two weeks.

**Economically active (or the labour force)** – those aged 16 and over who are in employment or unemployed.

**Unemployment rate** – the percentage of the economically active who are unemployed.

**Economically inactive** – people who are neither in employment nor unemployment. For example, those looking after a home or retired, or those unable to work due to long term sickness or disability.

**Economic activity rate** – the percentage of the population, for example in a given age group, which is economically active.

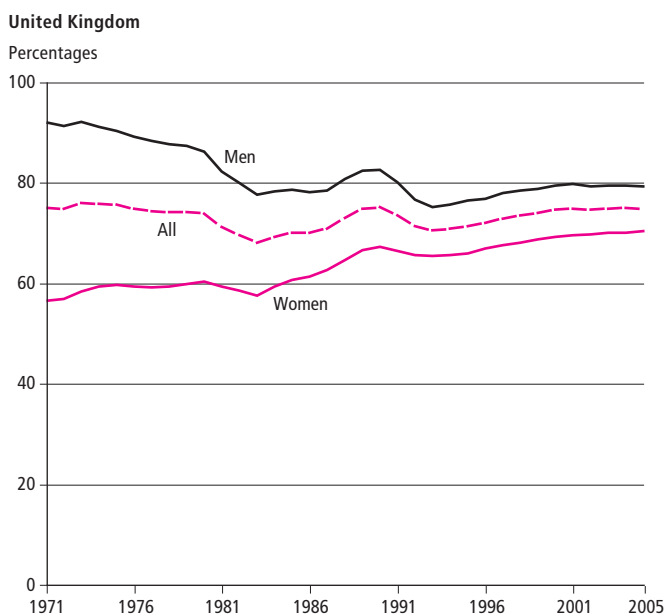
**Working age household** – a household that includes at least one person of working age (16 to 64 for men and 16 to 59 for women).

**Working household** – a household that includes at least one person of working age and where all the people of working age are in employment.

**Workless household** – a household that includes at least one person of working age where no one aged 16 and over is in employment.

## Figure 4.3

### Employment rates:<sup>1</sup> by sex



<sup>1</sup> At spring each year. Men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59. The percentage of the population that is in employment. Data are seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in autumn 2005. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting, and Historical LFS-consistent time series.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

a slight fall following the recession of 1990 and 1991, the employment rate was 75 per cent in spring 2005, the same as in spring 1971.

However, this overall picture conceals large and very different changes for men and women. The employment rate for men fell from 92 per cent in 1971 to 79 per cent in spring 2005 – though it reached a low of 75 per cent in 1993 – while the rate for women rose from 56 per cent to 70 per cent. The gap between men's and women's employment rates fell by a factor of nearly four, from 35 to 9 percentage points.

Employment rates also differ between the English regions and devolved administrations. In 2004 the highest working-age employment rate in England was in the South East (79 per cent) and the lowest was in London (69 per cent). Rates in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were: 75 per cent, 71 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively.

Differences in employment rates within regions are often greater than differences between regions. In 2004 the greatest contrast between local authorities was in London (see Appendix, Part 4: Annual Population Survey). The region contains Tower Hamlets, with the lowest working-age employment rate in Great Britain (54 per cent). The difference between the highest and lowest working-age employment rates in London was 25 percentage points (excluding the City

of London as the data are based on a very small sample). The London borough with the highest working-age employment rate was Bromley, at 79 per cent.

The local authority with the highest employment rate in Great Britain outside London was South Northamptonshire in the East Midlands with a rate of 86 per cent. Just over a fifth of local authorities in Great Britain had an employment rate of over 80 per cent in 2004.

In March 2000, the Lisbon European Council agreed an aim to achieve an overall European Union (EU) working-age employment rate as close as possible to 70 per cent by 2010 and, for women, an employment rate of more than 60 per cent. In 2004 the overall employment rate in the EU-25 was 63 per cent (Table 4.4). The United Kingdom had one of the highest employment rates after Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden and was one of only four out of the EU-25 with an employment rate above the 2010 overall target.

The average employment rate in the EU-25 was 71 per cent for men and 56 per cent for women – the United Kingdom had the fourth highest male rate (78 per cent) and, together with Finland, the fourth highest female rate (66 per cent). The lowest employment rates for women were in the southern European countries of Greece, Italy and Malta. In contrast, the north European countries of Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands had the highest rates. Among men the rates in 2004 varied from 57 per cent in Poland to 80 per cent in the Netherlands.

There is a range of factors underlying these comparisons. As well as economic cycle effects, which will vary across countries in a given year, they will also be affected by population structures and differing cultures, retirement ages and participation in post-compulsory full-time education across countries.

One of the factors that can affect employment rates is educational attainment: for both sexes, employment rates generally increase with the level of qualifications in the United Kingdom (Table 4.5). In spring 2005, 88 per cent of working-age people in the United Kingdom with a degree or equivalent were in employment compared with only 48 per cent of those with no qualification. This relationship was more marked for women than for men – 89 per cent of men who had a degree were in employment compared with 87 per cent of women, whereas 54 per cent of men and 42 per cent of women who did not have any qualifications were in employment. This means that the difference in employment rates between men and women generally decreases as the level of qualification increases. For those with a degree or equivalent there was a

**Table 4.4**  
**Employment rates:<sup>1</sup> by sex, EU comparison, 2004**

	Percentages				Percentages		
	Men	Women	All		Men	Women	All
Denmark	79.7	71.6	75.7	Luxembourg	72.4	50.6	61.6
Netherlands	80.2	65.8	73.1	Lithuania	64.7	57.8	61.2
Sweden	73.6	70.5	72.1	Spain	73.8	48.3	61.1
United Kingdom	77.8	65.6	71.6	Belgium	67.9	52.6	60.3
Cyprus	79.8	58.7	68.9	Greece	73.7	45.2	59.4
Austria	74.9	60.7	67.8	Italy	70.1	45.2	57.6
Portugal	74.2	61.7	67.8	Slovakia	63.2	50.9	57.0
Finland	69.7	65.6	67.6	Hungary	63.1	50.7	56.8
Ireland	75.9	56.5	66.3	Malta	75.2	32.8	54.1
Slovenia	70.0	60.5	65.3	Poland	57.2	46.2	51.7
Germany	70.8	59.2	65.0	EU-25 average	70.9	55.7	63.3
Czech Republic	72.3	56.0	64.2				
France	69.0	57.4	63.1				
Estonia	66.4	60.0	63.0				
Latvia	66.4	58.5	62.3				

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Part 4: Eurostat rates.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Eurostat

**Table 4.5**  
**Employment rate:<sup>1</sup> by sex and highest qualification, 2005<sup>2</sup>**

United Kingdom	Percentages		
	Men	Women	All
Degree or equivalent	89	87	88
Higher education	87	84	85
GCE A level or equivalent	81	73	77
Trade apprenticeship	83	73	81
GCSE grades A* to C or equivalent	79	71	75
Qualifications at NVQ level 1 and below	75	63	69
Other qualifications – level unknown	78	64	72
No qualifications	54	42	48
All <sup>3</sup>	79	70	74

<sup>1</sup> The percentage of the working-age population in employment. Men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59.

<sup>2</sup> At spring. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

<sup>3</sup> Includes those who did not state their highest qualification.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

gap of 3 percentage points in employment rates between men and women, compared with 12 percentage points for those with qualifications at NVQ level 1 and below.

There are clear differences in employment rates between parents and non-parents, between mothers and fathers, and between couple parents and lone parents. Table 4.6 overleaf shows that in spring 2004 in the United Kingdom, working-age mothers with dependent children were less likely to be in employment than working-age women without dependent children (67 per cent compared with 73 per cent). For men, the opposite was true – fathers were more likely to be in employment than working-age men without dependent children (90 per cent and 74 per cent). There is also an employment hierarchy evident between the different subgroups of parents. Fathers as a whole had higher employment rates than mothers (90 per cent compared with 67 per cent); couple parents had higher employment rates than lone parents (81 per cent and 54 per cent); and lone fathers had higher employment rates than lone mothers (67 per cent and 53 per cent). There were differences in employment rates between parents and non-parents, and between different types of parent, across all age groups.

In spring 2005, the employment rate for lone parents in the United Kingdom was 56 per cent, up 2 percentage points from

Table 4.6

Employment rates of people<sup>1</sup> with and without dependent children:<sup>2</sup> by age and sex, 2004<sup>3</sup>

United Kingdom		Percentages				
	16–24	25–34	35–49	50–59/64	All	
Mothers with dependent children	35	59	73	68	67	
Married/cohabiting mothers	45	63	76	72	71	
Lone mothers	25	46	62	55	53	
Women without dependent children	62	90	81	68	73	
Fathers with dependent children	81	89	92	84	90	
Married/cohabiting fathers	82	89	93	85	91	
Lone fathers	26	55	72	61	67	
Men without dependent children	61	87	85	69	74	
All parents with dependent children	45	70	82	78	77	
Married/cohabiting parents	57	75	84	80	81	
Lone parents	25	47	64	56	54	
All people without dependent children	61	88	83	69	74	

1 Men aged 16 to 64 and women aged 16 to 59. Excludes people with unknown employment status.

2 Children under 16 and those aged 16 to 18 who are never-married and in full-time education.

3 At spring. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

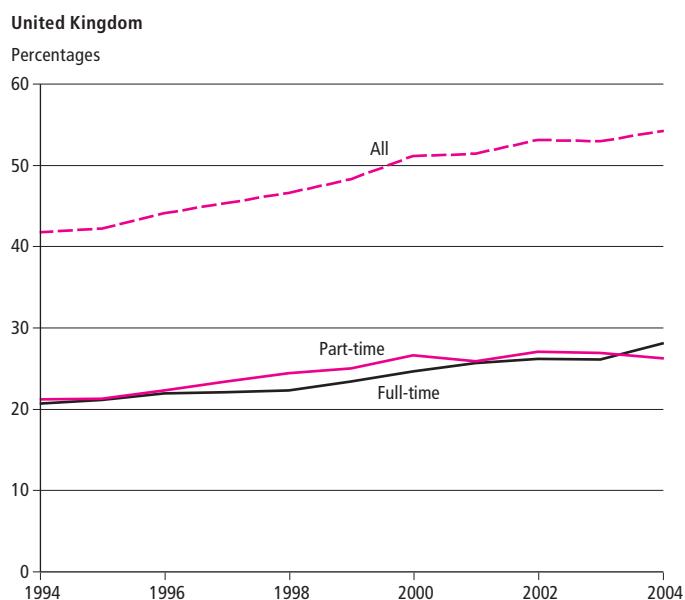
the previous year. In comparison, the employment rate for married or cohabiting mothers in spring 2005 was 72 per cent, up 1 percentage point from the previous year.

Between spring 1994 and spring 2004 the employment rate for couple mothers and couple fathers increased by 7 percentage points and 5 percentage points respectively. However employment rates for lone parents increased by 12 percentage points from 42 per cent to 54 per cent (Figure 4.7). These upward trends reflect increases in both full-time and part-time employment.

Couple mothers and lone parents tend to have lower qualification levels than couple fathers. In spring 2004, 17 per cent of couple mothers and only 9 per cent of lone parents had a degree or equivalent qualification, compared with 21 per cent of couple fathers. Over a fifth (22 per cent) of lone parents and 12 per cent of couple mothers had no qualifications compared with 10 per cent of couple fathers. Not surprisingly, employment rates were highest among graduates and lowest among those with no qualifications – couple mothers and lone parents with a degree or equivalent qualification each had an employment rate of 81 per cent, while couple mothers and lone parents with no qualifications had employment rates of 44 per cent and 29 per cent respectively.

Since October 1998 the Government's New Deal for Lone Parents (NDLP) has aimed at helping lone parents in Great

Figure 4.7

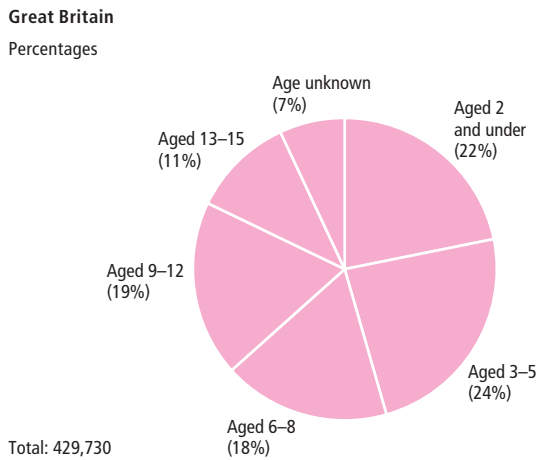
Employment rates of working-age lone parents:<sup>1</sup> by type of employment

1 Lone parents in employment as a percentage of all lone parents. At spring each year. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics



**Figure 4.8**  
**Parents leaving the New Deal for Lone Parents<sup>1</sup> to enter employment:<sup>2</sup> by age of youngest child<sup>3</sup>**



- 1 The New Deal for Lone Parents programme started in October 1998. Data are as a proportion of cases where the destination was known to be employment and are for October 1998 to May 2005.
- 2 Those who are recorded by Jobcentre Plus as having been placed into unsubsidised employment, those who are recorded on HM Revenue and Customs records as having obtained a job, and those who have evidence of both employment and benefit spells immediately after leaving the programme.
- 3 Age of youngest child when the lone parent attended the programme's initial interview.

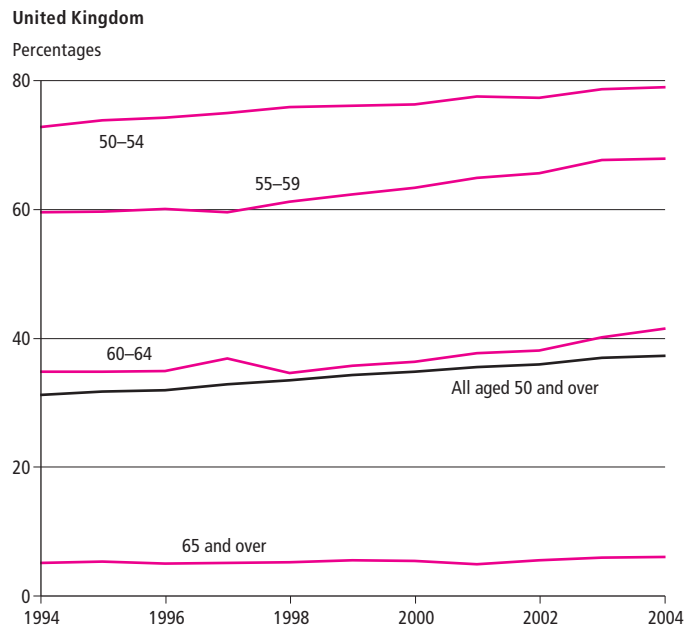
Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Britain into work. The programme involves an initial interview with an advisor to discuss work issues and advice on in-work benefits – further participation is voluntary. Main features of the programme include work trials, help with costs of approved training or education courses, and help with costs incurred while training, such as travel expenses and registered childcare costs. Between October 1998 and the end of May 2005, 429,700 lone parents left NDLP and moved directly into employment. Of these, 46 per cent had a youngest child aged five or under at the initial New Deal interview (Figure 4.8).

Other New Deal programmes aimed at helping particular groups of people into work include New Deal for Young People (NDYP) and New Deal 25 plus (ND25+). During the period April 1998 to the end of May 2005, 567,900 (46 per cent) of those leaving NDYP left the programme to enter employment. Among those aged 25 and over leaving the enhanced ND25+ programme between April 2001 and the end of May 2005, 126,600 (32 per cent) also left directly to enter employment. In addition there is a New Deal programme for those aged over 50 (ND50+). Between April 2000 and the end of August 2005, 146,000 people gained employment through ND50+.

Although the employment rate of older people declined markedly between the late 1970s and mid-1990s, employment rates of older workers have increased in recent years from

**Figure 4.9**  
**Employment rates<sup>1</sup> of older people<sup>2</sup>**



- 1 At spring each year. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.
- 2 State pension age for men is currently 65 and 60 for women.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

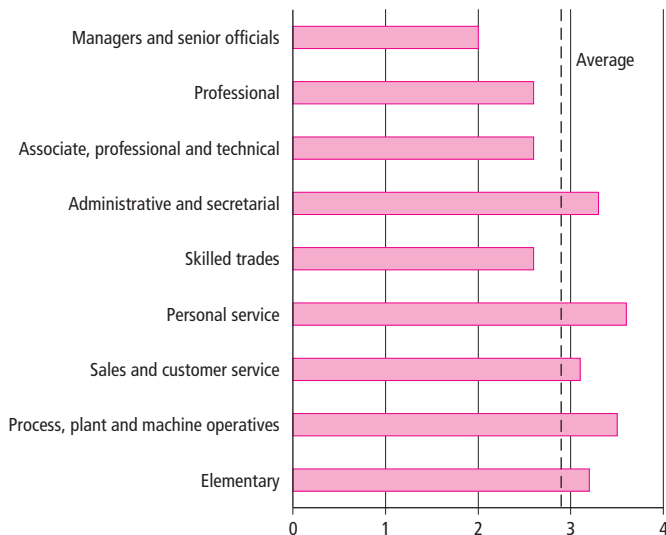
31 per cent in spring 1994 for those aged 50 and over to 37 per cent in spring 2004 (Figure 4.9). The main increase occurred among those aged 50 to state pension age (65 for men, 60 for women). Between spring 1994 and 2004 the employment rate among this group increased by 7 percentage points to 70 per cent. This compares with an increase of 1 percentage point to reach 6 per cent among those aged 65 and over. The increase in employment was experienced by both men and women. The proportion of men aged 50 and over in employment rose from 39 per cent to 44 per cent over the ten years to spring 2004, while the employment rate for women aged 50 and over rose from 25 per cent to 31 per cent.

Those with formal qualifications were more likely to stay in work than the unqualified. Of those aged 50 to state pension age in spring 2004, 81 per cent with a degree or equivalent were in employment, compared with 74 per cent of people with the equivalent of at least one GCSE and 52 per cent of people with no qualifications. However, over a fifth (22 per cent) of economically inactive people (those neither in work nor looking for work – see also page 63) aged 50 and over in 2002–04 had left their last job because of health reasons. The proportion was highest among those who were previously in process, plant and machine occupations (30 per cent) and lowest among those who were in administrative and secretarial (14 per cent).

**Figure 4.10**

**Sickness absence:<sup>1</sup> by occupation, 2004<sup>2</sup>**

United Kingdom  
Percentages



1 Employees who were absent from work for at least one day in the reference week.  
2 At spring. People aged 16 and over. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

In spring 2004 in the United Kingdom, some 1.7 million scheduled working days were lost to sickness absence among employees and around 3 per cent of employees took at least one day off work (in the survey reference week) because of sickness or injury. Sickness absence rates were generally higher for female employees (3.3 per cent) than male (2.4 per cent). They were also higher for younger employees than older employees – 3.2 per cent of 16 to 24 year olds took at least one day off sick in the reference week compared with 2.8 per cent of employees aged 50 to 59/64. Days lost to sickness were fairly evenly spread across the weekdays. This is counter to the common perception that sickness absence is higher on Mondays and Fridays as a result of non-genuine absence.

Sickness absence in spring 2004 also varied between occupations from 2.0 per cent for managers and senior officials to 3.6 per cent for employees in personal service occupations (Figure 4.10). As well as employees in personal service occupations, those who were process, plant and machine operatives, employees in administrative and secretarial, elementary, and sales and customer service occupations were more likely to take sickness absence than the average for employees in all occupations (2.9 per cent).

The Workplace Employment Relations Survey 2004 collected information about employees' job-related well-being via a six

item measure. Employees were asked how often their job made them feel tense, worried, uneasy, calm, relaxed and content. Almost one fifth (19 per cent) of employees in Great Britain said that their job made them feel tense all or most of the time, 42 per cent said they felt tense some of the time and 39 per cent said that they felt job-related tension only occasionally or never. The survey also asked employees how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the following eight aspects of their job: sense of achievement; scope for using initiative; influence over job; training; pay; job security; the work itself; and involvement in decision making. The survey found that employees were most likely to say that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the scope they had for using their initiative in their work, closely followed by satisfaction with their sense of achievement and the work itself. Employees were least likely to be satisfied with their pay (35 per cent) and with their involvement in decision making (38 per cent).

According to the British Social Attitudes survey most people do not think that pay should be the most important consideration in making career choices. In 2004 around one in ten people in Great Britain thought that good pay was the most important consideration, whereas one in three thought job security was the most important consideration, one in four thought interesting work was most important and one in five favoured a good work-life balance (Table 4.11).

**Table 4.11**

**Most important factors influencing career choices:<sup>1</sup> by sex, 2004**

Great Britain	Percentages		
	Men	Women	All
Secure job	36	35	36
Interesting work	26	24	25
Good work-life balance	21	21	21
Good pay	9	11	10
Opportunities for promotion	7	8	8
Chance to help other people	1	1	1

1 Respondents were shown the above options and asked 'Suppose you were thinking about a person's career in general and the choices that they have to make. Which one of these would you say is the most important for them to think about?' Excludes those who responded 'Don't know' or did not answer.

Source: British Social Attitudes Survey, National Centre for Social Research



**Table 4.12****All in employment: by sex and occupation, 2005<sup>1</sup>**

United Kingdom	Percentages	
	Men	Women
Managers and senior officials	18	11
Professional	14	12
Associate professional and technical	13	15
Administrative and secretarial	4	22
Skilled trades	20	2
Personal service	2	14
Sales and customer service	5	12
Process, plant and machine operatives	12	2
Elementary	12	11
All occupations	100	100

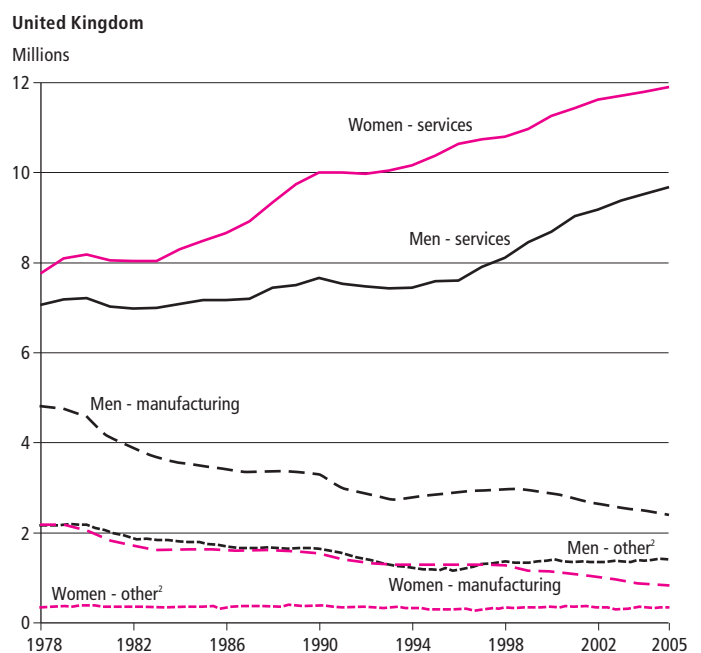
<sup>1</sup> At spring. People aged 16 and over. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

**Patterns of employment**

The pattern of occupations followed by men and women is quite different (Table 4.12). In spring 2005, just over a fifth of women in employment were employed in administrative and secretarial work, while men were most likely to be employed in skilled trade occupations or as managers and senior officials. These occupations were among the ones least likely to be followed by women. Conversely women were more likely than men to be in employment in the personal services (for example hairdressers and child care assistants) and in sales and customer services. Only the professional, associate professional and technical, and the elementary occupations (such as farm workers, labourers and catering assistants) were almost equally likely to be followed by both men and women: between around one in seven and one in nine were employed in each of these occupations.

It is well-known that the UK economy has experienced structural change since the end of World War Two with a decline in the manufacturing sector and an increase in service industries (Figure 4.13). Jobs in the service industries have increased by 45 per cent, from 14.8 million in 1978 (when the series began) to 21.5 million in 2005, while those in manufacturing have fallen by 54 per cent from 6.9 million to 3.2 million over the same period. Virtually all the increase in women's labour market participation has been through taking up jobs in the service sector. In 1978 there were fewer jobs done by women (10.2 million) than by men (13.9 million). However, by 2005 the number of jobs done by women and men were very similar (13.0 million and 13.4 million, respectively).

**Figure 4.13****Employee jobs:<sup>1</sup> by sex and industry**

<sup>1</sup> At June each year.

<sup>2</sup> Includes agriculture, construction, energy and water.

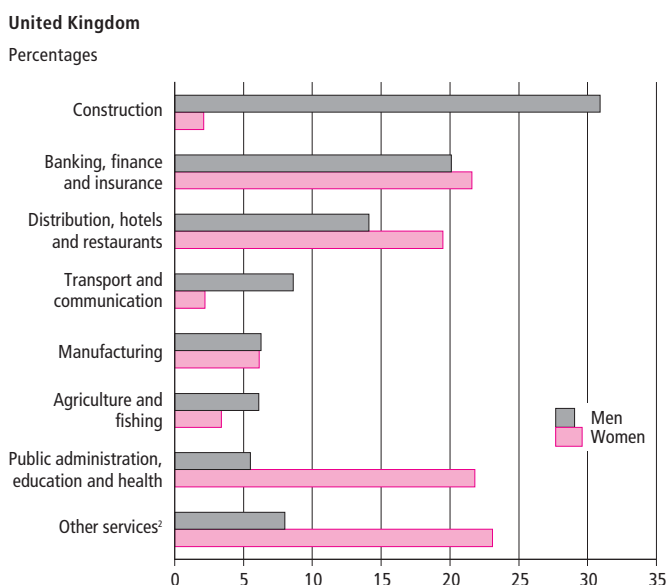
Source: Short-term Turnover and Employment Survey, Office for National Statistics

The largest increase in both male and female employee jobs has been in financial and business services which accounted for about one in ten employee jobs in 1978 compared with one in five employee jobs in 2005. Note that these data are based on jobs rather than people – one person may have more than one job, and jobs may vary in the number of hours' work they involve.

Not all people in employment work as employees. In spring 2005 there were 3.6 million self-employed people in the United Kingdom, accounting for 13 per cent of all those in employment. Self-employment is dominated by men – in spring 2005, 74 per cent of self-employed people were men.

Men and women also vary considerably in the type of self-employed work they undertake. Almost a third of self-employed men worked in the construction industry in spring 2005 but very few women worked in this sector (Figure 4.14 overleaf). On the other hand, 23 per cent of self-employed women worked in other services – for example community, social and personal services (such as textile washing and dry cleaning, hairdressing and other beauty treatments) – and 22 per cent worked in public administration, education and health. Fewer than one in twelve self-employed men worked in each of these industries.

Figure 4.14

Self-employment: by industry and sex, 2005<sup>1</sup>

1 At spring. People aged 16 and over. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in autumn 2005. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

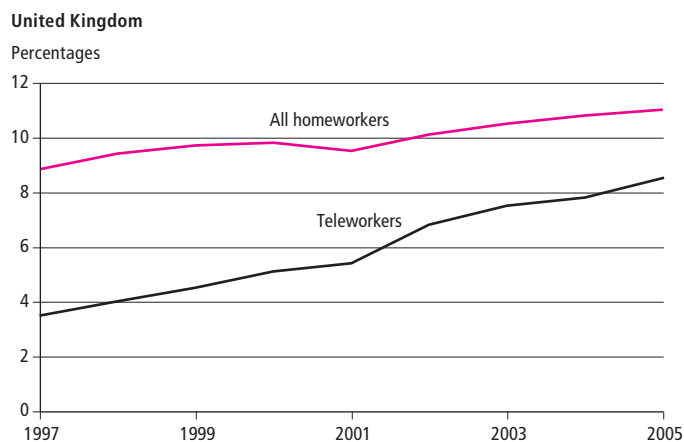
2 Community, social and personal services including sanitation, dry cleaning, personal care, and recreational, cultural and sporting activities.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Homeworkers are people who work mainly in their home, or in different places using home as a base, in their main job (see Appendix, Part 4: Homeworkers and teleworkers). In spring 1997, there were 2.3 million homeworkers in the United Kingdom but by spring 2005 the number had increased to around 3.1 million. Of these almost two thirds were self-employed. Most of these homeworkers (2.4 million) were teleworkers – people who used a telephone and computer to carry out their work. The number of teleworkers has increased by more than 150 per cent (1.5 million) since spring 1997, the earliest year for which data are available. In spring 1997 teleworkers represented 40 per cent of homeworkers but by spring 2005 this had risen to 77 per cent. Although teleworkers only represent a small proportion of the workforce, this proportion increased from 4 per cent in spring 1997 to 8 per cent in spring 2005 (Figure 4.15).

Sixty five per cent of teleworkers were men in spring 2005. This partly reflects the fact that men accounted for the larger share of the workforce overall but teleworking (and homeworking in general) was more prevalent among male workers than among female workers. In spring 2005, the teleworking rate for men was 11 per cent, compared with 6 per cent for women. Men are more likely than women to telework in different places using their home as a base, and it is in this style of work that the greatest increase in teleworking rates has taken place.

Figure 4.15

Homeworkers<sup>1</sup> and teleworkers<sup>2</sup> as a percentage of people in employment<sup>3</sup>

1 Homeworkers are people who mainly work in their home, or in different places using home as a base, in their main job.

2 Teleworkers are a subgroup of homeworkers, who use both a telephone and a computer to work at home, or in different places using home as a base. See Appendix, Part 4: Homeworkers and teleworkers.

3 At spring each year. Data are for people aged 16 and over and excludes people on government employment and training schemes. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting. Estimates have been adjusted for nonresponse to the homeworking and teleworking questions.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

There were 18.4 million full-time and 6.4 million part-time employees in spring 2005. However, to distinguish only between full time and part time masks differences in usual working hours. The 1998 Working Time Regulations implemented an EC Directive on working time in the United Kingdom. The regulations apply to full-time, part-time and temporary workers and provide for a maximum working week of 48 hours (on average), although individual workers can choose to work longer hours. In spring 2005, around a fifth (18 per cent) of full-time employees in the United Kingdom usually worked over 48 hours a week (Table 4.16). However, a higher proportion of male employees (23 per cent) than female (11 per cent) usually worked these longer hours. Those who worked as managers and senior officials were most likely to work over 48 hours a week (30 per cent), whereas those who worked in administrative and secretarial jobs were least likely (4 per cent). Although men were more likely than women usually to work over 48 hours in most occupational groups, the exception were professionals – in spring 2005 a similar proportion of professional women (28 per cent) usually worked longer hours as professional men (26 per cent).

In 2004 the British Social Attitudes survey asked working adults in Great Britain to consider the number of hours they worked (including regular overtime) and to say whether they would prefer more hours per week, fewer hours per week or whether

Table 4.16

**Employees<sup>1</sup> who usually worked over 48 hours a week: by sex and occupation, 2005<sup>2</sup>**

United Kingdom	Percentages		
	Men	Women	All employees
Managers and senior officials	36	18	30
Professional	26	28	27
Associate professional and technical	18	7	13
Administrative and secretarial	8	2	4
Skilled trades	19	7	19
Personal service	13	7	9
Sales and customer service	11	3	6
Process, plant and machine operatives	28	8	25
Elementary	18	8	16
All occupations	23	11	18

1 Full-time employees aged 16 and over. Time rounded to the nearest hour respondents worked on their main job. Includes regular paid and unpaid overtime. Excludes employees who did not state their usual hours.

2 At spring. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

they were happy with their weekly hours. Over a third of men said that they would prefer to work fewer hours, as did over a quarter of women. The majority of both men and women were happy with their current working hours. Those who answered they would prefer to work fewer hours per week were then asked 'Would you still prefer to work fewer hours, if it meant earning less money as a result?' Twenty two per cent of these men and 30 per cent of these women said they would still prefer to work fewer hours.

Government policy over recent years has stressed the importance of maintaining a healthy work-life balance. One factor seen as important is the availability of flexible working. Over a fifth of full-time employees and a quarter of part-time employees had some form of flexible working arrangement in spring 2005 (Table 4.17). Flexible working hours was the most common form of flexible working for full-time employees of both sexes. It was the most common arrangement among men who worked part time and second most common for women – exceeded only by term-time working.

Regulations introduced across the United Kingdom in April 2003 give parents of children under 6, or parents of disabled children under 18, the right to request a flexible work pattern. This could be either a change to the hours they work; a change to the times when they are required to work; or the opportunity to work from home. Employers have a statutory

Table 4.17

**Employees with flexible working patterns:<sup>1</sup> by sex, 2005<sup>2</sup>**

United Kingdom	Percentages		
	Men	Women	All employees
<b>Full-time employees</b>			
Flexible working hours	10.2	16.1	12.5
Annualised working hours	4.9	5.1	5.0
Four and a half day week	1.4	0.9	1.2
Term-time working	1.2	5.9	3.0
Nine day fortnight	0.3	0.3	0.3
Any flexible working pattern <sup>3</sup>	18.2	28.5	22.1
<b>Part-time employees</b>			
Flexible working hours	6.8	9.3	8.9
Annualised working hours	3.0	4.1	3.9
Term-time working	4.2	10.9	9.6
Job sharing	0.8	2.2	1.9
Any flexible working pattern <sup>3</sup>	15.8	27.3	25.0

1 Percentages are based on totals which exclude people who did not state whether or not they had a flexible working arrangement. Respondents could give more than one answer.

2 At spring. People aged 16 and over. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

3 Includes other categories of flexible working not separately identified.

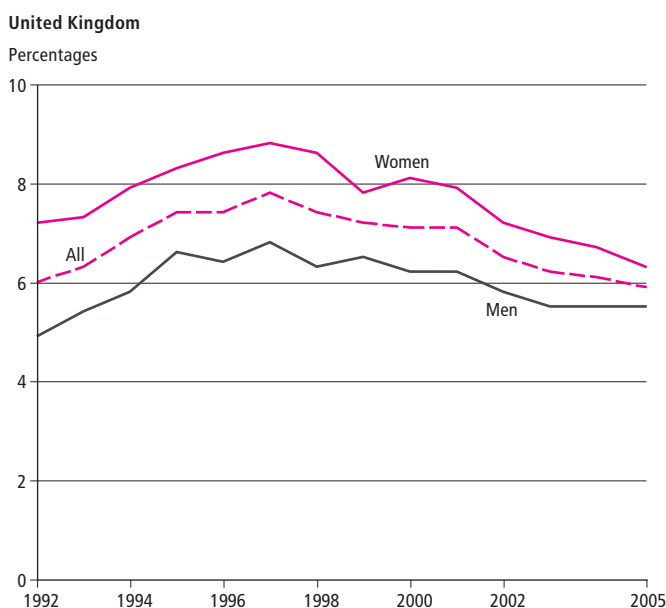
Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

duty to consider such requests seriously and may only refuse on business grounds. According to the Second Flexible Working Employee Survey, female employees in Great Britain in 2005 were more likely to have requested to work flexibly than males (19 per cent and 10 per cent respectively) in the previous two years. Requests were higher among employees with dependent children under the age of 6 (22 per cent), aged between 6 and 12 (18 per cent) or aged between 12 and 16 (15 per cent) than those employees without dependent children (10 per cent).

Temporary work increased during the early to mid-1990s but has declined in recent years. In spring 1992, 6 per cent of employees in the United Kingdom worked on a temporary basis and by spring 1997 this had increased to 8 per cent (Figure 4.18 overleaf). However by spring 2005 the proportion of employees who were in temporary work had fallen and was again 6 per cent which represented 1.5 million employees. Throughout the period a slightly higher proportion of female employees than male worked on a temporary contract.

Employees on fixed-period contracts accounted for about half of all temporary employees between spring 1992 and spring 2005. Other types of temporary work such as casual or seasonal work have declined slightly as a proportion of all

Figure 4.18

Temporary workers:<sup>1</sup> by sex

<sup>1</sup> As a percentage of all employees. Employees who said that their main job was non-permanent. At spring each year. People aged 16 and over. Data are seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in autumn 2005. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

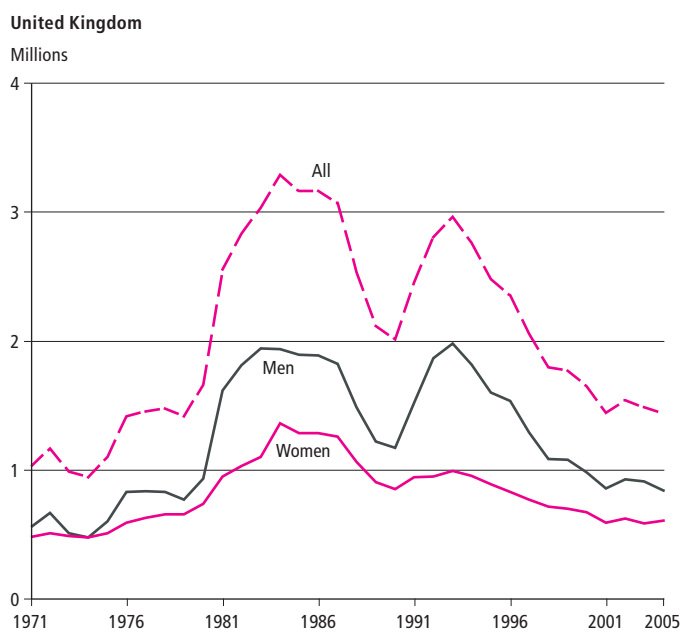
Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

temporary work. However, agency temping increased from 7 per cent of all temporary work in spring 1992 to 19 per cent in spring 2005. Just over a quarter of employees who worked in a temporary job did so because they did not want a permanent one. This proportion was higher for women than men (29 per cent compared with 24 per cent). A slightly lower proportion of employees were in a temporary job because they could not find a permanent job (24 per cent overall).

## Unemployment

The number of unemployed people is linked to the economic cycle, albeit with a time lag. Broadly speaking, as the country experiences economic growth so the number of jobs grows and unemployment falls, though any mismatches between the skill needs of the new jobs and the skills of those available for work may slow this process. Conversely as the economy slows and goes into recession so unemployment tends to rise. Since spring 1971 there have been two main peaks in unemployment. The first was in spring 1984 when unemployment reached 3.3 million, and the latest peak occurred in spring 1993 when it reached nearly 3 million (Figure 4.19). In spring 2001 the number of people unemployed fell to 1.4 million. Unemployment then increased slightly before falling back to 1.4 million again in spring 2005.

Figure 4.19

Unemployment:<sup>1</sup> by sex

<sup>1</sup> At spring each year. People aged 16 and over. Data are seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in autumn 2005. See Appendix, Part 4: Unemployment, and LFS reweighting, and Historical LFS-consistent time series.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

The peak for female unemployment was in spring 1984 when 1.3 million women were unemployed. The recession in the early 1990s had a much greater effect on unemployment among men than among women, as the peak for male unemployment was in 1993 when just under 2 million men were unemployed.

The unemployment rate in the United Kingdom was 4.7 per cent in spring 2005 but unemployment rates varied across the Government Office Regions and devolved administrations, with the highest rate in London (7.2 per cent) and the lowest rate in the South West (3.4 per cent). In Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales unemployment rates in spring 2005 were 5.7 per cent, 4.9 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively.

In 2004 the unemployment rate in the EU-25 was 9.0 per cent, ranging from 4.5 per cent in Ireland to 18.8 per cent in Poland (Table 4.20). The United Kingdom (4.7 per cent) had the third lowest overall unemployment rate of all the EU-25, although it had the sixth lowest rate for men (5.0 per cent) and the second lowest rate for women (4.2 per cent). The differences in rates between men and women were greatest in the southern European countries of Greece and Spain where rates for women were between 7 and 10 percentage points higher than for men. For the majority of the other EU countries, including

**Table 4.20**  
**Unemployment rates:<sup>1</sup> by sex, EU comparison, 2004**

	Men			Women			All		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Ireland	4.9	4.0	4.5	Finland	8.7	8.9	8.8		
Netherlands	4.3	4.8	4.6	Estonia	10.4	8.0	9.2		
United Kingdom	5.0	4.2	4.7	Germany	8.7	10.5	9.5		
Luxembourg	3.3	6.8	4.8	France	8.7	10.5	9.6		
Austria	4.4	5.3	4.8	Latvia	9.4	10.1	9.8		
Cyprus	4.1	6.5	5.2	Greece	6.6	16.2	10.5		
Denmark	5.1	5.7	5.4	Lithuania	10.5	11.2	10.9		
Slovenia	5.6	6.4	6.0	Spain	8.1	15.0	11.0		
Hungary	5.9	6.1	6.0	Slovakia	17.3	19.3	18.2		
Sweden	6.5	6.1	6.3	Poland	18.0	19.8	18.8		
Portugal	5.9	7.6	6.7	EU-25 average	8.1	10.2	9.0		
Malta	7.1	8.7	7.6						
Belgium	7.1	8.9	7.9						
Italy	6.4	10.5	8.0						
Czech Republic	7.1	9.9	8.3						

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Part 4: Eurostat rates.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Eurostat

the United Kingdom, the differences in rates were no more than 2 percentage points.

Unemployment rates in Great Britain for people from non-White ethnic groups were generally higher than those from White ethnic groups in 2004 (Figure 4.21). Male unemployment rates were highest among Black Caribbeans (15 per cent). Rates among men from the Black African, Bangladeshi and Mixed ethnic groups were each around 13 per cent – almost three times the rate for White British and White Irish men (each 5 per cent). Of the men from non-White ethnic groups, Indians had the lowest unemployment rates in 2004.

Among women, Pakistanis had the highest unemployment rates (20 per cent). Unemployment rates for women from the Black African (13 per cent) and Mixed ethnic groups (12 per cent) were also relatively high and around three times the rate for White Irish and White British women (each 4 per cent) (see article on ethnic and religious populations page 1).

Age and sex also influence the length of time that people spend unemployed. Younger unemployed people are less likely than older people to have been so for a long period, and women are less likely than men to have been unemployed for a long period (Table 4.22 overleaf). In spring 2005, over half of unemployed women aged between 16 and 19 had been out of work for less than three months, and less than one in fourteen

**Figure 4.21**  
**Unemployment rates: by ethnic group<sup>1</sup> and sex, 2004<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> The estimates for the Other Black group and Bangladeshi women are excluded due to a small number of respondents.

<sup>2</sup> January to December. See Appendix, Part 4: Annual Population Survey. Men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59.

Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

Table 4.22

Duration of unemployment:<sup>1</sup> by sex and age, 2005<sup>2</sup>

United Kingdom							Percentages
	Less than 3 months	3 months but less than 6 months	6 months but less than 1 year	1 year but less than 2 years	2 years or more	All durations	
<b>Men</b>							
16–19	38	27	20	11	5	100	
20–29	43	22	18	10	8	100	
30–39	32	17	17	19	16	100	
40–49	36	24	11	13	16	100	
50–64	27	16	18	16	23	100	
All aged 16 and over <sup>3</sup>	36	21	17	13	13	100	
<b>Women</b>							
16–19	57	16	20	7	-	100	
20–29	55	21	14	6	4	100	
30–39	50	18	13	12	7	100	
40–49	38	25	13	13	11	100	
50–59	41	14	8	19	18	100	
All aged 16 and over <sup>3</sup>	50	19	14	10	6	100	

1 Excludes those who did not state their duration of unemployment. See Appendix, Part 4: Unemployment.

2 At spring. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

3 Includes men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over.

Shaded cell indicates the estimate is unreliable and any analysis using this figure may be invalid. Any use of this shaded figure must be accompanied by this disclaimer.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

had been unemployed for a year or more. However, around one in six unemployed men in their 30s and 40s had been unemployed for two years or more and this rose to nearly one in four among those aged 50 to 64.

In the LFS people are defined as long-term unemployed if they have been unemployed for one year or more. In spring 2005, 0.3 million people in the United Kingdom had been unemployed for this length of time and of this group around 1 in 3 worked in an elementary occupation in their previous job. Those who were employed in associate, professional and technical occupations in their previous job were among the least likely to be long-term unemployed (around 1 in 15).

Job separations occur when an employee leaves a paid job of their own accord – a voluntary separation – or when the employer initiates the separation – an involuntary separation (see Appendix, Part 4: Job separations). In 2004 more people in the United Kingdom left their job voluntarily than involuntarily (3.3 per cent and 1.2 per cent respectively of those in employment in 2004). Men were also more likely than women to separate involuntarily, whereas women were more likely than men to separate from their job voluntarily.

It is possible in the LFS to determine the current economic activity status of people who separated from a job in the three months before they were interviewed. In winter 2004, the

Table 4.23

Economic activity status:<sup>1</sup> by sex and job separation type, 2004

United Kingdom		Percentages		
	Involuntary job separation	Voluntary job separation	All job separations	
<b>Men</b>				
In employment	45	68	60	
Unemployed	40	17	25	
Economically inactive	15	16	16	
All men	100	100	100	
<b>Women</b>				
In employment	47	62	58	
Unemployed	33	13	18	
Economically inactive	20	25	24	
All women	100	100	100	
<b>All</b>				
In employment	46	65	59	
Unemployed	37	15	22	
Economically inactive	17	20	19	
All people	100	100	100	

1 The current economic activity status of people who separated from paid jobs in the three months before their Labour Force Survey interview in Winter 2004. See Appendix, Part 4: Job separations. Men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics



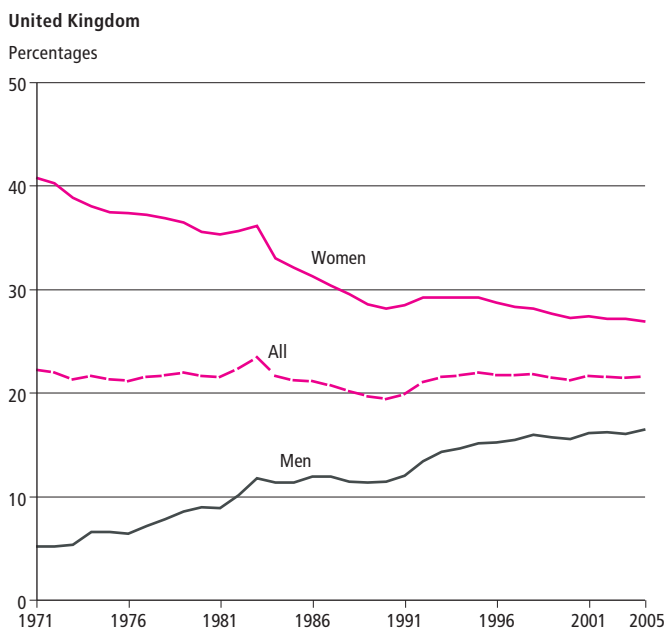
majority of people (59 per cent) who had separated from a job were back in paid employment within three months, although this proportion was higher for those who left voluntarily (65 per cent) than for those who left involuntarily (46 per cent) (Table 4.23). Women were more likely to find employment following an involuntary separation than men, while men were more likely to find employment after a voluntary separation than women. Women were more likely than men to become economically inactive following a voluntary separation.

### Economic inactivity

In spring 2005, 7.9 million people of working age in the United Kingdom were economically inactive, of whom 60 per cent were women. If those over state pension age (65 for men and 60 for women) are included this number rises to 17.6 million.

The inactivity rate among people of working age in the United Kingdom was 21 per cent in spring 2005 and has been stable since 1971 (Figure 4.24). However this masks quite marked differences in the trends for men and women. The inactivity rate among men rose from 5 per cent in spring 1971 to 17 per cent in spring 2005. In comparison although the rate for women is still higher than that for men, it fell from 41 per cent to 27 per cent over the same period.

**Figure 4.24**  
Economic inactivity rates:<sup>1</sup> by sex



<sup>1</sup> At spring each year. Men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59. Data are seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in autumn 2005. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting, and Historical LFS-consistent time series.

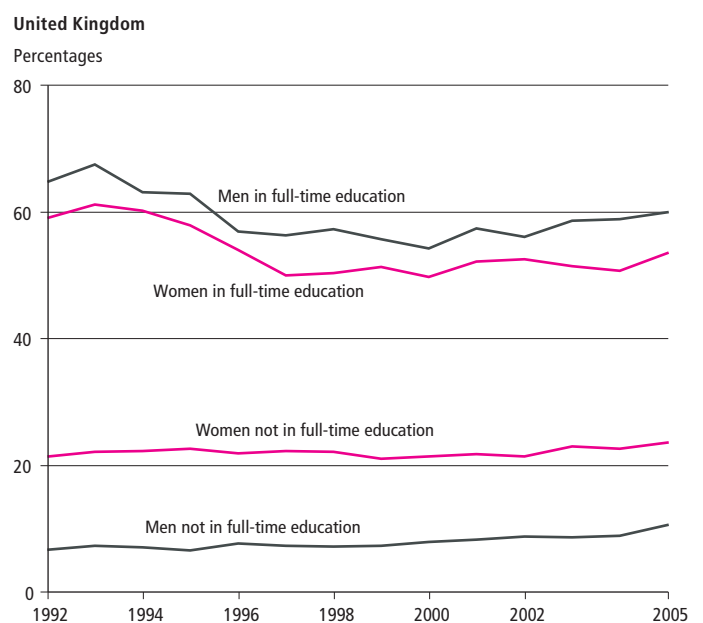
Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Between spring 1995 and spring 2005 the total number of working-age economically inactive people in the United Kingdom increased by 0.3 million. The number of inactive men over the period increased by 0.5 million, whereas the number of women decreased by 0.2 million. Conversely the total number of economically active increased by 1.6 million which was the result of an increase of 1.1 million economically active women and an increase of 0.5 million men.

Economic inactivity rates of young people in the United Kingdom (aged 16 to 24) are affected by whether or not they are in full-time education. Inactivity rates of those in full-time education fell between spring 1992 and spring 2005, although throughout the period the rate for males was consistently around 3 to 8 percentage points higher than for females (Figure 4.25). Among those who were not in full-time education young women were more likely than young men to be economically inactive.

The proportion of people aged 50 and over who were economically inactive fell over the 10 years to spring 2004 from 66 per cent to 62 per cent. For men of this age the rate decreased only slightly from 57 per cent to 54 per cent, whereas the rate for older women fell from 74 per cent to 69 per cent over the decade. Despite the overall decline in the

**Figure 4.25**  
Economic inactivity rates of young people:<sup>1</sup> by whether in full-time education



<sup>1</sup> At spring each year. Young people aged 16 to 24. Data are seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in autumn 2005. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Table 4.26

Reasons for economic inactivity: by sex and age, 2005<sup>1</sup>

United Kingdom		Percentages				
	16–24	25–34	35–49	50–59/64	All aged 16–59/64	
<b>Men</b>						
Long-term sick or disabled	5	40	61	52	37	
Looking after family or home	1	12	15	4	6	
Student	83	24	5	-	30	
Retired	0	0	-	30	13	
Other	11	24	18	13	14	
All men	100	100	100	100	100	
<b>Women</b>						
Long-term sick or disabled	4	9	25	40	20	
Looking after family or home	22	71	60	28	44	
Student	66	10	4	1	21	
Retired	0	0	-	15	4	
Other	8	10	11	16	11	
All women	100	100	100	100	100	

<sup>1</sup> At spring. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

rate of inactivity of older people, they still constituted the largest inactive group in spring 2004 compared with younger age groups.

Reasons for inactivity also vary by age. Long-term sickness or disability was the main reason for economic inactivity among working-age men, particularly for 35 to 49 year olds (61 per cent) (Table 4.26). Looking after the family or home was the most common reason for inactivity among working-age women; 44 per cent said this was their main reason for not seeking work but this rose to 71 per cent of 25 to 34 year olds.

There were over 7 million people in the United Kingdom who were disabled or had a work-limiting disability in spring 2005. Of these just under half (46 per cent) were economically inactive. However 50 per cent were in employment and 4 per cent were unemployed.

### Industrial relations at work

Total UK trade union membership was 6.8 million in autumn 2004, a decrease of 36,000 (0.5 per cent) since the previous year. Between 1995 and 2004 the number of male union members fell by 13 per cent, whereas over the same period female union membership rose by 7 per cent. Trade union density – membership as a proportion of all employees – fell

over this period for both men and women. However, the fall for men was faster so that in autumn 2004 the proportion of male employees belonging to a union (28.5 per cent) fell below that for females (29.1 per cent) for the first time. The widest gender gap was among the 25 to 34 age group, where membership among women employees was 4.1 percentage points higher than among men (Figure 4.27). Between 1995 and 1999 the proportion of women aged 25 to 34 who were members fell from 31 per cent to 27 per cent and remained at around this level to 2004. For men of the same age the proportion fell from 31 per cent in 1995 to 23 per cent in 2002 and remained at around this level to 2004. The only group among whom union membership increased between 1995 and 2004 was women aged 50 and over, from 31 to 34 per cent. However, men in this age group were still marginally more likely to be union members than women.

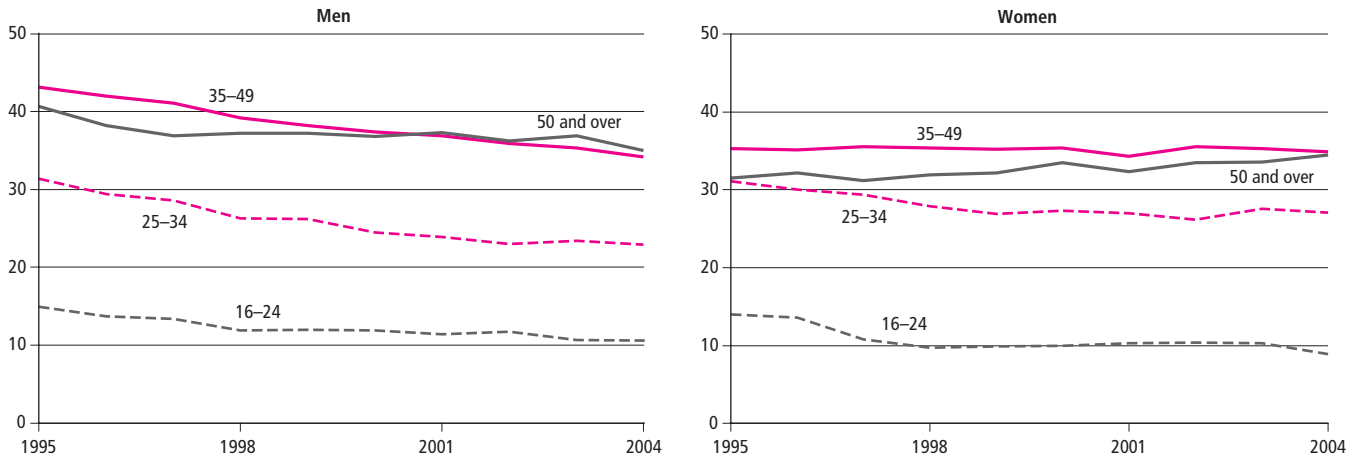
Employment Tribunals are judicial bodies which resolve disputes between employers and employees over employment rights. Their aim is to provide speedy, accessible and relatively informal justice. Employment Tribunals have powers to determine over 70 different types (or jurisdiction) of complaint including unfair dismissal, payment related complaints and discrimination. A claim to an Employment Tribunal can cover more than one type of complaint and in 2004/05 just over 86,000 claims were

Figure 4.27

Trade union membership<sup>1</sup> of employees: by sex and age

United Kingdom

Percentages



<sup>1</sup> Union membership (including staff associations) as a proportion of all employees. At autumn each year. People aged 16 and over. Data are not seasonally adjusted and have been adjusted in line with population estimates published in spring 2003. See Appendix, Part 4: LFS reweighting.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

registered with Employment Tribunals, which covered 156,000 types of complaint. Since 2000/01 there has been a general decrease in the number of claims – 130,000 claims were made in 2000/01 covering 218,000 types of complaint.

Complaints made to Employment Tribunals regarding unfair dismissal (25 per cent of all complaints) were the most common type registered in 2004/05, closely followed by claims for unauthorised deduction of wages (24 per cent)

(Table 4.28). These reasons for complaint have been the most common registered since 2000/01; on average they comprised just under half of all complaints each year. Complaints concerning the Working Time Directive were usually the least common registered during this period, with the exception of 2003/04. During that year there were a large number of cases where more than one claimant brought a complaint against an employer. This resulted in this category accounting for 9 per cent of all types of complaints in 2003/04.

Table 4.28

Employment tribunal claims:<sup>1</sup> by jurisdiction of complaint

Great Britain

Percentages

	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Unfair dismissal	23	27	27	23	25
Unauthorised deduction of wages <sup>2</sup>	19	22	23	22	24
Breach of contract	14	16	17	15	15
Sex, race and disability	16	13	12	14	13
Equal pay	8	5	3	2	5
Redundancy pay	4	5	5	5	5
Working Time Directive	3	3	4	9	2
Others	12	10	10	11	11
All jurisdictions (=100%) (thousands)	218	194	172	197	156

<sup>1</sup> A claim may have been brought under more than one jurisdiction or may have been subsequently amended or clarified in the course of proceedings. Prior to October 2004 claims were called 'applications'.

<sup>2</sup> Prior to 2002/03 this jurisdiction was known as the Wages Act.

Source: Employment Tribunals Service, Department of Trade and Industry

Table 4.29

Stoppages in progress: by size of dispute,<sup>1</sup> 2004

United Kingdom

	Stoppages in progress (numbers)	Percentage of all stoppages	Working days lost (thousands)	Percentage of all working days lost
<b>Working days lost in each dispute</b>				
Under 250 days	62	47.7	6.9	0.8
250 and under 500	16	12.3	5.4	0.6
500 and under 1,000	20	15.4	12.3	1.4
1,000 and under 5,000	22	16.9	51.4	5.7
5,000 and under 25,000	5	3.8	59.3	6.6
25,000 and under 50,000	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
50,000 days and over	5	3.8	769.5	85.0
All stoppages	130	100.0	904.9	100.0

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Part 4: Labour disputes.

Source: Office for National Statistics

In 2004 there were 905,000 working days lost in the United Kingdom through labour disputes, almost twice the number lost in 2003 (499,000). The 2004 total is higher than the average number of working days lost per year in the 1990s (660,000), but considerably lower than the average for both the 1980s (7.2 million) and the 1970s (12.9 million).

The majority of working days lost resulted from large stoppages – 92 per cent of working days lost in 2004 resulted from stoppages where more than 5,000 days were lost in total – but only 8 per cent of stoppages were that large (Table 4.29).

By contrast 48 per cent of stoppages involved the loss of less than 250 days, but only 1 per cent of all working days lost came from stoppages of this size. Ninety six per cent of all working days lost in 2004 were as a result of 101 stoppages in the service sector. Nearly half of all working days lost (48 per cent) were through stoppages in the public administration and defence and compulsory social security sector, followed by education with 42 per cent. The industries with the fewest working days lost were construction which accounted for 0.01 per cent of all working days lost and electricity, gas and water supply which accounted for 0.03 per cent.

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The Director of ONS is also the National Statistician and the Registrar General for England and Wales.

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