Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann um Staitisticí agus Taighde

NORTHERN IRELAND QUARTERLY EMPLOYMENT SURVEY (QES) – QUARTER 1 2017 REVISIONS

DATE: 14 June 2017

The QES sample is selected from the Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) using Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code and employee variables. These variables are also used for grossing purposes.

The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) results are used to update the employee and SIC code variables on the IDBR annually in Quarter 1 (Q1). This in turn updates the population to which the QES is grossed to and also the SIC code business are classified by.

As the most recent BRES (2015) was a full census of business (70,000 businesses) there was a greater impact on QES results than in previous years. The impact was to lift the QES jobs series primarily affecting the services sector between Q4 2015 and Q4 2016.

The December 2016 annual change initially reported as 0.3% has subsequently been revised to an annual change of 1.9%. The below graph shows the impact of revisions on the employee jobs time series.

The BRES data also updated the business industry information (SIC code) in Q1 2017. This new information helps to improve the industry estimates of employee jobs each quarter but also adds volatility to quarterly and annual changes, particularly at 2 digit SIC level. It is therefore recommended that changes in employee jobs estimates at 2 digit SIC level are considered in the context of a longer time series. The greatest impact was seen in the quarterly increase in the following sectors: (i) office administrative, office support and other business support activities; (ii) retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles and (iii) other professional, scientific and technical activities.