The production and presentation of unemployment statistics – comparability issues

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Percentage unemployment rate - top six and bottom six

- Macedonia
- Namibia
- South Africa
- Algeria
- Guadeloupe
- Palestine
- Mexico
- Cambodia
- Guatemala
- Thailand
- Azerbaijan
- Kuwait
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>ILO unemployment</th>
<th>Admin measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>000s</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>1,414</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>8,774</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4,023</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>6,303</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>16,634</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>4,570</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>—</td>
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</tbody>
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- Claimants
- Insured
- Registered
- Work applicants
- Major cities
Dimensions of comparability

- Conceptual
- Boundaries
- Entry and duration
- Denominators
- Influence
ILO/survey criteria

• Not in employment/available to start work
• Seeking work main criterion

• Advantages – universal/independence from admin schemes
• Disadvantages – fuzzy/bends towards exits/incompatible with admin schemes
CPS questions on employment

• LAST WEEK, did you do ANY work for (either) pay (or profit) ?
• LAST WEEK, did you do any unpaid work in the family business or farm ?
The entry oversight

• Question on unemployment addressed only to those already unemployed
• Misses entry to unemployment
• Duration statistics relate only to uncompleted spells
• Miss unemployment of less than four weeks
Exits from unemployment before four weeks compared with stock and monthly entrants - Great Britain
Entry oversight (cont’d)

- Misses a forward indicator
- Misses ‘reasons’ for unemployment
- Misses link with other labour market ‘states’
Reasons for unemployment, percent distributions, 1998 and 1999
Unemployment rates and entry rates
parliamentary constituency areas of the UK in 2004

Unemployment rate

Entry to unemployment rate

R = 0.892
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2004</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(percentages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Average unemployment rate</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>2.39</td>
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<tr>
<td>(population of working age denominators)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coefficient of variation</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>54.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Measures of long-term unemployment (rates LH scale, numbers RH scale)

PAR rate

LAPU

Unemp < year

Thousands unemployed
Unemployment rates for 2004:
- 2.89 to 9.94 (132)
- 1.95 to 2.89 (131)
- 1.3 to 1.95 (133)
- 0.57 to 1.3 (133)
Reforms for the LFS

• Recognise entry to unemployment and reasons for unemployment with questions to all respondents.
• Embrace not ignore administrative systems
• Use administrative records as part of sampling frame.