

## **Unemployment statistics from the Labour Force Surveys (LFS) and the Swedish Public Employment Service 2015 – A comparative study**

A comparative study was published in 2016 which was a more thorough follow up to a study published in 2013 on the two, in Sweden, generally occurring measures of unemployment. These are the official unemployment statistics published by Statistic Sweden's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the statistics from the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES). Questions that were highlighted in the report were which groups were classified as unemployed in the LFS but not registered at the SPES and vice-versa which groups were registered as unemployed at the SPES but not classified as unemployed by the LFS. The age span used for the comparison was 16-64 years, the ages that you can be registered at the SPES.

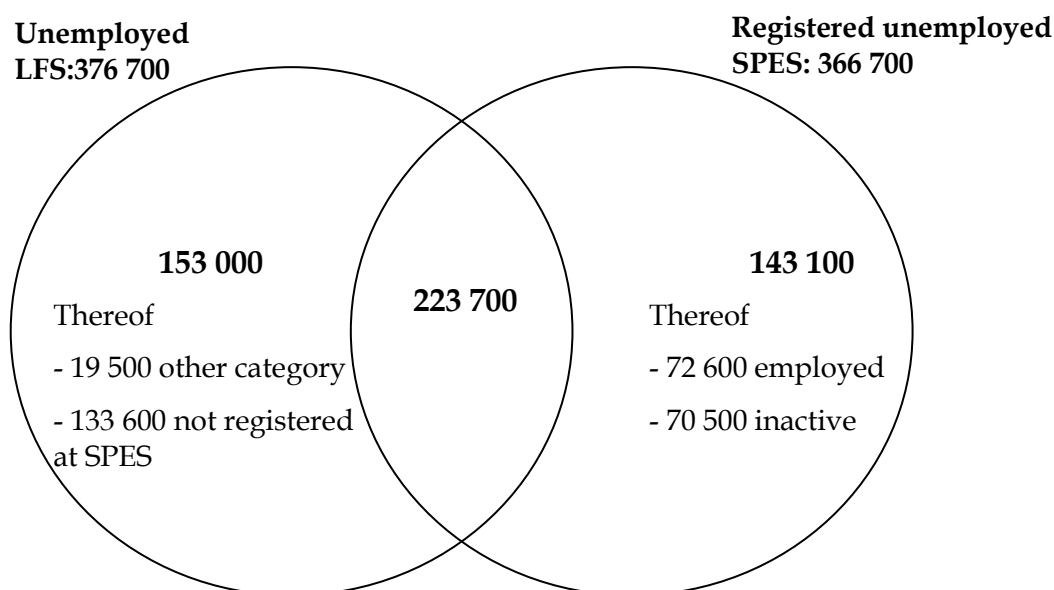
According to the LFS 376 700 persons aged 16-64 years (see table 1) were unemployed during 2015. During the same period 366 700 in the same age were registered as unemployed at the SPES. This gives a net difference of 10 000 persons indicating a good consistency between the two data sources. The composition of the two groups was however quite different and when divided by age it showed that far more young people aged 16-24 years (90 percent) were classified as unemployed in the LFS than were registered as unemployed at the SPES. The opposite was true for the 25-54 and 55-64 year olds.



**Table 1. Net difference between the LFS and the SPES by sex, age educational level and country of birth, 2015.**

| Sex/age/<br>education/<br>native-/foreign born | Data source |         |                |
|--|-------------|---------|----------------|
|  | LFS         | SPES    | Net-difference |
| 16-64 years                                    | 376 700     | 366 700 | 10 000         |
| Men  | 201 700     | 197 400 | 4 300          |
| Women  | 175 000     | 169 300 | 5 700          |
| 16-24 years                                    | 127 000     | 67 000  | 60 000         |
| 25-54  | 201 800     | 239 200 | -37 400        |
| 55-64  | 48 000      | 60 600  | -12 600        |
| <u>Education</u>                               |             |         |                |
| Primary and secondary                          | 113 300     | 89 500  | 23 800         |
| Upper secondary                                | 153 200     | 172 700 | -19 500        |
| Post-secondary                                 | 108 500     | 102 700 | 5 800          |
| Native born                                    | 218 900     | 186 400 | 32 500         |
| Foreign born                                   | 157 800     | 180 300 | -22 500        |

Beside that the age composition differed there were considerable gross differences between the two data sources (see table 1 in the appendix for a more detailed table). There were, for instance, registered unemployed that were employed or inactive in the LFS as well as unemployed in the LFS that were not registered at the SPES.

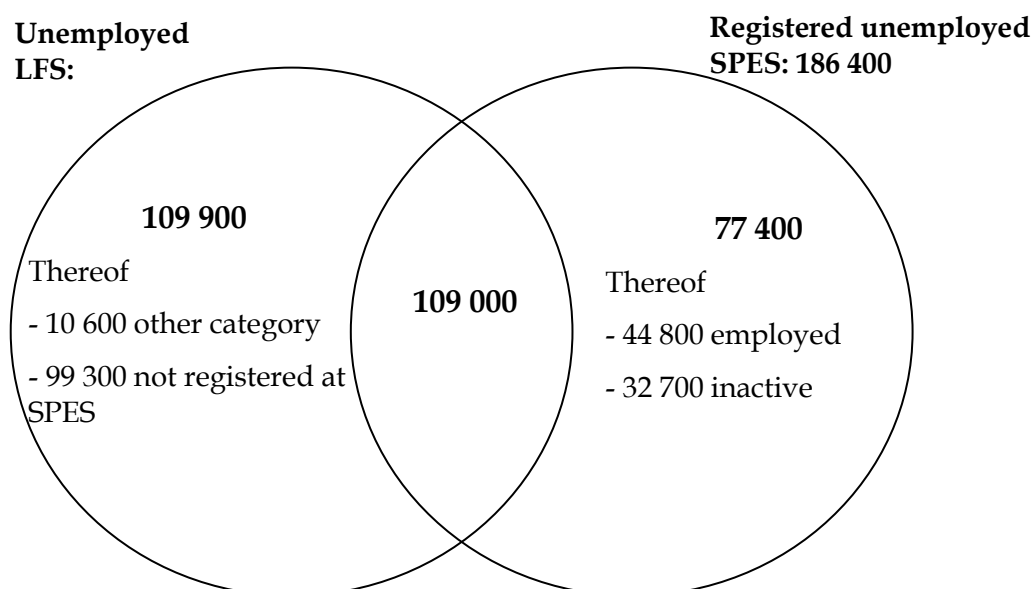
**Diagram 1. Persons aged 16-64 years. Unemployed (LFS) and registered unemployed (SPES) and gross differences by jobseeker category.**

The *first gross difference*, how registered unemployed at the SPES were distributed by labour status, showed that of the 366 700 registered as unemployed at the SPES 61.0 percent, or 223 700, were classified as unemployed in the LFS. Further 19.8 percent were classified as employed and 19.2 percent as inactive (see table 1 in Annex).

The second *gross difference*, how those classified as unemployed in the LFS were distributed by job seeker category, showed that among the 376 700 classified as unemployed in the LFS 59.4 percent, or 223 700, were also registered as unemployed at the SPES. Further, 5.2 percent was registered at the SPES but not in a category that is included in the registered unemployed definition and 133 600 were not registered at all at the SPES.

A comparison of native- and foreign born persons showed differences for both net- as well as gross differences (see table 2 and 3 in the appendix for a more detailed table). During 2015 there were 32 500 more native born persons that were unemployed according to the LFS then were registered as unemployed at the SPES, 218 900 compared to 186 400. For the foreign born persons the conditions was opposite with 22 500 fewer unemployed according to the LFS then registered at the SPES, 157 800 compared to 180 300. In other words the difference was noticeable even for the net differences

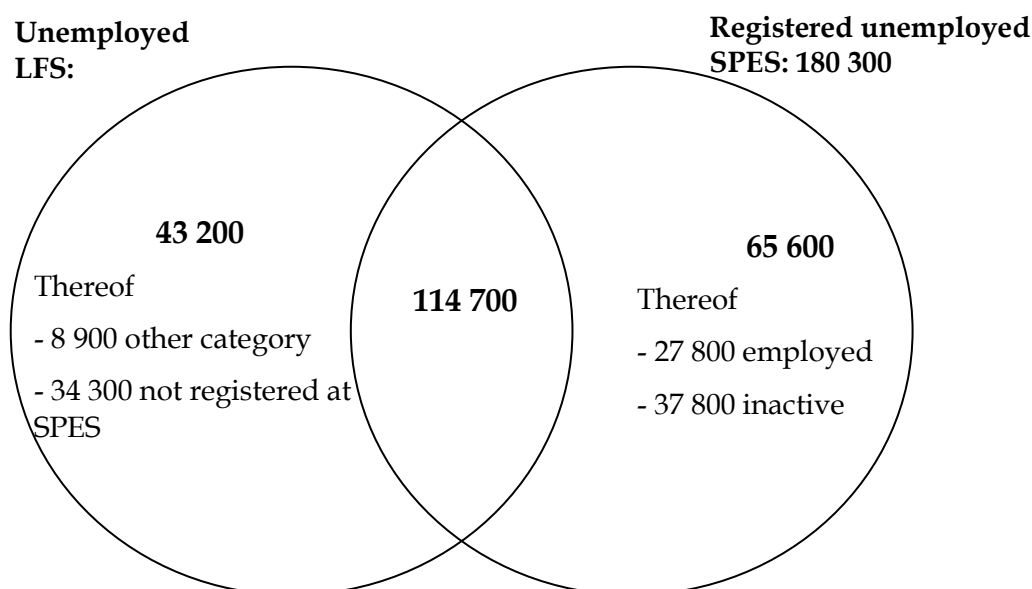
**Diagram 2. Native born persons aged 16-64 years. Unemployed (LFS) and registered unemployed (SPES) and gross differences by jobseeker category.**



The *first gross difference*, how registered unemployed at the SPES were distributed by labour status, showed small differences between native- and foreign born persons. Of the native born 58.5 percent of those registered at the SPES were also classified as unemployed in the

LFS. Corresponding figure for the foreign born persons was 63.6 percent.

**Diagram 3. Native born persons aged 16-64 years. Unemployed (LFS) and registered unemployed (SPES) and gross differences by job seeker category.**



The second *gross difference*, how those classified as unemployed in the LFS were distributed by job seeker category, showed considerably bigger differences between native- and foreign born persons. Of the unemployed, according to the LFS, native born persons aged 16-64 years 49.8 percent was also registered as unemployed at the SPES. Among foreign born persons that same figure was 72.6 percent. Another difference was that the share of unemployed that was not registered at the SPES was clearly higher among native born, 45.4 percent, compared to 21.7 percent among foreign born.

There were two crucial differences between native and foreign born regarding the unemployed that were not registered as unemployed at the SPES. The first is regarding the age structure. Among native born young people made up 65.5 percent of all unemployed that was unregistered while the same figure for foreign born were 35.6 percent.

The other difference was that the share that was not registered at all (not in any program or activity) tended to be higher among native born persons, 90.4 compared 79.4 among foreign born.

## Appendix:

**Table 1. Persons aged 16-64 years, 2015. Labour force status (LFS) and jobseeker category (SPES). Thousands and percent.**

| Registered by categories (grouped) |                       |                   |                                  |                                    |                                 |               |                  |                       |                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Labour status                      | Registered unemployed | thereof           |                                  | Jobseeker employed without support | Jobseeker employed with support | Nystarts-jobb | Other categories | Un-registered at SPES | Total             |
|                                    |                       | Openly unemployed | In programme with activity grant |                                    |                                 |               |                  |                       |                   |
|                                    |                       |                   |                                  |                                    |                                 |               |                  |                       |                   |
| Employed at work                   | 61,4<br>16,8%         | 31,5<br>16,5%     | 30,0<br>17,1%                    | 77,3                               | 68,0                            | 43,7          | 5,5              | 3 652,1               | 3 908,0           |
| Employed absent                    | 11,2<br>3,0%          | 6,7<br>3,5%       | 4,5<br>2,5%                      | 8,9                                | 11,3                            | 4,2           | 3,4              | 703,9                 | 742,7             |
| Unemployed                         | 223,7<br>(59,4%)      | 118,2<br>(31,4%)  | 105,5<br>(28,0%)                 | 9,1<br>(2,4%)                      | 1,4<br>(0,4%)                   | 1,6<br>(0,4%) | 7,4<br>(2,0%)    | 133,6<br>(35,5%)      | 376,7<br>(100,0%) |
| Percent row                        | 61,0%                 | 61,8%             | 60,1%                            |                                    |                                 |               |                  |                       |                   |
| Inactive                           | 70,5<br>19,2%         | 34,7<br>18,2%     | 35,7<br>20,3%                    | 4,3                                | 1,4                             | 0,6           | 36,0             | 924,3                 | 1 037,1           |
| Total                              | 366,7<br>100,0%       | 191,1<br>100,0%   | 175,6<br>100,0%                  | 99,5                               | 82,0                            | 50,1          | 52,4             | 5 413,8               | 6 064,6           |

**Table 2. Native born aged 16-64 years, 2015. Labour force status (LFS) and jobseeker category (SPES). Thousands and percent.**

| Registered by categories (grouped) |                       |                   |                                  |                                    |                                 |                          |                  |                       |                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Labour status                      | Registered unemployed | thereof           |                                  | Jobseeker employed without support | Jobseeker employed with support | Nystarts-jobb categories | Other categories | Un-registered at SPES | Total             |
|                                    |                       | Openly unemployed | In programme with activity grant |                                    |                                 |                          |                  |                       |                   |
|                                    |                       |                   |                                  |                                    |                                 |                          |                  |                       |                   |
| Employed at work                   | 37,7<br>20,2%         | 19,3<br>20,2%     | 18,4<br>20,3%                    | 49,4                               | 50,9                            | 18,8                     | 3,8              | 3 059,7               | 3 220,4           |
| Employed absent                    | 7,1<br>3,8%           | 3,6<br>3,8%       | 3,5<br>3,8%                      | 5,8                                | 8,7                             | 2,3                      | 2,3              | 584,6                 | 610,8             |
| Unemployed                         | 109,0<br>(49,8%)      | 59,5<br>(27,2%)   | 49,5<br>(22,6%)                  | 6,1<br>(2,8%)                      | 0,8<br>(0,4%)                   | 0,6<br>(0,3%)            | 3,1<br>(1,4%)    | 99,3<br>(45,4%)       | 218,9<br>(100,0%) |
| Percent row                        | 58,5%                 | 62,3%             | 54,4%                            |                                    |                                 |                          |                  |                       |                   |
| Inactive                           | 32,7<br>17,5%         | 13,1<br>13,7%     | 19,6<br>21,5%                    | 3,1                                | 0,9                             | 0,2                      | 17,8             | 692,2                 | 746,9             |
| Total                              | 186,4<br>100,0%       | 95,5<br>100,0%    | 90,9<br>100,0%                   | 64,4                               | 61,4                            | 21,9                     | 27,1             | 4 435,8               | 4 797,0           |

**Table 3. Foreign born aged 16-64 years, 2015. Labour force status (LFS) and jobseeker category (SPES). Thousands and percent.**

| Labour status    | Registered by categories (grouped) |                           |                                  |                                    |                                 |               |                  | Un-registered at SPES | Total    |
|------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------|
|                  | Registered unemployed              | thereof Openly unemployed | In programme with activity grant | Jobseeker employed without support | Jobseeker employed with support | Nystarts-jobb | Other categories |                       |          |
| Employed at work | 23,8<br>13,2%                      | 12,2<br>12,8%             | 11,5<br>13,6%                    | 27,8                               | 17,1                            | 24,9          | 1,7              | 592,4                 | 687,7    |
| Employed absent  | 4,1<br>2,3%                        | 3,0<br>3,2%               | 1,0<br>1,2%                      | 3,0                                | 2,6                             | 1,9           | 1,1              | 119,3                 | 131,9    |
| Unemployed       | 114,7                              | 58,6                      | 56,0                             | 3,0                                | 0,5                             | 1,0           | 4,3              | 34,3                  | 157,8    |
| Percent row      | (72,6%)<br>63,6%                   | (37,2%)<br>61,4%          | (35,5%)<br>66,1%                 | (1,9%)                             | (0,3%)                          | (0,6%)        | (2,8%)           | (21,7%)               | (100,0%) |
| Inactive         | 37,8<br>21,0%                      | 21,7<br>22,7%             | 16,2<br>19,1%                    | 1,2                                | 0,4                             | 0,5           | 18,2             | 232,1                 | 290,2    |
| <b>Total</b>     | 180,3<br>100,0%                    | 95,6<br>100,0%            | 84,7<br>100,0%                   | 35,1                               | 20,7                            | 28,3          | 25,3             | 978,0                 | 1 267,6  |