

### 3 – WORK

The economic crisis that began at the end of 2007 continued to have a negative effect on the labour market in Sicily in 2011. In this period, when compared to the previous year, there was a -0.4% fall in the number of employed persons (down by -5,900) and a fall of approximately -3% in the number of persons seeking employment (over 7,000 units). By sector, there were appreciable losses in the building trade (almost -8,741 units, equal to a fall of -7.1%), in industry in the strict sense (-0.9%) and in the service industry (-0.5%), whereas in agriculture there was an increase in employment of +8.16% (+8,681 units).

Distribution by branch of economic activity in 2011 confirmed the sizable gap between the number of people employed in industry in the strict sense in Sicily (9.3%) and the corresponding number in Italy as a whole (20.4%); confirmation of the lack of industrialization and an abiding agricultural vocation was provided by figures for workers in the primary sector of 8% in Sicily, as against the 3.7% in the country as a whole. Furthermore, the data highlights, both in Sicily and Italy, the solid concentration of employed persons in the private and public services, accounting for 75.6% and 67.6% of the totals respectively.

In 2011 (last data available when the yearbook went into print), over 222,000 workers (15.5% of the total for Sicily) had part-time contracts, principally women (66 out of 100 part-time employees), almost all of whom were employed in the service industries.

Of the almost 205,000 term contracts stipulated in 2010 in Sicily, over 130,000 regarded the service sector (63.9%) and about 50,000 agriculture (24.3%), whereas the corresponding figures for construction (7.1%) and industry in the strict sense (4.6%) were decidedly lower.

As further demonstration of the difficulty encountered in Sicily in entering the job market, in 2011 the number of persons seeking employment (240,703) corresponded to 11.4% of the national figure and 21.3% with reference to the South/islands division. The unemployment-rate fell slightly (from 14.7% to 14.4% in the last year) whilst the number of unemployed persons aged between 15 and 64 rose to over 1,686,000 (representing 11.3% of the national total). The rise in the number of persons seeking work affected both young people (who delayed joining the labour market in order to complete their studies) and adults (especially women) who were not actively seeking work, but would be available to work if the opportunity presented itself.

Mid-period analysis highlights a continuing, recessive trend beginning in 2007, the year in which the number of employed persons totaled 1,488,485. With regard to women the last year showed a 0.3% rise in the level of

employment when compared to 2010, less marked than the figure recorded for 2007 (+0.9%). As for males, on the other hand, a fall of 0.8% was registered in the last period and a fall of -5.5% when compared with the initial period. For the former the employment figures went from 29% in 2007 to 28.7% by the end of the period. At the same time there was a significant rise in the number of persons seeking work. In the five-year period numbers rose by over 19,156 units, with a direct effect on the unemployment-rate, which rose by 1.4% (standing at 13% in 2007). The participation-rate also fell from 51.3% in 2007 to 49.5% in 2011.

In relation to population size, the Provinces of Palermo (338,797 workers), Catania (302,660) and Messina (195,930) alone accounted for 58.4% of the total number of employed persons in Sicily. The highest participation-rate was to be found in Ragusa (56.2%), Siracusa (52.2%) and Agrigento (51.7%). Caltanissetta and Catania were again the least “active” Provinces, with indicator figures of around 47.8%, followed by Trapani with a slightly higher figure of 48.8%. At the Provincial level, analysis of employment-rates highlights gender-related imbalances. The figures registered for females are decidedly lower than the high figures for males. For example, for males in the Provinces of Agrigento (71.8%), Ragusa (70.3%) and Siracusa (67.6%), where the indicator’s highest levels are recorded, the respective percentages for women are 32.1%, 42.1% and 36.9%. The lowest figures for men were registered in Enna (62.2%), Catania (62.3%) and Messina (62.8%). Greater difficulty in finding work seems to be encountered above all in the Provinces of Palermo, where the unemployment-rate stands at 16%, Agrigento (17.7%) and Caltanissetta (17.1%), whereas residents of Catania (12.5%), Trapani (12.8%) and Messina (12.5%) seem to have more opportunity; although Ragusa (1.5%) has one of the lowest unemployment-rates in the Region, it is beginning to distance itself from unemployment-levels in the north/centre, which were more similar in the years preceding 2011.

## *Glossary*

**Dependent employee (permanent and full-time):** employed persons tied to a business enterprise by a direct contract, on the basis of which they receive a salary.

**Employed, The:** all persons aged over 15, who, in the week of reference,:

- have carried out an hour of work in any activity providing remuneration in cash or in kind;
- have carried out at least an hour of unpaid work in the business of an acquaintance, where they have often helped out;

– are off work (e.g. holiday, illness). Those off work are considered employed if the absence does not exceed 3 months, or if, during their absence, they continue to receive at least 50% of their pay. Non-permanent workers who are off work, except for family-collaborators, are considered employed if, during their period of absence, they still keep their jobs. Family-collaborators are considered employed if their absence does not exceed 3 months.

**Employment-rate:** percentage ratio of the employed (aged 15 to 64) to the corresponding contextual population .

**Job-seekers:** include unemployed persons (aged between 15 and 74) who:  
– have tried to look for employment in the thirty days prior to the interview and are available for work (or to launch an autonomous activity) within the two weeks following the interview;  
-or will start a job within three months of the date of the interview and are available for work (or to launch an autonomous activity) within the two weeks following the interview, whenever it is possible to bring forward the starting date for the job.

**Labour force:** the total number of employed persons and persons seeking employment.

**Non-work force:** persons who declare themselves to be of a non-professional status and not to have carried out any working activity, nor to have sought work in the period in question. Included in this group are those doing their military, or substitutive civil service, invalids and persons under the age of 14 years.

**Participation-rate:** ratio of people in the work-force aged 15 to 64 years to the entire corresponding population.

**Unemployment-rate:** is the percentage ratio between those seeking employment and the total work-force.

### *Further reading*

#### Publications

Italian statistical Yearbook 2012 – ISTAT  
SVIMEZ 2010 report on the economy in the South – SVIMEZ  
Immigration Statistics Dossier 2012 – CARITAS  
Pensions – 2006 – ISTAT

Work and pay – 2005-2006 – ISTAT  
The Labour-force – 2010 Averages – ISTAT

Internet

**<http://www.istat.it>**

**Factor Productivity Measures – 1980-2006**

**Added value and internal employees per local work system - 2003-2004**

**Employment and added value in the Provinces – 1995-2003**

**System of territorial indicators – Labour market area**

**Statistics for development policies – Key context indicators – Axis III**

**Human resources**

**Italian statistical Yearbook 2011 – Chapter 9: “Work”**

**<http://www.inps.it>**

**Statistics data-banks**

**Observatory on businesses, permanent employees in non-agricultural private sector and average annual pay for workers and employees**

**Observatory on dependent employees**

**Observatory on employment and labour policies**

**Observatory on self-employed workers**

**Observatory on domestic workers**

**Observatory on the agricultural world**

**[www.lavoro.gov.it](http://www.lavoro.gov.it)**

**Sector studies and statistics**

**[www.isfol.it](http://www.isfol.it)**

**Annual report**

**[www.inail.it](http://www.inail.it)**

**Statistics data-banks**

**Data-banks of disabled**

**Employment observatory**

**Historical statistics**

**[www.lavoro.minori.it](http://www.lavoro.minori.it)**

**National investigation into juvenile labour: “Children and work” – 2000**

**Children and injuries at work: reports and indemnity – 2002**

**Inspections of companies employing minors – 2003-2004**

**[www.alef-fvg.it](http://www.alef-fvg.it)**

**Data regarding immigration and emigration**

**[www.isfol.it](http://www.isfol.it)**

**Towards work, organization and functioning of public services for citizens  
and business enterprises in the labour-market – Monitoring 2003**

**Labour quality in Italy**

**[www.cnel.it](http://www.cnel.it)**

**Labour-market data-base**