

3 – WORK

The economic crisis that began at the end of 2007 has continued to have a negative effect on the labour market in Sicily in 2009. In this period, compared to the previous year, there has been a 1.1% fall (-15,000 employed persons), whilst the number of persons seeking employment has remained more or less stable at over 236,000 units.

By sector, there were appreciable losses in construction (almost 16,000 units, equal to a fall of 10.6% in the sector), in industry in the strict sense (-6%) and in agriculture (4,5000 units, equal to a 4.1% fall). On the other hand, employment in the service industry continued to rise (+1.2%).

Distribution by branch of economic activity in 2009, confirmed the sizable gap between the number of people employed in industry in the strict sense in Sicily (8.8%) and the corresponding number in Italy as a whole (20.7%); confirmation of the absence of industrialisation and an abiding agricultural vocation was provided by figures in the primary sector of 7.2% in Sicily, as against the 3.8% 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 74.7% and 67% of the totals respectively. In the same period, over 194,000 workers (13.3% of the total for Sicily) had part-time contracts, principally women (67 out of 100 employed part-time), almost all of whom were employed in the service industries.

Of the over 196,000 term contracts stipulated in 2009 in Sicily, over 127,000 regarded the service sector (64.9%) and about 46,000 agriculture (23.6%), whereas the corresponding figures for construction (6.3%) and industry in the strict sense (5.3%) were decidedly lower.

A further demonstration of the difficulties encountered in Sicily in entering the job market was provided in 2009 by the number of persons seeking employment (236,075), corresponding to 12.1% of the national figure and

26.2% if the South/islands division is taken into account. The unemployment-rate also rose slightly (from 13.8% to 13.9% in the last year) and the number of unemployed aged between 15 and 64 totalled over 1,643,000 (representing 11.1% of the national total). The rise in the number of persons looking for 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 reversal of trend, from rise to fall, beginning in 2006, the year in which the highest level of employment was registered (1,502,718). With regard to women the last year showed substantially stable employment levels when compared to 2008 and a rise of 4.3% when compared to 2005. As for men, on the other hand, a fall of 1.3% was registered in the last period and 2.7% when compared with the initial period. For the former the employment figures went from 32.4% in 2005 to 33.9% by the end of the period. At the same time there was a significant drop in the number of persons seeking work. In four years numbers fell by over 48,700 units, with a direct effect on the unemployment-rate, which dropped by over 2.3% (standing at 16.2% in 2005). On the other hand the participation-rate fell from 52.7% in the first year to 50.6% in 2009.

In relation to population, the Provinces of Palermo (359,607 workers), Catania (312,959) and Messina (200,638) alone accounted for 59% of the total number of employed persons in Sicily. The highest participation-rate was to be found in Ragusa (56.8%) and Messina (53.1%), whereas Siracusa, Caltanissetta and Catania were again the least "active" provinces, with indicator figures of around 48%. On the Provincial scale, analysis of employment-rates highlights gender-related imbalances. The figures for females are decidedly lower than the high figures registered for males. For example, in the Provinces of Agrigento (73.3%), Enna (70.1%) and Ragusa (69.8%), where the indicator's highest levels are recorded, the percentages for women are 31.5%, 36.6% and 40.4% respectively. The lowest figures for men were registered in Siracusa (64.3%), Catania (63.3%) and Caltanissetta (63.2%). The greatest difficulty in finding work seems to be encountered above all in the provinces of Palermo, where the unemployment-rate stands at 17.9%, Agrigento (17.6%) and Caltanissetta (15.3%), whereas residents of Trapani (11%) seem to have greater opportunity, along with Ragusa (8.9%) and especially Siracusa, where figures (8.5%) stand at levels close to those in the north and centre.

Glossary

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.

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

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: person 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 2010 – ISTAT
SVIMEZ 2010 report on the economy in the South – SVIMEZ
Immigration Statistics Dossier 2010 – CARITAS
Pensions – 2006 – ISTAT
Work and pay – 2005-2006 – ISTAT
The Labour-force – 2009 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 2010 – 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 permanent 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

Sector studies and statistics

www.isfol.it

Annual report

www.inail.it

Statistics data-banks

Data-banks of the disabled

Employment observatory

Historical statistics

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

Data regarding immigration and emigration

www.isfol.it

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

Labour quality in Italy

www.cnel.it

Labour-market data-base