

THE ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

LESSON 4: INTRODUCTION TO THE IRISH ECONOMY

Lesson aim:

- Provide a broad introduction to the Irish economy, particularly the labour market.

Learning objectives:

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- give a brief explanation of how the Irish economy is structured;
- outline the composition of the labour market; and
- identify sectors of growth and contraction and the implications for students.

Lesson outline:

In-class activity: Introduction and discussions

Discussions should centre on the Irish economy, the sectors within it and how the labour force is structured, but will be very broad at this stage. Students should be made aware of the importance of knowing what the economy and jobs market looks like and the possible direction it is going as this will inform them of the potential jobs in the future economy. Ensure students understand any new concepts. Additional information may be found in **Module 5** and at www.cso.ie

Put the word “jobs” on the blackboard and ask students to suggest the types of jobs in the economy. Look for retail worker, office worker, guard, nurse, teacher etc. When there are enough jobs on the board, ask them what sectors they might belong in.

Student activity: The labour market

Using the most up-to-date information from the Central Statistics Office, ask students to complete **Worksheet 3a**.

Using the most recent CSO figures from the Quarterly National Household Survey, ask students to complete **Worksheet 3b**.

In-class activity: Exercise review and discussion

Discuss the findings of the exercises.

- What has been learned?
- What information was new or surprising to you? Why?
- If you were choosing a career, which one would you choose and why?
- If the composition of the labour market was to change suddenly what implications would it have for students in terms of education, subject choice, qualifications and opportunities after school?

Student assignment: Essay writing

Based on the information learned so far, students should write an essay on one of the following or a topic of the teacher’s choosing.

“The composition of the Irish Labour force has profoundly changed in the last 20 years. This has a significant impact on education, subject choices and opportunities for students.” Discuss.

“By the time I leave school, my employment options will be significantly better (worse).” Discuss in light of current economic conditions.