

**Office for National Statistics
- UK Unemployment 3 mths to Aug '09**

The employment rate and the number of people in employment have fallen. The number of vacancies is unchanged. The number of unemployed people, the unemployment rate and the claimant count have increased. The number of inactive people of working age and the inactivity rate have increased. Growth in average earnings, both excluding and including bonuses, has fallen.

The employment rate for people of working age was 72.6 per cent for the three months to August 2009. It is down 0.3 from the previous quarter and down 1.8 over the year. The total number of people in employment for the three months to August 2009 was 28.95 million, down 45,000 over the quarter and down 467,000 over the year.

The unemployment rate was 7.9 per cent for the three months to August 2009. It is up 0.3 over the previous quarter and up 2.1 over the year. The number of unemployed people increased by 88,000 over the quarter and by 677,000 over the year, to reach 2.47 million. Short-term (up to six months duration) unemployment has fallen by 57,000 over the quarter to reach 1.36 million. This is the first quarterly fall in this series since the three months to March 2008.

The claimant count, which measures the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, reached 1.63 million in September 2009. It has not been higher since April 1997. While the total number of claimants increased by 20,800 over the previous month, the number of claimants of up to six months duration fell by 2,500.

The number of redundancies in the three months to August 2009 was 233,000, down 68,000 over the quarter but up 85,000 over the year.

There were 434,000 job vacancies in the three months to September 2009, unchanged over the previous quarter but down 163,000 over the year.

The inactivity rate for people of working age was 21.0 per cent for the three months to August 2009, up 0.1 both over the previous quarter and over the year. The number of economically inactive people of working age rose by 50,000 over the quarter and by 80,000 over the year to reach 7.97 million.

Average earnings, excluding bonuses, increased by 1.9 per cent in the three months to August 2009 compared with the previous year. This is the lowest annual growth rate since comparable records began in 2001. Average earnings, including bonuses, increased by 1.6 per cent in the three months to August 2009.

Steve Royston, until recently a resident of Riyadh and still an RGBB member has written in to the RGBB News with some observations and advice which may prove 'interesting' to many of us during these 'interesting' times.

Unemployment in the UK is topping 2.5 million and rising. Even at the top of the tree, people who would move effortlessly from one highly-rewarded job to another every few years are looking over their shoulders anxiously. Careers on the upward plane are stalling. Personal networks don't work as they used to because people are focused on retaining their own positions on the ladder rather than helping their friends. New members are flocking to LinkedIn to try and find "new friends". For goodness sake, Sven-Goran Eriksson is working at Notts County. But more about football later.

More than most, expatriate managers and executives in the Middle East know a thing or two about the simple twists of fate. Has there ever been job security in Dubai, in Riyadh, in Bahrain? Back in the UK, many of today's high-flyers were at school or University last time a serious recession bit. Not for nothing do economists describe events like the Saudi oil embargo of 1973 and the meltdown of the banking system in 2008 as "shocks". And on a personal level it's shocking to find the stable foundation of a lifestyle or a career shaken.



Interesting times demand interesting solutions. Michael Owen, scorer of 43 goals for England, found himself in a personal recession of the mind and body. He was becalmed at Newcastle in a losing team, and struggling to resurrect his career after string of serious injuries. His advisors came up with a bright idea. Why not produce a 16-page glossy brochure extolling Michael's skills, his track record and his newly-restored fitness, and send it to all the top clubs in England and the Continent? So they did. The result was increased press coverage and an expectation among managers that there would be competition for Michael's services. Is that what caused Sir Alex Ferguson to sign him to Manchester United? Probably not. But what created a stir was the fact that a high-profile player like Owen was packaged and marketed like a product or a company – features, benefits and all.

**The
Business
Within**

