

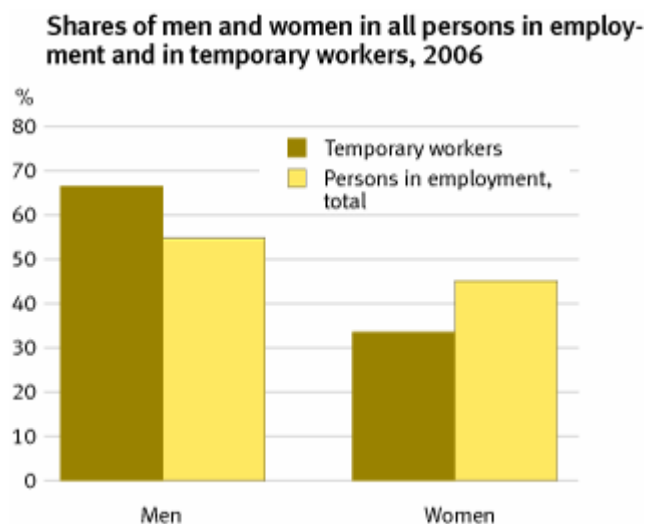
Temporary employment

Results of the Microcensus 2006

Destatis, 18 March 2008

With regard to forms of employment, the labour market has been changing for years. Temporary employment, also referred to as "labour leasing", has in particular gained increasing importance in recent years and even more so since the deregulation reform of the Act on Temporary Employment Businesses (AÜG) of 2003. This contribution provides information and figures on temporary employment, which was first covered in a separate question in the 2006 European Labour Force Survey, which is an integral part of the microcensus.

The majority of temporary workers are men



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According to the results of the microcensus, the total number of temporary workers in Germany was 588,000 in 2006, accounting for slightly more than 1.5% of all persons in employment. While the total number of persons in employment showed a nearly equal distribution between the genders, with the proportion of women amounting to 45%, men predominated among temporary workers in Germany, of whom 66% were men and only about a third (34%) were women. This supports the assumption that temporary employment is particularly strong in those economic sectors in which above-average numbers of men are employed.

The microcensus does not explicitly collect information on the economic activity of the local unit which has hired out a temporary worker. Temporary employment businesses – including the temporary personnel contractually employed by them – are, by definition, allocated to the services sector (business activities).

However, an analysis of the data on temporary workers by occupational groups reveals that just under 50% of them work in male-dominated production jobs (in contrast to 22% of all persons in employment), which can often be allocated to the secondary sector. This may be an explanation for the disproportionate number of men among temporary workers. Just under 45% of the temporary workers are in service occupations (67% of all persons in employment). Other occupational groups such as those in agriculture and forestry, mining and quarrying, and technical occupations can hardly be found.

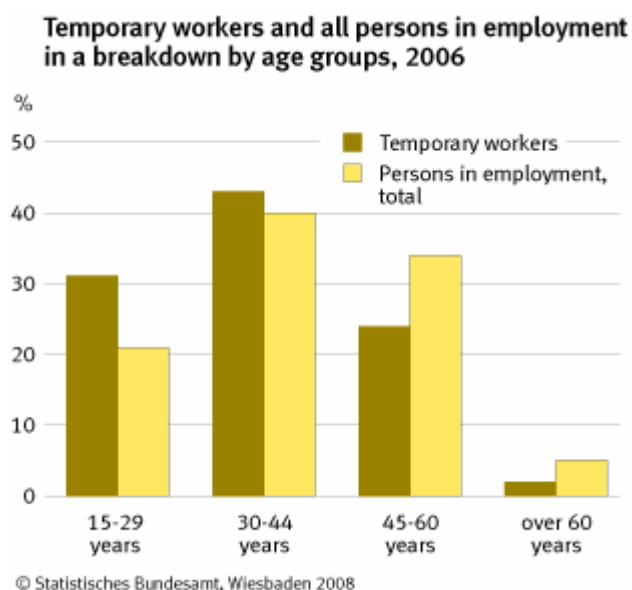
Hence it can be assumed that similar proportions of the enterprises hiring out temporary personnel belong to the secondary and tertiary sectors. As compared with the distribution of all persons in employment across the three sectors, temporary employment is of disproportionate significance for the secondary sector.

How are temporary workers employed?

Looking at temporary employment in terms of part-time and full-time jobs reveals a similar picture as the total of persons in employment. Part-time employees accounted for 26% of all persons in employment in 2006, which was somewhat higher than the share of part-time temporary workers (17%).

Compared with the share of employees with a fixed-term contract in the total number of persons in employment (15%), a substantially higher proportion of temporary workers (31%) have a work contract of limited duration, although temporary employment is subject to the general regulations that are aimed at limiting the number of fixed-term work contracts. It must be taken into account in this context that the information on work contracts of limited duration as well as on full-time and part-time employment is based on the respondents' own assessment.

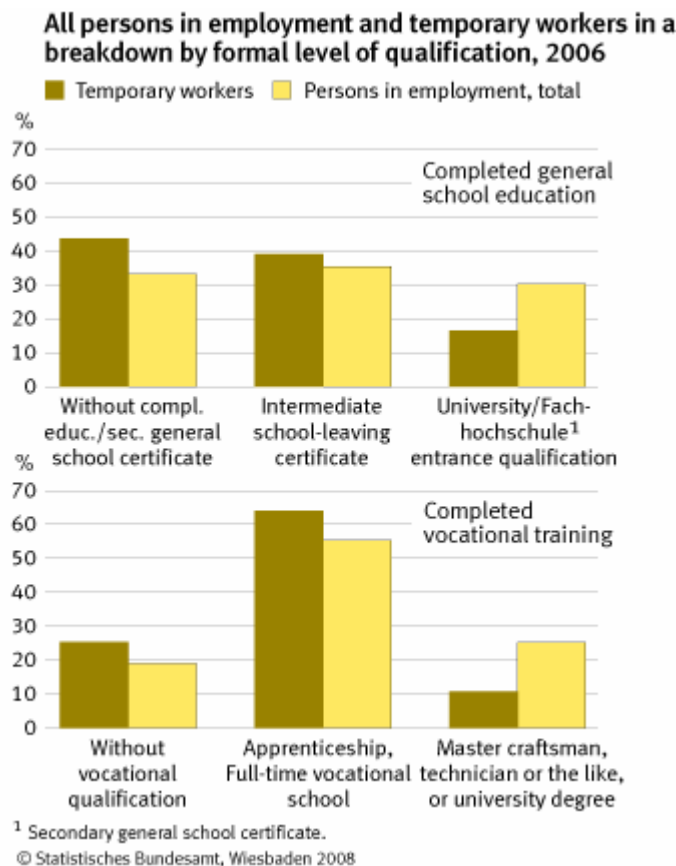
Is temporary work a form of employment only for younger people?



An analysis of temporary employment by age groups shows that, at 43%, 30 to 45 year olds represent the largest age group. Young employees aged 15 to 30 years account for 31% of the temporary workers, which is roughly a third more than the share of that age group in all persons of employment. However, temporary employment businesses also have older employees. Persons aged 45 to 60 years account for over 24% of the temporary workers, which is about 10 percentage points less than the share of that age group in the total number of persons in employment. Persons aged over sixty years play an insignificant part in temporary employment.

Temporary worker = low qualification?

An examination of the survey results for qualification levels shows that the majority of temporary workers, i.e. nearly 80%, hold school-leaving certificates from secondary general or intermediate schools or have equivalent qualifications. Persons with a higher education entrance qualification account for about 16% of the temporary workers. There is only a very small proportion of temporary workers without any general school-leaving certificate (3%).



A breakdown by vocational qualification reveals that the majority of temporary workers (64%) have completed vocational training. Persons who are fully qualified master craftsmen, technicians or the like account for only 4% and higher education graduates for 6% of the total number of temporary personnel. As many as 25% of the people engaged by temporary employment businesses have not completed vocational training.

A comparison with the total of persons in employment shows that temporary workers have rather lower qualifications. As far as general school-leaving certificates are concerned, the proportion of temporary workers with a higher education entrance qualification is almost 50% smaller than that of the total number of persons in employment. The proportion of temporary workers without any general school-leaving certificate or with a secondary general school certificate is about 10 percentage points higher than that of all persons in employment. The same picture emerges if we look at vocational qualifications. Persons without completed vocational training and those who have completed an apprenticeship or hold a comparable vocational school certificate are clearly overrepresented among temporary workers, while those with higher-level vocational qualifications are definitely underrepresented.

Temporary workers – and their situation a year earlier...

The temporary workers surveyed in 2006 were also questioned about their main activity [one year before the survey](#). Four fifths of the employees of temporary employment businesses had also been mainly economically active a year earlier. However, they did not necessarily have the same job then: 43% of the temporary workers indicated that they had started work for their current employer within the twelve months preceding the survey. This held true for only about 14% of all persons in employment. 20% of the temporary workers had been unemployed twelve months before taking up temporary employment. Those who had been pupils, students or housewives one year before the survey accounted for only a very small proportion of temporary personnel.

Since the survey question refers to the situation 12 months before the survey, changes which may have occurred in the interim between the two survey dates (e.g. short-term unemployment, leaving school) cannot be recorded.

Conclusion

Temporary workers can mainly be found in production jobs and service occupations. This result leads to the conclusion that temporary workers are mainly active in the secondary sector and also in the tertiary sector. Most of the temporary workers work full time and have work contracts of unlimited duration. The proportion of full-time jobs is somewhat higher among temporary workers than for all persons in employment, while the proportion of work contracts with unlimited duration is clearly below the level observed for the total of persons in employment. A significantly greater share of men is engaged in temporary work.

A comparison of educational and vocational qualifications shows that temporary employment businesses mostly employ persons with rather low qualifications. Nevertheless, there is also a noticeable proportion of temporary workers with higher qualifications. The results of the Microcensus 2007, which will be released some time this year, will show how the structural features of temporary employment have changed.