



Unemployment statistics

From Statistics Explained

Data up to November 2013. Most recent data: Further Eurostat information, Main tables and Database.

Unemployment levels and rates move in a cyclical way, largely related to the general business cycle. However, other factors such as labour market policies and demographic developments may influence the short and long-term evolution as well.

This article gives an overview of statistical information for unemployment in the European Union (EU) since the year 2000, starting with the most recent developments.

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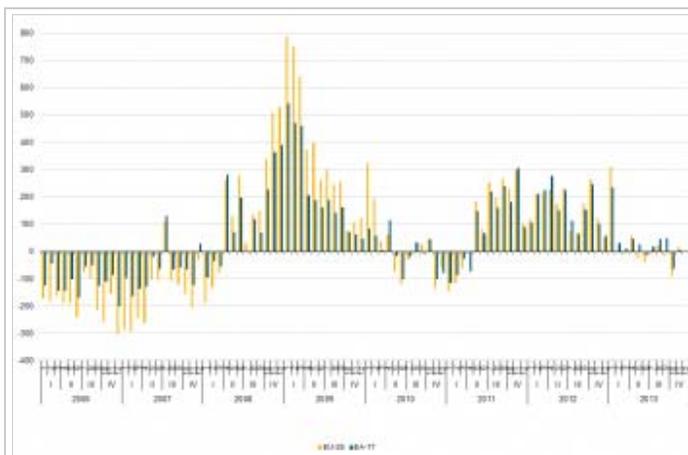


Figure 1: Change in the number of unemployed persons (compared to previous month, in thousands), seasonally adjusted, January 2006 - November 2013

Main statistical findings

- **Recent developments in unemployment at a European and Member State level**

Eurostat estimates that 26.553 million men and women in the EU-28^[1], of whom 19.241 million were in the euro area (EA-17)^[2], were unemployed in November 2013. Compared with October 2013, the number of persons

unemployed increased by 19 000 in the EU-28 and by 4 000 in the euro area. Compared with November 2012, unemployment rose by 278 000 in the EU-28 and by 452 000 in the euro area.

The euro area seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 12.1 % in November 2013, stable since April; it was 11.8 % in November 2012. The EU-28 unemployment rate was 10.9 % in November 2013, stable since May; it was 10.8 % in November 2012.

Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates were recorded in Austria (4.8 %), Germany (5.2 %) and Luxembourg (6.1 %), and the highest rates in Greece (27.4 % in September 2013) and Spain (26.7 %).

Compared with a year ago, the unemployment rate increased in fourteen Member States and fell in fourteen. The highest increases were registered in Cyprus (13.3 % to 17.3 %), Italy (11.3 % to 12.7 %), Greece (26.0 % to 27.4 % between September 2012 and September 2013) and the Netherlands (5.6 % to 6.9 %). The largest decreases were observed in Ireland (14.3 % to 12.3 %), Latvia (14.0 % to 12.0 % between the third quarters of 2012 and 2013), Lithuania (13.0 % to 11.3 %), Portugal (17.0 % to 15.5 %) and Hungary (11.0 % to 9.5 % between October 2012 and October 2013).

In November 2013, the unemployment rate in the United States was 7.0 %, down from 7.3 % in October 2013 and from 7.8 % in November 2012.

In November 2013, 5.661 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the EU-28, of whom 3.575 million were in the euro area. Compared with November 2012, youth unemployment decreased by 46 000 in the EU-28 and increased by 2 000 in the euro area. In November 2013, the youth unemployment rate was 23.6 % in the EU-28 and 24.2 % in the euro area, compared with 23.4 % and 23.9 % respectively in November 2012. In November 2013 the lowest rates were observed in Germany (7.5 %) and Austria (8.6 %), and the highest in Spain (57.7 %), Greece (54.8 % in September 2013) and Croatia (49.7 % in the third quarter 2013).

■ Unemployment trends

At the beginning of 2000, about 20 million persons

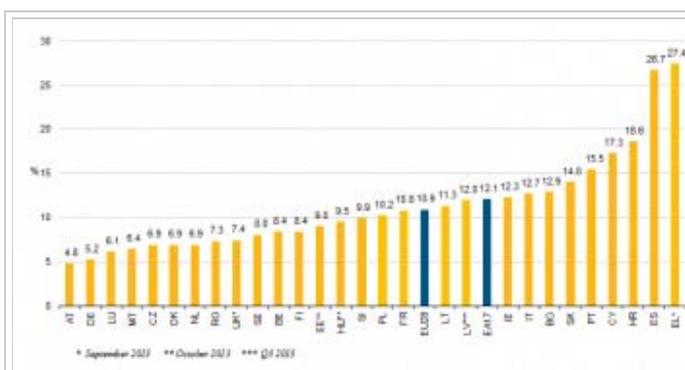


Figure 2: Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted, November 2013 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_m) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_m&language=en&mode=view)

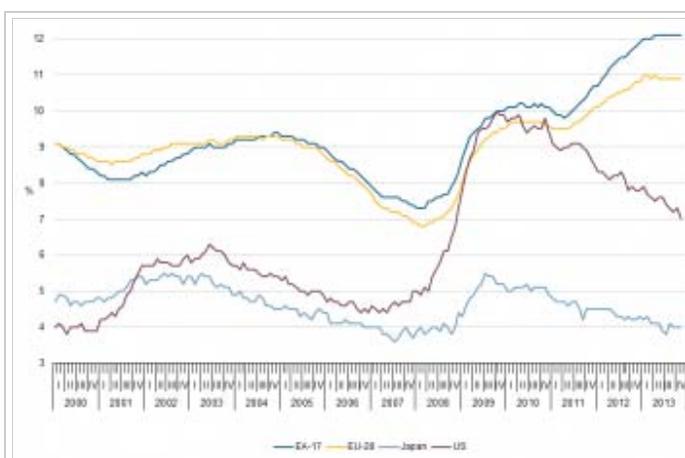


Figure 3: Unemployment rates EU-28, EA-17, US and Japan, seasonally adjusted, January 2000 - November 2013 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_m) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_m&language=en&mode=view)

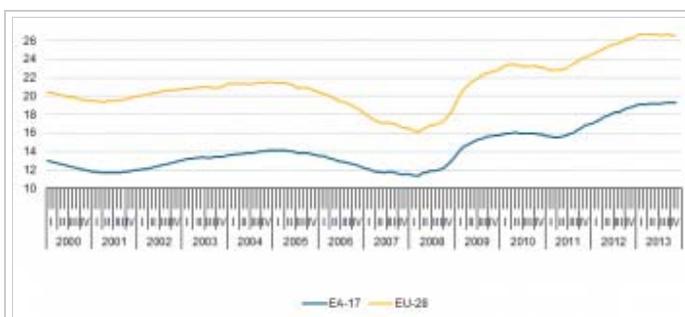


Figure 4: Unemployed persons, in millions, seasonally adjusted, EU-28 and EA-17, January 2000 - November 2013 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_nb_m) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_nb_m&language=en&mode=view)

were unemployed in the EU-27, corresponding to 9 % of the total labour force. The unemployment trend at that moment was downwards. In the first quarter of 2001 the number of unemployment persons had dropped to just above 19 million and the unemployment rate to 8.5 %. A long period of increasing unemployment followed. At the end of 2004 the number of jobseekers available for work reached 21.3 million, while the unemployment rate was at 9.2 %.

At the beginning of 2005 a period of steadily declining unemployment started, lasting until the first quarter 2008. At that time, EU-27 unemployment hit a low of 16 million persons (equivalent to a rate of 6.8 %) before rising sharply in the wake of the economic crisis. Between the second quarter 2008 and mid-2010 the unemployment level went up by more than 7 million, taking the rate up to 9.7 %, at that time the highest value recorded since the start of the series in 2000. The decline of both the unemployment level and rate in the following three quarters was a deceptive sign of the end of the crisis and of a stable improvement of the labour market conditions in the EU-27. As a matter of facts, since the second quarter 2011 and until the end of 2012 unemployment has steadily and markedly increased taking unemployment to the record level of nearly 26 million, corresponding to a record rate of 10.7 %.

The unemployment rate in the euro area (EA-17) followed roughly the same trend as in the EU-27. However, between 2000 and the middle of 2004 the unemployment rate in the euro area was below that recorded in the EU-27. This pattern was subsequently reversed as unemployment declined more rapidly in the Member States which do not yet have the euro between 2005 and the beginning of 2008. Like in the EU-27, during the economic crisis unemployment increased at a considerable pace, with the exception of the period between mid-2010 and mid-2011 where it temporarily declined. At the end of 2012 the unemployment rate for the EA-17 hit 11.8 %, the highest rate since 1995.

In 2000, the unemployment rate in the United States was around 4 %, considerably lower than in the EU.

It remained much lower until early 2008, when unemployment started to increase rapidly. By the beginning of 2009 the unemployment rate in the United States had reached the same level as in the EU-27, and stayed above the EU-27 rate until the beginning of 2010. Since then the US unemployment rate, while remaining relatively high, has taken a downwards path which has taken it

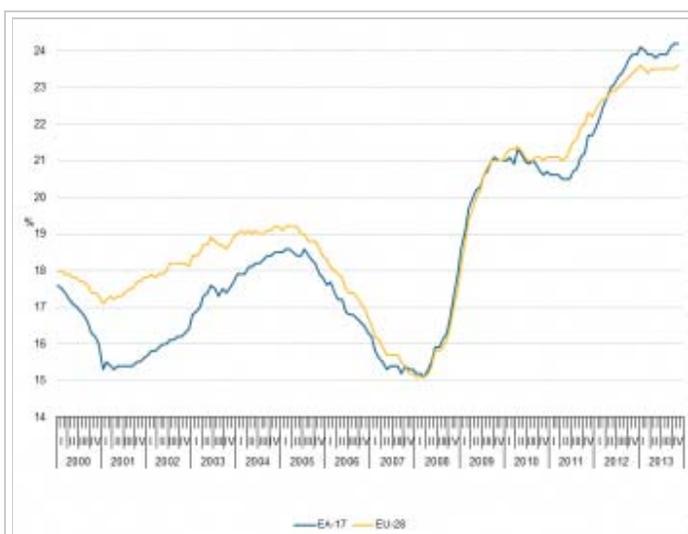


Figure 5: Youth unemployment rates, EU-28 and EA-17, seasonally adjusted, January 2000 - November 2013 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_m) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_m&language=en&mode=view)

	Youth unemployment rate				Youth unemployment ratio		
	2010	2011	2012	2012Q4*	2010	2011	2012
EU-27	21.1	21.4	22.8	23.2	9.0	9.1	9.7
Euro area	20.9	20.8	23.0	23.7	8.7	8.7	9.6
Belgium	22.4	18.7	19.8	22.0	7.3	6.0	6.2
Bulgaria	21.8	25.0	28.1	28.4	6.7	7.4	8.5
Czech Republic	18.3	18.1	19.5	19.3	5.7	5.4	6.1
Denmark	14.0	14.2	14.1	14.2	9.4	9.6	9.1
Germany	9.9	8.6	8.1	7.9	5.1	4.5	4.1
Estonia	32.9	22.3	20.9	19.3	12.6	9.1	8.7
Ireland	27.6	29.1	30.4	29.4	12.0	12.1	12.3
Greece	32.9	44.4	55.3	57.9	10.0	13.0	16.1
Spain	41.6	46.4	53.2	55.2	17.8	19.0	20.6
France	23.6	22.8	24.3	25.4	8.9	8.4	9.0
Italy	27.8	29.1	35.3	36.9	7.9	8.0	10.1
Cyprus	16.6	22.4	27.8	31.8	6.7	8.7	10.8
Latvia	37.2	31.0	28.4	24.7	13.9	11.6	11.4
Lithuania	35.3	32.2	26.4	24.2	10.4	9.0	7.7
Luxembourg	15.8	16.4	18.1	18.5	3.5	4.2	5.0
Hungary	26.6	26.1	28.1	28.8	6.6	6.4	7.3
Malta	13.1	13.8	14.2	14.5	6.7	7.1	7.2
Netherlands	8.7	7.6	9.5	9.8	6.0	5.3	6.6
Austria	8.8	8.3	8.7	8.7	5.2	5.0	5.2
Poland	23.7	25.8	26.5	27.5	8.2	8.7	8.9
Portugal	27.7e	30.1	37.7	38.4	8.2	11.7	14.3
Romania	22.1	23.7	22.7	22.2	6.9	7.4	7.0
Slovenia	14.7	15.7	20.6	23.2	5.9	5.9	7.1
Slovakia	33.9	33.5	34.0	35.1	10.4	10.0	10.4
Finland	21.4	20.1	19.0	19.3	10.6	10.1	9.8
Sweden	24.8	22.8	23.7	24.1	12.8	12.1	12.4
United Kingdom	19.6	21.1	21.0	20.7	11.6	12.4	12.4

* The quarterly youth unemployment rate is seasonally adjusted.
e: estimate

Table 1: Youth unemployment figures, 2010-2012Q4 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_q) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_q&language=en&mode=view) and (lfsi_act_a) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=lfsi_act_a&language=en&mode=view)

to 7.8 % at the end of 2012. In Japan, between 2000 and 2012, unemployment rates were much lower than in the EU, ranging between 3.7 % in the third quarter 2007 and 5.4 % in the third quarter 2009, when the rate started declining until reaching 4.2 % at the end of 2012.

■ Youth unemployment trends

Youth unemployment rates are generally much higher than unemployment rates for all ages. Until the end of 2008, the youth unemployment rate in the EU-27 has been around twice as high as the rate for the total population, reaching its minimum value (18.1 %) in the first quarter 2008. The economic crisis, however, seems to have hit the young more than other age groups. From the beginning of 2009, the gap between the youth and the total unemployment rates has increased, so that at the end of 2012 the youth unemployment rate was 2.6 times the total rate. The EU-27 youth unemployment rate was systematically higher than in the euro area between 2000 and mid-2007. Since then and until the third quarter 2010 these two rates have been very close. Afterwards the indicator has moved more sharply in the EA-17 than in the EU-27, first downwards, until mid-2011, then upwards until the end of 2012 (see also Figure 5). In the middle of 2012 the euro area youth unemployment rate has overtaken the EU-27 rate, and the gap has increased until the end of the year.

High youth unemployment rates do reflect the difficulties faced by young people in finding jobs. However, this does not necessarily mean that the group of unemployed persons aged between 15 and 24 is large, as many young people are studying full-time and are therefore neither working nor looking for a job (so they are not part of the labour force which is used as the denominator for calculating the unemployment rate). For this reason, youth unemployment ratios are calculated as well, according to a somewhat different concept: the unemployment ratio calculates the share of unemployed for the whole population. Table 1 shows that youth unemployment ratios in the EU are much lower than youth unemployment rates; they have however also risen since 2008 due to the effects of the crisis on the labour market.

■ Male and female unemployment trends

Historically, women have been more affected by unemployment than men. In 2000, the unemployment rate for women in the EU-27 was around 10 %, while the rate for men was below 8 %. By the end of 2002, this gender gap had narrowed to around 1.5 percentage points and between 2002 and mid-2007 this gap remained more or

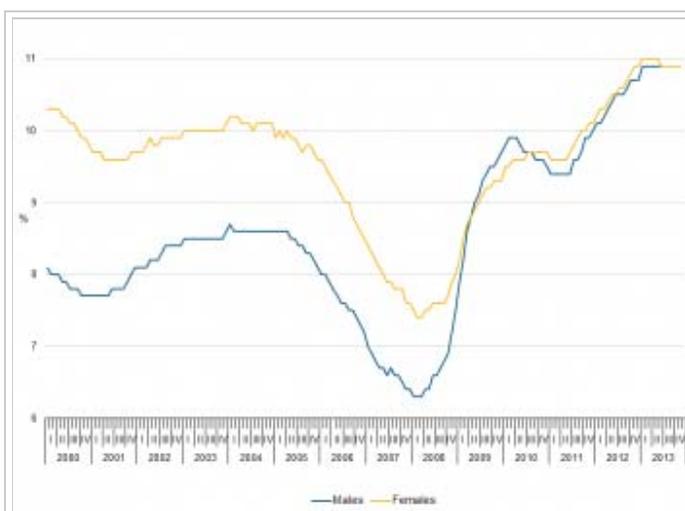


Figure 6: Unemployment rates by gender, EU, seasonally adjusted, January 2000 - November 2013 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_m) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_m&language=en&mode=view)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
EU-27	8.6	8.9	9.1	9.3	9.0	8.3	7.2	7.1	8.0	9.7	9.7	10.5
Euro area	8.1	8.5	9.0	9.3	9.2	8.5	7.6	7.6	8.6	10.1	10.2	11.4
Belgium	6.6	7.5	8.2	8.4	8.5	8.3	7.5	7.0	7.9	8.3	7.2	7.6
Bulgaria	19.5	18.2	13.7	12.1	10.1	9.0	6.9	5.6	6.8	10.3	11.3	12.3
Czech Republic	8.1	7.3	7.8	8.3	7.9	7.1	5.3	4.4	6.7	7.3	6.7	7.0
Denmark	4.5	4.6	5.4	5.5	4.8	3.9	3.8	3.4	6.0	7.5	7.6	7.5
Germany	7.9	8.7	9.8	10.5	11.3	10.3	8.7	7.5	7.8	7.1	5.9	5.5
Estonia	12.6	10.3	10.1	9.7	7.9	5.9	4.6	5.5	13.8	16.9	12.5	10.2
Ireland	3.9	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.7	6.4	12.0	13.9	14.7	14.7
Greece	10.7	10.3	9.7	10.5	9.9	8.9	8.3	7.7	9.5	12.6	17.7	24.3
Spain	10.5	11.4	11.4	10.9	9.2	8.5	8.3	11.3	18.0	20.1	21.7	25.0
France	8.2	8.3	8.9	9.3	9.3	9.2	8.4	7.8	9.5	9.7	9.6	10.2
Italy	9.0	8.5	8.4	8.0	7.7	6.8	6.1	6.7	7.8	8.4	8.4	10.7
Cyprus	3.9	3.5	4.1	4.6	5.3	4.6	3.9	3.7	5.4	6.3	7.9	11.9
Lithuania	12.9	12.8	11.3	11.2	9.6	7.3	6.5	8.0	18.2	19.8	16.2	14.9
Luxembourg	17.4	13.8	12.4	11.3	8.0	5.2	3.8	5.3	13.6	18.0	15.3	13.3
Hungary	1.9	2.6	3.8	5.0	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.9	5.1	4.6	4.8	5.1
Malta	5.6	5.8	5.8	6.1	7.2	7.5	7.4	7.8	10.0	11.2	10.9	10.9
Netherlands	7.6	7.4	7.7	7.2	7.3	6.9	6.5	6.0	6.9	6.9	6.5	6.4
Austria	2.5	3.1	4.2	5.1	5.3	4.4	3.6	3.1	3.7	4.5	4.4	5.3
Poland	3.6	4.2	4.3	4.9	5.2	4.8	4.4	3.8	4.8	4.4	4.2	4.3
Portugal	18.3	20.0	19.8	19.1	17.9	13.9	9.6	7.1	8.1	9.7	9.7	10.1
Romania	4.6	5.7	7.1	7.5	8.6	8.6	8.9	8.5	10.8	12.0	12.9	15.9
Slovakia	6.8	7.5	8.8	8.0	7.2	7.3	6.4	5.8	6.9	7.3	7.4	7.0
Slovenia	6.2	6.3	6.7	6.3	6.5	6.0	4.9	4.4	5.9	7.3	8.2	8.9
Sweden	19.5	18.8	17.7	18.4	16.4	13.5	11.2	9.6	12.1	14.5	13.6	14.0
United Kingdom	9.1	9.1	9.0	8.8	8.4	7.7	6.9	6.4	8.2	8.4	7.8	7.7
Japan	5.8	6.0	6.6	7.4	7.7	7.1	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.6	7.8	8.0
United States	5.0	5.1	5.0	4.7	4.8	5.4	5.3	5.6	7.6	7.8	8.0	7.9
Croatia		14.8	14.2	13.7	12.7	11.2	9.8	8.4	9.1	11.8	13.5	15.9
Turkey					9.2	8.7	8.8	9.7	12.5	10.7	8.8	8.1
Norway	3.4	3.7	4.2	4.3	4.5	3.4	2.5	2.5	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
Japan	5.0	5.4	5.3	4.7	4.4	4.1	3.9	4.0	5.1	5.1	4.6	4.3
United States	4.8	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6	4.6	5.8	9.3	9.6	8.9	8.1

Table 2: Unemployment rate 2001-2012 (%)
Source: Eurostat (une_rt_a) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_a&language=en&mode=view)

less constant. Since the first quarter of 2008, when they were at their lowest levels respectively at 6.3 % and 7.4 %, the male and female unemployment rates in the EU-27 have converged, and by the second quarter of 2009 the male unemployment rate was higher. The decline of the men's rate during 2010 and the first half of 2011 and the corresponding stability of the women's rate over the same period have brought the male rate below the female one once again. Since then the two rates have risen at the same pace, remaining very close and reaching at the end of 2012 10.7 % for men and 10.8 % for women.

■ **A detailed look at 2012**

The overall unemployment rate in the EU-27 reached 10.5 % in 2012, marking an increase of 0.8 percentage points in comparison with 2011, after remaining stable between 2010 and 2011. In the United States, after already decreasing between 2010 and 2011 from 9.6 % to 8.9 %, the unemployment rate went down again in 2012 to 8.1 %.

The unemployment rate rose in 16 Member States between 2011 and 2012, dropped in 9 and remained stable in two, Hungary and Ireland. The highest decreases in the annual average unemployment rates between 2011 and 2012 were again experienced in the Baltic countries, with Estonia in the lead (- 2.3 ppt) followed by Lithuania (-2.0 ppt) and Latvia (-1.3 ppt) . The unemployment rate also fell in Germany, Denmark, Malta, Romania, Finland and the United Kingdom. The highest increases were reported in Greece (+6.6 ppt), Cyprus (+4.0 ppt), Spain (+3.3 ppt), Portugal (+3.0 ppt), Italy (+ 2.3 ppt) and Bulgaria (+ 1.0 ppt). Increases below one percentage point were reported in Belgium, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and Sweden. For the fifth year in a row, Spain remained the country with the highest overall unemployment rate in 2012, at 25.0 %. The dispersion of unemployment across the EU-27 continued to increase during 2012.

Long-term unemployment is one of the main concerns of policymakers. Apart from its financial and social effects on personal life, long-term unemployment negatively affects social cohesion and, ultimately, may hinder economic growth. In total, 4.6 % of the labour force in the EU-27 in 2012 had been unemployed for more than one year; more

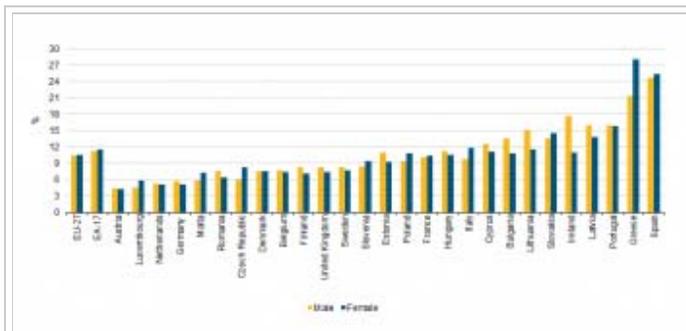


Figure 7: Unemployment rates, 2012, ranked on the average of male and female (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_a) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_a&language=en&mode=view)

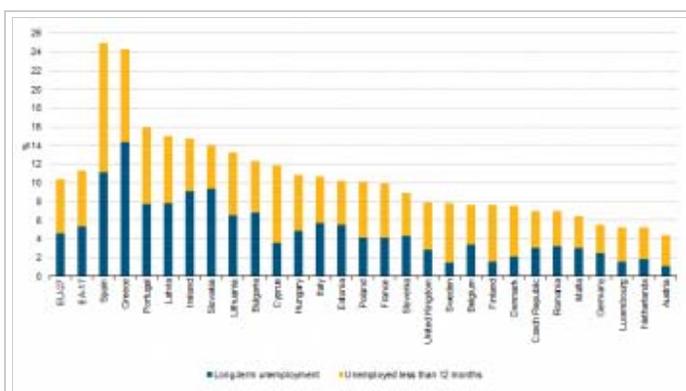


Figure 8: Unemployment rates by duration, 2012 (%)

Source: Eurostat (tsiem110) (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=tsiem110&language=en&mode=view>) and - (tsisc070) (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=tsisc070&language=en&mode=view>)

	Male		Female		< 25 years		25-74 years	
	2007	2012	2007	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012
EU-27	6.6	10.4	7.9	10.5	22.8	9.1		
Euro area	6.7	11.2	8.7	11.6	23.1	10.1		
Belgium	6.7	7.7	8.5	7.4	19.8	6.4		
Bulgaria	6.5	13.5	7.4	10.8	28.1	11.0		
Czech Republic	4.2	6.0	8.7	8.2	18.5	6.0		
Denmark	3.4	7.5	4.2	7.5	14.1	6.3		
Germany	6.6	5.7	8.8	5.2	8.1	5.2		
Estonia	5.4	11.0	3.8	9.3	20.9	8.9		
Ireland	5.0	17.7	4.3	11.0	30.4	12.9		
Greece	5.2	21.4	12.8	28.1	55.3	22.2		
Spain	6.4	24.7	10.9	25.4	53.2	22.7		
France	7.8	18.1	9.0	10.4	24.3	8.7		
Italy	4.9	9.9	7.9	11.9	35.3	8.9		
Cyprus	3.4	12.6	4.6	11.1	27.8	10.2		
Latvia	6.9	16.0	6.0	13.9	28.4	13.5		
Lithuania	3.7	15.1	3.9	11.5	26.4	12.1		
Luxembourg	3.4	4.5	5.1	5.8	18.1	4.2		
Hungary	7.1	11.2	7.7	10.6	28.1	9.6		
Malta	5.9	5.9	7.6	7.3	14.2	5.0		
Netherlands	3.1	5.3	4.1	5.2	9.5	4.5		
Austria	3.9	4.4	5.0	4.3	8.7	3.6		
Poland	9.0	9.4	10.3	10.9	26.5	8.5		
Portugal	8.0	16.0	10.0	15.8	37.7	14.0		
Romania	7.2	7.6	5.4	6.4	22.7	5.6		
Slovenia	4.0	6.4	5.9	9.4	20.6	7.9		
Slovakia	10.0	13.5	12.8	14.5	34.0	12.2		
Finland	6.5	6.3	7.2	7.1	19.0	6.1		
Sweden	5.9	8.2	6.5	7.7	23.7	5.7		
United Kingdom	5.6	6.3	5.0	7.4	21.0	5.7		
Iceland	2.3	6.4	2.3	5.7	13.6	4.5		
Norway	2.6	3.6	2.5	2.8	8.6	2.3		
Croatia	7.8	16.2	10.4	15.6	43.0	13.2		
Turkey	6.7	7.8	9.1	9.4	15.7	6.7		
United States	4.7	8.2	4.5	7.9	16.2	6.8		
Japan	3.9	4.6	3.7	4.0	8.1	4.0		

than half of these, 2.5 % of the labour force, had been unemployed for more than two years. Both these figures mark a sizeable increase from 2011, when they were respectively 4.1 % and 2.2 %.

For the first time since when the calculation of EU-27 unemployment statistics starts (in 2000), the unemployment rate for women was lower than that for men in 2009, and remained so in 2010. In 2011, this effect had reversed again, showing female unemployment rates at 9.8 % against 9.6 % for males. In 2012 the two rates for the EU-27 remained close, respectively at 10.4 % for men and 10.5 % for women. In the euro area the female rate has always been higher for women than for men. In 2012 the rates stood at 11.2 % for men and at 11.6 % for women. Male unemployment rates were higher than the corresponding rates for women during 2012 in 16 out of 27 Member States. The gap between male and female unemployment rates varied from -6.6 percentage points in Greece to +6.7 percentage points in Ireland.

The youth unemployment rate in the EU-27 was more than double the overall unemployment rate in 2012. At 22.8 %, more than one out of every five young persons in the labour force was not employed, but looking and available for a job. In the euro area, the youth unemployment rate was even higher at 23.1 %. The unemployment rate among young persons was higher than the rate among those aged between 25 and 74 in all of the Member States. In Greece (55.4 %), Spain (53.2 %), Portugal (37.7 %), Italy (35.3 %), Slovakia (34.0 %) and Ireland (30.4 %) youth unemployment rates were particularly high. Germany (8.1 %), Austria (8.7 %) and the Netherlands (9.5 %) were the only Member States with a youth unemployment rate below 10 %.

Educational qualifications are still the best insurance against unemployment, which clearly increases the lower the level of education attained. This characteristic was noted in all Member States in 2012, as the average unemployment rate in the EU-27 for those aged between 25 and 64 having attained at most a lower secondary education was 16.8 %, much higher than the rate of unemployment for those that had obtained a tertiary education qualification (5.6 %).

Data sources and availability

An unemployed person is defined by Eurostat, according to the guidelines of the International Labour Organization, as someone aged 15 to 74 without work during the reference week who is available to start work within the next two weeks and who has actively sought employment at some time during the last four weeks. The unemployment rate is the number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.

Table 3: Unemployment rates by age and gender, 2012 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_a) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_a&language=en&mode=view)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Male	8.5	8.6	8.4	7.6	6.6	6.6	9.1	9.7	9.6	10.4
Female	9.9	10.1	9.8	9.0	7.9	7.6	8.9	9.6	9.8	10.5
Less than 25 years	18.5	19.0	18.8	17.5	15.7	15.8	20.1	21.1	21.4	22.8
Between 25 and 74 years	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.1	6.1	6.0	7.6	8.3	8.3	9.1
Long-term unemployment rate	4.2	4.3	4.1	3.7	3.1	2.6	3.0	3.9	4.1	4.6
Male	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.5	2.9	2.4	2.9	3.9	4.2	4.6
Female	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.1	3.4	2.8	3.1	3.8	4.1	4.6
Very long-term unemployment rate	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.2	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.8	2.2	2.5

Table 4: Unemployment rates, EU-27, 2003-2012 (%)

Source: Eurostat (une_rt_a) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_rt_a&language=en&mode=view) and - (une_ltu_a) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=une_ltu_a&language=en&mode=view)

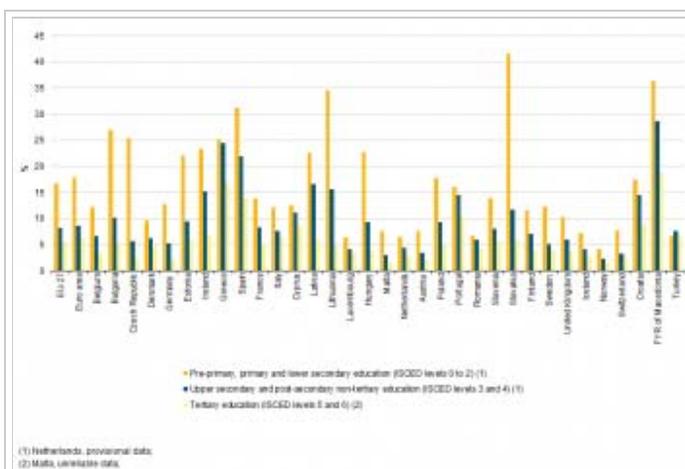


Figure 9: Unemployment rates (among persons aged 25-64 years) by level of educational attainment, 2012 (%)

Source: Eurostat (lfsa_urgaed) (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=lfsa_urgaed&language=en&mode=view)

In addition to the unemployment measures explained here, Eurostat publishes statistics of persons who fulfill only partially the definition of unemployment. These persons are not included in the official ILO unemployment concept and have a varying degree of attachment to the labour market. The indicators on and potential additional labour force statistics underemployment and potential additional labour force participants (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/Underemployment) supplement the unemployment rate to provide a more complete picture of the labour market.

There is currently no specific legal basis for producing and disseminating monthly unemployment data. However, these monthly data are estimates based on results of the European Union Labour force survey (EU LFS), which is a continuous household survey carried out in all Member States in accordance with European legislation and on the basis of harmonised definitions. These results are interpolated/extrapolated to monthly data using national survey data and/or national monthly series on registered unemployment. The quarterly LFS results are always used as a benchmark to ensure international comparability. As for most Member States the results from the LFS for a full quarter are available 90 days after the end of the reference period, the most recent figures are usually provisional. For many countries monthly unemployment data are calculated by Eurostat, while several countries actually supply those figures directly from the LFS.

The following LFS data are used in the calculations of the monthly unemployment rates published in this article:

- For the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Romania, Finland and Sweden: monthly data up to and including November 2013.
- For Greece: monthly data up to and including September 2013.
- For Denmark: monthly data (3 month moving average) up to and including October, November and December 2013.
- For Estonia and Hungary: monthly data (3 month moving average) up to and including September, October and November 2013.
- For the United Kingdom: monthly data (3 month moving average) up to and including August, September and October 2013.
- For Belgium, Bulgaria, Ireland, Spain, France, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Slovakia: quarterly data up and including Q3 2013.

Monthly unemployment and employment series are calculated first at the level of four categories for each Member State (males and females 15-24 years, males and females 25-74 years). These series are then seasonally adjusted and all the national and European aggregates are calculated. Monthly unemployment figures are published by Eurostat as rates (as a percentage of the labour force) or levels (in thousands), by gender and for two age groups (persons aged 15-24, and those aged 25-74). The figures are available as unadjusted, seasonally adjusted and trend series. There are monthly estimates for all EU-28 Member States except for Latvia. Data for the EU-28 aggregate start in 2000 and for the euro area (EA-17) in 1995; the starting point for individual Member States varies.

Member States may publish other rates such as register-based unemployment rates, or rates based on the national LFS or corresponding surveys. These rates may vary from those published by Eurostat due to a different definition or methodological choices.

Context

The unemployment rate is an important indicator with both social and economic dimensions. Rising unemployment results in a loss of income for individuals, increased pressure with respect to government spending on social benefits and a reduction in tax revenue. From an economic perspective, unemployment may be viewed as unused labour capacity.

The International Labour Organization definition of the unemployment rate is the most widely used labour

market indicator because of its international comparability and relatively timely availability. Besides the unemployment rate, indicators such as employment and job vacancies also give useful insights into labour market developments.

The time series on unemployment are used by the European Commission, other public institutions, and the media as an economic indicator; banks may use the data for business cycle analysis. Finally, the general public might also be interested in changes in unemployment.

The unemployment rate is considered to be a lagging indicator. When there is an economic downturn, it usually takes several months before the unemployment rate begins to rise. Once the economy starts to pick up again, employers usually remain cautious about hiring new staff and it may take several months before unemployment rates start to fall.

Male, youth and long-term unemployment appear to be more susceptible to cyclical economic changes than overall unemployment. Indeed, social policymakers often face the challenge of remedying these situations by designing ways to increase employment opportunities for various groups of society, those working in particular economic activities, or those living in specific regions.

Globalisation and technological progress have an ever-increasing effect on daily life, and the demand for different types of labour and skills is evolving at a rapid pace. While enterprises try to improve their productivity and become more competitive and innovative, they may well seek to pass on risk to the labour force through greater flexibility - both in relation to those already in employment, as well as those searching for a new job. Within the context of the European employment strategy (EES) (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=101&langId=en>), there are a number of measures that are designed to help encourage people to remain in work or find a new job, including: the promotion of a life-cycle approach to work, encouraging lifelong learning, improving support to those seeking a job, as well as ensuring equal opportunities. The integrated employment guidelines for 2008-2010 (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/employment_and_social_policy/community_employment_policies/em0007_en.htm) encouraged Member States, among others, to:

- work with renewed endeavour to build employment pathways for young people and reduce youth unemployment, in particular, through adapting education and training systems in order to raise quality, broaden supply, diversify access, ensure flexibility, respond to new occupational needs and skills requirements, and;
- take action to increase female participation and reduce gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay, through better reconciliation of work and private life and the provision of accessible and affordable childcare facilities and care for other dependents. The guidelines also set a number of additional benchmarks, whereby Member States were encouraged:
- to ensure that by 2010 every unemployed person is offered a job, apprenticeship, additional training or another employability measure (for young persons leaving school within four months, and for adults within no more than 12 months), and;
- to work towards 25 % of the long-term unemployed participating in training, retraining, work practice, or other employability measures by 2010.

The current economic crisis has however reversed much of the progress achieved in Europe since 2000. The Europe 2020 strategy (http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/index_en.htm) put forward by the European Commission sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century. As part of the flagship initiatives, 'An agenda for new skills and jobs' (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=822&langId=en>) and 'Youth on the move' (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>), (youth) unemployment rates will be targeted via by a range of policies, including proposals aimed at education and training institutions, or measures for the creation of a (work) environment conducive to higher activity rates and higher labour productivity. There are also initiatives aimed at improving the entry rate of young people into the labour market.

See also

- Job vacancy statistics
- Labour market introduced
- Underemployment and potential additional labour force statistics
- Youth unemployment

Further Eurostat information

■ Publications

- Impact of the crisis on unemployment so far less pronounced in the EU than in the US – Statistics in focus 20/2010 (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=KS-SF-10-020&language=en>)
- Sharp increase in unemployment in the EU – Statistics in focus 53/2009 (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=KS-SF-09-053&language=en>)
- Unemployment news release October 2013 (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-29112013-AP/EN/3-29112013-AP-EN.PDF) (Latest release, PDF)

■ Main tables

- Employment and unemployment (Labour force survey) (t_employ) (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/data/main_tables), see:

LFS main indicators (t_lfsi)

Unemployment - LFS adjusted series (t_une)

LFS series - detailed annual survey results (t_lfsa)

Unemployment rates of the population aged 25-64 by level of education (tps00066)

■ Database

- Employment and unemployment (Labour force survey) (employ) (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/data/database), see:

LFS main indicators (lfsi)

Unemployment - LFS adjusted series (une)

LFS series - detailed quarterly survey results (from 1998)

Total unemployment - LFS series (lfsq_unemp)

LFS series - Detailed annual survey results (lfsa)

Total unemployment - LFS series (lfsa_unemp)

■ Dedicated section

- Employment and unemployment (LFS) (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/introduction)

■ Methodology / Metadata

- EU Labour Force Survey - main concepts and definitions (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/methodology/main_concepts)
- Labour Force Survey in the EU, Candidate and EFTA countries - Main characteristics of the 2011 national surveys (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/product?code=KS-RA-12-025&language=en>) (publication)
- Unemployment - LFS-adjusted series (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/une_esms.htm) (ESMS metadata file - une_esms)

External links

- International Labour Organization - ILO Global Job Crisis Observatory (<http://www.ilo.org/global/lang-en/index.htm#a3>)
- OECD Statistics Portal - Labour (<http://www.oecd.org/>)

Notes

1. ↑ In line with Eurostat's guidelines for disseminating data when the EU is enlarged, aggregate data series in this article refer to the official composition of the EU in the most recent month for which data are available; from July 2013 onwards this is the EU with 28 Member States, EU-28.
2. ↑ In line with Eurostat's guidelines for disseminating data when the euro area is enlarged, aggregate data series in this article refer to the official composition of the euro area in the most recent month for which data are available; from the reference month of January 2014 onwards this will be the euro area with 18 Member States, EA-18.

Retrieved from "http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics"

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■ 8 watching users

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