

LMF1: Children in families by employment status

Definitions and methodology

This indicator presents information on children in different types of households along the employment status of parents (age 15 to 64) as in the Labour Force Statistics (LFS). Dependent children are defined as children age 0 to 14, and grouped along three different types of households (SF2): i) “couple-families”, children live with at least one of their parents and his/her partner in the same dwelling; ii) “sole-parent families”, children live with one parent who is without a partner; and, iii) “complex” households, households with either several non-related cohabiting members or with members of two or more families sharing the same dwelling. Such households could include sole or partnered parents living with other adults in the household (see ‘comparability and data issues’).

Children are also classified along the parental employment status:

A) For children in couple families, the categories include: i) “dual full-time earners” - both partners working full-time; ii) “one-and-a-half earners” - one partner working full-time and one partner working part-time; iii) “sole earner” - one partner working full-time and one partner not in paid work; and, iv) no earners - neither partner is in employment, v) “others” which includes any other combination (e.g. both parents working part-time, one parent working part-time and one parent not in paid work).

B) For children in sole-parent families, the categories include: i) parent working full-time, ii) parent working part-time, and iii) parent not in paid work.

C) Children in “complex” families include households where: i) all adults work (either full-time or part-time), ii) at least one adult works and one adult is not in paid work, and iii) no adult in paid work.

Children living in jobless families are children living in households where no adult is in paid work, regardless of the number of adults (and their relationship) in the household.

The data is presented from the children’s perspective, e.g. the indicator considers the proportion of children in jobless families rather than the share of jobless families in all households (LMF8 and LMF9).

Key findings

On average, 9% of children age 0 to 14 live in households where no adult is in paid work (Table LMF1.1). However, there is wide variation across OECD and EU countries. In 2007, in Luxembourg less than 3% of children lived in jobless households, while this was around 15% or more of children in Australia, New Zealand, Turkey and the UK.

Table LMF1.1 also shows that more than one in three children of sole-parent families lived in jobless households and this is over 50% in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and especially Turkey. The “risk” of living with parents not in the labour force is much lower in other types of households: only 5% of children in couple families and around 8% of children in “complex” households live in a jobless household.

Other relevant indicators: Children in families (SF2); Living arrangement of children (SF3); Maternal employment (LMF2); Distribution of working hours among couple- and sole-parent families (LMF8 and LMF9); Time used for work, care and daily household chores (LMF12); and, Child poverty (CO8).

Table LMF1.1 Proportion of children living in jobless families, 2007

% of children under age 15 for each type of households¹

	Proportion of children living in jobless families	Proportion of children with jobless parents in couple families	Proportion of children with a jobless parent in sole-parent families	Proportion of children living in jobless 'complex' families
Australia	14.8	5.5	54.5	15.2
Austria	5.9	3.7	25	4.8
Belgium	12.1	5.6	43.2	9
Bulgaria	12.8	10.6	34.6	12.1
Cyprus^{2,3}	3.8	1.8	34.3	2.9
Czech Republic	8.4	3.7	39.2	9.3
Denmark	7.2	2.4	4.8	..
Estonia	7.3	2.8	26.4	5
Finland	4.5	3.6	30.1	2.1
France	8.9	4.6	33.2	11.3
Germany	9.9	5.9	36.4	5
Greece	3.5	2.3	25.9	4.1
Hungary	14.4	10.4	44.2	16.1
Italy	5.6	4.1	23.8	8.9
Japan	2.4	0.6	13.3	5.3
Latvia	8.2	4.7	26.5	5.3
Lithuania	7.6	4.8	26.5	5.7
Luxembourg	2.8	1.5	19.8	1.4
Malta	9.8	5.5	70.4	8.9
Netherlands	7.3	3.3	37.2	7
New Zealand	17.5	5.7	51.2	..
Poland	9.5	5.5	45.1	8
Portugal	4.9	3	28	4.8
Romania	9.9	9.1	32.5	9.3
Slovak Republic	11.2	8.4	36.9	12.5
Slovenia	2.1	1.3	12.6	2.2
Spain	4.6	2.8	22	6.1
Sweden	4.8	1.5	3.2	..
Turkey	15.2	13.4	75.7	11.4
United Kingdom	17.6	6.6	50.9	11.2
United States	8	2.8	26.6	..
OECD Average	8.7	5.0	36.1	8.3

.. data not available.

1) Except for Denmark, Sweden and the United States where data refer to children age 0 to 17

2) Footnote by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to « Cyprus » relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

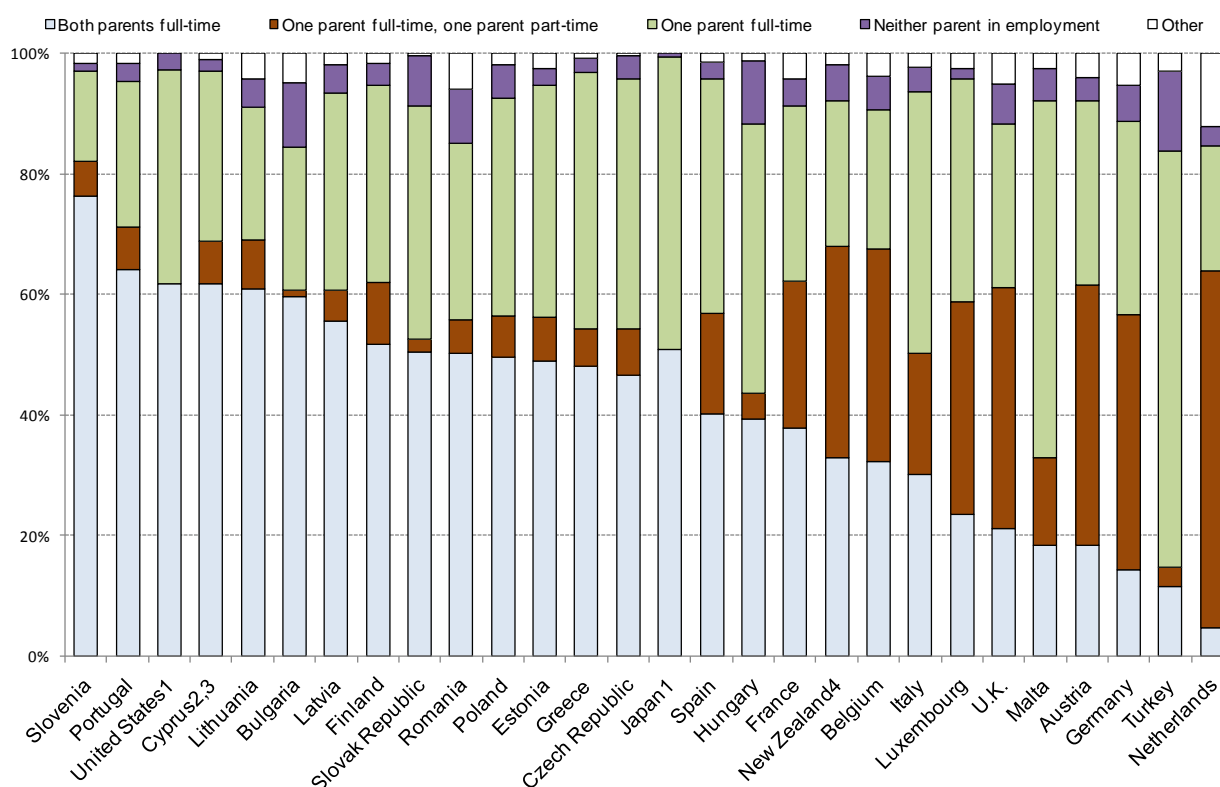
3) Footnote by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Commission: The Republic of Cyprus is recognized by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

4) Estimates on the distribution of children across households based on the number of household by type and the average number of children in each type of household. For "complex families" data show children whose parents are not in work, but other adult members of the household (e.g. grandparents) may be in employment.

Sources: EU-countries, European Labour Force Surveys, 2007, except for Denmark and Sweden: EU-SILC, 2005; Australia: Survey of Income and Housing, 2005-2006; Japan: 2007 Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions of the People on Health and Welfare; U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008 Annual Social and Economic Supplement; New Zealand: 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings.

Chart LMF1.1 shows the distribution of children in couple families according to paternal employment patterns. In over half of the countries more than 40% of couple families concern full-time dual-earner families, and this is around 75% in Slovenia “One-and-a-half earner couples” are most common in Austria, Germany, the UK and, particularly, the Netherlands. In fact, the relatively large proportion of children in ‘other’ households in the Netherlands (12%) concerns children living in couple-families where both parents work part-time (9 %). More than 40% of children in couple families live in one-earner families in Czech Republic, Greece, Italy and Turkey.

Chart LMF1.1 Children in couple households by parental employment status, 2007



1) Unable to distinguish between full-time and part-time work; year 2008.

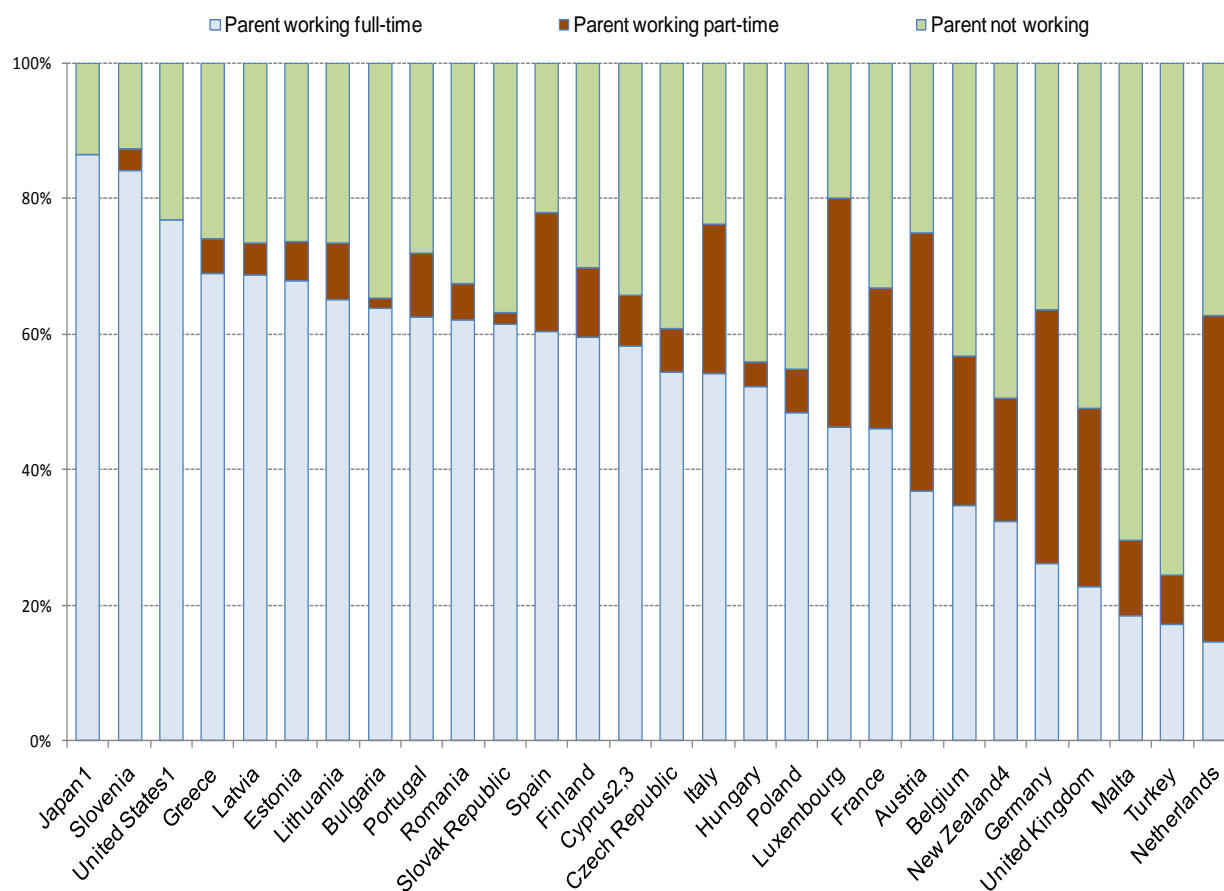
2, 3) see notes 2) and 3) to Table LMF1.1

4) For New Zealand, children from 0 to 18 years old; the category ‘one parent full-time, one part-time’ refers to the situation where either the father works full-time and the mother works part-time (28% of all couple households), or the father works part-time or is not employed, and the mother is employed (7% of all couple households).

Sources: European Labour Force Surveys 2007 for European countries; U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008 Annual Social and Economic Supplement; New Zealand: 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings.

Chart LMF1.2 presents the distribution of children in sole-parent families by employment status of the parent. Most children in sole-parent families live in families where the parent works full-time, except in Turkey and countries where part-time work is common (Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK). As discussed above, a considerable proportion of children in sole-parent families live in jobless households.

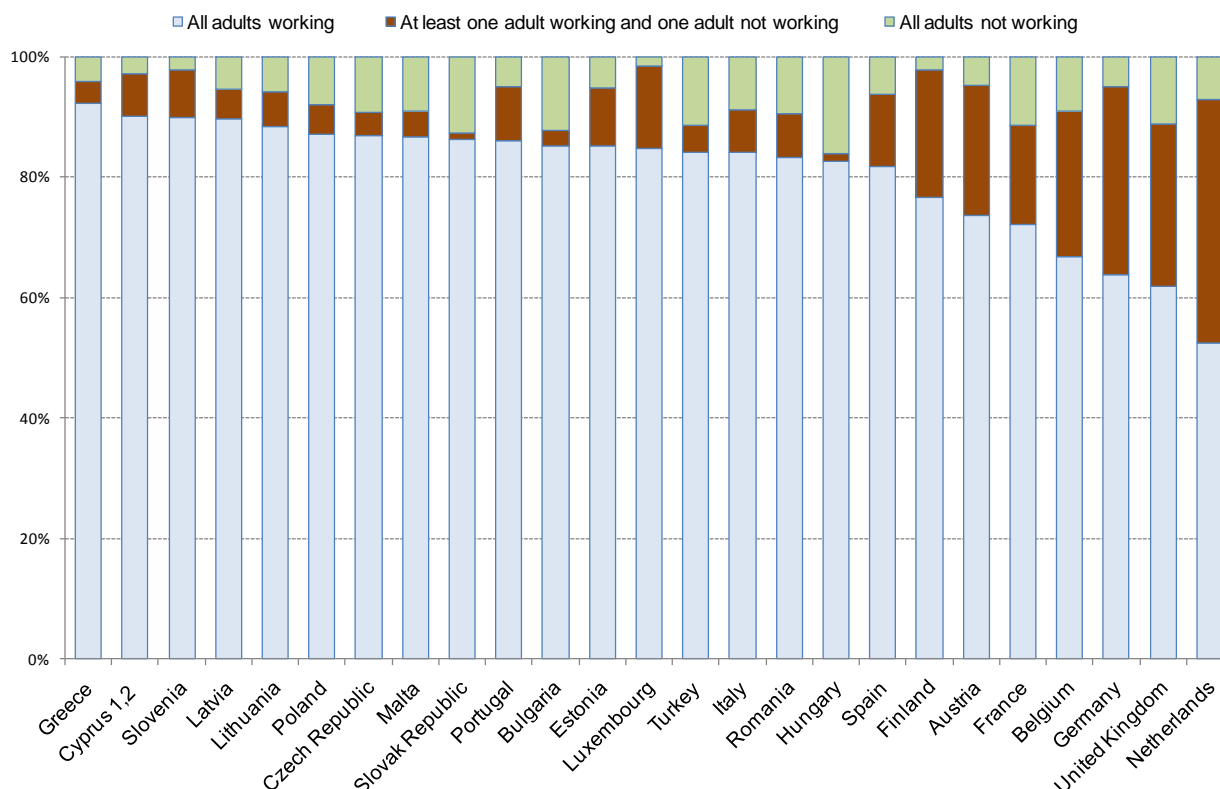
Chart LMF1.2 Children in sole-parent households by parental employment status, 2007



Countries are ranked by decreasing proportion of parent working full-time
 For notes 1), 2) and 3), see the notes to Chart LMF1.
 Sources: see Chart LMF1.1

Chart LMF1.3 shows employment patterns among children in ‘complex’ or other families, as defined by the ELFS (see below). The vast majority of children living in such households live with adults who are all in paid work; only in a few countries, particularly, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK do children live in a ‘complex’ household where one of the adults is not in paid work. The proportion of children in jobless complex households is highest in Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Turkey and the UK.

Chart LMF1.3 Children in 'complex' households by parental employment status, 2007



For 1) and 2) see notes to Chart LMF1.1
 Sources: see Chart LMF1.1

Comparability and data issues

For this indicator, data has been disaggregated by household type to group children living in couple families, in sole-parent families, or otherwise. For European countries, the ELFS applies a threefold categorisation that can lead to an underestimation of children living in sole and/or couple families (see SF2) since only those children in households with no other adults than partnered parents or sole parents are counted in these categories. Other or complex households in the ELFS include children who live in a sole-parent family and/or couple families with other adults present in the household. Thus, the ELFS does not facilitate identification of sole-parent families living with other adults in the household (e.g. extended families which are relatively common in Southern and Eastern Europe). By contrast, sole-parent and couple families are defined regardless of the presence of other adults in households in the surveys available for Other OECD countries.

In charts LMF1 to 5, parents are grouped as full-time or part-time employed along their response in the Labour Force Surveys with regard to their main job. The relevant definitions vary across countries (see LMF5 for details).

Sources and further reading: EU Labour Force Survey database, User Guide, http://circa.europa.eu/irc/dsis/employment/info/data/eu_lfs/index.htm; UNICEF (2007), *An overview of child well-being in rich countries*, Innocenti Research Report.

Table LMF1.2 Children aged 0 -14 by parental employment status, 2007¹

	Children in couple families					Children in sole-parent families			Children in complex families		
	Both parents full-time	One parent full-time	One parent full-time, one parent part-time	Neither parent in employment	Other	Parent working full-time	Parent working part-time	Parent not working	All adults working	At least one adult working and one adult not working	All adults not working
Austria	18.3	30.6	43.2	3.7	4.2	36.9	38.1	25.0	73.8	21.5	4.8
Belgium	32.2	22.9	35.4	5.6	3.9	34.7	22.1	43.2	66.7	24.3	9.0
Bulgaria	59.7	23.7	1.0	10.6	5.0	63.7	1.7	34.6	85.3	2.6	12.1
Cyprus ^{2,3}	61.9	28.2	7.1	1.8	1.1	58.3	7.5	34.3	90.2	6.9	2.9
Czech Republic	46.6	41.6	7.6	3.7	0.5	54.3	6.5	39.2	86.9	3.8	9.3
Estonia	49.0	38.4	7.2	2.8	2.6	67.9	5.7	26.4	85.2	9.7	5.0
Finland	51.7	32.8	10.2	3.6	1.8	59.5	10.3	30.1	76.7	21.3	2.1
France	37.8	28.9	24.4	4.6	4.3	46.1	20.7	33.2	72.1	16.6	11.3
Germany	14.2	32.1	42.4	5.9	5.4	26.1	37.5	36.4	63.7	31.2	5.0
Greece	48.0	42.6	6.1	2.3	0.9	68.9	5.2	25.9	92.3	3.6	4.1
Hungary	39.4	44.7	4.2	10.4	1.3	52.2	3.7	44.2	82.6	1.4	16.1
Italy	30.2	43.5	20.0	4.1	2.3	54.3	21.9	23.8	84.2	7.0	8.9
Latvia	55.5	32.8	5.2	4.7	1.9	68.7	4.8	26.5	89.8	4.9	5.3
Lithuania	61.0	22.0	8.0	4.8	4.2	65.2	8.3	26.5	88.4	5.9	5.7
Luxembourg	23.6	37.0	35.2	1.5	2.7	46.3	33.9	19.8	84.9	13.7	1.4
Malta	18.4	59.1	14.6	5.5	2.5	18.5	11.2	70.4	86.8	4.3	8.9
Netherlands	4.8	20.6	59.2	3.3	12.2	14.5	48.3	37.2	52.5	40.5	7.0
New Zealand ⁴	33	35	24	6	2	32	18	49	:	:	:
Poland	49.7	36.1	6.8	5.5	2.0	48.4	6.5	45.1	87.1	4.9	8.0
Portugal	64.0	24.2	7.1	3.0	1.6	62.6	9.4	28.0	86.2	9.0	4.8
Romania	50.1	29.3	5.6	9.1	5.9	62.1	5.4	32.5	83.2	7.5	9.3
Slovak Republic	50.5	38.8	2.1	8.4	0.3	61.5	1.6	36.9	86.4	1.1	12.5
Slovenia	76.2	14.9	5.9	1.3	1.8	84.3	3.1	12.6	89.9	7.9	2.2
Spain	40.2	39.0	16.5	2.8	1.4	60.5	17.6	22.0	81.9	12.0	6.1
Turkey	11.6	68.9	3.3	13.4	2.9	17.1	7.3	75.7	84.2	4.4	11.4
United Kingdom	21.1	27.1	40.0	6.6	5.2	22.7	26.4	50.9	61.9	26.9	11.2
United States ⁵	61.8	35.5	..	2.8	..		35.5	64.5
OECD Average	39.7	34.2	19.1	4.9	3.1	50.1	15.4	35.2	80.4	12.1	7.5
EU- Average	43.5	33.3	16.3	4.7	3.0	52.1	14.4	34.1	81.6	11.4	7.0

.. data not available.

1) Year 2006 for New Zealand

For 2) and 3) and 4) see notes to Chart LMF1.1

4) Children under age 18 in New Zealand

5) No distinction between full-time and part-time work for the US

Sources: European Labour Force Surveys 2007 for European countries; U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008 Annual Social and Economic Supplement. New Zealand: 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings.