

## OECD Standardised Unemployment Rates

### News Release

#### OECD Standardised Unemployment Rate rises to 6.0% in August 2008

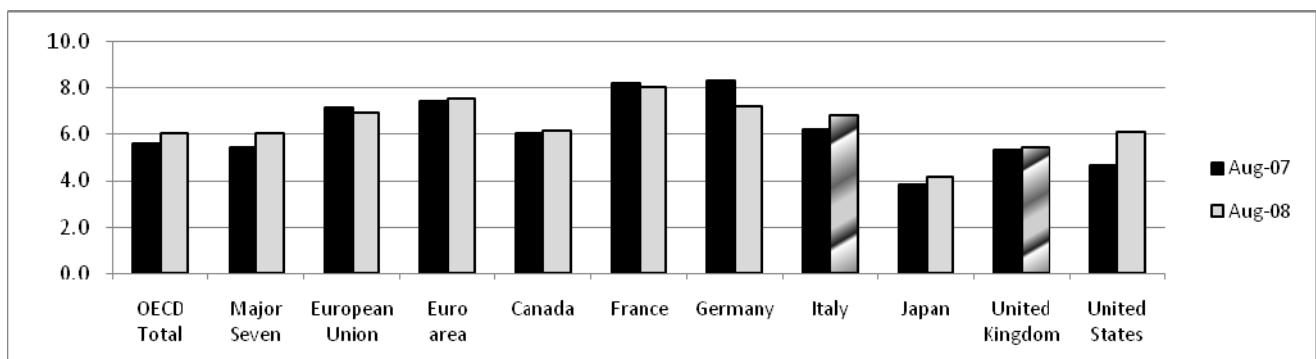
The standardised unemployment rate for the **OECD area** was 6.0% in August 2008, 0.2 percentage point higher than the previous month and 0.4 percentage point higher than a year earlier.

In the **Euro area**, the unemployment rate was 7.5% in August 2008, 0.1 percentage point higher than the previous month and 0.1 percentage point higher than a year earlier. For the **United States** the unemployment rate for *September 2008* was 6.1%, the same as the previous month and 1.4 percentage points higher than a year earlier. For **Japan**, the rate was 4.1% in August 2008, 0.1 percentage point higher than the previous month and 0.4 percentage point higher than in August 2007.

In August 2008, the unemployment rate for **France** was 8.0%, 0.2 percentage point higher than the previous month but 0.2 percentage point lower than a year earlier. For **Germany**, the rate was 7.2% in August 2008, 0.1 percentage point lower than the previous month and 1.1 percentage points lower than in August 2007. For **Canada**, the unemployment rate was 6.1% in August 2008, the same as the previous month and 0.1 percentage point higher than a year earlier. In *June 2008*, the rate in the **United Kingdom** was 5.4%, 0.1 percentage point higher than the previous month and 0.1 percentage point higher than in June 2007. In **Italy**, the rate was 6.8% in *June 2008*, the same as the previous month but 0.8 percentage point higher than the previous year.

The standardised unemployment rates for **other OECD countries and geographic groupings**, as well as historical data, can be downloaded from the OECD online data dissemination facility *OECD.Stat Extracts* at: <http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/Default.aspx?QueryName=251&QueryType=View&Lang=en>.

Selected Standardised Unemployment Rates  
August 2007 – August 2008 <sup>(1)</sup>



Notes:

(1) Italy and United Kingdom: June-07— June-08.

**NB: For methodological reasons, Standardised Unemployment Rates may differ from those published by national statistical institutes.**

**OECD Standardised Unemployment Rates**
**OECD Standardised Unemployment Rates**  
*Percentage of civilian labour force*

	2005	2006	2007	2007		2008		2008					
				Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
OECD - Total	6.7	6.1	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.8	5.8	5.8	6.0
Major Seven	6.2	5.8	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.7	5.8	5.8	6.0
European Union	8.9	8.2	7.1	7.1	6.9	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9
Euro area	8.8	8.2	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.5
Australia	5.1	4.8	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.1
Austria	5.2	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.1	4.0	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.3
Belgium	8.5	8.3	7.5	7.3	7.0	6.9	6.6	6.8	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6
Canada	6.8	6.3	6.0	6.0	5.9	5.9	6.1	6.0	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.1
Czech Republic	7.9	7.2	5.3	5.1	4.9	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.3
Denmark	4.8	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.9
Finland	8.4	7.7	6.8	6.8	6.6	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3
France	9.3	9.2	8.3	8.1	7.9	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.7	7.8	8.0
Germany	10.6	9.8	8.4	8.3	8.0	7.6	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.2
Greece	9.9	8.9	8.3	8.2	8.0	7.8	7.5	7.8	7.5	7.5	7.5		
Hungary	7.2	7.5	7.3	7.3	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.9
Ireland	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.7	5.0	5.4	5.2	5.2	5.4	5.6	5.9	6.2
Italy	7.7	6.8	6.2	6.2	6.3	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	6.8	6.8		
Japan	4.4	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1
Korea	3.7	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2
Luxembourg	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2
Netherlands	4.7	3.9	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.6
New Zealand	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.9						
Norway	4.6	3.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.4	
Poland	17.8	13.9	9.7	9.2	8.5	7.8	7.3	7.6	7.5	7.3	7.1	6.8	6.7
Portugal	7.7	7.8	8.1	8.1	7.8	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5
Slovak Republic	16.3	13.4	11.2	11.2	10.6	10.4	10.1	10.3	10.2	10.1	10.1	10.0	9.9
Spain	9.2	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.7	9.4	10.5	9.6	10.1	10.5	10.8	11.0	11.3
Sweden	7.3	7.0	6.2	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.7	5.9	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.8
Switzerland	4.4	4.0	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5						
United Kingdom	4.8	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.4		
United States <sup>(1)</sup>	5.1	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.3	5.1	5.0	5.5	5.5	5.7	6.1

Notes:

(1) United States: September 2008 is 6.1

**OECD Standardised Unemployment Rates**

**OECD Standardised Unemployment Rates**  
*Change of rates over the same period of the previous year*

	2005	2006	2007	2007		2008		2008					
				Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
OECD - Total	-0.2	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.3	-0.2	0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4
Major Seven	-0.2	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.2	-0.1	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6
European Union	-0.2	-0.7	-1.0	-0.9	-0.9	-0.7	-0.3	-0.6	-0.4	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
Euro area	0.0	-0.6	-0.8	-0.7	-0.6	-0.4	-0.1	-0.4	-0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Australia	-0.4	-0.3	-0.4	-0.4	-0.2	-0.5	-0.1	-0.4	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.0	-0.2
Austria	0.3	-0.4	-0.3	0.2	-0.4	-0.5	-0.9	-0.6	-0.7	-0.9	-1.1	-1.3	-1.4
Belgium	0.1	-0.2	-0.8	-0.9	-1.0	-0.8	-1.1	-0.9	-1.2	-1.2	-1.0	-0.8	-0.7
Canada	-0.4	-0.5	-0.3	-0.4	-0.3	-0.2	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
Czech Republic	-0.4	-0.8	-1.8	-1.9	-1.7	-1.3	-1.1	-1.2	-1.2	-1.0	-1.0	-0.9	-0.8
Denmark	-0.7	-0.9	-0.2	0.1	-0.3	-0.9	-0.6	-0.9	-0.6	-0.5	-0.6	-0.9	-0.9
Finland	-0.5	-0.6	-0.9	-0.9	-0.7	-0.7	-0.6	-0.7	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5
France	0.0	-0.1	-0.9	-0.9	-1.0	-1.1	-0.7	-1.1	-0.9	-0.8	-0.5	-0.4	-0.2
Germany	0.8	-0.8	-1.5	-1.3	-1.2	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1	-1.2	-1.1	-1.0	-1.0	-1.1
Greece	-0.7	-0.9	-0.6	-0.5	-0.7	-0.8	-0.9	-0.8	-0.9	-0.9	-0.9		
Hungary	1.1	0.3	-0.1	-0.2	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.5
Ireland	-0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.4	1.7
Italy	-0.4	-0.9	-0.6	-0.4	-0.2	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.8		
Japan	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	-0.2	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
Korea	0.1	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.0
Luxembourg	-0.3	0.0	-0.4	-0.5	-0.6	-0.5	-0.1	-0.5	-0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Netherlands	0.1	-0.8	-0.7	-0.8	-0.8	-0.7	-0.5	-0.5	-0.3	-0.4	-0.7	-0.6	-0.5
New Zealand	-0.2	0.1	-0.2	-0.2	-0.4	0.0	0.4						
Norway	0.2	-1.1	-0.9	-0.8	-0.4	-0.3	-0.1	-0.3	-0.3	0.0	0.1	-0.1	
Poland	-1.3	-3.9	-4.2	-4.1	-3.7	-3.2	-2.6	-3.0	-2.7	-2.6	-2.5	-2.6	-2.5
Portugal	1.0	0.1	0.3	0.5	-0.4	-0.8	-0.7	-0.9	-0.8	-0.7	-0.6	-0.7	-0.6
Slovak Republic	-1.9	-2.9	-2.2	-1.7	-1.7	-1.2	-1.2	-1.1	-1.2	-1.2	-1.2	-1.3	-1.3
Spain	-1.4	-0.7	-0.2	-0.2	0.4	1.2	2.5	1.5	2.1	2.5	2.8	2.9	3.0
Sweden	1.0	-0.3	-0.8	-1.0	-0.4	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5	-0.8	-0.4	-0.3	-0.1
Switzerland	0.0	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2						
United Kingdom	0.1	0.6	-0.1	-0.2	-0.4	-0.4	0.0	-0.3	-0.2	0.0	0.1		
United States <sup>(1)</sup>	-0.4	-0.5	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.4

Notes:

(1) United States: September 2008 is 1.4

## OECD Standardised Unemployment Rates

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### Methodological Notes

The OECD standardised unemployment rates, compiled for 27 OECD member countries, are based on definitions of the 13th Conference of Labour Statisticians (generally referred to as the ILO guidelines). Under these definitions, the unemployed are persons of working age who, in the reference period, are without work, are available for work and have taken specific steps to find work.

The uniform application of the definitions results in estimates that are more internationally comparable than those based on national definitions. For example, national unemployment data in some countries only include persons registered at government labour offices. Under the ILO definition, persons without work who are seeking employment through other means can also be classified as unemployed and registrants can be excluded if they worked or were not available for work. The unemployment rates shown here are calculated as the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the civilian labour force (i.e., the unemployed plus those in civilian employment) and are seasonally adjusted.

The unemployment rates for the European Union (EU) member countries and Norway are produced by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat). The OECD is responsible for collecting data and calculating unemployment rates for the remaining countries.

In September 2000, Eurostat adopted a new unemployment definition through a Commission Regulation. Details about the new definition and its implementation are available on the [Eurostat Internet site](#). This link also gives details about country specific estimations and provisional data.

Monthly figures include OECD Secretariat estimates for countries which only compile quarterly rates.

#### *Geographical groupings*

In this news release:

- The *Euro area* covers, for all periods, the 15 current participating member countries, see note 1 of Eurostat's monthly news release at [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?\\_pageid=0,1136184,0\\_45572592&\\_dad=portal&\\_sc\\_hema=PORTAL](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=0,1136184,0_45572592&_dad=portal&_sc_hema=PORTAL) for details;
- The *European Union* covers the EU 27 member countries, see note 1 as above for details;
- The *OECD area* covers the 27 OECD member countries for which standardised unemployment rates have been estimated. These comprise the 19 of the 27 European Union countries which are also members of the OECD plus Canada, the United States, Australia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland.

### Contacts:

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**Next release: Monday, 10 November 2008**