STANDARDISED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (1)

The OECD-area unemployment rate on a standardised basis was 7.9 per cent in August, unchanged since June; this compares with a 7.5 per cent rate a year earlier. The OECD Europe unemployment rate was also constant at 10.8 per cent between July and August. In North America the unemployment rate fell from 6.8 to 6.7 per cent in the United States, while in Canada it fell from 11.5 to 11.3 per cent. Unemployment in Japan was unchanged at 2.5 per cent, while in Australia it rose from 10.7 to 11.1 per cent. Unemployment rates rose in three of the European economies for which monthly data are available, remained constant in two, and fell in the three others. Unemployment rose to 9.4 per cent in Belgium, 5.9 per cent in Germany and 8.5 per cent in the Netherlands. Unemployment rates were constant in France and the United Kingdom at 11.7 and 10.3 per cent respectively, and fell to 17.9 per cent in Finland, 16.7 per cent in Ireland and 9.4 per cent in Sweden (2).

Unemployment rates fell in five of the seven OECD countries for which September data are available: from 11.3 to 11.1 per cent in Canada, from 6.7 to 6.6 per cent in the United States, from 11.1 to 10.7 per cent in Australia, from 9.4 to 8.7 per cent in Sweden (2) and from 10.3 to 10.2 per cent in the United Kingdom. The September unemployment rate was constant in Ireland at 16.7 per cent while it rose in Belgium from 9.4 to 9.5 per cent.

(1) Standardised unemployment rates are based on national statistics but have been adjusted when necessary, and as far as the available data allow, to bring them as close as possible to ILO guidelines for international comparisons of labour force statistics. The standardised rates are, therefore, more comparable between countries than the unemployment rates published in national sources. For further details, see the Technical Note to the table.

(2) Since January 1993 data for Sweden are not seasonally adjusted.