

YOUTH INACTIVITY

If young people are not in employment and not at school, there are good reasons to be concerned about their current well-being and their future prospects. Low educational attainments and the growing importance of educational attainment for successful integration into the workforce make it difficult for those leaving school without adequate qualifications to move into jobs with good career prospects. The shares of young persons who are neither in employment nor in education is an indicator of those who are candidates to later become the “socially excluded” – persons with incomes below or at the poverty-line and who lack the skills to improve their economic situation.

Long-term trends

On average, across the countries for which data are available, around 8% of teenagers were neither in school nor at work in 2003. Differences across countries are large: in Denmark, Luxembourg, Poland and Norway less than 4% were in this situation while the shares exceeded 10% in Austria, the Slovak Republic, Mexico, Turkey and, if 2003 data were available, probably in Italy also.

For the OECD as a whole, there has been a decline in the percentages of all teenagers who are neither in employment nor education, but the decline has been most marked for females. The fact that young people, and particularly females, spend more time in education than they did a decade ago has contributed to this.

Several features of the labour markets and training systems affect the ease of transition from school to work. OECD reviews of youths' transition from school to work have identified Nordic and English-speaking countries as those where this process is smoother than in countries in Continental and Southern Europe countries. Beyond waste of human capital and risks of marginalisation in the labour markets, delays in settling into jobs will lead many youths to live longer with their parents and defer the formation of independent families, further compounding fertility declines.

Definition

The indicator presents the proportion of youths aged 15 to 19 who are not in education, training or employment as a percentage of the total number of all in that age group. Youths in education include those attending part-time as well as full-time education, but exclude those in non-formal education and educational activities of very short duration. Employment is defined according to the ILO Guidelines and covers all those who have worked for monetary gain for at least one hour in the week previous to the enquiry date.

Comparability

Standard definitions are specified for both “being in education” and “being in employment” and countries try to apply these criteria correctly. The main problem of comparability is that in some countries, youths performing compulsory military service are neither recorded as being in employment nor in education; they are therefore included in the numerator of the ratio although they could reasonably be considered to be both in training and in employment. However, in countries where there is still conscription, the duration of military services is quite short and reallocation of military conscripts to the employment/education category would not much change the figures given here.

Source

- OECD (2005), *Society at a Glance: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD, Paris.

Further information

Analytical publications

- OECD (2000), *From Initial Education to Working Life: Making Transitions Work*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2005), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2005), *Society at a Glance: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD, Paris.

Web sites

- Youth Employment Summit, www.yesweb.org.



Youths aged between 15 and 19 who are not in education nor in employment

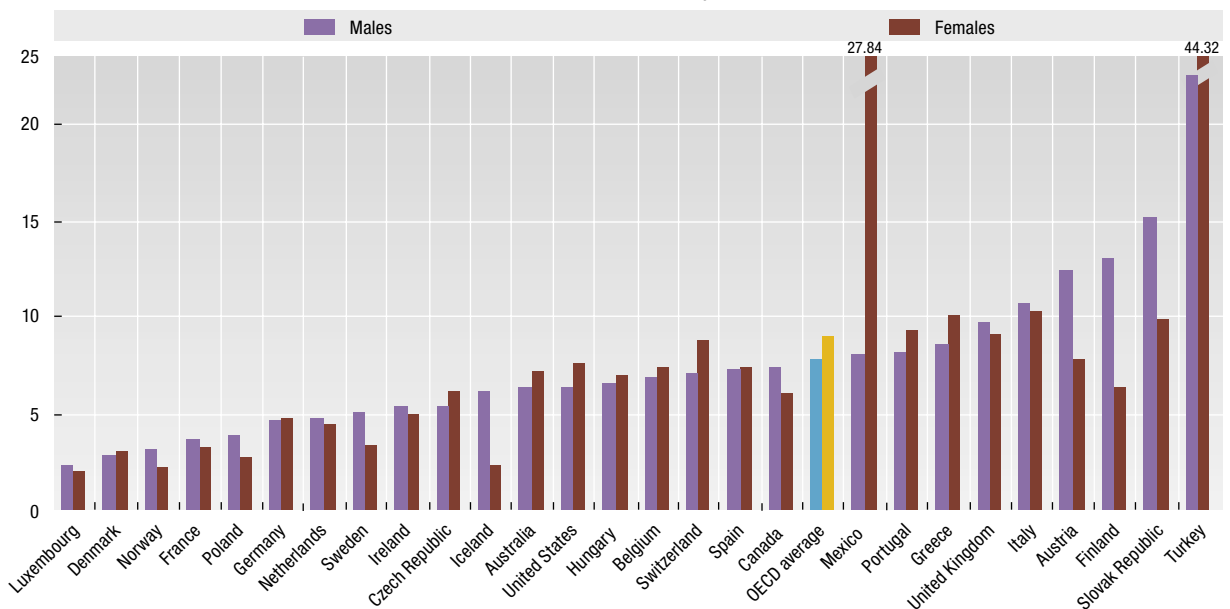
As percentage of persons in that age group

	Males							Females						
	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Australia	9.2	9.0	7.3	6.4	7.9	6.9	6.4	10.6	8.7	7.5	7.3	7.2	7.2	7.2
Austria	..	5.6	12.1	11.7	13.0	8.1	12.4	..	7.7	8.0	11.7	9.4	4.4	7.8
Belgium	9.9	10.8	6.3	6.7	6.0	7.3	6.9	11.2	10.8	7.3	6.3	6.4	6.4	7.4
Canada	7.3	8.0	7.8	7.6	6.8	7.2	7.3	7.2	6.7	6.3	6.3	5.4	5.7	6.0
Czech Republic	6.0	6.7	10.2	7.3	6.4	5.8	5.4	6.9	7.7	9.1	8.5	7.3	6.3	6.2
Denmark	1.9	1.5	4.2	1.9	4.7	2.4	2.9	4.1	2.1	2.6	3.6	2.7	2.4	3.1
Finland	..	13.6	12.2	13.9	13.4	13.7	13.0	..	5.5	5.2	4.6	6.1	5.3	6.4
France	2.3	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.7	..	2.7	2.6	3.0	3.2	3.5	3.2	..
Germany	..	3.1	4.2	5.2	4.9	4.3	4.7	..	3.7	4.9	6.3	5.3	5.1	4.8
Greece	6.7	7.0	8.1	6.9	5.7	5.2	8.6	14.1	12.7	12.6	11.1	9.8	7.5	10.1
Hungary	11.8	12.4	11.8	8.6	8.8	8.3	6.6	9.7	11.1	11.3	8.6	7.8	7.8	6.9
Iceland	14.8	2.8	0.4	1.0	2.0	6.2	..	14.8	2.5	2.5	3.3	1.0	2.3	..
Ireland	..	..	5.0	4.5	4.3	5.2	5.3	..	..	5.5	4.3	3.9	4.5	5.0
Italy	..	14.5	14.0	12.2	12.1	10.8	..	..	15.9	15.6	14.1	13.0	10.3	..
Luxembourg	7.3	6.4	3.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.4	8.8	5.8	6.3	1.7	2.0	4.3	2.0
Mexico	12.0	7.5	6.3	7.6	7.2	7.4	8.1	34.4	30.8	28.9	29.0	28.2	27.4	27.8
Netherlands	..	2.6	2.8	3.8	3.8	4.7	..	..	2.9	3.1	3.6	4.5	4.4	..
Norway	..	1.5	1.5	2.3	3.3	3.7	3.1	..	2.3	1.9	1.2	2.7	2.8	2.2
Poland	7.3	4.7	5.2	5.0	6.2	3.5	3.8	5.1	4.9	3.9	4.0	5.4	2.6	2.7
Portugal	8.7	6.9	6.7	6.2	5.4	7.7	8.2	9.6	9.7	9.6	9.2	9.5	6.8	9.4
Slovak Republic	17.4	21.7	22.5	27.8	27.9	17.7	15.2	14.3	14.9	18.1	24.7	24.9	13.5	9.9
Spain	11.2	10.1	9.4	7.7	6.6	6.9	7.3	11.9	9.6	9.3	8.2	7.3	7.5	7.4
Sweden	8.0	6.4	4.8	4.7	5.4	5.9	5.1	3.2	2.9	2.5	2.4	3.1	3.3	3.4
Switzerland	22.9	4.0	8.0	7.3	6.4	5.8	7.1	25.5	5.7	7.1	8.5	7.2	5.8	8.8
Turkey	14.3	14.2	14.5	17.8	19.2	21.7	22.6	41.6	42.7	41.5	46.5	47.0	45.6	44.3
United Kingdom	..	..	..	8.2	8.3	8.2	9.7	..	..	..	7.9	8.0	8.9	9.2
United States	6.4	6.5	6.1	6.8	6.9	6.4	..	9.3	8.2	8.7	7.3	8.0	7.5	..
OECD average	9.8	7.6	7.5	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.8	12.9	9.8	9.4	9.3	9.0	8.2	9.0

StatLink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/672117874630>

Percentage of youths aged between 15 and 19 who are not in education nor in employment

2003 or latest available year



StatLink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/715576365614>