STANDARDISED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (1)

The OECD-area unemployment rate on a standardised basis was 7.9 per cent in November, unchanged since June 1993; this compares with a 7.6 per cent rate a year earlier. The OECD-Europe unemployment rate was steady at 10.9 per cent. Between October and November the unemployment rate fell from 6.6 to 6.4 per cent in the United States, from 11.1 to 10.9 per cent in Canada, and from 11.1 to 11.0 per cent in Australia. The unemployment rate rose in Japan from 2.7 to 2.8 per cent. Unemployment rates fell in four of the European economies for which monthly data are available; it remained constant in two and rose in two. The unemployment rate fell to 18.0 per cent in Finland, to 16.7 per cent in Ireland, to 8.4 per cent in Sweden(2) and to 10.0 per cent in the United Kingdom. The unemployment rate was constant in Belgium at 9.6 per cent and in France at 12.0 per cent; it rose to 6.3 per cent in Germany and to 9.1 per cent in the Netherlands.

The unemployment rate fell in four of the seven OECD countries for which December data are available and rose in the other three. The unemployment rate fell from 6.4 to 6.3 per cent in the United States, from 11.0 to 10.6 per cent in Australia, from 8.4 per cent to 8.0 per cent in Sweden(2) and from 10.0 to 9.9 per cent in the United Kingdom. The unemployment rate rose from 10.9 to 11.1 per cent in Canada, from 9.6 to 9.7 per cent in Belgium and from 16.7 to 16.9 per cent in Ireland.

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(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.