The OECD-area unemployment rate on a standardised basis was 7.9 per cent in August, unchanged since May 1994. For OECD Europe it was 11.5 per cent, the same rate recorded each month since March. Among non-European OECD countries, the August unemployment rate was unchanged in the United States at 6.1 per cent, in Japan at 3.0 per cent and in Australia at 9.4 per cent, while it rose to 10.3 per cent in Canada. The unemployment rate rose in one of the seven European economies for which monthly data are available, while it remained constant in three and fell in the other three. The unemployment rate rose to 10.3 per cent of the labour force in Belgium, while it fell to 17.4 per cent in Finland, to 14.9 in Ireland and to 9.5 per cent in the United Kingdom. Elsewhere in Europe, the unemployment rate was stable: at 12.6 per cent in France, at 6.5 per cent in Western Germany and at 8.8 per cent in Sweden.

September unemployment rates are available for seven OECD countries. The unemployment rate was stable at 9.4 per cent in Australia. It rose in Belgium by 0.1 percentage points to 10.4 per cent and from 14.9 to 15.0 per cent in Ireland. Over the same period, the unemployment rate fell from 10.3 to 10.0 per cent in Canada, from 6.1 to 5.8 per cent in the United States, from 8.8 to 8.1 per cent in Sweden and from 9.5 to 9.4 per cent in the United Kingdom.

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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.