

## OECD unemployment rate in December 2017 falls below its pre-crisis level

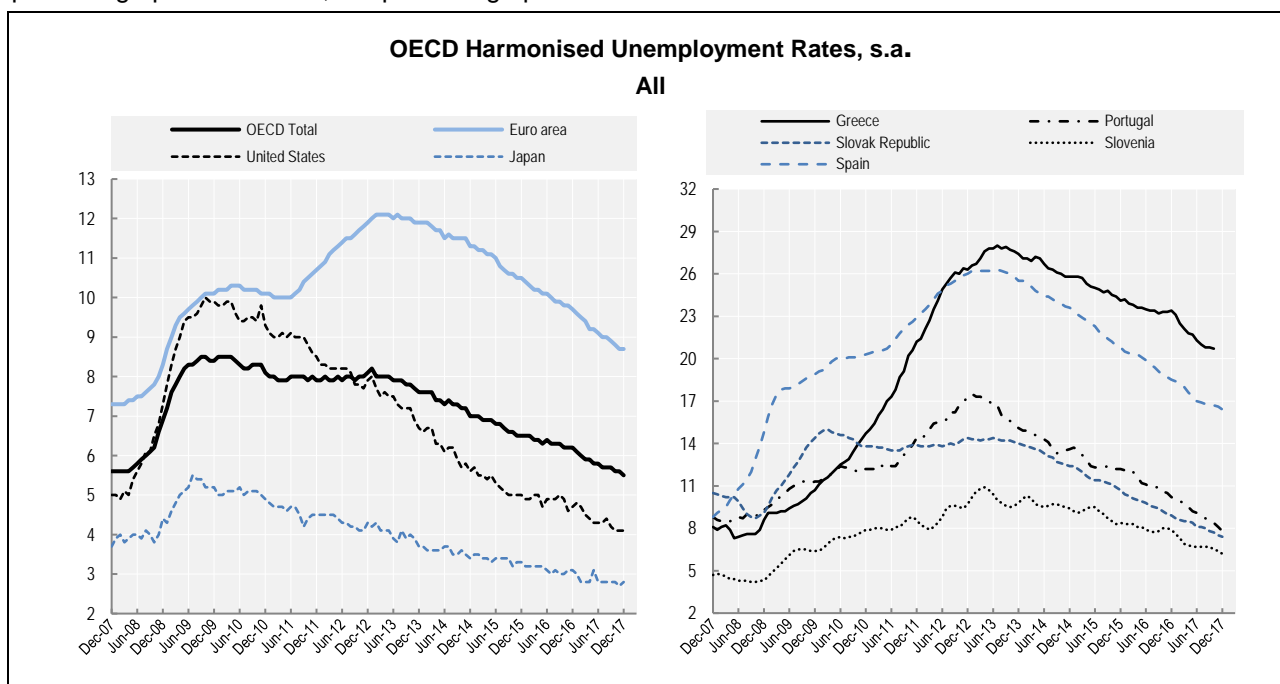
The **OECD** unemployment rate fell by 0.1 percentage point in December 2017, to 5.5%. This is 0.1 percentage point lower than the level just before the financial crisis (April 2008), reflecting an increase in the active population, with the total number of unemployed people, at 34.8 million, still remaining 2.2 million above its pre-crisis level.

In the **euro area**, the unemployment rate was stable at 8.7% in December, but declined by 0.3 percentage point in **Portugal** (to 7.8%) and by 0.2 percentage point in **Ireland** (to 6.2%), **Slovenia** (to 6.2%) and **Spain** (to 16.4%).

Outside the euro area, the unemployment rate fell by 0.3 percentage point in **Israel** (to 4.0%) and by 0.1 percentage point in **Canada** (to 5.8%), **Korea** (to 3.6%) and **Mexico** (to 3.4%). It was stable in the **United States** (at 4.1%) and rose by 0.1 percentage point in **Australia** (to 5.5%) and **Japan** (to 2.8%). More recent data show that in January, the unemployment rate remained stable in the **United States**, while it increased by 0.1 percentage point in **Canada** (to 5.9%).

Between December 2016 and December 2017, the **OECD** unemployment rate declined by 0.7 percentage point, with significant falls (exceeding 2.0 percentage points) in some euro area countries such as **Greece** (between October 2016 and October 2017, the latest month available), **Portugal** and **Spain**.

The **OECD** unemployment rate for **youth** (people aged 15 to 24) also fell in December, by 0.2 percentage point to 11.6%, 1.0 percentage point below its December 2016 level.



**Methodological Notes:** <http://www.oecd.org/std/labourstatistics/44743407.pdf>

All rates and levels quoted are seasonally adjusted (s.a.).

In this News Release, April 2008 is considered as the month preceding the start of the global financial crisis.

**Labour Market Statistics:** <http://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?queryid=36324>

**Country Note:** The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

**Contacts:** For further information readers are invited to contact the OECD's Media Relations Division on

(33) 1 45 24 97 00 or e-mail [news.contact@oecd.org](mailto:news.contact@oecd.org)

For technical questions contact [stat.contact@oecd.org](mailto:stat.contact@oecd.org)

**Next release: Monday, 12 March 2018**

**Table 1: OECD Unemployment Rates, s.a.**  
*Percentage of active population*

	2015	2016	2017	2017				2017					
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OECD - Total	6.8	6.3	5.8	6.0	5.8	5.7	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.5
Major Seven	5.8	5.5	5.0	5.2	5.0	5.0	4.8	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.8
European Union	9.4	8.6	7.7	8.0	7.7	7.5	7.3	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.3	7.3
Euro area	10.9	10.0	9.1	9.5	9.2	9.0	8.7	9.0	9.0	8.9	8.8	8.7	8.7
Australia	6.1	5.7	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.5
Austria	5.7	6.0	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.3
Belgium <sup>(1)</sup>	8.5	7.9	7.2	7.6	7.3	7.1	6.7	7.2	7.1	7.0	6.8	6.7	6.6
Canada <sup>(2)</sup>	6.9	7.0	6.3	6.6	6.5	6.2	6.0	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.2	5.9	5.8
Chile	6.2	6.5	6.7	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.9	6.4	6.5	6.7	6.7	6.9	
Czech Republic	5.1	4.0	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.4	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.3
Denmark	6.2	6.2	5.7	6.0	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.6
Estonia	6.2	6.8		5.6	6.6	5.7		6.0	5.4	5.8	5.2	5.4	
Finland	9.4	8.8	8.6	8.8	8.7	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.7	8.7
France	10.4	10.1	9.5	9.7	9.5	9.6	9.3	9.7	9.7	9.5	9.4	9.3	9.2
Germany	4.6	4.1	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6
Greece	25.0	23.6		22.6	21.6	20.9		21.0	20.8	20.8	20.7		
Hungary	6.8	5.1		4.3	4.3	4.2		4.3	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9	
Iceland	4.0	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9
Ireland	9.9	8.4	6.7	7.2	6.7	6.7	6.4	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.4	6.2
Israel	5.2	4.8	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.0
Italy	11.9	11.7	11.2	11.6	11.2	11.2	10.9	11.3	11.1	11.1	11.0	10.9	10.8
Japan	3.4	3.1	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8
Korea	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.6
Latvia	9.9	9.6	8.7	9.0	8.9	8.7	8.1	8.9	8.7	8.4	8.2	8.1	8.1
Luxembourg	6.5	6.3	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.8	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.6
Mexico	4.4	3.9	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4
Netherlands	6.9	6.0	4.9	5.2	5.0	4.7	4.4	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.4
New Zealand	5.4	5.1	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.5						
Norway	4.4	4.7		4.3	4.4	4.1		4.2	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1	
Poland	7.5	6.2	4.9	5.2	5.1	4.8	4.5	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.4
Portugal	12.7	11.2	9.0	9.9	9.3	8.7	8.1	8.9	8.7	8.5	8.4	8.1	7.8
Slovak Republic	11.5	9.7	8.1	8.6	8.3	8.0	7.5	8.1	8.0	7.8	7.7	7.5	7.4
Slovenia	9.0	8.0	6.8	7.3	6.7	6.7	6.4	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.4	6.2
Spain	22.1	19.7	17.2	18.2	17.3	16.8	16.6	16.9	16.8	16.7	16.7	16.6	16.4
Sweden	7.4	7.0	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.5	7.1	6.6	6.7	6.7	6.4	6.5
Switzerland	4.8	4.9		5.3	4.4	5.0							
Turkey	10.3	10.9		11.6	11.1	10.8		11.0	10.7	10.8	10.5		
United Kingdom	5.3	4.8		4.5	4.4	4.2		4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3		
United States <sup>(3)</sup>	5.3	4.9	4.4	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1

## Notes:

(1) Belgium: Due to a methodological break in the Labour Force Survey, data from the 1st quarter of 2017 onwards are not comparable with previous data.

(2) Canada: Unemployment rate for January 2018 was 5.9%.

(3) United States: Unemployment rate for January 2018 was 4.1 %.

**Table 2: Unemployment Rates by Gender, s.a.**  
*Percentage of corresponding active population*

	Women						Men					
	2017	2017		2017			2017	2017		2017		
		Q3	Q4	Oct	Nov	Dec		Q3	Q4	Oct	Nov	Dec
OECD - Total	6.0	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4
Major Seven	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.8
European Union	7.9	7.8	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.1	7.2	7.1	7.1
Euro area	9.5	9.3	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.0	8.8	8.7	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.4
Australia	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.4	5.7
Austria	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.6
Belgium <sup>(1)</sup>	7.1	6.6	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.3	7.3	7.5	7.0	7.2	7.0	6.9
Canada	5.9	5.8	5.5	5.8	5.5	5.3	6.8	6.6	6.3	6.6	6.3	6.1
Chile	7.2	6.9	7.5	7.3	7.5		6.3	6.3	6.4	6.4	6.4	
Czech Republic	3.6	3.3	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.0	2.0
Denmark	5.9	5.9	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4
Estonia		4.8		5.0	5.2			6.6		5.3	5.5	
Finland	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.9	8.8	8.9	8.8	8.9	9.0
France	9.4	9.4	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.1	9.6	9.8	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.4
Germany	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.2	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Greece		25.4		25.4				17.3		17.0		
Hungary		4.7		4.4	4.5			3.8		3.6	3.4	
Iceland	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.9
Ireland	6.3	6.3	6.0	6.2	6.0	5.8	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.6
Israel	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.3	3.9
Italy	12.4	12.4	12.0	12.1	12.1	11.8	10.4	10.3	10.1	10.2	10.1	10.0
Japan	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.7	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8
Korea	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8
Latvia	7.7	7.9	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.2	9.7	9.4	8.9	8.8	8.8	9.0
Luxembourg	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.9	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.8
Mexico	3.6	3.4	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.4
Netherlands	5.3	5.1	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1
New Zealand	5.2	5.3	5.0				4.2	4.0	4.0			
Norway		3.6		3.5	3.6			4.5		4.5	4.6	
Poland	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.9	4.7	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.3
Portugal	9.4	9.3	8.5	9.0	8.4	8.1	8.6	8.1	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.4
Slovak Republic	8.2	8.1	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.4	8.0	7.9	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.4
Slovenia	7.7	7.8	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.3	5.9	5.7	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.2
Spain	19.0	18.6	18.4	18.5	18.4	18.2	15.7	15.2	15.0	15.1	15.0	14.9
Sweden	6.4	6.6	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.6	6.9	7.0	6.7	7.1	6.7	6.3
Switzerland		5.4						4.6				
Turkey <sup>(2)</sup>		14.4		14.0				9.1		8.9		
United Kingdom		4.2		4.2				4.3		4.3		
United States	4.3	4.3	4.0	3.9	4.1	4.0	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1

## Notes:

(1) Belgium: Due to a methodological break in the Labour Force Survey, data from the 1st quarter of 2017 onwards are not comparable with previous data.

(2) Turkey: Due to changes introduced in the Labour Force Survey, data by gender from January 2014 onwards are OECD estimates.

**Table 3: Unemployment Rates by Age, s.a.**  
*Percentage of corresponding active population*

	Youth (15-24)						Prime-age and Older Workers (25+)					
	2017	2017		2017			2017	2017		2017		
		Q3	Q4	Oct	Nov	Dec		Q3	Q4	Oct	Nov	Dec
OECD - Total	12.0	11.9	11.7	11.7	11.8	11.6	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
Major Seven	10.7	10.5	10.5	10.4	10.6	10.3	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
European Union	16.8	16.7	16.2	16.4	16.2	16.1	6.7	6.6	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.4
Euro area	18.9	18.7	18.1	18.4	18.1	17.9	8.2	8.0	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.8
Australia	12.6	12.7	12.3	12.1	12.4	12.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.2
Austria	9.7	9.6	9.5	9.5	9.8	9.3	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
Belgium <sup>(1)</sup>	19.2	18.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	6.2	6.2	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.8
Canada	11.6	10.9	10.9	11.1	11.0	10.5	5.5	5.4	5.2	5.4	5.1	5.0
Chile	16.9	17.4	17.2	17.4	17.2		5.5	5.3	5.7	5.5	5.7	
Czech Republic	7.9	8.0	5.7	7.4	4.9	4.9	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2
Denmark	10.9	11.2	9.8	9.8	9.5	10.0	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.7
Estonia		11.0		8.1	6.8			5.3		4.9	5.2	
Finland	19.9	20.3	20.0	20.1	20.0	19.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	7.0	7.1	7.1
France	22.6	22.5	22.3	22.4	22.3	22.3	8.2	8.2	7.9	8.0	7.9	7.8
Germany	6.9	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3
Greece		40.3		40.8				19.7		19.5		
Hungary		11.0		10.4	10.3			3.6		3.5	3.4	
Iceland	8.2	7.9	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	1.8	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.9
Ireland	14.6	15.5	14.1	14.7	14.0	13.7	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.3
Israel	7.3	8.0	7.2	7.5	7.6	6.4	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.5
Italy	34.7	35.2	32.8	33.8	32.4	32.2		9.6				
Japan	4.7	4.9	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
Korea	10.3	10.2	10.4	10.5	10.6	9.9	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2
Latvia	16.2	15.7	14.5	14.7	14.5	14.2	8.1	8.1	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.6
Luxembourg	15.3	15.4	14.5	14.3	14.5	14.8	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.9
Mexico	6.9	6.9	7.0	6.9	7.0	7.2	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.6
Netherlands	8.9	8.7	7.9	7.9	7.8	8.0	4.1	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7
New Zealand	12.7	13.1	12.4				3.2	3.1	3.0			
Norway		10.4		10.3	10.2			3.2		3.1	3.2	
Poland	14.6	14.4	13.9	14.3	13.9	13.5	4.1	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.6
Portugal	23.8	24.0	23.1	24.5	22.8	22.1	7.9	7.5	6.9	7.1	6.9	6.6
Slovak Republic	18.6	18.6	17.4	17.8	17.3	17.0	7.3	7.1	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.7
Slovenia	11.7	12.0	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	6.4	6.2	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.7
Spain	38.7	37.7	37.2	37.6	37.1	36.8	15.7	15.3	15.1	15.2	15.1	15.0
Sweden	17.7	18.3	17.2	16.7	17.3	17.6	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.3	5.0	5.0
Switzerland		10.4						4.2				
Turkey		20.8		20.0				8.9		8.6		
United Kingdom		11.9		12.2				3.1		3.1		
United States	9.2	9.0	9.2	9.0	9.6	8.9	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4

Note:

(1) Belgium: Quarterly data are shown for youth unemployment. Due to a methodological break in the Labour Force Survey, data from the 1st quarter of 2017 onwards are not comparable with previous data.

**Table 4: Unemployment Levels, s.a.**  
*Thousands of persons*

	2016	2017	2017			2017			
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OECD - Total	39,341	36,235	36,444	35,852	34,960	35,546	35,092	34,998	34,782
Major Seven	20,546	18,938	18,976	18,825	18,200	18,565	18,279	18,223	18,099
European Union	20,939	18,828	18,965	18,595	18,142	18,442	18,319	18,128	17,978
Euro area	16,254	14,795	14,874	14,632	14,277	14,517	14,405	14,272	14,153
Australia	726	726	725	721	715	711	705	710	731
Austria	270	246	245	243	242	242	243	243	241
Belgium <sup>(1)</sup>	390	358	364	354	336	348	343	335	331
Canada	1,361	1,247	1,273	1,222	1,176	1,218	1,221	1,168	1,139
Chile	563	592	593	582	613	598	603	613	
Czech Republic	212	155	162	150	132	147	142	129	125
Denmark	187	172	171	173	166	170	168	164	166
Estonia	47		46	40		40	36	38	
Finland	237	234	235	233	235	233	234	235	237
France	2,972	2,815	2,825	2,850	2,750	2,816	2,779	2,738	2,733
Germany	1,774	1,633	1,646	1,617	1,593	1,611	1,603	1,594	1,581
Greece	1,131		1,036	997		995	990		
Hungary	234		198	193		188	183	179	
Iceland	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Ireland	195	158	155	156	150	156	154	150	147
Israel	188	168	175	164	168	163	168	173	163
Italy	3,009	2,909	2,904	2,904	2,831	2,876	2,863	2,838	2,791
Japan	2,080	1,896	1,933	1,880	1,860	1,880	1,870	1,850	1,860
Korea	1,012	1,028	1,050	1,014	1,005	1,022	997	1,011	1,007
Latvia	95	85	87	85	79	82	80	79	79
Luxembourg	18	17	16	17	16	16	16	16	16
Mexico	2,085	1,854	1,872	1,795	1,874	1,828	1,862	1,894	1,866
Netherlands	539	438	453	428	399	422	404	397	395
New Zealand	133	127	128	126	122				
Norway	132		121	113		111	111	115	
Poland	1,063	844	876	822	779	808	794	779	763
Portugal	572	464	477	449	417	439	434	417	401
Slovak Republic	267	223	229	219	208	216	211	207	205
Slovenia	80	69	68	69	67	69	68	67	65
Spain	4,481	3,917	3,927	3,818	3,770	3,802	3,792	3,773	3,745
Sweden	366	359	358	366	353	365	361	347	351
Switzerland	238		213	243					
Turkey	3,330		3,482	3,451		3,434	3,343		
United Kingdom	1,599		1,454	1,405		1,405	1,419		
United States	7,751	6,982	6,941	6,947	6,572	6,759	6,524	6,616	6,576

Note:

(1) Belgium: Due to a methodological break in the Labour Force Survey, data from the 1st quarter of 2017 onwards are not comparable with previous data.