

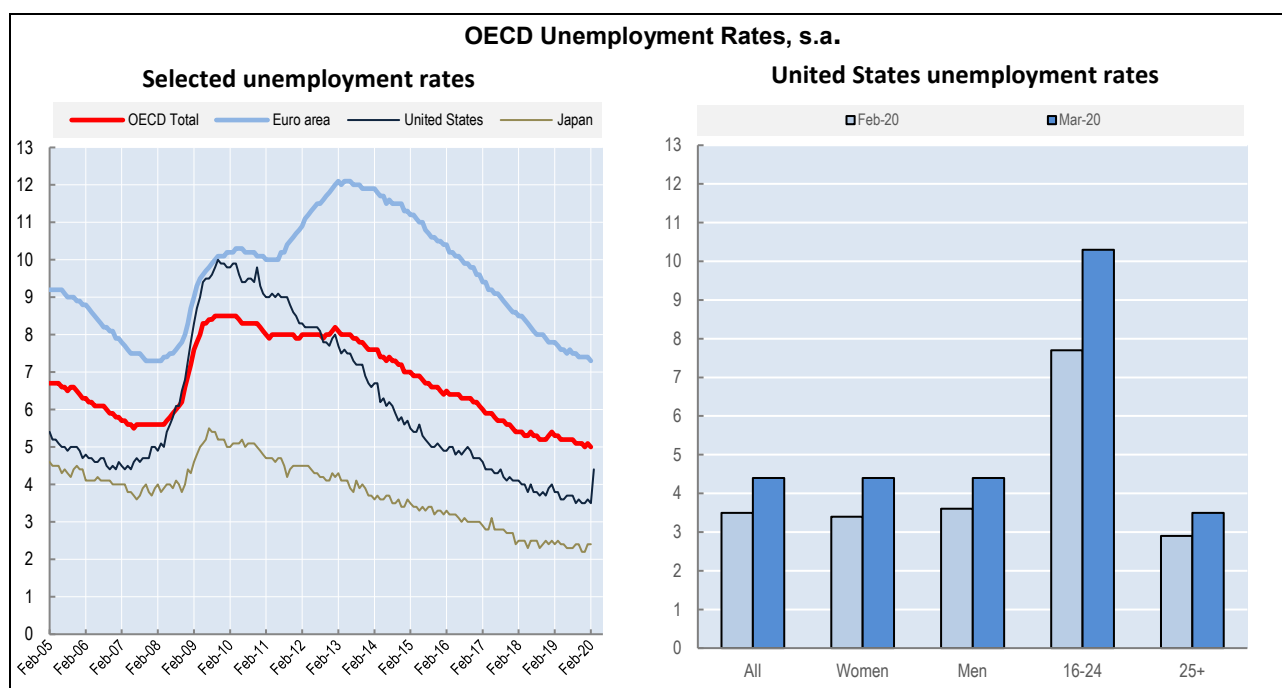
The measures put in place by national governments to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) are limiting the ability of national statistical offices to produce high quality statistics, including in the form of lower response rates. While data for most countries in this news release refer to a period before the pandemic started affecting the labour market, these limits are set to become more important in the next few months.

## Provisional data point to significant rise in unemployment due to the COVID-19 shock

Unemployment rose sharply in most countries where data for March 2020 are already available, although official unemployment statistics in most OECD economies still pre-date the COVID-19 shock. Figures for February 2020 showed the **OECD** unemployment rate falling by 0.1 percentage point, to 5.0%.

In March, in the **United States**, the unemployment rate (based on data for the week ending 14 March) rose by 0.9 percentage point (to 4.4%), with a sharper increase (from 7.7% to 10.3%) for **youth** (people aged 16 to 24)<sup>1</sup>. In the intervening weeks, the situation has deteriorated further with the number of new claimants of unemployment benefits rising to 6.6 million in the week ending 28 March; more than twenty times higher than during the week ending 14 March.

Similar complementary sources in other countries point to a similar deterioration. In **Austria**, the number of persons registering for work at the public employment service increase by more than two thirds in March. While in **Norway**, levels of registered unemployed at employment offices saw a fivefold increase.



### [Methodological Notes for OECD Harmonised Unemployment Rates News Release](#)

The OECD area unemployment rate is calculated as the total number of unemployed persons in all OECD countries as a percentage of the total labour force (i.e. the unemployed plus those in employment); this is equivalent to an average of unemployment rates of all OECD countries weighted by the labour force of each country. Rates and levels are seasonally adjusted (s.a.).

### **OECD Database:** [OECD Short-Term Labour Market Statistics](#)

**Country Notes:** 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.

Data for Chile do not consider the revisions recently introduced by INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas).

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**Next release: Wednesday, 13 May 2020**

<sup>1</sup> The reference week for the March Labour Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey was March 8<sup>th</sup>- March 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Table 1: OECD Unemployment Rates, s.a.**  
*Percentage of the labour force*

	2017	2018	2019	2019				2019				2020	
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
OECD - Total	5.8	5.3	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.1	5.0
Major Seven	5.0	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2
European Union	8.2	7.3	6.7	6.9	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	6.5
Euro area	9.1	8.2	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.5	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.3
Australia	5.6	5.3	5.2	5.0	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.3	5.1
Austria	5.5	4.9	4.5	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.4
Belgium <sup>(1)</sup>	7.1	6.0	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2
Canada	6.3	5.8	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.6	5.9	5.6	5.5	5.6
Chile	6.7	7.0	7.0	6.9	6.8	6.9	7.4	7.0	7.1	7.4			
Czech Republic	2.9	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0
Denmark	5.8	5.1	5.1	5.2	4.9	4.9	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.1	4.9	4.8	4.9
Estonia	5.8	5.4	4.4	4.2	4.9	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.7	
Finland	8.6	7.4	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.5	6.5
France	9.4	9.0	8.5	8.7	8.5	8.5	8.2	8.4	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.1
Germany <sup>(2)</sup>	3.8	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2
Greece	21.5	19.3	17.3	18.4	17.3	16.9	16.5	16.8	16.6	16.5	16.3		
Hungary	4.2	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.4	
Iceland	2.8	2.7	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.8
Ireland	6.7	5.8	5.0	5.0	5.2	5.0	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.8
Israel	4.2	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.4
Italy	11.2	10.6	10.0	10.3	10.0	9.8	9.7	9.9	9.7	9.7	9.8	9.8	9.7
Japan	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4
Korea	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.3
Latvia	8.7	7.4	6.3	6.6	6.4	6.2	6.0	6.0	5.8	5.9	6.3	6.5	6.4
Lithuania	7.1	6.2	6.3	6.0	6.1	6.6	6.4	6.7	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.6	6.6
Luxembourg	5.6	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.7
Mexico	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.2	3.6	3.6
Netherlands	4.9	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.0	2.9
New Zealand	4.7	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0						
Norway	4.2	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.8	
Poland	4.9	3.9	3.3	3.7	3.3	3.1	2.9	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
Portugal	9.0	7.1	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.5	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.5
Slovak Republic	8.1	6.5	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5
Slovenia	6.6	5.1	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.8	4.1	4.7	4.4	4.1	3.8	3.7	3.6
Spain	17.2	15.3	14.1	14.2	14.2	14.2	13.8	14.1	14.0	13.8	13.7	13.7	13.6
Sweden <sup>(1)</sup>	6.7	6.3	6.8	6.7	6.5	7.0	6.9	6.7	6.7	7.3	6.7	7.2	7.6
Switzerland	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.1						
Turkey	10.9	11.0	13.7	13.6	13.9	14.1	13.3	13.9	13.6	13.2	13.1		
United Kingdom	4.4	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7		
United States <sup>(3)</sup>	4.4	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5

Notes:

(1) Breaks in the Labour Force Survey data for Belgium in Q1 2017 and for Sweden in Q3 2018.

(2) Germany: Due to the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, data from January 2020 onwards are estimations.

(3) United States: Unemployment rate for March 2020 was 4.4%.

**Table 2: Unemployment Rates by Gender, s.a.**  
*Percentage of the labour force of each group*

	Women						Men					
	2019	2019		2019	2020		2019	2019		2019	2020	
		Q3	Q4	Dec	Jan	Feb		Q3	Q4	Dec	Jan	Feb
OECD - Total	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.0	5.0
Major Seven	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.3
European Union	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3
Euro area	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.0
Australia	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.2	4.9	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.4	5.2
Austria	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.6
Belgium	4.9	5.0	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.7	5.8	5.5	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.6
Canada	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.0	5.8	5.8
Chile	7.7	7.7	8.2				6.5	6.3	6.8			
Czech Republic	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.8
Denmark	5.3	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.0	5.1	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.6
Estonia	4.7	4.8	4.3	4.2	4.5		4.1	3.6	4.2	4.6	5.0	
Finland	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.8
France	8.4	8.4	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.5	8.6	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.1
Germany <sup>(1)</sup>	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6
Greece	21.5	20.8	20.3	20.2			14.0	13.8	13.5	13.2		
Hungary	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6		3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.3	
Iceland	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.3	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Ireland	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.6	5.2	5.2	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.0
Israel	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.0
Italy	11.1	11.0	11.0	10.9	11.1	10.8	9.1	8.9	8.7	8.9	8.8	9.0
Japan	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6
Korea	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.8	4.1	3.1	3.9	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.4
Latvia	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4	7.2	6.9	6.7	7.2	7.5	7.4
Lithuania	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.4	7.1	7.5	7.4	7.4	7.8	7.8
Luxembourg	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7
Mexico	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.5	3.6
Netherlands	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.1	2.9
New Zealand	4.4	4.5	4.3				3.8	3.8	3.8			
Norway	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5		4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.0	
Poland	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.7
Portugal	7.2	7.1	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.0	5.9	5.8	6.0	6.2	6.4	6.0
Slovak Republic	6.0	6.0	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.4
Slovenia	5.0	4.9	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.0	4.7	3.6	3.2	3.0	2.9
Spain	16.0	16.2	15.6	15.5	15.5	15.4	12.5	12.5	12.3	12.2	12.1	11.9
Sweden	6.9	7.1	6.9	6.6	6.7	7.9	6.7	6.8	6.8	6.7	7.6	7.3
Switzerland	4.7	4.7	4.3				4.1	4.2	3.9			
Turkey <sup>(2)</sup>	16.4	16.5	16.5	16.2			12.4	12.9	11.8	11.6		
United Kingdom	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5			3.9	4.0	3.9	3.9		
United States	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6

Notes:

(1) Germany: Due to the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, data from January 2020 onwards are estimations.

(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 the labour force of each group*

	Youth (15-24)						Prime-age and Older Workers (25+)					
	2019	2019		2019	2020		2019	2019		2019	2020	
		Q3	Q4	Dec	Jan	Feb		Q3	Q4	Dec	Jan	Feb
OECD - Total	11.2	11.3	10.9	10.8	11.0	10.8	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
Major Seven	9.4	9.5	9.2	9.2	9.3	9.0	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6
European Union	15.1	15.0	14.9	14.8	14.9	14.9	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.7
Euro area	15.8	15.7	15.6	15.5	15.6	15.5	6.8	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.5
Australia	11.7	11.8	11.9	11.6	12.1	12.2	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.7
Austria	8.5	9.3	8.6	8.8	9.2	9.7	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7
Belgium <sup>(1)</sup>	14.3	13.0	15.1	15.1			4.6	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4
Canada	11.0	11.7	11.3	11.1	10.3	10.3	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.8
Chile		18.9						5.7				
Czech Republic	5.6	5.2	5.1	4.8	5.4	5.3	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8
Denmark	10.1	9.8	10.4	10.1	10.5	10.5	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.9
Estonia	10.7	12.0	8.9	9.3	8.7		3.8	3.5	3.9	4.0	4.4	
Finland	17.0	17.5	17.3	17.3	17.3	17.3	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.1
France	19.6	19.2	20.1	20.2	19.9	19.5	7.3	7.3	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.8
Germany <sup>(2)</sup>	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.3	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
Greece	35.6	34.2	35.3	34.7			16.4	16.0	15.5	15.4		
Hungary	11.5	11.0	12.0	10.9	10.7		2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.9	
Iceland	9.1	8.7	9.6	9.3	9.0	8.9	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.9	2.9
Ireland	12.4	12.3	11.0	11.2	11.5	11.4	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9
Israel <sup>(3)</sup>	6.7	7.7	6.8	5.2	7.1	3.9	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1
Italy	29.2	28.7	28.7	29.0	29.6	29.6	8.8	8.6	8.5	8.5		
Japan	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.2	3.6	4.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.2
Korea	10.4	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.6	9.6	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.7	2.9
Latvia	12.5	10.7	10.6	10.9	11.4	10.8	5.9	5.9	5.7	6.0	6.1	6.1
Lithuania	11.9	12.2	14.5	14.9	14.3	14.2	5.8	6.1	5.8	5.8	6.0	6.0
Luxembourg	16.9	17.3	17.4	18.1	18.0	17.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.7
Mexico	7.2	7.5	7.3	6.9	7.9	7.1	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.8	2.9
Netherlands	6.7	6.9	7.1	6.7	6.4	6.3	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.3
New Zealand	11.1	10.8	11.2				2.8	2.9	2.8			
Norway	9.9	10.0	10.1	10.0	9.9		2.8	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.8	
Poland	9.9	9.6	8.1	7.8	7.7	7.8	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Portugal	18.2	18.8	18.3	18.7	19.5	19.5	5.6	5.5	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.5
Slovak Republic	16.1	16.8	16.5	15.9	15.6	15.7	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9
Slovenia <sup>(1)</sup>	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.3			4.2	4.6	3.8	3.5	3.4	3.3
Spain	32.6	32.6	30.7	30.3	30.8	30.9	12.8	12.9	12.6	12.5	12.4	12.3
Sweden	19.9	19.9	19.9	19.8	20.6	20.2	5.1	5.3	5.2	5.0	5.5	5.9
Switzerland	8.0	8.4	8.1				3.9	3.9	3.5			
Turkey	25.4	26.6	24.3	24.0			11.5	11.7	11.3	11.1		
United Kingdom	11.1	11.7	11.0	11.2			2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7		
United States	8.4	8.3	8.0	8.1	8.2	7.7	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9

Notes:

(1) Belgium and Slovenia: For youth unemployment, quarterly data are shown

(2) Germany: Due to the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, data from January 2020 onwards are estimations.

(3) Israel: Data shown in this table are not seasonally adjusted.

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

	2018	2019	2019			2019		2020	
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
OECD - Total	33,681	33,203	33,249	33,120	32,529	32,595	32,207	32,828	32,454
Major Seven	17,391	16,496	16,417	16,333	16,133	16,123	16,050	16,294	16,167
European Union	15,527	14,383	14,381	14,294	14,092	14,127	14,035	14,046	13,984
Euro area	13,374	12,413	12,427	12,346	12,175	12,180	12,139	12,135	12,047
Australia	703	701	708	713	707	706	692	725	699
Austria	220	205	208	203	193	192	191	197	201
Belgium	301	274	280	268	265	264	266	264	265
Canada	1,155	1,144	1,123	1,140	1,155	1,192	1,143	1,124	1,134
Chile	628	639	623	634	681	681			
Czech Republic	121	109	107	110	110	114	106	109	107
Denmark	152	153	149	151	154	155	149	147	147
Estonia	38	31	34	29	30	30	31	34	
Finland	202	184	185	186	184	184	183	181	181
France	2,682	2,506	2,514	2,502	2,440	2,437	2,429	2,424	2,396
Germany <sup>(1)</sup>	1,468	1,374	1,363	1,356	1,396	1,399	1,408	1,409	1,402
Greece	915	817	820	799	770	771	759		
Hungary	172	161	161	161	161	159	159	160	
Iceland	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	8
Ireland	137	121	125	120	116	115	117	120	120
Israel	163	157	160	151	153	164	146	148	139
Italy	2,761	2,585	2,580	2,542	2,516	2,517	2,522	2,530	2,513
Japan	1,665	1,617	1,633	1,590	1,563	1,530	1,520	1,640	1,660
Korea	1,073	1,063	1,117	990	1,025	1,029	1,064	1,143	927
Latvia	73	61	62	60	58	57	61	63	62
Lithuania	90	92	89	95	95	96	95	98	97
Luxembourg	16	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	18
Mexico	1,850	1,991	2,016	2,022	1,982	2,031	1,863	2,099	2,113
Netherlands	350	314	305	319	316	324	302	284	274
New Zealand	117	112	109	114	111				
Norway	109	105	97	108	110	112	110	107	
Poland	659	558	567	532	497	494	493	495	498
Portugal	363	340	342	336	344	347	348	350	336
Slovak Republic	180	158	157	158	154	154	153	152	153
Slovenia	53	46	45	49	42	42	39	38	37
Spain	3,479	3,248	3,258	3,269	3,200	3,196	3,181	3,180	3,165
Sweden <sup>(2)</sup>	344	373	358	385	381	407	367	397	422
Switzerland	231	216	220	218	201				
Turkey	3,544	4,455	4,504	4,584	4,331	4,312	4,265		
United Kingdom	1,347	1,269	1,278	1,277	1,256	1,237	1,275		
United States	6,314	6,001	5,924	5,926	5,807	5,811	5,753	5,892	5,787

Notes:

(1) Germany: Due to the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, data from January 2020 onwards are estimations.

(2) Break in the Labour Force Survey data for Sweden in Q3 2018.