

Unemployment rate in the OECD area falls further to 5.5% in November 2021

The monthly unemployment rate in the **OECD area** fell to 5.5% in November 2021, from 5.7% in October, extending the trend of reducing unemployment rates into a seventh consecutive month. However, it remained 0.2 percentage point above the pre-pandemic rate recorded in February 2020. The number of unemployed workers across the **OECD area** also continued to fall, by 1.1 million, reaching 36.9 million, which was still 1.5 million above the pre-pandemic level.

The unemployment rate in the **OECD area** declined among both **women** (to 5.8%, from 5.9% in October) and **men** (to 5.3%, from 5.5%). For **younger people** (aged 15 to 24), it fell slightly to 11.8% from 11.9% in October and remained 0.3 percentage point above its pre-pandemic level.

The **euro area** also recorded a decrease in the unemployment rate for the seventh month in a row in November (to 7.2%, from 7.3% in October), with declines of 0.3 percentage point or more in **Austria** (to 5.3%, from 5.7% in October), **Lithuania** (to 6.0%, from 6.5%) and **Spain** (to 14.1%, from 14.4%). By contrast, it increased by 0.3 percentage point, to 7.3%, in **Latvia**.

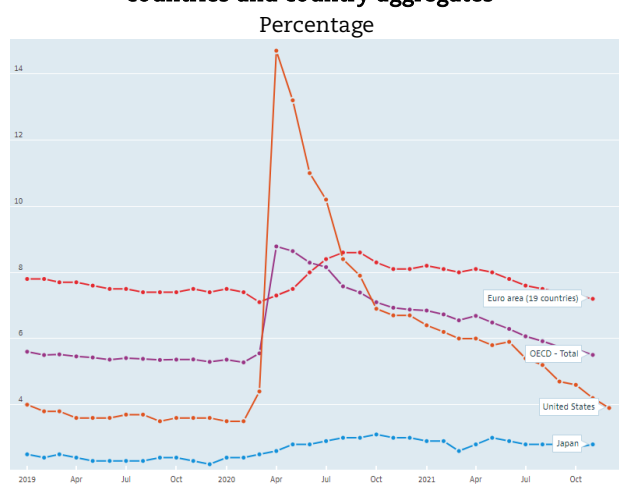
In November, the unemployment rate fell by 0.4 percentage point or more in **Australia** (to 4.6%, from 5.2% in October), **Canada** (to 6.0%, from 6.7%), **Colombia** (to 12.5%, from 13.0%), the **Czech Republic** (to 2.2%, from 2.6%), **Israel** (to 4.5%, from 4.9%) and the **United States** (to 4.2%, from 4.6%). It also declined, to a lesser extent, in **Korea** (to 3.1%, from 3.2%) and **Mexico** (to 3.8%, from 3.9%), while it rose slightly in **Japan** (to 2.8%, from 2.7%). More recent data show that in December the unemployment rate declined further in **Canada** (to 5.9%) and the **United States** (to 3.9%).

The fall in the **OECD area** unemployment rate when compared with the April 2020 peak should be interpreted with caution, as it largely reflects the return of temporary laid-off workers in the **United States** and **Canada**, where they are recorded as unemployed, unlike in most other countries, including European member states, where they are recorded as employed. In addition, methodological changes to the EU Labour Force Survey blur the comparison for several European Union countries between December 2020 and subsequent months.¹ Furthermore, the unemployment rate may conceal additional slack in the labour market as some non-employed people may be “out of the labour force”, either because they are not able to actively look for work or are not available to work.

In November (or in latest period available), unemployment rates were below the pre-pandemic level in **Australia, Chile, France, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal and Turkey**².

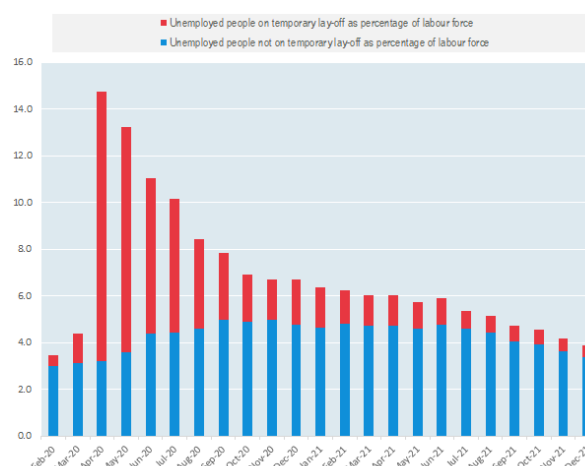
Unemployment rates (seasonally adjusted)

Figure 1. Unemployment rates for selected OECD countries and country aggregates⁽¹⁾



(1) Breaks between December 2020 and January 2021 for several EU Member States can affect aggregates for the euro area and OECD Total. Visit the interactive [OECD Data Portal](#) to explore these data further.

Figure 2. Composition of the United States unemployment rate⁽²⁾



(2) Source: OECD calculations based on US Current Population Survey

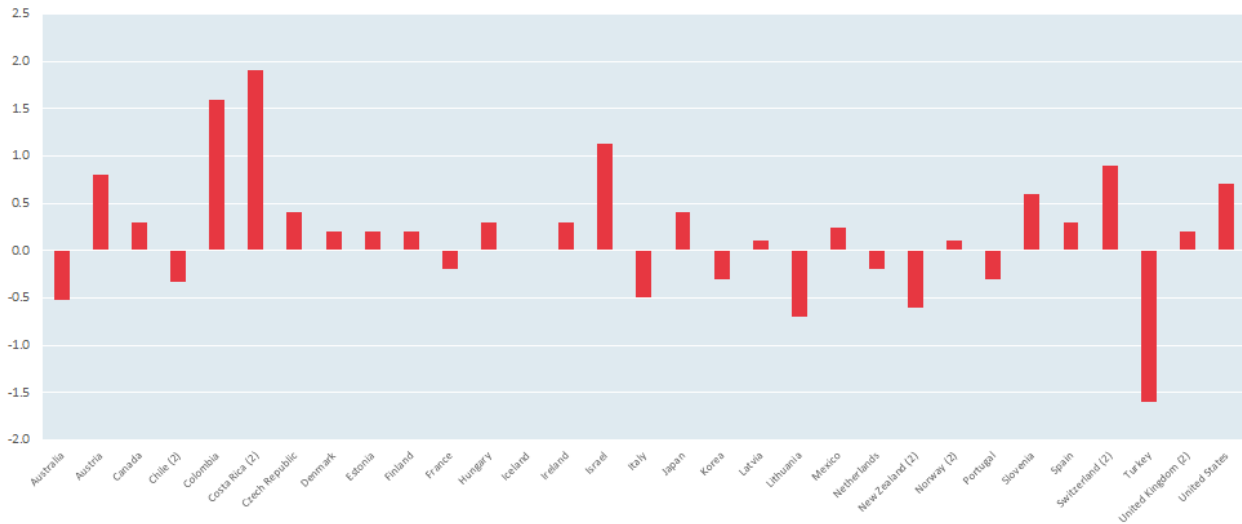
¹ See methodological notes at the end of this new release.

² European countries still showing a break in their unemployment series reflecting methodological changes in the EU Labour Force Survey in January 2021 are necessarily excluded from this list.

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**Figure 3. Changes in unemployment rate for selected OECD countries⁽¹⁾
between February 2020 and November 2021**

Percentage points



(1) European countries indicating a break in their unemployment series due to changes in the EU Labour Force Survey in January 2021 are not included in the chart.

(2) For Chile, Costa Rica and Norway, change between February 2020 and October 2021; for the United Kingdom, change between February 2020 and September 2021; for New Zealand and Switzerland, change between fourth quarter 2019 and third quarter 2021.

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Next release: Tuesday, 8 February 2022

OECD Unemployment Rates
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Table 1: OECD Unemployment Rates
 Percentage of the labour force, seasonally adjusted

	2019	2020	2020				2021						
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Feb	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
OECD - Total	5.4	7.2	7.0	6.7	6.5	5.9	5.3	6.3	6.1	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.5
Major Seven	4.3	6.5	6.1	5.7	5.6	5.0	4.2	5.5	5.2	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.5
European Union	6.8	7.2	7.4	7.5	7.3	6.8	6.6	7.1	6.9	6.8	6.7	6.7	6.5
Euro area	7.6	7.9	8.2	8.1	8.0	7.5	7.4	7.8	7.6	7.5	7.4	7.3	7.2
Australia	5.2	6.5	6.8	6.0	5.1	4.6	5.1	4.9	4.6	4.5	4.6	5.2	4.6
Austria ⁽¹⁾	4.8	6.0	6.3	7.0	6.7	5.7	4.5	6.2	6.0	5.9	5.2	5.7	5.3
Belgium ⁽²⁾	5.4	5.5	5.9	6.7	6.4	6.2	5.0	6.3	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.0	5.9
Canada ⁽³⁾	5.7	9.6	8.8	8.4	8.0	7.2	5.7	7.8	7.5	7.1	6.9	6.7	6.0
Chile	7.2	10.8	11.1	10.4	9.2	8.2	8.2	8.5	8.2	8.2	8.1	7.9	..
Colombia	10.5	16.1	15.4	14.1	14.8	13.0	10.9	14.5	13.6	12.7	12.7	13.0	12.5
Costa Rica	11.8	19.7	20.0	18.8	18.0	15.3	12.5	17.4	16.4	15.3	15.0	14.4	..
Czech Republic ⁽²⁾	2.0	2.6	3.1	3.3	3.1	2.7	1.8	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.2
Denmark ⁽²⁾	5.1	5.7	6.0	5.9	5.1	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.8	5.1	5.0	5.0
Estonia	4.5	6.8	7.4	6.8	6.5	6.0	4.8	6.5	6.4	5.9	5.6	5.2	5.0
Finland	6.7	7.7	8.1	8.0	8.1	7.5	6.6	7.7	7.7	7.1	7.7	6.7	6.8
France	8.4	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.2	7.9	7.7	8.1	8.0	7.9	7.7	7.6	7.5
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	3.2	3.8	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2
Greece ⁽²⁾	17.3	16.4	16.1	16.4	16.0	13.7	15.7	14.9	14.0	13.9	13.1	13.3	13.4
Hungary	3.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.1	3.9	3.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.6	3.9	3.8
Iceland	3.9	6.4	6.8	6.7	6.1	5.4	5.0	5.9	5.6	5.4	5.2	5.1	5.0
Ireland ⁽²⁾	5.0	5.9	6.3	7.5	6.9	5.4	4.9	6.3	5.7	5.4	5.2	5.2	5.2
Israel	3.8	4.3	4.8	5.1	5.3	5.0	3.4	5.1	4.9	5.0	5.1	4.9	4.5
Italy ⁽¹⁾	10.0	9.3	9.8	10.1	9.8	9.2	9.7	9.4	9.2	9.3	9.2	9.4	9.2
Japan	2.4	2.8	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.4	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8
Korea	3.8	3.9	4.3	4.4	3.7	3.0	3.4	3.7	3.3	2.8	3.0	3.2	3.1
Latvia ⁽²⁾	6.3	8.1	8.1	7.7	7.8	7.4	7.2	8.0	7.7	7.4	7.0	7.0	7.3
Lithuania ⁽²⁾	6.3	8.5	9.2	6.9	7.6	7.0	6.7	7.8	7.3	7.0	6.7	6.5	6.0
Luxembourg ⁽²⁾	5.6	6.7	6.3	6.2	5.9	5.3	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.3	5.2	5.0	5.0
Mexico ⁽⁴⁾	3.5	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.1	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.8
Netherlands	3.4	3.8	4.1	3.6	3.3	3.1	2.9	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.7
New Zealand	4.1	4.6	4.8	4.6	4.0	3.4							
Norway	3.7	4.6	5.0	4.8	5.0	4.0	3.5	4.9	4.3	4.0	3.6	3.6	..
Poland ⁽²⁾	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.8	3.6	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0
Portugal	6.7	7.1	7.2	6.8	6.9	6.4	6.6	6.8	6.6	6.3	6.4	6.4	6.3
Slovak Republic ⁽²⁾	5.8	6.7	7.1	7.1	7.0	6.6	6.0	6.9	6.7	6.6	6.5	6.4	6.3
Slovenia ⁽²⁾	4.5	5.0	5.2	5.2	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.8
Spain	14.1	15.5	16.2	15.6	15.4	14.8	13.8	15.3	15.0	14.7	14.6	14.4	14.1
Sweden ⁽²⁾	6.8	8.3	8.6	9.1	9.2	8.6	7.6	9.4	8.3	8.8	8.8	8.5	8.3
Switzerland	4.4	4.8	5.1	5.4	5.3	5.0							
Turkey	13.7	13.1	12.9	13.0	12.2	11.7	12.8	10.6	11.8	11.8	11.5	11.2	11.2
United Kingdom	3.8	4.6	5.2	4.9	4.7	4.3	4.0	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.2	..	..
United States ⁽⁵⁾	3.7	8.1	6.8	6.2	5.9	5.1	3.5	5.9	5.4	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.2

..: not available

Notes:

(1) Provisional data for Austria and Italy, for Germany from February 2021.

(2) Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Sweden: from January 2021, data are compliant with the new Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Framework Regulation, while prior to this date, data refer to the former definition.

(3) Canada: Unemployment rate for December 2021 was 5.9%.

(4) Mexico: April, May and June 2020 monthly figures are based on the INEGI Encuesta Telefónica de Ocupación y Empleo (ETOE) phone survey. These data are not strictly comparable with the results for earlier months. Data from July 2020 are based on the new Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo (ENOE) survey, combining telephone and face-to-face interviews.

(5) United States: Unemployment rate for December 2021 was 3.9%.

**OECD Unemployment Rates
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Table 2: Unemployment Rates by Sex
 Percentage of the labour force of each group, seasonally adjusted

	Women							Men						
	2019	2020	2021		2021			2019	2020	2021		2021		
			Q2	Q3	Sep	Oct	Nov			Q2	Q3	Sep	Oct	Nov
OECD - Total	5.6	7.4	6.7	6.1	6.0	5.9	5.8	5.3	6.9	6.3	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.3
Major Seven	4.2	6.6	5.4	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.4	6.4	5.7	5.2	5.0	4.7	4.6
European Union	7.1	7.5	7.7	7.2	7.0	7.0	6.8	6.5	6.9	6.9	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.3
Euro area	8.0	8.2	8.5	7.9	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.3	7.6	7.6	7.2	7.1	7.0	6.9
Australia	5.1	6.4	4.9	4.7	4.9	5.4	4.7	5.2	6.6	5.4	4.5	4.4	5.0	4.6
Austria ⁽¹⁾	4.6	5.9	6.5	5.5	4.9	6.0	5.3	5.1	6.1	6.7	5.8	5.4	5.5	5.3
Belgium ⁽²⁾	5.0	5.4	6.5	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.8	5.7	6.2	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.3
Canada	5.3	9.5	7.9	6.6	6.3	6.2	5.5	6.1	9.6	8.1	7.6	7.4	7.0	6.6
Chile	8.0	11.0	9.5	8.6	8.3	8.0	..	6.7	10.6	8.9	7.9	7.9	7.8	..
Colombia	13.7	20.7	19.2	17.3	17.1	17.4	16.5	8.2	12.9	11.7	9.9	9.5	9.8	9.7
Costa Rica	15.4	25.7	24.5	19.9	19.2	17.8	..	9.3	15.7	13.7	12.2	12.2	12.2	..
Czech Republic ⁽²⁾	2.4	3.0	3.8	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.7	1.7	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.3	1.9
Denmark ⁽²⁾	5.3	6.0	5.2	4.9	5.2	5.3	5.4	4.8	5.4	5.0	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.6
Estonia	4.9	6.5	6.1	5.0	4.4	4.7	4.7	4.2	7.0	7.0	6.9	6.8	5.7	5.3
Finland	6.2	7.4	7.3	7.1	7.0	6.1	6.7	7.3	8.1	8.9	7.9	8.3	7.2	6.9
France	8.4	8.0	8.3	7.9	7.7	7.5	7.4	8.5	8.1	8.1	7.9	7.8	7.6	7.5
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	2.7	3.4	3.3	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.5	4.2	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6
Greece ⁽²⁾	21.5	19.9	20.4	17.9	17.4	17.6	17.7	14.0	13.7	12.6	10.4	9.7	9.9	9.7
Hungary	3.3	4.2	4.3	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.1	3.4	4.1	4.0	3.8	3.3	3.5	3.5
Iceland	3.5	6.3	6.6	5.3	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.3	6.6	5.8	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.3
Ireland ⁽²⁾	4.7	5.9	6.8	5.4	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.8	7.1	5.4	5.2	5.3	5.3
Israel	3.9	4.1	5.4	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.3	3.7	4.5	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.7
Italy ⁽¹⁾	11.1	10.3	11.0	10.5	10.5	10.7	10.3	9.2	8.5	8.9	8.3	8.3	8.5	8.4
Japan	2.2	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.5	3.0	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.8	3.0
Korea	3.6	4.0	3.8	3.0	2.9	3.2	3.2	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.0
Latvia ⁽²⁾	5.4	7.1	6.8	5.9	5.7	5.9	6.3	7.2	9.1	8.9	8.8	8.3	8.1	8.3
Lithuania ⁽²⁾	5.5	7.7	7.3	6.3	6.0	5.6	5.1	7.1	9.3	7.8	7.7	7.4	7.4	6.8
Luxembourg ⁽²⁾	5.6	6.8	6.5	5.9	5.8	5.5	5.5	5.6	6.5	5.3	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.5
Mexico ⁽³⁾	3.6	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.5	4.6	4.5	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.6
Netherlands	3.4	4.0	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.1	2.7	3.4	3.7	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.6
New Zealand	4.4	5.0	4.2	3.4	..	..	..	3.8	4.3	3.8	3.3	..	..	..
Norway	3.4	4.4	4.7	3.6	3.2	3.5	..	4.0	4.8	5.1	4.3	3.9	3.8	..
Poland ⁽²⁾	3.6	3.3	3.8	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.5	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0
Portugal	7.3	7.4	7.3	6.9	6.5	6.7	6.4	6.0	6.8	6.6	6.0	6.2	6.0	6.2
Slovak Republic ⁽²⁾	6.0	7.1	7.1	6.7	6.6	6.4	6.3	5.6	6.4	6.8	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.4
Slovenia ⁽²⁾	5.0	5.7	5.4	4.2	4.1	4.4	4.4	4.0	4.4	3.8	4.9	5.1	5.2	5.2
Spain	16.0	17.4	17.6	16.5	16.2	16.0	15.6	12.5	13.9	13.4	13.2	13.1	13.0	12.7
Sweden ⁽²⁾	6.9	8.3	9.3	8.9	9.5	9.2	8.6	6.7	8.3	9.1	8.4	8.1	7.9	8.1
Switzerland	4.7	5.0	5.5	5.0	..	..	..	4.1	4.7	5.2	4.9	..	..	..
Turkey	16.4	14.8	15.0	14.4	14.4	13.9	14.5	12.4	12.4	10.9	10.4	10.0	9.9	9.6
United Kingdom	3.6	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.8	4.9	4.4	4.3
United States	3.6	8.4	5.7	4.9	4.5	4.6	4.2	3.7	7.8	6.1	5.3	5.0	4.5	4.2

..: not available

Notes:

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Table 3: Unemployment Rates by Age Group
 Percentage of the labour force of each group, seasonally adjusted

	Youth (15-24)							Prime-age and Older Workers (25+)						
	2019	2020	2021		2021			2019	2020	2021		2021		
			Q2	Q3	Sep	Oct	Nov			Q2	Q3	Sep	Oct	Nov
OECD - Total	11.9	15.2	13.5	12.2	11.9	11.9	11.8	4.6	6.1	5.6	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.7
Major Seven	9.5	13.8	11.0	10.2	9.9	9.6	9.6	3.6	5.6	4.9	4.4	4.2	4.1	3.9
European Union	15.4	17.2	17.6	16.0	15.8	15.6	15.4	6.0	6.3	6.3	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.7
Euro area	16.0	17.6	17.9	16.2	16.0	15.8	15.5	6.8	7.0	7.0	6.6	6.5	6.5	6.4
Australia	11.7	14.3	10.5	10.6	10.8	13.1	10.9	3.9	5.0	4.2	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.4
Austria ⁽¹⁾	9.1	11.7	12.0	10.1	9.1	10.3	10.0	4.3	5.3	6.0	5.1	4.7	5.2	4.7
Belgium ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾	14.3	15.3	19.2	18.4	18.4	..	..	4.6	4.8	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.0	4.9
Canada	11.0	20.0	15.2	11.5	11.3	10.2	10.5	4.8	7.9	6.9	6.4	6.2	6.1	5.3
Chile	18.6	24.7	21.7	17.5	17.8	16.9	..	6.1	9.6	8.1	7.4	7.2	7.1	..
Colombia	20.8	27.5	26.6	24.2	24.5	24.0	22.4	8.4	13.9	12.5	10.8	10.3	10.9	10.6
Costa Rica	31.8	42.9	39.6	37.7	36.7	35.6	..	8.4	15.8	14.2	11.6	11.5	11.1	..
Czech Republic ⁽³⁾	5.6	7.9	7.8	7.5	6.5	7.7	6.5	1.8	2.3	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.0
Denmark ⁽³⁾	10.1	11.6	10.3	10.3	11.8	11.7	11.2	4.2	4.7	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.0
Estonia	11.6	18.0	17.6	16.2	14.9	15.8	15.4	4.0	5.9	5.6	5.2	4.9	4.4	4.2
Finland	17.3	20.8	18.8	14.2	14.4	15.4	16.1	5.3	6.0	6.8	6.7	6.8	5.6	5.7
France	20.7	21.4	19.7	19.9	19.6	18.5	17.8	7.1	6.6	6.9	6.5	6.3	6.3	6.2
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽³⁾	5.8	7.1	7.1	6.6	6.5	6.4	6.4	2.9	3.5	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9
Greece ⁽³⁾	35.3	35.4	38.7	30.5	27.0	32.8	39.1	16.4	15.5	15.0	12.9	12.5	12.3	12.0
Hungary	11.3	12.4	13.8	13.8	10.0	13.4	12.4	2.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2
Iceland	9.5	11.9	10.9	9.0	8.6	8.5	8.4	3.0	5.5	5.4	4.8	4.6	4.5	4.4
Ireland ⁽³⁾	12.4	15.9	18.0	11.4	10.3	10.5	10.9	4.0	4.6	5.4	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.3
Israel ⁽⁴⁾	6.7	7.9	7.6	8.7	7.5	8.6	7.8	3.3	3.7	4.8	4.7	4.9	4.5	4.0
Italy ⁽¹⁾	29.2	29.3	30.3	28.2	29.6	28.2	28.0	8.8	8.1	8.5	8.1	8.1	..	..
Japan	3.8	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.1	5.2	2.2	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6
Korea	10.4	10.5	9.1	6.9	6.3	8.1	7.6	3.4	3.6	3.4	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9
Latvia ⁽³⁾	12.5	14.8	15.9	14.6	14.4	14.9	15.0	5.9	7.7	7.3	6.9	6.5	6.5	6.8
Lithuania ⁽³⁾	11.9	19.5	19.2	15.0	14.0	13.2	11.8	5.8	7.7	6.8	6.4	6.2	6.0	5.5
Luxembourg ⁽³⁾	16.6	22.7	18.3	16.5	16.3	15.4	15.5	4.6	5.4	4.8	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.1
Mexico ⁽⁵⁾	7.2	8.1	9.1	7.3	7.0	8.1	7.8	2.7	3.7	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.0
Netherlands	6.7	9.1	8.4	7.4	7.4	6.9	6.1	2.8	2.8	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.0
New Zealand	11.3	12.4	10.9	10.0				2.9	3.3	2.8	2.2			
Norway	9.9	11.5	12.1	10.5	9.7	9.9	..	2.8	3.6	3.8	3.0	2.7	2.7	..
Poland ⁽³⁾	9.9	10.9	13.8	10.3	10.0	10.8	11.6	2.8	2.6	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.4
Portugal	18.3	22.9	25.2	23.0	22.7	22.1	22.4	5.8	6.0	5.7	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.2
Slovak Republic ⁽³⁾	16.1	19.3	21.3	19.2	18.6	19.1	19.5	5.1	5.9	6.2	5.9	5.8	5.7	5.6
Slovenia ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾	8.2	14.4	14.7	12.8	12.8	..	..	4.2	4.4	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.9
Spain	32.6	38.3	37.6	31.9	30.6	30.2	29.2	12.8	14.0	13.8	13.5	13.4	13.2	12.9
Sweden ⁽³⁾	19.9	23.8	25.9	24.5	26.4	24.7	24.5	5.1	6.4	7.0	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.2
Switzerland	8.0	8.6	9.3	8.6				3.9	4.3	4.8	4.5			
Turkey	25.1	24.9	23.2	22.0	21.3	20.6	22.3	11.6	11.1	10.2	9.8	9.7	9.5	9.2
United Kingdom	11.4	13.7	13.1	11.7	11.3	..	..	2.7	3.3	3.6	3.3	3.2	..	..
United States	8.4	15.1	10.1	9.4	8.8	8.5	8.4	3.0	7.1	5.3	4.5	4.1	4.0	3.6

..: not available

Notes:

(1) Provisional data for Austria and Italy, for Germany from February 2021.

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

(3) Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, the Slovak republic, Slovenia and Sweden: from January 2021, data are compliant with the new Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Framework Regulation, while prior to this date, data refer to the former definition.

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

(5) Mexico: April, May and June 2020 monthly figures are based on the INEGI ETOE phone survey. These data are not strictly comparable with the results for earlier months. Data from July 2020 are based on the New ENOE survey, combining telephone and face-to-face interviews.

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Table 4: Unemployment Levels
 Thousands of persons, seasonally adjusted

	2019	2020	2021			2021			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
OECD - Total	36,254	46,804	44,305	43,134	39,489	39,523	38,395	37,993	36,901
Major Seven	16,559	24,669	21,813	21,214	19,198	19,323	18,488	18,057	17,379
European Union	14,461	15,131	15,671	15,459	14,540	14,598	14,314	14,231	13,984
Euro area	12,446	12,824	13,123	13,042	12,313	12,343	12,117	12,051	11,829
Australia	700	878	826	712	627	617	625	706	637
Austria ⁽¹⁾	220	271	319	303	260	268	237	265	244
Belgium ⁽²⁾	274	282	338	328	326	329	324	315	304
Canada	1,154	1,897	1,694	1,628	1,461	1,440	1,422	1,366	1,244
Chile	698	938	942	817	749	749	744	727	..
Colombia	2,611	3,755	3,425	3,581	3,191	3,131	3,124	3,183	3,035
Costa Rica	291	470	458	434	378	378	368	351	..
Czech Republic ⁽²⁾	109	137	174	163	143	151	139	138	121
Denmark ⁽²⁾	153	171	178	156	148	147	156	155	154
Estonia	32	47	47	45	42	41	40	36	35
Finland	183	209	218	225	207	197	210	185	188
France	2,519	2,381	2,388	2,474	2,384	2,403	2,340	2,290	2,262
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	1,374	1,664	1,659	1,554	1,451	1,449	1,422	1,402	1,390
Greece ⁽²⁾	819	761	719	742	644	657	618	620	636
Hungary	159	198	207	199	189	198	172	187	184
Iceland	8	13	14	13	11	11	11	11	11
Ireland ⁽²⁾	121	139	181	174	140	139	134	135	136
Israel	157	177	207	218	209	209	213	208	194
Italy ⁽¹⁾	2,588	2,318	2,511	2,467	2,328	2,334	2,325	2,381	2,338
Japan	1,617	1,911	1,953	2,000	1,900	1,910	1,890	1,820	1,920
Korea	1,063	1,108	1,247	1,051	858	794	849	900	890
Latvia ⁽²⁾	61	79	72	73	69	69	66	66	69
Lithuania ⁽²⁾	92	126	101	111	103	103	99	96	88
Luxembourg ⁽²⁾	17	21	20	19	17	17	17	16	16
Mexico ⁽³⁾	1,991	2,340	2,454	2,492	2,351	2,350	2,250	2,263	2,219
Netherlands	314	357	334	307	294	301	292	277	251
New Zealand	115	132	133	116	98				
Norway	105	131	137	142	115	116	104	105	..
Poland ⁽²⁾	558	537	656	619	534	530	519	515	512
Portugal	340	358	344	356	331	325	328	330	327
Slovak Republic ⁽²⁾	158	182	193	191	183	183	179	177	176
Slovenia ⁽²⁾	46	51	52	46	48	48	49	50	51
Spain	3,248	3,531	3,582	3,574	3,444	3,439	3,398	3,367	3,279
Sweden ⁽²⁾	373	459	503	511	480	488	490	471	462
Switzerland	216	238	267	262	245				
Turkey	4,463	4,040	4,146	3,940	3,855	3,873	3,809	3,738	3,777
United Kingdom	1,307	1,551	1,653	1,600	1,448	1,448	1,423	..	..
United States	6,001	12,948	9,954	9,491	8,225	8,339	7,666	7,375	6,802

..: not available

Notes:

(1) Provisional data for Austria and Italy, for Germany from February 2021.

(2) Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Sweden: from January 2021, data are compliant with the new Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Framework Regulation, while prior to this date, data refer to the former definition.

(3) Mexico: April, May and June 2020 monthly figures are based on the INEGI ETOE phone survey. These data are not strictly comparable with the results for earlier months. Data from July 2020 are based on the New ENOE survey, combining telephone and face-to-face interviews.

Note: Employment and unemployment statistics during the COVID-19 crisis

The broad comparability of unemployment data across OECD countries is achieved through the adherence of national statistics to International Guidelines from the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) – the so-called ILO guidelines.

Departures from these guidelines may however exist across countries depending on national circumstances (e.g. statistical environment, national regulations and practices). Typically, these departures have only a limited impact on broad comparability of employment and unemployment statistics. However, the unprecedented impact of COVID-19³ is amplifying divergences and affects the cross-country comparability of unemployment statistics in this news release.

This concerns in particular the treatment of persons on temporary layoff or employees furloughed by their employers. These are *persons not at work during the survey reference week due to economic reasons and business conditions* (i.e. lack of work, shortage of demand for goods and services, business closures or business moves).

According to ILO guidelines, ‘**employed**’ persons include those who, in their present job, were ‘not at work’ for a short duration but maintained a job attachment during their absence (ILO, 2013 and 2020). Job attachment is determined on the basis of the continued receipt of remuneration, and/or the total duration of the absence. In practice, formal or continued job attachment is established when:

- *the expected total duration of the absence is up to three months (which can be more than three months, if the return to employment in the same economic unit is guaranteed and, in the case of the pandemic, once the restrictions in place - where applicable - are lifted)*

OR

- *workers continue to receive remuneration from their employer, including partial pay, even if they also receive support from other sources, including government schemes.*

In turn persons are classified as ‘**not employed**’ if:

- *The expected total duration of absence is greater than three months or there is no or unknown expected return to the same economic unit*

AND

- *People in this condition do not receive any part of their remuneration from their employer.*

Not-employed persons are classified as ‘**unemployed**’ if they fulfil the criteria of active “job search”⁴ and “availability” specified for the measurement of unemployment.

However, departures from these guidelines in national practices do exist. In North America persons on temporary layoff are considered to be “only weakly or not at all attached to their job and are to be counted as unemployed” (Sorrentino, 2000). In the United States, people on temporary layoff are classified as ‘unemployed’ if they expect to be recalled to their job within six months. If they have not been given a date to return to work by their employer and if they have no expectation to return to work within six months, they need to fulfil the “job search” criteria to be classified as ‘unemployed’. For the latest US figures “people who were effectively laid off due

³ Broad comparability is ensured during normal business conditions, while divergences are potentially exacerbated during economic and financial crises, such as the Great Recession or the Covid-19 crisis.

⁴ Some people not in employment may be classified as “inactive/out of the labour force” because, due to the pandemic, they are either not able to actively look for a job even if they are available to work or are not available to work because of family responsibilities as schools and care services are closed.

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to pandemic-related closures were counted among the unemployed on temporary layoff” without further testing for their return to their previous job (BLS, 2020). In Canada, persons in temporary layoff are also classified as ‘unemployed’ if they have a date of return or an indication that they will be recalled by their employers.

Conversely, persons on temporary layoff are classified as employed (not at work) in Europe, as recommended by the ILO Guidelines (Eurostat, 2016). In practice, formal job attachment is tested on the basis of (i) an assurance of return to work within a period of three months or (ii) the receipt of half or more of their wage or salary from their employer. Somewhat stricter than ILO guidance, absences during COVID-19 crisis whose duration is unknown are treated as absences longer than three months. Those failing to satisfy these two criteria are classified as unemployed if they are “available to start work” (over the next two weeks) and have actively searched for a job in the last four weeks. All other persons on layoff are classified as inactive.

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

The OECD area unemployment rate is calculated as the total number of unemployed people 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.).

For countries for which unemployment data for the most recent month or quarter are not available, the latest available data are used to compile data for the OECD area total.

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

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.

New methodology in the **EU Labour Force Survey** from 2021 with the entry into force of the Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Framework Regulation, resulted in [updated definitions of the labour status](#). These changes may affect comparisons for several EU countries between December 2020 and subsequent months. Information, by European country, on the status of the implementation of IESS regulation as well as on possible resulting breaks in time series can be found in a Eurostat Statistics Explained [article](#).

The measures put in place by national governments to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) may have impacted on the ability to field surveys, and so, in turn, on the quality of statistics typically produced. In addition, because of differences in national practices used to determine whether individuals are unemployed when under confinement, international comparability has also been affected. See the **note above on the divergence in employment and unemployment statistics during the COVID-19 crisis**.