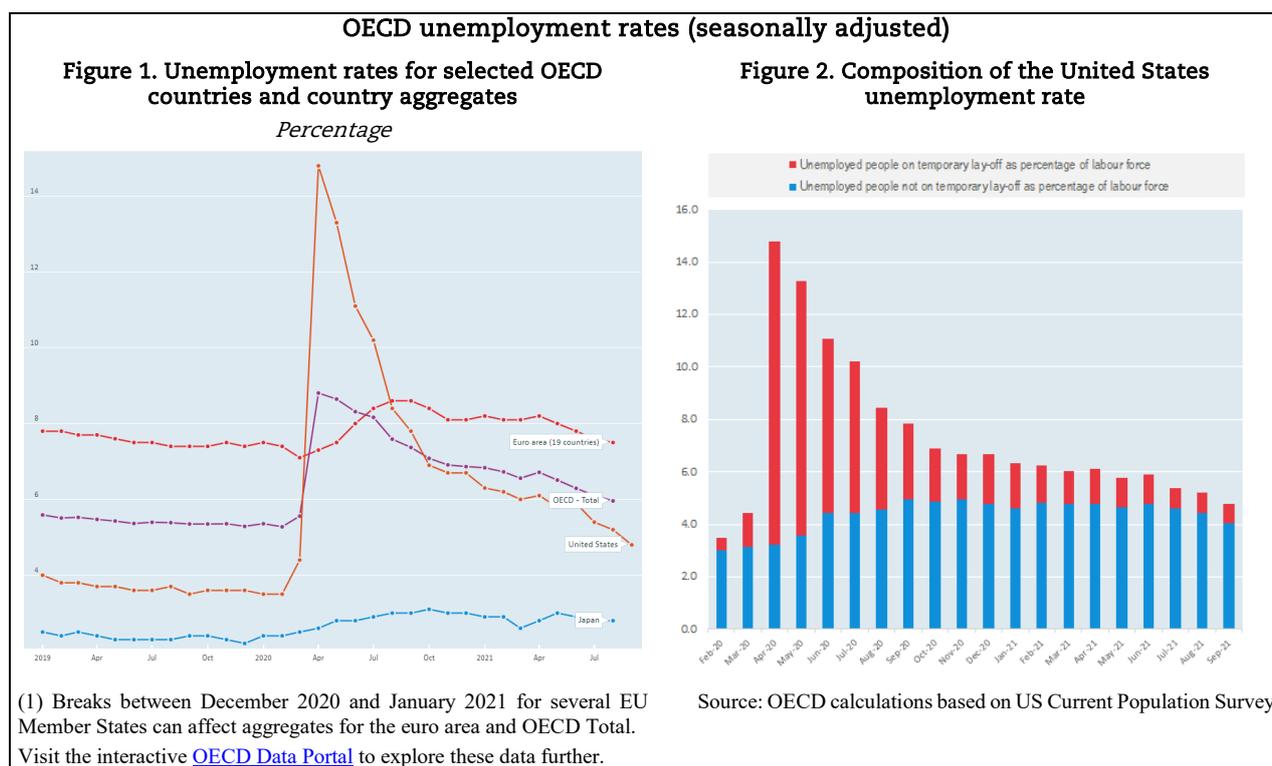


OECD monthly unemployment rate fell slightly to 6.0% in August 2021

The **OECD area** monthly unemployment rate fell for the fourth consecutive month, albeit slightly, in August 2021, to 6.0% (from 6.1% in July). While the rate remains 0.7 percentage point above the pre-pandemic rate as at February 2020¹, this latest update represents a continuation of the downward trend since the peak of 8.8% in April 2020, with the exception of April 2021. However, some care is needed in interpreting the fall in the OECD area unemployment rate when compared with the April 2020 peak, as it largely reflects the return of temporary laid-off workers in the **United States** and **Canada**, where they are recorded as unemployed.² The number of unemployed workers across the **OECD area** continued to fall (by 1.0 million) in August 2021, reaching 39.7 million, still 4.3 million above the level in February 2020.

In the **euro area**, the unemployment rate reached 7.5% in August 2021, down slightly from 7.6% in July, getting closer to pre-pandemic rates. There were falls of 0.3 percentage point or more in **Greece** (to 13.2%, from 14.2% in July), **Finland** (to 7.2%, from 7.8%), **Spain** (to 14.0%, from 14.5%), **Latvia** (to 7.1%, from 7.5%) and **Lithuania** (to 7.2%, from 7.5%).

Outside the euro area, the largest decreases in unemployment rates in August (from July) were observed in **Colombia** (to 12.7%, from 13.6%), **Korea** (to 2.8%, from 3.3%), **Canada** (to 7.1%, from 7.5%) and the **United States** (to 5.2%, from 5.4%), while slight changes or no changes were observed in most other countries, including **Australia** (at 4.5%, from 4.6%), **Japan** (2.8%), **Mexico** (at 4.1%, from 4.2%), **Poland** (at 3.4%) and **Turkey** (at 12.1%). More recent data show that in September 2021 the unemployment rate declined further in the **United States** (by 0.4 percentage point, to 4.8%) and **Canada** (by 0.2 percentage point, to 6.9%).



In August 2021, while the **OECD area** unemployment rate declined among people aged **25 and over** (to 5.1%, from 5.3% in July), it increased slightly (to 12.5%, from 12.4%) among **youth** (people aged 15 to

¹ New methodology in the EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) 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 result in time series breaks between December 2020 and January 2021 for several European Union Member States. More details on the main methodological changes to the EU LFS can be found [here](#).

² For Canada and the United States, the statistical treatment of people on temporary layoff is different from other OECD countries, where these people are typically recorded as employed. See the note on the divergence in employment and unemployment statistics during the COVID-19 crisis in the end of this News Release.

24), after 3 months of decline. There remain large differences across OECD countries in **youth** unemployment rates. For example, among the European economies, **Spain** (33.0%) and **Greece** (30.8%) show very high youth unemployment rates, compared with the **Netherlands** (7.4%) and **Germany** (7.5%).

OECD area unemployment rates for both **women** and **men** declined slightly in August to 6.2% (from 6.3% in July) and 5.8% (from 5.9%), respectively. However, declines of more than 1.0 percentage point in **women** unemployment rates were observed in **Colombia** (to 16.6%), **Finland** (to 6.5%) and **Greece** (to 15.1%).

Figure 3. Youth unemployment rates (15-24) for selected OECD countries and country aggregates

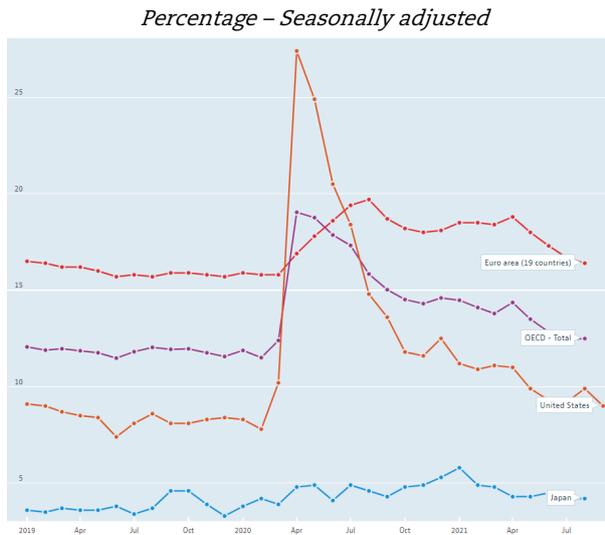
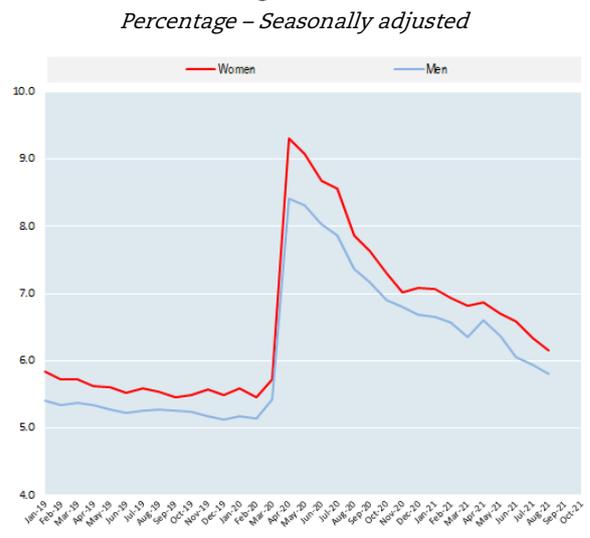


Figure 4. OECD area unemployment rates by gender⁽¹⁾



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

It should be noted that unemployment statistics do not account for the full amount of labour market slack due to the pandemic, as some non-employed people may be classified as “out of the labour force”, because they are either not able to actively look for a job or are not available to work.³

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; for technical questions contact stat.contact@oecd.org

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³ The [ILO guidelines](#) define the unemployed as “all those of working age who were not in employment, carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period and were currently available to take up employment given a job opportunity”. 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 look actively 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.

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

	2019	2020	2020		2021		2020	2021					
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
OECD - Total	5.4	7.2	7.7	7.0	6.7	6.5	5.3	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.3	6.1	6.0
Major Seven	4.3	6.5	7.0	6.0	5.7	5.6	4.2	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.5	5.2	5.1
European Union	6.7	7.1	7.7	7.4	7.4	7.3	6.6	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.1	6.9	6.8
Euro area	7.6	7.9	8.5	8.2	8.1	8.0	7.4	8.1	8.2	8.0	7.8	7.6	7.5
Australia	5.2	6.5	7.0	6.8	6.0	5.1	5.1	5.7	5.5	5.1	4.9	4.6	4.5
Austria ⁽¹⁾	4.8	6.0	6.5	6.3	7.0	6.7	4.5	6.7	7.1	6.7	6.2	6.1	6.1
Belgium ⁽²⁾	5.4	5.5	6.2	5.8	6.6	6.3	5.0	6.7	6.5	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.4
Canada ⁽³⁾	5.7	9.6	10.1	8.8	8.4	8.0	5.7	7.5	8.1	8.2	7.8	7.5	7.1
Chile	7.2	10.8	12.0	11.0	10.4	9.2	8.2	10.3	9.8	9.2	8.5	8.2	
Colombia	10.5	16.1	17.7	15.3	14.1	14.9	10.9	13.8	14.9	15.1	14.6	13.6	12.7
Costa Rica	11.8	19.7	21.7	20.2	18.9	17.8	12.6	17.4	17.7	17.8	17.3	16.4	
Czech Republic ⁽²⁾	2.0	2.6	2.8	3.1	3.3	3.1	1.8	3.4	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.8	2.9
Denmark ⁽²⁾	5.1	5.7	6.3	6.0	5.9	5.0	4.8	5.7	5.4	5.0	4.6	4.4	4.4
Estonia	4.5	6.8	7.8	7.3	6.9	6.5	5.0	6.8	6.4	6.7	6.5	6.3	6.2
Finland	6.7	7.7	8.5	8.1	8.0	8.1	6.6	7.5	8.5	8.2	7.7	7.8	7.2
France	8.4	8.0	8.8	8.0	8.1	8.2	7.7	8.2	8.4	8.3	8.0	8.0	8.0
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	3.2	3.8	4.1	4.1	3.9	3.7	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6
Greece ⁽²⁾	17.3	16.4	16.5	16.0	16.7	16.0	15.9	17.2	17.4	15.8	14.9	14.2	13.2
Hungary	3.3	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2	3.5	4.0	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.2
Iceland	3.9	6.4	6.7	7.1	7.0	6.6	4.9	7.0	6.9	6.6	6.3	6.1	6.0
Ireland ⁽²⁾	5.0	5.9	7.0	6.3	7.4	7.1	4.8	7.6	7.4	7.0	6.8	6.5	6.5
Israel	3.8	4.3	4.7	4.8	5.1	5.3	3.4	5.4	5.3	5.5	5.1	4.9	5.0
Italy ⁽¹⁾	10.0	9.3	10.0	9.8	10.1	9.8	9.7	10.0	10.1	9.9	9.4	9.3	9.3
Japan	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.4	2.6	2.8	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.8
Korea	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.3	4.4	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.3	2.8
Latvia ⁽²⁾	6.3	8.1	8.5	8.1	7.7	7.8	7.2	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.5	7.1
Lithuania ⁽²⁾	6.3	8.5	9.7	9.2	6.9	7.6	6.7	6.5	7.2	7.7	7.8	7.5	7.2
Luxembourg ⁽²⁾	5.6	6.7	6.8	6.3	6.2	6.0	5.7	6.2	6.2	6.0	5.8	5.6	5.5
Mexico ⁽⁴⁾	3.5	4.4	5.0	4.4	4.4	4.4	3.6	4.3	4.8	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.1
Netherlands	3.4	3.8	4.5	4.1	3.6	3.3	2.9	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.2
New Zealand	4.1	4.6	5.3	4.8	4.6	4.0							
Norway	3.7	4.6	5.2	5.0	4.7	4.8	3.5	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.2	
Poland ⁽²⁾	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.8	3.6	3.0	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.4
Portugal	6.7	7.1	8.1	7.2	6.8	6.9	6.6	6.6	7.0	7.0	6.8	6.6	6.4
Slovak Republic ⁽²⁾	5.8	6.7	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.0	6.0	7.2	7.1	7.0	6.8	6.6	6.5
Slovenia ⁽²⁾	4.5	5.0	5.3	5.3	5.2	4.5	4.1	5.0	4.8	4.5	4.2	4.0	3.9
Spain	14.1	15.5	16.5	16.2	15.6	15.3	13.7	15.4	15.5	15.4	15.0	14.5	14.0
Sweden ⁽²⁾	6.8	8.3	9.1	8.6	9.1	9.2	7.6	9.4	9.1	9.1	9.4	8.4	8.8
Switzerland	4.4	4.8	5.0	5.1	5.4	5.4							
Turkey	13.7	13.1	13.4	12.8	13.0	12.3	12.7	13.1	13.5	12.8	10.7	12.1	12.1
United Kingdom	3.8	4.6	4.8	5.2	4.9	4.7	4.0	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.6		
United States ⁽⁵⁾	3.7	8.1	8.8	6.8	6.2	5.9	3.5	6.0	6.1	5.8	5.9	5.4	5.2

Notes:

(1) Provisional data for Austria and Italy from 2004, for Germany from April 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 September 2021 was 6.9%.

(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 September 2021 was 4.8%.

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

	Women						Men					
	2020	2021		2021			2020	2021		2021		
		Q1	Q2	Jun	Jul	Aug		Q1	Q2	Jun	Jul	Aug
OECD - Total	7.4	6.9	6.7	6.6	6.3	6.2	6.9	6.5	6.3	6.1	5.9	5.8
Major Seven	6.6	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.1	5.0	6.4	5.8	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.2
European Union	7.4	7.8	7.7	7.5	7.4	7.2	6.9	7.1	6.9	6.7	6.5	6.5
Euro area	8.2	8.5	8.5	8.3	8.1	7.9	7.6	7.8	7.5	7.3	7.1	7.1
Australia	6.4	5.7	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.4	6.6	6.2	5.4	5.1	4.6	4.7
Austria ⁽¹⁾	5.9	7.1	6.6	6.0	6.1	5.8	6.1	6.9	6.8	6.5	6.2	6.3
Belgium ⁽²⁾	5.4	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.4	6.5	5.7	6.7	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.2
Canada	9.5	8.4	7.9	7.4	7.0	6.6	9.6	8.3	8.1	8.2	7.8	7.5
Chile	11.0	10.4	9.5	9.0	8.7		10.6	10.4	8.9	8.1	7.9	
Colombia	20.7	18.7	19.3	19.1	18.1	16.6	12.9	10.8	11.8	11.4	10.5	9.8
Costa Rica	25.7	26.6	23.8	23.4	21.8		15.7	13.7	13.7	13.2	12.8	
Czech Republic ⁽²⁾	3.0	4.1	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.7	2.2	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.3
Denmark ⁽²⁾	6.0	6.2	5.2	4.8	4.6	4.7	5.4	5.7	4.9	4.5	4.2	4.1
Estonia	6.5	6.3	6.0	6.2	5.8	5.8	7.0	7.5	7.2	6.9	6.7	6.6
Finland	7.4	7.5	7.3	6.9	7.8	6.5	8.1	8.4	8.9	8.4	7.8	7.7
France	8.0	7.7	8.3	8.1	8.0	7.8	8.1	8.4	8.2	7.9	8.1	8.1
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.9
Greece ⁽²⁾	19.9	21.3	20.4	19.1	18.6	15.1	13.7	13.0	12.6	11.5	10.7	11.7
Hungary	4.2	4.6	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.2
Iceland	6.3	8.1	7.5	6.9	6.5	6.4	6.6	6.1	5.9	5.8	5.7	5.7
Ireland ⁽²⁾	5.9	7.3	6.9	6.6	6.5	6.4	5.8	7.4	7.2	6.9	6.6	6.5
Israel	4.1	4.9	5.4	5.0	4.8	4.8	4.5	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2
Italy ⁽¹⁾	10.3	11.2	11.0	10.6	10.6	10.7	8.5	9.3	8.9	8.5	8.3	8.3
Japan	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1
Korea	4.0	4.6	3.8	3.8	3.2	3.0	3.9	4.3	3.6	3.6	3.4	2.7
Latvia ⁽²⁾	7.1	7.1	6.7	6.5	6.1	5.7	9.1	8.3	8.8	9.1	9.0	8.5
Lithuania ⁽²⁾	7.7	7.1	7.3	7.5	7.2	6.9	9.3	6.7	7.8	8.0	7.9	7.6
Luxembourg ⁽²⁾	6.8	6.9	6.6	6.3	6.2	6.0	6.5	5.7	5.5	5.3	5.1	5.0
Mexico ⁽³⁾	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.1	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.1
Netherlands	4.0	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.0
New Zealand	5.0	4.6	4.3				4.3	4.6	3.8			
Norway	4.4	4.3	4.7	4.5	3.9		4.8	5.0	4.9	5.0	4.4	
Poland ⁽²⁾	3.3	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.9	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.4
Portugal	7.4	7.0	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.1	6.8	6.7	6.6	6.3	6.0	5.6
Slovak Republic ⁽²⁾	7.1	7.9	7.1	6.8	6.7	6.5	6.4	6.5	6.8	6.8	6.6	6.4
Slovenia ⁽²⁾	5.7	6.4	5.5	5.1	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.1	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.3
Spain	17.4	17.7	17.5	17.2	16.7	16.2	13.9	13.7	13.4	13.1	12.5	11.9
Sweden ⁽²⁾	8.3	9.4	9.3	9.5	8.7	8.5	8.3	8.9	9.1	9.3	8.1	9.2
Switzerland	5.0	6.1	5.5				4.7	4.8	5.2			
Turkey	14.8	15.4	15.1	14.2	14.5	15.0	12.4	11.8	11.1	9.1	11.0	10.8
United Kingdom	4.3	4.6	4.5	4.4			4.8	5.1	4.9	4.7		
United States	8.4	6.1	5.7	5.7	5.2	5.0	7.8	6.3	6.1	6.0	5.6	5.4

Notes:

(1) Provisional data for Austria and Italy from 2004, for Germany from April 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.

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

	Youth (15-24)							Prime-age and Older Workers (25+)						
	2019	2020	2021		2021			2019	2020	2021		2021		
			Q1	Q2	Jun	Jul	Aug			Q1	Q2	Jun	Jul	Aug
OECD - Total	11.9	15.2	14.1	13.6	12.8	12.4	12.5	4.6	6.1	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.3	5.1
Major Seven	9.5	13.8	11.9	11.1	10.5	10.2	10.5	3.6	5.6	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.6	4.4
European Union	15.3	17.0	18.2	17.7	17.0	16.4	16.2	5.9	6.2	6.5	6.3	6.2	6.0	6.0
Euro area	16.0	17.6	18.5	18.0	17.3	16.7	16.4	6.8	7.0	7.2	7.0	6.8	6.7	6.6
Australia	11.7	14.3	12.9	10.5	10.2	10.2	10.7	3.9	5.0	4.7	4.2	3.9	3.6	3.4
Austria ⁽¹⁾	9.1	11.7	12.3	12.1	11.1	11.3	11.6	4.3	5.3	6.3	6.0	5.6	5.5	5.4
Belgium ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾	14.3	15.3	19.3	19.3	19.3			4.6	4.8	5.7	5.3	5.1	5.2	5.2
Canada	11.0	20.0	16.9	15.2	13.6	11.6	11.6	4.8	7.9	7.0	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.3
Chile	18.6	24.7	24.0	21.8	19.4	18.3		6.1	9.6	9.3	8.1	7.6	7.4	
Colombia	20.8	27.5	24.8	26.7	26.0	24.8	23.4	8.4	13.9	11.9	12.5	12.4	11.4	10.6
Costa Rica	31.8	42.9	44.5	40.0	40.9	40.0		8.4	15.8	14.1	13.9	13.2	12.4	
Czech Republic ⁽³⁾	5.6	7.9	10.4	7.9	7.2	8.1	8.8	1.8	2.3	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.6
Denmark ⁽³⁾	10.1	11.6	12.9	10.0	8.6	8.0	8.4	4.2	4.7	4.8	4.2	4.0	3.8	3.7
Estonia	11.6	18.0	15.7	17.3	18.3	18.7	19.2	4.0	5.9	6.3	5.7	5.6	5.2	5.1
Finland	17.3	20.8	19.5	18.8	16.4	14.7	14.0	5.3	6.0	6.5	6.8	6.6	7.0	6.3
France	20.7	21.4	20.8	19.7	18.9	19.6	19.9	7.1	6.6	6.7	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.7
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽³⁾	5.8	7.1	8.1	7.9	7.8	7.6	7.5	2.9	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1
Greece ⁽³⁾	35.3	35.4	41.9	38.4	30.4	33.1	30.8	16.4	15.5	15.4	15.0	14.1	13.3	12.4
Hungary	11.3	12.4	13.6	13.8	13.3	16.4	15.8	2.7	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4
Iceland	9.5	11.9	13.6	12.5	11.2	10.0	9.3	3.0	5.5	5.9	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.5
Ireland ⁽³⁾	12.4	15.9	17.6	18.7	18.6	17.3	17.0	4.0	4.6	6.0	5.4	5.1	4.9	4.8
Israel ⁽⁴⁾	6.7	7.9	7.1	7.6	8.8	9.1	9.4	3.3	3.7	4.3	4.8	4.8	4.4	4.8
Italy ⁽¹⁾	29.2	29.3	32.2	30.0	28.9	27.3	27.3	8.8	8.1	8.8	8.5	8.5		
Japan	3.8	4.5	5.2	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.2	2.2	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.6
Korea	10.4	10.5	10.2	8.9	8.5	7.1	7.1	3.4	3.6	4.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	2.6
Latvia ⁽³⁾	12.5	14.8	15.9	15.2	15.0	13.6	12.8	5.9	7.7	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.2	6.7
Lithuania ⁽³⁾	11.9	19.5	11.6	19.2	20.8	19.2	19.5	5.8	7.7	6.6	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.4
Luxembourg ⁽³⁾	16.6	22.7	19.6	18.6	17.6	17.3	16.4	4.6	5.4	5.1	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.5
Mexico ⁽⁵⁾	7.2	8.1	8.4	9.1	7.5	7.6	7.5	2.7	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.4
Netherlands	6.7	9.1	9.1	8.4	7.6	7.3	7.4	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.4
New Zealand	11.3	12.4	12.4	10.9				2.9	3.3	3.3	2.9			
Norway	9.9	11.4	11.0	11.6	11.9	10.5		2.8	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.1	
Poland ⁽³⁾	9.9	10.9	15.0	13.8	12.8	11.8	11.2	2.8	2.6	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
Portugal	18.3	22.9	23.2	25.2	25.4	23.4	22.6	5.8	6.0	5.8	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.2
Slovak Republic ⁽³⁾	16.1	19.3	23.3	21.4	19.9	18.1	17.2	5.1	5.9	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1	5.9
Slovenia ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾	8.2	14.4	14.3	14.7	14.7			4.2	4.4	4.6	3.8	3.5	3.4	3.4
Spain	32.6	38.3	38.9	37.6	36.9	34.7	33.0	12.8	14.0	14.0	13.7	13.5	13.1	12.8
Sweden ⁽³⁾	19.9	23.8	24.5	25.8	24.6	22.0	24.9	5.1	6.4	7.3	7.1	7.5	6.6	6.9
Switzerland	8.0	8.6	8.6	9.4				3.9	4.3	5.0	4.8			
Turkey	25.1	24.9	24.9	23.4	22.8	22.8	22.7	11.6	11.1	10.8	10.3	8.5	10.2	10.2
United Kingdom	11.4	13.7	13.7	13.1	12.9			2.7	3.3	3.7	3.6	3.4		
United States	8.4	15.1	11.1	10.1	9.3	9.2	9.9	3.0	7.1	5.5	5.3	5.4	4.8	4.5

Notes:

(1) Provisional data for Austria and Italy from 2004, for Germany from April 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.

Table 4: Unemployment Levels, seasonally adjusted
Thousands of persons

	2019	2020	2020		2021		2021			
			Q4	Q1	Q2	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	
OECD - Total	36,254	46,804	45,893	44,314	43,279	43,320	41,875	40,781	39,732	
Major Seven	16,559	24,669	23,077	21,818	21,304	21,190	21,002	19,977	19,536	
European Union	14,413	15,082	15,723	15,695	15,476	15,571	15,050	14,693	14,469	
Euro area	12,446	12,824	13,351	13,154	13,073	13,156	12,712	12,423	12,162	
Australia	700	878	932	826	711	701	679	639	617	
Austria ⁽¹⁾	220	271	287	320	304	305	286	281	276	
Belgium ⁽²⁾	274	282	295	338	328	327	323	322	328	
Canada	1,154	1,897	1,783	1,694	1,628	1,652	1,592	1,521	1,440	
Chile	698	938	986	941	818	818	765	747		
Colombia	2,611	3,755	3,729	3,422	3,592	3,673	3,522	3,328	3,140	
Costa Rica	291	470	488	458	434	434	423	402		
Czech Republic ⁽²⁾	109	137	165	174	164	167	151	148	158	
Denmark ⁽²⁾	153	171	182	178	152	153	140	133	133	
Estonia	32	47	51	49	46	47	46	44	43	
Finland	183	209	220	218	225	228	213	217	197	
France	2,519	2,381	2,375	2,392	2,478	2,504	2,418	2,417	2,385	
Germany ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	1,374	1,664	1,752	1,675	1,599	1,599	1,577	1,556	1,540	
Greece ⁽²⁾	819	761	741	737	741	742	699	665	627	
Hungary	159	198	200	208	201	206	198	202	204	
Iceland	8	13	14	14	14	14	13	13	13	
Ireland ⁽²⁾	121	139	151	177	177	176	171	171	172	
Israel	157	177	195	207	219	224	213	205	210	
Italy ⁽¹⁾	2,588	2,318	2,459	2,515	2,462	2,478	2,361	2,331	2,327	
Japan	1,617	1,911	2,100	1,953	2,000	2,040	2,020	1,900	1,910	
Korea	1,063	1,108	1,201	1,247	1,051	1,073	1,049	930	794	
Latvia ⁽²⁾	61	79	78	72	73	73	73	70	66	
Lithuania ⁽²⁾	92	126	137	101	111	113	113	111	106	
Luxembourg ⁽²⁾	17	21	20	20	19	19	18	18	17	
Mexico ⁽³⁾	1,991	2,340	2,448	2,454	2,500	2,379	2,326	2,466	2,365	
Netherlands	314	357	384	334	307	309	297	289	301	
New Zealand	115	132	139	133	117					
Norway	105	131	143	133	139	141	139	121		
Poland ⁽²⁾	558	537	555	656	622	622	598	582	575	
Portugal	340	358	366	344	356	362	353	340	326	
Slovak Republic ⁽²⁾	158	182	192	193	190	191	186	181	176	
Slovenia ⁽²⁾	46	51	55	51	46	46	43	41	40	
Spain	3,248	3,531	3,737	3,574	3,558	3,579	3,488	3,338	3,207	
Sweden ⁽²⁾	373	459	478	502	512	507	525	465	491	
Switzerland	216	238	255	268	263					
Turkey	4,463	4,040	3,993	4,147	3,987	4,122	3,443	3,954	3,965	
United Kingdom	1,307	1,551	1,771	1,653	1,600	1,600	1,550			
United States	6,001	12,948	10,838	9,937	9,537	9,316	9,484	8,702	8,384	

Notes:

(1) Provisional data for Austria and Italy from 2004, for Germany from April 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-19⁴ 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”⁵ 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 to pandemic-related closures were counted among the unemployed on temporary layoff” without

⁴ 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.

⁵ Some not-employed persons 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.

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](#). 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**.