

24/2016 - 2 February 2016

December 2015

Euro area unemployment rate at 10.4%

EU28 at 9.0%

The **euro area** (EA19) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 10.4% in December 2015, down from 10.5% in November 2015, and from 11.4% in December 2014. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **euro area** since September 2011. The **EU28** unemployment rate was 9.0% in December 2015, stable compared to November 2015, and down from 9.9% in December 2014. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **EU28** since June 2009. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

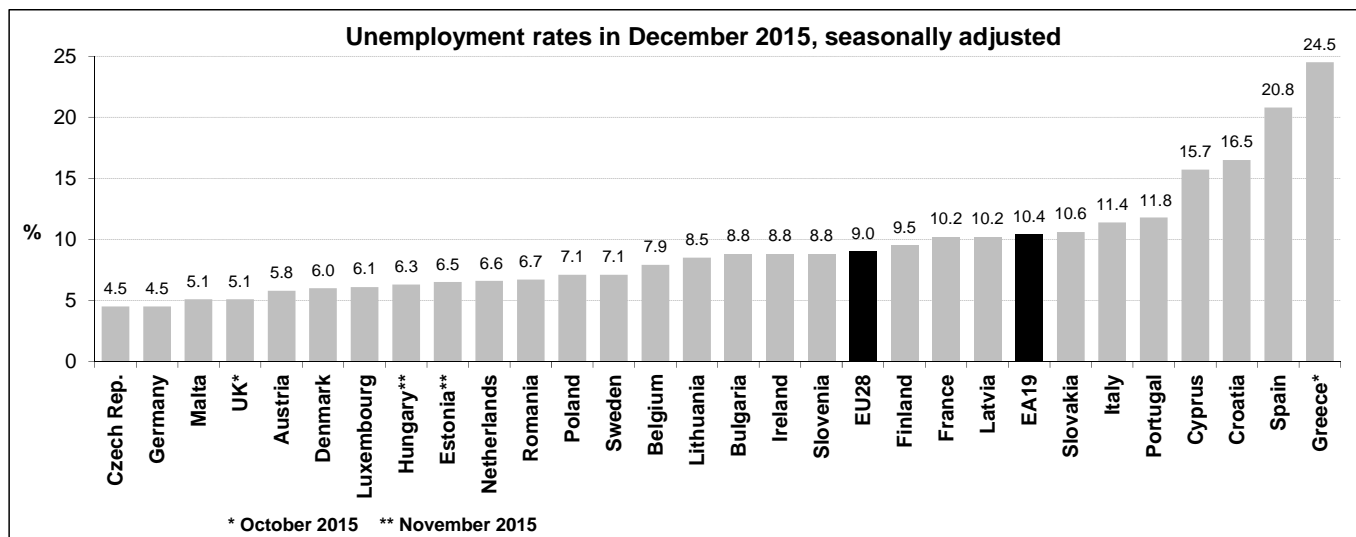
Eurostat estimates that 21.944 million men and women in the **EU28**, of whom 16.750 million were in the **euro area**, were unemployed in December 2015. Compared with November 2015, the number of persons unemployed decreased by 52 000 in the **EU28** and by 49 000 in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2014, unemployment fell by 2.026 million in the **EU28** and by 1.501 million in the **euro area**.

Member States

Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates in December 2015 were recorded in the **Czech Republic** and **Germany** (both 4.5%), **Malta** and the **United Kingdom** (both 5.1%, October data for the UK). The highest unemployment rates were observed in **Greece** (24.5% in October 2015) and **Spain** (20.8%).

Compared with a year ago, the unemployment rate in December 2015 fell in twenty-three Member States, remained stable in **Estonia** and increased in four. The largest decreases were registered in **Spain** (from 23.6% to 20.8%), **Slovakia** (from 12.4% to 10.6%) and **Portugal** (from 13.6% to 11.8%). The increases were registered in **Finland** (from 9.0% to 9.5%), **Austria** (from 5.6% to 5.8%), **Latvia** (from 10.1% to 10.2%) and **Romania** (from 6.6% to 6.7%).

In December 2015, the unemployment rate in the **United States** was 5.0%, stable compared to November 2015 and down from 5.6% in December 2014.



Youth unemployment

In December 2015, 4.454 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the **EU28**, of whom 3.057 million were in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2014, youth unemployment decreased by 426 000 in the **EU28** and by 229 000 in the **euro area**. In December 2015, the youth unemployment rate was 19.7% in the **EU28** and 22.0% in the **euro area**, compared with 21.2% and 23.0% respectively in December 2014. In December 2015, the lowest rates were observed in **Germany** (7.0%), **Denmark** (10.3%) and the **Czech Republic** (10.9%), and the highest in **Greece** (48.6% in October 2015), **Spain** (46.0%), **Croatia** (44.1% in the fourth quarter 2015) and **Italy** (37.9%).

Geographical coverage

The **euro area (EA19)** includes Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland.

The **European Union (EU28)** includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definition

Eurostat produces harmonised unemployment rates for individual EU Member States, the euro area and the EU. These unemployment rates are based on the definition recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The measurement is based on a harmonised source, the European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Based on the ILO definition, Eurostat defines **unemployed persons** as persons aged 15 to 74 who:

- are without work;
- are available to start work within the next two weeks;
- and have actively sought employment at some time during the previous four weeks.

The **unemployment rate** is the number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.

The **labour force** is the total number of people employed plus unemployed. In this news release unemployment rates are based on employment and unemployment data covering persons aged 15 to 74.

The **youth unemployment rate** is the number of people aged 15 to 24 unemployed as a percentage of the labour force of the same age. Therefore, the youth unemployment rate should not be interpreted as the share of jobless people in the overall youth population.

Country notes

Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Sweden and Iceland: the trend component is used instead of the more volatile seasonally adjusted data.

Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Norway: 3-month moving averages of LFS data are used instead of pure monthly indicators.

Revisions and timetable

The data in this News Release can be subject to revisions, caused by updates to the seasonally adjusted series whenever new monthly data are added; the inclusion of the most recent LFS data in the calculation process; update of seasonal adjustment models with complete annual data; inclusion of new weights in the LFS data due to the 2011 Census.

Compared with the rates published in News Release [3/2016](#) of 7 January 2016, the November 2015 unemployment rate was revised downwards for EU28 (from 9.1% to 9.0%) and remains unchanged for EA19. Among Member States, rates have been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points (pp) downwards for Spain (by 0.5 pp) and Portugal (by 0.2 pp).

For more information

Eurostat's [website section](#) on employment and unemployment

Eurostat's [database section](#) on unemployment, including non-seasonally adjusted and trend data

Eurostat's [Statistics Explained article](#) on unemployment


Eurostat's [Statistics Explained article](#) on youth unemployment

Eurostat's [metadata](#) on adjusted unemployment series

Eurostat's €-indicators [release calendar](#)

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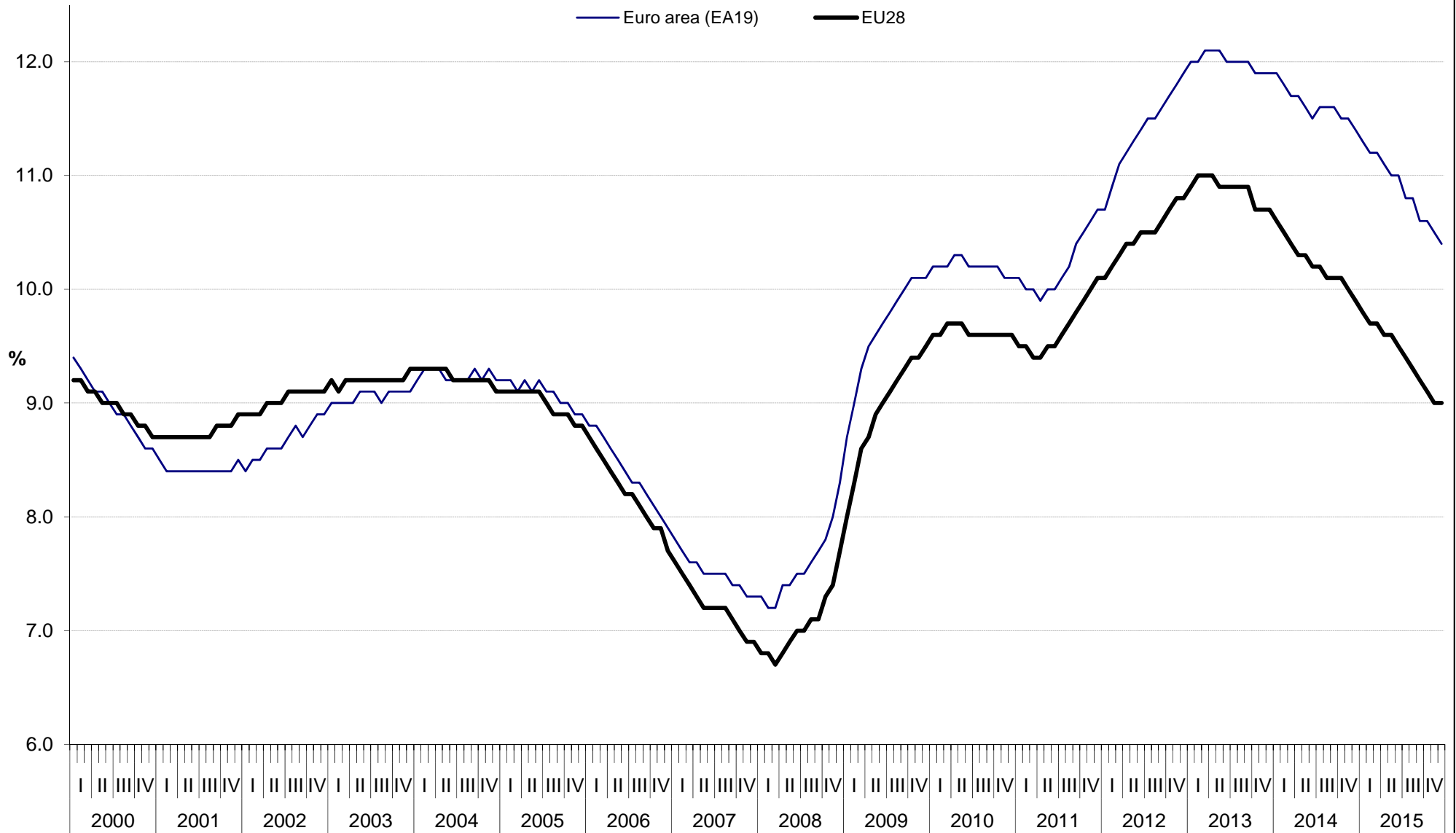
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Euro area and EU28 unemployment rates Seasonally adjusted series

— Euro area (EA19) — EU28



Seasonally adjusted unemployment, totals

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Dec 14	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15	Dec 14	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15
EA19	11.4	10.6	10.6	10.5	10.4	18 251	17 090	16 969	16 799	16 750
EU28	9.9	9.2	9.1	9.0	9.0	23 970	22 397	22 219	21 996	21 944
Belgium	8.6	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	426	393	389	390	391
Bulgaria	10.2	8.7	8.7	8.8	8.8	339	291	291	294	295
Czech Republic	5.8	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.5	308	249	243	238	236
Denmark	6.2	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	181	176	176	176	176
Germany	4.9	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	2 039	1 905	1 906	1 908	1 906
Estonia	6.5**	6.1	6.3	6.5	:	44**	42	44	45	:
Ireland	10.2	9.0	8.9	8.8	8.8	220	194	192	191	191
Greece	26*	24.6	24.5	:	:	1 247*	1 184	1 176	:	:
Spain	23.6	21.4	21.2	21.0	20.8	5 437	4 902	4 849	4 786	4 751
France	10.5	10.4	10.3	10.2	10.2	3 095	3 068	3 024	2 988	2 987
Croatia	17.7	16.2	16.4	16.6	16.5	334	305	308	309	308
Italy	12.4	11.6	11.5	11.4	11.4	3 152	2 939	2 925	2 880	2 898
Cyprus	16.5	15.2	15.3	15.7	15.7	71	63	64	66	66
Latvia	10.1	9.9	10.0	10.0	10.2	99	98	99	100	101
Lithuania	10.0	9.0	8.9	8.4	8.5	147	132	131	124	125
Luxembourg	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	17	17	17	17	17
Hungary	7.3**	6.5	6.4	6.3	:	325**	295	290	287	:
Malta	5.9	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	11	10	10	10	10
Netherlands	7.2	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.6	643	609	616	596	588
Austria	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.8	244	249	250	257	258
Poland	8.2	7.4	7.3	7.2	7.1	1 417	1 288	1 275	1 253	1 227
Portugal	13.6	12.4	12.3	12.2	11.8	696	633	632	627	604
Romania	6.6	6.9	6.8	6.7	6.7	609	634	630	621	626
Slovenia	9.3	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.8	93	89	89	88	90
Slovakia	12.4	11.3	11.1	10.8	10.6	339	309	303	296	290
Finland	9.0	9.4	9.4	9.5	9.5	243	253	254	255	256
Sweden	7.8	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.1	408	376	373	371	369
United Kingdom	5.8*	5.2	5.1	:	:	1 879*	1 690	1 661	:	:
Iceland	4.4	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6	8	7	7	7	7
Norway	3.8**	4.6	4.6	:	:	104**	127	129	:	:
United States	5.6	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.0	8 702	7 905	7 932	7 963	7 905

The source datasets are available [here](#) (rates) and [here](#) (in 1000 persons).

: Data not available

* October 2014

** November 2014

Seasonally adjusted youth (under 25s) unemployment

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Dec 14	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15	Dec 14	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15
EA19	23.0	22.2	22.3	22.1	22.0	3 286	3 113	3 109	3 068	3 057
EU28	21.2	20.0	20.0	19.7	19.7	4 880	4 526	4 515	4 453	4 454
Belgium	22.0	21.4	21.7	22.3	22.7	89	84	83	86	88
Bulgaria	22.4	20.4	20.8	20.9	21.0	43	37	37	37	37
Czech Republic	14.1	11.9	11.6	10.9	10.9	50	40	39	37	37
Denmark	10.4	10.7	10.3	10.1	10.3	47	48	47	46	47
Germany	7.3	7.1	7.1	7.0	7.0	306	282	280	277	275
Estonia	14.9	15.4	15.7	17.1	:	8	8	8	9	:
Ireland	21.9	20.3	19.7	19.4	19.2	42	39	37	37	36
Greece	51.1	49.1	48.6	:	:	152	135	132	:	:
Spain	51.4	47.2	46.9	46.3	46.0	824	728	716	698	691
France	24.7	25.3	25.6	25.8	25.9	680	706	718	723	730
Croatia	45.4	44.9	44.1	44.1	44.1	74	72	71	71	71
Italy	41.2	39.1	39.3	38.0	37.9	638	601	604	582	581
Cyprus	34.3	32.5	31.7	31.7	31.7	15	12	11	11	11
Latvia	17.4	15.2	17.1	18.0	18.2	15	12	13	14	14
Lithuania	18.4	16.1	15.6	14.9	14.3	24	20	19	18	17
Luxembourg	21.9	15.0	15.2	14.6	14.7	4	4	4	3	3
Hungary	18.9	15.7	15.0	15.7	:	64	54	51	54	:
Malta	11.2	12.6	12.9	12.6	12.6	3	3	4	3	4
Netherlands	11.8	11.5	11.6	11.2	11.2	164	161	163	156	155
Austria	9.5	11.0	10.9	11.2	11.2	53	61	60	61	62
Poland	21.6	20.8	20.7	20.5	20.5	301	283	285	283	282
Portugal	33.9	31.9	32.2	32.1	31.0	126	118	119	119	112
Romania	23.6	21.2	:	:	:	159	145	:	:	:
Slovenia	19.1	14.5	15.0	15.0	15.0	14	10	12	12	12
Slovakia	26.9	26.5	25.9	25.3	24.7	57	56	55	53	52
Finland	21.6	22.1	22.0	22.0	22.1	72	72	71	71	71
Sweden	22.3	19.5	19.2	19.0	18.8	146	126	124	123	121
United Kingdom	15.9	13.5	13.5	:	:	719	607	605	:	:
Iceland	9.1	8.4	8.3	8.1	8.0	3	3	3	3	3
Norway	8.2	9.8	9.4	:	:	31	37	35	:	:

The source datasets are available [here](#) (rates) and [here](#) (in 1000 persons).

: Data not available

Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia: quarterly data

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates (%), by gender

	Males					Females				
	Dec 14	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15	Dec 14	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15
EA19	11.2	10.5	10.4	10.3	10.3	11.5	10.8	10.7	10.6	10.6
EU28	9.8	9.1	9.1	9.0	9.0	10.0	9.3	9.2	9.1	9.1
Belgium	8.9	8.3	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.1	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.4
Bulgaria	11.0	9.4	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.2	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.0
Czech Republic	5.0	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.6	6.8	5.8	5.5	5.6	5.5
Denmark	6.2	5.6	5.5	5.7	5.7	6.2	6.5	6.5	6.2	6.2
Germany	5.2	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
Estonia	6.6	6.1	6.7	6.7	:	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.4	:
Ireland	11.8	10.4	10.2	10.1	10.0	8.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3
Greece	23.0	21.2	21.0	:	:	29.5	28.7	28.7	:	:
Spain	22.7	20.2	19.9	19.5	19.3	24.7	22.9	22.8	22.6	22.5
France	10.9	10.9	10.9	10.8	10.9	10.1	9.9	9.6	9.4	9.4
Croatia	17.5	15.1	15.2	15.3	15.3	17.9	17.4	17.8	18.0	17.9
Italy	11.5	11.0	11.1	10.9	11.1	13.5	12.3	12.1	12.0	11.8
Cyprus	17.3	14.7	15.0	15.4	15.6	15.6	15.6	15.7	15.9	15.9
Latvia	10.3	11.5	11.4	11.7	12.0	9.8	8.3	8.5	8.5	8.4
Lithuania	11.4	10.1	10.0	9.4	9.6	8.6	7.9	7.8	7.5	7.5
Luxembourg	5.7	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
Hungary	7.3	6.4	6.3	6.1	:	7.4	6.7	6.4	6.6	:
Malta	6.1	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.6	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.8
Netherlands	6.9	6.5	6.5	6.2	6.2	7.6	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.0
Austria	5.9	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.4	5.4
Poland	7.8	7.3	7.2	7.1	6.9	8.6	7.6	7.5	7.4	7.3
Portugal	13.3	12.2	12.1	12.1	11.4	13.9	12.6	12.6	12.3	12.3
Romania	6.9	7.7	7.6	7.4	7.4	6.1	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7
Slovenia	8.7	7.6	7.6	7.7	7.8	10.0	10.3	10.1	10.0	10.1
Slovakia	11.6	10.1	9.9	9.6	9.4	13.5	12.8	12.5	12.3	12.1
Finland	9.6	9.9	9.9	10.0	10.1	8.4	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9
Sweden	8.0	7.4	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.6	7.0	7.0	6.9	6.9
United Kingdom	5.8	5.3	5.2	:	:	5.3	5.0	4.9	:	:
Iceland	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.5	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.4
Norway	4.0	4.9	4.9	:	:	3.6	4.2	4.3	:	:

The source dataset is available [here](#).

: Data not available