

Regional labour market: higher unemployment rates and increasing disparities in 2010

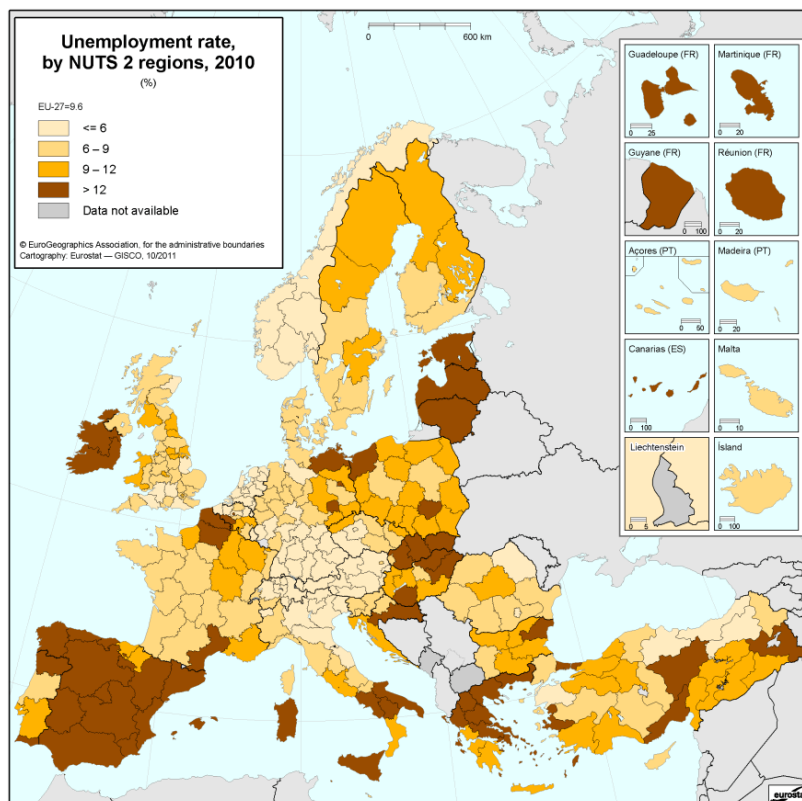
The latest estimates for 2010 show the continuing impact of the economic crisis in the EU labour market. The employment rate for the 20-64 age group in the EU-27 stood at 68.6 % in 2010, 0.5 percentage points (p.p.) lower than the previous year. The unemployment rate (15-74 age group) rose by 0.7 p.p., reaching 9.6 %, the highest value in the past decade.

This impact is evident in most of the Member

States, and is affecting all population groups. However, the scale varies from country to country, and even more from region to region. While almost 70 % of the NUTS 2 regions in the EU-27 recorded higher unemployment rates, 10 % of the regions achieved significant reductions.

As a result of differences in regional performance, cohesion in the labour market continued to deteriorate in 2010.

Map 1: Unemployment rate, by NUTS 2 regions, 2010



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfu3rt](#))

Unemployment in EU-27 regions

Map 1 shows the distribution of unemployment rates by NUTS 2 regions in 2010. They ranged from 2.7 % in the regions of Zeeland (Netherlands) and Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen (Italy) to 28.9 % on the island of Réunion (France).

There is quite a large gap between NUTS 2 regions among the Member States, with more than one fifth of the regions returning an unemployment rate above 12 %, while another fifth of the regions posted unemployment rates below 6 %. However, the distribution of unemployment rates at NUTS level 2 within countries was relatively uniform, albeit with the following exceptions: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, France, Italy and Portugal, where different internal patterns between regions emerged.

The highest unemployment rates were recorded in the south of Spain and the French overseas regions, reaching values above 20 %. To a lesser extent though still high, unemployment rates above 12 % were found in the three Baltic States, the south of Italy and Greece, some north-eastern regions of Germany, and also in Ireland, Slovakia and some regions of Belgium, Hungary, Poland, Portugal and Bulgaria.

The lowest regional unemployment rates, below 4 %, were found mainly in the Netherlands and in a cluster of regions in central Europe including areas in

Austria, the Czech Republic, the west, centre and south of Germany and the north of Italy. Low unemployment rates were also found in Luxembourg and in some parts of Belgium, the United Kingdom and Romania.

Most regions in Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia registered significant increases in the unemployment rate between 2009 and 2010. On the other hand, unemployment rates decreased in Luxembourg and in the majority of regions in Germany and Austria.

Table 1 presents on the left side the unemployment rates at country level for years 2009 and 2010. On the right side, the regions with the minimum and maximum values are displayed for year 2010.

Regarding EFTA countries, unemployment rates were relatively stable in most of the regions in 2010. All the rates remained below 6 % in Norway and Switzerland. In Iceland, the unemployment rate was slightly higher, standing at 7.6 % in 2010.

In the Candidate countries, regional unemployment rates ranged from 4.8 % in the Turkish regions of Trabzon and Dogu Karadeniz to 18 % in the Croatian region of Središnja i Istočna (Panonska) Hrvatska. While unemployment rates rose steeply in the three regions in Croatia, they decreased significantly in most of the regions in Turkey.

Table 1: Lowest and highest unemployment rates by country

	National values		Regional minimum		Regional maximum	
	2009	2010	2010		2010	
EU-27	8.9	9.6	Zeeland (NL), Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen (IT)	2.7	Réunion (FR)	28.9
BE	7.9	8.3	Prov. West-Vlaanderen	3.8	Hoofdstedelijk Gewest	17.3
BG	6.8	10.2	Yugozapaden	6.8	Severoiztochen	14.5
CZ	6.7	7.3	Praha	3.7	Severozapad	11.1
DK	6.0	7.4	Sjælland	6.7	Hovedstaden	7.8
DE	7.7	7.1	Oberbayern	3.6	Berlin	13.2
EE	13.8	16.9	-	-	-	-
IE	11.7	13.5	Border, Midland and Western	13.3	Southern and Eastern	14.0
EL	9.5	12.5	Voreio Aigaio	9.0	Dytiki Makedonia	15.5
ES	18.0	20.1	País Vasco	10.5	Canarias	28.7
FR	9.5	9.7	Corse	6.2-u	Réunion	28.9
IT	7.8	8.4	Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen	2.7	Sicilia	14.7
CY	5.3	6.2	-	-	-	-
LV	17.1	18.7	-	-	-	-
LT	13.7	17.8	-	-	-	-
LU	5.1	4.4	-	-	-	-
HU	10.0	11.2	Közép-Magyarország	8.9	Eszak-Magyarország	16.0
MT	7.0	6.9	-	-	-	-
NL	3.4	4.5	Zeeland	2.7	Groningen	5.3
AT	4.8	4.4	Tirol	2.8	Wien	7.3
PL	8.2	9.6	Mazowieckie	7.4	Zachodniopomorskie	12.3
PT	9.5	10.8	Região Autónoma dos Açores	6.9	Algarve	13.4
RO	6.9	7.3	Bucuresti - Ilfov	4.6	Centru	10.5
SI	5.9	7.2	Zahodna Slovenija	6.5	Vzhodna Slovenija	7.9
SK	12.0	14.4	Bratislavsky kraj	6.2	Východné Slovensko	18.5
FI	8.2	8.4	Etelä-Suomi	7.4	Itä-Suomi, Pohjois-Suomi	10.1
SE	8.4	8.4	Stockholm	7.1	Mellersta Norrland	10.2
UK	7.6	7.8	North Eastern Scotland	3.5	West Midlands	10.9
IS	7.2	7.6	-	-	-	-
NO	3.1	3.5	Agder og Rogaland	2.6	Oslo og Akershus	4.0
CH	4.1	4.5	Zentralschweiz	3.0	Région lémanique	6.7
HR	9.1	11.8	Sjeverozapadna Hrvatska	7.9	Sredisnja i Istocna (Panonska) Hrvatska	18.0
TR	12.6	10.7	Trabzon, Dogu Karadeniz	4.8	Van	15.5

-u Data with small reliability due to small sample size

- Not applicable, as the country comprises one single NUTS 2 region

Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfu3rt](#))

Youth unemployment reaches its highest rate in the last 10 years

In 2010, the EU-27 youth unemployment rate stood at 20.9 %, one p.p. higher than in 2009 and at its highest rate for the past 10 years. This shows that young people have borne the brunt of the crisis, with unemployment disproportionately affecting the 15-24 year olds and exceeding 30 % in almost a fifth of the NUTS 2 regions within the EU-27. The youth unemployment rate in the EU-27 was more than double the overall unemployment rate in 2010. One out of five young people in the labour force (20.9 %) was not employed, but was available and looking for a job.

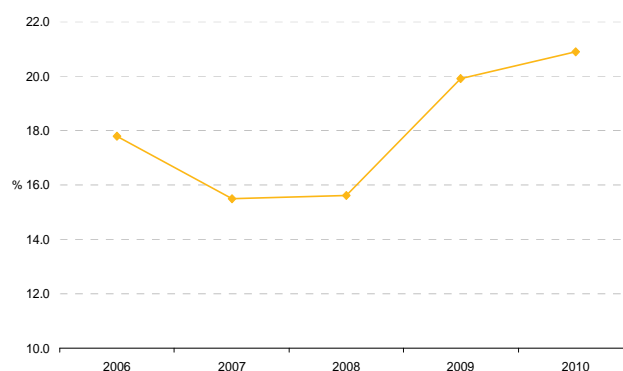
In all countries, the youth unemployment rate was significantly higher than the total unemployment rate. There is also a strong correlation between the levels of both rates, with the result that the geographical distribution of youth unemployment is similar to that shown in Map 1.

Map 2 presents the distribution of unemployment rates by NUTS 2 regions for the 15-24 age group in 2010. Youth unemployment rates were extremely high in the French overseas departments, in most regions in Spain and in the south of Italy, exceeding 40 % in some of the regions. High rates were also recorded in the three Baltic States, in some regions in Greece and Belgium, and a cluster of regions in the east of the EU-27 which included certain areas of Poland, Hungary and Slovakia.

The lowest youth unemployment rates were recorded in the southern regions of Germany, in the Czech region of Praha and in most regions of the Netherlands and Austria.

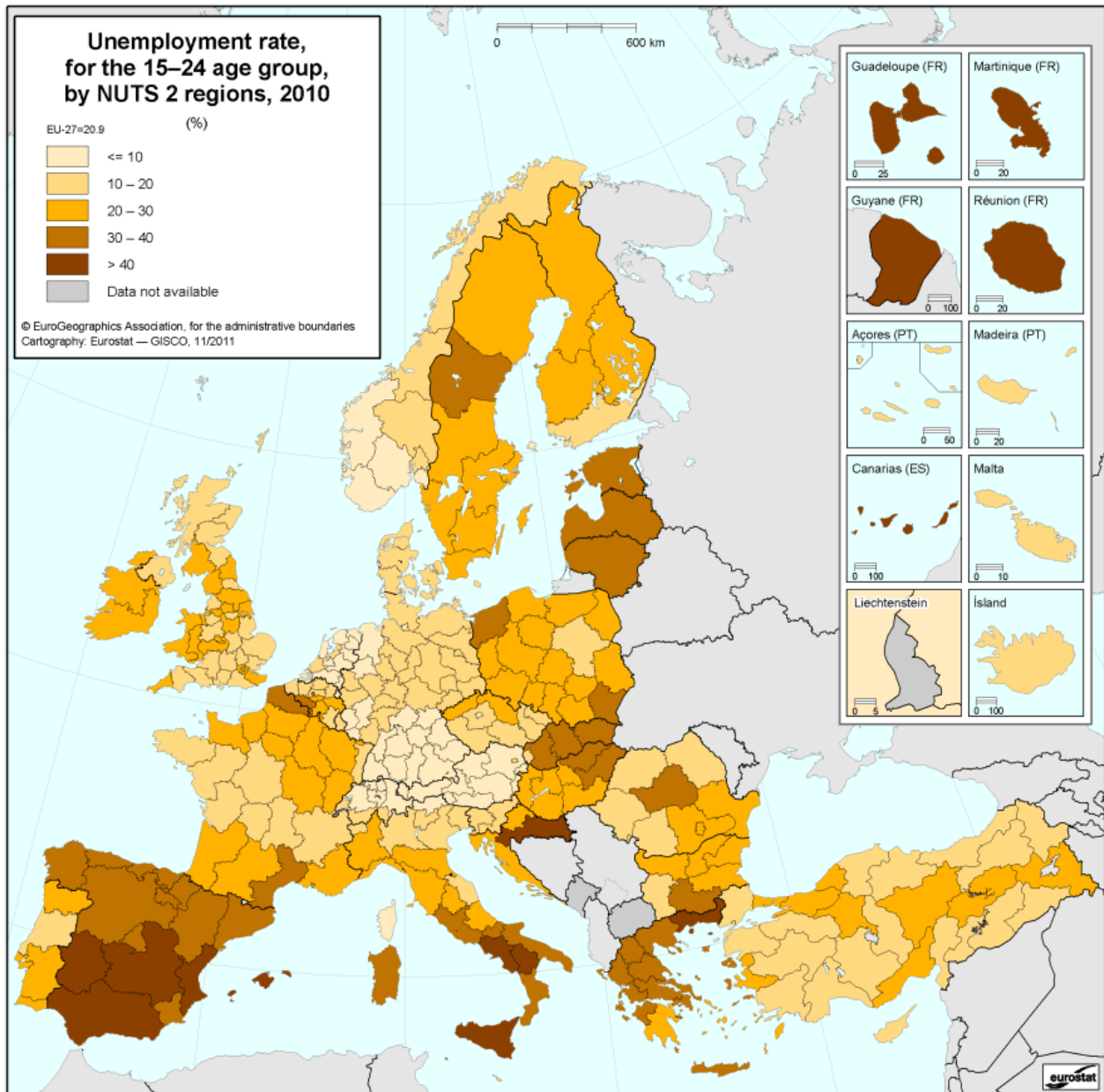
The gap between the lowest and the highest values of youth unemployment rates for NUTS level 2 was more than 55 p.p.. The lowest rate (5.1 %) was registered in the German region of Oberbayern, while the highest value (60.2 %) was observed in the Spanish region of Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta. In EFTA regions the youth unemployment rate was relatively low compared to the majority of the EU-27 regions, with regional rates ranging from 4.8 % in Zentralschweiz (Switzerland) to 16.2 % in Iceland. In the Candidate countries, rates ranged from 10.4 % in the Turkish region of Samsun to 44.8 % in Središnja i Istočna (Panonska) Hrvatska in Croatia. In line with the overall unemployment rate, youth unemployment rates decreased in most of the Turkish regions, remaining below the EU-27 average.

Figure 1: Evolution of the youth unemployment rate in the EU-27



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfu3rt](#))

Map 2: Youth unemployment rate (15-24), by NUTS 2 regions, 2010



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfu3rt](#))

Long-term unemployment share breaks the downward trend

The long-term unemployment share was at 40.1 % in 2010, 6.6 p.p. higher than the previous year and posting an increase for the first time since 2006. This means that in 2010 more than 40 % of unemployed persons in the EU-27 were looking for a job for more than one year.

Although all 27 Member States recorded increases in the share of long-term unemployment in 2010, they were not all affected to the same extent. While the share surged in Denmark, the three Baltic States, Cyprus, Ireland and Spain, it grew only moderately in Poland, Germany, Malta and Bulgaria.

The long-term unemployment share varied considerably among the NUTS 2 regions in the EU 27, ranging from 5.0 % in Bucureşti – Ilfov (Romania) to 78.8 % in the French overseas region of Guadeloupe.

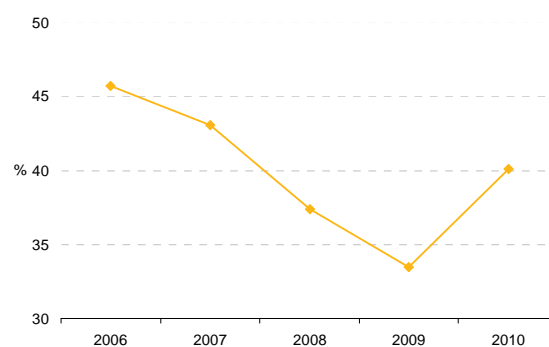
The highest shares could be seen in the French overseas departments, in all the regions in Slovakia, and in some regions in Belgium, Greece, the south of Italy and the north east of Germany. The lowest values were registered in all the Swedish regions and in some regions in Austria, Denmark and the United Kingdom.

With the exceptions of Italy and France, and to a lesser extent Greece, Romania and Bulgaria, regional long-term unemployment shares tend to be quite homogeneous within each country.

In EFTA regions, the long-term unemployment share was relatively low compared with the majority of the EU-27. However, there are different patterns among regions. In Iceland and most regions in Norway, the share of long-term unemployment rose steeply in 2010, whereas in the Swiss regions the increase was more moderate and the values were slightly higher compared with the rest of EFTA regions.

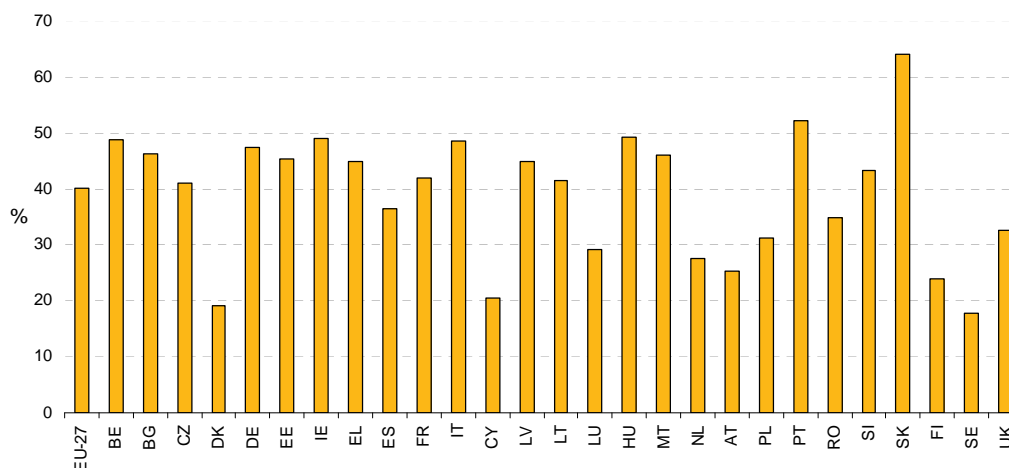
Regarding the Candidate countries, the long-term unemployment share decreased in both Croatia and Turkey. While shares exceeded the EU-27 average in the regions of Croatia, they were well below this average in all the Turkish regions.

Figure 2: Evolution of the long-term unemployment share in the EU-27



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfu2ltu](#))

Figure 3: Long-term unemployment share by Member State, 2010



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfu2ltu](#))

Moving away from Europe 2020 employment target

The employment rate for the 20-64 age group has been identified as one of the headline indicators for the Europe 2020 strategy, set out in 2010.

The EU-27 employment rate for the 20-64 age group dropped from an average of 69.1% in 2009 to 68.5% in 2010, continuing the downward trend started in 2009 and slipping away from the Europe 2020 target, which was set at 75%.

Map 3 presents the distribution of employment rates for the 20-64 age group at NUTS 2 level, with the darkest colour denoting regions that have already reached the Europe 2020 target of 75%.

In 2010, only a little more than 25% of the 271 NUTS 2 regions in the EU-27 had already reached the Europe 2020 target and more than 70% of the regions were below this target, with almost 30% more than 10 p.p. below.

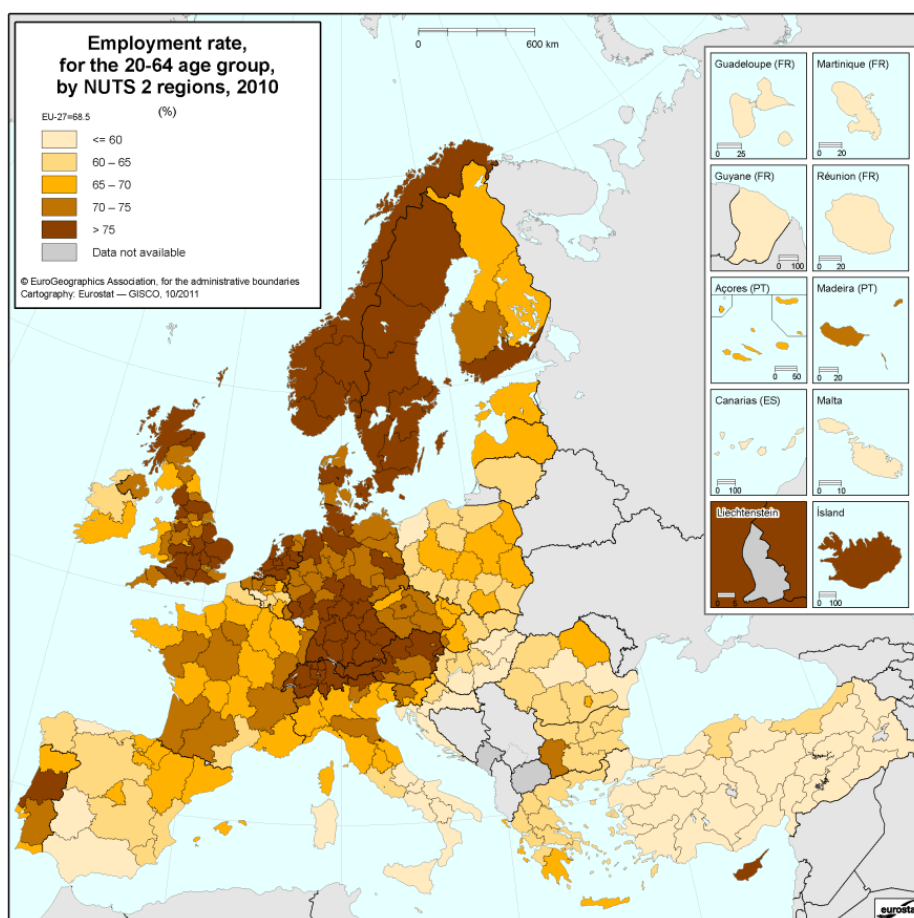
The lowest employment rates were recorded in regions in the south of Italy and Spain, the French overseas regions, Malta and certain regions in Belgium, Hungary, Romania and Poland. On the other hand, the northern EU regions, comprising all

the regions in Sweden and some regions in Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, northern Germany and the United Kingdom, recorded relatively high employment rates, and so did a cluster of regions right in the centre of Europe, consisting of southern Germany, Austria, the North Italian region of Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen and the Czech capital region of Praha.

The gap separating the lowest and highest regional employment rates in 2010 was significant, with Campania (Italy) on 43.7% at one extreme and Åland (Finland) with 83.6% at the other.

In the EFTA regions, all regional employment rates were above 75%. In the Candidate countries, regional employment rates ranged from 34.4% in Sanliurfa (Turkey) to 64.9% in Sjeverozapadna Hrvatska (Croatia). Despite the worldwide financial crisis, employment rates rose in most of the Turkish regions in 2010. However, they were still low, remaining well below 60% in the majority of the regions.

Map 3: Employment rate for the 20-64 age group, by NUTS 2 regions, 2010



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfe2emprt](#))

Continuing to narrow the gender gap

Prior to the Europe 2020 strategy, the Lisbon strategy, set out in year 2000, aimed at a female employment rate at 60 % for the 15-64 age group.

The female employment rate for the 15-64 age group in the EU-27 fell in 2010 by 0.3 p.p. to 58.2%, widening the gap in relation to the 60% Lisbon target. This target was achieved in 2010 in 148 of the 271 NUTS 2 regions in the EU-27.

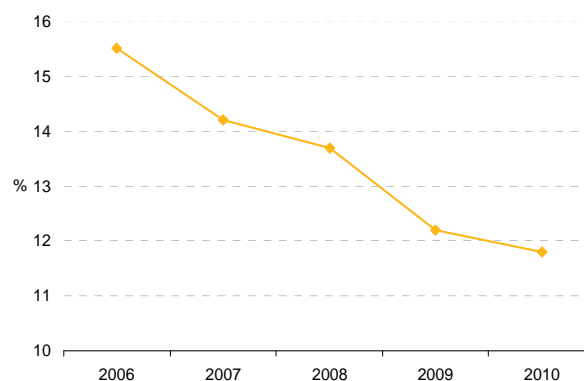
The male employment rate fell 0.7 p.p. in the EU-27, from 70.7% in 2009 to 70.0% in 2010. Male employment rates shrank faster than female rates in 2010, continuing to narrow the gender gap in the EU-27, which closed from 12.2 p. p. in 2009 to 11.8 p. p. in 2010.

However, male employment rates were still higher than female employment rates in most EU regions. In two Member States, Latvia and Lithuania, the female employment rate exceeded the male employment rate in 2010. During this year, the gender gap was below 6 p.p. in regions in Finland, Denmark, Sweden, in some of the German regions and in Norway and Iceland. On the other hand, it was quite high in Malta, in some regions of Greece and in the Southern regions of Italy and Spain.

The degree of compliance with this target is presented in Map 4 with the distribution of female employment rates for the 15-64 age group by NUTS 2 regions. There are major differences between Member States, with figures varying from 25.7% in Campania (Italy) to 80.3% in Åland (Finland).

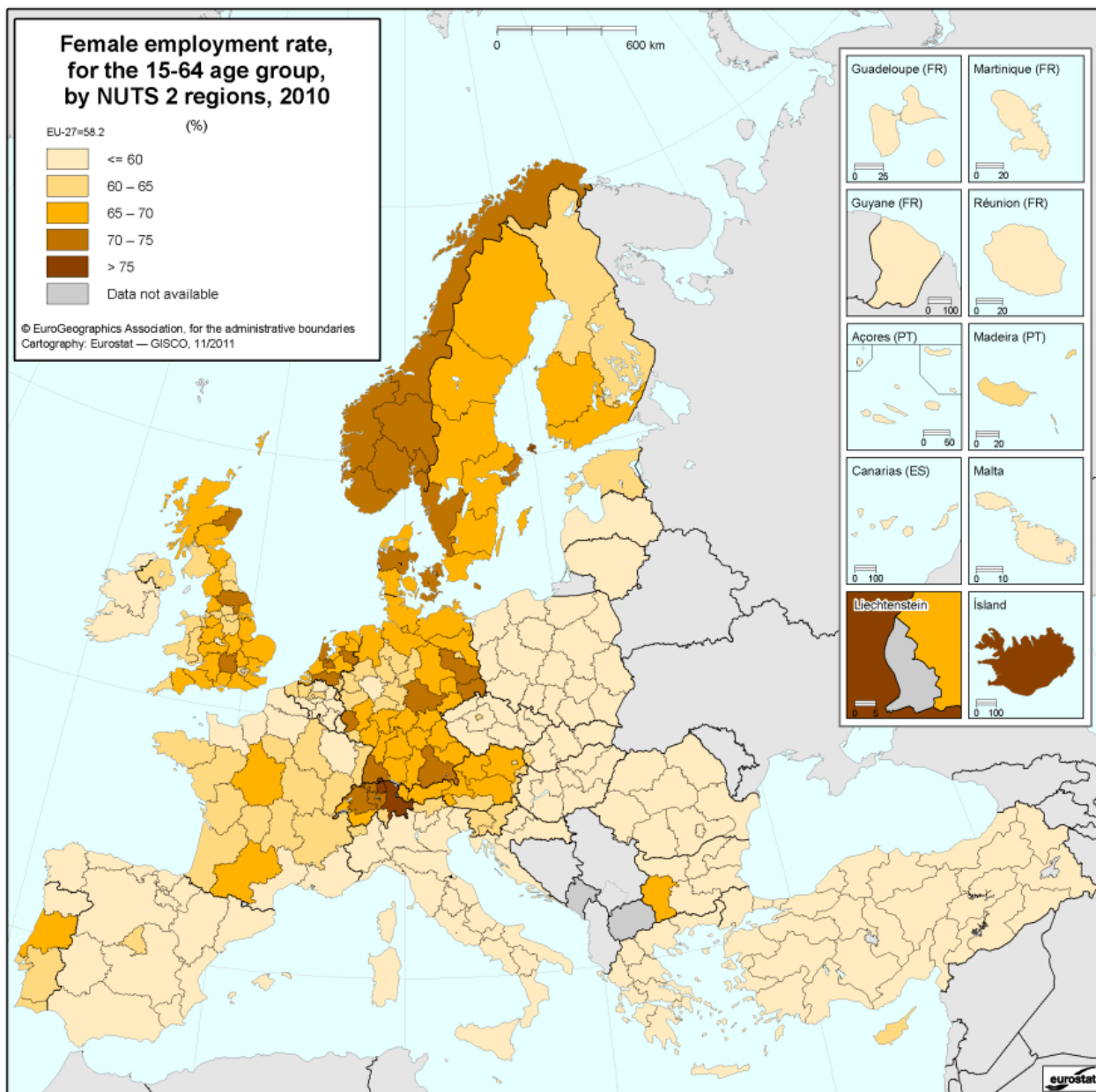
There is a strong correlation between the level of female employment and the level of overall employment, which both follow a similar trend. The Lisbon target of 60% female employment has been met and exceeded in all regions in Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria and Denmark, in most regions in the United Kingdom and Germany and in all regions in the EFTA countries. To a lesser extent, the 60% target rate has also been achieved in Slovenia, Estonia, Cyprus, in the capital regions of Bulgaria, Spain, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in two regions in the north of Italy and in some regions in Belgium, France and Portugal. On the other hand, female employment rates were quite low in Malta, in most regions in the Candidate countries, in the south of Italy, Spain and Greece, regions in Eastern Europe and the French overseas departments.

Figure 4: Gender gap in employment



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfe2emprrt](#))

Map 4: Female employment rate for the 15-64 age group, by NUTS 2 regions, 2010



Source: Eurostat (online data code: [lfst_r_lfe2emprt](#))

Disparities in regional labour market

The dispersion of employment and unemployment rates measures the spread of regional rates in a country or in the EU-27, and gives an idea of how regional rates differ from each other. As the dispersion of these rates declines, so labour market cohesion increases.

Table 2 shows the dispersion of employment and unemployment rates for the period 2006-2010. If the previous years' rates are considered, the effect

of the crisis can be seen, increasing the rates for the EU-27 from 2008 and reversing the declining trend which started five years earlier, in 2003. From 2009 to 2010, the dispersion of employment and unemployment rates in the EU-27 increased by 0.1 and 1.7 p. p. respectively, reaching 11.9 % and 50.8 %.

Although both rates increased in 2010 at EU-27 level, dispersion within countries has not followed

the same trend. The dispersion of employment rate fell in eight of the Member States. The impact was more even for the dispersion of unemployment rate, which decreased in most of the Member States. This is due to two reasons. On the one hand, in most Member States, the dispersion of the employment rate seems to be quite stable, whereas the dispersion of the unemployment rate is more likely to vary. On the other, there are differences in the way countries have responded to the crisis. Reactions among regions in the same country have been quite uniform, whereas reactions among

regions in different countries have been comparatively uneven.

The dispersion of both rates was quite high in Italy, which registered 17.8% for employment and 41.3% for unemployment. As shown in the maps, there are marked differences in regional labour market performance between the north and south of Italy. Belgium and Germany also registered high dispersion rates for unemployment, with 52.5% (maximum value in EU-27) and 36.1% respectively. On the other hand, dispersion for both rates was low in Sweden, Greece and the Netherlands, as well as in Denmark.

Table 2: Dispersion of employment and unemployment rates at NUTS level 2

	Dispersion of employment rates (°)					Dispersion of unemployment rates (°)				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU-27	11.4	11.1	11.3	11.8	11.9	45.7	44.1	47.2	49.1	50.8
Belgium	8.7	8.6	8.4	8.7	8.8	55.1	59.2	59.9	51.4	52.5
Bulgaria	7.3	7.1	7.2	8.1	8.7	26.3	39.1	38.6	30.9	25.3
Czech Republic	5.2	4.6	4.0	4.7	4.9	44.6	41.9	44.2	34.0	31.4
Denmark	:	1.3	1.6	1.8	:	:	11.3	5.4	7.4	:
Germany	5.2	4.8	4.8	4.3	4.2	39.2	43.5	45.0	37.3	36.1
Estonia (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ireland (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greece	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.4	2.8	14.0	15.2	18.5	11.5	9.5
Spain	7.8	7.5	8.2	8.8	9.5	29.1	30.6	33.3	27.2	26.5
France	7.4	6.5	6.7	6.9	6.7	35.3	33.0	36.0	32.2	31.9
Italy	16.0	16.3	17.0	17.4	17.8	57.1	56.7	55.3	42.4	41.3
Cyprus (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lithuania (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luxembourg (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	9.1	9.7	10.0	9.7	8.1	31.8	39.4	42.5	30.7	22.6
Malta (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	14.8	16.9	16.1	15.4	12.2
Austria	3.4	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.3	44.2	45.0	39.6	31.0	34.9
Poland	5.1	4.5	5.1	4.5	4.5	12.1	14.2	17.9	20.1	14.3
Portugal	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.9	21.0	20.3	18.2	17.8	19.7
Romania	3.6	4.6	4.3	5.0	5.4	22.7	27.7	28.3	26.1	23.6
Slovenia (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	8.6	8.3	8.1	8.0	7.7	37.8	38.0	40.7	31.5	27.2
Finland	5.4	5.6	5.2	5.3	4.4	23.9	25.8	21.6	18.0	13.9
Sweden	2.9	2.4	2.7	3.1	2.7	11.9	10.1	13.4	11.1	10.4
United Kingdom	5.4	5.3	5.6	5.9	5.4	25.9	24.5	28.8	24.2	21.5
Iceland (°)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norway	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.3	1.9	12.6	14.4	17.4	20.1	12.6
Switzerland	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.6	3.7	18.3	21.7	22.0	24.6	25.4
Croatia	:	7.5	7.4	7.8	9.6	:	35.2	39.3	37.5	35.5
Turkey	15.4	13.1	15.5	15.5	12.3	32.6	31.9	28.3	31.0	27.5

Notes:

(°) Dispersion of employment rates for the age group 15-64

(°) Dispersion of unemployment rates for the age group 15-74

(°) Estonia, Ireland, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovenia and Iceland comprise only one or two NUTS 2 regions, therefore dispersion rates here are not applicable

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [lfst_r_lmdcr](#), [lfst_r_lmdur](#))

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The main source of regional labour market information is the [EU Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#). This is a quarterly household sample survey conducted in all 27 Member States of the EU and in EFTA and Candidate countries.

The EU LFS survey follows the definitions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). To achieve further harmonisation, the Member States also adhere to common principles when formulating questionnaires.

Population covers persons aged 15 and over, living in private households (those living in collective households, i.e. residential homes, boarding houses, hospitals, religious institutions, workers' hostels, etc., are not included). This comprises all persons living in the households surveyed during the reference week. The definition also includes persons absent from the households for short periods (but retaining a link with the private household in question) owing to studies, holidays, illness, business trips, etc. Persons on obligatory military service are not included.

Employed persons are all persons aged 15 and over (16 and over in ES and UK, 15 to 74 in DK, EE, HU, LV, SE and FI and 16-74 in IS and NO) who, during the reference week, worked at least one hour for pay, profit or family gain, or were not at work but had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent.

Unemployed persons comprise persons aged 15-74 (16 to 74 in ES, UK, IS and NO) who were (all three conditions must be fulfilled simultaneously):

1. without work during the reference week;
2. available for work at the time (i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week);
3. actively seeking work (i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment), or who found a job to start within a period of at most three months.

The economically active population (also labelled active population) comprises employed and unemployed persons.

The **employment rate** represents employed persons as a percentage of the population.

The **gender gap** refers to the differences in the outcomes that men and women achieve in the labour market. The text refers to the gender gap as the difference between male and female employment rates.

The **unemployment rate** shows unemployed persons as a percentage of the economically active population. The **youth unemployment rate** relates to persons aged 15–24.

The **long-term unemployment share** represents the percentage of total unemployed persons seeking a job for longer than one year.

The **dispersion of employment (unemployment) rates** is the coefficient of variation of regional employment (unemployment) rates.

The **coefficient of variation** is defined as the ratio of the standard deviation to the mean. This coefficient of variation is multiplied by 100 to make a percentage.

This indicator measures the spread of regional employment (unemployment) rates as regards the national or EU-27 employment (unemployment) rate. If all the regional employment (unemployment) rates of a country are equal, the dispersion is zero. Significant differences between regional employment (unemployment) rates within a country imply a fairly wide dispersion.

All regional results presented in the SIF publication concern NUTS level 2 regions. For NUTS level 2, the regional labour market data provided by Eurostat are taken from the LFS.

The results presented are related to the Lisbon and Europe 2020 labour market targets. The **Lisbon Strategy** was an action and development plan for the economy of the European Union between 2000 and 2010. Its aim was to make the EU 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' by 2010. It was set out by the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000.

The main targets for 2010 (for the age group 15-64) were:

- ▶ an overall employment rate of 70 %
- ▶ an employment rate for women of over 60 %
- ▶ an employment rate of 50 % for older workers
- ▶ annual economic growth of around 3 %

The **EU 2020 Strategy** has now replaced the outgoing Lisbon Agenda. It was made public at the beginning of March 2010. The EU 2020 strategy is oriented primarily towards 'activating' various aspects of economic growth. It is based on three mutually reinforcing economic growth models and socially oriented priorities: smart growth, sustainable growth and inclusive growth. The target

for the labour market in the EU 2020 strategy is: 75 % of 20-64 year-olds to be employed.

The [Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics](#), abbreviated as NUTS is a hierarchical classification subdividing the economic territory of the European Union into regions at three different levels (NUTS 1, 2 and 3, respectively, moving from larger to smaller territorial units). Above NUTS 1 is the 'national' level of the Member State.

The aim of the NUTS classification is to provide a single and coherent territorial breakdown for the compilation of EU regional statistics. The current version of the nomenclature, NUTS-2006, subdivides the economic territory of the 27 Member States into 97 NUTS 1 regions, 271 NUTS 2 regions and 1303 NUTS 3 regions. The classification is regularly revised to adapt to administrative territorial changes within the Member States. The next version of the classification (NUTS-2010) will be applicable from 1 January 2012. The legal base of the classification is Regulation (EC) No1059/2003 establishing the common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS).

The NUTS classification is defined only for the Member States of the EU. Eurostat, in agreement with the countries concerned, also defined a coding of Statistical Regions for countries that do not belong to the EU but are either Candidate countries awaiting accession to the EU or countries belonging to the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). The regions presented in this classification of Statistical Regions have been defined according to principles similar to those used in the establishment of the NUTS classification.

Country codes

Member States of the [European Union \(EU\)](#) and other countries have been assigned a two-letter **country code**, always written in capital letters, and often used as an abbreviation in statistical analyses, tables, figures or maps.

The 'protocol order' in which countries are normally listed is based on the alphabetical list of

countries in their national language for EU and EFTA Member States and for candidate countries.

EU Member States come first, followed by [European Free Trade Association \(EFTA\)](#) Member States and finally [Candidate countries](#). The order in the tables below is first column down, then second column down, etc.

European Union (EU)

Belgium	(BE)	France	(FR)	Austria	(AT)
Bulgaria	(BG)	Italy	(IT)	Poland	(PL)
Czech Republic	(CZ)	Cyprus	(CY)	Portugal	(PT)
Denmark	(DK)	Latvia	(LV)	Romania	(RO)
Germany	(DE)	Lithuania	(LT)	Slovenia	(SI)
Estonia	(EE)	Luxembourg	(LU)	Slovakia	(SK)
Ireland	(IE)	Hungary	(HU)	Finland	(FI)
Greece	(EL)	Malta	(MT)	Sweden	(SE)
Spain	(ES)	Netherlands	(NL)	United Kingdom	(UK)

European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

Iceland	(IS)	Norway	(NO)
Liechtenstein	(LI)	Switzerland	(CH)

EU candidate countries

Croatia	(HR)	Montenegro	(ME)
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	(MK)	Turkey	(TR)

As no data are available for Liechtenstein, Montenegro and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, these countries have not been included in Tables 1 and 2 of the text.

Further information

Eurostat Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Data on 'EU-LFS Statistics'

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/data/database

Further information about 'EU-LFS Statistics'

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_unemployment_lfs/introduction

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European Statistical Data Support:

With the members of the 'European statistical system', Eurostat has set up a network of support centres in nearly every Member State and in some EFTA countries.

Their role is to provide help and guidance to Internet users of European statistics.

Contact details for this support network can be found on the Eurostat website at:

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