

20/2015 - 30 January 2015

December 2014

Euro area unemployment rate at 11.4%

EU28 at 9.9%

The **euro area**¹ (EA18) seasonally-adjusted² unemployment rate³ was 11.4% in December 2014, down from 11.5% in November 2014⁴, and from 11.8% in December 2013. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **euro area** since August 2012. The **EU28**¹ unemployment rate was 9.9% in December 2014, down from 10.0% in November 2014 and from 10.6% in December 2013. This is the first time the rate for the **EU28** has fallen below 10.0% since October 2011. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

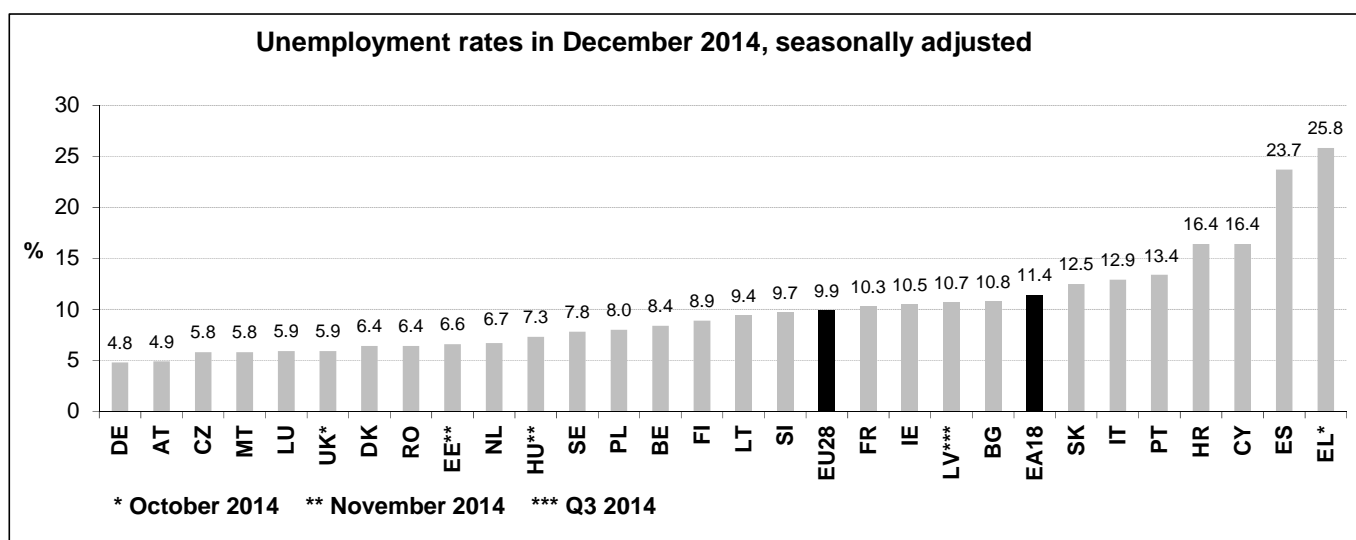
Eurostat estimates that 24.056 million men and women in the **EU28**, of whom 18.129 million were in the **euro area**, were unemployed in December 2014. Compared with November 2014, the number of persons unemployed decreased by 228 000 in the **EU28** and by 157 000 in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2013, unemployment fell by 1.710 million in the **EU28** and by 693 000 in the **euro area**.

Member States

Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates in December 2014 were recorded in **Germany** (4.8%) and **Austria** (4.9%), and the highest in **Greece** (25.8% in October 2014) and **Spain** (23.7%).

Compared with a year ago, the unemployment rate in December 2014 fell in twenty-four Member States, remained stable in **Belgium** and increased in **Finland** (8.3% to 8.9%), **Italy** (12.6% to 12.9%) and **France** (10.2% to 10.3%). The largest decreases were registered in **Estonia** (9.0% to 6.6% between November 2013 and November 2014), **Bulgaria** (12.8% to 10.8%), **Greece** (27.8% to 25.8% between October 2013 and October 2014), **Hungary** (9.3% to 7.3% between November 2013 and November 2014) and **Poland** (10.0% to 8.0%).

In December 2014, the unemployment rate in the **United States** was 5.6%, down from 5.8% in November 2014, and from 6.7% in December 2013.



Youth unemployment

In December 2014, 4.960 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the **EU28**, of whom 3.289 million were in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2013, youth unemployment decreased by 464 000 in the **EU28** and by 168 000 in the **euro area**. In December 2014, the youth unemployment rate⁵ was 21.4% in the **EU28** and 23.0% in the **euro area**, compared with 23.1% and 23.9% respectively in December 2013. In December 2014, the lowest rates were observed in **Germany** (7.2%), **Austria** (9.0%) and the **Netherlands** (9.6%), and the highest in **Spain** (51.4%), **Greece** (50.6% in October 2014), **Croatia** (44.8% in the fourth quarter 2014) and **Italy** (42.0%).

1. Up to 31 December 2014, the euro area (EA18) included Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland. From 1 January 2015 the euro area (EA19) also includes Lithuania.

The EU28 includes Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), the Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Ireland (IE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Croatia (HR), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT), the Netherlands (NL), Austria (AT), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Slovenia (SI), Slovakia (SK), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE) and the United Kingdom (UK).

As part of Eurostat's guidelines for the dissemination of data when the euro area is enlarged, the aggregate data series commented on in this News Release refer to the official composition of the euro area in the most recent month for which data is available. **Thus News Releases with data for months up to December 2014 comment on EA18 series, while Releases with data for January 2015 onwards will comment on EA19 series.**

Eurostat's guidelines can be found on the Eurostat website:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-eurostat-news/-/GUIDE_ENLARG_2007

The tables also include Iceland, Norway and the United States.

2. Non-seasonally adjusted and trend data can be found in the statistical database on the Eurostat website. For further details please refer to the *Unemployment statistics* article in Statistics Explained:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics

3. 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.

4. The data in this News Release are normally subject to small revisions, caused by the updates to the seasonally adjusted series whenever new monthly data are added. Larger revisions can occur when the most recent LFS data are included in the calculation process. Compared with the rates published in News Release 1/2015 of 7 January 2015, the November 2014 unemployment rates remain unchanged at 11.5% for the EA18 and at 10.0% for the EU28. Among Member States, rates have been revised between 0.2 and 0.4 percentage points for Cyprus and Portugal.

5. 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. For further details please refer to the *Youth unemployment* article in Statistics Explained:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Youth_unemployment

6. Latvia: quarterly data for all series.

Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia: quarterly data for youth unemployment.

7. For Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Sweden and Iceland the trend component is used instead of the more volatile seasonally adjusted data. For Sweden and Iceland, seasonally adjusted data are available in the online data base on the Eurostat website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

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

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

For further information on data:

Tim ALLEN

Tel: +352-4301-33 444

eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu

Sammy Lauritsen

Tel: +352-4301-35 742

Hubertus VREESWIJK

Tel: +352-4301-34 323

Eurostat news releases on internet:

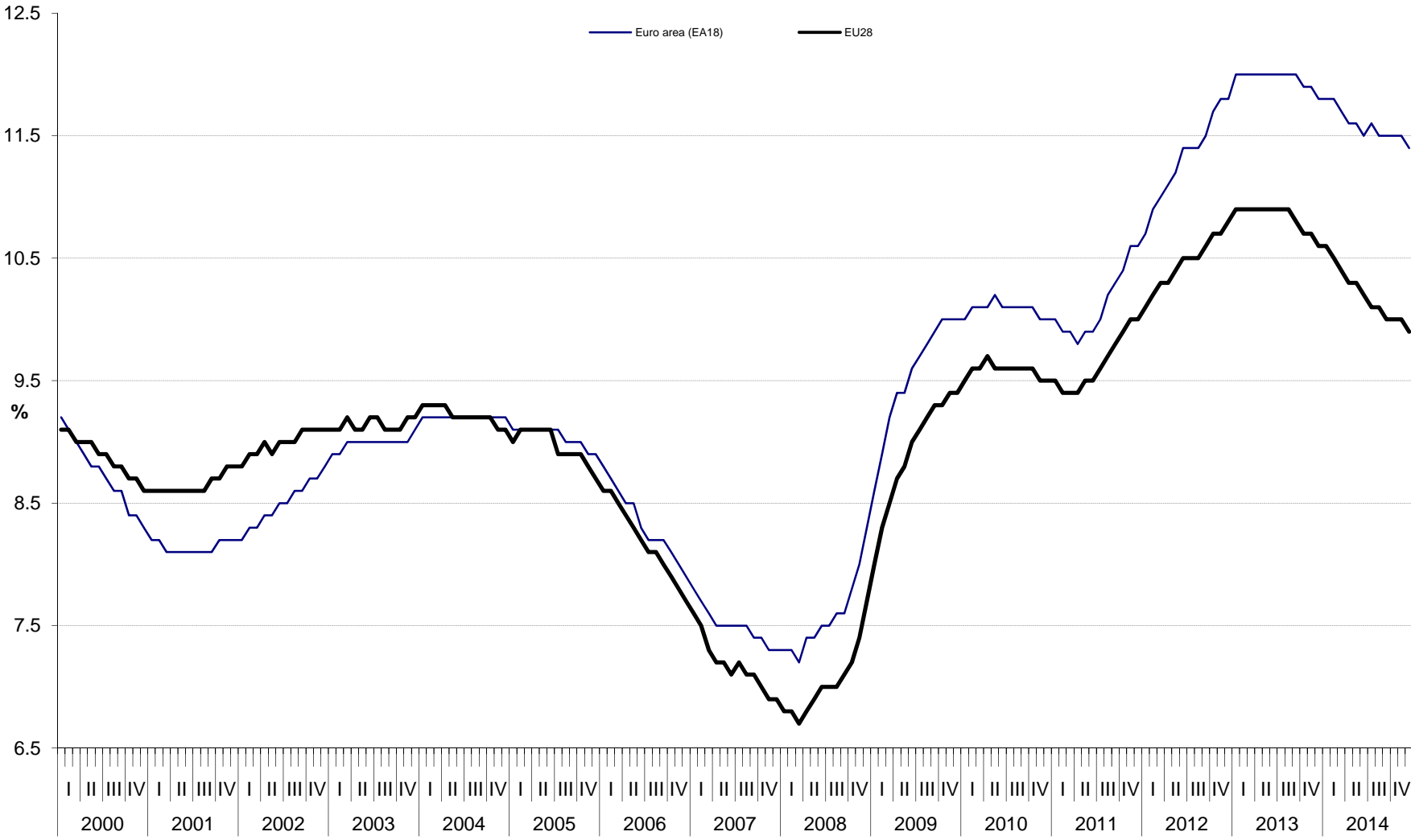
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Selected Principal European Economic Indicators: **<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/euroindicators>**

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Euro area and EU28 unemployment rates Seasonally adjusted series



Seasonally adjusted unemployment, totals

| | Rates (%) | | | | | Number of persons (in thousands) | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|
| | Dec 13 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 | Dec 13 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 |
| EA18 | 11.8 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 11.4 | 18 822 | 18 302 | 18 325 | 18 286 | 18 129 |
| EA19 | 11.8 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 11.4 | 11.3 | 18 987 | 18 445 | 18 472 | 18 425 | 18 266 |
| EU28 | 10.6 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 9.9 | 25 766 | 24 389 | 24 381 | 24 284 | 24 056 |
| Belgium | 8.4 | 8.6 | 8.5 | 8.5 | 8.4 | 416 | 426 | 422 | 420 | 416 |
| Bulgaria | 12.8 | 11.4 | 11.3 | 11.0 | 10.8 | 433 | 387 | 380 | 373 | 365 |
| Czech Republic | 6.7 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 353 | 306 | 306 | 307 | 308 |
| Denmark⁸ | 7.2 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 206 | 191 | 188 | 188 | 188 |
| Germany⁷ | 5.1 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 2 133 | 2 092 | 2 073 | 2 045 | 2 014 |
| Estonia⁸ | 9.0** | 7.4 | 6.9 | 6.6 | : | 61** | 50 | 47 | 45 | : |
| Ireland | 12.1 | 11.0 | 10.9 | 10.7 | 10.5 | 261 | 237 | 234 | 230 | 226 |
| Greece | 27.8* | 26.0 | 25.8 | : | : | 1350* | 1 259 | 1 245 | : | : |
| Spain | 25.6 | 24.0 | 23.9 | 23.8 | 23.7 | 5 880 | 5 501 | 5 492 | 5 471 | 5 460 |
| France | 10.2 | 10.3 | 10.2 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 2 981 | 3 016 | 2 998 | 3 022 | 3 020 |
| Croatia | 17.1 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 16.6 | 16.4 | 314 | 322 | 323 | 321 | 317 |
| Italy | 12.6 | 13.0 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 12.9 | 3 227 | 3 344 | 3 432 | 3 431 | 3 322 |
| Cyprus | 16.5 | 16.2 | 16.3 | 16.6 | 16.4 | 71 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 71 |
| Latvia⁶ | 11.7*** | 10.7 | : | : | : | 116*** | 105 | : | : | : |
| Lithuania | 11.3 | 9.7 | 9.9 | 9.4 | 9.4 | 165 | 143 | 147 | 138 | 137 |
| Luxembourg | 6.0 | 6.0 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Hungary⁸ | 9.3** | 7.3 | 7.3 | 7.3 | : | 406** | 324 | 327 | 325 | : |
| Malta | 6.5 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 11 |
| Netherlands⁷ | 7.0 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.7 | 628 | 580 | 581 | 585 | 595 |
| Austria⁷ | 5.0 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 222 | 227 | 223 | 219 | 220 |
| Poland | 10.0 | 8.5 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 8.0 | 1 733 | 1 470 | 1 448 | 1 423 | 1 391 |
| Portugal | 15.2 | 13.3 | 13.5 | 13.5 | 13.4 | 789 | 684 | 694 | 694 | 690 |
| Romania | 7.0 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 649 | 624 | 620 | 617 | 604 |
| Slovenia | 9.9 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 99 | 97 | 97 | 96 | 97 |
| Slovakia | 14.0 | 12.9 | 12.8 | 12.6 | 12.5 | 379 | 351 | 347 | 342 | 338 |
| Finland⁷ | 8.3 | 8.8 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 223 | 237 | 239 | 240 | 240 |
| Sweden⁷ | 8.0 | 7.8 | 7.8 | 7.8 | 7.8 | 412 | 408 | 406 | 405 | 404 |
| United Kingdom⁸ | 7.1* | 5.9 | 5.9 | : | : | 2 311* | 1 919 | 1 899 | : | : |
| Iceland⁷ | 5.3 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.6 | : | 10 | 9 | 9 | 9 | : |
| Norway⁸ | 3.5** | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.7 | : | 89** | 101 | 103 | 102 | : |
| United States | 6.7 | 5.9 | 5.7 | 5.8 | 5.6 | 10 384 | 9 182 | 9 061 | 9 109 | 8 703 |

: Data not available

* October 2013

** November 2013

*** Q3 2013

Seasonally adjusted youth (under 25s) unemployment

| | Rates (%) | | | | | Number of persons (in thousands) | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|
| | Dec 13 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 | Dec 13 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 |
| EA18 | 23.9 | 23.3 | 23.3 | 23.3 | 23.0 | 3 457 | 3 331 | 3 327 | 3 331 | 3 289 |
| EA19 | 23.8 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 23.0 | 3 484 | 3 353 | 3 352 | 3 353 | 3 312 |
| EU28 | 23.1 | 21.7 | 21.7 | 21.6 | 21.4 | 5 424 | 5 034 | 5 028 | 5 029 | 4 960 |
| Belgium | 23.7 | 20.8 | 21.1 | 21.6 | 21.9 | 96 | 85 | 85 | 87 | 88 |
| Bulgaria | 26.9 | 22.3 | 21.8 | 21.6 | 21.6 | 57 | 46 | 45 | 44 | 43 |
| Czech Republic | 18.7 | 14.9 | 14.2 | 14.9 | 14.3 | 66 | 52 | 51 | 53 | 51 |
| Denmark⁸ | 14.1 | 12.7 | 11.6 | 11.4 | 11.0 | 61 | 58 | 53 | 52 | 50 |
| Germany⁷ | 7.9 | 7.5 | 7.4 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 337 | 314 | 309 | 305 | 301 |
| Estonia⁸ | 18.4 | 13.6 | 13.8 | 13.4 | : | 11 | 8 | 8 | 7 | : |
| Ireland | 25.8 | 22.6 | 22.2 | 21.8 | 21.6 | 53 | 44 | 42 | 42 | 41 |
| Greece | 56.2 | 50.4 | 50.6 | : | : | 171 | 157 | 156 | : | : |
| Spain | 54.6 | 53.2 | 52.4 | 51.8 | 51.4 | 906 | 837 | 833 | 826 | 824 |
| France | 23.6 | 24.9 | 25.1 | 25.3 | 25.2 | 653 | 693 | 704 | 712 | 706 |
| Croatia⁶ | 48.3 | 45.4 | 44.8 | 44.8 | 44.8 | 74 | 76 | 78 | 78 | 78 |
| Italy | 41.8 | 42.4 | 42.8 | 43.0 | 42.0 | 685 | 696 | 690 | 697 | 664 |
| Cyprus⁶ | 40.3 | 34.7 | 32.8 | 32.8 | 32.8 | 17 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| Latvia⁶ | 22.8 | 20.2 | : | : | : | 21 | 17 | : | : | : |
| Lithuania | 21.0 | 16.6 | 17.5 | 15.5 | 16.5 | 27 | 22 | 25 | 22 | 24 |
| Luxembourg | 16.3 | 18.2 | 18.3 | 18.4 | 18.2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Hungary⁸ | 23.5 | 19.4 | 19.5 | 18.9 | : | 76 | 64 | 65 | 63 | : |
| Malta | 13.2 | 12.8 | 12.7 | 13.2 | 13.2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Netherlands⁷ | 11.3 | 9.8 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.6 | 160 | 136 | 136 | 136 | 135 |
| Austria⁷ | 10.1 | 9.4 | 9.8 | 9.5 | 9.0 | 59 | 55 | 57 | 55 | 53 |
| Poland | 26.7 | 23.5 | 23.3 | 23.1 | 22.6 | 395 | 337 | 333 | 330 | 324 |
| Portugal | 35.2 | 32.9 | 33.2 | 33.4 | 34.5 | 134 | 125 | 123 | 123 | 127 |
| Romania⁶ | 24.4 | 23.3 | : | : | : | 168 | 160 | : | : | : |
| Slovenia⁶ | 20.1 | 20.5 | 24.1 | 24.1 | 24.1 | 14 | 14 | 17 | 17 | 17 |
| Slovakia | 33.0 | 29.0 | 29.3 | 29.2 | 28.9 | 69 | 61 | 61 | 61 | 60 |
| Finland⁷ | 19.8 | 20.6 | 20.8 | 21.0 | 21.2 | 66 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 |
| Sweden⁷ | 23.0 | 22.5 | 22.5 | 22.5 | 22.5 | 154 | 150 | 149 | 149 | 149 |
| United Kingdom⁸ | 19.5 | 16.4 | 16.7 | : | : | 889 | 731 | 739 | : | : |
| Iceland⁷ | 10.1 | 10.1 | 10.0 | 9.9 | : | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | : |
| Norway⁸ | 9.5 | 7.9 | 7.8 | 7.4 | : | 36 | 29 | 28 | 28 | : |

: Data not available

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates (%), by gender

| | Males | | | | | Females | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|
| | Dec 13 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 | Dec 13 | Sep 14 | Oct 14 | Nov 14 | Dec 14 |
| EA18 | 11.7 | 11.3 | 11.4 | 11.3 | 11.2 | 12.0 | 11.7 | 11.6 | 11.6 | 11.5 |
| EA19 | 11.7 | 11.3 | 11.4 | 11.3 | 11.2 | 12.0 | 11.7 | 11.6 | 11.6 | 11.5 |
| EU28 | 10.6 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 9.8 | 10.7 | 10.2 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 10.0 |
| Belgium | 8.8 | 8.8 | 8.8 | 8.8 | 8.8 | 8.0 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 8.0 |
| Bulgaria | 13.8 | 12.4 | 12.2 | 11.9 | 11.6 | 11.8 | 10.4 | 10.2 | 10.0 | 9.9 |
| Czech Republic | 5.6 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 8.0 | 7.0 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 6.8 |
| Denmark ⁸ | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.2 | 7.7 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 6.6 |
| Germany ⁷ | 5.4 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Estonia ⁸ | 9.1 | 7.9 | 6.9 | 6.4 | : | 7.9 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 6.8 | : |
| Ireland | 13.6 | 12.3 | 12.0 | 11.8 | 11.7 | 10.3 | 9.5 | 9.4 | 9.3 | 9.1 |
| Greece | 24.5 | 23.2 | 23.1 | : | : | 30.8 | 29.7 | 29.2 | : | : |
| Spain | 24.9 | 23.0 | 23.0 | 22.9 | 22.8 | 26.4 | 25.2 | 25.0 | 24.7 | 24.6 |
| France | 10.3 | 10.4 | 10.4 | 10.4 | 10.4 | 10.1 | 10.2 | 10.0 | 10.2 | 10.2 |
| Croatia | 16.8 | 15.9 | 16.1 | 16.1 | 16.0 | 17.4 | 17.6 | 17.4 | 17.1 | 16.8 |
| Italy | 12.0 | 12.2 | 12.6 | 12.4 | 12.0 | 13.6 | 14.0 | 14.3 | 14.6 | 14.1 |
| Cyprus | 17.6 | 17.6 | 17.9 | 18.3 | 18.0 | 15.4 | 14.7 | 14.7 | 14.8 | 14.7 |
| Latvia ⁶ | 12.3 | 11.4 | : | : | : | 10.7 | 10.0 | : | : | : |
| Lithuania | 12.4 | 10.8 | 11.6 | 10.7 | 11.2 | 10.2 | 8.7 | 8.2 | 8.1 | 7.8 |
| Luxembourg | 6.1 | 5.9 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 6.0 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.0 |
| Hungary ⁸ | 8.4 | 7.1 | 7.2 | 7.3 | : | 9.0 | 7.6 | 7.5 | 7.3 | : |
| Malta | 6.7 | 6.1 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.4 |
| Netherlands ⁷ | 7.4 | 6.6 | 6.6 | 6.7 | 6.8 | 6.6 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.3 | 6.5 |
| Austria ⁷ | 4.9 | 5.6 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.3 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| Poland | 9.4 | 7.9 | 7.8 | 7.7 | 7.4 | 10.6 | 9.1 | 9.0 | 8.8 | 8.7 |
| Portugal | 15.2 | 12.5 | 13.2 | 13.4 | 13.2 | 15.3 | 14.1 | 13.9 | 13.7 | 13.7 |
| Romania | 7.7 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 7.0 | 6.7 | 6.2 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 5.9 | 6.0 |
| Slovenia | 9.3 | 9.0 | 9.0 | 9.0 | 9.2 | 10.6 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.4 | 10.3 |
| Slovakia | 14.1 | 12.4 | 12.2 | 12.1 | 11.9 | 13.9 | 13.5 | 13.4 | 13.3 | 13.2 |
| Finland ⁷ | 8.9 | 9.6 | 9.8 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 7.8 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 8.1 |
| Sweden ⁷ | 8.2 | 8.1 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 7.6 |
| United Kingdom ⁸ | 7.4 | 6.2 | 6.1 | : | : | 6.7 | 5.6 | 5.5 | : | : |
| Iceland ⁷ | 5.5 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.5 | : | 5.1 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 | : |
| Norway ⁸ | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.1 | : | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.3 | : |

: Data not available