

Business demography characteristics

# Almost 1 in 10 enterprises in the EU recognised as high-growth companies

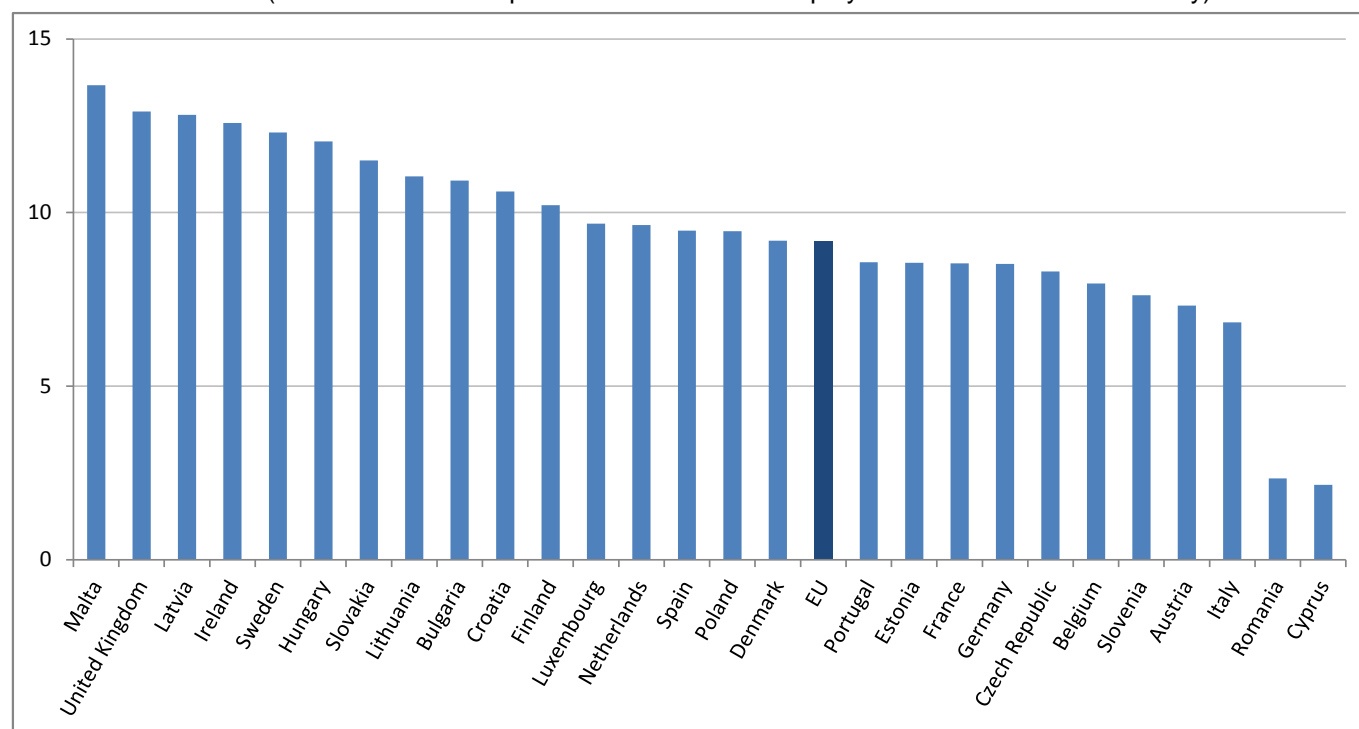
## Highest shares in services

In 2014, around 145 000 companies, or almost a tenth (9.2%) of all active enterprises with at least ten employees in the business economy in the **European Union** (EU) were recognized as high-growth enterprises, providing work for over 12 million employees. These firms have been distinguished using the following criteria: average annualised growth in number of employees greater than 10% per year over a three-year period and at least 10 employees at the beginning of the growth. High-growth enterprises play an important role in contributing to economic growth and the creation of jobs.

Looking at a breakdown by economic activity, high-growth enterprises in the **EU** were more predominant in the service sectors than in the rest of the business economy in 2014. The highest proportion was found in the "Information and communication" sector (15.0% of active enterprises in this sector), followed by "Administrative and support service activities" (12.7%), "Transportation and storage" and "Professional, scientific and technical activities" (both 11.0%).

This information, issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, presents a selection of the latest data available on high-growth enterprises in the EU.

**High-growth enterprises in the EU Member States, 2014**  
(as % of active enterprises with at least 10 employees in the business economy)



Data not available for Greece.

## Highest shares of high-growth enterprises in Malta, the United Kingdom and Latvia

In 2014, considerable variations were observed across EU Member States in the distribution of high-growth enterprises, with shares ranging from more than 12% in **Malta** (13.7%), the **United Kingdom** (12.9%), **Latvia** (12.8%), **Ireland** (12.6%), **Sweden** (12.3%) and **Hungary** (12.1%), to less than 3% in **Romania** (2.3%) and **Cyprus** (2.2%).

High-growing enterprises have a noteworthy impact on employment. In 2014, the highest contributions of high-growth enterprises to the total number of employees were recorded in the **United Kingdom** (19.3%), **Ireland** (19.1%), **Bulgaria** (18.0%), **Hungary** (17.9%), **Malta** (17.5%) and **Latvia** (17.4%). In contrast, the lowest share was registered in **Cyprus** (3.6%), followed at a distance by **Romania** (6.7%) and **Slovenia** (8.2%).

### High growth enterprises in the business economy in the EU Member States, 2014

	Enterprises		Employees	
	Number	% of all active enterprises with at least 10 employees	Number	% of all employees among the stock of active enterprises with at least 10 employees
<b>EU*</b>	<b>144 926</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>12 228 946</b>	<b>13.0</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	2 398	8.0	165 985	9.1
<b>Bulgaria</b>	2 819	10.9	242 405	18.0
<b>Czech Republic</b>	3 067	8.3	264 831	11.3
<b>Denmark</b>	2 118	9.2	142 768	10.3
<b>Germany</b>	29 679	8.5	2 210 198	10.2
<b>Estonia</b>	551	8.6	38 302	12.5
<b>Ireland</b>	2 247	12.6	181 876	19.1
<b>Greece</b>	:	:	:	:
<b>Spain</b>	10 403	9.5	709 769	11.1
<b>France</b>	13 102	8.5	1 007 835	10.0
<b>Croatia</b>	1 275	10.6	79 777	11.3
<b>Italy</b>	10 655	6.8	722 563	9.5
<b>Cyprus</b>	70	2.2	4 897	3.6
<b>Latvia</b>	1 129	12.8	73 029	17.4
<b>Lithuania</b>	1 793	11.0	112 798	15.7
<b>Luxembourg</b>	421	9.7	24 272	9.9
<b>Hungary</b>	3 487	12.1	299 206	17.9
<b>Malta</b>	256	13.7	16 395	17.5
<b>Netherlands</b>	5 631	9.6	677 815	16.8
<b>Austria</b>	2 962	7.3	c	c
<b>Poland</b>	9 356	9.5	944 665	15.8
<b>Portugal</b>	3 138	8.6	c	c
<b>Romania</b>	1 219	2.3	199 209	6.7
<b>Slovenia</b>	532	7.6	32 547	8.2
<b>Slovakia</b>	1 662	11.5	c	c
<b>Finland</b>	2 001	10.2	108 190	9.5
<b>Sweden</b>	4 651	12.3	315 052	15.1
<b>United Kingdom</b>	26 705	12.9	2 961 954	19.3
<b>Norway</b>	2 774	11.5	156 151	12.6

\* EU data are estimated

: Data not available.

c Confidential

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

## Information & communication, top sector for high-growth enterprises in almost half of Member States

Although high-growth enterprises operate in all sectors of the business economy across the EU, their share in the service sectors is higher in the majority of Member States.

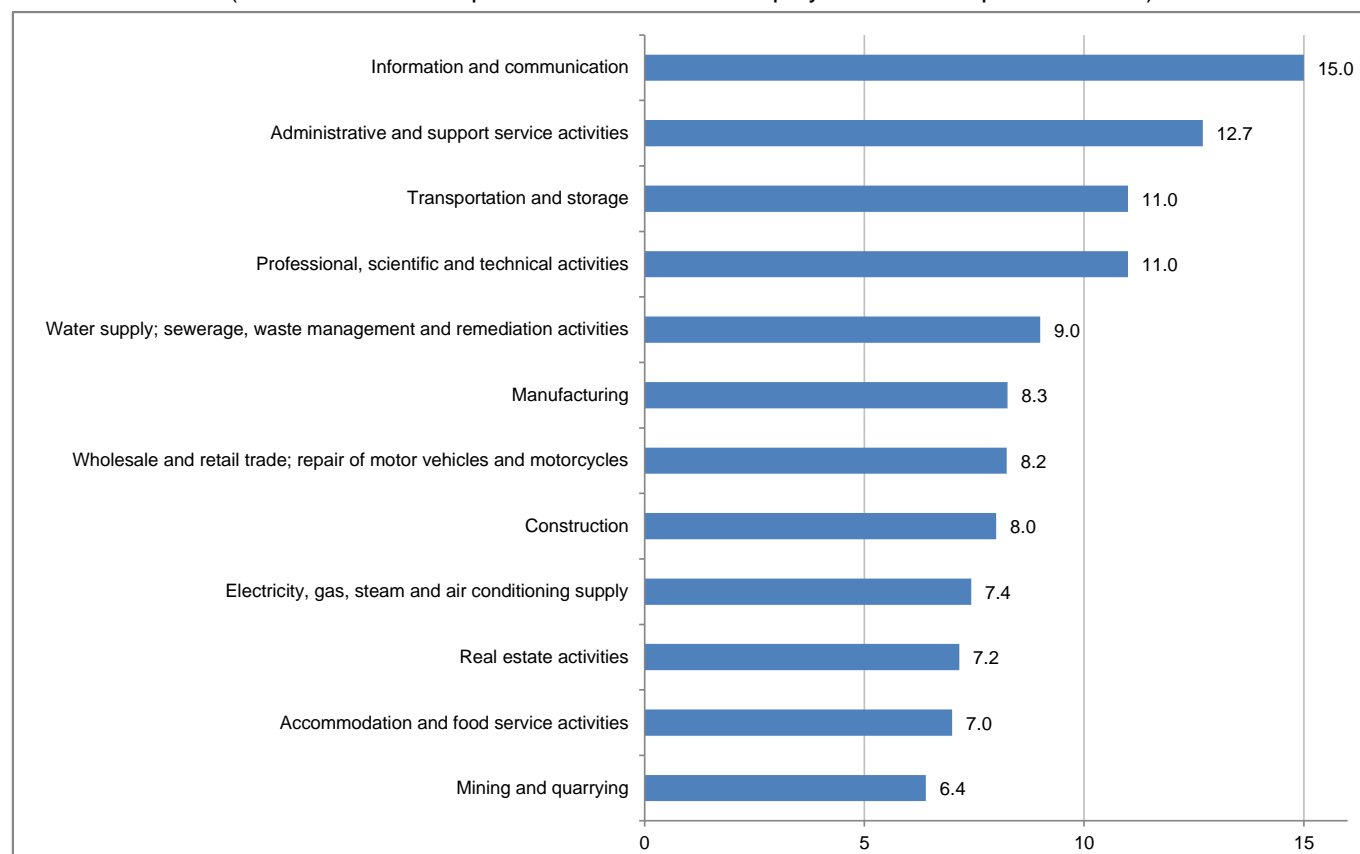
More specifically, in 2014 high-growth enterprises were particularly concentrated within "Information and communication". This sector was registered among the top 3 economic branches in 23 Member States, with the highest percentages being observed in **Malta** (22.3%), **Ireland** (19.9%), the **United Kingdom** (18.6%), **Sweden** (18.2%) and the **Netherlands** (17.6%).

"Administrative and support service activities" were among the top 3 sectors in terms of high-growth enterprises in 20 Member States, with the largest proportions being registered notably in **Ireland** (19.3%), **Sweden** (16.7%), **Belgium** (16.3%), **Croatia** (15.5%) and **Denmark** (15.3%).

"Transport and storage" and "Professional, scientific and technical activities" each recorded 11% of high-growth enterprises at EU level. In particular, large shares in "Transport and storage" were registered in **Slovakia** (17.2%), the **United Kingdom** (15.9%), **Hungary** and **Bulgaria** (both 15.7%).

"Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities" was the first industrial sector in terms of proportions of high-growth enterprises. It was listed among the top 3 economic branches in 6 Member States, with the highest shares being observed in the **United Kingdom** (17.9%), **Sweden** (15.3%) and **Hungary** (15.1%).

**High-growth enterprises by economic sectors\* in the EU, 2014**  
(as % of active enterprises with at least 10 employees in the respective sector)



\* Data are estimated. Data for sector "Financial and insurance activities" are not available.

**Top 3 NACE Rev. 2 sectors with the highest share of high growth enterprises in EU Member States, 2014**  
(as % of active enterprises with at least 10 employees in the respective NACE Rev. 2 sector)

	First NACE sector	%	Second NACE sector	%	Third NACE sector	%
<b>EU*</b>	<b>Information and communication</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>Administrative and support service activities</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>Transportation and storage / Professional, scientific and technical activities</b>	<b>11.0</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	Administrative and support service activities	16.3	Information and communication	13.2	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	13.2
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Information and communication	16.4	Transportation and storage	15.7	Administrative and support service activities	13.6
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Administrative and support service activities	12.6	Information and communication	12.3	Transportation and storage	11.4
<b>Denmark</b>	Administrative and support service activities	15.3	Information and communication	14.7	Construction	11.0
<b>Germany</b>	Information and communication	16.4	Administrative and support service activities	11.2	Professional, scientific and technical activities	11.1
<b>Estonia</b>	Information and communication	11.6	Accommodation and food service activities	10.2	Transportation and storage	10.0
<b>Ireland</b>	Information and communication	19.9	Administrative and support service activities	19.3	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	17.7
<b>Greece</b>	:	:	:	:	:	:
<b>Spain</b>	Information and communication	13.1	Transportation and storage	11.5	Administrative and support service activities	11.1
<b>France</b>	Information and communication	16.4	Administrative and support service activities	13.8	Professional, scientific and technical activities	11.1
<b>Croatia</b>	Administrative and support service activities	15.5	Transportation and storage	14.1	Manufacturing	11.5
<b>Italy</b>	Administrative and support service activities	10.8	Information and communication	10.7	Water supply; sewerage, waste management	9.9
<b>Cyprus</b>	Administrative and support service activities	4.8	Water supply; sewerage, waste management	3.0	Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles	3.0
<b>Latvia</b>	Mining and quarrying	18.9	Information and communication	14.9	Construction	14.8
<b>Lithuania</b>	Transportation and storage	14.6	Administrative and support service activities	12.5	Manufacturing	11.9
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Real estate activities	14.3	Information and communication	13.5	Water supply; sewerage, waste management	11.5
<b>Hungary</b>	Transportation and storage	15.7	Water supply; sewerage, waste management	15.1	Information and communication	14.6
<b>Malta</b>	Mining and quarrying	50.0	Information and communication	22.3	Real estate activities	20.0
<b>Netherlands</b>	Mining and quarrying	18.0	Information and communication	17.6	Administrative and support service activities	14.0
<b>Austria</b>	Information and communication	12.6	Administrative and support service activities	11.9	Professional, scientific and technical activities	9.2
<b>Poland</b>	Information and communication	13.6	Transportation and storage	13.0	Administrative and support service activities	12.1
<b>Portugal</b>	Information and communication	16.1	Administrative and support service activities	12.4	Transportation and storage	11.8
<b>Romania</b>	Information and communication	4.6	Transportation and storage	4.1	Mining and quarrying	3.4
<b>Slovenia</b>	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	12.2	Transportation and storage	11.7	Administrative and support service activities	11.3
<b>Slovakia</b>	Transportation and storage	17.2	Information and communication	15.0	Administrative and support service activities	14.3
<b>Finland</b>	Information and communication	16.5	Administrative and support service activities	14.0	Transportation and storage	12.6
<b>Sweden</b>	Information and communication	18.2	Administrative and support service activities	16.7	Water supply; sewerage, waste management	15.3
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Information and communication	18.6	Water supply; sewerage, waste management	17.9	Transportation and storage	15.9
<b>Norway</b>	Mining and quarrying	24.9	Administrative and support service activities	17.4	Information and communication	15.0

\* EU data are estimated

: Data not available.

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

## Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) 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 definitions

Data presented in this News Release come from the Eurostat Business demography statistics, which cover variables explaining the characteristics and demography of the business population (including information on high-growth enterprises). Data are mainly drawn from business registers.

A **high-growth enterprise** (growth by 10% or more) is an enterprise with average annualised growth in number of employees greater than 10% per year over a three-year period and having at least 10 employees at the beginning of the growth.

**Business economy** refers to the following NACE Rev. 2 sectors: industry, construction (section F), services (sections G to N, excluding activities of holding companies - K64.2).

- Industry (sections B to E): Mining and quarrying; Manufacturing; Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; and Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities;
- Construction (section F);
- Services (sections G to N, excluding activities of holding companies - K64.2): Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; Transportation and storage; Accommodation and food service activities; Information and communication; Financial and insurance activities; Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities.

**Employees** defines those persons who work for an employer on the basis of a contract of employment and receive compensation in the form of wages, salaries, fees, gratuities, piecework pay or remuneration in kind. Part-time workers, seasonal workers, persons on strike or on short-term leave are all considered employees, while volunteers or workers on long-term leave are excluded.

## For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) on structural business statistics.

Eurostat [database](#) on structural business statistics.

Eurostat metadata on [business demography](#) statistics.

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