

21/2019 – 31 January 2019

December 2018

Euro area unemployment at 7.9%

EU28 at 6.6%

The **euro area** (EA19) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 7.9% in December 2018, stable compared with November 2018 and down from 8.6% in December 2017. This remains the lowest rate recorded in the **euro area** since October 2008. The **EU28** unemployment rate was 6.6% in December 2018, stable compared with November 2018 and down from 7.2% in December 2017. This remains the lowest rate recorded in the **EU28** since the start of the EU monthly unemployment series in January 2000. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

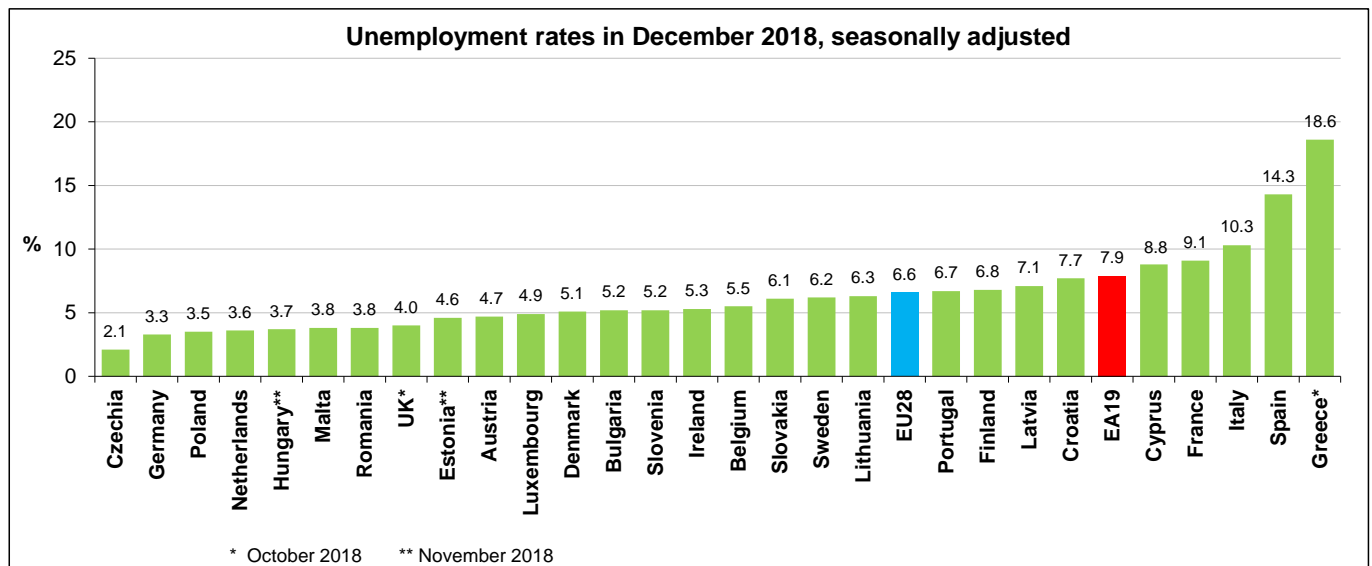
Eurostat estimates that 16.306 million men and women in the **EU28**, of whom 12.919 million in the **euro area**, were unemployed in December 2018. Compared with November 2018, the number of persons unemployed decreased by 75 000 in both the **EU28** and the **euro area**. Compared with December 2017, unemployment fell by 1.533 million in the **EU28** and by 1.174 million in the **euro area**.

Member States

Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates in December 2018 were recorded in **Czechia** (2.1%), **Germany** (3.3%), **Poland** (3.5%) and the **Netherlands** (3.6%). The highest unemployment rates were observed in **Greece** (18.6% in October 2018), **Spain** (14.3%) and **Italy** (10.3%).

Compared with a year ago, the unemployment rate fell in all Member States except **France** where it remained stable. The largest decreases were registered in **Greece** (from 21.0% to 18.6% between October 2017 and October 2018), **Spain** (from 16.5% to 14.3%) and **Croatia** (from 9.7% to 7.7%).

In December 2018, the unemployment rate in the **United States** was 3.9%, up from 3.7% in November 2018 and down from 4.1% in December 2017.



Youth unemployment

In December 2018, 3.365 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the **EU28**, of whom 2.391 million were in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2017, youth unemployment decreased by 249 000 in the **EU28** and by 141 000 in the **euro area**. In December 2018, the youth unemployment rate was 14.9% in the **EU28** and 16.6% in the **euro area**, compared with 16.1% and 17.8% respectively in December 2017. In December 2018, the lowest rates were observed in **Czechia** (5.8%), **Germany** (6.0%) and the **Netherlands** (6.6%), while the highest were recorded in **Greece** (38.5% in October 2018), **Spain** (32.7%) and **Italy** (31.9%).

Geographical information

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, Czechia, 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

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.

When data for the most recent month are not available for a Member State, EU and EA aggregates are calculated using the latest data available for that Member State.

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.

Compared with the rates published in News Release [4/2019](#) of 9 January 2019, the November 2018 unemployment rate for EA19 remains unchanged, while the rate for EU28 has been revised downwards from 6.7% to 6.6%. Among Member States, the rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points (pp) downwards for Spain, Cyprus and Poland (all by 0.3 pp) as well as for Bulgaria and Finland (both by 0.2 pp). The unemployment rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points upwards for France and Slovenia (both by 0.2 pp).

For more information

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

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

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on unemployment

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

Eurostat [metadata](#) on adjusted unemployment series

Eurostat €-indicators [release calendar](#)

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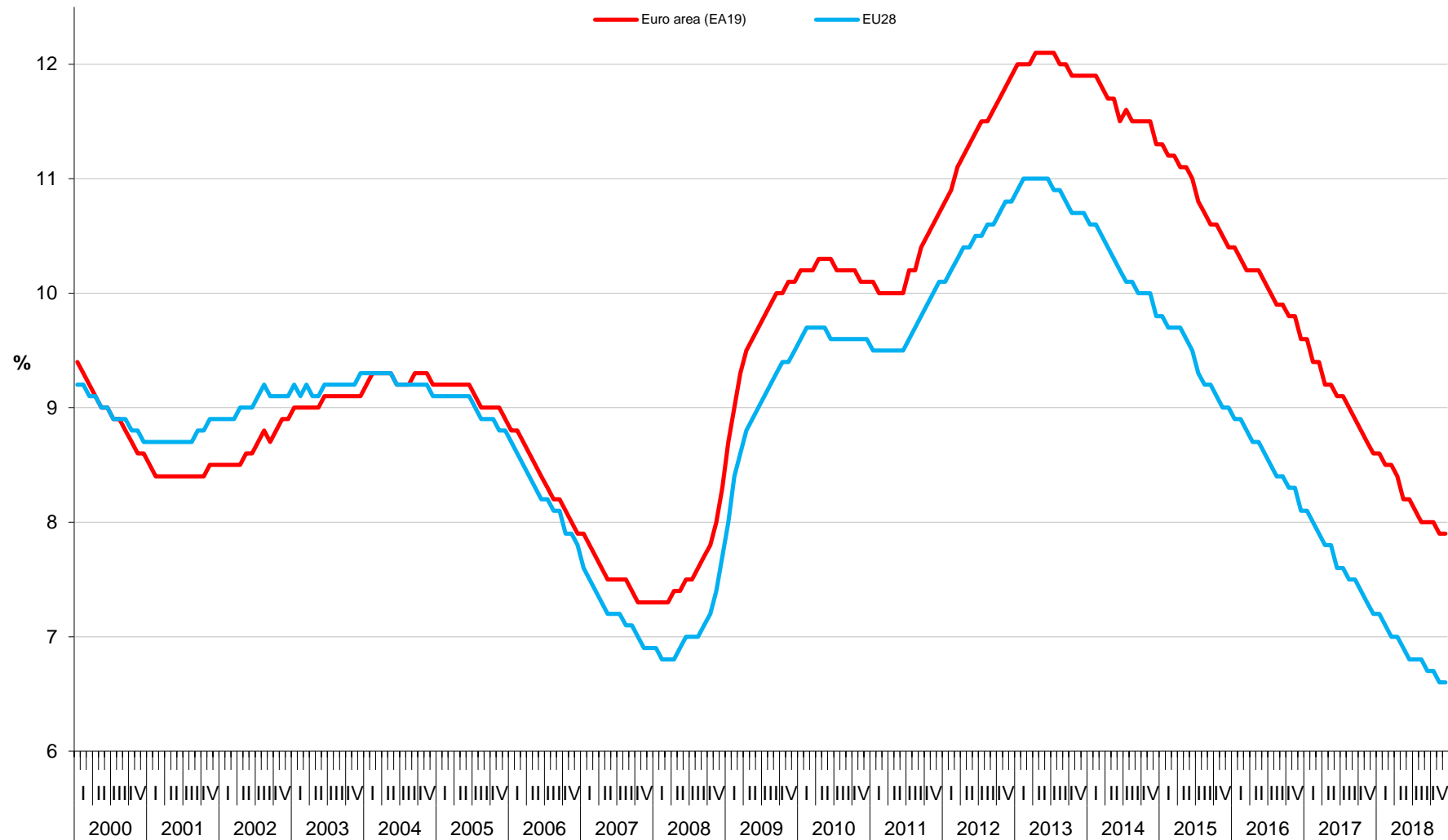
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Euro area and EU28 unemployment rates Seasonally adjusted series



Seasonally adjusted unemployment, totals

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Dec 17	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18	Dec 17	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18
EA19	8.6	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.9	14 093	13 125	13 100	12 994	12 919
EU28	7.2	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.6	17 839	16 591	16 516	16 381	16 306
Belgium	6.2	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	310	279	276	276	278
Bulgaria	5.7	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.2	192	173	174	172	171
Czechia	2.4	2.2	2.1	1.9	2.1	126	116	115	103	116
Denmark	5.3	4.8	4.8	5.0	5.1	157	147	144	153	153
Germany	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	1 543	1 451	1 440	1 427	1 413
Estonia	5.5**	5.7	5.2	4.6	:	39**	41	37	32	:
Ireland	6.2	5.6	5.4	5.3	5.3	147	133	130	128	127
Greece	21.0*	18.6	18.6	:	:	998*	887	876	:	:
Spain	16.5	14.8	14.6	14.4	14.3	3 748	3 372	3 338	3 298	3 269
France	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	2 708	2 717	2 714	2 710	2 720
Croatia	9.7	8.1	8.0	7.8	7.7	176	146	143	140	137
Italy	10.9	10.4	10.6	10.5	10.3	2 819	2 690	2 752	2 727	2 682
Cyprus	10.3	8.5	8.5	8.9	8.8	44	37	38	40	39
Latvia	8.1	6.9	6.9	7.0	7.1	80	68	68	69	70
Lithuania	6.8	6.6	6.3	6.2	6.3	99	97	92	91	91
Luxembourg	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.0	4.9	16	15	15	15	14
Hungary	3.9**	3.7	3.7	3.7	:	179**	173	172	171	:
Malta	4.1	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.8	10	9	9	9	10
Netherlands	4.4	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.6	395	343	337	326	329
Austria	5.4	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.7	244	223	218	213	214
Poland	4.3	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.5	745	635	620	605	591
Portugal	7.9	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.7	411	341	343	345	346
Romania	4.6	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.8	419	355	370	358	350
Slovenia	5.6	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.2	58	53	54	54	54
Slovakia	7.4	6.3	6.2	6.1	6.1	204	173	171	169	166
Finland	8.3	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.8	228	196	193	191	188
Sweden	6.4	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.2	347	345	345	344	343
United Kingdom	4.2*	4.1	4.0	:	:	1 412*	1 364	1 348	:	:
Iceland	3.0	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	6	5	5	5	5
Norway	4.1**	4.0	4.0	3.8	:	113**	112	112	106	:
United States	4.1	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.9	6 549	5 998	6 088	6 007	6 275

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

: Data not available

* October 2017

** November 2017

Seasonally adjusted youth (under 25s) unemployment

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Dec 17	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18	Dec 17	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18
EA19	17.8	16.9	16.9	16.6	16.6	2 532	2 426	2 430	2 386	2 391
EU28	16.1	15.2	15.1	14.9	14.9	3 614	3 410	3 416	3 371	3 365
Belgium	16.6	15.7	15.4	15.4	15.4	60	62	61	61	61
Bulgaria	11.5	12.8	12.8	12.6	12.8	19	18	19	19	19
Czechia	5.7	5.6	5.0	5.0	5.8	17	16	15	15	17
Denmark	10.2	9.1	8.5	8.7	8.7	46	41	39	40	40
Germany	6.5	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.0	274	260	258	256	253
Estonia	7.0	17.6	16.2	12.2	:	4	11	10	7	:
Ireland	13.3	13.5	12.9	12.3	12.2	37	40	39	38	37
Greece	43.2	37.6	38.5	:	:	108	90	92	:	:
Spain	36.7	34.2	33.8	32.9	32.7	550	515	512	499	500
France	21.5	21.1	21.1	21.0	21.1	611	607	608	606	610
Croatia	25.9	23.9	22.7	22.7	22.7	41	36	33	33	33
Italy	32.8	32.3	32.4	31.8	31.9	496	489	498	484	493
Cyprus	22.9	18.7*	:	:	:	8	7*	:	:	:
Latvia	17.0	9.6	10.3	10.6	10.8	11	7	7	7	8
Lithuania	13.4	10.7	10.6	10.6	10.5	15	13	13	13	13
Luxembourg	14.7	12.7	12.5	12.4	11.9	3	3	3	3	3
Hungary	10.7	9.9	10.1	10.2	:	35	33	34	34	:
Malta	10.5	11.0	11.1	12.0	12.3	3	3	3	4	4
Netherlands	8.0	7.5	7.2	6.9	6.6	116	109	105	101	97
Austria	9.7	9.3	9.3	8.7	8.9	51	49	49	47	48
Poland	13.6	11.9	11.5	11.0	10.5	178	153	149	143	136
Portugal	22.3	19.8	20.7	19.3	17.6	83	75	78	72	66
Romania	19.7	16.2*	:	:	:	126	99*	:	:	:
Slovenia	11.3	10.0	9.7	9.7	9.7	9	7	7	7	7
Slovakia	18.0	14.8	14.5	14.3	13.8	36	29	28	27	26
Finland	18.5	17.5	17.5	17.4	17.2	61	55	55	55	55
Sweden	16.7	16.8	17.1	16.7	16.6	104	105	106	105	105
United Kingdom	11.9	11.5	11.5	:	:	507	485	492	:	:
Iceland	6.9	6.3	6.2	5.9	6.1	2	2	2	2	2
Norway	9.8	10.0	10.3	10.3	:	35	37	38	38	:

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

: Data not available

* Q3 2018 data

Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia: quarterly data

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates (%), by gender

	Males					Females				
	Dec 17	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18	Dec 17	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18
EA19	8.3	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	9.0	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.3
EU28	7.0	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	7.5	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8
Belgium	6.2	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.2	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8
Bulgaria	6.0	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.4	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6
Czechia	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.8	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.6
Denmark	5.0	4.8	4.9	5.1	5.1	5.6	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.1
Germany	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7
Estonia	5.6	6.0	4.9	4.2	:	5.6	5.5	5.6	5.0	:
Ireland	6.5	5.6	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.3
Greece	16.7	14.9	15.0	:	:	26.0	23.4	23.1	:	:
Spain	14.9	13.3	13.1	12.9	12.6	18.3	16.5	16.4	16.2	16.1
France	9.0	9.2	9.2	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.0	9.0	9.1	9.1
Croatia	9.0	7.7	7.5	7.3	7.1	10.5	8.6	8.5	8.4	8.3
Italy	10.1	9.5	9.6	9.6	9.4	11.9	11.5	11.9	11.7	11.6
Cyprus	10.7	7.9	8.0	8.6	8.5	9.9	9.1	9.1	9.3	9.1
Latvia	9.1	7.9	7.8	7.8	8.1	7.2	5.9	6.1	6.1	6.1
Lithuania	8.0	7.1	6.9	6.8	6.8	5.7	6.1	5.8	5.7	5.7
Luxembourg	5.2	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.6	5.8	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.3
Hungary	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.6	:	4.3	4.1	3.9	3.7	:
Malta	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.8	4.0	4.1	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.6
Netherlands	4.1	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.5	4.7	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.7
Austria	5.8	5.0	5.2	5.0	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.4	4.4	4.7
Poland	4.3	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.3
Portugal	7.6	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.0	8.3	7.1	7.1	7.3	7.4
Romania	5.1	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.0	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0
Slovenia	5.0	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	6.4	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.8
Slovakia	7.0	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.7	7.9	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.5
Finland	8.5	7.2	7.1	7.0	6.8	8.0	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.9
Sweden	6.5	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2
United Kingdom	4.2	4.1	4.0	:	:	4.3	4.0	4.0	:	:
Iceland	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4
Norway	4.5	4.2	4.1	3.9	:	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.6	:

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

: Data not available