

February 2020

# Euro area unemployment at 7.3%

EU at 6.5%

The **euro area** seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 7.3% in February 2020 – the month before COVID-19 containment measures began to be widely introduced by Member States –, down from 7.4% in January 2020 and from 7.8% in February 2019. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **euro area** since March 2008. The **EU** unemployment rate was 6.5% in February 2020, stable compared with January 2020 and down from 6.9% in February 2019. This remains the lowest rate recorded in the **EU** since the start of the monthly unemployment series in February 2000. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

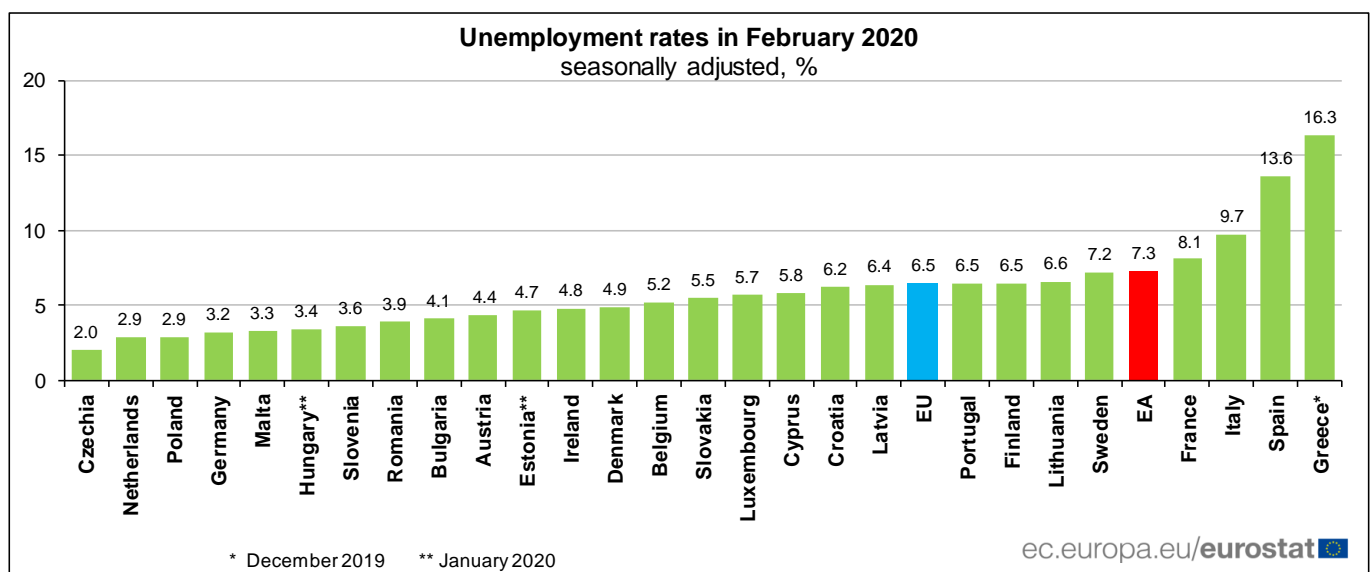
Eurostat estimates that 13.984 million men and women in the **EU**, of whom 12.047 million in the **euro area**, were unemployed in February 2020. Compared with January 2020, the number of persons unemployed decreased by 62 000 in the **EU** and by 88 000 in the **euro area**. Compared with February 2019, unemployment fell by 784 000 in the **EU** and by 663 000 in the **euro area**.

## Member States

Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates in February 2020 were recorded in **Czechia** (2.0%), the **Netherlands** and **Poland** (both 2.9%). The highest unemployment rates were observed in **Greece** (16.3% in December 2019) and **Spain** (13.6%).

Compared with a year ago, the unemployment rate fell in 19 Member States, remained stable in **Germany** and **Portugal**, while it increased in **Czechia** (from 1.9% to 2.0%), **Romania** (from 3.8% to 3.9%), **Luxembourg** (from 5.4% to 5.7%), **Estonia** (from 4.2% to 4.7% between January 2019 and January 2020), **Lithuania** (from 6.0% to 6.6%) and **Sweden** (from 6.6% to 7.2%). The largest decreases were registered in **Greece** (from 18.5% to 16.3% between December 2018 and December 2019), **Cyprus** (from 7.5% to 5.8%) and **Croatia** (from 7.2% to 6.2%).

In February 2020, the unemployment rate in the **United States** was 3.5%, down from 3.6% in January 2020 and from 3.8% in February 2019.



## Youth unemployment

In February 2020, 2.734 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the **EU**, of whom 2.258 million were in the **euro area**. Compared with February 2019, youth unemployment decreased by 85 000 in the **EU** and by 56 000 in the **euro area**. In February 2020, the youth unemployment rate was 14.9% in the **EU** and 15.5% in the **euro area**, compared with 15.5% and 16.1% respectively in February 2019. In February 2020, the lowest rates were observed in **Czechia** and **Germany** (both 5.3%) and the **Netherlands** (6.3%), while the highest were recorded in **Greece** (34.7% in December 2019), **Spain** (30.9%) and **Italy** (29.6%).

## 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** (EU27) 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 and Sweden.

## 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.

Germany: due to the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, including the LFS, the monthly unemployment rate for February 2020 is an estimation based on the figures recorded in previous periods.

## 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 [35/2020](#) of 3 March 2020, the January unemployment rate for the euro area remained unchanged while it has been revised for the EU from 6.6% to 6.5%. Among EU Member States, the rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points (pp) downwards for: Slovenia (by 1.0 pp) as well as Portugal and Slovakia (both 0.2 pp). The rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points (pp) upwards for Croatia (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](#)

European Statistics [Code of Practice](#)

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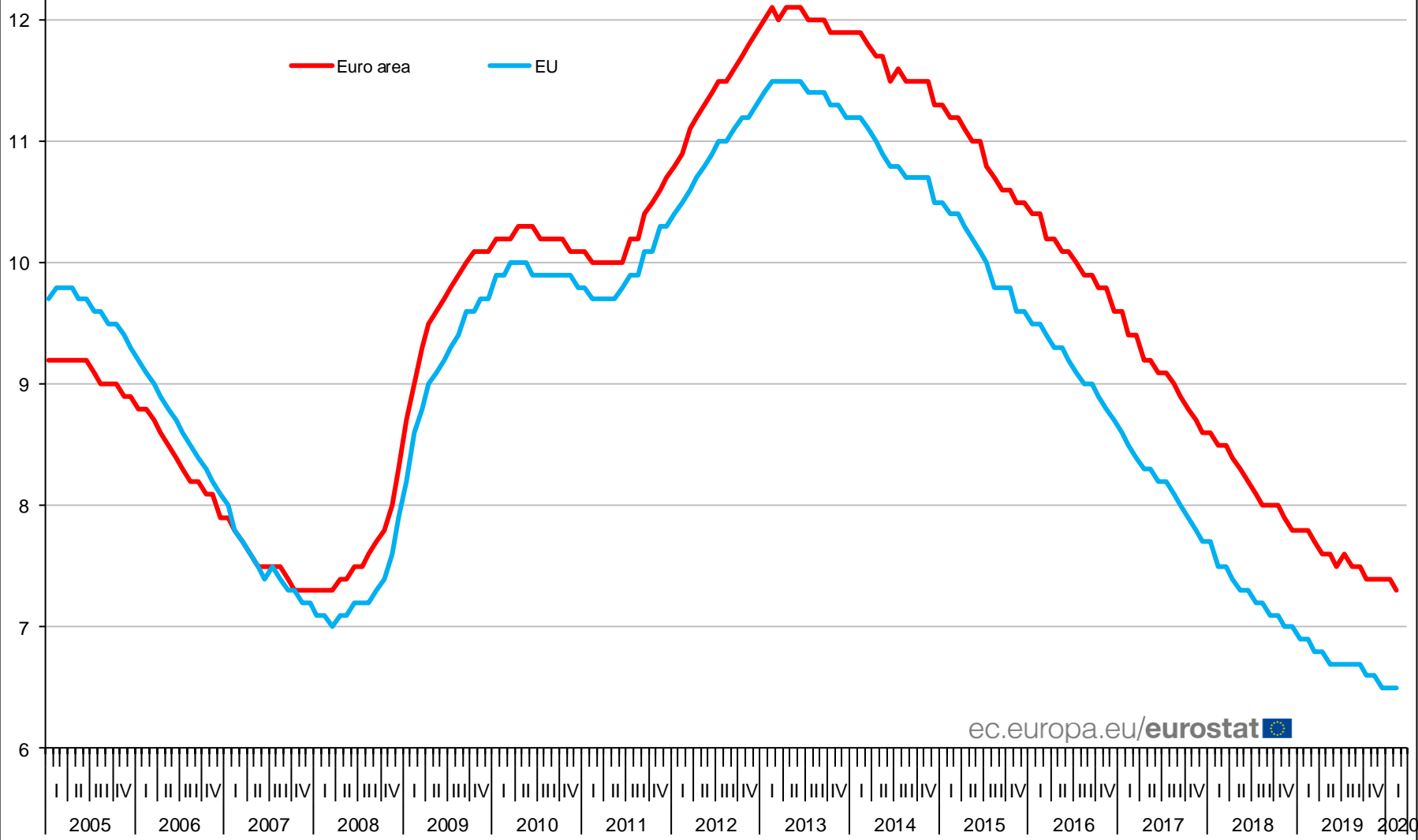


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[ec.europa.eu/eurostat](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

### Unemployment rates seasonally adjusted series, %



ec.europa.eu/eurostat 

### Seasonally adjusted unemployment, totals

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Feb 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Feb 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20
<b>Euro area</b>	7.8	7.4	7.4	7.4	<b>7.3</b>	12 710	12 180	12 139	12 135	<b>12 047</b>
<b>EU</b>	6.9	6.6	6.5	6.5	<b>6.5</b>	14 768	14 127	14 035	14 046	<b>13 984</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.2	<b>5.2</b>	280	264	266	264	<b>265</b>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	4.7	4.2	4.2	4.1	<b>4.1</b>	157	142	141	140	<b>138</b>
<b>Czechia</b>	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.0	<b>2.0</b>	105	114	106	109	<b>107</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.8	<b>4.9</b>	154	155	149	147	<b>147</b>
<b>Germany</b>	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	<b>3.2</b>	1 392	1 399	1 408	1 409	<b>1 402</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	4.2**	4.3	4.4	4.7	:	29**	30	31	34	:
<b>Ireland</b>	5.0	4.7	4.7	4.8	<b>4.8</b>	120	115	117	120	<b>120</b>
<b>Greece</b>	18.5*	16.5	16.3	:	:	873*	771	759	:	:
<b>Spain</b>	14.2	13.8	13.7	13.7	<b>13.6</b>	3 256	3 196	3 181	3 180	<b>3 165</b>
<b>France</b>	8.7	8.2	8.2	8.2	<b>8.1</b>	2 571	2 437	2 429	2 424	<b>2 396</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	7.2	6.4	6.3	6.3	<b>6.2</b>	129	114	114	113	<b>111</b>
<b>Italy</b>	10.5	9.7	9.8	9.8	<b>9.7</b>	2 719	2 517	2 522	2 530	<b>2 513</b>
<b>Cyprus</b>	7.5	6.5	6.3	6.0	<b>5.8</b>	34	29	28	27	<b>26</b>
<b>Latvia</b>	6.6	5.9	6.3	6.5	<b>6.4</b>	64	57	61	63	<b>62</b>
<b>Lithuania</b>	6.0	6.5	6.4	6.6	<b>6.6</b>	89	96	95	98	<b>97</b>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	5.4	5.6	5.6	5.7	<b>5.7</b>	16	17	17	17	<b>18</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	3.5**	3.4	3.4	3.4	:	165**	159	159	160	:
<b>Malta</b>	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.4	<b>3.3</b>	10	9	9	9	<b>9</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	3.4	3.5	3.2	3.0	<b>2.9</b>	312	324	302	284	<b>274</b>
<b>Austria</b>	4.7	4.2	4.2	4.3	<b>4.4</b>	214	192	191	197	<b>201</b>
<b>Poland</b>	3.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	<b>2.9</b>	640	494	493	495	<b>498</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	6.5	6.7	6.7	6.7	<b>6.5</b>	336	347	348	350	<b>336</b>
<b>Romania</b>	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.9	<b>3.9</b>	346	361	366	350	<b>352</b>
<b>Slovenia</b>	4.5	4.1	3.8	3.7	<b>3.6</b>	47	42	39	38	<b>37</b>
<b>Slovakia</b>	5.9	5.6	5.6	5.5	<b>5.5</b>	161	154	153	152	<b>153</b>
<b>Finland</b>	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.5	<b>6.5</b>	185	184	183	181	<b>181</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	6.6	7.0	7.1	7.1	<b>7.2</b>	362	388	391	395	<b>399</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	3.8*	3.7	3.7	:	:	1 287*	1 237	1 275	:	:
<b>Iceland</b>	3.1	3.6	3.6	3.8	<b>3.8</b>	6	7	7	8	<b>8</b>
<b>Norway</b>	3.8**	3.9	3.9	3.8	:	107**	112	110	107	:
<b>United States</b>	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.6	<b>3.5</b>	6 210	5 819	5 755	5 899	<b>5 807</b>

: Data not available

\* December 2018

\*\* January 2019

Source datasets: une\_rt\_m (rates) and une\_rt\_m (in 1000 persons)

### Seasonally adjusted youth (under 25s) unemployment

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Feb 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Feb 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20
<b>Euro area</b>	16.1	15.6	15.5	15.6	<b>15.5</b>	2 314	2 245	2 243	2 251	<b>2 258</b>
<b>EU</b>	15.5	14.9	14.8	14.9	<b>14.9</b>	2 819	2 726	2 707	2 722	<b>2 734</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	15.0	15.1	15.1	:	:	58	60	60	:	:
<b>Bulgaria</b>	9.8	9.0	9.3	9.7	<b>10.3</b>	14	14	14	15	<b>16</b>
<b>Czechia</b>	6.0	5.4	4.8	5.4	<b>5.3</b>	18	14	14	15	<b>15</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	10.7	10.4	10.1	10.5	<b>10.5</b>	47	47	44	45	<b>44</b>
<b>Germany</b>	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.4	<b>5.3</b>	249	241	237	233	<b>229</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	7.2	9.2	9.3	8.7	:	4	5	5	5	:
<b>Ireland</b>	12.2	10.9	11.2	11.5	<b>11.4</b>	35	32	34	35	<b>35</b>
<b>Greece</b>	38.8	35.4	34.7	:	:	91	81	78	:	:
<b>Spain</b>	34.3	30.5	30.3	30.8	<b>30.9</b>	520	470	469	483	<b>492</b>
<b>France</b>	19.7	20.1	20.2	19.9	<b>19.5</b>	563	571	575	571	<b>561</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	18.3	15.8	15.8	:	:	28	23	23	:	:
<b>Italy</b>	31.3	28.8	29.0	29.6	<b>29.6</b>	473	438	444	448	<b>463</b>
<b>Cyprus</b>	18.2	15.2	15.2	:	:	7	6	6	:	:
<b>Latvia</b>	13.8	10.6	10.9	11.4	<b>10.8</b>	9	7	7	7	<b>7</b>
<b>Lithuania</b>	10.7	14.5	14.9	14.3	<b>14.2</b>	12	16	16	15	<b>15</b>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	15.8	17.2	18.1	18.0	<b>17.7</b>	4	4	4	4	<b>4</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	11.1	12.3	10.9	10.7	:	36	40	35	34	:
<b>Malta</b>	10.9	9.3	9.0	9.7	<b>10.0</b>	3	3	3	3	<b>3</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	6.4	7.3	6.7	6.4	<b>6.3</b>	95	110	101	97	<b>94</b>
<b>Austria</b>	7.6	8.7	8.8	9.2	<b>9.7</b>	40	44	44	47	<b>49</b>
<b>Poland</b>	10.9	8.0	7.8	7.7	<b>7.8</b>	136	99	97	96	<b>97</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	16.8	18.6	18.7	19.5	<b>19.5</b>	62	70	69	72	<b>71</b>
<b>Romania</b>	15.4	17.7	17.7	:	:	93	112	112	:	:
<b>Slovenia</b>	8.8	8.3	8.3	:	:	6	6	6	:	:
<b>Slovakia</b>	14.7	16.5	15.9	15.6	<b>15.7</b>	26	27	26	26	<b>26</b>
<b>Finland</b>	16.8	17.3	17.3	17.3	<b>17.3</b>	55	56	56	56	<b>56</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	20.0	19.5	20.4	20.7	<b>20.0</b>	124	126	127	127	<b>128</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	10.4	10.9	11.2	:	:	434	451	471	:	:
<b>Iceland</b>	7.4	9.9	9.3	9.0	<b>8.9</b>	2	3	3	3	<b>3</b>
<b>Norway</b>	10.2	10.3	10.0	9.9	:	38	39	38	37	:

: Data not available

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

Source datasets: [une\\_rt\\_m](#) (rates) and [une\\_rt\\_m](#) (in 1000 persons)

### Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates (%), by gender

	Males					Females				
	Feb 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Feb 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20
<b>Euro area</b>	7.4	7.1	7.1	7.1	<b>7.0</b>	8.2	7.7	7.7	7.7	<b>7.6</b>
<b>EU</b>	6.6	6.3	6.3	6.3	<b>6.3</b>	7.3	6.9	6.8	6.8	<b>6.8</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	6.0	5.7	5.8	5.7	<b>5.6</b>	5.0	4.7	4.6	4.6	<b>4.7</b>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	5.0	4.6	4.6	4.6	<b>4.6</b>	4.3	3.8	3.6	3.5	<b>3.4</b>
<b>Czechia</b>	1.6	2.0	1.7	1.9	<b>1.8</b>	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	<b>2.3</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.7	<b>4.6</b>	5.5	5.4	5.2	5.0	<b>5.1</b>
<b>Germany</b>	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	<b>3.6</b>	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	<b>2.6</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	4.1	4.0	4.6	5.0	:	4.8	4.5	4.2	4.5	:
<b>Ireland</b>	5.3	4.8	4.9	5.0	<b>5.0</b>	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.6	<b>4.6</b>
<b>Greece</b>	14.6	13.5	13.2	:	:	23.3	20.3	20.2	:	:
<b>Spain</b>	12.5	12.3	12.2	12.1	<b>11.9</b>	16.2	15.6	15.5	15.5	<b>15.4</b>
<b>France</b>	8.7	8.3	8.3	8.2	<b>8.1</b>	8.6	8.1	8.1	8.1	<b>8.1</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	6.5	6.0	5.9	5.9	<b>5.8</b>	8.1	6.8	6.8	6.8	<b>6.7</b>
<b>Italy</b>	9.6	8.7	8.9	8.8	<b>9.0</b>	11.6	11.1	10.9	11.1	<b>10.8</b>
<b>Cyprus</b>	6.8	5.8	5.5	5.3	<b>5.1</b>	8.4	7.3	7.1	6.8	<b>6.5</b>
<b>Latvia</b>	7.5	6.5	7.2	7.5	<b>7.4</b>	5.7	5.4	5.5	5.4	<b>5.4</b>
<b>Lithuania</b>	6.5	7.5	7.4	7.8	<b>7.8</b>	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.5	<b>5.4</b>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	5.4	5.6	5.6	5.6	<b>5.7</b>	5.4	5.5	5.7	5.7	<b>5.8</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	:	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	:
<b>Malta</b>	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.2	<b>3.2</b>	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.6	<b>3.5</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	3.3	3.7	3.4	3.1	<b>2.9</b>	3.5	3.3	3.1	3.0	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Austria</b>	4.9	4.3	4.3	4.4	<b>4.6</b>	4.6	4.1	4.1	4.3	<b>4.2</b>
<b>Poland</b>	3.3	2.7	2.7	2.8	<b>2.7</b>	4.3	3.2	3.1	3.1	<b>3.2</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	5.8	5.9	6.2	6.4	<b>6.0</b>	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.1	<b>7.0</b>
<b>Romania</b>	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.3	<b>4.3</b>	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.3	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Slovenia</b>	3.8	3.6	3.2	3.0	<b>2.9</b>	5.3	4.7	4.6	4.5	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Slovakia</b>	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.4	<b>5.4</b>	6.1	5.8	5.8	5.7	<b>5.8</b>
<b>Finland</b>	7.0	7.1	7.0	6.9	<b>6.8</b>	6.4	6.2	6.2	6.2	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	6.5	7.0	7.1	7.2	<b>7.2</b>	6.7	7.0	7.1	7.1	<b>7.2</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	3.8	3.8	3.9	:	:	3.6	3.5	3.5	:	:
<b>Iceland</b>	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.7	<b>3.7</b>	2.7	3.3	3.3	4.0	<b>4.0</b>
<b>Norway</b>	3.9	4.3	4.2	4.0	:	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.5	:

: Data not available

Source dataset: [une\\_rt\\_m](#)