A well-functioning labour market with a highly-qualified workforce that can rapidly acquire new skills is increasingly seen as a prerequisite for delivering a dynamic and competitive economy. Under its priority of ensuring a deeper and fairer economic and monetary union, the European Union (EU) seeks to deliver more job opportunities and better living standards by combining fairness and democratic accountability. The European pillar of social rights is designed to guarantee effective citizen rights, by ensuring: equal opportunities and access to labour markets; fair working conditions; social protection and inclusion and is based on 20 underlying principles. The EU has promoted a broad range of alternative initiatives within this domain, such as: measures promoting work-life balance; minimum standards of parental/care leave (designed to encourage more men to take-up out-of-work responsibilities); new ways of providing adequate social security cover for the self-employed and people who work in the gig economy.

As well as being of interest to governments and policymakers, labour markets are also paramount to personal development, as employment opportunities provide a means, among others, of gaining independence, financial security and a sense of belonging. While the EU promotes labour market integration for all members of society, some groups continue to be subject to discrimination (under-represented or excluded).

This chapter analyses EU labour markets and is split into three principal sections, covering:
• regional employment, including information on employment rates, the gender gap in employment rates, and patterns of self-employment;

• a special focus on job satisfaction by region;

• regional unemployment, including an analyses of two structural issues — youth unemployment and long-term unemployment.

In 2018, the EU-28 population between the ages of 15 and 74 years numbered 380.4 million. The labour force — often referred to as the economically active population — was composed of 246.7 million, while 133.8 million people were considered to be outside the labour force, or economically inactive (in other words, people who were neither employed nor unemployed); this latter cohort is largely composed of students, pensioners and people caring for other family members, but also includes volunteers, people unable to work because of long-term sickness or disability and people outside the labour force for any other reason. Looking in more detail, the EU-28 labour force was composed of 229.8 million employed persons and 16.9 million unemployed persons (those not working, but actively seeking and available for work).

Employment

The employment rate is the ratio of employed persons (of a given age) relative to the total population (of the same age); in this section, information is presented for the working-age population, defined here as people aged 20-64 years. This definition has been used to be in line with the Europe 2020 strategy and to reflect the growing proportion of young people who remain within educational systems beyond their teens, which may exclude them from participating in labour markets.

The Europe 2020 strategy set a benchmark target, as part of its agenda for growth and jobs, whereby 75% of people aged 20-64 years should be in work by 2020. In order to deliver this goal, national targets were set for each of the EU Member States: these targets range from 80% or higher in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden down to 70% or lower in Ireland, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Malta and Romania; there is no target in the reform programme for the United Kingdom.

The European pillar of social rights seeks to guarantee effective citizen rights, by ensuring: equal opportunities and access to labour markets; fair working conditions; social protection and inclusion. One of its 20 underlying principles states that ‘everyone has the right to timely and tailor-made assistance to improve employment or self-employment prospects’. The employment rate is part of a social scoreboard used to monitor progress with respect to the European pillar of social rights; note the scoreboard also includes a complementary indicator for analysing the structure of the labour force — the activity rate — regional analyses for this indicator are presented in Chapter 14.

Stockholm recorded the highest regional employment rate in the EU, at 85.7%.

The EU-28 employment rate for people aged 20-64 years stood at 73.1% in 2018, marking its fifth consecutive increase since a relative low of 68.3% in 2013. Compared with a year before, the EU-28 employment rate rose by 1.0 percentage points (pp): this was broadly in line with annual developments during the previous five years, when increases of 0.8-1.1 pp were recorded. If the EU-28 employment rate continues to increase at a similar pace during the next two years then the Europe 2020 target of 75.0% could be achieved.

Map 1 presents employment rates for people aged 20-64 years across NUTS level 2 regions; the highest employment rates — equal to or above the Europe 2020 target of 75% — are shown in a blue shade; just over half (145 out of 281) of all regions in the EU had reached or surpassed this 75.0% benchmark in 2018. Across the EU, the highest employment rates were recorded in Sweden — where all but one region had an employment rate above 80% and Stockholm recorded the highest regional employment rate in the EU (85.7%); high rates were also recorded in Germany and the United Kingdom.

There were two distinct patterns when analysing regional employment rates:

- intra-regional differences were apparent in some of the larger EU Member States, with higher employment rates generally recorded in southern (rather than northern) regions of Germany and the United Kingdom, while employment rates tended to be lower in southern (rather than northern) regions of Spain and Italy;

- contrasting patterns when analysing capital city and metropolitan regions:
– in eastern parts of the EU it was commonplace to find that employment rates for capital city regions were among the highest in the country (for example, Bulgaria, Czechia or Poland), whereas employment rates for rural regions tended to be considerably lower;

– in western Member States the picture was often reversed, insofar as the highest employment rates were usually recorded for people living in towns and suburbs or rural regions, whereas the lowest employment rates were recorded in capital city and metropolitan regions (for example Wien in Austria).

In 2018, there were five regions across the EU where less than half of the working-age population was in work: four of these were in southern Italy — Puglia, Calabria, Campania and Sicilia (which had the lowest rate in Italy, at 44.1%) — while the other was the French overseas region of Mayotte (40.8%).
Employment rate, 2018 (% share of people aged 20-64 years, by NUTS 2 regions)

Map 1: Employment rate, 2018 (% share of people aged 20-64 years, by NUTS 2 regions)

Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfst_r_lfe2emprtn)

Labour market statistics at regional level 4
The EU-28 employment rate for women was 11.5 percentage points lower than the corresponding rate for men.

One of the 20 underlying principles of the European pillar of social rights is that ‘equality of treatment and opportunities between women and men must be ensured and fostered in all areas, including regarding participation in the labour market, terms and conditions of employment and career progression’. The EU-28 employment rate for people aged 20-64 years was 73.1 % in 2018: an analysis by sex reveals that the female employment rate (67.4 %) was considerably lower than the corresponding male rate (78.9 %). Although the gender employment gap was 11.5 pp in 2018, this was notably narrower than a decade earlier, at the onset of the global financial and economic crisis in 2008, when the gender employment gap had stood at 15.1 pp.

The largest gender employment gaps among the EU Member States were recorded in Malta (22.3 pp in 2018), Greece (21.0 pp), Italy (19.8 pp) and Romania (18.3 pp). By contrast, the employment gap between the sexes was less than 5.0 pp in Sweden, Latvia, Finland and Lithuania (where the smallest difference was recorded, at 2.3 pp).

Map 2 confirms these national patterns, as the most pronounced gender employment gaps were recorded mainly in southern and eastern regions of the EU, while employment rates for men and women were most closely aligned in many Baltic and Nordic regions, as well as parts of Germany. In 2018, the highest regional gender employment gap was recorded in Puglia — one of the most southerly regions in Italy — where the male employment rate exceeded the female employment rate by 28.1 pp. At the other end of the range, Övre Norrland — the most northerly region in Sweden — reported almost no difference between the sexes, with an employment rate for men that was 0.5 pp higher than that for women.
Gender employment gap, 2018 (percentage points difference, male employment rate minus female employment rate, based on people aged 20-64 years, by NUTS 2 regions)

Map 2: Gender employment gap, 2018 (percentage points difference, male employment rate minus female employment rate, based on people aged 20-64 years, by NUTS 2 regions) Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_lfe2emprtn)

Note: the gender employment gap is defined as the difference between the male employment rate and the female employment rate among those persons aged 20-64 years; the male employment rate was consistently higher than the female employment rate across all regions.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfst_r_lfe2emprtn)
More than two fifths of the workforce in the southern Greek region of Peloponnisos was self-employed

Policymakers are increasingly interested by flexible forms of work, analysing labour market differences between: employees and the self-employed; people employed on a full-time or part-time basis; people employed with a permanent or a temporary work contract. Some commentators claim that self-employment signals the presence of an entrepreneurial spirit in dynamic and innovative economies, whereas others suggest it is perhaps more indicative of the increasingly precarious nature of employment contracts. This divergence may, at least to some degree, reflect underlying economic conditions, with self-employment being opportunity driven or necessity driven.

In 2018, self-employment provided work to around one in seven (13.7 %) persons aged 20-64 years who were in work across the EU, some 30.3 million persons. Among NUTS level 2 regions (see Map 3), the highest share of self-employment was recorded in the southern Greek region of Peloponnisos, as more than two fifths of its workforce was self-employed in 2018. This was in keeping with a broader pattern, as Greek regions occupied the top 11 places in a ranking of self-employment rates for EU regions — each with a share that was in excess of 30 % — the capital city region of Attiki and the island region of Notio Aigaio were the only exceptions.

By contrast, the lowest share of self-employment was also registered in a Romanian region — the capital city region of Bucureşti-Ilfov — where less than 1 in 26 (3.8 %) of the workforce was self-employed in 2018. Aside from Bucureşti-Ilfov and Vest (both Romania) and Észak-Magyarország and Közép-Dunántúl (both Hungary), the lowest shares of self-employment were more generally recorded in northern and western regions of the EU, in particular in several northern regions of Denmark and Germany; very low shares of self-employment were also recorded across Norway.

In many northern and western EU Member States, it was more common for capital city regions to record some of the highest shares of self-employment, for example in Berlin, Noord-Holland and Stockholm. This pattern may reflect: lifestyle choices, whereby the self-employed seek to benefit from greater autonomy and flexibility at work; the presence of dynamic hubs for start-ups that are usually located in major metropolitan regions; the development of the gig economy.

The highest shares of self-employment in eastern and southern regions of the EU were usually spread over rural regions, with many of the self-employed working in the agricultural sector. By contrast, capital city regions (for example Attiki, Comunidad de Madrid or Bucureşti-Ilfov) often recorded relatively low shares of self-employment, which may reflect: a wider choice of employment opportunities and occupations; a higher proportion of permanent employment contracts; and the presence of major employers (such as multinational enterprises or public administrations). Praha, Budapest and Zahodna Slovenija were notable exceptions as they had the highest self-employment rates among the Czech, Hungarian and Slovenian regions.
Self-employed persons, 2018
(%, share of total employment among people aged 20-64 years, by NUTS 2 regions)

Map 3: Self-employed persons, 2018(%, share of total employment among people aged 20-64 years, by NUTS 2 regions)Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_lfe2estat) and (lfsa_egaps)

Note: Aland (FII20), 2017. Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta (ES63), Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla (ES64), Guyane (FRY3) and Aland (FII20): low reliability.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfst_r_lfe2estat and lfsa_egaps)
Job satisfaction

There are a wide range of issues that may influence job satisfaction. On a general level, people who are in good health and people with a higher level of educational attainment are more likely to be satisfied with their job. More specifically, for some people the main determinant of job satisfaction is remuneration (in other words, their salary), while others place greater importance on their working environment, for example: job security (a permanent work contract and/or few concerns about being made unemployed); job fit (ensuring they are matched to their job in terms of qualifications, abilities, interests and personality); job flexibility (the ability to choose their working hours and/or a broad range of different tasks at work).

In 2017, Eurostat carried out a survey on self-employed persons as part of the labour force survey (LFS) — results are presented in a specific article on Statistics Explained: the third sub-module included a question on the level of an individual’s job satisfaction in their main job, with data collected for employees, self-employed persons and family workers — it forms the basis for the information presented below.

The lowest level of job satisfaction was recorded in the German region of Leipzig, where just over one in five of the workforce declared themselves to be highly satisfied with their job.

Based on a four-point scale from ‘not at all satisfied’ to ‘highly satisfied’, the share of EU-28 workforce that was highly satisfied with their job stood at 42.8% in 2017. This proportion peaked, among the EU Member States, at 75.0% in Malta, followed by Sweden (69.5%) and Denmark (64.8%). The high shares in Sweden and Denmark may reflect, at least in part, their flexible labour markets that encourage job mobility/flexibility coupled with highly developed social welfare systems (which, among others, protect pension and holiday entitlements if moving between jobs).

The Baltic countries, Ireland, Austria, Italy and Slovenia were the only other EU Member States to report that more than half of their working populations were highly satisfied with their jobs in 2017. By contrast, Romania (28.3%) and Bulgaria (27.6%) had the lowest shares in the EU; note, however that Turkey recorded a much lower share, as less than one in five (17.1%) members of the workforce were highly satisfied with their job.

In 2017, an analysis by NUTS level 2 region reveals that, aside from Malta (a single region at this level of detail; 75.0%), the highest levels of job satisfaction — at least 60.0% (as shown by the darkest shade in Map 4) were concentrated in Denmark and Sweden (all regions). The highest levels of job satisfaction were recorded in the Swedish region of Norra Mellansverige and the Italian Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen (both 71.4%).

In many northern and western EU Member States, capital city regions recorded some of the lowest levels of job satisfaction in 2017 — for example, the share of the workforce that was highly satisfied with their job in Hovedstaden, Wien and Stockholm was lower than in any other region of Denmark, Austria and Sweden. By contrast, the opposite pattern was observed in several eastern Member States. For example, the highest levels of job satisfaction in Bulgaria and Poland were registered in their capital city regions of Yugozapaden and Warszawski stoleczny.

At the other end of the scale, the lowest levels of job satisfaction in 2017 — where fewer than 30% of the workforce were highly satisfied by their job (as shown by the lightest shade in Map 4) — were principally located in Bulgaria (except the capital city region), Romania (except Nord-Vest and Sud-Muntenia) and (eastern) Germany, including Leipzig which had the lowest level of job satisfaction in the EU, at 20.9%.
Job satisfaction, 2017
(%, share of employed people aged ≥ 15 years who are highly satisfied with their job, by NUTS 2 regions)

Map 4: Job satisfaction, 2017(%: share of employed people aged ≥ 15 years who are highly satisfied with their job, by NUTS 2 regions)Source: Eurostat, labour force survey
Self-employed people had higher levels of job satisfaction than the workforce as a whole

Given that self-employed people in the EU-28 often have greater autonomy and flexibility derived from being their own boss, it is perhaps unsurprising to find that in 2017 they had higher levels of job satisfaction (47.9 % were highly satisfied with their job) when compared with the workforce in general (42.8 %).

A majority of self-employed people living in the cities (50.3 %) and in towns and suburbs (50.4 %) of the EU-28 were highly satisfied with their jobs; this may reflect, at least to some degree, self-employment being opportunity driven in urban areas. Satisfaction levels were lower among the whole of the workforce (therefore including the self-employed) than just among the self-employed, as 42.8 % of employed city-dwellers and 43.8 % of employed people living in towns and suburbs stated that they were highly satisfied with their job. Figure 1 confirms this pattern that, in cities as well as towns and suburbs, the self-employed are more likely to be highly satisfied with their job than the employed workforce as a whole. It also reveals that in rural areas there was little difference in terms of job satisfaction between the self-employed and all employed people.

In 2017, self-employed people living in the cities of Slovakia and Finland (note there was a relatively high level of non-response) were more than one third more likely to be highly satisfied with their jobs than employed city-dwellers in general; in the Netherlands, this ratio was even higher, as self-employed city-dwellers were just over 50 % more likely than all city-dwellers to be highly satisfied with their job. By contrast, there were only six EU Member States where self-employed people living in cities were less likely (than the average for all city dwellers) to be highly satisfied with their jobs: Italy, Spain, Slovenia, Croatia (low reliability), Latvia and Cyprus.

At the other end of the spectrum, self-employed persons living in rural areas had lower levels of job satisfaction (than the average for the whole of the rural workforce) in half of the EU Member States in 2017. The lowest relative shares were recorded in Romania, Croatia (low reliability) and Cyprus (also low reliability). This pattern may reflect self-employment in these rural areas being predominantly necessity driven, with few alternative forms of employment outside of the agricultural sector and a relatively high share of self-employed persons make a living from semi-subsistence farming.
Unemployment

Unemployment can have an impact not just on the economic well-being of a country (unused potential labour input and higher social protection payments) but also on the well-being of individuals who are without work and their families. The personal and social costs of unemployment are varied and include a higher risk of poverty, debt or homelessness, while the stigma of being unemployed can cause a reduction in self-esteem, a breakdown in family/personal relations, or social exclusion. One of the 20 underlying principles of the European pillar of social rights states that ‘the unemployed have the right to adequate activation support from public employment services to (re)integrate in the labour market and adequate unemployment benefits of reasonable duration’, as well as ‘the right to personalised, continuous and consistent support. The long-term unemployed have the right to an in-depth individual assessment at the latest at 18 months of unemployment’.

In 2018, there were 16.9 million unemployed persons aged 15-74 years in the EU-28, equivalent to 6.9 % of the total labour force. Having peaked at 26.1 million unemployed persons or 10.9 % of the labour force in 2013, the number of people without work fell overall by more than one third, or 9.2 million, with five consecutive annual reductions through to 2018. As a result, the EU-28 unemployment rate fell to a level that in 2018 was, for the first time, below that recorded at the onset of the global financial and economic crisis in 2008 (7.0 %).

The lowest regional unemployment rate was recorded in the Czech capital city region of Praha, at 1.3 %

In 2018, the lowest regional unemployment rates — among NUTS level 2 regions — were concentrated together in a cluster of regions that started in western Austria, moved up through southern Germany and across
into Czechia; the unemployment rate was also lower than 2.5 % in three Hungarian regions, two regions from each of Poland and the United Kingdom and one Romanian region (as shown by the lightest shade in Map 5). In 2018, Praha — the capital city region of Czechia — recorded the lowest regional unemployment rate in the EU, repeating the situation of a year before.

By contrast, the highest unemployment rates were recorded in southern and outermost regions of the EU. There were 16 regions across the EU where the unemployment rate was above 20 % in 2018, including: five regions from Greece and from Spain; three outermost regions of France, including the highest regional unemployment rate in the EU that was recorded in Mayotte (35.1 %); three regions in southern Italy. In four northern and western EU Member States — Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Austria — the highest regional unemployment rate in 2018 was recorded in the capital city region.
Map 5: Unemployment rate, 2018 (%, share of labour force aged 15-74 years, by NUTS 2 regions)

Note: Corse (FRM0), Burgenland (AT11), Lubuskie (PL43), Opolskie (PL52), Cumbria (UKD1), Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (UKK3), North Eastern Scotland (UKM5) and Highlands and Islands (UKM6), low reliability.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: lst_r_lfu3rt)

Labour market statistics at regional level
The EU-28 youth unemployment rate was 15.2%.

One labour market area of particular interest to policymakers is that of youth unemployment. The performance of youth labour markets is closely linked to education and training systems and reflects, at least to some degree, a mismatch between the skills obtained by young people and the skills that are required by employers (to fill job vacancies). Several EU Member States have enacted new employment laws with the goal of liberalising labour markets, for example, by providing a wider range of possibilities for hiring staff through temporary, fixed-term or zero hours contracts. In some countries this has resulted in a clear division between people with a permanent, full-time post and those with more precarious employment; the latter are often young people and/or people with relatively low levels of educational attainment.

One of the 20 underlying principles of the European pillar of social rights is that ‘young people have the right to continued education, apprenticeship, traineeship or a job offer of good standing within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving education’. In 2018, the EU-28 youth unemployment rate was 15.2%, which was 2.2 times as high as the overall unemployment rate (among people aged 15-74 years) which stood at 6.9%.

The information presented for regional youth unemployment often duplicates the patterns observed for the total unemployment rate, although youth unemployment rates were consistently higher for all NUTS level 2 regions, this was most notably the case in:

- three Romanian regions, where the youth unemployment rate was 4.8-6.6 times as high as the total unemployment rate — Nord-Vest, Bucuresti - Ilfov (2017 data) and Centru;
- the capital city regions of Praha (Czechia; 4.3 times as high) and Outer London — West and North West (the United Kingdom; 4.2 times as high).

Figure 2 shows that there were some considerable inter-regional variations in youth unemployment rates in 2018: this was particularly the case in France and the three southern EU Member States of Italy, Spain and Greece, where the range between the highest and lowest regional youth unemployment rates was at least 37.5 pp. The biggest difference was recorded in France, where the region with the highest youth unemployment rate was Mayotte (61.1%) and the region with the lowest rate was Limousin (12.2%); as such, the youth unemployment rate in Mayotte was five times as high as that in Limousin, a ratio that was only surpassed in Italy, where the region with the highest youth unemployment rate was Campania (53.6%), some 5.8 times as high as the rate recorded for Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen (9.2%).

In four western EU Member States, the capital city region had the highest regional youth unemployment rate on the national territory; note, this had also been the case for the overall unemployment rate concerning Belgium, Germany and Austria — the final region was Outer London — West and North West in the United Kingdom.
Long-term unemployment share in the EU-28 was 43.2 %

This final section provides an analysis of long-term unemployment, defined here as persons aged 15-74 years who had been without work for at least 12 months. Long-term unemployment may have a considerable impact on an individual’s well-being, leading to self-doubt, anxiety or depression, while people in this situation also have a far higher risk of falling into poverty or social exclusion. Furthermore, the longer somebody remains unemployed, the less attractive they are likely to be for potential employers. One of the 20 underlying principles of the European pillar of social rights is that 'the long-term unemployed have the right to an in-depth individual assessment at the latest at 18 months of unemployment'.

The long-term unemployment share is defined as the share of the long-term unemployed in total unemployment. In 2018, the EU-28 long-term unemployment share was 43.2 %, in other words, more than two fifths of all unemployed people in the EU had been without work for at least a year. Figure 3 shows the highest long-term unemployment share was recorded in Mayotte (81.8 %), followed by Ipeiros in Greece (77.2 %), Severozapaden in Bulgaria (76.8 %); two additional mainland regions from Greece followed — Attiki (76.0 %) and Sterea Ellada (74.3 %). By contrast, the lowest long-term unemployment shares were concentrated in Sweden and the south of the United Kingdom.
**Figure 3: Long-term unemployment share, 2018 (%), share of unemployed persons aged 15-74 years, by NUTS 2 regions**

Source: Eurostat (lfsst_r_lfu2ltu)

**Source data for figures and maps**

Labour market at regional level

**Data sources**

The information presented in this article mainly pertains to annual averages derived from the labour force survey (LFS). Eurostat compiles and publishes labour market statistics for EU regions, the individual EU Member States, as well as the EU-28. In addition, data are also available for several EFTA (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) and candidate (Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey) countries. Subnational statistics are presented for NUTS level 2 regions and by degree of urbanisation. The LFS population generally consists of persons aged 15 years and over living in private households, with definitions aligned with those provided by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

When analysing regional information from the LFS, it is important to bear in mind that the information presented relates to the region where the respondent has his/her permanent residence and that this may be different to the region where their place of work is situated as a result of commuter flows.

Eurostat’s unemployment statistics follow guidelines provided by the ILO: an unemployed person is defined as someone aged 15 to 74 years who is without work, but who has actively sought employment in the last four weeks and is available to begin work within the next two weeks. The unemployment rate is defined as the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the total labour force (the sum of total employment and total unemployment).

The youth unemployment rate is defined as the share of unemployed people aged 15-24 years, expressed in
relation to the total labour force of the same age. It is important to note that a relatively high proportion of people aged 15-24 years are outside the labour market as they study full-time (and are therefore not available to work).

For more information:

- Dedicated section on the labour market
- EU labour force survey — methodology

Context

While almost all of the Europe 2020 flagship initiatives have some relevance for labour markets, two are directly aimed at improving the employability of the workforce. **An agenda for new skills and jobs** (COM(2010) 682 final) set out, through 13 key actions, to promote a substantial increase in employment rates, particularly those for women, young and older workers. **Youth on the move** (COM(2010) 477 final) was a flagship initiative that came to an end as of December 2014. Its aim was to help young people gain the knowledge, skills and experience they needed to secure their first job, proposing 28 actions aimed at making education and training more relevant, increasing the employability of young people, as well as ensuring that young people had the right skills for the jobs of tomorrow.

In February 2013, the European Council agreed on a **youth employment initiative** with a budget of around EUR 6.4 billion (later increased to around EUR 9 billion) for the period 2014-2020, largely to support young people not in education, employment or training. This initiative concerns any region that has a youth unemployment rate that is over 25 % and supports measures to integrate young people (in particular those who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs)) into the labour market.

This was followed in April 2013 by the **Youth guarantee** that provides a commitment to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. Data released at the end of April 2019 suggest that more than 14 million young people across the EU have taken up an offer of employment, education, traineeship or apprenticeship since 2014.

In December 2016, the European Commission proposed a Communication **Investing in Europe’s youth**, based on three distinct actions: better opportunities to access employment (extending the Youth guarantee); better opportunities through education and training (by establishing a modern apprenticeship system); better opportunities for solidarity, learning mobility and participation (through expanding the budget for **Erasmus+**).

Aside from promoting the labour market position of young persons, the EU has also introduced a range of complementary measures designed to support labour markets in a broader context, among which:

- a Council recommendation (2016/C 67/01) in February 2016 on the integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market and a subsequent report that took stock of progress made since adopting the recommendation;
- a **New skills agenda for Europe** (COM(2016) 381 final) adopted by the European Commission in June 2016, which seeks to improve the quality and relevance of training and other ways of acquiring skills;
- the **European pillar for social rights** as proclaimed in November 2017, which seeks to ensure there is a better balance between economic and social objectives, bringing about more effective and fairer labour markets and social protection systems.

EU cohesion policy invests in employment and long-term growth in Europe. Investments are made in various labour market areas that are designed to boost employment and labour mobility. The **European Social Fund** (ESF) is the principal cohesion policy fund supporting employment and labour mobility initiatives in the EU, while the **European Regional Development Fund** (ERDF) may be used to improve conditions for job creation. EU cohesion policy also supports labour market reforms that promote equal opportunities for all, in particular, those for women, young and old workers or ethnic minorities.
Other articles

- EU labour force survey — online publication
- EU labour force survey statistics — online publication
- Earnings statistics
- Employment rates and Europe 2020 national targets
- Employment statistics
- Job vacancy statistics
- Labour cost index — recent trends
- Labour cost structural statistics — levels
- Labour market flow statistics in the EU
- Participation of young people in education and the labour market
- Unemployment statistics
- Unemployment statistics at regional level
- Wages and labour costs
- Youth unemployment

Publications

- Eurostat regional yearbook

Main tables

- Regional statistics (t_reg) , see:

  Regional labour market statistics (t_reg_lmk)
  - Employment rate of the age group 15-64 by NUTS 2 regions (tgs00007)
  - Employment rate of the age group 20-64 by NUTS 2 regions (tgs00102)
  - Employment rate of the age group 55-64 by NUTS 2 regions (tgs00054)
  - Unemployment rate by NUTS 2 regions (tgs00010)
  - Long-term unemployment rate (12 months and more) by NUTS 2 regions (tgs00053)

- Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey) (t_employ) , see:

  LFS series - Specific topics (t_lfst)
Database

- Regional statistics by NUTS classification (reg), see:
  Regional labour market statistics (reg_lmk)
  Regional labour costs statistics (reg_lcs)

- Employment and unemployment (Labour force survey) (employ), see:
  LFS series - detailed annual survey results (lfsa)
    Employment - LFS series (lfsa_emp)
  LFS series - Specific topics (lfst)
    LFS regional series (lfst_r)
      Regional population and economically active population - LFS annual series (lfst_r_lfpop)
      Regional employment - LFS annual series (lfst_r_lfemp)
      Regional unemployment - LFS annual series (lfst_r_lfu)
      Regional labour market disparities - LFS series and LFS adjusted series (lfst_r_lmd)
      Regional labour market statistics by degree of urbanisation (lfst_r_lfurb)

Dedicated section

- Labour market (including labour force survey)
- Regions and cities

Data visualisation

- Eurostat statistical atlas (Chapter 5)
- Regional statistics illustrated

Methodology

ESMS metadata files

- Regional labour market statistics (ESMS metadata file — reg_lmk_esms)

Methodological reports and manuals

- Annual quality reports for the EU labour force survey
- Labour force survey in the EU, candidate and EFTA countries — main characteristics of national surveys 2017
- Labour force survey methodology — main concepts
- Labour market methodology
External links

- European Commission Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: European employment strategy
- European Commission Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: employment and social analysis
- European Commission Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: rights at work
- European Commission Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: youth employment
- European Commission — Regional Policy — Employment and labour market mobility
- ILO — International Labour Organisation — statistics and databases — standards and guidelines on labour statistics
- OECD — active labour market policies

Maps can be explored interactively using Eurostat’s statistical atlas (see user manual).

This article forms part of Eurostat’s annual flagship publication, the Eurostat regional yearbook.