

December 2009

Euro area unemployment rate up to 10.0%

EU27 up to 9.6%

The **euro area**¹ (EA16) seasonally-adjusted² unemployment rate³ was 10.0% in December 2009, compared with 9.9% in November⁴. It was 8.2% in December 2008. The **EU27**¹ unemployment rate was 9.6% in December 2009, compared with 9.5% in November⁴. It was 7.6% in December 2008. For the **euro area** this is the highest rate since August 1998 and for the **EU27** since the start of the series in January 2000.

Eurostat estimates that 23.012 million men and women in the **EU27**, of whom 15.763 million were in the **euro area**, were unemployed in December 2009. Compared with November, the number of persons unemployed increased by 163 000 in the **EU27** and by 87 000 in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2008, unemployment went up by 4.628 million in the **EU27** and by 2.787 million in the **euro area**.

These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

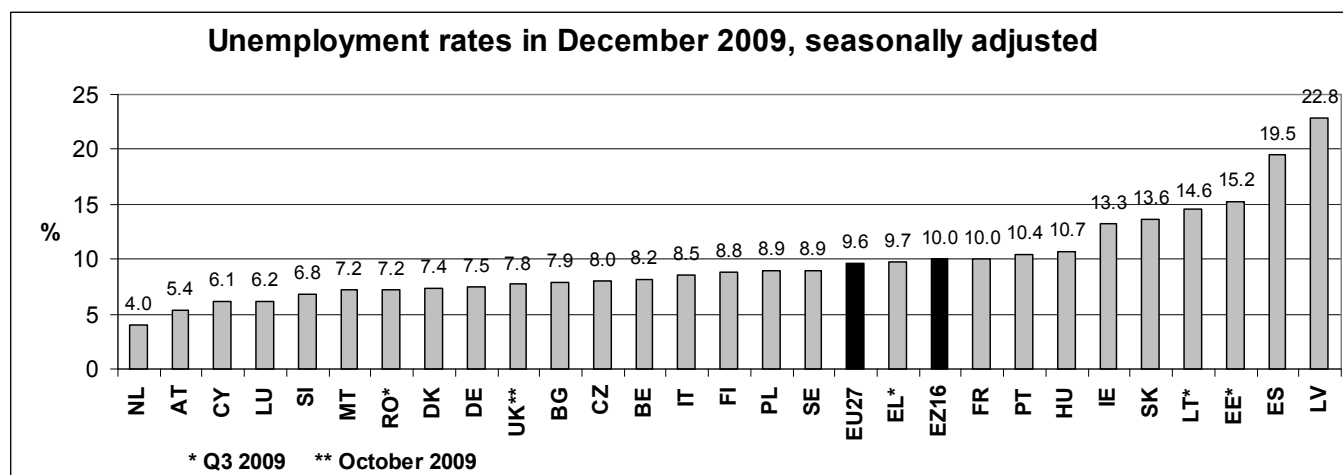
Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates were recorded in the **Netherlands** (4.0%) and **Austria** (5.4%), and the highest rates in **Latvia** (22.8%) and **Spain** (19.5%).

Compared with a year ago, all Member States recorded an increase in their unemployment rate. The smallest increases were observed in **Germany** (7.1% to 7.5%), **Luxembourg** (5.3% to 6.2%) and **Belgium** (7.1% to 8.2%). The highest increases were registered in **Latvia** (11.3% to 22.8%), **Estonia** (6.5% to 15.2% between the third quarters of 2008 and 2009) and **Lithuania** (6.5% to 14.6% between the third quarters of 2008 and 2009).

Between December 2008 and December 2009, the unemployment rate for males rose from 7.8% to 10.0% in the **euro area** and from 7.5% to 9.8% in the **EU27**. The female unemployment rate increased from 8.7% to 10.1% in the **euro area** and from 7.9% to 9.3% in the **EU27**.

In December 2009, the youth unemployment rate (under-25s) was 21.0% in the **euro area** and 21.4% in the **EU27**. In December 2008 it was 17.0% and 16.9% respectively. The lowest rate was observed in the **Netherlands** (7.6%), and the highest rates in **Spain** (44.5%) and **Latvia** (43.8% in the fourth quarter of 2009).

In the **USA**, the unemployment rate was 10.0% in December 2009. In **Japan** it was 5.2% in November 2009.



1. The euro area (EA16) consists of Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland.
The EU27 includes Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), the Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Ireland (IE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), 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).
2. Non-seasonally adjusted and trend data can be found in the statistical database on the Eurostat website.
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.
The numbers of unemployed and the monthly unemployment rates are estimates based on results of the LFS which is a continuous household survey carried out in Member States on the basis of agreed definitions. These results are interpolated/extrapolated to monthly data using national survey data and/or national monthly series on registered unemployment. The most recent figures are therefore provisional; results from the Labour Force Survey are available 90 days after the end of the reference period for most Member States.
Monthly unemployment and employment series are calculated first at the level of four categories for each Member State (males and females 15-24 years, males and females 25-74 years). These series are then seasonally adjusted and all the national and European aggregates are calculated.
Member States may publish other rates such as register based unemployment rates, or rates based on national Labour Force Surveys or corresponding surveys. These rates may vary from those published by Eurostat due to a different definition or methodological choices.
Current deviations from the definition of unemployment in the EU Labour Force Survey:
Spain, Italy, and United Kingdom: Unemployment is restricted to persons aged 16-74. In Spain and Italy the legal age limit for working is 16. Employment data used for Italy includes also those above 74.
Netherlands: Persons without a job, who are available for work and looking for a job are only included in unemployment if they express that they would like to work.
4. Compared with the rates published in News Release 5/2010 of 8 January 2010, the November 2009 unemployment rate has been revised from 10.0% to 9.9% in the euro area and remains unchanged at 9.5% in the EU27.
The following LFS data are used in the calculations of the monthly unemployment rates published in this News Release:
For Germany, Italy, Finland and Sweden up to and including December 2009.
For the Netherlands up to and including October-November-December 2009 (3-month rolling average).
For the United Kingdom up to and including September-October-November 2009 (3-month rolling average).
For Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Spain, Greece, France, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia up to and including 2009Q3.
5. Italy recently implemented a method to produce monthly unemployment data purely based on the LFS. For the moment, these data should be considered provisional.
6. Estonia, Greece, Lithuania and Romania: quarterly data for all series.
Cyprus, Latvia, and Slovenia: quarterly data for youth unemployment.
7. For Finland and Sweden, the trend component is used instead of the more volatile seasonally adjusted data.

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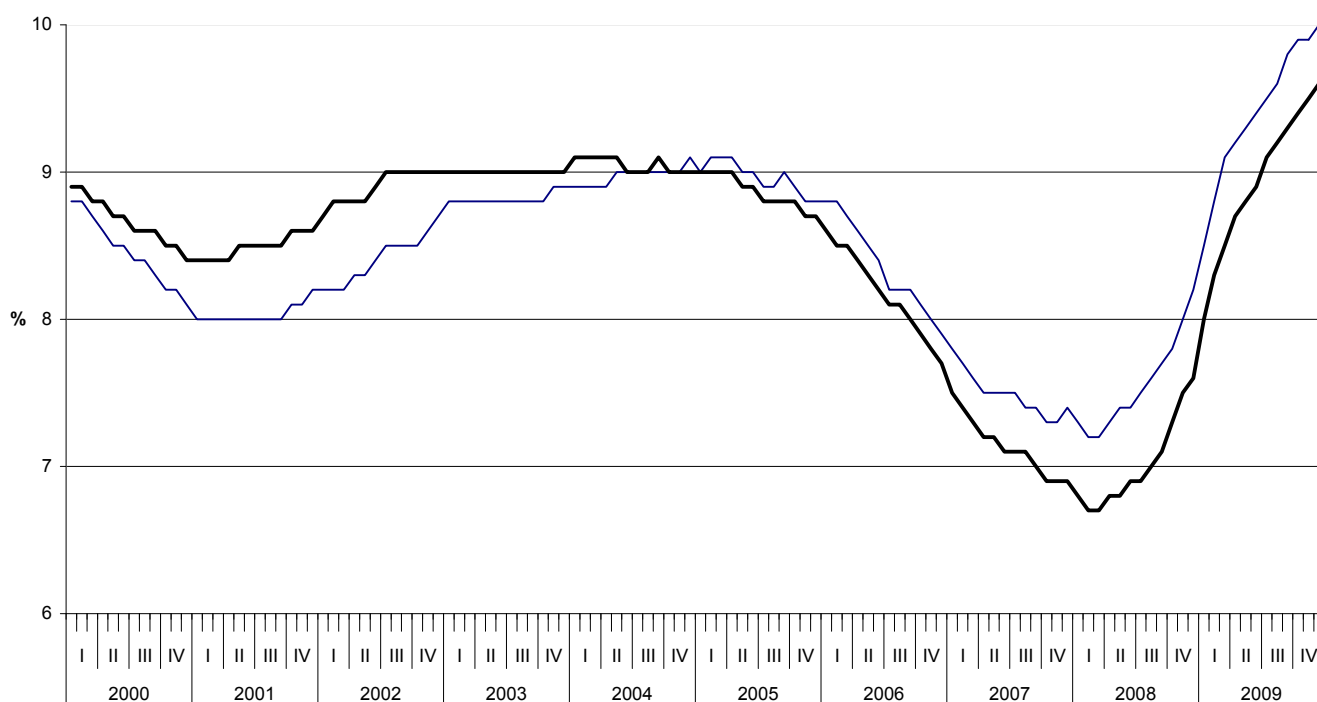
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Selected Principal European Economic Indicators: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/euroindicators>

Euro area and EU27 unemployment rates

— Euro area (EA16), seasonally adjusted series
 — EU27, seasonally adjusted series



SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%) TOTALS

	Dec 2008	Jun 2009	Jul 2009	Aug 2009	Sep 2009	Oct 2009	Nov 2009	Dec 2009
EA16	8.2	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.8	9.9	9.9	10.0
EU27	7.6	8.9	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.4	9.5	9.6
BE	7.1	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.1	8.1	8.2
BG	5.4	6.5	6.7	6.9	7.2	7.4	7.7	7.9
CZ	4.7	6.7	7.0	7.3	7.5	7.7	7.8	8.0
DK	4.1	6.1	6.1	6.0	6.5	6.9	7.2	7.4
DE	7.1	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.5
EE⁶	7.7	13.3	15.2	15.2	15.2	:	:	:
IE	8.3	12.1	12.0	12.1	12.5	12.6	13.0	13.3
EL⁶	7.9	9.2	9.7	9.7	9.7	:	:	:
ES	14.8	18.1	18.4	18.7	19.0	19.2	19.4	19.5
FR	8.5	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.9	10.0	10.0
IT⁵	7.0	7.6	7.7	7.7	8.0	8.2	8.3	8.5
CY	4.0	5.3	5.4	5.6	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.1
LV	11.3	17.2	18.0	18.9	20.0	21.2	22.2	22.8
LT⁶	8.2	13.5	14.6	14.6	14.6	:	:	:
LU	5.3	5.8	5.9	5.9	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2
HU	8.5	9.8	10.2	10.5	10.7	10.8	10.8	10.7
MT	6.0	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.1	6.9	7.0	7.2
NL	2.8	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.0
AT	4.2	4.9	5.1	5.2	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.4
PL	7.0	8.1	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.7	8.8	8.9
PT	8.1	9.6	9.8	9.9	10.0	10.2	10.3	10.4
RO⁶	5.9	6.4	7.2	7.2	7.2	:	:	:
SI	4.2	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.8	6.8	6.8
SK	9.3	11.6	12.1	12.6	13.0	13.3	13.5	13.6
FI⁷	6.9	8.4	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	8.8
SE⁷	7.0	8.3	8.5	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.9	8.9
UK	6.5	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	:	:
NO	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	:	:
US	7.4	9.5	9.4	9.7	9.8	10.1	10.0	10.0
JP	4.3	5.4	5.7	5.5	5.3	5.1	5.2	:

: Data not available

Source: Eurostat

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%)

	Youth (under 25's)				Males				Females			
	Dec-08	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Dec-08	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Dec-08	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09
EA16	17.0	20.7	20.9	21.0	7.8	9.8	9.9	10.0	8.7	10.0	10.0	10.1
EU27	16.9	21.0	21.2	21.4	7.5	9.6	9.7	9.8	7.9	9.2	9.2	9.3
BE	18.2	21.2	21.8	22.6	6.6	8.0	8.1	8.2	7.8	8.2	8.1	8.1
BG	12.5	18.0	18.9	19.5	5.4	7.7	8.0	8.3	5.4	7.1	7.4	7.5
CZ	11.4	19.5	20.3	21.1	3.8	7.0	7.2	7.4	5.9	8.6	8.7	8.8
DK	8.5	12.1	12.4	12.7	4.2	7.7	8.0	8.2	3.9	5.9	6.2	6.4
DE	9.9	10.2	10.2	10.1	7.4	8.2	8.2	8.1	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.8
EE ⁶	18.4	28.5*	:	:	8.5	18.4*	:	:	6.9	11.9*	:	:
IE	17.7	26.7	29.0	31.5	10.3	15.8	16.2	16.6	5.6	8.6	8.9	9.2
EL ⁶	22.5	25.3*	:	:	5.3	7.1*	:	:	11.6	13.5*	:	:
ES	30.8	42.7	43.6	44.5	14.0	19.2	19.4	19.6	15.8	19.3	19.3	19.4
FR	21.1	25.0	25.3	25.2	8.0	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.0	10.1	10.2	10.3
IT ⁵	23.2	26.5	26.2	26.2	6.0	7.2	7.4	7.5	8.5	9.7	9.7	10.0
CY ⁶	9.4	16.0	16.0	16.0	3.5	6.0	6.1	6.1	4.5	6.0	6.2	6.2
LV ⁶	19.7	43.8	43.8	43.8	13.4	24.4	25.5	26.1	9.1	17.8	18.7	19.3
LT ⁶	18.1	33.7*	:	:	8.8	18.6*	:	:	7.5	10.5*	:	:
LU	18.9	18.8	19.0	19.4	4.8	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.5	6.5	6.7
HU	21.3	28.5	28.8	29.1	8.5	11.2	11.1	11.1	8.4	10.4	10.4	10.3
MT	11.6	13.7	13.9	14.4	5.8	6.6	6.7	6.9	6.6	7.6	7.7	7.9
NL	5.4	7.5	7.6	7.6	2.6	3.8	3.9	4.1	2.9	4.0	4.0	4.0
AT	9.4	12.0	12.0	12.0	3.9	5.9	5.9	5.8	4.5	5.2	5.0	4.9
PL	17.4	23.6	24.0	24.2	6.4	8.5	8.7	8.8	7.8	8.9	8.9	8.9
PT	18.0	18.7	18.6	18.5	7.2	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.2	10.8	10.9	11.0
RO ⁶	18.2	21.3*	:	:	6.7	8.2*	:	:	4.8	6.1*	:	:
SI ⁶	9.7	15.7	15.7	15.7	4.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	4.5	6.6	6.6	6.6
SK	20.1	30.8	32.0	32.9	8.4	13.0	13.2	13.3	10.4	13.7	13.9	13.9
FI ⁷	17.8	22.7	22.9	23.5	6.8	9.5	9.7	9.6	6.9	8.0	8.0	7.9
SE ⁷	22.0	26.6	26.7	26.9	7.0	9.2	9.3	9.3	7.1	8.4	8.4	8.5
UK	16.8	19.8	:	:	7.2	8.9	:	:	5.7	6.6	:	:
NO	7.9	8.9	:	:	3.1	3.6	:	:	2.5	2.8	:	:
US	14.9	19.2	19.1	18.9	8.1	11.4	11.2	11.0	6.6	8.8	8.6	8.8
JP	:	:	:	:	4.5	5.3	5.4	:	4.2	4.8	4.9	:

*Data for Q3 2009 : Data not available Source: Eurostat

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED (in millions)

	Dec 2008	Jun 2009	Jul 2009	Aug 2009	Sep 2009	Oct 2009	Nov 2009	Dec 2009
EA16	12.976	14.881	15.052	15.192	15.430	15.583	15.676	15.763
EU27	18.384	21.469	21.807	22.035	22.397	22.677	22.849	23.012

Euro area and EU27 unemployed (in millions)

