

March 2009

## Euro area unemployment up to 8.9%

### EU27 up to 8.3%

The **euro area**<sup>1</sup> (EA16) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate<sup>2</sup> was 8.9% in March 2009, compared with 8.7% in February<sup>3</sup>. It was 7.2% in March 2008. The **EU27**<sup>1</sup> unemployment rate was 8.3% in March 2009, compared with 8.1% in February<sup>3</sup>. It was 6.7% in March 2008.

Eurostat estimates that 20.154 million men and women in the **EU27**, of which 14.158 million were in the **euro area**, were unemployed in March 2009. Compared with February, the number of persons unemployed increased by 626 000 in the **EU27** and by 419 000 in the **euro area**. Compared with March 2008, unemployment went up by 4.061 million in the **EU27** and by 2.816 million in the **euro area**.

These figures are published by **Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities**.

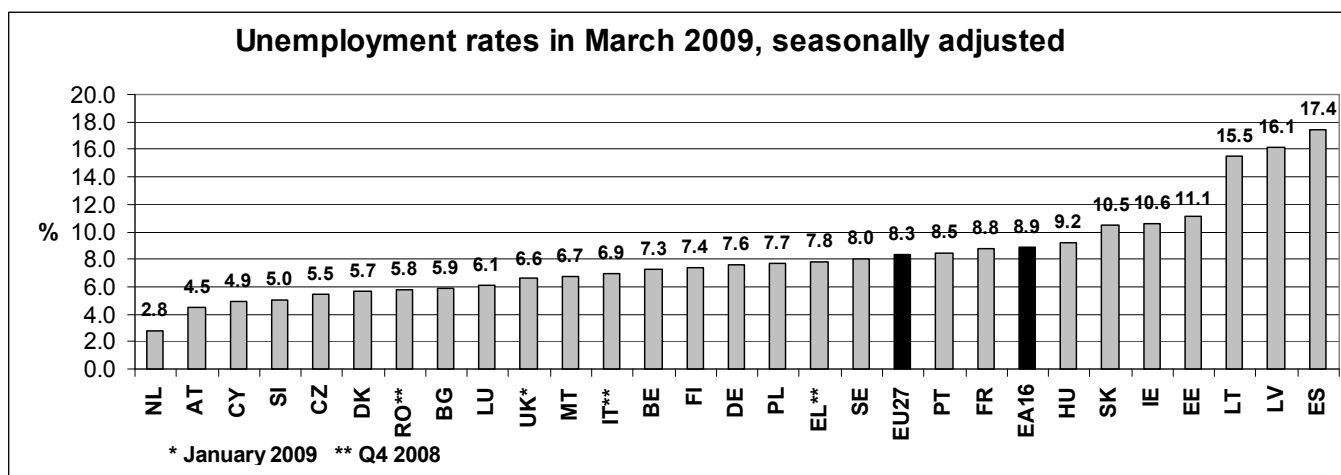
Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rate was recorded in the **Netherlands** (2.8%), and the highest rates in **Spain** (17.4%), **Latvia** (16.1%) and **Lithuania** (15.5%).

Compared with a year ago, three Member States recorded a fall in their unemployment rate, twenty-three an increase and the rate remained stable in the **Netherlands**. The falls were observed in **Romania** (6.1% to 5.8% between the fourth quarters of 2007 and 2008), **Bulgaria** (6.1% to 5.9%) and **Greece** (7.9% to 7.8% between the fourth quarters of 2007 and 2008). The highest increases were registered in **Lithuania** (4.3% to 15.5%), **Latvia** (6.1% to 16.1%) and **Spain** (9.5% to 17.4%).

The unemployment rate for males rose from 6.5% to 8.6% between March 2008 and March 2009 in the **euro area** and from 6.2% to 8.3% in the **EU27**. The female unemployment rate increased from 8.2% to 9.2% in the **euro area** and from 7.3% to 8.3% in the **EU27**.

In March 2009, the youth unemployment rate (under-25s) was 18.1% in the **euro area** and 18.3% in the **EU27**. In March 2008 it was 14.5% and 14.6% respectively. The lowest rate was observed in the **Netherlands** (5.7%), and the highest rates in **Spain** (35.4%) and **Latvia** (29.3% in the first quarter of 2009).

In March 2009, the unemployment rate was 8.5% in the **USA**. In **Japan** it was 4.4% in February 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. 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.  
*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.
3. The February 2009 unemployment rates for the euro area and the EU27 have been revised. The rates published in News Release 45/2009 of 1 April 2009 were 8.5% for the euro area and 7.9% for the EU27. Among Member States, the rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points for the Czech Republic, Denmark, Latvia, Slovakia and Finland. A larger revision (of around one percentage point) has been registered for Spain. The revisions are primarily caused by the inclusion of the most recent EU Labour Force Survey data in the calculation process and updates to the seasonally adjusted series.  
The following LFS data are used in the calculations of the monthly unemployment rates published in this News Release:  
For Germany, Finland and Sweden up to and including March 2009.  
For the Netherlands up to and including January-February-March 2009 (3-month rolling average).  
For the United Kingdom up to and including December 2008-January-February 2009 (3-month rolling average).  
For Spain up to and including 2009Q1.  
For Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia up to and including 2008Q4.
4. Greece, Italy and Romania: quarterly data for all series.  
Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia: quarterly data for youth unemployment.
5. Provisional data: the Swedish Labour Force Survey was amended in April 2005 to take further account of the EU harmonised methodology. This break in the series may affect the reliability of the seasonal adjustment.

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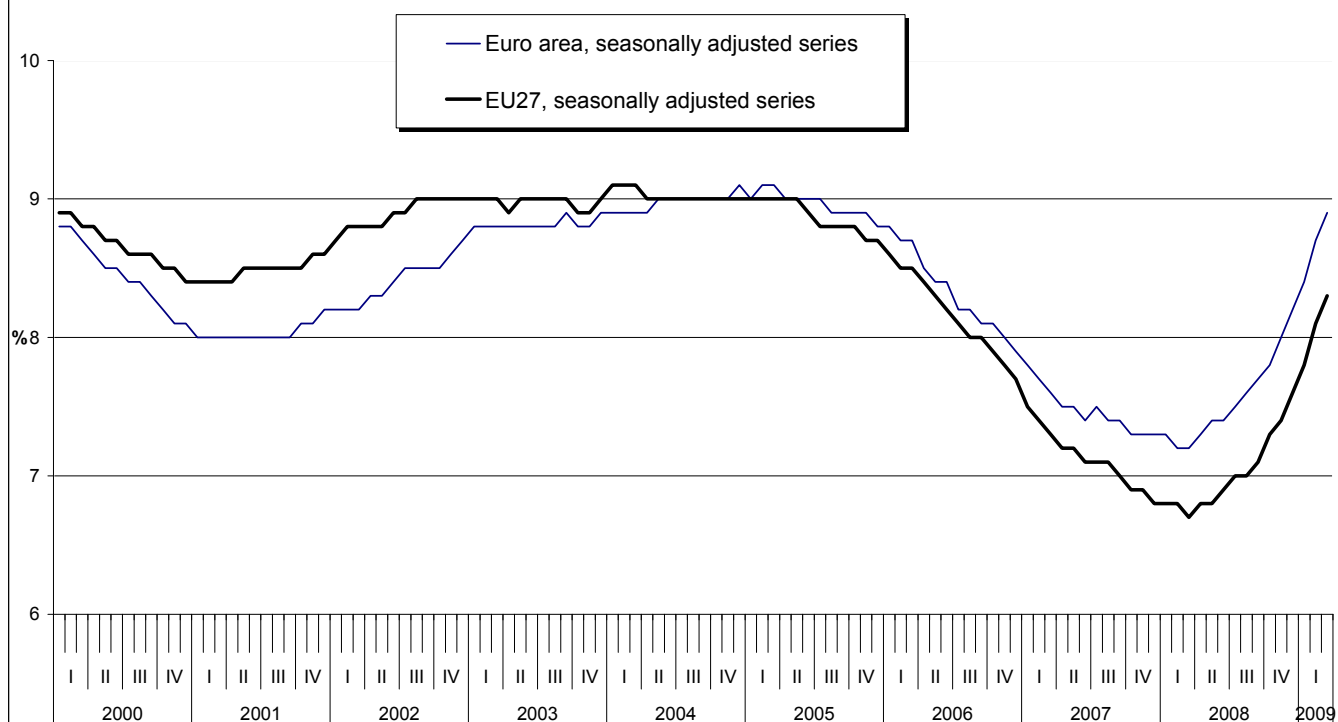
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Selected Principal European Economic Indicators: **<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/euroindicators>**

## Euro area and EU27 unemployment rates



### SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%) TOTALS

	March 2008	Sept 2008	Oct 2008	Nov 2008	Dec 2008	Jan 2009	Feb 2009	March 2009
<b>EA16</b>	7.2	7.7	7.8	8.0	8.2	8.4	8.7	<b>8.9</b>
<b>EU27</b>	6.7	7.1	7.3	7.4	7.6	7.8	8.1	<b>8.3</b>
<b>BE</b>	6.8	7.2	7.1	6.9	6.9	7.1	7.2	<b>7.3</b>
<b>BG</b>	6.1	5.2	5.1	5.0	5.3	5.3	5.6	<b>5.9</b>
<b>CZ</b>	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.9	5.2	<b>5.5</b>
<b>DK</b>	3.0	3.4	3.7	3.9	4.3	4.7	5.1	<b>5.7</b>
<b>DE</b>	7.4	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	<b>7.6</b>
<b>EE</b>	4.0	6.7	6.9	7.4	8.4	9.1	10.0	<b>11.1</b>
<b>IE</b>	5.2	7.1	7.6	8.2	8.7	9.4	10.0	<b>10.6</b>
<b>EL<sup>4</sup></b>	7.8	7.5	7.8	7.8	7.8	:	:	:
<b>ES</b>	9.5	12.4	13.2	13.9	14.7	15.7	16.5	<b>17.4</b>
<b>FR</b>	7.6	7.9	8.0	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.6	<b>8.8</b>
<b>IT<sup>4</sup></b>	6.6	6.7	6.9	6.9	6.9	:	:	:
<b>CY</b>	3.7	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.3	4.4	4.6	<b>4.9</b>
<b>LV</b>	6.1	8.1	9.3	10.3	11.5	13.2	14.6	<b>16.1</b>
<b>LT</b>	4.3	6.6	7.2	8.4	9.7	11.6	13.6	<b>15.5</b>
<b>LU</b>	4.4	5.1	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.7	5.9	<b>6.1</b>
<b>HU</b>	7.6	7.9	7.8	8.0	8.3	8.4	8.8	<b>9.2</b>
<b>MT</b>	5.8	5.7	5.9	6.1	6.0	6.3	6.5	<b>6.7</b>
<b>NL</b>	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	<b>2.8</b>
<b>AT</b>	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.5	<b>4.5</b>
<b>PL</b>	7.4	6.8	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.2	7.5	<b>7.7</b>
<b>PT</b>	7.6	7.8	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.2	8.4	<b>8.5</b>
<b>RO<sup>4</sup></b>	5.8	5.7	5.8	5.8	5.8	:	:	:
<b>SI</b>	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.6	<b>5.0</b>
<b>SK</b>	9.9	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.3	9.6	10.0	<b>10.5</b>
<b>FI</b>	6.3	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.9	7.1	<b>7.4</b>
<b>SE<sup>5</sup></b>	5.8	6.4	6.7	7.0	7.0	7.3	7.6	<b>8.0</b>
<b>UK</b>	5.2	6.0	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.6	:	:
<b>NO</b>	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.0	3.1	:
<b>US</b>	5.1	6.2	6.6	6.8	7.2	7.6	8.1	<b>8.5</b>
<b>JP</b>	3.8	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.3	4.2	4.4	:

: Data not available      Source: Eurostat

## SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%)

	Youth (under 25's)				Males				Females			
	Mar-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Mar-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Mar-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09
EA16	14.5	17.2	17.7	18.1	6.5	8.1	8.3	8.6	8.2	8.9	9.0	9.2
EU27	14.6	17.3	17.8	18.3	6.2	7.7	8.0	8.3	7.3	8.0	8.2	8.3
BE	16.8	19.1	19.5	19.9	6.4	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.3	7.6	7.7	7.8
BG	13.8	13.9	14.9	16.1	5.9	5.5	5.9	6.5	6.3	5.1	5.1	5.3
CZ	9.4	11.9	12.4	13.0	3.4	4.2	4.5	4.8	5.6	5.9	6.2	6.4
DK	7.0	10.3	11.0	12.3	2.7	5.2	5.8	6.6	3.5	4.1	4.3	4.6
DE	9.9	10.1	10.4	10.7	7.3	7.6	7.8	8.0	7.5	7.0	7.0	7.1
EE <sup>4</sup>	7.7	26.8	26.8	26.8	3.4	9.5	9.9	10.4	4.5	8.7	10.1	11.7
IE	10.8	20.0	21.4	22.8	6.0	11.4	12.1	12.8	4.0	6.7	7.3	7.7
EL <sup>4</sup>	22.3	22.3*	:	:	5.1	5.2*	:	:	11.7	11.5*	:	:
ES	21.1	32.6	34.0	35.4	7.9	15.1	16.1	17.1	11.6	16.4	17.1	17.9
FR	17.7	20.5	21.0	21.4	7.1	8.0	8.1	8.3	8.1	9.0	9.1	9.3
IT <sup>4</sup>	20.5	22.4*	:	:	5.2	5.9*	:	:	8.6	8.3*	:	:
CY <sup>4</sup>	9.2	12.4	12.4	12.4	3.2	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.9	5.0	5.3
LV <sup>4</sup>	11.0	29.3	29.3	29.3	6.3	15.9	17.9	20.0	5.9	10.2	10.9	11.7
LT <sup>4</sup>	9.5	27.7	27.7	27.7	4.4	13.5	16.5	19.2	4.2	9.6	10.6	11.4
LU	15.5	19.1	19.4	20.1	3.5	5.0	5.2	5.4	5.6	6.7	6.8	7.1
HU	19.5	20.8	21.8	23.0	7.2	8.4	8.8	9.2	8.0	8.4	8.7	9.1
MT	11.5	12.5	13.0	13.9	5.5	5.9	6.0	6.2	6.5	7.1	7.4	7.7
NL	5.3	5.5	5.6	5.7	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.8	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.8
AT	7.9	10.6	11.2	11.4	3.4	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.6	4.6
PL	17.2	18.7	19.7	20.7	6.7	6.6	6.9	7.2	8.2	7.9	8.2	8.3
PT	15.8	17.8	18.1	18.4	6.4	7.3	7.5	7.7	9.0	9.2	9.3	9.4
RO <sup>4</sup>	18.3	18.0*	:	:	6.9	6.6*	:	:	4.5	4.8*	:	:
SI <sup>4</sup>	11.1	10.1	10.1	10.1	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.8	5.0	4.7	4.9	5.3
SK	18.9	20.8	21.4	22.1	8.4	8.9	9.3	9.8	11.8	10.5	10.9	11.4
FI	15.8	17.3	17.5	17.7	5.8	7.1	7.5	7.9	6.7	6.8	6.8	6.8
SE <sup>5</sup>	19.2	23.2	24.2	25.2	5.4	7.3	7.7	8.2	6.3	7.3	7.5	7.8
UK	14.1	16.6	:	:	5.5	7.3	:	:	4.9	5.8	:	:
NO	6.6	8.5	8.4	:	2.5	3.2	3.3	:	2.2	2.8	2.9	:
US	11.4	14.8	15.5	16.3	5.2	8.3	8.8	9.5	5.0	6.7	7.3	7.5
JP	:	:	:	:	3.9	4.2	4.4	:	3.8	4.1	4.5	:

: Data not available      Source: Eurostat      \* Data for 2008Q4

## SEASONALLY ADJUSTED NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED (in millions)

	March 2008	Sept 2008	Oct 2008	Nov 2008	Dec 2008	Jan 2009	Feb 2009	March 2009
EA16	11.342	12.086	12.383	12.637	12.930	13.344	13.739	14.158
EU27	16.093	17.071	17.481	17.880	18.346	18.944	19.528	20.154

### Euro area and EU27 unemployed (in millions)

