

MIGRATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Immigrant workers are more affected by unemployment in traditional European immigration countries. Conversely, in North America, Australia and, to a lesser extent, Southern Europe, the unemployment rate depends less on the place of birth. Some groups, such as young immigrants, women or older immigrants have greater difficulties in finding jobs.

Definition

The unemployment rate is the share of the unemployed in the total labour force (employed and unemployed persons). In accordance with the ILO standards, unemployed persons consist of those persons who report that they are without work during the reference week, that they are available for work and that they have taken active steps to find work during the four weeks preceding the interview.

Comparability

Data for the European countries are from the *European Union Labour Force Survey*. Data for Australia are taken from the *National Labour Force Survey*; those for Canada from the *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics* and the 2006 Census; and those for the United States from the *Current Population Survey* (March supplement). Even if unemployment levels can at times be affected by changes in the survey design (this occurred in France in 2004) and by survey implementation problems (e.g. non-response), data on unemployment rates are generally consistent over time.

Overview

In 2007, unemployment rates decreased both for foreign- and native-born populations in most OECD countries but immigrants in most European OECD countries remained much more affected by unemployment than the native population. In Belgium, Finland, Germany and France, the unemployment rate of immigrants was above 13%. The unemployment rate was more than twice the level observed for the native-born population in Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland. In other countries, especially in settlement countries (Australia, Canada, the United States) and in recent immigration countries (Greece, Portugal), the unemployment rate does not vary much by birth status.

The period since 1995 has seen some sizable declines in the unemployment rates of the foreign-born (both men and women) in a number of countries, such as Australia, Denmark, Sweden, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. At the same time, labour market conditions have stagnated in a number of other countries and have had adverse consequences on the unemployment rates for immigrants in Austria, Germany and Luxembourg.

More than 15% of immigrant women are unemployed in Finland, Belgium, France, Greece and Germany. The unemployment rate of immigrant women is at least twice as high as that of native women in Switzerland, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, Austria, Luxembourg and Sweden. In all OECD countries, immigrant women have a higher unemployment rate than native women, but this difference does not always increase with the level of qualifications.

Sources

- OECD (2009), *International Migration Outlook: SOPEMI 2009*, OECD, Paris.

Further information

Analytical publications

- OECD (2006), *Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) – From Immigration to Integration: Local Solutions to a Global Challenge*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2007), *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol. 1): Labour Market Integration in Australia, Denmark, Germany and Sweden*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *A Profile of Immigrant Populations in the 21st Century: Data from OECD Countries*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *Jobs for Immigrants Vol. 2: Labour Market Integration in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Portugal*, OECD, Paris.

Web sites

- OECD International Migration Statistics, www.oecd.org/els/migration/statistics.



Unemployment rates of foreign- and native-born populations

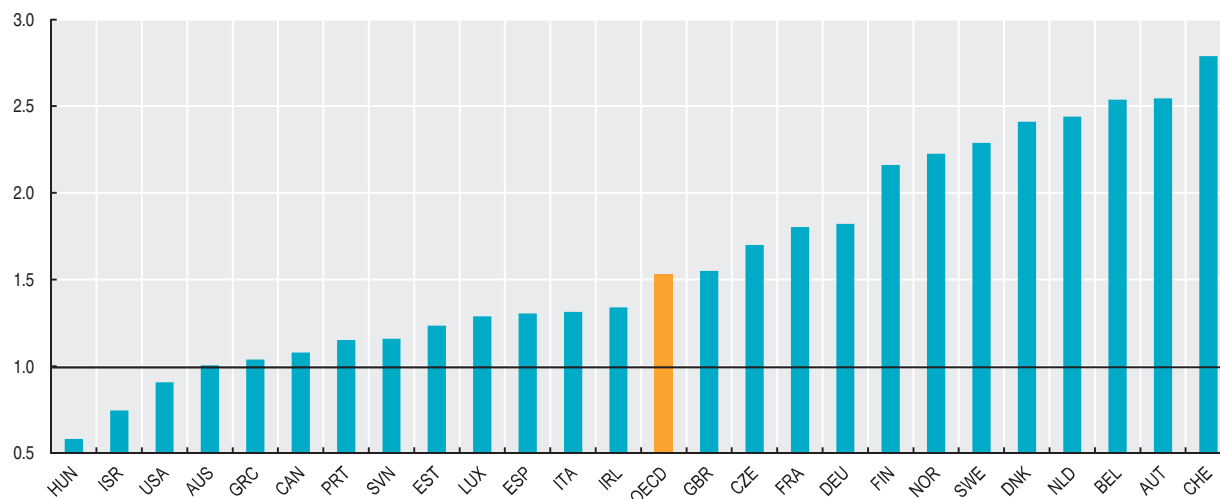
As a percentage of total labour force

	Men						Women						Total	
	Native-born			Foreign-born			Native-born			Foreign-born			Native-born	Foreign-born
	1995	2000	2007	1995	2000	2007	1995	2000	2007	1995	2000	2007	2007	2007
Australia	8.4	6.6	3.4	10.6	6.5	4.1	7.7	5.8	4.2	9.6	7.0	5.1	4.2	4.2
Austria	3.6	4.3	3.1	6.6	8.7	8.4	4.6	4.2	4.1	7.3	7.2	9.7	3.5	9.0
Belgium	6.3	4.2	5.6	16.9	14.7	15.8	11.2	7.4	7.5	23.8	17.5	17.2	6.4	16.4
Canada	8.6	5.7	..	10.4	6.1	..	9.8	6.2	..	13.3	8.7	..	..	..
Czech Republic	..	..	4.2	..	..	7.6	..	..	6.7	..	..	10.8	5.3	9.0
Denmark	6.4	3.4	3.0	20.5	9.5	8.6	8.4	4.3	3.9	20.7	9.6	7.9	3.4	8.2
Finland	17.7	10.3	6.5	..	..	12.0	16.1	12.0	7.0	..	..	17.4	6.7	14.5
France	9.1	7.7	7.2	16.6	14.5	11.9	13.6	11.3	7.7	19.0	19.7	15.1	7.4	13.4
Germany	..	6.9	7.7	..	12.9	14.9	..	8.0	8.1	..	12.1	13.5	7.8	14.3
Greece	6.1	7.4	5.3	14.0	9.5	4.9	13.7	16.6	12.8	20.8	21.1	14.3	8.4	8.7
Hungary	..	7.3	7.2	..	..	2.6	..	5.8	7.7	..	..	6.1	7.5	4.3
Ireland	12.0	4.4	4.7	16.8	..	6.0	11.9	4.2	4.1	15.4	..	5.7	4.4	5.9
Italy	9.3	8.4	4.9	..	6.5	5.3	16.3	14.9	7.6	23.5	21.2	11.4	6.0	7.9
Luxembourg	..	..	3.0	..	..	4.3	..	..	4.4	..	..	5.1	3.6	4.6
Netherlands	4.9	1.8	2.7	19.5	5.4	7.5	7.7	3.0	3.6	19.8	7.6	7.7	3.1	7.6
Norway	..	3.4	2.3	..	6.8	6.1	..	3.2	2.3	..	..	4.0	2.3	5.1
Poland	..	..	9.1	..	..	..	..	..	10.4	..	..	..	8.4	9.4
Portugal	6.6	3.1	7.0	..	3.9	7.3	7.8	4.9	10.0	..	5.4	12.1	..	9.6
Slovak Republic	..	..	9.9	..	..	..	..	..	12.8	..	..	..	11.2	..
Spain	18.0	9.5	6.0	24.4	12.4	8.4	30.5	20.5	10.5	30.5	20.7	12.6	7.9	10.3
Sweden	7.9	5.1	5.1	24.8	12.3	11.7	6.6	4.2	5.5	18.5	10.8	12.6	5.3	12.1
Switzerland	..	..	2.0	..	..	5.8	..	..	3.2	..	..	8.8	2.6	7.1
United Kingdom	9.9	5.9	5.3	14.2	9.6	7.0	6.7	4.6	4.4	10.9	7.8	8.4	4.9	7.6
United States	6.2	4.5	5.4	7.9	4.5	4.8	5.3	4.2	4.3	8.2	5.5	4.0	4.9	4.5
OECD average	8.8	5.8	5.2	15.6	9.0	7.9	11.1	7.7	6.6	17.2	12.1	9.9	5.7	8.8
Estonia	..	..	5.3	..	13.4	..	..	11.8	3.9	..	11.1	..	4.6	5.7
Israel	5.8	8.8	7.4	5.2	7.8	5.4	9.0	9.4	8.8	7.9	8.9	6.6	8.0	6.0
Slovenia	..	..	4.1	..	10.0	4.0	..	7.1	5.8	..	7.9	7.8	4.9	5.7

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/823715202068>

Foreign-born unemployment rate relative to native-born unemployment rate

Ratio, 2007 or latest available year



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/818012473347>



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