

EMPLOYMENT RATES

Employment rates are a measure of the extent of utilisation of available labour resources. In the short term, these rates are sensitive to the economic cycle, but in the longer term they are significantly affected by government policies with regard to higher education and income support and by policies that facilitate employment of women and disadvantaged groups.

Definition

Employment rates are calculated as the ratio of the employed to the working age population. Employment is generally measured through household labour force surveys. According to the ILO Guidelines, employed persons are defined as those aged 15 or over who report that they have worked in gainful employment for at least one hour in the previous week or who had a job but were absent from work during the reference week. Those not in employment consist of persons who are classified as either unemployed or inactive, in the sense that they are not included in the labour force for reasons of experiencing difficulty to find a job, study, incapacity or the need to look after young children or elderly relatives or personal choice.

Overview

Employment rates for men are higher than those for women in all OECD countries with an average OECD difference of 16 percentage points. The employment gap dropped significantly since 2000 by about 5 percentage points in the OECD area due to an increase in women's employment rates while those of men declined since the onset of the crisis in late 2007 and in particular in countries hard hit by the crisis. The increase in employment rates for women was widespread before the crisis, exceeding 5 or more percentage points in 13 countries, in particular in Ireland, Greece and Spain.

Despite the recent increase, Turkey has by far the lowest women's employment rate, at 27.8%, with Iceland remaining the highest, at 77.3%. Chile has below OECD average employment rates for women despite increases (12 percentage points) over the last decade in excess of those recorded for men. By contrast, 9 countries have below OECD average employment rates for men and above OECD average employment rates for women, Among those countries, Portugal and the United States had above OECD average employment rates for men in 2000.

In the emerging economies, employment rates of men are markedly higher than those of women, by more than 23 percentage points in Brazil, 12 percentage points in South Africa and by more than 8 percentage points in the Russian Federation.

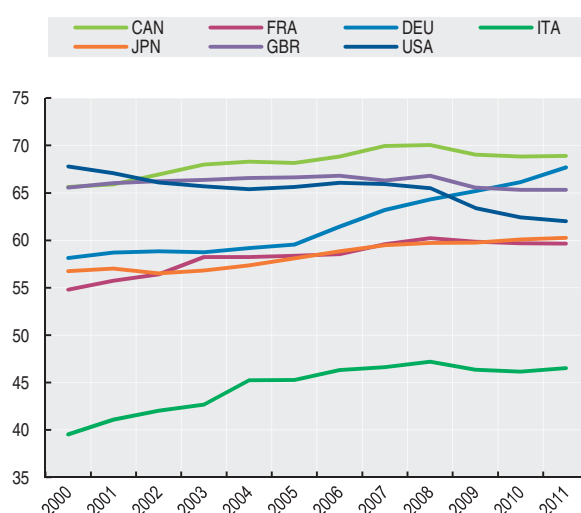
The working age population refers to persons aged 15 to 64.

Comparability

All OECD countries use the ILO Guidelines for measuring employment. Operational definitions used in national labour force surveys may vary slightly from country to country. Employment levels are also likely to be affected by changes in the survey design and the survey conduct. Despite these changes, the employment rates shown here are fairly consistent over time.

Employment rates: women

Share of women of working age in employment



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932708465>

Sources

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Further information

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- OECD (2011), *Divided We Stand: Why Inequality Keeps Rising*, OECD Publishing.
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Online databases

- *OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics*.

Websites

- *OECD Labour Statistics Database*, www.oecd.org/statistics/labour.

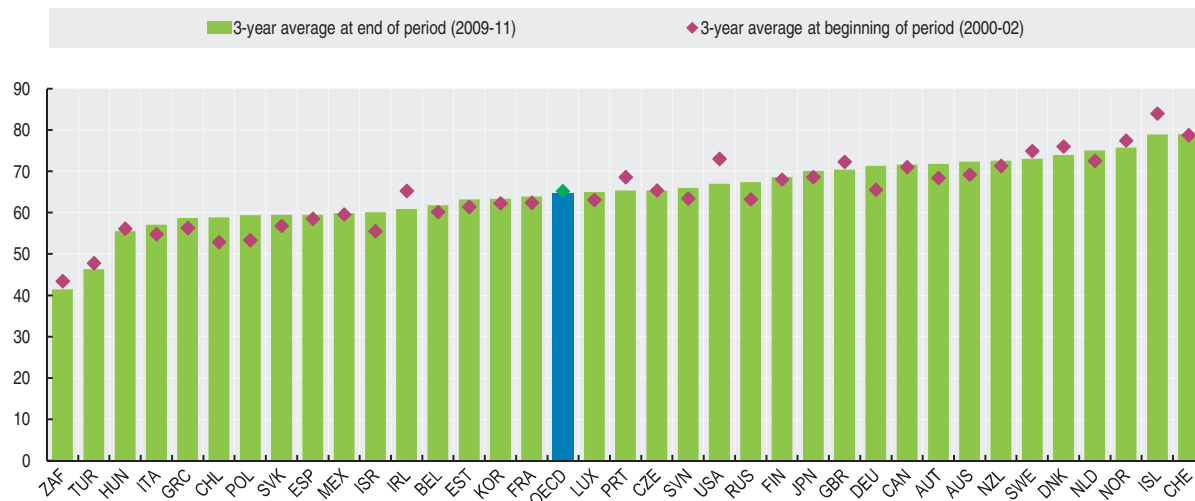

Employment rates by gender

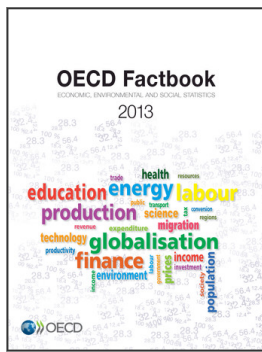
Share of persons of working age in employment

	Women				Men				Total			
	2000	2008	2010	2011	2000	2008	2010	2011	2000	2008	2010	2011
Australia	61.4	66.7	66.2	66.7	77.1	79.7	78.6	78.7	69.3	73.2	72.4	72.7
Austria	59.4	65.8	66.4	66.5	77.3	78.5	77.1	77.8	68.3	72.1	71.7	72.1
Belgium	51.9	56.2	56.5	56.7	69.8	68.6	67.4	67.1	60.9	62.4	62.0	61.9
Canada	65.6	70.1	68.8	68.9	76.2	77.2	74.2	75.0	70.9	73.6	71.5	72.0
Chile	35.1	42.1	46.7	49.1	71.9	72.6	72.1	73.6	53.3	57.3	59.3	61.3
Czech Republic	56.9	57.6	56.3	57.2	73.6	75.4	73.5	74.0	65.2	66.6	65.0	65.7
Denmark	72.1	74.1	71.1	70.4	80.7	81.6	75.6	75.9	76.4	77.9	73.3	73.1
Estonia	57.0	66.3	60.5	62.7	65.4	73.5	61.5	67.8	61.0	69.7	61.0	65.2
Finland	64.5	69.0	66.9	67.5	70.5	73.4	69.7	70.9	67.5	71.3	68.3	69.2
France	54.8	60.2	59.7	59.7	68.8	69.5	68.1	68.1	61.7	64.8	63.8	63.8
Germany	58.1	64.3	66.1	67.7	72.9	75.9	76.1	77.4	65.6	70.2	71.2	72.6
Greece	41.3	48.7	48.1	45.1	71.3	75.0	70.9	65.9	55.9	61.9	59.6	55.6
Hungary	49.6	50.6	50.6	50.6	62.7	63.0	60.4	61.2	56.0	56.7	55.4	55.8
Iceland	81.0	80.3	77.0	77.3	88.2	87.8	80.6	80.8	84.6	84.2	78.9	79.0
Ireland	53.8	60.5	56.4	56.0	76.1	75.7	64.5	63.3	65.0	68.1	60.4	59.6
Israel	50.9	55.6	56.9	57.5	61.4	64.1	63.4	64.3	56.1	59.8	60.2	60.9
Italy	39.6	47.2	46.1	46.5	68.2	70.3	67.7	67.5	53.9	58.7	56.9	56.9
Japan	56.7	59.7	60.1	60.3	80.9	81.6	80.0	80.2	68.9	70.7	70.1	70.3
Korea	50.0	53.2	52.6	53.1	73.1	74.4	73.9	74.5	61.5	63.8	63.3	63.9
Luxembourg	50.0	55.1	57.2	56.9	75.0	71.5	73.1	72.1	62.7	63.4	65.2	64.6
Mexico	39.6	44.1	43.8	43.4	82.8	80.7	78.5	77.8	60.1	61.3	60.3	59.8
Netherlands	62.7	69.3	69.4	69.9	81.2	82.4	80.0	79.8	72.1	75.9	74.7	74.9
New Zealand	63.2	68.7	66.7	67.2	77.9	80.9	78.2	78.2	70.4	74.7	72.3	72.6
Norway	74.0	75.4	73.3	73.4	81.7	80.6	77.4	77.2	77.9	78.1	75.4	75.3
Poland	48.9	52.4	53.0	53.1	61.2	66.3	65.6	66.3	55.0	59.2	59.3	59.7
Portugal	60.5	62.5	61.1	60.4	76.3	74.0	70.1	68.1	68.3	68.2	65.6	64.2
Slovak Republic	51.5	54.6	52.3	52.7	62.2	70.0	65.2	66.3	56.8	62.3	58.8	59.5
Slovenia	..	64.2	62.6	60.9	..	72.7	69.6	67.7	..	68.6	66.2	64.4
Spain	42.0	55.7	53.0	52.8	72.7	74.6	65.6	64.1	57.4	65.3	59.4	58.5
Sweden	72.2	73.2	70.3	71.9	76.3	78.3	75.0	76.3	74.3	75.8	72.7	74.1
Switzerland	69.4	73.5	72.5	73.2	87.3	85.4	84.6	85.3	78.4	79.5	78.6	79.3
Turkey	26.2	23.5	26.2	27.8	71.7	66.6	66.7	69.3	48.9	44.9	46.3	48.4
United Kingdom	65.6	66.8	65.3	65.3	78.9	78.6	75.3	75.5	72.2	72.7	70.3	70.4
United States	67.8	65.5	62.4	62.0	80.6	76.4	71.1	71.4	74.1	70.9	66.7	66.6
EU 27	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
OECD	55.0	57.6	56.6	56.7	76.1	75.6	72.7	73.0	65.4	66.5	64.6	64.8
Brazil	..	56.8	..	..	..	80.6	..	..	..	68.3	..	..
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	58.9	64.8	63.5	63.8	67.2	73.0	71.6	72.2	62.9	68.7	67.4	67.8
South Africa	..	37.4	34.4	34.6	..	52.7	47.7	47.4	..	44.8	40.8	40.8

 StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932708427>
Employment rates: total

Share of persons of working age in employment


 StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932708446>



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