

MIGRATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT

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

Definition

The unemployment rate is calculated as 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 preceding weeks.

Long-term trends

In 2006, immigrants in the majority of European OECD countries were relatively more affected by unemployment than was the native population. In the Slovak Republic, in Finland, Belgium, France and Germany, the unemployment rate of immigrants is higher than 15%. The rate is more than twice the level observed for the native-born in Finland, Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria, Norway, Switzerland and Denmark. In other countries, however, especially the main settlement countries (Australia, Canada, the United States) and recent immigration countries (Greece, Portugal, Italy), 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, among them Australia, Denmark and 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 for immigrants in Austria, Germany and Luxembourg.

More than 15% of immigrant women in the labour force are seeking employment in the Slovak Republic, Finland, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, the Czech Republic, and Greece. In relative terms, the unemployment rate of immigrant women is at least twice as high as that of natives in Switzerland, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, Austria, Luxembourg and Sweden. The difference in absolute values vis-à-vis the native-born is systematically positive, but does not generally increase with the level of qualifications.

Comparability

All data for the European countries are from the European Union Labour Force Survey. The national labour force survey, the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics and the 2006 Census, and the Current Population Survey (March supplement) are used respectively for Australia, Canada and the United States. Even if unemployment levels can at times be affected by changes in the survey design (this is the case for France since 2004) and by survey implementation problems (e.g. non-response), the unemployment rates are generally consistent over time.

Source

- OECD (2008), *International Migration Outlook: SOPEMI 2008*, 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), *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol. 2): Labour Market Integration in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Portugal*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *A Profile of Immigrant Populations in the 21st Century: Data from OECD Countries*, OECD, Paris.

Websites

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



Unemployment rates of foreign- and native-born populations

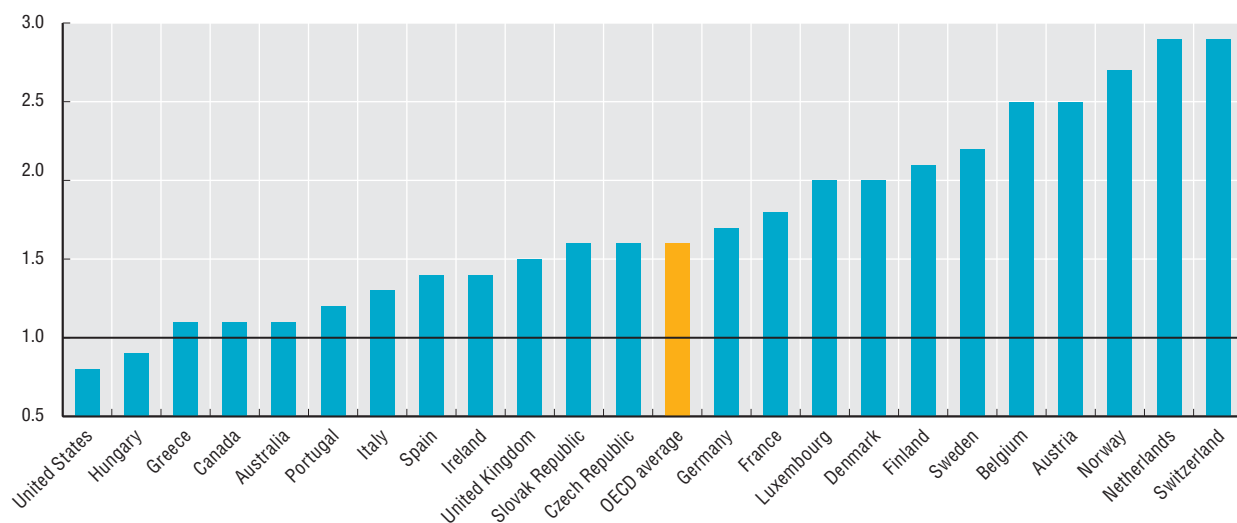
As a percentage of total labour force

	Men						Women					
	Native-born			Foreign-born			Native-born			Foreign-born		
	1995	2000	2006	1995	2000	2006	1995	2000	2006	1995	2000	2006
Australia	8.4	6.6	3.8	10.6	6.5	4.3	7.7	5.8	4.5	9.6	7.0	5.2
Austria	3.6	4.3	3.3	6.6	8.7	9.8	4.6	4.2	4.4	7.3	7.2	9.8
Belgium	6.3	4.2	6.2	16.9	14.7	15.8	11.2	7.4	8.0	23.8	17.5	19.3
Canada	8.6	5.7]	6.6	10.4	6.1]	6.2	9.8	6.2]	6.2	13.3	8.7]	8.0
Czech Republic	..	..	5.8	..	..	8.4	..	..	8.8	..	..	15.3
Denmark	6.4	3.4]	3.2	20.5	9.5]	7.4	8.4	4.3]	4.4	20.7	9.6]	7.7
Finland	17.7	10.3	8.6	..	..	16.0	16.1	12.0	8.9	..	..	20.4
France	9.1	7.7	8.5	16.6	14.5	15.5	13.6	11.3	9.6	19.0	19.7	17.1
Germany	..	6.9]	9.4	..	12.9]	16.6	..	8.0]	9.3	..	12.1]	15.8
Greece	6.1	7.4	5.8	14.0	9.5	5.3	13.7	16.6	13.6	20.8	21.1	15.1
Hungary	..	7.3	7.2	..	..	..	..	5.8	7.8	..	..	10.3
Ireland	12.0	4.4	4.4	16.8	..	6.0	11.9	4.2	3.8	15.4]	..	6.0
Italy	9.3	8.4	5.5	..	6.5	5.7	16.3	14.9	8.5	23.5	21.2	12.4
Luxembourg	..	..	2.7	..	..	4.7	..	..	4.1	..	..	8.9
Netherlands	4.9	1.8	3.3	19.5	5.4	10.4	7.7	3.0	4.3	19.8	7.6	11.0
Norway	..	3.4	3.1	..	6.8	8.9	..	3.2	3.0	..	..	7.7
Portugal	6.6	3.1	6.9	..	3.9	8.2	7.8	4.9	9.3	..	5.4	11.4
Slovak Republic	..	..	12.3	..	..	23.0	..	..	14.7	..	..	28.6
Spain	18.0	9.5	6.1	24.4	12.4	7.7	30.5	20.5	10.8	30.5	20.7	15.8
Sweden	7.9	5.1	6.0	24.8	12.3	13.6	6.6	4.2	6.4	18.5	10.8	13.3
Switzerland	..	..	2.4	..	..	6.8	..	..	3.3	..	..	9.4
United Kingdom	9.9	5.9	5.5	14.2	9.6	7.4	6.7	4.6	4.5	10.9	7.8	7.9
United States	6.2	4.5	5.8	7.9	4.5	4.1	5.3	4.2	4.8	8.2	5.5	4.9
OECD average	8.8	5.8	5.8	15.6	9.0	9.6	11.1	7.7	7.1	17.2	12.1	12.2

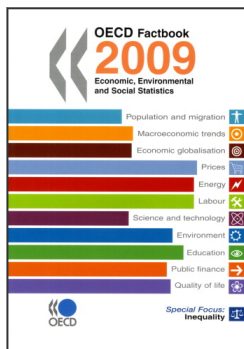
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/540617007518>

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

Ratio, 2006 or latest available year



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/534566756704>



From:
OECD Factbook 2009
Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2009-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2009), "Migration and unemployment", in *OECD Factbook 2009: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2009-9-en>

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