

March 2005

## Euro-zone unemployment up to 8.9%

EU25 stable at 8.9%

**Euro-zone**<sup>1</sup> seasonally-adjusted unemployment<sup>2</sup> stood at 8.9% in March 2005, compared to 8.8% in February<sup>3</sup>, reports Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities. It was 8.8% in March 2004. The **EU25**<sup>4</sup> unemployment rate was 8.9% in March 2005, unchanged compared to February. It was 9.0% in March 2004.

In March 2005, the lowest rates were registered in **Ireland** (4.3%), **Luxembourg** (4.5%), **Austria** (4.6%), the **United Kingdom** (4.7% in January) and **Denmark** (4.9% in February). Unemployment rates were highest in **Poland** (18.1%), **Slovakia** (15.9%), **Greece** (10.2% in December 2004) and **Spain** (10.2%).

Amongst the Member States, thirteen recorded a decrease in their unemployment rate over a year, two remained stable and ten reported an increase. The largest relative decreases were observed in **Lithuania** (11.4% to 8.6%), **Estonia** (9.8% to 7.9%), **Slovakia** (18.7% to 15.9%) and **Malta** (7.8% in February 2004 to 6.8% in February 2005), while the **Netherlands** (4.4% in February 2004 to 5.0% in February 2005), **Luxembourg** (4.1% to 4.5%) and **Hungary** (5.8% to 6.3%) registered the highest relative increases.

In March 2005 compared to March 2004, the unemployment rate for males grew from 7.5% to 7.6% in the **euro-zone** and decreased from 8.1% to 8.0% in the **EU25**. The female unemployment rate fell from 10.6% to 10.5% in the **euro-zone** and from 10.2% to 10.0% in the **EU25**.

In March 2005, the unemployment rate for under-25s was 19.2% in the **euro-zone** and 19.1% in the **EU25**. In March 2004 it was 18.2% and 18.9% respectively. The lowest rates for under-25s were observed in **Denmark** (7.1% in February), **Ireland** (8.0%) and the **Netherlands** (9.1% in February) and the highest in **Poland** (36.4%), **Slovakia** (27.6%), **Greece** (26.2% in December 2004) and **Italy** (24.0% in December 2004).

Eurostat estimates that, in March 2005, 12.8 million men and women were unemployed in the **euro-zone** and 19.1 million in the **EU25**. These are seasonally-adjusted figures in line with ILO criteria.

In March 2005, the **US** unemployment rate was 5.2% and the **Japanese** rate was 4.5%.

### Unemployment (%) in March 2005 - in ascending order

IE	LU	AT	UK	DK	NL	CY	SI	HU	SE	MT	PT	EE	BE
4.3	4.5	4.6	Jan 05 4.7	Feb 05 4.9	Feb 05 5.0	5.1	5.8	6.3	6.3	Feb 05 6.8	6.9	7.9	8.0
IT	CZ	FI	LT	Euro-zone	EU25	LV	DE <sup>5</sup>	FR	EL	ES	SK	PL	
Dec 04 8.0	8.3	8.3	8.6	8.9	8.9	9.4	9.8	9.8	Dec 04 10.2	10.2	15.9	18.1	

1. Euro-zone: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and Finland.
2. *Eurostat's unemployment rates*

Eurostat compiles "harmonised" unemployment rates for Member States. These unemployment rates are based on definitions recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). "Harmonised" means that the national micro data concerning the individuals and households are treated by Eurostat in the same fashion throughout the EU so as to allow comparability between the Member States.

The Eurostat definition of unemployed people are those aged 15 to 74 and who, following the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition:

  - 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 and unemployed.

The numbers of unemployed and the monthly unemployment rate are estimates based on results of the European Union Labour Force Survey which is a household survey carried out in all countries on the basis of agreed definitions. These results are interpolated/ extrapolated to monthly data using national survey data and national monthly series on registered unemployment.

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. Before the aggregation, missing national data are estimated using the most recent trends of the series.

Further information on the methodology of the monthly unemployment rate statistics can be found on the annex to News Release 67/2002 of 4 June 2002.

Registered unemployed data are national administrative data compiled on a purely national basis and purposes. There are no European-wide rules on definition and coverage. Therefore the ensuing unemployment rates cannot be compared from one country to another. National legislation on the definition of unemployment and therefore its calculation can change in individual states. The conditions to receive unemployment benefits and assistance vary from one country to another. This affects the willingness of people to register themselves and the published unemployment rates.

Member States may also publish other rates than register based unemployment rates, for example based on national Labour Force or corresponding surveys. Although still internationally comparable, these rates may vary to a minor extent from those published by Eurostat due to different methodological choices.

*Current deviations from definition of unemployment in the EU Labour Force Survey*

*Spain, United Kingdom:* Unemployment is restricted to persons aged 16-74. In Spain the legal age limit for working is 16.

*Netherlands, Sweden:* 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.

The other Member States already comply with the definition. The remaining deviations will disappear as Member States adapt their surveys to the new definitions. The Netherlands and Sweden will adapt in 2005.
3. The unemployment rate for the euro-zone for February 2005 has been revised. The rate published in News Release 44/2005 of 1 April 2005 was 8.9%. The rate published for the EU25 remains the same.
4. EU25: Belgium (BE), the Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT), the Netherlands (NL), Austria (AT), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Slovenia (SI), Slovakia (SK), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE) and the United Kingdom (UK).
5. Provisional data.

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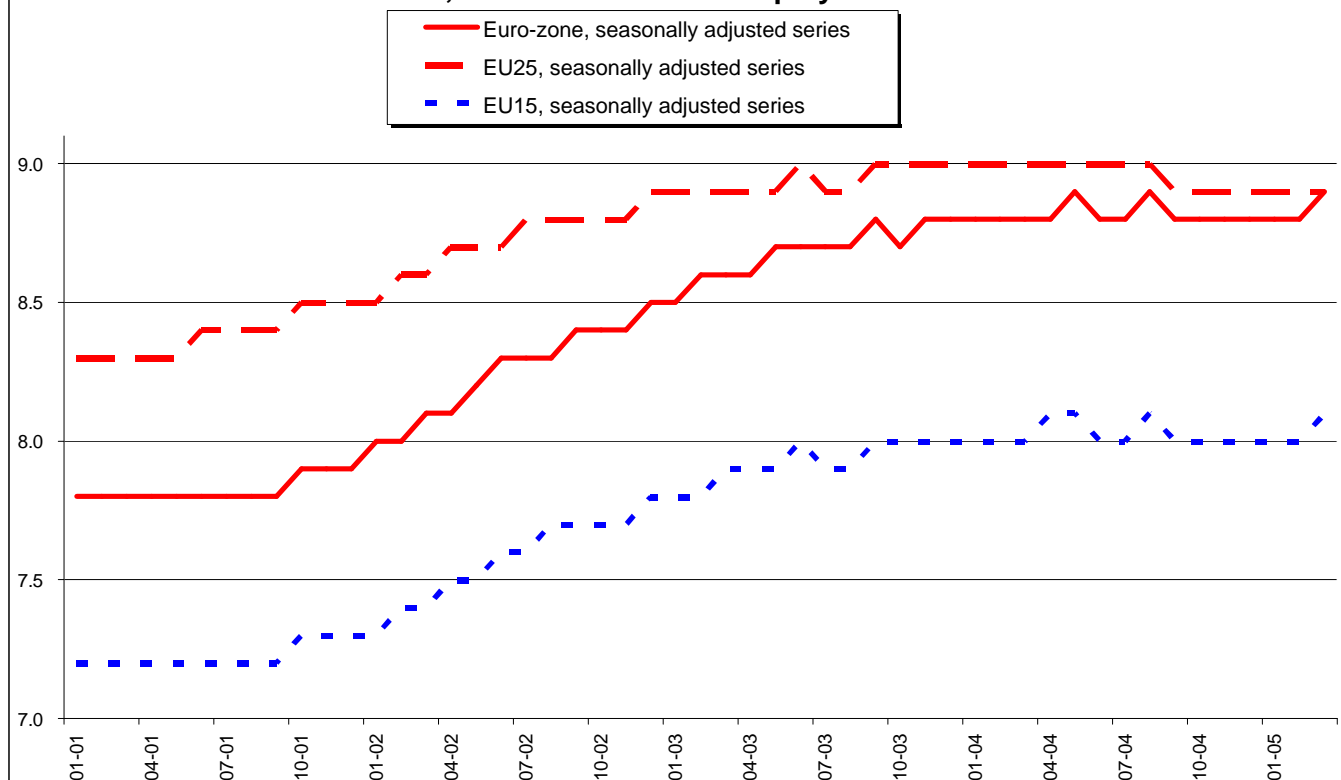
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### Euro-zone, EU25 and EU15 unemployment rates



### SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%) TOTAL MALES AND FEMALES

	Mar 2004	Sept 2004	Oct 2004	Nov 2004	Dec 2004	Jan 2005	Feb 2005	Mar 2005
<b>Euro-zone</b>	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	<b>8.9</b>
<b>EU25</b>	9.0	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	<b>8.9</b>
<b>EU15</b>	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	<b>8.1</b>
<b>BE</b>	7.7	7.7	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	<b>8.0</b>
<b>CZ</b>	8.4	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	<b>8.3</b>
<b>DK</b>	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.0	5.0	4.9	:
<b>DE<sup>o</sup></b>	9.4	9.5	9.8	9.4	9.5	9.6	9.7	<b>9.8</b>
<b>EE</b>	9.8	8.8	8.5	8.3	8.2	8.1	8.0	<b>7.9</b>
<b>EL</b>	10.7	10.5	10.2	10.2	10.2	:	:	:
<b>ES</b>	11.1	10.6	10.5	10.4	10.4	10.3	10.2	<b>10.2</b>
<b>FR</b>	9.6	9.7	9.6	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.8	<b>9.8</b>
<b>IE</b>	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	<b>4.3</b>
<b>IT</b>	8.2	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.0	:	:	:
<b>CY</b>	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.5	5.5	5.6	<b>5.1</b>
<b>LV</b>	9.9	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.6	9.5	<b>9.4</b>
<b>LT</b>	11.4	10.3	9.9	9.5	9.3	9.0	8.8	<b>8.6</b>
<b>LU</b>	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	<b>4.5</b>
<b>HU</b>	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.3	<b>6.3</b>
<b>MT</b>	7.6	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	6.9	6.8	:
<b>NL</b>	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.8	4.8	5.0	5.0	:
<b>AT</b>	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.6	<b>4.6</b>
<b>PL</b>	19.1	18.6	18.5	18.4	18.3	18.2	18.1	<b>18.1</b>
<b>PT</b>	6.4	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	<b>6.9</b>
<b>SI</b>	6.2	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	<b>5.8</b>
<b>SK</b>	18.7	17.6	17.5	17.1	16.8	16.5	16.1	<b>15.9</b>
<b>FI</b>	9.0	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.9	9.0	<b>8.3</b>
<b>SE</b>	6.3	6.6	6.2	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.5	<b>6.3</b>
<b>UK</b>	4.7	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.7	:	:
<b>US</b>	5.7	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.4	<b>5.2</b>
<b>JP</b>	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.6	<b>4.5</b>

: Data not available  
Source: Eurostat

## SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%)

## MALES

	Mar 2004	Sept 2004	Oct 2004	Nov 2004	Dec 2004	Jan 2005	Feb 2005	Mar 2005
<b>Euro-zone</b>	7.5	7.5	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6
<b>EU25</b>	8.1	8.0	8.1	8.1	7.9	8.0	7.9	8.0
<b>EU15</b>	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.2	7.0	7.1	7.0	7.1
<b>BE</b>	7.0	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.2
<b>CZ</b>	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.3
<b>DK</b>	5.3	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.6	:
<b>DE<sup>b</sup></b>	8.5	8.7	9.4	9.3	8.7	9.0	8.6	8.9
<b>EE</b>	10.9	9.9	9.6	9.4	9.3	9.2	9.1	8.9
<b>EL</b>	6.9	6.5	6.3	6.3	6.3	:	:	:
<b>ES</b>	8.1	7.8	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.4
<b>FR</b>	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.9	8.9
<b>IE</b>	5.0	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7
<b>IT</b>	6.4	6.3	6.4	6.4	6.4	:	:	:
<b>CY</b>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.1
<b>LV</b>	9.4	9.2	9.1	9.1	9.0	9.0	8.9	8.8
<b>LT</b>	11.2	9.7	9.3	8.7	8.3	8.1	7.8	7.6
<b>LU</b>	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8
<b>HU</b>	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.3
<b>MT</b>	7.0	6.8	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.4	:
<b>NL</b>	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.9	:
<b>AT</b>	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0
<b>PL</b>	18.4	17.8	17.7	17.6	17.5	17.7	17.7	17.6
<b>PT</b>	5.6	6.0	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.2
<b>SI</b>	5.8	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4
<b>SK</b>	17.9	16.3	16.0	15.6	15.2	14.9	14.6	14.4
<b>FI</b>	8.9	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.2
<b>SE</b>	6.6	6.8	6.3	6.6	6.5	6.3	6.6	6.4
<b>UK</b>	5.2	4.9	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.0	:	:
<b>US</b>	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.6	5.3	5.6	5.3
<b>JP</b>	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.8	5.0	4.7

## FEMALES

	Mar 2004	Sept 2004	Oct 2004	Nov 2004	Dec 2004	Jan 2005	Feb 2005	Mar 2005
<b>Euro-zone</b>	10.6	10.5	10.4	10.2	10.4	10.4	10.6	10.5
<b>EU25</b>	10.2	10.1	10.0	9.9	10.1	10.0	10.1	10.0
<b>EU15</b>	9.3	9.2	9.1	9.0	9.2	9.1	9.3	9.3
<b>BE</b>	8.7	8.8	9.0	9.2	9.2	9.1	9.1	9.1
<b>CZ</b>	10.0	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.7	9.5
<b>DK</b>	5.8	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.2	:
<b>DE<sup>b</sup></b>	10.6	10.5	10.3	9.6	10.5	10.4	11.1	10.8
<b>EE</b>	8.7	7.7	7.4	7.2	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.8
<b>EL</b>	16.4	16.3	16.0	16.0	16.0	:	:	:
<b>ES</b>	15.3	14.6	14.4	14.4	14.3	14.2	14.2	14.1
<b>FR</b>	10.7	10.8	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.8	10.8
<b>IE</b>	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7
<b>IT</b>	10.8	10.4	10.3	10.3	10.3	:	:	:
<b>CY</b>	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.8	6.9	7.0	6.4
<b>LV</b>	10.3	10.3	10.4	10.3	10.3	10.2	10.2	10.1
<b>LT</b>	11.6	10.8	10.6	10.4	10.3	10.1	9.8	9.7
<b>LU</b>	5.2	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.5
<b>HU</b>	5.8	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.4	6.4
<b>MT</b>	9.1	7.5	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.6	:
<b>NL</b>	4.8	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.2	:
<b>AT</b>	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.3	5.3
<b>PL</b>	19.8	19.6	19.5	19.4	19.3	18.7	18.6	18.7
<b>PT</b>	7.3	8.0	7.9	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.7
<b>SI</b>	6.6	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3
<b>SK</b>	19.6	19.2	19.2	18.9	18.6	18.3	18.0	17.7
<b>FI</b>	9.0	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.9	9.1	9.2	8.5
<b>SE</b>	6.0	6.5	6.2	6.2	6.4	6.1	6.4	6.3
<b>UK</b>	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2	:	:
<b>US</b>	5.5	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	5.0
<b>JP</b>	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.3

: Data not available  
Source: Eurostat

**SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%)  
UNDER 25 YEARS**

	Mar 2004	Sept 2004	Oct 2004	Nov 2004	Dec 2004	Jan 2005	Feb 2005	Mar 2005
<b>Euro-zone</b>	18.2	17.9	17.8	17.3	17.9	18.7	18.6	<b>19.2</b>
<b>EU25</b>	18.9	18.5	18.4	18.1	18.5	18.9	18.8	<b>19.1</b>
<b>EU15</b>	16.7	16.5	16.5	16.1	16.6	17.2	17.2	<b>17.6</b>
<b>BE</b>	20.0	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.3	19.3	<b>19.4</b>
<b>CZ</b>	20.6	21.2	21.5	21.5	21.3	21.2	21.1	<b>21.1</b>
<b>DK</b>	8.5	7.8	7.7	7.6	7.5	7.3	7.1	:
<b>DE<sup>b</sup></b>	15.8	15.2	14.8	13.3	15.4	17.5	17.3	<b>19.0</b>
<b>EE</b>	23.2	19.3	18.5	18.1	17.8	17.6	17.4	<b>17.2</b>
<b>EL</b>	27.8	26.3	26.2	26.2	26.2	:	:	:
<b>ES</b>	22.5	21.5	21.5	21.4	21.2	21.0	20.8	<b>20.7</b>
<b>FR</b>	21.9	22.3	21.9	22.0	22.1	22.2	22.2	<b>22.3</b>
<b>IE</b>	8.5	8.2	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	<b>8.0</b>
<b>IT</b>	23.1	23.1	24.0	24.0	24.0	:	:	:
<b>CY</b>	10.7	10.6	10.5	10.4	10.6	10.5	10.4	<b>10.2</b>
<b>LV</b>	19.1	19.0	19.0	18.8	18.6	18.6	18.5	<b>18.2</b>
<b>LT</b>	23.1	17.4	16.3	14.7	14.4	14.4	14.3	<b>14.3</b>
<b>LU</b>	12.8	13.0	12.8	12.8	12.9	12.8	12.9	<b>13.1</b>
<b>HU</b>	14.5	15.0	15.2	15.5	15.7	15.9	15.9	<b>15.9</b>
<b>MT</b>	17.7	15.8	15.8	15.7	15.7	15.5	15.2	:
<b>NL</b>	7.9	8.0	8.4	8.5	8.3	9.0	9.1	:
<b>AT</b>	9.8	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.8	9.9	<b>10.1</b>
<b>PL</b>	40.4	39.0	38.6	38.2	37.8	36.9	36.3	<b>36.4</b>
<b>PT</b>	15.0	16.1	16.1	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	<b>15.8</b>
<b>SI</b>	14.7	14.1	14.3	13.9	13.4	13.4	13.4	<b>12.6</b>
<b>SK</b>	34.2	31.0	30.7	30.1	29.5	28.9	28.2	<b>27.6</b>
<b>FI</b>	21.0	20.6	20.6	20.7	20.7	20.8	20.9	<b>20.1</b>
<b>SE</b>	16.2	17.4	16.3	17.0	16.3	16.5	18.0	<b>16.6</b>
<b>UK</b>	11.9	12.3	12.4	12.5	12.4	12.5	:	:
<b>US</b>	11.8	11.8	12.2	11.5	11.7	11.7	12.4	<b>11.6</b>
<b>JP</b>	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

**25 YEARS AND OVER**

	Mar 2004	Sept 2004	Oct 2004	Nov 2004	Dec 2004	Jan 2005	Feb 2005	Mar 2005
<b>Euro-zone</b>	7.6	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.5	<b>7.5</b>
<b>EU25</b>	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.5	<b>7.5</b>
<b>EU15</b>	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.7	<b>6.7</b>
<b>BE</b>	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.8	6.8	<b>6.8</b>
<b>CZ</b>	7.1	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	<b>7.0</b>
<b>DK</b>	5.1	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.5	:
<b>DE<sup>b</sup></b>	8.3	8.6	9.0	8.8	8.5	8.3	8.4	<b>8.2</b>
<b>EE</b>	8.1	7.6	7.3	7.2	7.1	7.0	6.9	<b>6.8</b>
<b>EL</b>	8.8	8.9	8.6	8.6	8.6	:	:	:
<b>ES</b>	9.6	9.2	9.1	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.9	<b>8.9</b>
<b>FR</b>	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.3	<b>8.3</b>
<b>IE</b>	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	<b>3.6</b>
<b>IT</b>	6.6	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.5	:	:	:
<b>CY</b>	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.9	5.0	5.1	<b>4.5</b>
<b>LV</b>	8.6	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.4	8.4	<b>8.3</b>
<b>LT</b>	10.3	9.6	9.4	9.1	8.8	8.6	8.3	<b>8.2</b>
<b>LU</b>	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	<b>3.8</b>
<b>HU</b>	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.4	<b>5.4</b>
<b>MT</b>	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	:
<b>NL</b>	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	:
<b>AT</b>	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	<b>3.7</b>
<b>PL</b>	16.0	15.7	15.7	15.7	15.6	15.6	15.6	<b>15.6</b>
<b>PT</b>	5.4	5.8	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.9	<b>5.9</b>
<b>SI</b>	5.1	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.9	<b>5.0</b>
<b>SK</b>	16.3	15.7	15.5	15.2	14.9	14.6	14.4	<b>14.2</b>
<b>FI</b>	7.3	7.2	7.1	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.3	<b>6.7</b>
<b>SE</b>	5.0	5.1	4.8	4.9	5.1	4.8	4.9	<b>4.9</b>
<b>UK</b>	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	:	:
<b>US</b>	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.2	<b>4.0</b>
<b>JP</b>	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

: Data not available  
Source: Eurostat