

The employment rate in the OECD rises to 68.7% in Q4 2021, close to its pre-pandemic rate

The OECD employment rate, which is the percentage share of the working-age population with jobs, including both employees and self-employed, **rose to 68.7% in the fourth quarter of 2021, from 68.2% in the third quarter, only 0.2 percentage point below the rate recorded in the fourth quarter of 2019 (Table 1).**

The OECD labour force participation rate – the share of the working-age population that is either employed or unemployed – **slightly rose to 72.8%, again approaching the level recorded in the fourth quarter of 2019**, as increases in employment were reflected in corresponding declines in unemployment. These latest figures inevitably exclude any potential impact of the current economic and geopolitical uncertainties on the OECD labour market.

The OECD employment rate **rose in all groups**. It continued to increase for women to 61.5% and men to 76.0% in the fourth quarter of 2021 (Table 2) and across all age groups (Table 3). Nonetheless, employment rates remained below pre-pandemic levels for all groups.

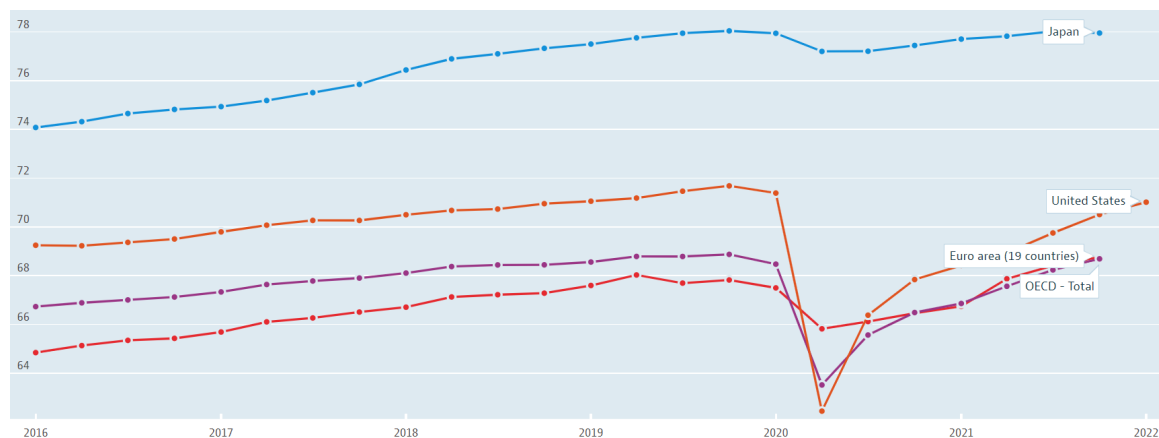
Increases in the employment rate were reported in four fifths of OECD countries. The largest increases (above 1.0 percentage point) were observed in Chile, Iceland, Israel and Turkey, with declines only recorded in Belgium, Colombia, Latvia, Luxembourg and Slovenia.

The employment rate **rose by 0.4 percentage point, to 68.8%, in the euro area**, with the largest increases recorded in Finland and Ireland. It increased in Canada, to 74.7%, its highest level since comparable data became available in 1976, and in the United States to 70.5%, still 1.2 percentage points below the pre-pandemic rate. More recent data for the first quarter of 2022 show that employment rates increased further in the United States (to 71.0%) and Canada (to 75.1%).

In the fourth quarter, employment rates were above or at the same level as pre-pandemic levels in 23 OECD countries (Figure 2),¹ and for the first time in Canada, Lithuania and the Slovak Republic.

¹ Due to breaks for Iceland in Q4 2020 and for Norway and Turkey in Q1 2021, these countries are not included in this list.

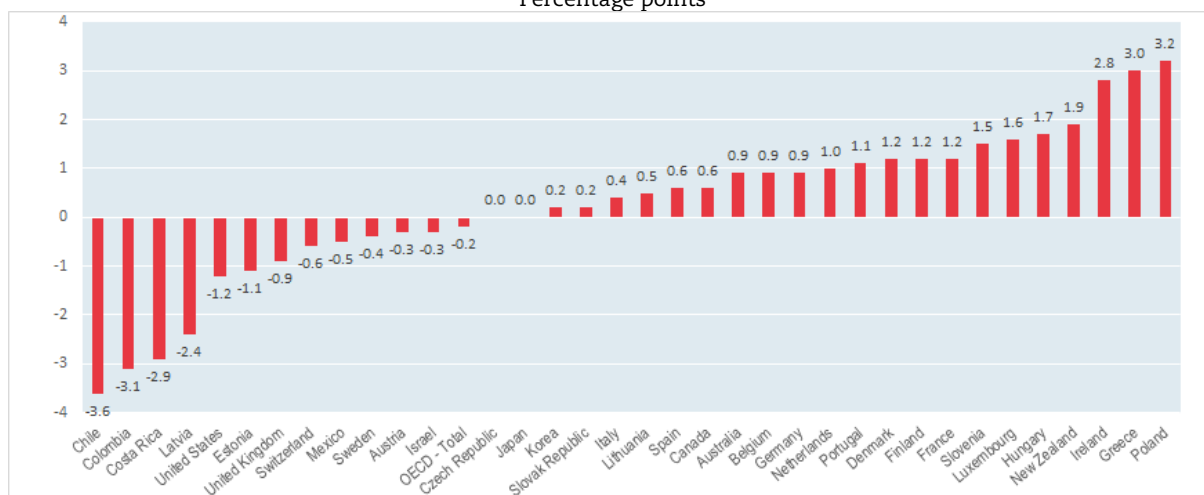
Figure 1. Employment rates (persons aged 15-64) for selected OECD countries and country aggregates⁽¹⁾
As a percentage of the working-age population



(1) In the third quarter of 2020 and, to a lesser extent, fourth quarter of 2020, a large part of the increase in the employment rate for the OECD-Total reflects the return to work of furloughed workers in Canada and the United States, where they are recorded as unemployed, whereas in most other countries, they are recorded as employed.

Visit the interactive [OECD Data Portal](#) to explore these data further.

Figure 2. Changes in employment rates (persons aged 15-64) for selected OECD countries(1)
between Q4 2019 and Q4 2021
Percentage points



(1) Due to breaks for Iceland in Q4 2020 and for Norway and Turkey in Q1 2021, these countries are not included in the chart.

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Table 1: OECD employment rates and levels (15-64)

Employment as a percentage of corresponding working age population and levels, seasonally adjusted

	Employment rates											Levels Thousands Q4 - 2021	
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2021								
					2019 Q4	2020 Q3 Q4		2021 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4					
OECD - Total	68.4	68.8	66.0	67.8	68.9	65.6	66.5	66.9	67.6	68.2	68.7	597,565	
Major Seven	71.4	72.1	69.6	71.1	72.2	69.1	69.9	70.2	70.7	71.4	71.9	342,102	
European Union	67.4	68.1	67.1	68.4	68.0	66.6	66.9	67.2	68.2	68.8	69.3	195,262	
Euro area	67.2	67.9	66.7	68.0	67.8	66.1	66.5	66.7	67.9	68.4	68.8	148,835	
Australia	73.8	74.3	72.7	75.0	74.3	72.1	73.5	74.4	75.4	74.8	75.2	12,449	
Austria	73.0	73.5	71.7	72.4	73.6	71.8	71.6	71.3	72.0	73.0	73.3	4,280	
Belgium	64.5	65.3	64.5	65.3	65.1	64.5	64.0	63.7	65.1	66.3	66.0	4,860	
Canada	73.5	74.2	70.0	73.2	74.1	70.2	71.9	72.1	72.5	73.8	74.7	18,391	
Chile	64.1	64.1	55.8	58.5	63.8	52.7	56.3	57.4	57.2	59.1	60.2	8,124	
Colombia	66.5	65.4	57.8	61.5	64.5	56.5	59.4	60.8	61.6	62.2	61.4	20,401	
Costa Rica	61.0	61.6	54.8	57.2	61.6	52.4	55.3	56.0	55.6	58.3	58.7	2,005	
Czech Republic	74.8	75.1	74.4	74.4	75.1	74.2	74.1	73.9	73.9	74.7	75.1	5,087	
Denmark	74.1	75.0	74.4	75.5	75.2	73.9	74.5	74.1	75.8	75.7	76.4	2,831	
Estonia	75.1	75.6	74.0	74.0	76.1	73.2	73.7	73.7	72.9	74.4	75.0	624	
Finland	71.2	72.0	71.2	72.7	72.3	71.0	71.4	71.6	72.9	72.7	73.5	2,493	
France	66.2	66.4	66.1	67.3	66.5	65.9	66.2	66.5	67.1	67.6	67.7	27,444	
Germany ⁽¹⁾	74.9	75.7	76.2	75.8 (u)	75.8	74.1 (u)	74.6 (u)	74.8	75.4	76.3	76.7	40,453	
Greece	54.5	56.1	53.7	57.3	56.2	55.3	53.7	53.8	57.4	58.7	59.2	3,956	
Hungary	71.4	72.2	72.0	73.1	72.2	72.1	72.2	72.0	73.1	73.3	73.9	4,562	
Iceland ⁽²⁾	85.1	84.1	80.3	79.8	83.6	81.5	76.6 (b)	77.5	79.3	80.4	81.8	192	
Ireland	68.5	69.5	66.6	69.9	69.5	66.0	66.3	66.2	69.4	71.4	72.3	2,385	
Israel	69.0	68.9	66.8	66.6	68.5	66.1	65.7	65.4	65.7	67.1	68.2	3,839	
Italy	58.5	59.1	57.5	58.3	59.0	57.0	57.3	56.7	58.0	58.8	59.4	22,169	
Japan	77.2	78.1	77.7	77.9	78.0	77.2	77.4	77.7	77.8	78.0	78.0	57,757	
Korea	66.6	66.8	65.9	66.5	67.0	65.7	65.6	65.6	66.5	66.8	67.2	24,474	
Latvia	71.7	72.2	71.5	69.9	72.6	71.4	71.3	68.8	69.6	70.9	70.2	820	
Lithuania	72.4	73.0	71.6	72.4	73.0	70.8	71.5	71.1	71.9	73.2	73.5	1,321	
Luxembourg	67.1	68.0	67.3	69.4	67.9	66.9	68.6	68.1	69.6	70.2	69.5	304	
Mexico ⁽³⁾	61.5	62.3	..	61.0	62.4	56.9	59.2	59.6	61.1	61.5	61.9	53,314	
Netherlands	78.7	79.7	79.3	80.2	79.8	78.9	79.2	79.4	79.9	80.4	80.8	9,081	
New Zealand	77.5	77.5	76.8	78.3	77.3	76.1	76.5	77.2	77.8	79.1	79.2	2,633	
Norway ⁽²⁾	74.8	75.3	74.7	76.3	75.4	74.3	74.5	74.9 (b)	76.0	76.9	77.4	2,693	
Poland	66.7	67.5	67.8	70.3	67.7	67.9	68.4	69.4	70.2	70.6	70.9	16,382	
Portugal	69.0	69.9	68.5	70.2	69.9	68.1	68.9	68.6	70.0	70.8	71.0	4,676	
Slovak Republic	69.6	70.4	69.5	69.5	70.2	69.3	69.4	68.2	69.2	70.1	70.4	2,538	
Slovenia	70.6	71.3	70.1	71.5	70.9	69.5	70.1	69.0	71.6	72.7	72.4	963	
Spain	62.4	63.3	61.0	62.7	63.3	60.7	61.1	61.1	62.6	63.4	63.9	19,837	
Sweden ⁽²⁾	76.9	76.6	74.9	75.4	76.3	74.4	74.6	74.5	75.4	75.7	75.9	4,893	
Switzerland	80.1	80.5	79.9	79.3	80.7	79.8	80.2	79.0	78.5	79.5	80.1	4,574	
Turkey ⁽²⁾	52.0	50.3	47.5	50.3	50.4	47.8	47.9	49.2 (b)	49.5	50.5	51.8	28,870	
United Kingdom	75.6	76.2	75.4	75.2	76.4	74.9	74.6	74.8	75.1	75.3	75.5	31,184	
United States	70.7	71.4	67.1	69.4	71.7	66.4	67.8	68.4	68.9	69.8	70.5	144,703	

...: not available

b: Break in time series

u: Low reliability

(1) Germany: due to technical issues with the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, data for Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 2020 are provisional.

(2) Breaks in the Labour Force Survey for Sweden in Q3 2018; for Iceland in Q4 2020 and for Norway and Turkey in Q1 2021. Some of these breaks also affect, to some extent, aggregates for the European Union and OECD-Total.

(3) Mexico: Q2 2020 figures are not available. Estimations based on the monthly INEGI Encuesta Telefónica de Ocupación y Empleo (ETOE) phone survey were used in the compilation of Q2 2020 figures for the OECD-Total. Data from Q3 2020 are based on the New Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo (ENOE) survey, combining telephone and face-to-face interviews.

Table 2: OECD employment rates (15-64) by sex
Employment as a percentage of corresponding working age population, seasonally adjusted

	Women							Men								
	2019	2020			2021				2019	2020			2021			
	Q4	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
OECD - Total	61.6	58.3	59.3	59.6	60.3	61.1	61.5	76.3	72.9	73.8	74.3	74.9	75.5	76.0		
Major Seven	67.2	64.2	65.1	65.4	65.9	66.6	67.1	77.3	74.0	74.8	75.2	75.7	76.2	76.7		
European Union	63.0	61.6	62.0	62.1	63.1	64.0	64.4	73.0	71.7	71.9	72.3	73.2	73.7	74.2		
Euro area	63.1	61.4	61.9	62.0	63.1	63.9	64.3	72.6	70.8	71.0	71.5	72.7	73.0	73.2		
Australia	70.2	68.2	69.4	70.7	71.8	71.0	71.4	78.5	76.1	77.6	78.1	79.0	78.8	79.1		
Austria	69.3	67.7	67.4	66.8	67.8	68.8	69.2	78.0	75.9	75.9	75.8	76.3	77.2	77.4		
Belgium	61.4	60.7	60.4	59.8	61.6	62.9	62.8	68.7	68.4	67.6	67.6	68.6	69.6	69.2		
Canada	71.3	67.2	68.9	68.9	69.1	70.9	71.9	76.8	73.3	75.0	75.3	75.8	76.7	77.5		
Chile	54.5	43.9	46.3	47.9	47.7	49.4	50.8	73.0	61.4	66.3	66.8	66.7	68.9	69.5		
Colombia	52.8	43.6	46.8	48.3	49.0	49.8	49.0	77.0	70.2	72.7	73.9	74.8	75.4	74.6		
Costa Rica	48.1	38.6	42.8	42.4	41.8	45.7	45.8	74.9	65.9	67.5	69.3	69.0	70.7	71.4		
Czech Republic	67.9	66.6	66.7	66.5	66.4	67.6	68.0	81.9	81.4	81.1	80.9	81.1	81.5	81.8		
Denmark	72.2	71.0	71.5	71.2	73.0	72.7	73.3	78.2	76.8	77.4	77.1	78.5	78.6	79.5		
Estonia	74.3	71.4	72.3	71.6	70.5	72.7	74.5	77.9	75.1	75.0	75.7	75.3	76.0	75.5		
Finland	70.9	69.3	70.0	70.5	72.0	72.2	72.2	73.6	72.6	72.7	72.7	73.7	73.1	74.7		
France	64.0	63.3	63.8	64.0	64.2	64.9	65.0	69.2	68.6	68.8	69.1	70.2	70.4	70.6		
Germany ⁽¹⁾	71.7	70.3 (u)	70.8 (u)	71.0	71.6	72.9	73.3	79.7	77.7 (u)	78.3 (u)	78.5	79.1	79.7	80.0		
Greece	46.7	46.4	44.9	44.4	48.4	49.9	50.2	65.9	64.3	62.6	63.4	66.5	67.4	68.4		
Hungary	67.2	67.0	67.1	66.6	68.1	68.7	69.5	77.3	77.2	77.3	77.5	78.0	78.0	78.3		
Iceland ⁽²⁾	81.2	78.9	74.6 (b)	73.6	76.5	78.0	79.1	85.7	83.9	78.5 (b)	81.1	81.9	82.8	84.4		
Ireland	64.0	60.5	61.1	61.4	64.8	67.4	68.4	75.1	71.7	71.7	71.1	74.1	75.5	76.3		
Israel	66.3	64.4	64.3	63.9	64.2	65.7	66.6	70.8	67.8	67.2	66.9	67.2	68.5	69.7		
Italy	50.1	48.2	48.6	47.7	49.0	50.1	50.9	68.0	65.8	66.1	65.8	67.1	67.5	67.9		
Japan	71.5	70.4	71.0	71.2	71.4	71.7	71.6	84.4	83.9	83.8	84.0	84.1	84.2	84.1		
Korea	58.0	56.4	56.5	56.5	57.6	58.1	58.4	75.8	74.7	74.5	74.4	75.1	75.4	75.8		
Latvia	70.9	70.1	69.7	66.4	68.1	69.1	68.3	74.4	72.8	73.1	71.4	71.3	72.7	72.1		
Lithuania	72.9	70.5	70.9	70.0	71.4	72.9	73.4	73.2	71.1	72.1	72.2	72.5	73.6	73.6		
Luxembourg	63.9	63.9	65.1	63.9	66.5	67.2	66.3	71.8	69.9	71.8	72.2	72.7	73.1	72.5		
Mexico ⁽³⁾	47.5	41.9	44.4	44.7	46.3	46.6	47.1	78.7	73.1	75.3	75.8	77.2	77.8	78.3		
Netherlands	76.0	75.2	75.8	76.1	76.3	76.8	77.2	83.5	82.5	82.7	82.7	83.4	84.1	84.4		
New Zealand	73.0	71.3	71.9	72.8	73.5	75.5	75.6	81.8	80.9	81.1	81.7	82.2	82.7	82.9		
Norway ⁽²⁾	73.2	72.4	72.3	73 (b)	73.9	74.8	75.6	77.4	76.1	76.5	76.7 (b)	78.0	78.8	79.2		
Poland	60.6	61.0	61.8	62.4	63.7	64.4	64.7	74.8	74.7	75.1	76.5	76.6	76.8	77.2		
Portugal	67.4	66.5	66.9	66.1	67.6	68.6	68.7	72.4	69.9	71.1	71.4	72.7	73.3	73.5		
Slovak Republic	66.6	65.8	65.8	63.9	65.6	66.2	66.6	73.8	72.8	72.8	72.4	72.7	73.9	74.1		
Slovenia	68.6	66.8	66.7	65.7	68.3	69.6	69.0	73.1	72.1	73.2	72.0	74.7	75.6	75.6		
Spain	58.0	55.6	56.1	56.1	57.7	58.8	59.2	68.6	65.8	66.1	66.2	67.5	68.0	68.6		
Sweden	74.5	72.6	72.6	72.4	73.7	73.6	73.5	78.1	76.2	76.6	76.5	77.1	77.7	78.2		
Switzerland	76.8	75.9	76.6	74.8	74.1	75.8	76.8	84.5	83.5	83.7	83.2	82.8	83.0	83.3		
Turkey ⁽²⁾	31.9	30.1	29.6	30.5 (b)	31.0	32.2	33.2	68.7	65.2	66.0	67.7 (b)	67.8	68.7	70.1		
United Kingdom	72.4	71.6	71.5	71.7	71.9	72.0	72.3	80.5	78.3	77.8	78.0	78.3	78.7	78.8		
United States	66.8	61.7	63.2	63.7	64.2	65.1	65.7	76.7	71.2	72.6	73.3	73.8	74.6	75.5		

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Table 3: OECD employment rates by age

Employment as a percentage of corresponding working age population, seasonally adjusted

	Youth (15-24)					Prime-age workers (25-54)					Older workers (55-64)				
	2019	2021				2019	2021				2019	2021			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
OECD - Total	42.5	40.1	41.1	41.8	42.3	78.8	76.7	77.4	78.1	78.6	62.2	60.7	61.2	61.8	62.1
Major Seven	46.8	44.8	45.6	46.4	47.1	81.6	79.5	80.0	80.7	81.2	65.6	64.0	64.3	64.8	64.9
European Union	33.4	31.1	32.6	33.4	33.8	80.2	79.3	80.2	80.9	81.3	59	59.7	60.3	60.8	61.2
Euro area	34.1	32.1	33.6	34.7	35.3	79.4	78.4	79.5	79.9	80.6	60.4	60.2	60.7	61.3	61.7
Australia	60.1	59.7	62.0	60.1	61.4	81.7	81.3	82.2	82.0	82.0	64.6	64.4	65.6	65.4	66.2
Austria	51.6	49.0	49.9	51.6	50.1	85.6	82.9	83.1	84.3	85.0	54.3	54.0	55.0	56.3	56.5
Belgium	26.3	22.6	24.4	26.1	25.9	80.6	79.2	80.7	81.4	81.7	52.4	53.4	54.4	54.5	55.5
Canada	57.6	52.2	53.4	57.5	58.1	83.0	81.4	81.7	82.4	83.8	62.8	62.6	62.4	63.0	62.7
Chile	25.6	19.5	20.5	22.1	23.2	75.5	69.3	68.9	70.7	72.0	66.9	56.6	55.6	58.0	59.2
Colombia	40.1	37.3	37.2	37.4	37.0	75.6	71.6	72.1	73.1	72.5	61.5	55.6	56.1	56.9	56.5
Costa Rica	31.2	26.2	27.8	27.9	27.4	74.7	69.2	68.0	71.7	72.0	58.0	50.5	49.9	51.8	54.1
Czech Republic	27.2	24.4	24.5	25.0	25.3	87.3	85.9	86.0	86.6	86.9	67.4	68.9	68.4	70.7	71.4
Denmark	55.5	51.7	54.2	54.3	55.3	82.9	81.7	83.3	83.8	84.6	71.6	72.0	71.9	72.1	73.0
Estonia	39.9	34.1	32.7	34.4	33.1	85.4	83.8	83.0	83.8	85.1	72.5	69.3	69.4	73.9	73.9
Finland	44.2	42.2	43.8	44.7	44.6	82.3	81.7	82.5	82.5	82.6	66.5	66.6	68.4	68.5	69.9
France	29.7	29.9	32.3	33.0	33.7	81.9	81.5	82.0	82.5	82.4	55.5	55.9	55.7	56.0	56.2
Germany ⁽¹⁾	47.7	47.1	48.2	49.1	50.2	84.0	83.4	84.1	85.1	85.3	72.7	71.2	71.4	72.3	72.5
Greece	15.1	12.3	12.8	14.0	14.3	70.5	67.4	71.3	72.3	73.4	43.4	44.5	48.6	49.7	50.5
Hungary	28.6	27.4	27.7	27.2	27.7	87.3	85.9	87.0	87.2	87.8	57.5	61.4	62.5	63.4	63.9
Iceland ⁽²⁾	69.6	60.7	62.0	69.4	69.8	88.4	82.6	83.6	83.4	84.3	80	78.7	79.4	80.7	81.9
Ireland	41.7	35.8	40.3	47.8	47.6	80.3	76.7	79.7	81.3	82.4	62.8	60.7	61.5	63.3	65.6
Israel						80.3	76.7	77.0	78.0	79.6	67.8	67.0	66.9	68.1	67.5
Italy	18.2	16.2	17.5	18.0	18.5	70.6	68.2	70.0	70.8	71.6	54.0	52.6	53.4	53.6	53.9
Japan	47.6	46.7	46.4	47.0	46.0	86.2	85.9	85.9	86.2	85.9	76.9	77.0	77.1	77.1	77.3
Korea	27.0	25.4	27.5	27.6	27.6	76.4	74.6	75.2	75.6	75.9	67.0	65.5	66.1	66.5	67.1
Latvia	33.7	26.3	27.7	29.2	28.4	82.9	79.4	80.0	81.4	80.7	67.9	66.5	68.1	68.4	68.1
Lithuania	32.1	29.5	27.4	32.2	35.4	85.1	83.5	84.1	84.7	84.8	68.7	66.5	69.4	68.9	67.3
Luxembourg	26.6	29.0	31.9	32.5	24.2	84.5	83.6	85.1	86.4	86.5	44	47.2	47.7	44.3	47.1
Mexico ⁽³⁾	41.5	39.3	41.0	41.6	41.5	72.7	69.9	71.3	71.6	72.3	56.6	50.9	53.2	53.8	54.5
Netherlands	73	69.6	71.3	72.8	73.0	85.3	85.5	85.7	86.0	86.4	70.2	71.0	70.6	71.6	72.4
New Zealand	55.6	55.9	58.0	59.0	59.3	84.6	83.9	84.1	85.6	85.7	76.5	77.0	77.3	78.8	78.7
Norway ⁽²⁾	50.8	50.4 (b)	54.3	54.0	54.6	83.2	82.4 (b)	83.2	84.2	84.3	73.4	73.6 (b)	74.3	75.0	75.7
Poland	32.1	26.5	26.9	27.7	28.1	81.9	84.2	84.8	85.1	85.2	49.2	53.5	54.4	55.1	55.6
Portugal	27.6	21.9	23.6	22.8	22.8	85.2	83.9	84.9	86.2	86.3	58.8	61.1	63.8	63.9	64.7
Slovak Republic	25.0	20.4	19.8	21.2	21.7	84.1	81.3	82.8	84.2	84.3	59.8	58.7	59.7	61.2	62.9
Slovenia	30.5	23.9	28.2	33.1	33.0	88.4	86.2	88.7	89.1	89.2	47.9	51.4	53.9	52.4	53.1
Spain	22.6	18.5	20.5	22.1	21.2	75.7	73.7	75.2	75.8	76.8	54.7	54.9	55.5	55.9	56.8
Sweden	44.2	39.1	41.8	41.1	40.7	85.8	83.7	84.6	85.2	85.4	76.2	76.1	76.8	76.9	77.6
Switzerland	61.3	59.4	58.9	59.5	60.6	87.7	86.1	85.7	86.4	87.0	73.2	71.9	72.1	72.2	73.0
Turkey ⁽²⁾	33.1	31.9 (b)	31.2	32.1	33.8	59.8	58.9 (b)	59.5	60.7	61.8	33.0	32.3 (b)	33.3	33.9	34.8
United Kingdom	54.8	50.6	51.8	53.0	54.2	85.1	84.2	84.4	84.7	84.6	66.6	65.4	65.1	64.7	64.5
United States	51.3	49.1	49.8	50.2	51.2	80.4	76.6	77.0	78.0	78.8	63.8	61.0	61.6	62.4	62.5

..: not available

b: Break in time series

u: Low reliability

(1) Germany: due to technical issues with the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, data for Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 2020 are provisional.

(2) Breaks in the Labour Force Survey for Iceland in Q4 2020 and for Norway and Turkey in Q1 2021. These breaks also affect, to some extent, aggregates for OECD-Total.

(3) Mexico: Q2 2020 figures are not available. Estimations based on the monthly INEGI ETOE phone survey were used in the compilation of Q2 2020 figures for the OECD-Total. Data from Q3 2020 are based on the New ENOE survey, combining telephone and face-to-face interviews.

Table 4: OECD labour force participation rates (15-64)

Labour force as a percentage of corresponding working age population, seasonally adjusted

	Participation rate										
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020		2021			
					Q4	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
OECD - Total	72.4	72.8	71.2	72.4	72.9	71.2	71.7	71.8	72.4	72.7	72.8
Major Seven	74.9	75.3	74.4	75.1	75.5	74.4	74.6	74.6	75.0	75.3	75.4
European Union	72.8	73.2	72.3	73.6	73.0	72.4	72.5	72.7	73.7	73.9	74.2
Euro area	73.4	73.6	72.5	73.7	73.4	72.6	72.5	72.8	73.9	74.1	74.1
Australia	78.0	78.5	77.9	79.1	78.5	77.7	79.0	79.2	79.6	78.5	79.0
Austria	77.1	77.3	76.4	77.3	77.2	76.7	76.4	76.9	77.2	77.4	77.5
Belgium	68.7	69.1	68.4	69.7	68.8	68.9	68.2	68.4	69.5	70.7	70.1
Canada	78.2	78.7	77.4	79.1	78.7	78.3	78.7	78.7	78.8	79.5	79.6
Chile	69.4	69.3	62.7	64.3	69.3	60.1	63.5	64.2	63.1	64.6	65.4
Colombia	73.7	73.2	69.0	71.3	72.5	68.7	70.6	71.3	71.8	71.6	70.4
Costa Rica	68.1	70.1	68.3	68.6	70.7	67.3	69.3	69.2	68.1	69.0	68.2
Czech Republic	76.6	76.7	76.4	76.6	76.7	76.3	76.5	76.4	76.3	76.8	76.8
Denmark	78.2	79.1	79.0	79.6	79.2	79.1	79.0	79.1	79.6	79.7	79.9
Estonia	79.3	79.2	79.6	79.1	79.5	79.7	80.2	79.2	78.4	79.3	79.5
Finland	77.0	77.4	77.3	78.8	77.7	77.7	77.8	78.0	79.3	78.9	79.1
France	72.8	72.6	72.0	73.0	72.5	72.3	72.1	72.4	73.2	73.3	73.2
Germany ⁽¹⁾	77.5	78.1	77.3	78.7	78.2	77.2 (u)	77.6 (u)	77.9	78.4	79.1	79.4
Greece	68.1	68.5	65.3	67.3	68.1	66.9	65.2	64.5	67.9	68.3	68.4
Hungary	74.1	74.7	75.1	76.2	74.7	75.4	75.4	75.4	76.1	76.3	76.8
Iceland ⁽²⁾	87.5	87.3	85.2	85.1	86.7	86.7	83.6 (b)	84.2	85.0	84.8	86.2
Ireland	72.8	73.2	70.8	74.6	73.1	71.0	71.0	71.3	74.6	75.8	76.6
Israel	72.0	71.7	69.9	70.2	71.2	69.5	69.2	68.9	69.6	70.8	71.4
Italy	65.6	65.7	63.6	64.5	65.4	64.1	63.4	63.1	64.5	65.1	65.2
Japan	78.9	79.7	79.7	80.3	80.0	79.7	80.0	80.2	80.3	80.4	80.2
Korea	69.3	69.5	68.6	69.0	69.5	68.4	68.5	68.5	69.1	69.1	69.4
Latvia	77.7	77.3	78.1	75.8	77.4	78.2	77.8	75.1	75.8	76.6	75.8
Lithuania	77.3	78.1	78.6	78.2	78.4	78.2	78.7	77.4	78.0	78.7	78.8
Luxembourg	71.1	72.0	72.2	73.2	72.1	72.7	73.4	72.1	73.9	74.3	72.6
Mexico ⁽³⁾	63.7	64.6	..	63.7	64.7	59.8	62.2	62.5	63.9	64.1	64.5
Netherlands	82.8	83.4	83.4	83.7	83.5	83.5	83.5	83.3	83.5	83.9	84.0
New Zealand	81.2	80.9	80.6	81.6	80.7	80.5	80.7	81.0	81.2	82.0	82.0
Norway ⁽²⁾	77.9	78.3	78.2	80.0	78.4	78.0	78.2	78.9 (b)	80.1	80.2	80.5
Poland	69.4	69.9	70.1	72.8	69.9	70.3	70.9	72.0	72.7	73.1	73.3
Portugal	74.5	74.9	73.8	75.2	74.9	74.1	74.4	73.9	75.4	75.6	75.9
Slovak Republic	74.4	74.8	74.5	74.6	74.6	74.6	74.7	73.5	74.3	75.1	75.5
Slovenia	74.5	74.7	73.8	75.1	74.1	73.3	74.0	72.9	75.1	76.3	75.8
Spain	73.7	73.8	72.2	73.7	73.8	72.5	73.0	72.7	74.0	74.3	73.9
Sweden ⁽²⁾	82.3	82.5	82.1	82.9	82.4	82.1	82.3	82.4	83.1	83.0	83.0
Switzerland	84.2	84.3	84.1	83.7	84.3	84.2	84.8	83.8	82.9	83.7	84.2
Turkey ⁽²⁾	58.5	58.4	54.9	57.3	58.2	55.2	55.1	56.5 (b)	56.8	57.4	58.3
United Kingdom	78.9	79.3	79.1	78.8	79.5	78.9	78.9	78.7	78.8	78.8	78.8
United States	73.6	74.1	73.0	73.4	74.4	72.7	73.0	73.0	73.3	73.5	73.7

...: not available

b: Break in time series

u: Low reliability

(1) Germany: due to technical issues with the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, data for Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 2020 are provisional.

(2) Breaks in the Labour Force Survey for Iceland in Q4 2020 and for Norway and Turkey in Q1 2021. These breaks also affect, to some extent, aggregates for the European Union and OECD-Total.

(3) Mexico: Q2 2020 figures are not available. Estimations based on the monthly INEGI ETOE phone survey were used in the compilation of Q2 2020 figures for the OECD-Total. Data from Q3 2020 are based on the New ENOE survey, combining telephone and face-to-face interviews.

Note: Employment and unemployment statistics during the COVID-19 crisis

The broad comparability of unemployment data across OECD countries is achieved through the adherence of national statistics to International Guidelines from the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) – the so-called ILO guidelines.

Departures from these guidelines may however exist across countries depending on national circumstances (e.g. statistical environment, national regulations and practices). Typically, these departures have only a limited impact on broad comparability of employment and unemployment statistics. However, the unprecedented impact of COVID-19¹ is amplifying divergences and affects the cross-country comparability of unemployment statistics in this news release.

This concerns in particular the treatment of persons on temporary layoff or employees furloughed by their employers. These are *persons not at work during the survey reference week due to economic reasons and business conditions* (i.e. lack of work, shortage of demand for goods and services, business closures or business moves).

According to ILO guidelines, ‘**employed**’ persons include those who, in their present job, were ‘not at work’ for a short duration but maintained a job attachment during their absence (ILO, 2013 and 2020). Job attachment is determined on the basis of the continued receipt of remuneration, and/or the total duration of the absence. In practice, formal or continued job attachment is established when:

- *the expected total duration of the absence is up to three months (which can be more than three months, if the return to employment in the same economic unit is guaranteed and, in the case of the pandemic, once the restrictions in place - where applicable - are lifted)*
- OR**
- *workers continue to receive remuneration from their employer, including partial pay, even if they also receive support from other sources, including government schemes.*

In turn persons are classified as ‘**not employed**’ if:

- *The expected total duration of absence is greater than three months or there is no or unknown expected return to the same economic unit*
- AND**
- *People in this condition do not receive any part of their remuneration from their employer.*

Not-employed persons are classified as ‘**unemployed**’ if they fulfil the criteria of active “job search”² and “availability” specified for the measurement of unemployment.

However, departures from these guidelines in national practices do exist. In particular, in North America persons on temporary layoff are considered to be “only weakly or not at all attached to their job and are to be counted as unemployed” (Sorrentino, 2000). In the United States, people on temporary layoff are classified as ‘unemployed’ if they expect to be recalled to their job within six months. If they have not been given a date to return to work by their employer and if they have no expectation to return to work within six months, they need to fulfil the “job search” criteria to be classified as ‘unemployed’. For the latest US figures “people who were effectively laid off due to

¹ Broad comparability is ensured during normal business conditions, while divergences are potentially exacerbated during economic and financial crisis, such as the Great Recession or the current Covid-19 crisis.

² Some not-employed persons may be classified as “inactive/out of the labour force” because, due to the pandemic, they are either not able to actively look for a job even if they are available to work or are not available to work because of family responsibilities as schools and care services are closed.

pandemic-related closures were counted among the unemployed on temporary layoff” without further testing for their return to their previous job (BLS, 2020). In Canada, persons in temporary layoff are also classified as ‘unemployed’ if they have a date of return or an indication that they will be recalled by their employers.

Conversely, persons on temporary layoff are classified as employed (not at work) in Europe, as recommended by the ILO Guidelines (Eurostat, 2016). In practice, formal job attachment is tested on the basis of (i) an assurance of return to work within a period of three months or (ii) the receipt of half or more of their wage or salary from their employer. Somewhat stricter than ILO guidance, absences during COVID-19 crisis whose duration is unknown are treated as absences longer than three months. Those failing to satisfy these two criteria are classified as unemployed if they are “available to start work” (over the next two weeks) and have actively searched for a job in the last four weeks. All other persons on layoff are classified as inactive.

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Methodological Notes for OECD Quarterly Employment Situation News Release

All rates and levels quoted are seasonally adjusted (s.a.). Data for EU countries and for some non-EU countries are seasonally adjusted by the OECD.

OECD Database: OECD Short-Term Labour Market Statistics

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

New methodology in the **EU Labour Force Survey** from 2021 with the entry into force of the Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Framework Regulation, resulting in [updated definitions of the labour status](#). A discussion on changes resulting from the implementation of the IESS regulation can be found in a Eurostat *Statistics Explained* [article](#)

The measures put in place by national governments to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) may have impacted on the ability to field surveys, and so, in turn, on the quality of statistics typically produced. In addition, because of differences in national practices used to determine whether individuals are unemployed when under confinement, international comparability has also been affected. See the above **note on the divergence in employment and unemployment statistics during the Covid-19 crisis**.