

EMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUP

Labour markets differ in how employment opportunities are allocated among people of different ages. Employment rates for people of different ages are significantly affected by government policies with regard to higher education, pensions and retirement age.

Definition

The employment rate for a given age group is measured as the number of employed people of a given age as a ratio of the total number of people in that same age group.

Employment is generally measured through national labour force surveys. In accordance with the ILO Guidelines, employed persons are 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 in the reference week. Those

Overview

Employment rates for people aged 25 to 54 are relatively similar between OECD countries, with rates in all countries except Turkey ranging between 68% and 87% in 2011. Cross-country differences are larger when looking at the youngest age group where, in 2011, employment rates ranged between less than 26% in nine countries – Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Slovak Republic, Luxembourg, Korea, Spain, the Czech Republic and Poland – and over 60% in just four countries – Australia, Switzerland, Iceland and the Netherlands. Employment rates for the oldest age group also vary considerably, between 70% or more in nine countries – Australia, Israel, Korea, Japan, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, New Zealand and Iceland and less than 40% in eight countries – Slovenia, Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and Greece. Eleven countries have prime-age rates below the OECD average – Chile, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Israel, Korea, Mexico, Spain, Turkey, the United States, whereas Slovenia is 8 points above the average. In the emerging economies, employment rates for youth and older workers are above the OECD average only in Brazil, while those for people of prime working age exceed the OECD average by around 9 percentage points in the Russian Federation.

As a consequence of the ongoing jobs crisis, prime-age employment rates have fallen quite significantly in a few countries by 4 percentage points or more in Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Spain and the United States. The employment rates for older workers increased by 6 percentage points on average in the OECD area, even during the jobs crisis, with the largest increases recorded in New Zealand, the Netherlands, Germany, Australia, Belgium and Finland.

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.

Employment rates are shown for three age groups: persons aged 15 to 24 are those just entering the labour market following education; persons aged 25 to 54 are those in their prime working lives; persons aged 55 to 64 are those who have passed the peak of their career and are approaching retirement.

Comparability

Employment levels are likely to be affected by changes in the survey design, the survey conduct and adjustments to the population controls based on census results and intercensal population estimates between censuses. Despite these changes, the employment rates shown here are fairly consistent over time.

Sources

- OECD (2012), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD Publishing.
- For non-member countries: National sources.

Further information

Analytical publications

- Burniaux, J.M., R. Duval and F. Jaumotte (2004), “Coping with Ageing”, *OECD Economics Department Working Papers*, No. 371.
- OECD (2012), *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives, A Strategic Approach to Skills Policies*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2010), *Off to a Good Start? Jobs for Youth*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2006), *Ageing and Employment Policies*, OECD Publishing.

Statistical publications

- OECD (2011), *Labour Force Statistics*, OECD Publishing.

Online databases

- *OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics*.

Websites

- OECD Ageing and Employment Policies (supplementary material), www.oecd.org/els/employment/olderworkers.
- OECD Employment Policies, www.oecd.org/els/employment.
- OECD Jobs for Youth Project (supplementary material), www.oecd.org/employment/youth.
- OECD Labour Statistics, www.oecd.org/std/labourstatistics.



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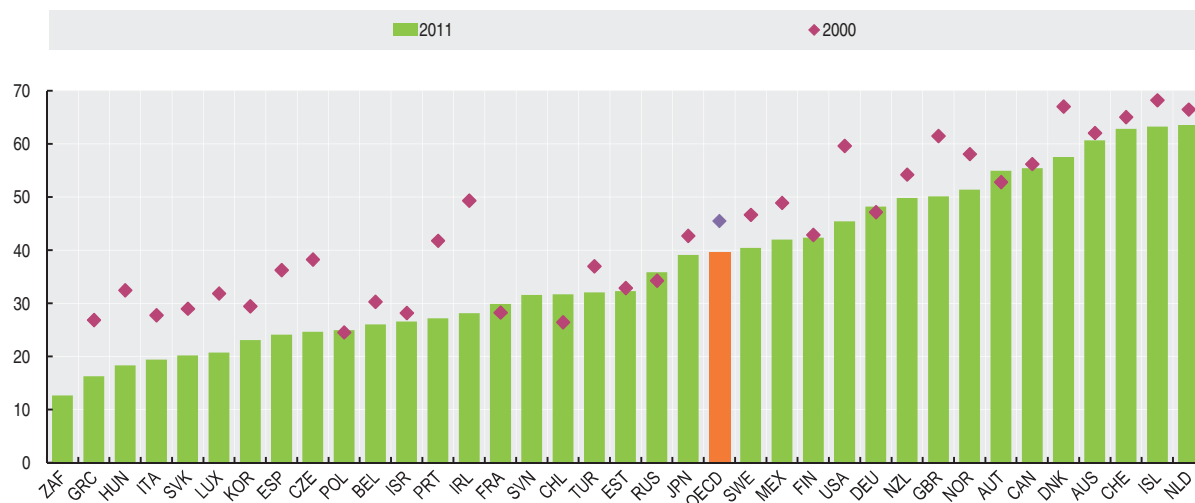
Employment rates by age group

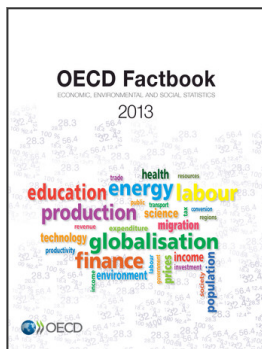
As a percentage of population in that age group

	Persons 15-24 in employment				Persons 25-54 in employment				Persons 55-64 in employment			
	1990	2000	2005	2011	1990	2000	2005	2011	1990	2000	2005	2011
Australia	62.7	62.1	63.3	60.7	76.0	76.3	78.8	79.8	41.5	46.2	53.5	61.1
Austria	..	52.8	53.1	54.9	..	82.5	82.6	84.9	..	28.3	31.8	41.5
Belgium	30.4	30.3	27.5	26.0	71.7	77.9	78.3	79.3	21.4	25.0	31.8	38.7
Canada	61.3	56.2	57.7	55.4	78.1	79.9	81.3	81.0	46.2	48.1	54.7	58.7
Chile	..	26.4	25.4	31.7	..	65.0	67.5	74.2	..	47.5	51.0	59.7
Czech Republic	..	38.3	27.3	24.7	..	81.6	82.0	82.8	..	36.3	44.6	47.6
Denmark	65.0	67.1	62.3	57.5	84.0	84.3	84.5	82.3	53.6	54.6	59.5	59.5
Estonia	51.7	32.9	29.8	32.3	91.8	75.7	79.3	78.1	60.4	44.0	55.7	57.1
Finland	55.2	42.9	42.1	42.3	87.9	80.9	81.7	82.3	42.8	42.3	52.6	57.0
France	35.7	28.3	30.2	29.9	77.3	78.4	80.7	81.3	30.7	29.3	38.5	41.4
Germany	56.4	47.2	42.6	48.2	73.6	79.3	77.4	82.8	36.8	37.6	45.5	59.9
Greece	30.3	26.9	25.0	16.3	68.5	70.2	74.0	69.0	40.8	39.0	41.6	39.4
Hungary	..	32.5	21.8	18.3	..	73.0	73.7	73.1	..	21.9	33.0	35.8
Iceland	..	68.2	71.6	63.3	..	90.6	88.2	84.0	..	84.2	84.8	79.5
Ireland	41.4	49.4	47.9	28.1	60.0	75.5	77.8	69.8	38.6	45.2	51.6	50.8
Israel	23.6	28.2	26.6	26.6	66.5	70.4	70.6	74.8	48.5	46.6	52.4	61.2
Italy	29.8	27.8	25.5	19.4	68.2	68.0	72.2	71.1	32.6	27.7	31.4	37.9
Japan	42.2	42.7	40.9	39.1	79.6	78.6	79.0	80.2	62.9	62.8	63.9	65.1
Korea	32.5	29.4	29.9	23.1	73.2	72.2	73.4	74.4	61.9	57.8	58.7	62.1
Luxembourg	43.3	31.8	24.9	20.7	71.8	78.2	80.7	82.0	28.2	27.2	31.7	39.3
Mexico	..	48.9	43.7	42.0	..	67.4	68.8	69.5	..	51.7	52.6	53.4
Netherlands	54.5	66.5	61.7	63.6	71.2	81.0	81.5	84.2	29.7	37.6	44.8	56.1
New Zealand	59.1	54.2	56.4	49.9	76.3	78.3	81.6	80.4	41.8	56.9	69.5	73.7
Norway	53.4	58.1	52.9	51.4	82.2	85.3	83.2	84.7	61.5	67.1	67.6	69.6
Poland	..	24.5	20.9	24.9	..	70.9	69.5	77.2	..	28.4	29.1	36.9
Portugal	54.8	41.8	36.1	27.1	78.4	81.8	80.8	77.8	47.0	50.7	50.5	47.9
Slovak Republic	..	29.0	25.6	20.2	..	74.7	75.3	76.5	..	21.3	30.4	41.4
Slovenia	..	..	34.1	31.5	..	..	83.8	83.1	..	..	30.7	31.2
Spain	38.3	36.3	41.9	24.1	61.4	68.4	74.4	68.7	36.9	37.0	43.1	44.5
Sweden	66.1	46.7	43.3	40.4	91.6	83.8	83.9	86.0	69.5	65.1	69.6	72.5
Switzerland	..	65.1	59.9	62.9	..	85.4	85.1	86.4	..	63.3	65.1	69.5
Turkey	45.9	37.0	30.2	32.1	61.6	56.7	53.0	57.5	42.7	36.4	28.0	31.4
United Kingdom	70.1	61.5	58.7	50.1	79.1	80.2	81.1	80.1	49.2	50.4	56.7	56.8
United States	59.8	59.7	53.9	45.5	79.7	81.5	79.3	75.1	54.0	57.8	60.8	60.0
EU 27	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
OECD	49.1	45.5	42.7	39.5	75.8	75.9	75.8	75.4	47.7	47.6	51.7	54.4
Brazil	..	..	52.7	..	..	..	75.9	..	..	..	54.1	..
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	..	34.3	32.5	35.8	..	79.6	82.6	84.6	..	34.6	44.3	43.8
South Africa	..	..	15.0	12.7	..	..	59.3	56.5	..	..	42.2	38.0

 StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932708484>
Employment rates for age group 15-24

Persons in employment as a percentage of population in that age group


 StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932708503>



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