### 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.

### **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. 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 study, incapacity or the need to look after young children or elderly relatives.

### Overview

Total employment rates over the three years to 2008 are, in most OECD countries, slightly above the levels achieved in the period 1995 to 1997. In Ireland and Spain the increase in employment rates exceed 10 points, while gains are more moderate for most other OECD countries. However, the Czech Republic, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Turkey and the United States recorded modest falls in employment rates over this period. By the end of the period, employment rates ranged between 45% in Turkey and 85% in Iceland. Among the non-OECD countries shown here, employment rates in Brazil, Estonia and Russia are slightly above OECD average, rising by 5 percentage points over the past years in Russia and Slovenia. By contrast, employment rates in Chile and Israel are below the OECD average, despite modest rises since the mid-1990s. All these developments have preceded those associated to the financial crisis of 2008-2009, whose employment impacts are described later in this volume.

Employment rates for men are higher than those for women in all OECD countries. While employment rates for men have remained fairly stable in most OECD countries, there are larger differences across countries in how those for women have evolved. In particular, in Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands employment rates for women have increased by more than 10 percentage points in this period, contributing to much of the rise in the total employment. In non-OECD countries, employment rates of men are markedly higher than those of women, by more than 20 points in Brazil and Chile and by 5 to 10 points in Estonia, Israel, Russia and Slovenia. Brazil, Chile and Israel have below OECDaverage employment rates for women despite increases since the mid-1990s in excess of those recorded for men. By contrast, Estonia, Russia and Slovenia have above OECD-average employment rates for women, rising at a somewhat quicker pace than those of men since the mid-1990s.

The working age population refers to persons aged 15 to 64. Employment rates are here shown for both total employment and for men and women separately.

### **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.

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#### **Online databases**

• Employment Statistics.

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- Putting More Women to Work: A Colloquium on Employment, Child Care and Taxes, www.oecd.org/employment/colloquium/women.

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# **Employment rates: total**

Share of persons of working age in employment

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Australia	67.7	67.6	67.4	67.9	68.4	69.3	69.0	69.4	70.0	70.3	71.5	72.2	72.8	73.2
Austria	68.7	67.8	67.8	67.8	68.4	68.3	68.2	68.8	68.9	67.8	68.6	70.2	71.4	72.1
Belgium	56.3	56.3	57.0	57.3	58.9	60.9	59.7	59.7	59.3	60.5	61.0	60.4	61.6	62.0
Canada	67.5	67.3	68.0	68.9	70.0	70.9	70.8	71.4	72.2	72.5	72.5	72.9	73.6	73.7
Czech Republic	69.4	69.3	68.7	67.5	65.9	65.2	65.3	65.7	64.9	64.2	64.8	65.3	66.1	66.6
Denmark	73.9	74.0	75.4	75.3	76.5	76.4	75.9	76.4	75.1	76.0	75.5	76.9	77.3	78.4
Finland	61.9	62.8	63.5	64.8	66.6	67.5	68.3	68.3	67.9	67.8	68.5	69.6	70.5	71.3
France	59.1	59.2	58.9	59.4	59.8	61.1	62.0	62.2	63.3	63.1	63.2	63.3	64.0	64.6
Germany	64.6	64.3	63.8	64.7	65.2	65.6	65.8	65.3	64.6	65.0	65.5	67.2	69.0	70.2
Greece	54.5	54.9	54.8	55.6	55.4	55.9	55.6	57.7	58.9	59.6	60.3	61.0	61.5	62.2
Hungary	52.9	52.7	52.7	53.6	55.4	56.0	56.2	56.2	57.0	56.8	56.9	57.3	57.3	56.7
Iceland	80.5	80.4	80.0	82.2	84.2	84.6	84.6	82.8	84.1	82.8	84.4	85.3	85.7	84.2
Ireland	54.1	55.0	56.3	59.6	62.5	64.5	65.0	65.0	64.9	65.4	67.1	68.2	69.0	68.1
Italy	51.2	51.4	51.6	52.2	52.9	53.9	54.9	55.6	56.2	57.4	57.5	58.4	58.7	58.7
Japan	69.2	69.5	70.0	69.5	68.9	68.9	68.8	68.2	68.4	68.7	69.3	70.0	70.7	70.7
Korea	63.5	63.7	63.7	59.2	59.6	61.5	62.1	63.3	63.0	63.6	63.7	63.8	63.9	63.8
Luxembourg	58.5	59.1	59.9	60.2	61.6	62.7	63.0	63.6	62.2	62.5	63.6	63.6	63.6	64.4
Mexico	57.2	58.1	60.3	60.4	60.4	60.1	59.4	59.3	58.8	59.9	59.6	61.0	61.1	61.3
Netherlands	65.1	66.0	67.9	69.5	70.8	72.1	73.1	73.2	72.6	71.8	71.9	73.2	74.8	76.1
New Zealand	70.1	71.1	70.6	69.6	70.1	70.7	71.8	72.4	72.5	73.5	74.6	75.2	75.4	74.9
Norway	73.5	75.3	77.0	78.3	78.0	77.9	77.5	77.1	75.8	75.6	75.2	75.5	76.9	78.1
Poland	58.1	58.4	58.8	58.9	57.5	55.0	53.5	51.7	51.4	51.9	53.0	54.5	57.0	59.2
Portugal	63.2	63.6	64.7	66.8	67.4	68.3	68.6	68.1	67.1	67.8	67.5	67.9	67.8	68.2
Slovak Republic	60.2	61.9	61.1	60.5	58.1	56.8	56.9	56.9	57.7	57.0	57.7	59.4	60.7	62.3
Spain	48.3	49.3	50.7	52.4	55.0	57.4	58.8	59.5	60.7	62.0	64.3	65.7	66.6	65.3
Sweden	72.2	71.6	70.7	71.5	72.9	74.2	75.2	74.9	74.3	73.5	73.9	74.5	75.7	75.7
Switzerland	76.4	77.0	76.9	78.0	78.4	78.4	79.2	78.9	77.9	77.4	77.2	77.9	78.6	79.5
Turkey	52.4	52.5	51.3	51.4	50.8	48.9	47.8	46.7	45.5	46.1	45.9	45.9	44.6	44.9
United Kingdom	69.2	69.7	70.6	71.0	71.5	72.2	72.5	72.3	72.6	72.7	72.6	72.5	72.3	72.7
United States	72.5	72.9	73.5	73.8	73.9	74.1	73.1	71.9	71.2	71.2	71.5	72.0	71.8	70.9
OECD total	64.2	64.5	65.0	65.1	65.3	65.6	65.4	65.1	64.9	65.2	65.5	66.2	66.6	66.7
Brazil	67.7	65.1	65.3	64.4	64.6		64.3	65.4	65.0	66.4	67.0	67.4	67.4	68.3
Chile		55.8	55.8	55.5	54.4	53.8	54.0	53.8	54.3	55.2	55.0	56.5	57.1	57.8
Estonia	65.5	64.9	65.2	64.5	61.6	60.7	61.1	61.7	62.6	62.6	64.0	67.7	69.1	69.5
Israel	56.5	56.4	55.7	55.2	55.5	56.1	55.6	54.8	55.0	55.7	56.7	57.6	58.9	59.8
Russian Federation	64.5	63.4	60.4	58.4	61.6	63.3	63.2	64.5	64.2	65.0	66.1	66.5	68.3	68.8
Slovenia	62.8	61.9	63.5	63.3	62.5	62.9	63.9	63.4	62.6	65.3	66.0	66.6	67.8	68.6

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# **Employment rates: total**

Share of persons of working age in employment



StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/820337340873

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EMPLOYMENT RATES

# **Employment rates: men**

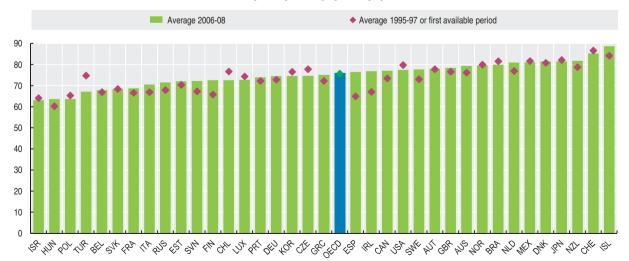
Share of men of working age in employment

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Australia	76.4	76.3	75.8	76.2	76.6	77.1	76.4	76.7	77.0	77.6	78.5	78.8	79.6	79.6
Austria	78.6	77.4	77.2	77.0	77.5	77.3	76.6	76.4	76.4	74.9	75.4	76.9	78.4	78.5
Belgium	66.9	66.8	67.1	67.0	67.5	69.8	68.5	68.1	67.1	67.9	67.7	67.0	68.2	68.3
Canada	73.4	73.2	73.8	74.3	75.4	76.2	75.7	75.9	76.4	76.7	76.7	76.8	77.2	77.2
Czech Republic	77.9	78.1	77.4	76.3	74.3	73.6	73.6	74.2	73.4	72.4	73.3	73.7	74.8	75.4
Denmark	80.7	80.5	81.3	80.2	81.2	80.7	80.2	80.2	79.7	79.9	80.1	80.6	81.3	82.4
Finland	64.8	66.0	66.6	68.2	69.6	70.5	71.2	70.4	70.1	70.0	70.5	71.8	72.4	73.4
France	66.7	66.8	66.3	66.6	66.8	68.1	69.0	68.6	69.1	68.7	68.6	68.4	68.6	69.2
Germany	73.7	72.8	72.1	72.9	72.8	72.9	72.8	71.7	70.4	70.8	71.4	72.8	74.7	75.9
Greece	72.2	72.6	71.9	71.6	70.9	71.3	70.9	72.5	73.5	74.0	74.5	74.6	74.9	75.4
Hungary	60.2	60.2	60.3	60.3	62.2	62.7	63.0	62.9	63.4	63.1	63.1	63.8	64.0	63.0
Iceland	84.0	84.3	84.2	86.0	88.2	88.2	88.0	85.7	86.8	86.2	87.4	88.7	89.5	87.8
Ireland	66.7	66.6	67.8	71.0	73.5	75.6	76.0	74.9	74.6	75.1	76.2	77.4	77.4	75.6
Italy	67.0	66.9	66.8	67.1	67.6	68.2	68.7	69.2	69.7	69.7	69.7	70.5	70.7	70.3
Japan	81.9	82.1	82.4	81.7	81.0	80.9	80.5	79.9	79.8	80.0	80.4	81.0	81.7	81.6
Korea	76.8	76.7	76.2	71.3	71.3	73.1	73.5	74.9	75.0	75.2	75.0	74.6	74.7	74.4
Luxembourg	74.3	74.4	74.3	74.6	74.4	75.0	74.9	75.5	73.3	72.8	73.3	72.6	72.8	72.8
Mexico	79.9	81.4	83.7	83.5	83.7	82.8	82.3	81.6	80.8	81.0	80.2	81.6	80.9	80.7
Netherlands	76.0	76.8	78.1	79.6	80.3	81.2	81.9	81.4	80.3	79.3	78.9	79.9	81.0	81.9
New Zealand	78.6	79.0	78.6	77.3	77.4	78.2	79.1	79.8	79.4	80.8	81.5	82.1	82.1	81.0
Norway	78.1	80.0	81.7	82.8	82.1	81.7	81.0	80.2	78.7	78.4	78.3	78.6	79.7	80.6
Poland	64.7	65.2	66.1	65.8	63.6	61.2	59.2	57.0	56.7	57.4	59.0	60.9	63.6	66.3
Portugal	72.1	72.0	72.5	75.6	75.6	76.3	76.5	75.7	73.9	74.1	73.4	73.9	73.9	74.0
Slovak Republic	67.6	69.2	68.4	67.8	64.3	62.2	62.1	62.5	63.4	63.2	64.6	67.0	68.4	70.0
Spain	64.0	64.7	66.1	68.3	70.8	72.7	73.8	73.9	74.5	74.9	76.4	77.3	77.4	74.6
Sweden	73.5	73.2	72.4	73.6	74.8	76.2	76.9	76.4	75.7	75.0	75.9	76.8	78.0	78.1
Switzerland	87.3	86.8	85.9	87.2	87.1	87.3	87.6	86.2	85.1	84.5	83.9	84.7	85.6	85.4
Turkey	74.6	74.9	74.8	74.3	72.7	71.7	69.3	66.9	65.9	67.9	68.2	68.0	66.8	66.6
United Kingdom	76.1	76.3	77.4	78.0	78.3	78.9	79.1	78.6	78.9	78.9	78.8	78.4	78.4	78.5
United States	79.5	79.7	80.1	80.5	80.5	80.6	79.4	78.0	76.9	77.2	77.6	78.1	77.8	76.4
OECD total	75.4	75.6	76.0	76.0	76.0	76.2	75.7	75.0	74.6	74.8	75.1	75.7	76.0	75.7
Brazil	83.1	80.8	80.7	79.5	78.8		78.2	78.7	77.9	79.3	79.4	79.6	79.7	80.6
Chile		76.7	76.7	74.4	73.0	72.1	72.3	71.8	71.7	71.9	71.6	72.6	72.6	72.5
Estonia	70.9	69.8	70.4	68.9	65.6	64.8	65.2	66.0	66.7	65.7	66.2	70.5	72.6	73.0
Israel	65.0	64.2	63.1	61.9	61.3	61.4	60.8	59.5	59.4	60.4	61.0	61.8	63.3	64.1
Russian Federation	69.9	68.6	65.3	63.1	65.9	67.6	67.4	68.3	67.9	68.6	69.6	69.7	71.8	73.0
Slovenia	67.7	66.2	67.9	67.7	66.9	67.2	68.7	68.2	67.4	70.0	70.4	71.1	72.7	72.7

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### **Employment rates: men**

Share of men of working age in employment



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# **Employment rates: women**

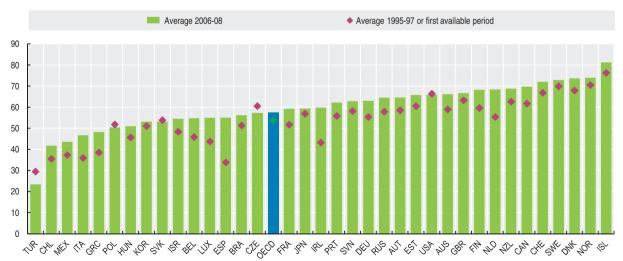
Share of women of working age in employment

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Australia	59.0	58.9	58.9	59.6	60.0	61.4	61.7	62.0	63.0	63.0	64.6	65.5	66.1	66.7
Austria	58.9	58.3	58.4	58.5	59.4	59.4	59.9	61.2	61.6	60.7	62.0	63.5	64.4	65.8
Belgium	45.4	45.6	46.7	47.5	50.2	51.9	50.7	51.1	51.4	53.0	54.1	53.6	54.9	55.7
Canada	61.6	61.5	62.1	63.5	64.6	65.6	65.9	67.0	67.9	68.4	68.3	69.0	70.1	70.1
Czech Republic	61.0	60.6	59.9	58.7	57.4	56.9	57.0	57.1	56.3	56.0	56.3	56.8	57.3	57.6
Denmark	67.0	67.4	69.4	70.3	71.6	72.1	71.4	72.6	70.5	72.0	70.8	73.2	73.3	74.4
Finland	59.0	59.5	60.4	61.3	63.6	64.5	65.4	66.1	65.7	65.5	66.5	67.3	68.5	69.0
France	51.6	51.8	51.7	52.4	53.0	54.3	55.2	55.8	57.6	57.7	58.0	58.2	59.4	60.1
Germany	55.3	55.5	55.3	56.3	57.4	58.1	58.7	58.8	58.7	59.2	59.6	61.4	63.2	64.3
Greece	38.0	38.5	39.1	40.3	40.7	41.3	41.2	43.1	44.5	45.5	46.2	47.5	48.1	49.0
Hungary	45.9	45.5	45.5	47.3	48.9	49.6	49.8	49.8	50.9	50.7	51.0	51.2	50.9	50.6
Iceland	76.8	76.5	75.6	78.3	80.2	81.0	81.1	79.8	81.2	79.4	81.2	81.6	81.7	80.3
Ireland	41.5	43.3	44.7	48.2	51.3	53.3	54.0	55.0	55.2	55.6	57.9	58.7	60.3	60.5
Italy	35.4	36.0	36.4	37.3	38.3	39.6	41.1	42.0	42.7	45.2	45.3	46.3	46.6	47.2
Japan	56.4	56.8	57.6	57.2	56.7	56.7	57.0	56.5	56.8	57.4	58.1	58.8	59.5	59.7
Korea	50.5	51.1	51.6	47.3	48.1	50.0	50.9	52.0	51.1	52.2	52.5	53.1	53.2	53.2
Luxembourg	42.2	43.6	45.4	45.6	48.5	50.0	50.8	51.5	50.9	51.9	53.7	54.6	54.5	55.8
Mexico	36.0	36.8	39.1	39.3	39.1	39.6	39.0	39.5	39.1	40.9	41.6	42.9	43.6	44.1
Netherlands	53.9	54.9	57.4	59.1	61.1	62.7	64.1	64.8	64.7	64.1	64.8	66.4	68.5	70.2
New Zealand	61.7	63.4	62.8	62.1	63.0	63.5	64.8	65.3	65.7	66.5	68.0	68.4	69.0	69.0
Norway	68.8	70.4	72.2	73.6	73.8	74.0	73.8	73.9	72.7	72.7	72.0	72.3	74.0	75.4
Poland	51.8	51.8	51.8	52.2	51.6	48.9	47.8	46.4	46.2	46.4	47.0	48.2	50.6	52.4
Portugal	54.8	55.6	57.2	58.3	59.5	60.5	61.0	60.8	60.6	61.7	61.7	62.0	61.9	62.5
Slovak Republic	53.0	54.6	54.0	53.5	52.1	51.5	51.8	51.4	52.2	50.9	50.9	51.9	53.0	54.6
Spain	32.5	33.8	35.2	36.5	39.1	42.0	43.8	44.9	46.8	49.0	51.9	54.0	55.5	55.7
Sweden	70.9	69.9	68.9	69.4	70.9	72.2	73.5	73.4	72.8	71.8	71.8	72.1	73.2	73.2
Switzerland	65.6	67.1	67.8	68.8	69.6	69.4	70.7	71.5	70.7	70.3	70.4	71.1	71.6	73.5
Turkey	30.2	30.3	28.0	28.5	28.9	26.2	26.3	26.6	25.2	24.3	23.7	23.8	22.8	23.5
United Kingdom	62.5	63.3	64.0	64.2	65.0	65.6	66.0	66.3	66.4	66.6	66.7	66.8	66.3	66.9
United States	65.8	66.3	67.1	67.4	67.6	67.8	67.1	66.1	65.7	65.4	65.6	66.1	65.9	65.5
OECD total	53.2	53.6	54.2	54.4	54.9	55.2	55.3	55.3	55.3	55.7	56.1	56.9	57.5	57.8
Brazil	53.1	50.3	50.7	50.1	51.3		51.3	52.9	52.9	54.3	55.3	55.9	55.8	56.8
Chile		35.5	35.5	36.9	36.3	35.7	35.8	35.8	37.1	38.8	38.7	40.5	41.6	43.2
Estonia	60.6	60.5	60.5	60.5	57.9	57.0	57.3	57.8	58.8	59.8	61.9	65.1	65.7	66.3
Israel	48.1	48.6	48.4	48.7	49.8	50.9	50.4	50.2	50.6	51.0	52.5	53.3	54.6	55.6
Russian Federation	59.4	58.5	55.8	54.0	57.5	59.3	59.3	61.0	60.8	61.7	62.8	63.6	65.1	64.9
Slovenia	57.9	57.7	59.0	58.8	57.9	58.5	58.9	58.6	57.6	60.5	61.3	61.8	62.6	64.2

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# **Employment rates: women**

Share of women of working age in employment



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https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2010-en

# Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2010), "Employment Rates", in *OECD Factbook 2010: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <u>https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2010-45-en</u>

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