

## 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 by policies that facilitate employment of women and disadvantaged groups.

### 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 or who had a job but were absent from work during the reference 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 experiencing difficulty to find a job, study, incapacity or the need to look after young children or elderly relatives or personal choice.

The working age population refers to persons aged 15 to 64.

### Overview

In 2014, the OECD employment rate was 65.7%, 0.6 percentage point higher than in 2013. Among OECD countries, employment rates ranged from a bit less than 50% in Greece and Turkey to more than 80% in Iceland.

Employment rates for men are higher than those for women in all OECD countries with an average OECD difference of 15.7 percentage points in 2014. However, there are large cross country differences in the employment gaps, which range from less than 5 percentage points in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland (which are also the only four countries where the employment rate for women is above 70%), to more than 20 percentage points in Korea, Chile, Mexico and Turkey (the country with the lowest women's employment rate, at 29.5% in 2014). The employment gap has closed by 3.3 percentage points since 2005 in the OECD area due to an increase in women's employment rates, while those of men declined since the onset of the crisis in late 2007 and in particular in countries hard hit by the crisis. However, compared to 2013, the gap was stable in 2014.

Since 2005, the employment rate for women has increased in about three quarters of countries. By contrast, over the same period, almost two-thirds of countries have registered decreasing men's employment rates.

### 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, the survey scope and the survey conduct. Despite these changes, employment rate are fairly consistent over time.

There are series breaks due to a major redesign of the national labour force survey in Chile between 2009 and 2010, in Israel between 2011 and 2012 and in Turkey between 2013 and 2014. For Israel there was a change from a quarterly to a monthly survey as well as a change in concept from "civilian" to "total" labour force.

### Sources

- OECD (2015), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD Publishing.

### Further information

#### Analytical publications

- Jaumotte, F. (2003), "Female Labour Force Participation", *OECD Economics Department Working Papers*, No. 376.
- OECD (2015), *How's Life? Measuring Well-being*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2015), *OECD Skills Outlook*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2011), *Divided We Stand, Why Inequality Keeps Rising*, OECD Publishing.

#### Statistical publications

- OECD (2014), *OECD Labour Force Statistics*, OECD Publishing.

#### Online databases

- *OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics*.

#### Websites

- Employment policies and data, [www.oecd.org/employment/emp](http://www.oecd.org/employment/emp).
- Labour statistics, [www.oecd.org/employment/labour-stats](http://www.oecd.org/employment/labour-stats).


**Employment rates by gender**

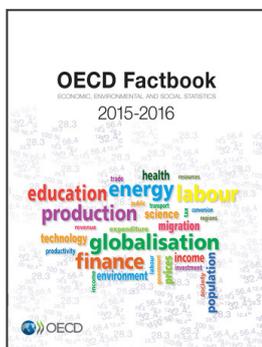
Share of persons of working age in employment

	Women				Men				Total			
	2000	2010	2013	2014	2000	2010	2013	2014	2000	2010	2013	2014
Australia	61.3	66.1	66.4	66.1	76.9	78.6	77.6	77.1	69.1	72.4	72.0	71.6
Austria	59.6	65.7	66.9	66.9	77.4	76.0	76.0	75.3	68.5	70.8	71.4	71.1
Belgium	51.5	56.5	57.2	58.0	69.5	67.5	66.4	65.8	60.5	62.0	61.8	61.9
Canada	65.6	68.8	69.7	69.4	76.2	74.1	75.2	75.2	70.9	71.5	72.4	72.3
Chile	..	46.7	51.0	51.7	..	72.1	73.8	72.8	..	59.3	62.3	62.2
Czech Republic	56.9	56.3	59.6	60.7	73.2	73.5	75.7	77.0	65.0	65.0	67.7	69.0
Denmark	71.6	71.1	70.1	69.8	80.8	75.6	75.0	75.8	76.3	73.4	72.6	72.8
Estonia	57.4	60.8	65.7	66.3	63.4	61.7	71.4	73.0	60.3	61.3	68.5	69.6
Finland	64.2	66.9	67.8	68.0	70.1	69.4	69.9	69.5	67.2	68.2	68.9	68.7
France	..	59.8	60.4	60.4	..	68.4	67.9	67.3	..	64.0	64.1	63.8
Germany	..	66.1	69.0	69.5	..	76.0	78.0	78.1	..	71.1	73.5	73.8
Greece	41.7	48.0	39.9	41.1	71.5	70.4	57.9	58.0	56.5	59.1	48.8	49.4
Hungary	49.7	50.2	52.6	55.9	63.1	59.9	63.7	67.8	56.2	55.0	58.1	61.8
Iceland	..	76.2	79.0	79.3	..	80.1	83.2	84.0	..	78.2	81.1	81.6
Ireland	53.9	55.8	55.9	56.7	76.3	63.5	65.1	66.9	65.2	59.7	60.5	61.7
Israel	50.9	56.9	63.0	64.2	61.4	63.4	71.2	71.5	56.1	60.2	67.1	67.9
Italy	39.6	46.1	46.5	46.8	68.0	67.5	64.7	64.7	53.7	56.8	55.5	55.7
Japan	56.8	60.4	62.5	63.7	81.1	80.7	80.8	81.6	69.0	70.6	71.7	72.7
Korea	50.0	52.6	53.9	54.9	73.1	73.9	74.9	75.7	61.5	63.3	64.4	65.3
Luxembourg	..	57.2	59.1	60.5	..	73.1	72.2	72.6	..	65.2	65.7	66.6
Mexico	..	43.2	45.0	44.2	..	77.8	78.3	78.1	..	59.7	60.8	60.4
Netherlands	63.5	69.3	69.0	68.1	82.1	80.0	78.2	78.2	73.0	74.7	73.6	73.1
New Zealand	63.1	66.5	67.7	69.1	77.8	78.2	78.3	79.7	70.3	72.2	72.8	74.2
Norway	73.7	73.3	73.5	73.4	81.3	77.3	77.3	77.0	77.5	75.3	75.4	75.2
Poland	48.9	52.6	53.4	55.2	61.2	65.3	66.6	68.2	55.0	59.0	60.0	61.7
Portugal	60.5	61.0	57.9	59.7	76.6	69.7	63.5	65.8	68.4	65.3	60.6	62.6
Slovak Republic	51.5	52.3	53.3	54.3	62.2	65.2	66.4	67.7	56.8	58.8	59.9	61.0
Slovenia	58.4	62.6	59.2	60.0	67.2	69.7	67.1	67.6	62.9	66.2	63.3	63.9
Spain	41.3	52.8	50.3	51.2	71.2	64.8	59.2	60.7	56.3	58.9	54.8	56.0
Sweden	..	69.7	72.5	73.1	..	74.6	76.3	76.6	..	72.2	74.4	74.9
Switzerland	..	72.5	74.4	75.2	..	84.6	84.7	84.5	..	78.6	79.6	79.9
Turkey	..	26.2	29.7	29.5	..	66.7	69.5	69.5	..	46.3	49.5	49.5
United Kingdom	64.7	64.5	65.8	67.1	77.8	74.4	75.4	76.8	71.2	69.4	70.5	71.9
United States	67.8	62.4	62.3	63.0	80.6	71.1	72.6	73.5	74.1	66.7	67.4	68.1
EU 28	..	58.2	58.8	59.6	..	70.1	69.4	70.1	..	64.1	64.1	64.8
OECD	..	56.5	57.4	57.9	..	72.6	73.1	73.6	..	64.5	65.1	65.7
Brazil	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	59.3	63.3	64.4	64.8	67.6	71.6	73.6	74.3	63.3	67.3	68.8	69.3
South Africa	39.0	35.3	36.9	36.9	53.2	48.7	48.7	48.9	45.7	41.8	42.7	42.8

 1 2 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933336088>
**Employment rates: total**

Share of persons of working age in employment


 1 2 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933334907>



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