

## 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 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.

### Overview

Employment rates for people aged 25 to 54 (prime-age) are relatively similar between OECD countries, with rates in all countries except Turkey ranging between 62.4% and 86.9% in 2014. Eight countries have prime-age rates below the OECD average whereas the rates are 6 or more percentage points above the average in eleven countries. Cross country differences are larger when looking at the youngest age group (aged 15-24) where, in 2014, employment rates ranged between less than 25% in eight countries – Greece, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, the Slovak Republic, Portugal, Belgium and Hungary – to over 60% in just two countries – Switzerland and Iceland. Employment rates for the oldest age group (aged 55-64) also vary considerably, between 70% or more in five countries – Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, New Zealand and Iceland – to less than 40% in three countries – Turkey, Greece and Slovenia.

As a consequence of the financial crisis, compared to 2005, prime-age employment rates have fallen quite significantly in a few countries, by more than 5 percentage points in Greece, Spain and Ireland and by 2 to 5 percentage points in Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Iceland, and the United States. The employment rates for older workers increased by 5.6 percentage points on average in the OECD area, between 2005 and 2014, with the largest increases of more than 12 percentage points recorded in Germany, Poland, Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Chile and Israel.

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 are approaching retirement.

### Comparability

Employment levels are likely to be affected by changes in the survey design, the survey scope, 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.

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.
- For non-member countries: National sources.

### Further information

#### Analytical publications

- OECD (2015), *Ageing and Employment Policies*, OECD Publishing.
- 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.

#### Statistical publications

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

#### Online databases

- *OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics*.

#### Websites

- Ageing and Employment Policies, [www.oecd.org/employment/emp/ageingandemploymentpolicies.htm](http://www.oecd.org/employment/emp/ageingandemploymentpolicies.htm).
- 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).
- Youth employment and unemployment, [www.oecd.org/employment/emp/action-plan-youth.htm](http://www.oecd.org/employment/emp/action-plan-youth.htm).



## EMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE GROUP

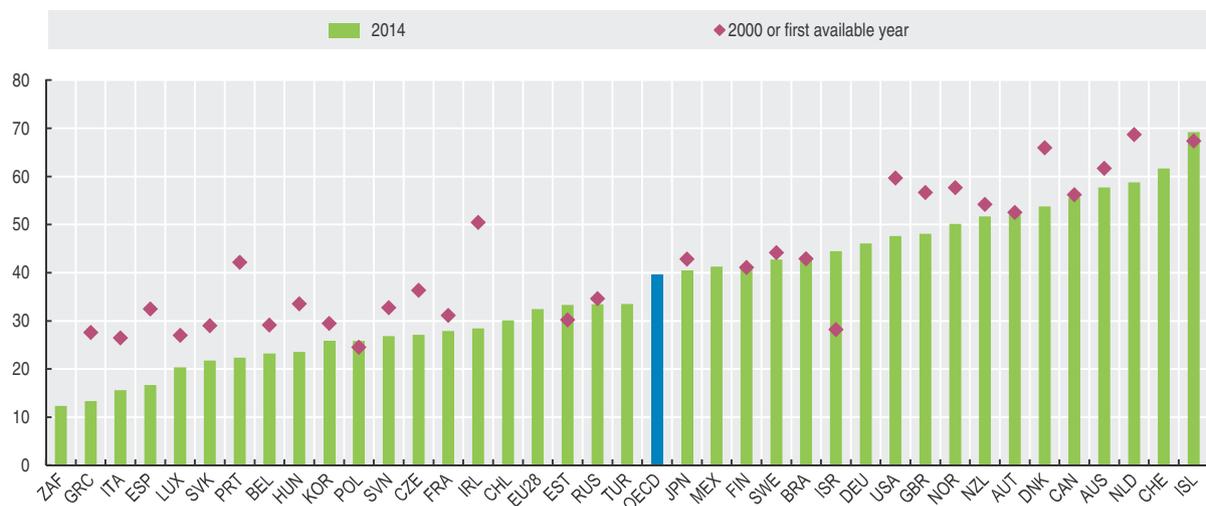
**Employment rates by age group**

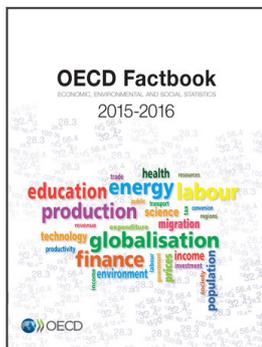
As a percentage of population in that age group

	Persons 15-24 in employment				Persons 25-54 in employment				Persons 55-64 in employment			
	2000	2005	2010	2014	2000	2005	2010	2014	2000	2005	2010	2014
Australia	61.7	63.3	60.5	57.7	76.2	78.8	79.5	78.8	46.0	53.5	60.6	61.5
Austria	52.6	51.6	52.8	52.1	82.6	81.6	83.3	83.5	28.9	30.0	41.2	45.1
Belgium	29.1	27.5	25.2	23.2	77.4	78.3	80.0	79.1	26.3	31.8	37.4	42.7
Canada	56.2	57.7	54.9	55.6	79.9	81.3	80.5	81.2	48.1	54.8	58.1	60.4
Chile	..	25.4	30.5	30.1	..	67.5	72.0	74.9	..	51.0	58.0	64.2
Czech Republic	36.4	27.5	25.2	27.1	81.6	82.0	82.2	83.8	36.3	44.5	46.5	54.0
Denmark	66.0	62.3	58.1	53.8	84.1	84.5	82.8	82.0	55.7	59.5	58.5	63.2
Estonia	30.2	30.7	25.4	33.3	74.5	79.2	74.9	80.9	45.0	55.7	53.8	64.0
Finland	41.1	40.5	38.8	41.4	80.9	81.7	81.6	80.5	41.7	52.7	56.3	59.1
France	..	30.4	30.1	27.9	..	80.8	82.0	79.8	..	38.6	39.7	46.9
Germany	..	41.9	46.3	46.1	..	77.4	81.5	83.5	..	45.5	57.7	65.6
Greece	27.6	25.0	20.1	13.3	70.5	74.0	73.2	62.4	38.9	42.0	42.4	34.1
Hungary	33.5	21.8	18.3	23.5	73.0	73.7	72.5	79.3	22.2	33.0	33.6	41.8
Iceland	..	70.5	61.7	69.2	..	87.7	82.9	85.1	..	84.3	79.8	83.6
Ireland	50.4	48.7	31.5	28.4	75.3	78.0	70.3	72.6	45.3	51.6	50.2	53.0
Israel	28.2	26.6	27.0	44.5	70.4	70.6	73.9	78.2	46.7	52.4	59.8	65.1
Italy	26.5	25.7	20.3	15.6	68.0	72.3	71.1	67.9	27.7	31.4	36.5	46.2
Japan	42.8	40.9	38.5	40.3	78.7	79.2	80.7	82.2	62.8	63.9	66.0	68.6
Korea	29.4	29.9	23.0	25.8	72.2	73.4	73.8	75.7	57.8	58.7	60.9	65.6
Luxembourg	..	24.9	21.2	20.4	..	80.7	82.3	83.8	..	31.7	39.7	42.6
Mexico	..	44.6	42.5	41.2	..	68.9	69.1	70.1	..	53.2	53.5	55.0
Netherlands	68.7	65.2	63.0	58.8	81.7	82.9	84.7	81.7	38.2	46.1	53.7	59.9
New Zealand	54.2	56.3	49.4	51.7	78.2	81.5	79.9	81.7	56.8	69.5	73.2	76.2
Norway	57.7	53.4	51.5	50.2	85.4	83.3	84.7	83.9	65.2	65.5	68.6	72.2
Poland	24.5	22.5	26.4	25.8	70.9	69.6	77.2	78.4	28.4	27.2	34.1	42.5
Portugal	42.2	35.3	27.9	22.4	81.8	80.7	79.2	77.4	50.7	50.4	49.5	47.8
Slovak Republic	29.0	25.6	20.7	21.8	74.7	75.3	75.8	76.8	21.4	30.3	40.6	44.8
Slovenia	32.8	34.0	34.1	26.8	82.6	83.8	83.7	81.9	22.8	30.7	35.1	35.4
Spain	32.5	38.5	25.0	16.7	68.4	74.8	70.0	67.4	37.0	43.1	43.6	44.3
Sweden	..	39.0	38.8	42.8	..	83.5	84.0	85.4	..	69.5	70.5	74.0
Switzerland	..	59.9	62.5	61.7	..	85.1	85.8	86.9	..	65.1	68.0	71.6
Turkey	..	..	30.0	33.5	..	..	55.4	58.8	..	..	29.6	31.4
United Kingdom	56.7	54.3	46.8	48.1	80.2	81.3	79.8	82.1	50.7	56.8	57.2	61.0
United States	59.7	53.9	45.0	47.6	81.5	79.3	75.1	76.7	57.8	60.8	60.3	61.3
EU 28	..	36.0	33.9	32.4	..	77.0	77.7	77.4	..	42.3	46.2	51.8
OECD	..	42.5	39.0	39.7	..	75.8	75.2	76.0	..	51.7	54.0	57.3
Brazil	..	43.6	46.0	43.4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	34.6	33.1	34.2	33.4	80.2	82.9	83.6	85.7	34.8	45.9	46.7	47.4
South Africa	..	..	12.8	12.3	..	..	56.8	57.5	..	..	37.9	40.6

 1 2 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933336076>
**Employment rates for age group 15-24**

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


 1 2 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933334898>



**From:**  
**OECD Factbook 2015-2016**  
Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2015-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2016), "Employment rates by age group", in *OECD Factbook 2015-2016: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2015-50-en>

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