

*Although unemployment rates across OECD countries are now close to pre-crisis levels, differences within countries remain high and can reach up to 20 percentage points, with youth unemployment exhibiting particularly high disparities.*

Unemployment in the OECD area has decreased and, at 6.8% in 2017, is now close to the pre-crisis level. Despite the general reduction in unemployment in 70% of OECD regions, regional disparities remain substantial and almost unchanged. In 2017, unemployment rates differ by 6 percentage points within OECD countries, exactly

#### Definition

Employed people are all persons who, during the reference week, worked at least one hour for pay or profit or were temporarily absent from such work. Family workers are included.

Unemployed persons are defined as those who are without work, are available for work, and have taken active steps to find work in the last four weeks. The unemployment rate is defined as the ratio between unemployed persons and labour force, where the latter is composed of unemployed and employed persons.

OECD has established a regional typology to take into account geographical differences and enable meaningful comparisons between regions belonging to the same type. All regions in a country have been classified as predominantly rural, intermediate and predominantly urban. This typology has been refined by introducing a criterion of distance (driving time) to large urban centres. Thus a predominantly rural region is classified as predominantly rural remote (PRR) if at least 50% of the regional population needs more than one hour to reach a large urban centre; otherwise, the rural region is classified as predominantly rural close to a city (PRC). The extended typology has been applied to North America, Europe and Japan (see Annex A for the detailed methodology). In the case of Europe, the classification in predominantly urban and predominantly rural regions is reported following the population-grid based classification developed by Eurostat (2013).

the same average regional disparities as in 2011. However, while in 2011 almost one-fourth of the OECD regions had an unemployment rate above 10%, this share declined to 18% in 2017, representing 66 large regions. The largest regional disparities are found in Turkey, Italy, Spain, Greece and Belgium, with a difference of at least 10 percentage points between the highest and lowest regional unemployment rates (Figure 2.10). Unemployment rates are generally lower in urban regions, with some exceptions like in Denmark or the United Kingdom, where they are one percentage point higher than in rural regions. Higher unemployment rates are mostly found in intermediate remote regions, which do not benefit from the proximity to cities. On the other hand, intermediate regions close to cities have seen faster decrease of unemployment.

Even more worrying, in some regions of Italy, Greece, and Tunisia, more than 50% of youths remain unemployed. Regional disparities are generally much higher for youth unemployment than for total unemployment, with, for example, the highest youth unemployment rates in Lake Geneva (Switzerland) and South-East Anatolia East (Turkey), roughly twice the national average (Figure 2.11).

#### Source

OECD (2018), OECD Regional Statistics (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

See Annex B for data sources and country-related metadata.

#### Reference years and territorial level

2017; TL2.

#### Further information

OECD Regional Well-Being: [www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org](http://www.oecdregionalwellbeing.org).

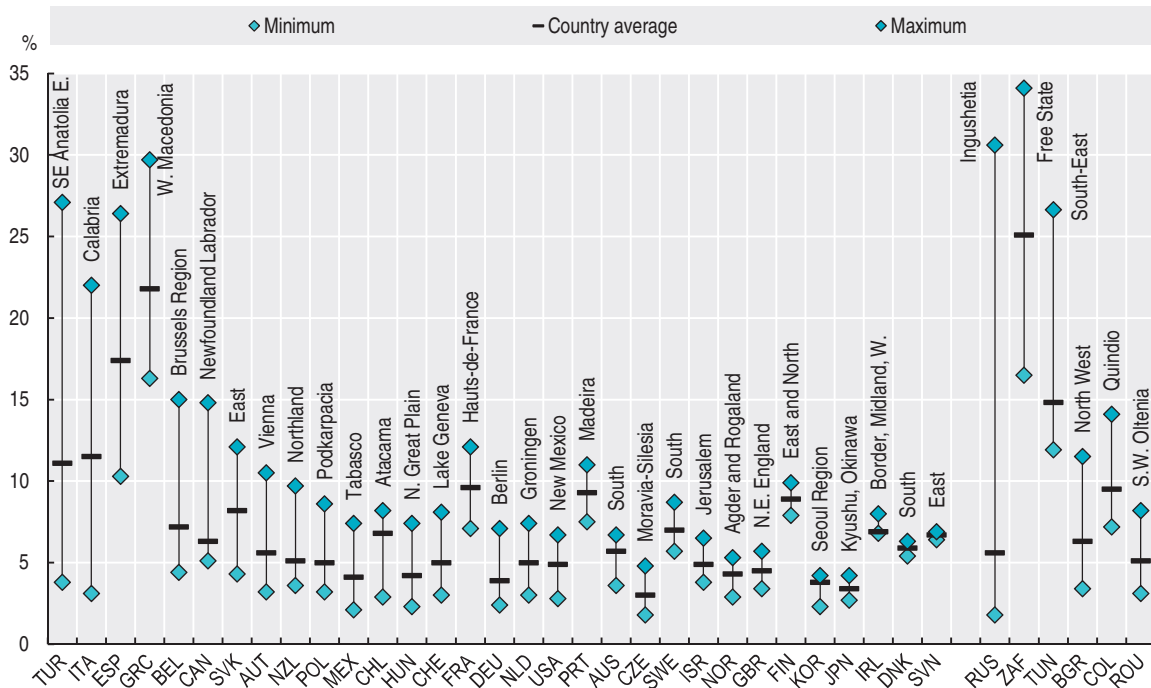
#### Figure notes

2.10: 2017 or latest available year: Chile, Colombia, Israel, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, 2016; Japan and Russian Federation, 2015; South Africa and Tunisia, 2014.

2.11: 2017 or latest available year: Peru, Russian Federation and United States, 2014.

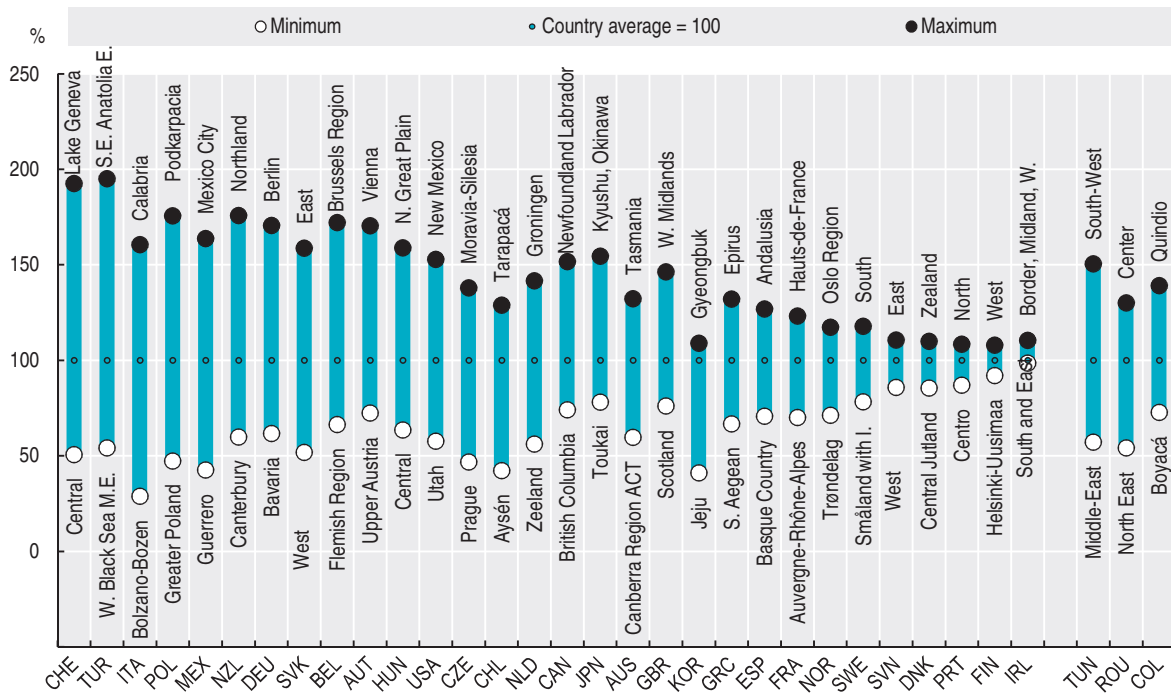
## 2.10. Regional differences of unemployment rate, 2017

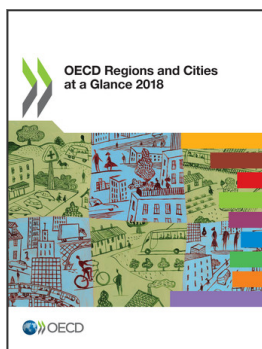
Large regions (TL2)

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933817162>

## 2.11. Regional youth unemployment rate as a share of national average, 2017

Large regions (TL2)

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933817181>



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