

Employment gender gap in the EU is narrowing

Labour market trends 2000-2007

Overall, the employment gender gap is decreasing in the EU-27; compared with 2000, the 2007 gender gap was markedly narrower in the age class 25-54. It is most likely that the general economic conditions and a variety of measures stimulating female employment (such as better childcare facilities and more possibilities for flexible working time arrangements) contributed to this result.

At EU-27 level, self-employment is twice as frequent among men. Southern European Member States generally display high rates of self-employment for both men and women.

Fixed-term employment in the EU-27 is roughly equal for both women and men. In Spain, specific labour market provisions have led to rates that are more than double the EU average.

This *Statistics in focus* examines the situation on the labour market by focussing on the gender gap for persons aged between 15 and 64, comparing the situation in 2007 with that in 2000. It draws on key results of the European Labour Force Survey (EU LFS).

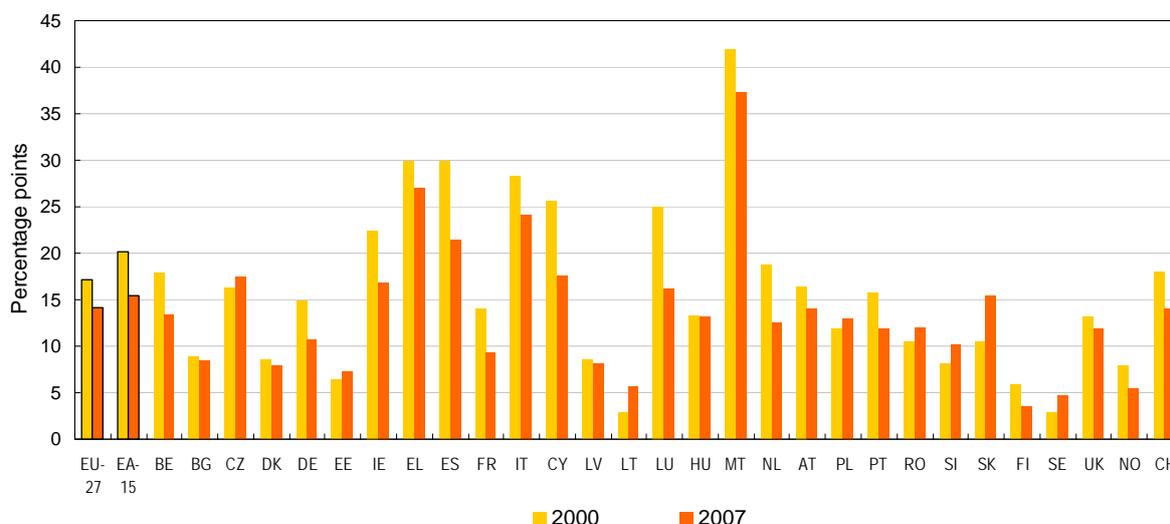
Employment gender gap narrows between 2000 and 2007

Under the Lisbon strategy, Member States pledged to encourage female labour market participation and achieve a substantial reduction in the employment gender gap by 2010¹. Achieving these objectives will essentially depend on the possibility for both women and men to strike a balance between their professional careers and family lives. The provision of adequate, affordable, accessible and quality care facilities for children and other dependents is an important factor allowing women to take up jobs and carry on working throughout their lives. Also, the right to take parental leave from work and flexible working arrangements are considered to be an important means of reconciling private and professional life and of promoting equality between women and men.

Since 2000, the EU employment rate for women rose significantly, whereas it increased only slightly for men. As a result, the gap between male and female employment rates narrowed.

¹ See also http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/index_en.htm

Figure 1: Gender gap* in employment rates, 2000 and 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

* Calculated as the difference between male and female employment rates (persons aged 15-64 employed as a percentage of the total population of the same age); a positive gap indicates a higher employment rate for men than women.

Figure 1 displays the differences between the employment rates. Whereas the difference at EU-27 level amounted to 17.1 percentage points (pp) in 2000, it was 14.2 pp in 2007 (-2.9 pp).

In all Member States, the employment rate of men exceeded that of women. However, the development of the gender gap was less uniform. In 19 Member States, the gender gap grew smaller (most noticeably in Spain, Cyprus and Luxembourg) whereas it actually increased in eight countries. Among the latter, the highest increase was registered in Slovakia; but even with this increase, Slovakia's gender gap in 2007 (15.4 pp) remained relatively close to the EU average (14.2 pp).

Examining the 2007 situation, three country groups can be detected: differences between the female and male employment rates appear to be lowest (less than 10 percentage points difference) in the Scandinavian and Baltic countries, Bulgaria and France, and highest (over 20 pp) in the Mediterranean Member States Greece, Spain, Italy and especially Malta. The remaining countries show differences between 10 and 20 pp.

Malta stands out with the highest gender gap (37 pp), as it has by far the lowest female employment rate (36.9% in 2007, compared to an average 58.3% at EU-27 level), substantially below the target of 60% set by the European Strategy for Growth and Jobs, to be achieved by 2010.

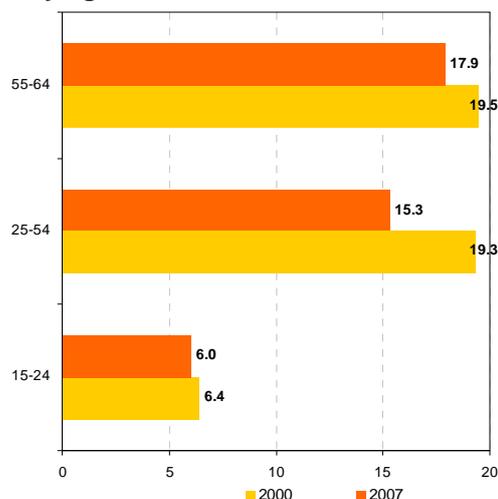
Noticeable gender gap reduction in the 25-54 age class

Looking at the gender-specific differences in the 2007 employment rates by age groups, it becomes clear that the largest difference is among 55-64 year olds. The 17.9 pp difference is somewhat larger than for those aged 25-54 (15.3 pp).

More interesting is the development since 2000: while the situation remained almost unchanged for the young (15-24), it is the 25-54 age group where the gender gap was noticeably reduced (from 19.3 pp in 2000 to 15.3 pp in 2007). Considering that women in this age group are the most likely to be affected by issues relating to childcare facilities, this development indeed suggests that women are increasingly better able to combine caring and other family responsibilities with a professional activity.

As regards the 55-64 years old, the gender gap was only slightly reduced: between 2000 and 2007, it remained close to 18 pp, due in part to lower levels of female participation in general, lower skill levels of older women and, in many Member States, lower statutory retirement ages for women.

Figure 2: Gender gap* in EU-27 employment rates, by age class, 2007 versus 2000



Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

* Calculated as the difference between male and female employment rates in the age classes (persons employed as a percentage of the total population); a positive gap indicates a higher employment rate for men than women.

Female workforce better educated than in 2000

Table 1: EU-27 employment rates by highest level of education attained, gender gap and trend, 2000 and 2007

	2000		2007		Gender gap		Trend
	Men	Women	Men	Women	2000	2007	
Low	60.1	38.7	58.3	39.1	21.4	19.2	↘
Medium	75.1	61.0	76.5	63.7	14.1	12.8	↘
High	86.3	78.2	87.3	80.5	8.1	6.8	↘

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

Compared to 2000, the EU-27 work force is better educated. The increasing share of highly educated women is especially noteworthy (data not shown) and in absolute terms, there are now more highly educated

women than men (in 2007 21.1% of women aged 15 to 64 had completed tertiary education compared to 20.1% of men). Simultaneously, the proportion of women with a low education decreased (from 40.0% in 2000 to 33.5% in 2007) and approached that of men (32.2%).

A correlation emerges between the level of education and labour market participation: the higher the educational attainment, the higher the employment rate. Although this finding holds true for both sexes, this relationship is much more marked among women. In 2007, the employment rate of women with a low level of educational attainment was only 39.1%, while it reached 80.5% for women with a high level of education.

Self-employment far more widespread among men

Self-employment may be evidence of entrepreneurship or it may reflect the lack of opportunities to work as an employee. Workers are considered to be self-employed if they work in their own business, farm or professional practice.

In 2007, 18.2% of all employed men at EU-27 level were working as self-employed, a proportion roughly double that for women (9.7%). Compared to 2000, this situation did not change, despite specific actions or measures promoting female entrepreneurship that have already been established in almost all EU Member States (support for start-ups, funding, training, mentoring, information, advice and consultancy, and networking¹).

At EU-27 level, the gender gap amounted to 8.7 pp in 2000 and 8.6 pp in 2007. The share of self-employed varies considerably across the individual Member States; among men in 2007, it ranged from 8.1% in Luxembourg to 34.3% in Greece. Hence, in Greece, more than one out of three men in gainful work is running their own business.

Among women, the range is smaller: the lowest rates were found in Denmark (4.4%) and Norway (4.2%) and the highest again in Greece (20.1%).

Reading Table 2 'horizontally' and comparing the situation in 2000 with that of 2007, the small change at EU level is largely confirmed in the individual Member States. It is in the new Member States where the development is more 'dynamic': the share of self-employed men clearly increased in Estonia and Slovakia against noticeable drops in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania and Hungary. For women, the share increased in Slovakia, whereas decreases were recorded in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Poland.

Not considering the varying proportions of the self-employed, the gender gap in 2007 was particularly low in Luxembourg (2.4 pp) but also in Portugal (4.0 pp) and Austria (4.7 pp). Conversely, it remained high in Greece (14.2 pp), Cyprus (13.7 pp), Romania (13.1 pp) and particularly in Ireland (16.7 pp).

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/craft/craft-women/women-dgentr-activities.htm>

Table 2: Share of self-employed in total employment*, gender gap and trend, 2000 and 2007**

	2000		2007		Gender gap*		Trend
	Men	Women	Men	Women	2000	2007	2000-2007
EU-27	18.4	9.7	18.2	9.7	8.7	8.6	→
EA-15	18.0	9.4	18.2	9.9	8.6	8.3	→
Belgium	16.8	9.3	16.6	8.8	7.4	7.8	↗
Bulgaria	17.3	9.9	13.9	7.6	7.4	6.2	↘
Czech Republic	18.6	8.9	19.9	9.4	9.7	10.5	↗
Denmark	11.7	3.8	11.4	4.4	7.8	7.0	↘
Germany	12.4	6.2	13.2	7.2	6.2	6.0	→
Estonia	9.7	6.2	12.3	5.0	3.5	7.3	↑
Ireland	23.6	6.8	22.8	6.1	16.8	16.7	→
Greece	37.4	21.3	34.3	20.1	16.1	14.2	↘
Spain	20.6	12.8	19.5	11.7	7.8	7.8	→
France	13.4	5.8	13.5	6.2	7.6	7.3	→
Italy	28.2	15.8	27.6	17.0	12.4	10.7	↘
Cyprus	27.7	9.6	23.6	10.0	18.1	13.7	↘
Latvia	12.3	7.9	11.3	6.3	4.4	5.0	↗
Lithuania	19.4	12.1	14.9	8.5	7.3	6.4	↘
Luxembourg	10.3	6.1	8.1	5.7	4.3	2.4	↘
Hungary	18.4	9.5	14.6	8.3	9.0	6.3	↘
Malta	14.6	(5.5)	16.9	6.9	(9.1)	10.0	↗
Netherlands	11.9	7.6	14.7	8.7	4.3	6.0	↗
Austria	12.4	8.2	13.8	9.1	4.2	4.7	↗
Poland	25.2	17.7	22.3	14.4	7.5	7.8	→
Portugal	22.2	18.0	20.8	16.9	4.3	4.0	→
Romania	26.4	13.2	24.4	11.4	13.3	13.1	→
Slovenia	14.1	6.0	13.6	5.7	8.2	7.9	→
Slovakia	10.8	4.1	17.2	7.1	6.7	10.0	↗
Finland	16.6	8.1	15.3	7.6	8.5	7.7	↘
Sweden	14.1	5.2	13.6	5.1	8.9	8.5	↘
United Kingdom	15.3	7.0	17.0	7.6	8.2	9.5	↗
Iceland	22.3	10.6	:	:	11.7	:	:
Norway	9.3	4.2	10.2	4.2	5.1	6.0	↗
Switzerland	17.8	11.4	15.4	10.3	6.5	5.1	↘

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

* Self-employed as a percentage of the total number of persons employed in the age group 15-64. ** Gender gap is computed as the difference between men's and women's shares. A positive gap indicates a higher share for men in comparison with women.

Fixed-term contracts slightly more widespread among women

Employees with a fixed-term working contract are those who declare themselves as having a temporary employment contract or a job which will terminate when certain objective criteria are met, such as the completion of an assignment or the return of an employee who has been temporarily replaced. The share of employees with fixed-term working contracts is calculated as a proportion of all employees aged 15-64.

In 2007, around 14% of all employees in the EU-27 were working under temporary contracts; this type of contract being somewhat more common amongst women (15.2% of all employees against 13.8% for men, Table 3).

Fixed-term employment appears far more common in Spain than in other Member States as this country records shares of 30.6% for men and 33.1% for women. Fixed-term contracts were introduced by the Spanish government in 1984 (Reform of workers' status), in order to facilitate job creation, reduce unemployment and

support the integration of young people. Strict regulations on permanent employment, reduced redundancy costs and wage differentiation might have played a prominent role in the success of this type of work. Poland and Portugal also display fairly high shares of fixed-term employment (between 20 and 30%).

Conversely, in many new Member States (such as Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and especially Romania) fixed-term employment is not widespread.

Women were more likely to be in temporary employment across all Member States in 2007, except in Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. In Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Romania gender differences are negligible.

Compared to 2000, the gender gap has significantly decreased in Portugal and the Netherlands (by around 3 pp) whereas it has noticeably increased in Slovenia (+3 pp) and especially Cyprus (+5 pp).

Table 3: Share of employees with a fixed-term employment contract in the total number of employees*, gender gap and trend, 2000 and 2007**

	2000		2007		Gender gap		Trend
	Men	Women	Men	Women	2000	2007	2000-2007
EU-27	11.6	12.9	13.8	15.2	-1.3	-1.4	→
EA-15	14.3	16.5	15.9	17.8	-2.2	-1.9	→
Belgium	6.6	12.1	6.8	10.8	-5.5	-4.0	↓
Bulgaria	:	:	4.8	5.4	:	-0.6	:
Czech Republic	6.0	8.6	6.5	9.4	-2.6	-2.9	↗
Denmark	8.7	11.7	7.4	9.9	-3.0	-2.5	↓
Germany	12.5	13.1	14.7	14.5	-0.6	0.2	↓
Estonia	(3.2)	:	(2.8)	:	:	:	:
Ireland	4.3	6.6	6.0	8.6	-2.3	-2.6	↗
Greece	12.2	16.3	9.3	13.2	-4.1	-3.9	↓
Spain	30.9	34.7	30.6	33.1	-3.8	-2.5	↓
France	14.6	16.4	13.3	15.5	-1.8	-2.2	↗
Italy	8.8	12.2	11.2	16.0	-3.4	-4.8	↗
Cyprus	7.6	14.3	7.6	19.2	-6.7	-11.6	↑
Latvia	8.9	4.5	5.6	2.8	4.4	2.8	↓
Lithuania	5.0	2.7	4.8	(2.3)	2.3	(2.5)	→
Luxembourg	2.6	4.4	6.2	7.6	-1.8	-1.4	↓
Hungary	7.3	6.3	7.7	6.8	1.0	0.9	→
Malta	(3.4)	(5.1)	3.8	8.0	(-1.7)	-4.2	↗
Netherlands	11.3	17.1	16.4	19.5	-5.8	-3.1	↓
Austria	7.6	8.4	8.8	9.0	-0.8	-0.2	↓
Poland	6.4	4.7	28.4	27.9	1.7	0.5	↓
Portugal	17.8	22.2	21.8	23.0	-4.4	-1.2	↓
Romania	3.0	2.9	1.7	1.5	0.1	0.2	→
Slovenia	12.1	13.4	16.3	20.7	-1.3	-4.4	↗
Slovakia	3.7	4.3	4.9	5.1	-0.6	-0.2	↓
Finland	14.5	20.9	12.3	19.4	-6.4	-7.1	↗
Sweden	12.1	16.5	14.7	19.7	-4.4	-5.0	↗
United Kingdom	5.7	7.6	5.1	6.3	-1.9	-1.2	↓
Iceland	4.9	6.0	:	:	-1.1	:	:
Norway	7.7	11.8	7.4	11.6	-4.1	-4.2	→
Switzerland	10.6	12.9	12.7	13.2	-2.3	-0.5	↓

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

* Employees with a fixed-term contract as a share of employees in the age group 15-64. ** Gender gap is computed as the difference between men's and women's shares. A positive/negative gap indicates a higher/lower share of men than women.

Three out of four Dutch women work part-time

The rate of part-time employment is expressed as the share of persons that declared working part-time in the total number of employed persons aged 15-64.

Female participation in the labour market is still largely characterised by a high and even increasing share of part-time work (negative gender gap). At EU-level in 2007, 30.7% of working women had part-time occupations against only 6.9% of men. A look at the 2000 figures reveals that the proportion of part-timers has only slightly increased (1 pp for men and 2 pp for women, see Table 4).

Looking at the 2007 situation in the individual countries, the very high Dutch proportions for both men (22.5%) and women (74.8%) stand out; for decades, the labour market in the Netherlands has offered many possibilities for part-time employment. Without reaching the Dutch levels, part-time employment among men is also widespread in most Scandinavian countries and in Switzerland (10 to 13%). High rates among women (in the 40 to 50% range) were reported in Belgium, Germany, Austria, Sweden, the UK, as well as Norway and Switzerland.

Most new Eastern European Member States recorded low rates among female workers, as there are fewer opportunities for part-time employment in these countries¹.

Comparing the situation in 2000 with that of 2007, the gender gap shows no radical changes; in Italy, Luxembourg and Malta, however, the gap increased significantly.

The question remains whether to judge the generally large negative gender gap as positive or negative. To the extent that the decision to work part-time is largely voluntary, the increased availability of part-time working arrangements offers more women the possibility of being in gainful work and combining it with caring responsibilities.

¹ Janneke Plantenga & Chantal Remery, "Reconciliation of work and private life: a comparative review of thirty European countries", (European Communities, 2005).

Table 4: Share of part-time employment in total employment*, gender gap and trend, 2000 and 2007**

	2000		2007		Gender gap		Trend
	Men	Women	Men	Women	2000	2007	2000-2007
EU-27	5.9	28.7	6.9	30.7	-22.8	-23.8	↗
EA-15	5.1	30.4	6.9	34.8	-25.3	-27.9	↗
Belgium	(5.9)	(39.8)	7.1	40.5	(-33.9)	-33.4	→
Bulgaria	:	:	1.1	1.9	:	-0.8	:
Czech Republic	1.6	8.9	1.7	7.9	-7.3	-6.2	↘
Denmark	9.6	34.9	12.5	35.8	-25.3	-23.3	↘
Germany	4.5	37.7	8.5	45.3	-33.2	-36.8	↗
Estonia	3.9	8.8	(3.8)	10.6	-4.9	(-6.8)	↗
Ireland	6.8	30.7	(6.5)	(31.9)	-23.9	(-25.4)	↗
Greece	2.5	7.7	2.5	9.9	-5.2	-7.4	↗
Spain	2.7	17.0	3.9	22.7	-14.3	-18.8	↗
France	5.2	30.9	5.5	30.2	-25.7	-24.7	↘
Italy	3.7	17.3	4.6	26.8	-13.6	-22.2	↗
Cyprus	3.5	13.3	3.0	10.4	-9.8	-7.4	↘
Latvia	9.5	11.6	4.4	6.9	-2.1	-2.5	→
Lithuania	7.8	10.1	6.5	9.7	-2.3	-3.2	→
Luxembourg	1.7	25.8	(2.6)	37.1	-24.1	(-34.5)	↑
Hungary	(1.8)	5.0	2.5	5.5	(-3.2)	-3.0	→
Malta	(2.9)	13.3	4.0	24.9	(-10.4)	-20.9	↑
Netherlands	18.9	70.5	22.5	74.8	-51.6	-52.3	→
Austria	4.0	32.9	6.2	40.7	-28.9	-34.5	↗
Poland	7.0	12.1	5.8	11.7	-5.1	-5.9	→
Portugal	3.4	13.7	4.7	13.6	-10.3	-8.9	↘
Romania	12.2	16.0	8.3	8.9	-3.8	-0.6	↘
Slovenia	4.0	6.9	6.5	10.0	-2.9	-3.5	→
Slovakia	(0.9)	2.9	1.0	4.3	(-2.0)	-3.3	↗
Finland	7.4	16.7	8.3	18.8	-9.3	-10.5	↗
Sweden	9.1	35.7	10.5	39.5	-26.6	-29.0	↗
United Kingdom	7.9	43.8	9.4	41.6	-35.9	-32.2	↘
Iceland	10.8	46.0	:	:	-35.2	:	:
Norway	10.5	42.9	12.8	43.6	-32.4	-30.8	↘
Switzerland	9.1	54.9	10.8	58.5	-45.8	-47.7	↗

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

* Employed persons with a part-time occupation as a share of all employed persons in the age group 15-64. ** Gender gap is computed as the difference between men's and women's shares. A positive/negative gap indicates a higher/lower share of men than women.

On the other hand, the situation might largely confirm the classic pattern of gender-specific task distribution, where women still take on the bulk of childcare responsibilities and domestic tasks. Moreover, even though it is a

"voluntary" choice, it is still a choice made under constraints (availability of care services for instance) and which can have a major impact on a person's career, social security entitlements and pensions.

Working atypical hours: differences in evening and night work

Table 5: Share of persons working atypical hours* in EU-27, in %

	2000		2007	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Shift	16.3	13.2	19.0	16.2
Saturday	27.6	27.1	27.3	27.2
Sunday	11.3	11.5	13.2	13.3
Night	9.3	5.3	9.4	5.3
Evening	19.3	15.6	21.5	18.0

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

* Calculated as a share of all persons employed aged 15-64. Double counting may occur as a person may work during the evening, at night and/or on entire weekends.

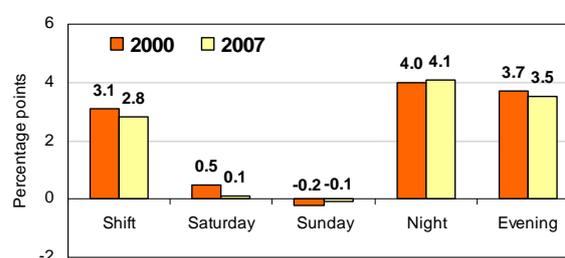
Working atypical hours has often been associated with night and shift work, primarily done by men in the industrial sector. But in today's 'round-the-clock' economy, working atypical hours is more common, also in services (notably in cleaning, retail trade, etc.). Table 5 reveals that working on Saturday was most common in the EU (just over 27% of both men and women regularly work such days – see Methodological Notes for definitions), followed by evening and shift work. No fundamental changes are noted between 2000 and 2007. Working shifts, on Sundays and evenings has become slightly more common for both genders.

Figure 3 clearly indicates that the gender gap for Saturday and Sunday work is negligible. For Sunday work, slightly negative values are noted, meaning that a marginally higher proportion of women in employment work on that day.

The occurrence of shift and evening work is broadly similar, but the gender gap for the latter is somewhat higher.

Night work, often considered as the most unpopular of atypical working hours, is the only category to record shares of less than 10% (in 2007, 9.4% of men and 5.3% of women did perform night work, practically unchanged compared to 2000). The resulting gender gap of 4.1 pp was the highest among the various categories.

Figure 3: Gender gap* in atypical working hours in EU-27



Source: Eurostat EU LFS

* A positive/negative gap indicates a higher/lower share for men than women.

Background information: employment and unemployment rates

The sections above can be better understood against the backdrop of the global employment and unemployment

figures (always calculated as a proportion of the total population aged 15-64).

Table 6: Unemployment and employment rates, 2007

		EU-27	EA-15	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV		
Unemployment rate	Men	2000	8.3	7.6	5.3	16.8	7.4	4.0	7.7	14.9	4.5	7.6	9.5	8.6	8.4	3.3	15.3	
		2007	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.6	4.3	3.5	8.7	5.5	5.0	5.3	6.4	7.5	5.0	3.5	6.6	
	Women	2000	10.7	11.3	8.3	15.9	10.6	5.0	8.3	11.7	4.3	17.3	20.4	12.2	14.9	7.4	13.6	
		2007	7.9	8.5	8.5	7.3	6.8	4.2	8.8	4.0	4.2	12.9	10.9	8.5	7.9	4.6	5.7	
Employment rate	Men	2000	70.7	71.4	69.8	56.1	73.1	80.7	72.7	63.7	75.7	71.7	71.0	68.8	67.6	78.6	61.9	
		2007	72.5	73.4	68.7	66.0	74.8	81.0	74.7	73.2	77.4	74.9	76.2	69.3	70.7	80.0	72.5	
	Women	2000	53.6	51.2	51.9	47.2	56.8	72.1	57.8	57.2	53.2	41.8	41.2	54.8	39.3	53.0	53.3	
		2007	58.3	58.0	55.3	57.6	57.3	73.2	64.0	65.9	60.6	47.9	54.7	60.0	46.6	62.4	64.4	
		LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK	NO	CH	
Unemployment rate	Men	2000	18.5	1.8	7.2	6.3	2.2	4.8	14.8	3.2	8.2	6.9	19.5	10.4	6.0	6.2	3.6	2.4
		2007	4.4	3.6	7.2	5.9	2.8	4.0	9.1	7.0	7.6	4.1	9.9	6.6	6.0	5.6	2.6	3.0
	Women	2000	14.0	3.2	5.8	6.5	3.5	4.6	18.6	5.0	7.1	7.2	18.6	12.0	5.1	4.9	3.3	3.2
		2007	4.4	4.7	7.7	7.7	3.7	5.1	10.4	10.1	5.7	6.0	12.7	7.3	6.5	5.0	2.5	4.6
Employment rate	Men	2000	61.1	75.0	62.7	75.3	82.1	76.2	61.2	76.2	69.5	66.7	61.6	71.1	72.6	77.6	81.8	87.3
		2007	67.9	72.3	64.0	74.2	82.2	78.4	63.6	73.8	64.8	72.7	68.4	72.1	76.5	77.3	79.5	85.6
	Women	2000	58.2	50.0	49.4	33.4	63.4	59.7	49.3	60.5	59.0	58.5	51.1	65.2	69.7	64.5	73.9	69.3
		2007	62.2	56.1	50.9	36.9	69.6	64.4	50.6	61.9	52.8	62.6	53.0	68.5	71.8	65.5	74.0	71.6

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Data source

The main data source is the European Labour Force Survey (EU LFS). The EU LFS is conducted in all Member States of the European Union and the EFTA countries (excluding Liechtenstein). Data are available in Eurostat's online database for most of the variables covered by the EU LFS. The analysis in this *Statistics in Focus* is limited to persons aged 15-64 (16-64 for ES, UK and NO).

For further information see also the European Labour Force Survey website:
http://circa.europa.eu/irc/dsis/employment/info/data/eu_ifs/index.htm

Definitions

The survey concepts and definitions follow the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation.

A **person in employment** is anyone who worked for an hour or more during the reference week or was temporarily absent from work; he/she is regarded as having a job.

Self-employed persons are defined as persons who work in their own business, professional practice or farm for the purpose of earning a profit.

A job may be regarded as **fixed term work** if it is understood by both employer and the employee that the termination of the job is determined by objective conditions such as reaching a certain date, completion of an assignment or return of another employee who has been temporarily replaced. In the case of a work contract of limited duration the condition for its termination is generally mentioned in the contract.

The distinction between **full-time and part-time work** should be made on the basis of a spontaneous answer given by the respondent.

'**Involuntary part-time work**' refers to a situation where a person in search of full-time employment is working part-time, due to a lack of full-time occupations on the labour market.

Atypical work refers to work in the evening, at night, on Saturdays, on Sundays and shift. In this context, 'usually' is interpreted as meaning at least half the number of days (evening and night) or two or more Saturdays (or Sundays) on which the person worked during a four-week reference period before the interview.

To *work on Saturdays or Sundays* means having worked two or more Saturdays or Sundays during a four-week reference period before the survey.

Shift work is a regular work schedule during which an enterprise is operational or provides services beyond the normal working hours, and where different crews of workers succeed each other at the same work site to perform the same operations. Shift work usually involves work in the early morning, at night or at the weekend; the weekly rest days might not coincide with the normal rest days.

Work done during usual sleeping hours implies unusual sleeping times and is considered *night work*. The

indicator covers work during the night for at least half the number of days on which the person worked during a four-week reference period before the survey.

However, in the Member States concerned, *evening work* is generally considered to be work done after usual working hours but before the usual hours of sleep.

In accordance with the ILO standards, **unemployed persons** comprise persons who were: without work during the reference week, i.e. neither had a job nor were at work (for one hour or more) in paid employment or self-employment; currently available for work, i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week; actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment or who found a job to start later, i.e. within a period of at most three months.

Level of education

The level of education is defined in accordance with the 1997 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 1997), divided into three levels: **Low**: below the second cycle of secondary education (up to ISCED level 2); **Medium**: second cycle of secondary education (ISCED levels 3-4); **High**: higher education (ISCED levels 5-6).

Further useful reading

"Employment in Europe", Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities – 2007,
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_analysis/employ_2007_en.htm

Symbols

'.' indicates that the value is not available or extremely unreliable.

'()' values in brackets are unreliable due to small sample size.

Symbols indicating gender gap trends:

- no or no significant change
- ↗ slight increase of gender gap
- ↑ significant increase of gender gap
- ↘ slight decrease of gender gap
- ↓ significant decrease of gender gap

Country codes

This publication covers the 27 EU Member States (EU-27): Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Ireland (IE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT), Netherlands (NL), Austria (AT), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Slovenia (SI), Slovakia (SK), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE), and the United Kingdom (UK).

EFTA countries Iceland (IS), Norway (NO) and Switzerland (CH) are included when available.

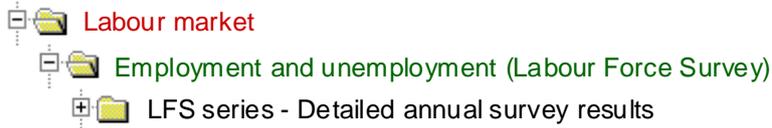
Further information

Data: [Eurostat Website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

Select your theme on the left side of the homepage and then 'Data' from the menu.

Data: [Eurostat Website/Population and social conditions/Labour market](#)

Population and social conditions



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European Statistical Data Support:

Eurostat set up with the members of the 'European statistical system' a network of support centres, which will exist in nearly all Member States as well as in some EFTA countries.

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