

## OECD unemployment rate remains stable at 8.2% in December 2011 but national rates continue to diverge

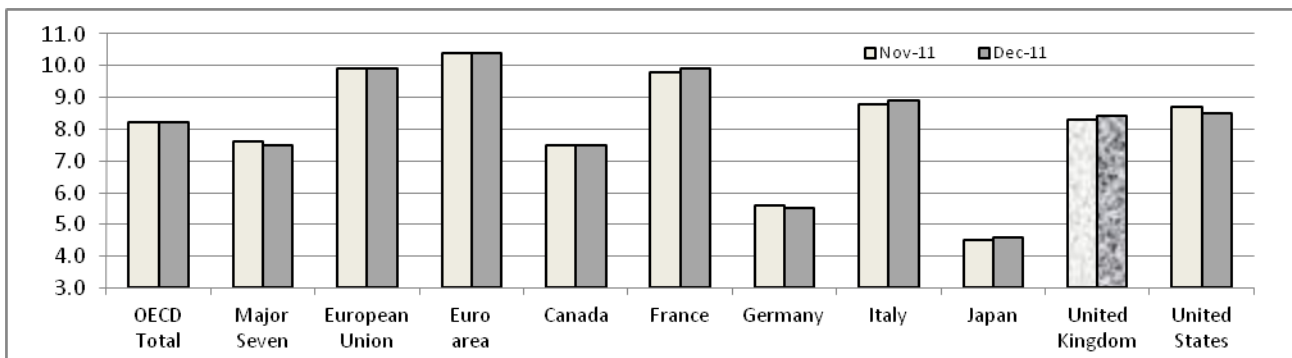
The **OECD area** unemployment rate, unchanged at 8.2% December 2011, continued to show the stability seen throughout 2011.

The **Euro area's** unemployment rate was also unchanged at 10.4% in December, a continuing record high since the start of the global financial crisis. This however masks large differences in national rates. **Spain** (22.9%), **Ireland** (14.5%), **Portugal** (13.6%), and the **Slovak Republic** (13.4%) all recorded high unemployment rates in December 2011, while **Austria** (4.1%), the **Netherlands** (4.9%), **Luxembourg** (5.2%) and **Germany** (5.5%) continue to exhibit lower unemployment rates.

New unemployment rate data for January 2012 show a similar divergent pattern for North America, with a fifth consecutive monthly decline in the **United States** (at 8.3%) and a continuing increase in **Canada** (7.6%). Meanwhile, December 2011 unemployment rates for **Australia** (5.2%), **Japan** (4.6%), **Korea** (3.1%) and **Mexico** (5.0%) remained low and broadly stable.

Around 44.6 million people were unemployed across the OECD area in December 2011, down 1.0 million from December 2010 but still 13.5 million higher than in December 2007.

### Selected Unemployment Rates, s.a. November 2011 – December 2011 <sup>(1)</sup>



(1) United Kingdom: September 2011— October 2011.

#### Methodological Notes:

For methodological reasons, harmonised unemployment rates may differ from those published by national statistical institutes. All rates and levels quoted are seasonally adjusted (s.a.).

More methodological notes are available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/21/0/44743407.pdf>.

#### Access data:

The latest unemployment rates for all OECD countries and geographic groupings, as well as historical data, can be downloaded from the OECD online data dissemination facility OECD.Stat Extracts at: <http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/Default.aspx?QueryName=251&QueryType=View&Lang=en>.

#### Contacts:

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**OECD Harmonised Unemployment Rates  
News Release: December 2011**
**OECD Unemployment Rates, s.a.  
Percentage of labour force**

	2009	2010	2011	2011				2011					
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OECD - Total	8.4	8.6	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2
Major Seven	8.1	8.2	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.8	7.7	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.5
European Union	9.0	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.5	9.7	9.9	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.8	9.9	9.9
Euro area	9.6	10.1	10.1	10.0	10.0	10.2	10.4	10.1	10.2	10.3	10.3	10.4	10.4
Australia	5.6	5.2	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.2
Austria	4.8	4.4	4.1	4.4	4.1	3.8	4.1	3.7	3.7	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.1
Belgium	7.9	8.3	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.4	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.2	7.2
Canada <sup>(1)</sup>	8.3	8.0	7.4	7.7	7.5	7.2	7.4	7.3	7.3	7.2	7.4	7.5	7.5
Chile	10.8	8.2	7.1	7.4	6.8	7.2	7.1	7.0	7.2	7.3	7.5	7.1	
Czech Republic	6.7	7.3	6.8	6.9	6.9	6.6	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8
Denmark	6.0	7.4	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.8	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.8
Estonia	13.8	16.8		13.6	12.7	11.3		11.3	11.3	11.3			
Finland	8.2	8.4	7.8	8.0	7.8	7.7	7.6	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.6
France	9.5	9.8	9.7	9.6	9.6	9.7	9.8	9.7	9.6	9.7	9.7	9.8	9.9
Germany	7.8	7.1	5.9	6.3	6.0	5.8	5.6	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.6	5.5
Greece	9.5	12.6		15.1	16.7	18.4		17.9	18.4	18.8	19.2		
Hungary	10.0	11.2	10.9	11.0	10.9	10.9	10.8	10.9	10.9	10.8	10.8	10.7	10.9
Iceland	7.2	7.5	7.1	7.4	6.9	7.2	6.7						
Ireland	11.8	13.7	14.4	14.3	14.3	14.5	14.4	14.6	14.6	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.5
Israel <sup>(3)</sup>	7.5	6.7		6.0	5.5	5.6							
Italy	7.8	8.4	8.4	8.2	8.2	8.4	8.7	8.3	8.3	8.6	8.5	8.8	8.9
Japan	5.1	5.1	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.3	4.1	4.5	4.5	4.6
Korea	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1
Luxembourg	5.2	4.6	4.9	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.9	5.2
Mexico	5.5	5.4	5.2	5.1	5.5	5.3	5.0	5.3	5.4	5.2	4.8	5.2	5.0
Netherlands	3.7	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.9	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.8	4.9	4.9
New Zealand	6.1	6.5		6.5	6.5	6.6							
Norway	3.1	3.5		3.3	3.3	3.2		3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3		
Poland	8.2	9.7	9.6	9.4	9.6	9.7	9.9	9.7	9.7	9.8	9.9	9.9	9.9
Portugal	10.6	12.0	12.7	12.4	12.5	12.7	13.3	12.6	12.6	12.8	13.0	13.2	13.6
Slovak Republic	12.0	14.4	13.4	13.4	13.3	13.4	13.5	13.4	13.4	13.4	13.5	13.5	13.4
Slovenia	5.9	7.3	8.1	8.1	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.0	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2
Spain	18.0	20.1	21.7	20.7	21.0	22.1	22.8	21.7	22.1	22.4	22.7	22.9	22.9
Sweden	8.3	8.4	7.5	7.7	7.5	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.5	7.5	7.5
Switzerland	4.1	4.2		3.9	3.4	4.0							
Turkey	12.5	10.6		9.3	9.1	8.6		9.0	8.6	8.3			
United Kingdom	7.6	7.8		7.7	7.9	8.2		8.1	8.3	8.3	8.4		
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	9.3	9.6	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.1	8.7	9.1	9.1	9.0	8.9	8.7	8.5

## Notes:

(1) Canada: Unemployment rate for January 2012 was 7.6%

(2) United States: Unemployment rate for January 2012 was 8.3%

(3) The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

**OECD Harmonised Unemployment Rates  
News Release: December 2011**
**OECD Unemployment Rates, s.a.  
Change of rates over the same period of the previous year**

	2009	2010	2011	2011				2011					
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
OECD - Total	2.3	0.2	-0.4	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.3	-0.2
Major Seven	2.2	0.1	-0.5	-0.6	-0.6	-0.4	-0.5	-0.3	-0.4	-0.5	-0.4	-0.6	-0.5
European Union	1.9	0.6	0.0	-0.2	-0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4
Euro area	1.9	0.5	0.0	-0.1	-0.2	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4
Australia	1.4	-0.4	-0.1	-0.3	-0.4	0.0	0.1	-0.2	0.2	0.2	-0.1	0.1	0.3
Austria	1.0	-0.4	-0.3	-0.1	-0.4	-0.6	-0.1	-0.8	-0.8	-0.4	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Belgium	0.9	0.4	-1.1	-1.3	-1.4	-0.9	-0.6	-1.2	-0.9	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	-0.4
Canada <sup>(1)</sup>	2.2	-0.3	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5	-0.8	-0.3	-0.7	-0.8	-0.8	-0.4	-0.1	-0.1
Chile	3.0	-2.6	-1.1	-1.7	-1.2	-0.6	-0.6	-0.8	-0.6	-0.4	0.0	-0.6	
Czech Republic	2.3	0.6	-0.5	-0.8	-0.4	-0.5	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.4	-0.3	-0.4
Denmark	2.6	1.4	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2
Estonia	8.2	3.0		-5.1	-5.2	-4.8		-4.8	-4.8	-4.8			
Finland	1.8	0.2	-0.6	-0.7	-0.7	-0.6	-0.5	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5
France	1.7	0.3	-0.1	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1	0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2
Germany	0.3	-0.7	-1.2	-1.2	-1.2	-1.1	-1.1	-1.0	-1.1	-1.0	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1
Greece	1.8	3.1		4.0	4.6	5.5		5.3	5.5	5.5	5.3		
Hungary	2.2	1.2	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.1	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	-0.3	-0.3	-0.1
Iceland	4.2	0.3	-0.4	0.1	-0.1	-0.6	-1.6						
Ireland	5.5	1.9	0.7	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.1	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0
Israel <sup>(3)</sup>	1.4	-0.8		-0.9	-1.0	-1.0							
Italy	1.0	0.6	0.0	-0.3	-0.4	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.8
Japan	1.1	0.0	-0.5	-0.3	-0.5	-0.6	-0.5	-0.4	-0.7	-0.9	-0.6	-0.6	-0.3
Korea	0.4	0.1	-0.3	-0.4	-0.1	-0.4	-0.3	-0.4	-0.3	-0.5	-0.4	-0.1	-0.4
Luxembourg	0.3	-0.6	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4
Mexico	1.5	-0.1	-0.2	-0.2	0.0	0.1	-0.5	0.0	0.3	-0.1	-0.6	-0.3	-0.5
Netherlands	0.6	0.8	-0.1	-0.2	-0.3	-0.1	0.5	-0.3	-0.1	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.6
New Zealand	1.9	0.4		0.4	-0.4	0.2							
Norway	0.6	0.4		-0.2	-0.3	-0.2		-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2		
Poland	1.0	1.5	-0.1	-0.4	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3
Portugal	2.1	1.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.2
Slovak Republic	2.5	2.4	-1.0	-1.3	-1.2	-0.9	-0.5	-1.0	-0.9	-0.9	-0.7	-0.5	-0.4
Slovenia	1.5	1.4	0.8	1.4	0.7	0.8	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.2
Spain	6.6	2.1	1.6	1.3	0.9	1.7	2.4	1.4	1.7	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.5
Sweden	2.1	0.1	-0.9	-1.0	-1.1	-0.9	-0.4	-1.1	-0.8	-0.9	-0.5	-0.3	-0.3
Switzerland	0.9	0.1		-0.6	-0.7	-0.4							
Turkey	2.8	-1.9		-2.2	-1.5	-1.9		-1.3	-2.1	-2.3			
United Kingdom	2.0	0.2		-0.2	0.1	0.5		0.4	0.7	0.5	0.6		
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	3.5	0.3	-0.6	-0.8	-0.6	-0.4	-0.9	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-1.1	-0.9

## Notes:

(1) Canada: For January 2012 the change was -0.1

(2) United States: For January 2012 the change was -0.8

(3) The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.