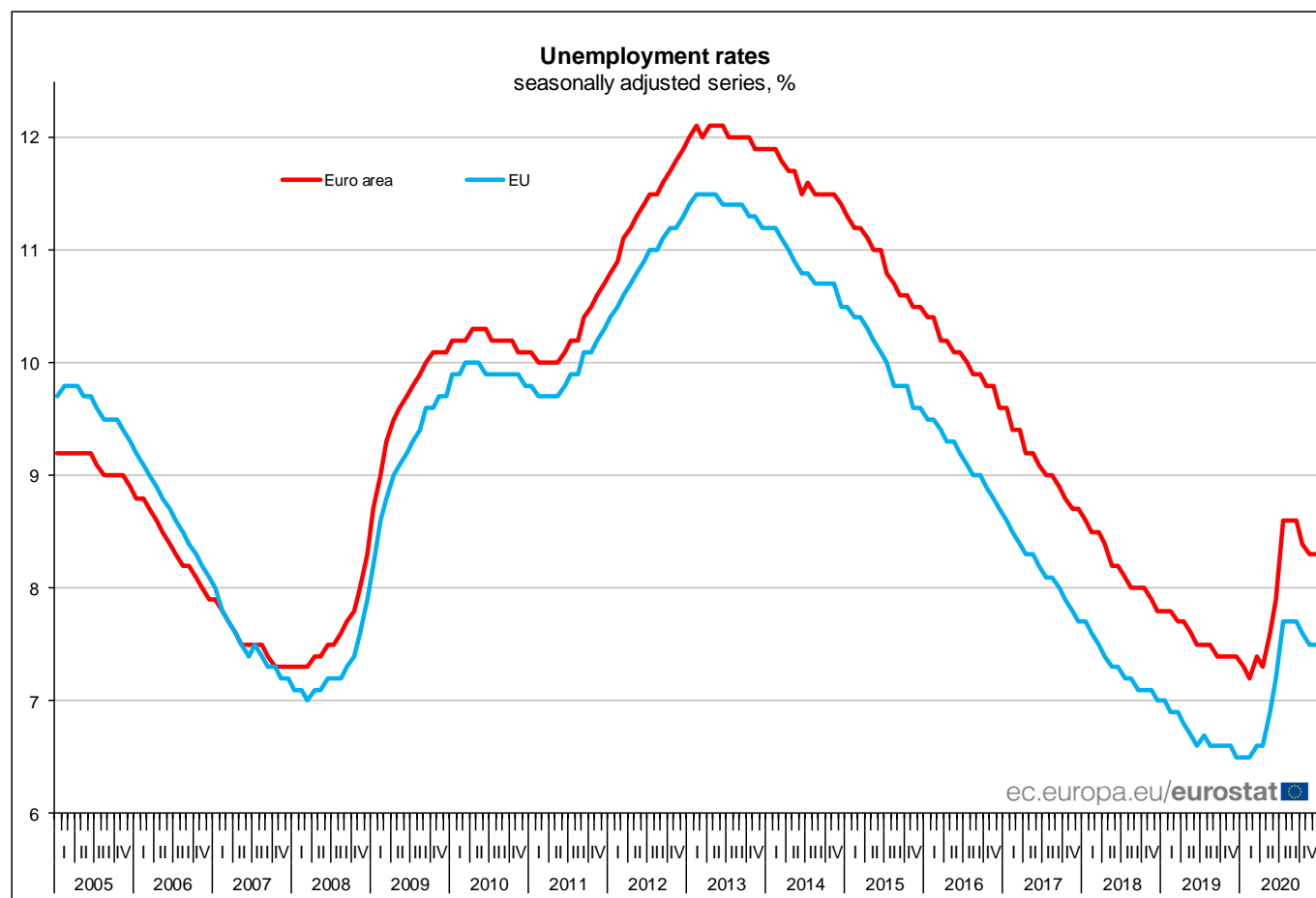## December 2020
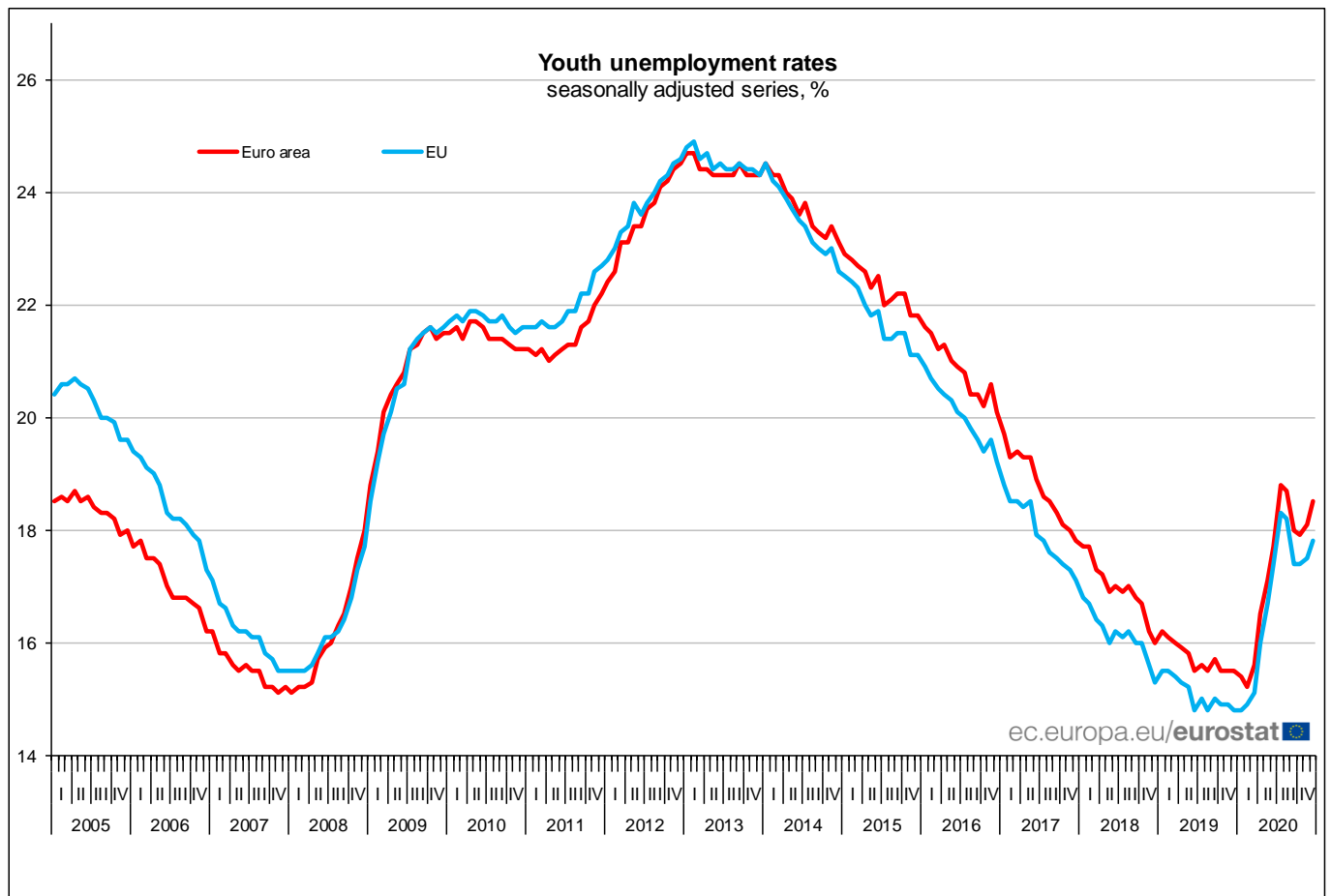# Euro area unemployment at 8.3%
EU at 7.5%

In December 2020, the **euro area** seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 8.3%, stable compared with November 2020 and up from 7.4% in December 2019. The **EU** unemployment rate was 7.5% in December 2020, also stable compared with November 2020 and up from 6.5% in December 2019. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Eurostat estimates that 16.000 million men and women in the **EU**, of whom 13.671 million in the **euro area**, were unemployed in December 2020. Compared with November 2020, the number of persons unemployed increased by 67 000 in the **EU** and by 55 000 in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2019, unemployment rose by 1.951 million in the **EU** and by 1.516 million in the **euro area**.

Unemployment rates
seasonally adjusted series, %

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Youth unemployment

In December 2020, 3.138 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the **EU**, of whom 2.590 million were in the **euro area**. In December 2020, the youth unemployment rate was 17.8% in the **EU** and 18.5% in the **euro area**, up from 17.5% and 18.1% respectively in the previous month. Compared with November 2020, youth unemployment increased by 41 000 in the **EU** and by 36 000 in the **euro area**. Compared with December 2019, youth unemployment increased by 438 000 in the **EU** and by 353 000 in the **euro area**.

Youth unemployment rates
seasonally adjusted series, %

Unemployment by gender

In December 2020, the unemployment rate for women was 7.9% in the **EU**, stable compared with November 2020. The unemployment rate for men was 7.1% in December 2020, also stable compared with November 2020. In the **euro area**, the unemployment rate for women remained stable at 8.8% in December 2020 while it increased from 7.8% to 7.9% for men.

Additional labour market indicators

These estimates are based on the globally used International Labour Organisation standard definition of unemployment, which counts as unemployed people without a job who have been actively seeking work in the last four weeks and are available to start work within the next two weeks. The COVID-19 outbreak and the measures applied to combat it have triggered a sharp increase in the number of claims for unemployment benefits across the EU. At the same time, a significant part of those who had registered in unemployment agencies were no longer actively looking for a job or no longer available for work, for instance, if they had to take care of their children. This leads to discrepancies in the number of registered unemployed and those measured as unemployed according to the ILO definition.

To capture in full the unprecedented labour market situation triggered by the COVID-19 outbreak, the data on unemployment have been complemented by additional indicators, e.g. underemployed part-time workers, persons seeking work but not immediately available and persons available to work but not seeking, released together with LFS data for the third quarter of 2020. The LFS for the fourth quarter of 2020 will be released on 21 April 2021.

Geographical information

Euro area (EA19): Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland.

European Union (EU27): Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

Methods and definitions

Eurostat publishes harmonised unemployment rates for individual EU Member States, the euro area and the EU. These unemployment rates are based on the definition recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The measurement is based on a harmonised data source, the European Union Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Based on the ILO definition, Eurostat defines **unemployed persons** as persons aged 15 to 74 who:
- are without work;
- are available to start work within the next two weeks;
- and have actively sought employment at some time during the previous four weeks.

The **unemployment rate** is the number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.

Series have been **seasonally adjusted** using the seasonal factors estimated in the period up to December 2019 included. Those seasonal factors will be kept unchanged ('controlled concurrent adjustment method') until the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak can be integrated in seasonal adjustment models.

The **labour force** is the total number of people employed plus unemployed. In this news release unemployment rates are based on employment and unemployment data covering persons aged 15 to 74.

The **youth unemployment rate** is the number of people aged 15 to 24 unemployed as a percentage of the labour force of the same age. Therefore, the youth unemployment rate should not be interpreted as the share of jobless people in the overall youth population.

When data for the most recent month are not available for a Member State, EU and EA aggregates are calculated using the latest data available for that Member State.

Country notes

Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Sweden and Iceland: the trend component is used instead of the more volatile seasonally adjusted data.

Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Portugal and Norway: 3-month moving averages of LFS data are used instead of pure monthly indicators.

Germany: due to the introduction of the new German system of integrated household surveys, including the LFS, the monthly unemployment rate for December 2020 is an estimation based on the figures recorded in previous periods, taking into account current developments.

Revisions and timetable

The data in this News Release can be subject to revisions, caused by updates to the seasonally adjusted series whenever new monthly data are added; the inclusion of the most recent LFS data in the calculation process; update of seasonal adjustment models with complete annual data.

Compared with the rates published in News Release 4/2021 of 8 January 2021, the November 2020 unemployment rate for the euro area and the EU has remained unchanged. Among EU Member States, the rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points (pp) downwards for Spain and Malta (both by 0.3 pp) as well as for Ireland (by 0.2 pp). The rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points upwards for Greece (by 0.6 pp, September 2020 data) and Austria (by 0.3 pp).

For more information

Eurostat website section on employment and unemployment

Eurostat database section on unemployment, including non-seasonally adjusted and trend data

Eurostat Statistics Explained articles on unemployment and on youth unemployment

Eurostat metadata on adjusted unemployment series and methodological note regarding COVID-19 outbreak

Eurostat €-indicators release calendar

European Statistics Code of Practice

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Seasonally adjusted unemployment, totals

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Dec 19	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Dec 19	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20
Euro area	7.4	8.6	8.4	8.3	**8.3**	12 155	14 046	13 849	13 616	**13 671**
EU	6.5	7.7	7.6	7.5	**7.5**	14 049	16 406	16 222	15 933	**16 000**
Belgium	5.2	6.6	6.3	6.1	**5.8**	266	339	323	310	**295**
Bulgaria	4.2	5.2	5.2	5.0	**4.8**	141	171	169	163	**159**
Czechia	2.0	2.8	2.8	2.9	**3.1**	105	149	152	154	**166**
Denmark	5.0	6.0	5.9	5.7	**5.8**	151	182	179	175	**177**
Germany	3.3	4.5	4.5	4.5	**4.6**	1 448	1 993	2 001	2 008	**2 015**
Estonia	4.3**	8.1	8.1	7.8	**:**	30**	57	58	55	**:**
Ireland	4.7	7.2	7.1	7.3	**7.2**	117	177	177	183	**179**
Greece	16.7*	16.7	16.7	:	**:**	786*	786	786	:	**:**
Spain	13.7	16.6	16.3	16.1	**16.2**	3 181	3 823	3 745	3 708	**3 741**
France	8.2	8.8	8.6	8.8	**8.9**	2 429	2 612	2 545	2 583	**2 614**
Croatia	6.4	8.0	7.8	7.5	**7.5**	114	145	140	135	**135**
Italy	9.6	9.5	9.5	8.8	**9.0**	2 479	2 403	2 391	2 223	**2 257**
Cyprus	6.3	9.3	10.5	7.8	**7.3**	28	42	48	35	**32**
Latvia	6.5	8.3	8.1	8.1	**8.2**	64	80	78	79	**80**
Lithuania	6.4	10.5	10.4	10.4	**10.1**	95	154	155	154	**149**
Luxembourg	5.6	6.7	6.5	6.5	**6.7**	17	21	20	20	**21**
Hungary	3.4**	4.4	4.5	4.3	**:**	159**	204	208	202	**:**
Malta	3.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	**4.5**	10	13	12	12	**12**
Netherlands	3.2	4.4	4.3	4.0	**3.9**	302	413	406	378	**368**
Austria	4.3	5.5	5.4	5.5	**5.8**	194	250	246	253	**265**
Poland	2.9	3.3	3.4	3.3	**3.3**	493	562	573	568	**551**
Portugal	6.7	7.9	7.5	7.1	**6.5**	348	407	387	369	**331**
Romania	4.0	5.1	5.3	5.1	**4.9**	366	455	477	462	**450**
Slovenia	3.8	5.0	4.9	4.9	**4.7**	39	51	50	50	**47**
Slovakia	5.6	7.0	7.1	7.1	**7.0**	153	191	194	192	**190**
Finland	6.8	8.2	8.2	8.1	**8.1**	189	227	225	224	**224**
Sweden	7.1	8.9	8.7	8.6	**8.5**	391	490	485	479	**475**
Iceland	4.0	5.7	5.9	6.0	**6.1**	8	12	12	13	**13**
Norway	4**	5.1	5.2	5.0	**:**	113**	146	149	143	**:**
Switzerland	4.1	5.1	:	:	**:**	203	252	:	:	**:**
United States	3.6	7.8	6.9	6.7	**6.7**	5 872	12 574	11 081	10 813	**10 769**

: Data not available   * October 2019   ** November 2019

Source datasets: une_rt_m (rates) and une_rt_m (in 1 000 persons)

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Seasonally adjusted youth (under 25s) unemployment

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Dec 19	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Dec 19	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20
Euro area	15.5	18.0	17.9	18.1	**18.5**	2 237	2 540	2 527	2 554	**2 590**
EU	14.8	17.4	17.4	17.5	**17.8**	2 700	3 074	3 083	3 097	**3 138**
Belgium	15.1	17.5	16.6	16.6	**16.6**	60	67	65	65	**65**
Bulgaria	9.3	14.7	14.1	13.9	**14.0**	14	19	18	17	**18**
Czechia	4.7	8.0	8.7	9.3	**10.3**	13	21	23	24	**26**
Denmark	9.9	12.2	12.9	12.9	**12.9**	43	53	56	56	**56**
Germany	5.6	6.4	6.3	6.3	**6.1**	244	274	271	266	**260**
Estonia	9.3	20.7	22.9	23.3	**:**	5	11	12	13	**:**
Ireland	11.2	19.9	19.3	20.4	**19.4**	34	60	58	63	**61**
Greece	32.4	33.7	35.0	:	**:**	73	82	81	:	**:**
Spain	30.3	40.8	40.2	40.0	**40.7**	469	601	585	578	**596**
France	20.2	20.7	20.7	22.1	**23.4**	575	601	606	650	**685**
Croatia	16.2	24.8	21.6	21.6	**21.6**	23	37	31	31	**31**
Italy	28.4	29.3	29.8	29.4	**29.7**	430	410	410	407	**397**
Cyprus	15.2	21.4	21.3	21.3	**21.3**	6	8	7	7	**7**
Latvia	11.7	13.6	14.1	15.0	**15.7**	7	8	8	9	**9**
Lithuania	14.9	24.9	27.1	28.4	**26.9**	16	24	28	30	**28**
Luxembourg	18.9	22.5	21.6	21.5	**22.3**	4	5	5	5	**5**
Hungary	10.9	11.5	11.9	11.6	**:**	35	35	36	34	**:**
Malta	9.8	11.1	10.5	11.0	**11.0**	3	3	3	3	**3**
Netherlands	6.7	10.7	10.1	9.4	**9.5**	101	157	151	138	**139**
Austria	8.8	8.8	8.7	10.2	**11.0**	45	46	45	53	**57**
Poland	7.8	11.3	12.3	12.5	**11.5**	97	122	134	138	**127**
Portugal	18.7	24.3	24.7	23.4	**22.5**	69	81	81	76	**70**
Romania	17.7	19.0	:	:	**:**	112	111	:	:	**:**
Slovenia	8.3	15.7	14.6	14.6	**14.6**	6	10	9	9	**9**
Slovakia	15.9	19.2	19.9	20.4	**20.5**	26	30	31	32	**32**
Finland	18.5	21.4	21.4	21.5	**21.6**	60	67	67	67	**68**
Sweden	20.4	25.6	24.9	24.3	**23.8**	128	152	148	144	**141**
Iceland	9.6	10.3	10.3	10.3	**10.3**	3	3	3	3	**3**
Norway	10.1	12.9	11.9	11.5	**:**	38	48	43	42	**:**
Switzerland	8.3	8.8	:	:	**:**	50	50	:	:	**:**

: Data not available
Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia: quarterly data

Source datasets: une_rt_m (rates) and une_rt_m (in 1 000 persons)

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Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates (%), by gender

	Males					Females				
	Dec 19	**Sep 20**	**Oct 20**	**Nov 20**	**Dec 20**	**Dec 19**	**Sep 20**	**Oct 20**	**Nov 20**	**Dec 20**
Euro area	7.1	8.0	8.0	7.8	**7.9**	7.7	9.2	9.0	8.8	**8.8**
EU	6.3	7.2	7.2	7.1	**7.1**	6.8	8.2	8.1	7.9	**7.9**
Belgium	5.8	6.8	6.4	6.3	**6.3**	4.6	6.4	6.2	5.8	**5.3**
Bulgaria	4.6	5.9	5.9	5.7	**5.5**	3.6	4.4	4.2	4.1	**4.0**
Czechia	1.7	2.4	2.4	2.4	**2.7**	2.2	3.2	3.4	3.5	**3.6**
Denmark	4.7	5.6	5.6	5.4	**5.6**	5.3	6.4	6.2	6.1	**6.1**
Germany	3.7	4.5	4.5	4.5	**4.5**	2.8	4.6	4.6	4.6	**4.6**
Estonia	4.6	7.6	7.7	8.4	**:**	4.2	8.7	8.6	7.1	**:**
Ireland	4.9	6.8	6.9	7.2	**7.0**	4.6	7.5	7.4	7.5	**7.3**
Greece	13.4	13.6	13.5	:	**:**	20.3	20.6	20.6	:	**:**
Spain	12.2	14.6	14.3	14.1	**14.2**	15.5	18.8	18.5	18.3	**18.4**
France	8.3	8.9	8.7	8.9	**9.2**	8.1	8.8	8.5	8.6	**8.6**
Croatia	5.9	7.7	7.4	7.1	**7.1**	6.9	8.4	8.2	8.0	**8.1**
Italy	8.8	8.6	8.7	8.2	**8.3**	10.7	10.7	10.4	9.7	**10.0**
Cyprus	5.5	9.3	10.5	7.6	**6.9**	7.1	9.3	10.6	8.0	**7.7**
Latvia	7.3	9.1	8.9	9.0	**9.3**	5.8	7.4	7.2	7.2	**7.2**
Lithuania	7.4	11.2	11.2	11.1	**10.5**	5.5	9.8	9.7	9.7	**9.7**
Luxembourg	5.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	**6.8**	5.6	6.6	6.4	6.5	**6.6**
Hungary	3.2	4.3	4.4	4.1	**:**	3.6	4.4	4.5	4.6	**:**
Malta	3.5	4.6	4.6	4.6	**4.6**	3.8	4.7	4.4	4.5	**4.4**
Netherlands	3.4	4.2	4.0	3.9	**3.9**	3.1	4.7	4.7	4.2	**4.0**
Austria	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.6	**5.9**	4.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	**5.6**
Poland	2.7	3.0	3.1	3.1	**3.1**	3.1	3.7	3.7	3.6	**3.5**
Portugal	6.2	7.7	7.2	6.9	**6.4**	7.2	8.1	7.7	7.4	**6.6**
Romania	4.7	5.4	5.5	5.3	**5.1**	3.2	4.7	5.0	4.8	**4.6**
Slovenia	3.2	4.4	4.1	3.9	**3.6**	4.6	5.7	5.8	6.0	**5.9**
Slovakia	5.4	6.5	6.7	6.8	**6.8**	5.8	7.6	7.6	7.4	**7.2**
Finland	7.1	8.6	8.5	8.4	**8.4**	6.5	7.8	7.8	7.8	**7.8**
Sweden	7.0	8.8	8.7	8.6	**8.4**	7.1	8.9	8.8	8.7	**8.7**
Iceland	3.9	6.1	6.3	6.4	**6.4**	4.1	5.2	5.4	5.6	**5.6**
Norway	4.2	5.3	5.5	5.3	**:**	3.5	4.9	4.9	4.7	**:**
Switzerland	4.0	4.9	:	:	**:**	4.2	5.3	:	:	**:**

: Data not available

Source dataset: une_rt_m

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