

## EMPLOYMENT RATES

Employment rates are a measure of the extent of utilisation of available labour resources. In the short term, these rates are sensitive to the economic cycle, but in the longer term they are significantly affected by government policies with regard to higher education and income support and by policies that facilitate employment of women.

### Definition

Employment rates are calculated as the ratio of the employed to the working age population. Employment is generally measured through household labour force surveys. According to the ILO Guidelines, employed persons are defined as 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 during 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 study, incapacity or the need to look after young children or elderly relatives.

### Overview

Total employment rates over the three years to 2010 are, in most OECD countries, slightly above the levels achieved in the period 1998 to 2000. In Spain, Germany, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands, the increase in employment rates exceed 5 percentage points, while gains are more moderate for most other OECD countries. However, the United States, Turkey and Iceland recorded modest falls in employment rates over this period. By the end of the period, employment rates ranged between 46% in Turkey and 79% in Iceland. Among the emerging economies shown, employment rates in Brazil and the Russian Federation are slightly above the OECD average, rising by 4 percentage points over the past decade in the Russian Federation. By contrast, employment rates in Chile and Israel are below the OECD average, despite modest rises since the mid-1990s. Estonia experienced an increase of 9 percentage points towards the end of the past decade, followed by a decline by the same amount in 2010.

Employment rates for men are higher than those for women in all OECD countries with an average OECD difference of 16%. While employment rates for men have remained fairly stable in most OECD countries, there are larger differences across countries in how those for women have evolved. In particular, in Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Chile, Italy, Germany and Greece employment rates for women have increased by more than 8 percentage points in this period, while the increase in Spain was as high as 15%, contributing to much of the rise in the total employment. Turkey has by far the lowest women's employment rate, at 26%, with Iceland remaining the highest, despite the recent decrease, at 77%. In the emerging economies, employment rates of men are markedly higher than those of women, by more than 23 points in Brazil and by 7 points in the Russian Federation.

Chile has below OECD-average employment rates for women despite increases (12 percentage points) over the last decade in excess of those recorded for men. By contrast, Estonia, Israel and Slovenia have above OECD-average employment rates for women, rising at a somewhat quicker pace than those of men since 2000.

The working age population refers to persons aged 15 to 64. Employment rates are here shown for both total employment and for men and women separately.

### Comparability

All OECD countries use the ILO Guidelines for measuring employment. Operational definitions used in national labour force surveys may vary slightly from country to country. Employment levels are also likely to be affected by changes in the survey design and the survey conduct. Despite these changes, the employment rates shown here are fairly consistent over time.

### Sources

- OECD (2011), *OECD Employment Outlook*, OECD Publishing.

### Further information

#### Analytical publications

- Jaumotte, F. (2003), "Female Labour Force Participation", *OECD Economics Department Working Papers*, No. 376.
- OECD (2007), *Babies and Bosses – Reconciling Work and Family Life*, series, OECD Publishing.

#### Statistical publications

- OECD (2011), *Labour Force Statistics*, OECD Publishing.

#### Online databases

- *OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics*.

#### Websites

- OECD Labour Statistics Database, [www.oecd.org/statistics/labour](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/labour).



**Employment rates: total**

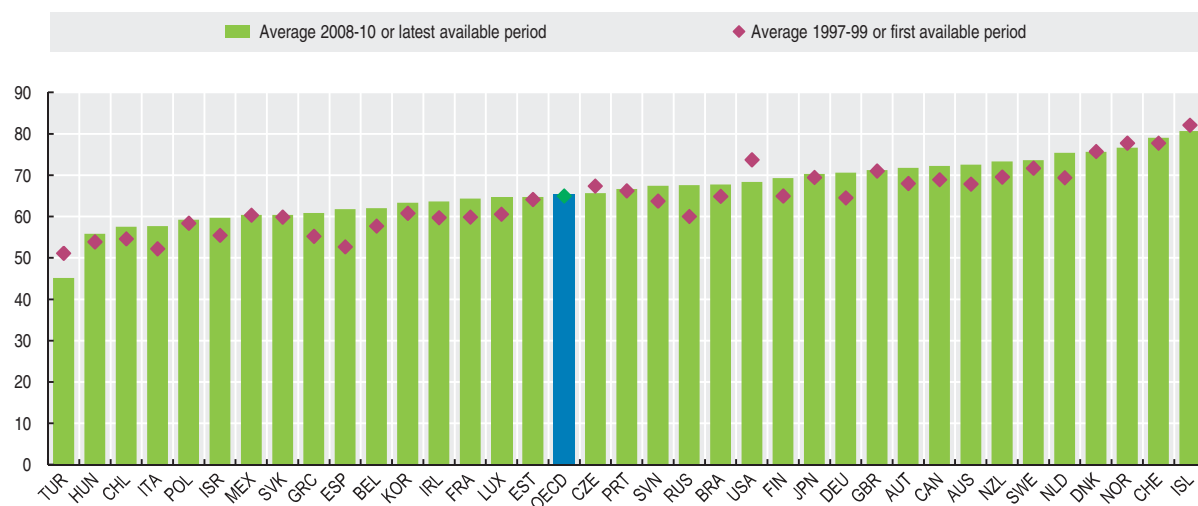
Share of persons of working age in employment

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Australia	67.4	67.9	68.4	69.3	69.0	69.4	70.0	70.3	71.5	72.2	72.9	73.2	72.0	72.4
Austria	67.8	67.8	68.4	68.3	68.2	68.8	68.9	67.8	68.6	70.2	71.4	72.1	71.6	71.7
Belgium	57.0	57.3	58.9	60.9	59.7	59.9	59.6	60.3	61.1	61.0	62.0	62.4	61.6	62.0
Canada	68.0	68.9	70.0	70.9	70.8	71.4	72.2	72.5	72.4	72.8	73.5	73.6	71.5	71.5
Chile	55.2	55.3	53.4	53.3	52.7	52.6	53.5	53.6	54.4	55.5	56.3	57.3	56.1	59.3
Czech Republic	68.7	67.5	65.9	65.2	65.3	65.7	64.9	64.2	64.8	65.3	66.1	66.6	65.4	65.0
Denmark	75.4	75.3	76.5	76.4	75.9	75.9	75.1	75.7	75.9	77.4	77.1	77.9	75.7	73.4
Estonia	65.7	64.8	62.0	61.0	61.4	62.0	62.8	62.9	64.2	67.9	69.2	69.7	63.5	61.0
Finland	63.5	64.8	66.6	67.5	68.3	68.3	67.9	67.8	68.5	69.6	70.5	71.3	68.4	68.3
France	59.4	59.9	60.4	61.7	62.7	62.9	64.0	63.7	63.7	63.7	64.3	64.9	64.1	64.0
Germany	63.8	64.7	65.2	65.6	65.8	65.3	64.6	65.0	65.5	67.2	69.0	70.2	70.4	71.2
Greece	54.8	55.6	55.4	55.9	55.6	57.5	58.7	59.4	60.1	61.0	61.4	61.9	61.2	59.6
Hungary	52.7	53.6	55.4	56.0	56.2	56.2	57.0	56.8	56.9	57.3	57.3	56.7	55.4	55.4
Iceland	80.0	82.2	84.2	84.6	84.6	82.8	84.1	82.8	84.4	85.3	85.7	84.2	78.9	78.9
Ireland	56.3	60.0	63.0	65.0	65.7	65.2	65.2	65.9	67.5	68.5	69.2	68.1	62.5	60.4
Israel	55.7	55.2	55.5	56.1	55.7	54.8	55.0	55.7	56.7	57.6	58.9	59.8	59.2	60.2
Italy	51.6	52.2	52.9	53.9	54.9	55.6	56.2	57.4	57.5	58.4	58.7	58.7	57.5	56.9
Japan	70.0	69.5	68.9	68.9	68.8	68.2	68.4	68.7	69.3	70.0	70.7	70.7	70.0	70.1
Korea	63.7	59.2	59.6	61.5	62.1	63.3	63.0	63.6	63.7	63.8	63.9	63.8	62.9	63.3
Luxembourg	59.9	60.2	61.6	62.7	63.0	63.6	62.2	62.5	63.6	63.6	64.2	63.4	65.2	65.2
Mexico	60.3	60.4	60.4	60.1	59.4	59.3	58.8	59.9	59.6	61.0	61.1	61.3	59.4	60.4
Netherlands	67.9	69.5	70.8	72.1	72.6	73.0	71.6	71.1	71.5	72.5	74.4	75.9	75.6	74.7
New Zealand	70.1	69.1	69.6	70.4	71.4	72.2	72.2	73.2	74.3	74.9	75.2	74.7	72.9	72.3
Norway	77.0	78.3	78.0	77.9	77.5	77.1	75.8	75.6	75.2	75.5	76.9	78.1	76.5	75.4
Poland	58.8	58.9	57.5	55.0	53.5	51.7	51.4	51.9	53.0	54.5	57.0	59.2	59.3	59.3
Portugal	64.7	66.7	67.3	68.3	68.9	68.7	68.0	67.8	67.5	67.9	67.8	68.2	66.3	65.6
Slovak Republic	61.1	60.5	58.1	56.8	56.9	56.9	57.7	57.0	57.7	59.4	60.7	62.3	60.2	58.8
Slovenia	..	..	..	..	..	63.4	62.6	65.3	66.0	66.6	67.8	68.6	67.5	66.2
Spain	50.7	52.4	55.0	57.4	58.8	59.5	60.7	62.0	64.3	65.7	66.6	65.3	60.6	59.4
Sweden	70.7	71.5	72.9	74.3	75.4	75.2	74.4	73.7	74.0	74.6	75.7	75.8	72.3	72.7
Switzerland	76.9	78.0	78.4	78.4	79.2	78.9	77.9	77.4	77.2	77.9	78.6	79.5	79.0	78.6
Turkey	51.3	51.4	50.8	48.9	47.8	46.7	45.5	44.1	44.4	44.6	44.6	44.9	44.3	46.3
United Kingdom	70.6	71.0	71.5	72.2	72.5	72.3	72.6	72.7	72.6	72.5	72.3	72.7	70.6	70.3
United States	73.5	73.8	73.9	74.1	73.1	71.9	71.2	71.2	71.5	72.0	71.8	70.9	67.6	66.7
OECD total	64.8	65.0	65.2	65.4	65.2	64.9	64.7	65.0	65.3	66.0	66.5	66.5	64.7	64.6
Brazil	..	..	..	..	64.3	65.4	65.0	66.4	67.0	67.4	67.4	68.3	67.6	..
Russian Federation	60.2	58.2	61.7	63.7	63.8	65.1	64.0	64.9	65.9	66.7	68.3	68.6	66.8	67.4

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**Employment rates: total**

Share of persons of working age in employment



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EMPLOYMENT RATES

**Employment rates: men**

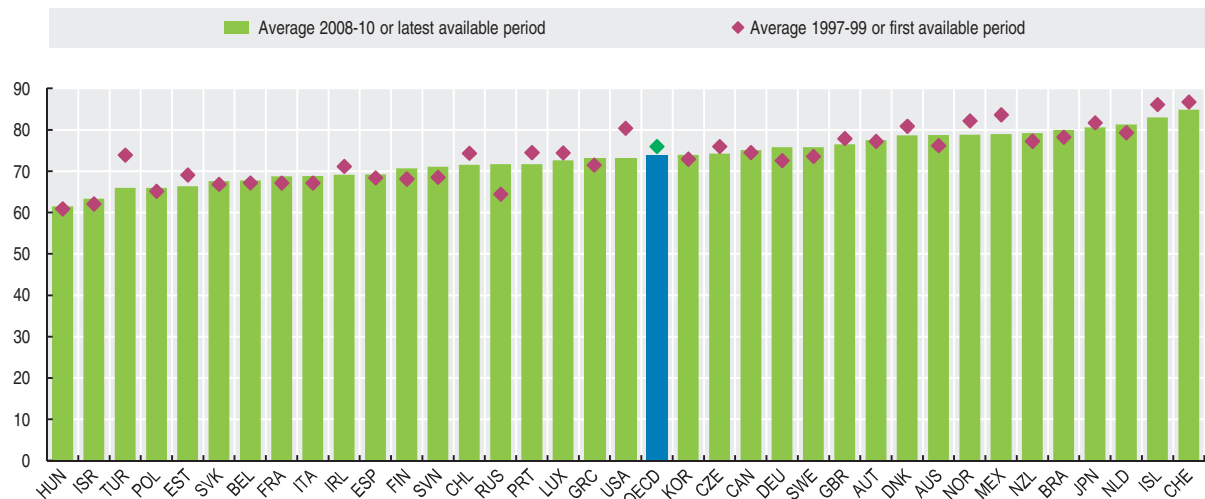
Share of men of working age in employment

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Australia	75.8	76.2	76.6	77.1	76.4	76.7	77.0	77.6	78.5	78.8	79.6	79.7	77.8	78.6
Austria	77.2	77.0	77.5	77.3	76.6	76.4	76.4	74.9	75.4	76.9	78.4	78.5	76.9	77.1
Belgium	67.1	67.0	67.5	69.8	68.5	68.3	67.3	67.9	68.3	67.9	68.7	68.6	67.2	67.4
Canada	73.8	74.4	75.4	76.2	75.7	75.9	76.4	76.6	76.6	76.7	77.1	77.2	73.9	74.2
Chile	75.6	75.2	72.2	71.9	71.2	71.0	71.3	70.7	71.1	72.0	72.3	72.6	70.0	72.1
Czech Republic	77.4	76.3	74.3	73.6	73.6	74.2	73.4	72.4	73.3	73.7	74.8	75.4	73.8	73.5
Denmark	81.3	80.2	81.2	80.7	80.2	80.0	79.6	79.7	79.8	81.2	81.0	81.9	78.3	75.8
Estonia	71.4	69.5	66.4	65.4	65.8	66.5	67.2	66.3	66.8	70.9	73.0	73.5	64.1	61.5
Finland	66.6	68.2	69.6	70.5	71.2	70.4	70.1	70.0	70.5	71.8	72.4	73.4	68.9	69.7
France	66.8	67.2	67.5	68.8	69.8	69.6	69.9	69.4	69.2	68.9	69.2	69.6	68.4	68.3
Germany	72.1	72.9	72.8	72.9	72.8	71.7	70.4	70.8	71.4	72.8	74.7	75.9	75.5	76.1
Greece	71.9	71.6	70.9	71.3	70.9	72.2	73.4	73.7	74.2	74.6	74.9	75.0	73.5	70.9
Hungary	60.3	60.3	62.2	62.7	63.0	62.9	63.4	63.1	63.1	63.8	64.0	63.0	61.1	60.4
Iceland	84.2	86.0	88.2	88.2	88.0	85.7	86.8	86.2	87.4	88.7	89.5	87.8	80.6	80.6
Ireland	67.8	71.5	74.2	76.1	76.7	75.1	74.9	75.7	76.6	77.7	77.6	75.7	67.3	64.5
Israel	63.1	61.9	61.3	61.4	60.8	59.5	59.4	60.4	61.0	61.8	63.3	64.1	62.5	63.4
Italy	66.8	67.1	67.6	68.2	68.7	69.2	69.7	69.7	69.7	70.5	70.7	70.3	68.6	67.7
Japan	82.4	81.7	81.0	80.9	80.5	79.9	79.8	80.0	80.4	81.0	81.7	81.6	80.2	80.0
Korea	76.2	71.3	71.3	73.1	73.5	74.9	75.0	75.2	75.0	74.6	74.7	74.4	73.6	73.9
Luxembourg	74.3	74.6	74.4	75.0	74.9	75.5	73.3	72.8	73.3	72.6	72.3	71.5	73.2	73.1
Mexico	83.7	83.5	83.7	82.8	82.3	81.6	80.8	81.0	80.2	81.6	80.9	80.7	77.7	78.4
Netherlands	78.1	79.6	80.3	81.2	81.6	81.4	79.5	78.6	78.7	79.5	81.1	82.4	81.5	80.0
New Zealand	78.1	76.8	76.9	77.9	78.6	79.5	79.3	80.6	81.3	81.9	81.9	80.9	78.6	78.2
Norway	81.7	82.8	82.1	81.7	81.0	80.2	78.7	78.4	78.3	78.6	79.7	80.6	78.4	77.4
Poland	66.1	65.8	63.6	61.2	59.2	57.0	56.7	57.4	59.0	60.9	63.6	66.3	66.1	65.6
Portugal	72.5	75.6	75.5	76.3	76.7	76.3	74.8	74.1	73.4	73.9	73.9	74.0	71.1	70.1
Slovak Republic	68.4	67.8	64.3	62.2	62.1	62.5	63.4	63.2	64.6	67.0	68.4	70.0	67.6	65.2
Slovenia	..	..	..	..	..	68.2	67.4	70.0	70.4	71.1	72.7	72.7	71.0	69.6
Spain	66.1	68.3	70.8	72.7	73.8	73.9	74.5	74.9	76.4	77.3	77.4	74.6	67.5	65.6
Sweden	72.4	73.6	74.8	76.3	77.2	76.9	76.0	75.5	76.2	77.1	78.2	78.3	74.2	75.0
Switzerland	85.9	87.2	87.1	87.3	87.6	86.2	85.1	84.5	83.9	84.7	85.6	85.4	84.4	84.8
Turkey	74.8	74.3	72.7	71.7	69.3	66.9	65.9	66.4	66.9	66.8	66.8	66.6	64.6	66.7
United Kingdom	77.4	78.0	78.3	78.9	79.1	78.6	78.9	78.9	78.8	78.4	78.4	78.5	75.7	75.3
United States	80.1	80.5	80.5	80.6	79.4	78.0	76.9	77.2	77.6	78.1	77.8	76.4	72.0	71.1
OECD total	75.9	76.0	75.9	76.1	75.6	74.9	74.5	74.7	74.9	75.5	75.9	75.6	72.9	72.7
Brazil	..	..	..	..	78.2	78.7	77.9	79.3	79.4	79.6	79.7	80.6	79.7	..
Russian Federation	64.9	62.7	65.8	67.7	67.7	68.6	67.6	68.5	69.5	69.9	71.8	72.9	70.6	71.6

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**Employment rates: men**

Share of men of working age in employment



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932505317>

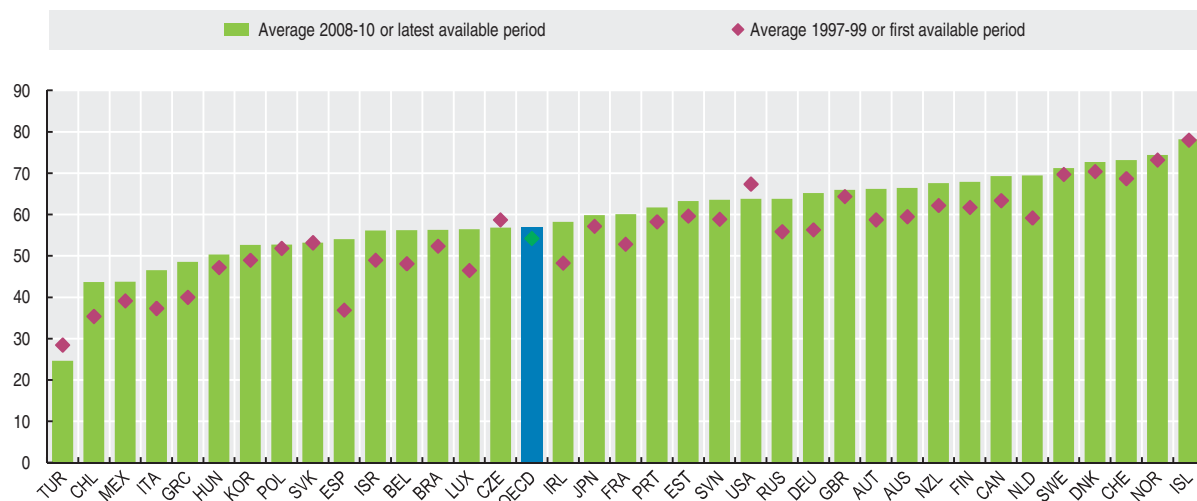

**Employment rates: women**

Share of women of working age in employment

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Australia	58.9	59.6	60.0	61.4	61.7	62.0	63.0	63.0	64.6	65.5	66.1	66.7	66.3	66.2
Austria	58.4	58.5	59.4	59.4	59.9	61.2	61.6	60.7	62.0	63.5	64.4	65.8	66.4	66.4
Belgium	46.7	47.5	50.2	51.9	50.7	51.4	51.8	52.6	53.8	54.0	55.3	56.2	56.0	56.5
Canada	62.1	63.5	64.6	65.6	65.9	66.9	68.0	68.3	68.2	68.8	69.9	70.1	69.0	68.8
Chile	35.4	35.8	35.0	35.1	34.5	34.5	35.8	36.7	38.0	39.2	40.4	42.1	42.2	46.7
Czech Republic	59.9	58.7	57.4	56.9	57.0	57.1	56.3	56.0	56.3	56.8	57.3	57.6	56.7	56.3
Denmark	69.4	70.3	71.6	72.1	71.4	71.7	70.5	71.6	71.9	73.4	73.2	73.9	73.1	71.1
Estonia	60.5	60.5	57.9	57.0	57.3	57.8	58.8	59.8	61.9	65.1	65.7	66.3	63.0	60.5
Finland	60.4	61.3	63.6	64.5	65.4	66.1	65.7	65.5	66.5	67.3	68.5	69.0	67.9	66.9
France	52.1	52.9	53.5	54.8	55.7	56.4	58.2	58.2	58.4	58.6	59.7	60.4	60.0	59.9
Germany	55.3	56.3	57.4	58.1	58.7	58.8	58.7	59.2	59.6	61.4	63.2	64.3	65.2	66.1
Greece	39.1	40.3	40.7	41.3	41.2	42.9	44.3	45.2	46.1	47.4	47.9	48.7	48.9	48.1
Hungary	45.5	47.3	48.9	49.6	49.8	49.8	50.9	50.7	51.0	51.2	50.9	50.6	49.9	50.6
Iceland	75.6	78.3	80.2	81.0	81.1	79.8	81.2	79.4	81.2	81.6	81.7	80.3	77.2	77.0
Ireland	44.7	48.4	51.8	53.8	54.6	55.2	55.5	56.1	58.2	59.1	60.7	60.5	57.8	56.4
Israel	48.4	48.7	49.8	50.9	50.7	50.2	50.6	51.0	52.5	53.3	54.6	55.6	55.9	56.9
Italy	36.4	37.3	38.3	39.6	41.1	42.0	42.7	45.2	45.3	46.3	46.6	47.2	46.4	46.1
Japan	57.6	57.2	56.7	56.7	57.0	56.5	56.8	57.4	58.1	58.8	59.5	59.7	59.8	60.1
Korea	51.6	47.3	48.1	50.0	50.9	52.0	51.1	52.2	52.5	53.1	53.2	53.2	52.2	52.6
Luxembourg	45.4	45.6	48.5	50.0	50.8	51.5	50.9	51.9	53.7	54.6	56.1	55.1	57.0	57.2
Mexico	39.1	39.3	39.1	39.6	39.0	39.5	39.1	40.9	41.6	42.9	43.6	44.1	43.0	44.1
Netherlands	57.4	59.1	61.1	62.7	63.4	64.5	63.5	63.5	64.1	65.4	67.5	69.3	69.6	69.4
New Zealand	62.3	61.7	62.6	63.2	64.5	65.1	65.5	66.1	67.6	68.2	68.7	68.7	67.4	66.7
Norway	72.2	73.6	73.8	74.0	73.8	73.9	72.7	72.7	72.0	72.3	74.0	75.4	74.4	73.3
Poland	51.8	52.2	51.6	48.9	47.8	46.4	46.2	46.4	47.0	48.2	50.6	52.4	52.8	53.0
Portugal	57.2	58.2	59.4	60.5	61.3	61.4	61.4	61.7	61.7	62.0	61.9	62.5	61.6	61.1
Slovak Republic	54.0	53.5	52.1	51.5	51.8	51.4	52.2	50.9	50.9	51.9	53.0	54.6	52.8	52.3
Slovenia	..	..	..	..	..	58.6	57.6	60.5	61.3	61.8	62.6	64.2	63.8	62.6
Spain	35.2	36.5	39.1	42.0	43.8	44.9	46.8	49.0	51.9	54.0	55.5	55.7	53.5	53.0
Sweden	68.9	69.4	70.9	72.2	73.5	73.4	72.8	71.8	71.8	72.1	73.2	73.2	70.2	70.3
Switzerland	67.8	68.8	69.6	69.4	70.7	71.5	70.7	70.3	70.4	71.1	71.6	73.5	73.6	72.3
Turkey	28.0	28.5	28.9	26.2	26.3	26.6	25.2	22.3	22.3	22.7	22.8	23.5	24.2	26.2
United Kingdom	64.0	64.2	65.0	65.6	66.0	66.3	66.4	66.6	66.7	66.8	66.3	66.9	65.6	65.3
United States	67.1	67.4	67.6	67.8	67.1	66.1	65.7	65.4	65.6	66.1	65.9	65.5	63.4	62.4
OECD total	53.9	54.2	54.6	55.0	55.1	55.1	55.1	55.4	55.9	56.7	57.2	57.6	56.7	56.7
Brazil	..	..	..	..	51.3	52.9	52.9	54.3	55.3	55.9	55.8	56.8	56.4	..
Russian Federation	55.8	54.1	57.8	59.8	60.0	61.8	60.5	61.5	62.6	63.7	65.1	64.7	63.3	63.5

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**Employment rates: women**

Share of women of working age in employment


 StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932505355>

