

## OECD unemployment rate stable at 8.2% in March 2012

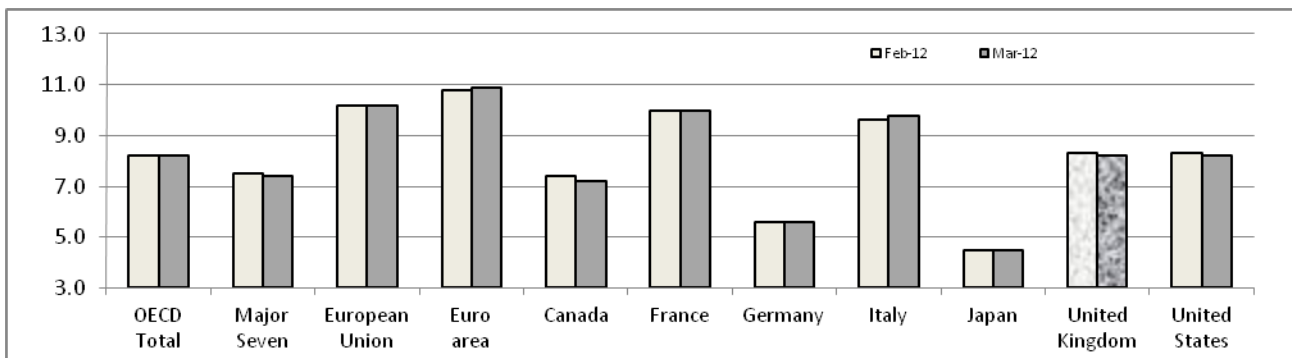
The **OECD area** unemployment rate was stable at 8.2% in March 2012, the same level recorded since February 2011. This flatness is largely the result of increasing rates in some euro area countries being offset by declines in North America.

The **euro area** unemployment rate rose by 0.1 percentage point to 10.9% in March, 3.6 points higher than its all time low of 7.3% in March 2008. Within the euro area in March, the unemployment rate rose by 0.3 point in **Portugal** (to 15.3%) and **Spain** (to 24.1%, the highest rate in the OECD area), by 0.2 point in **Italy** (9.8%) and by 0.1 point in the **Netherlands** (5.0%). It fell by 0.2 point in **Ireland** (14.5%) and **Slovenia** (8.5%), and by 0.1 point in **Austria** (4.0%) and the **Slovak Republic** (13.9%), while unemployment rates remained stable in all other euro area countries.

Outside Europe, unemployment rates across the OECD area remained broadly stable. **Korea** experienced the largest fall in March 2012 (to 3.4%), with no country recording an increase. New data for April 2012 show that the unemployment rate fell in the **United States** (to 8.1%, down from its peak of 9.1% in August 2011) while it rose slightly in **Canada** (to 7.3%, up 0.1 point from the previous month).

Around 45.0 million people were unemployed across the OECD area in March 2012, up 0.8 million from March 2011 and 14.1 million from March 2008.

**Selected Unemployment Rates, s.a.**  
February 2012 – March 2012 <sup>(1)</sup>



(1) United Kingdom: December 2011— January 2012.

### 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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**Next release: Tuesday, 12 June 2012**

**OECD Harmonised Unemployment Rates  
News Release: March 2012**
**OECD Unemployment Rates, s.a.  
Percentage of labour force**

	2009	2010	2011	2011			2012	2011			2012		
				Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
OECD - Total	8.4	8.6	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2
Major Seven	8.1	8.2	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.5	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.4
European Union	9.0	9.7	9.7	9.5	9.7	10.0	10.2	9.9	10.0	10.0	10.1	10.2	10.2
Euro area	9.6	10.1	10.2	10.0	10.2	10.5	10.8	10.4	10.6	10.6	10.8	10.8	10.9
Australia	5.6	5.2	5.1	4.9	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	5.2
Austria	4.8	4.4	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.3	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0
Belgium	7.9	8.3	7.2	7.1	7.3	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.3	7.3	7.3
Canada <sup>(1)</sup>	8.3	8.0	7.4	7.5	7.2	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.2
Chile	10.8	8.2	7.1	6.9	7.2	7.0	6.6	7.4	7.0	6.9	6.8	6.6	
Czech Republic	6.7	7.3	6.7	6.9	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.7
Denmark	6.1	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.8	8.0	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.9	7.9	8.1
Estonia	13.9	16.9	12.5	13.1	11.4	11.7		11.7	11.7	11.7			
Finland	8.2	8.4	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.6	7.5	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.5
France	9.5	9.8	9.7	9.6	9.7	9.8	10.0	9.8	9.8	9.9	10.0	10.0	10.0
Germany	7.8	7.1	5.9	6.0	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6
Greece	9.5	12.6	17.7	16.7	18.4	20.5		19.7	20.6	21.2	21.7		
Hungary	10.0	11.2	10.9	10.9	10.9	10.9	11.2	10.9	10.9	11.0	11.3	11.1	11.2
Iceland	7.2	7.5	7.1	6.9	7.2	6.7	6.8						
Ireland	11.9	13.7	14.5	14.2	14.7	14.7	14.6	14.7	14.8	14.7	14.7	14.7	14.5
Israel <sup>(3)</sup>	7.5	6.7	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.4							
Italy	7.8	8.4	8.5	8.2	8.4	9.1	9.6	8.8	9.2	9.3	9.5	9.6	9.8
Japan	5.1	5.1	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5
Korea	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.7	3.4
Luxembourg	5.2	4.6	4.8	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.2	4.9	4.9	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.2
Mexico	5.5	5.3	5.2	5.5	5.3	5.0	5.0	4.8	5.1	5.0	4.8	5.2	5.1
Netherlands	3.7	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.9	5.0	4.8	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.9	5.0
New Zealand	6.1	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.6	6.4	6.7						
Norway	3.1	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.4		3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2		
Poland	8.2	9.6	9.7	9.6	9.7	10.0	10.1	9.9	10.0	10.0	10.1	10.1	10.1
Portugal	10.6	12.0	12.9	12.6	12.7	14.1	15.0	13.6	14.0	14.6	14.8	15.0	15.3
Slovak Republic	12.0	14.4	13.6	13.3	13.5	14.0	14.0	13.9	14.0	14.1	14.0	14.0	13.9
Slovenia	5.9	7.3	8.2	8.0	8.2	8.7	8.6	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.5
Spain	18.0	20.1	21.7	20.9	22.0	23.0	23.8	22.7	23.0	23.2	23.5	23.8	24.1
Sweden	8.3	8.4	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.3
Switzerland	4.1	4.2	3.8	3.4	3.9	3.8							
Turkey	12.5	10.6	8.8	9.1	8.6	8.3		8.4	8.2	8.3			
United Kingdom	7.6	7.8	8.0	7.9	8.2	8.3		8.3	8.3	8.3	8.2		
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	9.3	9.6	9.0	9.0	9.1	8.7	8.3	8.9	8.7	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.2

## Notes:

(1) Canada: Unemployment rate for April 2012 was 7.3%

(2) United States: Unemployment rate for April 2012 was 8.1%

(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: March 2012**
**OECD Unemployment Rates, s.a.  
Change of rates over the same period of the previous year**

	2009	2010	2011	2011			2012	2011			2012		
				Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
OECD - Total	2.3	0.2	-0.4	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3	0.0	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.0
Major Seven	2.2	0.1	-0.5	-0.5	-0.4	-0.5	-0.2	-0.4	-0.6	-0.4	-0.3	-0.2	-0.3
European Union	1.9	0.7	0.0	-0.2	0.1	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.8
Euro area	2.0	0.5	0.1	-0.2	0.1	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.8	1.0
Australia	1.4	-0.4	-0.1	-0.4	0.0	0.1	0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.3
Austria	1.0	-0.4	-0.2	-0.4	-0.5	0.1	-0.2	0.1	0.3	-0.1	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2
Belgium	0.9	0.4	-1.1	-1.4	-1.0	-0.6	0.2	-0.8	-0.7	-0.5	0.0	0.2	0.3
Canada <sup>(1)</sup>	2.2	-0.3	-0.6	-0.5	-0.8	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.3	-0.4
Chile	3.0	-2.6	-1.1	-1.2	-0.6	-0.5	-0.7	0.0	-0.5	-0.8	-0.9	-0.7	
Czech Republic	2.3	0.6	-0.6	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.2	-0.5	-0.4	-0.5	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2
Denmark	2.7	1.4	0.1	-0.1	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6
Estonia	8.3	3.0	-4.4	-5.3	-4.9	-2.2		-2.2	-2.2	-2.2			
Finland	1.8	0.2	-0.6	-0.7	-0.6	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.4
France	1.7	0.3	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
Germany	0.3	-0.7	-1.2	-1.2	-1.1	-1.1	-0.7	-1.1	-1.1	-1.0	-0.8	-0.7	-0.6
Greece	1.8	3.1	5.1	4.6	5.5	6.4		5.9	6.6	6.7	7.0		
Hungary	2.2	1.2	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	0.2	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.2	0.5
Iceland	4.2	0.3	-0.4	-0.1	-0.6	-1.6	-0.6						
Ireland	5.6	1.8	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.4
Israel <sup>(3)</sup>	1.4	-0.8	-1.1	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0							
Italy	1.1	0.6	0.1	-0.3	0.1	0.8	1.5	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.5	1.7
Japan	1.1	0.0	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.5	-0.2	-0.7	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2
Korea	0.4	0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.4	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.1	-0.4	-0.4	-0.2	-0.6
Luxembourg	0.3	-0.6	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5
Mexico	1.5	-0.2	-0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.4	0.2	-0.6	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	0.0	0.0
Netherlands	0.6	0.8	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.8
New Zealand	1.9	0.4	0.0	-0.4	0.2	-0.3	0.1						
Norway	0.6	0.4	-0.2	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1		-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2		
Poland	1.0	1.4	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.7
Portugal	2.1	1.4	0.9	0.6	0.4	1.8	2.7	1.3	1.8	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.9
Slovak Republic	2.5	2.4	-0.8	-1.2	-0.9	0.1	0.6	-0.2	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6
Slovenia	1.5	1.4	0.9	0.6	0.9	1.0	0.6	1.1	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.4
Spain	6.6	2.1	1.6	0.8	1.7	2.5	3.1	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.9	3.1	3.3
Sweden	2.1	0.1	-0.9	-1.1	-1.0	-0.4	-0.2	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3	-0.2	-0.1	-0.4
Switzerland	0.9	0.1	-0.4	-0.7	-0.5	-0.2							
Turkey	2.8	-1.9	-1.8	-1.5	-1.9	-1.6		-1.9	-1.6	-1.4			
United Kingdom	2.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.5		0.5	0.6	0.5	0.4		
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	3.5	0.3	-0.6	-0.6	-0.4	-0.9	-0.7	-0.6	-1.1	-0.9	-0.8	-0.7	-0.7

## Notes:

(1) Canada: For April 2012 the change was -0.3

(2) United States: For April 2012 the change was -0.9

(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.