

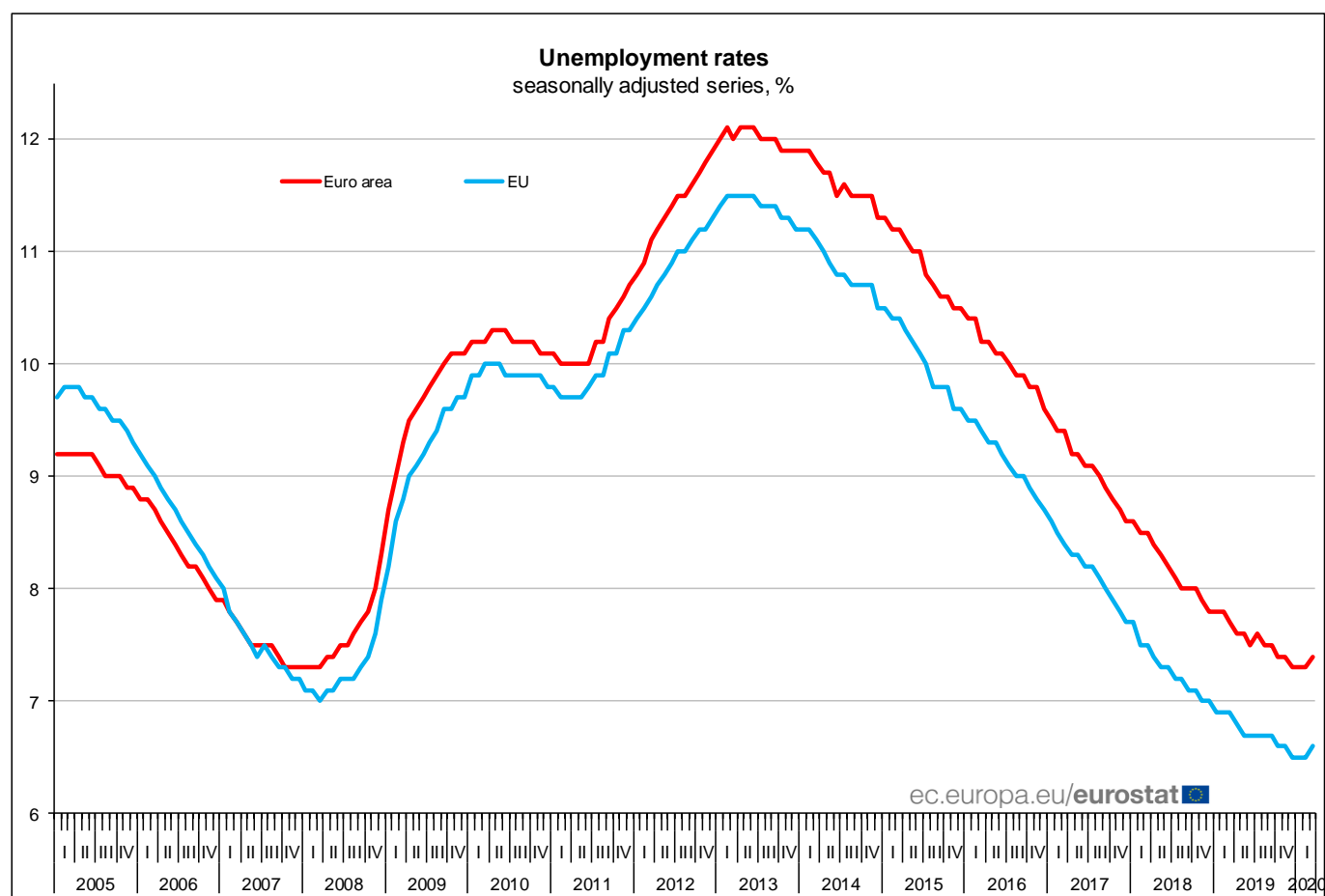
March 2020

Euro area unemployment at 7.4%

EU at 6.6%

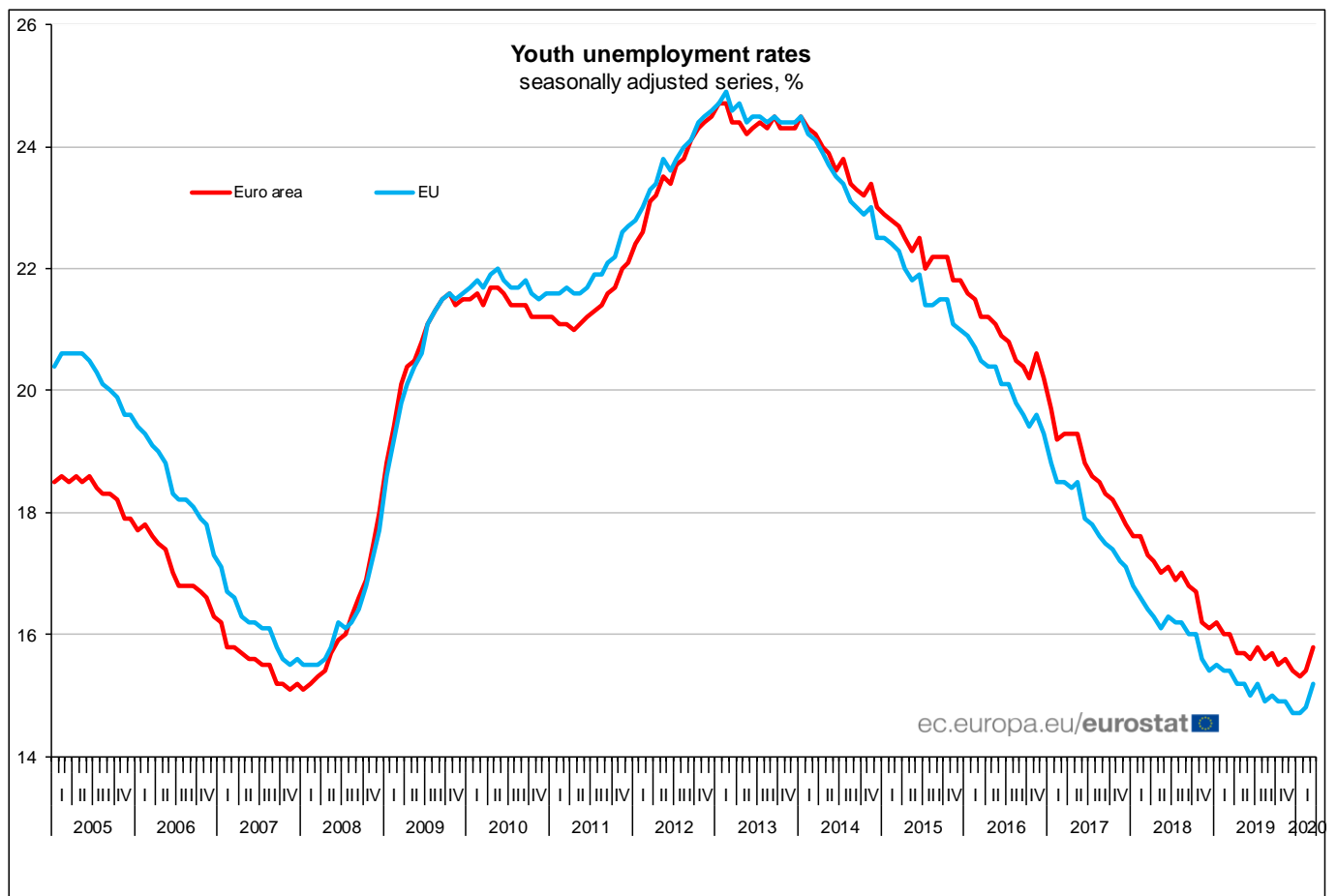
In March 2020, the month when COVID-19 containment measures began to be widely introduced by Member States, the **euro area** seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 7.4%, up from 7.3% in February 2020. The **EU** unemployment rate was 6.6% in March 2020, up from 6.5% in February 2020. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Eurostat estimates that 14.141 million men and women in the **EU**, of whom 12.156 million in the **euro area**, were unemployed in March 2020. Compared with February 2020, the number of persons unemployed increased by 241 000 in the **EU** and by 197 000 in the **euro area**.



Youth unemployment

In March 2020, 2.763 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the **EU**, of whom 2.275 million were in the **euro area**. In March 2020, the youth unemployment rate was 15.2% in the **EU** and 15.8% in the **euro area**, up from 14.8% and 15.4% respectively in the previous month. Compared with February 2020, youth unemployment increased by 59 000 in the **EU** and by 52 000 in the **euro area**.



Unemployment by gender

In March 2020, the unemployment rate for women was 7.0% in the EU, up from 6.7% in February 2020. The unemployment rate for men was 6.3% in March 2020, compared with 6.2% in February 2020. While in the euro area the unemployment rate remained stable for men in March 2020 compared with February 2020 (at 7.0%), it increased from 7.6% to 7.8% between February and March 2020 for women.

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 confinement measures introduced in March 2020 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 those who had registered in unemployment agencies were no longer actively looking for a job, e.g. limited by the confinement measures or no longer available for work, for instance, if they had to take care of their children during the lockdown. 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 will be complemented by additional indicators, e.g. on employment, underemployment and potential additional labour force participants, when the LFS quarterly data for 2020 are published.

Geographical information

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

The **European Union** (EU27) includes 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.

Examples: Mr X was employed as a technician in the manufacturing sector until February but did not work in March due to the lockdown. His employment contract has not been broken and he has been assured by his employer he could return to work within 3 months. Mr X therefore keeps an attachment to his job in the LFS meaning and is thus not recorded as unemployed.

Mrs Y was employed as an accountant until February but was dismissed in March by her employer due to the drop in activity. Mrs Y has actively searched for a new job on the internet with a view to be recruited as soon as the situation in the labour market improves. She is immediately available to start teleworking for her next employer. Mrs Y will be recorded as unemployed.

Mrs Z was unemployed, actively looking for a job until the COVID outbreak. She then interrupted her job searches in order to take care of her children until school resumes and the situation improves in the labour market. Mrs Z will be counted as inactive and not as unemployed in March.

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, the United Kingdom 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 March 2020 is an estimation based on the figures recorded in previous periods, taking into account current developments.

Italy: Unemployment decrease is linked to move to inactivity of a number of people no longer able to actively look for a job.

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 [53/2020](#) of 1 April 2020, the February 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: Italy (by 0.4 pp) and France (by 0.2 pp). The rate has been revised by more than 0.1 percentage points (pp) upwards for Germany as well as Hungary (both by 0.2 pp, February 2020 data for Hungary).

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 article](#) on unemployment

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on unemployment and [Statistics Explained article](#) 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)				
	Mar 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Mar 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20
Euro area	7.7	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.4	12 633	12 098	11 999	11 959	12 156
EU	6.9	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.6	14 697	13 991	13 905	13 900	14 141
Belgium	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.3	279	266	265	265	272
Bulgaria	4.5	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.5	151	141	140	138	154
Czechia	2.1	1.9	2.0	1.9	2.0	115	104	104	105	107
Denmark	5.3	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.8	160	149	147	145	146
Germany	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.5	1 384	1 408	1 396	1 519	1 531
Estonia	4.4**	4.4	4.7	4.7	:	31**	31	34	34	:
Ireland	5.0	4.7	4.8	4.8	5.4	120	117	119	120	137
Greece	18.5*	16.4	16.4	:	:	878*	768	767	:	:
Spain	14.2	13.7	13.8	13.6	14.5	3 251	3 181	3 173	3 114	3 369
France	8.6	8.2	8.1	7.9	8.4	2 554	2 429	2 390	2 350	2 497
Croatia	7.0	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.8	126	114	113	112	122
Italy	10.4	9.6	9.5	9.3	8.4	2 703	2 471	2 438	2 399	2 132
Cyprus	7.6	6.3	5.9	5.8	6.7	34	28	27	26	30
Latvia	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.9	63	62	64	63	68
Lithuania	6.0	6.4	6.6	6.6	7.1	89	95	98	97	104
Luxembourg	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7	6.5	17	17	17	18	20
Hungary	3.4**	3.4	3.4	3.6	:	159**	159	160	166	:
Malta	3.6	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	9	9	9	9	9
Netherlands	3.3	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.9	307	302	284	274	273
Austria	4.7	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.5	213	191	198	204	207
Poland	3.6	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	619	493	495	503	512
Portugal	6.5**	6.7	6.8	6.4	:	336**	348	352	332	:
Romania	3.7	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.6	331	366	350	352	410
Slovenia	4.4	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.8	46	39	38	37	40
Slovakia	5.8	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.6	159	153	150	151	156
Finland	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	185	183	181	180	179
Sweden	6.7	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.2	365	388	390	392	393
United Kingdom	3.8*	3.7	3.8	:	:	1 283*	1 275	1 307	:	:
Iceland	3.2	3.6	3.8	3.8	:	7	7	8	8	:
Norway	3.8**	3.9	3.7	3.5	:	107**	110	106	100	:
United States	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.5	4.4	6 192	5 755	5 899	5 807	7 131

: Data not available

* January 2019

** February 2019

Source datasets: une_rt_m (rates) and une_rt_m (in 1000 persons)

Seasonally adjusted youth (under 25s) unemployment

	Rates (%)					Number of persons (in thousands)				
	Mar 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Mar 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20
Euro area	16.0	15.4	15.3	15.4	15.8	2 314	2 227	2 203	2 223	2 275
EU	15.4	14.7	14.7	14.8	15.2	2 820	2 691	2 672	2 704	2 763
Belgium	15.0	15.1	14.5	14.5	14.5	58	60	59	59	59
Bulgaria	9.7	9.3	11.0	11.3	13.3	14	14	17	18	21
Czechia	6.5	4.8	5.7	5.7	6.2	19	13	15	15	17
Denmark	10.8	10.2	10.5	10.6	11.0	47	45	46	45	48
Germany	5.7	5.5	4.8	5.5	5.6	249	237	208	235	242
Estonia	7.6	9.3	8.6	9.6	:	4	5	5	5	:
Ireland	12.9	11.2	11.5	11.4	13.2	37	34	35	35	41
Greece	37.8	31.7	32.4	:	:	90	72	74	:	:
Spain	33.9	30.3	31.6	31.7	33.1	515	469	483	481	521
France	19.7	20.2	19.8	19.3	20.4	562	575	567	552	594
Croatia	18.3	15.8	16.2	16.2	16.2	28	23	24	24	24
Italy	30.0	28.7	29.1	29.2	28.0	476	435	432	446	399
Cyprus	18.2	15.2	:	:	:	7	6	:	:	:
Latvia	14.0	11.2	11.7	11.2	12.1	9	7	7	7	8
Lithuania	10.2	14.9	14.3	14.2	15.7	11	16	15	15	16
Luxembourg	16.6	18.1	18.0	17.7	19.9	4	4	4	4	5
Hungary	11.3	10.9	10.7	11.3	:	37	35	34	37	:
Malta	10.1	8.9	9.6	10.0	10.4	3	3	3	3	3
Netherlands	6.4	6.7	6.4	6.3	6.3	94	101	97	94	94
Austria	8.2	8.6	9.1	9.6	9.3	43	44	47	49	48
Poland	10.9	7.8	7.3	7.8	8.1	135	97	91	97	103
Portugal	17.1	18.7	19.5	18.9	:	63	69	73	69	:
Romania	15.4	17.7	:	:	:	93	112	:	:	:
Slovenia	8.8	8.3	7.9	7.9	7.9	6	6	6	6	6
Slovakia	15.0	15.9	15.3	15.3	16.1	26	26	26	26	28
Finland	16.7	17.6	17.8	18.0	18.1	55	57	57	57	57
Sweden	19.9	19.7	19.7	19.6	21.1	125	124	124	123	123
United Kingdom	10.6	11.2	11.3	:	:	439	471	476	:	:
Iceland	7.4	9.3	9.0	8.9	:	2	3	3	3	:
Norway	9.7	10.1	10.2	10.1	:	35	38	39	38	:

: Data not available

Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia: quarterly data

Source datasets: [une_rt_m](#) (rates) and [une_rt_m](#) (in 1000 persons)

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates (%), by gender

	Males					Females				
	Mar 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Mar 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20
Euro area	7.3	7.1	7.0	7.0	7.0	8.1	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.8
EU	6.5	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.3	7.3	6.8	6.8	6.7	7.0
Belgium	6.0	5.8	5.7	5.6	5.8	5.0	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.8
Bulgaria	4.8	4.6	4.7	4.6	5.1	4.2	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.7
Czechia	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.8	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2
Denmark	5.0	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.6	5.6	5.2	5.0	5.0	5.1
Germany	3.5	3.6	3.6	4.0	3.6	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8	3.4
Estonia	3.8	4.6	5.0	5.2	:	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.2	:
Ireland	5.3	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.5	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.6	5.4
Greece	14.4	13.5	13.5	:	:	22.6	20.1	20.1	:	:
Spain	12.5	12.2	12.2	11.9	13.0	16.1	15.5	15.5	15.4	16.2
France	8.7	8.3	8.1	7.9	8.3	8.5	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.5
Croatia	6.3	5.9	5.9	5.8	6.3	7.8	6.8	6.8	6.7	7.4
Italy	9.6	8.8	8.5	8.6	7.5	11.4	10.6	10.8	10.4	9.6
Cyprus	7.0	5.5	5.3	5.3	5.9	8.2	7.1	6.5	6.4	7.5
Latvia	7.5	7.2	7.5	7.4	7.8	5.4	5.6	5.5	5.5	6.1
Lithuania	6.5	7.4	7.8	7.8	8.5	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.7
Luxembourg	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7	6.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	6.2
Hungary	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.4	:	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.7	:
Malta	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.7	4.1
Netherlands	3.3	3.4	3.1	2.9	2.9	3.4	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9
Austria	4.7	4.3	4.4	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.4
Poland	3.3	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	4.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.3
Portugal	5.7	6.2	6.4	5.9	:	7.2	7.2	7.1	6.9	:
Romania	3.9	4.7	4.3	4.3	5.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.8
Slovenia	3.8	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.2	5.3	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.5
Slovakia	5.6	5.4	5.2	5.3	5.5	6.0	5.8	5.7	5.7	5.8
Finland	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.1
Sweden	6.5	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.1	6.8	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.2
United Kingdom	3.9	3.9	4.1	:	:	3.5	3.5	3.6	:	:
Iceland	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	:	2.8	3.3	4.0	4.0	:
Norway	3.7	4.2	4.0	3.7	:	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.3	:

: Data not available

Source dataset: une_rt_m