

Labour market and the economic crisis

Fewer hours worked and more part-time work in the EU27

Sharp fall in employment among workers with low qualifications

Employment in the **EU27** and the **euro area** began to fall in the second quarter of 2008 as a result of the economic crisis. Between the second quarters of 2008 and 2009, employment¹ dropped by 1.9% to 222.7 million persons in the **EU27** and by 1.8% to 145.5 million in the **euro area** (EA16). However, the fall in employment was smaller than the contraction of economic activity (-4.9% GDP growth in the **EU27** and -4.8% in the **euro area** in the same period). One of the reasons for this is the fact that employers can reduce the volume of hours worked and increase the use of part-time employment. This has been the case in the **EU27** and in the **euro area** between the second quarters of 2008 and 2009. The analysis of the impact of the crisis on employment also shows that employees have been affected differently depending on their level of education.

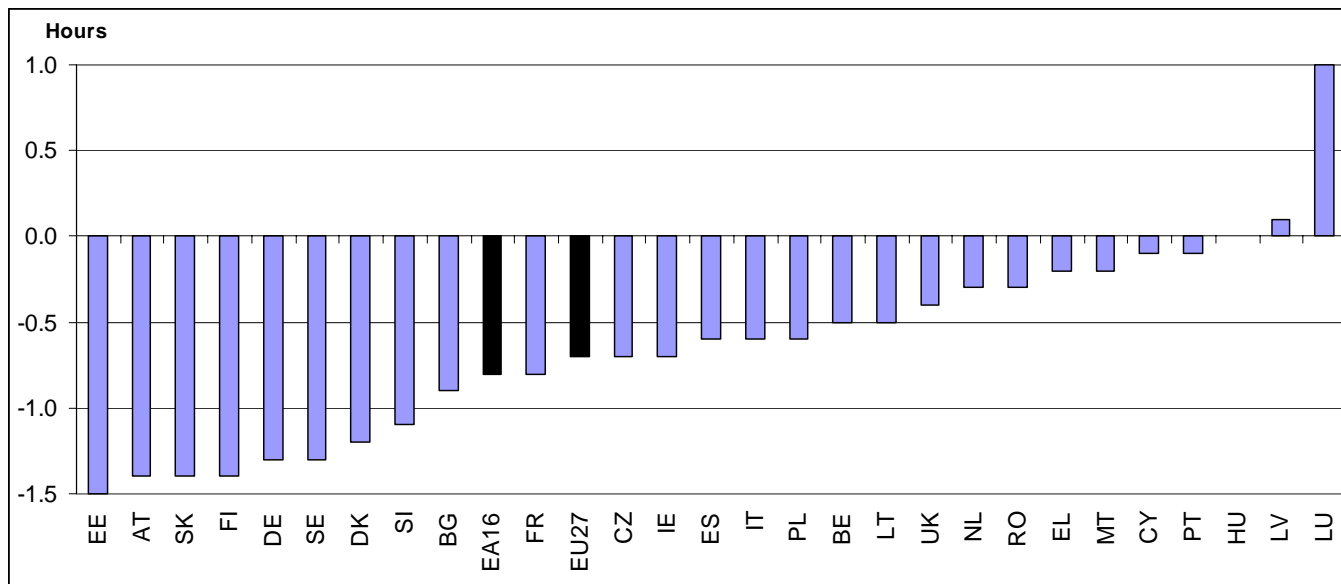
These data, published by **Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities**, come from a publication² on the impact of the economic crisis on the labour market in the EU. This publication also includes information about people on temporary contracts and job opportunities during the crisis.

Full-time employed work on average 0.7 hours less per week in the EU27

In the year up to the second quarter of 2009, the average number of actual hours worked per week by persons in full-time employment fell by 0.7 hours (from 41.0 hours per week to 40.3) in the **EU27** and by 0.8 hours (from 40.8 to 40.0) in the **euro area**, while between the second quarters of 2007 and 2008 there had been a rise by 0.3 hours in both zones.

Between the second quarters of 2008 and 2009, the number of weekly working hours of a full-time worker went down in 24 out of the 27 Member States. The largest falls were registered in **Estonia** (-1.5 h), **Austria**, **Slovakia** and **Finland** (all -1.4 h), **Germany** and **Sweden** (both -1.3 h), **Denmark** (-1.2 h) and **Slovenia** (-1.1 h).

Change in the average actual hours worked per week by full-time employed³



Highest rise in share of part-time workers in Estonia, Ireland and Lithuania

The share of part-time workers⁴ in total employment rose in the **EU27** from 18.3% in the second quarter of 2008 to 18.8% in the second quarter of 2009, and from 19.6% to 20.0% in the **euro area**. Over the preceding year the share of part-time workers had remained stable in the **EU27**, while it had increased by 0.1 percentage point in the **euro area**.

Between the second quarters of 2008 and 2009, the share of part-time workers rose in 22 out of the 27 Member States. The highest increases were observed in **Estonia** (+5.3 percentage points to 11.7%), **Ireland** (+2.3 p.p. to 20.8%), **Lithuania** (+2.1 p.p. to 8.6%) and **Slovakia** (+1.8 p.p. to 4.0%).

Total and part-time employment and average hours worked per week

	Employment			Average hours worked per week***			Part-time in % of total employment		
	Change (%)*		1 000**	Change (hours)		Number of hours	Change (percentage points)		Part-time in %
	2007Q2-2008Q2	2008Q2-2009Q2	2009Q2	2007Q2-2008Q2	2008Q2-2009Q2	2009Q2	2007Q2-2008Q2	2008Q2-2009Q2	2009Q2
EU27	1.4	-1.9	222 682	0.3	-0.7	40.3	0.0	0.5	18.8
EA16	1.1	-1.8	145 526	0.3	-0.8	40.0	0.1	0.4	20.0
Belgium	1.7	-0.7	4 404	0.1	-0.5	40.2	-0.1	0.6	23.2
Bulgaria	3.4	-1.8	3 873	0.3	-0.9	40.3	0.5	0.2	2.6
Czech Republic	1.4	-1.4	5 208	0.4	-0.7	41.6	-0.1	0.6	5.6
Denmark	1.1	-2.6	2 852	1.0	-1.2	38.0	0.4	1.1	25.8
Germany	1.5	-0.1	40 228	0.3	-1.3	40.8	-0.1	0.1	26.3
Estonia	-0.5	-10.2	582	-0.7	-1.5	39.3	-1.5	5.3	11.7
Ireland	-0.1	-8.3	1 945	-0.2	-0.7	39.4	0.4	2.3	20.8
Greece	1.5	-1.0	4 712	0.1	-0.2	42.0	-0.3	0.5	6.0
Spain	0.1	-7.1	19 264	0.3	-0.6	40.6	0.0	0.9	12.9
France	0.8	-1.2	25 556	0.6	-0.8	38.3	-0.4	0.1	17.1
Italy	0.8	-0.9	25 104	0.1	-0.6	39.9	1.2	-0.3	14.4
Cyprus	2.7	-0.5	396	0.1	-0.1	39.6	0.7	0.7	8.4
Latvia	3.4	-13.1	995	-1.5	0.1	40.5	-0.9	1.7	8.1
Lithuania	-0.6	-6.7	1 419	0.7	-0.5	39.9	-1.8	2.1	8.6
Luxembourg	4.9	1.3	352	0.4	1.0	40.9	-1.0	1.2	17.6
Hungary	-1.8	-4.5	3 938	0.4	0.0	40.6	0.4	1.1	5.6
Malta	3.1	-0.8	162	0.5	-0.2	41.1	0.9	-0.3	11.4
Netherlands	1.6	-0.8	8 683	0.1	-0.3	40.3	0.3	1.0	48.2
Austria	2.0	-1.1	4 080	0.5	-1.4	41.5	0.9	1.3	24.9

Poland	5.4	-0.7	15 790	-0.1	-0.6	41.4	-1.0	0.3	8.6
Portugal	1.2	-2.7	5 027	0.1	-0.1	39.9	-0.1	-0.4	11.7
Romania	:	:	:	-0.2	-0.3	41.1	0.5	-0.1	10.0
Slovenia	3.1	-1.6	972	0.2	-1.1	40.4	-0.9	1.7	10.7
Slovakia	2.9	-1.3	2 196	0.6	-1.4	39.3	-0.5	1.8	4.0
Finland	2.1	-3.0	2 477	1.2	-1.4	37.8	-0.7	0.5	13.4
Sweden	1.3	-2.2	4 437	1.7	-1.3	38.1	1.9	0.0	27.0
United Kingdom	1.2	-2.0	28 933	0.2	-0.4	40.8	0.1	0.8	26.1

* Not seasonally adjusted data.

** Seasonally adjusted data except Bulgaria, Cyprus, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Sweden.

*** Average number of actual hours worked per week in main job for persons in full-time employment.

Source: Eurostat National Accounts data for employment; EU Labour Force Survey for part-time employment and average actual hours worked per week.

EU27 employment continued to rise among persons with high qualifications

A fall in employment was observed among persons with low and medium levels of education, while employment continued to rise among persons with a high level of education.

Between the second quarters of 2008 and 2009, employment among those with a low level of education (up to lower secondary education) fell by 4.9% in the **EU27** and by 5.4% in the **euro area**. Among those with a medium level of education (upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education), employment fell by 2.6% in the **EU27** and by 1.6% in the **euro area**. By contrast, employment of those with a high level of education (tertiary education) rose by 3.0% and 2.6% respectively.

For comparison, between the second quarters of 2007 and 2008, the change of employment among those with a low level of education was -1.8% in the **EU27** and -1.6% in the **euro area**, among those with a medium level of education it was +1.5% in the **EU27** and +1.3% in the **euro area**, and among those with high level of education it was +4.0% in the **EU27** and +3.8% in the **euro area**.

Employment change by level of education* (%)

	2007Q2-2008Q2			2008Q2-2009Q2		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
EU27	-1.8	1.5	4.0	-4.9	-2.6	3.0
EA16	-1.6	1.3	3.8	-5.4	-1.6	2.6
Belgium	-5.9	5.3	2.1	2.6	-3.5	1.9
Bulgaria	3.1	3.2	4.6	-1.9	-3.3	1.0
Czech Republic	-1.4	1.3	5.8	-9.5	-2.4	7.6
Denmark	u	u	u	u	u	u
Germany	-1.8	0.4	3.2	-2.3	-1.2	5.9
Estonia	8.8	1.2	-5.3	-26.7	-15.9	6.0
Ireland	-5.9	-0.9	5.4	-17.4	-9.7	0.7
Greece	-1.8	2.9	3.4	-1.7	-1.5	0.2
Spain	-1.4	0.1	2.6	-11.6	-5.9	-2.6
France	-3.9	3.3	3.8	-3.1	-2.6	5.1
Italy	-0.6	0.7	7.0	-4.6	0.3	0.2
Cyprus	-5.9	1.2	6.8	4.8	-2.0	-1.3
Latvia	-7.7	4.4	7.3	-29.0	-11.7	-6.3
Lithuania	-23.3	0.3	1.6	-8.9	-8.5	-3.6
Luxembourg	u	u	u	u	u	u
Hungary	-3.7	-4.0	5.6	-7.7	-2.0	1.8
Malta	-1.9	7.1	5.6	4.4	-5.9	-3.0
Netherlands	1.5	-1.3	5.5	1.6	-1.0	1.2
Austria	-4.4	3.2	3.0	-6.8	-0.9	6.1
Poland	-2.6	3.6	5.8	-5.2	-1.8	11.3
Portugal	0.5	0.8	6.2	-6.3	6.2	4.1
Romania	-1.3	-0.4	7.9	1.4	-3.4	3.5
Slovenia	-0.6	2.0	-4.4	-12.2	-0.3	3.3
Slovakia	-1.9	2.7	4.9	-14.4	-2.0	6.5
Finland	0.2	2.9	1.6	-6.4	-1.4	-3.4
Sweden	u	u	u	u	u	u
United Kingdom	-2.6	2.7	2.8	-6.9	-4.2	3.3

* Low level of education refers to pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education (ISCED level 0-2), medium level to upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED level 3-4) and high level to tertiary education (ISCED level 5-6)

u unreliable data

Source: EU Labour Force Survey

1. Employment has been calculated according to the domestic concept i.e. employment in resident production units irrespective of the place of residence of the employed person. In this News Release total employment figures have been extracted from Eurostat National Accounts data while other indicators have been extracted from EU Labour Force Survey.
2. **Eurostat**, Statistics in Focus, 79/2009 "**The impact of the crisis on employment**", available free of charge in pdf format on the Eurostat web site.
3. The figures in the graph refer to hours worked in the main job only.
4. Full-time/part-time refers to the main job. The distinction is based on a spontaneous response by the respondent.

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