

Statistics in focus

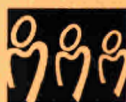
POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THEME 3 – 18/1999

POPULATION AND LIVING CONDITIONS

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Dynamic Measures of Economic Activity and Unemployment: 2. Status in terms of the amount of time spent

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This report follows another study on some dynamic measures of change in economic activity, and in particular unemployment, constructed from the European Community Household Panel (see Statistics in focus No. 17/1999). It is based on a research carried out on behalf of Eurostat by Vijay Verma, Professor at the University of Essex. In the present study, the focus is on measures describing the *longer-term activity patterns*, constructed by aggregating information on a panel of individuals over time. Measures of economic activity defined in terms of the *proportion of time individuals spend in different states of activity* are presented.

At the micro-level, these proportions measure the *degrees* to which an individual is economically active, employed or unemployed over a period such as one or more years. At the societal level, these measures provide the corresponding *rates* averaged over the period. Furthermore, they indicate the extent to which the experience of, say, unemployment is *shared* in the society, or is *concentrated* on the same group(s) in the form of long-term unemployment.

The results presented here are based on the only longitudinal data of this type available at the EU level, and are in this sense unique. Furthermore, the present analysis is also of considerable methodological interest: several new measures describing various aspects of individuals' economic activity have been developed. It should be noted, however, that the data used were collected in 1994/95, and therefore do not reflect the more recent changes in the labour market in the Member States.

A few highlights ...

- As a proportion of working-age (18-64) time spent in economic activity (employment or unemployment), the *activity rate* for the EU population averaged 68% over the 24-month period analysed. Closer examination at the individual level reveals that nearly 75% of the working-age persons were economically active at some time during this period: four-fifths of them were active throughout, while the remaining fifth were less strongly attached to the labour market, being economically active only for some but not all the time. There were sharp national, age and sex differentials in the activity rates, with the male-female difference widening with age.
- As a proportion of the economically active time spent in unemployment (rather than in employment), the EU *unemployment rate* averaged 11% over the two year period. How *widespread* the experience of unemployment was, is indicated by the fact that almost 20% of the economically active persons experienced unemployment at some time or another during the two years. This is thus nearly twice the average proportion who would be found unemployed at any one time according to the conventional measure. The *persistence* of unemployment is indicated by the fact that, over the 24-month period analysed, 15% of the economically active were unemployed for 6 months or more, over 10% for 1 year or more, and 5% were unemployed throughout.
- As many as 30% of adults appeared to be *potentially disadvantaged in relation to their work situation*, either because of the extent of their own unemployment, or because of the lack of employment among working-age members of their household.

A variety of dynamic measures, which capture aspects of *individuals' patterns of economic activity over time*, can be constructed from the longitudinal information collected in the European Community Household Panel (ECHP). Putting together the month-by-month information collected in the *Activity Status Calendar*, this report presents longitudinal measures of economic activity, employment and unemployment defined in terms of the proportion of time individuals spend in these different states. Several types of measures are described and illustrated:

- Activity, employment and unemployment rates are constructed from the total time spent in different states, by all persons over the 24-month period studied, covering calendar years 1993 and 1994 (which are the "reference years" for the surveys conducted during 1994 and 1995, respectively). These measures provide robust alternatives to the rates defined in terms of current status during a short reference period, as in a standard labour force survey.
- At the micro-level, these proportions measure the *degrees* to which an individual is economically active, employed or unemployed over the period

analysed. These go beyond the conventional measures which categorise individuals exclusively into one state or another, and provide more informative and quantitative indicators of the individual's longer-term situation.

- At the societal level these measures indicate the extent to which participation in economic activity and employment, and the experience of unemployment are *shared* in the society, or are *concentrated* on the same groups in the form of a continuous or persistent state over a period of time.
- The degree to which an individual is subject to unemployment, combined with information on the employment of other members of the same household, provides an indication of how good or bad is the individual's overall 'work situation'.

It is important to note that throughout this analysis, the activity, employment and unemployment rates are based on the respondent's "self-declared" activity status, averaged over 24 monthly observations (see *Methods and Concepts* below). These may differ from the conventional rates from the Labour Force Survey, which is the official EU source of such data.

1. Economic activity and employment

Based on information on current age and activity status, conventional activity rate is defined as the proportion of working-age persons who are economically active with reference to a short period such as one week. As noted above, the parallel concept mainly used in the ECHP is that of self-declared activity status, which is available for each month of the calendar year preceding the survey, and the above rate can therefore be computed for each month.

In a sense, the monthly data-sets are like a series of separate surveys on (self-declared) labour force status, conducted at monthly intervals on the same sample of individuals. These 12 monthly rates from each wave of the ECHP can be put together over the year, and then over successive years to construct measures pertaining to the average conditions over a longer period. Such averaging has the advantage of smoothing out seasonal and random variations and, to the extent

repeated observations on the same sample contain independent information, of increasing the effective sample size. A limitation of this approach is the likely increase in measurement error due to the retrospective nature of the data collected.

Thus the ECHP data allow the computation of the *activity rate* as the proportion of working-age time spent in economic activity by the

population over a certain period. At the individual level, this ratio gives the person's *degree of activity*.

Table 1 shows the *activity rates*, computed as defined above. As in the other tables presented below, the rates are averages over the 24-month reference period (calendar years 1993-94), computed for the matched sample of persons interviewed in both the 1994 and 1995 waves of ECHP¹.

Table 1
Activity rate, measured as the proportion of working-age time spent in economic activity (employment or unemployment). Two-year period 1993-1994, EU-11

		B	DK	D	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L	P	UK	EU-11
ALL	18-64	67	82	70	62	61	70	64	62	61	72	72	68
male	18-64	79	86	81	81	80	79	87	79	78	83	85	81
	18-24	43	69	65	59	57	46	69	60	57	63	81	61
	25-39	96	94	93	95	94	95	97	94	94	95	93	94
	40-54	94	94	95	95	92	95	94	90	91	92	90	93
	55-64	39	70	51	50	52	37	65	48	29	67	62	51
female	18-64	56	79	59	44	43	62	41	45	45	61	59	55
	18-24	46	61	67	50	47	42	58	48	59	54	62	53
	25-39	81	89	69	58	59	77	50	60	60	80	61	67
	40-54	59	89	68	43	39	73	32	44	42	64	69	60
	55-64	14	50	25	18	14	29	13	12	5	36	31	23

¹ Data are "EU-11" data – namely the Twelve minus the Netherlands for which the required data are not available.

Table 2
 'Degree of economic activity': distribution of working-age time according to its
 proportion spent in economic activity. Two-year period 1993-1994, EU-11

	proportion of working-age time spent in activity (% distribution)								activity rate
	none	some, but not all				all	total		
		0%	<25%	25 to <50%	50 to <75%				
ALL 18-64	26	2	2	7	3	13	61	100	68
male 18-64	14	1	2	5	3	11	75	100	81
female 18-64	38	2	2	9	3	16	46	100	55

N.B. : The column 'subtotal' gives the percentage intermittently active, i.e. economically active for some but not all of the working-age time during the 2-year period.

Overall, two-thirds of working-age persons are economically active, with a marked male-female differential (81% versus 55%). This differential is quite small among young persons, but widens with age to a male:female ratio of over 2 among persons aged 55-64. Across the countries, the overall activity rates are below-average (around 60%) in Greece, Spain, Italy and Luxembourg, but are outstandingly high (over 80%) in Denmark.

The different pattern in Portugal, in contrast to other Southern countries, is noteworthy. (It is worth pointing that such contrast has been noted with regard to certain other characteristics as well.)

Also, Ireland is characterised by the sharpest male:female differential – it has the highest activity rate for men and the lowest for women among the countries. National differences are the sharpest among older females: from 50% of women aged 55-64 economically active in Denmark, to only 10-15% in Belgium, Spain, Ireland and Italy, and a mere 5% in Luxembourg.

Table 2 shows the distribution of persons according to the proportion of working-age time spent in economic activity: what may be called the *degree of activity*. The overall 2-year average activity rate of 68% is the result of 74% of the working-age persons being economically active at some time, made-up of the 61% active throughout and the remaining 13% active only for a part of the time. Intermittent economic activity is more common among women than men. Note that the reference here is only to whether the person is classified as 'mainly employed or unemployed' or as 'mainly inactive' during each month - no account being taken of the actual duration of the activity during the month, or of whether it is full-time or part-time.

More detailed sex-age and national differentials in the incidence of intermittent activity are shown in Table 3. The male:female differential is interesting when controlled for age. There is no such differential among the young: equally among men and women, just over 25% of those aged 18-24 are active at some but not all

the time. Women in the middle age range (25-54) are much more likely to be active intermittently than men. But the pattern is reversed at older ages, reflecting the fact that large proportions of women move out of the labour force altogether.

It is noteworthy that, despite substantial differences in overall activity rates, the proportions in the intermittent activity category are quite uniform across countries, except for the somewhat higher figures reported in Denmark and the United Kingdom.

Similar measures can be constructed for the *rate and degree of employment*, defined as the proportion of working-age time spent in employment. The pattern differs from the above only because of the impact of unemployment, which is discussed in more detail below.

Table 3
 Distribution according to whether any working-age time is spent in
 economic activity. Two-year period 1993-1994, EU-11

	time spent in activity (% distribution)				activity rate
	none	some	all	total	
ALL 18-64	26	13	61	100	68
male 18-64	14	11	75	100	81
18-24	26	26	48	100	61
25-39	3	7	90	100	94
40-54	5	5	89	100	93
55-64	41	16	43	100	51
female 18-64	38	16	46	100	55
18-24	33	27	40	100	53
25-39	25	18	57	100	67
40-54	34	11	55	100	60
55-64	72	10	18	100	23
Country (18-64)					
B	28	12	61	100	67
DK	11	16	74	100	82
D	24	12	64	100	70
EL	32	13	55	100	62
E	32	14	54	100	61
F	24	14	62	100	70
IRL	29	13	58	100	64
I	33	11	56	100	62
L	33	11	56	100	61
P	23	11	66	100	72
UK	21	16	63	100	72

2. Unemployment

Based on the information on activity status, the conventional unemployment rate is defined as the proportion of the economically active (employed or unemployed) population who are unemployed with reference to a short period such as one week. By

contrast, cumulation of the monthly data from the ECHP Activity Status Calendar allows the computation of the *unemployment rate* pertaining to an extended period as *the proportion of the economic active time spent in unemployment* by the population.

Box 1: Technical specification of the measures

The basic measures utilised in this analysis are summarised below.

Unemployment measures: At the macro-level, the *unemployment rate* over the period is the ratio of the total time spent in unemployment by all individuals, to their total economically active time. For an economically active individual, the *degree of unemployment* over the period is the proportion of his/her active time spent in unemployment. It can be seen that the macro-level measure is a weighted average of the individual degrees of unemployment, with individuals *weighted in proportion to the duration of their economic activity*. Such weighting ensures statistical consistency between individual level and aggregate measures. Furthermore, such a weighting scheme is also statistically efficient: the duration of the time spent in economic activity determines the amount of relevant information provided by the individual to the measures being constructed.

Valuable insight is gained by examining proportions of persons whose degree of unemployment equals or exceeds various specified levels, such as: (i) the proportion subject to any unemployment during the period; (ii) the proportion constantly unemployed throughout; and (iii) intermediate values, such as the proportion unemployed for at least half of their economically active time.

The ratio of such proportions to the unemployment rate provide measures of the extent to which, for a prevailing level of unemployment, the experience is *shared* in the society, and the extent to which it tends to be *concentrated* among the same groups in the form of persistent unemployment.

Economic activity and employment measures: The above concepts also apply to activity and employment measures. The only difference is that an individual is now weighted in proportion to the *time spent within the working-age range* during the period of analysis. For most individuals this is simply a constant, equal to the length of the period concerned, except for persons who happen to cross a working-age boundary (18 or 65) during that period.

Classification by age group: The Activity Status Calendar data are analysed over the 24-month reference period covering calendar years 1993-94. Some individuals enter while others leave the working-age range 18-64 during this period. To cover this age-range fully over the whole reference period, it is necessary to include all persons who have spent any time within this age range over the reference period: from those already 16 by the beginning of 1993, up to those still under 67 at the end of 1994. For age-specific analysis, individuals are classified according to their average age during the reference period, i.e. their age on 31/12/1993 (reference date). Hence, the bottom age class labelled (18-24) actually includes some persons aged 17 and the top class labelled (55-64) includes people aged 65 on that reference date. During any particular month, of course, only the time spent at ages 18-64 counts as the working-age time.

In the computation of a monthly unemployment rate, an individual contributes to the numerator if he/she is unemployed during the particular month, and to the denominator if he/she is economically active during this period. Hence the individual's contribution may change from one month to another depending on his/her activity status at the time. In averaging the measure over a longer period, therefore, an individual's contribution is in proportion to the number of months the person is economically active. Any time spent outside economic activity is disregarded.

The ratio of unemployed to economically active time over a certain period can, of course, also be computed at the individual level. This may be called the individual's *degree of unemployment* over the period. It varies from 1 for a person experiencing only unemployment, to 0 for a person experiencing only

employment during their economically active time. It will have an intermediate value for persons experiencing both unemployment and employment during the period.

Tables 4-6 analyse the experience of unemployment in more detail. Table 4 shows *unemployment rates* reflecting the average condition over the 2-year period analysed (1993-94), computed as defined above. Overall, there are marked differences by age. Around 25% of young persons, both male and female, are unemployed, compared to 10% or so in other age groups. The unemployment rate tends to be higher for women than for men, which at least in part reflects the effect of differences in age composition among the two groups: in relative terms there are more young persons (subject to higher unemployment rates) among economically active women than among economically active men.

Not surprisingly, Spain stands out with its high rate of unemployment, followed by Ireland and then by Belgium, Denmark and Italy with their above-average rates. In relative terms (i.e. compared to the sex-age pattern in EU-11 as a whole), women's position seems better in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and worse in Belgium and Greece. That of older persons (55-64) appears better in Greece and Italy, but worse in Belgium, Germany and, to a lesser extent, France.

Table 4

Unemployment rate, measured as the proportion of economically active time spent in unemployment. Two-year period 1993-1994, EU-11

		B	DK	D	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L	P	UK	EU-11
ALL	18-64	13	13	8	10	22	10	15	13	2	8	8	11
male	18-64	9	11	6	7	18	8	17	11	2	6	10	10
	18-24	22	15	8	21	37	19	25	40	2	12	17	23
	25-39	6	11	5	7	17	7	18	10	2	5	10	9
	40-54	8	8	5	5	13	6	16	5	1	4	7	6
	55-64	19	11	12	4	20	13	11	5	(0)	9	11	11
female	18-64	18	15	10	15	28	12	11	17	2	10	4	12
	18-24	30	21	12	43	48	24	25	44	5	15	8	25
	25-39	16	17	8	14	28	12	7	15	2	10	4	12
	40-54	16	11	10	7	17	8	5	5	1	9	4	8
	55-64	28	15	14	3	13	14	4	3	*	8	2	10

(...) based on 20-49 observations.

* based on less than 20 observations.

Table 5 shows important aspects of the unemployment situation, highlighting the valuable new insights which emerge from the ECHP. The first part of the table shows the distribution of economically active persons according to the *degree of unemployment*, i.e. the proportion of the economically active time spent in unemployment over the 2-year period. Overall, nearly 20% of economically active persons experienced some unemployment during the period, men only marginally less than women.

Table 5

'Degree of unemployment': distribution of economically active time according to its proportion spent in unemployment. Two-year period 1993-1994, EU-11

		Proportion of economically active time spent in unemployment (% distribution)						
		none	some, but not all			all	total	
		0%	<25%	25 to <50%	50 to <75%	100%		
ALL	18-64	81	4	4	4	2	5	100
male	18-64	82	5	4	4	2	4	100
female	18-64	80	4	4	4	2	6	100
		Cumulative distribution according to proportion of time in unemployment (%)						
		some	25%	50%	75%	100%	unemployment rate	
		or more	or more	or more	or more			
ALL	18-64	19	15	11	7	5	11	
male	18-64	18	13	10	6	4	10	
female	18-64	20	16	13	9	6	12	
		Ratio of cumulative distribution to the unemployment rate						
ALL	18-64	1,75	1,35	1,01	0,67	0,48	1,00	
male	18-64	1,84	1,38	1,01	0,64	0,46	1,00	
female	18-64	1,65	1,32	1,02	0,71	0,51	1,00	

N.B.1 : Columns in the second part of the table are obtained by cumulating the columns in the first part from the right.

N.B.2 : In the third part of the table, figures in the first column are the 'index of sharing' of unemployment in the population; for example an index of 1.75 is computed as 19/11 from corresponding cells in part 2 of the table. Similarly, figures in the fifth column (e.g. 0.48=5/11) are the 'index of concentration' of unemployment.

More instructive is the cumulation of this distribution in the second part of the table. It shows the proportion of economically active persons whose degree of unemployment equals or exceeds specified levels. Thus 15% were unemployed for a quarter or more of the time, i.e. for 6 months or more out of 2 years of economically active time; 11% were unemployed for at least half the time, i.e. for 1 year or more of the 2 years; and 5% were unemployed throughout the two years.

It is even more instructive to express these latter proportions in relation to the prevailing unemployment rates, as shown in the third part of Table 5. The unemployment rate, by definition, is the average of the distribution of economically active persons according to their degree of unemployment (first part of the table); it is the average proportion unemployed as observed at any one time during the 24-month period. Overall, as indicated by the 1.75 ratio, 75% more individuals experience unemployment at some time during the 24-month period than would be observed in that state, on the average, during any one month. This may appear as a negative aspect of the situation, but in fact, for a *given level of unemployment*, this shows the extent to which the burden is shared among different individuals.

This may be termed the *index of sharing of unemployment*. Higher values of this index imply that a given level of unemployment at the societal level is shared among more individuals. Lower values mean that the same quantum of unemployment is concentrated among fewer individuals in the form of longer-term unemployment. (The lowest possible value of this index is 1.0, meaning that the same group of persons remains unemployed throughout, while no one outside that group experiences any unemployment during the period. Theoretically, the highest possible

value is the inverse of the unemployment rate, which applies when every person in the population is unemployed for exactly the same proportion of his/her economically active time.)

At the opposite end, we have an *index of concentration* of unemployment, computed as the proportion of the economically active persons unemployed throughout the reference period in relation to the prevailing unemployment rate. This index is around 0.5 for EU-11. Higher values of the index reflect a less egalitarian situation: that the given unemployment level takes the form of longer-term unemployment, more concentrated on disadvantaged subgroups in the population.

In terms of both the above indices, the situation among economically active women appears to be somewhat worse compared to men in the EU. Table 6 examines sex-age and national differentials in the indices in more detail. A number of remarkable features emerge. The index of sharing (col. 6) has an inverted U-shaped distribution by age for both males and females: there is less sharing of the prevailing level of unemployment among the youngest and the oldest groups, and more sharing in the middle ages. The high degree of concentration in the form of long-term unemployment is clearly seen among the oldest (col. 8). These patterns appear to be unrelated to the sharp age-differentials in the unemployment rates (col. 5).

There are also marked national differences, though here there is some correlation with the prevailing national unemployment rates. Belgium, Ireland and Italy are characterised by low values of the "sharing" and high values of the "concentration" indices (col. 6 and 8 respectively). These reinforce the negative effect of the above-average unemployment rates in these countries. By contrast, Spain and especially Denmark, which also have high unemployment rates, are characterised by a greater sharing of the unemployment experience. The index of sharing is also above-average in Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, Germany and Greece.

A most interesting observation is that for diverse population groups and across countries, the proportion experiencing unemployment for 50% or more of the economically active time almost exactly equals the prevailing unemployment rate: the ratio of these measures is mostly in the range 0.95-1.05. This appears to be the case also for different socio-economic groups by education, occupation, most recent job status, etc. (not shown here). This empirical observation implies that the conventional unemployment rate is a good indicator of the proportion of the population experiencing what may be called 'very serious' unemployment – in that 50% or more of the person's economically active time is spent in unemployment.

Table 6
The 'sharing' versus 'concentration' of the experience of unemployment
Two-year period 1993-1994, EU-11

		cumulative distribution (%) according to the proportion of time in unemployment				unemp. rate [5]	ratio to unemployment rate		
		no unemp. [1]	some unemp. [2]	>=50% of time [3]	100% of time [4]		some unemp. [6]	>=50% of time [7]	100% of time [8]
ALL	18-64	81	19	11	5	11	1,75	1,01	0,48
male	18-64	82	18	10	4	10	1,84	1,01	0,46
	18-24	60	40	24	11	23	1,75	1,03	0,47
	25-39	82	18	9	3	9	2,02	0,98	0,38
	40-54	88	12	6	3	6	1,82	1,01	0,49
	55-64	83	17	12	7	11	1,51	1,05	0,59
female	18-64	80	20	13	6	12	1,65	1,02	0,51
	18-24	59	41	26	14	25	1,59	1,01	0,54
	25-39	80	20	12	5	12	1,74	1,02	0,46
	40-54	86	14	8	4	8	1,65	1,02	0,52
	55-64	87	13	11	7	10	1,28	1,05	0,70
Country	(18-64)								
	B	81	19	13	9	13	1,47	1,01	0,69
	DK	74	26	12	4	13	2,01	0,95	0,35
	D	85	15	7	4	8	1,92	0,95	0,46
	EL	81	19	10	4	10	1,92	1,03	0,38
	E	64	36	23	9	22	1,64	1,07	0,43
	F	82	18	10	4	10	1,81	0,99	0,39
	IRL	76	24	15	10	15	1,54	1,00	0,63
	I	81	19	14	8	13	1,47	1,08	0,62
	L	94	6	2	1	2	2,68	0,91	0,28
	P	85	15	8	3	8	1,84	1,05	0,40
	UK	84	16	7	4	8	2,04	0,95	0,49

N.B. : Column [6] shows the 'index of sharing' of unemployment in the population

Column [8] shows the 'index of concentration' of unemployment

(See also table 5)

3. Towards identification of disadvantaged groups

The employment situation of an individual is described not only by person-level indicators such as the degree of unemployment, but also by the work situation of other members of the household. As an indicator of the *household's work situation*, we compute the ratio of the time spent in employment by all household members, to the total working-age time available to them over the reference period. This indicator ranges from 0 for work-less households, to 1.0 for households with all working-age members in continuous employment.

The combination of the personal degree of unemployment and the person's household work situation can be useful, at least as the first step, in identifying individuals disadvantaged in relation to the labour market. Persons who are subject to a high

degree of unemployment (say, for 50% or more of their economically active time), and/or whose households are in a poor work situation (say, with employment for less than 50% of the available working-age time), are *potentially* in a disadvantaged position in relation to the labour market.

Using this definition, individuals *potentially in a work-poor situation* constitute around 30% of the total adult population in EU-11 (Table 7). This proportion varies considerably across countries: from nearly 50% in Spain and around 35% in Greece, Italy, Ireland and Belgium, to about 25% in Denmark, Germany, Portugal and the United Kingdom. It reflects, among other possible factors, national differences in the level of unemployment and female activity rates.

Table 7
Percentage of adults potentially in a disadvantaged position in relation to the labour market
two-year period 1993-1994, EU-11

	B	DK	D	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L	P	UK	Total
Total	34	22	24	33	47	30	36	38	27	25	24	31
male	31	21	23	32	46	28	35	38	26	24	23	30
female	37	24	24	34	48	31	38	39	28	26	25	32

N.B.: 'Potentially in a work-poor situation persons' have been defined as persons who, during the 2-year reference period 1993-94:

(i) spent 50% or more of their economically active time in unemployment and/or

(ii) lived in a household where less than 50% of the working age time available to its members was spent in employment.

➤ METHODS AND CONCEPTS

- The **European Community Household Panel (ECHP)** is a survey that involves annual interviewing of a representative panel of households and individuals in each country, covering a wide range of topics: income (including the various social transfers) health, education, housing, demographics and employment characteristics, etc. The longitudinal structure of the ECHP makes it possible to follow up and interview the same households and individuals over several consecutive years. The first wave of the ECHP was conducted in 1994 in the then twelve EU Member States. Since then, Austria and Finland have joined the project. Sweden does not take part.
- The **results** presented in this study were calculated from the ECHP **'users' database"** (UDB), which includes longitudinal data on households and persons standardised and linked across waves of the survey.
Most of the analysis is confined to the subset of individuals aged 18-64 who were successfully interviewed in both the 1994 and 1995 waves, with the Netherlands being excluded because of non-availability of the required data. This amounts to an "EU-11" linked sample of around 85,000 persons. National sample sizes range from around 1,650 for Luxembourg and 4,200 for Denmark at the lower end, and 12,000 for Spain and 14,000 for Italy at the upper end. The results presented in this study are estimates, whose precision - all other things being equal - depends on the size of the sample and the percentage.
- The information utilised in this report is largely drawn from the **Activity Status Calendar**, that records the *self-declared activity status* of the individual for each month of the calendar year prior to the interview. This status is determined according to the respondent's own declaration, presumably on the basis of the most time spent, and is not the same as the *conventional status* defined in accordance with the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The **employed** are those working 15 hours or more per week. The remainder are those declaring themselves to be **unemployed**, and **those economically inactive**. Persons normally working for fewer than 15 hours a week are also classified as economically inactive, unless they regard themselves as unemployed.
- Essentially, the data analysed have been **weighted** according to the 'base weights' provided in the ECHP UDB for the 1995 survey. These weights are defined for the so-called 'sample persons', i.e. for persons successfully interviewed in 1995 who came from the original ECHP 1994 sample. The matched sample analysed is close to, but somewhat smaller than, the above set. It was re-weighted to minimise this difference.
For statistical reasons (see Box 1), individuals were given additional weights in proportion to their duration of economic activity in the analysis of unemployment, and in proportion to the time spent within the working-age range in the analysis of economic activity and employment
In computing statistics at the EU level, the country samples have been weighted in proportion to the size of the national population aged 16 and over.

Further information:

➤ Reference publications

Title European Community Household Panel (ECHP): Selected indicators from the 1995 wave
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