



Statistics in focus

POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THEME 3 – 9/2003

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Poverty and social exclusion in the EU after Laeken – part 2

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Agreement reached on a set of common indicators

At the Nice European Council in December 2000, Heads of State and Government confirmed and implemented their March 2000 (Lisbon) decision that the fight against poverty and social exclusion would be best achieved by means of the open method of coordination. Key elements of this approach are the definition of commonly-agreed objectives for the European Union (EU) as a whole, the development of appropriate national action plans to meet these objectives, and the periodic reporting and monitoring of progress made. In this context, the Laeken European Council in December 2001 formally adopted a first set of 18 common statistical indicators in the field of social inclusion. These indicators should be considered as a consistent whole, reflecting a balanced consideration of EU social concerns. They cover four important dimensions of social cohesion: financial poverty, employment, health and education – highlighting the multi-dimensional nature of social inclusion. The present publication provides an overview of the non-monetary indicators adopted at Laeken, for each Member State and the EU as a whole. This publication follows a first one dealing with monetary indicators.

Employment and social inclusion

Labour market participation is widely recognised as an important factor for social inclusion. One reason for this is the obvious link between work and income, even though it would be wrong to assume that the absence of a job automatically leads to financial poverty or that having a job is a sufficient condition for escaping from poverty. Apart from the financial aspect, employment can also be an essential means of social participation and personal development, albeit the absence of a job does not necessarily imply poor social integration, and not all jobs offer scope for social inclusion and personal well being. This explains why four out of the 18 *Laeken indicators* relate to employment: long term unemployment rate, long term unemployment share, very long term unemployment rate and persons living in jobless households.

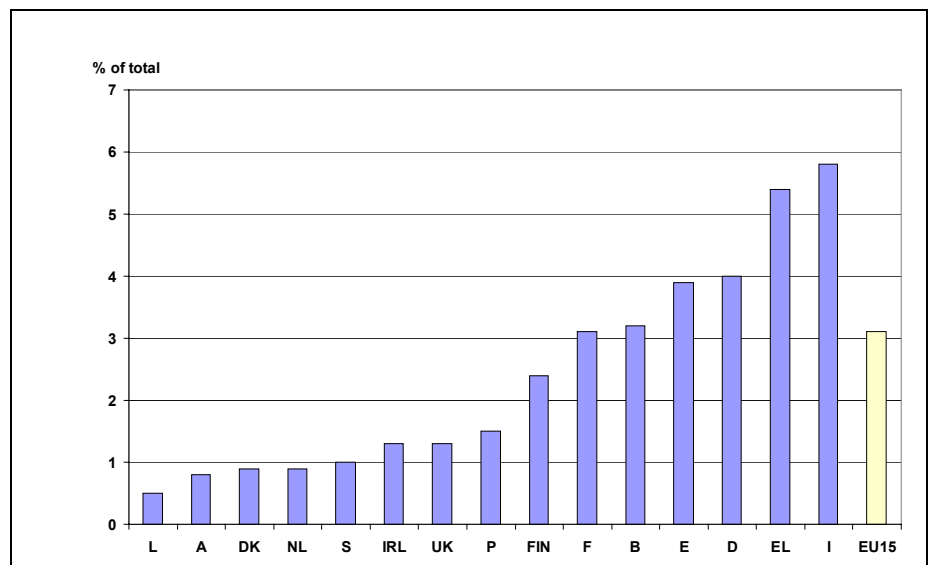


Figure 1: Ranking by long-term unemployment rate for 2001
(Except D,L 2000)

Source: EU Labour Force Survey – annual averages.

Long term unemployment in the EU

As employment is a key mechanism for social inclusion, unemployment raises particular concerns, especially if it persists for a long period of time. Using figures from the Labour Force Survey and applying the standard ILO definition of unemployment, the long term unemployment rate, i.e. the share of the total active population (which consists of both people at work and the unemployed) that has been unemployed for at least 12 months stood at 3% for the EU as a whole in 2001 (the EU percentage is calculated as a weighted average of national results, with each country receiving a weight equal to its total population). Data for Germany and Luxembourg relate to 2000.

This rate ranged from less than 1% in Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Luxembourg (2000 data) to 6% in Italy (see Figure 1 and statistical appendix). Furthermore, there are important gender differences (women being more likely to be unemployed for a long time) – particularly in Greece, Spain and Italy (see statistical appendix). Expressed as a share of total unemployment rather than total activity, the long-term unemployed represented a high proportion of 41% at EU level in 2001 (see Figure 2). Values ranged from 20% in Denmark to more than 60% in Italy. Data for Netherlands relate to 1999.

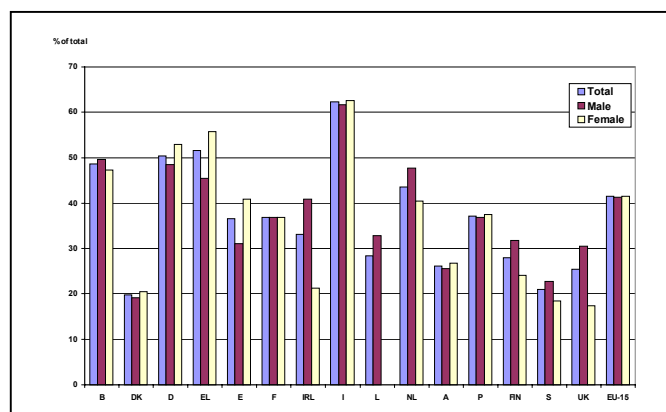


Figure 2: Long-term unemployment share for 2001 (Except NL - 1999)

Source: EU Labour Force Survey – annual averages.

'Long-term' often means 'very-long-term'

The longer the period of unemployment, the greater the risk of social exclusion, which is why the Laeken European Council has also selected the very-long-term unemployment rate as one of the EU indicators of social inclusion. In 2001, this indicator (see figure 3) had a value of 2% for the EU as a whole, showing that 2% of the active population had been unemployed for at least the last 24 months using the standard ILO definition (see methodological appendix). This implies that about two thirds of the long-term unemployed had in fact been unemployed for a very long time. There are important gender differences, with the situation being almost twice as bad for women in Greece, Spain and Italy as it was

for men (see statistical appendix). Data for Germany and Luxembourg are for 2000.

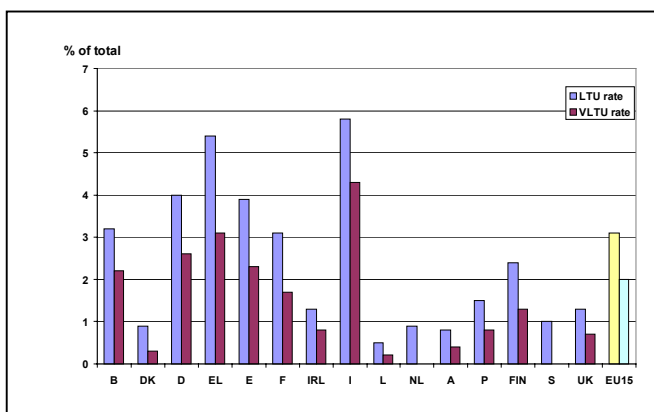


Figure 3: Very long-term unemployment rate and long term unemployment rate for 2001

(Except D, L, 2000)

Source: EU Labour Force Survey – annual averages.

Many people live in jobless households

The well being of individuals depends not only on their own labour market position but more broadly on the degree of contact with the world of work of their household. Another indicator covering the employment dimension of social exclusion is the proportion of persons living in jobless households. More precisely, this indicator measures the proportion of people living in "active age" households, i.e. households where one could expect (on age grounds) at least one member to be economically working, but where no one works. The focus of this indicator is therefore on the cumulative negative impact, at household level, of lacking contact with the world of work.

The specific objective of this indicator requires that eligible households, i.e. "active age" households, be first correctly identified. Eligible households are those households where at least one member does not fall in any of the following categories: children aged less than 18 years old; persons aged 18-24 in education and inactive; and persons aged over 65 and not working. To take account of the different retirement ages (legal or effective) across Member States, an alternative threshold for defining the elderly population (60) has also been retained. The indicator is then calculated as the share of people living in eligible households who are aged 0-65 (respectively 0-60) and who live in a household where no one is working.

For the EU as a whole, 12% of people living in eligible households were in that situation in 2001; this figures drops to 9% if a reference age of 60 instead of 65 is used for defining the elderly population (see Figure 4 below and statistical appendix). The EU percentage masks some considerable variation between Member States - with national figures ranging from 5% (3% with the 60 years threshold) in Portugal to 16% (13% for 0-60) in Belgium.

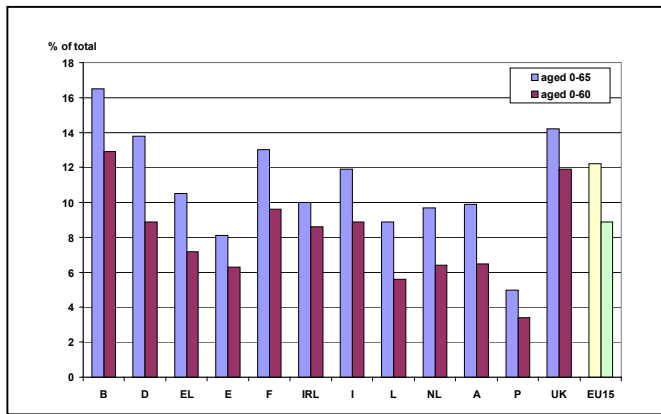


Figure 4: Persons living in jobless households for 2001
Source: EU Labour Force Survey – Spring data.

Regional cohesion

With the aim to measure social cohesion across regions, a specific indicator provides the dispersion (coefficient of variation) of employment rates at NUTS2 level, using data from the Labour Force Survey. For 2001, this indicator suggests that regional cohesion is lowest in Italy and Spain and highest in the Netherlands and Austria (see Figure 5 and statistical appendix). This indicator is not applicable in Denmark, Ireland and Luxembourg as NUTS2 and national levels are similar.

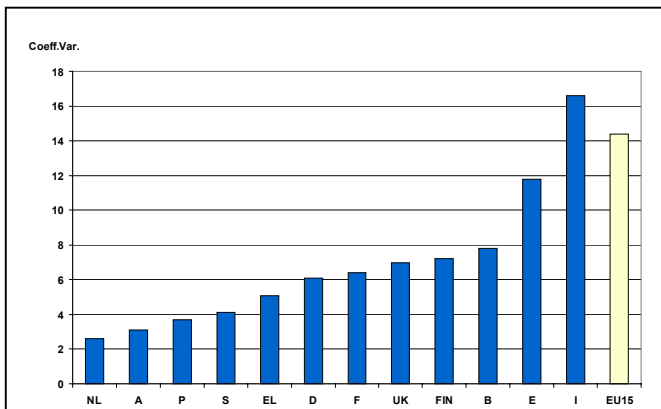


Figure 5: Dispersion of regional employment for 2001
Source: EU Labour Survey – Spring data.

19% leave school with low qualifications

If education is obviously a critical explanatory factor in determining entry into and positioning within the labour market, it also plays a major role in terms of participation in society and personal development.

In particular, the proportion of persons with low educational attainment among the age group 18 to 24 just leaving the education system is an important indicator of the efficiency of this system, but also a predictor of the future ability of the society to fight poverty and improve social cohesion.

2001 Labour Force Survey data (see figure 6) shows that 19% of all 18-24 year olds had only lower education

level or less (i.e. a school-leaving qualification of maximum ISCED'97 level 2; see methodological annex) and were not currently attending education or training (this latter filter is necessary to exclude people who are still attending courses which may increase their qualification level). Values ranged from 10% in Austria to 45% in Portugal.

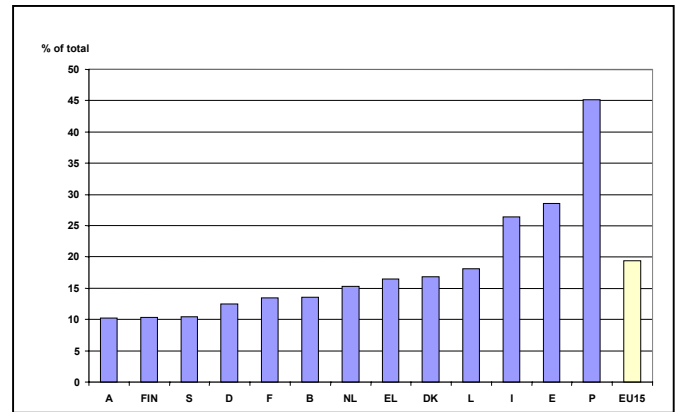


Figure 6: Early school leavers not in education or training in 2001
Source: EU Labour Force Survey – Spring data.

Improving educational attainment levels

To complement the foregoing indicator, a useful stock indicator on the educational level of the working age population aged 25-64 years has also been endorsed: the percentage of persons aged 25-64 who have only lower secondary education or less (see figure 7).

When broken down into 10-year age bands, it shows the extent to which general educational attainment levels are changing over time. At EU level for 2001, the proportion of the older generation (55-64) falling in this category is approximately twice that of the younger generation (25-34), suggesting a significant improvement over time.

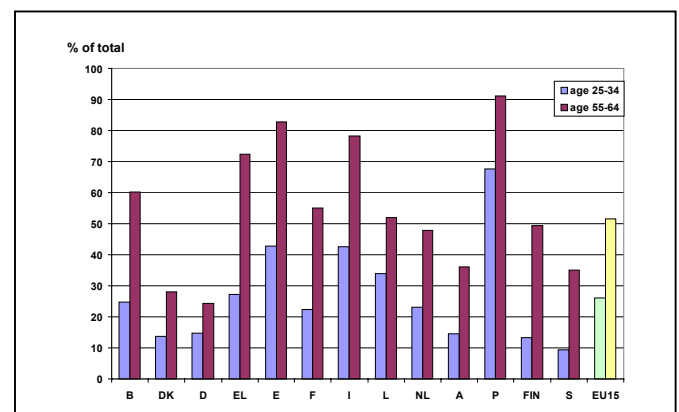


Figure 7: Persons with low educational attainment in 2001 (aged 25-34 and aged 55-64)
Source: EU Labour Force Survey – Spring data.

High life expectancy

The general social cohesion in terms of health in the EU as a whole rather than in individual Member States can be assessed by looking at the life expectancy figures, i.e. the number of years which a person may be expected to live at birth. Figure 8 shows that on average, in 2001 the life expectancy of Europeans was around 78 years, varying from 76 (in Ireland) to 80 (in Italy and Sweden).

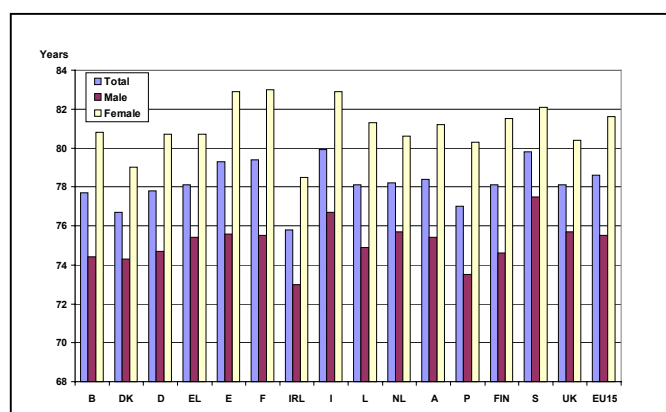


Figure 8: Life expectancy at birth for 2001

Except 2000 (L, A, B (male)), 1999 (D).

Source: Demographic statistics.

Wide variation of health status by income

It is often recognised that health is closely linked to social inclusion. The way to interpret the linkage between bad health and poverty is twofold. Bad health can lead to exclusion from the labour market and cause poverty. Poverty can also generate bad health, due to poor living and housing conditions or difficulties of access to health care.

In the absence of comparable objective health data (like premature mortality) by socio-economic groups, self-defined health status allows a first useful investigation of a particularly important aspect of social inclusion. The subjective nature of this indicator needs, however, to be kept in mind due to the problems of interpretation.

An indicator of health inequality by income was tentatively adopted in Laeken, calculated as the ratio of the proportions in the bottom and top income quintile groups of the population aged 16 and over who classify themselves as in a bad or very bad state of health. However, Eurostat is still undertaking research into the feasibility and suitability of this indicator, in collaboration with the Indicators Sub-Group. For this reason, provisional figures derived from the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) are not presented here.

Indicators discussed in this publication

As mentioned above, altogether eighteen indicators were agreed at Laeken, grouped into ten primary indicators to cover the most important elements identified as leading to social exclusion, and eight secondary indicators to describe other dimensions of the problem. They now form a key basis for EU policy-making in the social area, given that Member States will include them as from 2003 in their National Action Plans on social inclusion that are to be submitted every second year. They will also be used by both Member States and the Commission in their Joint Report on Social Inclusion as from 2003.

Member States will also be encouraged to supplement these common indicators in their National Action Plans on social inclusion with a third level of indicators to reflect specific national circumstances and to help interpret the primary and secondary indicators; these indicators need not necessarily be harmonised at EU level. More information about the Laeken indicators can be found in the part 1 of this two-part publication.

Indicators of monetary poverty derived from the European Community Household Panel are discussed in part 1 of this two-part publication. The remaining indicators can be found in the present publication. The indicators in this report (graphs and statistical appendix) are presented for a single year, either at the level of the total population or with a breakdown by gender or age. Related data can be found on the Eurostat New Cronos website in the following tables:

Indicator	New Cronos
Persons living in Jobless Households	Theme 3 Domain LFS Collection LFS-IND Table LFS-IND Indicator SC071, 072
Long-term unemployment rate	Theme 3 Domain EMPL Collection INDIC_Y Table LTU_ACT-RT
Long-term unemployment share	Theme 3 Domain LFS Collection UNEMPL Table UPGAL Indicator Y15MAX
Very long-term unemployment rate	Indicator not published. For absolute numbers of persons, see: Theme 3 Domain LFS Collection UNEMPL Table UGAD Indicator Y15MAX

Indicator	New Cronos
Regional cohesion	Theme 1 Domain REGIO Collection LFS-R Table LFOCVERT
Early school leavers not in education or training	Theme 3 Domain LFS Collection LFS-IND Table LFS-IND Indicator SC051, 052, 053
Persons with low educational attainment	Indicator not published. For absolute numbers of persons, see: Theme 3 Domain LFS Collection POPHOUSE Table PGAED
Life expectancy at birth	Theme 3 Domain DEMO Collection DMOR Table MLEXPEC
Self-defined health status by income level	Indicator not published. For status, see: Theme 3 Domain HEALTH Collection PUBLIC Group HSTATUS Table SPHL

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Jobless households, long-term unemployment rate, long-term unemployment share, very-long-term unemployment rate

The **total active population** or labour force is the total population at work and the unemployed population. **Unemployed** persons are those aged 15-64, not living in collective households who are without work throughout the reference period, are available to start work within the next two weeks and are taking active steps to find work (have actively sought employment at some time during the previous four weeks or are not seeking a job because have already found a job to start later).

The **long term unemployment rate** is the total number of long-term unemployed (at least 12 months) as a percentage of the total active population aged 15-64. (Gender breakdown + total)

The **long term unemployment share** is the total number of long-term unemployed (at least 12 months) as a percentage of the total number of unemployed. (Gender breakdown + total)

The **very long term unemployment rate** is the total number of very long-term unemployed (at least 24 months) as a percentage of the total active population aged 15-64. (Gender breakdown + total)

Population living in **jobless households** is calculated by dividing the number of persons aged 0-65 (and additionally 0-60) living in households where no one is working out of the persons living in eligible households. Eligible households are all households except those where everybody falls in one of these categories:

- aged less than 18 years old
- aged 18-24 in education and inactive
- aged 65 (60) and over and not working

The data presented in this publication for 2001 and earlier years come from the Labour Force Survey (available data for individual indicators shown in statistical appendix). Fig.4 (jobless households): no comparable data are yet available for Denmark, Finland and Sweden. The target population is all persons aged 15+ living in private households, and the survey covers around 1,200,000 such individuals (550,000 households) across Europe.

Data are only presented in this publication for the EU15 member states. Comparable data are also available for EFTA countries (Switzerland, Iceland and Norway) and Candidate Countries for accession to the European Union. No comparable data are available for USA or Japan. Indicators established for individual countries using alternative data sources and methodologies may differ from the LFS-

derived results presented in this publication. The EU-15 average is calculated as a population weighted average of the available individual national values, with national weights equal to national populations.

Early school leavers not in education or training, Persons with low educational attainment

Early school leavers are the proportion of persons aged 18 to 24 who have only lower secondary education (their highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1 or 2) and have not received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey.

Persons with low educational attainment: Proportion of people aged 25-64 (by ten year age band) whose highest level of education or training is ISCED 0, 1 or 2 in the total population of the same age group.

ISCED 97 is the 1997 International Standard Classification of Education.

The data presented in this publication also come from the Labour Force Survey. Interviewees are asked whether they have participated in education and training during the preceding 4 weeks. This includes any forms of education, whether for general interest, academic or vocational reasons. Coding of educational level is according to the 1997 International Standard Classification of Education. Agreement has not yet been reached with the UK on the definition of upper secondary attainment. Comparable data are therefore not currently available for this country. The EU-15 average is calculated as a population weighted average of the available individual national values, with national weights equal to national populations.

Regional cohesion

The **regional cohesion** indicator is the coefficient of variation of employment rates at NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) level 2. It is calculated separately for each country and gives a measure of the regional spread of employment rates.

The source of data for this indicator is the Labour Force Survey. For individual countries, the limitation to NUTS 2 level (c.200 locations) reduces the number of observations considerably by comparison to NUTS 3 level (c.1100 locations), which makes the indicator more sensitive to any changes. Data are not applicable for Denmark, Ireland or Luxembourg as NUTS2 level is close to national level. The EU-15 estimate is calculated using data for all regions in all countries (including Denmark, Ireland and Luxembourg).

Life expectancy at birth

The **life expectancy at birth** is the number of years a person may be expected to live, starting at age 0. (Gender breakdown + total)

The source of data for this indicator is the periodic census (currently 1991, given that 2001 results are not yet final), which is then adjusted for available information on subsequent births, deaths and migration. Data are collected for males and females: figures for the total population are estimated as a weighted arithmetic mean. The EU-15 estimate is calculated as a population weighted average of the individual national values. Data are only presented in this publication for the EU15 member states. Comparable data are also available for EFTA countries (Switzerland, Iceland and Norway), the Candidate Countries for accession to the European Union, USA and Japan.

Self-perceived health status by income

The **'self-perceived health by income'** indicator compares (a) the percentage of individuals aged 16 and over with an equalised total net household income in the 'richest' income quintile group who classify themselves as having a 'bad' or 'very bad' state of health according to the WHO definition with (b) the percentage of individuals aged 16 and over with an equalised total net household income in the 'poorest' income quintile group who classify themselves as having a 'bad' or 'very bad' state of health according to the WHO definition. (Gender breakdown + total)

Data are not presented in this publication, pending the result of ongoing research into the feasibility and suitability of this Indicator. If retained, information would come from the latest wave of the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) users' database.

Statistical Appendix

Indicator	Unit	Period	EU15	B	DK	D	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	A	P	FIN	S	UK
Persons living in Jobless Households ¹ , aged 0-65	%	2001	12,2 e	16,5	:	13,8	10,5	8,1	13,0	10,0	11,9	8,9	9,7	9,9	5,0	:	:	14,2
Persons living in Jobless Households ¹ , aged 0-60	%	2001	8,9 e	12,9	:	8,9	7,2	6,3	9,6	8,6	8,9	5,6	6,4	6,5	3,4	:	:	11,9
Long-term unemployment rate ² , Total	%	2001	3,1 e	3,2	0,9	4,0	5,4	3,9	3,1	1,3	5,8	0,5	0,9	0,8	1,5	2,4	1,0	1,3
Long-term unemployment rate ² , Male	%	2001	2,7 e	2,9	0,8	3,8	3,2	2,3	2,5	1,6	4,4	0,5	0,7	0,7	1,2	2,5	1,2	1,7
Long-term unemployment rate ² , Female	%	2001	3,7 e	3,5	1,0	4,3	8,7	6,3	3,7	0,8	8,1	0,6	1,0	0,9	1,9	2,3	0,9	0,8
Long-term unemployment share ³ , Total	%	2001	41,4 e	48,6	19,7	50,4	51,6	36,6	36,8	33,1	62,2	28,4	43,5	26,1	37,2	27,9	20,9	25,4
Long-term unemployment share ³ , Male	%	2001	41,3 e	49,7	19,1	48,4	45,5	31,0	36,9	40,8	61,7	32,8	47,7	25,5	36,9	31,8	22,8	30,4
Long-term unemployment share ³ , Female	%	2001	41,4 e	47,3	20,5	52,9	55,7	40,9	36,8	21,3	62,5	:	40,4	26,7	37,5	24,1	18,4	17,4
Very long-term unemployment rate ² , Total	%	2001	2 e	2,2	0,3	2,6	3,1	2,3	1,7	0,8	4,3	0,2	:	0,4	0,8	1,3	:	0,7
Very long-term unemployment rate ² , Male	%	2001	1,7 e	2,0	0,3	2,3	1,7	1,3	1,4	1,0	3,3	0,2	:	0,4	0,5	1,5	:	1,0
Very long-term unemployment rate ² , Female	%	2001	2,4 e	2,4	0,3	2,9	5,1	3,9	2,1	0,4	5,9	0,3	:	0,4	1,1	1,1	:	0,4
Regional cohesion ¹ , Total	%	2001	14,4 e	7,8	:	6,1	5,1	11,8	6,4	:	16,6	:	2,6	3,1	3,7	7,2	4,1	7,0
Regional cohesion ¹ , Male	%	2001	10,9 e	6,4	:	7,1	3,8	8,3	4,5	:	9,2	:	2,4	2,8	2,3	6,7	3,9	6,7
Regional cohesion ¹ , Female	%	2001	21,7 e	10,2	:	6,4	9,2	18,6	9,1	:	28,7	:	3,9	4,8	6,8	8,1	4,5	7,6
Early school leavers not in education or training ¹ , Total	%	2001	19,4 e	13,6	16,8	12,5	16,5	28,6	13,5	:	26,4	18,1	15,3	10,2	45,2	10,3	10,5	:
Early school leavers not in education or training ¹ , Male	%	2001	21,9 e	15,0	16,9	12,2	20,4	34,9	15,0	:	30,2	19,0	16,5	9,7	52,3	13,0	11,3	:
Early school leavers not in education or training ¹ , Female	%	2001	16,8 e	12,3	16,7	12,8	13,0	22,2	12,0	:	22,6	17,2	14,1	10,7	38,0	7,7	9,7	:
Persons with low educational attainment ¹ , aged 25-34	%	2001	26,1 e	24,9	13,7	14,8	27,3	42,8	22,3	:	42,6	34,0	23,1	14,6	67,6	13,2	9,3	:
Persons with low educational attainment ¹ , aged 35-44	%	2001	31,4 e	37,6	19,6	14,6	39,6	55,0	33,4	:	50,7	37,4	29,0	18,2	80,4	16,0	13,8	:
Persons with low educational attainment ¹ , aged 45-54	%	2001	40,2 e	46,3	19,6	17,1	56,8	71,4	42,4	:	61,5	45,4	37,8	26,5	86,3	30,8	21,8	:
Persons with low educational attainment ¹ , aged 55-64	%	2001	51,6 e	60,3	28,1	24,3	72,3	82,7	54,9	:	78,2	52,1	47,8	36,1	91,2	49,3	35,1	:
Life expectancy at birth ⁴ , Total	%	2001	78,6 e	77,7 e	76,7 e	77,8 e	78,1 e	79,3 e	79,4 e	75,8 e	79,9 e	78,1 e	78,2 e	78,4 e	77,0 e	78,1 e	79,8 e	78,1 e
Life expectancy at birth ⁴ , Male	%	2001	75,5 e	74,4	74,3	74,7	75,4	75,6	75,5	73,0	76,7	74,9	75,7	75,4	73,5	74,6	77,5	75,7
Life expectancy at birth ⁴ , Female	%	2001	81,6 e	80,8	79,0	80,7	80,7	82,9	83,0	78,5	82,9	81,3	80,6	81,2	80,3	81,5	82,1	80,4

Source:

1. Eurostat, LFS, Spring 2002
2. Eurostat, LFS, Spring 2002. Annual averages for 2001 except D and L (2000)
3. Eurostat, LFS, Spring 2002. Annual averages for 2001 except NL (1999)
4. Eurostat, Demography statistics, 2003. Data for 2001 except D (1999); B, L, A (2000)

e = estimated

: = no information available

Further information:

➤ Reference publications

Title Income, Poverty & Social Exclusion (2000)
 Catalogue No KS-29-00-181-EN-C Price EUR 14.50

➤ Databases

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