



55/2006 - 3 May 2006

March 2006

## Euro-zone unemployment down to 8.1%

### EU25 unchanged at 8.4%

**Euro-zone**<sup>1</sup> seasonally-adjusted unemployment<sup>2</sup> stood at 8.1% in March 2006, compared to 8.2% in February<sup>3</sup>. It was 8.8% in March 2005. The **EU25**<sup>4</sup> unemployment rate was 8.4% in March 2006, unchanged compared to February<sup>3</sup>. It was 8.9% in March 2005.

In March 2006, the lowest rates were registered in the **Netherlands** (4.0%), **Ireland** (4.2%), **Denmark** (4.3%), **Luxembourg** (4.8%) and the **United Kingdom** (5.0% in January). Unemployment rates were highest in **Poland** (16.8%), **Slovakia** (15.7%), **Greece** (9.6% in the fourth quarter 2005) and **France** (9.1%).

These figures come from **Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities**.

Amongst the Member States, seventeen recorded a decrease in their unemployment rate over a year, one remained stable and six reported an increase. The largest relative falls were observed in **Estonia** (8.8% to 5.3%), **Lithuania** (9.2% to 6.4%), **Denmark** (5.4% to 4.3%), the **Netherlands** (4.9% to 4.0%), and **Latvia** (9.1% to 7.6%). The highest relative increases were registered in **Malta** (7.2% to 8.1%), **Luxembourg** (4.3% to 4.8%), **Hungary** (6.8% to 7.4%), the **United Kingdom** (4.7% in January 2005 to 5.0% in January 2006), and **Portugal** (7.4% to 7.6%).

The unemployment rate for males fell from 7.6% to 7.0% in the **euro-zone** between March 2005 and March 2006 and from 8.0% to 7.5% in the **EU25**. The female unemployment rate declined from 10.3% to 9.5% in the **euro-zone** and from 10.0% to 9.5% in the **EU25**.

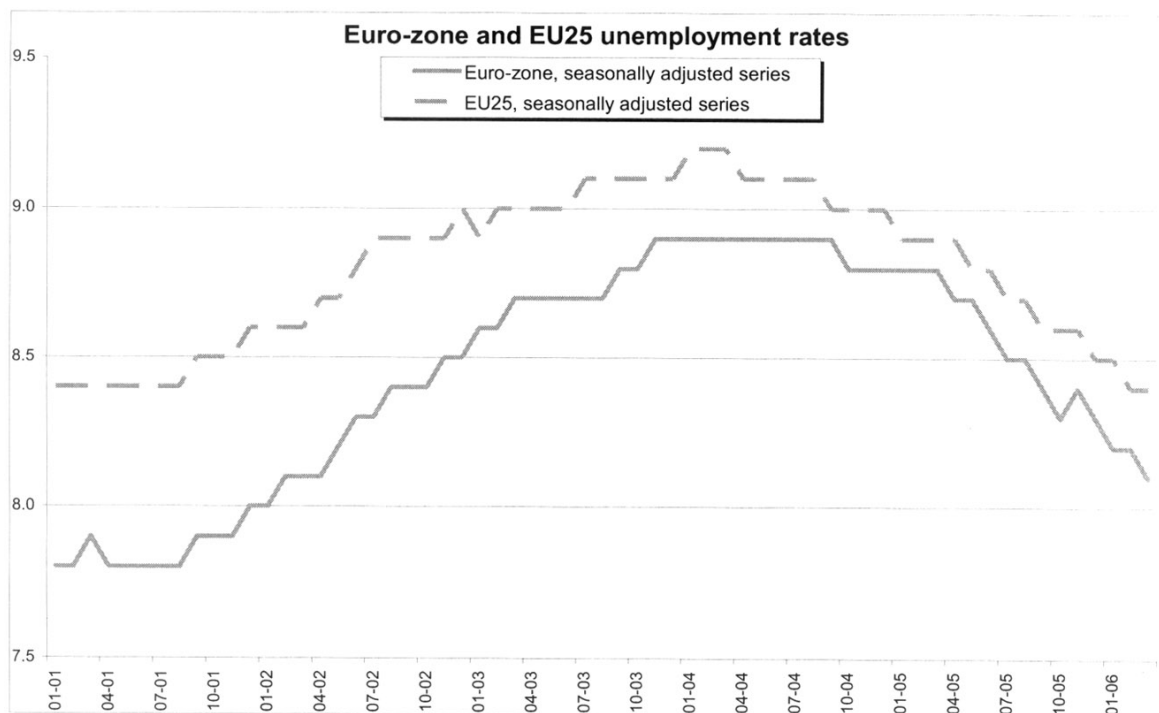
In March 2006, the unemployment rate for under-25s was 17.5% in the **euro-zone** and 18.3% in the **EU25**. In March 2005 it was 18.4% and 19.0% respectively. The lowest rates for under-25s were observed in the **Netherlands** (6.8%), **Denmark** (8.4%) and **Ireland** (8.8%), the highest in **Poland** (34.2%), **Slovakia** (29.8%), and **Greece** (26.4% in fourth quarter 2005).

Eurostat estimates that, in March 2006, 11.8 million men and women were unemployed in the **euro-zone** and 18.2 million in the **EU25**. These are seasonally-adjusted figures in line with ILO criteria.

In March 2006, the **US** unemployment rate was 4.7% and the **Japanese** rate was 4.1%.

#### Unemployment (%) in March 2006 - in ascending order

NL	IE	DK	LU	UK	AT	CY	EE	SI	LT	HU	LV	PT
4.0	4.2	4.3	4.8	Jan 06 5.0	5.1	5.2	5.3	6.2	6.4	7.4	7.6	7.6
CZ	IT	FI	MT	Euro-zone	BE	EU25	DE <sup>5</sup>	ES	FR	EL	SK	PL
7.7	2005 Q4 7.7	7.9	8.1	8.1	8.2	8.4	8.7	8.7	9.1	2005 Q4 9.6	15.7	16.8



**SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%)  
TOTAL MALES AND FEMALES**

	Mar 2005	Sept 2005	Oct 2005	Nov 2005	Dec 2005	Jan 2006	Feb 2006	Mar 2006
<b>Euro-zone<sup>5</sup></b>	8.8	8.4	8.3	8.4	8.3	8.2	8.2	<b>8.1</b>
<b>EU25<sup>5</sup></b>	8.9	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.5	8.5	8.4	<b>8.4</b>
<b>BE</b>	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.1	8.2	<b>8.2</b>
<b>CZ</b>	8.0	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	<b>7.7</b>
<b>DK</b>	5.4	4.5	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.4	4.4	<b>4.3</b>
<b>DE<sup>5</sup></b>	9.8	8.6	9.1	9.3	9.5	9.1	8.9	<b>8.7</b>
<b>EE</b>	8.8	7.2	7.3	6.9	6.6	6.2	5.8	<b>5.3</b>
<b>EL</b>	9.9	10.1	9.6	9.6	9.6	:	:	:
<b>ES</b>	9.9	8.6	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	<b>8.7</b>
<b>FR</b>	9.7	9.4	9.3	9.3	9.2	9.1	9.1	<b>9.1</b>
<b>IE</b>	4.5	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	<b>4.2</b>
<b>IT</b>	7.8	7.6	7.7	7.7	7.7	:	:	:
<b>CY</b>	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.3	5.2	<b>5.2</b>
<b>LV</b>	9.1	8.8	8.4	8.2	8.0	8.1	7.8	<b>7.6</b>
<b>LT</b>	9.2	7.4	6.9	6.7	6.8	6.8	6.5	<b>6.4</b>
<b>LU</b>	4.3	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	<b>4.8</b>
<b>HU</b>	6.8	7.4	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.6	<b>7.4</b>
<b>MT</b>	7.2	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.6	7.9	8.0	<b>8.1</b>
<b>NL</b>	4.9	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.2	<b>4.0</b>
<b>AT</b>	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	<b>5.1</b>
<b>PL</b>	18.0	17.6	17.3	17.2	17.1	17.1	16.9	<b>16.8</b>
<b>PT</b>	7.4	7.8	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.7	7.7	<b>7.6</b>
<b>SI</b>	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.2	6.2	<b>6.2</b>
<b>SK</b>	16.7	16.5	16.4	16.1	16.0	15.7	15.7	<b>15.7</b>
<b>FI</b>	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.1	<b>7.9</b>
<b>SE<sup>6</sup></b>	6.3	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
<b>UK</b>	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.0	4.9	5.0	:	:
<b>US</b>	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.7	4.8	<b>4.7</b>
<b>JP</b>	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.1	<b>4.1</b>

: Data not available  
Source: Eurostat

