



# Association of Career Firms INTERNATIONAL

ISSUE MARCH 2020 | topic TRANSITION

Dear readers,

You shouldn't be surprised. You can't expect the world to stand still. This is a common response to news that all of a sudden comes to us. No matter how strong, experienced or educated we are, it is difficult to be prepared for the unexpected. In this regard I do not only refer to Covid19.

It was with great sadness that we had to inform you in January of the untimely passing of our esteemed friend and colleague, Herbert Mühlenhoff, Managing Partner of Mühlenhoff & Partner GmbH, Düsseldorf at the age of 69 after short yet serious illness. Herbert's commitment to the association and the industry as a whole was unparalleled and his thought leadership was exemplary. Over the years, Herbert has held various positions within the ACF Europe board, the last one being treasurer. His legacy will live on because of all he has brought to the ACF.

The other change was the depart of our president Bev White. The board wishes her lots of success and happiness in her challenge as CEO of Harvey Nash Group PLC. We are very grateful to Bev for her long lasting engagement during the period that she was our esteemed president. Her way of leading the association contributed as a whole to the significance of ACF Europe.

ACF started 2020 with a new board of directors, consisting of Manfred Bertschat (BDU delegate) in the position of treasurer, Charel Jelles in the position of secretary general and myself in the position of president. We also welcomed our new board member Mrs Daniela König-Mühlenhoff, representing the arbora group. With the arrival of arbora, ACF Europe has transformed into an organisation with an international scope, with more than 150 career provider offices throughout the world. Therefore the board decided to change the name into ACF International. With this change comes a brand new look and feel with a new logo and website. Especially for our esteemed members, we developed a marketing kit, with various marketing tools for branding the certified ACF membership. This marketing kit will be sent to you soon.

A new board with a new look that feels inspired and challenged to bring fresh visions and activities to our members.

Best regards,

Pascal L. Favre  
President ACF International



PASCAL LAURENT FAVRE IS  
CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING  
DIRECTOR OF PDP  
PERFORMANCE  
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS  
LTD, CHAIRMAN OF ACF  
SWITZERLAND AND THE NEW  
PRESIDENT OF ACF  
INTERNATIONAL.

Born in Geneva, Pascal Laurent Favre, a Swiss and French citizen, earned his Masters Degree in Business Administration at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. [read more](#)



## TRENDING TOPIC

### The Importance of Flexible Working Solutions to Coronavirus

The outspread of coronavirus is an important global challenge. Organisations are turning to flexible and remote working as an ideal solution to prevent their staff from contracting and passing on coronavirus. It has essentially altered the way we live and work across the globe. Working from home reduces the risk of exposure to the virus significantly. Rather than commuting to the office every day where you come in contact with hundreds of people, you can stay in your home. Companies should be properly prepared for their staff to work from their homes.

This is of course not possible for all businesses and sectors, and there are a significant number of people who would be unable to work from home. For example, there is no clarity in what would happen if everyone was accessing broadband from multiple providers. High-speed broadband is not feasible for everybody, especially in rural areas. Some providers are working to expand their networks. For example, Vodafone has been producing several gigabit hubs in numerous rural areas. They have a partnership with Siro, which includes Skibbereen, Sligo, Drogheda, and Cavan. 15 hubs have been rolled out from this initiative, supporting remote working in towns in Ireland. However, this is not the case in many areas.

#### Is Remote Working Effective?

The US sales and trade agency workers discovered their output increased by 4.4% after a shift to remote working, according to the recent study of Harvard Business Review. A Chinese travel agency found that flexible working has increased the satisfaction of employees. Workers feel more comfortable and productive while working from home. They can fully concentrate on their business, creating their suitable environment.

While working from home, you can have a flexible schedule for your work. You can have relaxing periods in your job from time to time which often leads to an increase in productivity. You can spend quality time with your family as well. But remote working also has some drawbacks. You may have less communication and collaborating time with others. There can also be distractions within the home. Some people dislike working in the same place as where they live, and they don't like to spend all their time in a single place.

People across the globe are currently having to work from home as cases of Coronavirus increase, and it has been welcomed by many who feel uncertain about going into their offices. There are many people already working from home. In the UK, more than 1.54 million people have adopted flexible working, from ten years ago a two-fold increase. In Japan, more than 3,000 companies are planning to introduce telecommuting to their workers, for coping with workloads. The Covid-19 outbreak is affecting economies and businesses across the globe. The way in which we work has been forced to evolve very quickly as a direct response to the pandemic.

*This article was spotted by: Charel Jelles, managing partner of Talent4Success, member sales leadership team Career Star Group, Secretary General ACF International.*



MARK RICHTER IS CEO AT OTP ORGANISATION AND PARTNERS AG AND ACF INTERNATIONAL BOARD MEMBER



"The road to success leads through change. We take this road together with our clients."

OTP was founded as a consulting company for outplacement, newplacement, assessment, coaching and training.

- Swiss HR consulting group with a team of more than 80 dedicated professionals.
- 9 convenient locations in Switzerland.
- 25 years of successfully supporting our clients in their professional reorientation and business creation and experience in designing, implementing and supporting change processes and transnational projects.
- services in German, English, French and Italian.
- global collaboration with the strong local partners of Career Partners International. clients include listed companies as well as small and mid-size organizations from the finance, service and manufacturing industries and also serves public institutions.

[otp organisation & training partners ag](http://otp-organisation.com)

## Plant closure – "After the anger the next successful career step..."

When it was announced last summer that a company with almost 200 employees in the field of medical technology in Eastern Switzerland would close in one year at the latest, this was a shock for all concerned. The takeover of the company just three years earlier had raised great hopes that the local research location would continue to flourish. The company developed and marketed technologically advanced products. And then this: the products could be manufactured more cheaply abroad. Anger and disappointment spread among the employees.

The company planned to cushion the consequences for all 200 employees with various measures. In addition to early communication and a variable severance payment, an outplacement was offered. OTP was commissioned to design and implement an outplacement concept for all employees that was appropriate for each level. For the more highly qualified employees, an individual outplacement with a duration of 3 to 6 months was developed. A workshop programme lasting several days with individual coaching sessions was designed for the production employees. These measures were carried out by us in the run-up to the final closure on site.

We approached the former employees personally and asked them what the outplacement program had brought them. The individual outplacements praise the very personal coaching as well as the competent advice tailored to individual needs.

The value-added support and the focus on strengths are also emphasized.

The opportunity to deal intensively with one's own professional future and to discover many new things in the process is highly appreciated. Equally important are the large network of coaches and the concrete support in finding a job. Due to the professionalism, market knowledge and extensive experience of our coaches, many participants were able to achieve a higher salary or even make a career leap.

The answers to the question of group outplacement for production employees also showed a consistently positive overall picture. The focus of this program was strongly on the successful self-presentation, the very appealing application documents and a target-oriented application strategy. Here above all the gratitude for the very personal and pragmatic support as well as the patient commitment of the coaches is emphasized. The intensive job hunting and the active networking of the coaches in favour of the workshop participants were finally the decisive success factors for the effective job search. During the workshops and coaching sessions, the participants sent out a large number of active and reactive applications.

The results of the subsequent survey speak for themselves! Without exception, the employees participating in the outplacement program found a new job. The salaries are usually the same or could even be increased. In view of the fact that very good salaries are paid in the medical sector, this is a remarkable result. The general satisfaction was and is very high and the OTP program is recommended by all participants without reservation.



**BARBARA KEMP IS AN ASSOCIATE CONSULTANT  
AT CDS, CAREER DIRECTED SOLUTIONS**

She has expertise in the areas of management and leadership development, human resource management (especially organisational development and HRD), team building, executive coaching and leadership in a cross consultancy assignments including most recently:

- Team building and managing change workshops for CTA in the Netherlands
- Management development workshops for the ICT-Y division of the United Nations in the Hague.
- Leadership Development Programme for Brita UK.
- Executive coaching for : Worcester Bosch, DS Smith, Paragon Bank, Co-Op Group.

CDS, Career Directed Solutions provides Change Consulting, Outplacement, Career Management and Coaching & Leadership to organisations in the UK, Europe and beyond. CDS coaches and consultants have been carefully selected to ensure they are qualified, experienced, enthusiastic and motivated, to offer your people the very best career solutions possible.

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## A look at some organisation initiative ideas

The management bookshelves are filled with the latest thinking on how to enhance performance. We used to talk about motivation, with the influential AMO model (Performance = ability, motivation and opportunity) suggesting the importance of motivation in seeking to raise levels of performance. Now engagement seems to be the more popular terminology, and surveys and initiatives abound in seeking to enhance engagement. Organisations are investing heavily in leadership development programmes, to grow leaders who will inspire and empower those around them.

Employee well-being is also now at the top of many HR agendas, as HR professionals seek to mitigate the impact of work intensification, as organisations seek competitive edge or to do more with less resources, often competing in a global market place.

How do we engage staff, ensure well-being and achieve our stretching performance goals? I have been struck recently by some seemingly powerful initiatives or approaches as I visit various organisations in my coaching capacity and thought I would share just a few here. These are ones that staff talked enthusiastically to me about and said really mattered to them. Most not radically new, some requiring some budget, but others just need the will to make it happen.

Counselling for friends and family – a £500 budget per employee to spend on counselling for themselves or family members (doesn't have to be for work related issues). No questions asked, just entered on monthly expenses. Real time feedback – keypads placed throughout the organisation for tapping to show how staff are feeling (happy, OK, not happy), with screens on each floor that show results. This allows managers to pick up quickly if morale is low that day and take quick action. Contrasts with the annual surveys which can take 6 months for results to feed through!

Above and beyond awards – monthly awards to vote for colleagues who have supported or contributed in ways outside the 'norm'. Names publicly displayed for other staff and customers to see. The annual award winners getting an extra days holiday and a named parking space for a year (a team leader who had got this told me how valued it made him feel, to get this sort of recognition from his colleagues).

Family first policy – not a formal policy but understood through the organisation that if someone needs to leave for an urgent family issue, no questions asked, with cover arranged. Colleagues will all pitch in to support. Twenty four hours of freedom-staff get a day away from their day-to-day job to work individually or in teams on ideas and innovations they don't get time to work on in the busyness of their day to day job. Ideas can be presented in writing or at team meetings.

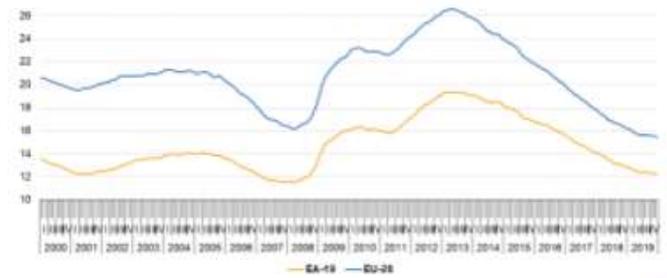
Walk and talk team meetings-going outside the building (weather dependent!), just walking together as a team, ideally through some local green spaces, to discuss team issues and look for solutions.

A week available for every member of staff and family at an eco-lodge, with simple accommodation and no wi-fi (this is in a space bought by the company and used to support staff well-being and promote sustainability).

Most of these ideas, it seems, emerged from staff or were developed by groups of staff so they were really linked to what people found valuable or made a difference. I am sure lots reading this will have other great initiatives in their organisations or teams that equally make a difference. Some in the public sector will feel that most of those identified are not realistic in their settings and with their financial constraints. However, the message I was left with from these conversations is that measures to value people and support well-being don't have to be over complicated, don't have to come from HR and don't all require much budget. But they do all come from a genuine belief at all levels in the organisation that how people feel and their well-being does matter, not just to drive performance, but as a key responsibility of any organisation.



Unemployed persons, in millions, seasonally adjusted, EU-28 and EA-19, January 2000 - December 2019



Source: Eurostat (online data code: une\_fm)

eurostat

## Unemployment in Europe – statistics 2019

This article presents the very latest unemployment figures for the European Union (EU), the euro area and individual Member States, complemented by an overview of long-term developments since the year 2000. The unemployment rate is an important indicator with both social and economic dimensions. Rising unemployment results in a loss of income for individuals, increased pressure with respect to government spending on social benefits and a reduction in tax revenue. From an economic perspective, unemployment may be viewed as unused labour capacity.

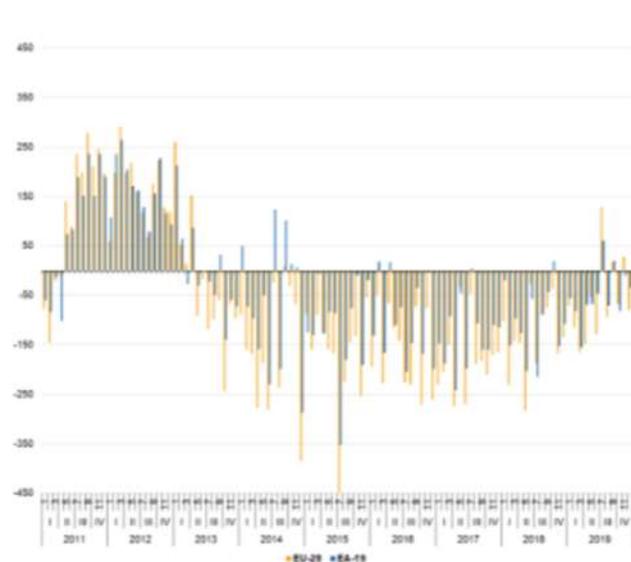
### Recent developments

#### Unemployment in the EU and the euro area

Eurostat estimates that 15.475 million men and women in the EU, of whom 12.251 million in the euro area, were unemployed in December 2019. Compared with November 2019, the number of persons unemployed decreased by 80 000 in the EU-28 and by 34 000 in the euro area. Compared with December 2018, unemployment fell by 747 000 in the EU-28 and by 592 000 in the euro area.

The euro area seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 7.4 % in December 2019, down from 7.5 % in November 2019 and from 7.8 % in December 2018. The EU-28 unemployment rate was 6.2 % in December 2019, down from 6.3 % in November 2019 and from 6.6 % in December 2018.

Change in the number of unemployed persons (compared to previous month, in thousands), seasonally adjusted, January 2011 - December 2019



Source: Eurostat (online data code: une\_fm)

eurostat

### Trends in the euro area

The unemployment rate in the euro area (EA-19) followed roughly the same trend as in the EU-28. However, between 2000 and the beginning of 2004 the unemployment rate in the euro area was below that recorded in the EU-28. This pattern was subsequently reversed as, between 2005 and the beginning of 2008, unemployment declined more rapidly in the Member States which do not yet have the euro. As in the EU-28, during the economic crisis unemployment increased at a considerable pace, with the exception of the period between mid-2010 and mid-2011 where it temporarily declined. The unemployment level peaked at 19.3 million in the second quarter of 2013, before going down since the second part of 2013 and reaching 13 million at the end of 2018.

### Trends in the United States and Japan

In 2000, the unemployment rate in the United States was around 4 %, considerably lower than in the EU. It remained much lower until early 2008, when unemployment started to increase rapidly. By the beginning of 2009 the unemployment rate in the United States had reached the same level as in the EU-28, and stayed above the EU-28 rate until the beginning of 2010. Since then the US unemployment rate has followed a downwards path which has taken it to 3.8 % at the end of 2018. In Japan, between 2000 and 2018, unemployment rates were much lower than in the EU, ranging between 5.4 % in the third quarter 2009 and 2.4 % in the fourth quarter of 2018.

Unemployment rate 2008-2018 (%)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
EU-28	7.0	9.0	9.6	9.7	10.5	10.9	10.2	9.4	8.5	7.6	6.2
Euro area	7.6	9.6	10.2	10.2	11.4	12.0	11.6	10.9	10.0	9.1	8.2
Belgium	7.0	7.9	8.3	7.2	7.9	8.4	8.5	8.5	7.8	7.1	6.9
Bulgaria	5.6	6.8	10.3	11.3	12.3	13.0	11.4	9.2	7.6	6.2	5.2
Czechia	4.4	6.7	7.3	6.7	7.0	7.0	6.1	5.1	4.0	2.9	2.2
Denmark	3.4	6.0	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.0	6.6	6.2	6.2	5.7	5.0
Germany	7.4	7.6	7.0	5.8	5.4	5.2	5.0	4.6	4.1	3.8	3.4
Estonia	5.0	13.0	16.7	12.3	10.0	8.6	7.4	6.2	6.8	5.8	5.4
Ireland	6.8	12.6	14.6	15.4	15.5	13.8	11.0	10.0	8.4	6.7	5.8
Greece	7.8	9.6	12.7	17.9	24.5	27.5	26.5	24.9	23.6	21.6	19.3
Spain	11.3	17.9	19.9	21.4	24.8	26.1	24.5	22.1	19.6	17.2	15.3
France	7.4	9.1	9.3	9.2	9.8	10.3	10.3	10.4	10.1	9.4	9.1
Croatia	8.0	9.3	11.8	13.7	15.8	17.4	17.2	16.1	13.4	11.0	8.5
Italy	6.7	7.7	8.4	8.4	10.7	12.1	12.7	11.9	11.7	11.2	10.6
Cyprus	3.7	5.4	6.3	7.0	11.0	10.0	10.1	10.0	11.0	11.1	8.4
Lithuania	7.7	17.0	19.0	16.2	15.0	11.9	10.8	9.9	9.6	8.7	7.4
Luxembourg	5.8	13.8	17.8	15.4	13.4	11.8	10.7	9.1	7.9	7.1	6.2
Hungary	4.9	5.1	4.6	4.8	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.5	6.3	5.6	5.4
Malta	6.0	6.0	6.8	6.4	6.2	6.1	5.7	5.4	4.7	4.0	3.7
Netherlands	3.7	4.4	5.0	5.0	5.8	7.3	7.4	6.9	6.0	4.9	3.8
Austria	4.1	2.3	4.8	4.6	4.9	5.4	5.6	5.7	5.0	2.5	4.9
Poland	7.1	8.1	9.7	9.7	10.1	10.3	9.0	7.5	6.2	4.0	3.9
Portugal	8.8	10.7	12.0	12.9	12.8	10.4	14.1	12.6	11.2	9.0	7.0
Romania	5.0	6.5	7.0	7.2	6.8	7.1	6.8	6.8	5.9	4.9	4.2
Slovenia	4.4	2.9	7.3	8.2	8.9	10.1	9.7	9.0	8.0	6.6	5.1
Slovakia	9.6	12.1	14.0	13.7	14.0	14.2	13.2	11.0	9.7	8.1	6.0
Finland	6.4	8.2	8.4	7.8	7.7	8.2	8.7	9.4	8.8	8.6	7.4
Sweden	6.2	8.3	8.6	7.8	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.4	5.9	5.7	6.3
United Kingdom	5.0	7.6	7.8	8.1	7.9	7.5	6.1	4.8	4.4	4.4	4.0
Iceland	3.0	7.2	7.6	7.1	6.0	5.4	5.0	4.0	3.0	2.8	2.7
Norway	2.7	3.3	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.6	4.2	4.8	4.2	3.9
Turkey	10.0	13.0	11.1	9.1	8.4	9.0	9.9	10.3	10.9	10.9	11.0
United States	5.8	9.3	9.6	8.9	8.1	7.4	6.2	5.3	4.9	4.4	3.9
Japan	4.0	5.1	5.9	4.6	4.3	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.1	2.8	2.4

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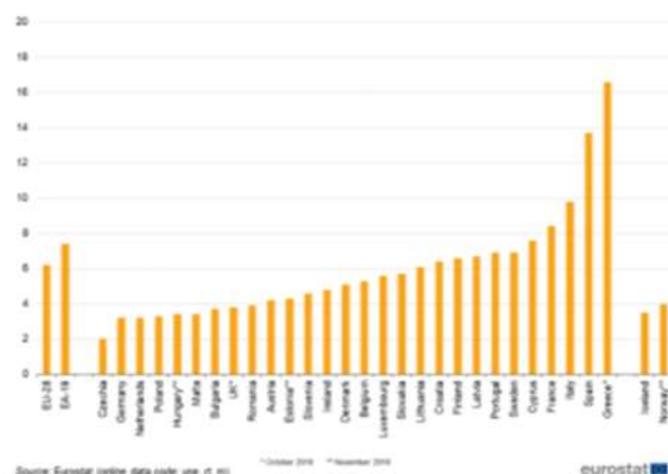
Source: Eurostat (online data code: une\_fm)

eurostat

## Unemployment in the Member States

Among the Member States, the lowest unemployment rates in December 2019 were recorded in Czechia (2.0 %) as well as in Germany and the Netherlands (both 3.2 %). The highest unemployment rates were observed in Greece (16.6 % in October 2019) and Spain (13.7 %). Compared with a year ago, the unemployment rate fell in 21 Member States, remained stable in Denmark, while it increased in Cyprus (from 7.4 % to 7.6 %), Slovenia (from 4.4 % to 4.6 %), Lithuania (from 5.8 % to 6.1 %), Portugal (from 6.6 % to 6.9 %), Luxembourg (from 5.2 % to 5.6 %) and Sweden (from 6.5 % to 6.9 %). The largest decreases were registered in Greece (from 18.5 % to 16.6 % between October 2018 and October 2019), Bulgaria (from 4.7 % to 3.7 %), and Croatia (from 7.3 % to 6.4 %).

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted, December 2019



In December 2019, the unemployment rate in the United States was 3.5 %, stable compared with November 2019 and down from 3.9 % in December 2018.

## Youth unemployment

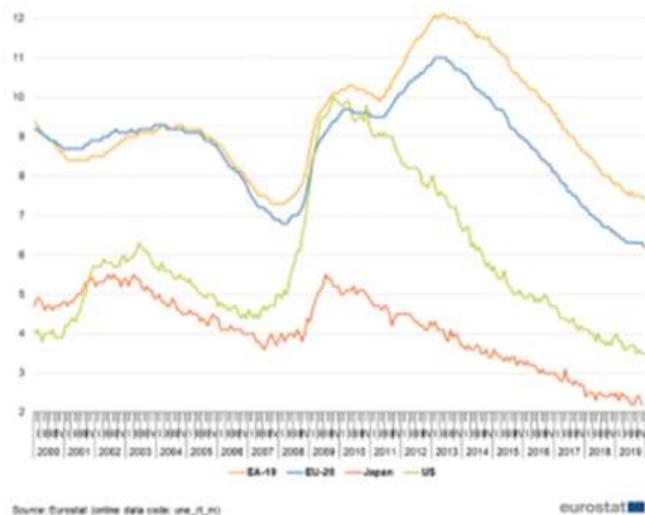
### Higher youth unemployment in the euro area than in the EU since mid-2012

Youth unemployment rates are generally much higher, even double or more than double, than unemployment rates for all ages. As for the rate for the total population, the youth unemployment rate in the EU-28 sharply declined between 2005 and 2007, reaching its minimum value (15.1 %) in the first quarter 2008. The economic crisis, however, severely hit the young. From the second quarter of 2008, the youth unemployment rate has taken an upward trend peaking in 23.9 % in the first quarter 2013, before receding to 14.8 % at the end of 2018. The EU-28 youth unemployment rate was systematically higher than in the euro area between 2000 and mid-2007. Since then and until the third quarter 2010 these two rates were very close. Afterwards the indicator moved more sharply in the EA-19 than in the EU-28, first downwards until mid-2011, then upwards until the end of 2012 (see also Figure 4). In the middle of 2012 the euro area youth unemployment rate overtook the EU-28 rate, and the gap increased until the end of the year. The gap became even larger in the second part of 2013 and during 2014 and 2015, when the rate for the euro area went down less than the rate for the EU-28. The gap remained at relatively high level during 2018.

### Difference between rate and ratio

High youth unemployment rates do reflect the difficulties faced by young people in finding jobs. However, this does not necessarily mean that the group of unemployed persons aged between 15 and 24 is large, as many young people are studying full-time and are therefore neither working nor looking for a job (so they are not part of the labour force which is used as the denominator for calculating the unemployment rate). For this reason, youth unemployment ratios are also calculated, according to a somewhat different concept: the unemployment ratio calculates the share of unemployed for the whole population. Table 2 shows that youth unemployment ratios in the EU are much lower than youth unemployment rates; they have however also risen due to the effects of the crisis on the labour market starting in 2008. More recently, they have however also reached a record low during the course of 2018.

Unemployment rates EU-28, EA-19, US and Japan, seasonally adjusted, January 2000 - December 2019



### Youth unemployment

In December 2019, 3.155 million young persons (under 25) were unemployed in the EU-28, of whom 2.213 million were in the euro area. Compared with December 2018, youth unemployment decreased by 143 000 in the EU-28 and by 129 000 in the euro area. In December 2019, the youth unemployment rate was 14.1 % in the EU-28 and 15.3 % in the euro area, compared with 14.6 % and 16.2 % respectively in December 2018. In December 2019, the lowest rates were observed in Czechia (4.3 %), Germany (5.8 %) and the Netherlands (6.7 %), while the highest were recorded in Greece (35.6 % in October 2019), Spain (30.0 %) and Italy (28.9 %).

Youth unemployment figures, 2008-2018 (%)

	Youth unemployment rate				Youth unemployment ratio			
	2008	2016	2017	2018	2008	2016	2017	2018
EU-28	15.9	18.7	16.8	15.2	7.0	7.8	7.0	6.3
Euro area	15.1	20.9	18.8	16.9	7.1	8.3	7.4	6.7
Bulgaria	18.0	20.1	19.3	15.8	6.0	5.7	5.4	4.7
Bulgaria	11.9	17.2	12.9	12.7	3.7	4.1	3.4	3.0
Czechia	8.9	10.5	7.9	6.7	3.1	3.4	2.5	2.0
Denmark	8.0	12.0	11.0	9.3	5.8	7.9	7.0	5.9
Germany	10.4	7.1	6.8	6.2	5.5	3.5	3.4	3.1
Estonia	12.0	13.4	12.1	11.9	4.9	5.8	5.6	5.6
Ireland	13.5	16.8	14.4	13.8	8.9	8.5	6.7	6.4
Greece	21.9	47.3	43.6	39.9	6.6	11.7	10.9	9.3
Luxembourg	24.5	44.4	38.6	34.3	11.7	14.7	12.9	11.3
France	19.0	24.6	22.3	20.7	7.1	9.0	8.0	7.6
Croatia	23.6	31.8	27.2	23.8	8.7	11.6	9.8	7.9
Italy	21.2	37.8	34.7	32.2	6.5	10.0	9.1	8.4
Cyprus	9.0	29.1	24.7	20.2	3.8	10.8	9.0	7.9
Latvia	13.6	17.3	17.0	12.2	5.8	6.9	6.8	4.6
Lithuania	13.3	14.5	13.3	11.1	4.0	5.1	4.6	4.1
Luxembourg	17.3	19.1	15.5	13.5	5.2	5.8	4.7	4.7
Hungary	19.5	12.9	10.7	10.2	4.9	4.2	3.5	3.3
Malta	11.7	10.7	10.6	9.2	6.1	5.5	5.6	5.1
Netherlands	8.6	10.8	8.9	7.2	5.0	7.4	6.1	4.9
Austria	8.5	11.2	9.8	9.4	5.1	6.5	5.5	5.3
Poland	17.2	17.7	14.8	11.7	5.7	6.1	5.2	4.1
Portugal	21.8	28.2	23.8	20.3	8.5	9.3	8.1	6.9
Romania	17.6	20.6	18.3	16.2	5.7	5.8	5.5	4.8
Slovenia	10.4	15.2	11.2	8.8	4.5	5.1	4.4	3.4
Slovakia	19.3	22.2	18.9	14.9	6.2	7.2	6.3	4.8
Finland	16.5	20.1	20.1	17.0	8.8	10.5	10.7	9.0
Sweden	20.2	18.9	17.8	16.8	10.7	10.4	9.8	9.1
United Kingdom	15.0	13.0	12.1	11.3	9.2	7.6	7.0	6.4
Iceland	8.2	6.5	8.2	6.1	5.4	5.4	6.5	4.9
Norway	8.0	11.3	10.7	9.7	4.6	6.1	5.6	5.3
Switzerland	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Turkey	18.5	19.6	20.7	20.3	6.9	8.2	8.9	8.8
United States	12.8	10.4	9.2	8.6	..	..	..	..
Japan	7.3	5.1	4.7	3.7	..	..	..	..

.. data not available  
\* The quarterly youth unemployment rate is seasonally adjusted.

Source: Eurostat (une\_ft\_n)

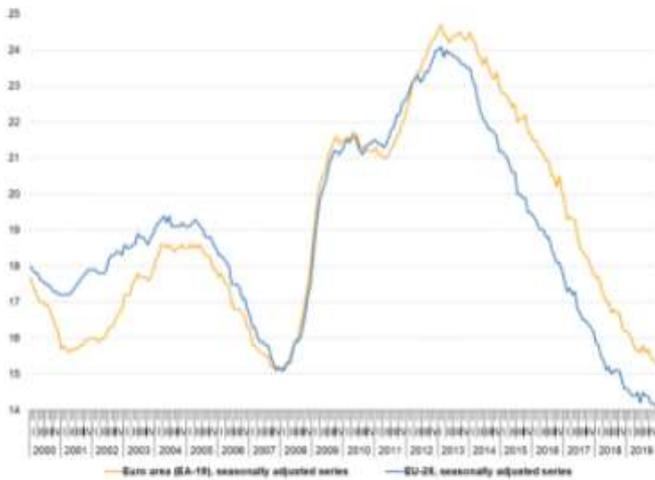


### Male and female unemployment

Similar developments in male and female unemployment since mid-2013

Unemployment levels and rates move in a cyclical manner, largely related to the general business cycle. However, other factors such as labour market policies and demographic developments may also influence the short and long-term evolution.

**Youth unemployment rates, EU-28 and EA-19, seasonally adjusted, January 2000 - December 2019**



Source: Eurostat (online data code: une\_ft\_10)

eurostat

### Longer-term unemployment trends

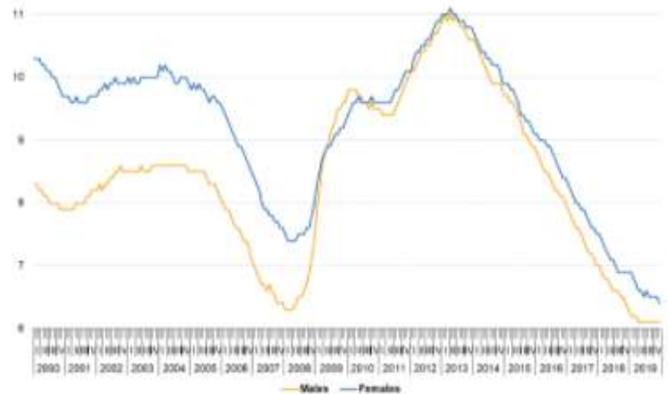
#### Trends in the EU: Unemployment rate at all-time low

At the beginning of 2000, above 20.5 million persons were unemployed in the EU-28, corresponding to 9.2 % of the total labour force. The unemployment trend at that moment was downwards. In the second quarter of 2001 the number of unemployment persons had dropped to 19.6 million and the unemployment rate to 8.7 %. A long period of increasing unemployment followed. At the end of 2004 the number of jobseekers available for work reached 21.2 million, while the unemployment rate was 9.2 %.

At the beginning of 2005 a period of steadily declining unemployment started, lasting until the first quarter 2008. At that time, EU-28 unemployment hit a low of 16.2 million persons (equivalent to a rate of 6.8 %) before rising sharply in the wake of the economic crisis. Between the second quarter 2008 and mid-2010 the unemployment level went up by more than 6.7 million, taking the rate up to 9.7 %, at that time the highest value recorded since the start of the series in 2000. The decline of unemployment in the following three quarters was a deceptive sign of an end of the crisis and of a stable improvement in labour market conditions in

Historically, women have been more affected by unemployment than men. In 2000, the unemployment rate for women in the EU-28 was around 10 %, while the rate for men was below 8 %. By the end of 2002, this gender gap had narrowed to around 1.4 percentage points and between 2002 and mid-2007 this gap remained more or less constant. Since the first quarter of 2008, when they were at their lowest levels of 6.3 % and 7.4 % respectively, the male and female unemployment rates in the EU-28 converged, and by the third quarter of 2009 the male unemployment rate was higher.

**Unemployment rates by gender, EU, seasonally adjusted, January 2000 - December 2019**



Source: Eurostat (online data code: une\_ft\_11)

eurostat

The decline of the men's rate during 2010 and the first half of 2011 and the corresponding stability in the women's rate over the same period brought the male rate below the female one once again. Since then the two rates have risen at the same pace until mid-2013, when they reached their highest value of 10.9 % for men and 11 % for women. Starting end-2013 both the male and the female rates began to decline and reached respectively 6.3 % and 6.9 % at the end of 2018.

**Unemployment rates, EU-28, 2008-2018 (%)**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Male	6.5	6.0	6.7	6.5	10.4	10.2	10.1	9.3	8.4	7.4	6.6
Female	7.5	6.9	6.6	6.9	10.6	10.6	10.3	9.9	9.0	7.8	7.1
Less than 25 years	15.9	20.3	21.4	21.8	23.3	23.8	22.2	20.3	18.7	16.8	15.2
Between 25 and 64 years	5.9	5.9	6.3	6.3	8.1	8.1	8.0	7.3	6.7	6.1	5.0
Long-term unemployment rate	2.6	3.0	3.5	4.1	4.0	5.1	5.0	4.5	4.0	3.4	2.9
Male	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.6	3.1	3.0	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.0
Female	2.8	3.1	3.7	4.1	4.0	5.1	5.0	4.5	4.0	3.5	3.0
Very long term unemployment rate	1.6	1.6	1.8	2.2	2.5	3.2	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.1	1.6

( ) data not available

Source: Eurostat (une\_ft\_2\_une\_ft\_2)

eurostat

The detailed tables are available [here](#)



## Sweden: Latest developments in working life

Author: [Gustafsson, Anna-Karin](#)

### Reform of Employment Protection Act

When the new government was formed in January 2019, a new level of cooperation was agreed between the Swedish Social Democratic Party and the Green Party on the one hand, and the Centre Party and the Liberals on the other. This new collaboration resulted in a 73-point policy programme involving all major policy areas. In the labour market policy area, the four parties agreed to reform the current employment protection regulations, as well as the unemployment insurance system in line with a 'flexicurity' model. The main debate has focused on the rules relating to the termination of employment, which are regulated in the Employment Protection Act.

According to the Employment Protection Act, an employer who wants to dismiss an employee must be able to show objectively justifiable reasons for the termination, either due to redundancy or personal reasons. If such reasons cannot be given, the termination could be annulled, and the employer might have to pay damages. In the case of termination due to redundancy, employees up for dismissal are listed in order of priority in line with the last-in-first-out principle (where workers with the shortest tenure must leave first).

In an agreement made between the four parties earlier this year, it was stated that more employers should be able to make exceptions to the order of priority rules.

### Views of trade unions

Several trade unions have expressed concerns about this development, arguing that the current regulations work well and that there is no need

for reform. The Swedish Council for Negotiation and Cooperation (PTK) is a joint organisation consisting of 27 member unions that represent 880,000 salaried employees in the private sector in Sweden. In a recent study, PTK interviewed 200 employers and just over 200 trade union representatives working in organisations that have experienced downsizing within the past few years.

Three out of four respondents stated that the employer and the union had agreed about the need for downsizing. Nine out of ten stated that the employer and the union had agreed on which employees were to be made redundant, in half of the cases through a priority list. Out of the ones who reached an agreement, three out of four stated that it had been an easy process.

## Views of employers

Employers, on the other hand, have welcomed the changes. In response to the PTK report, the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise's labour market expert, Patrik Karlsson, explained that being pleased with negotiation results and having a system that is suited for today's labour market are not the same thing. He further stated that companies find that the current rules on employment and dismissal inhibit growth.

The challenges experienced by employers are further described in a new report by the Swedish Federation of Business Owners, Sweden's largest business organisation. According to the federation's members, the rules on termination due to personal reasons are the most complex, as they often involve a high level of uncertainty regarding time and costs, and require significant evidence. Termination due to redundancy can also create problems and becomes increasingly complicated as the number of employees grows. Many companies fear not being able to retain the right competencies in case of redundancies. This is also problematic because the right to return after dismissal is connected to the priority list and the surveyed companies stated that this was the main reason why they did not recruit.

An inquiry into how the Employment Protection Act should be reformed has been commissioned by the

government, with a legislative proposal expected in the first half of 2020. Commissioning an inquiry is a way for the government to put pressure on the social partners to reach a bipartite agreement (generally seen as the more favourable option). Bipartite negotiations are currently ongoing.



## **Meet the new treasurer**

**MANFRED BERTSCHAT IS OWNER AND GENERAL MANAGER OF BERTSCHAT & HUNDERTMARK UNTERNEHMUNGSGRUPPE, CEO OF THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OUTPLACEMENT WITHIN THE FEDERAL ASSOCIATION OF MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS (BDU) AND THE NEW TREASURER OF ACF INTERNATIONAL.**

Manfred graduated in Business Economics at the University of Applied Science in Cologne. He has a long lasting experience of 20 years worldwide management in large corporations. Since 2010 he is appointed as the General Manager of the Bertschat & Hundertmark Group, based in Bad Nauheim.

The Bertschat & Hundertmark (B&H) group is a specialist service provider with approx. 100 consultants in the field of Personnel restructuring. The experts at the B&H specialist societies provide comprehensive transparency Employer offers in all decision-relevant questions. How to design e.g. the tax and pension experts from employer offers tailored, individual solutions with optimal financial flows and thus increase the financial security of the employees. They also support employees in their search for new ones Jobs, promote start-ups, support business plans (B&H Placement), help severely disabled employees because of their Expertise in special solutions, advise older workers in Early retirement or retirement benefits (B&H Future).

[Bertschat & Hundertmark](#)

Manfred Bertschat's motivation to work for ACF International are:

- Sharing international best practice and European Standards (Code of Conduct)
- Promoting international cooperation between member companies
- Participation in European matters in the area of outplacement and incl. (taxation affairs, social security law)
- Supporting Activities/Initiatives of ACF and Communication into BDU (Bundesverband der Unternehmensberater)



## Meet the new secretary general

**CHAREL JELLES IS MANAGING PARTNER OF TALENT4SUCCESS IN THE BENELUX AND THE NEW SECRETARY GENERAL OF ACF INTERNATIONAL.**

Charel is responsible for securing and maintaining relationships with key customers and ensuring that candidate and customer expectations are achieved through operational and sales excellence.

Since 1997 Charel Jelles has experience in the human capital and talent development marketplace. He received his bachelor's degree in Management, Economics and Law and a post-bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a Labour market specialization.

Talent4Success is a talent solutions company focused on delivering Career Transition, Leadership Consulting and Workforce Solutions for organizations committed to developing their best talent and becoming employers of choice. Talent4Success sincerely believes in the power of talent and human potential. Every individual is talented. The individuals are the ones that make or break organisations and who see their work as an

expression of who they are, and who give a face to your company. The services provided are all about bringing out the best in people. It's coaches are determined to help people develop to the full extent of their potential and to assist employees with career changes. Either be it within the company or elsewhere, enabling individuals to keep growing as an organisation. With over 40 locations in the Benelux, Talent4success is always close by.

### [Talent4Success](#)

Charel Jelles's objectives, in the role Secretary General, are to deliver added value to ACF International by:

- Strengthening the brand awareness and growth of the number of members
- Increasing the number of countries and/or regional chapters together with the existing members
- Developing partnerships with other sector organisations (e.g. the World Employment Confederation)
- Establishing recognition of the ACF International quality label in all countries of our working area
- Positioning ACF International as interlocutor with national and European government bodies



## Meet the new arbora representative

**DANIELA KÖNIG-MÜHLENHOFF IS THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MÜHLENHOFF MANAGEMENTBERATUNG AND BOARD MEMBER OF ACF INTERNATIONAL AS REPRESENTATIVE OF ARBORA GLOBAL CAREER PARTNERS.**

Daniela König-Mühlenhoff joined Mühlenhoff Managementberatung in 1993 and holds a Master's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Philology, both earned at the Freie Universität Berlin. She combines successfully the roles of Managing Director and Executive Consultant/Coach which ensures that Mühlenhoff offers cutting-edge services relevant to both companies and employees. Her core expertise includes *outplacement* – she personally has provided career transition services to more than 1,000 managers, professionals and top executives –, *executive coaching*, *assessment* (design and execution) and *change*. Daniela has been leading large-scale change projects at times of workforce restructuring for many years.

Mühlenhoff Managementberatung, is the quality leader in outplacement with 8 locations across Germany and

serves client companies from the public as well as the private sector, including companies listed on the DAX 30 Stock Market Index. Recognising the importance of global partnerships, Mühlenhoff joined arbora global career partners already in 1990 and has ever since been involved in providing cross-border outplacement services.

### [Mühlenhoff Managementberatung](#)

Arbora has member companies in 30 countries that provide outplacement, career management and leadership development services. Like all ACF members, every partner has to undergo a rigorous quality and capability test before being admitted to arbora. Over the years Daniela has served on several arbora committees, including the quality standards and quality assurance committee.

### [arbora Global Career Partners](#)

Daniela König-Mühlenhoff's motivation to become a board member of ACF International, representing arbora global career partners:

It seems only natural to create and leverage synergies between ACF and arbora to promote the interests of the outplacement industry as a whole. As the arbora representative, I shall share the multi-country operational expertise and know-how available within arbora. Arbora and its members will in turn benefit from the achievements only an umbrella organization such as ACF can provide to its members. I am proud to join a team of engaged, ambitious and open-minded board members and is looking forward to developing ACF further.