

Quality report of the
European Union
Labour Force Survey 2018

2020 edition



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1

Introduction

The quality concept applied in this report is in conformity with the definition developed by the European Statistical System and reported in the European Statistics Code of Practice ⁽¹⁾. According to this definition, the quality of a statistical output includes the following components: relevance, accuracy and reliability, timeliness and punctuality, comparability and coherence, accessibility and clarity. Each quality component consists of several sub-components and is shortly explained at the start of the respective section in this report ⁽²⁾.

The individual country quality reports that were delivered to Eurostat during summer 2019 constitute the main source for the present report. Other sources that have been used or consulted are additional metadata provided to Eurostat from countries, national quality reports from previous years, websites of the individual National Statistical Institutes (NSIs), the EU-LFS datasets for 2018 and the reference metadata on the datasets disseminated by Eurostat.

The present quality report closely follows the standard Quality Report format that has been developed within Eurostat. In many instances, however, it is impossible to present the data exactly as required by the standard Eurostat format, as this is targeted to report homogeneous production processes within each country and the EU-LFS is the result of the collection of national datasets from the NSIs. Information from the individual countries was in some cases not sufficient to provide a comprehensive summary.

Chapter 9 of the present report covers the regional aspects of the EU-LFS and has been written jointly by the units within Eurostat dealing with labour market and regional statistics.

This quality report complements the statistical report describing the characteristics of the national surveys in the EU Member States, Candidate Countries and the EFTA countries, also available on the Eurostat website ⁽³⁾.

Eurostat wishes to thank all experts in the countries participating in conducting the EU-LFS and providing the data and descriptions as well as their support necessary for compiling this report.

⁽¹⁾ Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/european-statistics-code-of-practice>

⁽²⁾ Most of the introductory texts shortly explaining each quality component are taken from the 'ESS handbook for Quality Reports', available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-GQ-15-003>

⁽³⁾ Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-statistical-reports/-/KS-FT-19-008>

2

Overview of designs and methods of the EU-LFS in 2018

2.1 Coverage

This document covers all the thirty-five countries (participating countries) providing Eurostat with quarterly micro-data from their labour force surveys in 2018: the 28 Member States of the European Union, three EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) and four candidate countries, i.e. Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. All the territories of participating countries are covered, except for Cyprus which only covers the areas under the control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus. Since 2014, also the French overseas departments are covered (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyane, La Réunion), with the exception of Mayotte ⁽⁴⁾.

The EU-LFS covers persons in private households. However, in several countries also members of collective households are sampled, either directly (register based sampling frames) or indirectly through their relationship with the sampled household.

The population interviewed about the employment status is 15 years and more for all participating countries, with the exception of Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom (which interview people aged 16 and more) as well as Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Finland, Sweden and Norway (people aged 15-74), Iceland (people aged 16-74) and the North Macedonia (people aged 15-79).

2.2 Legal basis

The EU-LFS is based on European legislation since 1973. The principal legal act is the Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98. The regulations are an important element assuring the quality of the EU-LFS. They stipulate rules and guidelines to assure the comparability of the results by regulating the survey designs, the survey characteristics and the methodology of the EU-LFS. A detailed overview of the EU-LFS regulations is published in Statistics Explained at 'EU-LFS – main features and legal basis' ⁽⁵⁾.

In addition to European regulations, many participating countries have their own national legislation for the conduct of a labour force survey. Detailed information on the national laws or regulations is not collected for this report.

⁽⁴⁾ Until 2014 the French overseas departments (Département d'outre-mer – DOM) only had a partial coverage over time, as data collection only referred to quarter 2. In Mayotte this is still the case and 2018 data for this department is still not included in the standard French datasets. Data from Mayotte are nevertheless included in the regional tables.

⁽⁵⁾ See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/EU_labour_force_survey_%E2%80%93_main_features_and_legal_basis

The participation in the EU-LFS is compulsory in fourteen participating countries (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Slovakia, Norway and Turkey) and voluntary in the other countries.

2.3 Reference period

The EU-LFS is designed as a continuous quarterly survey with interviews spread uniformly over all weeks of a quarter. Each reference week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday. The first week of a year or quarter is defined as the week that includes the first Thursday of the year or the quarter. All countries conduct the EU-LFS as a continuous survey.

All participating countries in the EU-LFS produce quarterly and annual estimates ⁽⁶⁾.

2.4 Sampling designs

The sampling designs applied in the EU-LFS are very varied. Most NSIs use some kind of multi-staged stratified random sample design, especially those that do not have central population registers available.

Bases used for the sample

Population registers and the latest population census or list of addresses used in that census are the two main sources for the sampling frame; other sources include registers of dwellings or lists of addresses from, e.g., the postal authorities or utility databases. Belgium, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Austria, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland use the population registers as the sole basis while the Netherlands complete this information with postal data, Denmark and Latvia with other registers, Estonia, Spain and Malta with census information. Germany grounds the sample frame on the 2011 census integrated with information from the register of new dwellings. France uses the tax register for Metropolitan France and the annual population census for the overseas departments. Poland uses a statistical sampling frame for social surveys based on information coming from administrative sources, regarding persons residing at a given address. In the United Kingdom the survey base is represented by the Royal Mail's PAF (Postcode Address File), a database of all addresses receiving mail, the telephone directories in the far north of Scotland and the Rating and Valuation Lists (which serves for the administration of land taxes) in Northern Ireland.

Sampling stages and primary sampling units (PSU)

Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Iceland and Norway use a single stage sampling or single stage cluster sampling design. All other countries use a two stage sampling design, usually selecting municipalities, administrative districts or census enumeration areas in the first stage.

Final sampling units

Three types of final sampling units are employed: 1) households, 2) dwellings/addresses and 3) persons. Germany and France sample clusters of dwelling units. In samples of dwellings or addresses usually all persons and thus all households, residing within the dwelling/address are interviewed. When persons constitute the primary sampling units, the selected persons either

⁽⁶⁾ Under Regulation (EC) No 577/98 a specific set of variables, referred to as structural variables, need to be surveyed only as annual averages with reference to 52 weeks rather than as quarterly averages (see section 2.8).

constitute the final sample (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Switzerland) or the sampled persons lead to a final sample comprised of the sampling units and their household members (Estonia, Lithuania and Luxembourg).

Overall sampling rate

The theoretical sampling rate (in % of final sampling units), for all participating countries, per quarter of the EU-LFS is 0.40% (EU-28: 0.42%). Malta, Ireland and Iceland (1.7%) have the highest sampling rate per quarter followed by Luxembourg (1.6%), while most other participating countries have sampling rates of 1% or less. On average, the achieved quarterly sample in 2018 in all participating countries is 1.743 million individuals (EU-28: 1.508 million), of which 1.333 million are in the age group 15–74 years (EU-28: 1.152 million). The achieved sample in the EU-LFS is thus approximately 0.29% of the total population.

Stratification

All countries, except Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta and Iceland, stratify the sample frame prior to the sampling. All countries but Denmark use the region, either at NUTS 2, NUTS 3 and NUTS 4 level or nationally defined areas, as stratification variable. The degree of urbanization or the classification in 'urban/rural area' is also a common stratification variable. Other stratification variables concerning information about the characteristics (size, type) of the primary sampling units are also considered in some countries.

2.5 Rotation schemes

All participating countries use a rotating panel design for the samples. The number of panels (waves) ranges from two to eight. All panel designs include an overlap between one quarter and the successive one, except for Germany, which only has a year-to-year overlap. The most common panel design with a quarterly overlap in 2018, adopted by 16 participating countries, is 2-(2)-2, where sampled units are interviewed for two consecutive quarters, then stay out of the sample for the next two quarters and are included again two more times afterwards. Other widespread rotation patterns are in for 5 and in for 6 waves, used respectively in seven and six countries, where each panel is interviewed consecutively for five or six quarters before permanently leaving the sample. Three other rotation schemes are used by one or maximum two countries.

Depending on national priorities with regard to the desired precision of change estimates, levels or annual averages, the number of waves and skip patterns lead to different percentages of overlapping population between two successive quarters or between the same quarters in two successive years. All panel designs, with a quarter-to-quarter overlap, result in an overlap of 50% or more ⁽⁷⁾ of the sample between two successive quarters. There is less emphasis on the overlap between corresponding quarters in two successive years. Seven countries have an overlap of 20% while most other countries have an overlap ranging from 33% to 50%. Germany has 75% overlap with the previous year.

2.6 Calculation of weighting factors

Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 on the EU-LFS stipulates that weighting factors should take into account 'in particular the probability of selection and external data relating to the distribution of the

(7) These percentages are only theoretical; the actual overlaps may be lower due to non-response and panel attrition.

population being surveyed, by sex, age (five-year age groups) and region (NUTS 2 level), where such external data are held to be sufficiently reliable by the Member States concerned' (Article 3(5)).

The methods of calculating the weights differ considerably between countries. Two main methods are used, depending on the detail of the external information and whether or not this external information can be cross-tabulated: 1) post-stratification where the inverse of the selection probabilities are adjusted a posteriori to the population's distribution by sex, age groups and other external (administrative) sources and 2) calibration which consist in different variations of adjusting to marginal totals. Most of the countries adjust for non-response either directly in the weighting process or in a preliminary step before adjusting the weights to external sources.

Due to the complexity and number of factors taken into account in some of the weighting calculations, the requirement of the Regulation to use five-year age groups is not implemented in all countries. Almost all countries adjust the weighting factors to regional levels. These regions may, however, not necessarily correspond to the NUTS 2 regional classification.

All countries use data on sex in the weighting process. Almost all countries use five-year age groups, for people aged between 15 and 74, in calculating the weighting factors: exceptions are Germany, Greece and Slovenia who use broader age groups than the five-year ones ⁽⁶⁾. All countries that have NUTS 2 regions defined use at least NUTS 2 regions for calculating the weights, but twenty-four countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) use a more detailed regional classification (groups of NUTS 3 or LAU⁹).

Denmark, Latvia, the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland use register statistics on employment and/or unemployment in their weighting procedure. In other countries, different external distributions or sources are frequently used both for weighting and stratification, such as urban/rural distinction, nationality, ethnicity and size classes of regions or local areas. Nevertheless, no country directly calibrates a variable determining the International Labour Organization (ILO) labour force status to match non-demographic administrative data. In that respect, the current use of non-demographic administrative data in the production process of the EU-LFS and in particular in the calibration and weighting steps, does not affect the correct survey measurement of the ILO labour force status.

Fourteen countries, namely Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Serbia, gross the sample to the total population, i.e. including people living in institutional households, although some of them do not (Czechia, Ireland and Slovenia) or only partially (Portugal, Romania and Slovakia) cover the institutional population in data collection.

2.7 Data collection methods

The EU-LFS data collection is carried out through mainly four modes: personal visits, telephone interviews, web interviews and self-administered questionnaires.

Most countries conduct the interview only with computerised questionnaires. Seven (Czechia, Germany, Greece, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and North Macedonia) use both computerised and paper questionnaires and three countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro) rely solely on paper questionnaires (PAPI).

⁽⁶⁾ Czechia, Denmark, Spain, Luxembourg, Poland and Turkey use the five-year age groups up to the 60–64 years old.

⁽⁹⁾ Local Administrative Units (LAUs) are the building blocks of the NUTS and comprise the municipalities and the communes of the European Union. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/local-administrative-units>

As described above, all countries interview responding units several times: about half of the countries (Czechia, Estonia, Ireland, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and Serbia) conduct the first interview always or mainly via CAPI while in subsequent waves the interviews are performed by CATI, if a telephone contact is available. Germany collects data mainly with face-to-face interviews (using CAPI); persons not available for the interview or refusing oral interviews are in a few cases interviewed by telephone or more frequently fill in self-administered questionnaires. Belgium, Denmark, Lithuania, Luxembourg and the Netherlands use computer assisted web interviews (CAWI) in combination with other methods. Five countries (Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) rely solely on telephone interviews. Five countries (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Montenegro and Turkey) collect data using only face-to-face interviews.

Table 2.1 reports the distribution of EU-LFS interviews by technique used for data collection. CATI remains the predominant data collection mode with 46.7% of interviews in 2018.

Table 2.1: EU-LFS interviews by mode of data collection, 2016 – 2018 ⁽¹⁾
(% of interviews)

Data collection technique	2018 ⁽²⁾	2017	2016 ⁽³⁾
CAPI	35.3	35.1	40.0
CATI	46.7	46.8	43.6
PAPI	10.9	11.2	10.5
CAWI	3.4	3.2	2.4
Other (Postal, self-administered)	3.7	3.7	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

⁽¹⁾ Data for Lithuania is not available.

⁽²⁾ Data for Germany, Iceland and North Macedonia are based on 2017 estimation.

⁽³⁾ Data for Luxembourg is not available in 2016.

2.8 Use of subsamples to survey structural variables

In 2018, twelve countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Spain, France, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Finland, the United Kingdom, Norway and Switzerland) use a subsample to survey all or some of the thirty-nine structural variables, taking advantage of this option offered by Regulation (EC) No 2257/2003. The subsample coincides with one rotation panel in the total sample, except for Luxembourg and Norway, which use both the first and the last survey waves and Switzerland, which uses the first and the third wave.

Regulation (EC) No 377/2008 stipulates that the estimates produced from the yearly subsample should be consistent with those obtained as annual averages of the full quarterly samples, at least as regards the ILO labour force status broken down by sex and 10-year age groups. This requirement aims at ensuring the consistency of the main indicators (e.g. the employment or the unemployment rates) and their breakdowns produced from the two different databases.

3

Relevance

3.1 Definition

Relevance is an attribute of statistics measuring the degree to which statistical information meets current and potential needs of the users.

It depends on whether all statistics, that are needed, are produced and the extent to which concepts used (definitions, classifications, etc.) reflect user needs. It can be assessed by analysing the different users, who they are, what needs they have, whether they are satisfied, etc.

Most EU statistics are compiled according to regulations containing a defined list of variables, which reflect in particular the most relevant institutional users' needs. If certain variables required by the regulation are not covered, the statistics are incomplete. Hence, lack of completeness affects the relevance of the statistics provided.

3.2 The users

Eurostat does not carry out regular satisfaction surveys targeted only at users of labour market statistics but a general Eurostat User Satisfaction Survey is carried out every year to collect feedback on the quality of its statistics ⁽¹⁰⁾. The survey is usually addressed to the registered Eurostat users who are mainly students, academic, private users, business government and international organisations. According to the results of the 2019 User Satisfaction Survey, 60.6% of the users express a "very good or good" judgement of the statistics on Labour market provided by Eurostat.

In 2011, Eurostat carried out an EU-LFS Rolling Review through its Quality Assurance Framework which included a user survey. Most users stressed the importance of the EU-LFS results. The results were acknowledged as essential both for the European Commission and its agencies and for international organisations. The EU-LFS data are equally important or even essential for users from universities, research institutes and businesses. Moreover in 2018 the EU-LFS was subject of an assessment by the European Commission concerning its relevance in supporting European Union policies ⁽¹¹⁾.

For major topics of interest not covered by the standard EU-LFS, the instrument of ad hoc modules has proven to be useful and flexible.

⁽¹⁰⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/general-evaluation-results>

⁽¹¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/c/portal/layout?p_l_id=64257&p_v_l_s_g_id=0

Some users seek for more timely data releases, at least for few main indicators. The availability of a release calendar for the main indicators produced by the EU-LFS, even with conservative delays, has been favourably received by users.

3.3 Completeness

All Member States of the EU provide quarterly and annual results.

Although adhering to the EU-regulations on the EU-LFS, countries do not always provide data for all the variables. The reason can be for example the (temporary) inability to implement a variable in the national questionnaire or because of insufficient time for testing a required change.

Structural variables may be collected and transmitted for an annual sub-sample only (see section 2.8). Household data is another special case. In line with the provisions of Council Regulation 577/98, Denmark, Luxembourg, Finland and Sweden provide data for complete households only for an annual sub-sample of their normal samples of individuals. Norway only covers family members of working age, but e.g. no children below 15 yet. Iceland does not send any data for households, while Switzerland has a general derogation in that respect.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 below summarize the completeness of data. An analysis of the situation, by country and by variable, is provided in the Annex.

Table 3.1: Completeness of the EU-LFS variables, 2016 - 2018

Number of compulsory variables with 100 % item non-response (1)	Number of participating countries					
	2018 ⁽²⁾	<i>Of which: EU-28 Member States</i>	2017 ⁽³⁾	<i>Of which: EU-28 Member States</i>	2016	<i>Of which: EU-28 Member States</i>
0	17	14	14	14	20	19
1-4	16	13	16	13	10	8
5-9	2	1	4	1	3	1
10+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	35	28	34	28	33	28

(1) The variable INCDECIL is not included. The INCDECIL data may be forwarded to Eurostat within twenty-one months after the end of the reference period.

(2) From 2018 also data for Serbia is available.

(3) From 2017 also data for Montenegro is available.

Table 3.2: Compulsory EU-LFS variables having one or more country returning 100% non-response or constant value ⁽¹⁾, 2018

Column number ⁽²⁾	Brief description	Number of countries	Of which: EU-28
Col_017/18	Nationality	2	0
Col_023	Nature of participation in the survey	1	1
Col_028	Continuing receipt of the wage or salary	6	5
Col_039/40	Country of place of work	3	1
Col_055	Contract with a temporary employment agency	3	2
Col_067/68	Unpaid overtime in the reference week in the main job	1	0
Col_073/74	Number of hours that the person would like to work in total	1	0
Col_094/95	Economic activity of the local unit in which person last worked	1	0
Col_096/98	Occupation of last job	1	0
Col_101	Type of employment sought	1	0
Col_102	Duration of search for employment	1	0
Col_103	Contacted public employment to find work	1	0
Col_104	Contacted private employment agency to find work	2	0
Col_105	Applied to employers directly	1	0
Col_106	Asked friends, relatives, trade unions etc.	2	0
Col_107	Inserted or answered advertisements in newspapers or journals	1	0
Col_108	Studied advertisements in newspapers or journals	2	0
Col_109	Took a test, interview or examination	2	1
Col_110	Looked for land, premises or equipment	12	8
Col_111	Looked for permits, licenses, financial resources	11	7
Col_112	Awaiting the results of an application for a job	4	3
Col_113	Waiting for a call from a public employment office	8	6
Col_114	Awaiting the results of a competition for recruitment to the public sector	17	11
Col_115	Other method used	9	6
Col_117	Availability to start working within two weeks	1	0
Col_118	Reasons for not being available to start working within 2 weeks	1	1
Col_121	Registration at a public employment office	3	2
Col_146	Situation with regard to activity one year before survey	1	1
Col_150/151	Country of residence one year before survey	2	1
Col_152/153	Region of residence (within Member State) one year before survey	6	4
Col_168	Degree of urbanisation	2	0
Col_209	Level of this education or training	1	0
Col_210	Orientation of education	1	0

(¹) Excluding variables which are constant by default such as country, reference year, region (if NUTS 2 is the whole country). The variable INCDECIL is not included. The INCDECIL data may be forwarded to Eurostat within twenty-one months after the end of the reference period.

(²) According to Commission Regulation (EC) No 377/2008.

4 Accuracy

4.1 Definition

The accuracy of statistical outputs in the general statistical sense is the degree of closeness of computations or estimates to the exact or true values that the statistics were intended to measure.

Statistics can be different from the true values because of random variability (the statistics change from one to another implementation of the survey due to random effects) and/or bias (the average of possible values of the statistics is different from the true value due to systematic effects).

Several types of error, stemming from all survey processes, contribute to the error of the statistics (their bias and variability). A certain typology of errors is widely adopted in statistics. Sampling errors affect only sample surveys; they are due to the fact that only a subset of the population, usually randomly selected, is surveyed. Non-sampling errors affect sample surveys and complete enumerations alike and comprise: 1. Coverage errors; 2. Measurement errors; 3. Non-response errors; 4. Processing errors.

4.2 Sampling errors

Sampling errors affect only sample surveys and arise because not all units of the frame population are surveyed. The frame is a device that permits access to population units, such as a list of households with addresses. The sampling frame is the reference list(s) from which the sample (e.g. individuals, households, addresses or dwellings) is drawn. Official surveys, like the EU-LFS, use probability sampling. This makes it possible to quantify the sampling errors which can be expressed in terms of confidence intervals. Tables 4.1a and 4.1b provide the estimates and 95% confidence limits for the annual results 2018 reached for seven main indicators. For example, interval 219 726 - 220 342 covers the true value of employed persons at the aggregated EU-28 level with a 95% probability.

Table 4.1a: Confidence limits ⁽¹⁾ for employment variables, annual average 2018

	Number of employed (age group 20-64) (in thousands)	Employment rate as a percentage of the population (age group 20-64) (%)	Number of part-time employed persons (age group 20-64) (in thousands)	Average actual hours of work per week (age group 20-64) ⁽²⁾ (Hrs.)
EU-28	220 034 ±308	73.1 ±0.1	40 755 ±170	37.1 ±0.0
Belgium	4 646 ±25	69.7 ±0.4	1 115 ±20	36.9 ±0.2
Bulgaria	3 055 ±60	72.4 ±1.4	55 ± 6	40.0 ±0.1
Czechia	5 124 ±26	79.9 ±0.8	317 ±14	39.3 ±0.1
Denmark	2 601 ± 9	77.5 ±0.3	537 ±10	35.7 ±0.1
Germany	39 551 ±101	79.9 ±0.1	10 610 ±62	35.7 ±0.1
Estonia	622 ±10	79.5 ±0.8	66 ± 5	38.5 ±0.3
Ireland	2 120 ±12	74.1 ±0.4	384 ± 8	37.1 ±0.1
Greece	3 737 ±67	59.5 ±0.6	336 ±18	40.9 ±0.2
Spain	19 002 ±104	67.0 ±0.4	2 708 ±55	37.5 ±0.1
France	26 316 ±119	71.3 ±0.3	4 692 ±87	36.6 ±0.1
Croatia	1 610 ±61	65.2 ±0.9	80 ± 9	38.8 ±0.3
Italy	22 480 ±79	63.0 ±0.2	4 112 ±58	36.9 ±0.1
Cyprus	387 ± 5	73.9 ±0.9	41 ± 3	38.4 ±0.3
Latvia	868 ± 5	76.8 ±0.5	61 ± 4	39.2 ±0.2
Lithuania	1 313 ±38	77.8 ±1.1	90 ±10	38.8 ±0.4
Luxembourg	275 ± 7	72.1 ±1.2	48 ± 3	38.0 ±0.4
Hungary	4 383 ±21	74.4 ±0.4	184 ±10	38.3 ±0.1
Malta	229 ± 3	75.5 ±0.9	28 ± 2	38.5 ±0.4
Netherlands	7 949 ±22	79.2 ±0.2	3 719 ±27	33.9 ±0.0
Austria	4 102 ±14	76.2 ±0.3	1 134 ±20	36.0 ±0.1
Poland	16 051 ±79	72.2 ±0.4	1 000 ±39	39.8 ±0.1
Portugal	4 575 ±33	75.4 ±0.5	356 ±18	39.1 ±0.8
Romania	8 294 ±151	69.9 ±0.8	518 ±44	39.4 ±0.2
Slovenia	950 ±13	75.4 ±0.6	86 ± 4	38.9 ±0.2
Slovakia	2 519 ±22	72.4 ±0.6	121 ± 8	38.9 ±0.1
Finland	2 392 ±14	76.3 ±0.4	326 ±10	36.7 ±0.1
Sweden	4 784 ±15	82.6 ±0.3	1 019 ±18	36.8 ±0.1
United Kingdom	30 098 ±77	78.7 ±0.2	7 010 ±65	36.6 ±0.1
Iceland	176 ± 0	86.5 ±0.0	32 ± 0	40.7 ±0.0
Norway	2 489 ± 9	79.2 ±0.3	592 ±12	35.0 ±0.2
Switzerland	4 276 ±16	82.5 ±0.3	1 647 ±21	37.3 ±0.1
Montenegro	227 ± 5	59.8 ±0.9	10 ± 1	43.5 ±0.3
North Macedonia	743 ±27	56.1 ±2.1	25 ± 2	41.9 ±0.4
Serbia	2 667 ±18	63.1 ±0.4	243 ± 9	43.1 ±0.2
Turkey	26395 ±155	55.6 ±0.3	2 508 ±64	45.7 ±0.2

(¹) The confidence limits at 95% level of significance.

(²) By people who worked at least one hour in the reference week. The hours are calculated as the sum of actual hours in the main and second job.

Note: Confidence limits for the EU aggregates are Eurostat's own approximation.

Table 4.1b: Confidence limits ⁽¹⁾ for unemployment variables, annual average, 2018

	Number of unemployed persons (age group 15-74) (in thousands)	Unemployment rate as a percentage of labour force (age group 15-74) (%)	Youth unemployment rate as a percentage of labour force (age group 15-24) (%)
EU-28	16 895 ±132	6.9 ±0.1	15.2 ±0.3
Belgium	301 ±11	6.0 ±0.3	15.8 ±1.5
Bulgaria	173 ±12	5.2 ±0.3	12.7 ±1.9
Czechia	121 ± 8	2.2 ±0.1	6.7 ±0.9
Denmark	153 ± 5	5.1 ±0.2	10.5 ±0.7
Germany	1 468 ±29	3.4 ±0.1	6.2 ±0.3
Estonia	38 ± 3	5.4 ±0.5	11.8 ±2.3
Ireland	137 ± 5	5.7 ±0.2	13.8 ±0.9
Greece	915 ±32	19.3 ±0.6	39.9 ±2.7
Spain	3 479 ±68	15.3 ±0.3	34.3 ±1.3
France	2 702 ±67	9.1 ±0.2	20.8 ±0.9
Croatia	152 ±12	8.4 ±0.6	23.7 ±3.0
Italy	2 755 ±46	10.6 ±0.2	32.2 ±1.0
Cyprus	37 ± 3	8.4 ±0.7	20.2 ±3.6
Latvia	73 ± 4	7.4 ±0.4	12.2 ±1.8
Lithuania	90 ±10	6.2 ±0.7	11.1 ±3.4
Luxembourg	17 ± 2	5.6 ±0.7	14.2 ±3.4
Hungary	172 ± 9	3.7 ±0.2	10.2 ±0.9
Malta	9 ± 1	3.7 ±0.5	9.1 ±1.8
Netherlands	350 ±10	3.8 ±0.1	7.2 ±0.3
Austria	220 ± 9	4.9 ±0.2	9.4 ±0.9
Poland	659 ±30	3.9 ±0.2	11.8 ±1.1
Portugal	366 ±17	7.0 ±0.3	20.3 ±2.2
Romania	380 ±27	4.2 ±0.4	16.2 ±2.1
Slovenia	53 ± 4	5.1 ±0.4	8.8 ±1.5
Slovakia	180 ± 9	6.5 ±0.3	15.0 ±1.7
Finland	202 ± 6	7.4 ±0.2	17.0 ±1.1
Sweden	346 ± 8	6.4 ±0.1	16.8 ±0.8
United Kingdom	1 347 ±35	4.0 ±0.1	11.3 ±0.5
Iceland	6 ± 0	2.7 ±0.0	6.1 ±0.0
Norway	106 ± 5	3.8 ±0.2	9.7 ±0.7
Switzerland	231 ±10	4.7 ±0.2	8.0 ±0.7
Montenegro	42 ± 2	15.2 ±0.7	29.4 ±3.5
North Macedonia	199 ±13	20.7 ±1.1	45.4 ±3.5
Serbia	412 ±12	12.7 ±0.4	29.7 ±1.8
Turkey	3 512 ±83	10.9 ±0.2	20.2 ±0.7

(¹) The confidence limits at 95% level of significance.

Note: Confidence limits for the EU aggregates are Eurostat's own approximation.

4.3 Non-sampling errors

Coverage errors

Coverage errors (or frame errors) are due to divergences between the target population and the frame population.

Table 4.2: Frame quality, coverage rates and methodological notes, 2018

	Under-coverage	Over-coverage	Misclassification
Belgium	X	N	N
Bulgaria	-	X	-
Czechia	-	N	-
Denmark	N	N	N
Germany	-	-	-
Estonia	X	N	N
Ireland	N	N	N
Greece	X	X	-
Spain	X	X	N
France	X	N	N
Croatia	X	X	N
Italy	X	X	X
Cyprus	X	N	-
Latvia	N	X	N
Lithuania	-	X	-
Luxembourg	X	X	-
Hungary	X	X	-
Malta	X	X	N
Netherlands	-	-	-
Austria	X	N	N
Poland	X	X	-
Portugal	-	X	-
Romania	X	X	-
Slovenia	N	X	N
Slovakia	X	X	N
Finland	N	X	-
Sweden	X	X	-
United Kingdom	X	-	-
Iceland	N	N	N
Norway	X	N	X
Switzerland	N	N	N
Montenegro	-	X	-
North Macedonia	N	X	N
Serbia	-	X	-
Turkey	-	X	-

Notes: (X) indicates the presence of the coverage error.

(N) indicates no coverage error or negligible.

(-) indicates that information has not been provided by the country or that the country does not know.

Possible divergence types are:

- Under-coverage: the frame population does not include all units of the target population.
- Over-coverage: the frame population includes units which do not belong to the target population.
- Misclassification: units in the frame population which belong to the target population but are wrongly classified.

Table 4.2 summarises the information on coverage errors given by the participating countries. For more details see Table 10.1 in the Annex.

Measurement errors

Measurement errors are errors that occur during data collection and cause recorded values of variables to be different from the true ones.

Their causes are commonly categorised as:

- Survey instrument: the form, questionnaire or measuring device used for data collection may lead to the recording of wrong values.
- Respondent: respondents may, consciously or unconsciously, give erroneous information.
- Interviewer: interviewers may influence the answers given by respondents.
- Measurement errors may cause both bias and extra variability of statistical outputs.

One part of the respondent measurement error can be represented by the level of proxy interviews which are interviews where a person (the proxy) answers questions on behalf of another person. The proxy is generally a household member of the person from whom information is being sought. Table 4.3 shows the reported information related to measurement errors as the number of proxy interviews and their evolution in the recent years. The proxy rate for EU-28 slightly increased to 33.3% in 2018 after a rise in 2017 (33.0%), compared to a quite stable trend over the previous years. However, large differences can be observed among countries: the proxy rate decreased in 2018 in 17 countries with respect to 2017.

In 2018, the proxy rate exceeded 50% in six countries (Spain, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, North Macedonia and Serbia) while in six further countries it was higher than 40%. On the other hand, in five countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Switzerland) the proxy rate was under 10%; in all of these countries, the sampling unit is the individual and the need to directly contact the selected person in the sample leads to a lower proxy rate.

Table 4.4 shows the main methods adopted by the countries to reduce the measurement error. Almost all countries provide training to the interviewers on the contents and possible changes of the survey compared to previous round (33 countries) and send an introduction letter for the survey in advance to the sampled units (33 countries). Less widespread but still used by half of the countries are phone calls for booking or introducing the survey (15 countries) or monitoring directly the survey by listening to the interviews (19 countries).

For a detailed picture by country, see Table 10.2 in the Annex.

Table 4.3: Share of proxy interviews (people aged 15-74), 2014 - 2018

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
EU-28	33.3	33.0	29.8	30.0	30.2
Belgium	27.0	25.7	17.8	17.8	19.0
Bulgaria	30.0	28.3	33.0	33.8	33.7
Czechia	43.0	43.2	42.3	44.1	44.6
Denmark	6.7	6.4	5.0	5.8	4.8
Germany	23.2	25.1	23.9	25.6	26.0
Estonia	16.3	36.1	36.8	35.7	36.4
Ireland	46.8	48.7	50.2	50.3	50.5
Greece	39.6	40.4	41.1	41.2	41.4
Spain ⁽¹⁾	51.0	51.5	51.8	52.2	52.5
France	27.1	27.3	26.6	27.9	27.8
Croatia	51.5	51.7	52.3	48.0	46.3
Italy	33.1	26.7	20.3	19.0	18.0
Cyprus	38.1	35.9	34.5	33.6	32.5
Latvia	38.1	38.4	39.7	39.4	37.9
Lithuania	36.1	33.0	35.8	34.5	34.5
Luxembourg	26.4	34.0	41.8	23.3	39.8
Hungary	41.6	42.2	42.6	42.7	44.0
Malta	47.4	47.4	48.3	49.2	49.8
Netherlands	45.0	45.4	45.5	46.2	46.5
Austria	27.9	24.4	24.3	23.2	25.2
Poland	36.5	37.6	37.2	37.8	40.0
Portugal	48.2	48.1	48.3	47.9	47.7
Romania	19.4	20.8	22.2	24.6	25.8
Slovenia	54.2	53.3	49.7	53.4	55.6
Slovakia	51.1	51.6	51.1	50.4	49.8
Finland	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.1
Sweden	2.8	2.6	3.1	2.7	2.6
United Kingdom ⁽¹⁾	35.2	35.2	34.9	35.0	35.5
Iceland ⁽¹⁾	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.3
Norway	17.3	17.0	17.2	16.5	16.7
Switzerland	2.7	2.8	3.0	2.7	1.9
Montenegro ⁽²⁾	39.4	39.0	-	-	-
North Macedonia	53.8	52.8	50.8	54.2	54.5
Serbia⁽³⁾	53.1	-	-	-	-
Turkey	10.3	9.6	11.6	13.9	20.9

⁽¹⁾ Respondents aged 16–74 years.

⁽²⁾ Information for Montenegro before 2017 is not available.

⁽³⁾ Information for Serbia before 2018 is not available.

Table 4.4: Methods used for reducing measurement errors, 2018

Methods	Number of participating countries	
	2018	Of which: EU-28 Member States
Respondent		
Letter introducing the survey	33	27
Phone call for booking or introducing the survey	15	14
Interviewer		
Periodical training (at least one time per year)	33	27
Feedbacks from the interviewer (reports, debriefings, etc.)	31	25
Fieldwork		
Monitoring directly contacting the respondents	24	20
Monitoring directly listening interviews	19	16
Monitoring remotely by indicators	23	20
Questionnaire		
Questionnaire in different languages	21	20
On-line checks ⁽¹⁾	31	26

(¹) In Bulgaria, Romania and Montenegro this item is not foreseen due to the only use of the PAPI data collection technique.

Non-response errors

Non-response errors occur when the survey fails to get a response to one, or possibly all, of the questions.

The term encompasses a wide variety of reasons for non-collection of data: impossible to contact, not at home, unable to answer, incapacity, refusal, inaccessible, unreturned questionnaire, etc. Non-response could lead to a reduction in the actual size of the sample and consequently to an increase in variance. This also produces a bias if the non-respondents have different characteristics from the respondents for the survey variables.

There are two types of non-response:

- unit non-response which occurs when no data are collected about a population unit designated for data collection;
- item non-response which occurs when data only on some but not all the survey variables are collected about a designated population unit.

This section only covers the issue of unit non-response while item non-response is presented variable by variable in the Annex (Table 10.3).

Table 4.5 shows unit non-response rates, but they are not fully comparable across countries. Most of them calculate non-response on the basis of the household unit, except for Denmark, Estonia, Luxembourg, Malta, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, which compute non-response at the level of individuals. In the last five years, the EU-LFS has been affected by a slight increase of the unit non-response rate; in 2018 non-response rate increased in 22 countries compared to 2017.

Table 4.5: Unit non-response rates, 2014 - 2018

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Belgium	19.0	17.4	28.4	26.7	27.8
Bulgaria	20.0	19.7	20.3	22.2	23.7
Czechia	22.4	21.2	20.2	20.5	20.6
Denmark	43.0	45.0	52.0	47.0	46.2
Germany	3.4	3.8	2.6	3.4	2.3
Estonia	28.1	33.2	30.2	28.1	31.3
Ireland	36.7	32.2	27.3	25.1	23.9
Greece	26.8	25.4	25.5	25.9	24.6
Spain	15.6	13.1	12.6	12.4	15.2
France	20.3	20.4	19.3	20.3	20.9
Croatia	42.4	44.5	38.6	30.3	31.3
Italy	14.4	14.9	13.3	12.5	11.8
Cyprus	4.3	3.8	4.3	5.4	4.2
Latvia	34.8	35.4	38.0	37.9	35.7
Lithuania	21.6	22.3	21.3	20.3	19.6
Luxembourg	44.4	41.7	47.5	48.0	84.6
Hungary	24.5	21.5	19.3	17.2	17.2
Malta	27.8	24.8	23.1	23.4	23.7
Netherlands	49.4	48.4	47.0	45.5	42.7
Austria	7.1	3.4	5.3	7.8	5.7
Poland	42.2	38.7	37.6	34.9	31.5
Portugal	16.4	16.1	15.8	15.4	14.8
Romania	12.3	12.7	13.3	12.2	9.5
Slovenia	21.3	20.1	21.4	21.3	21.3
Slovakia	17.6	18.0	15.2	15.2	11.0
Finland	34.5	32.7	30.4	29.2	28.0
Sweden	47.2	43.4	43.0	40.1	35.7
United Kingdom	51.1	50.7	44.6	47.4	39.8
Iceland	-	31.5	26.8	22.7	21.0
Norway	15.7	15.8	18.4	20.3	19.9
Switzerland	20.3	19.7	19.2	18.3	18.8
Montenegro	20.2	16.7	16.6	18.6	-
North Macedonia	11.7	11.9	15.6	25.6	24.6
Serbia	21.5	20.9	20.0	19.8	20.1
Turkey	4.6	4.3	5.3	5.2	9.3

Notes: (-) indicates that information has not been provided by the country.

Table 4.6 presents the non-response rate by main reasons for non-response (refusal, non-contact, other). The main reason for non-response for most countries is the impossibility to contact the sampling unit; in Czechia, Estonia, Croatia, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, the United Kingdom and North Macedonia the main reason is the refusal to reply to the EU-LFS while in Belgium and Greece non-response is mainly due to other reasons.

Table 4.6: Non-response rate (%) by category, 2018

	Total	Refusals	Non-contacts	Other reasons
Belgium	19.0	2.9	7.0	9.1
Bulgaria	20.0	4.1	14.2	1.7
Czechia	22.4	17.7	4.1	0.6
Denmark	43.0	6.0	33.0	4.0
Germany	3.4	-	-	-
Estonia	28.1	15.0	12.2	0.9
Ireland	36.7	8.5	18.7	9.5
Greece	26.8	8.4	8.3	10.1
Spain	15.6	6.5	9.0	0.1
France	20.3	3.9	14.8	1.6
Croatia	42.4	21.7	16.4	4.3
Italy	14.4	4.3	9.2	0.9
Cyprus	4.3	1.8	1.8	0.7
Latvia	34.8	11.2	22.1	1.6
Lithuania	21.6	6.7	14.5	0.3
Luxembourg	44.4	2.9	33.9	7.7
Hungary	24.5	9.0	13.4	2.1
Malta	27.8	1.9	26.0	0.0
Netherlands	49.4	35.7	10.7	3.0
Austria	7.1	1.2	1.6	4.3
Poland	42.2	21.3	19.5	1.4
Portugal	16.4	2.6	9.5	4.3
Romania	12.3	2.8	5.9	3.7
Slovenia	21.3	11.9	3.3	6.1
Slovakia	17.6	15.4	0.1	2.2
Finland	34.5	20.1	14.0	0.4
Sweden	47.2	15.1	30.7	1.3
United Kingdom	51.1	42.4	8.7	0.0
Iceland	-	-	-	-
Norway	15.7	1.0	13.7	1.0
Switzerland	20.3	2.5	10.9	7.0
Montenegro	20.2	5.9	11.4	2.9
North Macedonia	11.7	4.4	2.9	4.4
Serbia	21.5	5.8	15.4	0.3
Turkey	4.6	0.1	3.7	0.8

Notes: (-) indicates that information has not been provided by the country.

Processing errors

Between data collection and the beginning of statistical analysis for the production of statistics, data must undergo a certain processing: coding, data entry, data editing, imputation, etc. Errors introduced at these stages are called processing errors.

According to national quality report information, 19 countries adopt editing and correction procedures to EU-LFS data. These countries are Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, the United Kingdom, Montenegro and the North Macedonia.

In their national quality report, 15 countries also mention to use item non-response data imputation: Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, the United Kingdom and Montenegro. Imputation is mainly used for the INCDECIL variable and in some countries for variables related to job characteristics or education.

No estimates can be produced at Eurostat about the rate of processing errors in the EU-LFS.

5

Timeliness and punctuality

5.1 Definition

Timeliness is the length of time between data availability and the event or phenomenon they describe.

Punctuality is the time lag between the actual delivery of data and the target date on which they were scheduled for release as announced in an official release calendar, laid down by Regulations or previously agreed among partners.

According to Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98 data shall be delivered to Eurostat within twelve weeks from the end of a reference quarter. A release calendar for the EU-LFS main indicators is in place, scheduling the release of the EU-LFS main indicators around four weeks after the data delivery deadline. In addition, Eurostat continuously updates the Eurostat online database (other tables) whenever new data becomes available.

Table 5.1 shows that data are transmitted to Eurostat for most countries in the third month after the end of the quarter. Eurostat hence disseminates most national data in the third month after the end of the quarter as well. Timeliness and punctuality of the transmission to Eurostat and Eurostat's dissemination of national data have slightly improved with the 2018 data compared to the 2017 exercise.

Table 5.1: Transmission to Eurostat and Eurostat's dissemination of EU-LFS data by number of calendar days from the end of the reference period, 2016 - 2018 quarterly EU-LFS data

Number of calendar days from end of reference period	Number of countries					
	2018		2017		2016	
	All	EU-28	All	EU-28	All	EU-28
Transmission to Eurostat						
<31	1	1	1	1	1	1
31-60	11	9	10	8	11	9
61-90	23	18	22	19	21	18
91+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	35	28	33	28	33	28
Average number of calendar days	63	62	63	63	62	63
Eurostat's dissemination of national data (web site)						
<31	0	0	0	0	0	0
31-60	6	5	6	5	5	3
61-90	27	23	25	22	27	24
91+	2	0	2	1	1	1
Total	35	28	33	28	33	28
Average number of calendar days	76	74	77	75	73	74

6

Comparability

6.1 Definition

Comparability is a measurement of the impact of differences in applied statistical concepts, measurement tools and procedures where statistics are compared between geographical areas or over time.

6.2 Comparability over space

A common framework regulation ⁽¹²⁾, common variable definitions ⁽¹³⁾, common explanatory notes ⁽¹⁴⁾ and a common regulation regarding the definition of unemployment and the twelve principles of questionnaire construction ⁽¹⁵⁾ serve to ensure comparability of the statistics between the participating countries. This is, however, mainly true for the main characteristics of employment and unemployment, where particular definitions and sequences of questions are part of the EU legislation. For the other variables, each country has the responsibility to ensure that the national survey provides data compatible with the EU definitions and of the same quality as for the core variables.

As most of the variables are defined in accordance with recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other international organizations, the main statistics from the EU-LFS are directly comparable to those of other industrialised countries, especially those of the other members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In Table 6.1 the main divergences of national concepts from the European framework are reported.

Table 6.1: Divergence of national concepts from European concepts, 2018

Divergences in definition of resident population	
Belgium	The Registered population definition in the sampling frame is used. At the beginning of the interview, the interviewer checks with the respondent(s) whether the list of household members as taken from the sampling frame corresponds to the actual situation. Interviewers are instructed to drop household members that no longer live at the given address since at least 6 months (but in practice they sometimes drop household members earlier) and also add new members in the household if any.

⁽¹²⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 577/98.

⁽¹³⁾ Commission Regulation (EC) No 377/2008.

⁽¹⁴⁾ EU Labour Force Survey Explanatory Notes, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/EU_labour_force_survey_-_methodology

⁽¹⁵⁾ Commission Regulation (EC) No 1897/2000.

Denmark	The definition of the resident population in the Danish LFS is harmonised with the Danish population register. The permanent address is therefore defined as the place where you regularly sleep, when you are not abroad because of holidays, business trips, or the place where you have your belongings. The definition does therefore not explicitly include the minimum of 1 year, as stated in the Explanatory notes. This solution complies with art. 2(d) of EP and Council Regulation (EC) No 763/2008.
Austria	Prospective information (intention to stay at least one year) is not available
Sweden	To belong to the Swedish resident population the residence permit is needed. This means that some immigrants group, i.e. persons with citizenship outside the EU, don't belong to the population even if they are staying or intended to stay in the country for a period longer than one year. These people cannot work or seek job by defaults and they don't exist in the populations register and thereby neither in the sample frame.
United Kingdom	Persons resident in NHS/Health Trust accommodation and students in institutions are included in national survey results.
Norway	In the Norwegian register definition a person is resident if he/she is staying or intends to stay 6 months or more in Norway.
Divergences in concept of employment	
Germany	The category "lay-off" is not implemented in WSTATOR, because there are no lay-offs in Germany.
Croatia	The persons on sick leave, maternity or paternity leave, paid parental leave are always considered as employed, regardless of the length of the absence.
Hungary	According to the ILO recommendation drafted for countries in transition in Prague in November 1995, persons receiving child care allowance or child care benefit during parental leave have been classified since 1998 on the basis of their activity performed in the reference week. Therefore these persons are not classified as persons with a job from which he/she was absent during the reference week, if they are not working besides receiving childcare allowance or benefit. Questions about how long they have been out of his/her main job are skipped for these persons. In case of persons older than 74 'other' category (WSTATOR=5) cannot be used because we do not know whether they have a job or not.
Portugal	Persons who work on their own small agriculture farms and produce only for their own consumption are considered as employed if the output is considered important (by the household) for the household budget. Persons on compensation leave, sick leave, maternity or paternity leave, paid parental leave are always considered to be employed, regardless of the length of the absence.
Turkey	Three months absence criterion defined by Eurostat is not followed for unpaid family workers; they are not covered as employed if they did not work in the reference week even one hour. Farmers who only produce for own-consumption are considered as employed if the amount of this production is considerable within total household consumption (if the total amount of this product is at least 51% of total food expenditure).
Divergences in concept of unemployment	
Belgium	In Belgium, unemployment rate is calculated for persons aged 15-64 and not 15-74.
Slovenia	There is a divergence in the unemployment concept. Nevertheless, the figures can be calculated in both ways (national and Eurostat approach). In general, the unemployment rate calculated by Eurostat and by the Slovenian statistical office differs for max. 0.1%.
United Kingdom	All those waiting to start a job already obtained are counted as ILO unemployed. The restriction of job starting within a period of three months is not applied to national estimates. All job search methods counted including passive methods. Differences are not large.
Turkey	For national calculation of unemployment, passive job search methods are covered besides the active ones.

6.3 Comparability over time

For a detailed overview of the availability of quarterly EU-LFS microdata and the uniform spreading of the sample over the whole year, please consult: [EU Labour Force Survey EU — Methodology \(Statistics Explained\)](#).

Every year, a certain number of changes are introduced in some national LFSs, to take into account changes introduced at European level, to better align the national surveys to the already existing EU regulations or methodological guidelines, or to take into consideration national needs. These changes can concern the conceptual level (i.e. concepts and definitions used by the EU-LFS, the survey coverage and the geographical boundaries, the target population, the legislation, the classifications used) or the measurement level (i.e. the sampling strategy, the data collection and the weighting scheme).

Table 6.2 reports changes to the national labour force surveys introduced in 2018 by the participating countries. Such changes may introduce some discontinuity in the time series.

Table 6.2: Changes in LFS in 2018 compared to previous year(s)

Changes to survey concepts (legislation, definitions, coverage and classifications)	
Ireland	The amended NUTS 3 region groupings came into force from Q1 2018. Variables not included in back-casting exercise are flagged. LFS data was amended to reflect the changes from Q1 2012 to Q4 2017. https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/revnuts23/ https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/in/lfs/informationnotice-labourforcesurveyquarter12018/
Poland	Due to entry into force, starting from 1st January 2018, the revision of Classification of Territorial Units for Statistics – NUTS 2016 – the LFS data from the first quarter 2018 are presented taking into account the new statistical division of Poland. The new statistical division introduces changes at all levels of classification.
Changes to sampling strategy (sampling frame, sample design, rotational pattern)	
Estonia	The quarterly sample size is increased to 4500 households.
Montenegro	New rotational scheme 2-(2)-2 introduced in 2017 and fully implemented in 2018. In process of analyses and calculation of the impact of the changes.
Changes to data collection (questionnaire, national explanatory notes, survey mode)	
France	End of the supplementary non-response survey.
Latvia	CAWI introduced for 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th interviews in combination with CATI and CAPI.
Poland	Changes in questions used to record people who are in non-formal education in last 4 weeks - the formulation and the way of asking questions on that topic has been changed, also reminders have been added in order to better cover the participation in non-formal education.
Romania	In the 4 th quarter of 2018, for a small sample data were collected via CAPI mode. The main purpose of this exercise was to test CAPI questionnaire and organisation. No impact was observed.
Austria	New data collection tool, called “Statsurv”, from an internal development.
Changes to weighting scheme	
Czechia	Add age group 65-69.
Ireland	All variables as NUTS 3 regions are used in the weighting of the data.
Malta	The weighting methodology was changed to give more precise estimates for foreigners. Time series and the mains indicators were revised backward till 2012.

Sweden	Weights have been revised for the period from July 2018 to September 2019, which consists of using only half of the sample, following the detection of quality deficiencies. As the resulting statistics are based on half of the sample, this increases the uncertainty.
Norway	A new model-calibration method is used for the non-response treatment. More information are available here : https://www.ssb.no/en/arbeid-og-lonn/artikler-og-publikasjoner/new-estimation-methodology-for-the-norwegian-labour-force-survey .

7

Coherence

7.1 Definition

Coherence measures the adequacy of the statistics to be combined in different ways and for various uses.

The coherence of two or more statistical outputs refers to the degree to which the statistical processes by which they were generated used the same concepts — classifications, definitions and target populations — and harmonised methods. Coherent statistical outputs have the potential to be validly combined and used jointly. It is, however, generally easier to show cases of incoherence than to prove coherence.

The following sections assess coherence with similar data from other sources, the population statistics and the employment data from National Accounts and Structural Business Statistics. Other comparisons are possible as well, such as with employment data from the Labour Cost Survey.

7.2 Coherence with population statistics

The coherence with population statistics is of importance for the users, as often the most recent population estimates are available from the EU-LFS statistics. These two statistics are, however, not fully comparable.

Differences that need to be considered are:

- EU-LFS statistics usually cover the population in private households, while population statistics cover the whole population, including those living in collective households (e.g. conscripts).
- Sometimes the rules for defining the usual resident population in the EU-LFS differ from the rules in population statistics.
- Population statistics usually refer to particular dates, e.g. 1st January or mid-year for population level and characteristics. The EU-LFS statistics generally refer to the average quarterly or annual situation.

Most of the participating countries carried out a population census in the 2011 round. New censuses often result in new weights, new sample frames or new sample designs. By 2014 all of the participating countries had revised the weights to reflect new population estimates, including re-weighting of back data series at least back to 2010. Table 7.1 shows the comparison between population statistics and EU-LFS for people aged 15-64 years.

Table 7.1: Coherence between population statistics and EU-LFS for persons aged 15-64, 2018

	Population 15-64 (in thousands)			LFS annual average 15-64 (in thousands)			Relative difference [(L-P)/P*100]		
	01/01/2018			2018			Total	Men	Women
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women			
EU-28	331 526	166 052	165 474	327 258	163 517	163 741	-1.3	-1.5	-1.0
Belgium	7 334	3 691	3 643	7 289	3 659	3 630	-0.6	-0.9	-0.4
Bulgaria	4 564	2 310	2 254	4 531	2 289	2 242	-0.7	-0.9	-0.5
Czechia	6 899	3 509	3 390	6 879	3 500	3 379	-0.3	-0.2	-0.3
Denmark	3 705	1 871	1 833	3 695	1 867	1 829	-0.2	-0.3	-0.2
Germany	53 911	27 376	26 534	53 524	27 125	26 399	-0.7	-0.9	-0.5
Estonia	846	422	424	843	420	423	-0.3	-0.6	-0.1
Ireland	3 155	1 564	1 591	3 176	1 575	1 601	0.6	0.6	0.7
Greece	6 854	3 377	3 477	6 831	3 381	3 449	-0.3	0.1	-0.8
Spain	30 720	15 405	15 315	30 671	15 339	15 332	-0.2	-0.4	0.1
France	41 655	20 523	21 132	40 924	20 056	20 868	-1.8	-2.3	-1.2
Croatia	2 686	1 343	1 343	2 689	1 345	1 344	0.1	0.1	0.1
Italy	38 759	19 354	19 405	38 588	19 232	19 356	-0.4	-0.6	-0.3
Cyprus	587	286	300	568	275	294	-3.2	-4.1	-2.3
Latvia	1 240	604	636	1 216	591	626	-1.9	-2.3	-1.6
Lithuania	1 836	895	940	1 828	893	935	-0.4	-0.3	-0.5
Luxembourg	419	214	205	415	211	204	-0.9	-1.3	-0.5
Hungary	6 504	3 242	3 263	6 370	3 161	3 208	-2.1	-2.5	-1.7
Malta	320	166	154	326	170	156	1.8	2.3	1.3
Netherlands	11 179	5 622	5 557	11 070	5 546	5 523	-1.0	-1.3	-0.6
Austria	5 902	2 972	2 930	5 809	2 903	2 906	-1.6	-2.4	-0.8
Poland	25 693	12 849	12 843	23 941	11 964	11 977	-6.8	-6.9	-6.7
Portugal	6 654	3 216	3 438	6 623	3 200	3 423	-0.5	-0.5	-0.4
Romania	12 928	6 551	6 377	12 930	6 546	6 385	0.0	-0.1	0.1
Slovenia	1 355	698	657	1 352	696	656	-0.2	-0.3	-0.1
Slovakia	3 749	1 889	1 860	3 749	1 889	1 860	0.0	0.0	0.0
Finland	3 443	1 748	1 695	3 421	1 729	1 692	-0.7	-1.1	-0.2
Sweden	6 319	3 230	3 089	6 347	3 245	3 102	0.4	0.4	0.4
United Kingdom	42 310	21 120	21 190	41 656	20 714	20 943	-1.5	-1.9	-1.2
Iceland	232	120	112	221	114	106	-5.0	-4.7	-5.2
Norway	3 460	1 773	1 687	3 458	1 771	1 688	-0.1	-0.1	0.0
Switzerland	5 665	2 866	2 799	5 604	2 830	2 774	-1.1	-1.2	-0.9
Montenegro	418	210	208	422	212	211	1.1	0.9	1.3
North Macedonia	1 450	736	713	1 446	735	712	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
Serbia	4 602	2 297	2 305	4 564	2 278	2 286	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8
Turkey	54 882	27 733	27 149	53 644	26 923	26 721	-2.3	-2.9	-1.6

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [demo_pjan](#) and [lfsa_pjanws](#)), extracted in December 2019.

7.3 Coherence with other employment and unemployment estimates

Coherence of employment for EU-LFS and Business Statistics

Business statistics, whether Structural Business Statistics (SBS) or Short-term Business Statistics (STS), are focused on production-related variables like output, turnover or value added, but they also produce some estimates of employment. These estimates may be and frequently are different from EU-LFS results. The main reasons for the differences are:

- Different scope: business surveys gather information on production units operating in the territory whereas EU-LFS gathers information on people living in the country. Cross-border workers or seasonal workers are correspondingly recorded in different countries.
- Different coverage: the EU-LFS usually does not collect information for people living in collective households (Business Statistics do not exclude the information). The EU-LFS covers all economic activities and all firm sizes, whereas Business Statistics typically do not gather information on agriculture, government or some service activities. In addition, business registers used to compile Business Statistics may not include small enterprises below a certain threshold or may leave out employment not included in the payroll or in the accounting books such as family workers.
- Different units: business surveys estimate the number of jobs whereas EU-LFS counts jobholders. Business surveys rarely have access to jobholders' features like age, gender, etc. for which EU-LFS is the only source.

Coherence of employment for EU-LFS and National Accounts

Key concepts used in National Accounts, such as domestic employment, have no correspondence in the EU-LFS, which uses instead number of persons employed based on residency within the national border (national employment). There are also differences in coverage, with the EU-LFS covering persons living in private households only, while National Accounts cover all persons regardless of their type of residence. In addition, the EU-LFS does not consider conscripts and unpaid trainees as employed whereas these are explicitly or implicitly accounted for in the National Accounts. The reference period for the measurement could also contribute to some differences. The EU-LFS estimates represent the average on all weeks in the year (for annual results) or in the quarter (for quarterly results). National Accounts stock estimates refer to the mid of the year (for annual accounts) or the mid of the quarter (for quarterly accounts).

As expected, the employment estimates based on EU-LFS data usually lie somewhat below the estimates of employment as estimated by National Accounts. This results from table 7.2, where the data are grouped on the basis of the importance of the EU-LFS in the production of the National accounts data. National Accounts estimates on employment are in general higher, especially in countries with a considerable percentage of irregular economy.

Apart from the coverage, measurement and conceptual differences mentioned above only account for a relatively small part of the difference between the two estimates. As a rule of thumb, relative differences higher than 1.5% need to be explained by other reasons. This would concern eighteen participating countries as shown in table 7.2. Germany, France and Italy are responsible for the bulk

of the absolute EU difference between the National Accounts employment estimates and the EU-LFS employment estimates, while in relative terms Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, Cyprus and France show the highest discrepancies, with a difference of more than 5% ⁽¹⁶⁾.

When comparing data from EU-LFS and National Accounts, users are also interested in whether the two sources show the same trend or not. Table 7.2 also compares the data on employment growth in 2018. The results show that both sources are broadly comparable as regards the direction of the employment growth for the EU-28 and that the differences mostly lie in the size of the growth figures.

The reasons for the disparities, either in levels or in the direction of the employment growth, are not fully known. In general, the actual sources of incoherence are quite diverse across countries. The issue of incoherence between the EU-LFS and National Accounts employment estimates has been addressed by a Eurostat-coordinated Task Force on the Quality of the Labour Force Survey ⁽¹⁷⁾. By the use of reconciliation tables, a range of potential sources of incoherence on the EU-LFS side was identified, either related to a biased measurement of specific areas of employment, such as marginal employment, employment in hidden/undeclared labour activities, employment in private households, illegal immigrants, or emerging from data collection, as in the case of non-response and proxy interviews.

National Accounts combine data from all available data sources in the country. This method allows better coverage of the non-observed economy. For this reason, National Accounts estimates are frequently higher than EU-LFS employment estimates. In addition, it can be pointed out that EU-LFS estimates are subject to sampling error, both with regard to levels and changes between periods (cf. Tables 4.1a and 4.1b). When changes between periods are small, this may result in diverging trends between National Accounts and EU-LFS figures, just because for the EU-LFS the changes are within the margin of error. As regards National Accounts, some indicative reasons for incoherence can be mentioned: National Accounts may use sources different than EU-LFS (or EU-LFS combined with other sources) to estimate employment; National Accounts may introduce adjustments to reach consistency between the employment reported by its sources and other related variables, like salaries or production; the National Accounts approach, by comparing and combining different sources, is also more prone than EU-LFS to identify and address underreporting or systematic biases. All in all, National Accounts are judged more suitable to measure employment levels, employment growth and industry breakdowns while EU-LFS is more adequate to measure participation in the labour market (i.e. employment rates, activity rates, etc.), or to analyse the situation of specific socio-economic groups of the population (e.g. by age, gender or educational level).

⁽¹⁶⁾ No data is available for Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

⁽¹⁷⁾ See <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-RA-09-020>

Table 7.2: Employment (national concept) in levels and growth rates, in two different datasets on the Eurostat website (LFS and NA), 2018

	2018 levels				2017–2018 growth rates		
	Labour Force Survey	National Accounts	LFS-NA	(LFS - NA)/NA	Labour Force Survey	National Accounts	LFS-NA
	(in thousands)	(in thousands)	(in thousands)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(p.p.)
1 Countries using EU-LFS as their only source for employment in National Accounts. EU-LFS is only adjusted for conceptual alignment to ESA2010							
Czechia	5 293.8	5 385.0	-91.2	-1.7	1.4	1.1	0.3
Estonia	664.7	666.5	-1.8	-0.3	0.9	0.8	0.1
Croatia	1 655.0	1 664.4	-9.4	-0.6	1.8	1.8	0.0
Latvia	909.4	917.1	-7.7	-0.8	1.6	1.7	-0.1
Romania	8 688.5	8 819.3(p)	-130.8	-1.5	0.2	0.2	0.0
Sweden	5 097.3	5 097.4	-0.1	0.0	1.5	1.5	0.0
2 Countries using mainly EU-LFS, but replacing it in a few industries (or labour status), on a case-by-case basis							
Greece	3 828.0	4 216.7(p)	-388.7	-9.2	2.0	1.7	0.3
Lithuania	1 374.7	1 377.3	-2.6	-0.2	1.5	1.5	0.0
United Kingdom	32 354.1	32 443.0	-88.9	-0.3	1.2	1.2	0.0
3 Countries not using EU-LFS, or making minimal use of it							
Belgium	4 755.2	4 899.6	-144.4	-2.9	2.5	1.4	1.1
Denmark	2 832.3	2 926.0	-93.7	-3.2	1.6	1.4	0.2
France	27 122.2	28 562(p)	-1 439.8	-5.0	0.9	1.0	-0.1
Cyprus	400.9	424.2(p)	-23.3	-5.5	5.6	4.1	1.5
Luxembourg	279.9	265.0	14.9	5.6	3.0	2.8	0.2
Malta	238.5	235.0	3.5	1.5	8.2	5.7	2.5
Austria	4 319.0	4 384.3	-65.3	-1.5	1.4	1.7	-0.3
Slovenia	980.6	1 029.3	-48.7	-4.7	2.2	3.3	-1.1
Iceland	198.3	203.4(p)	-5.1	-2.5	2.3	2.9	-0.6
4 Countries combining sources for labour supply and demand, EU-LFS being one source among others. This group is rather heterogeneous and can be sub-divided as follows:							
4a Countries giving precedence to labour supply sources (i.e. EU-LFS)							
Spain	19 327.7	19 871.8(p)	-544.1	-2.7	2.7	2.2	0.5
Poland	16 484.0	16 484.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.0
Portugal	4 866.7	4 940.4(p)	-73.7	-1.5	2.3	2.3	0.0
4b Countries not giving precedence to any labour side							
Bulgaria	3 152.7	3 521.6(p)	-368.9	-10.5	0.1	-0.1	0.2
Hungary	4 469.5	4 469.5	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.1	0.0
4c Countries giving precedence to labour demand sources (i.e. employment registers and/or enterprise surveys)							
Germany	41 914.5	44 709.0	-2 794.5	-6.3	0.6	1.3	-0.7
Ireland	2 257.5	2 215.7	41.8	1.9	2.9	3.1	-0.2
Italy	23 214.9	24 834.0	-1 619.1	-6.5	0.8	0.9	-0.1
Netherlands	8 798.0	9 196(p)	-398.0	-4.3	2.2	2.3	-0.1
Slovakia	2 566.7	2 566.7	0.0	0.0	1.4	1.4	0.0
Finland	2 539.9	2 629.4	-89.5	-3.4	2.7	2.6	0.1
Norway	2 685.8	2 792.0	-106.2	-3.8	1.6	1.6	0.0
Switzerland	4 675.3	4 675.3	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.8	0.0

Note: (p) indicates that information is provisional.

Source: Eurostat Labour Force Survey, Annual averages (online data code: [lfsa_egan](#)) and Eurostat National Accounts, national concept (online data code: [nama_10_pe](#)), extracted in March 2019.

Coherence of unemployment for EU-LFS and registers

The main coherence issues between unemployment estimated by the EU-LFS and that derived from registers are the different definitions and the different modes of measurement. According to the ILO definition adopted by the EU-LFS, unemployed persons comprise persons aged 15 to 74 who fulfil the three following conditions:

- not employed during the reference week;
- available to start work within the two weeks following the reference week;
- actively seeking work in the four weeks preceding the reference week or have already found a job to start within the next three months.

The definition of register unemployment varies from country to country. In general, the registration as a job seeker at the public employment office is the common basis for being counted in the unemployment register.

The actual sources of incoherence between EU-LFS and register unemployment figures are quite diverse across countries; this may be due to several reasons:

- The EU-LFS excludes from unemployment all individuals who have any kind of job (1-hour criterion), whereas registers can include individuals who have temporary jobs, jobs with less than a certain number of hours, or salaries below a given amount;
- The immediate availability for a job required by EU-LFS is based on self-declarations. On the other hand, registers could exclude individuals who miss periodical meetings or refuse a fair job offer;
- In the EU-LFS, registration at the public employment office in order to find a job is only one of the possible active search actions;
- Persons who are looking for a job but who have not paid any contributions and are not eligible for unemployment benefits may not have any interest in registering for work and consequently do not feature in the registered unemployment figures but may feature in EU-LFS;
- Different reference periods (EU-LFS uses continuous reference week and registers often use a specific day of each month as reference);
- Any delay in updating the registers;
- In some countries unemployed persons, 65 years and older, who are looking for a job, cannot be registered;
- EU-LFS often covers only persons residing in private households while registers cover all persons who fulfil legal criteria to be included in the registers regardless if they live in private or institutional households.
- Persons on lay-off (until 3 months) are not classified as unemployed in the EU-LFS, but as employed persons (temporarily absent from work) while they can be registered at the public employment office as unemployed;
- Figures from registers may not include full-time students looking for employment which could be considered unemployed if they comply with the ILO criteria;

Moreover, EU-LFS estimates are subject to sampling errors which does not affect estimates based on registers.

In twelve countries (Denmark, Greece, Spain, Latvia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey) unemployment estimates coming from LFS exceed figures from registers, while in thirteen countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, France, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Finland and Serbia) is the opposite. Ten countries are not able to provide any assessment about the direction of the differences.

8

Accessibility and clarity

8.1 Definition

Accessibility and clarity refer to the simplicity and ease, the conditions and modalities by which users can access, use and interpret statistics, with the appropriate supporting information and assistance.

8.2 Available information

Eurostat publishes both quarterly and annual results. Eurostat also publishes annually a compendium describing the main characteristics of the national surveys ⁽¹⁸⁾.

Eurostat's public website is free of charge and includes main indicators, derived from the Labour Force Survey, as well as detailed, constantly updated results from the EU-LFS. All data on the website are supplemented by meta-data in Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), giving basic information on the background and a summary of the methodology. More detailed information can be found at the dedicated EU-LFS web page ⁽¹⁹⁾ and at the EU-LFS Statistics Explained ⁽²⁰⁾.

Eurostat also produces tailor-made tables ⁽²¹⁾ not available online at the request of users. More than 1 300 user requests are processed every year by Eurostat concerning EU-LFS data.

Since 2011 researchers can get anonymised datasets ⁽²²⁾ containing microdata free of charge if certain conditions are fulfilled. Data from EU Member States and from Iceland, Norway and Switzerland are available in this format. In 2018 around 300 researchers or research groups work with EU-LFS microdata (new contracts and amendments).

⁽¹⁸⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/publications/quality-reporting>

⁽¹⁹⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/overview>

⁽²⁰⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/EU_labour_force_survey

⁽²¹⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/help/support>

⁽²²⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/overview>

9

Regional labour market statistics⁽²³⁾

9.1 Introduction

The EU-LFS is designed to give accurate quarterly information at national level and accurate annual information at NUTS 2 regional level. Microdata including the NUTS 2 level codes are provided by all participating countries with a good degree of geographical comparability, which allows the production and dissemination of a wide set of comparable indicators. Eight countries, namely Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Iceland, Montenegro and North Macedonia comprise a single NUTS 2 region, i.e. the national result is also the NUTS 2 result (as well as the NUTS 1 result).

For the purposes of regional analyses as well as for monitoring the progress towards regional cohesion, data at NUTS 3 level are also often requested by users. However, as the transmission of data at NUTS 3 level has no legal basis, the figures are provided by participating countries on a voluntary basis with the purpose of deriving other regional aggregations. Therefore, available NUTS 3 data is currently only used for publication at a more aggregated level. For example, unemployment and employment figures are disseminated by urban-rural typology, coastal regions, mountain regions, island regions, border regions as well as metropolitan regions, which are based on data of groups of NUTS 3 regions⁽²⁴⁾.

The compilation of NUTS 2 figures is well specified in the EU-LFS. As this is not the case for the NUTS 3, the sources and compilation methods for this dataset are described below.

9.2 Sources for NUTS 3 level labour market statistics

A majority of EU Member States provide the NUTS 3 code in the EU-LFS micro data. For 2018, 20 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom) as well as Iceland, Norway and North Macedonia sent the NUTS 3 codes in the EU-LFS micro data. All but two of these countries (France and Spain) have given their consent to Eurostat to use this data to produce the aggregations by regional typologies. Four of the 23 countries providing NUTS 3 micro data, namely Austria, Ireland, France and Spain, also transmit tabulated results. Six countries (Germany, Croatia, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia) only transmit

⁽²³⁾ Chapter 9 was jointly written by Eurostat Units F3 – Labour market and lifelong learning and E4 – Regional statistics and geographical information.

⁽²⁴⁾ For a detailed description of these regional typologies, see:
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/rural-development/methodology>
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/metropolitan-regions/background>
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/coastal-island-outermost-regions/methodology>

tabulated results, partly because the data is not always based on annual EU-LFS results. However, due to non-sampling errors and the combined use of EU-LFS data with the information from other sources (e.g. registers, small area estimates), it is difficult to assess the accuracy of NUTS 3 level labour market data according to scientific standards. Portugal and Germany transmit employment and unemployment data already aggregated by regional typologies. In 2018, for Switzerland and Turkey, no NUTS 3 data are available. For two Member States, Cyprus and Luxembourg, and Montenegro, the NUTS 3 level does not differ from the NUTS 1 and the NUTS 2 level.

From 2014 onwards, the EU-LFS reliability limits used for annual averages of quarterly data ⁽²⁵⁾ are applied directly on the aggregated labour market data by regional typologies. In past years the EU-LFS reliability limits used for NUTS 2 data were also applied for the individual NUTS 3 data, which resulted in an unnecessary high number of missing aggregate values.

⁽²⁵⁾ For more information, see:
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/EU_labour_force_survey

10

Annex

10.1 Tables

Table 10.1: Comments and methodological notes about coverage errors

	Comments
Belgium	Under-coverage: Households, all members of which are 77 years or older and collective households (about 0.15% of all households) are excluded before draw. Delay between draw of household (from National Population Register, kept up to date "permanently") and fieldwork: between 2 and 6 months.
Bulgaria	Over-coverage: non-occupied dwellings.
Czechia	Under-coverage: Households are selected once a year from the Register of Census Areas. Due to differences in time span there is not the actual information about addresses or flats. The sampling frame contains only private households. Persons living in institutional households are not covered. Over-coverage: Not existing or not inhabited flats remain in the Register of Census Areas.
Germany	Under-coverage: Homeless people and other people without registered residence (e.g. people living in huts, caravans) are out of the frame. Apart from that German LFS is an area sample. All inhabited dwellings belong to the frame. Thus, changes of the population (e.g. by immigration, emigration) are included in the frame automatically.
Estonia	Under-coverage: Among the households not interviewed, in 312 cases (1.9% of total number of sampled households) the reason was an error or inaccuracy of the frame (person emigrated or left the county, person deceased, wrong address, etc.). By counties the share of frame errors varied from 0.9% to 4.2%.
Greece	Under-coverage: Population living in collective households or in dwellings outside the borders of built areas is not covered. Frames are compiled at census, and sampling rates are based at census population. Frames are updated at the first time when the primary sampling units are selected but not at subsequent waves. Over-coverage: The sample in Greek LFS is a sample of dwellings. The percentage of over-coverage is computed as the percentage of dwellings that are either used as "secondary residence" of the household or they are used solely for business purposes (e.g., a doctor's office).
Spain	Under-coverage: Percentage calculated as 'omitted' dwellings detected in the 'quality control survey'; measures of impact are not available. Over-coverage: Average of the four quarter percentages of dwellings out of frame ('no encuestables') The touristic areas are more prone to higher rates.
France	Under-coverage: The sample is usually updated several months before the reference year and it does not cover the most recent buildings. The number of newly-built dwellings is taken into account in the weighting procedure. No impact on estimates.
Croatia	Under-coverage: Since the beginning of 2014, the new sample frame based on the data from the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in 2011 has been in use. This sample frame includes addresses of private households on the whole territory of Croatia; hence the LFS results relate to the whole country. As the Census database was not updated since 2011, it is becoming obsolete, and some problems regarding migration and/or newly built dwellings will be present in a larger extent. Over-coverage: Over-coverage rates are actually non-eligibility rates of addresses selected in sample.
Italy	Under-coverage: Households are selected once a year from the municipalities' registry; they cover the whole reference population. The data might contain errors as for information such as addresses (due for instance to recent change of the address), wrong inclusions (recent emigration) and missed inclusions (recent immigration). As for the survey's

	Comments
	management strategies, ISTAT requires that each non-responding household has to be replaced with a household having similar characteristics, in order to maintain as much as possible the sample representativeness and to minimize the impact of unit non-response. No more than 3 replaces are admitted.
Cyprus	Under-coverage: The sample was drawn from the Census of Population household frame of 2011. In a post enumeration survey conducted after the census, under-coverage of 1.97% was estimated.
Lithuania	Over-coverage: Among not interviewed households, in 700 cases (2% of total number of sampled households) the reason was an error or inaccuracy of the frame (imprecise address, the premises at the indicated address are non-residential, etc.).
Luxembourg	Under-coverage: The LFS sample is drawn from the register around six times a year and the sampled persons are interviewed five times during a two year period. No additional sample selection is made in order to update the sample with immigrants during this two-year period. This under-coverage is judged to have marginal effects on the LFS-estimates. Over-coverage: The over coverage consists of people born abroad who left Luxembourg without reporting to the authorities. When these persons is included in the sample there are no information that they have moved out of the country. They can not be reached for interview and will be classified as non-response. For the moment we do not possess any data about this over-coverage and its magnitude but we estimate it as a marginal impact.
Hungary	Under-coverage: It mainly consists of unoccupied dwelling, not a dwelling unit, not existing address.
Malta	Under-coverage: The sampling frame being used covers private households. Hence persons living in institutional households are not being covered. Since the 2011 Census is being used as a sampling frame so households created after 2011 are not well represented. Over-coverage: There is over-representation for households created prior to 2011 and for households which were present in 2011 and no longer exist after 2011.
Austria	Under-coverage: From 2004 onwards the sample for the Austrian LFS is drawn from the Austrian Register of Residents. This register was set up in 2002. The sample is drawn three months before the start of the quarter. This results in a time lag of three to six months. Therefore, dwellings where persons moved in after the due date for the survey are not covered. Furthermore, under-coverage of migrants can be observed, although the questionnaires are translated into several languages.
Poland	Under-coverage: New dwellings underrepresented in the sample - dwellings are selected once a year from the register of housing units and due to differences in time span; there is no current information about addresses or flats. Over-coverage: Over-coverage consists of dwellings in which inhabitants are not present for a long time, the dwelling is non-residential (shop) or not found (incorrect address).
Portugal	Under-coverage: The sampling frame does not cover the individuals living in collective dwellings. This population represents less than approximately 1%.
Romania	Under-coverage: Due to the lack of appropriate information, the new dwellings, built after 2011 Census of the Population and Dwellings, that could possibly constitute a sampling frame of the new dwellings, have not been taken into account. Over-coverage: Over-coverage rates were estimated on the basis of the survey samples, as ratio between number of not-eligible dwellings and number of sampled dwellings.
Slovakia	Under-coverage: The LFS sample is based on a Population Census conducted once every ten years (last time in 2011). There is the lack of information on new statistical units during a rather long period. Errors as for information on addresses of dwellings; missing coverage of collective households, persons living in convents, members of the Slovak embassies and institutions abroad. Under-coverage comprises people born abroad and living in collective houses. Over-coverage: Mainly young residents working temporarily abroad can stay to live there.
Finland	Under-coverage: The sampling frame used is the total population database maintained by Statistics Finland. It is based on the Population Information System of The Population Register Centre and updated regularly. Under-coverage fairly small (no large-scale immigration). Over-coverage: Mostly emigration in wave 1, deaths and emigration for later waves.
Sweden	Under-coverage: The LFS sample is drawn once a year and the sampled persons are interviewed eight times during a two year period. No additional sample selection is made in order to update the sample with immigrants during this two-year period. The average time span between sample selection and the reference week is about 19 months which means an under-coverage of about 50 000 persons or 1 % of the population. This under-coverage is judged to have marginal effects on the LFS-estimates. Over-coverage: The over coverage consists of people born abroad who left Sweden without reporting this to the Swedish authorities. When these persons are included in the sample there are no information that they have moved out from Sweden. They cannot be reached for interview and will be classified as non-response. According to evaluation-studies made this over-coverage is mainly concentrated to non-Nordic immigrants and is of a magnitude of 25,000-50,000 persons in the total population (0.2%).

	Comments
United Kingdom	Under-coverage: The LFS coverage omits communal establishments, excepting NHS housing and students in halls of residence. Members of the armed forces are only included if they live in private accommodation. The LFS, by not sampling from communal establishments, excludes approximately 1.5% of the total GB population.
Norway	Under-coverage: Do not include those 75 years and older. We impute them as outside the labour force. Number of persons employed about 0.25 per cent too low. The sampling frame consists of registered family units where the main person in the family is aged 15-74 years. Women married to men 75 years or older are underrepresented. Misclassification: Using family as a proxy for household at the moment.
Switzerland	Misclassification: Differing household composition. Unit non-response if the selected person is not living in the selected household (anymore), else no impact on estimates.

Table 10.2: Data collection facilities and methods of reducing measurement errors

Country	Respondent		Interviewer		Fieldwork			Questionnaire	
	Letter introducing the survey	Phone call introducing the survey	Periodical training	Feedbacks	Monitoring directly by respondents	Monitoring directly listening interviews	Monitoring remotely by indicators	Questionnaire in different languages	On-line checks
Belgium	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Bulgaria	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	NA
Czechia	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Denmark	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
Germany	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	UNA	Y	Y
Estonia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Ireland	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Greece	Y	Y ⁽¹⁾	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y
Spain	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
France	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Croatia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Italy	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cyprus	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Latvia	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lithuania	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Luxembourg	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hungary	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Malta	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Netherlands	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Austria	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Poland	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Portugal	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Romania	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Slovenia	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Slovakia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
Finland	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Sweden	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
United Kingdom	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Iceland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norway	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
Switzerland	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Montenegro	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	NA
North Macedonia	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Serbia	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Turkey	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Notes: (-) indicates that information has not been provided by the country; NA indicates Not Applicable (for example online checks with computerised questionnaire when only PAPI technique is used for interviews); UNA indicates information unavailable in the country.

(¹) Not in the first wave.

Table 10.3: Item non-response for the variables defined by Commission Regulation (EC) No 377/2008 and clarifications provided by Member States**Quarterly data 2018**

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
Belgium						
compulsory	HWOVERP	13.7	14.8	22.3	14.9	After a more detailed analysis has been assessed that the variable can be partially imputed. It will be done from 2020 on.
compulsory	HWOVERPU	13.7	14.6	22.2	15.1	After a more detailed analysis has been assessed that the variable can be partially imputed. It will be done from 2020 on.
compulsory	HWWISH	89.3	89.7	89.8	89.7	After a more detailed analysis has been assessed that the variable can be partially imputed. It will be done from 2020 on.
compulsory	NACE2J2D	16.6	16.8	17.7	16.4	We have no item non-response in wave 1 (CAPI) but a high percentage of item non-response in waves 2-4 (CAWI/CATI). We are investigating if a change in our CAWI/CATI questionnaire could reduce item non-response for NACE2J2D.
compulsory	HWACTUA2	10.8	12.3	10.8	11.6	We have a small item non-response in wave 1 (CAPI) but a higher percentage of item non-response in waves 2-4.
compulsory	WANTWORK	46.8	48.3	48.6	48.1	We do not ask 'wantwork' to all persons with seekwork =3. We have no info about 'wantwork' for persons with statbit=2 & seekwork=3 neither for persons with seekwork = 3 but who are (early) retired. 99% or more of the item non-response concerns (early) retired persons. We can consider them as not willing to work anymore since they don't seek work.
Bulgaria						
compulsory	TEMPDUR	21.2	17.9	12	13.6	For persons without employment contract (main part of the variable non-response) the duration of job is often unclear.
compulsory	HWACTUA2	14.5	17.9	23.5	22.8	Respondents meet difficulties to answer the question, especially self-employed. More than a half of non-responded persons were self-employed on the second job.
compulsory	METHODI-employed	.	C	C	C	This method is rarely used by employed persons to find other job.
compulsory	METHODL-employed	.	C	.	C	This method is rarely used by employed persons to find other job.
compulsory	METHODM - employed	.	C	C	C	Only methods corresponding to variables from METHODODA to METHODDI are considered as active methods.
compulsory	METHODM - not employed	C	C	.	C	Only methods corresponding to variables from METHODODA to METHODDI are considered as active methods.
Czechia						
compulsory	EDUCSTAT	20	20.5	20.6	20.7	Only persons aged 15-69.
Denmark						
compulsory	SIGNISAL	C	C	C	C	Respondents included in the filter are coded with 'don't know'.
compulsory	MSTARTWK	13.3	16.4	20	19.7	
compulsory	YEARPR	7.9	9.4	11.0	9.2	
Germany						
compulsory	METHODL-employed	.	C	.	C	
optional	COUNTRYB	.	10.6	.	.	

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
Estonia						
compulsory	SIGNISAL	.	.	C	.	Small figures due to very few cases if any.
compulsory	METHODI - employed	.	.	C	.	Small figures due to very few cases if any.
compulsory	COURLEN	89.1	32.8	.	.	Due to problems with the questionnaire software, this was not asked the 1st and 2nd quarter of 2018. The error was discovered in the middle of 2nd quarter of 2018 and then fixed.
Ireland						
compulsory	TEMPDUR	26.9	19.1	16.8	20.7	Persons are asked the question and the level of non-response generally reflects people not knowing what the duration of temporary employment will be.
compulsory	HWOVERP	.	.	14.0	11.0	
compulsory	HWOVERPU	.	.	13.8	10.9	
compulsory	HWWISH	81.0	81.0	81.7	82.7	
compulsory	EXIST2J	97.1	97.0	97.1	97.1	Variable amended and will be re-transmitted as soon as possible.
compulsory	NACE2J2D	27.6	49.9	54.4	53.0	Variable amended and will be re-transmitted as soon as possible.
Spain						
compulsory	TEMPDUR	47.5	46	45.2	49.2	Many people actually do not know the total duration of their temporary job.
compulsory	HWWISH	85.7	85.7	86	86.2	
compulsory	METHODM - employed	C	C	C	C	No "other" active method.
compulsory	METHODM - not employed	C	C	.	C	No "other" active method.
compulsory	COURLEN	40.7	41.6	47.6	39.9	People aged 15 and + don't know the number of hours.
compulsory	EDUCLEVEL	11.3	11.9	12.9	12	People aged 15.
France						
compulsory	TEMPDUR	11.7	11.0	10.2	11.0	A part of the non-response comes from the people that declare to be in internship. We do not ask or use the duration of the internship. Other part of the non-response comes from some people who say they do not have any work contract and thus cannot be asked about its duration.
compulsory	HWWISH	12.3	12.6	13.1	12.5	Most of the non-response is due to people saying they do not want to work more or less than their currently amount of hours, and have more than one job.
compulsory	NACE2J2D	40.9	41.4	40.5	41.0	The code for EXIST2J has recently changed to correct some errors. The code of NACE2J2D was not changed to take this into account.
compulsory	HWACTUA2	10.6	11.3	.	10.5	The code for EXIST2J has recently changed to correct some errors. The code of HWACTUA2 was not changed to take this into account.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	.	C	.	C	
compulsory	METHODL - employed	.	.	.	C	
compulsory	INTWEEK	11.7	12.0	12.3	12.0	For households where all persons are aged 65 or more and are inactive, the variables are imputed for waves 2 to 5; thus there is no interview week for them.
Croatia						

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
compulsory	HWOVERP	97.4	97.3	97.7	98.7	This calculation refers to persons who did not work overtime, and in that case did not answer the question about paid overtime. It will be adjusted from 2019 on.
compulsory	HWWISH	94.2	94.7	94.9	95.3	This calculation refers to people who do not wish to work usually more than the current number of hours (WISHMORE=0) and which in that case do not answer to the question about number of hours that the person would like to work in total. It will be adjusted from 2019 on.
compulsory	METHODK - employed	.	.	C	.	This method is rarely or never used in the job search.
Italy						
compulsory	HWWISH	.	.	15.3	.	The questions on WISHMORE-HWWISH in the IT questionnaire are referred to the wish of working more than the actual number of hours. Most of the item non-responses are due to persons that did not want to work at all in the reference week (code "0" is not available); they are mainly concentrated in the 3rd quarter in which there are summer holidays.
compulsory	SEEKTYPE - employed	16.2	19	15.3	15.1	Item non-responses are due to persons that do not have preferences about an employment as self-employed or employee.
compulsory	SEEKTYPE - not employed	27	24.5	23.1	23.7	Item non-responses are due to persons that do not have preferences about an employment as self-employed or employee.
Cyprus						
compulsory	SIGNISAL	C	.	.	.	
compulsory	COUNTRYW	C	C	C	C	Country is always CY.
compulsory	METHODH	C	.	C	C	Rare method to use for searching.
compulsory	METHODI	C	.	C	C	Rare method to use for searching.
compulsory	METHODM	.	.	C	.	Rare method to use for searching.
Latvia						
compulsory	HWOVERPU	.	.	C	.	Data about workplace are collected at NUTS 1 level.
compulsory	EXISTPR	31.3	30.9	31.7	31.5	There aren't interviewed persons aged 75 or more included in filter (col.123).
compulsory	SEEKDUR	.	.	.	14.5	Part of non-responses were in proxy interviews.
compulsory	METHODH - employed	.	C	.	.	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODI - employed	.	.	C	C	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODI - not employed	.	.	.	C	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODK - employed	.	C	C	.	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	.	.	.	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODM - not employed	C	C	.	.	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	EDUCSTAT	15.6	15.5	15.6	15.4	Persons aged 75+ were not interviewed.
compulsory	COURATT	15.7	15.5	15.6	15.5	Persons aged 75+ were not interviewed.
compulsory	HAT11LEV	15.7	15.5	15.6	15.4	Persons aged 75+ were not interviewed.
Lithuania						
compulsory	METHODH - not employed	.	.	.	C	This method is used infrequently.
Luxembourg						
compulsory	PROXY	C	C	C	.	
compulsory	NACE3D	10.5	.	.	.	Due to proxy.
compulsory	MSTARTWK	13.3	15.1	13.1	11.5	Due to proxy.

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
compulsory	HWUSUAL	.	.	.	10.2	Due to proxy.
compulsory	NACE2J2D	21.8	23.4	20.8	22.7	Due to proxy.
compulsory	HWACTUA2	.	10.4	.	.	Due to proxy.
compulsory	MONTHPR	21.8	17.8	22.8	22.4	Due to proxy.
compulsory	EDUCLEVL	18.1	.	.	.	Due to proxy.
compulsory	EDUCVOC	12.1	.	.	.	Error in codification. It will be solved from 2019 on.
Hungary						
compulsory	MSTARTWK	.	14.1	18.6	24.6	HU Filter is different from EU filter for this variable.
compulsory	EXISTPR	22.6	22.9	23	23.6	There is an upper-age limit (74 years) in HU-LFS for this variable.
compulsory	MONTHPR	.	14.7	21.4	24.9	HU Filter is different from EU filter for this variable.
compulsory	METHODH - employed	C	C	.	.	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODH - not employed	.	.	.	C	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	EDUCSTAT	11.8	11.8	11.9	12.2	There is an upper-age limit (74 years) in HU-LFS for this variable.
compulsory	COURATT	11.8	11.8	11.9	12.2	There is an upper-age limit (74 years) in HU-LFS for this variable.
Malta						
compulsory	SIGNISAL	C	.	.	.	
compulsory	METHODH - employed	.	.	C	.	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODH - not employed	.	C	C	.	This method is used infrequently.
compulsory	METHODJ - employed	C	C	C	C	Information on this variable is not collected.
compulsory	METHODJ - not employed	C	C	C	C	Information on this variable is not collected.
compulsory	METHODK - employed	C	C	C	C	Information on this variable is not collected.
compulsory	METHODK - not employed	C	C	C	C	Information on this variable is not collected.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	C	C	Information on this variable is not collected.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	Information on this variable is not collected.
Netherlands						
compulsory	TEMPDUR	59.7	60.2	60.4	61.5	Issues with national implementation of the variable in the questionnaire.
compulsory	NACE2J2D	27.3	27.8	28.7	27.7	Issues with national implementation of the variable in the questionnaire.
compulsory	SEEKTYPE - not employed	11.4	11.5	11.4	10.8	
compulsory	SEEKDUR - not employed	17.1	18.7	20.8	18.4	Issues with national implementation of the variable in the questionnaire.
compulsory	METHODH - employed	C	.	C	C	
compulsory	METHODI - employed	C	.	C	C	
compulsory	METHODJ - employed	C	.	C	C	
compulsory	METHODJ - not employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	.	C	C	
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	
optional	COUNTRYB	13.5	13.5	13.8	13.9	It depends on missing in the variable YARESID.

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
Portugal						
compulsory	SIGNISAL	.	.	C	.	In the concerned quarter there were only individuals coded in answer option 1 of the SIGNISAL variable. In these quarters there were no record for the other codes, namely, 2,3 and 4.
compulsory	TEMPDUR	17.7	17.9	17.1	17.5	Corresponds to non-response of the employees who did not give an answer this variable.
compulsory	METHODM - employed	.	C	C	C	This variable does not exist in our national questionnaire.
compulsory	METHODM - not employed	C	C	C	C	This variable does not exist in our national questionnaire.
Romania						
compulsory	METHODH - employed	C	C	C	C	This search method is rarely used by employed.
compulsory	METHODI - employed	C	C	C	C	This search method is rarely used by employed.
Slovenia						
compulsory	HWOVERP	86	86.6	88.3	85.6	
compulsory	HWOVERPU	91.6	92	93.1	92.2	
compulsory	MONTHPR	.	11.9	13.9	11.7	
compulsory	METHODH - employed	.	.	C	.	Not available in Slovenia.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	C	C	Not available in Slovenia.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	.	C	Not available in Slovenia.
compulsory	EDUCLEVEL	30	30.1	32.6	31.5	Issue raised in 2018. More investigation about it is needed.
Slovakia						
compulsory	SEEKTYPE - employed	22.7	23	19.9	21	Missing of appropriate code for those who are looking for any causes higher value of the non-response rate.
compulsory	SEEKTYPE - not employed	15.2	16.8	14.9	16.4	Missing of appropriate code for those who are looking for any job causes higher value of the non-response rate.
compulsory	METHODI - employed	.	.	C	C	Methods used in job seeking have the same question "State all methods you used during the last 4 weeks to find work".
compulsory	METHODL - employed	.	C	.	C	Methods used in job seeking have the same question "State all methods you used during the last 4 weeks to find work".
compulsory	METHODM - employed	.	C	C	C	Methods used in job seeking have the same question "State all methods you used during the last 4 weeks to find work".
compulsory	METHODM - not employed	.	C	.	C	Methods used in job seeking have the same question "State all methods you used during the last 4 weeks to find work".
compulsory	COUNTRYB	.	99.5	.	99.5	Data for the 2nd and 4th quarter 2018 will be re-transmitted.
Finland						
compulsory	EXISTPR	10.8	11.7	11.6	11.4	As Finland is using persons as sampling units, this variable is optional for other members of the household.
compulsory	SEEKDUR - employed	.	.	.	10.3	Duration of searching job is difficult to recall/know for long-term unemployment.
compulsory	METHODJ - employed	.	C	.	.	Passive job search methods are asked only if none of the active methods have been used.
compulsory	METHODJ - not employed	.	.	C	.	Passive job search methods are asked only if none of the active methods have been used.
compulsory	METHODK -	.	C	.	C	Passive job search methods are asked only if

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
	employed					none of the active methods have been used.
compulsory	METHODK - not employed	C	.	.	.	Passive job search methods are asked only if none of the active methods have been used.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	.	C	Passive job search methods are asked only if none of the active methods have been used.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	Passive job search methods are asked only if none of the active methods have been used.
Sweden						
compulsory	TEMPDUR	27.8	26.6	26.4	33	Respondents do not always remember start and end of work.
compulsory	SEEKDUR - employed	10.2	10.8	10.6	10.2	People tend to forget how long they have been looking for work.
compulsory	SEEKDUR - not employed	29.3	38	21.7	22.5	People tend to forget how long they have been looking for work.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	C	C	Very infrequent that this variable has value 1. Checked against micro-data.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	.	C	.	.	Very infrequent that this variable has value 1. Checked against micro-data.
United Kingdom						
compulsory	TEMPDUR	54.8	53	53.9	53.2	High level of non-response owing to a relatively small proportion of the employed sample in a temporary job in the reference week.
compulsory	HWOVERP	90.6	90.3	90.5	90.4	High level of non-response owing to a relatively small proportion of the employed sample working overtime in the reference week.
compulsory	HWOVERPU	85.6	85.6	86.8	86.5	High level of non-response owing to a relatively small proportion of the employed sample working overtime in the reference week.
compulsory	HWWISH	90.9	91.4	91.1	91.5	Variable only computed for respondents recorded as wishing to work more hours; this group equates to only 4% of the employed sample.
compulsory	METHODG - employed	C	C	.	C	The UK-LFS does not ask if respondents took a test, interview or examination. Therefore only 'No' responses can be calculated.
compulsory	METHODG - not employed	C	C	C	C	The UK-LFS does not ask if respondents took a test, interview or examination. Therefore only 'No' responses can be calculated.
compulsory	METHODK - employed	C	C	.	C	The UK-LFS does not ask if respondents are waiting for a call from a public employment office.
compulsory	METHODK - not employed	C	C	C	C	The UK-LFS does not ask if respondents are waiting for a call from a public employment office.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	.	C	The UK-LFS does not ask if respondents are waiting for the results of a competition for recruitment to the public sector.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	The UK-LFS does not ask if respondents are waiting for the results of a competition for recruitment to the public sector.
compulsory	COURLEN	73.1	73.8	73.9	72.4	The high level of non-response is due to the fact that not all people who have completed a course in the last 4 weeks are asked how many hours of instruction that have attended in total.
compulsory	HAT11LEV	11.3	11.4	11.9	11.9	The UK LFS asks education and qualifications of everyone aged 16 to 69. Respondents aged >= 70 are asked these questions only if they are economically active. Moreover UK LFS does not survey people aged 15 years.

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
compulsory	EDUCVOC	25.7	25	28.5	27.7	The high level of non-response is down to 15 year olds. The filter is ISCED=3 or 4 at EDUCLEV, 15 year olds are automatically coded to ISCED 3 (Secondary school), which means they are eligible for EDUCVOC but the UK does not ask 15 year olds the follow up questions, therefore they are coded as blank at EDUCVOC.
Iceland						
compulsory	COUNTRYW	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	HWOVERP	72.3	74.5	80.6	77.3	
compulsory	HWOVERPU	72.3	74.5	80.6	77.3	
compulsory	HOURREAS	11.4	.	.	10.4	
compulsory	HWWISH	34.3	35.4	35.7	35.4	
compulsory	HWACTUA2	17.4	16.7	18.3	17.1	
compulsory	SEEKTYPE - employed	100	98.7	.	.	
compulsory	SEEKTYPE - not employed	.	23.4	.	.	
compulsory	SEEKDUR - employed	100	98.7	.	.	
compulsory	SEEKDUR - not employed	10.4	24.5	10.3	.	
compulsory	METHODA - employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODB - employed	C	C	.	.	
compulsory	METHODC - employed	C	.	.	.	
compulsory	METHODD - employed	C	.	.	.	
compulsory	METHODE - employed	C	.	.	.	
compulsory	METHODF - employed	C	.	.	.	
compulsory	METHODG - employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODG - not employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODH - employed	C	C	.	C	
compulsory	METHODH - not employed	.	C	C	.	
compulsory	METHODI - employed	C	C	.	.	
compulsory	METHODI - not employed	.	C	C	.	
compulsory	METHODJ - employed	C	.	.	.	
compulsory	METHODK - employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODK - not employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODM - employed	C	C	.	.	
compulsory	WANTWORK	25.2	28.7	30.3	30.3	
compulsory	COURLEN	17.1	15.2	24.6	15	
compulsory	HATVOC	92.3	32.8	28.6	36.4	
compulsory	EDUCLEV	15.5	22.1	15.2	16.3	

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
Norway						
compulsory	MSTARTWK	29.4	33.1	34.8	37.4	
compulsory	TEMPDUR	47.5	46.1	42.6	43.7	Many employed do not have any date for the end of their temporary work.
compulsory	WISHMORE	14.4	14.7	13.6	13	Due to proxy.
compulsory	LOOKOJ	13.3	13.9	12.7	11.6	Due to proxy.
compulsory	HWACTUA2	11.5	11.5	.	.	Due to proxy.
compulsory	SEEKDUR - employed	.	.	12.8	12.3	Due to proxy.
compulsory	SEEKDUR - not employed	.	.	10.5	10.5	Due to proxy.
compulsory	METHODH - employed	.	.	C	.	Very few answers if any.
compulsory	METHODH - not employed	.	.	C	C	Very few answers if any.
compulsory	METHODI - employed	.	.	.	C	Very few answers if any.
compulsory	METHODI - not employed	.	.	C	.	Very few answers if any.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	.	C	C	Very few answers if any.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	Very few answers if any.
compulsory	EDUCVOC	100	100	100	100	
Switzerland						
compulsory	METHODH - employed	.	.	.	C	No relevant respondent declared to have used this method.
compulsory	METHODH - not employed	.	.	C	C	No relevant respondent declared to have used this method.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	C	C	METHODL is not relevant for Switzerland.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	METHODL is not relevant for Switzerland.
compulsory	EDUCVOC	12.2	11.6	12.7	12.1	Filter/codification error, adaptation planned.
Montenegro						
compulsory	SIGNISAL	.	C	C	.	
compulsory	METHODD - employed	.	.	C	.	
compulsory	METHODH - employed	.	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODI - employed	.	C	C	C	
compulsory	METHODL - employed	.	.	C	.	
compulsory	DEGURBA	100	100	100	100	It is planned to deliver DEGURBA in near future.
North Macedonia						
compulsory	NATIONAL	.	C	.	.	
compulsory	METHODL - employed	.	C	C	C	We plan to introduce this variable in the future.
compulsory	METHODL - not employed	C	C	C	C	We plan to introduce this variable in the future.
compulsory	METHODM - employed	.	C	C	C	
compulsory	AVAILABLE	C	.	.	.	
Turkey						
compulsory	NATIONAL	100	100	100	100	According to the 2010 Address Based Population Registration System; 99.7 % of population has Turkish Nationality. So, it is not easy to cover non-nationals with a sample survey.

Variable status	Identifier	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
compulsory	COUNTRYW	C	C	C	C	There are very few people who are working abroad and at the same time considered as household member since Turkey is a very broad country. This may only occur in border cities, but not common. So, this variable is not asked.
compulsory	HWOVERPU	100	100	100	100	Only total overtime is asked in the questionnaire (paid+unpaid). Since it is not possible to distinguish paid and unpaid overtime. Total overtime is given in HWOVERP and this variable is coded as blank.
compulsory	HWWISH	100	100	100	100	This variable was dropped out from the questionnaire in 2009 since it was observed that, results were not reliable.
compulsory	METHODB - employed	C	C	C	.	For employed people all the methods are not asked in same detail, some of them are grouped looking at the frequency.
compulsory	METHODF - employed	C	C	C	.	For employed people all the methods are not asked in same detail, some of them are grouped looking at the frequency.
compulsory	METHODI - employed	C	C	C	.	For employed people all the methods are not asked in same detail, some of them are grouped looking at the frequency.
compulsory	METHODK - employed	C	C	C	.	For employed people all the methods are not asked in same detail, some of them are grouped looking at the frequency.
compulsory	METHODL - employed	C	C	C	.	For employed people all the methods are not asked in same detail, some of them are grouped looking at the frequency.
compulsory	METHODM - not employed	.	.	C	.	
compulsory	DEGURBA	100	100	100	100	

Note: 'C' All records have the same value.

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Variable status	Identifier	2018	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
Belgium			
compulsory	AVAIREAS - not employed	90.8	Early retired persons are asked if they are searching a job. If not, they are not asked if they want a job. So we don't know for these persons if they are available.
Bulgaria			
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	37.0	Persons who are employed but temporary absent from work (e.g. on parental leave) - cases with SIGNISAL=3, were not asked this question due to the limitations of paper questionnaire. The future decision will depend on the existence of variable SIGNISAL.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	The variable is not available in the national LFS.
Denmark			
optional	COURPURP	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not collected.
Germany			
compulsory	SIZEFIRM	19.9	
compulsory	TEMPREAS	29.2	
compulsory	TEMPAGCY	12.4	
compulsory	AVAIREAS – not employed	22.7	
compulsory	NEEDCARE	30.4	
Estonia			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	14.8	Persons having 'no preference' were coded as 'blank'. The variable will be improved during the next revision of the questionnaire (then implementing the IESS Framework Regulation).
optional	COURWORH	30.3	Due to problems with the questionnaire software, the variables on education were not asked during the 1st quarter of 2018. The error was discovered in the 2nd quarter of 2018 and then fixed.
Ireland			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	29.5	
compulsory	HOMEWK	21.5	
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	99.8	
compulsory	REGISTER	100.0	Not collected.
compulsory	WSTAT1Y	100.0	Not collected.
compulsory	COUNTR1Y	100.0	Not collected.
compulsory	REGION1Y	C	
compulsory	INCDECIL	77.5	Sensitive question only asked to direct respondents.
optional	COURPURP	100.0	
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
Greece			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	11.0	In the Greek questionnaire there is the (residual) answer category "Did not specify the reason" (which is converted in "No answer").

Variable status	Identifier	2018	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	10.8	In the Greek questionnaire there is the (residual) answer category "Did not specify the reason" (which is converted in "No answer").
compulsory	INCDECIL	18.2	It is a sensitive question in which people tend to refuse to answer.
Spain			
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	15.4	
compulsory	AVAIREAS - not employed	11.1	
optional	COURPURP	16.0	People aged 15.
optional	COURFILD	16.0	People aged 15.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not provided.
France			
compulsory	WAYJFOUN	16.5	Question is not asked to people working in an informal job, or with a temporary employment agency contract.
compulsory	TEMPREAS	10.0	Some of the people declaring they have no contract are reclassified as temporary contracts (TEMP = 2). Yet we don't have the reason.
compulsory	PRESEEK	44.9	PRESEEK is not asked in the French LFS questionnaire. However, this variable is rebuilt for people who have been seeking a job for one year or less.
compulsory	REGISTER	14.4	Information is currently not available for people over 65.
compulsory	COUNTR1Y	17.1	Question is not asked to people under 15.
optional	COURPURP	12.9	Question is not asked to people over 65.
Croatia			
compulsory	SIZEFIRM	14.5	People do not know information on number of persons working at the local unit.
compulsory	LOOKREAS	24.0	Will be improved in the future.
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	90.5	Will be improved in the future.
compulsory	AVAIREAS - not employed	21.1	Will be improved in the future.
compulsory	INCDECIL	22.6	People do not want to give an answer on this sensitive issue.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
Italy			
compulsory	REGISTER	28.8	Variable reviewed in 2018. Some issues in transcoding from national questions.
compulsory	COUNTR1Y	12.1	Item non-response is due to people aged less than 15 years, for which this information is not collected in the national questionnaire.
Cyprus			
compulsory	TEMPAGCY	C	There are no temporary agencies in Cyprus.
Latvia			
optional	MAINSTAT	15.8	There are not interviewed persons aged 75 or more included in filter.
compulsory	WSTAT1Y	15.8	There are not interviewed persons aged 75 or more included in filter.

Variable status	Identifier	2018	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
Lithuania			
optional	COURPURP	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not collected.
Luxembourg			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	13.2	
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	98.6	
compulsory	AVAIREAS - not employed	13.5	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	REGISTER	12.5	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	WSTAT1Y	24.0	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	NACE1Y2D	10.3	
compulsory	INCDECIL	15.8	Mainly due to proxy.
Hungary			
compulsory	WSTAT1Y	11.9	There is an upper-age limit (74 years) in HU-LFS for this variable.
optional	MAINSTAT	11.9	There is an upper-age limit (74 years) in HU-LFS for this variable.
Malta			
compulsory	TEMPAGCY	C	
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	82.3	Further analysis in the future will be carried out to ensure non response rate.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not collected.
Netherlands			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	31.0	Mostly due to questionnaire related matters.
compulsory	STAPROPR	66.1	Mostly due to questionnaire related matters.
compulsory	NACEPR2D	71.5	Mostly due to questionnaire related matters.
compulsory	ISCOPR3D	80.2	Mostly due to questionnaire related matters.
compulsory	AVAIREAS - not employed	35.7	Mostly due to questionnaire related matters.
compulsory	PRESEEK	75.7	Mostly due to questionnaire related matters.
compulsory	WSTAT1Y	15.7	
compulsory	NACE1Y2D	12.4	
compulsory	HATYEAR	10.9	
optional	COURWORH	12.9	
Poland			
compulsory	INCDECIL	62.8	Very sensitive variable which makes it possible for respondent to not answer this question.
Portugal			
compulsory	INCDECIL	12.0	Corresponds to non-response of the employees who did not give an answer to the income variable.
optional	COURPURP	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not collected.

Variable status	Identifier	2018	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
Slovenia			
compulsory	MARSTAT	14.1	
compulsory	WAYJFOUN	25.4	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	NACEPR2D	60.3	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	ISCOPR3D	60.1	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	AVAIRES - employed	100.0	
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
Slovakia			
compulsory	INCDECIL	26.3	Very sensitive nature of question for the field survey. Since 2016 we have started to use the new administrative source: Structure of Earnings Survey that substituted the LFS variable.
Finland			
compulsory	WSTAT1Y	21.1	As Finland is using persons as sampling units, this variable is optional for other members of the household.
compulsory	COUNTR1Y	42.7	As Finland is using persons as sampling units, this variable is optional for other members of the household.
compulsory	HATYEAR	11.0	
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
Sweden			
compulsory	AVAIRES - employed	76.9	The high non-response is due to employed who does not look for another job.
compulsory	REGISTER	18.7	The question is not given to employed who are not searching for a job.
compulsory	WSTAT1Y	45.1	
compulsory	HATYEAR	21.0	
optional	COURPURP	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not collected.
United Kingdom			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	33.6	The current calculation of TEMPREAS assigns WHYTMP6 = 5 (some other reason) to 'Blank' (no answer). The Eurostat codification allows only four values (covered by the first four response categories). It is not clear how those respondents who answer 'some other reason' should be coded.
compulsory	TEMPAGCY	98.4	TEMPAGCY is derived from national variable TMPCON (contract with employment agency). TMPCON is asked only if HOWGET = 5 (private employment agency). If TEMPAGCY were filtered by HOWGET = 5 then NR would be < 2%.
compulsory	AVAIRES - employed	69.5	Calculation of variable under review.
compulsory	AVAIRES - not employed	37.6	Calculation of variable under review.
compulsory	NEEDCARE	59.4	Calculation of variable under review.
compulsory	INCDECIL	80.8	A Technical error meant INCDECIL was not submitted for Q2-4. Revised variable will be re-transmitted.
compulsory	HATFIELD	16.8	Calculation of variable under review.
optional	MAINSTAT	100.0	Not collected.

Variable status	Identifier	2018	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
optional	COURPURP	76.5	Calculation of variable under review.
optional	COURWORH	76.5	Calculation of variable under review.
Iceland			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	31.4	
compulsory	TEMPAGCY	C	
compulsory	LOOKREAS	29.4	
compulsory	STAPROPR	60.8	
compulsory	NACEPR2D	62.1	
compulsory	ISCOPR3D	28.6	
compulsory	SEEKREAS	27.0	
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	96.4	
compulsory	AVAIREAS - not employed	79.9	
compulsory	PRESEEK	13.2	
compulsory	NEEDCARE	82.6	
compulsory	NACE1Y2D	28.0	
compulsory	COUNTR1Y	75.2	
compulsory	INCDECIL	100.0	
optional	COURFILD	100.0	
Norway			
compulsory	WAYJFOUN	29.6	
compulsory	FTPTREAS	29.1	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	TEMPREAS	16.7	
compulsory	NACEPR2D	100.0	
compulsory	ISCOPR3D	100.0	
compulsory	SEEKREAS	31.4	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	AVAIREAS - employed	20.3	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	PRESEEK	28.1	Mainly due to proxy.
compulsory	REGISTER	100.0	
compulsory	COUNTR1Y	100.0	Variable not delivered.
compulsory	REGION1Y	C	Variable not delivered.
compulsory	INCDECIL	100.0	Variable not delivered.
optional	MAINSTAT	50.5	
optional	COURPURP	100.0	Variable not delivered.
optional	COURFILD	16.9	Difficulties in coding.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Variable not delivered.
Switzerland			
compulsory	TEMPREAS	25.1	A considerable amount of respondents have indicated "other reasons" (without specification). As TEMPREAS does not have such a residual category, these respondents have to be coded "blank".

Variable status	Identifier	2018	Short comments on reasons for non-available statistics and prospects for future solutions
compulsory	NACEPR2D	10.2	A major part of the non-response in NACEPR2D is due to the fact that the local unit indicated by respondents does not (or not anymore) figure in the register which is used to derive the economic activity according to NACE.
compulsory	NEEDCARE	10.4	Filter/codification error, adaptation is planned.
compulsory	HATYEAR	18.7	Filter/codification error, adaptation is planned.
optional	WAYMORE	43.1	Filter/codification error. No adaptation planned, as WAYMORE will be deleted from the LFS by 2021.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not collected.
Montenegro			
compulsory	INCDECIL	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
North Macedonia			
compulsory	MARSTAT	15.5	
compulsory	PRESEK	100.0	This variable is planned to be introduced in the future.
compulsory	REGISTER	16.2	For this variable we did not collect information for persons who are not registered in our employment agency because they cannot apply for benefit.
compulsory	COUNTR1Y	17.6	For this variable we collected the information only for persons aged 15-79.
Serbia			
compulsory	INCDECIL	22.2	Lack of information due to respondents' reluctance to disclose their personal earnings and proxy interviews.
Turkey			
compulsory	TEMPAGCY	100.0	This variable is not asked since temporary working agencies are not common in Turkey for the moment.
compulsory	AVAIRES - employed	C	This variable is not available for employed since 2009. It had been asked until 2009 and found unnecessary when examined the frequency.
compulsory	REGISTER	100.0	This question is not asked since the coverage of unemployment benefits is very limited in Turkey (around 10% of registered unemployed are receiving unemployment benefit at the current situation).
optional	COURPURP	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURFILD	100.0	Not collected.
optional	COURWORH	100.0	Not collected.

Note: 'C' All records have the same value.

10.2 Country codes

Geographical aggregates and country codes

EU-28	European Union of 28 Member States
EU	European Union
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czechia
DK	Denmark
DE	Germany
EE	Estonia
IE	Ireland
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
HR	Croatia
IT	Italy
CY	Cyprus
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
UK	United Kingdom
IS	Iceland
NO	Norway
CH	Switzerland
ME	Montenegro
MK	North Macedonia
RS	Serbia
TR	Turkey

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The purpose of this quality report is to provide the users of the European Union Labour Market Statistics with a tool for assessing the quality of these statistics which are based on the European Union Labour Force Survey. It provides a brief description of the survey and a summary of the main quality indicators which are: relevance, accuracy, accessibility and clarity, timeliness and punctuality, comparability, and coherence. The quality report is updated annually.

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