

8 March 2011: International Women's Day

Women and men in the EU seen through figures

Among the 200 million private households in the EU27, what share consists of single women with or without children? And what proportion are couples? How does the number of children affect the employment rate of both mothers and fathers? How do women and men perceive their general health?

Answers to these questions can be found in this News Release, published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, on the occasion of the International Women's Day on 8 March 2011. The tables in this News Release only show a small part of the large amount of gender based data available at Eurostat. A dedicated section on the topic of gender equality has recently been created on the Eurostat web site¹, where many of these indicators are presented, as well as links to the website of the General Directorate Justice, Fundamental rights and Citizenship of the European Commission and to the European Institute for Gender Equality.

Seven times more single mothers than single fathers

There were just over 200 million private households in the **EU27** in 2009, of which 25% consisted of couples without children, 22% of couples with children², 17% of single women without children, 13% of single men without children, 4% of single women with children, 0.5% of single men with children and 19% of other types of households².

For single women without children, the shares varied from 9% of all households in **Cyprus** and 11% in **Spain, Malta** and **Portugal** to 23% in **Finland**, 21% in **Germany** and **Lithuania** and 20% in **Austria** and **France**. In all Member States, there was a higher proportion of women living alone than of men.

The share of single women with children ranged from less than 2% in **Greece, Finland, Romania** and **Malta** to 7% in **Estonia** and the **United Kingdom** and 6% in **Ireland, Latvia** and **Lithuania**, while the proportion for men was 1% or less in all Member States.

Household composition* in % of all households, 2009

	Total number of households (000s)	Couples without children	Couples with children	Single women without children	Single men without children	Single women with children	Single men with children	Other households
EU27**	200 534	24.8	21.5	17.4	12.7	3.7	0.5	19.4
Belgium	4 568	23.9	19.5	16.7	13.9	5.3	0.8	19.9
Bulgaria	2 901	25.0	17.5	17.5	10.9	2.3	0.5	26.4
Czech Rep.	4 366	25.5	24.1	16.4	10.7	4.5	0.5	18.4
Denmark	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Germany	39 311	28.7	16.7	21.2	17.5	3.5	0.4	12.0
Estonia	549	19.9	23.0	18.2	12.3	7.0	0.9	18.7
Ireland	1 487	20.7	27.6	11.7	10.0	5.9	0.5	23.5
Greece	4 318	24.3	23.3	16.3	10.9	1.5	0.2	23.6
Spain	17 076	21.5	25.9	10.5	8.1	2.3	0.5	31.2
France	27 393	27.3	22.7	19.6	14.6	4.7	0.8	10.4
Italy	24 610	20.6	23.1	18.3	11.7	2.0	0.3	24.0
Cyprus	275	25.1	31.1	9.0	5.2	2.6	0.2	26.8
Latvia	863	16.7	18.5	17.8	8.3	5.6	0.6	32.5
Lithuania	1 393	16.2	20.7	21.2	11.7	5.5	1.0	23.7
Luxembourg	202	23.2	28.8	16.4	15.2	4.2	0.9	11.3
Hungary	3 791	22.0	21.5	16.4	7.6	3.4	0.4	28.6
Malta	142	18.8	25.5	10.9	6.6	1.9	0.4	36.3
Netherlands	7 270	29.9	22.8	18.6	16.0	3.7	0.7	8.2
Austria	3 598	22.9	18.0	20.2	15.5	2.8	0.3	20.3
Poland	13 319	20.3	25.1	14.2	6.4	3.3	0.3	30.4
Portugal	3 926	22.6	25.4	11.3	6.2	3.2	0.3	31.1
Romania	7 396	19.5	25.1	13.2	7.1	1.7	0.3	33.2
Slovenia	791	19.3	23.6	16.2	10.0	2.9	0.4	27.5
Slovakia	1 757	19.4	24.3	14.1	6.8	2.7	0.2	32.5
Finland	2 482	30.8	20.2	22.7	16.5	1.5	0.2	8.1
Sweden	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
United Kingdom	26 753	26.9	19.6	16.7	13.8	6.7	0.7	15.7
Croatia	1 639	22.4	16.2	19.5	8.3	1.8	0.2	31.7
Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	539	14.0	23.7	6.2	3.5	1.5	0.2	50.9
Turkey	19 006	15.4	39.8	5.3	2.4	2.4	0.2	34.6

* Couples include both those with and without a legal basis. Two adults living together who are not a couple are counted within "other households".

Children include all those aged less than 15 as well as young people aged 15 to 24 if they are economically inactive and live with their father and/or mother (e.g. students at home).

Other households are those containing two adults who are not a couple or three or more adults, regardless of the number of children.

** EU27 excluding Denmark and Sweden

: Data not available

The more children, the lower the employment rate for women in the EU27

The employment rates³ for women and men vary differently according to whether they have children or not. The employment rate for women aged 25 to 54 decreases as the number of children increases, while for men in this age group the pattern is almost the opposite.

In the **EU27** in 2009, the employment rate for women aged 25 to 54 without children was 75.8%, while the rate for those women with one child was 71.3%, compared with 69.2% for those with two children and 54.7% for those with three children or more. For men in this age group without children the employment rate was 80.3%, while it was 87.4% for those with one child, 90.6% for those with two children and 85.4% for those with three children or more.

The pattern observed on an EU level, that the employment rate for women decreases as the number of children increases is confirmed in a majority of Member States. However, the pattern is slightly different in **Cyprus**, **Hungary**, the **Netherlands** and **Finland**, where the rate decreases for the first child but then increases for the second. In **Latvia**, **Lithuania**, **Portugal** and **Romania**, women with one child are more often in employment, and the employment rate only starts to drop for women with a second child. In **Belgium** and **Slovenia**, the employment rate starts to drop with the third child. For men, the EU pattern is confirmed in nearly all Member States.

Employment rates for women both with and without children were lower than for men in all Member States, except for women without children in **Estonia**, **Ireland**, **Latvia**, **Lithuania**, **Hungary** and **Finland**.

Employment rates of women and men aged 25 to 54 by number of children*, 2009

	Women without children	Women with one child	Women with two children	Women with three children or more	Men without children	Men with one child	Men with two children	Men with three children or more
EU27**	75.8	71.3	69.2	54.7	80.3	87.4	90.6	85.4
Belgium	74.6	74.8	77.2	61.7	80.4	89.1	93.1	87.1
Bulgaria	77.7	76.7	74.1	44.3	79.7	86.4	86.9	67.7
Czech Republic	84.4	70.2	68.9	52.6	86.6	92.8	96.1	89.5
Denmark	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Germany	81.8	76.5	72.6	53.6	82.7	90.6	92.8	87.0
Estonia	81.6	77.6	70.0	56.5	71.5	80.7	83.2	84.9
Ireland	77.7	67.2	61.5	49.6	73.6	77.7	82.4	80.4
Greece	64.8	61.3	59.9	54.5	84.4	90.8	94.4	93.0
Spain	68.4	63.2	60.3	49.0	72.5	80.2	84.7	75.5
France	78.7	78.0	78.0	58.9	82.3	90.3	92.9	89.2
Italy	63.9	59.0	54.1	41.3	79.8	88.0	91.1	87.7
Cyprus	78.0	75.5	77.4	67.7	82.7	92.7	94.3	92.8
Latvia	75.5	76.8	75.3	61.4	68.8	77.5	82.7	78.1
Lithuania	76.2	81.3	78.8	66.7	65.2	81.5	83.0	76.9
Luxembourg	78.9	72.0	69.4	53.1	87.9	91.2	95.0	93.1
Hungary	75.2	65.6	65.7	39.1	75.2	82.5	85.1	73.9
Malta	56.6	45.7	37.4	29.6	83.9	91.7	95.6	88.5
Netherlands	83.1	78.4	81.1	71.3	88.2	93.4	95.6	93.3
Austria	82.3	81.3	77.3	60.1	85.5	92.0	93.2	90.1
Poland	73.6	73.1	70.8	62.6	76.3	86.6	90.2	87.8
Portugal	74.5	76.3	75.2	66.3	78.4	88.8	90.4	86.2
Romania	66.7	70.4	66.8	51.6	77.4	82.1	84.6	75.6
Slovenia	78.5	84.8	89.1	79.3	80.5	90.0	93.7	89.5
Slovakia	77.3	70.2	69.6	53.7	78.4	88.8	90.3	83.8
Finland	83.2	78.6	83.3	68.2	79.0	88.8	92.1	88.7
Sweden	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
United Kingdom	82.2	75.0	72.0	48.8	82.5	89.3	91.7	82.8
Croatia	65.7	72.7	75.1	61.3	71.1	81.7	87.0	80.2
Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	47.5	55.6	49.2	19.8	59.5	68.5	72.5	62.7
Turkey	35.4	29.9	24.3	19.6	70.1	79.5	83.6	77.6

* Children include all those aged less than 15 as well as young people aged 15 to 24 if they are economically inactive and live with their father and/or mother (e.g. students at home).

** EU27 excluding Denmark and Sweden

: Data not available

Ireland has the highest share of both women and men feeling they have very good general health

The answer to the question: "How is your health in general?", differs quite significantly between women and men, as well as between Member States. In the **EU27** in 2008, 65% of women and 71% of men aged 15 and over declared they had very good or good general health, 24% of women and 21% of men said they had fair general health, while 11% of women and 8% of men stated they had bad or very bad health. The pattern was the same in all Member States: men declared a better general state of health than women.

Among the Member States, the highest shares of women stating they had very good or good health were found in **Ireland** (83%), the **United Kingdom** (79%), **Sweden** (76%) and **Cyprus** (75%), and for men in **Ireland** (86%), **Sweden** (82%), the **Netherlands** and the **United Kingdom** (both 81%).

On the other hand, the highest shares of women declaring that their health was bad or very bad were observed in **Portugal** (23%), **Hungary** (21%), **Lithuania** and **Latvia** (both 20%), and for men in **Hungary** (17%), **Portugal** (16%) and **Poland** (15%).

Self-perceived health, 2008 % of the population aged 15 and over

	Very good/Good		Fair		Bad/Very bad	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
EU27	65.0	71.1	24.3	20.7	10.7	8.2
Belgium	71.4	76.6	19.0	16.7	9.6	6.7
Bulgaria	57.7	67.9	26.6	20.6	15.7	11.5
Czech Republic	58.3	65.2	27.7	22.9	13.9	11.9
Denmark	72.9	75.8	19.0	17.9	8.0	6.4
Germany	62.5	66.9	29.1	25.6	8.5	7.5
Estonia	52.8	57.0	31.1	29.8	16.0	13.2
Ireland	83.3	85.8	13.9	12.0	2.9	2.3
Greece	73.3	79.2	16.5	12.6	10.3	8.1
Spain	69.0	76.9	21.4	17.1	9.6	6.0
France	66.5	71.7	24.0	21.1	9.5	7.2
Italy	59.6	67.9	27.7	22.9	12.7	9.3
Cyprus	75.1	79.1	16.2	14.2	8.7	6.7
Latvia	41.0	48.9	39.3	36.8	19.6	14.4
Lithuania	45.4	52.9	34.3	33.1	20.3	14.0
Luxembourg	72.6	75.4	18.9	17.6	8.4	6.9
Hungary	52.0	58.9	26.8	24.2	21.1	17.0
Malta	72.3	75.6	22.8	20.5	4.8	3.8
Netherlands	73.8	81.2	19.7	14.9	6.5	3.9
Austria	68.2	71.1	22.2	20.3	9.7	8.5
Poland	54.6	61.2	27.4	24.3	18.0	14.6
Portugal	43.4	54.1	33.8	29.9	22.8	16.0
Romania	65.3	73.8	24.6	19.1	10.2	7.0
Slovenia	56.8	60.9	28.0	26.0	15.3	13.0
Slovakia	55.2	65.1	26.7	22.0	18.1	12.8
Finland	67.6	69.7	24.4	22.9	8.0	7.4
Sweden	75.5	81.6	18.6	14.1	5.9	4.4
United Kingdom	79.0	81.2	15.8	13.9	5.2	4.9
Iceland	78.8	82.4	16.3	14.1	5.0	3.4
Norway	74.0	79.2	16.2	14.8	9.8	6.0

1. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_social_policy_equality/gender_equality
2. Couples include both those with and without a legal basis. Two adults living together who are not a couple are counted within "other households".
Children include all those aged less than 15 as well as young people aged 15 to 24 if they are economically inactive and live with their father and/or mother (e.g. students at home).
Other households are those containing two adults who are not a couple or three or more adults, regardless of the number of children.
3. The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of persons aged 25 to 54 in employment by the total population of the same age group.

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