

29 April 2019 | 1100 hrs | 065/2019

Unemployment Rate: March 2019

The purpose of this release is to provide a more timely monthly series of unemployment estimates. For this release, the monthly unemployment rates are based on a harmonised source, the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in combination with Jobsplus as the administrative source. Estimates are seasonally adjusted so as to allow comparability of data with previous months.

Main points

- In March 2019, the seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate was 3.5 per cent (Chart 1).
- At 3.7 per cent, males were the main contributors to the overall unemployment rate recorded for March 2019 (Table 2).
- During the month under review, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for persons aged 15 to 24 years (youth unemployment rate) was 9.5 per cent while the rate for the 25 to 74 age group stood at 2.6 per cent (Table 1).

Chart 1. Seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate



Components leading to monthly unemployment rate

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March 2019 was 3.5 per cent, as compared to 3.6 per cent in February 2019 (Table 1).

During March 2019, the seasonally adjusted number of unemployed persons was 8,675 with the unemployed males and the over 25 age group being the major contributors to the overall level of unemployment (Table 2).

In March 2019, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for males was 3.7 per cent, as compared to 3.8 per cent in February 2019. The rate for females stood at 3.1 per cent, down by 0.1 percentage points over February levels (Table 1).

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for persons aged 15 to 24 years (youth unemployment rate) was 9.5 per cent, while the rate for the 25 to 74 age group stood at 2.6 per cent (Chart 2).

The seasonally adjusted number of youth unemployed amounted to 2,818 whereas the figure for those between 25 and 74 was 5,857 (Table 2).

Table 1. Seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate

Month	15-24	25-74	Males	Females	Total
	%				
	2018				
March	8.4	3.3	4.1	3.8	4.0
April	7.6	3.3	4.0	3.7	3.9
May	7.7	3.3	4.0	3.5	3.8
June	8.7	3.1	4.0	3.5	3.8
July	9.8	2.9	3.9	3.5	3.7
August	9.8	2.7	3.7	3.3	3.6
September	10.4	2.6	3.7	3.4	3.6
October	9.8	2.7	3.6	3.4	3.5
November	9.7	2.8	3.6	3.5	3.6
December	9.6	2.7	3.7	3.4	3.5
	2019				
January	9.4	2.7	3.7	3.2	3.5
February	9.8	2.7	3.8	3.2	3.6
March	9.5	2.6	3.7	3.1	3.5

Chart 2. Seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate by age group

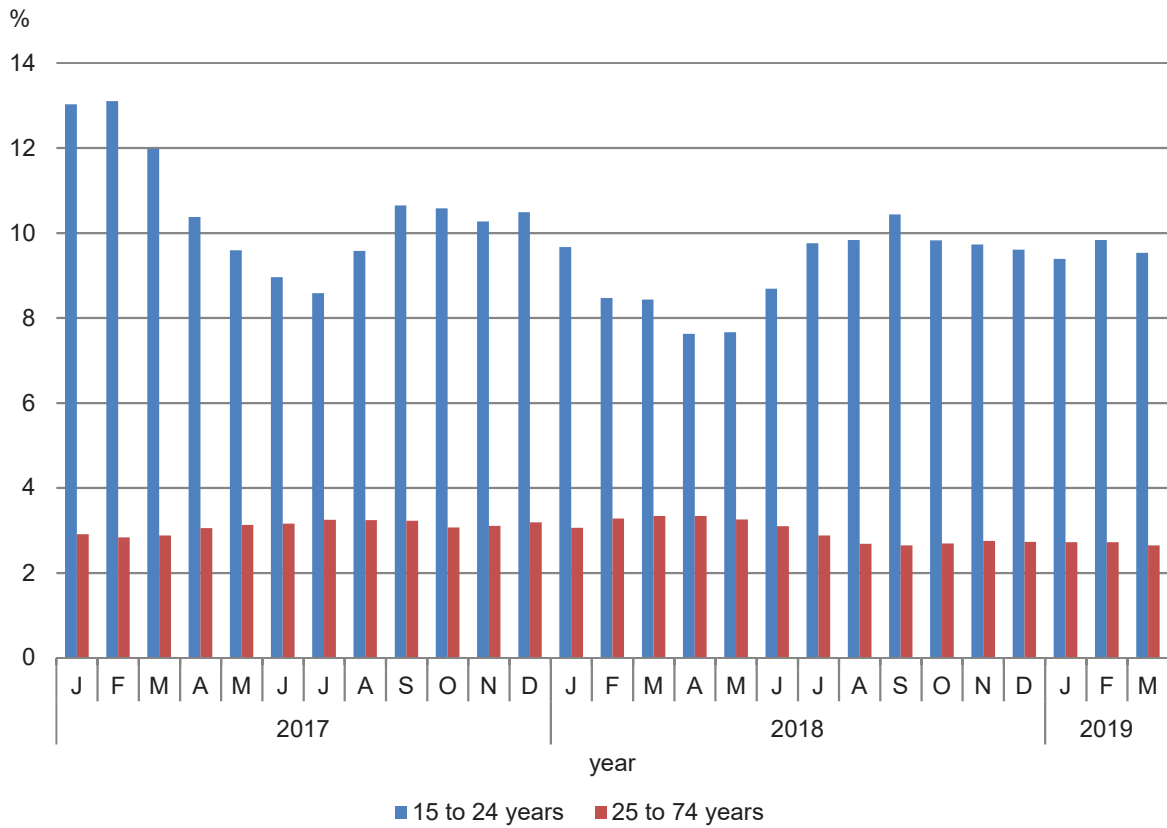


Table 2. Seasonally adjusted unemployment levels

Month	15-24	25-74	Males	Females	Total
	Number				
	2018				
March	2,441	6,960	5,774	3,627	9,401
April	2,188	7,020	5,678	3,530	9,208
May	2,197	6,904	5,710	3,391	9,101
June	2,519	6,610	5,747	3,382	9,129
July	2,911	6,194	5,611	3,494	9,105
August	2,939	5,809	5,397	3,351	8,748
September	3,106	5,746	5,366	3,486	8,852
October	2,905	5,856	5,267	3,494	8,761
November	2,870	6,010	5,306	3,574	8,880
December	2,835	5,967	5,370	3,432	8,802
	2019				
January	2,771	5,967	5,528	3,210	8,738
February	2,915	5,988	5,656	3,247	8,903
March	2,818	5,857	5,484	3,191	8,675

Methodological Notes

1. The purpose of this release is to provide a detailed series of monthly unemployment estimates using harmonised definitions applied in the Labour Force Survey. The release contains both monthly unemployment rates and monthly unemployment levels.
2. The monthly unemployment rates are based on the definition recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The measurement is based on a harmonised source, the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which is designed to satisfy the concepts and definitions as outlined by Eurostat, EU's Statistical Agency.
3. The monthly unemployment rates are computed on the basis of a benchmarking model which combines monthly Jobsplus data on employment and unemployment with Quarterly LFS data. This computation produces the non seasonally adjusted (NSA) estimates, which are then seasonally adjusted (SA). The results in this release are all seasonally adjusted (SA), however, non seasonally adjusted (NSA) data are included in the excel version of this release. The monthly figures produced differ from the quarterly LFS publications due to differences in the method of calculation.
4. Definitions:
 - **Labour force:** The sum of persons aged 15 to 74 years who are either employed or unemployed.
 - **Unemployed persons:** The sum of persons aged between 15 years and 74 years who, during the reference week, satisfied the following criteria:
 - **without work**
 - **actively seeking work during the previous 4 weeks:** example of active job search include contacting Jobsplus, applying directly with an employer, contacting a private employment agency, inserting or answering to an advert in a newspaper.
 - **currently available for work:** available to start work within 2 weeks of the reference week.
 - **Unemployment rate:** Unemployed persons (15 to 74 years) as a percentage of the labour force (15 - 74 years).
5. Methodology:
 - **Calculation of monthly estimates to produce non seasonally adjusted estimates:** The LFS provides benchmark estimates of employment and unemployment for each quarter since 2005. These quarterly benchmark estimates are used to compile monthly data using the Proportional Denton method. For months where the quarterly LFS data is not yet available, data is forecasted in order to compile the monthly estimates. This methodology provides the non seasonally adjusted (NSA) estimates.
 - **Seasonal adjustment:** To correct for typical seasonal patterns, the data series included have been concurrently seasonally adjusted. This seasonal adjustment is completed by applying the ARIMA time series models, integrated in the JDemetra+ application. This seasonal adjustment is conducted using the indirect approach, where each individual series is independently adjusted. The individual series taken in consideration for both employment and unemployment are:
 - Males aged 15 to 24 years
 - Males aged 25 to 74 years
 - Females aged 15 to 24 years
 - Females aged 25 to 74 years
6. For further information on the methodology to produce the monthly estimates kindly access the link: https://nso.gov.mt/en/nso/Sources_and_Methods/Unit_C2/Labour_Market_Statistics/Documents/Monthly%20unemployment%20rate%20-%20Methodology.pdf
7. The full series starting from January 2010 for both NSA and SA are published in the excel version of this release.

8. **Revisions:** Due to the method adopted, the data in this News Release is subject to revisions.

Revisions are caused by the following:

- **Inclusion of the most recent LFS data in the NSA calculation process**

The monthly estimates are released at approximately 30 days from the reference month. Later, when the quarterly LFS estimates are produced (at approximately 90 days from the end of the quarter), the non seasonally adjusted estimates of the three months are recalculated. The non seasonally adjusted monthly estimates are then revised, at the moment of release of the first month following the LFS reference quarter.

- **Updates to the seasonally adjusted series whenever new monthly data are added**

The monthly seasonally adjusted series are estimated every month including the latest available data, and these updates result in changes in the model parameters. With reference to the seasonally adjusted data, revisions are therefore observed every month.

- **Revisions in LFS data**

Periodically, the monthly estimates will be subject to revision due to revisions in LFS data. Changes in LFS estimates are carried out intermittently to align the estimates with population figures.

9. Figures may not add up due to rounding.

10. References to this News Release are to be cited appropriately.

11. A detailed news release calendar is available on:

https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx

Components leading to monthly unemployment rate

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November 2018 was 3.7 per cent, as compared to 3.6 per cent in October 2018 (Table 1).

The seasonally adjusted number of unemployed persons was 9,148 in November 2018, with the unemployed males as the major contributor to the overall level of unemployment (Table 2).

In November 2018, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for males was 3.7 per cent, unchanged from the preceeding month . The rate for females, in November 2018, stood at 3.5 per cent also at par with previous monthly figures (Table 1).

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for persons aged 15 to 24 years (youth unemployment rate) was 11.6 per cent in November 2018, while the rate for the 25 to 74 age group stood at 2.5 per cent (Chart 2).

The seasonally adjusted number of youth unemployed in November 2018 was 3,546 whereas the figure for those between 25 and 74 was 5,602 (Table 2).