Unemployment in the EU

Unemployment in the euro zone and the whole European Union has been inching down for many months, adding to signs of economic recovery, but remains well above levels recorded before the start of the financial crisis in 2008. The seasonally-adjusted euro area unemployment rate was 11.1 percent in April 2015 down from 11.7 percent in the same month last year. The EU-28 rate was 9.7 percent in April 2015, compared with 10.3 percent in April 2014. There are significant differences among member states in the jobless rate, which was 4.7 percent in Germany in April 2015 and 25.4 percent in Greece.

The slow decline in current unemployment levels and the fact that, even before the crisis, unemployment was much higher in the EU than in many other regions of the world are attributed by some economists to certain labour market issues. High joblessness, especially among young people, is now considered a major social and economic problem, prompting calls for reform.

Boosting what is the still sluggish economic growth and increasing the number of jobs are a key priority for European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker.

This note highlights a selection of commentaries and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on labour market issues, with hyperlinks to the texts concerned.

- Home ownership, labour markets and the economic crisis
  Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), 16 June 2015

- One year after the Youth Guarantee: Policy fatigue or signs of action?
  European Policy Centre (EPC), 27 May 2015

- The case for a European unemployment benefit scheme
  Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), 15 May 2015

- Erasmus Pro: For a million "young European apprentices" by 2020
  Notre Europe Jacques Delors Institute, 12 May 2015

- Job quality and women’s labour market participation
  European Trade Union Institute, June 2015

- It’s our job: Reforming Europe’s labour markets
  Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, May 2015

- European employers’ perspectives on long-term unemployment, recruitment and public employment services
  Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), May 2015

- Europe’s jobs policy shake-up
  Friends of Europe, May 2015
Creating a Union with a "human face": a European unemployment insurance
Istituto Affari Internazionali, May 2015

Is this the end of jobs as we know them?  Open Society Foundations, 7 April 2015

Poor and under pressure: the social impact of Europe’s fiscal consolidation  Bruegel, 1 April 2015

Europäische Arbeitslosenversicherung Ein wirkungsvoller Stabilisator für den Euroraum?
Centrum für Europäische Politik, April 2015

Wie sozial ist die EU? Eine Perspektive für die soziale Dimension
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, April 2015

Labour Mobility in Europe: An untapped resource?
Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), March 2015

Unequal Europe: Recommendations for a more caring EU  Friends of Europe, 23 February 2015

Employee progression in European labour markets
Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), 6 February 2015

Poverty and inequalities on the rise: Just social models needed as the solution!
Caritas Europa, February 2015

A Single European Labour Market: Moving it closer?
Egmont, Bruegel, Confrontations Europe, 29 January 2015

European social dialogue: 30 years of experience and progress, what future?
Notre Europe Jacques Delors Institute, 26 January 2016

Políticas activas de empleo: una panorámica
Fundación de Estudios de Economía Aplicada, 15 January 2015

Reinsurance of national unemployment benefit schemes
Centre for European Policy Studies, 9 January 2015

Self-employment in Europe
Institute for Public Policy Research 4 January 2015

Opportunities and challenges in the area of employment, social affairs, skills and labour mobility
European Policy Centre, 30 September 2014

Benefits and drawbacks of European unemployment insurance
Bruegel, 13 September 2014