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From:	Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
Subject:	REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL on implementation of Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies

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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

on implementation of Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies

1. INTRODUCTION

Job vacancy statistics (JVS) record the number of jobs vacant at a particular moment, reflecting the unmet demand for labour.

They therefore provide key information on possible gaps between labour supply and demand, including labour market mismatches, which occur when the skills or location of people seeking a job do not correspond to the expectations of possible employers.

Eurostat publishes a quarterly news release on its website[1], with a large set of JVS data broken down by economic activity.

Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 April 2008 on quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies[2] ('the JVS Regulation') establishes a common framework for Member States to produce comparable data and transmit them to the Commission.

Under Article 10 of the JVS Regulation, the Commission is required to report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the Regulation by 24 June 2010 and every three years thereafter. The purpose of this report is to assess the quality both of statistics provided by Member States and of EU aggregates. Furthermore, it will also identify areas where improvements could be made in the future.

This is the Commission's sixth JVS report to the European Parliament and the Council[3]. It focuses on JVS data received since the previous edition, for the reference quarters from the first quarter of 2022 (Q1-2022) to the third quarter of 2024 (Q3-2024). It reflects the observations made by Eurostat when collecting and validating JVS data for these reference quarters and builds on the documentation provided by Member States in their annual quality reports[4].

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-euro-indicators/w/3-16122024-bp
[2] OJ L 145, 4.6.2008, p. 234. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2008/453/oj/eng
[3] See previous report: COM(2022) 355 of 26 July 2022. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022DC0355&qid=1738593721236,
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/jvs_esms.htm

To complement the general framework established by the JVS Regulation, the Commission adopted two implementing regulations:

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 1062/2008[5], which defines the seasonal adjustment procedures to be applied from the first quarter of 2014, the structure and content of the annual quality reports that Member States are to supply to the Commission, and the dates on which these reports are to be sent;
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 19/2009[6], which defines the term 'job vacancy', sets deadlines for sending data and specifies the periods to be covered by the first set of data supplied. The annex to this legal act lists the Member States running feasibility studies and the subjects these studies cover.

In Annex 2 to Regulation (EC) No 1062/2008, the quality of JVS data is determined using the following criteria: relevance, accuracy, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, comparability, and coherence.

The accessibility and clarity of JVS data is now well established, through the publication of detailed metadata and national quality reports on Eurostat's website. This JVS report will therefore focus on other criteria.

2. General progress since the last report

The above-described legal basis for JVS applies to the reference period covered by this report.

In 2022, the Commission carried out an evaluation and impact assessment for all labour market statistics on businesses (LMB), including JVS. On this basis, the Commission made a proposal to replace the Framework Regulation that was adopted on 28 July 2023[7]. The new Regulation (EU) 2025/941 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Union labour market statistics on businesses, repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 530/1999 and Regulations (EC) No 450/2003 and (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council, was adopted on 7 May 2025[8].

[5] Commission Regulation (EC) No 1062/2008 of 28 October 2008 implementing Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies, as regards seasonal adjustment procedures and quality reports (OJ L 285, 29.10.2008, p. 3).
[6] Commission Regulation (EC) No 19/2009 of 13 January 2009 implementing Regulation (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quarterly statistics on Community job vacancies, as regards the definition of job vacancy, the reference dates for data collection, data transmission specifications and feasibility studies (OJ L 9, 14.1.2009, p. 3).
[7] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52023PC0459.
[8] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202500941

The main developments that took place during the reference period were as follows:

- updating the euro area aggregate to reflect the inclusion of Croatia after its adoption of the euro on 1 January 2023;
- including in the quarterly news release an analysis of the job vacancy rate by NACE section, for both euro area and EU aggregates;
- disseminating the quarterly news release in a revised format featuring interactive graphs;
- expanding the scope of JVS, for France, to cover small enterprises with fewer than 10 employees.

In the next sections, we comment on the latest developments as regards the scope, data collection standards, data validation and seasonal adjustment.

2.1 Scope

Under EU legislation, Member States are required to provide the number of job vacancies and of occupied posts for all business units and by economic activity, for each section of the statistical classification[9] of economic activities in the European Community (NACE Rev. 2). However, for small enterprises (defined as units with fewer than 10 employees) and NACE Rev. 2 sections O-S[10] (where the main activities are public administration, health services and education), the JVS Regulation states that any Member States that have difficulties in providing data should conduct feasibility studies. Although these feasibility studies have enabled some Member States to achieve full coverage of the economy, this is not yet the case for Denmark, France and Italy.

Since the last report, France has started transmitting job vacancy data for all sizes of enterprise, including those with 1-9 employees. Back series have also been transmitted for the period starting from the second quarter of 2011 (Q2-2011) onwards.

In Denmark, only units within the business economy (NACE Rev. 2 sections B to N) are surveyed. In France and Italy, ‘Public administration and defence; compulsory social security’ (NACE Rev. 2 section O) is not surveyed, while public institutions are not fully covered in ‘Education’ or ‘Human health and social work activities’ (NACE Rev. 2 sections P and Q).

2.2 Data collection standards

[9] Regulation (EC) No 1893/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 establishing the statistical classification of economic activities NACE Revision 2 and amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 3037/90 as well as certain EC Regulations on specific statistical domains (OJ L 393, 30.12.2006, p. 1). OJ L 393, 30.12.2006, p. 1; ELI: https://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2006/1893/oj.

[10] Covering: public administration and defence, compulsory social security (section O), education (section P), human health and social work activities (section Q), arts, entertainments and recreation (section R) and other service activities such as activities of membership organisations, repair of computers and personal and household goods, and other personal service activities (section S).

The latest version of the Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX)[11] data structure and internationally agreed code lists (available online through a dedicated registry)[12] were used successfully to receive Member State data; to produce the JVS and to transmit them to the European Central Bank.

2.3 Data validation

Eurostat continued carrying out plausibility checks on each quarterly transmission by comparing series over time and across NACE economic activities. If there are significant quarter-on-quarter changes, Eurostat asks Member States to confirm the data or transmit a corrected data file. If major revisions or sudden changes are detected in any particular NACE section, they are systematically followed up with the countries concerned.

2.4 Seasonal adjustment

Under Commission Regulation No 1062/2008, all EU Member States and other European Economic Area (EEA) countries[13] are also expected to transmit seasonally adjusted (SA) series with data on job vacancies and occupied posts at least for individual/aggregated NACE Rev. 2 sections B-E, F, G-I, J, K, L, M-N, O-Q and R-S. Eurostat uses the data supplied on seasonally adjusted job vacancies and occupied posts to calculate the seasonally adjusted job vacancy rates as a ratio.

At EU and euro area levels, occupied posts and job vacancies are first aggregated across Member States and then seasonally adjusted (direct seasonal adjustment).

Eurostat publishes SA data for EU aggregates in the relevant database[14] and in the 'Statistics Explained' article on JVS[15], alongside non-seasonally adjusted (NSA) data (see Section 4.5).

Eurostat continued to monitor seasonal adjustment procedures through the dedicated annex attached to the national quality reports. This annex details in particular the seasonal adjustment models used, the outliers detected, the size of the adjustments, and the volatility of the results.

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[11] https://sdmx.org/ (available only in English).

[12] https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/sdmxregistry/ (available only in English).

[13] Except Liechtenstein, as Regulation (EC) No 1062/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 February 2003 does not apply to this country. Throughout the document, Norway and Iceland are referred to as 'other EEA countries'.

[14] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/jvs_q_nace2/default/table?lang=en&category=labour.jvs

[15] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Job_vacancy_statistics

2.5 Quality reports

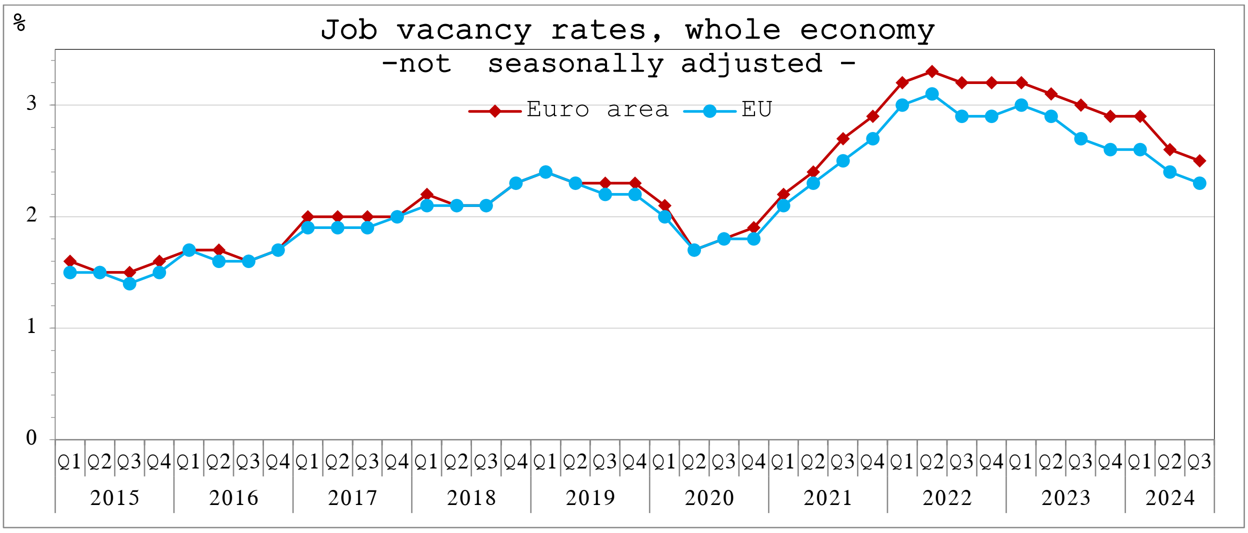
The annual quality reports were generally submitted by Member States on time, i.e. by 31 August 2024, using the latest version of the European Statistical System Metadata Handler tool. The reports were made available to all users[16].

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS THROUGH THE LENS OF JVS

During the reference period, Eurostat has continued to provide institutional users and the general public with JVS and derived indicators on cyclical and structural changes in EU labour markets. The latest developments are described in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 below.

3.1 Job vacancy cycle

As shown in the chart below, JVS show a turning point in the second quarter of 2022 (Q2-2022) for both the EU and the euro area. This marked the beginning of a decline in the job vacancy rates following several quarters of consecutive increases.



3.2 Beveridge curve

Besides being an important indicator for analysing business cycles, JVS provide information on the matching performance of labour markets through the 'Beveridge curve'.

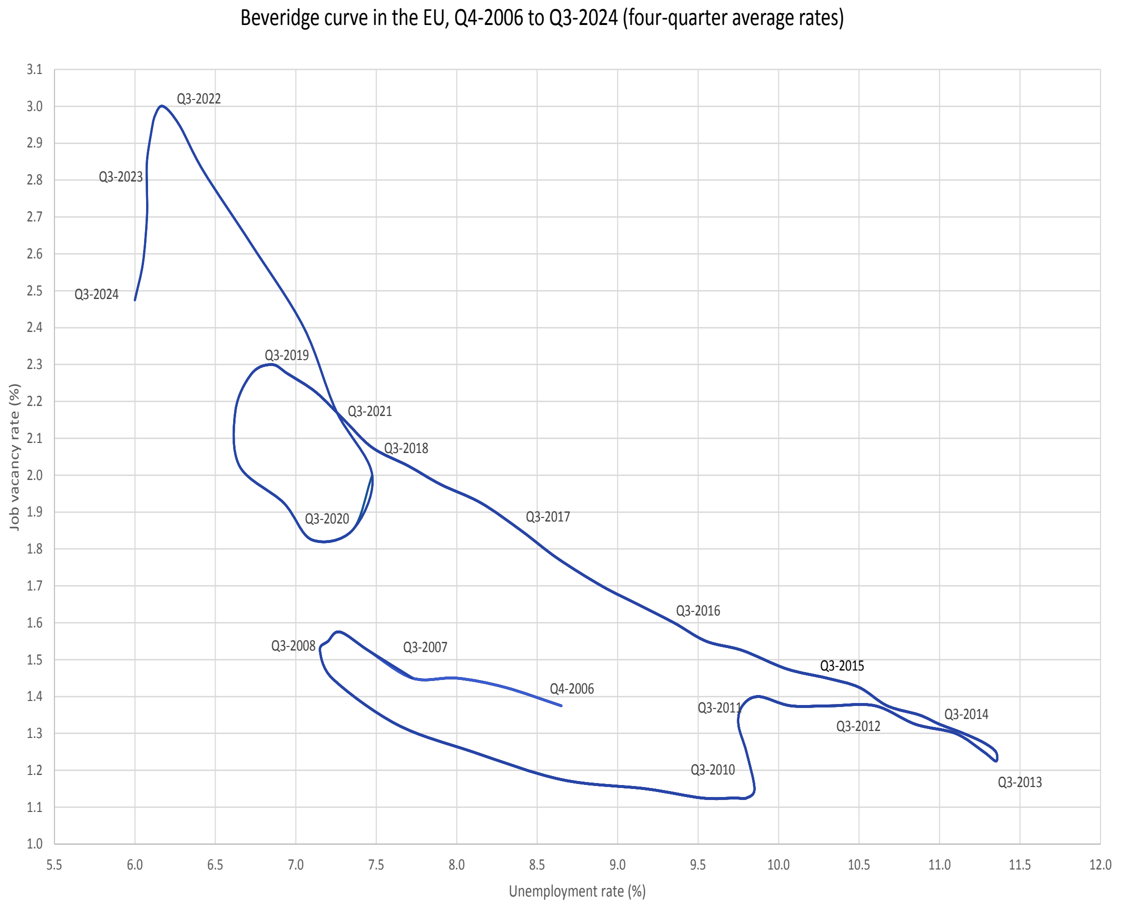
The figure below shows the EU Beveridge curve, illustrating the negative relationship between unemployment and job vacancies, i.e. as the number of job openings increases, the number of people unemployed decreases. Whereas movements along the Beveridge curve can be attributed to changes in labour market tightness, shifts of the curve may indicate changes in the matching efficiency between labour supply and labour demand, i.e. the ease with which unemployed individuals can find employment. The job vacancy rate and the unemployment

[16] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/jvs_esms.htm (available only in English).

rate figures used to construct the Beveridge curves below are four-quarter averages of quarterly data.

Between the first quarter of 2021 (Q1-2021) and the fourth quarter of 2022 (Q4-2022), we observe a continuous increase in job vacancy rates along a steeper segment of the Beveridge curve. Since the turning point, job vacancy rates have been decreasing sharply in the EU, with no concurrent increases in the unemployment rates so far.

During the reference period of this report, Eurostat updated the EU Beveridge curve twice per year and commented on the results in a Statistics Explained article[17]. This curve is provided below, up to the last quarter covered by this report (Q3-2024).



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: jvs_q_nace2, lfsq_urgan)

[17] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Job_vacancy_and_unemployment_rates_-_Beveridge_curve

4. DATA QUALITY

This part of the report examines all quality dimensions in European statistics on job vacancies: relevance, accuracy, timeliness and punctuality, accessibility and clarity, comparability, and coherence.

4.1 Relevance

JVS are important for economic analysis, as they are the main data source that measures unmet labour demand[18]. Quarterly JVS data are used by the Commission (the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs) and the European Central Bank to monitor short-term developments in the business cycle and on the labour market.

The job vacancy rate is one of the principal European economic indicators[19], the primary source of information used to analyse and monitor short-term cyclical economic developments within the EU, the euro area and individual EU countries.

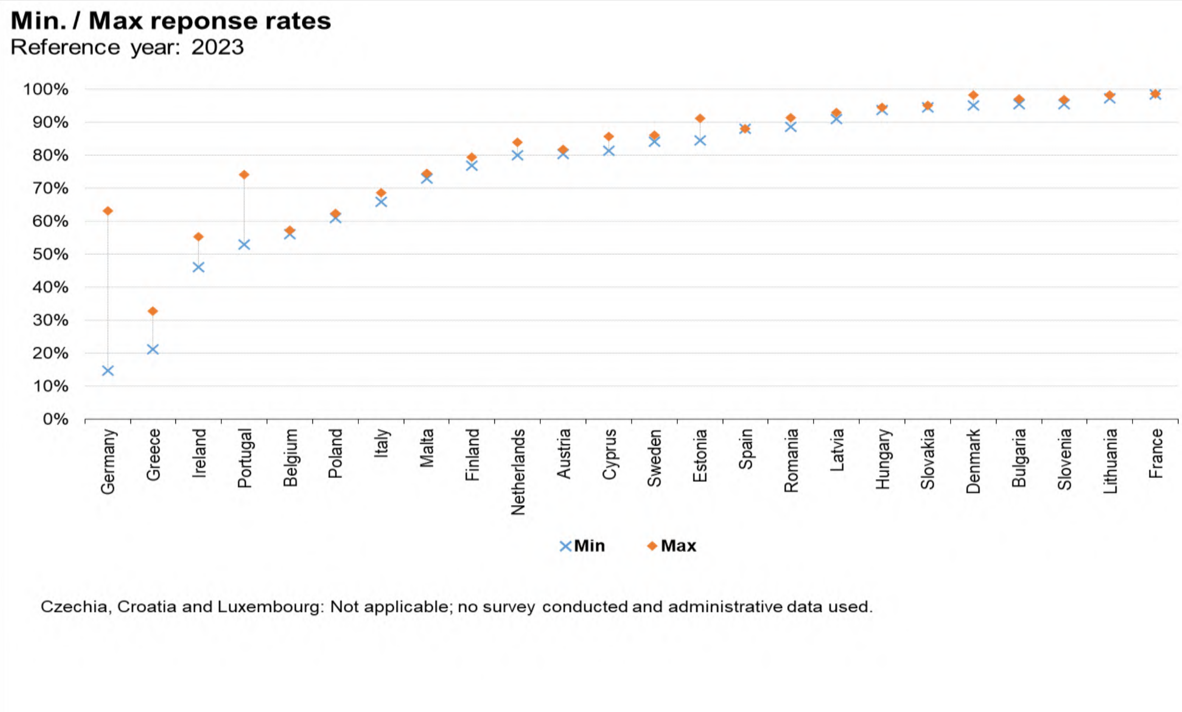
JVS were also used in several official documents, including the Commission's Joint Employment Report (2024)[20] and the Commission's European Economic Forecast (spring 2023)[21].

4.2 Accuracy

As an indication of accuracy, Member States calculate the coefficients of variation in the number of job vacancies (non-seasonally adjusted), taking into account the characteristics of their national sample design. The coefficient of variation expresses the standard error as a percentage of the mean value being estimated. According to the quality reports for the 2023 reference year, the coefficients of variation for total job vacancies were below 15% in all Member States except for Ireland[22].

[18] In situations where vacancy data are not available, unmet labour demand has in some cases been proxied in economic analysis by survey-based indicators, for instance of perceived labour shortages as reported by firms.
[19] Communication of the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on *Eurozone statistics Towards improved methodologies for Eurozone statistics and indicators*, COM(2002) 661 final.
[20] https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/93b9c730-8da5-11ee-8aa6-01aa75ed71a1/language-en
[21] https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/european-economic-forecast-spring-2023_en#:~:text=The%20European%20economy%20continues%20to%20show%20resilience%20in,lifting%20the%20growth%20outlook%20for%202023%20and%202024
[22] JVS metadata: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/jvs_esms.htm.

The response rate significantly affects the accuracy of estimates. According to the quality reports from Member States, it varied from 14.7% in Germany[23] (for the postal survey conducted in the fourth quarter of 2023, Q4-2023) and between 21.1% and 32.7% for Greece (depending on the quarters) up to 98.3% in Lithuania, Denmark and 98.7% in France. In 2023, the median response rate across Member States remained high, ranging from 83% to 86% depending on the quarter.



In terms of revisions, the situation differs for the two releases of the job vacancy rate, i.e. the flash and the final estimates. The flash estimates, which are released at T+50 days, may be revised at T+78 days, when the final estimates are published. Although the flash data do not cover all Member States, revisions of the flash estimates did not exceed 0.1 percentage points for the euro area and the EU over the reference period of this report.

As regards final estimates published at T+78 days, revisions can be measured by comparing the first transmission with the latest available release. For the euro area and the EU, revisions in the job vacancy rate never exceeded 0.1 percentage points over the reference period of this report, except for the first and second quarters of 2023 (Q1-2023 and Q2-2023), where revisions reached 0.2 percentage points.

[23] The job vacancy survey is not mandatory in Germany, which explains the low rate of response to the postal survey run every fourth quarter of the year. The results from this survey are re-weighted using administrative data, through generalised regression estimation, to correct for any bias due to non-response.

4.3 Timeliness and punctuality

All Member States are required to provide time series for the total number of vacancies and number of occupied posts in their country, starting from the first quarter of 2010. They should provide the data no more than 70 days after the end of the quarter (T+70). In addition, Member States with an overall number of employees exceeding 3% of the EU total are required to send flash estimates no more than 45 days after the end of the quarter (T+45).

The timeliness of JVS transmissions was generally satisfactory as regards both the flash estimate and the final publication. Member States have been reminded regularly of the importance of meeting the mandatory deadlines for transmitting data on principal European economic indicators, including JVS. Some delays were occasionally recorded in Ireland, Croatia, Hungary and Luxembourg (delays of one day) as well as in Greece, Portugal and Iceland (delays of two days). In the third quarter of 2022 (Q3-2022), Portugal transmitted its data too late for inclusion in the quarterly release. There were no structurally late deliveries that could impair the timely publication of European aggregates.

4.4 Accessibility and clarity

JVS are disseminated through Eurostat's standard distribution channels, namely the online database and the 'Statistics Explained' pages on Eurostat's website[24]. The website provides timely information on the job vacancy rate for both the European aggregates and individual Member States, including charts on developments over time. As the job vacancy rate belongs to the principal European economic indicators, a news release is published every quarter[25].

Metadata supplied to users in support of data releases have been updated using the annual quality reports provided by Member States. These can be found on Eurostat's website[26].

4.5 Comparability and coherence

There is no other harmonised source available at European level that measures unmet demand on the labour market which could be used for comparing with JVS. Many Member States count vacancies reported to public employment services, but it is problematic to use these figures to assess the consistency of the JVS. This is because such data may suffer from under coverage (as not all vacancies may be reported to the public employment service) and/or over-reporting (if any filled vacancies still remain in the administrative register). Moreover, JVS from administrative sources are based on national definitions, which differ from one country to another.

[24] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Job_vacancy_statistics and https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Job_vacancy_and_unemployment_rates_-_Beveridge_curve (available only in English).

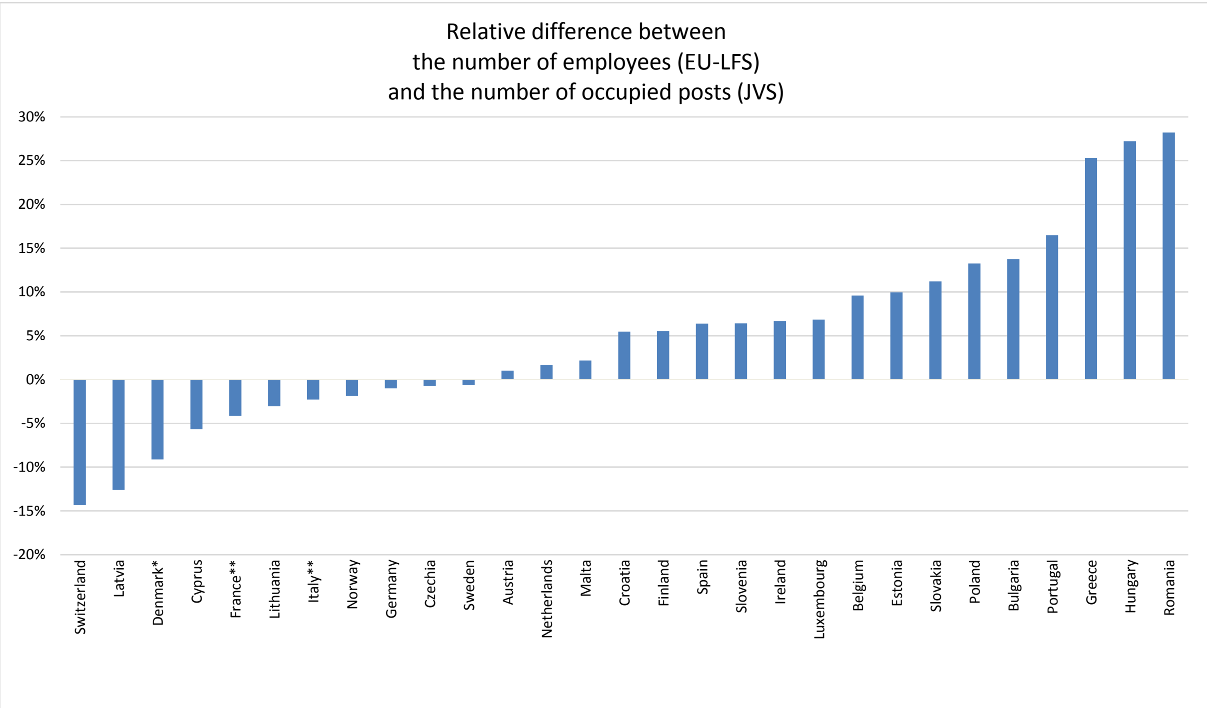
[25] See the Release calendar for euro indicators (available only in English, French and German).

[26] See the JVS metadata and the EU and national quality reports: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/jvs_esms.htm (available only in English).

The number of occupied posts, which is the denominator of the job vacancy rate, can be compared with information from other sources, in particular the number of employees reported in the EU labour force survey (EU-LFS). Comparisons and subsequent assessments of differences must nevertheless take account of conceptual and survey-related differences between sources. In particular, JVS are estimated from a sample of businesses, whereas the EU-LFS is based on a sample of households.

The EU-LFS data were extracted for the reference year 2023 according to the *country of work*, rather than the country of residence that is used for most LFS-based statistics. This extraction is more in line with the concept of occupied posts used in JVS as it excludes cross-border commuters and other non-residents whose posts are not recorded in the latter. It could remove the negative gap measured for Luxembourg explained by the large proportion of cross-border work, which creates large discrepancies between EU-LFS and JVS concepts: the EU-LFS surveys resident households only, even those working abroad, whereas JVS cover resident enterprises, including their non-resident (i.e. cross-border) workers.

As shown in the figure below, the difference between the number of employees recorded in the EU-LFS and the number of occupied posts recorded in JVS for the whole economy generally remains within a range of between -15% and +15%, with the exceptions of Portugal (+16%) and Greece, Hungary and Romania (all above +20%).



* Denmark: comparison for the aggregated NACE Rev. 2 sections B-N.

** France and Italy: occupied posts are not recorded for section O and recorded only very partially for sections P and Q. Hence, those sections have been omitted in this comparison with EU-LFS data.

In the case of Greece, the identified gap points to differences between both sources as regards methodology and definitions. JVS only cover businesses with three or more employees. Moreover, some businesses might not be captured in the sampling frame because they started operating after the business register had been updated, leading to some underestimation of occupied posts.

Hungary does not cover businesses with fewer than five employees in its JVS, which explains part of the gap recorded.

In its quality report[27], Romania explained that discrepancies between the EU-LFS and JVS regarding the number of occupied posts reflected the fact that occupied posts collected using JVS methods did not include the following:

- individuals whose employment contract is suspended for a given period (on the grounds of maternity leave, childcare leave, sick leave or unpaid leave, or because of some other type of absence);
- posts which, though temporarily suspended, might fall vacant and be occupied for a limited period of time;
- posts in armed forces or in the informal sector.

Together with the responsible national authorities of the countries listed above, Eurostat will continue monitoring discrepancies between the number of employees recorded by the EU-LFS and the number of occupied posts recorded in JVS.

It is also important that vacancies and posts on the payroll of temporary agencies are covered and assigned to section N of NACE Rev. 2.

Finally, the main challenge as regards comparability is for all Member States to cover the entire economy in their JVS, i.e. to include small enterprises and NACE Rev. 2 sections O to S, including public institutions. Since the last progress report, France now covers enterprises with fewer than 10 employees. However, as mentioned in Section 2.1, data for Denmark, France and Italy are still not fully comparable with that of other Member States.

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the quality of the JVS of the Member States and of the EU aggregates has remained good. Over the past three years, the timeliness of JVS has continued to improve.

The quality reports submitted by Member States were processed using the latest version of the European Statistical System Metadata Handler tool and made available to all users[28].

As regards seasonal adjustment, Eurostat has collected detailed methodological information from Member States and released it as an annex to the annual quality reports.

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[27] https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/estat/spe/metaconv/previewMetadataFile.htm?metadataFileId=36727

[28] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/jvs_esms.htm (available only in English).

Eurostat has continued to provide institutional users and the general public with JVS and derived indicators on cyclical and structural changes in EU labour markets. In particular, JVS were able to capture the turning point that affected the business cycles of the euro area and the EU.

The European aggregates were published as scheduled. In general, only very minor revisions have been recorded for the European aggregates, as regards both the flash and final estimates.

To improve the comparability of JVS across countries further, it is important that all Member States fully cover the public sector (in the case of Denmark, France and Italy). Improved coverage would also make it possible to publish the number of vacancies, for European aggregates, in addition to the job vacancy rate. Eurostat will continue to address this issue, in close cooperation with the countries concerned.

The new regulation on EU labour market statistics on businesses will introduce the following improvements for JVS:

- eliminating possible biases by covering all economic activities and business sizes, including small enterprises with fewer than 10 employees, public institutions and the public sector;
- introducing precision targets for the number of vacancies and occupied posts;
- specifying in the legislation the statistical units used for collecting JVS data, limiting them to enterprises and local units.

Eurostat will continue to monitor the compliance and quality of JVS at regular intervals, using the data delivered and other national documentation, including quality reports, and follow this up closely with the national statistical authorities responsible.

The new Regulation (EU) 2025//941 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Union labour market statistics on businesses, repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 530/1999 and Regulations (EC) No 450/2003 and (EC) No 453/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council, was adopted on 7 May 2025[29].

As the legal framework has been updated with the Regulation (EU) 2025/941 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Union labour market statistics on businesses, adopted on 7 May 2025, this is the last report under the Regulation (EC) No 453/2008.

[29] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202500941