

GDP and employment flash estimates for the first quarter of 2020

# GDP down by 3.8% and employment down by 0.2% in the euro area

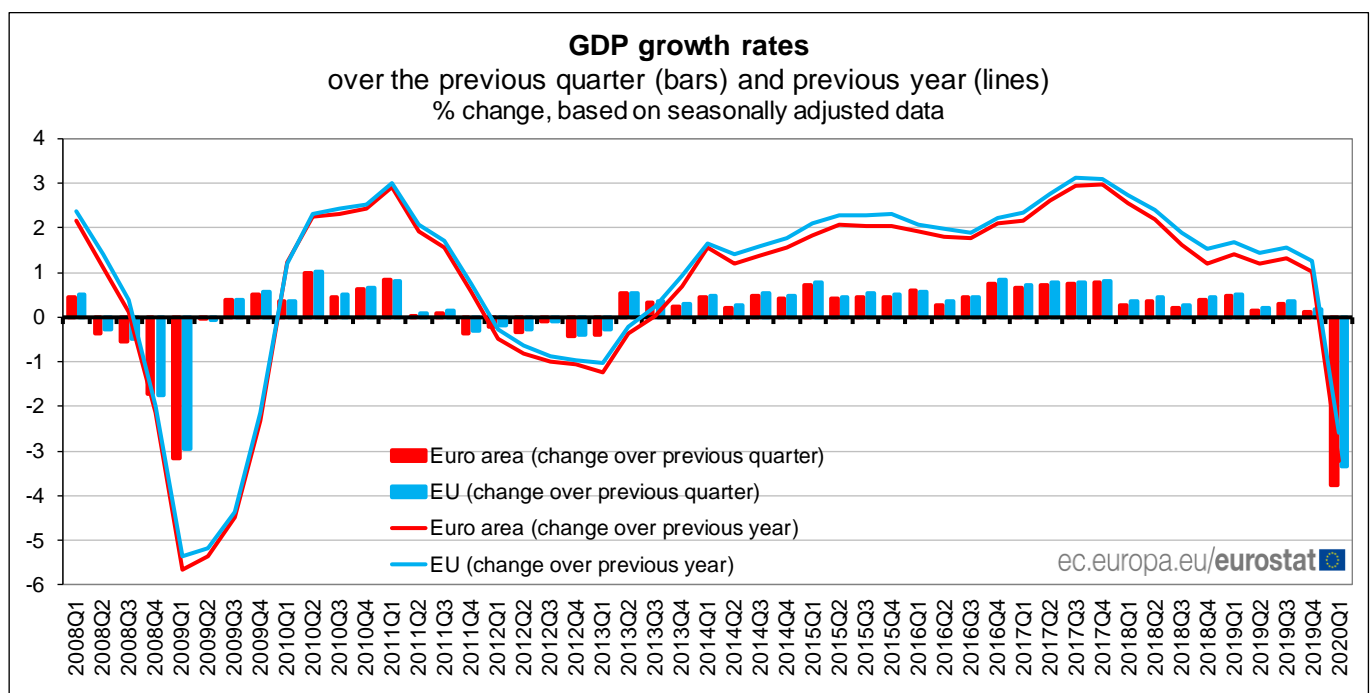
In the EU, GDP down by 3.3% and employment down by 0.2%

## GDP growth in the euro area and EU

Seasonally adjusted GDP decreased by 3.8% in the **euro area** and by 3.3% in the **EU** during the first quarter of 2020, compared with the previous quarter, according to a flash estimate published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. These were the sharpest declines observed since time series started in 1995. In March 2020, the final month of the period covered, COVID-19 containment measures began to be widely introduced by Member States. In the fourth quarter of 2019, GDP had grown by 0.1% in the **euro area** and by 0.2% in the **EU**.

Compared with the same quarter of the previous year, seasonally adjusted GDP decreased by 3.2% in the **euro area** and by 2.6% in the **EU** in the first quarter of 2020, after +1.0% and +1.3% respectively in the previous quarter. These were the sharpest declines since the third quarter of 2009 (-4.5% for **euro area** and -4.4% for **EU**).

During the first quarter of 2020, GDP in the **United States** decreased by 1.2% compared with the previous quarter (after +0.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019). Compared with the same quarter of the previous year, GDP increased by 0.3% (after +2.3% in the previous quarter).



## Employment growth in the euro area and EU

The number of employed persons decreased by 0.2% in both the **euro area** and the **EU** in the first quarter of 2020, compared with the previous quarter. This is the first decline in the time series since the second quarter of 2013 for the **euro area** and the first quarter of 2013 for the **EU**. In the fourth quarter of 2019, employment had grown by 0.3% in both zones.

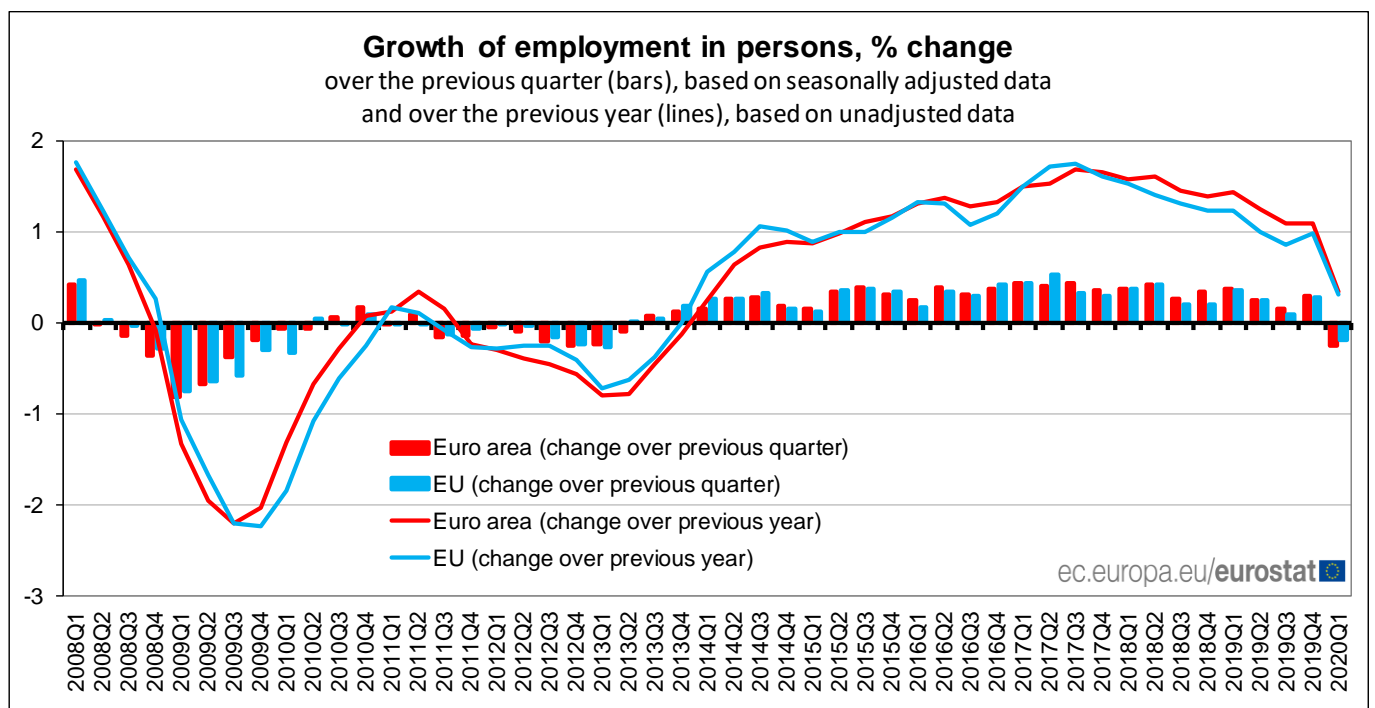
Compared with the same quarter of the previous year, employment increased by 0.3% in both the **euro area** and the **EU** in the first quarter of 2020, after +1.1% and +1.0% respectively in the fourth quarter of 2019. These are the lowest growth rates since the first quarter of 2014 for the **euro area** and the fourth quarter of 2013 for the **EU**.

These data provide a picture of labour input consistent with the output and income measure of national accounts.

### Growth rates of employment in persons

	Percentage change compared with the previous quarter (based on seasonally adjusted data)				Percentage change compared with the same quarter of the previous year (based on unadjusted data)			
	2019Q2	2019Q3	2019Q4	2020Q1	2019Q2	2019Q3	2019Q4	2020Q1
<b>EA</b>	0.2	0.2	0.3	<b>-0.2</b>	1.2	1.1	1.1	<b>0.3</b>
<b>EU</b>	0.3	0.1	0.3	<b>-0.2</b>	1.0	0.9	1.0	<b>0.3</b>

Source datasets: [tec00108](#) (quarterly change), [teina305](#) (annual change) and [tec00109](#) (levels)



**Growth rates of GDP in volume**  
(based on seasonally adjusted\* data)

	Percentage change compared with the previous quarter				Percentage change compared with the same quarter of the previous year			
	2019Q2	2019Q3	2019Q4	2020Q1	2019Q2	2019Q3	2019Q4	2020Q1
<b>EA</b>	0.1	0.3	0.1	<b>-3.8</b>	1.2	1.3	1.0	<b>-3.2</b>
<b>EU</b>	0.2	0.4	0.2	<b>-3.3</b>	1.5	1.6	1.3	<b>-2.6</b>
Member States								
<b>Belgium</b>	0.3	0.4	0.5	<b>-3.9p</b>	1.4	1.6	1.3	<b>-2.8p</b>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	0.7p	0.7p	0.8p	<b>0.3p</b>	3.5p	3.2p	3.1p	<b>2.4p</b>
<b>Czechia</b>	0.5	0.4	0.5	<b>-3.6</b>	2.7	2.5	2.0	<b>-2.2</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	1.2	0.5	0.6	<b>-1.9</b>	2.7	2.6	2.3	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Germany</b>	-0.2	0.3	-0.1	<b>-2.2</b>	0.3	0.7	0.4	<b>-2.3</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	0.9	1.2	0.9	:	4.4	4.5	4.0	:
<b>Ireland</b>	-0.4	2.1	1.8	:	4.2	4.5	6.3	:
<b>Greece</b>	1.0p	0.4p	-0.7p	:	2.8p	2.3p	1.0p	:
<b>Spain</b>	0.4p	0.4p	0.4p	<b>-5.2p</b>	2.0p	1.9p	1.8p	<b>-4.1p</b>
<b>France</b>	0.3	0.3	-0.1	<b>-5.8</b>	1.5	1.5	0.9	<b>-5.4</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	0.6	0.6	0.3	:	2.4	2.8	2.7	:
<b>Italy</b>	0.1	0.1	-0.3	<b>-4.7</b>	0.4	0.5	0.1	<b>-4.8</b>
<b>Cyprus</b>	1.1	0.0	1.0	<b>-1.3</b>	3.2	3.2	3.2	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Latvia</b>	0.7	0.6	0.1	<b>-2.9</b>	2.7	1.8	1.0	<b>-1.5</b>
<b>Lithuania</b>	0.9	0.8	1.1	<b>-0.2</b>	3.9	3.8	3.9	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Luxembourg</b>	1.9	0.3	0.4	:	2.9	2.8	3.1	:
<b>Hungary</b>	0.8e	0.9e	0.7e	<b>-0.4e</b>	5.2e	4.7e	4.4e	<b>2.0e</b>
<b>Malta</b>	1.5	1.2	1.7	:	4.5	3.3	4.3	:
<b>Netherlands**</b>	0.3p	0.4p	0.4p	<b>-1.7p</b>	1.7p	1.7p	1.6p	<b>-0.7p</b>
<b>Austria</b>	0.0	0.1	0.0	<b>-2.5</b>	1.8	1.5	0.7	<b>-2.4</b>
<b>Poland</b>	0.7p	1.2p	0.2p	<b>-0.5p</b>	4.2p	4.1p	3.5p	<b>1.6p</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	0.5e	0.3e	0.7e	<b>-3.9e</b>	2.1e	1.9e	2.2e	<b>-2.4e</b>
<b>Romania</b>	0.6p	0.5p	1.2p	<b>0.3p</b>	4.3p	3.3p	3.9p	<b>2.7p</b>
<b>Slovenia</b>	0.0	0.8	0.4	:	2.3	2.1	1.7	:
<b>Slovakia***</b>	0.4	0.4	0.6	<b>-5.4</b>	2.5	1.9	2.0	<b>-4.1</b>
<b>Finland</b>	0.5	0.4	-0.6	<b>0.1</b>	1.1	1.7	0.6	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	0.2	0.4	0.2	<b>-0.3</b>	1.0	1.9	0.8	<b>0.5</b>
Other countries								
<b>United Kingdom</b>	-0.2	0.5	0.0	<b>-2.0</b>	1.3	1.3	1.1	<b>-1.6</b>
<b>Iceland***</b>	3.2	-1.0	4.8	:	2.1	1.0	4.1	:
<b>Norway</b>	0.2	0.0	1.5	<b>-1.5</b>	1.2	0.5	1.8	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Switzerland</b>	0.4	0.4	0.3	:	0.3	1.1	1.5	:
<b>United States</b>	0.5	0.5	0.5	<b>-1.2</b>	2.3	2.1	2.3	<b>0.3</b>

: Data not available    p provisional    e estimated

\* Growth rates to the previous quarter and to the same quarter of the previous year presented in this table are generally both based on seasonally and calendar adjusted figures since unadjusted data are usually not transmitted for the compilation of GDP flash estimates.

\*\* Percentage change compared with the same quarter of the previous year calculated from calendar adjusted data.

\*\*\* The seasonal adjustment does not include a calendar adjustment for Slovakia and Iceland.

Source dataset: [namq\\_10\\_gdp](#) and [naidq\\_10\\_gdp](#)

## Geographical information

**Euro area (EA19):** Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland.

**European Union (EU27):** Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

## Methods and definitions

European quarterly national accounts are compiled in accordance with the European System of Accounts 2010 (ESA 2010). They include key policy indicators of GDP and employment.

**Gross domestic product (GDP)** at market prices measures the production activity of resident production units. Growth rates are based on chain-linked volumes.

**Employment** covers employees and self-employed working in resident production units (domestic concept). While employment flash estimates are limited to total employment in persons, regular estimates also cover hours worked and industry breakdowns.

## Release schedule of main aggregates

Comprehensive estimates of European main aggregates (including GDP and employment) are based on countries regular transmissions and published around 65 and 110 days after the end of each quarter. To improve the timeliness of key indicators, Eurostat also publishes flash estimates for GDP (after around 30 and 45 days) and employment (after around 45 days). Their compilation is based on estimates provided by EU Member States on a voluntary basis.

**This news release presents flash estimates for euro area and EU GDP and employment growth after around 45 days.**

The GDP estimates of the first quarter 2020 are based on Member States' data covering 96% of both the EA and the EU GDP, while employment estimates are based on Member States' data covering 96% of the EA and 93% of the EU total employment. The country coverage was not affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

## Revisions and timetable

The reliability of GDP and employment flash estimates was tested by dedicated working groups and revisions of subsequent estimates are continuously monitored. Further information can be found on Eurostat website. The method used for compilation of European GDP and employment estimates is the same as for previous releases. However, both GDP and employment flash estimates are based on source data that are incomplete and subject to further revisions under the COVID-19 containment measures.

With these flash estimates, euro area and EU employment and GDP figures for earlier quarters are not revised.

A preliminary flash estimate of GDP growth was published in News Release [74/2020](#) issued on 30 April 2020. This was based on a more limited dataset than the one used for the present News Release and, additionally, on preliminary flash estimates which have now been revised by some Member States. The EA and EU estimates for the last quarter were revised as presented in the following table:

Growth rates Estimates	To the previous quarter (Q/Q-1)		To the previous year (Q/Q-4)	
	Previous	Current	Previous	Current
GDP EA	-3.8	<b>-3.8</b>	-3.3	<b>-3.2</b>
GDP EU	-3.5	<b>-3.3</b>	-2.7	<b>-2.6</b>

All figures presented in this release may be revised with Eurostat's regular estimates of GDP and main aggregates (including employment) scheduled for 9 June and 20 July 2020.

## For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) on national accounts, notably information on European [GDP](#) and [employment](#) estimates

Eurostat [database section](#) on national accounts and Eurostat [metadata](#) on quarterly national accounts

Eurostat Statistics Explained articles on [measuring quarterly GDP](#) and the presentation of [quarterly data](#)

[Note](#) on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on national accounts

[Guidance](#) on quarterly national accounts (including flash) estimates in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and [country specific metadata](#) on the impact of COVID-19 on GDP estimates

[European System of Accounts 2010](#)

Eurostat €-indicators [release calendar](#)

European Statistics [Code of Practice](#)

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