

OECD Health Statistics 2025

Definitions, Sources and Methods

Sickness absences of full-time dependent employees **New**

Annual averages on sickness absences among full-time dependent employees.

Data are expressed as the number of weeks of sickness absence per year, based on self-reported information, and include both full- and part-week absences unless indicated below.

Source: OECD estimates rely on the European Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) for European countries and on national labour force surveys for Canada and the United States.

Methodology:

The distinction between full- and part-time employees is based on self-reported working time status in labour force surveys.

Temporary work absences due to sickness refer to dependent employees who usually work full-time in their main job but who, during the survey reference week:

- did not work at all due to sickness (full-week absences), or
- worked fewer hours than usual due to sickness (part-week absences).

The number of weeks of sickness absence is calculated as the number of hours absent relative to usual weekly hours, multiplied by 52 weeks. These estimates are then multiplied by a factor of 2 to correct for an estimated 50% underreporting of sickness absences in labour force surveys compared with health surveys and other sources.

Sources and Methods

Canada

i Coverage: Data refer only to part-week absences.

Iceland

i Coverage: 2017-2023 data are full-week absences only.

Ireland

i Coverage: Data refer only to full-week absences.

United States

i Coverage: Data refer only to part-week absences.

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<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/oecd-health-statistics.html>