

Percentage GDP growth – 2009 forecast

These forecasts were made in Q3 of 2009. Continued economic turbulence in Q4 of 2009 means that these forecasts probably vary from those that could be made as of the end of 2009.

GDP growth (average on previous year) – 2009 forecast									
Country	2010 GDP	Country	2010 GDP	Country	2010 GDP	Country	2010 GDP	Country	2010 GDP
Argentina	1.5	Estonia	-2.6	Mexico	3.3	South Korea	3.6		
Australia	2.0	Finland	0.9	Netherlands	0.7	Spain	-0.7		
Austria	0.3	France	0.9	New Zealand	1.2	Sweden	1.2		
Belgium	0.0	Germany	0.3	Norway	1.1	Switzerland	0.5		
Brazil	3.5	Greece	-0.1	Pakistan	3.0	Taiwan	3.7		
Bulgaria	-2.5	Hong Kong	3.5	Peru	5.8	Thailand	3.7		
Canada	2.1	Hungary	-0.9	Philippines	3.2	Tunisia	4.0		
Chile	4.0	India	6.4	Poland	2.2	Turkey	3.7		
China	9.0	Indonesia	4.8	Portugal	0.4	Ukraine	2.7		
Colombia	2.5	Ireland	-2.5	Romania	0.5	UAE	2.4		
Costa Rica	2.3	Italy	0.0	Russia	1.5	United Kingdom	0.9		
Croatia	0.4	Japan	0.7	Saudi Arabia	1.5	United States	1.5		
Czech Republic	1.3	Kazakhstan	0.0	Singapore	4.1	Venezuela	-0.4		
Denmark	0.9	Latvia	-4.0	Slovakia	3.7	Vietnam	5.3		
Ecuador	1.5	Lithuania	-4.0	Slovenia	0.6				
Egypt	4.5	Malaysia	2.5						

Source: Mercer's 2009 Global Compensation Planning Report, October update

Effective tax rates and social security contributions

Tax and social security charges significantly affect the level of an employee's take home pay. The tables below show effective tax and social security charges at a macro level.

Tax and social security rates 2009									
Location	Paraprofessional			Professional			Management		
	General	Skilled	Avg	Junior	Senior	Avg	Lower middle	Upper middle	Avg
Argentina	17.0%	17.0%	17.0%	17.0%	21.1%	19.1%	23.0%	28.1%	25.5%
Australia	10.8%	14.9%	12.9%	18.6%	22.6%	20.6%	27.0%	31.6%	29.3%
Austria	27.5%	31.8%	29.7%	35.9%	37.5%	36.7%	38.0%	39.3%	38.6%
Belgium	24.1%	28.7%	26.4%	32.6%	37.5%	35.1%	43.7%	47.8%	45.7%
Brazil	11.0%	15.1%	13.0%	16.8%	20.7%	18.8%	22.9%	24.9%	23.9%
Bulgaria	21.7%	21.7%	21.7%	21.7%	18.8%	20.2%	15.7%	13.7%	14.7%
Canada	19.3%	21.7%	20.5%	23.4%	26.0%	24.7%	29.2%	31.9%	30.5%
Chile	20.4%	21.4%	20.9%	20.9%	17.1%	19.0%	20.2%	26.5%	23.3%
China-Beijing	12.1%	15.9%	14.0%	20.1%	20.8%	20.4%	21.5%	23.7%	22.6%

Tax and social security rates, 2009, continued									
Location	Para-professional			Professional			Management		
	General	Skilled	Avg	Junior	Senior	Avg	Lower middle	Upper middle	Avg
Colombia	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	10.1%	16.2%	13.1%	19.6%	23.7%	21.7%
Costa Rica	9.0%	9.0%	9.0%	11.3%	16.3%	13.8%	20.0%	21.8%	20.9%
Croatia	27.9%	32.0%	30.0%	35.2%	40.1%	37.6%	47.7%	46.6%	45.2%
Czech Republic	11.0%	15.5%	13.2%	20.8%	24.3%	22.6%	26.6%	22.8%	24.7%
Denmark	–	31.4%	–	34.9%	40.0%	37.4%	43.9%	47.7%	45.8%
Ecuador	10.8%	13.3%	12.0%	16.4%	18.7%	17.6%	25.0%	28.4%	25.7%
Egypt	11.6%	13.4%	12.5%	16.3%	17.9%	17.1%	18.8%	19.3%	19.0%
Estonia	13.2%	16.5%	14.8%	18.7%	21.0%	19.9%	21.2%	21.9%	21.5%
Finland	20.2%	24.7%	22.5%	28.7%	32.7%	30.7%	35.9%	39.5%	37.7%
France	21.7%	22.8%	22.3%	24.0%	26.1%	25.4%	27.1%	29.9%	28.5%
Germany	27.3%	31.8%	29.5%	34.1%	35.3%	34.7%	35.8%	37.5%	36.6%
Greece	16.0%	22.3%	19.1%	22.0%	31.0%	29.4%	37.7%	39.7%	38.7%
Hong Kong	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.3%	8.7%	7.0%	11.3%	13.1%	12.2%
Hungary	39.9%	44.3%	42.1%	47.2%	50.2%	48.2%	48.6%	48.3%	48.5%
India	6.0%	8.1%	7.1%	12.9%	20.9%	17.4%	25.0%	27.4%	26.2%
Indonesia	4.6%	5.4%	5.0%	9.0%	12.5%	11.0%	15.8%	20.4%	18.1%
Ireland	11.9%	15.8%	13.8%	21.2%	27.6%	24.4%	32.5%	36.3%	34.4%
Italy	21.4%	25.0%	23.9%	31.1%	36.4%	33.7%	40.4%	45.7%	43.1%
Japan	17.6%	18.5%	18.0%	20.3%	23.0%	21.6%	24.7%	27.1%	25.9%
Kazakhstan	17.6%	18.0%	17.8%	18.4%	18.6%	18.5%	18.7%	18.8%	18.8%
Latvia	22.4%	24.5%	23.4%	26.0%	27.1%	26.6%	27.9%	28.4%	28.2%
Lithuania	22.6%	24.0%	23.3%	24.0%	24.0%	24.0%	24.0%	24.0%	24.0%
Malaysia	9.5%	10.2%	9.9%	12.2%	16.5%	14.4%	22.5%	26.9%	24.7%
Mexico	12.2%	14.0%	13.7%	18.8%	21.6%	20.2%	24.5%	25.9%	25.2%
Netherlands	29.6%	30.0%	30.5%	33.1%	35.0%	34.1%	39.2%	42.4%	40.8%
New Zealand	19.7%	21.0%	20.3%	24.2%	27.8%	26.0%	30.3%	32.4%	31.3%
Norway	23.0%	25.3%	24.1%	28.3%	31.3%	29.8%	33.9%	36.5%	35.2%
Pakistan	0.7%	3.5%	2.1%	7.5%	11.0%	9.2%	15.0%	17.5%	16.3%
Panama	9.2%	9.3%	9.2%	18.1%	24.4%	21.2%	29.5%	31.8%	30.6%
Peru	13.0%	19.6%	16.3%	23.2%	26.1%	24.7%	31.4%	35.7%	33.6%
Philippines	16.4%	20.7%	18.5%	24.4%	27.5%	26.0%	29.3%	30.4%	29.8%
Poland	25.9%	27.5%	26.7%	28.5%	29.6%	29.1%	31.5%	32.7%	32.1%
Portugal	14.5%	17.3%	15.9%	22.4%	25.8%	24.1%	29.9%	33.2%	31.5%
Romania	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%
Russia	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%
Serbia	28.8%	29.1%	29.0%	29.3%	29.5%	29.4%	29.6%	27.4%	28.5%
Singapore	20.0%	20.5%	20.3%	21.3%	16.9%	19.1%	14.5%	14.0%	14.2%

Tax and social security rates, 2009, continued									
Location	Para-professional			Professional			Management		
	General	Skilled	Avg	Junior	Senior	Avg	Lower middle	Upper middle	Avg
Slovakia	19.4%	23.0%	21.2%	25.1%	24.6%	24.8%	25.1%	23.7%	24.4%
Slovenia	29.4%	32.9%	31.1%	36.9%	41.3%	39.1%	44.6%	47.0%	45.8%
South Korea	9.5%	12.0%	10.8%	13.9%	15.1%	14.5%	15.5%	19.9%	18.7%
Spain	21.6%	24.4%	23.0%	27.0%	29.6%	28.3%	33.0%	35.6%	34.3%
Sweden	–	23.1%	–	24.2%	31.1%	27.7%	30.8%	37.4%	34.1%
Switzerland	17.7%	21.4%	19.5%	24.2%	26.5%	25.6%	29.0%	34.1%	32.2%
Taiwan	4.8%	6.2%	5.5%	8.2%	10.6%	9.4%	13.9%	17.8%	15.8%
Thailand	4.4%	4.3%	4.3%	6.5%	7.1%	6.8%	16.0%	21.4%	18.7%
Tunisia	19.8%	22.6%	21.2%	25.1%	28.2%	26.7%	30.3%	33.0%	31.7%
Turkey	30.7%	33.0%	31.9%	34.0%	34.6%	34.3%	35.0%	35.2%	35.1%
Ukraine	17.6%	17.8%	17.7%	17.8%	17.2%	17.5%	16.4%	15.8%	16.1%
UAE	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
United Kingdom	19.7%	22.6%	21.2%	24.8%	26.4%	25.6%	29.9%	32.8%	31.3%
United States	12.1%	15.2%	13.7%	17.8%	18.3%	18.8%	22.8%	23.6%	23.2%
Venezuela	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	5.2%	6.0%	5.6%	8.2%	13.9%	11.1%
Vietnam	8.0%	8.1%	8.0%	9.1%	8.9%	9.1%	8.5%	10.0%	9.2%

Source: Mercer's Personal Tax Report, 2009 and Mercer's Hypothetical Tax Calculator

Cost-of-living (COL) analysis

This table ranks cities from the 62 countries covered in this report using Mercer's COL index, which compares average prices of the same items in all locations. The base for this analysis is the "United States average."

Mean-to-mean COL index, 2009 (US average = 100)							
Rank	City	Country	COL Index	Rank	City	Country	COL Index
1	Copenhagen	Denmark	164	31	Stockholm	Sweden	122
2	Tokyo	Japan	160	33	Seoul	South Korea	121
3	Oslo	Norway	152	34	New York City	United States	120
4	Geneva	Switzerland	147	35	Toronto	Canada	116
5	Caracas	Venezuela	145		Taipei	Taiwan	115
6	Moscow	Russia	144	37	Sofia	Bulgaria	114
7	Bratislava	Slovakia	143	38	Ljubljana	Slovenia	113
8	Prague	Czech Republic	141	39	Cairo	Egypt	112
9	Vienna	Austria	140	39	Warsaw	Poland	112
10	Rome	Italy	139		Abu Dhabi	UAE	112
11	Paris	France	138	42	Bogotá	Colombia	109
11	Dublin	Ireland	137	43	Almaty	Kazakhstan	108
13	Riga	Latvia	135	44	Jakarta	Indonesia	107
13	Singapore	Singapore	135	45	Auckland	New Zealand	103
15	Rio De Janeiro	Brazil	134	45	Lima	Peru	103
15	Helsinki	Finland	134	45	Bangkok	Thailand	103
15	Athens	Greece	134	48	Santiago	Chile	102
15	Amsterdam	Netherlands	134	49	Bucharest	Romania	101
19	Beijing	China	132	50	Ho Chi Minh City	Vietnam	100
20	Brussels	Belgium	131	51	Panama City	Panama	99
21	Barcelona	Spain	130	52	Belgrade	Serbia	98
22	Berlin	Germany	129	52	Tunis	Tunisia	98
23	Sydney	Australia	128	54	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	96
24	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	127	55	Mexico City	Mexico	93
24	London	United Kingdom	127	55	Kiev	Ukraine	93
26	Zagreb	Croatia	126	57	San José	Costa Rica	91
26	Vilnius	Lithuania	126	57	Quito	Ecuador	91
26	Lisbon	Portugal	126	59	Buenos Aires	Argentina	89
26	Istanbul	Turkey	126	59	Mumbai	India	89
30	Budapest	Hungary	123	59	Manila	Philippines	89
31	Tallinn	Estonia	122	62	Islamabad	Pakistan	75

Source: Mercer's Cost-of-Living (COL) Survey, September 2009