

MAIN LABOUR FORCE SURVEY RESULTS, FIRST QUARTER OF 2020

Main labour market indicators in the first quarter of 2020

The activity rate for population aged 15 - 64 was 71.4%, by 0.5 percentage points lower compared to the first quarter of 2019.

The employment rate for population aged 15 - 64 decreased by 0.2 percentage points from the same quarter of 2019 and was 68.1%.

The unemployment rate was 4.6%, by 0.4 percentage points lower compared to the first quarter of 2019.

There were 67.4 thousand **discouraged persons aged 15 - 64**, representing 5.3% of the economically inactive population in the same age group.

Employment

In the first quarter of 2020 there were 3 107.2 thousand **employed persons aged 15 years and over**, of whom 1 667.1 thousand men and 1 440.1 thousand women. The share of employed persons in the total population aged 15 years and over was 52.4% (58.7% for men and 46.7% for women).

In the first quarter of 2020, 1 987.3 thousand persons (64.0% of all employed persons) worked in the service sector, 935.6 thousand persons (30.1%) worked in the industry sector and 184.3 thousand persons (5.9%) worked in agriculture, forestry and fishing.

Of all employed persons 3.1% (96.8 thousand) were employers, 6.9% (214.8 thousand) were self-employed persons without employees, 89.4% (2 777.4 thousand) were employees and 0.6% (18.2 thousand) were unpaid family workers. Of all employees 2 086.1 thousand persons (75.1%) worked in private sector while 691.4 thousand (24.9%) worked in public sector.

The number of employees with temporary job was 87.3 thousand, representing 3.1% of all employees.

In the first quarter of 2020, the employment in specific age groups was as follows:

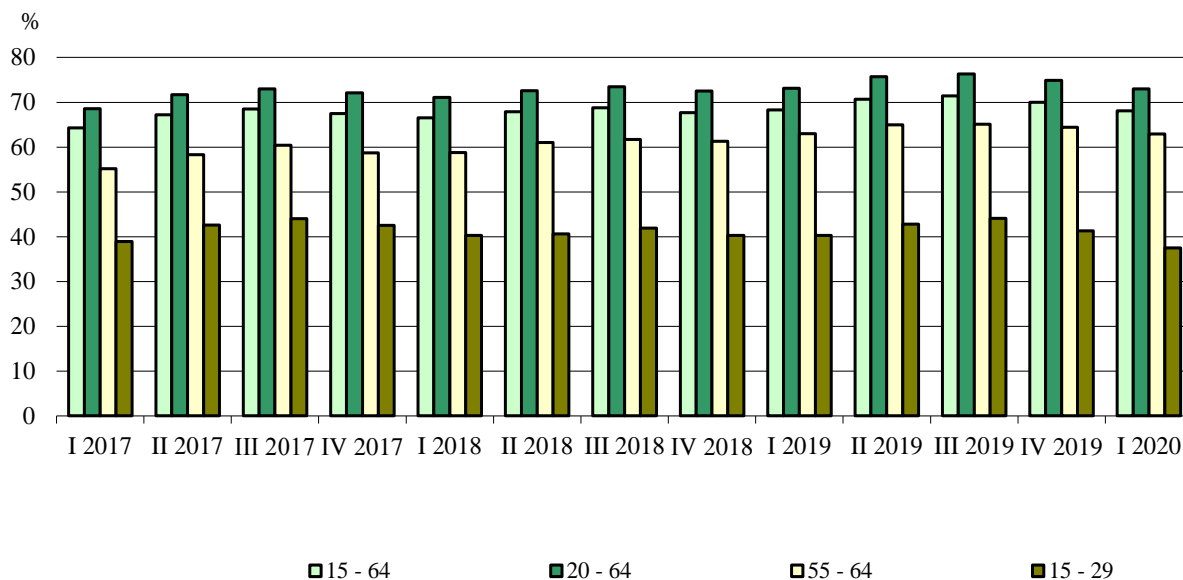
There were 3 015.3 thousand **employed persons aged 15 - 64 years**. The employment rate for the same age group was 68.1% (72.2% for men and 63.9% for women).

The employment rate for the age group 15 - 29 years was 37.5% (42.5% for men and 32.3% for women).

The employment rate for the age group 20 - 64 years was 73.0%, 77.4% and 68.5% for men and women respectively. This rate remained almost unchanged from the first quarter of 2019, registering increase (by 0.4 percentage points) for men and decrease (by 0.7 percentage points) for women.

There were 595.2 thousand **employed persons aged 55 - 64 years**, representing 62.9% of population in the same age group (66.9% of men and 59.1% of women).

Figure 1. Employment rate by age group and by quarter



Unemployment

In the first quarter of 2020 there were 148.9 thousand **unemployed persons**, of whom 86.0 thousand (57.8%) men and 62.9 thousand (42.2%) women. **The unemployment rate** was 4.6%, 4.9% and 4.2% for men and women respectively. In comparison with the first quarter of 2019, the unemployment rate went down by 0.4 percentage points, registering the same decrease for men and women.

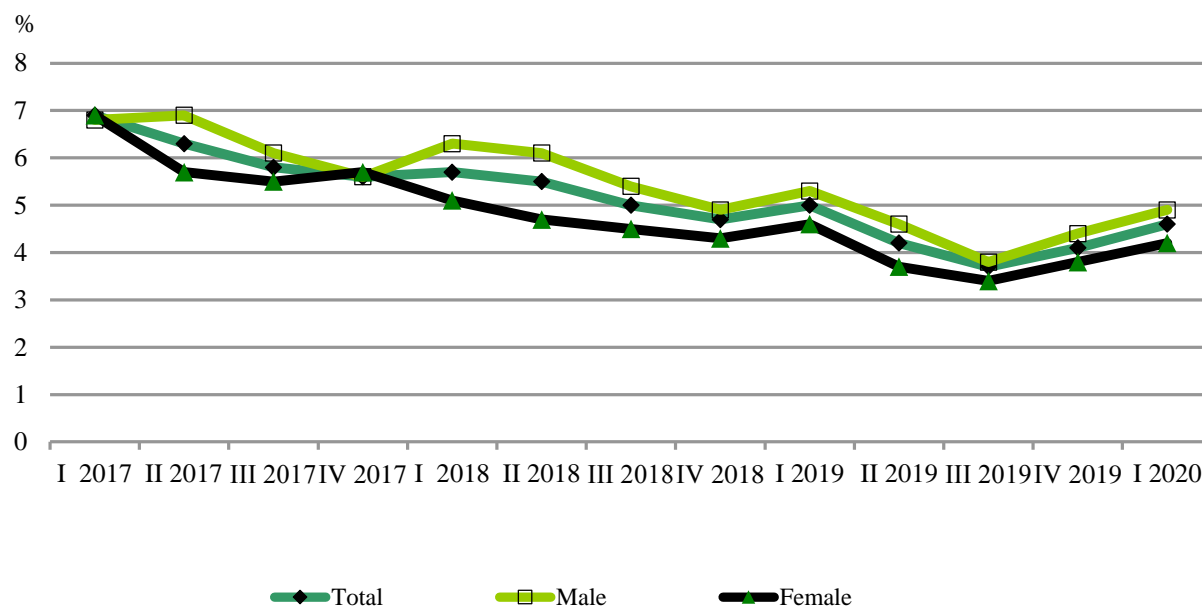
Among all unemployed persons, 11.2% had attained tertiary education, 49.7% had completed upper secondary education and 39.1% had at most lower secondary education. The unemployment rate by level of educational attainment was as follows: 1.7% for higher education, 4.0% for upper secondary and 14.1% for education lower than upper secondary.

In the first quarter of 2020 there were 74.5 thousand **long-term unemployed persons (unemployed for one or more years)**, representing 50.1% of all unemployed persons. **The long-term unemployment rate** was 2.3%, 2.6% for men and 1.9% for women.

Of all unemployed people 23.5 thousand (15.8%) were looking for first job.

In the first quarter of 2020, **the unemployment rate for the age group 15 - 29 years** was 7.9% and remained almost unchanged in comparison with a year earlier. The unemployment rate (15 - 29 years) for men was 8.7%, by 0.3 percentage points higher than in the first quarter of 2019, while that for women decreased by 0.4 percentage point achieving 6.8%.

Figure 2. Unemployment rate by sex and by quarter



Economic inactivity

In the first quarter of 2020 there were 2 668.5 thousand **economically inactive persons** aged 15 years and over, of whom 1 085.9 thousand (40.7%) men and 1 582.6 thousand (59.3%) women. **In the age group 15 - 64 years** 1 268.1 thousand persons were economically inactive, accounting for 28.6% of population in the same age group.

Methodological notes

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a continuous sample survey providing quarterly and annual data on the economic activity of the population aged 15 and over. The survey covers non-institutional households.

Reference period - the characteristics of each interviewee refer to his/her status during a defined calendar week.

Economically active population (labour force) comprises all employed and unemployed persons.

Employed are persons aged 15 and over who during the reference period:

- performed some work for at least one hour for pay in cash or in kind or other income;
- did not work but had a job or an enterprise, a business from which they were temporarily absent due to illness, annual leave, full-paid maternity leave, parental leave, strike or another labour dispute, etc.

Unemployed are persons aged 15 to 74 who:

- did not work at all during the reference period;
- were actively seeking work within the preceding four weeks, including the reference one, or have found a new job or business that is expected to start within 3 months following the reference period;
- were available to start working within two weeks following the reference period.

Long-term unemployed are persons who have been unemployed for one or more years.

Economically inactive population (persons not in the labour force) includes persons aged 15 and over who were neither employed, nor unemployed during the reference period.

Discouraged persons are persons not in the labour force who want to work but they do not actively look for a job, because they do not believe they will find one.

Activity rate - ratio between the economically active population and the total population of the same age group.

Employment rate - ratio between the employed population and the total population of the same age group.

Unemployment rate - ratio between the unemployed persons and the economically active population.

Long-term unemployment rate - ratio between the long-term unemployed persons and the economically active population.

For the weighting of the results of the survey for the first quarter of 2020 data on population as of 31 December 2019 (excluding population living in institutional households) were used.

Like all sample surveys, data from the Labour Force Survey are subject of errors due to the sample (stochastic errors). The relative standard errors for the main LFS indicators for the first quarter of 2020 are as follows:

- total number of employed persons - 1.8%;
- total number of unemployed persons - 6.4%;
- unemployment rate - 6.2%.

In relation to the measures taken to contain the spread of coronavirus, the National Statistical Institute stopped, in mid-March 2020, conducting surveys through direct contact with the population. As a result, the share of non-interviewed households in the Labor Force Survey in the first quarter of 2020 is higher than usual, which may affect the accuracy of the results.

Because of the rounding of the figures some of the totals (rows and columns) are not equal to the sum of the components.

More detailed data from the Labour Force Survey could be found on the NSI website - www.nsi.bg, section 'Labour Market', Labour Force Survey.

Annex

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, first quarter of 2019 and 2020

	First quarter 2019	First quarter 2020	Change (first quarter 2020 minus first quarter 2019)
Total			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	71.9	71.4	-0.5
Employed persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	3147.8	3107.2	-40.6
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	3062.4	3015.3	-47.1
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	117.7	103.9	-13.8
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	417.9	374.8	-43.1
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	3051.0	3006.4	-44.6
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	601.9	595.2	-6.7
Employment rate (15 and over) - %	52.7	52.4	-0.3
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	68.3	68.1	-0.2
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	19.0	17.0	-2.0
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	40.3	37.5	-2.8
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	73.1	73.0	-0.1
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	63.0	62.9	-0.1
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	165.3	148.9	-16.4
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	163.1	146.0	-17.1
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	35.6	32.2	-3.4
Unemployment rate - %	5.0	4.6	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	5.1	4.6	-0.5
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	7.8	7.9	0.1
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.6	2.3	-0.3
Discouraged persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	65.8	69.2	3.4
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	63.6	67.4	3.8

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, first quarter of 2019 and 2020

(Continued)

	First quarter 2019	First quarter 2020	Change (first quarter 2020 minus first quarter 2019)
Male			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	76.0	75.9	-0.1
Employed persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	1681.4	1667.1	-14.3
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	1630.2	1615.1	-15.1
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	71.0	62.4	-8.6
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	239.8	217.7	-22.1
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	1621.5	1608.5	-13.0
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	309.1	304.5	-4.6
Employment rate (15 and over) - %	58.7	58.7	0.0
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	71.9	72.2	0.3
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	22.3	19.9	-2.4
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	45.1	42.5	-2.6
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	77.0	77.4	0.4
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	67.5	66.9	-0.6
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	95.0	86.0	-9.0
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	93.3	84.7	-8.6
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	21.9	20.7	-1.2
Unemployment rate - %	5.3	4.9	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	5.4	5.0	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	8.4	8.7	0.3
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.9	2.6	-0.3
Discouraged persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	35.4	35.9	0.5
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	33.2	34.8	1.6

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, first quarter of 2019 and 2020

(Continued and end)

	First quarter 2019	First quarter 2020	Change (first quarter 2020 minus first quarter 2019)
Female			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	67.7	66.7	-1.0
Employed persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	1466.4	1440.1	-26.3
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	1432.2	1400.2	-32.0
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	46.7	41.4	-5.3
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	178.1	157.1	-21.0
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	1429.5	1398.0	-31.5
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	292.8	290.7	-2.1
Employment rate (15 and over) - %	47.2	46.7	-0.5
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	64.5	63.9	-0.6
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	15.5	13.9	-1.6
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	35.3	32.3	-3.0
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	69.2	68.5	-0.7
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	58.8	59.1	0.3
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	70.3	62.9	-7.4
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	69.8	61.3	-8.5
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	13.7	11.4	-2.3
Unemployment rate - %	4.6	4.2	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	4.6	4.2	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	7.2	6.8	-0.4
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.3	1.9	-0.4
Discouraged persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	30.4	33.3	2.9
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	30.4	32.6	2.2