



MAIN LABOUR FORCE SURVEY RESULTS, THIRD QUARTER OF 2024

The unemployment rate was 3.6%, by 0.4 percentage points lower compared to the third quarter of 2023.

The employment rate of the population aged 15 - 64 increased by 0.2 percentage points in comparison with the same quarter of 2023 and reached 71.7%.

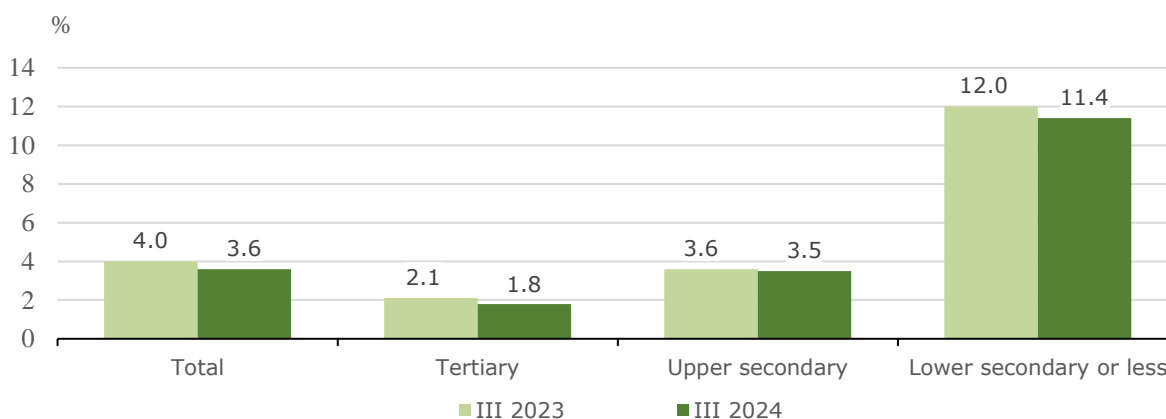
The activity rate of the population aged 15 - 64 was 74.4%, by 0.2 percentage points lower compared to the third quarter of 2023.

Unemployment

In the third quarter of 2024, there were 110.3 thousand **unemployed persons**, of whom 62.0 thousand (56.1%) men and 48.4 thousand (43.9%) women. In comparison with the third quarter of 2023, the number of unemployed persons decreased by 14.7 thousand (11.8%). For the same period, **the unemployment rate** went down by 0.4 percentage points and reached 3.6%, 3.8% for men and 3.4% for women respectively.

Among all unemployed persons, 19.1% had attained tertiary education, 52.3% had completed upper secondary education and 28.6% had at most lower secondary education. The unemployment rate by level of educational attainment was as follows: 1.8% for tertiary education, 3.5% for upper secondary education and 11.4% for lower education (lower secondary or less).

**Figure 1. Unemployment rates by level of education
in the third quarter of 2023 and 2024**



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In the third quarter of 2024, there were 58.5 thousand **long-term unemployed people** (unemployed for one year or more), representing 53.1% of all unemployed. **The long-term unemployment rate** was 1.9%.

Among all unemployed, 17.2 thousand persons, or 15.6%, were looking for their first job.

In the third quarter of 2024, **the youth unemployment rate** (age group 15 - 29) was 7.0% (7.0% for men and 7.1% for women). Compared to the same quarter of 2023, this rate decreased by 1.3 percentage points - by 2.0 percentage points for men and by 0.3 percentage points for women.

Employment

In the third quarter of 2024, there were 2 964.8 thousand **employed persons**, of whom 1 571.2 thousand men and 1 393.5 thousand women. **The employment rate** for the population aged 15 years and over was 53.8%, 60.0% for men and 48.1% for women.

In the third quarter of 2024, in the service sector worked 1 998.9 thousand persons (67.4% of all in employment), in the industry sector - 823.6 thousand (27.8%), and in the agriculture, forestry and fishing - 142.3 thousand (4.8%).

According to the status in employment, the distribution of employed persons was as follows: 5.1% (151.3 thousand) employers, 6.7% (199.4 thousand) self-employed persons without employees, 87.9% (2 606.0 thousand) employees and 0.3% (8.1 thousand) unpaid family workers. Of all employees, 1 955.3 thousand persons (75.0%) worked in the private sector, while 650.7 thousand (25.0%) worked in the public sector. Among all employees, 87.3 thousand persons (3.3%) had a temporary job (with limited duration).

In the third quarter of 2024, the employment in specific age groups was as follows:

There were 2 849.8 thousand **employed persons aged 15 - 64** (1 506.9 thousand men and 1 342.9 thousand women). The employment rate for the same age group was 71.7% (74.9% for men and 68.3% for women).

The employment rate for the age group 15 - 29 was 36.6% (40.4% for men and 32.5% for women).

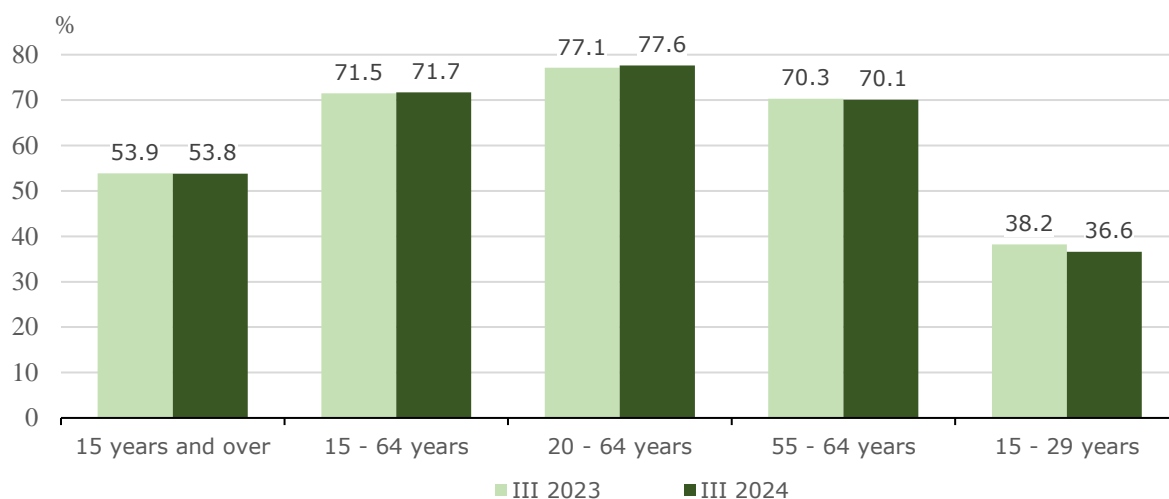
The employment rate for the age group 20 - 64 was 77.6% (81.2% for men and 73.9% for women). In comparison with the third quarter of 2023, the employment rate for the age group 20 - 64 increased by 0.5 percentage points.

There were 632.0 thousand **employed persons aged 55 - 64**, representing 70.1% of the population in the same age group (73.6% of men and 66.9% of women). In comparison

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with the third quarter of 2023, the employment rate for the age group 55 - 64 registered a decrease of 0.2 percentage points.

Figure 2. Employment rates by age groups in the third quarter of 2023 and 2024



Economic inactivity

In the third quarter of 2024, there were 2 436.8 thousand **economically inactive persons** (persons not in the labour force) aged 15 years and over, of whom 983.9 thousand (40.4%) men and 1 452.9 thousand (59.6%) women.

The economically inactive persons aged 15 - 64 were 1 018.0 thousand (443.5 thousand men and 574.5 thousand women), representing 25.6% of the population in the same age group (22.1% of men and 29.2% of women). Among all persons not in the labour force aged 15 - 64, 42.7% were inactive due to participation in education or training. There were 19.0 thousand **discouraged persons aged 15 - 64**, representing 1.9% of the economically inactive population in the same age group.

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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. The households participating in the survey were randomly selected and were interviewed through a face-to-face interview.

Reference period - the characteristics of each interviewee refer to his/her status during a defined calendar week (from Monday to Sunday). With each quarter the sample is evenly spread over the all 13 calendar weeks.

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

Employed are persons aged 15 to 89 who, during the reference period:

- did some work for at least one hour for salary or other form of payment;
- did not work but had a job or business, from which they were temporarily absent due to holiday, illness, maternity leave, etc.

Unemployed are persons aged 15 to 74 who:

- did not work at all during the reference period;
- were actively looking for work during the preceding four weeks, including the reference one, or have found a new job 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 year or longer.

The 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, incl. all persons aged 90 and over.

Discouraged persons are persons not in the labour force, aged 15 to 74, who want to work but do not actively look for a job as they believe there are no suitable jobs available.

Activity rate - the ratio between the economically active population and the total population (in the respective group).

Employment rate - the ratio between the employed population and the total population (in the respective group).

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

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

For weighting of the results of the Labour Force Survey for the third quarter of 2024, preliminary data on the population as of 30 June 2024 were used. The population living in institutional households was excluded.

Like all sample surveys, data from the Labour Force Survey have sampling errors (stochastic errors). The relative standard errors for the main LFS indicators for the third quarter of 2024 are as follows:

- total number of employed persons - 1.4%;
- total number of unemployed persons - 7.2%;
- unemployment rate - 7.0%.

Some of the totals are not equal to the sum of their components due to the rounding of the numbers.

More detailed data from the Labour Force Survey for the third quarter of 2024 can be found on the website of NSI - www.nsi.bg/en, section [Labour Market](#), [Labour Force Survey](#) and in the [Information System INFOSTAT](#).

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Annex

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, third quarter of 2023 and 2024

Indicators	Third quarter 2023	Third quarter 2024	Growth (Third quarter 2024 minus third quarter 2023)
Total			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	74.6	74.4	-0.2
Employed persons - total - in thousands	2964.7	2964.8	0.1
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	2851.9	2849.8	-2.1
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	116.7	107.0	-9.7
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	325.0	316.0	-9.0
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	2839.6	2838.6	-1.0
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	627.1	632.0	4.9
Employment rate - %	53.9	53.8	-0.1
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	71.5	71.7	0.2
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	20.2	17.9	-2.3
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	38.2	36.6	-1.6
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	77.1	77.6	0.5
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	70.3	70.1	-0.2
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	125.0	110.3	-14.7
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	121.9	108.1	-13.8
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	29.3	23.9	-5.4
Unemployment rate - %	4.0	3.6	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	4.1	3.7	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	8.3	7.0	-1.3
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.1	1.9	-0.2
Discouraged persons - total - in thousands	37.3	19.8	-17.5
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	36.0	19.0	-17.0

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THIRD QUARTER OF 2024**

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, third quarter of 2023 and 2024

(Continued)

Indicators	Third quarter 2023	Third quarter 2024	Growth (Third quarter 2024 minus third quarter 2023)
Male			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	77.8	77.9	0.1
Employed persons - total - in thousands	1566.8	1571.2	4.4
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	1499.9	1506.9	7.0
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	68.0	65.9	-2.1
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	182.3	179.6	-2.7
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	1495.0	1500.4	5.4
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	318.6	320.2	1.6
Employment rate - %	60.0	60.0	0.0
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	74.4	74.9	0.5
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	22.9	21.5	-1.4
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	41.7	40.4	-1.3
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	80.4	81.2	0.8
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	74.2	73.6	-0.6
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	69.9	62.0	-7.9
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	68.0	60.3	-7.7
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	18.0	13.5	-4.5
Unemployment rate - %	4.3	3.8	-0.5
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	4.3	3.9	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	9.0	7.0	-2.0
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.2	2.0	-0.2
Discouraged persons - total - in thousands	21.2	12.3	-8.9
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	20.6	11.8	-8.8

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THIRD QUARTER OF 2024**

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, third quarter of 2023 and 2024

(Continued and end)

Indicators	Third quarter 2023	Third quarter 2024	Growth (Third quarter 2024 minus third quarter 2023)
Female			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	71.3	70.8	-0.5
Employed persons - total - in thousands	1397.9	1393.5	-4.4
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	1352.0	1342.9	-9.1
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	48.8	41.1	-7.7
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	142.8	136.5	-6.3
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	1344.5	1338.3	-6.2
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	308.5	311.8	3.3
Employment rate - %	48.4	48.1	-0.3
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	68.5	68.3	-0.2
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	17.3	14.2	-3.1
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	34.5	32.5	-2.0
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	73.7	73.9	0.2
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	66.6	66.9	0.3
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	55.1	48.4	-6.7
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	54.0	47.8	-6.2
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	11.4	10.5	-0.9
Unemployment rate - %	3.8	3.4	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	3.8	3.4	-0.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	7.4	7.1	-0.3
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.1	1.8	-0.3
Discouraged persons - total - in thousands	16.1	7.6	-8.5
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	15.4	7.2	-8.2