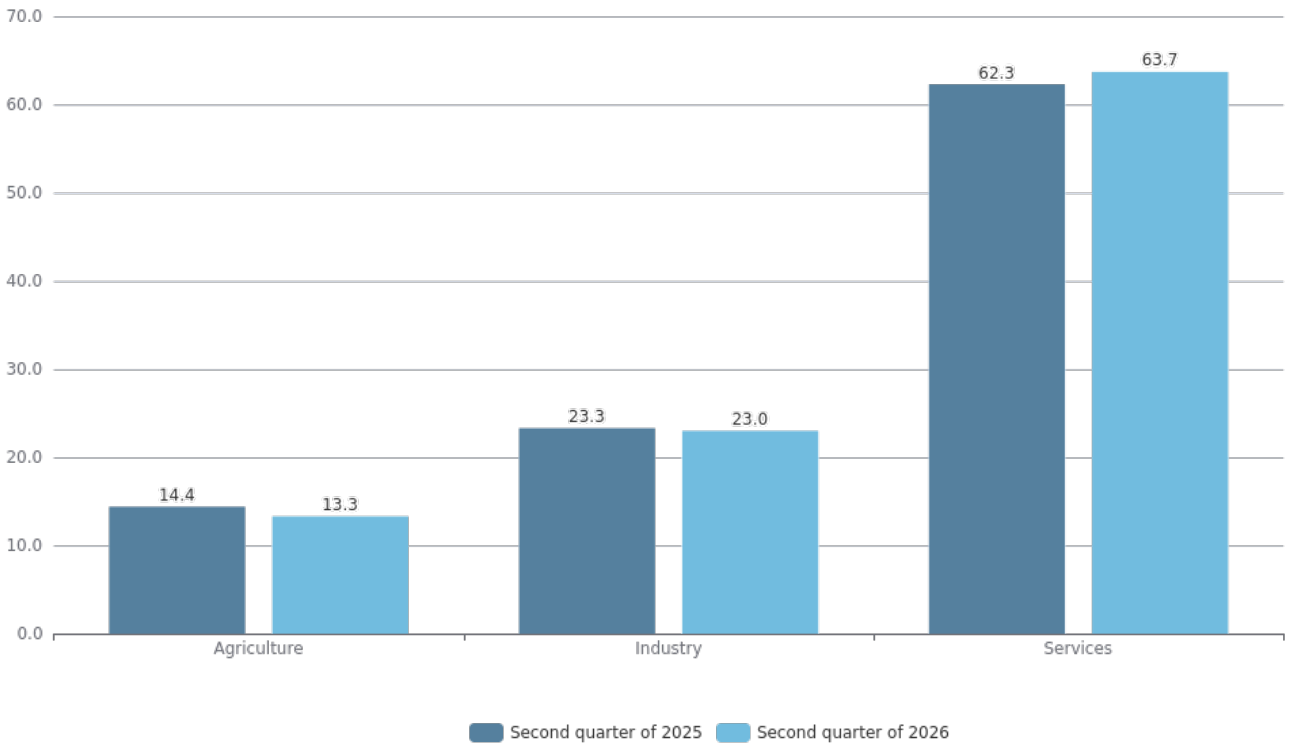
LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY, EMPLOYMENT AND HOURS WORKED - SECOND QUARTER OF 2026 - PRELIMINARY DATA

According to the preliminary data, the Gross domestic product (GDP) per person employed increased in real terms by 3.1% in the second quarter of 2026 compared to the same quarter of the previous year.

The number of persons employed in the economy is 3 661.8 thousand and the total number of hours worked is 1 428.3 million. Compared with the same quarter of the previous year, the structure of employment by economic sector in the second quarter of 2026 shows an increase in the relative share of Service sector and a decrease in the Agriculture and Industrial sectors.

Figure 1. Structure of the persons employed by economic sector in the second quarter of 2025 and 2026



The GDP per person employed is 8 272.6 EUR and GDP per hour worked is 21.2 EUR.

Gross value added (GVA) per person employed in the second quarter of 2026 increased by 0.3% compared to the second quarter of 2025. GVA per hour worked increased in real terms by 0.5%.

The GVA per person employed in the Service sector is 7 298.4 EUR and GVA per hour worked is 18.5 EUR according to the preliminary data for the second quarter of 2026. In the Industrial sector, an average of 7 898.2 EUR GVA is produced by person employed or an average of 19.4 EUR GVA per hour worked. The lowest labour productivity is in the Agricultural sector - 1 305.8 EUR GVA per person employed and 3.9 EUR per hour worked.

Methodological notes

1. Labour productivity is a compound economic indicator that compares the achieved result (created product) with the input labour factor when performing an economic activity on a given economic territory for a given period.
2. The main elements of labour productivity are indicators that measure the result of the underlying economic activity (numerator) and indicators for input labour in the production process (denominator).
3. At national level the result of production activity is measured with the Gross domestic product (GDP) and the Gross value added (GVA), created by all sectors of the national economy. GDP is the main indicator in the system of national economic accounts (ESA 2010) and it represents the final result of the production activity of all resident production units. The link between GDP and GVA is defined by the method of valuating the end product. GDP is valued at market prices including taxes on products and imports, net of subsidies on products. GVA measures the result of production activity using basic prices before taxation, including subsidies on products.
4. For the purposes of international comparisons of labour productivity between national economies the GDP per person employed (hour worked) is used: see http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat - General Economic Background. Labour productivity per person employed.
5. GVA per person employed (hour worked) is an indicator that is applicable for calculation of labour productivity on both national level and the level of the production activity.
6. The use of this indicator in national practice is in compliance with the specific methodological range of the sector ‘Renting and operating of own or leased real estate’ - activity type 68.2 of NACE.BG - 2008 - GVA includes an estimate of the imputed rent on real estates used by the owners which in Bulgaria has a dominating share - close to 90% of the population lives in their own houses. The value added from imputed rent of own real estate is classified entirely as operating surplus in the compilation of ‘Generation of income’ account and is not directly related to labour participation. Because of this, the value added due to imputed housing rent has to be excluded when calculating labour productivity both for the services sector and for the economy as a whole.
7. The labour production factor in the labour productivity indicator is measured by the number of person employed in resident production units of the national economy and the time that they were employed - hours worked.
8. The measurement of number of persons employed and hours worked is according to the definitions and concepts of ESA 2010 as they are applied in estimation of the indicators for economic activities.

9. When comparing the data with the results of the labour force survey it is necessary to consider differences in definitions and methodological characteristics. The main conceptual differences are:

- Object of the Labour Force Survey is the permanent population of the country, including temporary workers abroad, while the employment data in ESA 2010 are defined in terms of resident production units that can hire labour both from the country and abroad.

- Persons on temporary military service are part of the employees under ESA 2010, but are not recorded by the Labour Force Survey.

10. The preferred indicator for the assessment of the labour factor in the composition of the labour productivity is man hours worked - this indicator represents more accurately the actual work input in the production process - the Eurostat website - http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat.

11. Comparison of indicators of labour productivity over time requires the elimination of the influence of prices in the value of indicators for the results from the economic activity. For this purpose, GDP and GVA of the current period are presented at constant prices of the base period.

12. Data for labour productivity are published on the website of NSI and in INFOSTAT - quarterly and annual time series.

13. Labour productivity data for the period 2018 - 2022 are subject to revision due to the implementation of a final estimate for National Accounts - SUT table. The data will be published on 20.10.2026.

Annex

Table 1. GDP per person employed - current prices, EUR				
Year	**First quarter**	**Second quarter**	**Third quarter**	**Fourth quarter**
2020	3970.7	4156.2	4733.7	5316.5
2021	4462.4	4787.6	5444.6	6231.8
2022	5204.8	5775.4	6448	7555.3
2023	5984.4	6292.1	6878.1	8014.4
2024	6493.4	7016.8	7645.3	8628.5
2025*	6702.5	7404.2	8597.2	9550.8
2026*	7768.7	8272.6		

Table 2. GDP per hour worked - current prices, EUR				
Year	**First quarter**	**Second quarter**	**Third quarter**	**Fourth quarter**
2020	9.8	10.7	11.8	12.9
2021	11.0	12.0	13.7	15.0
2022	12.7	14.4	16.4	18.2
2023	13.9	15.5	17.2	18.9
2024	15.6	17.7	19.4	20.6
2025*	16.3	19.0	21.8	23.1
2026*	19.0	21.2		

Table 3. GDP per person employed - volume index[1] compared to the corresponding quarter of previous year, %				
Year	**First quarter**	**Second quarter**	**Third quarter**	**Fourth quarter**
2020	101.7	94.6	100.3	98.1
2021	105.6	107	107.7	109.7
2022	103.4	104.4	102.7	101.9
2023	99.4	100.1	101.8	101
2024	100.8	101.8	102.5	103.6
2025*	101.4	100.8	100.7	100.6
2026*	101.6	103.1		

Table 4. GDP per hour worked - volume index[1] compared to the corresponding quarter of previous year, %

Year	First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter
2020	101.6	101.7	100.3	100.3
2021	105.7	104.1	108.7	108.3
2022	102.7	104	103.7	102.2
2023	94.8	99.1	100.1	98.7
2024	103.8	103.8	104.2	105.3
2025*	102.7	102.5	100.8	101.6
2026*	102.4	103.3		

* Preliminary data.

[1] The volume indices are calculated based on the values of the corresponding indicator at constant prices of 2020.