

MAIN LABOUR FORCE SURVEY RESULTS, FOURTH QUARTER OF 2020

Main labour market indicators in the fourth quarter of 2020

The activity rate for population aged 15 - 64 was 72.7%, by 0.3 percentage points lower compared to the fourth quarter of 2019.

The employment rate for population aged 15 - 64 decreased by 1.2 percentage points from the same quarter of 2019 and stood at 68.8%.

The unemployment rate was 5.2%, by 1.1 percentage points higher compared to the fourth quarter of 2019.

There were 62.1 thousand **discouraged persons aged 15 - 64**, representing 5.2% of the economically inactive population in the same age group.

Employment

In the fourth quarter of 2020 there were 3 126.9 thousand **employed persons aged 15 years and over**, of whom 1 692.3 thousand men and 1 434.5 thousand women. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2019, the number of employed persons fell by 3.0%. The employment rate for the same age group was 52.9% (59.8% for men and 46.6% for women).

In the fourth quarter of 2020, 1 959.2 thousand persons (62.7% of all employed persons) worked in the service sector, 963.6 thousand persons (30.8%) worked in the industry sector and 204.0 thousand persons (6.5%) worked in agriculture, forestry and fishing. The number of employed persons decreases across all economic sectors compared to the same quarter of 2019, however, the greatest decrease is observed at the service sector - falling with 74.0 thousand persons (3.6%).

Of all employed persons 3.8% (118.6 thousand) were employers, 6.8% (211.9 thousand) were self-employed persons without employees, 88.9% (2 780.1 thousand) were employees and 0.5% (16.2 thousand) were unpaid family workers. Of all employees 2 120.7 thousand persons (76.3%) worked in the private sector while 659.4 thousand (23.7%) worked in the public sector.

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

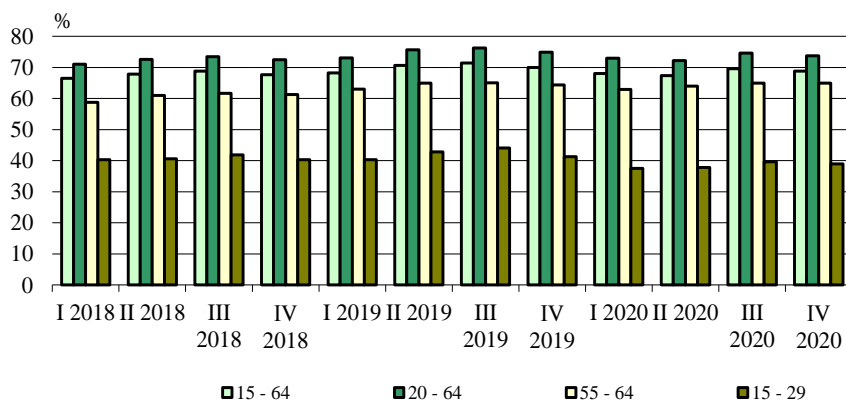
There were 3 029.7 thousand **employed persons aged 15 - 64 years**. The employment rate for the same age group was 68.8% (73.4% for men and 64.1% for women).

The employment rate for the age group 15 - 29 years was 39.0% (43.8% for men and 34.0% for women).

The employment rate for the age group 20 - 64 years was 73.8%, 78.9% and 68.6% for men and women respectively. In comparison with the fourth quarter of 2019 this rate registered a decrease by 1.1 percentage points, by 1.0 percentage point for men and by 1.2 percentage points for women.

There were 608.5 thousand **employed persons aged 55 - 64 years**, representing 65.0% of population in the same age group (71.6% of men and 58.9% of women).

Figure 1. Employment rate by age group and by quarter



Unemployment

In the fourth quarter of 2020 there were 173.1 thousand **unemployed persons**, of whom 95.7 thousand (55.3%) men and 77.4 thousand (44.7%) women. **The unemployment rate** was 5.2%, 5.4% and 5.1% for men and women respectively. In comparison with the fourth quarter of 2019, the unemployment rate rose by 1.1 percentage points, registering an increase by 1.0 percentage point for men and by 1.3 percentage points for women.

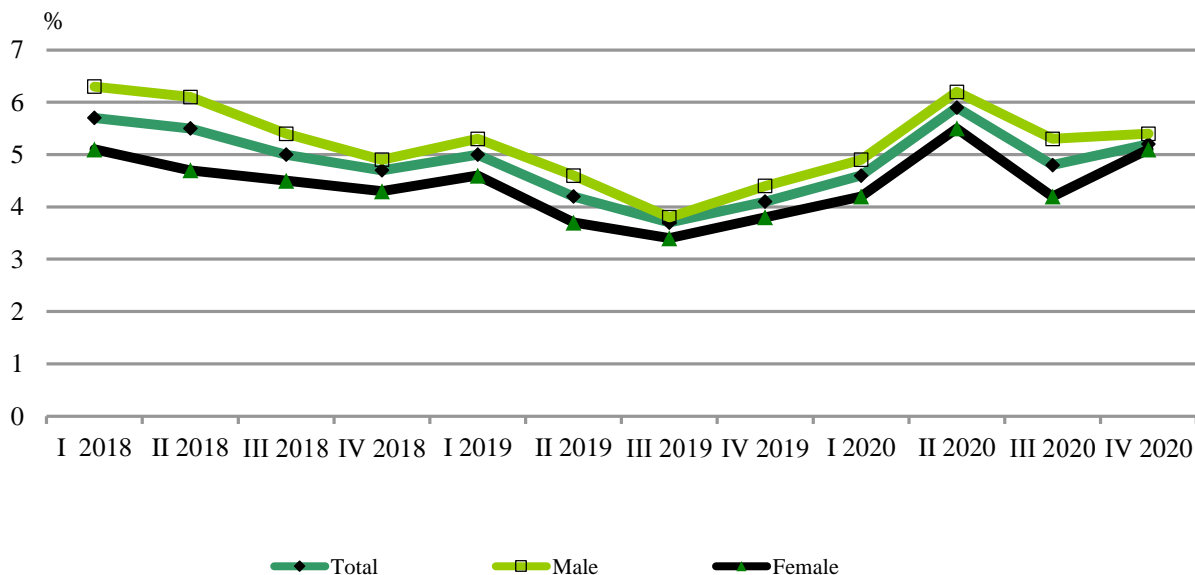
Among all unemployed persons 13.9% had attained tertiary education, 51.4% had completed upper secondary education and 34.7% had at most lower secondary education. The unemployment rate by level of educational attainment was as follows: 2.3% for tertiary education, 4.8% for upper secondary and 15.1% for education lower than upper secondary.

The growth of unemployment between the fourth quarters of 2019 and 2020 is to a larger degree due to the increase of number of persons unemployed for less than a year. In the period concerned, it went up by 23.1 thousand to 88.0 thousand persons. In the fourth quarter of 2020 there were 85.1 thousand **long-term unemployed persons (unemployed for one or more years)**, representing 49.2% of all unemployed persons. **The long-term unemployment rate increased** by 0.4 percentage points to 2.6% as the increase is almost equal for men and women.

Of all unemployed people 27.4 thousand (15.8%) were looking for first job.

In the fourth quarter of 2020, **the unemployment rate for the age group 15 - 29 years** was 9.3%, by 2.6 percentage points higher than a year earlier. The unemployment rate (15 - 29 years) increased by 2.4 percentage points among men and by 3.0 percentage points among women, reaching 9.6% and 8.9% respectively.

Figure 2. Unemployment rate by sex and by quarter



Economic inactivity

In the fourth quarter of 2020 there were 2 613.0 thousand **economically inactive persons**, of whom 1 044.2 thousand (40.0%) men and 1 568.8 thousand (60.0%) women. Of all economically inactive persons 1 202.8 thousand persons were in the age group 15 - 64, representing 27.3% of the 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 fourth quarter of 2020 preliminarily data on population as of 30 September 2020 (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 fourth quarter of 2020 are as follows:

- total number of employed persons - 1.3%;
- total number of unemployed persons - 5.6%;
- unemployment rate - 5.4%.

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, fourth quarter of 2019 and 2020

	Fourth quarter 2019	Fourth quarter 2020	Change (fourth quarter 2020 minus fourth quarter 2019)
Total			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	73.0	72.7	-0.3
Employed persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	3222.7	3126.9	-95.8
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	3123.5	3029.7	-93.8
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	137.0	122.3	-14.7
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	419.9	383.2	-36.7
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	3106.9	3020.6	-86.3
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	611.7	608.5	-3.2
Employment rate (15 and over) - %	54.0	52.9	-1.1
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	70.0	68.8	-1.2
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	22.2	19.9	-2.3
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	41.3	39.0	-2.3
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	74.9	73.8	-1.1
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	64.4	65.0	0.6
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	138.5	173.1	34.6
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	134.7	170.7	36.0
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	13.7	20.1	6.4
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	30.0	39.3	9.3
Unemployment rate - %	4.1	5.2	1.1
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	4.1	5.3	1.2
Unemployment rate (15 - 24) - %	9.1	14.1	5.0
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	6.7	9.3	2.6
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.2	2.6	0.4
Discouraged persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	63.0	64.4	1.4
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	60.6	62.1	1.5

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, fourth quarter of 2019 and 2020

(Continued)

	Fourth quarter 2019	Fourth quarter 2020	Change (fourth quarter 2020 minus fourth quarter 2019)
Male			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	78.2	77.7	-0.5
Employed persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	1742.3	1692.3	-50.0
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	1684.3	1635.0	-49.3
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	81.1	70.8	-10.3
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	245.9	220.4	-25.5
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	1672.9	1630.3	-42.6
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	321.1	322.8	1.7
Employment rate (15 and over) - %	61.0	59.8	-1.2
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	74.7	73.4	-1.3
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	25.6	22.4	-3.2
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	47.2	43.8	-3.4
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	79.9	78.9	-1.0
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	70.3	71.6	1.3
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	80.6	95.7	15.1
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	78.3	93.8	15.5
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	9.2	12.9	3.7
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	19.1	23.4	4.3
Unemployment rate - %	4.4	5.4	1.0
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	4.4	5.4	1.0
Unemployment rate (15 - 24) - %	10.2	15.4	5.2
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	7.2	9.6	2.4
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.3	2.6	0.3
Discouraged persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	31.3	34.8	3.5
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	29.6	33.6	4.0

Table 1

Main labour market indicators, fourth quarter of 2019 and 2020

(Continued and end)

	Fourth quarter 2019	Fourth quarter 2020	Change (fourth quarter 2020 minus fourth quarter 2019)
Female			
Activity rate (15 - 64) - %	67.8	67.6	-0.2
Employed persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	1480.4	1434.5	-45.9
Employed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	1439.2	1394.7	-44.5
Employed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	55.9	51.5	-4.4
Employed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	174.1	162.8	-11.3
Employed persons aged 20 - 64 - in thousands	1434.0	1390.2	-43.8
Employed persons aged 55 - 64 - in thousands	290.6	285.7	-4.9
Employment rate (15 and over) - %	47.7	46.6	-1.1
Employment rate (15 - 64) - %	65.2	64.1	-1.1
Employment rate (15 - 24) - %	18.6	17.2	-1.4
Employment rate (15 - 29) - %	35.1	34.0	-1.1
Employment rate (20 - 64) - %	69.8	68.6	-1.2
Employment rate (55 - 64) - %	58.9	58.9	0.0
Unemployed persons - total - in thousands	57.9	77.4	19.5
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	56.4	76.8	20.4
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 24 - in thousands	(4.5)	7.2	2.7
Unemployed persons aged 15 - 29 - in thousands	10.8	15.9	5.1
Unemployment rate - %	3.8	5.1	1.3
Unemployment rate (15 - 64) - %	3.8	5.2	1.4
Unemployment rate (15 - 24) - %	7.4	12.3	4.9
Unemployment rate (15 - 29) - %	5.9	8.9	3.0
Long-term unemployment rate - %	2.1	2.5	0.4
Discouraged persons aged 15 and over - in thousands	31.6	29.6	-2.0
Discouraged persons aged 15 - 64 - in thousands	31.0	28.5	-2.5

() - due to small sample figures in brackets are not reliable.