

Employed, unemployed and economically inactive persons (preliminary results of the Polish Labour Force Survey in the first quarter of 2026)¹

26.05.2026

58.7%

Activity rate of persons aged 15-89

In the first quarter of 2026, economically active persons accounted for 58.7% of the population aged 15-89. This share decreased by 0.3 pp. compared to the fourth quarter of 2025, but increased by 0.5 pp. compared to the first quarter of 2025.

Economic activity of the population aged 15-89 by the LFS

In the first quarter of 2026, the number of economically active persons aged 15-89 amounted to 17 817 thousand, of which: 17 237 thousand constituted employed persons, while 580 thousand – the unemployed. The population of economically inactive persons in this age group comprised 12 538 thousand persons. Among persons at the working age², the economically active population numbered 16 954 thousand, including 16 386 thousand employed and 568 thousand – unemployed persons. The economically inactive population at working age amounted to 3 665 thousand persons.

Population of economically active persons aged 15-89 in first quarter of 2026 decreased compared to the fourth quarter of 2025 (by 95 thousand, i.e. by 0.5%), while it increased compared to the first quarter of 2025 (by 157 thousand, i.e. by 0.9%). Among persons at working age, similar trends were observed – the number of economically active persons was lower than in the fourth quarter of 2025 (by 71 thousand, i.e. by 0.4%) and higher than in the first quarter of 2025 (by 82 thousand, i.e. by 0.5%).

The economically active population decreased compared to the fourth quarter of 2025, but increased compared to the first quarter of 2025

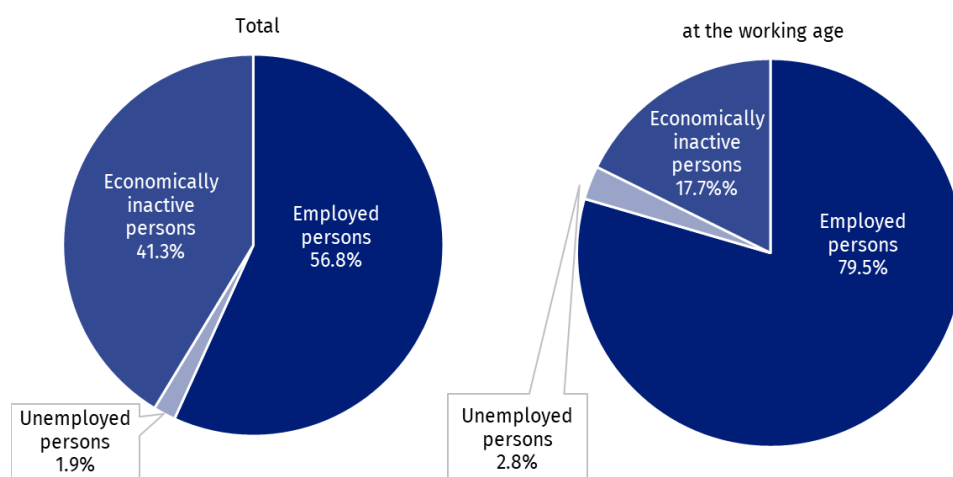
Table 1. Economic activity of the population aged 15-89

Specification	2025		2026		
	quarter 1	quarter 4	quarter 1	+/- compared to	
				quarter 4/2025	quarter 1/2025
				in thousands	
Total	30 369	30 368	30 356	-12	-13
Economically active persons	17 660	17 912	17 817	-95	157
Employed persons	17 060	17 346	17 237	-109	177
Unemployed persons	600	567	580	13	-20
Economically inactive persons	12 709	12 456	12 538	82	-171
of which at the working age					
Total	20 731	20 645	20 619	-26	-112
Economically active persons	16 872	17 025	16 954	-71	82
Employed persons	16 280	16 466	16 386	-80	106
Unemployed persons	593	559	568	9	-25
Economically inactive persons	3 859	3 620	3 665	45	-194

¹ The LFS results refer to the resident population i.e. staying or intending to stay in the country's territory for at least 12 months, living in households. Generalisation of the survey results over the general population has been carried out with the use of the data on resident population in Poland, coming from the balances, for which the basis (initial base) are the results of the Population and Housing Census 2021/National Census 2021. Data for the period from the first quarter of 2021 to the third quarter of 2023 was recalculated in line with the new generalisation basis. See methodological notes at the end of this news release.

² 18-64 years for man, 18-59 years for women.

Chart 1. Structure of the population aged 15-89 and at the working age by status on the labour market in the first quarter of 2026



The activity rate for the population aged 15-89 was 58.7% and decreased by 0.3 pp. compared to the fourth quarter of 2025, but increased compared to the first quarter of 2025 (by 0.5 pp.). The indicator was higher for men than for women – in the first quarter of 2026: 65.4% versus 52.5% (respective values for persons at the working age were 82.2% for the total population of that age: 84.5% for men and 79.7% for women). Corresponding indicators for urban and rural residents accounted respectively for: 58.9% and 58.5% (at the working age: 83.9% and 79.8%).

Within the scope of population aged 15-89, the ratio of the number of not working persons (unemployed and economically inactive) to the employed persons slightly increased compared to the previous quarter with a simultaneous decrease in this ratio compared to the first quarter of 2025. In the first quarter of 2026, there were 761 unemployed or economically inactive persons aged 15-89 per 1 000 employed persons (in the fourth quarter of 2025 – 751 persons and in the first quarter of 2025 – 780 persons).

The indicator describing the relation of not working persons to the number of employed persons was higher than in the fourth quarter of 2025, but lower than in the first quarter of 2025

56.8%

Employment rate
of persons aged 15-89

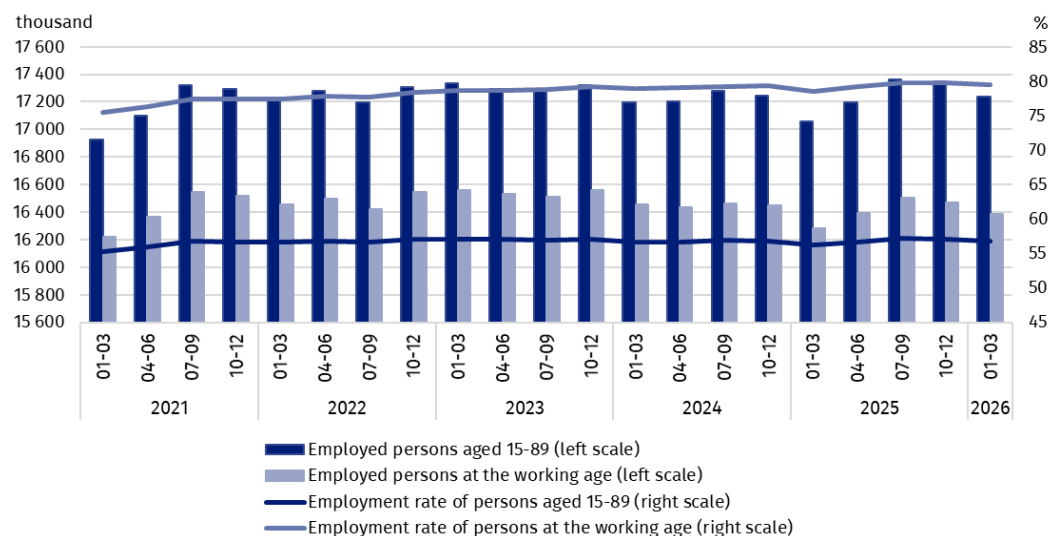
In the first quarter of 2026, employed persons accounted for 56.8% of the population aged 15-89. The employment rate was lower than noted in the fourth quarter of 2025 (by 0.3 pp.) but higher than recorded in the first quarter of 2025 (by 0.6 pp.).

Employed persons aged 15-89 by the LFS

In the first quarter of 2026, population of employed persons aged 15-89 amounted to 17 237 thousand persons and was lower than in the fourth quarter of 2025 (by 109 thousand, i.e. by 0.6%), while compared to the first quarter of 2025 it increased by 177 thousand i.e. by 1.0%.

The number of working-age persons in the first quarter of 2026 amounted to 16 386 thousand. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2025, there was a decrease in this group of persons – by 80 thousand, i.e. by 0.5%, while compared to the first quarter of 2025 – an increase by 106 thousand, i.e. by 0.7%.

Chart 2. Employed persons and employment rate of persons aged 15-89 and at the working age

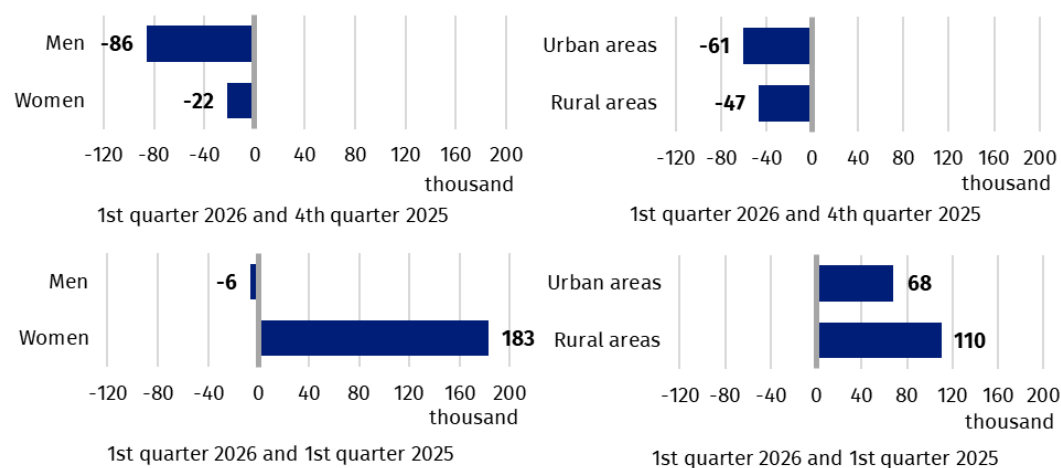


The size of the working population changes throughout the year i.e. due to the seasonality of certain types of work

In the first quarter of 2026, in the population of employed persons, taking into account division by sex, men still predominated constituting 53.5% (i.e. 9 223 thousand persons) of this group. Regarding the place of residence, there were more employed persons living in urban areas (60.5%, i.e. 10 422 thousand), which is a direct consequence of the higher population in urban than rural areas.

Chart 3 presents the directions and magnitude of changes in the population of employed persons aged 15-89 compared to the previous quarter and the same quarter of the previous year, depending on sex and place of residence of the employed persons.

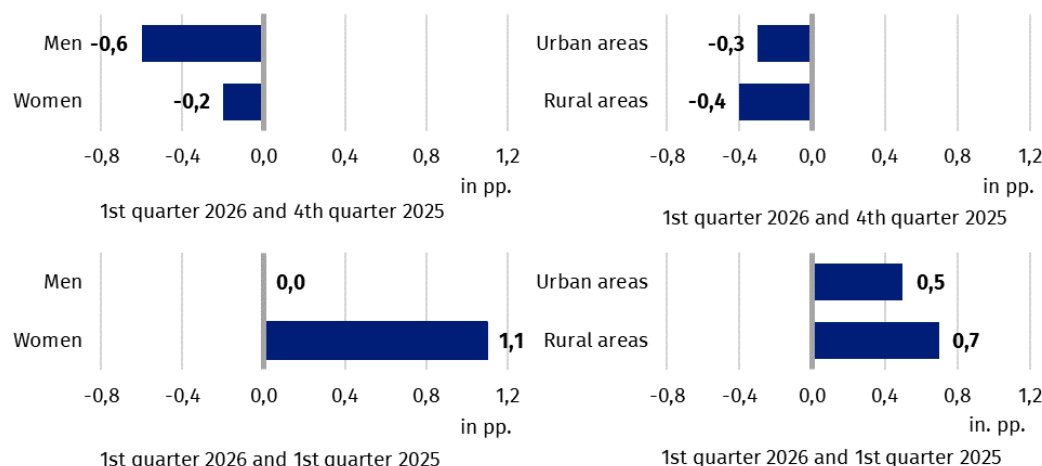
Chart 3. Changes in the number of employed persons aged 15-89 between the 1st quarter of 2026 and the 4th quarter of 2025 as well as the 1st quarter of 2025



In the first quarter of 2026, the total employment rate amounted to 56.8% and was lower than noted in the fourth quarter of 2025 – by 0.3 pp. and higher than in the first quarter of 2025 – by 0.6 pp.

Chart 4 presents changes in the employment rate for the population aged 15-89 compared to the previous quarter and the same quarter of the previous year, depending on sex and place of residence of the employed persons.

Chart 4. Changes in the employment rate of persons aged 15-89 between the 1st quarter of 2026 and the 4th quarter of 2025 as well as the 1st quarter of 2025

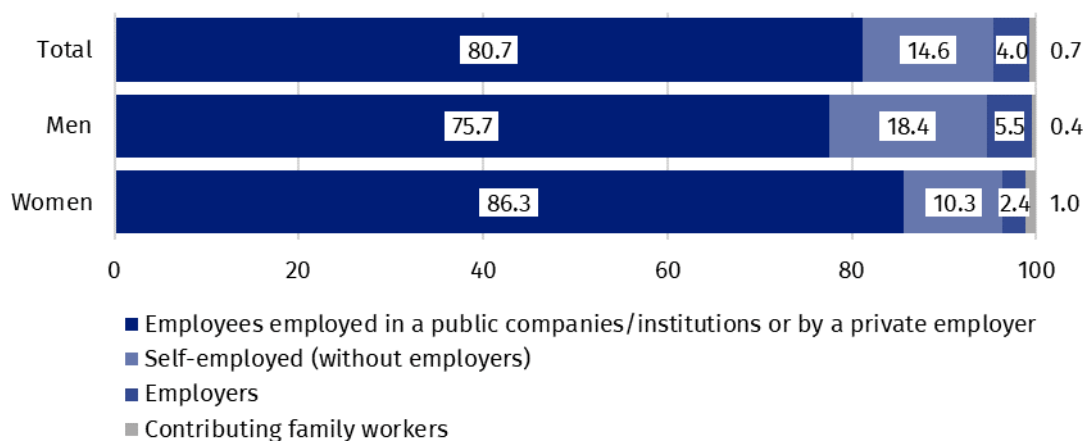


The LFS results indicate, among other things, that in the first quarter of 2026:

- full-time work was performed by 15 959 thousand persons (i.e. 92.6%), while 1 278 thousand persons worked part-time (i.e. 7.4%),
- 13 039 thousand persons worked in the private sector (75.6%) and 4 199 thousand persons worked in the public sector (24.4%),
- the average number of hours worked per employee during the reference week amounted to 38.4 hours in the main job and 38.8 hours in total in the main and second job,
- a vast majority of employees employed in public companies/institutions or by a private employer performed their work on the basis of the contract for an indefinite period (84.7%, i.e. 11 772 thousand persons),
- the sections³ where the most people worked were: Manufacturing – 18.5% of all employed persons (3 182 thousand persons); Wholesale and retail trade – 11.9% (2 052 thousand), Education – 7.9% (1 369 thousand) and Transportation and storage – 7,1% (1 219 thousand).

The number of full-time employed persons was lower than in the fourth quarter of 2025 and higher than in the first quarter of 2025

Chart 5. Structure of employed persons aged 15-89 by employment status in the main job in the first quarter of 2026 (in %)



³ By NACE Rev. 2.1 sections

3.3%

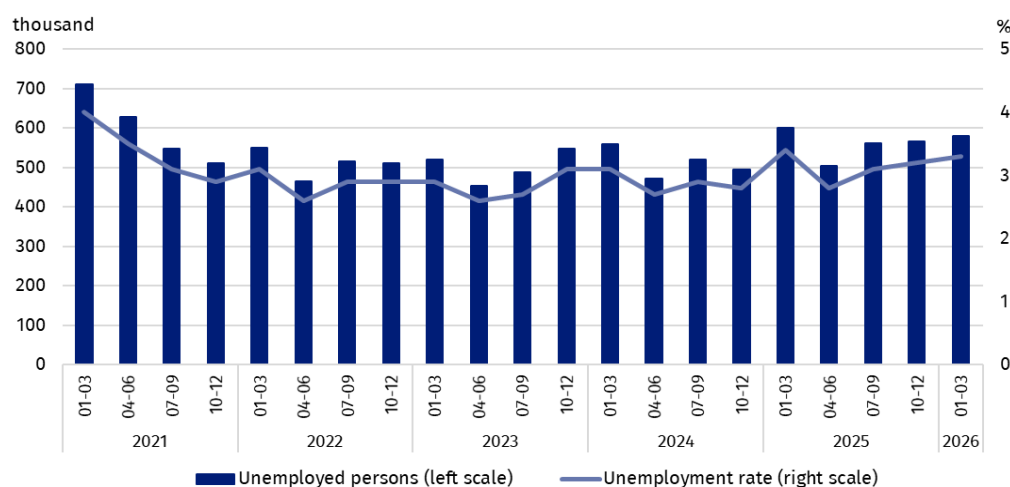
Unemployment rate of persons aged 15-89

In the first quarter of 2026, unemployed persons accounted for 3.3% of the economically active population aged 15-89. The unemployment rate was slightly higher compared to the previous quarter (by 0.1 pp.), but also slightly lower than in the first quarter of 2025 (by 0.1 pp.).

Unemployed persons aged 15-74 by the LFS

In the first quarter of 2026, the size of the unemployed population aged 15-74 (featured by the international criteria⁴ used in the LFS) amounted to 580 thousand⁵ and was higher than in the fourth quarter of 2025 – by 2,3% (increase by 13 thousand persons), but lower than in the first quarter of 2025 – by 3.3% (decrease by 20 thousand).

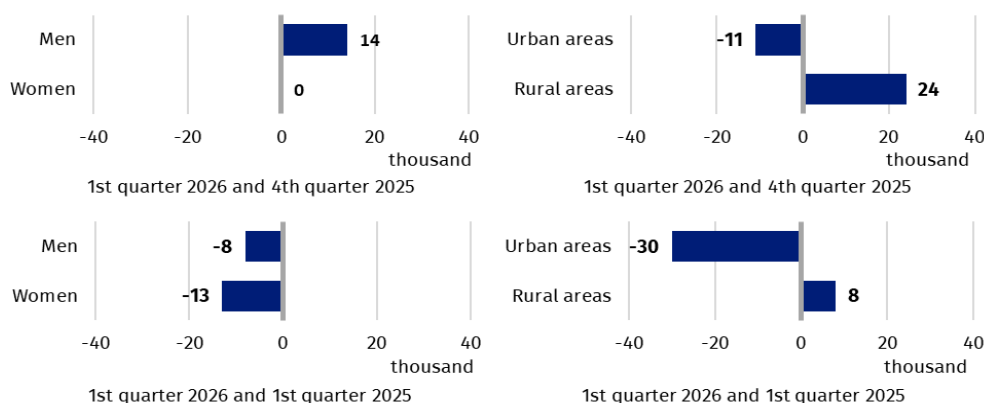
Chart 6. Unemployed persons aged 15-74 and unemployment rate of persons aged 15-89



In the first quarter of 2026, the population of unemployed men was slightly higher than the population of unemployed women (298 thousand unemployed men versus 282 thousand unemployed women). The number of unemployed persons living in urban areas was 318 thousand and in rural areas 261 thousand.

Chart 7 presents the directions and magnitude of changes in the unemployed persons population depending on sex and place of residence.

Chart 7. Changes in the number of unemployed persons aged 15-74 between the 1st quarter of 2026 and the 4th quarter of 2025 as well as the 1st quarter of 2025



⁴ See methodological notes at the end of this news release.

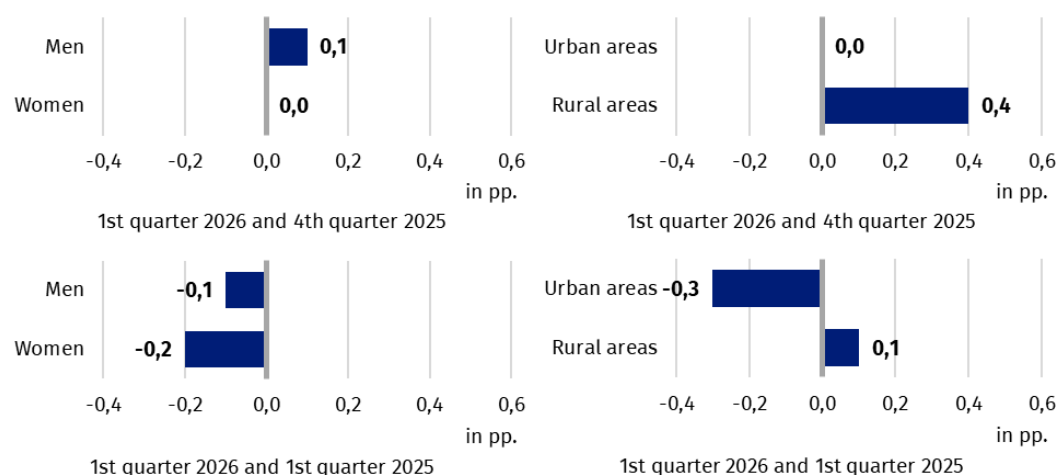
⁵ LFS results are presented as an average value in the analysed period, in this case – an average in a quarter (unlike, for example, in the case of data on registered unemployment, where data are most often presented as of the end of the period).

The number of unemployed persons was higher than recorded in the previous quarter but lower than in the corresponding period of the previous year

In the first quarter of 2026, the unemployment rate according to the LFS amounted to 3.3% and was slightly higher than noted in the fourth quarter of 2025 (by 0.1 pp.), and slightly lower than observed in the first quarter of 2025 (by 0.1 pp.).

Chart 8 presents changes in the intensity of unemployment by sex and place of residence of unemployed persons.

Chart 8. Changes in the unemployment rate of persons aged 15-89 between the 1st quarter of 2026 and the 4th quarter of 2025 as well as the 1st quarter of 2025



Changes in unemployment rate are also noticeable when taking into account the division of population by age groups. The highest unemployment rate was recorded for the youngest age group, i.e. in the age group 15-24 years – 12.5%. Significantly lower unemployment rates were observed in other age groups. The unemployment rate was 3.2% for persons aged 25-34, 2.3% for aged 35-44, and 2.8% in the group of persons of non-mobile age⁶ (45-59/64). The unemployment rate for persons of post-working age⁷ (60/65-89 years) cannot be presented due to the high random sampling error of the indicator (resulting from the low number of unemployed persons in this age group, less than 10 thousand, i.e. below the data reliability threshold adopted in Polish LFS).

Persons with tertiary education are still in the best situation – the unemployment rate in this group is the lowest – in the first quarter of 2026 it was 1.8%. For the subpopulation of persons with post-secondary and technical secondary or secondary sectoral vocational education, unemployment rate was 3.3% and for those with general secondary education – 3.7%. Among persons with basic vocational or basic sectoral vocational education the unemployment rate in the analysed quarter was 4.7%. However, the highest unemployment rate – 12.8% concerned the population with the lowest level of education, i.e., with lower secondary education or less.

Each unemployed person was classified into one of four categories separated due to the reason of inflow to unemployment. The largest population of unemployed were those who lost their job, i.e. persons who left their last job in the last 3 months not on their own initiative (45.4%, i.e. 263 thousand persons). The share of unemployed intending to return to work after a break (lasting longer than 3 months) was 22.3% (i.e. 129 thousand), but among women this share was higher than among men and amounted to 28.0% and 16.9%, respectively. The share of unemployed who were looking for their first job amounted to 16.2% (i.e. 94 thousand) and unemployed persons who resigned from work on their own initiative was 16.1% (i.e. 93 thousand persons) of the entire unemployed population.

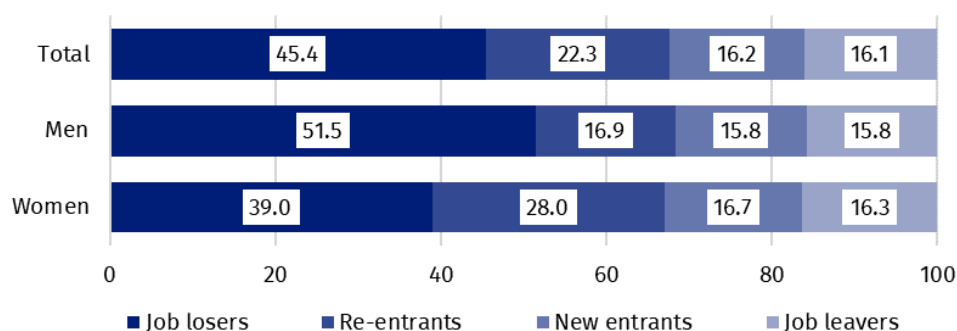
As in previous periods, the highest unemployment rate was observed among the youngest persons, i.e. aged 15-24

To the greatest extent, unemployment affected persons with the lowest level of education

⁶ Men aged 45-64 and women aged 45-59.

⁷ Men aged 65-89 and women aged 60-89.

Chart 9. Structure of unemployed persons by the source of inflow to unemployment in the first quarter of 2026 (in %)



In the first quarter of 2026, unemployed persons had been looking for a job 8.5 months on average⁸ (in the previous quarter and in the first quarter of 2025 it was 8.6 and 7.5 months respectively). Persons who were seeking a job for the longest duration were the ones aged 45-54 (an average 9.9 months), while the shortest job search duration was observed for the youngest persons i.e. aged 15-19 (5.7 months).

The average duration of job search by unemployed persons in the first quarter of 2026 was 8.5 months

41.3%

The share of economically inactive persons in the total number of the population aged 15-89

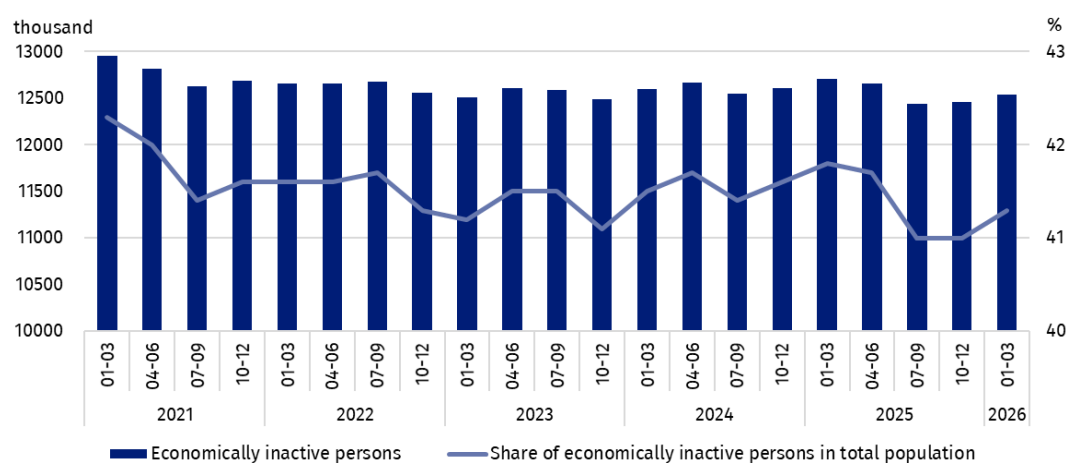
In the first quarter of 2026, economically inactive persons accounted for 41.3% of the total number of population aged 15-89. The indicator increased compared to the fourth quarter of 2025 by 0.3 pp., but was lower than in the first quarter of 2025 by 0.5 pp.

Economically inactive persons aged 15-89 by the LFS

In the first quarter of 2026, population of economically inactive persons aged 15-89 amounted to 12 538 thousand and increased compared to the fourth quarter of 2025 (by 82 thousand persons i.e. by 0.7%), while a decrease was recorded compared to the first quarter of 2025 – by 171 thousand i.e. by 1.3%.

The number of economically inactive persons increased compared to the fourth quarter of 2025, but was lower than in the first quarter of 2025

Chart 10. Economically inactive persons and the share of economically inactive persons in population aged 15-89



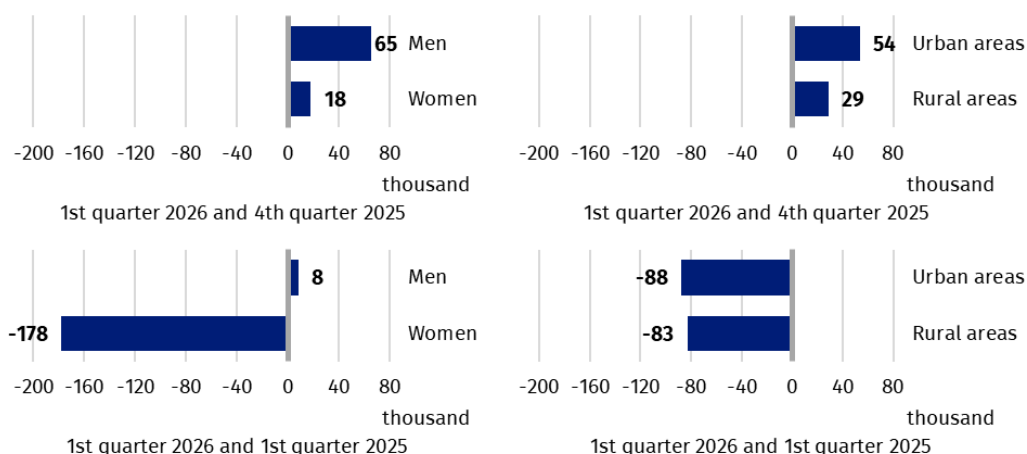
Over half of the population of economically inactive persons in the analysed age group constituted women – their share was 59.8% (7 496 thousand). Economically inactive women

⁸ The average duration of job search is the period, counted in months, during which unemployed persons are actively looking for a job (this includes the last uninterrupted period of job search).

accounted for 47.5% of all women aged 15-89, while analogous indicator for men was 34.6%. A majority of economically inactive persons constituted urban residents (59.9%, i.e. 7 509 thousand) than rural residents, which is connected with a higher population in urban than in rural areas. The share of economically inactive persons in the analysed age group among all urban residents was at the level of 41.1% and among rural residents amounted to 41.5%.

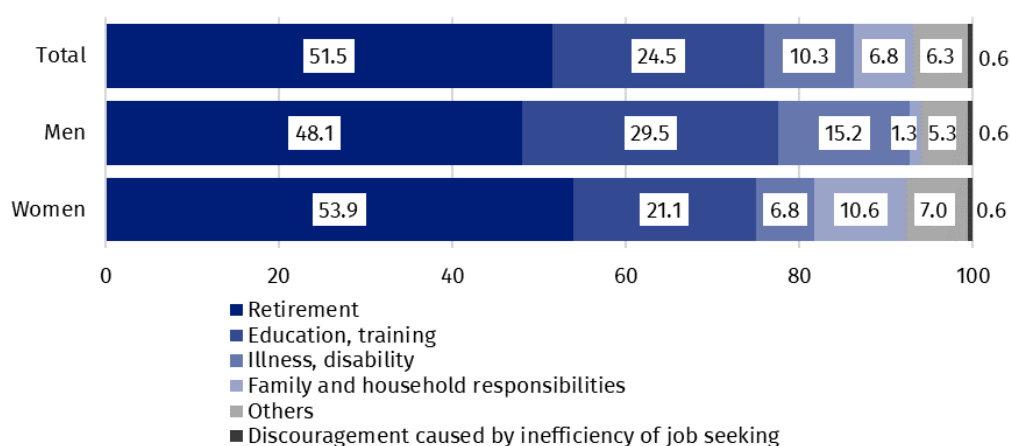
Chart 11 presents changes in the economically inactive population depending on sex and place of residence.

Chart 11. Changes in the number of economically inactive persons aged 15-89 between the 1st quarter of 2026 and the 4th quarter of 2025 as well as the 1st quarter of 2025



The economically inactive population is a specific one in respect to the labour market resources. Its scope includes persons who have not entered the labour market yet (including the majority of the youth still participating in education) and persons who have definitely left the labour market or will never enter the labour market (some retirees, pensioners, persons who earn their living from other sources than work), but also persons who entered the labour market, then partially deactivated and who will want to re-enter the labour market after a break.

Chart 12. Structure of economically inactive persons aged 15-74 by sex and reasons for inactivity in the first quarter of 2026 (in %)



In the first quarter of 2026, over half of the economically inactive persons aged 15-74 numbering 9 749 thousand (the reason for inactivity was determined for this age group) constituted retirees (51.5%), while the second largest group were pupils and students (24.5%). It is worth noting that education and training as well as illness and disability were more often the reasons for inactivity among men (respectively 29.5% and 15.2%) than among women (respectively 21.1% and 6.8%). On the other hand, family responsibilities were much more often the reason for inactivity among women (10.6%) than men (1.3%).

Family and households responsibilities were much more often the reason for women's economic inactivity

Among the economically inactive of working age (3 665 thousand persons) the most often reasons for inactivity were: education and training – 33.4%, illness and disability – 24.2% and family responsibilities – 17.1%. Retirement as the reason for inactivity on the labour market indicated 8.5% persons at the working age, while persons discouraged with unsuccessful job search constituted 1.4% of this group.

Education and training were the most often reason for economic inactivity of persons at the working age

Methodological notes

The presented news release was prepared on the basis of the generalised results of the sample survey **Badanie Aktywności Ekonomicznej Ludności/BAEL** (Eng.: **Labour Force Survey/PL-LFS**).

Badanie Aktywności Ekonomicznej Ludności has been carried out in Poland quarterly since May 1992 and it has been improved in accordance with the International Labour Organization and Eurostat recommendations.

From the first quarter of 2021 onwards, the base of the EU-LFS methodology are definitions of the employed, the unemployed and economically inactive persons in accordance with the Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization adopted in 2013 on the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in Geneva (19th ICLS) and recommended by the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the use in all countries.

The survey object is the situation in terms of economic activity of the population, i.e. the fact of performing work, being unemployed or economically inactive persons in the reference week. In the European Union, the implementation of the provisions of the above mentioned Resolution was carried out through introduction of new legal acts. **From 2021 onwards, EU-LFS has been one of the key surveys embraced by the framework regulation for social statistics (the so-called IESS FR⁹).** Accompanying IESS FR implementing regulations in the domain of the labour force specify the range of the core survey and module surveys, determine survey organisation and define in detail particular populations specified according to the status of persons in the labour market.

Since the fourth quarter of 2023, generalization of the survey results over the general population has been carried out with the use of the data on resident population in Poland living in households coming from the balances, for which the basis (initial base) are the results of the Population and Housing Census of 31 March 2021 (by the third quarter of 2023, the results were generalised over the general population using population data from the balances, for which the basis were the results of the National Census 2011). The component data (births, deaths and migrations) come from administrative registers. The data published in this news release and in the attached tables for the period from the first quarter of 2021 to the third quarter of 2023 have been recalculated in accordance with the new basis for generalizing results and are therefore comparable.

Starting from the first quarter of 2026, the information regarding the type of economic activities at the workplace is presented in accordance with the Polish Classification of Activities 2025 (PKD 2025), which was introduced by the Regulation of the Council of Ministers on 18 December 2024 (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1936). The PKD 2025 has been developed based on amendments made to the classification by the United Nations Organization - ISIC Rev. 5 (International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities) and the European Union classification - NACE Rev. 2.1 (Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the EU).

Compared with the PKD 2007 classification, the new PKD 2025 classification introduced changes including, among others, an increase in the number of sections from 21 to 22, as well as scope-related and structural modifications aimed at better adapting the classification to the current realities characteristics of the Polish economy which are covered by statistical observation.

⁹ Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 October 2019 establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households, based on data at individual level collected from samples.

Due to the changes introduced, the data by PKD sections, as well as by economic sectors, are not fully comparable with the results of previous periods.

Detailed information regarding the PKD classification can be found on Statistics Poland website:

<https://klasyfikacje.stat.gov.pl/Pkd2025>

In the first quarter of 2026, the data on the resident population as of the state on 31 December 2025 were used to generalise the survey results. The number of resident population aged 15-89 years living in households obtained after generalisation of the results of the survey is lower by about 488 thousand (persons living in institutional households and homeless persons) from the estimated number of resident population as of the state on 31 December 2025.

In the first quarter of 2026, the Labour Force Survey covered 26.9 thousand households, including 18.7 thousand households in urban areas. In each of the sampled households, persons at the age 15-89 years were surveyed, which gave a sample of 45.4 thousand persons, of whom 29.3 thousand persons were urban residents. The response rate was 64.7%.

More information on the methodology used in the survey can be found in the Methodological report and detailed survey results can be found in the tables available on Statistics Poland website at:

<https://stat.gov.pl/en/topics/labour-market/yearbook-of-labour/methodological-report-labour-force-survey,8,2.html>

Statistics Poland / Topics / Labour Mark <https://stat.gov.pl/en/topics/labour-market/working-unemployed-economically-inactive-by-lfs/labour-force-survey-in-poland-quarter-42025,2,60.html>

In the case of quoting Statistics Poland data, please provide information: 'Source of data: Statistics Poland', and in the case of publishing calculations made on data published by Statistics Poland, please provide information: 'Own work based on Statistics Poland data.'

Prepared by:
Labour Market and Human Capital Department

Director Agnieszka Zgierska, PhD
Phone: (+48 22) 608 34 99

Issued by:

Press Office

Mobile +48 695 255 032

Phone +48 22 608 38 04, +48 22 449 41 45,
+48 22 608 30 09

e-mail: obslugaprasowa@stat.gov.pl



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Related information

[Methodological report. Labour Force Survey](#)

[Labour Force Survey in Poland](#)

[Other publications containing the results of LFS and its module surveys](#)

[stat.gov.pl → Topics → Labour Market](#)

Data available in databases

[Strateg → Topics → Labour Market](#)

[Local Data Bank → labour Market](#)

[Knowledge Databases → Society → Labour Market](#)

Terms used in official statistics

[Economic activity by LFS](#)

[Economically active population by LFS](#)

[Employed persons by LFS](#)

[Unemployed persons by LFS](#)

[Economically inactive population according to the LFS](#)

[Activity rate by LFS](#)

[Employment rate by LFS](#)

[Unemployment rate by LFS](#)