

QUARTERLY LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

Quarter I 2026

This press release presents quarterly indicators on labour force participation, employment, and unemployment based on the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Labour force participation

In the first quarter of 2026, the labour force participation rate for the population aged 15-64 is 76.2%.

- Compared to the first quarter of 2025, this indicator has decreased by 0.5 percentage points;
- Compared to the previous quarter, this indicator increased by 0.3 percentage points.

Employment

In the first quarter of 2026, the employment rate for the population aged 15 and over is 58%.

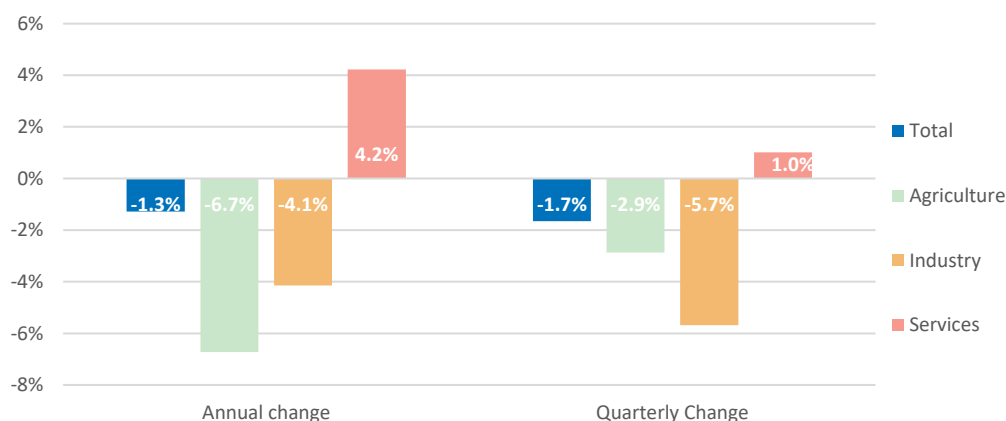
- Compared to the first quarter of 2025, this indicator has decreased by 0.3 percentage points.
- Compared to the previous quarter, this indicator decreased by 0.5 percentage points.

Unemployment

In the first quarter of 2026, the unemployment rate for the population aged 15 and over is 8.4%.

- Compared to the first quarter of 2025, this indicator has decreased by 0.3 percentage points;
- Compared to the previous quarter, this indicator has increased by 0.1 percentage points.

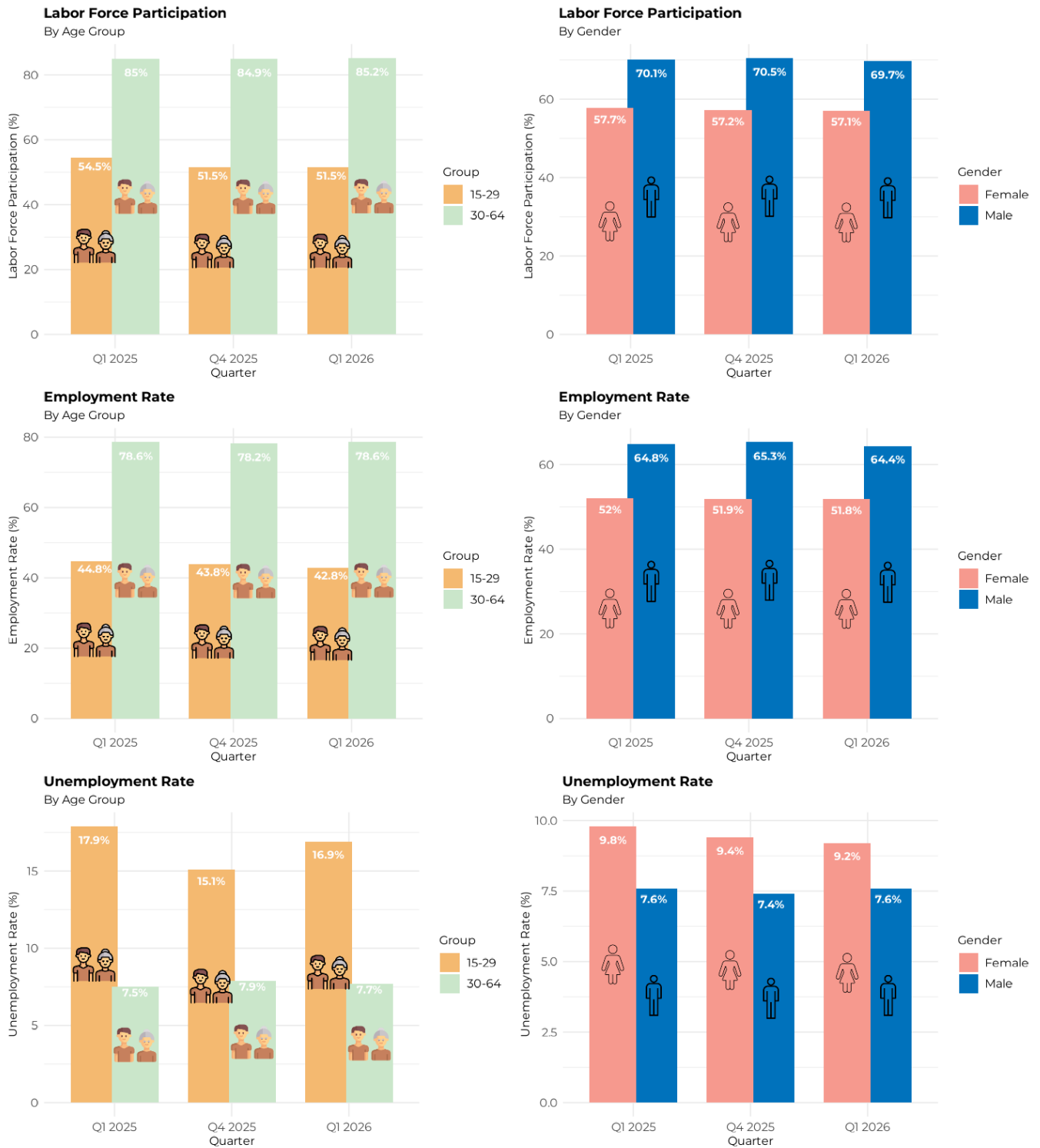
FIG. 1 ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT BY ACTIVITY GROUP



Source of Information: Labour Force Survey

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FIG. 2 LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER



Note to users:

Detailed monthly and annual data by groups are available in the INSTAT statistical database : [Labour Force Survey](#)

METHODOLOGY

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) is a household-based statistical survey designed to provide regular and comparable information on the labour market in Albania. Its data are used to monitor labour market developments and to support the design of economic and social policies.

The QLFS is implemented in accordance with the methodology and definitions established by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Eurostat, ensuring the comparability of labour market indicators with European Union countries and international standards. Key indicators such as employment, unemployment, labour force participation, and economic inactivity are calculated based on harmonised ILO and Eurostat concepts and criteria.

For the first quarter of 2026, the survey sample is based on data from the 2023 Population and Housing Census and consists of 7,906 households. The sample is selected using a two-stage procedure: in the first stage, geographical sampling units are selected with probability proportional to their size, while in the second stage a fixed number of households is selected within each unit with equal probability. This method ensures the representativeness of the results at national and regional level.

The survey has a panel structure, where households are interviewed for five consecutive quarters, with interviews conducted every 13 weeks. Data are collected through direct interviews with household members aged 15 and over. The response rate for the first quarter of 2026 was 83%. For data extrapolation, information from the 2023 Census and demographic events registered by the General Directorate of Civil Status are used.

Definitions

The working-age population includes all persons aged 15–64 years.

Employed persons are those who worked, even for one hour, during the reference week, including those who receive paid training or were temporarily absent from work (for reasons such as maternity leave, illness, etc.).

Unemployed persons are those who were without work during the reference week, are available for work, and are actively seeking employment.

The labour force comprises both employed and unemployed persons.

The economically inactive population includes persons who are neither employed nor unemployed (such as students, pensioners, and persons with disabilities).

The employment rate is the ratio of employed persons to the working-age population. The unemployment rate is the ratio of unemployed persons to the labour force. The participation rate is the ratio of the labour force to the working-age population.

Explanatory note on the main labour market indicators

Labour market indicators for employment and labour force participation rates are calculated for the population aged 15-64, being more accurate and meaningful.

The unemployment rate is calculated for the economically active population (15 years and older), and is not affected by retired persons. The inclusion of retirees in employment and participation rates may reduce the accuracy of the results, while the unemployment rate reflects only individuals actively seeking work.

Quality of labour market statistics

The Labour Force Survey results presented in this press release have been calibrated using the resident population according to the results of the 2023 Population and Housing Census.

The main indicators of the labour market are assessed by the Quarterly Labour Force Survey. The survey is based on a probability sample of 7,900 households. The selection of households is made in such a way as to provide the most accurate estimates of the main indicators of the labour market. Therefore, the survey can provide estimates rather than exact figures for the number of employed and unemployed. For each estimate obtained from the survey, the sample variance is calculated for each third of how the estimate would change if different random samples of the same size were carried out for the same period, instead of a single sample. This allows us to determine the limits within which the estimate should lie (known in statistical terminology as the confidence interval).

In general, the smaller the value of the relative standard deviation of an estimate, the higher the level of accuracy of the estimate. Table 1 presents the relative standard deviation and confidence interval for the main labour market indicators for the population 15 years of age and older.

TAB. 1 OVERALL SAMPLE STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Indicator	Number of people in employment (15+)	Employment rate (%)	Number of unemployed people (15+)	Unemployment rate (%)
ESTIMATE	1.153.106	57,99%	105.208	8,36%
SE	23.856	0,66%	6.841	0,53%
CV	2,07	1,14	6,5	6,35
CI- Lower	1.106.350	56,69%	91.801	7,32%
CI-Upper	1.199.863	59,28%	118.616	9,4%

(*) for the 95% confidence level

The unemployment rate for the population aged 15 and over is estimated at 8.4%, with a standard deviation of 0.53%. For a 95% confidence level, the confidence interval for this indicator ranges from 7.3% to 9.4%, which indicates that with 95% confidence, the true value of the unemployment rate lies within this interval.

Meanwhile, the employment rate for the population aged 15 and over is estimated at 58%, with a standard deviation of 0.66%. For a 95% confidence level, the confidence interval for this indicator ranges from 56.7% to 59.3%, indicating that the true value of the employment rate in the population falls within this interval.