

Romania sees EU's second-steepest decline in employment in Q3

The number of employed persons was 1 percent up in the euro area and 0.9 percent higher in the EU in the third quarter of 2020 compared to the previous quarter, representing the strongest increases observed since time series started in 1995, shows data released on Tuesday by the European Statistical Office (Eurostat). However, the most significant decline in employment was registered in Lithuania (-1.9 pct), Romania (-1 pct) and Bulgaria (-0.5 pct).

In Q3 2020, compared to the previous quarter, the countries to see the largest increase in the number of employees were Ireland (3.3 pct), Spain (3.1 pct) and Austria (3 pct).

In the second quarter of 2020, employment dropped 3 pct in the euro area and 2.8 pct in the EU, compared to the previous three months.

Also, in Q3 2020, compared to the same period in 2019, the number of employees decreased by 2.3 pct in the euro area and by 2 pct in the European Union, after declining 3.1 pct and 2.9 pct, respectively, between April and June 2020.

Although the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the labor market has been mitigated by government support schemes, the changes in hours worked were much more pronounced. The number of hours worked increased by 14.8 pct in the euro area and by 11.9 pct in the European Union in Q3 2020, compared to the previous three months. Compared to the same period in 2019, the number of hours worked decreased by 4.5 pct in the euro area and by 3.7 pct in the EU.

Based on seasonally adjusted data, Eurostat estimates that 205.2 million people were employed in the EU in the third quarter of 2020, of whom 157.4 million in the euro area. As a result of the pandemic, the number of employees is 3.6 million in the euro area and 4.3 million in the EU below the level of the fourth quarter of 2019.

Compared to the fourth quarter of 2019, the number of hours worked was 4.6 pct lower in the euro area and 3.6 pct lower in the EU.

In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, productivity based on persons recovered from the previous sharp drop in the third quarter of 2020, but remained negative compared to the same quarter of the previous year with -2.2 pct for the euro area and -2.3 pct for the EU

Based on hours worked, the impact on productivity was more limited. In the euro area there was a slight increase in productivity based on hours worked compared to the same quarter of the previous year of 0.4 pct, while for the EU productivity declined slightly by 0.5 pct.