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More than one third of the population lost some income in the past twelve months

About 2.3 million people affected in Austria in the second quarter of 2022

Vienna, 2022-10-12 – The COVID-19 pandemic has caused income losses for about 2.3 million people in Austria: A Statistics Austria study on the social effects of the crisis in the second quarter of 2022 showed that about 37 % of respondents lost some income in the twelve months preceding the study.

"In the second quarter of 2022, every fifth person reported increased income in the last twelve months, but the proportion of people who reported lower income was significantly higher at 37 %. Loss of purchasing power due to massive inflation is now the most frequently cited reason for perceived loss of income. More and more people in Austria are worried about the rising housing and energy costs in particular: every twelfth person now assumes that they can no longer afford a suitably warm apartment," explains Statistics Austria Director General Tobias Thomas.

A growing number of people anticipate income losses in the next months

Almost 20 % of respondents between the ages of 16 and 69 reported a rise in household income in the twelve months prior to the survey in May and June 2022. This number remains unchanged compared to the results of the first quarter 2022. 37 % of respondents (2.3 million people) experienced a decline in household income in the past twelve months. This number increased slightly compared to the previous quarter (34 %). The reason mentioned most for this subjective loss in income is the high inflation. Reduced working hours and wages are less important compared to the previous wave of the survey.

31 % of respondents expect a loss in household income in the upcoming twelve months, a considerable increase compared to the first quarter 2022 (25 %).

The effects of reduced income

45 % of the approximately 2.3 million people who experienced income losses in the second quarter 2022 reduced their spending on food, clothes, and other goods as well as services in the past twelve months because of their reduced income. 30 % had to fall back on their savings. Around 5 % had to take out a loan with their bank or increase existing loans because of the income losses, a further 5 % borrowed money privately.

37 % of the Austrian population plan to keep spending about the same amount of money for bigger purchases in the future. This is a decrease of 8 percentage points compared to the previous quarter. Conversely, 44 % of respondents planned to spend less money for big purchases like furniture, cars, or holiday trips in the future. The percentage of people who plan to economise regarding bigger purchases has increased by 11 percentage points compared to the first quarter of 2022. 19 % plan to spend a little or a lot more for big purchases, which constitutes a decline by 3 percentage points compared to the previous quarter.

The perceived burden of housing costs increases

In the second quarter of 2022, 18 % of respondents state that housing costs, which also include ancillary costs such as electricity, gas and heating, are a heavy financial burden for their household. Compared to the first quarter, this is an increase of 5 percentage points. Specifically, people affected by unemployment

perceive housing costs as a heavy financial burden (45 %). Over time, almost all at-risk groups experienced a considerable increase in the subjective burden of housing costs. About 8 % of respondents stated that they experienced difficulty keeping their living space adequately warm. This share has also increased (6 % in the first quarter of 2022).

With the next three months in mind, 19 % of respondents stated that they anticipate difficulty covering their housing and energy costs (14 % in the first quarter of 2022). People affected by unemployment particularly frequently (56 %) expect such payment difficulties (35 % in the first quarter of 2022). The same goes for people with low income who, at 34 %, are well above the average of 19 %.

For detailed results and further information please refer to our [website](#).

Table 1: Financial Situation

Attribute		4 th quarter 2021	1 st quarter 2022	2 nd quarter 2022 in %	
		in %	in %	in %	in 1 000
Change in income (last 12 months)	Increased	15,8	19,8	19,9	1 246
	Unchanged	50,2	45,8	43,1	2 700
	Decreased	34,1	34,4	37,0	2 322
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	6 268
Expected change in income (next 12 months)	Increase	18,2	17,9	14,9	929
	No change	59,4	57,5	54,5	3 418
	Decrease	22,4	24,5	30,7	1 921
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	6 268
Planned big purchases (next 12 months)	Less	34,5	32,6	43,5	2 728
	Same	45,9	44,7	37,0	2 322
	More	19,6	22,6	19,4	1 218
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	6 268
Making ends meet with the household income	With great difficulty	5,4	4,7	5,4	338
	With difficulty	9,5	8,1	10,2	637
	With slight difficulty	24,9	24,9	26,8	1 682
	With slight ease	32,2	34,3	34,1	2 136
	With ease	18,0	17,9	15,7	982
	With great ease	10,1	10,1	7,9	493
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	6 268

Source: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey „So geht’s uns heute“. Data as of 30.9.2022.

Table 2: Burden of Housing Cost

Attribute		4 th quarter 2021	1 st quarter 2022	2 nd quarter 2022 in %	
		in %	in %	in %	in %
Burden of housing cost	Heavy burden	14,2	13,1	17,9	1 122
	Some Burden	62,7	63,7	63,7	3 993
	No burden	23,1	23,2	18,4	1 153
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	6 268
Expected difficulties paying for housing cost (in the next 3 months)	Yes	12,0	13,8	18,9	1 185
	No	88,0	86,2	81,1	5 083
Total		100,0	100,0	100	6 268
Ability to keep living space ad- equately warm	Not affordable	6,0	6,1	8,4	527
	Affordable	94,0	93,9	91,6	5 741
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	6 268

Source: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey „So geht’s uns heute“. Data as of 30.9.2022.

Information on methodology, definitions: The third wave of the survey “So geht's uns heute” took place in Mai and June 2022. Approximately 3 100 respondents between 16 and 69 years participated in the survey. The study is co-financed by Eurostat and the Austrian Ministry for Social Affairs. Eleven other EU member states conduct similar pilot studies each quarter. The current results in Austria show the midyear subjective public opinion 2022. The study focuses on personally experienced income losses; the subjective coping with the cost of life, personal well-being, and happiness. The quarterly study aims to identify the social effects of the current developments in the pandemic as early as possible. The sample was drawn from the Austrian civil register. Register data was not used in order to depict changes in the public opinion in a timely manner. The questionnaire can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions on this topic, please contact:

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