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Financial burden for multi-child families has decreased

Continued high level, but significant relief for households with at least three children

Vienna, 2024-12-18 – In the third quarter of 2024, 11% of 18- to 74-year-olds stated in the social impact survey conducted by Statistics Austria, that they were struggling to make ends meet. In households with three or more children (without single-parent households), the proportion was higher at 18%. In the third quarter, however, the perceived difficulties in making ends meet dropped in this group significantly.

“The financial situation of the Austrian population continued to improve in fall 2024. The proportion of people reporting difficulties with their household income fell from 16% to 11% in the third quarter of 2024 compared to the same quarter of the previous year. By contrast, the financial burden is higher in single-parent households or in households with three or more children, although the financial situation of multi-child households has recently eased,” says Statistics Austria Director General Tobias Thomas.

Income losses in multi-child and single-parent households decreased strongly compared to the previous year

In the third quarter of 2024, around 21% of people aged between 18 and 74 reported having suffered **income losses** in the past twelve months and around 43% reported **income gains**. Compared to the start of the year, the number of people reporting income gains has fallen slightly (Q1/2024: 49%). The trend in perceived income losses has been largely stable since the beginning of the year. Compared to the previous year (Q3/2024), the proportion of people reporting a loss of income has fallen by 10 percentage points (see table 1).

Among people from single-parent households, 20% reported income losses within the past twelve months in Q3/2024. Compared to the third quarter of the previous year, the decline of 18 percentage points is significantly more pronounced than for the total population. The proportion of people from multi-child households who reported a loss of income has also fallen significantly by 16 percentage points compared to the previous year. Around 17% of people from multi-child households reported having been affected by a loss of income in the third quarter of 2024.

Decrease in the financial burden for multi-child households greater than in the total population

In fall 2024, around 11% stated that it was **difficult or very difficult to make ends meet**. A slight decrease can be observed in the overall population compared to the previous quarter (Q2/2024: 13%; see table 1). For people from multi-child households, the proportion of those who are struggling to make ends meet has fallen more sharply, by 6 percentage points compared to the previous quarter. Despite this positive trend, 18% of this group stated in the third quarter of 2024 that it was difficult or very difficult to cover their expenses with their income, significantly more than for the overall population aged between 18 and 74. For people from households affected by unemployment (31%) and low-income households (41%), the proportion is stable compared to the previous quarter and at a significantly above-average level.

Around 30% of the population aged 18 to 74 stated in the third quarter of 2024 that it was **(much) more difficult to make ends meet** than a year ago (see table 2). The main reasons given for larger financial difficulties were high food costs and high housing costs (including energy costs), each at around 24%. In the previous quarter, high food prices were the main reason for struggling to make ends meet, at 31%, ahead of high housing costs. The proportion of people aged 18 to 74 who stated that they could not afford **major unexpected expenses** amounting to 1 390 euro remained stable compared to the previous quarter at around a quarter. In comparison, this proportion has fallen by 7 percentage points from 48% to 41% among people from single-parent households.

The **burden of housing costs** is stable compared to the previous quarter; around 16% of the population stated that they perceive housing costs as a heavy burden. Compared to the same quarter of the previous year, this represents a decrease of 6 percentage points (see table 1). Among people from multi-child households, the proportion of those who consider housing costs to be a heavy financial burden fell significantly by 11 percentage points to 18% compared to the previous quarter.

Households with young children particularly financially burdened

The composition of the household has a major influence on the financial vulnerability. While around 11% of the total population aged 18 to 74 stated in the third quarter that it was difficult or very difficult to make ends meet, this was the case for 20% of single-person households and 21% of people from single-parent households. Among households with children, those with younger children (under ten years old, here: excluding single-parent households) are particularly financially vulnerable. Among couple households without children, around 7% of people stated that it was (very) difficult to get by on their income (see table 3).

With regard to the housing cost burden, single-person households are more likely to be financially burdened due to the type of housing, among other things. In the third quarter of 2024, around 68% of people from single-person households lived in rented accommodation, while people from couple households with one to two children were much more likely to be home owners (37% live in rented accommodation). Around a quarter of people from single-person households felt that housing costs were a heavy financial burden (22%). At 26%, people from single-parent households also reported being severely affected by high housing costs. At 5%, people from older couple households (average age of the couple 60 years or older) without children felt the least burdened by housing costs.

Half of the population expects the economic situation to deteriorate

With regard to the economic situation in Austria, around half of the population (Q3/2024: 51%) aged 18 to 74 were pessimistic about the future and stated that they **expected the general economic situation to deteriorate in the coming year**. This proportion has risen slightly compared to the previous quarter (Q2/2024: 47%), but is 13 percentage points below the previous year's figure (Q3/2023: 63%).

At around 19%, slightly fewer people from households affected by unemployment **expected their income to deteriorate** compared to the previous quarter (Q2/2024: 25%). The proportion of people with a loss of income who expected their income to fall further also decreased slightly compared to the previous quarter (Q2/2024: 41%, Q3/2023: 36%). In the overall population, the proportion is stable compared to the previous quarter at around 18% (Q2/2024: 19%).

Detailed results and in-depth analyses on differences between men and women can be found in the report "So geht's uns heute: Die sozialen Krisenfolgen im 3. Quartal 2024 – Schwerpunkt: Unterschiede zwischen Haushaltskonstellationen" (in German language), issued jointly by IHS and Statistics Austria. The report is available on our [website](#) along with other detailed results.

Table 1: Financial Situation

Attribute		Q3/2023	Q4/2023	Q1/2024	Q2/2024	Q3/2024	
		in %				in %	in 1 000
Perceived change in income (last 12 months)	Increase	20,5	19,3	48,8	45,3	43,1	2 849
	Unchanged	48,7	52,2	30,1	32,8	35,8	2 363
	Decrease	30,8	28,4	21,1	21,9	21,1	1 395
Expected change in income (next 12 months)	Increase	17,2	21,6	17,4	18,6	21,3	1 407
	Unchanged	59,0	57,5	63,8	62,8	60,9	4 021
	Decrease	23,8	20,9	18,8	18,6	17,8	1 179
Making ends meet with the house-hold income	With great difficulty	6,7	6,1	5,0	5,8	4,7	310
	With difficulty	9,2	9,6	7,9	7,4	6,8	447
	With slight difficulty	32,2	28,0	28,6	27,3	27,5	1 818
	With slight ease	32,3	33,9	35,4	36,7	38,1	2 519
	With ease	13,8	15,8	15,2	16,0	15,0	991
	With great ease	5,8	6,5	7,9	6,9	7,9	522
Burden of housing cost	Heavy burden	21,2	19,8	18,7	15,9	15,5	1 021
	Some burden	62,5	64,2	64,6	62,5	63,3	4 185
	No burden	16,3	16,0	16,8	21,6	21,2	1 401
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	6 607

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey "So geht's uns heute". – Data as of 18.12.2024.

Table 2: Change in financial situation

Attribute		Q1/2024	Q2/2024	Q3/2024	
		in %	In %	in %	in 1 000
Change in ability to make ends meet compared to twelve months ago	Much worse	5,8	5,2	4,4	294
	Slightly worse	28,9	26,2	25,4	1 681
	Unchanged	51,1	52,2	54,9	3 626
	Somewhat improved	12,6	14,2	13,5	890
	Much improved	1,6	2,2	1,8	116
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	6 607

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey "So geht's uns heute". – Data as of 18.12.2024.

Table 3: Financial situation according to household constellation

Attribute	Group	Q3/2024
		in %
Making ends meet with the household income with great difficulty or with difficulty	Single-person household	19,6
	Couple household without children	6,7
	Single-parent household	21,3
	Couple household with one or two children	8,3
	Multi-child household	18,2
	Total population	11,5

Definitions: Single-parent household: Household with only one parent and at least one child under the age of 25; couple household with 1-2 children: Couple household with 1-2 dependent children; multi-child household: couple household with at least three dependent children in the household; dependent child: child is under 18 years old or between 18 and 24 years old and not active or unemployed.

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey "So geht's uns heute". – Data as of 18.12.2024.

Information on methods, definitions: The twelfth wave of the survey "So geht's uns heute" took place in August, September and October 2024. Approximately 3 400 respondents between 18 and 74 years participated in the survey. Between 2021 and 2023 Austria carried out the project with ten other EU countries and was funded by Eurostat and the Ministry of Social Affairs. From the survey in the first quarter of 2024 onwards, "So geht's uns heute" is fully funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The current results in Austria show the subjective public opinion of the third quarter of 2024. 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 developments in the current crisis 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](#).

Unexpected expenditure of 1 390 euro or more: The poverty risk threshold from the EU-SILC survey is used as the basis for this amount (survey waves 1-6: 1 300 euro, waves 7-9: 1 370 euro, from wave 10: adjustment of the expenditure amount to 1 390 euro).

Statistics Austria is the central organisation for official data and statistics on society, the economy, the state and the environment. As a national statistical institute, it is committed to the statutory principles of independence, impartiality and objectivity. Statistics Austria is headed by Tobias Thomas, Director General Statistics, and Franz Haslauer, Director General Finance.

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