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Labour market Q1 2026: One in three women aged 60 to 64 is in employment

Increase in the retirement age for women main reason for rise

Vienna, 2026-06-03 – According to Statistics Austria’s Microcensus Labour Force Survey, there were 20 200 more employed women aged 60 to 64 in the first quarter of 2026 than in the same quarter of the previous year. The main reason for this increase is the gradual rise in women’s statutory retirement age since the beginning of 2024. Whereas before this adjustment began (Q1 2023) only just under one in five women (18,7%) in this age group was employed, it is now already one in three (32,2%).

“In the first quarter of 2026, compared with the first 3 months of the previous year, the number of employed persons increased by 24 800. This growth in employment was largely driven by women in higher age groups. Among women aged 60 to 64, there was an increase of 20 200 employed persons. As a result, the employment rate of women in this age group rose by 5.4 percentage points compared with the first quarter of 2025, mainly due to the gradual increase in the statutory retirement age for women. Currently, nearly one in three women aged 60 to 64 is employed,” says Statistics Austria Director General Manuela Lenk.

Already one in three women aged 60 to 64 is in employment

In the first quarter of 2026, an average of 4 468 900 persons aged 15 and over were in employment according to the international definition, 24 800 more than in the same quarter of the previous year. As a result, the employment rate—defined as the proportion of employed persons among all individuals aged 15 to 64—rose to 73.9% (+0.4 percentage points). The increase was particularly pronounced among those aged 60 to 64. In the first quarter of 2026, 40.2% of this age group were employed, 3.0 percentage points more than a year earlier.

This rise is largely driven by the higher labour force participation of women in this age group and is mainly attributable to the gradual increase in their statutory retirement age since 1 January 2024. While only 18.7% of women aged 60 to 64—just under one in five—were employed in the first quarter of 2023, this share rose to 23.2% in the first quarter of 2024 (+4.5 percentage points) and further to 26.8% in the first quarter of 2025 (+3.6 percentage points). In the first quarter of 2026, the employment rate reached 32.2% (+5.4 percentage points), meaning that nearly one in three women in this age group is now employed. Employment among men of the same age group also increased, but more moderately (Q1 2023: 46.5%; Q1 2026: 48.3%, see bar chart).

Unemployment rate rises further to 6.3%

The number of unemployed persons according to the international definition has increased once again. In the first quarter of 2026, a total of 301 900 people were without employment, actively seeking work and available to start, which is 17 700 more than in the same quarter of the previous year.

The unemployment rate thus rose slightly by 0.3 percentage points to 6.3% compared with the same quarter of the previous year. The increase was smaller among men (+0.1 percentage points to 6.7%) than

among women (+0.5 percentage points to 5.9%). The stronger rise in unemployment among women in the first quarter of 2026 was entirely concentrated in the younger age groups: it was particularly pronounced among women aged 25 to 34, whose unemployment rate increased by 1.9 percentage points to 7.4%.

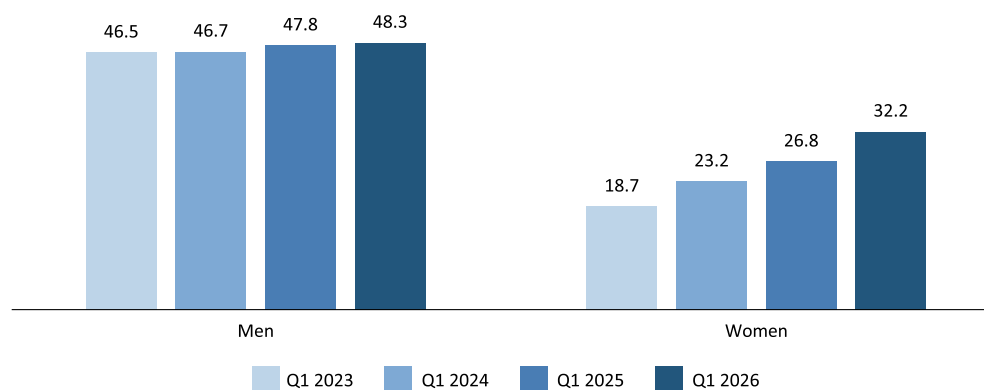
Employed and unemployed

Employed and unemployed (ILO concept)	Unit	Q1 2026	Changes compared to... (absolute or in % points)	
			Q4 2025	Q1 2025
Employed (15 years or older)	1 000	4 468.9	-48.0	24.8*
Employment rate ¹ (15 to 64 years)	%	73.9	-0.8	0.4*
Men	%	76.8	-1.3	0.6*
Women	%	70.9	-0.2*	0.3*
Employed (60 to 64 years)	1 000	272.5	-2.8*	25.0
Men	1 000	161.7	-2.6*	4.8*
Women	1 000	110.8	-0.1*	20.2
Employment rate ¹ (60 to 64 years)	%	40.2	-0.6*	3.0
Men	%	48.3	-1.0*	0.5*
Women	%	32.2	-0.2*	5.4
Unemployed	1 000	301.9	31.8	17.7*
Unemployment rate ²	%	6.3	0.7	0.3*
Men	%	6.7	0.9	0.1*
Women	%	5.9	0.4*	0.5*

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Labour Force Survey (Microcensus) – International definition according to ILO concept. Non-significant changes are marked with *. Rounding differences not balanced.

1) Employed persons as a percentage of the population of the respective age group. – 2) Unemployed as a percentage of the labour force (employed and unemployed) aged 15 to 74.

Employment rates for men and women aged 60 to 64 – in percent



S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Labour Force Survey (Microcensus) – International definition according to ILO concept. – Employment rate: Employed persons as a percentage of the population of the respective age group.

Detailed results and further information on the labour market in the first quarter can be found on our German [website](#) in the publication “Labour Market Statistics, 1. Quarter 2026” under “Publications”; additional tables are available under “Detailed results”.

Information on methodology, definitions: The European Labour Force Survey (LFS), which takes place in all EU Member States, collects information on employment and job search in a standardised form from randomly selected private households. In Austria, the LFS is conducted as part of the Microcensus – a sample survey in which about 1 500 households are interviewed weekly. These data are extrapolated to the population.

Employed persons: According to the international definition (ILO concept), persons are considered to be employed if they have worked at least 1 hour in the reference week or if they have not worked due to vacation, illness, etc., but are normally employed. Military and civilian servants are excluded.

Unemployed persons: According to the international definition (ILO concept), persons are considered to be unemployed if they are not employed (see above) and have actively sought work during the reference week or the 3 preceding weeks. Also considered as unemployed are persons who already have a job offer and start this job within 3 months. In addition, they must be able to start working within the next 2 weeks after the reference week. The **unemployment rate** is the proportion of unemployed persons in the total labour force (employed and unemployed) aged 15 to 74.

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 Manuela Lenk, Director General Statistics, and Franz Haslauer, Director General Finance.

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