

People over 50 on the labour market in 2021

27.04.2023

35.6%

Percentage of economically active people aged 50 and over in the total number of people aged 50-89 years.

In Poland, in 2021, the number of economically active people aged 50 and over was 4 811 thousand.¹ The number of economically inactive people at this age was 8 723 thousand. The employment rate and activity rate were higher among men.

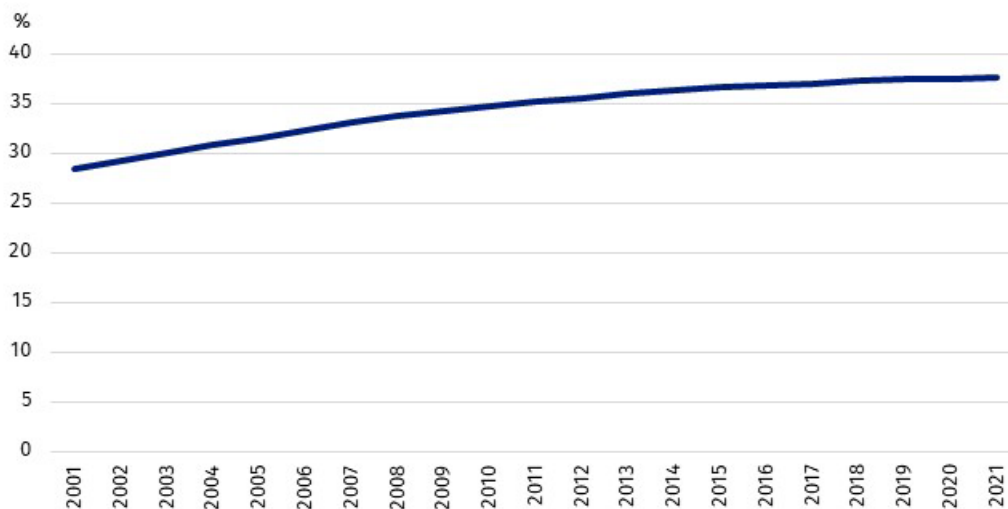
Demographic situation

Over the past 20 years, an increase in the share of people aged 50 and over in the Polish population can be observed. At the end of 2021, there were 14 277.9 thousand people aged 50 and over. They accounted for 37.7% of the total number of the population and, compared with 2001, this share increased by 9.2 percentage points and, in relation to the previous year, there was an increase of 0.2 percentage points.

As at the last day of 2021, people aged 50 and over accounted for nearly 38% of Poland's population

Chart 1. The share of people aged 50 and over in the total population

As at 31 December

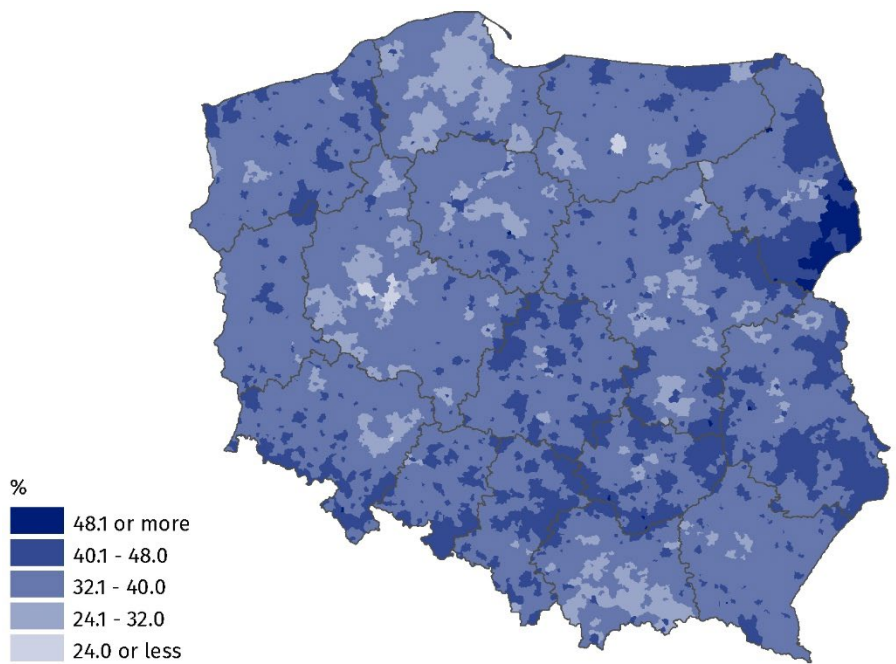


The share of people aged 50 and over varied spatially. The highest share of people at this age was recorded in gminas located in the eastern part of the Podlaskie Voivodship. On the other hand, the relatively smallest share of the analysed group was recorded in gminas located in the Wielkopolskie Voivodship around Poznań and in the rural gmina of Stawiguda located in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship.

¹ The results of the Labour Force Survey refer to the population residing or intending to reside in the country for at least 12 months, living in households.

Map 1. The share of people aged 50 and over in the total population in 2021

As at 31 December

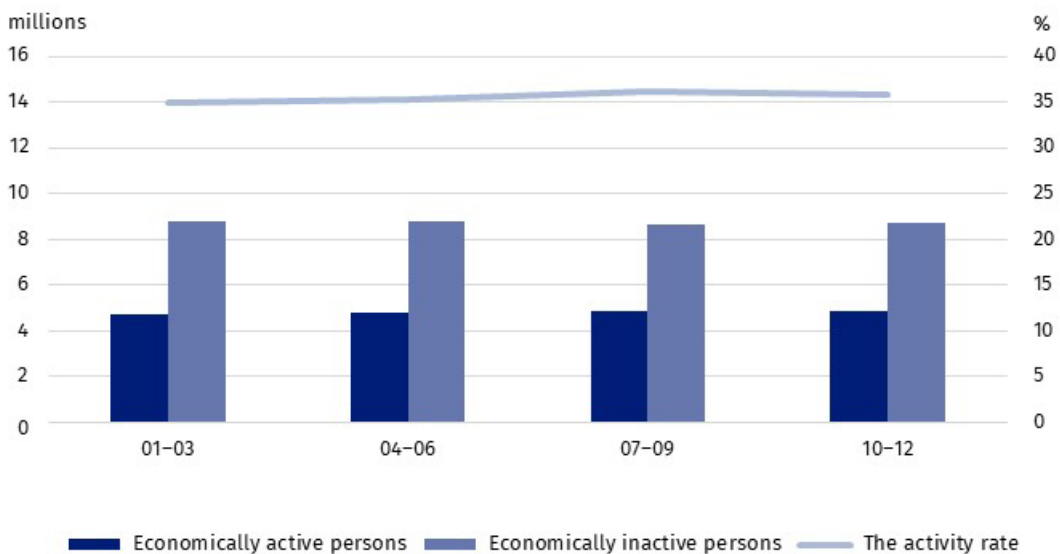


The situation of people aged 50 and over on the labour market

Demographic changes are having an impact on the structure of the labour force. According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS), in 2021² the activity rate among people aged 50 and over was 35.6%. Almost one in three women and almost one in two men surveyed were economically active. The highest activity rate was among people aged 50-54 (83.4%). Outside the labour market, there were 8 723 thousand people aged 50 and over. The main reasons for inactivity included: retirement, disability and illness.

In 2021, the highest activity rate was among people aged 50-54

Chart 2. Economically active and inactive persons aged 50 and over (left axis) and the activity rate (right axis) for people aged 50 and over in the quarters of 2021

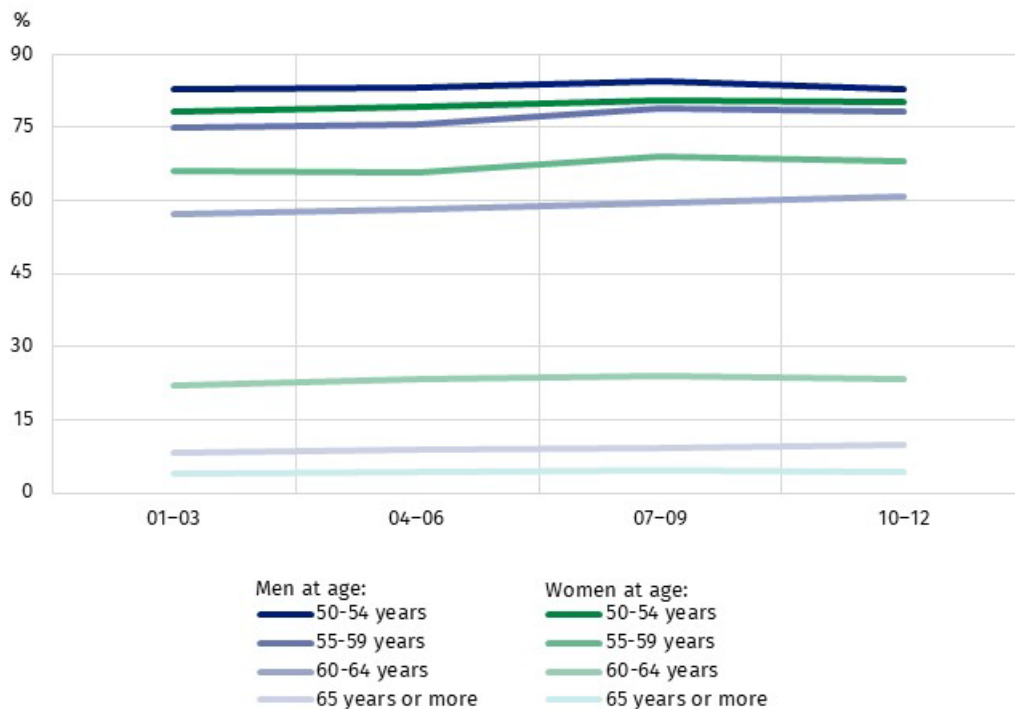


² Due to the implementation of methodological changes in the Labour Force Survey, the analysis of the labour market situation in 2021 has been limited to the population aged 50-89, and all persons aged 90 and over are treated as economically inactive.

One of the basic labour market indicators is the employment rate, i.e. the percentage of employed people in the surveyed population. This indicator, calculated on the basis of the LFS, shows that 34.7% of people aged 50 and over were working. In 2021, the employment rate for men at this age was 43.6%, 15.9 percentage points higher than the employment rate for women. The highest employment rate was recorded among those aged 50-54 (81.4%), and the lowest for those aged 65 and over (6.2%).

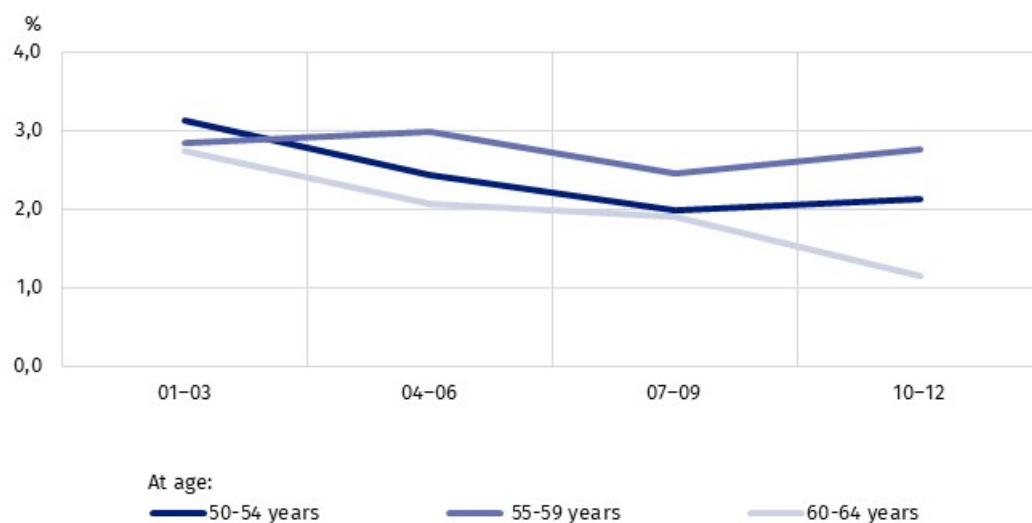
The employment rate of men aged 50 and over was 43.6%, which was 15.9 percentage points higher than among women in the same age group

Chart 3. The employment rate for people aged 50 and over by sex and age group in the quarters of 2021



In 2021, according to the Labour Force Survey, among economically active people aged 50-89 there were 109.3 thousand unemployed people. The majority were men (62.2%). The unemployment rate in the analysed age group was 2.3%. The highest unemployment rate in the population of people aged 50 and over was among people aged 55-59 (2.8%).

Chart 4. The unemployment rate for people aged 50 and over by age group in the quarters of 2021



The source of data on unemployed persons are also data from official registers, whereby the definition of an unemployed person and the methodology of surveying the registered

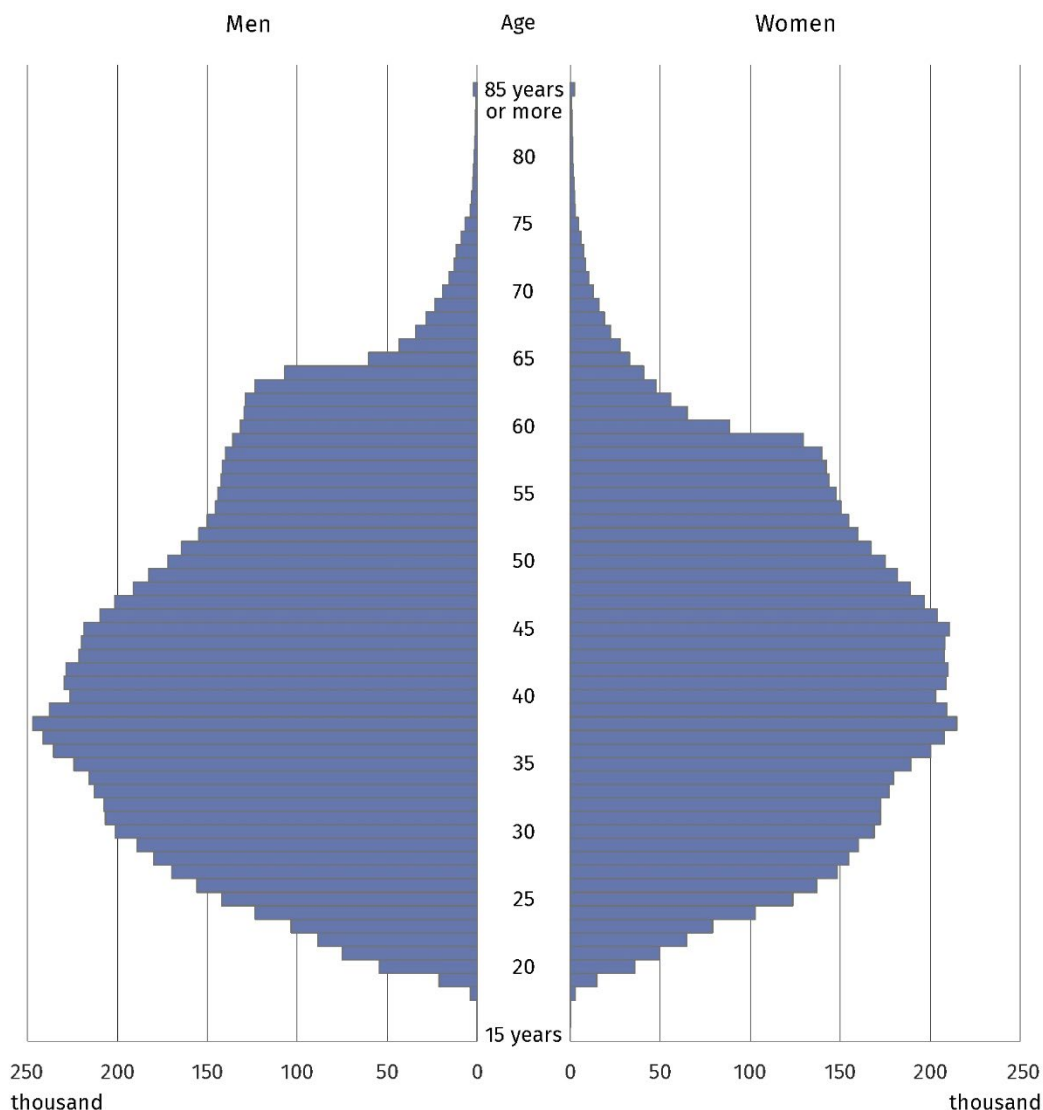
unemployment differ from the definition of an unemployed persons and methodology in the Labour Force Survey and are not comparable. According to the register data, at the end of 2021, people aged 50 and over accounted for 26.9% of the total registered unemployed people. The group of the unemployed aged 50 and over was dominated by people with basic vocational education and lower secondary, primary and incomplete primary education. Such people constituted a total of 71.1% of the unemployed at this age. The group of the unemployed was also dominated by long-term unemployed people, for more than 24 months, who constituted 36.7%.

Due to the growing demand for data diagnosing the situation of the analysed age group on the labour market, attempts are being made to search for new data sources. These include, among others, public administration information systems, which make it possible to compile data at lower levels of aggregation, including by individual single-year cohort. Due to ongoing methodological work, analyses based on them have the status of experimental statistics.

When analysing the graphical presentation of the distribution of the employed population by individual single-year cohort and sex, it can be seen that in the employed population aged 50 and over, the number of employed persons is decreasing with each single-year cohort. The predominance of employed women over employed men occurs between the ages of 50 and 57. In older single-year cohorts, there are more employed men.

Chart 5. Age pyramid of employed persons in 2021

As at 31 December

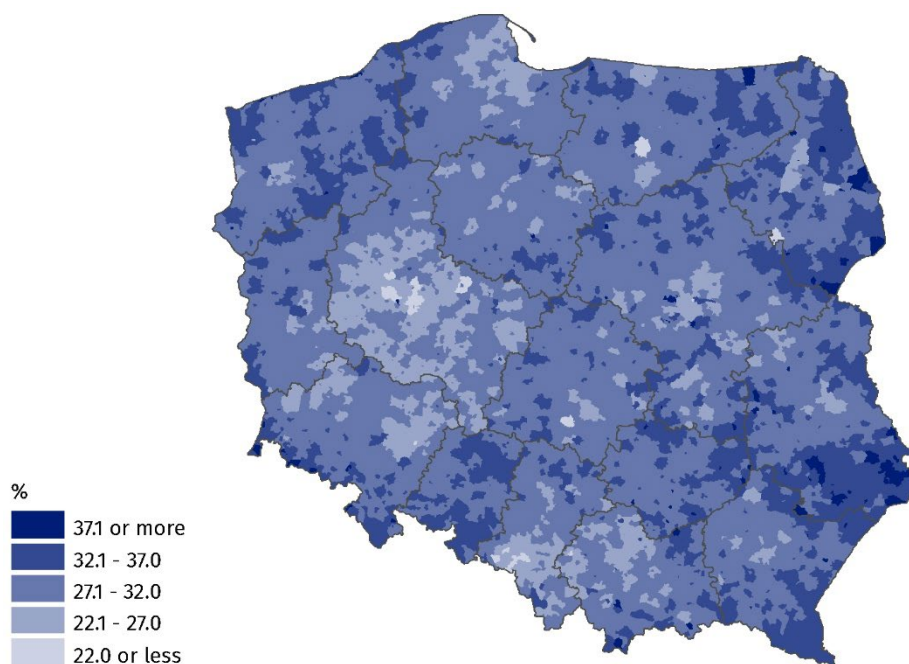


The share of employed persons aged 50 and over in the total number of employed persons was also varied spatially. The highest percentage of this group of employed persons was in gminas located in the Lubelskie Voivodship.

The lowest share of employed persons aged 50 and over in the total number of employed persons was observed in gminas located in the Wielkopolskie Voivodship.

Map 2. The share of employed persons aged 50 and over in the total number of employed persons in 2021

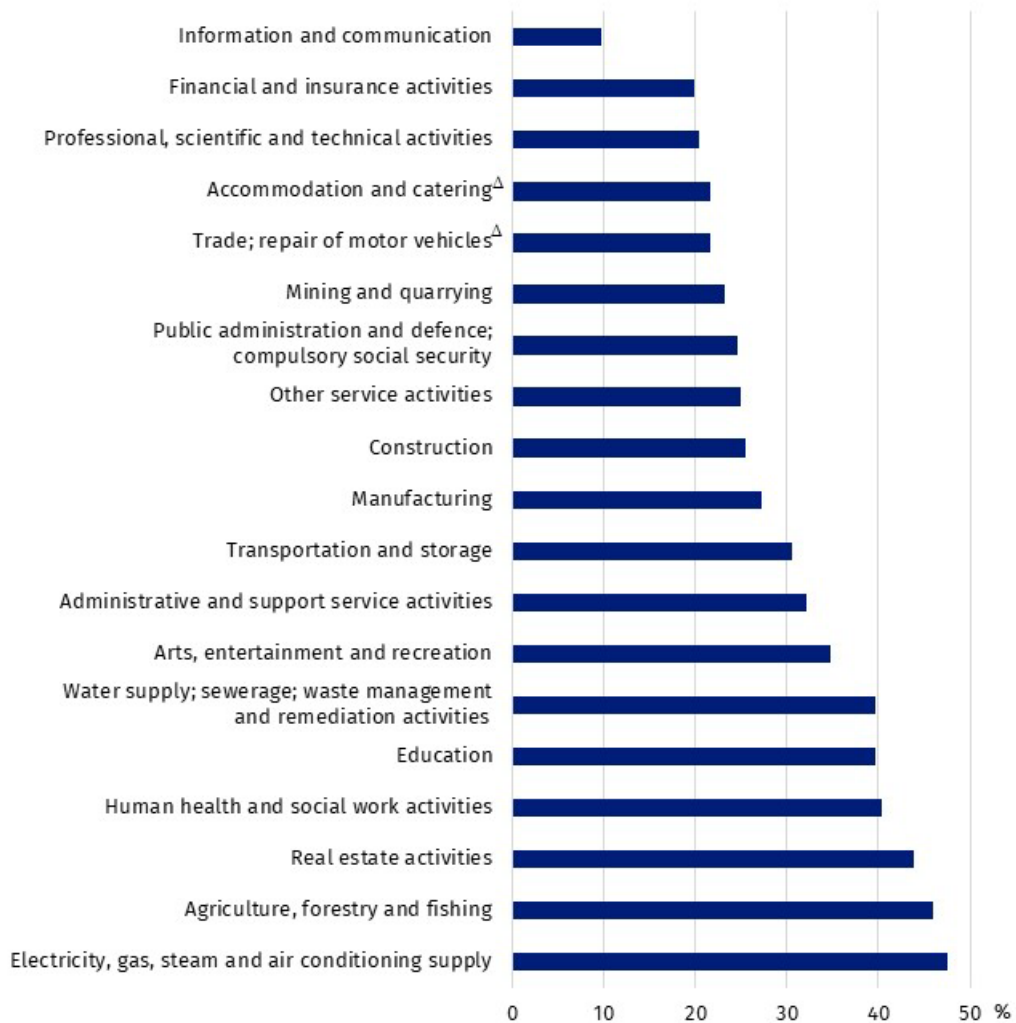
As at 31 December



The process of labour force ageing varies depending on the kind of activity. The conducted analysis based on administrative data indicates that in 2021 the highest percentage of employed persons aged 50 and over were in the Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply section. Employed persons of the analysed age constituted as many as 47.6% of all employed persons in this section. A significant share of employed persons aged 50 and over in the total number of employed persons was also recorded in the following sections: Agriculture, forestry and fishing (45.9%), Real estate activities (43.8%) and Human health and social work activities (40.3%). The situation was different in the Information and communication section, where, nearly every tenth employed person was aged 50 and over. In the remaining sections, the share of employed persons in this age bracket ranged from almost 20% to 40%.

Chart 6. The share of employed persons aged 50 and over in the total number of employed persons by PKD/NACE section in 2021

As at 31 December



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Related information

[Methodological report Employment in the national economy according to administrative data sources](#)

[People over 50 on the labour market in 2019](#)

[People over 50 on the labour market in 2020](#)

Data available in databases

[Eurostat](#)

[Local Data Bank](#)

Terms used in official statistics

[Employment in national economy](#)

[Economically active population by LFS](#)

[Economically inactive population according to the LFS](#)

[Unemployed persons by LFS](#)

[Registered unemployed persons](#)