Statistics Poland

NEWS RELEASES

# The impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on selected elements of the labour market in Poland in the fourth quarter of 2020

10.03.2021

**10.8%**

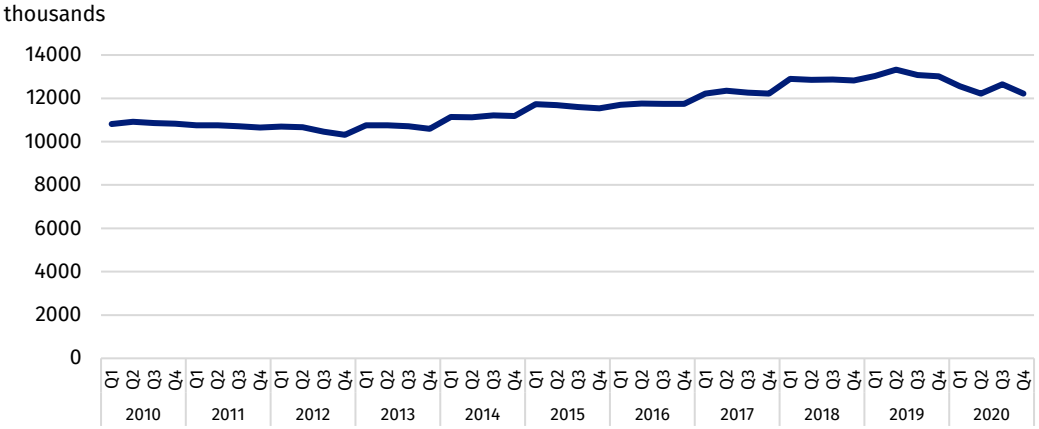
the share of people who worked remotely on 31 December 2020 due to the epidemic situation in the total number of employed persons

**In March 2020, a state of epidemic threat was announced in Poland, followed by a state of epidemic in connection with the spread of an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, called COVID-19. In relation to the assessment of the state of epidemic, solutions were introduced by law to prevent and counter-act the spread of the said virus and to combat the disease caused by it. These solutions were also applicable on the labour market. Among them was for instance the introduction of the possibility of working from outside a permanent workplace, that is remote work. The data presented in this publication were obtained from 'the Survey on the demand for labour' [1].**

The Survey on the demand for labour is conducted using a representative method on a quarterly basis. According to the scope of the survey, it covers notional economy entities and their local units employing at least 1 person. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2020, the number of employed persons was 3.4% lower than at the end of the third quarter of 2020. This situation has already been observed since the first decade of the 21st century. In the fourth quarters the number of employed persons was lower than in the third quarters. However, it has been the largest decrease in the number of employed persons between analysed quarters.

**Chart 1. Employed persons**

As at the last day of the quarter



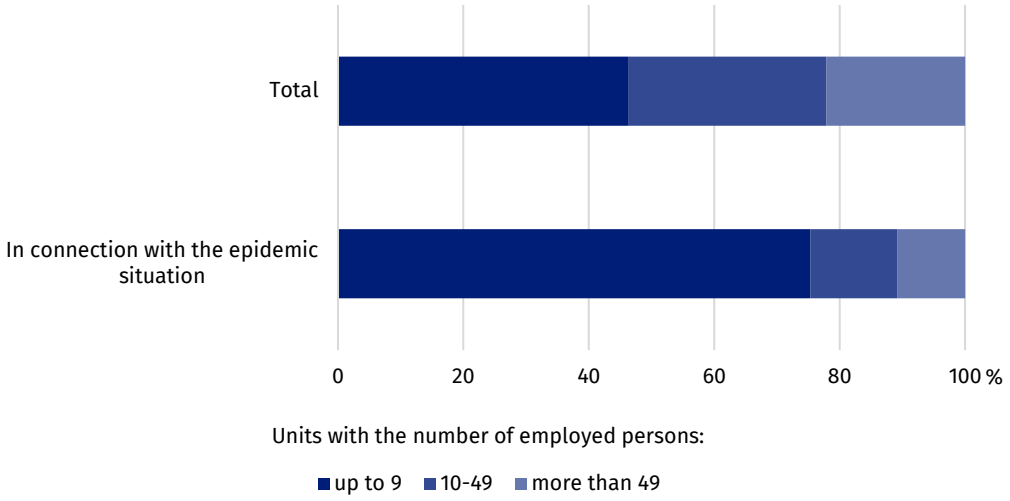

1 The collected data come from the voluntary responses of reporting units to four additional questions attached on the Reporting Portal to 'the Survey on the demand for labour'. Half of the units that completed the reports answered the questions about the impact of the pandemic situation on the way enterprises operate and behave.

## Liquidated jobs

In the fourth quarter of 2020, 53.9 thousand jobs were liquidated, nearly 14% fewer than in the third quarter of 2020. However, it should be noted that the scale of job cuts related to the spread of COVID-19 was over 12% of all job losses. The cutting of jobs took place in all size classes of units. The share of jobs liquidated due to the epidemic situation higher than on average in Poland was in units with up to 9 employed persons. In other size classes of units, this share was lower than the average for Poland.

Out of all job losses in the fourth quarter of 2020, 12.1% were caused by the epidemic situation

**Chart 2. Liquidated jobs in Poland in the fourth quarter of 2020**

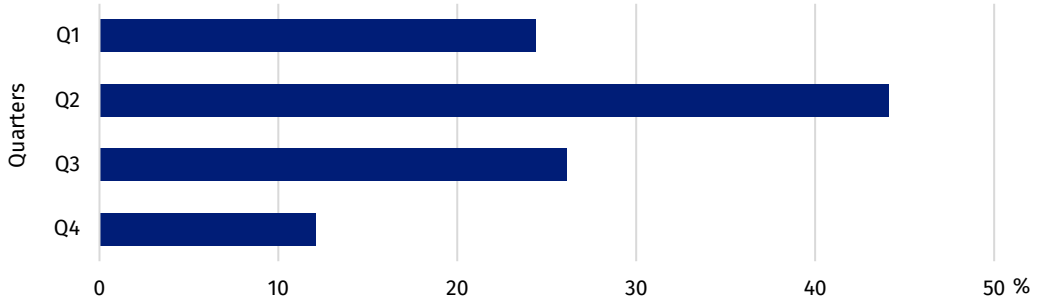



Job losses due to the spread of COVID-19 occurred mainly in the private sector.

Taking into account the type of activity according to PKD (NACE Rev.2 it can be concluded that in some sections the number of jobs lost due to the epidemic situation in individual sections was correlated with the number of jobs liquidated altogether. For example, jobs liquidated in the Manufacturing section accounted for 24% of jobs liquidated in the whole economy, while jobs liquidated in this section due to the epidemic situation accounted for approximately 40% of all jobs lost for this reason. A greater difference between the share of jobs liquidated due to the epidemic situation and the share of total jobs liquidated was in the Accommodation and food activities[Δ] section. In this section, the share of jobs lost as a result of the epidemic was more than four times greater than the share of all jobs lost.

In the country, relatively fewest jobs were lost due to the epidemic in the fourth quarter of 2020.

**Chart 3. The share of jobs liquidated due to the epidemic situation in 2020**

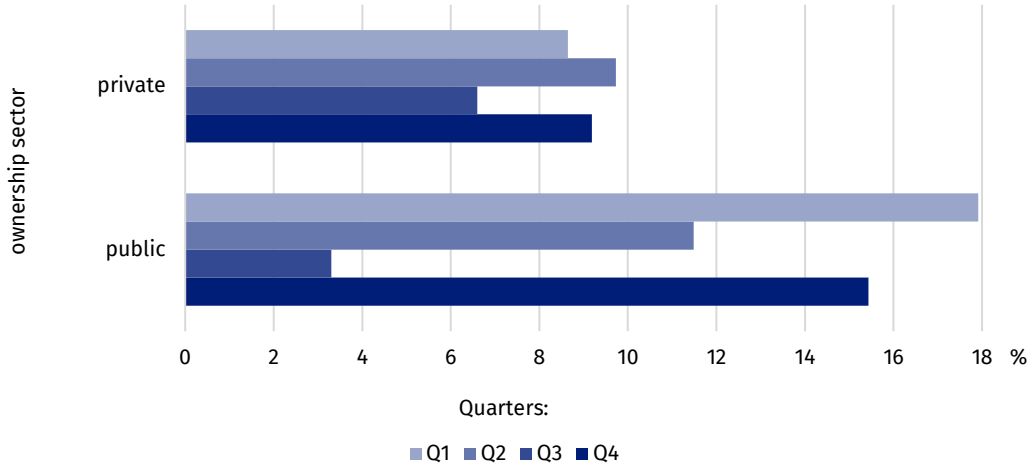


## Remote work during the period of epidemic threat

The epidemic situation that occurred in March 2020 limited the activities of national economy entities in their hitherto existing form. This was manifested, on the one hand, by the liquidation of jobs, and on the other hand, by the fact that employers became open to forms of employment enabling staff to maintain social distance. One of such forms is remote work.

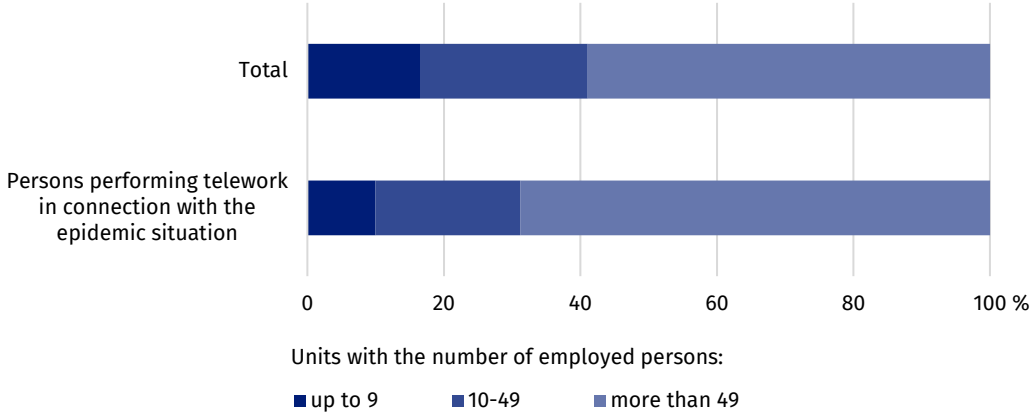
At the end of December 2020, the share of people who worked remotely in connection with the epidemic situation in the total number of employed persons covered by 'the Survey on the demand for labour' was 10.8%, 5.0 percentage points more than at the end of September 2020. During the fourth quarter, the extent of remote work in the private sector was larger than in the public sector.

**Chart 4. The share of employed persons performing telework in connection with the epidemic situation by ownership sectors in 2020**
As at the last day of the quarter



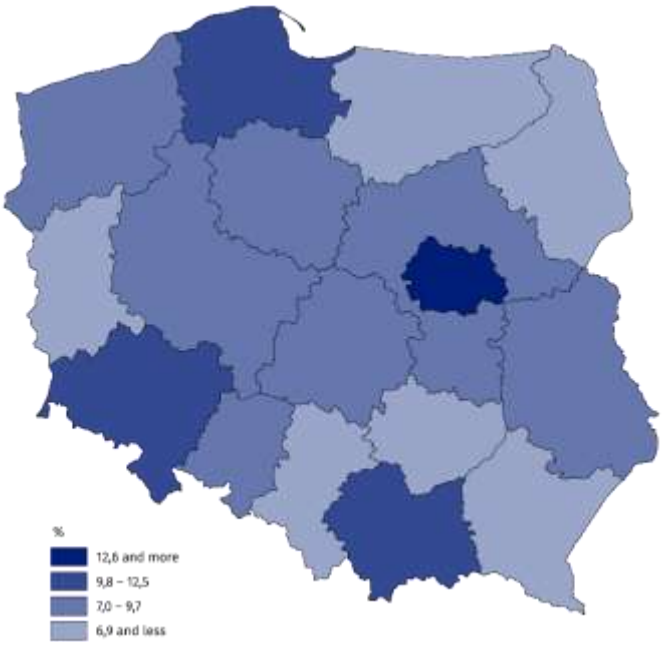

Across the whole economy, the use of remote work in order to reduce the epidemic risk remained the highest in units employing over 49 persons. The share of people working remotely in units of this size was 12.6%, 5.0 percentage points more than in the third quarter of 2020. In units employing up to 9 persons, remote work was performed by 6.5% of employed persons, whereas in units with 10 to 49 employed persons – over 9%.

**Chart 5. The structure of employed persons by size of units in the fourth quarter of 2020**
As at the last day of the quarter



Remote work caused by the epidemic was implemented by employers in individual regions at different scales.

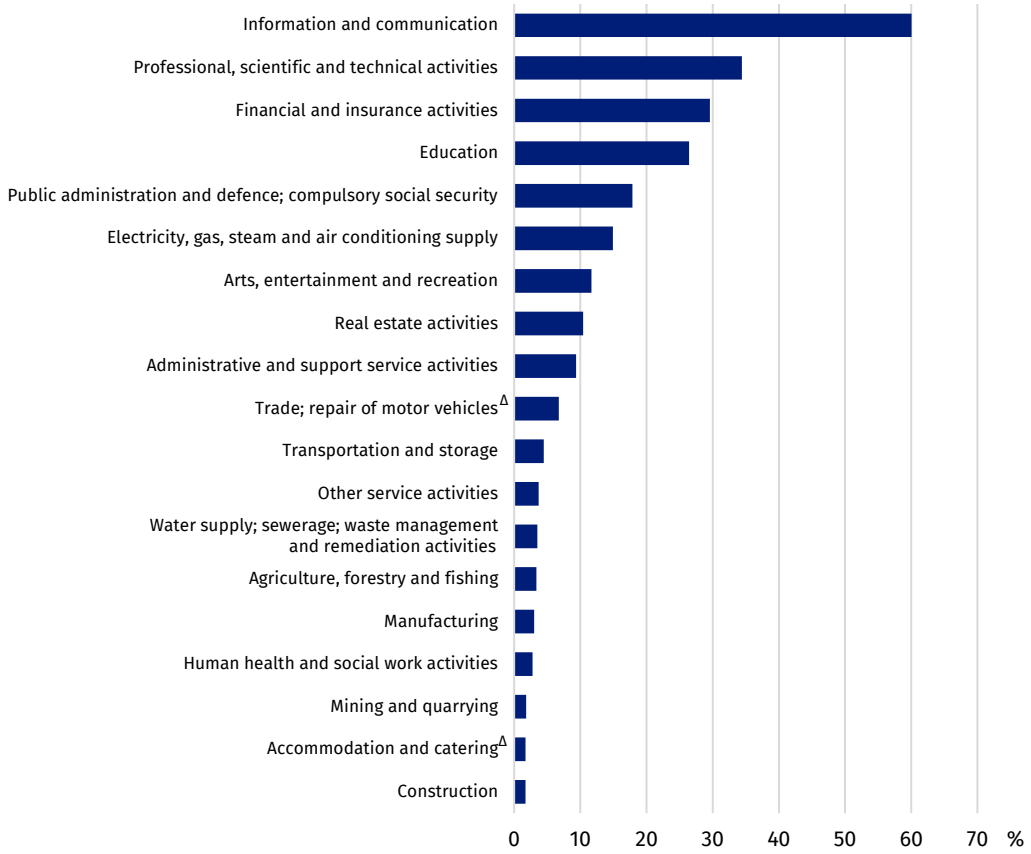
**Map 1. The structure of employed persons performing telework in connection with the epidemic situation by region (NUTS 2016) in the fourth quarter of 2020**
As at the last day of the quarter




The transition to remote work to a significantly higher degree than on average in Poland took place in the Warszawski stołeczny region. As a result of the epidemic situation, every fourth employed person worked there remotely. Among the remaining regions, the use of the described form of work in the realities of an epidemic threat was least common in the Świętokrzyskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie regions, where remote work due to the COVID-19 threat was performed by 4.5% and 5.4% of employed persons, respectively.

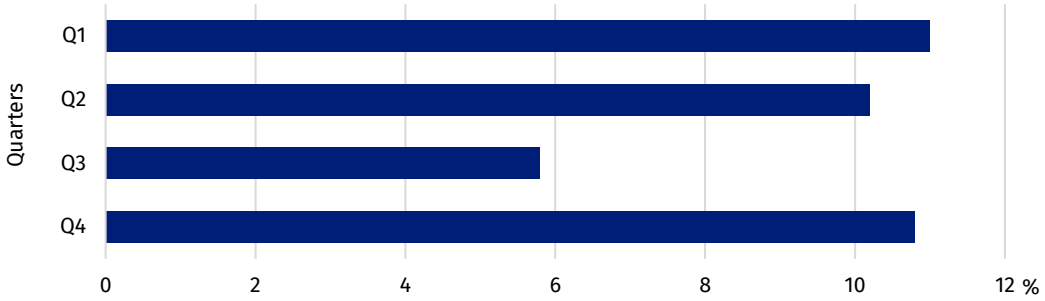
Performing remote work in the fourth quarter of 2020 varied depending on the type of activity. For example, in the manufacturing section, remote work was performed by 3.0% of employees. In services, the scale of the phenomenon was almost 5 times greater, while the use of the discussed form of work was conditioned by the specificity of services. For example, in the information and communication section with this form of work, slightly more than 60% of employees were covered due to the outbreak of an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Almost every third working person in the professional, scientific and technical activity section worked remotely. This form of work was also used to a large extent in the sections of financial and insurance activities as well as education - almost every 4 employees worked remotely. In the remaining sections, the transition to remote work concerned less than 18% of the employed.

**Chart 6. The structure of employed persons performing telework in connection with the epidemic situation in selected PKD (NACE Rev.2) sections in the fourth quarter of 2020**
As at the end of quarters




The share of employed persons who worked remotely due to the epidemic situation was the highest in the first quarter of 2020, and the lowest in the third quarter, when some restrictions related to the spread of the coronavirus were reduced. In the fourth quarter, the share of such employed persons again reached the level very similar to that in the first quarter of the analysed year.

**Chart. 7. The share of employed persons performing telework in connection with the epidemic situation in 2020**
As at the end of quarters

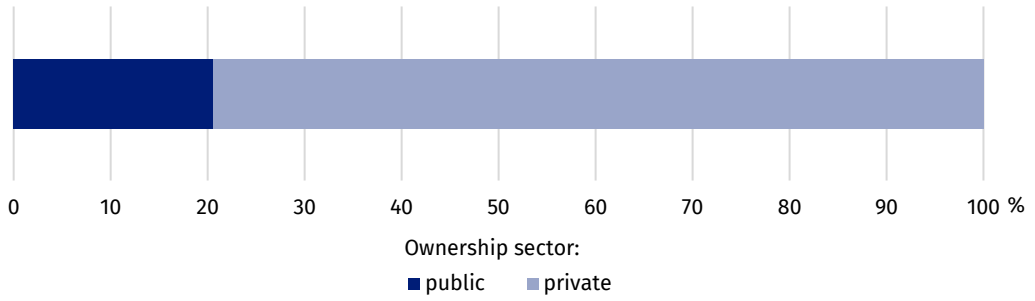


## Employed persons who in connection with the epidemic situation received a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age

In the fourth quarter of this year, 1.1% of employed persons received a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age

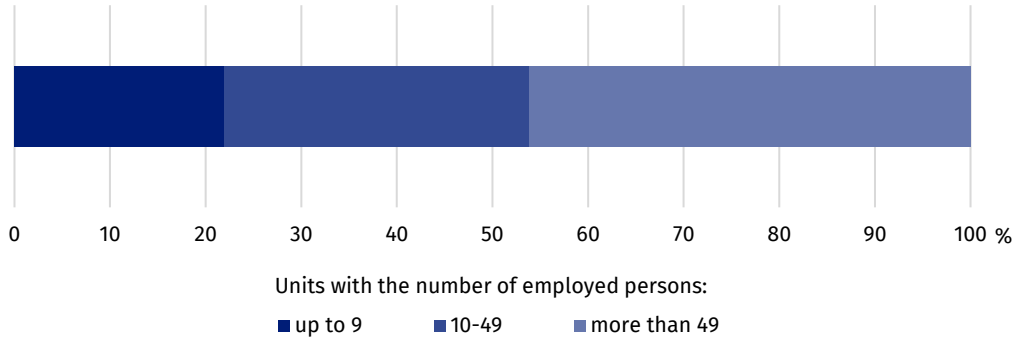
By virtue of the Act of 2 March 2020 on Specific Solutions to Prevent, Counteract and Combat COVID-19, Other Infectious Diseases and Crisis Situations Caused by Them, working parents or legal guardians were provided with the possibility to receive a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age in case of a closure of a nursery, nursery school, children's club or school. In the fourth quarter of 2020, 1.1% of employed persons were exercising this right in Poland. There were 0.2 percentage points fewer of them than at the end of the first quarter of that year. The share of employed persons who under the aforementioned act remained at home was slightly higher in the private sector than in the public sector. It was 1.2% and 0.9%, respectively.

**Chart 8. The structure of employed persons who in connection with the epidemic situation received a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age in case of a closure of a nursery, nursery school, children's club or school by ownership sectors as in the fourth quarter of 2020**




Of employed persons who due to the epidemic situation were recipients of a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age in case of a closure of a nursery, nursery school, children's club or school the largest number worked in units with more than 49 employed persons – 46.2%.

**Chart 9. The structure of employed persons who in connection with the epidemic situation received a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age in case of a closure of a nursery, nursery school, children's club or school by size of units in the fourth quarter of 2020**



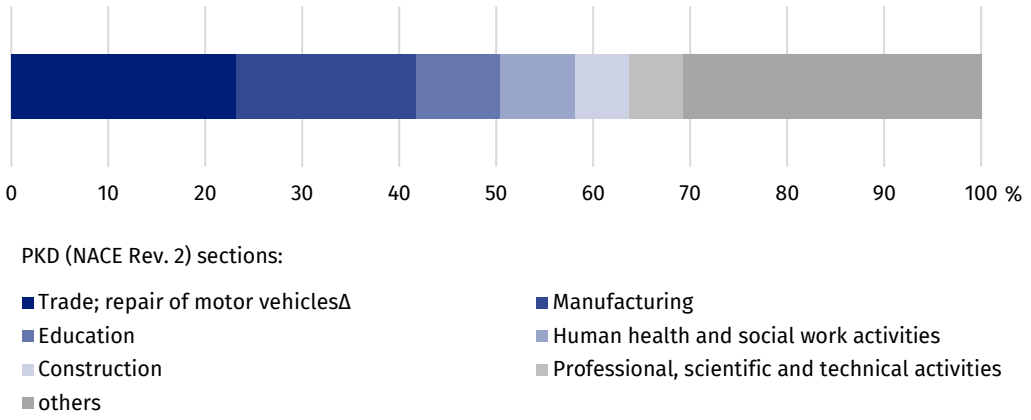

The scale of taking care of a child for the said reason in particular regions was quite similar. The share of the number of working parents and legal guardians exercising the right to care for a child due to the epidemic situation fluctuated around 0.9% in the Świętokrzyskie and Łódzkie voivodships to 1.6% in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship.

According to the survey, the relatively highest number of employed persons, that is 2.2%, did not work because of childcare in the Accommodation and catering[Δ] section.

The largest number of employed persons who exercised the right to take care of a child due to the spread of COVID-19 were parents and legal guardians working in the field of manufacturing and trade; repair of motor[Δ] vehicles.

The analysis of the structure of employed persons who in connection with the epidemic situation received a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age in case of a closure of a nursery, nursery school, children's club or school by PKD (NACE Rev. 2) section shows that employed persons from the Trade; repair of motor[Δ] vehicles section accounted for over 23% of all recipients of this allowance.

**Chart 10. The structure of employed persons who in connection with the epidemic situation received a care allowance during a period of leave resulting from the necessity to take personal care of a child under 8 years of age in case of a closure of a nursery, nursery school, children's club or school by PKD (NACE Rev.2) section in 2020**
As at the end of quarters

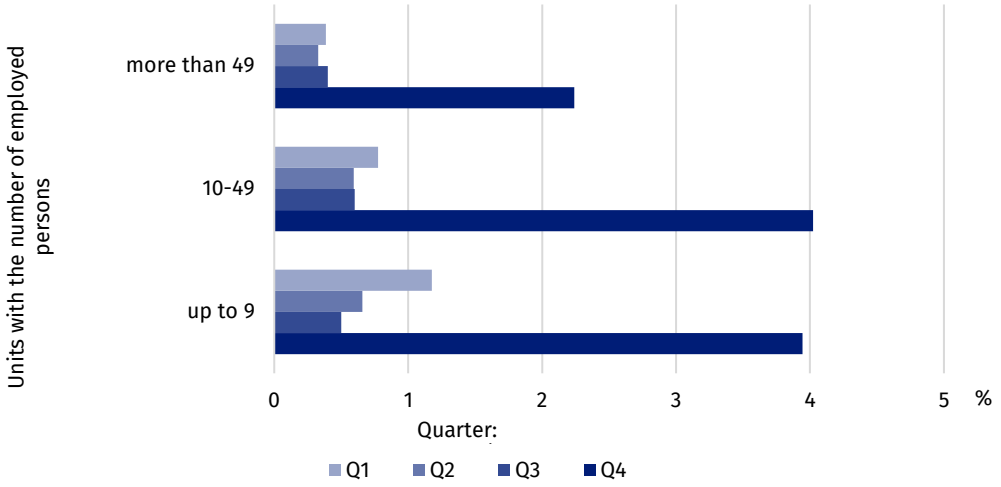



## Employed persons who in connection with the epidemic situation received a sick pay or sickness allowance because of undergoing quarantine or isolation

In the fourth quarter of 2020, in order to limit the spread of the infectious disease, forms of temporary isolation due to the suspicion of an infection were still in use, for instance quarantine and isolation. Employed persons who, as at 31 December 2020, were recipients of a sick pay or sickness allowance due to quarantine or isolation, constituted 3.0% of the total employed population. Such cases were reported at a similar scale in both the public and private sectors.

As at 31 December 2020, 3.0% of employed persons were recipients of a sick pay or sickness allowance because of undergoing quarantine or isolation

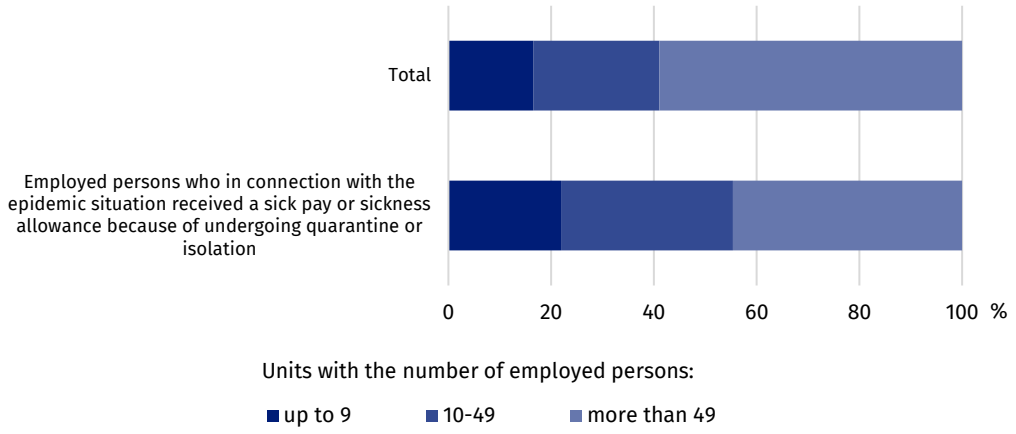
**Chart 11. The share of employed persons who received a sick pay or sickness allowance because of undergoing quarantine or isolation by size of units in the 2020**
As at the end of quarters



The scale of using this kind of temporary isolation (i.a. quarantine or isolation) due to the suspicion of infection was the highest in the fourth quarter. In units with up to 49 employed persons, the share of employed persons subject to quarantine or isolation oscillated around 4%, while in units with more than 49 employed persons, this share was 2.2%. In the remaining quarters of the year this share, regardless of the size of the entity, did not exceed 1.5%.

**Chart 12. Structure of employed persons by size of units in the fourth quarter of 2020**

As at the end of quarters



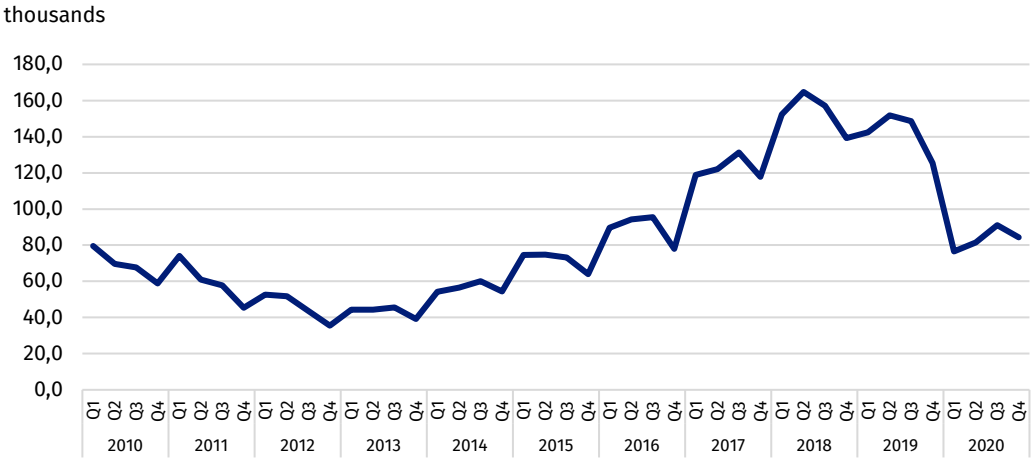

Quarantine or isolation of employed persons occurred in all regions, with the relatively highest occurrence in the Zachodniopomorskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodships – where employed persons who, as at 31 December 2020, were recipients of a sick pay or sickness allowance because of undergoing quarantine or isolation accounted for respectively 4.5% and 4.4% of employed persons in their regions. When considering types of activities, it can be stated that at the end of December 2020, much higher shares of employed persons subject to the obligation of quarantine or isolation than the average share for Poland were in sections: Human health and social work activities, Construction, Accommodation and catering[Δ] and Other service activities.

## Summary

The SARS-CoV-2 virus began to spread in Poland in the first quarter of 2020. The results of the survey show that in the subsequent quarters of 2020, the situation regarding filled and unfilled jobs was different than in the previous years of the second decade of the 21st century. In the fourth quarter of 2020, the number of employed persons, which reflects filled jobs, after a significant decrease in the second quarter of 2020, returned to the level of the first quarter of 2020. Comparing the scale of the loss between first quarter and fourth quarter 2019 and third quarter and fourth quarter 2020, in the analyzed year it was almost 9 times higher.

**Chart 13. Job vacancies**

As at the end of quarters




In the fourth quarter of 2020, the number of job vacancies decreased by 7.4% compared to the previous quarter. This is a situation that has occurred every year since the second decade of the 21st century. Although the number of vacancies increased compared to the remaining quarters of 2020, it decreased by over 30% compared to the fourth quarter of 2019.

The phenomena presented in this study will be monitored in subsequent editions of the Survey on the demand for labour.

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**Terms used in official statistics**

Demand for labour

Vacancies

Newly created jobs