

Changes on the labour market – jobs on the decrease, wage growth slows.

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At the end of April 2009 the registered unemployment rate (claimant count rate) was 11% versus 11.2% at the end of March. Employment in the corporate sector was by 1.4% lower than in April 2008. Wages were higher by 4.8% year on year; in the four months to April they were higher by 5.9%. Growth in average wages has been slowing for several months now.

Central Statistical Office (GUS): In April average employment in the corporate sector was by 1.4% lower than a year before, with the largest decrease noted in manufacturing. The registered unemployment rate dropped by 0.2 pct. points to 11.0% but was higher than a year before (10.3%). The preliminary findings of the labour force survey confirm unfavourable trends on the labour market in the first quarter of the year. Compared to the fourth quarter of last year, the number of working people decreased, the employment and the economic activity rates dropped, which was coupled with a rise in the unemployment rate to 8.3%. The year-on-year increase in average gross wages in the corporate sector was lower in April than in previous months – 4.8% in nominal terms and 1.1% in real terms. Growth in the purchasing power of old-age and disability pensions slowed (...). Of the sectors which have a significant share in total employment, the sharpest year-on-year decrease in average employment was recorded by businesses producing clothes (down by 16.4%), motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (down by 13.1%), products made of other non-metallic mineral raw materials (down by 9.7%) and furniture (down by 8.9%). Employment also dropped in businesses manufacturing rubber and plastic products (down by 6.3%) and machines and equipment (down by 5.4%). The highest year-on-year increase in average employment was recorded in specialist construction services (up by 7.1%), retail trade (up by 4.7%) and civil engineering (up by 4.5%). (GUS, "Report on the Country's Socio-Economic Situation, April 2009," p. 3-4 and 6; www.stat.gov.pl)

