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Q2-2026

Labour market and social sphere

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Labour market and social sphere

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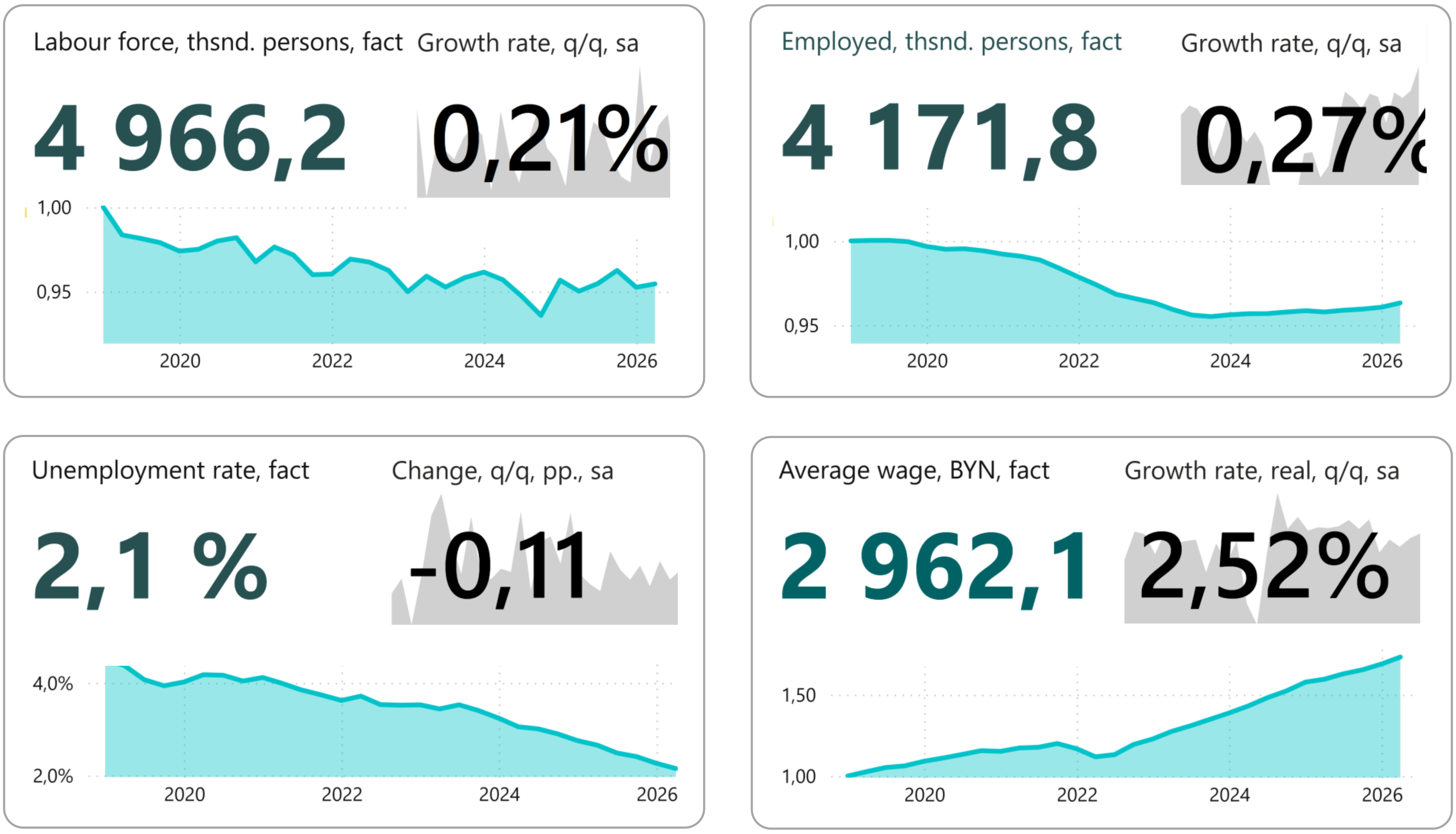
Key findings

- Employment in the economy increased by **0,21%** quarter-on-quarter (seasonally adjusted), while the employment level reached **4171,8 thsnd.** employees (average quarterly actual value).
- The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased by **0,11 pp.** and reached a new historical minimum, with the actual value standing at **2,1%**.
- New hires had a record increase over the observed period: compared with the previous quarter, they increased by **7,9%**, taking into account seasonal adjustment. The number of terminations also increased compared with the previous quarter, by **4,3%** after seasonal adjustment. The number of additionally introduced workplaces, seasonally adjusted, did not change significantly.
- The most active labour market dynamics in regional terms were observed in Vitebsk Region, Minsk City and Mogilev Region, while a slowdown in dynamics was observed in Brest Region.
- In sectoral terms, the labour market was most active in Construction and Agriculture. A decline in labour market activity was observed in Information and communication.
- By the end of the quarter, no significant increase in labour market tightness was observed. If the trend towards a reduction in the number of vacancies continues over the next two quarters, it will be possible to conclude that labour market tightness is easing.
- The average monthly nominal wage amounted to **2962,1 BYN** at the end of the quarter, while in real terms it increased by **2,52%**, taking into account seasonal adjustment. The growth rate of labour productivity in real terms increased slightly, reaching **0,81%** compared with the previous quarter, while in nominal terms it grew slightly faster than the average wage.
- As of May 2026, the median wage amounted to **2314,9 BYN** (**+9,58%** in real terms compared with the same period of the previous year), or **77,1%** of the average wage in the respective month. The largest share of employees received wages in the range of **1500,1–2000 BYN** (**17,9%**), while the share of employees with low wages amounted to **22,8%**.
- The growth rate of real wages in the state commercial sector and the budgetary sector was slightly higher than the economy-wide average, resulting in a slight upward trend in their relative wage levels. The share of the payroll number of employees in the state commercial sector decreased slightly and amounted to **41,7%** at the end of the quarter.

The bulletin "Labour Market and Social Sphere" provides an overview of developments in the labour market and the social sector in Belarus. It presents the dynamics of key labour market indicators – the size of the labour force and employed population, unemployment, and average wages (including the public commercial and budgetary sectors). The bulletin analyses the contributing factors behind these changes, assesses the overall labour market situation, and examines its impact on the country's economic development. The methodological foundation of the analysis is based on the dynamics of the aforementioned indicators and their factor-based decomposition. All data used for the calculations are drawn from open official sources.

Previous labour market trends persisted

Key Labour Market Indicators in Q2-2026



Notes. 1) The cards display actual values of the indicators; base indices (Q1-2019 = 1), unemployment dynamics, and growth rates are presented in real terms, seasonally adjusted[1]. 2) The average wage is reported for registered staff and external part-time workers. Source: Compiled basing on Belstat data.

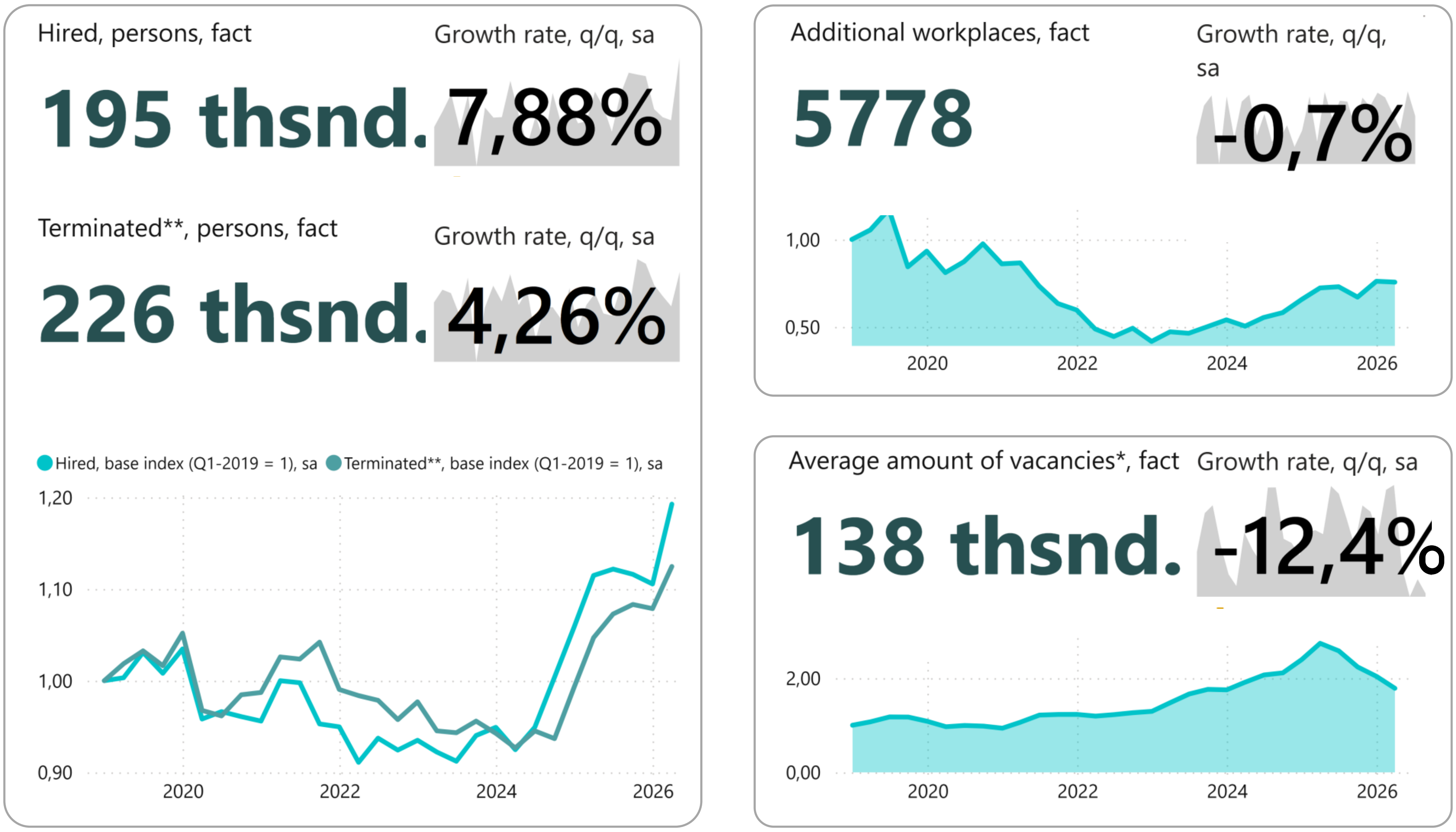
Employment in the economy increased slightly. In Q2-2026, average employment increased by 0,27% quarter-on-quarter, seasonal adjustment accounted, and demonstrated an upward trend. The labour force increased at a similar rate: according to labour force survey data, it increased by 0,21% quarter-on-quarter after seasonal adjustment; the overall trend in labour force dynamics indicates that its level remained stable, with a slight tendency towards an increase.

The unemployment rate reached a new historical minimum. According to data from the household labour force survey, in Q2-2026 the unemployment rate amounted to 2,1% in absolute terms, decreasing by 0,11 pp. compared with the previous quarter seasonal adjustment accounted. With the trend towards increasing employment and a relatively stable labour force, this decline signals the continued depletion of labour resources in the economy.

The upward trend in real wages continues. In Q2-2026, average real wage growth amounted to 2,52% quarter-on-quarter, taking into account seasonal adjustment. Despite the overall slowdown in real wage growth compared with the previous year, the upward trend persistent.

New hire and termination levels remain high

The Labor Market Dynamics in Q2-2026



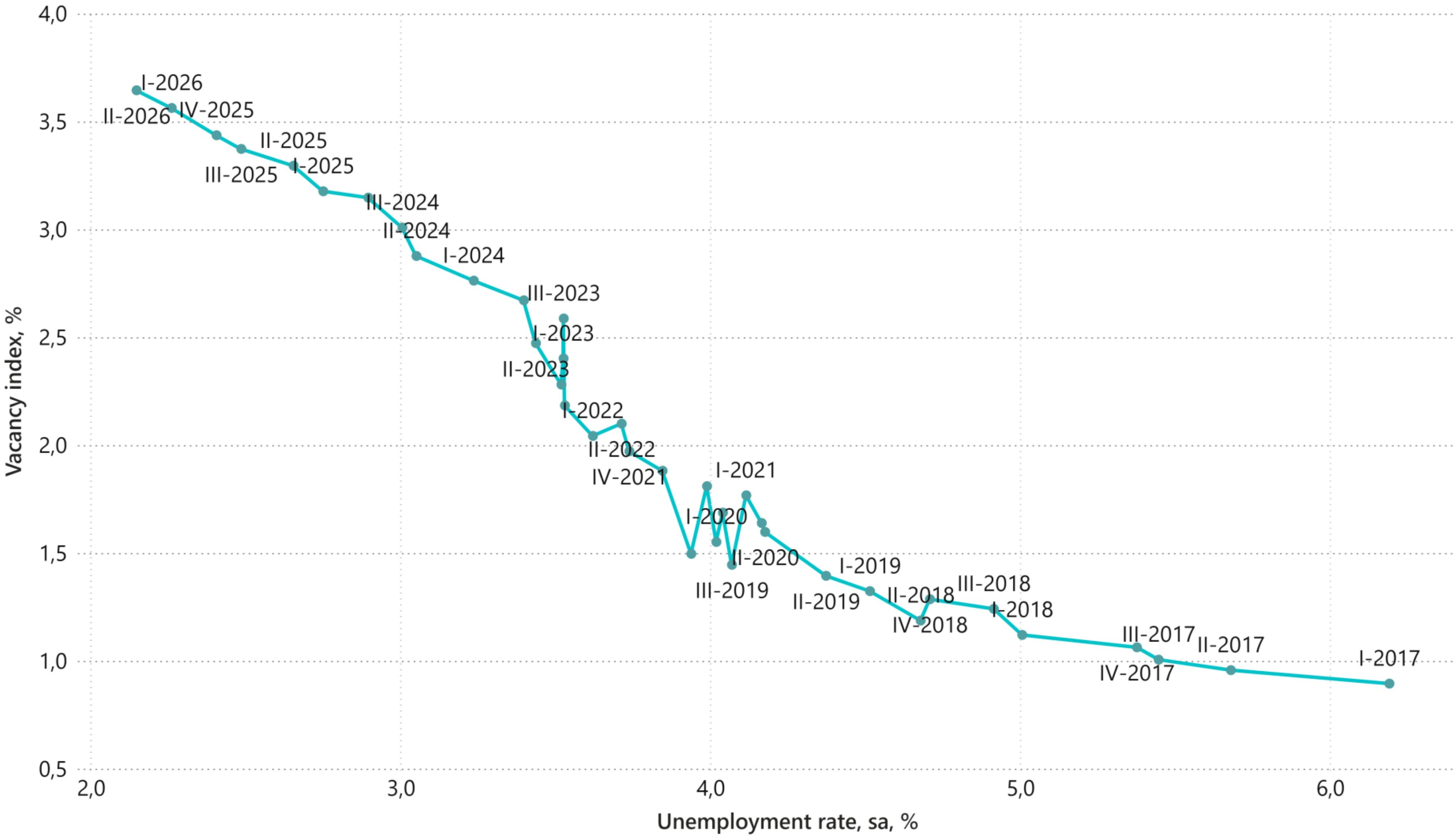
*Notes. 1) The cards display the actual values of indicators; growth rates and base indices (Q1-2019 = 1) are presented in real terms, seasonally adjusted. 2) * - due to changes in legislation on job vacancy postings[2], the data contains a structural shift. 3) ** - estimated value. Source: compiled basing on Belstat and Ministry of Labour and Social Defense of Republic of Belarus data.*

Both new hires and terminations increased in Q2-2026. The balance of new hires and terminations amounted to -31,5 thsnd. employees in absolute terms, while the seasonally adjusted dynamics of both indicators reached new highs over the entire period under review. The increase in new hires in seasonally adjusted terms was the highest over the period under review, while the overall trend of new hires growing faster than terminations, observed since 2024, persisted.

The number of hires for additionally introduced workplaces remained at a level similar to that of the previous quarter. In Q2-2026, the number of hires for additionally introduced workplaces decreased by 0,7% compared with the previous quarter, taking into account seasonal adjustment. Nevertheless, the overall upward trend in hires for additionally introduced workplaces continues.

The number of vacancies declined for the fourth consecutive quarter. During Q2-2026, the number of vacancies decreased by 12,4% compared with the previous quarter, reaching the level observed at the beginning of 2024. The downward trend in the number of vacancies remained persistent.

Beveridge curve, QI-2017 - Q2-2026



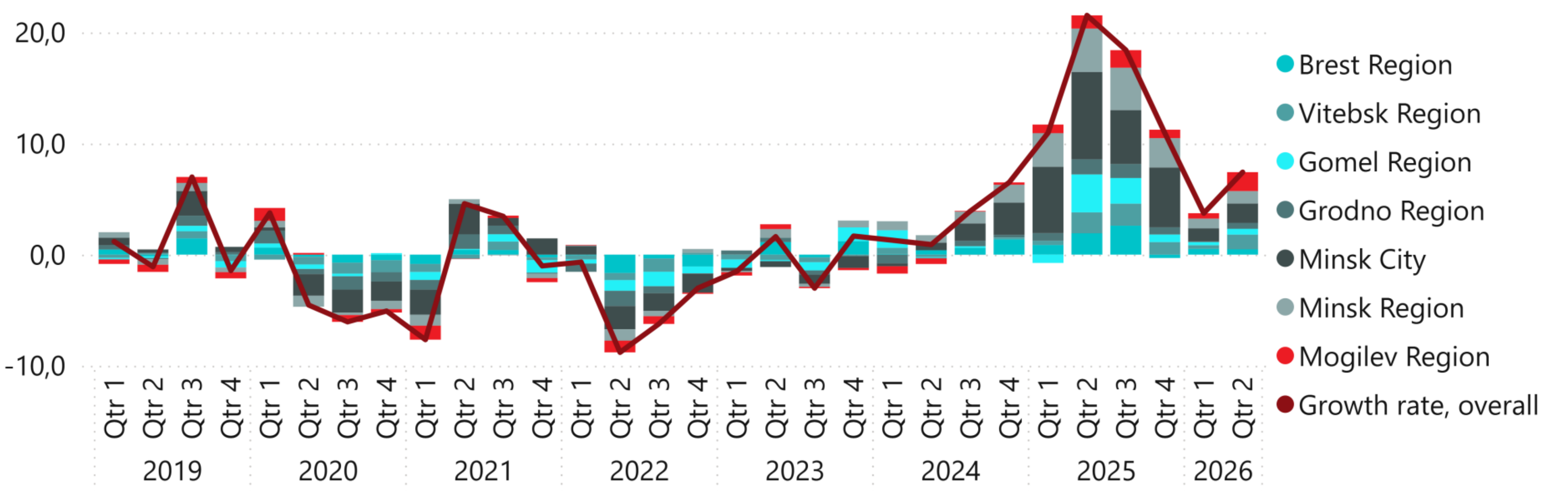
Note. The Beveridge curve reflects labor market tightness[3]: movement from the lower right to the upper left corner indicates increasing tension. The vacancy index is calculated as the ratio of the average number of vacancies, smoothed using a Hodrick–Prescott filter, to the seasonally adjusted labor force. Source: calculated basing on Belstat and Ministry of Labour and Social Defense of Republic of Belarus data.

Labour market tightness persisted, but no significant increase was observed. In Q2-2026, the Beveridge curve shifted mainly to the left due to the continued decline in the unemployment rate. The change in the vacancy index shifted the curve slightly upwards. However, if the observed rate of decline in the number of vacancies continues over the next two quarters, ceteris paribus, it will be possible to conclude that labour market tightness is easing.

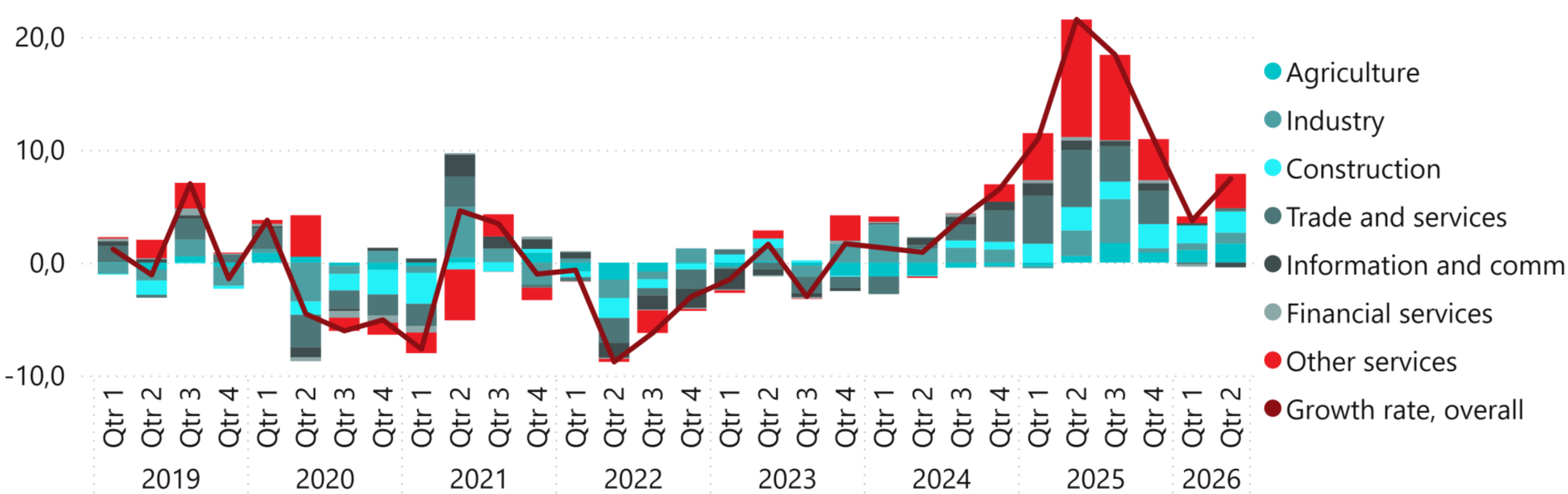
The increase in new hires in Q2-2026 was driven by increases across all regions and almost all sectors[4]. Compared with the same quarter of the previous year, the indicator increased by 7,42% in Q2-2026. In regional terms, the main contributions to the increase came from Minsk City (1,74 pp.), Mogilev Region (1,70 pp.) and Vitebsk Region (1,32 pp.), which together accounted for 64,2% of the total increase in new hires. In sectoral terms, the largest contributions came from Other services (3,04 pp.), Construction (1,88 pp.) and Agriculture (1,68 pp.), which together accounted for 84,0% of the positive contribution to the increase in the number of new hires. A slight decline in new hires was observed in Information and communication (-0,41 pp.) and Financial services (-0,03 pp.).

Hires growth rates decomposition
q/q same period of previous year, %, including:

by regions



by industries

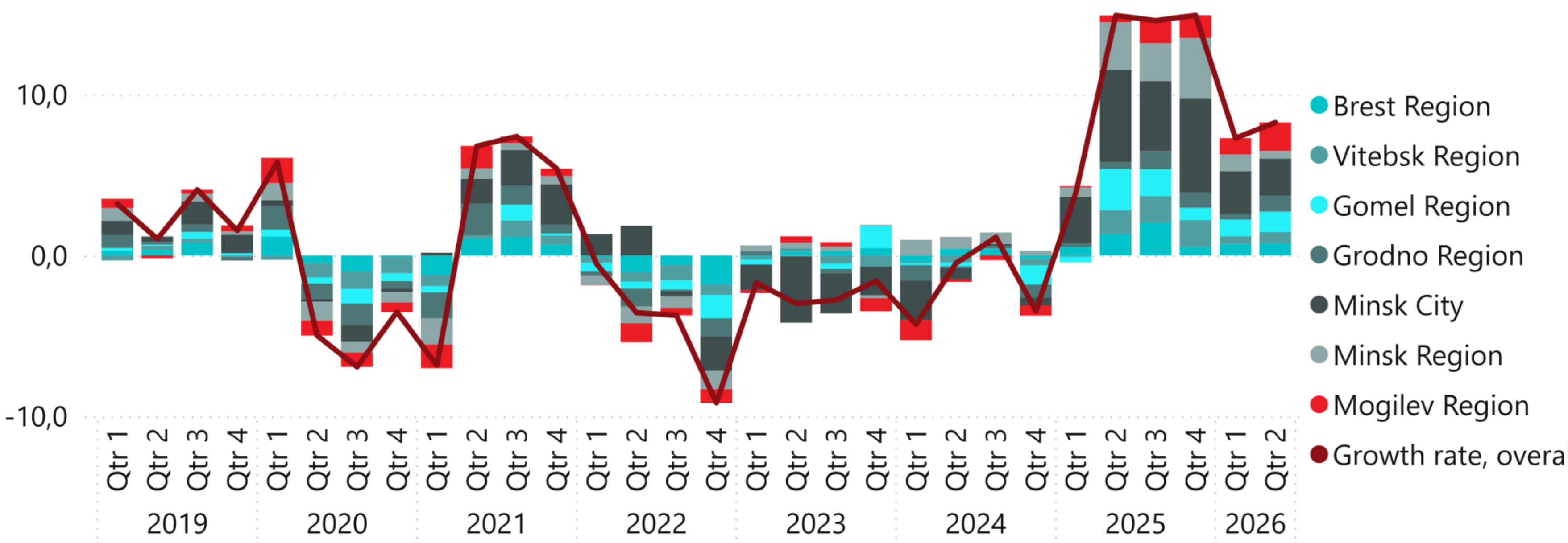


Note. Switching to year-over-year growth rates and their decomposition by factors helps address the issue of seasonality; the value of such growth differs from that of the original seasonally adjusted series. Source: Calculated basing on Belstat data.

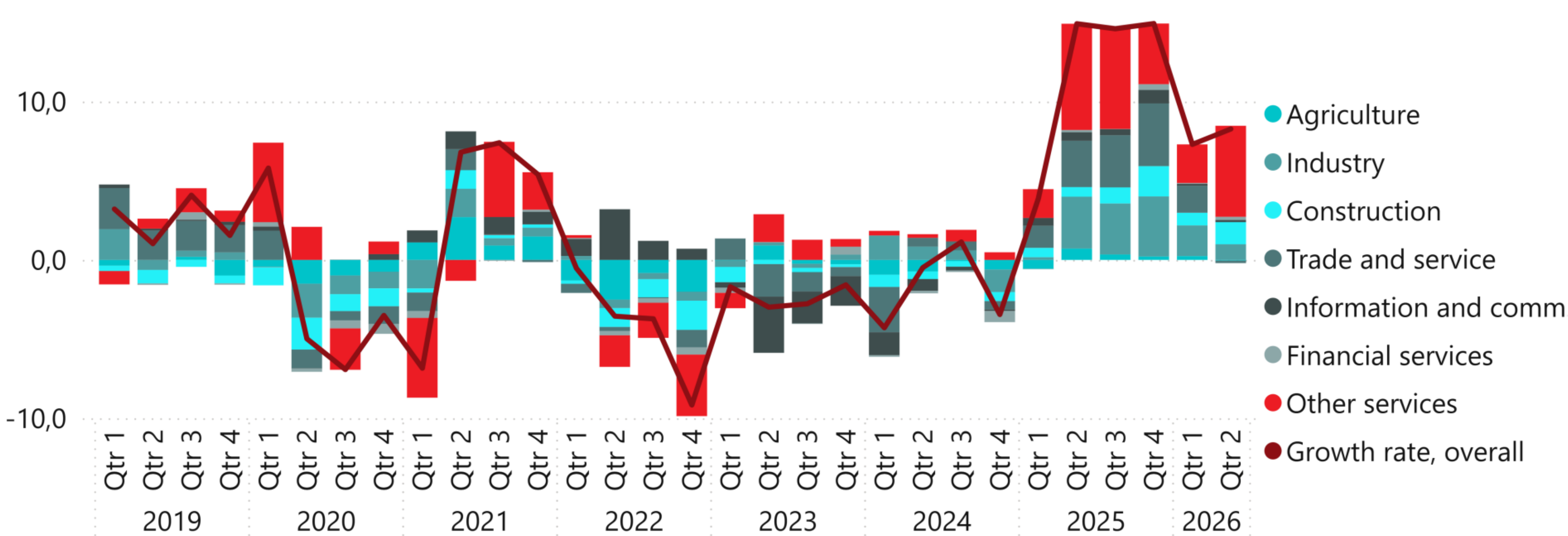
The number of terminations increased in all regions and almost all sectors in Q2-2026. The number of terminations increased by 8,27% in Q2-2026 compared with the same quarter of the previous year. Among the regions, the largest contributions came from Minsk City (2,30 pp.), Mogilev Region (1,76 pp.) and Gomel Region (1,27 pp.), which together accounted for 64,4% of the total increase. In sectoral terms, the largest contributions to the increase came from Other services (5,75 pp.) and Construction (1,40 pp.), which together accounted for 84,1% of the total positive contribution to the increase in the indicator; the contribution of the remaining sectors did not exceed 1,0 pp. A slight decline in terminations was observed in Trade and service, with a contribution of -0,20 pp.; this was the first time such a situation had occurred since Q4-2024.

Terminations growth rates decomposition
q/q same period of previous year, %, including:

by regions



by industries

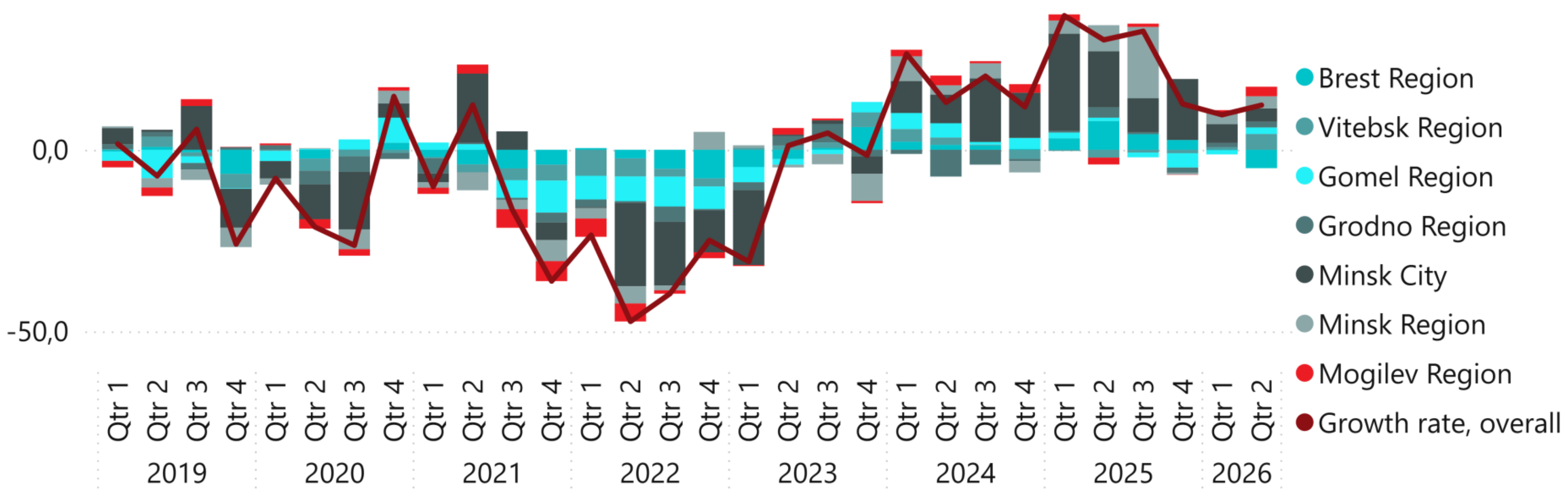


Note. Switching to year-over-year growth rates and their decomposition by factors helps address the issue of seasonality; the value of such growth differs from that of the original seasonally adjusted series. Source: calculated basing on Belstat data.

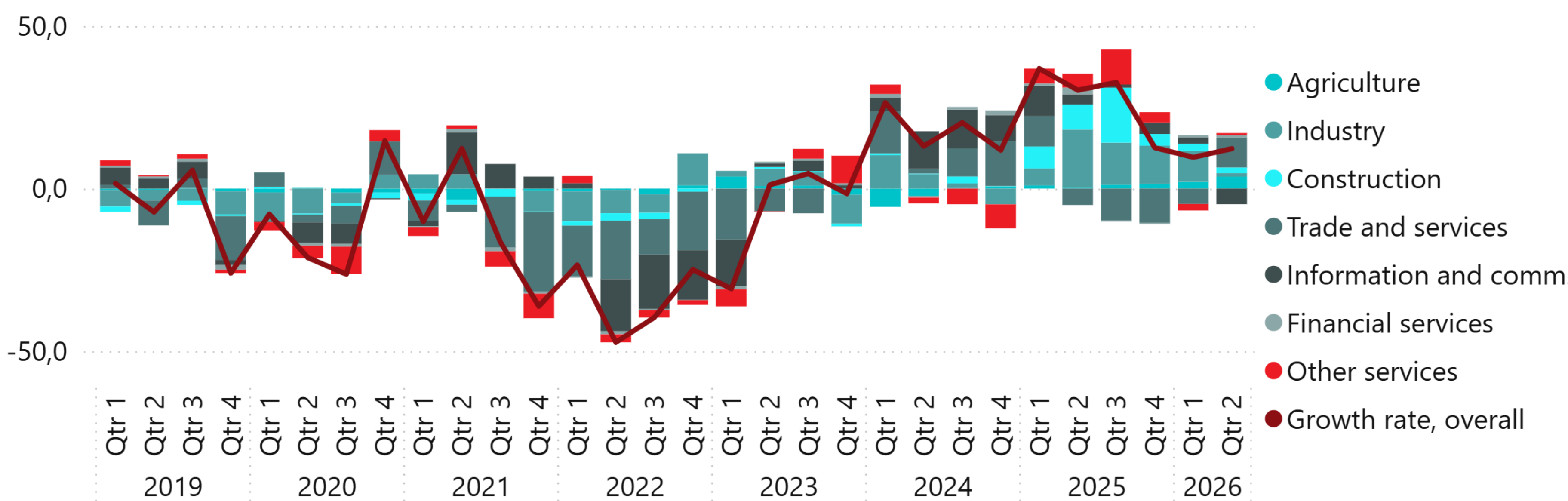
The creation of additionally introduced workplaces increased in almost all regions and sectors. Compared with the same quarter of the previous year, the indicator increased by 12,28% in Q2-2026. In regional terms, the largest contributions to the increase came from Vitebsk Region (4,35 pp.), Minsk City (3,63 pp.) and Minsk Region (3,34 pp.), which together accounted for 65,3% of the positive contribution. A decline was observed in Brest Region (-5,07 pp.). In sectoral terms, the increase in the number of additionally introduced workplaces was mainly driven by Trade and service (9,11 pp.) and Agriculture (3,67 pp.), which together accounted for 74,9% of the total positive contribution. A noticeable decline in the creation of additionally introduced workplaces was observed in Information and communication (-4,80 pp.).

Additionally introduced workplaces growth rates decomposition
q/q same period of previous year, %, including:

by regions



by industries



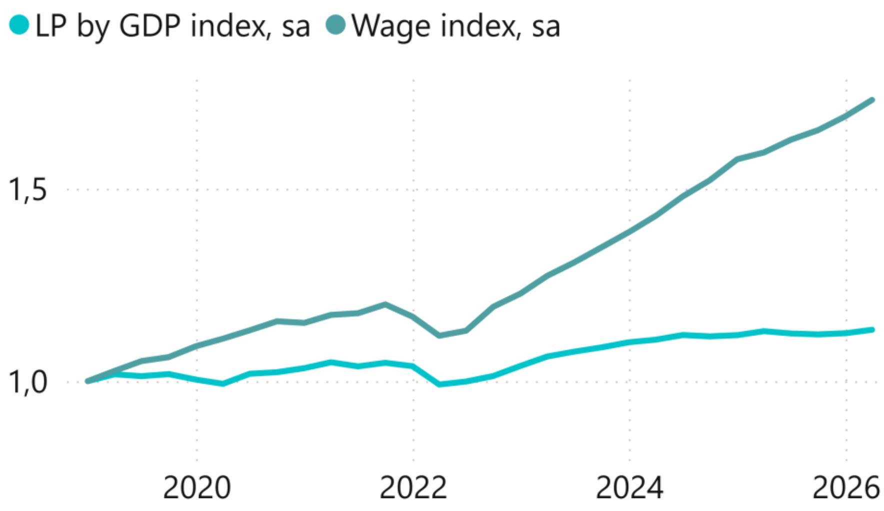
Note. Switching to year-over-year growth rates and their decomposition by factors helps address the issue of seasonality; the value of such growth differs from that of the original seasonally adjusted series. Source: Calculated basing on Belstat data.

Labour market dynamics in Q2-2026 were mixed. Among the regions, Vitebsk Region emerged as the leader in labour market activity, with a significant contribution to new hires, including hires for additionally introduced workplaces, while simultaneously making only a small contribution to the increase in terminations. The labour market was also active in Minsk City and Mogilev Region. Among the sectors, the highest level of activity continued to be observed in Construction, while positive trends were also observed in Agriculture. The situation in Trade and service was noteworthy: contributions to both new hires and terminations declined considerably, while the sector was nevertheless the leader in terms of its contribution to new hires for additionally introduced workplaces. A slowdown in dynamics among the regions was observed in Brest Region, while among the sectors it was observed in Information and communication. The persistently high contributions to new hires and terminations, combined with a small contribution to new hires for additionally introduced workplaces, in Other services may signal risks of staff turnover in the sector.

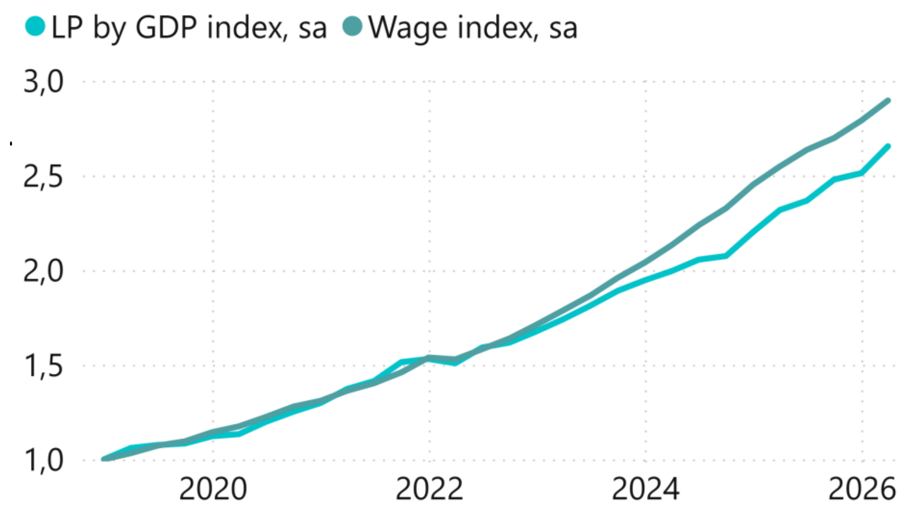
No significant increase in labour costs observed

Labor productivity and wage dynamics
Base indices (Q1-2019 = 1), seasonally adjusted

in real terms



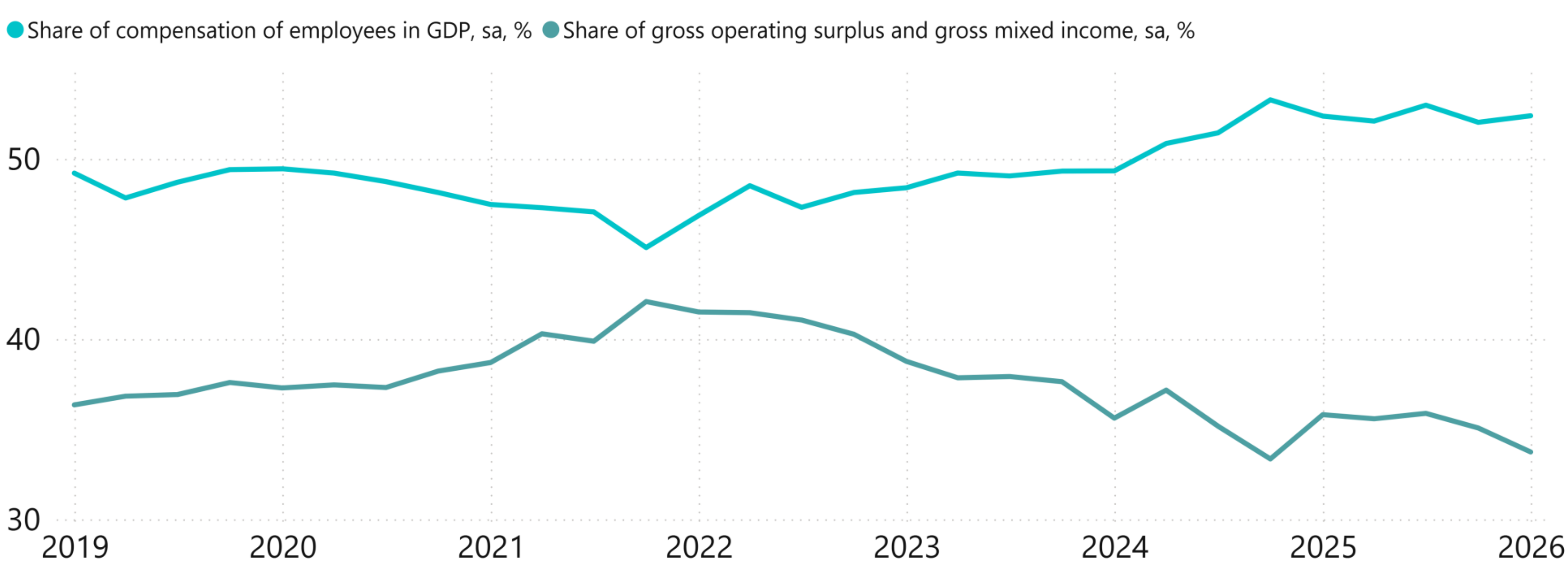
in nominal terms



Source: calculated basing on Belstat data.

Labour productivity (hereinafter – LP) in real terms demonstrated slight growth. In Q2-2026, seasonally adjusted average accrued wages in real terms increased by 2,52%, while seasonally adjusted average GDP-based labour productivity in real terms increased by 0,81% compared with the previous quarter. In nominal terms, the growth rate of seasonally adjusted labour productivity slightly outpaced the growth rate of nominal wages, resulting in a slight narrowing of the gap between their growth rates.

Dynamics of shares of compensation of employees and gross mixed income in GDP structure

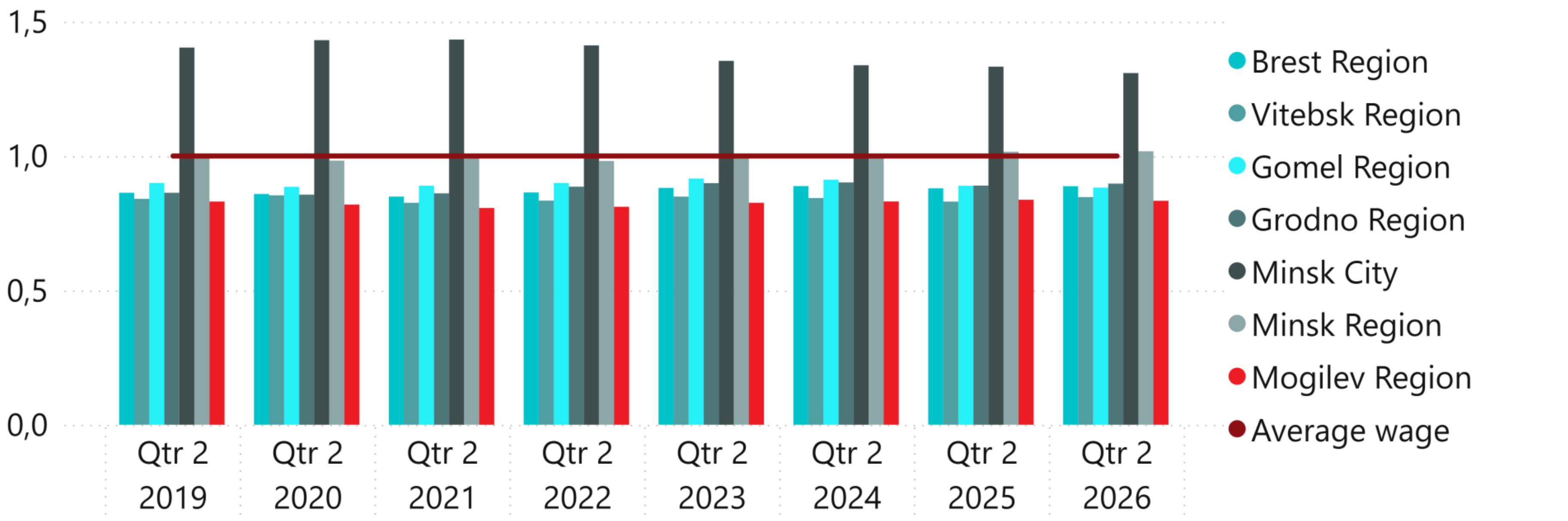


Note: The data are provided with a one-quarter lag due to the publication schedule. Source: calculated basing on Belstat data.

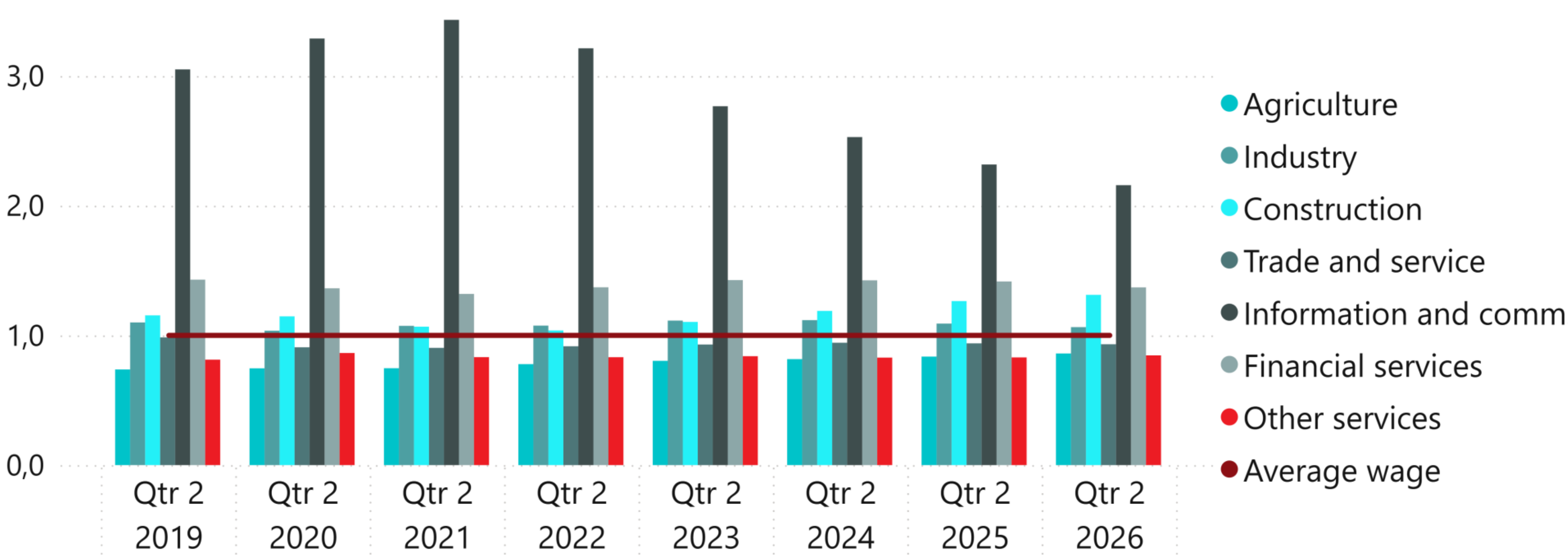
The share of labour compensation in GDP remained at the previous level. In Q1-2026, the share of labour compensation in the structure of GDP amounted to 52,4% of GDP in seasonally adjusted terms. The share of gross operating surplus and gross mixed income in GDP decreased compared with the previous quarter and amounted to 33,7% of GDP in seasonally adjusted terms. The share of labour compensation remains at its highest level over the observed period, but has shown no upward trend since Q4-2024.

Relative nominal average monthly wage
Average wage in economy = 1

in regions



in industries

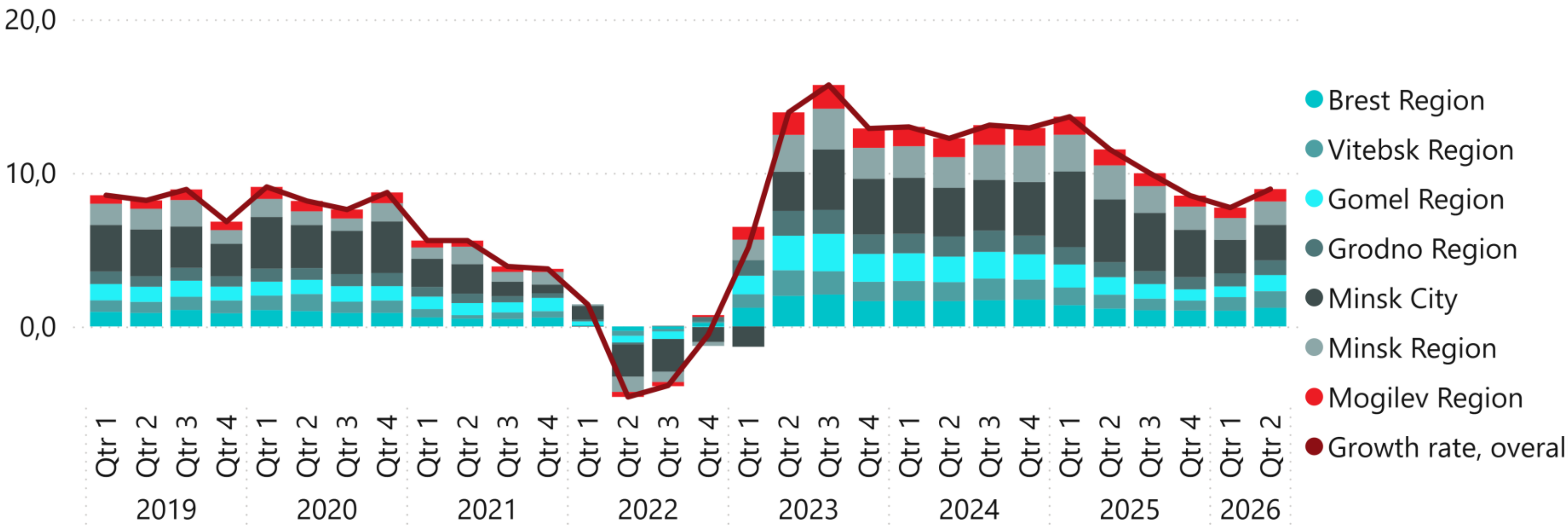


Note: The relative wage indicator is calculated as the ratio of the nominal accrued average monthly wage in a given sector or region to the corresponding countrywide average, seasonally adjusted. Source: calculated basing on Belstat data.

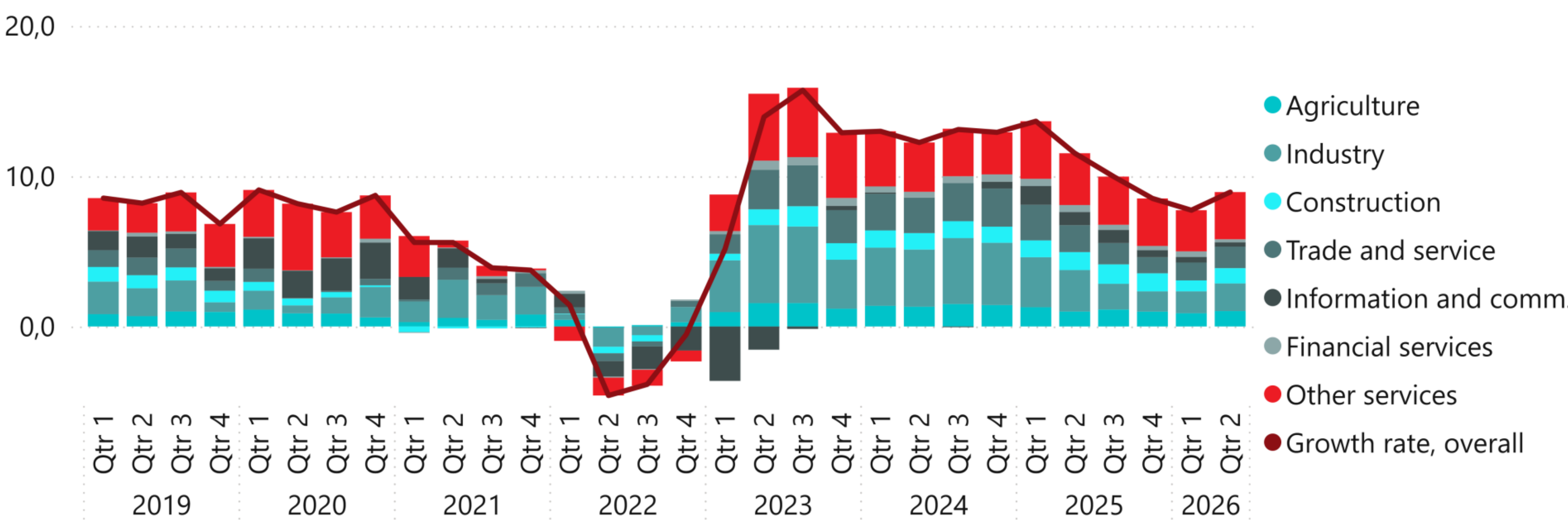
Trends in relative wage levels across regions and sectors remained unchanged. The highest relative wages continued to be observed in Minsk City (1,31 times) and Minsk Region (1,02 times); the regional structure of relative wages remained at approximately the same levels compared with the same quarter of the previous year. Information and communication retained its leading position among sectors (2,16 times), although the downward trend in relative wages in the sector continued. The upward trend in relative wages in Construction continued: in Q2-2026, they amounted to 1,33 times the average wage, compared with 1,26 times in the same quarter of the previous year. The downward trend in relative wages in Financial services (1,37 times compared with 1,42 times) and Industry (1,06 times compared with 1,09 times) also continued compared with the same quarter of the previous year.

Real wage growth decomposition[5]
q/q same period of previous year, %, including:

by regions

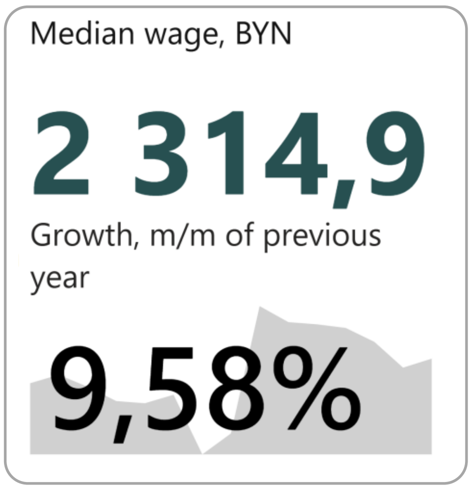


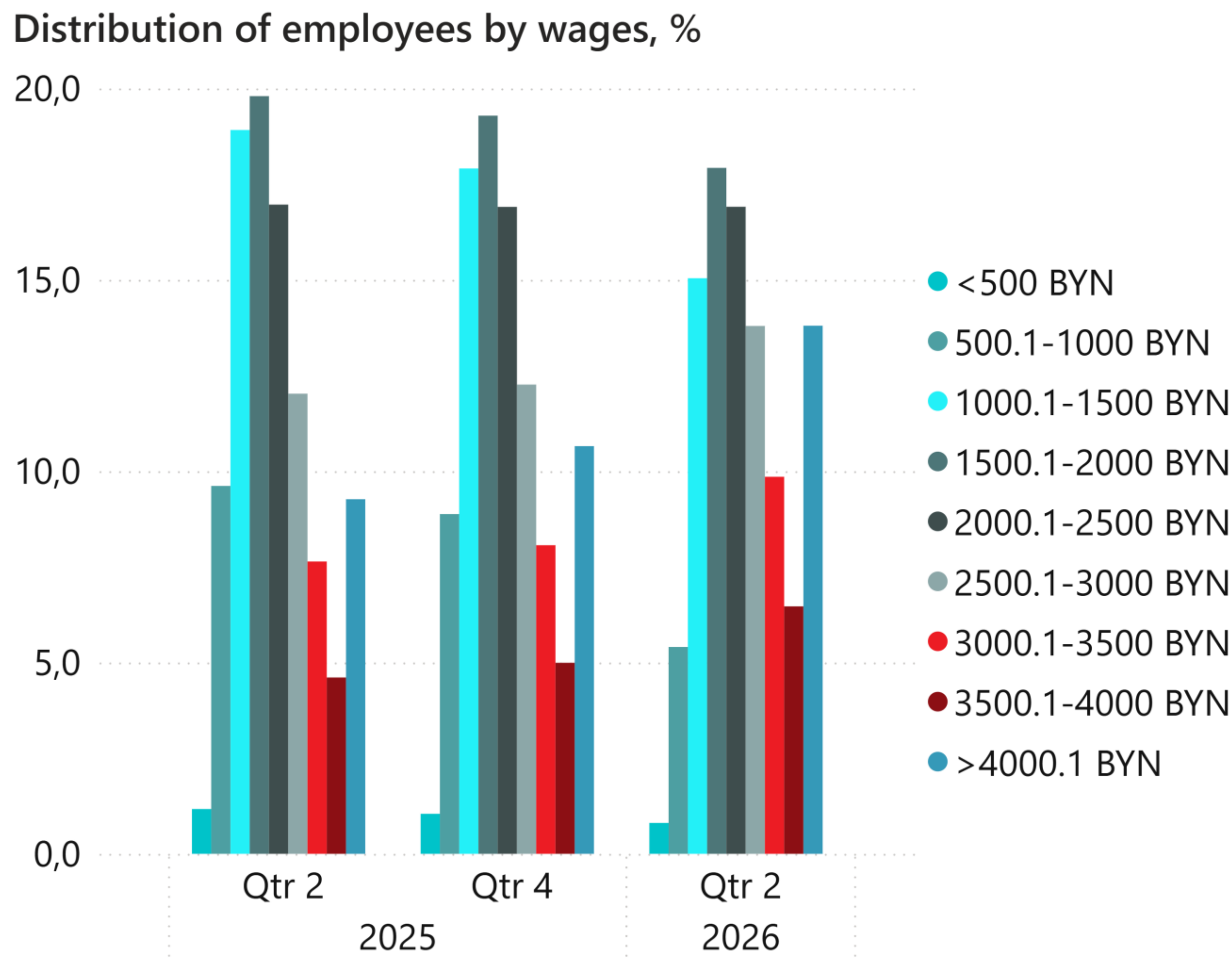
by industries



Note. Switching to year-over-year growth rates and their decomposition by factors helps address the issue of seasonality; the value of such growth differs from that of the original seasonally adjusted series. Source: calculated basing on Belstat data.

Real wages increased in all regions and sectors. The increase in real wages in Q2-2026 compared with the same quarter of the previous year amounted to 8,94%. In regional terms, the largest contributions to the increase in average real wages came from Minsk City (2,31 pp.), Minsk Region (1,53 pp.) and Brest Region (1,21 pp.), which together accounted for 56,5% of the total increase. In sectoral terms, the largest contributions came from Other services (3,14 pp.), Industry (1,84 pp.) and Trade and service (1,43 pp.). The smallest contributions to wage growth in sectoral terms continued to come from Information and communication and Financial services, at 0,29 pp. and 0,20 pp., respectively.





Notes. 1) The increase in median wages is presented in real terms. 2) Low wages are defined as wages below the threshold of 2/3 of the median wage in the period under review (according to OECD methodology). Source: compiled based on Belstat data.

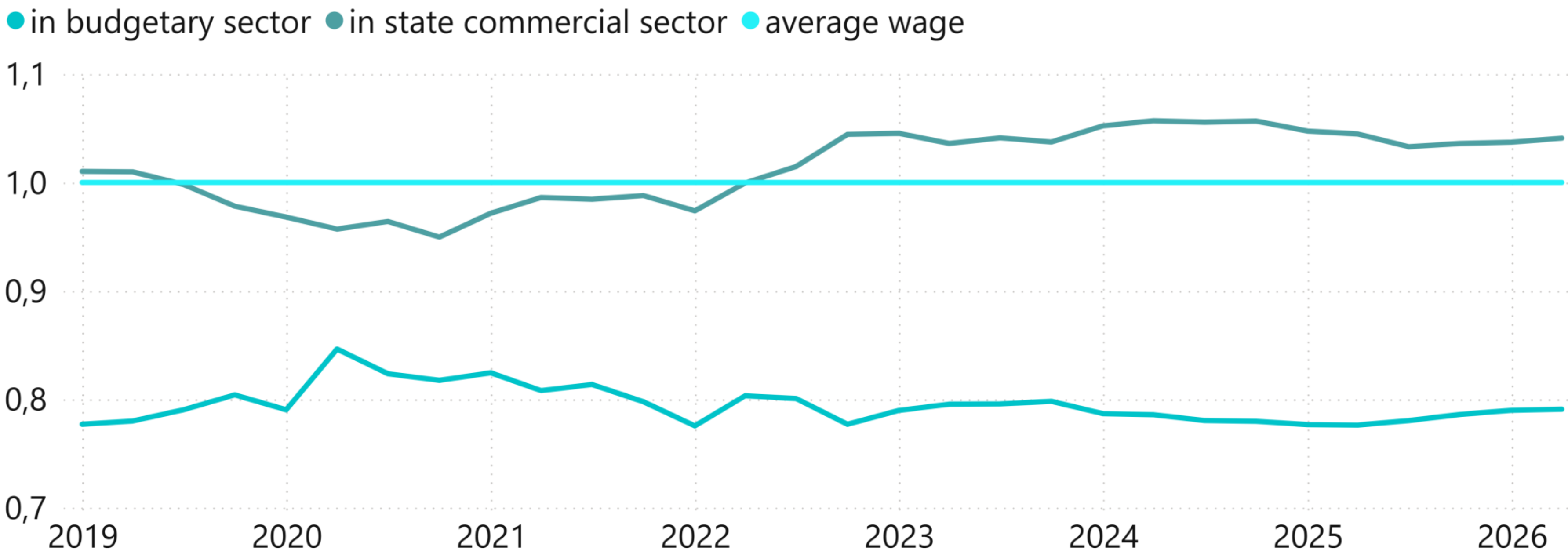
The share of groups of workers with higher wages continued to increase. According to the labour force survey conducted by Belstat, the median wage amounted to 2314,9 BYN in May 2026, increasing by 9,6% in real terms over the year (compared with 11,6% over the same period of the previous year). Relative to the average wage in the respective month, the median wage amounted to 77,1%; in the same period of 2021, this ratio stood at 71,7%, which also indicates an increase in wages for the majority of employees. During the period under review, the wage group with the largest number of employees remained the 1500,1–2000 BYN range (17,9%). However, due to the increase in the share of workers with higher incomes, its share decreased by 1,37 pp. over the six-month period. The shares of groups with lower income levels continued to decline: the share of workers with an income of 1000,1–1500 BYN decreased by 2,9 pp., while the share of those with an income of 500,1–1000 BYN decreased by 3,5 pp. compared with the previous six-month period. The share of workers with high wages – more than 4000 BYN per month – increased significantly, reaching 13,8% in May 2026, up by 3,1 pp. over the six-month period and equaling the share of employees with wages in the 2500,1–3000 BYN range. The shares of workers with higher wages increased across all wage ranges. As workers were redistributed towards higher earnings, the share of low-wage workers decreased slightly, amounting to 22,8% in May 2026. This was 0,57 pp. lower than in the same period of the previous year and 0,66 pp. lower than in the previous six-month period.

The situation in the state sector did not change significantly

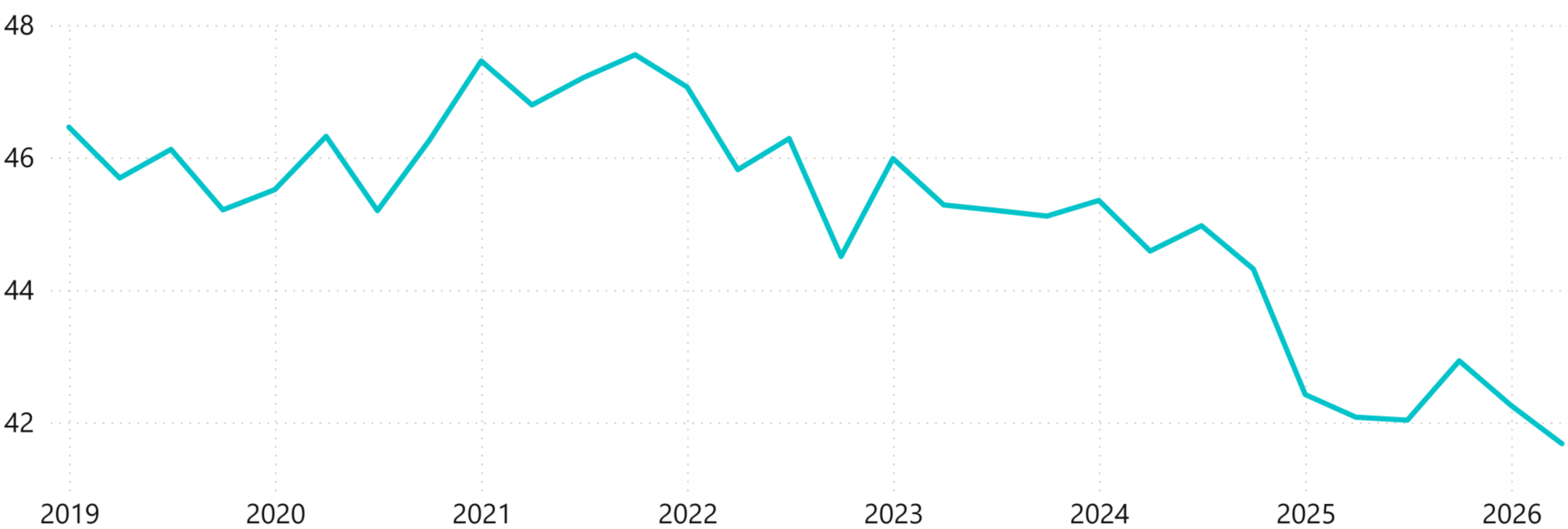
A slight upward trend in wages was observed in the state commercial sector. The relative wage in the state commercial sector amounted to 1,04 times the ave-rage wage in the economy in Q2-2026, taking into account seasonal adjustment, and demonstrated a slight upward trend. Real wages in the state

Relative nominal average wage in state sector

average wage in economy = 1



Share of payroll number of employees of state commercial sector in overall payroll number of employees, %



Notes. 1) The public commercial sector refers to commercial organizations with state ownership or a state ownership share. 2) Wage indicators are seasonally adjusted. Source: calculated basing on Belstat data.

commercial sector grew slightly faster than the average wage in the economy: the quarterly increase in Q2-2026 amounted to 2,88%, compared with 2,52% for average real wages after seasonal adjustment, which accounted for the upward trend in relative wages. The share of the payroll number of employees in the state commercial sector decreased slightly as the result of the quarter, amounting to 41,7% and reaching a new low over the observed period.

In the budgetary sector, real wages also grew slightly faster than the economy-wide average in Q2-2026: the quarterly increase amounted to 2,65%, taking into account seasonal adjustment. The relative wage level also demonstrated a slight upward trend, amounting to 79,1% of the average wage in the economy.

Notes and Comments

[1] Seasonal adjustment is applied to remove the seasonal component from the data, which does not carry significant information but can distort the true trend. The seasonal adjustment procedure is performed using JDemetra+ software with the X13-ARIMA-SEATS or TRAMO-SEATS methods, depending on the quality of the series adjustment. Explanations regarding the seasonal adjustment methods are available upon request.

[2] For more detailed information on the changes in legislation regarding job vacancy postings, please refer to the source (available in Russian only).

[3] Labour market tightness refers to a situation where, despite the increase in the number of vacancies, the labour supply remains relatively low, leading to a shortage of workers. A tight labour market is characterized by low unemployment and high demand for labour, which creates difficulties for firms in finding and hiring new employees.

[4] In the bulletin the types of economic activities listed in the Nomenclature of Economic Activities (hereinafter – NACE-2011) have been grouped into industrial categories. The correspondence table between industrial groups and types of economic activities is provided below.

Industrial group	**Economic activities according to NACE-2011 classification, included in industrial group**
Agriculture	A «Agriculture, forestry and fishing»
Industry	B «Mining and quarrying», C «Manufacturing», D «Electricity, gas, steam, hot water and air conditioning supply», E «Water supply; waste management and remediation activities»
Construction	F «Construction»
Trade and service	G «Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles», H «Transportation, storage, postal and courier activities», I «Accommodation and food service activities»
Information and communication	J «Information and communication»
Financial services	K «Financial and insurance activities», L «Real estate activities»
Other services	M «Professional, scientific and technical activities», N «Administrative and support service activities», O «Public administration», P «Education», Q «Human health and social work activities», R «Arts, sports, entertainment and recreation», S «Other service activities»

[5] The model for real wage growth decomposition by regional (industry) factors is as follows:

$$\Delta W_t = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} WF_{i,\,t}}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} PNE_{i,\,t}} \Big/ \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} WF_{i,\,t-4}}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} PNE_{i,\,t-4}} \times 100 - 100,$$

where:

i – regional (industrial) index;

t – reporting quarter index;

ΔW_t – value of the average real wage growth in the reporting quarter;

$WF_{i,\,t}$ – real wage fund in the region (industry) in the reporting quarter;

$PNE_{i,\,t}$ – payroll number of employees in the region (industry) in the reporting quarter.