

Labour market outlook spring 2026 – Summary

Outlook for the labour market 2026–2027



Summary

Uncertain global conditions have put the recovery of the Swedish economy on hold

Following a slowdown in the economic recovery in early 2026, economic growth is expected to pick up again in the second half of the year. Household consumption is of great importance to the recovery, but the war in the Middle East has driven up world market prices for energy, which risks reducing households' spending power. The sentiment revealed in the joint employer survey (LOR) conducted by the Arbetsförmedlingen and Statistics Sweden, SCB, in spring 2026, shows that employers have positive but cautious recruitment plans for the coming year. The subdued situation in the labour market is also reflected in the statistics on job vacancies, redundancy notices and bankruptcies. At the same time, the global economic situation is uncertain, and there is greater uncertainty about future developments than before.

Unemployment is set to reduce gradually over the forecast period

The development on the labour market has shown a slight improvement during the start of 2026, but over the spring the decline in the number of registered unemployed persons has gradually slowed down. The recovery is expected to gain momentum in the latter part of 2026, and by the second half of 2027, unemployment rates are expected to have returned to the same level as before the recession. Arbetsförmedlingen estimates that the number of registered unemployed persons will amount to 349,000, or 6.5 per cent, in 2026. In 2027, the number of registered unemployed persons is expected to amount to 328,000, which corresponds to an unemployment rate of 6.1 per cent. This can be compared with 2023, at the start of the recession, when the annual average amounted to 334,000 people, equivalent to 6.4 per cent.

The number of long-term unemployed persons is also expected to reduce slightly, but will remain at a high level during the forecast period 2026–2027. In 2027, the number of long-term unemployed persons is estimated to amount to 145,000, compared with an average of 152,000 in 2025. This means that the number of long-term unemployed persons accounts for an ever-increasing proportion of total unemployment.

Recruitment problems despite high unemployment

The recession has led to a rise in unemployment even amongst groups that are normally in a strong position on the labour market. However, structural unemployment, characterised by a persistently high number of long-term unemployed persons, has been high for a long time. At the same time, many employers are experiencing recruitment difficulties.

Persistently high long-term unemployment, combined with shortages in the labour force in certain sectors, increases the need for efforts to both tackle long-term unemployment and contribute to ensuring a supply of skilled labour. A large proportion of registered unemployed persons lack the skills that are in demand on the labour market, which means there is a risk that matching problems will increase as the economic situation improves. To help ensure a well-functioning labour market, Arbetsförmedlingen, together with other actors, needs to work to ensure that more jobseekers have access to more coordinated support and the efforts they require.