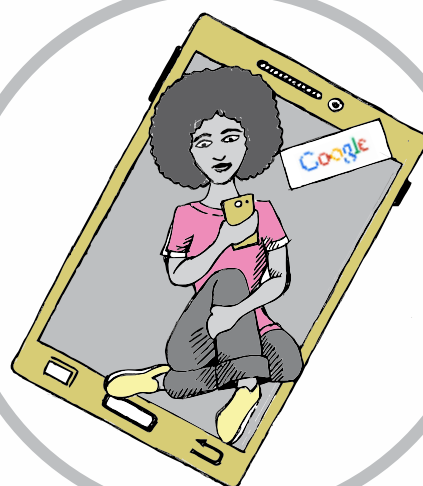
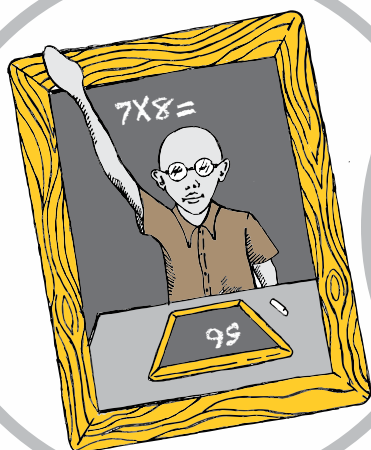


Statistics South Africa

Education Series Volume VI:

Education and Labour Market Outcomes in South Africa, 2018



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Education Series Volume VI

Education and Labour Market Outcomes in South Africa, 2018

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Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AET	Adult Education and Training
CET	Community Education and Training
ECD	Early Childhood Development
GHS	General Household Survey
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEET	Not in education, employment or training
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NQF	National Qualification Framework
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
LFS	Labour Force Survey
SONA	State of the Nation
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

WC	Western Cape
EC	Eastern Cape
NC	Northern Cape
FS	Free State
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NW	North West
GP	Gauteng
MP	Mpumalanga
LP	Limpopo
RSA	Republic of South Africa

Foreword

This report is the sixth in the education series and aims at presenting an overview of demographic and socio-economic trends relative to progress made against the goals of the education system in South Africa over the past two decades. The report focuses on three generations of adults and their participation in education, their highest educational attainment and labour market outcomes. The three generations studied in this report were the Generation X adults born between 1960 and 1979 who were 39–58 years old in 2018; the Millennials born between 1980 and 1999 who were 19–38 years old in 2018; and the Born-free generation born in 1994 and later who were 0–24 years old in 2018. These three generations were shaped by important political changes in South Africa which affected the choices they made in their educational and labour market participation.

In 2018, two out of ten (19,9%) of the total South African population were Generation X adults aged 39–58 years, while more than one-third of the population (35,3%) were Millennials aged 19–38 years, and the majority (45,5%) were the Born-free generation aged 0–24 years. Moreover, 10,2% of the total population comprised Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years. In 2018, Millennials aged 19–38 years made the largest share of the working-age population (54,1%), followed by Generation X adults aged 39–58 years (30,5%), and Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years who made up 15,7% of the working-age population.

This report looks at the educational profiles of the three generations described above, comparing Millennials and the Born-free generation to those who were their age in the generation which came before them. The report uses the 2002 and 2018 General Household Survey data, the 2002 Labour Force Survey data and the 2018 Quarterly Labour Force Survey annualised dataset. For the purpose of comparability, the report studies a subsection of the generations presented earlier: Generation X adults aged 23–38 in 2002, and Millennial adults aged 23–38 in 2018 due to the overlap in the age cohorts. Furthermore, since most Born-free generation members were still children, the analysis focuses on a subsection of this generation aged 19–24 in 2018 referred to as Born-free Millennials. While the cohorts under study were still young and may have not achieved their full educational goals, the analysis can provide insights into relative educational achievements as well as labour market variations across these cohorts.

Overcoming the challenges of the legacy of the South African education system includes confronting the lack of early and equal access to quality education, especially for the previously disadvantaged socio-economic groups. Most students attending school in the 23–38-year age cohort for both Generation X adults in 2002 and Millennials in 2018 were black Africans or coloureds, while other population groups in the same age cohort were attending a tertiary educational institution. The gender gap in attendance of a tertiary educational institution had narrowed from 8,4 percentage points in 2002 to 4,8 percentage points in 2018. Females had also outpaced men during the same period. Attendance of a tertiary educational institution for the cohort aged 23–38-years remained stable for black Africans from 2002 to 2018 (39,9% and 39,4%, respectively), while it declined from 63,1% to 46,5% for coloureds, and declined from 73,1% to 60,0% for whites. However, attendance of a tertiary educational institution grew from 72,0% in 2002 to 95,7% in 2018 among, Asians/Indians. Household income gaps were the reason for inequalities in education participation as 21,4% of Millennials from the bottom of the household income distribution were attending school and 31,6% were attending a tertiary educational institution. By contrast, among Millennials who were in the richer household income quintiles, the majority (60,0% in quintile 4 and 73,1% in quintile 5) were attending a tertiary educational institution.

Overall, both Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38 had made a substantial investment in their human capital. The biggest achievement was in the reduction of individuals aged 23–38 who did not have any schooling, which reduced from 4,3% in 2002 to less than one per cent (0,9%) in 2018, and those who

dropped out from primary school reduced from 19,5% in 2002 to 6,6% in 2018. Furthermore, the percentage of a tertiary qualification achievement increased from 10,9% in 2002 to 14,9% in 2018. Compared to their preceding generation in 2002, Millennial women in 2018 had outpaced men in secondary school completion (38,4% for females and 34,8% for males) and in the achievement of a tertiary qualification (16,1% for females and 13,8% for males). However, the racial gap in tertiary educational attainment had increased between black Africans and whites (from 28,4 percentage points in 2002 to 35,7 percentage points in 2018).

Among Millennials aged 23–38 in 2018, close to half (49,5%) were employed, while 23,8% were unemployed, and 26,7% were not economically active. This was close to a three-percentage-point decline from 2002 to 2018 among employed people across Generation X and Millennials. Two out of ten (20,4%) employed Millennial adults aged 23–38 had a tertiary qualification in 2018, while in 2002, the same was true for 15,9% of Generation X adults. There was however, a higher percentage of unemployed Millennials with a tertiary qualification in 2018 (9,5%) compared to unemployed Generation X adults aged 23–38 with a tertiary qualification in 2002 (5,6%).

Overall, 46,1% of Born-free Millennials were not in education, employment, or training (NEET), with 23-year-olds having the highest percentage in this category (53,2%). Furthermore, the gender gap in NEET status was 7,6 percentage points higher for Born-free Millennial women compared to men. The majority of NEET Born-free Millennials did not complete secondary school (44,8%), while 40,8% completed secondary school.



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Chapter 1: Young adults in 2018 compared to their preceding generation

1.1 Introduction

South Africa's transition to a democratic society over the past quarter of a century have not always delivered on the promise of social and economic transition. While tremendous progress was made after 1994 to improve the living circumstances of residents, the sheer magnitude of deprivation created severe backlogs in delivery of basic infrastructure for the majority of the people of the country did not provide the opportunity to produce the expected generational lift of creating better-educated, employed and prosperous cohorts of people. Despite its importance for the development of the country and the commensurate investment, basic education remains a major challenge. Although access has improved significantly over the past 25 years, throughput remain inefficient, particularly given the large budget allocation. Government is still seeking a new approach to education and skills.

In his state of the nation (SONA) address on 20 June 2019, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa announced seven key priorities for his new administration:

- Economic transformation and job creation;
- Education, skills and health;
- Consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services;
- Spatial integration, human settlements and local government;
- Social cohesion and safe communities;
- A capable, ethical and developmental state;
- A better Africa and World.

The President also announced that the focus in the coming 10 years would be on equipping young children with reading skills, providing free higher education for the poor, enhancing teachers' preparation, and providing support for teaching learners in reading in all the languages. The President also announced the introduction of subjects like coding and data analytics at primary school level (The Presidency, 2019). Education was allocated the largest share of total government spending in 2019 (R372,7 billion) on the premise of improving the education system and developing skills needed by the economy. A breakdown of the sector's budget shows the largest slice being allocated to basic education (R250,4 billion). Furthermore, transfers to universities amounted to R37,0 billion; the National Student Financial Aid Schemes (NSFAS) received R33,3 billion; the skills development levy institutions received R21,7 billion; education administration was allocated R17,6 billion; and finally technical and vocational education and training (TVET) received R12,7 billion (National Treasury, 2019).

The South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996) and its amendments provide for nine years of free schooling in no-fee designated public schools. The Act also provides for a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools and the redress of past injustices in educational provision. However, more than 20 years after the end of apartheid, the education system has still not been able to enhance effectively the teaching quality and the required effectiveness in learning. Despite these prevailing circumstances, access to education to the poor has expanded largely due to financial aid to poor families through the child support and other grants, availability of no-fee schools, school feeding programmes and scholar transports. These programmes have proven to make a big difference in increased attendance rates, completion of schooling, and in the national senior certificate (NSC) performance of learners who were

beneficiaries of some of these programmes. In 2016, close to 70% of young adults aged 20–34 who completed a post-school education were first-generation secondary school graduates. Similarly, close to 71% of young adults in the same age group who completed post-school education were first-generation post-school qualification holders (Stats SA, 2017). The socio-economic condition of learners play out not only in their school attendance but also in their academic performance. The percentage of individuals aged 20 years and older without formal education had reduced from 11,4% in 2002 to 4,5% in 2018. Furthermore, progress has been achieved over time in the completion of Grade 12 among individuals 20 years and older from 21,3% in 2002 to 30,9% in 2018 (Stats SA, 2019a). In 2018, out of the 512 735 total candidates who wrote the NSC, 316 995 were recipients of social grants (61,8%). The NSC pass rate among candidates who were recipients of social grants was 74,8%. Moreover, 35,5% of these candidates achieved a bachelor's pass, 38,4% achieved a diploma pass and 26,1% achieved a certificate pass (Department of Social Development, 2019).

Government policy on early childhood development (ECD) is that it is a fundamental and universal human right to which all young children are equally entitled without discrimination. Currently, ECD facilities in South Africa vary in quality and level of operations. The services are mostly provided by private service providers, not-for-profit organisations, day mothers, and through community development programmes that offer mobile ECD programmes such as book and toy libraries and community playgroups. However, early learning and care programmes are not universally available or equitably accessible to vulnerable children. In 2018, among children aged 0–4 years, only 38,4% were attending ECD facilities, which could be regarded as a contributing factor to the weak foundation in future learning, seeing that the majority of young children (56%) were kept at home with either their parents, guardians or others, and with limited access to stimulation and learning. Moreover, close to 47% of children aged 0–4 years did not have adults who read with them or drew pictures or coloured in with them (43,1%) (Stats SA, 2019a).

Government policy on higher education is to provide multiple pathways for young people to pursue a post-secondary education. In 2016, in total, 975 837 students were enrolled at public higher education institutions in South Africa, out of which 158 891 were first-time entrants. Hence, first-time entrants constituted 16,3% of total enrolment. However, the percentage of first-time entering students as a ratio to the total bachelor's and diploma passes declined over the years, with less than half of those who achieved a bachelor's or diploma pass being enrolled as first-time students in 2016 (46,5%). In 2016, close to 77% of enrolments at higher education institutions were for a bachelor's/national higher diploma (NQF1 Level 7). Similarly, in 2016, 705 397 enrolments were registered at TVET colleges, while 273 431 were at Community Education and Training (CET) colleges, and 168 911 at private colleges (Stats SA, 2019b).

Although most of the post-school education institutions are public entities funded through public transfers, learners are also funded through the provision of various support schemes such as the NSFAS and other student loans and bursaries. This is to ensure that no students who pass the exam are denied access to post-school education due to a lack of financial means. Government also makes further opportunities for higher education available to working adults through work-place bursaries.

Over the past 25 years, South Africa has undergone some demographic and economic shifts. Although change is often measured by comparing levels of development at two distinct points in time, a focus on education calls for a more nuanced approach that explicitly takes into consideration the age of particular target groups. An individual's age is the most common predictor of differences in attitudes and behaviour. Age denotes two important characteristics of individuals: their membership of a cohort who were born during a similar period of time (and who were often affected by similar conditions), and a similar place in the life

¹ National Qualification Framework

cycle. The nature of age allows researchers to track individuals over the course of their lives, and to compare them with other cohorts.

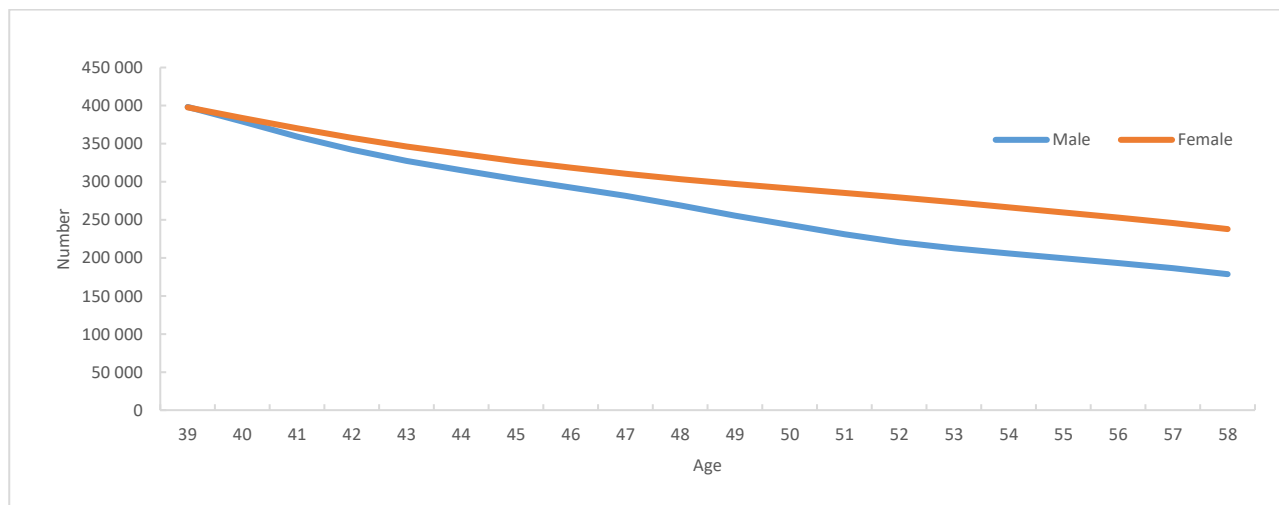
Generations are one way to group age cohorts. A generation typically refers to people that were born over a span of 15-20 years. Different generations are identified based on a unique mix of factors, including demography. This report will utilise Generation X (born between 1960 and 1979) and Millennials (born between 1980 and 1999), as well as the generation of South Africans that were born after the advent of democracy in 1994, the so-called 'Born-free' generation. In 2018, the oldest members of the Born-free generation have turned 24 while the oldest Millennials turned 38. In this report, the three generations will be compared with respect to their educational characteristics which is a trait that distinguishes them from one another. These generations' educational achievement as well as access to educational opportunities are compared in their early adult lives, including their labour market outcomes.

1.2 Objective of the report

Each demographic generation has characteristics that distinguish them from one another. This report looks at the educational profiles of the three generations described above, comparing Millennials and the Born-free generation to those who were their age in the generation which came before them. The report uses the 2002 and 2018 General Household Survey data as well as the Quarterly Labour Force Survey annualised data sets for 2002 and 2018. For the purpose of comparability, the report studies a sub section of the generations presented earlier: Generation X adults aged 23–38 in 2002, and Millennial adults aged 23–38 in 2018 due to the overlap in the age cohorts. Furthermore, since most Born-free generation members were still children, analyses will focus on a sub section of this generation aged 19–24 which will be referred to as Born-free Millennials. The report is organised into five chapters. The first chapter defines the three generations under study; the second chapter presents participation by the generations in educational institutions; and chapter three provides insight into the educational achievement of these generations. This is followed by chapter four, which provides information on labour market outcomes of these generations and chapter five concludes.

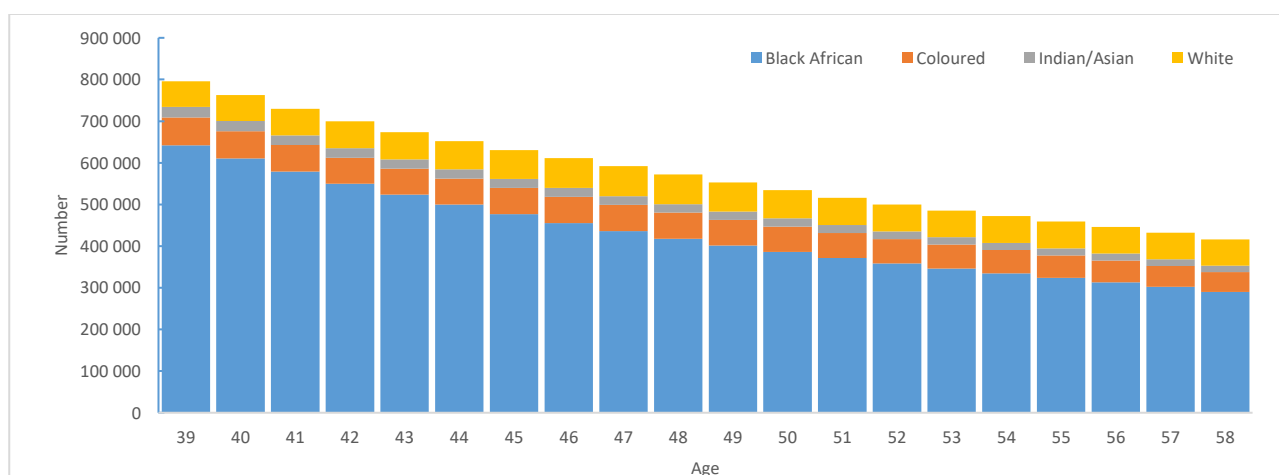
1.3 Generation X

Born between 1960 and 1979, this cohort constituted close to 11,5 million individuals aged 39–58 in 2018, with 63% amongst them still below the age of 50 years. In 2018, there were 5,4 million males and 6,1 million females in this generation. This was the youth generation during the democratic transition of the country from its apartheid past, as the youngest were just 15 years old and the oldest were 34 years old in 1994. This generation was marked by important political changes in South Africa that affected their schooling choices and labour market participation decisions. Their lives were shaped by limited educational opportunities before the end of apartheid followed by unprecedented labour market opportunities thereafter. In South Africa, women outnumber men in adulthood as women live longer. In 2018, the male life expectancy at birth was 61,1 years whereas the female life expectancy at birth was 67,5 years (Stats SA, 2019c).

Figure 1.1: Generation X–single-age population estimates by gender, 2018

Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.1 above shows the population distribution of the Generation X by single age and gender in 2018. The marked decline in population numbers as their age increases is due to a considerable increase in the death rate among members of this generation as a result of deaths caused by communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV. From 2000 to 2016, close to 2,8 million people in this generation died. Furthermore, close to 36% of all deaths that occurred in 2004 were among those born between 1960 and 1979 (Stats SA, 2018b). A larger decrease is also observed in the size of the cohorts aged 39–41 compared to those aged 36–38 in the Millennials' generation. Three out of eight (37,4%) Generation X individuals (approximately 4,3 million) were 39–44 years old. This generation was characterised by lower sex ratios that declined rapidly from age 41 onwards.

Figure 1.2: Generation X–single-age population estimates by population group, 2018

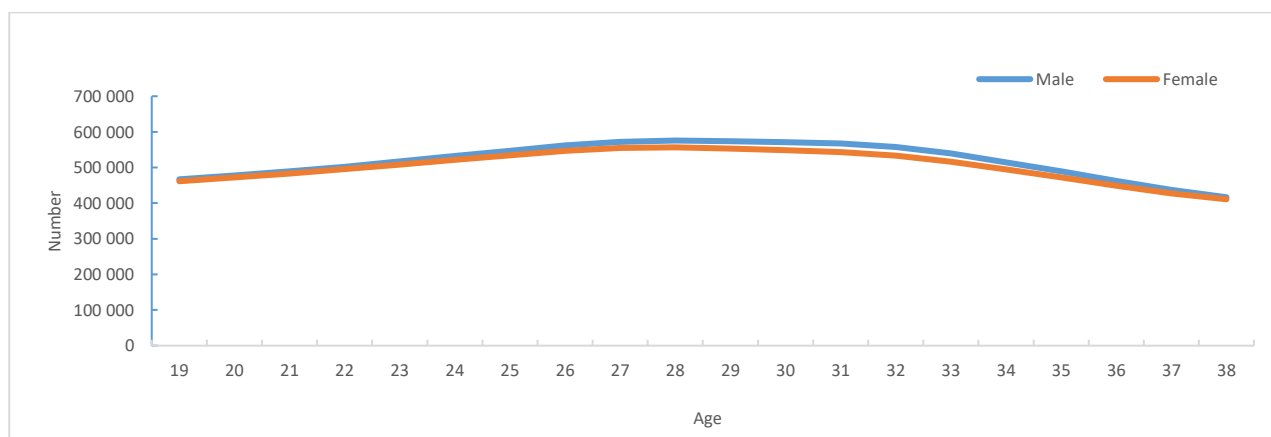
Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.2 above presents single-age population estimates and the population group composition of Generation X. According to the mid-year population estimates in 2018, three out of four individuals in the age group 39–58 were black Africans (close to 8,6 million) while close to 11% (1,3 million), 10% (1,2 million) and 4% (402 000) were whites, coloureds and Asians/Indians respectively. Moreover, two out of five black Africans in this generation were 39–44 years old; similarly, two out of five whites in this generation were 39–46 years old. However, one out of every two black African individuals in Generation X were 39–46 years old.

1.4 Millennials

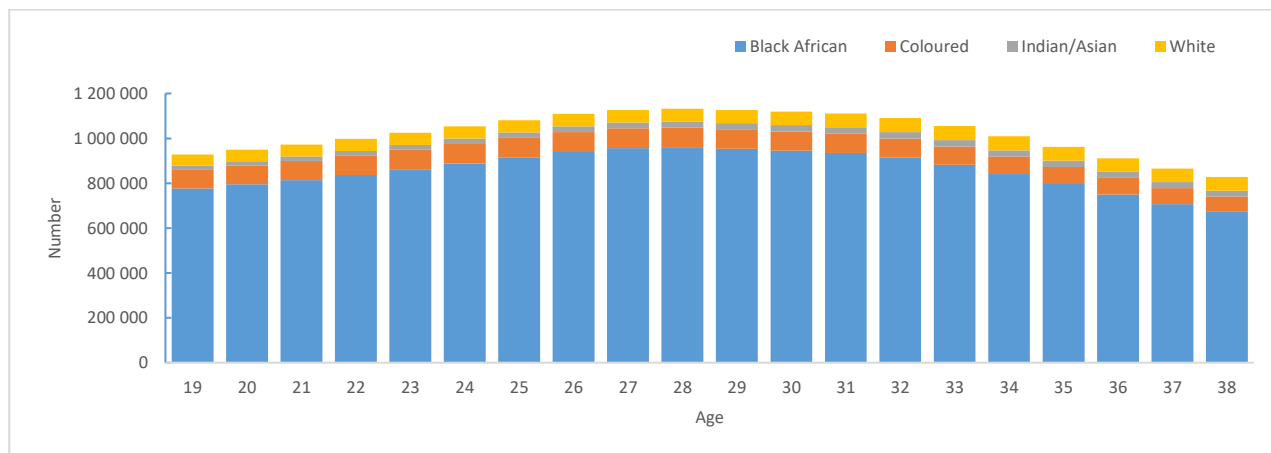
Born between 1980 and 1999, this cohort constituted close to 20,5 million individuals aged 19–38 in 2018 with more than half (56,2%) of them still younger than 30 years. They were the generation that were born during a time that saw the dawning of the greatest technological advancements such as personal computers, mobile telephones and the internet. This has shaped their acquisition of human capital, especially in countries that were able to invest in technology in the schooling environment, creating opportunities for this generation to be innovators in the development of technology and its consumption.

Figure 1.3: Millennials – single-age population estimates by gender, 2018



Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.3 shows the population distribution of Millennials by gender in 2018. The share of women in each age cohort was equal or slightly less than half of the total population and hence did not display an imbalance in the male and female population. In 2018, there were approximately 10,4 million males and 10,1 million females in this generation. The population distribution of the Millennials was characterised by an increase in the number of both male and female individuals with age up to the age of 28, after which a slow decline followed.

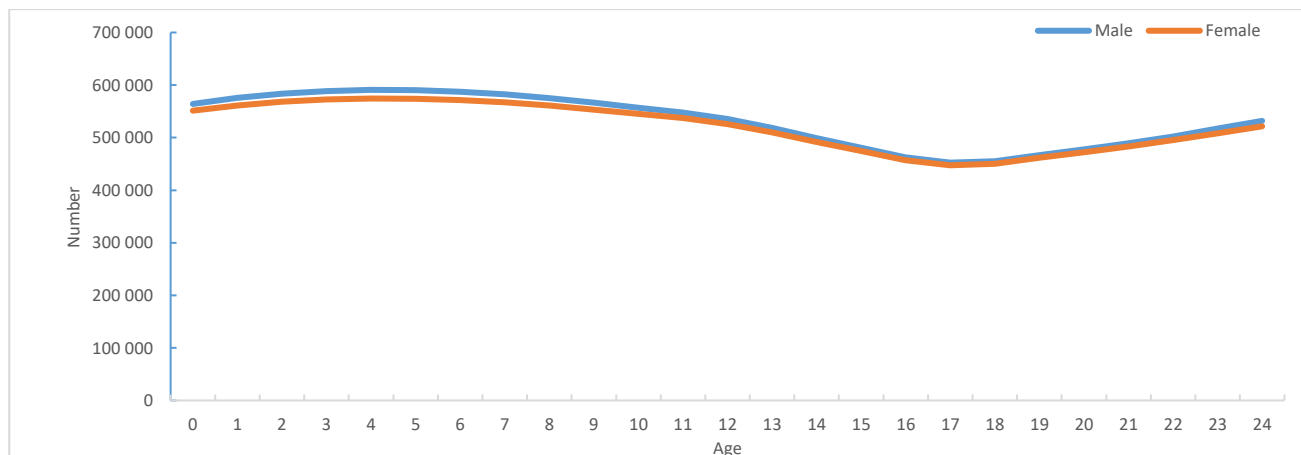
Figure 1.4: Millennials – single-age population estimates by population group, 2018

Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.4 shows the population group composition of the Millennial generation. Overall, the Millennials comprised 84% black African (17,1 million), 8% coloured (1,6 million), 2% Asian/Indian (506 000) and 6% white (1,1 million) persons.

1.5 Born-free generation

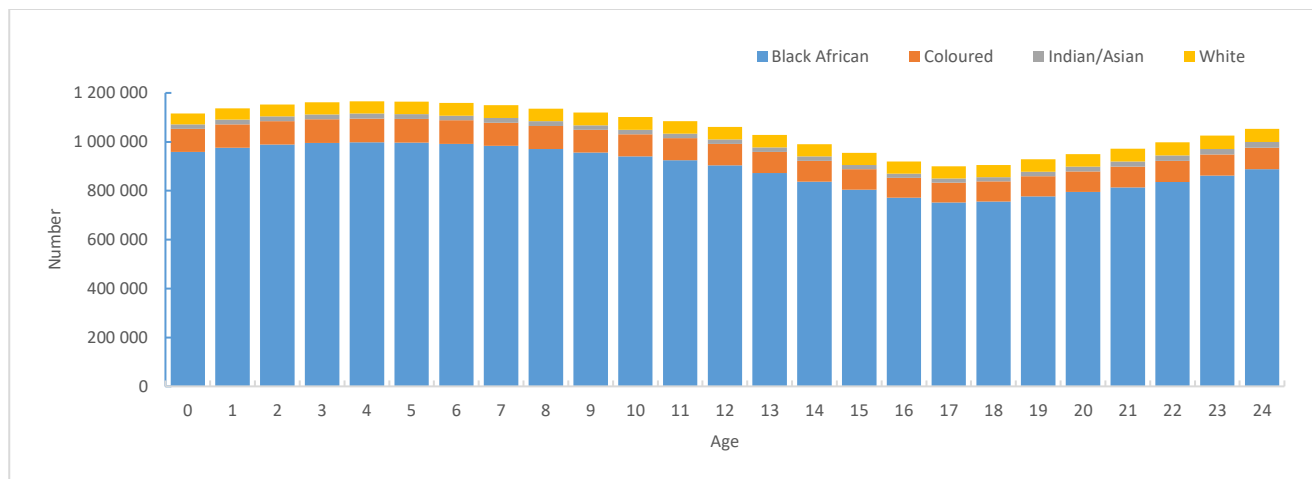
Born in 1994 and after, this cohort constituted of close to 26,3 million individuals aged 0–24 in 2018, with two-thirds (67% or approximately 17,8 million) amongst them aged 15 years or younger. They are the generation that was born after the fall of apartheid in 1994 a time that signifies a period of political freedom in the country. For the purpose of this report, the period 1994 to 2018 were used. Born-free Millennials were the generation aged 19–24.

Figure 1.5: Born-free generation – single-age population estimates by gender, 2018

Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.5 shows that the distribution of the Born-free population had just about reached gender parity within all the age groups. In 2018, there were approximately 13,3 million males and 13,0 million females in this generation. Among the Born-free generation, seven out of nine (close to 78%) were 18 years or younger in 2018, whereas the rest (approximately 22%) were 19–24 years old. The graph shows a decline in the size of the population from the age cohorts 4 to 16 years and slight increases occurred from age 17 upwards.

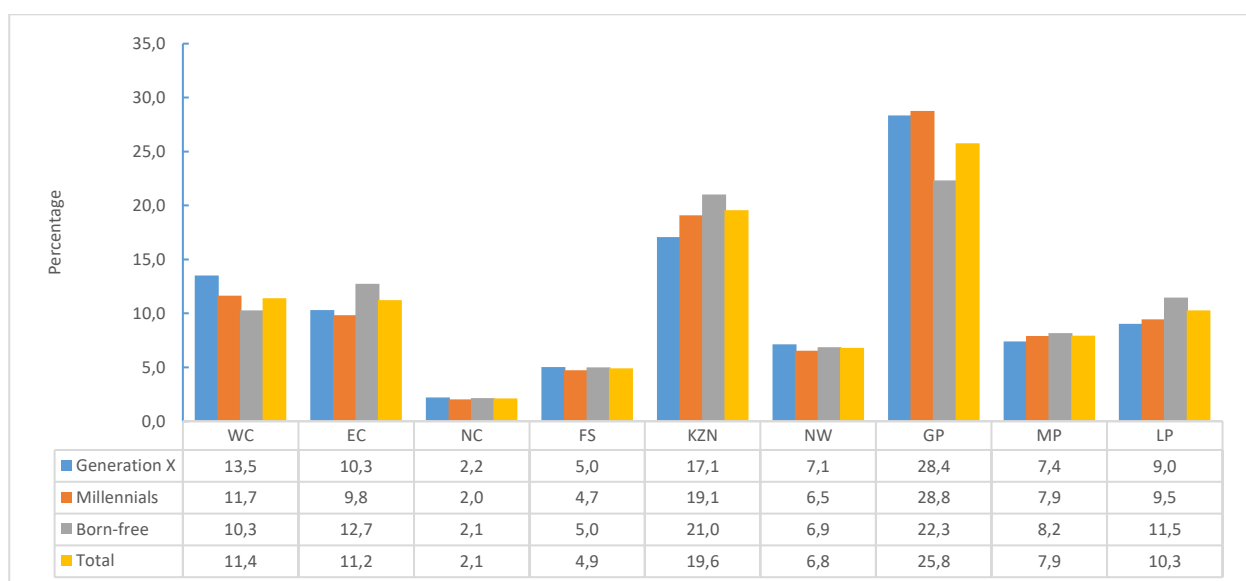
Figure 1.6: Born-free generation – single-age population estimates by population group, 2018



Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.6 presents single-age population estimates and the population group composition of the Born-free generation. The age cohorts 17 to 19 had the lowest percentage of the black African population compared to the other age groups. Among the black African Born-free generation, seven out of nine (close to 78%) were 18 years or younger in 2018. Similarly, 77% of coloureds, 74% of Indians/Asians and 75% of whites were 18 years or younger in 2018.

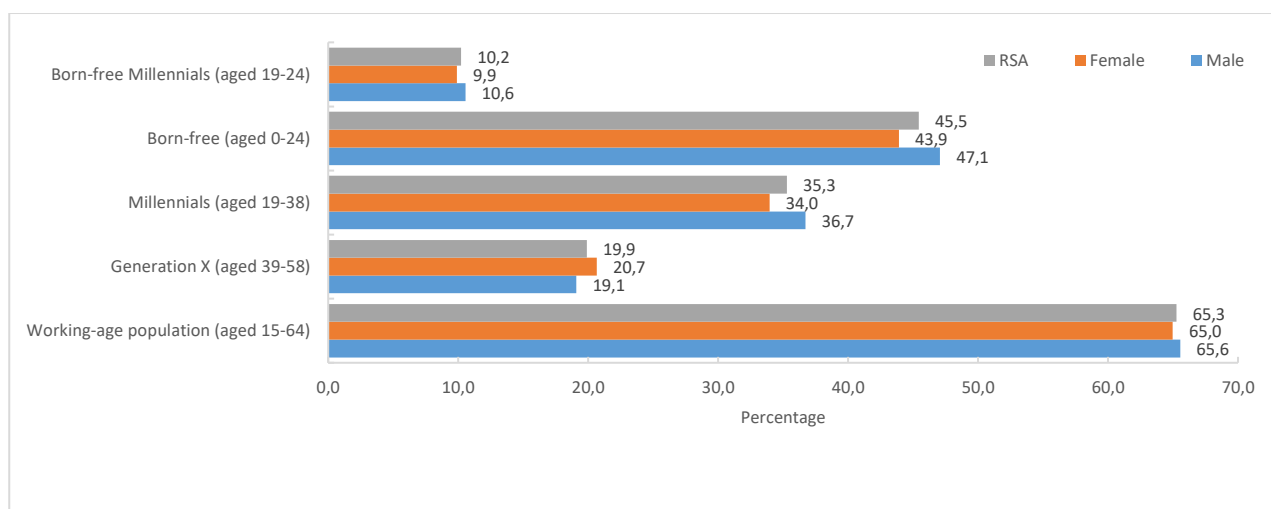
Figure 1.7: Distribution of the generations by province, 2018



Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

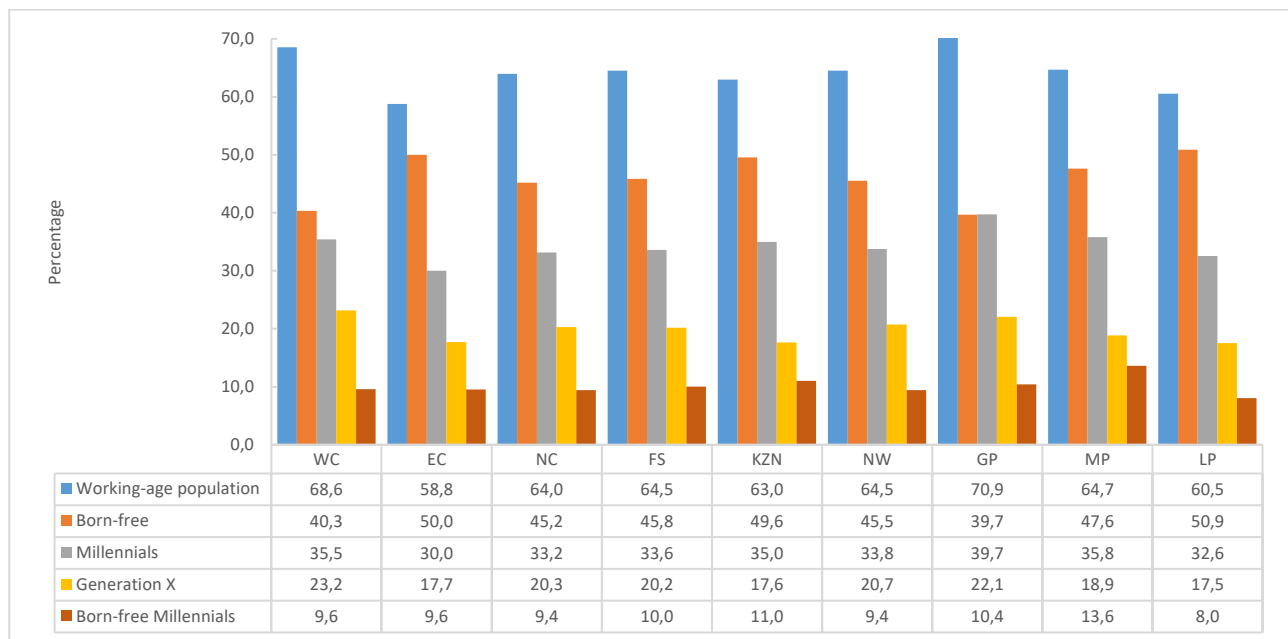
Figure 1.7 compares the population distributions of the total population and the three generations being discussed in this report, i.e. Generation X, Millennials and the Born-free generations by province. In 2018, Gauteng was home to the largest share of the population in South Africa with close to a quarter (25,6%) of the total population residing in the province. Similarly, Gauteng had the largest population share of all three generations, while KwaZulu-Natal had the second largest share of the population, as depicted in the graph. Northern Cape was the province with the smallest share of all populations described above. The Born-free generation were typically residents of Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

Figure 1.8: Distribution of the generations as a percentage of the total population by gender, 2018



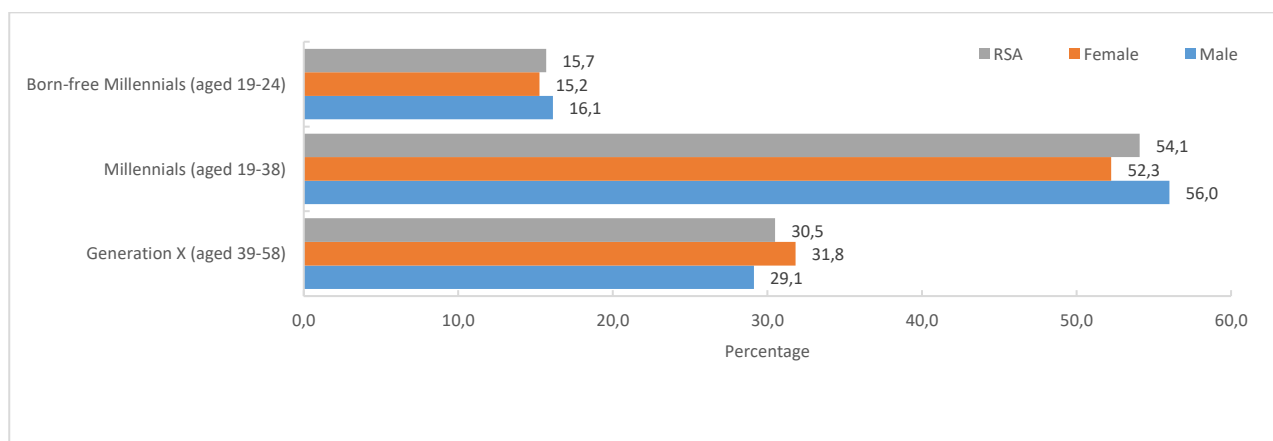
Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.8 shows the distribution by gender of each generation with respect to the total South African population in 2018. In 2018, the Born-free generation constituted close to half (45,5%) of the total South African population, while the Millennials made up 35,3% of the total population and close to 20% of the adult population comprised of Generation X adults. Furthermore, close to 10% of the population in 2018 were Born-free Millennials. Close to 37% of the total male population comprised male Millennials and Generation X males made up close to 19% of total male population.

Figure 1.9: Distribution of the generations as a percentage of the total population by province, 2018

Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

Figure 1.9 shows the distribution of each generation as a percentage of the total population by province, in 2018. Gauteng and Western Cape had by far the largest share of the working-age population in South Africa (close to 71% and 69%, respectively), while one out of every two individuals in Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal constituted the Born-free generation. The highest percentage of Millennials were residents of Gauteng (39,7%), followed by Mpumalanga (35,8%), Western Cape (35,5%) and KwaZulu-Natal (35%). In Mpumalanga, the Born-free Millennials were the largest generation (close to 14%), while this generation amounted to the lowest percentage (8%) in Limpopo. In the Western Cape, Generation X made up the largest share of the total provincial population (23,2%) while the same generation constituted 22,1% of the total population in Gauteng.

Figure 1.10: Distribution of the generations as a percentage of the total working-age population by gender, 2018

Source: Stats SA, Mid-year population estimates 2018

In 2018, Millennials aged 19 to 38 years constituted more than half (54,1%) of the working-age population in South Africa, while Generation X adults made up close to 31% and Born-free Millennials close to 16% of the total working-age population. Male Millennials constituted the largest percentage (56%) of the total male working-age population, while females within the same generation amounted to 52,3% of all females among the working-age population.

1.6 Educational attainment

Over time, general educational attainment in South Africa has shown an upward trend, especially among the younger generation. Among males aged 20–39, the percentage of individuals with no formal education or for whom the highest level of education was less than Grade 7 (functional illiteracy) reduced from 17,1% in 2002 to 5,3% in 2018. Similarly, among females in the same age group, functional illiteracy reduced almost fourfold from 15,8% in 2002 to 3,5% in 2018. Furthermore, among males aged 40–59 years, the functional illiteracy reduced from 36,1% in 2002 to 16,3% in 2018. Among females in the same age group, functional illiteracy reduced from 41,0% in 2002 to 17,9% in 2018 (Stats SA, 2019a).

Table 1.1: Educational attainment of Generation X, Millennials and Born-free generation by gender, 2018

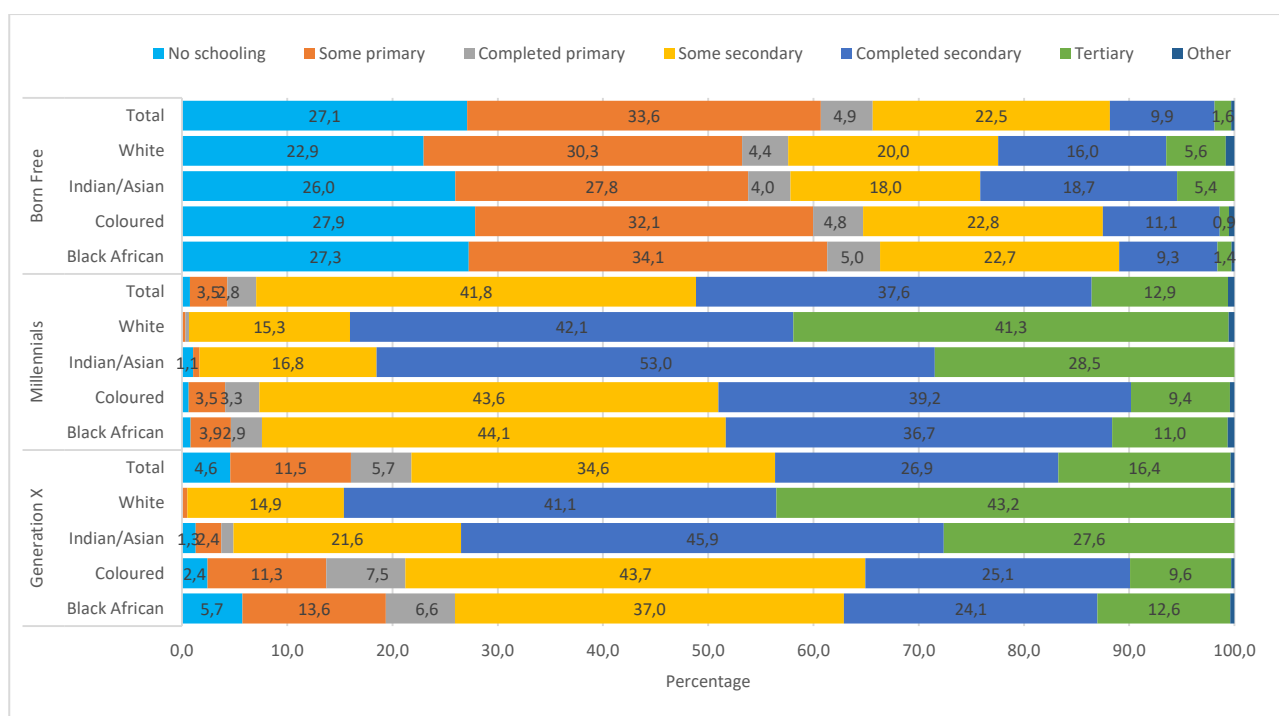
Highest level of education	Generation X			Millennials			Born-free generation		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
No schooling	4,1	5,1	4,6	0,8	0,7	0,8	27,3	26,8	27,1
Some primary	11,6	11,4	11,5	4,3	2,8	3,5	34,4	32,9	33,6
Completed primary	5,5	5,9	5,7	3,1	2,4	2,8	5,3	4,6	4,9
Some secondary	34,0	35,1	34,6	43,6	39,9	41,8	22,1	22,9	22,5
Completed secondary	27,9	26,0	26,9	35,4	39,8	37,6	9,1	10,8	9,9
Tertiary	16,6	16,2	16,4	11,9	14,0	12,9	1,4	1,8	1,6
Other	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,7	0,5	0,6	0,4	0,2	0,3
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Stats SA, GHS 2002, 2018

Millennials had obtained better educational achievements up until tertiary level compared to their preceding generation. Table 1.1 shows that while overall 4,6% of Generation X had no schooling in 2018, among Millennials, less than one per cent (0,8%) had no schooling. Millennials were also less likely to have dropped out before or after completing primary schooling as only 3,5% among them had dropped out without completing primary school and 2,8% had left school after completing primary school. By contrast, 11,5% of Generation X members did not complete primary schooling and 5,7% completed primary school only. More Millennials had completed at least some secondary schooling (41,8%) or Grade 12 (37,6%) compared to 34,6% and 26,9%, respectively, among Generation X adults. However, 16,4% of the members of Generation X, had achieved a tertiary qualification compared with just 12,9% of the Millennials. This is most likely because some of the Millennials were still in the education system.

Female Millennials were also better educated compared to their male counterparts, while the educational gender gap was more narrowed within Generation X. The percentage of female Millennials who completed their secondary education was 4,4 percentage points higher than that of their male counterparts (39,8% and 35,4%, respectively). However, among Generation X, this difference amounted to only two per cent. Similarly, the percentage of female Millennials who achieved tertiary qualifications was 2,1 percentage points higher than that of their male counterparts (14,0% and 11,9%, respectively), while this difference is minor among Generation X. More male Millennials would proportionately dropout of primary school, as 4,3% did not complete primary schooling compared to their female counterparts (2,8%). Most of the Born-free generation were still too young to be at school or were still attending school in 2018.

Figure 1.11: Educational attainment of Generation X, Millennials and Born-free Millennials by population group, 2018



Source: Stats SA, GHS 2002, 2018

Figure 1.11 shows the differences in generational educational attainment by population group. A lower percentage of dropouts from primary schooling were observed among black African and coloured Millennials, compared to the older generation. Moreover, the largest educational gains among black Africans and coloureds were in the increase in the percentage of individuals who completed secondary schooling from 24,1% amongst Generation X black Africans to 36,7% amongst black African Millennials; and from 25,1% amongst Generation X coloureds to 39,2% amongst coloured Millennials. Similarly, significant progress had been observed in the completion of secondary schooling among Indians/Asians, with 45,9% of Generation X Indians/Asians and 53,0% of Indian/Asian Millennials achieving such qualifications. However, inequalities by population group in the achievement of tertiary qualifications across generations persist. The percentage of black African and coloured Millennials who hold a tertiary qualification was lower (11,0% and 9,4%) compared to whites (41,3%) and Indians/Asians (28,5%).

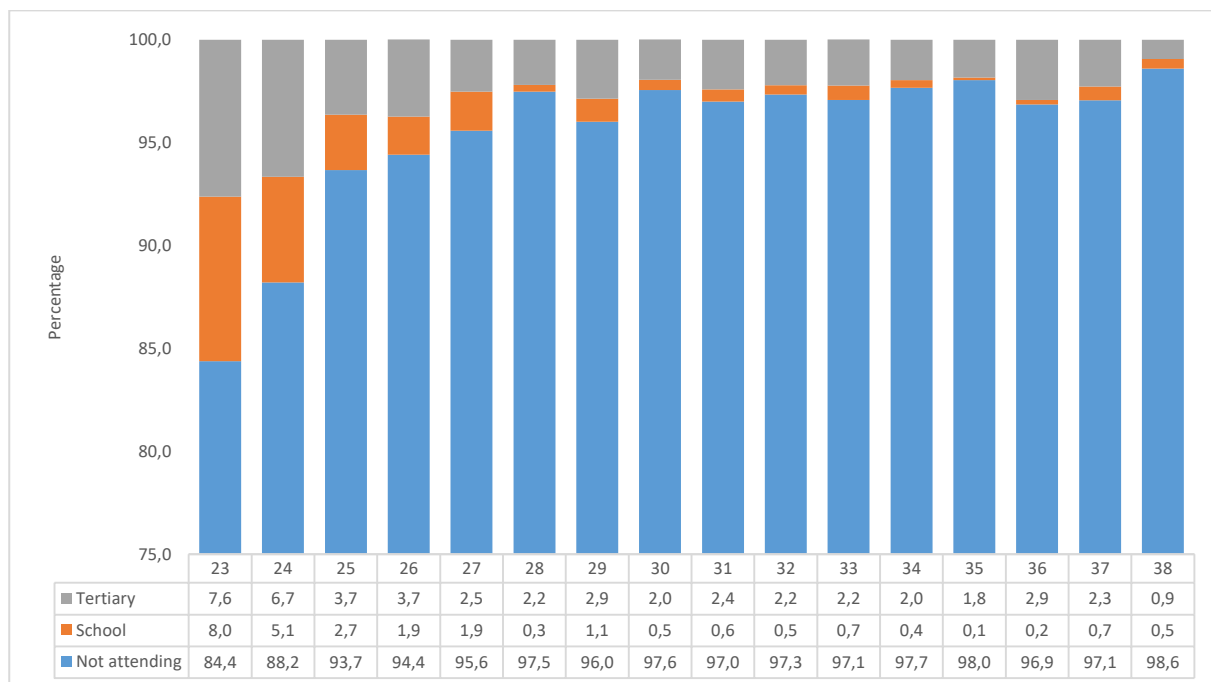
Chapter 2: Participation in educational institutions by Generation X individuals, Millennials and Born-free Millennials

This chapter presents data, analysis and trends to understand patterns of educational participation in South African educational institutions from pre-1994 and after the dawn of democracy. The GHS data is used to analyse and compare the levels of participation in educational institutions by Generation X individuals aged 23–38 in 2002 and Millennials aged 23–38 in 2018. The level of participation in educational institutions by Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 in 2018 is also presented and compared to the two generations. Furthermore, this chapter analyses the impact of subsidised and free education on participation in educational institutions. After 1990, the educational system in South Africa had undergone a series of educational transformation to pave the way for inclusive equity policies and to create a transformed education sector that is of high quality and that includes all the demographic groups.

2.1 Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X adults aged 23–38 in 2002

Following the various reforms in education, investment in education and training has been stepped up significantly to benefit the previously disadvantaged community. Generation X youth aged 23–38 in 2002 were direct recipients of policy interventions aimed at breaking the vicious circle of low education and skills leading to unemployment and poverty. The section below outlines educational participation of this generation in 2002.

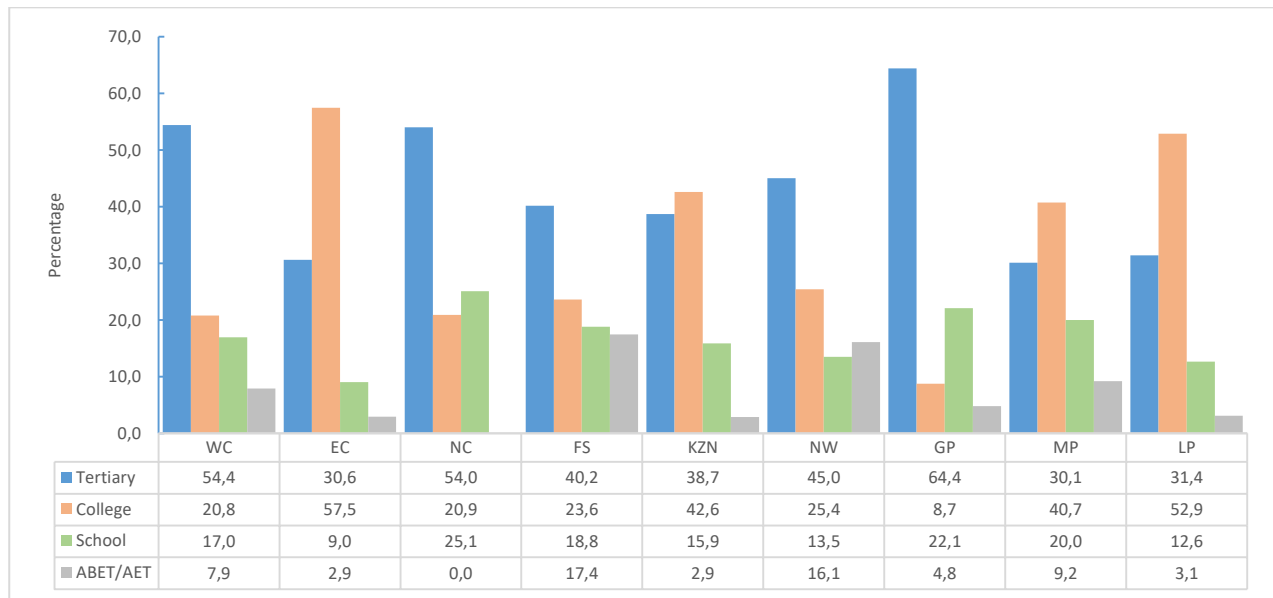
Figure 2.1: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X adults aged 23–38 years by age, 2002



Source: Stats SA, GHS 2002

Figure 2.1 shows attendance of an educational institution by Generation X adults in 2002. Among 23 year olds, eight out of ten (84,4%) were not attending any educational institutions, while close to 8% each of Generation X adults in the same age group were attending a tertiary educational institution or were attending school.

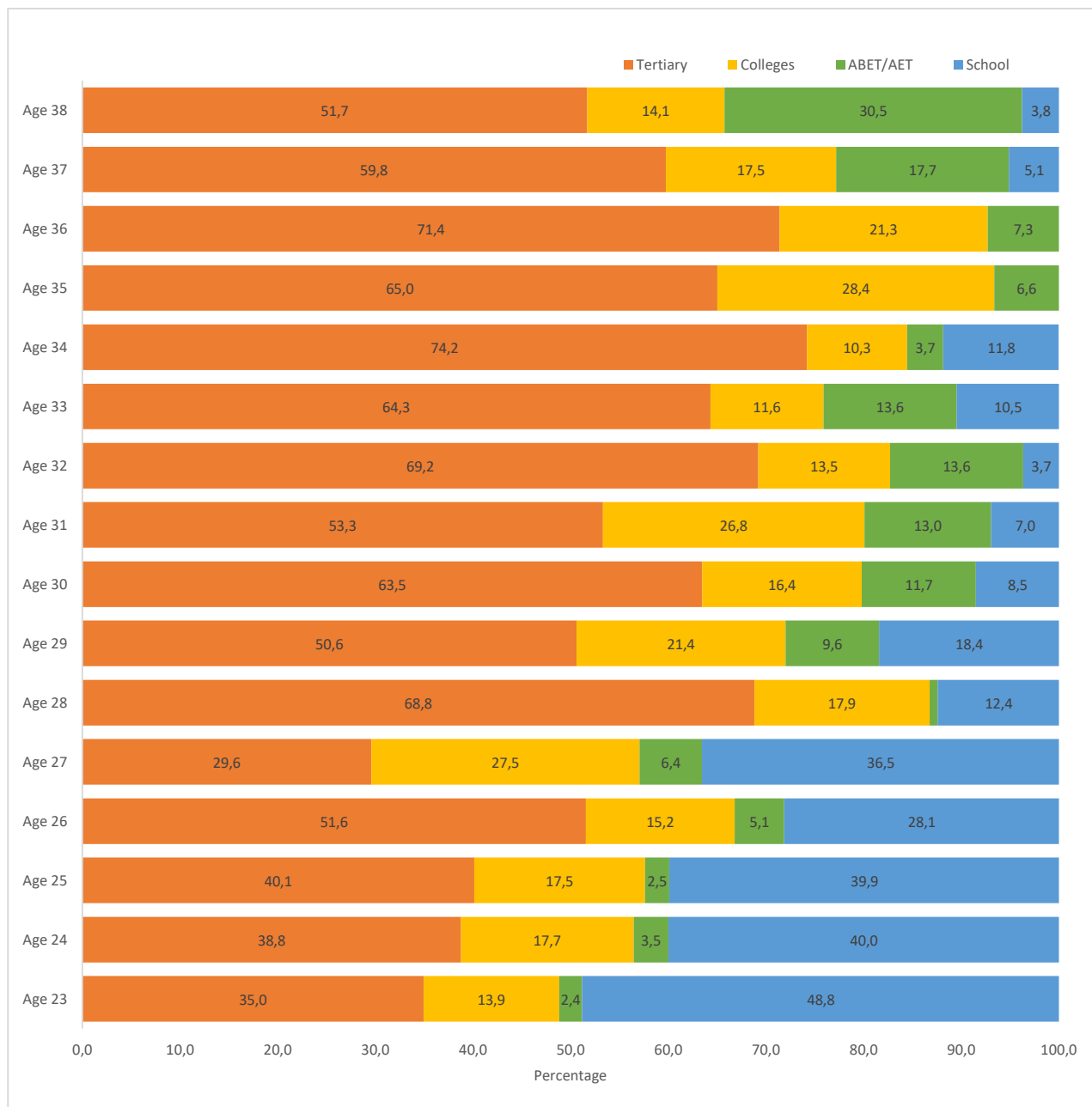
Figure 2.2: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X adults aged 23–38 years by province, 2002



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

The highest attendance rate in tertiary education amongst Generation X adults was observed in Gauteng (64,4%), followed by Western Cape (54,4%) and Northern Cape (54,0%). Eastern Cape (57,5%), Limpopo (52,9%), Kwazulu-Natal (42,6%) and Mpumalanga (40,7%) had the highest percentage of adults attending colleges. Free State and North West had the highest percentage of adults attending ABET/AET (17,4% and 16,1%, respectively). The percentage of adults who attended schools was relatively high in Northern Cape at 25,1%, Gauteng at 22,1% and Mpumalanga at 20,0% and very low in Eastern Cape at 9,0%.

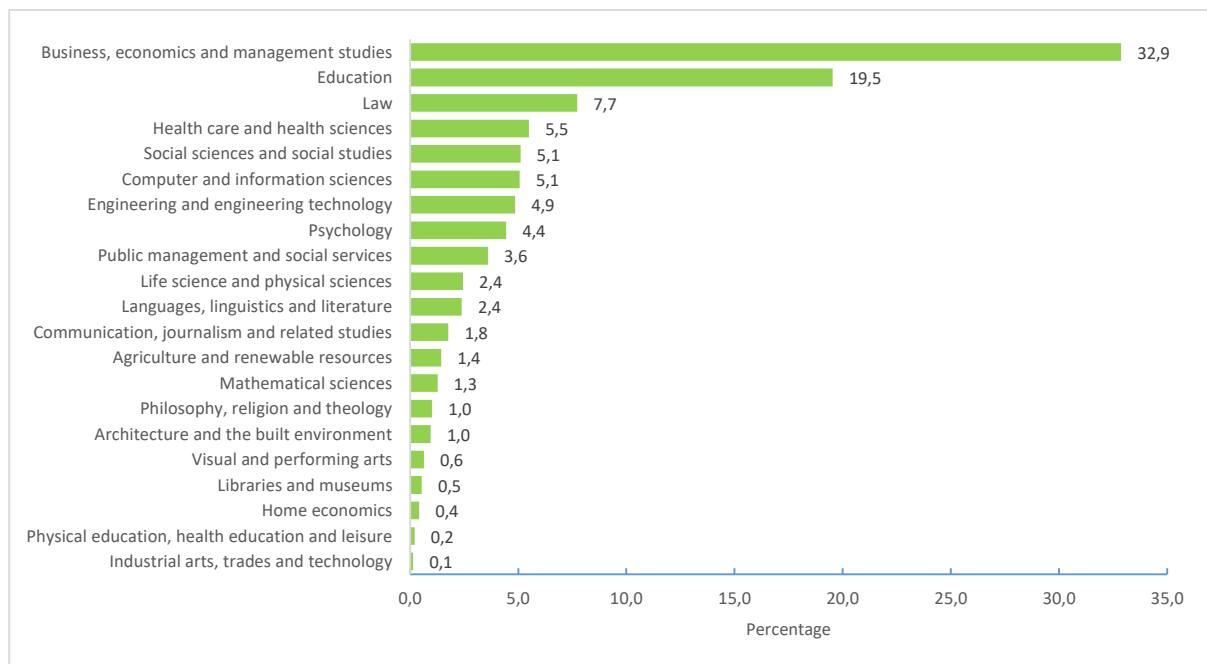
Figure 2.3: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X individuals aged 23–38 years by age, 2002



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

A breakdown of attendance of education institutions by age shows that for the ages 28 years and above, over half of the individuals attending educational institutions were attending tertiary institutions. The highest percentage of Generation X individuals participating at tertiary institutions (74,2%) was among 34-year-olds, followed closely by 36-year-olds (71,4%). These findings also show that attendance at an ABET or AET institutions increased with age. Attendance rates in school were the highest among those aged 23 to 27 years. There was a noticeable representation of learners who were older than the ideal graduation age and who were still attending school.

Figure 2.4: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X adults aged 23–38 years by fields of study, 2002

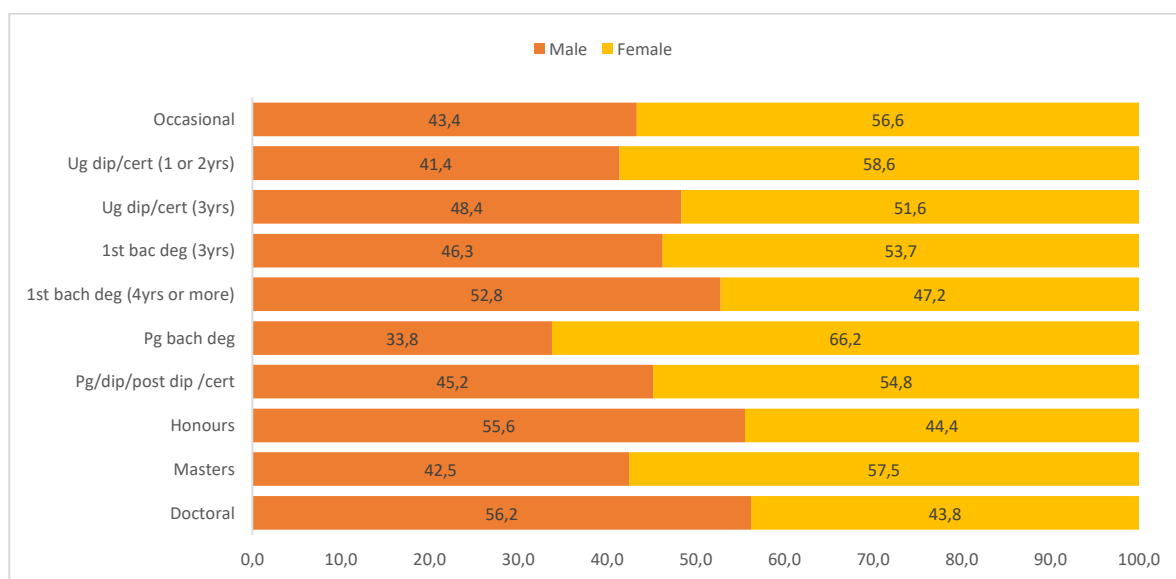


Source:

Department of Higher Education 2002

Figure 2.4 shows university attendance figures of Generation X adults aged 23–38 by the fields of education in 2002. The highest percentage of Generation X individuals were engaged in business, economics and management studies (32,9%), followed by education (19,5%) and law (7,7%). Engineering and mathematics only have a combined enrolment rate close to 6,0%.

Figure 2.5: Attendance of educational institutions of Generation X adults' by type of qualification and gender, 2002



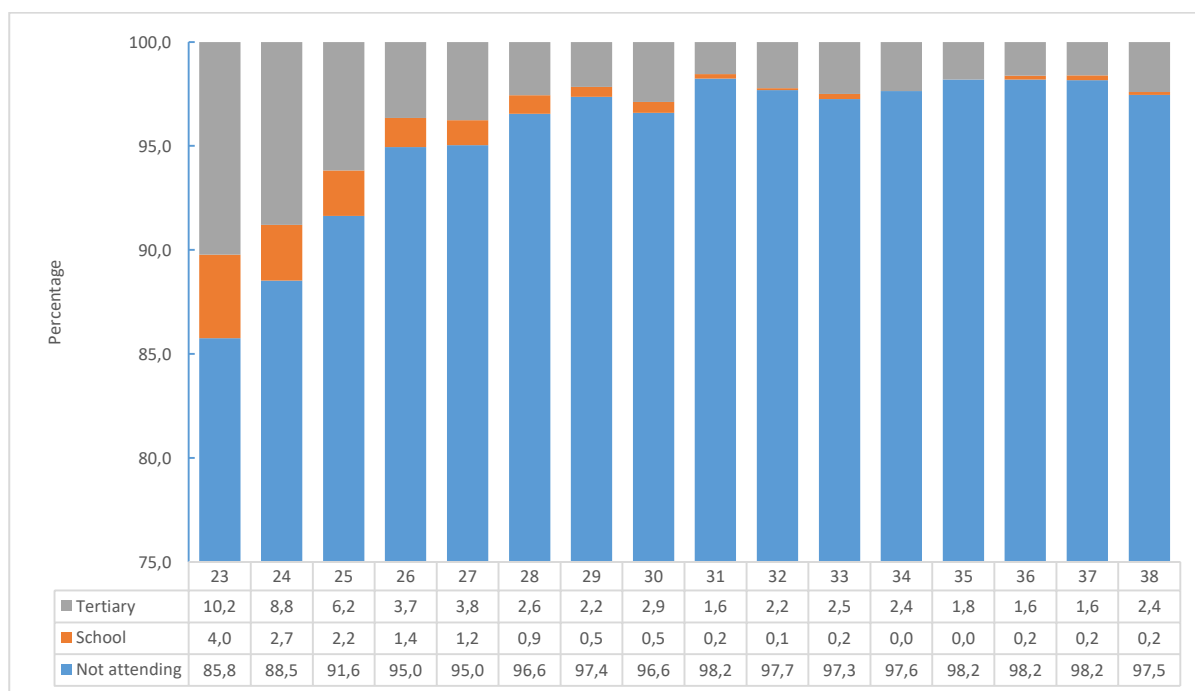
Source: Department of Higher Education 2002

Figure 2.5 shows the gender disparities that exist amongst Generation X students enrolled for various types of qualification. In the most type of qualification, the gender gap was large except for undergraduate diploma or certificate (3 years) where the gender gap was relatively narrow. Furthermore, in 2002, Generation X females were more likely to further their studies towards a post bachelor degree (66,2%) and master's degree (57,5%) as compared to males (42,5% and 33,8%, respectively). At the same time, a considerable percentage of male students were studying towards honours and doctoral degree (55,6% and 56,2%, respectively) during the same period.

2.2 Attendance of educational institutions among Millennials adults aged 23–38 in 2018

The Millennials generation comprised mostly children during the democratic change in South Africa; some were not even born at the time of the transition. Successive governments in South Africa have prioritised education as a trajectory for accelerating the implementation of growth and developmental programmes. Millennials were expected to have benefited even more from broader availability of better quality education with the continuing policy reforms and budget adjustments to allow fair access to education and training throughout the country. The section below outlines educational participation of this generation in 2018.

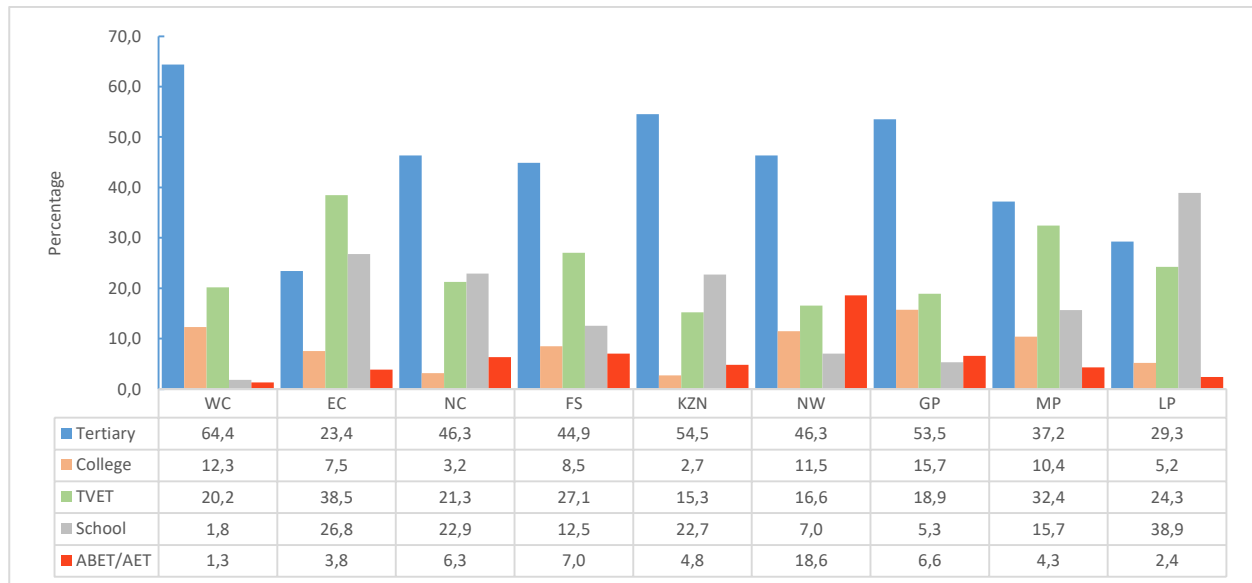
Figure 2.6: Attendance of educational institutions among Millennials aged 23–38 years by age, 2018



Source: Stats SA, GHS 2002

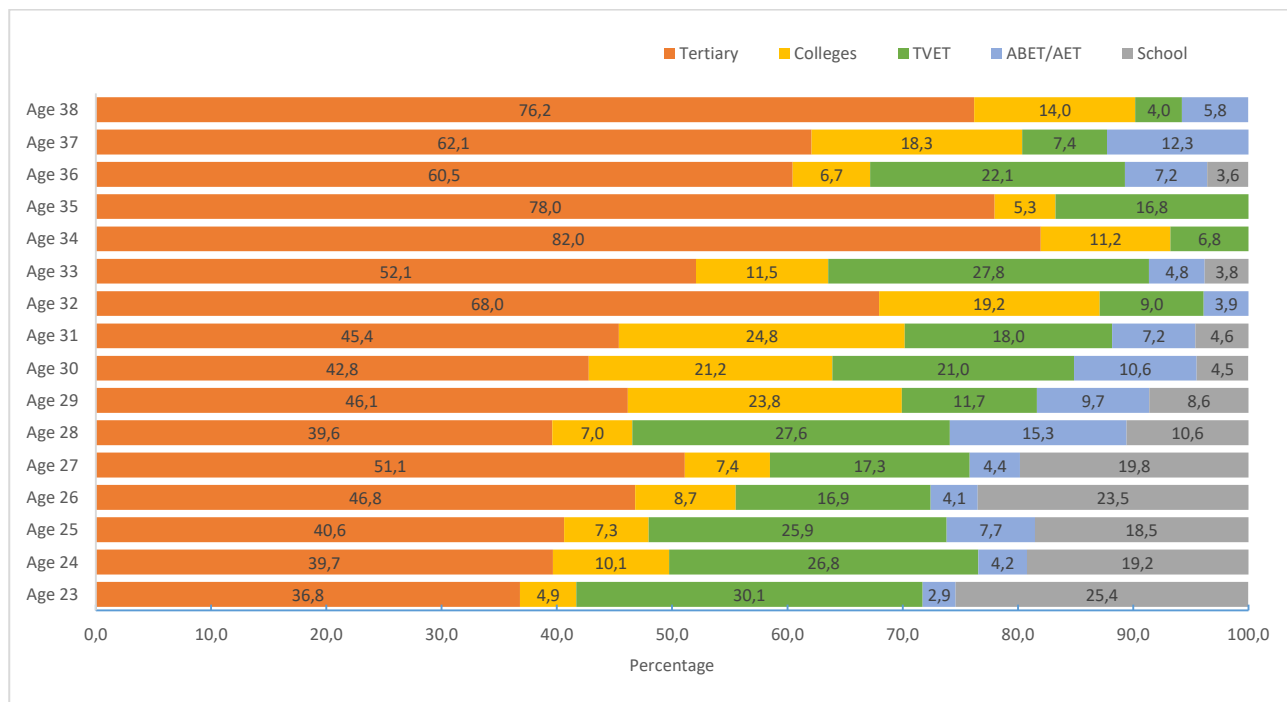
Figure 2.6 shows attendance of an educational institution by Millennials in 2018. Among 23 year olds, eight out of ten (85,8%) were not attending any educational institutions, while 10,2% of Millennials in the same age group were attending a tertiary educational institution and 4,0% were attending school.

Figure 2.7: Attendance of educational institutions among Millennials aged 23–38 years by province, 2018



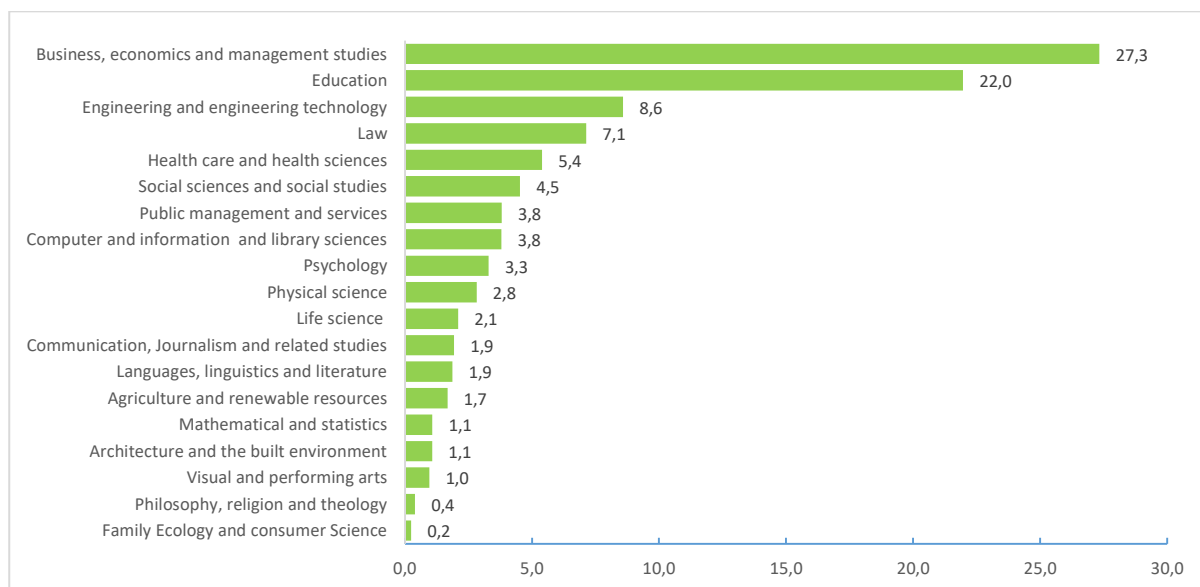
Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

The highest attendance rate in tertiary education amongst Millennials was observed in Western Cape (64,4%) followed, by KwaZulu-Natal (54,5%) and Gauteng (53,5%). Eastern Cape (38,5%) and Mpumalanga (32,4%) had the highest percentage of Millennials attending TVET colleges. On the other hand, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Eastern Cape had the lowest percentage of Millennials attending tertiary education institutions (37,2%, 29,3% and 23,4%, respectively). Notably, North West had the highest percentage of Millennials attending ABET/AET institutions (18,6%), while Limpopo had the highest percentage of Millennials attending schools (38,9%).

Figure 2.8: Attendance of educational institutions among Millennials aged 23–38 years by age, 2018

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

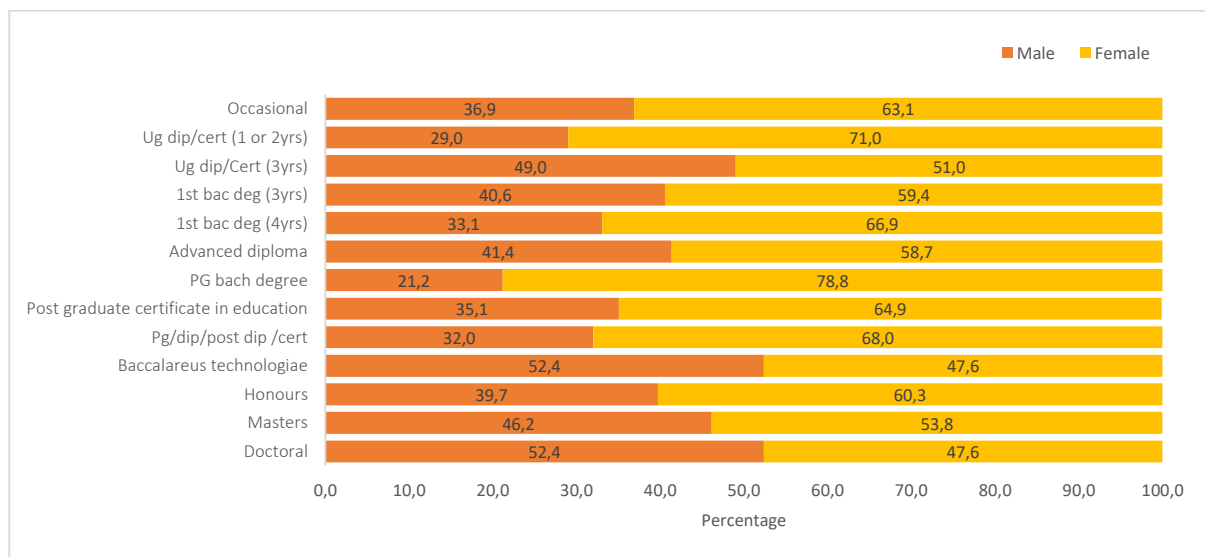
Figure 2.8 shows attendance of educational institutions by Millennials aged 23–38 in 2018. Amongst young individuals aged 23 years, a quarter (25,4%) were attending school while three out of ten (30,1%) were attending TVET colleges and 36,8% were attending tertiary educational institutions. Furthermore, the graph shows that attendance of tertiary educational institutions increased with age with a 34,4 percentage increase between 23-year-olds and 38-year-olds. Attendance of colleges varied among the age groups with the highest attendance observed among 29–31 year-olds.

Figure 2.9: Millennials aged 23–38 attending university by fields of study, 2018

Source: Department of Higher Education 2018

Figure 2.9 shows that Millennials and Generation X shared similar enrolment percentages for the various fields of study. Like their Generation X counterparts in 2002, Millennials were mostly engaged in business, economics and management studies (27,3%), followed by education (22,0%). An improvement in enrolment in engineering at 8,6% was observed among Millennials with a close to four percentage points increase as compared to enrolment among individuals in Generation X. Family ecology ,philosophy, religion and theology, and visual and performing arts had the lowest percentage of enrolment among Millennials.

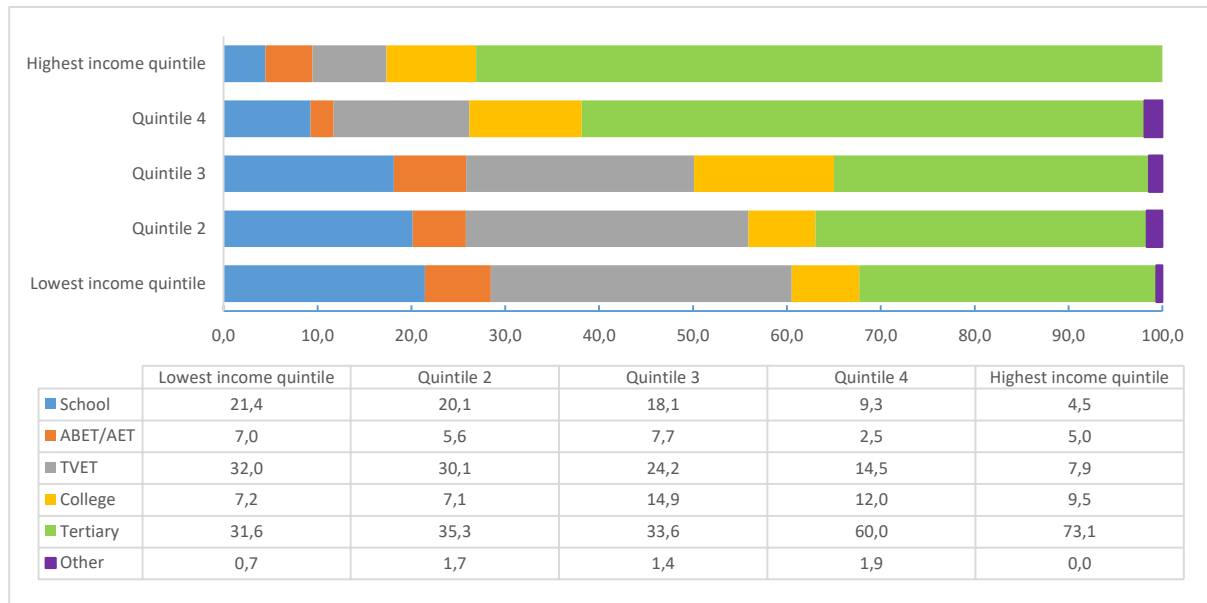
Figure 2.10: Millennials aged 23–38 attending university by type of qualifications and gender, 2018



Source: Department of Higher Education 2018

For 11 of the 13 qualification types shown in the above graph, the enrolment figures for female Millennials surpassed those of males. Males had a slightly higher enrolment percentage for doctoral degree (52,4%) and B-Tech (52,4%). A disparity in the percentage of males and females in enrolment of postgraduate qualifications can be seen, for example, 60,3% females enrolled for honours studies and 53,8% for a master's degree as compared to males (39,7% and 46,2%, respectively). When comparing Millennial individuals with those of Generation X, we find that in both generations, females were likely to pursue an educational qualification that is beyond NQF level 8 and were even more likely to enrol for first bachelor's degree than their male equals. This shows that females outperform males, and that their participation in higher education had improved significantly.

Figure 2.11: Attendance of educational institutions among Millennials aged 23–38 years by household income quintiles, 2018



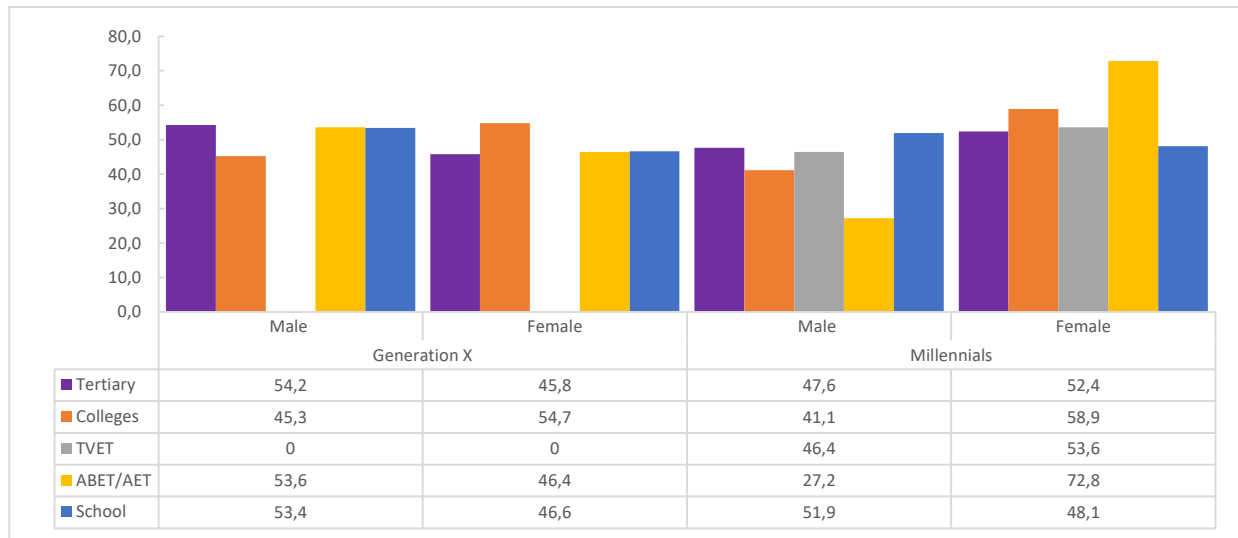
Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Among Millennials in the lowest household income quintile, 21,4% were attending school, while 32,0% were attending a TVET college and 31,6% were attending a tertiary educational institution. By contrast, among Millennials who were in the richer household income quintiles, the majority (60,0% in quintile 4 and 73,1% in quintile 5), were attending a tertiary educational institution. Attendance of school or a TVET college was marginal among Millennials in the richest household income quintile (4,5% and 7,9%, respectively).

2.3 Attendance of educational institutions among adults of Generation X and Millennials aged 23–38 in 2002 and 2018

This section brings together data across cohorts in order to analyse the educational inequalities over time. This section compares the educational paths followed by the two generations and their choices regarding the fields of study.

Figure 2.12: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38 years by gender, 2002 and 2018

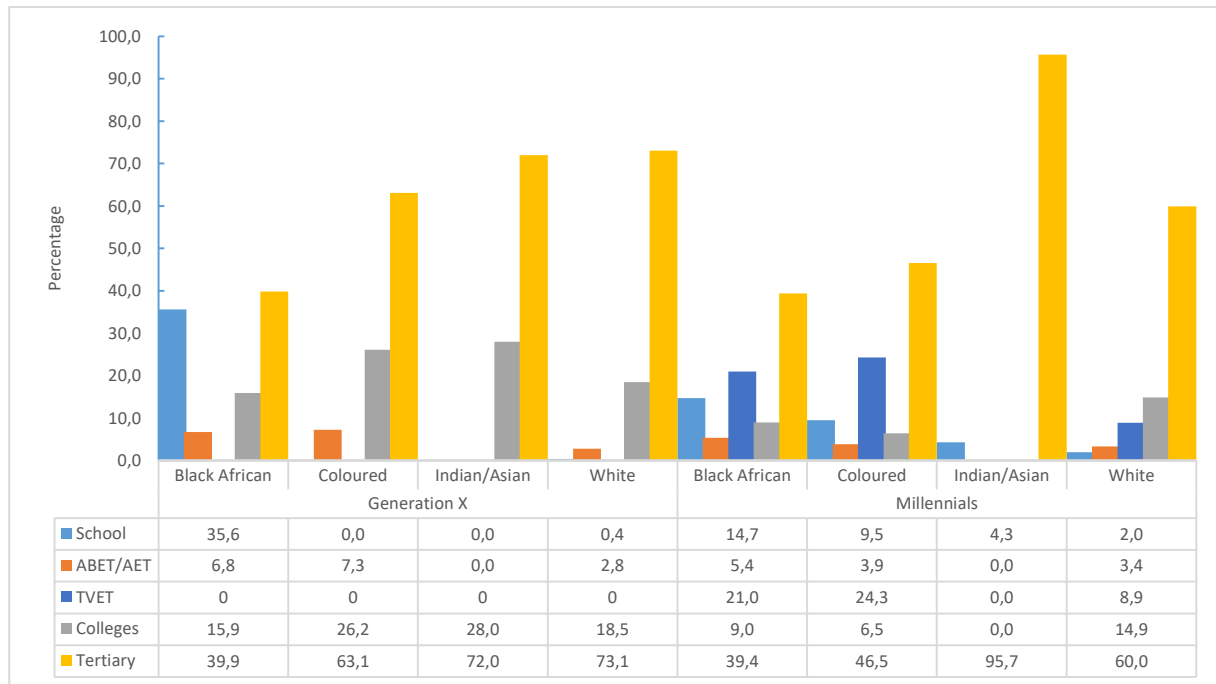


Source: Stats SA GHS 2002 and 2018

Note: TVET colleges were established and operated from 2006, under the authority of the Continuing Education and Training Act 16 of 2006. TVET colleges did not exist during Generation X, hence we find 0 values.

Figure 2.12 presents the breakdown by gender regarding the attendance of educational institutions by Generation X adults and Millennials in 2002 and 2018 in South Africa. The graph reveals that in 2002, attendance of schools was higher amongst Generation X males (53,4%) compared to females (46,6%). In addition, in 2002, attendance of tertiary education institutions were higher amongst Generation X males (54,2%) compared to females (45,8%). However, the pattern reversed for Millennials in 2018, as females (52,4%) were more likely to attend tertiary educational institutions relative to males (47,6%). Furthermore, while the gender gap in attendance of schools and tertiary institutions narrowed for Millennials as compared to Generation X individuals, the gender gap in attendance of ABET/AET and colleges had widened.

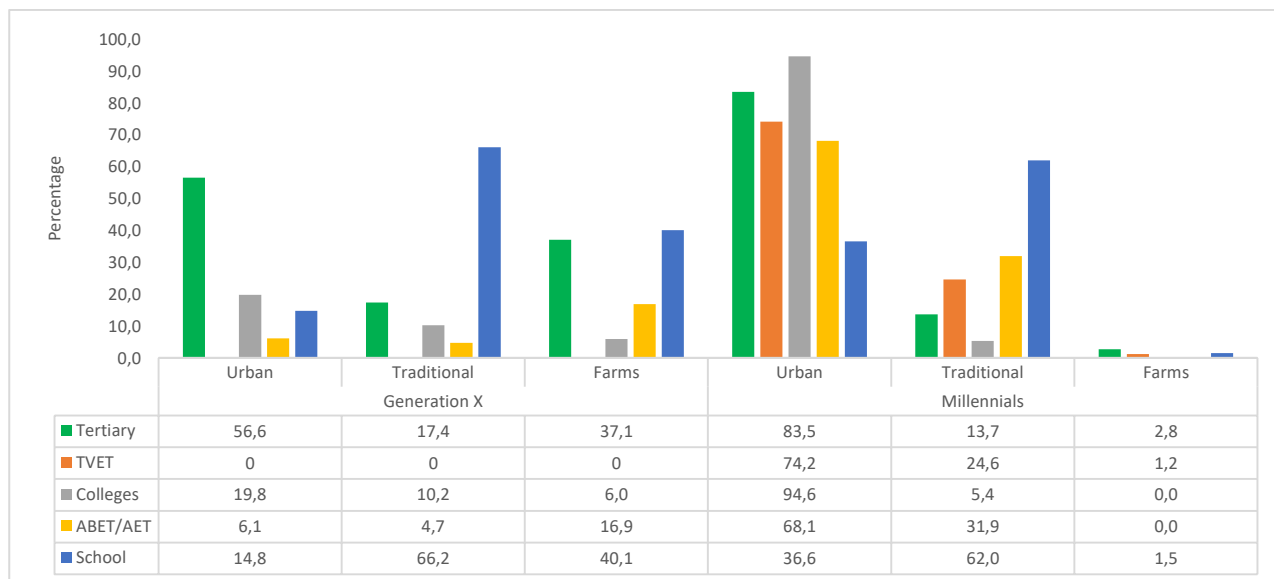
Figure 2.13: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38 years by population group, 2002 and 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002 and 2018

Overcoming the challenges of the legacy of the South African education system includes confronting the lack of access to quality education, especially in township areas, informal settlements and rural areas. This left certain population groups distinctively vulnerable to being denied their rights to early access to education. Hence most students who were attending schools in the 23–38 year age cohort for both Generation X and Millennials were black Africans or coloureds, while other population groups in the same age cohorts were attending colleges and universities. Between Generation X and Millennials, the attendance rate for tertiary institutions in the age group 23–38 years declined noticeably for coloureds (from 63,1% to 46,5%), whites (from 73,1% to 60,0%) and black Africans (from 39,9% to 39,4%), whilst tertiary education attendance improved for Indians/Asians from 72,0% for Generation X adults to 95,7% for Millennials.

Figure 2.14: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38 years by geography type, 2002 and 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002 and 2018

The school attendance rates were much higher in traditional and farm areas among both Generation X individuals in 2002 and Millennials in 2018, compared to urban areas. This shows that, in 2002, individuals from Generation X who lived in traditional and farm areas were either starting school in their older years or it took them a little bit longer to complete school compared to Generation X individuals in urban areas. Furthermore, overall, school attendance by Millennials had declined compared to Generation X individuals. In 2002, among individuals aged 23–38 residing in traditional areas, close to 66% were still attending schools and this percentage remained almost unchanged in 2018 (62,0%). Similarly, close to 40% in farm areas and close to 15% in urban areas were still attending schools in 2002, while the same was observed for close to 1,5% in farm areas and 36,6% in urban areas in 2018.

Close to 57% of individuals aged 23–38 among Generation X individuals living in urban areas, were attending a tertiary educational institution, whilst the same was true for 83,5% of Millennials living in urban areas.

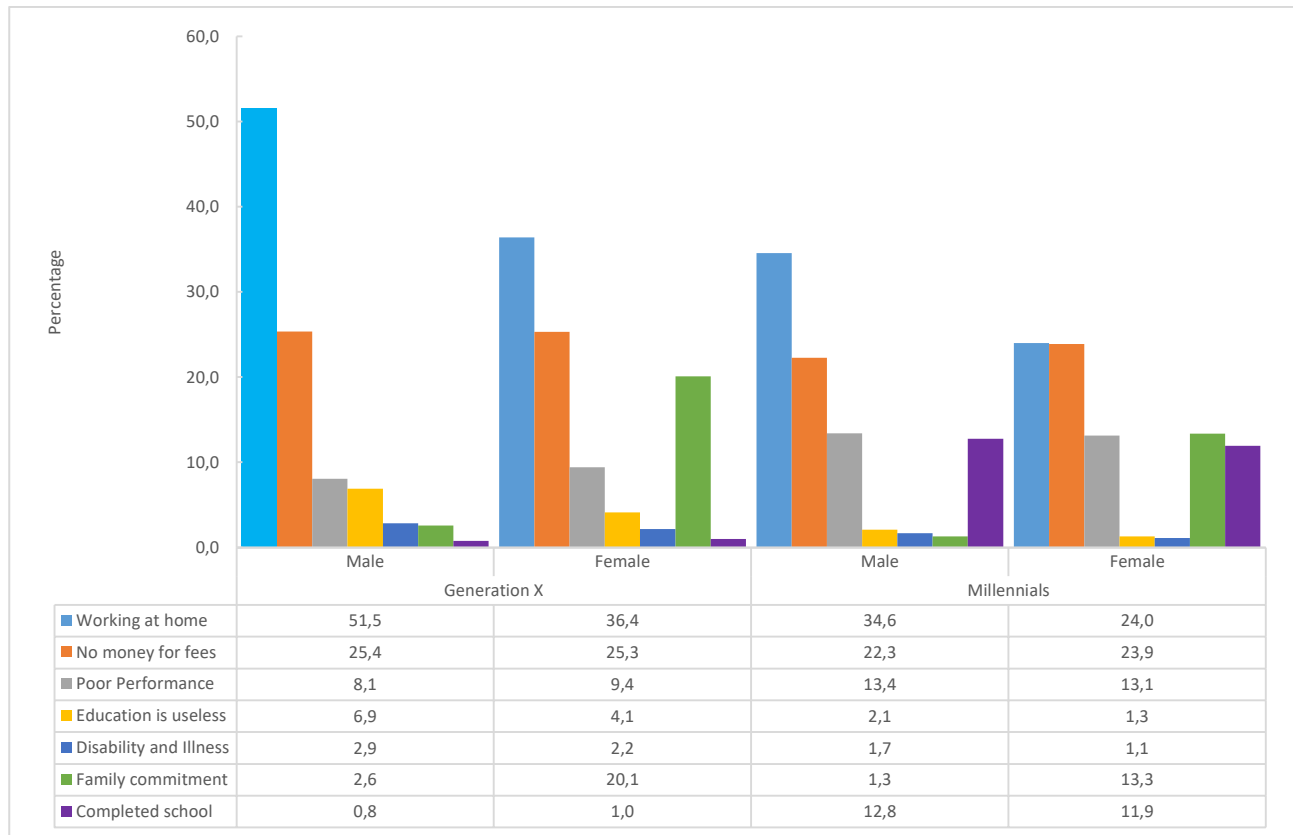
Table 2.1: Fields of study among Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38 by population group, 2002 and 2018

CESM Category	Generation X				Millennials			
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	African	Coloured	Indian	White
Agriculture and renewable resources	1,5	0,6	0,3	1,9	2,5	0,8	0,5	2,8
Architecture and the built environment	0,8	0,9	0,6	1,5	1,3	1,5	2,1	2,3
Visual and performing arts	0,4	0,5	0,2	1,4	1,6	2,5	1,2	2,8
Business, economics and management studies	29,2	41,8	45,7	36,4	26,7	20,4	28,7	23,0
Communication, journalism and related studies	2,0	1,4	1,1	1,4	2,5	2,0	0,8	1,2
Computer and information and library sciences	2,8	4,0	5,7	5,7	4,6	3,9	4,5	3,4
Education	27,3	9,1	5,6	5,8	18,2	20,7	13,8	16,5
Engineering and engineering technology	4,2	4,4	4,7	5,8	8,2	5,7	11,4	10,6
Health care and health sciences	4,3	5,8	9,6	7,5	4,7	8,9	12,2	9,8
Home economics	0,5	0,6	0,2	0,3	0,4	0,3	0,3	0,6
Languages, linguistics and literature	2,4	2,1	1,4	2,7	2,1	4,4	1,1	2,1
Law	6,1	9,8	8,7	9,4	6,4	7,3	8,0	6,1
Life sciences and physical sciences	2,1	2,5	2,0	3,4	7,1	6,8	7,6	8,3
Physical education, health education and leisure	0,7	0,4	0,2	1,1	6,0	3,4	3,7	5,3
Mathematical sciences	3,8	2,5	2,7	3,7	1,7	1,4	1,7	1,7
Philosophy, religion and theology	1,9	2,5	1,7	3,5	0,4	1,3	0,3	0,8
Psychology	5,5	7,1	5,9	6,8	2,5	5,0	3,3	4,7
Public admin, and social services	7,1	5,8	3,3	3,1	3,8	1,1	0,7	0,7
Social sciences and social studies	8,9	7,3	6,6	6,8	5,4	5,9	2,0	2,6

Source: Department of Higher Education 2002 and 2018

Table 2.1 shows the field of study for both Generation X and Millennials who attended universities in 2002 and 2018, respectively. Education and business, economics and management studies were the two top major fields of study for all population groups in both generations. Furthermore, the racial gap in enrolment in engineering and health sciences still remained in 2018, with a lower percentage of black African and coloured Millennials enrolled in these fields of study. Though substantial increases in enrolment at universities were observed from 2002 until 2018, enrolment in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields is lower for Millennials compared to Generation X individuals.

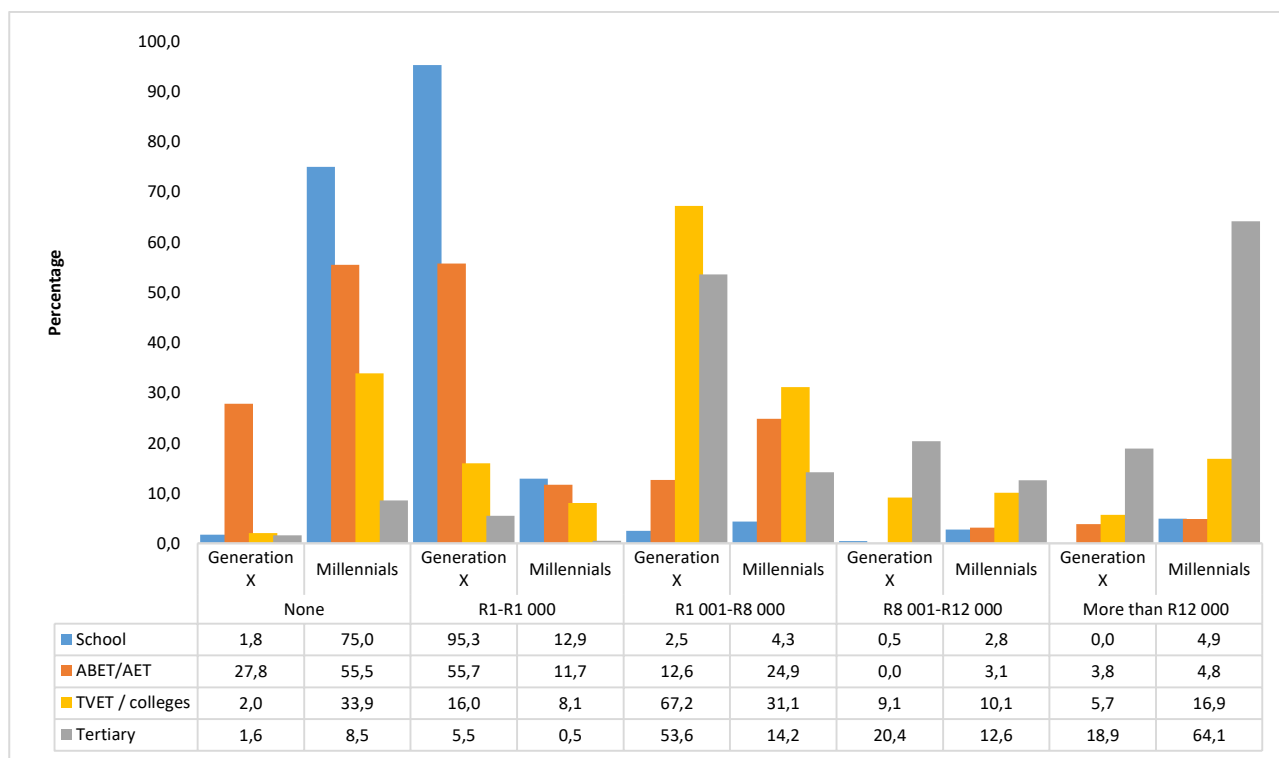
Figure 2.15: Main reasons for not attending educational institution among Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38 by gender, 2002 and 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002 and 2018

For both males and females in both generations, the main reason provided for not attending an educational institution was working at home or in businesses. However, this reason was less pronounced for Millennials of both genders compared to Generation X adults (less by 16,9 percentage points for males and less by 12,4 percentage points for females). The economic reason “no money for fees” was the second main reason provided for non-attendance by both generations. Family commitment was the third main reason among 20,1% female adults of Generation X and 13,3 % of female Millennials for not attending educational institution. Poor performance was the third main reason provided by males in both generations.

Figure 2.16: Attendance of educational institutions among Generation X and Millennials aged 23–38 years by amount of tuition fees paid, 2002 and 2018



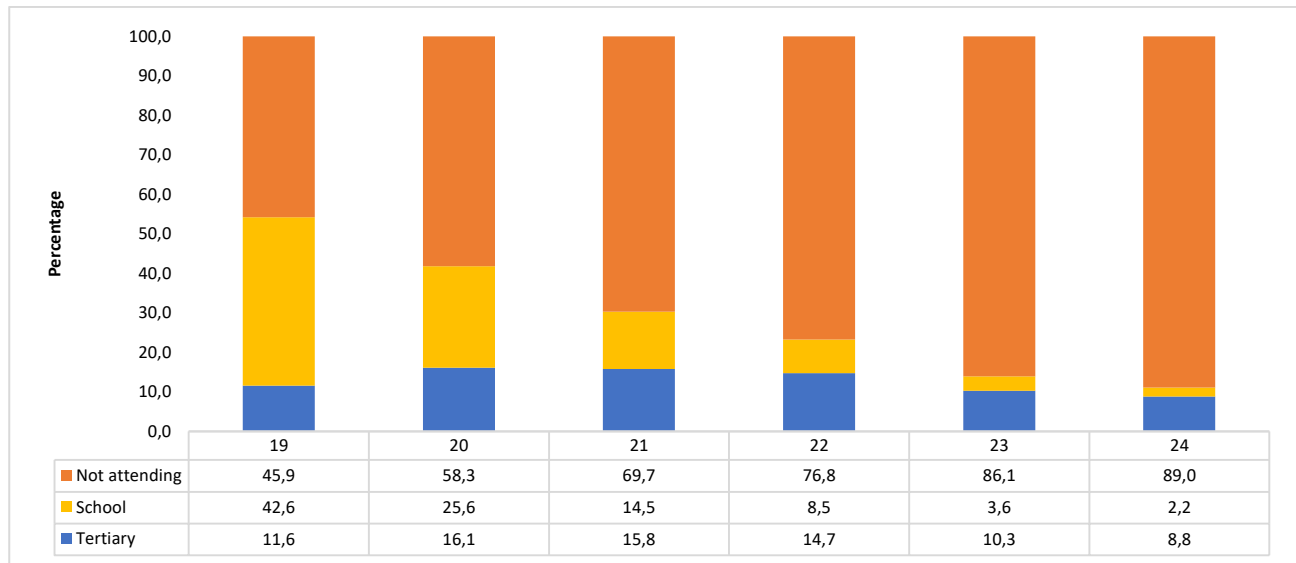
Source: Stats SA GHS 2002 and 2018

Figure 2.16 illustrates the monthly fees paid by individuals in both generations to be able to attend an educational institution. The graph also shows the change in cost as the type of educational institutions differ. Interestingly, the majority of Millennials (75,0%) were not paying school fees, as compared to 1,8% among Generation X individuals who paid no school fees. The majority of Generation X individuals (95,3%) reported paying R1–R1 000 for attending school, whereas 53,6% reported paying R1 001–R8 000 while attending a tertiary educational institution and 67,2% reported paying the same amount for attending TVET colleges. The majority of Millennials (64,1%) who reported paying more than R12 000 were attending a tertiary educational institution.

2.4 Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 in 2018

The South African Constitution guarantees the rights to basic education. Through the South African Schools Act of 1996, the national Department of Education has made educational attendance compulsory for all children aged seven to 15 (or until the completion of Grade 9). South Africa had met the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) targets related to universal access to education, while access to tertiary education was still elusive to many young South Africans. Government is struggling to make final pronouncement on “fully subsidised free higher education and training for poor and working class South Africans” since implementation of such funding model would be unaffordable given the rising needs of tertiary education. The Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 who are presented in this section are a relatively small cohort compared to Generation X and Millennial adults; their educational need created the widening gap between expectations and what can be provided by public funding.

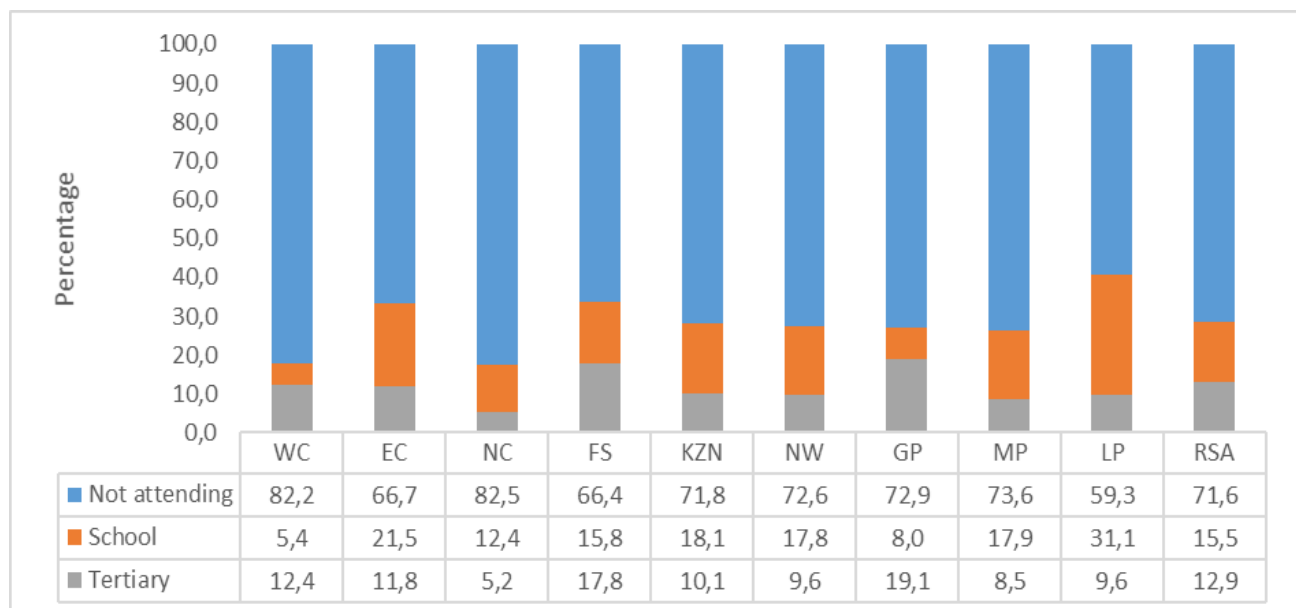
Figure 2.17: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by age, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

The attendance rate of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials declined with age. Close to 86% at age 23 and 89% at age 24 reported that they did not attend any educational institution. Attendance of a school was the highest among youth aged 19, 20 and 21 (42,6%, 25,6% and 14,5%, respectively).

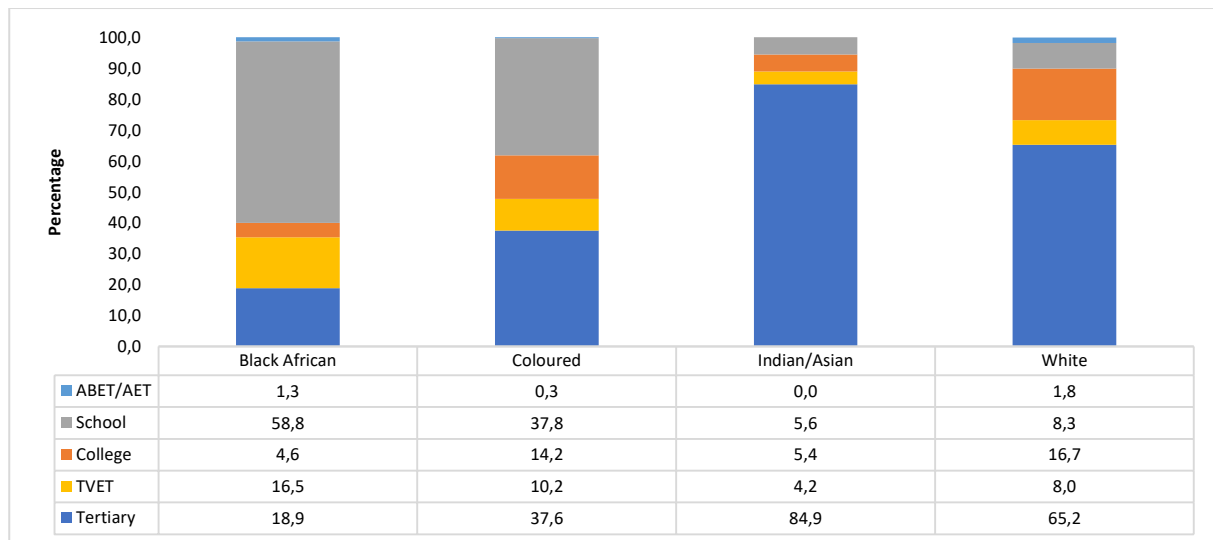
Figure 2.18: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19-24 years by province, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

The data shows a high percentage of youth aged 19–24 were not attending any educational institution. Limpopo, Free State and Eastern Cape (59,3%, 66,4% and 66,7%, respectively) had the lowest percentage of youth not attending any educational institution compared to the national average (71,6%), whilst Northern Cape and Western Cape had the highest percentage of youth not attending any educational institution (82,5% and 82,2%). Attendance of a tertiary educational institution was the highest in Gauteng (19,1%), followed by Free State (17,8%).

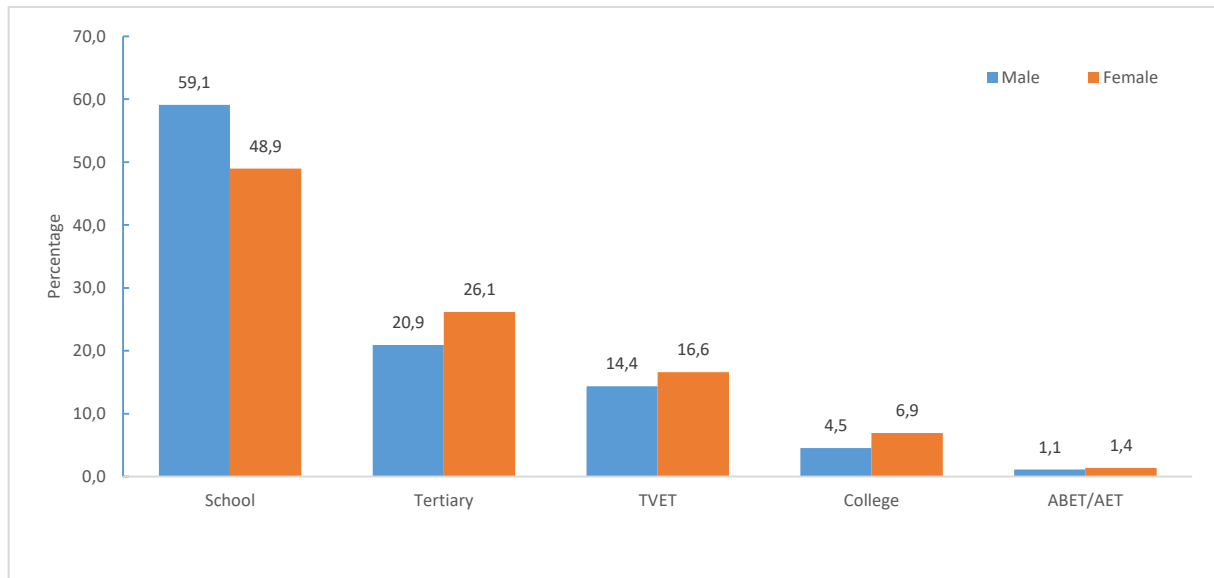
Figure 2.19: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by population group, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 2.19 shows the disproportion in access to education amongst the various population groups. Whilst the majority (84,9%) of Indians/Asians and a large percentage (65,2%) of the white population aged 19–24 years were attending a tertiary educational institution, only 18,9% of the black African and 37,6% of the coloured population were attending a tertiary educational institution. The largest percentage (58,8%) of black African youth aged 19–24 years were attending school.

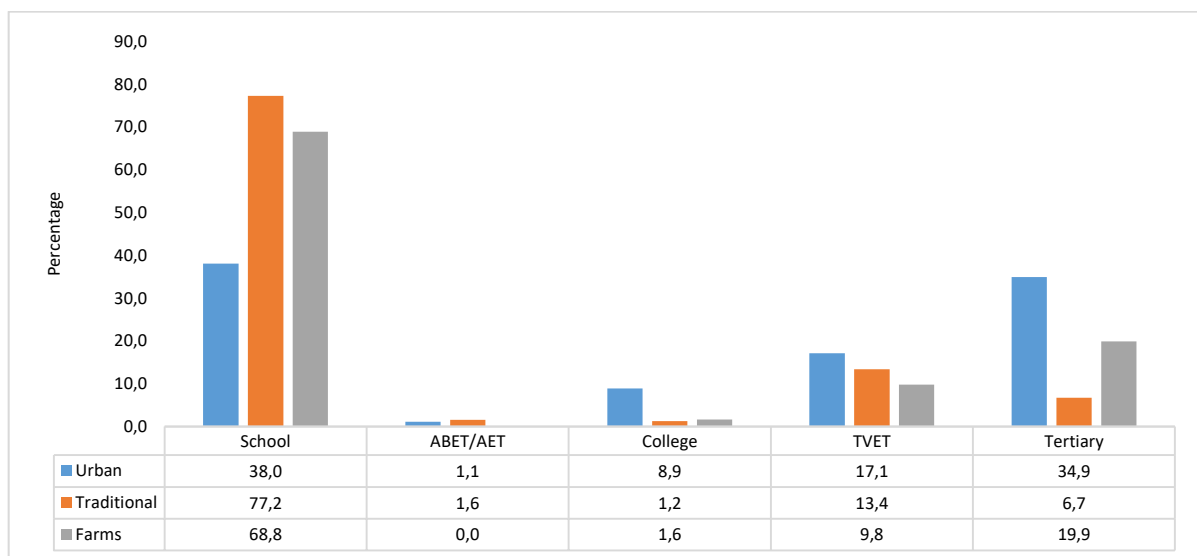
Figure 2.20: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by gender, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Similarly to Millennials, the gender gap in educational participation remains large among Born-free Millennials. A larger percentage of females (26,1%) aged 19–24 years, as compared to males (20,9%) were attending tertiary institutions. The same was true for TVET educational institutions, where 16,6% of females compared to 14,4% of males were attending these institutions. The gender gap was the widest among those who were attending school (10,2% percentage points). Almost six in ten (59,1%) male Born-free Millennials were still attending school.

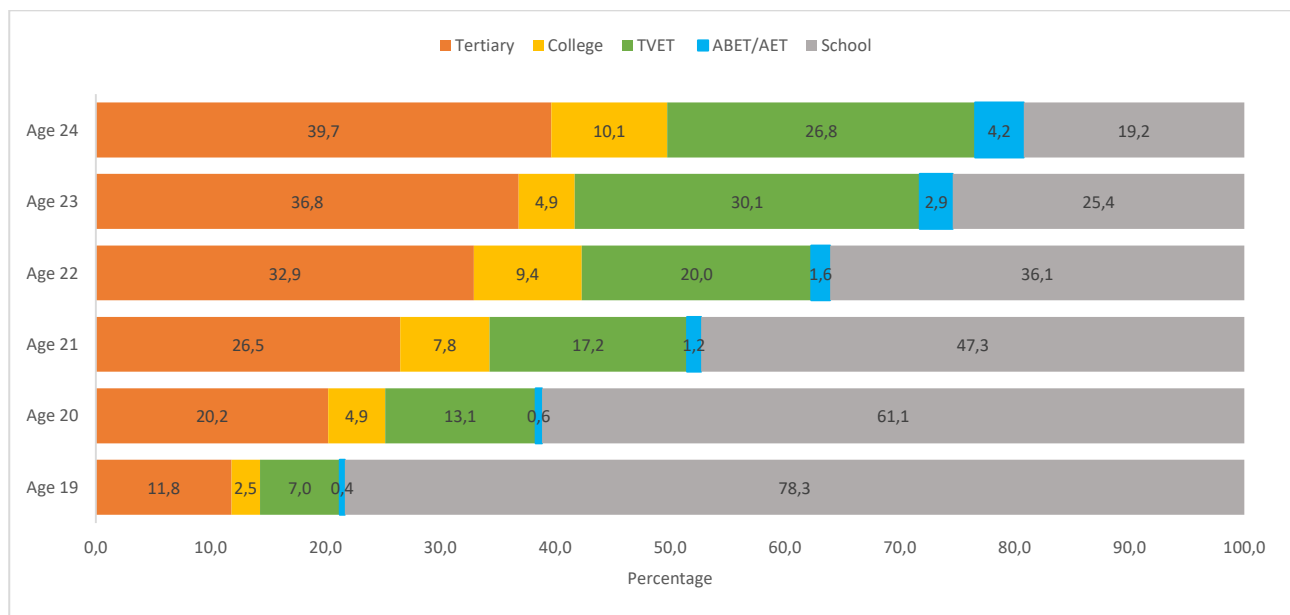
Figure 2.21: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19-24 years by geography type, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Born-free Millennials from urban areas were more likely to attend a tertiary institution than their peers from farm and traditional areas. Of the 19–24 year olds in urban areas, 34,9% were at a tertiary institution, compared to 19,9% in farm areas and 6,7% in traditional areas. The majority of youth in this age group living in traditional areas (77,2%) and in farm areas (68,8%) were still attending school.

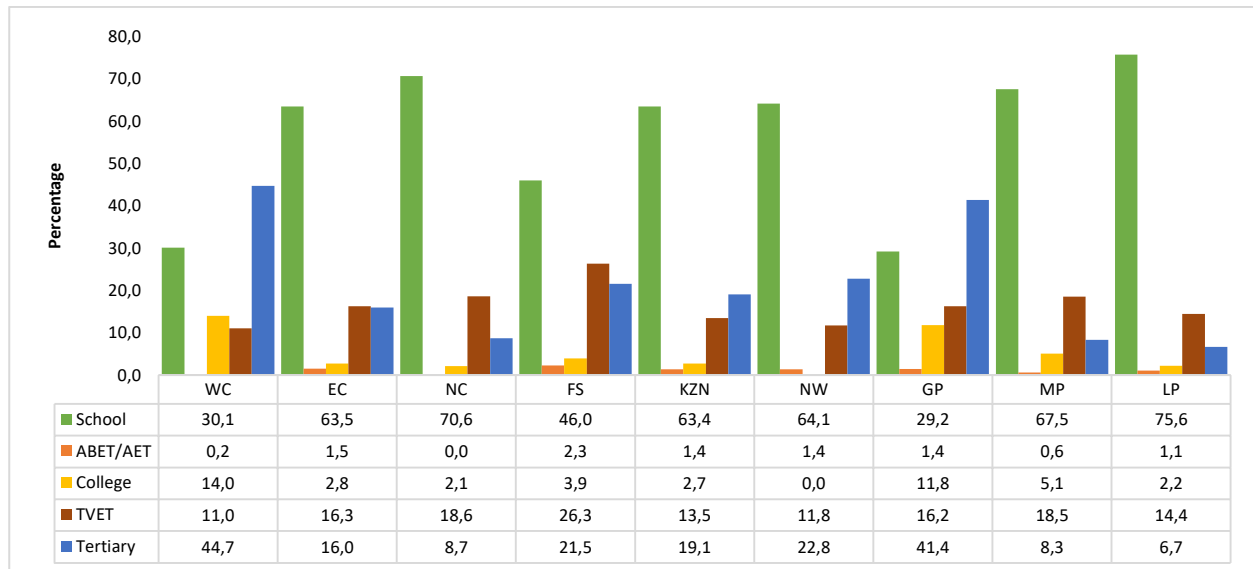
Figure 2.22: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by age, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

A notable percentage of learners, remained in school education long after they should have exited those institutions. According to Figure 2.22, close to 78% of 19 year olds were attending school, whilst close to 12% were attending a tertiary educational institution. However, among the oldest Born-free Millennials aged 24 years old, as many as 19,2% were still attending school while close to 40% were attending a tertiary educational institution.

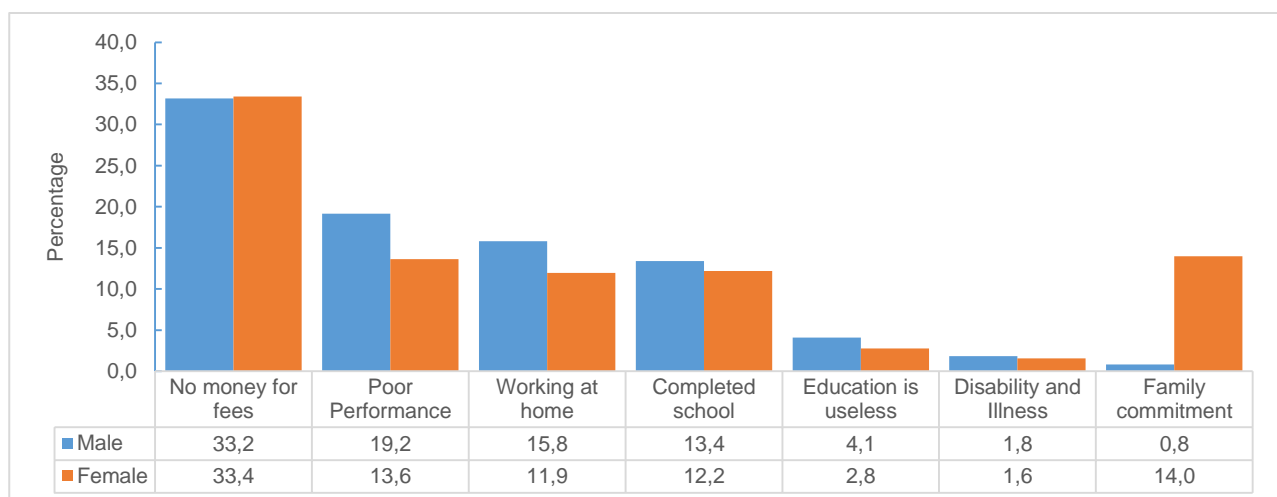
Figure 2.23: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by province, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Similar to the other generations, the largest percentage of 19–24 year olds in the Born-free generation who were attending a tertiary educational institution resided in the Western Cape (44,7%) and Gauteng (41,4%). In Limpopo and in Mpumalanga, only 6,7% and 8,3%, respectively of their counterparts were enrolled at a tertiary educational institution. The majority of the youth in this age group residing in Limpopo (75,6%) and the Northern Cape (70,6%) were still attending school.

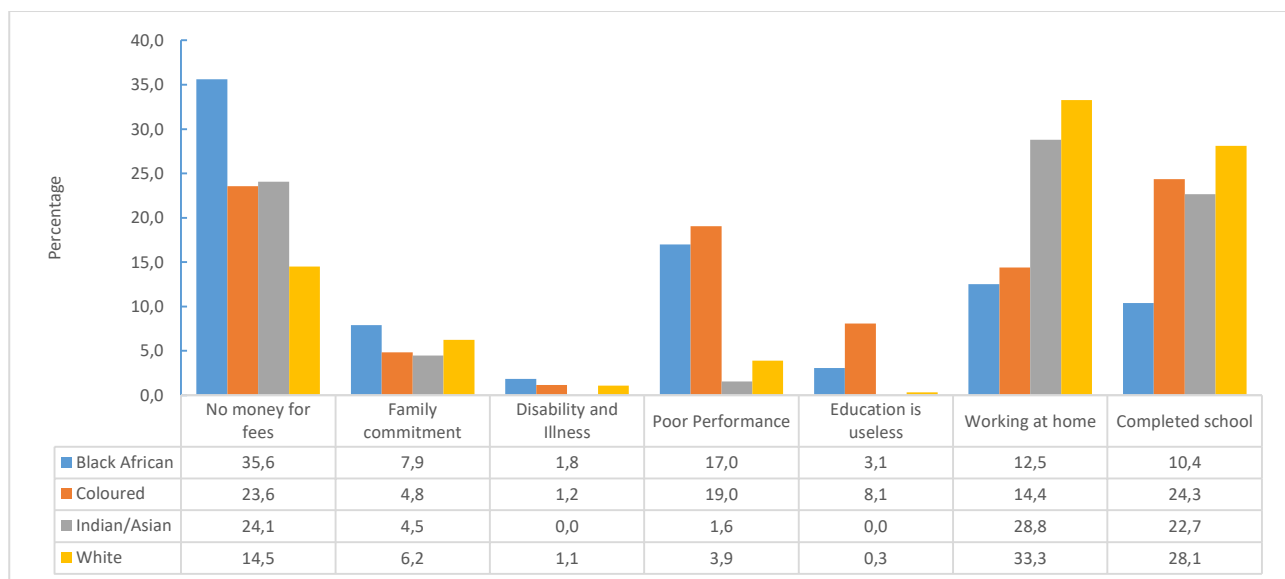
Figure 2.24: Main reason for non-attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by gender, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

The main reason provided for non-attendance of an educational institution for 19–24 year olds was that they did not have the financial means to attend, while this was given as a second reason for both Generation X and Millennials. Whilst 14% of females did not attend because of family commitments only 0,8% males provided the same reason. Poor performance ranked higher amongst males (19,2%) than females (13,6%) as a reason for non-attendance. This reason was also prominent among Born-free Millennial males compared to Generation X and Millennial males.

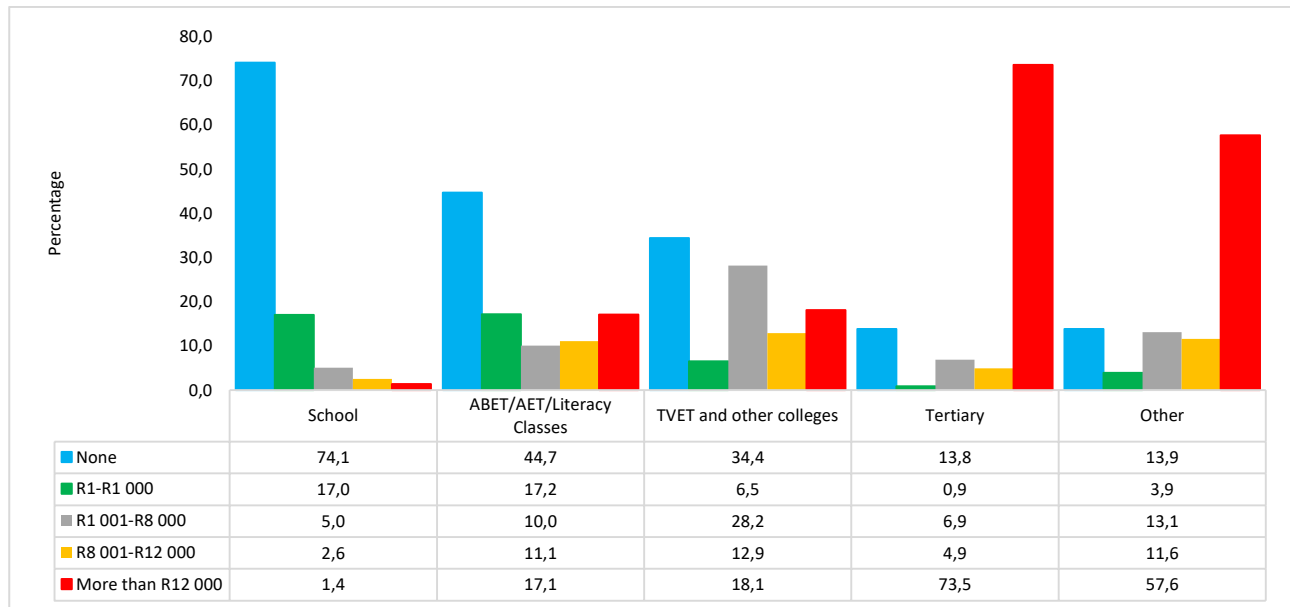
Figure 2.25: Main reason for non-attendance of educational institutions of Born-free Millennials aged 19-24 years by population group, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

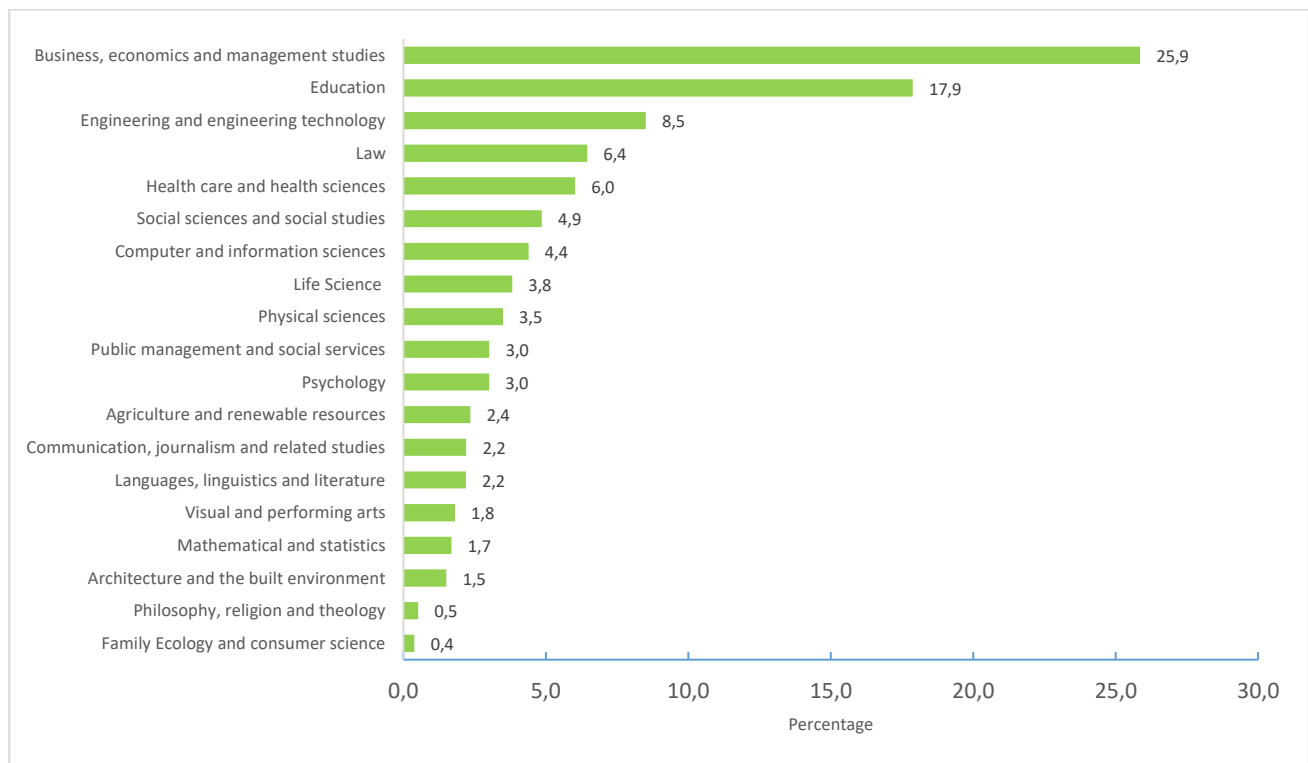
Stark differences exist for reasons for non-attendance amongst the population groups, as shown in Figure 2.25. Whilst 35,6% of black Africans aged 19–24 years cited financial reasons for not being able to attend an educational institution, this was the reason for only 14,5% of white youth. Poor performance was also the most common reason provided by 17,0% of black African youth for non-attendance, as compared to 3,9% of white youth and 1,6% of Indian/Asian youth. However, working at home was a reason for non-attendance among one-third (33,3%) of white and 28,8% of Indian/Asian Born-free Millennials.

Figure 2.26: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by amount of tuition fees paid, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

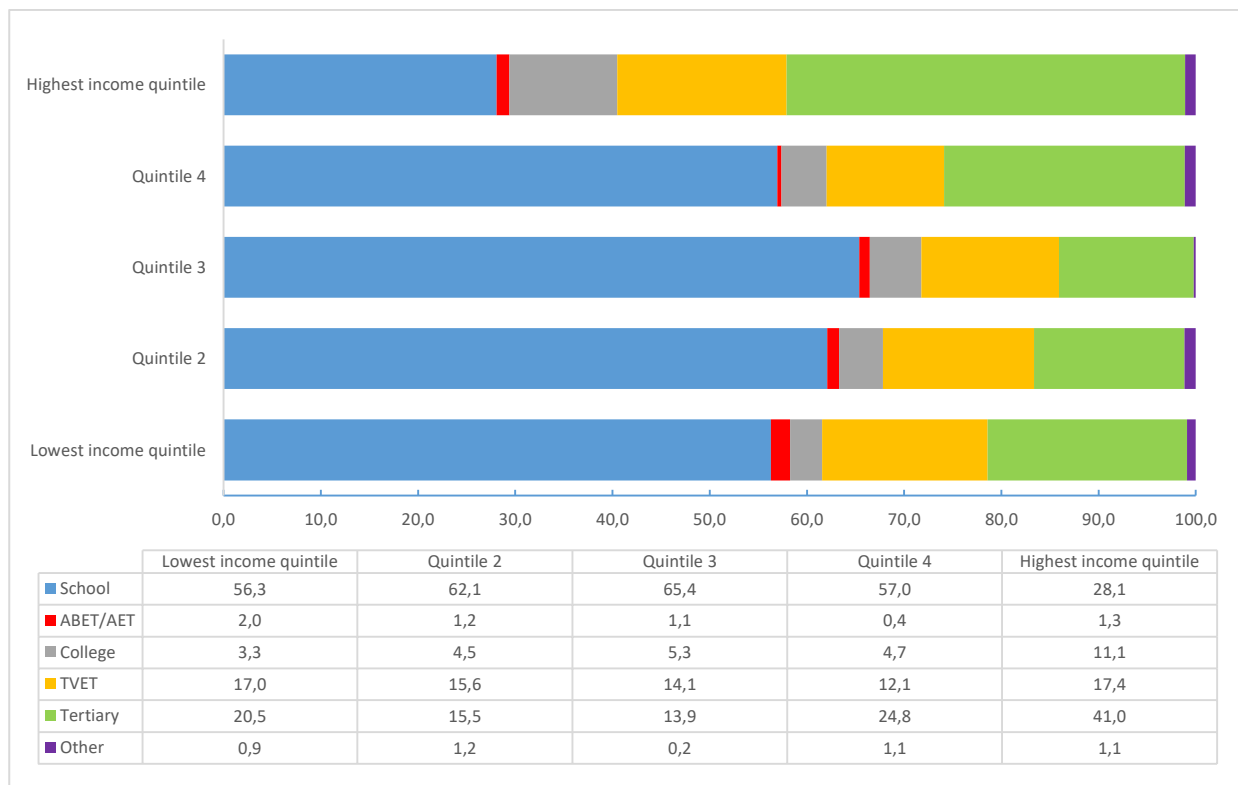
Figure 2.26 shows that the majority (74,1%) of Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years, did not pay tuition fees to attend school. However, 73,5% paid more than R12 000 for tertiary education while 13,8% did not pay any tertiary tuition fees. Compared to Millennials, the Born-free generation incurred proportionately higher costs to be able to access a tertiary education (9,4 percentage points higher).

Figure 2.27: Born-free Millennials aged 19–23 attending university by fields of study, 2018

Source: Department of Higher Education 2018

Similarly to Generation X in 2002 and Millennial counterparts, Born-free Millennials mostly engaged in business, economics and management studies (25,9%), followed by education (17,9%). An improvement in enrolment in engineering at 8,5% was also observed among Born-free Millennials. Philosophy, religion and theology; and family ecology and consumer science, architecture and the build environment and mathematical and statistics had the lowest enrolment percentages among Born-free Millennials, which follows the same pattern as that of Millennials.

Figure 2.28: Attendance of educational institutions among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years by household income quintiles, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 2.28 shows large gaps in household incomes among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 years. As expected, the largest percentage of Born-free Millennials were attending school regardless of their household income quintiles, except for those in the highest household income quintile where the majority were attending a tertiary educational institution (41,0%). Attendance of a tertiary educational institution was also high among Born-free Millennials in household income quintile 4 (24,8%) while close to two in ten (20,5%) Born-free Millennials in the lowest household income quintile attended a tertiary educational institution. Similarly, 11,1% of the Born-free Millennials in the richest household income quintile were attending a college.

2.5 Summary

Generation X adults aged 23–38 years were mostly attending tertiary institutions in 2002, except for adults in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Similarly, most Millennial adults aged 23–38 years in Eastern Cape and Limpopo were in the same situation in 2018 as they were not attending a tertiary educational institution. In 2002, the highest participation in a tertiary education among Generation X adults was observed in Gauteng (64,4%) whereas, in 2018, the highest participation in a tertiary education among Millennials was observed in Western Cape (64,4%), while participation in Gauteng reduced to 53,5%. Participation in school education also changed between 2002 and 2018. Eastern Cape was the province with the lowest percentage of adults aged 23–38 attending school (9,0%) in 2002, and this percentage increased to 26,8% in 2018. Furthermore, the percentage for school attendance reduced by almost half in North West

from 13,5% in 2002 to 7,0% in 2018; and reduced almost fourfold in Gauteng from 22,1% in 2002 to 5,3% in 2018.

Close to 48% of Generation X adult women aged 23–38 had enrolled for a master's degree and 45,1% had enrolled for a doctorate degree. However, Millennial women were better educated than their preceding generation. In 2018, there was a 6,3 percentage points rise in the proportion of women who had enrolled for master's degree and an increase of 9,3 percentage points among those who enrolled for a doctorate degree. Generation X and Millennial adults aged 23–38 shared the same primary reason of “working at home” for not attending an educational institution, whereas the primary reason of Born-free Millennials was “no money for fees”. Born-free Millennials also incurred high costs for attending a tertiary educational institution with 73,5% spending more than R12 000 on fees while 64,1% of Millennials and 18,9% of Generation X adults aged 23–38 reported paying such amounts. There are large inequalities in educational participation among Millennials between rich and poor households. Millennials in the highest household income quintile were six times more likely to attend a tertiary educational institution (30,8%) compared to school attendance (5,9%). Conversely, Millennials in the lowest household income quintile were twice more likely to attend school compared to attending a tertiary educational institution (30,6% and 14,3%, respectively). Despite the employment advantages that (STEM) fields of study bring, most young people still engage in business, economics and management studies.

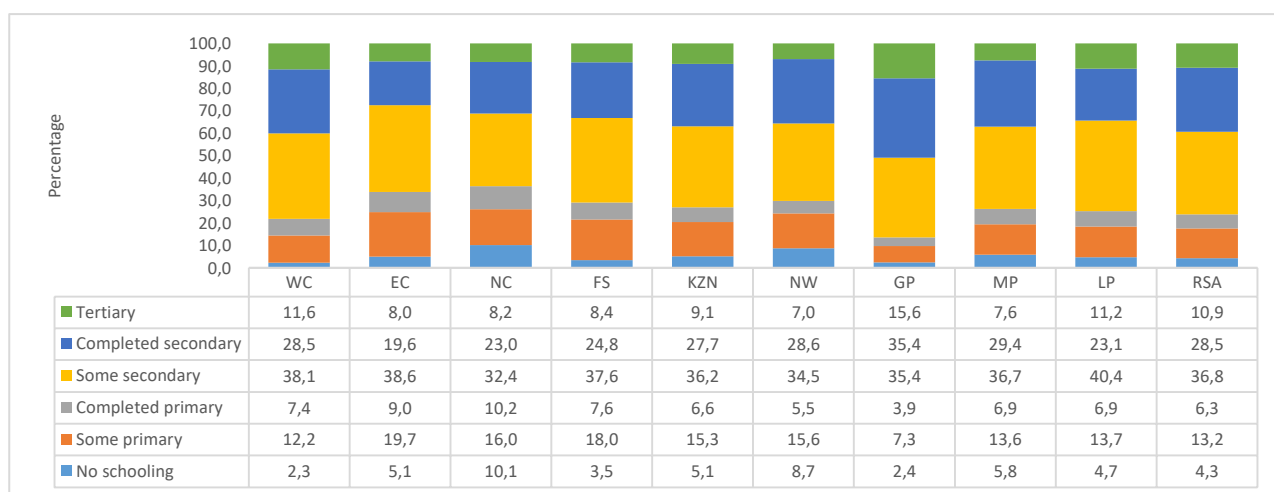
Chapter 3: Education profile of Generation X, Millennials and Born-free Millennials

The political transformation in South Africa has yielded changes in educational policies that led to a rise in the average levels of educational attainment. However, there were large disparities in educational achievement between population groups. The lower and middle end of the distribution of educational attainment were lifted up substantially while the increase in post-school educational attainment remained moderate. In 2018, the percentage of individuals aged 20 years and older who dropped out from primary schooling was reduced by almost half from 17,4% in 2002 to 8,7% in 2018. Similarly, those who achieved upper secondary schooling increased from 18,8% in 2002 to 25,5% in 2018; and those who completed secondary schooling increased from 21,3% in 2002 to 30,9% in 2018. Furthermore, the percentage of individuals aged 20 years and older who achieved a post-school education increased by 5,1 percentage points from 2002 to 2018 (Stats SA, 2019a). Functional illiteracy² declined over the years in South Africa. In 2002, it was 16,4% among 20–39 year olds and reduced to 4,4% in 2018. Basic education provides a good foundation for further skills development, and higher levels of educational attainment lead to a better skilled and productive workforce. A country with a relatively good human capital base can, with a successful transition from school to work, create people's capacity to pick up new technologies and turn them to economic advantages. Many of the jobs which the current work force are involved with today did not exist two decades ago while this generation was in school or higher educational institutions. Most of the workers in this generation had thus to upgrade their skills to align to those required in emerging sectors. This chapter presents information on the educational attainment of Generation X, Millennials and Born-free Millennials, and highlights the intergenerational comparisons.

3.1 Educational attainment among Generation X adults aged 23–38 in 2002

Educational expansion started with Generation X adults, where more young people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds surged into educational facilities, including tertiary educational institutions. This sections profiles the educational attainment of Generation X adults in 2002.

Figure 3.1: Highest level of education achieved by Generation X adults aged 23–38 by province, 2002



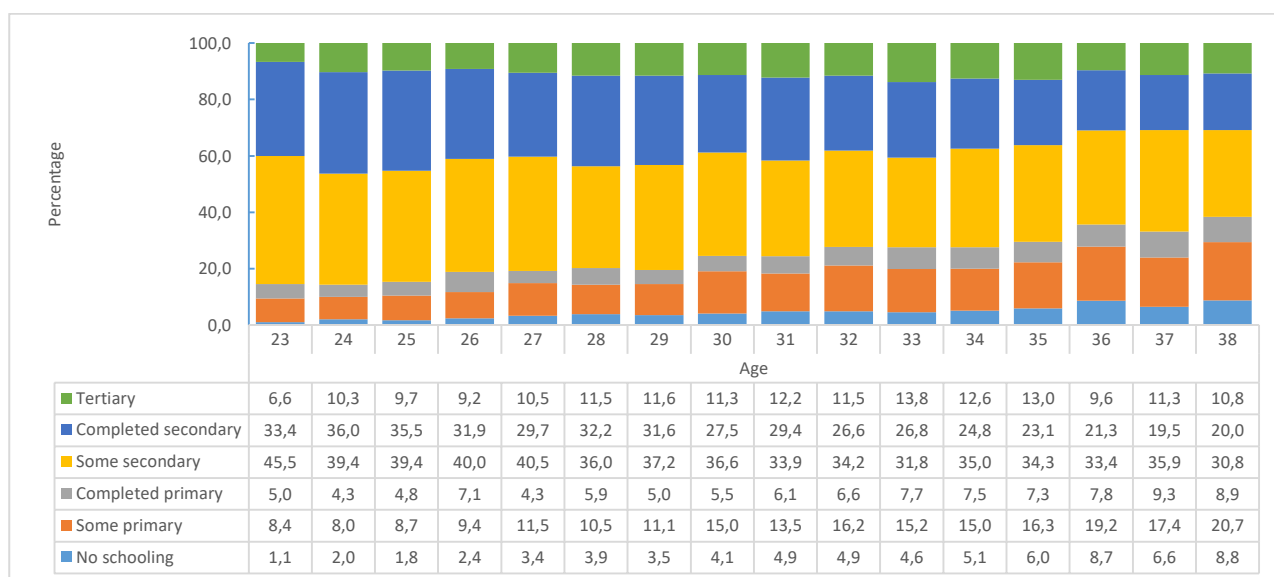
Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

² Functional illiteracy refers to individuals who have either received no schooling or who have not completed Grade 7 yet.

Figure 3.1 presents the educational level of Generation X adults aged 23–38 by province. Nationally, close to six out of ten (60,5%) of Generation X individuals had completed low levels of education or dropped out of school, and 39,4% achieved grade 12 or higher level of education. Furthermore, 4,3% of Generation X adults aged 23–38 had no schooling in 2002.

Gauteng was the province with the highest percentage of Generation X adults aged 23–38 who had completed secondary school and obtained tertiary qualifications were (35,4% and 15,6% respectively). In Eastern Cape, close to 67% of adults aged 23–38 dropped out of school, and of this percentage close to 20% dropped out before completing primary school. Similarly, in Free State and Limpopo, close to 63% and 61% respectively of adults in the same age group dropped out of school. High percentages of no schooling were observed in Northern Cape (10,1%) and North West (8,7%); these were above the national average of 4,3%.

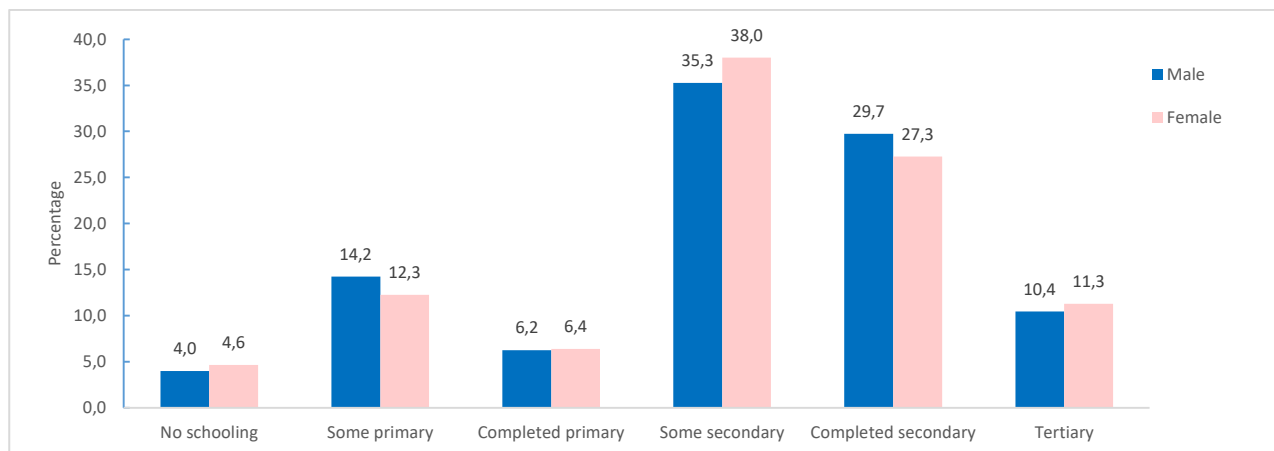
Figure 3.2: Highest level of education achieved among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by age, 2002



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

A larger percentage of younger Generation X individuals were more likely to complete some secondary education or higher, compared to their older counterparts. Among 23-year-olds, while 45,5% had only achieved some secondary school education, one-third (33,4%) in this age group had completed secondary school. Similarly, among 38-year-olds, 30,8% had only achieved some secondary school, while 20,0% had completed secondary school. Furthermore, while 8,8% of 38-year-olds had no schooling, only 1,1% among 23-year-olds had no schooling.

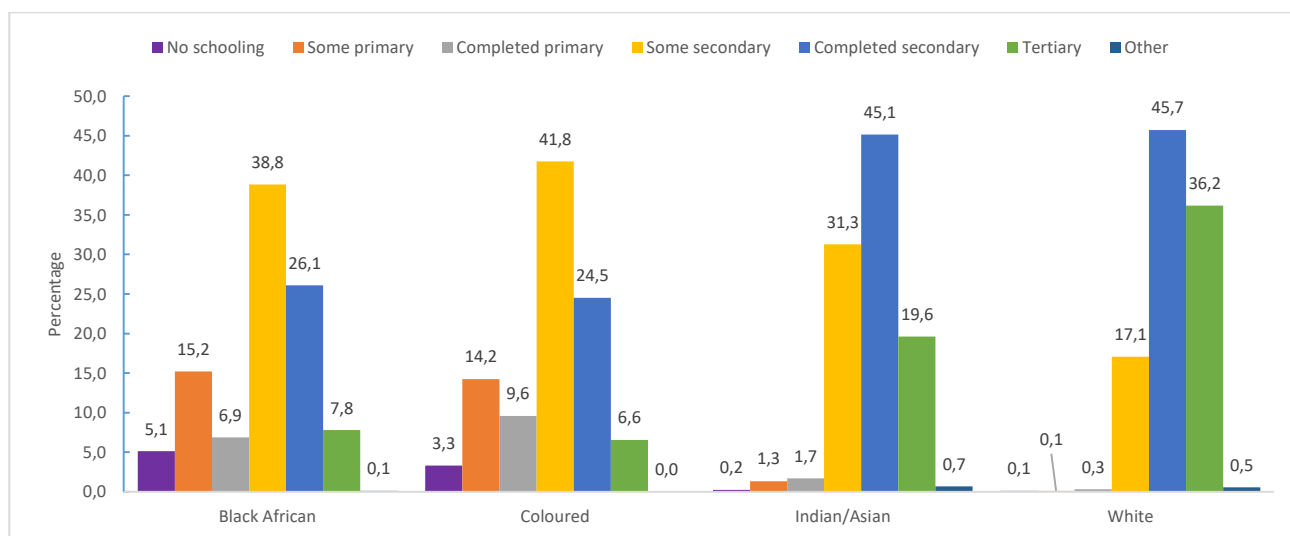
Figure 3.3: Highest level of education achieved among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by gender, 2002



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

Figure 3.3 depicts the distribution of the highest level of education among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by gender. The gender gap in education in 2002 is worth noting. More males dropped out of primary school compared to females (14,2% compared to 12,3%). The gender gap among those who completed primary schooling was relatively narrow (0,2 percentage points) while it was larger among those who achieved some secondary education or completed secondary schooling (2,7 and 2,4 percentage points respectively). More than one-third (35,3%) of males completed some secondary education compared to three out of eight (38,0%) females. Furthermore, close to 30% of males completed secondary schooling compared to 27,3% of females who achieved a similar qualification. Additionally, females were more likely to attain a tertiary qualification compared to males (11,3% and 10,4%, respectively).

Figure 3.4: Highest level of education achieved among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by population group, 2002

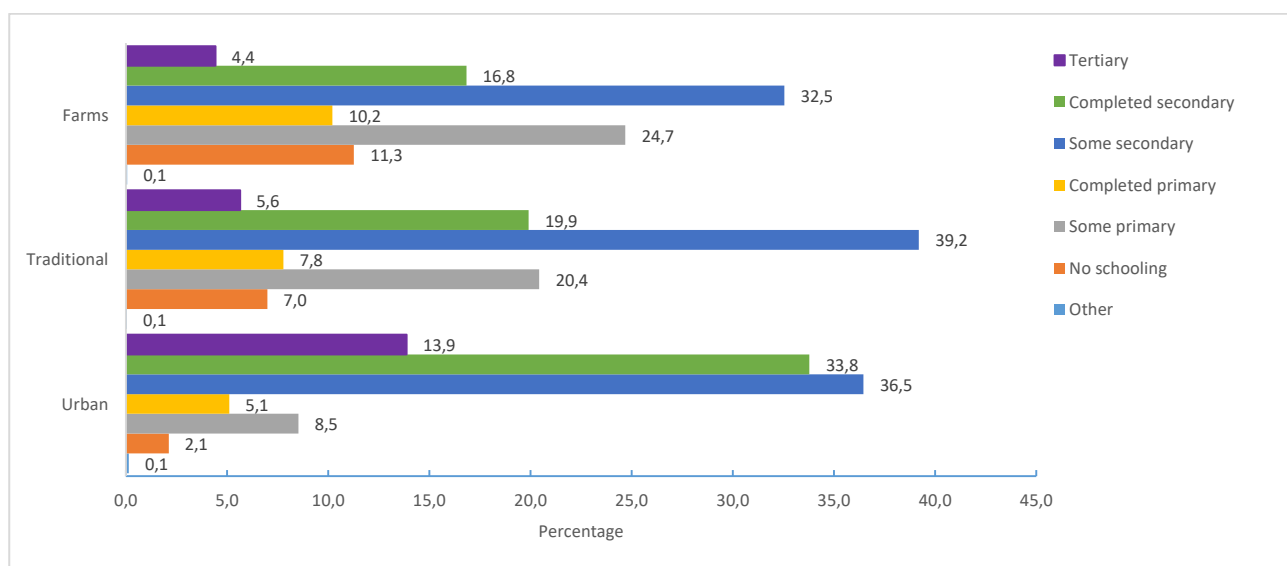


Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

Figure 3.4 shows the distribution of the highest level of education completed by Generation X adults aged 23–38 by population group. Among black African Generation X individuals aged 23–38, more than a quarter (26,1%) completed secondary education while amongst coloureds close to a quarter (24,5%) achieved similar qualifications. Furthermore, 45,1% of Indian/Asian and 45,7% of white Generation X adults aged 23–38 completed secondary school.

The figure shows that in 2002, Indians/Asians and whites were doing much better than black Africans and coloureds in achieving higher levels of education. Even though most Generation X individuals were black African, their achievement of tertiary qualifications remained proportionally low in comparison with that of Indians/Asians and whites. More than one-third (36,2%) of whites and 19,6% of Indians/Asians had completed tertiary education compared to 7,8% of black Africans and 6,6% of coloureds.

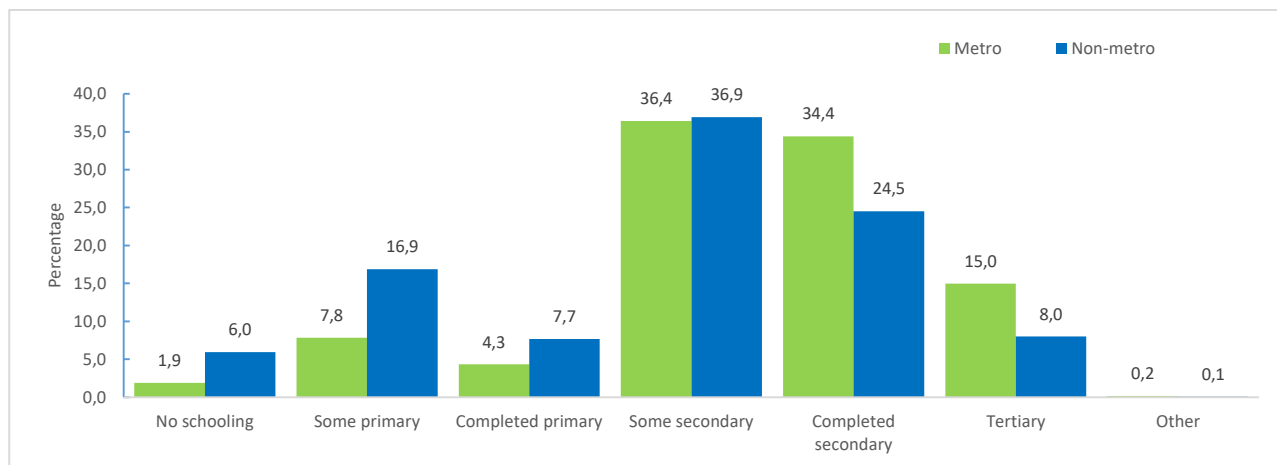
Figure 3.5: Highest level of education achieved among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by geographical area, 2002



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

In 2002, adults residing in non-urban areas were more likely to have achieved lower levels of schooling. Nearly one-third (32,5%) of Generation X individuals residing in farm areas had some secondary education, while 24,7% had some primary education and 16,8% completed secondary education. In urban areas, over one third (36,5%) of Generation X individuals completed some secondary education, while 33,8% completed secondary education and 13,9% achieved a tertiary qualification. In farm areas, close to 11,3% had no schooling, while the same was true for 7,0% in traditional areas and 2,1% in urban areas.

Figure 3.6: Highest level of education achieved among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by metropolitan area, 2002



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

Better opportunities for education, training and skills development are available in the larger metropolitan³ areas in South Africa compared to other cities. Residents of non-metropolitan areas most likely had a lower level of education compared to their counterparts residing in metropolitan areas. Among those who were residing in non-metropolitan areas, close to 17% dropped out of primary school while 6,0% had no education. Among those who were residing in metropolitan areas, 7,8% dropped out of primary school while 1,9% had no education. Completion of secondary school education and acquiring a tertiary qualification was more common among Generation X adults who were residents of metropolitan areas, as 34,4% of residents in these areas had completed secondary school and 15,0% had attained a tertiary qualification, compared to residents in non-metropolitan areas, where 24,5% had completed secondary school and 8,0% had attained a tertiary qualification.

Table 3.1: Highest level of education achieved among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by marital status, 2002

Highest level of education	Married or living together as husband and wife	Widow/widower	Divorced or separated	Never married
No schooling	51,4	2,4	0,9	45,2
Some primary	46,0	1,7	2,1	50,1
Completed primary	42,1	2,4	2,7	52,6
Some secondary	41,0	1,0	1,9	56,0
Completed secondary	40,1	0,6	1,7	57,7
Tertiary	55,0	0,9	2,0	42,1
Other	24,1	*	*	69,0
South Africa	43,4	1,1	1,9	53,5

Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

*Unweighted numbers of 3 and below per cell are too small to provide reliable estimates

³ There are 8 metropolitan areas in South Africa: City of Tshwane, City of Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, Mangaung, EThekweni, Buffalo City, Nelson Mandela Bay, City of Cape Town

Table 3.1 shows the highest level of education of Generation X adults by marital status. Overall, in 2002, the majority (53,5%) of Generation X adults aged 23–38 were never married, while 43,4% were married or living together as husband and wife. An estimated 1,9% of Generation X individuals were divorced or separated from their partners. More than half (55,0%) of Generation X individuals who completed a tertiary education were married or living together as husband and wife, and 42,1% who had the same qualification never married. Of those Generation X individuals who had no schooling, more than half (51,4%) were married or living together as husband and wife, while 45,2% were never married and 2,4% were a widow or widower.

Table 3.2: Highest level of education achieved among Generation X adults aged 23–38 by gender of household head, 2002

Highest level of education	Head of household				Total
	Male		Female		
No schooling	128 156	5,0	66 927	6,1	195 083
Some primary	364 401	14,1	157 214	14,4	521 615
Completed primary	165 213	6,4	100 088	9,2	265301
Some secondary	860 338	33,3	412 522	37,8	1 272 859
Completed secondary	698 213	27,0	220 208	20,2	918 421
Tertiary	363 739	14,1	129 110	11,8	492 849
Other	2 841	0,1	6 622	0,5	9 463
Total	2 582 901	100,0	1 092 691	100,0	3 675 592

Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

Table 3.2 presents Generation X individuals who were household heads their educational achievement and gender in 2002. More than two-thirds (67,5%) of Generation X female household heads had no education or achieved lower levels of education, while 20,2% completed secondary school and 11,8% achieved a tertiary qualification. This corresponds to 58,8% of Generation X male household heads who had no education or dropped out of school, 27,0% who completed secondary education and 14,1% who achieved a tertiary education.

Table 3.3: Highest level of education achieved by Generation X adults aged 23–38 by property ownership, 2002

Highest level of education	Owned and fully paid off	Owned, but not yet fully paid off (e.g. with a mortgage)	Rented	Occupied rent-free as part of employment contract of family member	Occupied rent-free not as part of employment contract of family member	Other	Total
No schooling	5,8	*	3,1	12,9	6,5	6,4	5,1
Some primary	17,1	2,3	9,7	23,4	16,2	17,3	13,8
Completed primary	9,1	1,6	4,8	11,8	8,4	3,6	7,1
Some secondary	39,5	18,3	33,2	37,4	41,8	46,4	35,0
Completed secondary	21,8	38,7	31,4	10,7	19,3	19,4	25,3
Tertiary	6,5	38,4	17,8	3,6	5,3	6,7	13,3
Other	*	0,7	*	*	*	*	0,3
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

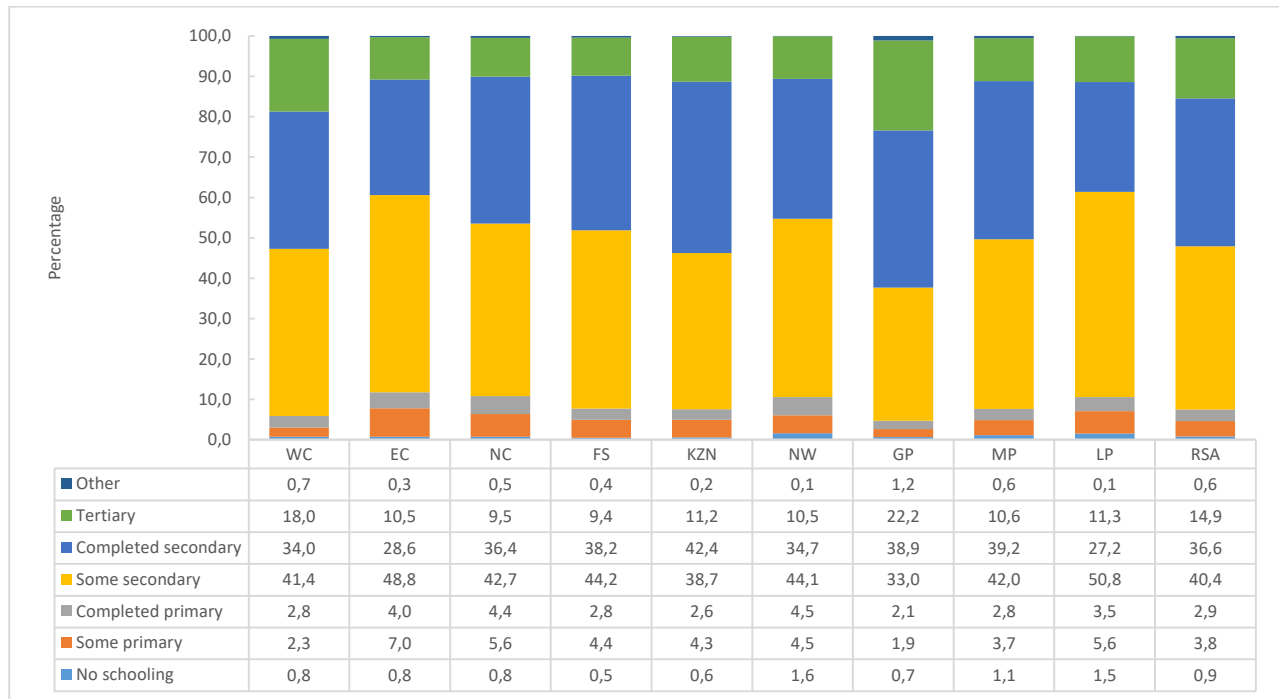
Source: Stats SA GHS 2002

*Unweighted numbers of 3 and below per cell are too small to provide reliable estimates

Table 3.3 presents home ownership among Generation X adults according to their educational achievement. A total of 32,0% of Generation X adults who owned and had fully paid off their property had a primary education or less, 39,5% dropped out of secondary school, 21,8% completed secondary school and 6,5% achieved a tertiary qualification. Among those who owned their property but had not yet fully paid it off, the majority had either completed secondary school or had a tertiary qualification (38,7% and 38,4%, respectively). Among those who were renting, one-third (33,2%) did not complete secondary school while 31,4% had completed secondary schooling and close to 18% had a tertiary qualification.

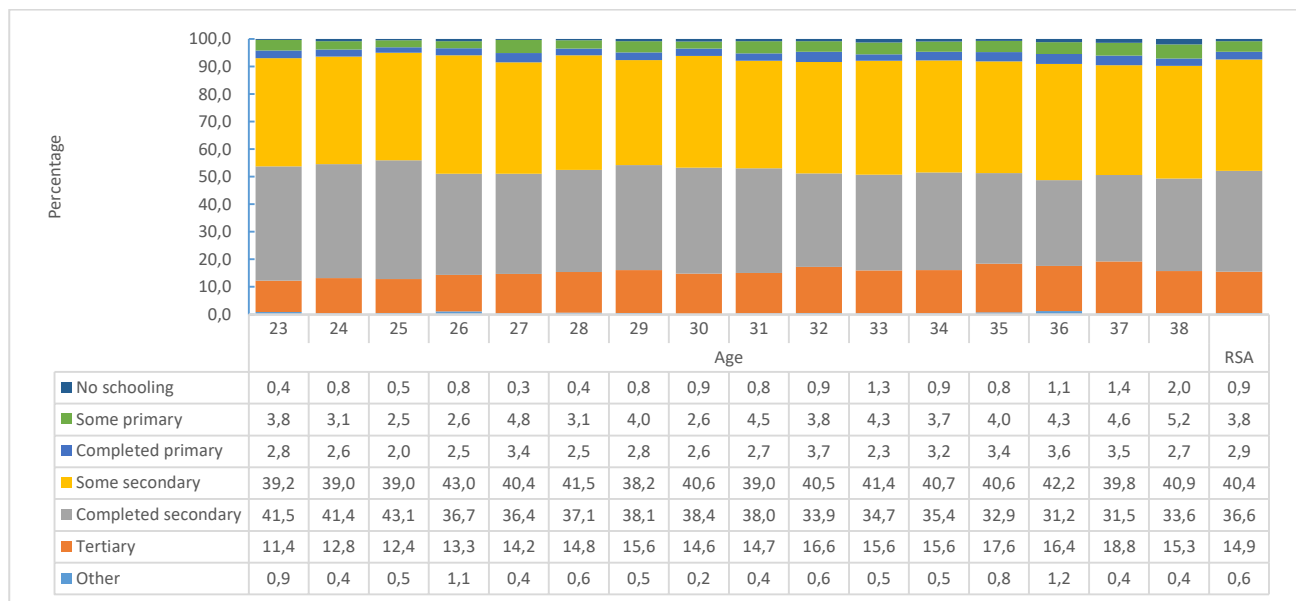
3.2 Educational attainment among Millennials aged 23–38, 2018

With so many Millennials enrolled in schools, there has been an unprecedented expansion of education to lower-income and previously disadvantaged communities. This section compares adult Millennials in 2018 to Generation X adults who were their age in 2002.

Figure 3.7: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by province, 2018

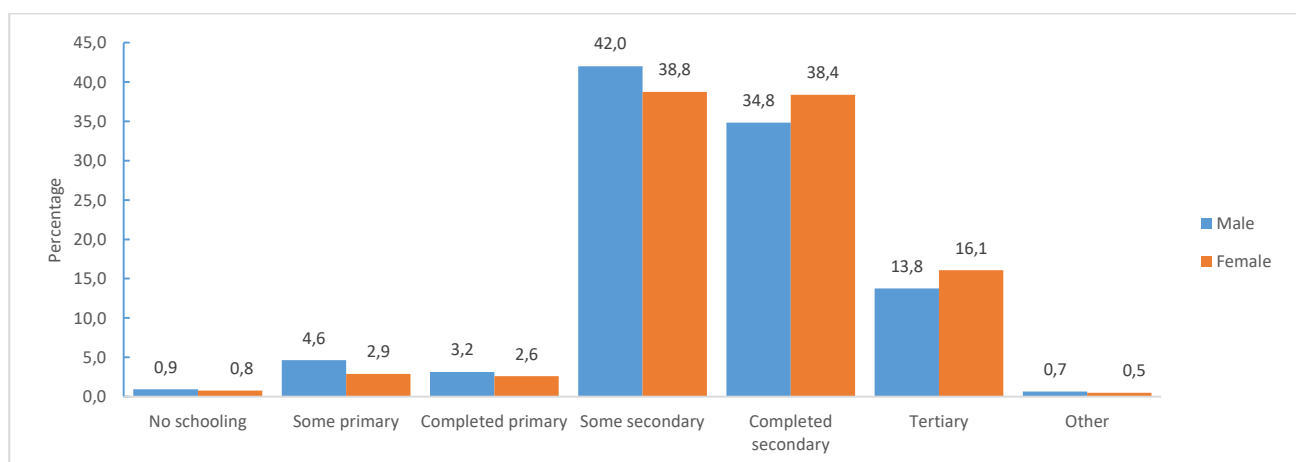
Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.7 shows the educational attainment among Millennials aged 23–38 by province in 2018. Provincial disparities exist for the educational achievements of Millennials in 2018. Yet, in 2018, Millennial adults had better educational outcomes compared to Generation X adults in 2002 in all the provinces, since most Millennials progressed in achieving at least some secondary education. Limpopo and Eastern Cape were the provinces with the highest percentages of secondary school drop-outs or the non-completion of secondary school due to delayed schooling (50,8% and 48,8%, respectively). Secondary school completion among Millennials was the highest in Gauteng (38,9%) and the lowest in Limpopo (27,2%). Gauteng ranks first in tertiary education attainment, followed by Western Cape (22,2% and 18,0%, respectively).

Figure 3.8: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by age, 2018

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

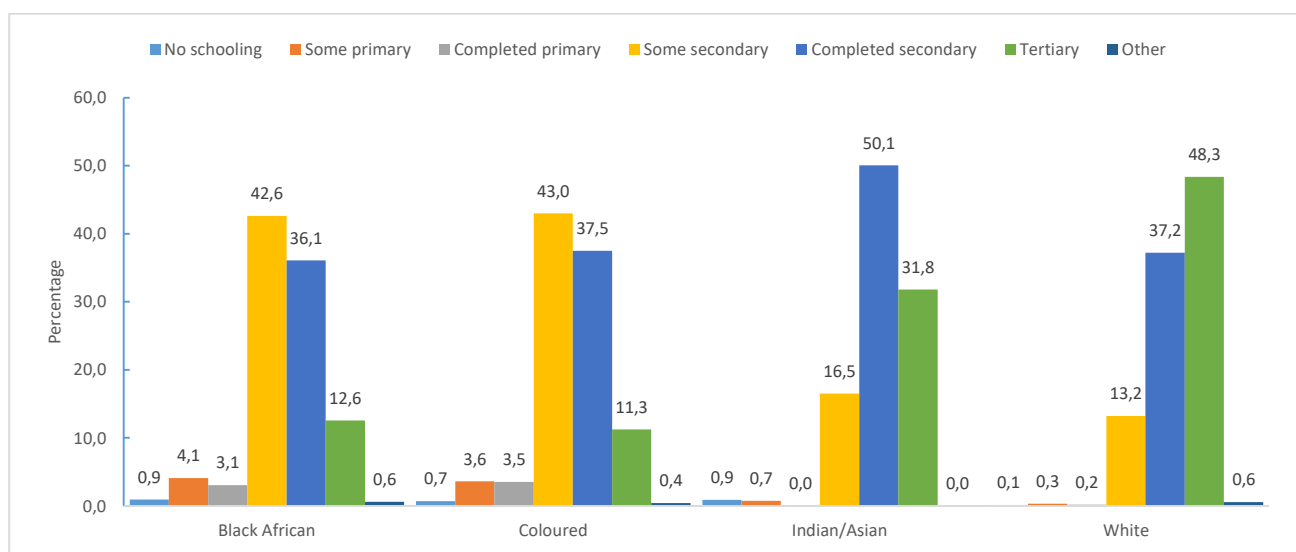
Figure 3.8 shows the percentage of Millennials in single ages by their level of education. Approximately 42% of younger Millennials aged 23 years completed their secondary education as compared to 33,6% of Millennials aged 38 years. Roughly about 15% of 38-years-old Millennials completed a tertiary qualification as compared to 11,4% of 23-years-old Millennials, who achieved similar qualifications, with both being below the national average of 14,9%. Overall, younger Millennials did better in completing their secondary education than the older ones. Furthermore, the graph indicates that as the Millennials grow older, they tend to pursue a tertiary education.

Figure 3.9: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by gender, 2018

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.9 indicates the existing gender gap in educational achievement among Millennials. The gender gap for “no schooling” had closed and was almost non-existent among Millennials compared to their Generation X counterparts. While still quite a significant percentage of Millennials dropped out of secondary school, the share of women in this category remains stable while those of men had risen by 6,7 percentage points compared to 2002. The gender gap in completion of secondary schooling increased from 2,4 percentage points among Generation X individuals to 3,6 percentage points among Millennials. Furthermore, female Millennials were more likely to complete a tertiary education compared to their male counterparts (16,1% females compared to 13,8% males).

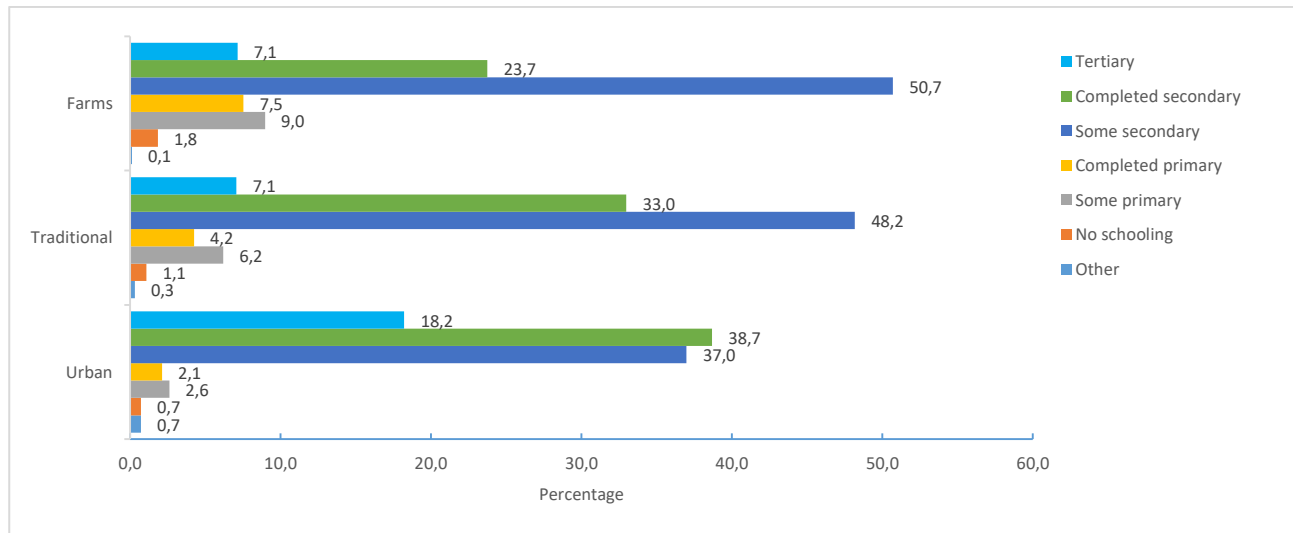
Figure 3.10: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by population group, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

White and Indian/Asian Millennials were outperforming black Africans and coloureds, especially in higher education. Black Africans and coloureds seem to begin to lag behind during their secondary education, as 42,6% of black Africans and 43,0% of coloureds still did not complete their secondary education while the same was true for only close to 17% of Indians/Asians and 13% of whites. About 8% of black Africans had only achieved primary school education or had not received any education, while the same was true for 7,8% coloured Millennials.

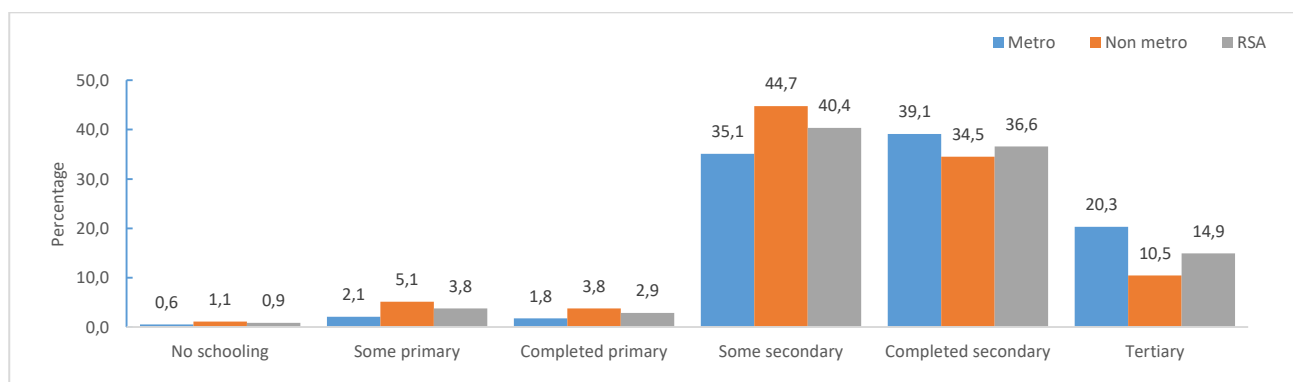
Figure 3.11: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by geographical area, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

The figure above shows the location of Millennials by geographical area in 2018. Close to four out of ten (38,7%) Millennials in urban areas completed secondary school, while 37,0% only had some secondary education and 18,2% had acquired a tertiary qualification. More than half of Millennials (50,7%) residing in farm areas had attained some secondary education, 23,7% had completed secondary education and 7,1% had obtained a tertiary qualification. In traditional areas, nearly half of Millennials (48,2%) attained some secondary education, while one-third (33,0%) completed secondary education, and 7,1% had a tertiary qualification. Lower levels of educational attainment were observed in farm areas rather than in traditional areas.

Figure 3.12: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by metropolitan areas, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.12 presents Millennials aged 23–38 residing in metropolitan or non-metropolitan areas by their highest level of education in 2018. Approximately, four out of ten (39,1%) of Millennials residing in metropolitan areas, had completed secondary school, exceeding the national average of 36,6%, while 34,5% of Millennials residing in non-metropolitan areas had achieved similar qualifications. Individuals aged 23–38 in 2018 residing in metropolitan areas were much better educated than their counterparts in 2002, as the share of individuals with a tertiary qualification had risen by 5,3 percentage points. Similarly, among those residing in non-metropolitan areas, the gains in educational achievement were especially steep (20,2 percentage points higher) for Millennials who completed secondary education.

Table 3.4: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by marital status, 2018

Highest level of education	Married or living together as husband and wife	Widow/widower	Divorced or separated	Never married
No schooling	40,2	0,0	0,0	59,8
Some primary	31,3	0,5	0,8	67,4
Completed primary	38,6	1,2	0,8	59,4
Some secondary	35,4	0,3	0,9	63,3
Completed secondary	34,4	0,3	0,7	64,6
Tertiary	47,2	0,1	1,1	51,6
Other	43,0	0,0	0,9	56,1
South Africa	36,8	0,3	0,8	62,0

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

In 2018, the majority (62,0%) of Millennials were never married, followed by 36,8% who were married or living together as husband and wife, and 0,8% who were divorced or separated. Of those who did not have any schooling, six out of ten (59,8%) were never married and 40,2% were married or living together as husband and wife. Among those who completed a tertiary qualification close to 47% were married or living together as husband and wife, which was a decline of 7,8 percentage points compared to adults aged 23–38 in 2002. Millennials preferred a single life (62,0%) to being married compared to their Generation X counterparts (53,5%).

Table 3.5: Highest level of education achieved among household head Millennials aged 23–38, 2018

Highest level of education	Male		Female		Total
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
No schooling	31 934	0,9	17 650	0,9	49 584
Some primary	140 404	3,8	66 049	3,3	206 453
Completed primary	112 313	3,0	51 039	2,5	163 351
Some secondary	1 518 760	41,1	879 467	43,7	2 398 227
Completed secondary	1 190 190	32,2	647 336	32,1	1 837 527
Tertiary	660 699	17,9	344 063	17,1	1 004 762
Other	38 768	1,0	9 192	0,5	47 961
Total	3 693 069	100,0	2 014 796	100,0	5 707 864

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Table 3.5 presents Millennial individuals who were household heads by their educational achievement and gender in 2018. About half (50,4%) Millennial female household heads had no education or achieved lower levels of education, while 32,1% completed secondary school and 17,1% achieved a tertiary qualification. By contrast, 48,8% Millennial male household heads had no education or dropped out of school, 32,2% completed secondary education, and 17,9% achieved a tertiary education.

Table 3.6: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by property ownership, 2018

Highest level of education	Owned and fully paid off	Owned, but not yet paid off to bank/financial institution	Rented	Occupied rent-free	Other	Total
No schooling	0,9	*	0,6	1,4	3,3	0,9
Some primary	5,1	1,4	2,0	5,6	1,6	3,6
Completed primary	3,1	*	2,2	4,6	2,9	2,9
Some secondary	50,0	18,5	34,0	52,3	40,2	42,0
Completed secondary	31,4	33,3	34,1	28,6	31,4	32,2
Tertiary	9,1	46,7	25,7	7,0	20,5	17,6
Other	0,4	*	1,4	0,5	*	0,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

*Unweighted numbers of 3 and below per cell are too small to provide reliable estimates

Table 3.6 shows property ownership among Millennials by level of education in 2018. Among Millennials who owned fully paid properties, half (50,0%) did not complete secondary school, whereas 31,4% had completed secondary school and 9,1% had a tertiary qualification. Among Millennials who owned their property but had not yet fully paid for such property, the majority (46,7%) had a tertiary qualification while 33,3% had completed secondary school and the rest did not complete secondary school. Among those who were renting, 34,0% had some secondary education while an additional 34,1% had completed secondary school and close to a quarter (25,7%) had a tertiary qualification.

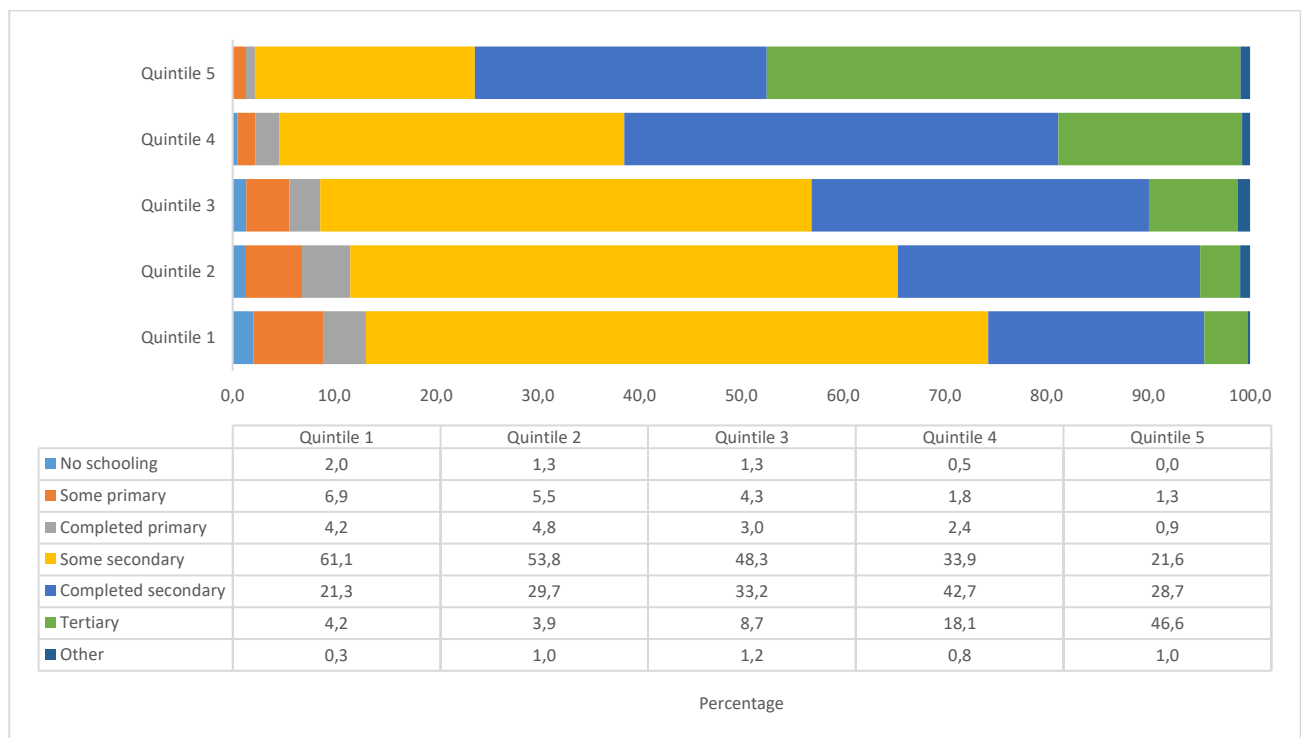
Table 3.7: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by household size, 2018

Highest level of education	Household size											Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More than 10	
No schooling	0,7	0,8	0,9	0,6	0,8	1,1	0,9	1,3	1,0	0,6	1,4	0,9
Some primary	3,6	3,8	3,1	2,7	3,2	4,4	4,0	5,5	5,9	2,9	7,7	3,8
Completed primary	2,8	3,0	2,5	2,4	2,9	2,2	2,9	3,6	4,1	4,1	4,6	2,9
Some secondary	42,9	37,6	36,6	36,5	42,0	40,7	42,6	46,5	46,4	46,6	47,2	40,4
Completed secondary	32,0	33,8	37,5	37,5	36,7	39,4	40,0	38,7	35,3	39,9	35,1	36,6
Tertiary	17,1	20,0	18,6	20,0	13,8	12,0	9,2	4,3	6,8	5,7	3,5	14,9
Other	0,9	0,9	0,8	0,3	0,6	0,2	0,4	*	*	*	*	0,6
RSA	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

*Unweighted numbers of 3 and below per cell are too small to provide reliable estimates

Table 3.7 illustrates the living arrangement of Millennials by their level of education in 2018. Households with single-member Millennials were more likely not to complete secondary education. The same was true for large households with five or more members. One out of five Millennials staying in two-member or four-member households had a tertiary qualification.

Figure 3.13: Highest level of education achieved among Millennials aged 23–38 by household income quintiles, 2018

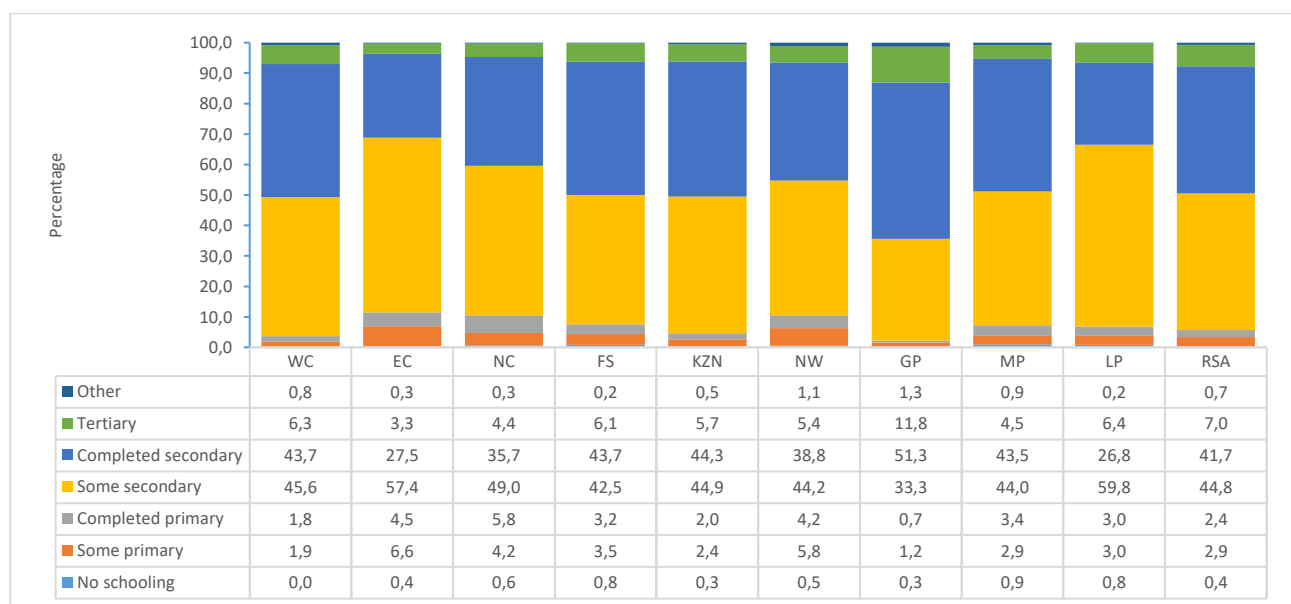
Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.13 presents the distribution of educational achievement among Millennials by household income quintiles. The graph shows that educational attainment rises with increased household income. Millennials from poor households were most likely to have dropped out of school while those from rich households were more likely to have completed a tertiary education. The majority (72,2%) of Millennials living in poor households (in quintiles one and two) either had no schooling or dropped out without completing school. This is true for nearly three-quarters (74,2%) of Millennials in households from income quintile one and 65,4% of Millennials in households from income quintile two. On the other hand, close to three quarters (75,3%) of Millennials in the highest household income quintile (quintile five) had either completed secondary education or had a tertiary qualification. Furthermore, close to 47% of Millennials in the highest household income quintile were tertiary qualification holders, which is 42,6 percentage points higher than Millennials in the lowest household income quintile.

3.3 Educational attainment among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 in 2018

This section provides the educational profile of Born-free Millennial South Africans. Born-free Millennials were born into the new democratic South Africa. They were seen as the future of South Africa to be given opportunities without limit so that they are able achieve their full potential unlike their preceding generations.

Figure 3.14: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by province, 2018

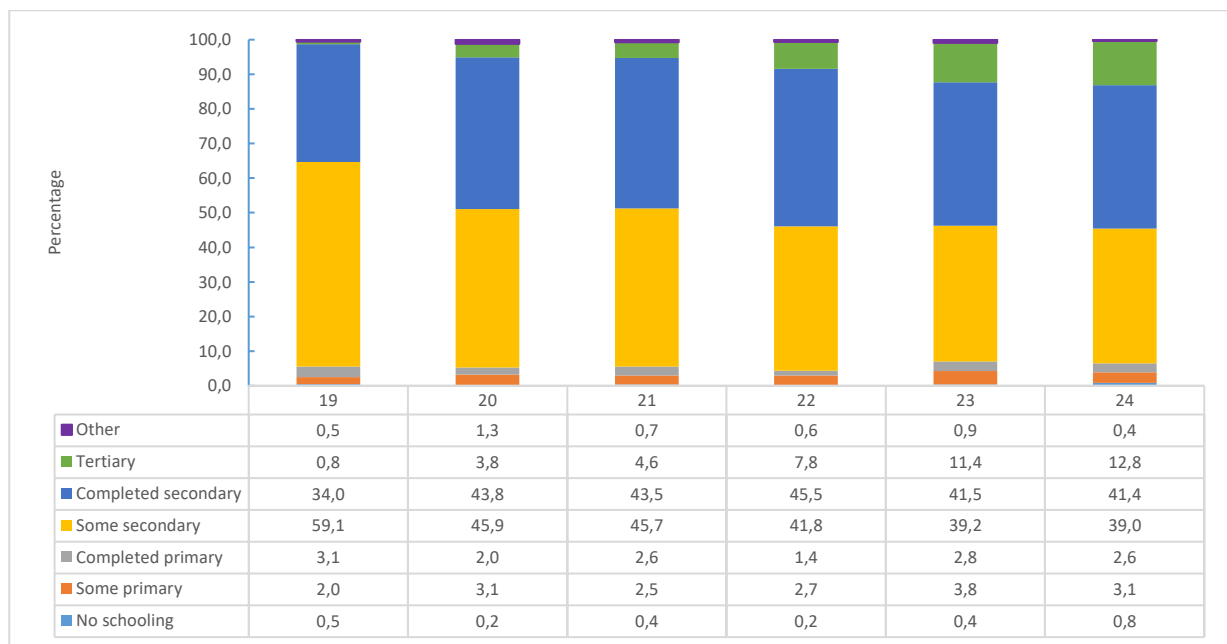


Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.14 describes the provincial disparities in levels of educational attainment among Born-free Millennials. Some Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 were still too young in 2018 to have completed their education. Hence, the above graph depicts the highest achieved qualifications while they were still pursuing further education. Nationally, 41,7% of Born-free Millennials completed secondary education, while 44,8% achieved some secondary education and 7,0% attained tertiary qualifications. Moreover, more than half (50,5%) of Born Free Millennials did not complete secondary education in 2018. Limpopo and Eastern Cape

were the provinces where the highest percentage of Born-free Millennials were lagging to complete school (59,8% and 57,4%, respectively). Gauteng had the highest percentage of Born-free Millennials who had completed secondary education (51,3%); the province also had the highest percentage of Born-free Millennials who achieved a tertiary qualification (11,8%).

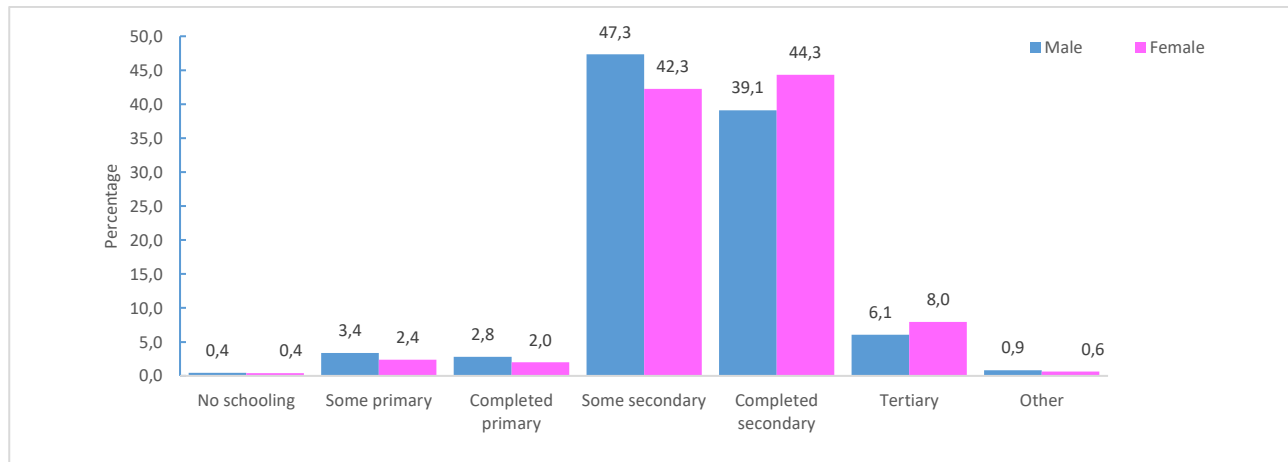
Figure 3.15: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by age, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.15 depicts Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by age and educational achievement. As educational progression improves with age, only 34,0% among 19-year-olds completed secondary education, while the same was true for 41,4% among 24-year-olds. Most 19-year-olds (59,1%) had not completed secondary education. This percentage reduced to 39,0% among 24-year-olds. However, 6,5% of the 24-year-olds had dropped out from primary school or had “no schooling”. One in eight 24-year-olds (12,8%) had achieved a tertiary qualification.

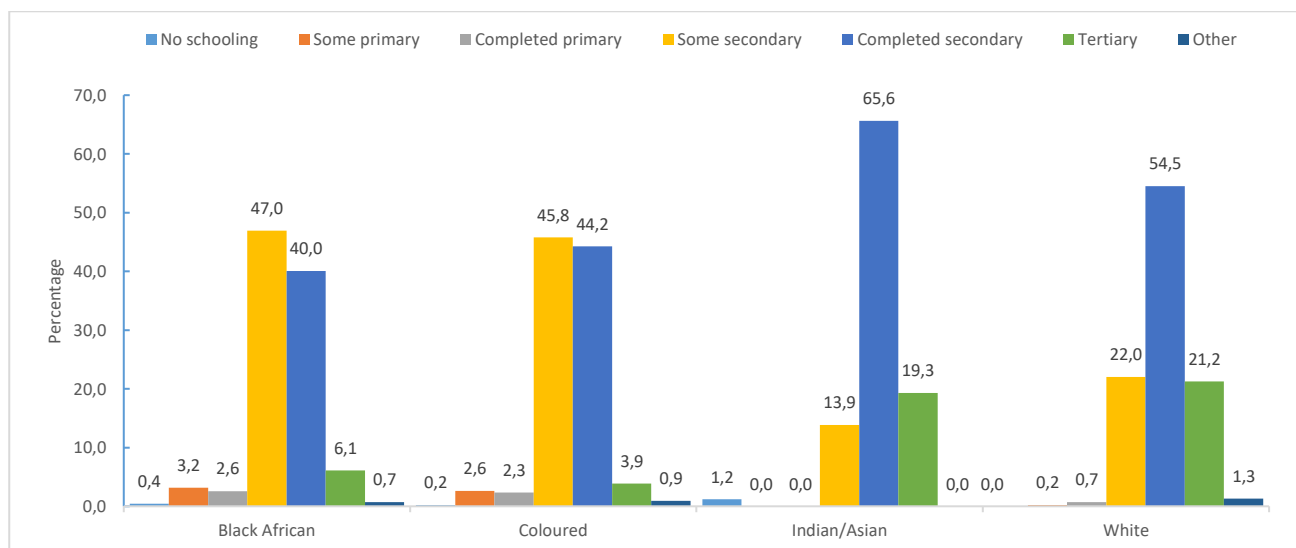
Figure 3.16: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by gender, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

The gender gap in educational achievement was the widest among Born-free Millennials compared to the other generations, and was estimated to 5,2 percentage points among those who completed secondary education and five percentage points among those who did not complete secondary education. However, female Born-free Millennials were more likely complete secondary education and achieve a tertiary qualification compared to males, which was a similar trend to that of the Millennials.

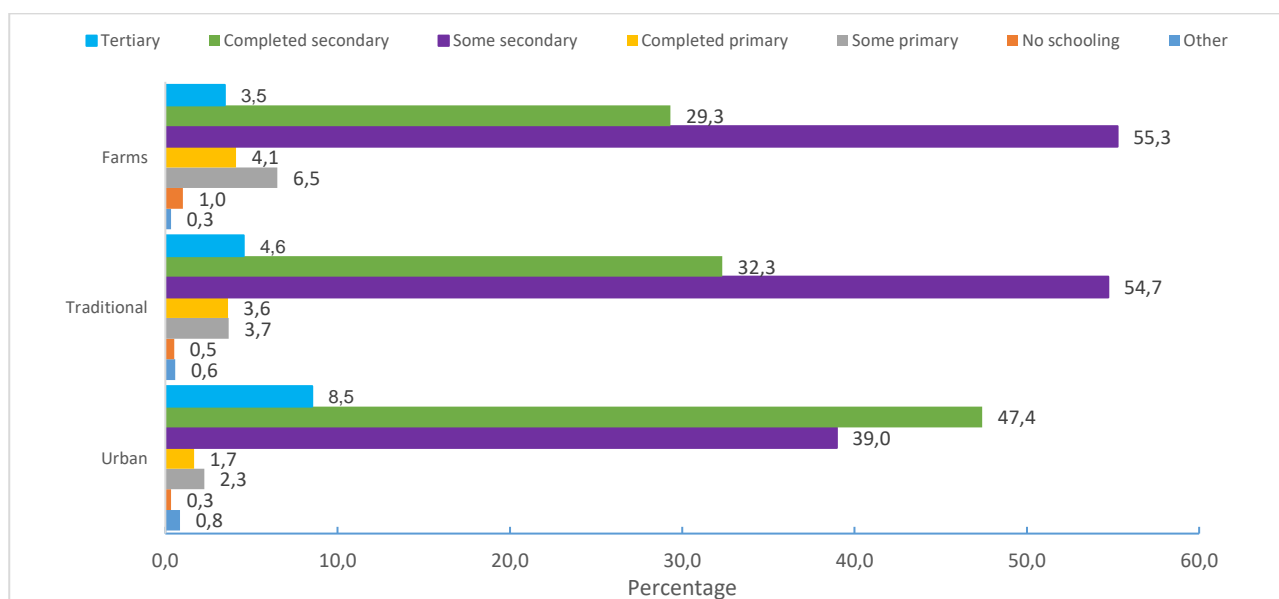
Figure 3.17: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by population group, 2019



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Racial gaps in educational achievement rates still persist in South Africa, where black African Born-free Millennials continue to be almost three times less likely as white or Indian/Asian Born-free Millennials to achieve a tertiary qualification. Two out of ten of both Indian/Asians and whites (19,3% and 21,2% respectively) obtained a tertiary qualification compared to 6,1% of black Africans and 3,9% of coloureds. Overall, less than half of black African and coloured Born-free Millennials had either completed secondary education or achieved a tertiary qualification, while close to 85% of Indians/Asians and 76% of whites had achieved similar qualifications.

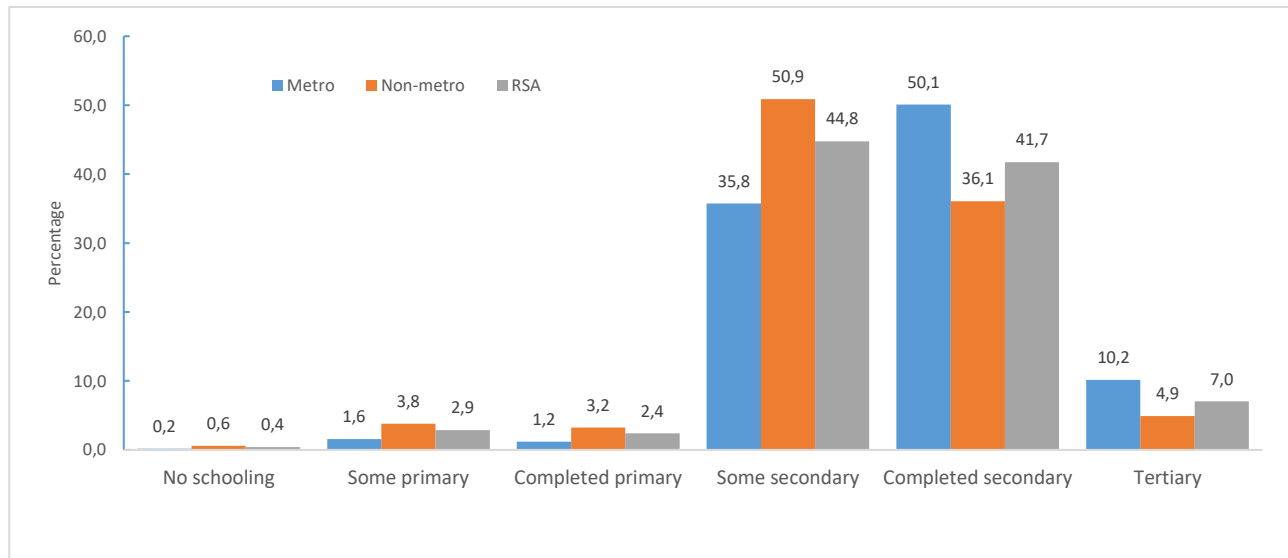
Figure 3.18: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by geographical area, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.18 shows that 47,4% of Born-free Millennials residing in urban areas had completed secondary education, while the same was true for 32,3% residing in traditional areas and 29,3% residing in farm areas. More than half Born-free Millennials residing in traditional areas (54,7%) and farm areas (55,3%) had achieved some secondary education and were still in the process of probably completing secondary education. Close to 7% of Born-free Millennials in farm areas and 4% in traditional areas did not complete primary school.

Figure 3.19: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by metropolitan area, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.19 shows the highest level of education achievement among Born-free Millennials by metropolitan area type in 2018. Nearly six out of ten (59,6%) Born Free Millennials resided in non-metropolitan and just about 40,4% lived in metropolitan areas. By and large, individuals in metropolitan areas tend to be more educated than those in non-metropolitan areas. The graph indicates that 60,3% of individuals in metropolitan areas had completed their secondary or tertiary education, and 38,8% did not complete school. In non-metropolitan areas, 36,1% Born-free Millennials had completed their secondary education while 3,8% had some primary education.

Table 3.8: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by marital status by, 2018

Highest level of education	Married or living together as husband and wife	Widow/widower	Divorced or separated	Never married
No schooling	22,3	*	*	77,7
Some primary	14,5	*	*	85,5
Completed primary	17,5	*	*	82,5
Some secondary	12,0	0,1	0,1	87,9
Completed secondary	8,2	*	0,2	91,6
Tertiary	11,3	*	0,8	87,9
Other	20,0	*	*	80,0
Total	10,7	0,0	0,2	89,2

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

*Unweighted numbers of 3 and below per cell are too small to provide reliable estimates

Table 3.8 indicates the education achievement of Born-free Millennials by marital status. As expected, Born-free Millennials were most likely not married. Of those who had no schooling, 22,3% were married or living together as husband and wife and 77,7% had never married.

Table 3.9: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials household heads of aged 19–24, 2018

Highest level of education	Male		Female		Total
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
No schooling	3 591	1,0	*	*	3 591
Some primary	17 376	4,7	5 052	2,4	22 427
Completed primary	11 955	3,3	3 474	1,7	15 430
Some secondary	164 637	44,8	87 758	42,1	252 395
Completed secondary	133 571	36,3	86 424	41,5	219 995
Tertiary	33 993	9,2	25 702	12,3	59 695
Other	2 526	0,7	*	*	2 526
Total	367 649	100,0	208 409	100,0	576 059

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

*Unweighted numbers of 3 and below per cell are too small to provide reliable estimates

Table 3.9 shows highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials who were household heads. In 2018, there were 367 649 male Born-free Millennials who were household heads and 208 409 female Born-free Millennials who were household heads in South Africa. Close to four out of ten (41,5%) female Born-free Millennials household heads had completed secondary education, while 42,1% had some secondary education and 12,3% had completed a tertiary qualification. Among Born-free Millennials, more than half (53,8%) of male household heads had no schooling or had lower levels of education compared to 46,2% of female household heads.

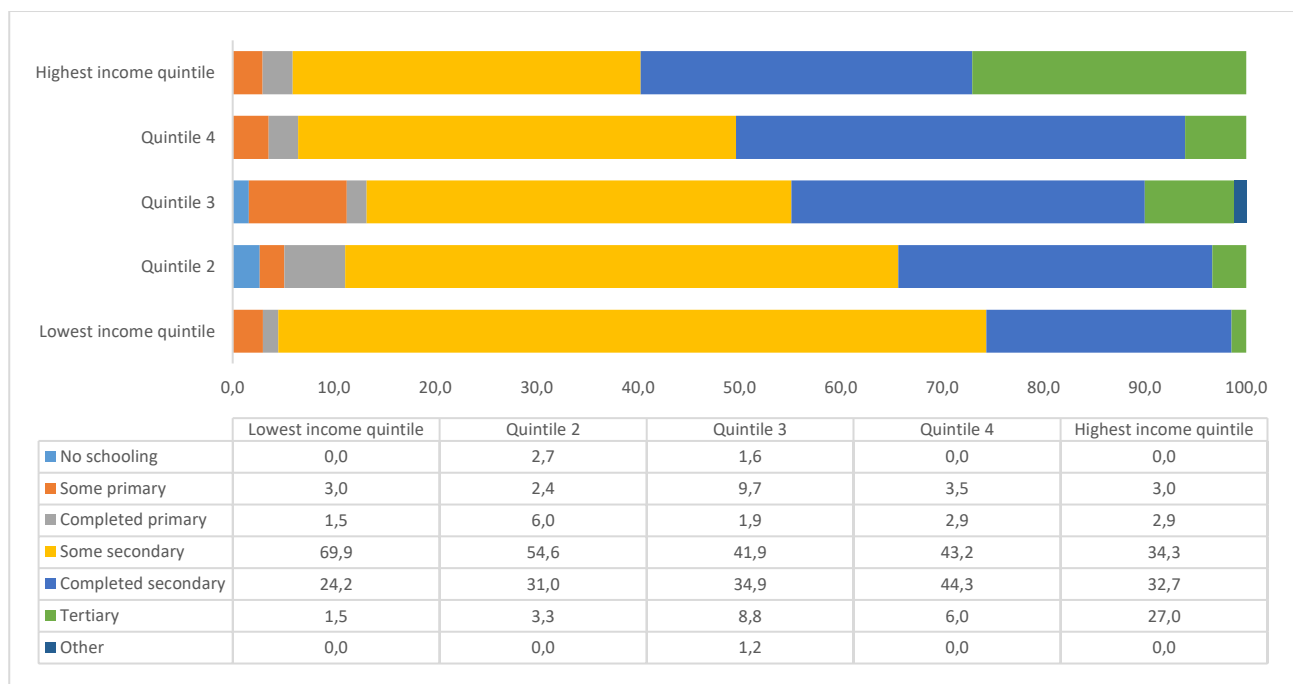
Table 3.10: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by household size, 2018

Highest level of education	Household size											Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	More than 10	
No schooling	0,7	0,2	0,6	0,3	0,5	0,4	0,6	0,3	0,5	0,3	0,0	0,4
Some primary	4,0	3,5	2,1	2,8	2,6	2,6	3,8	3,4	2,7	2,2	3,3	2,9
Completed primary	2,2	2,4	1,9	1,5	1,5	1,9	1,1	3,1	4,7	4,6	7,0	2,4
Some secondary	41,9	40,5	42,0	37,8	42,9	46,4	52,3	48,0	53,5	50,4	55,4	44,8
Completed secondary	39,5	40,6	44,8	44,8	46,4	41,3	38,4	42,2	33,5	38,1	33,7	41,7
Tertiary	11,2	11,3	7,7	12,1	5,5	6,5	3,4	2,1	4,2	4,4	0,4	7,0
Other	0,6	1,4	0,9	0,8	0,5	1,0	0,5	0,8	0,9	0,0	0,0	0,7
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Table 3.10 shows the highest level of education achieved by Born-free Millennials by household size in 2018. Across the different household sizes, most of the Born-free Millennials had either undergone some secondary education or they had completed their secondary education. The smaller the household size, the higher the percentage of Born-free Millennials completing their tertiary education. Close to 12% of Born-free Millennials in a household size of four had completed a tertiary qualification, while 44,8% had completed secondary school and 37,8% did not complete their secondary education.

Figure 3.20: Highest level of education achieved among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by household income quintiles, 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2018

Figure 3.20 shows educational achievement among Born-free Millennials by household income quintiles. Educational inequity linked to income inequality still persists among Born-free Millennials. However, the generation might not have achieved their final levels of education yet. Seven out of ten Born-free Millennials (69,9%) in the lowest household income quintile only had some secondary education, while 24,2% had completed their secondary education and 1,5% had achieved a tertiary qualification. It should be kept in mind that some Born-free Millennials were still busy with schooling. However, the above graph also shows the poor educational outcomes of poor households. The educational achievement gap by household income quintiles was high among Born-free Millennials.

3.4 Summary

General education serves as an important avenue for a better life, and a better future, and it thus affects the nation and the growth of the economy; therefore, a lack of education makes it harder to succeed in life. We have seen that different generations choose to pursue different paths of education through time. Among Generation X, close to six out of ten (60,5%) individuals had completed a low level of education or had dropped out of school, while only 39,4% had achieved grade 12 or a higher level of education. In contrast,

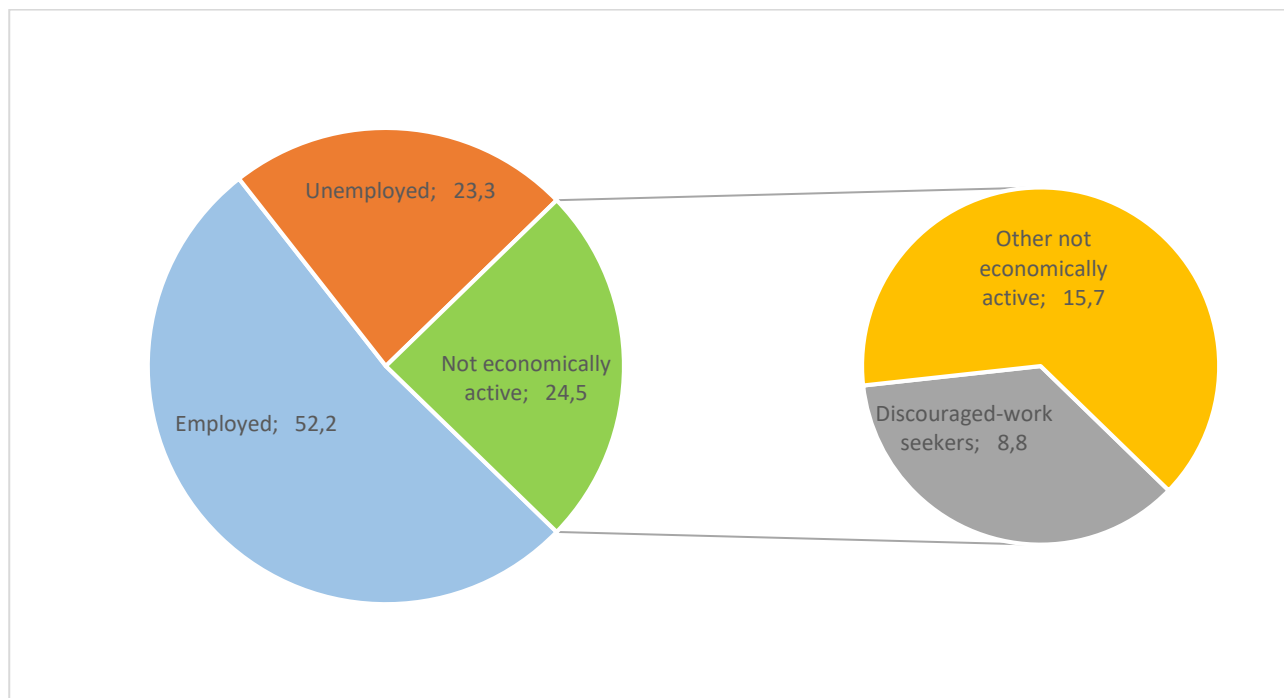
more than half (51,5%) of the Millennials have completed their secondary education or acquired a tertiary qualifications while 48,0% had low levels of education or had dropped out of school. Moreover, close to 60% of Generation X individuals did not complete their secondary education while the same was true for only 47,1% of Millennials. Millennials were more likely to be better educated than Generation X adults and Born-free Millennials; hence, close to 15% attained a tertiary qualification compared to 10,9% of Generation X and 7,0% of Born-free Millennials. While the gender gap in attainment of a tertiary qualification remained moderate, females were more likely to attain a tertiary qualifications compared to males. For the majority of black Africans across the generations, the achievement of a tertiary qualification remained proportionally low in comparison with Indians/Asians and whites. This is true for both Millennials and Born-free Millennials, even though participation in tertiary education had somewhat improved throughout the years. In 2002, more than one-third (36,2%) of Generation X whites had completed a tertiary education while 19,6% of Indians/Asians, 7,8% of black Africans and 6,6% of coloureds in the same generation had acquired similar qualifications. Moreover, in 2018 close to 48% white Millennials attained a tertiary qualification, while 31,8% Indians/Asians, 11,3% coloureds and 12,6% black Africans had achieved similar qualifications.

Chapter 4: Labour market outcomes for Generation X, Millennials and Born-free Millennials

This chapter looks at how educational attainment makes a difference to the labour market outcomes experienced by individuals – and how these differ among the three generations presented in this report. The first two sections of this chapter compare labour market outcomes for Generation X and Millennials at relatively similar ages (age 23–38). While the cohorts under study are still young and may have not achieved their full educational goals, the analysis can provide insights in relative educational achievements as well as labour market variation across these cohorts. Educational attainment affects participation in the labour market. Formal education and training received at tertiary educational institutions provides general knowledge, the core work skills, and some of the industry based knowledge and professional competencies that facilitate the transition from education to the labour market. Individuals with greater skills receive higher returns from their participation in the labour market and thus would be more likely to participate in the labour market and be employed. Some workers may have lower educational levels but may still have the skills required for the work, especially if these are jobs in elementary occupations or informal sector employments. Unskilled labour, when measured by educational achievement, refers to jobs that require no schooling, or could be filled by a school dropout who masters specific skills. Skilled labour requires additional skills or education that could range from completion of secondary school to holding a tertiary qualification.

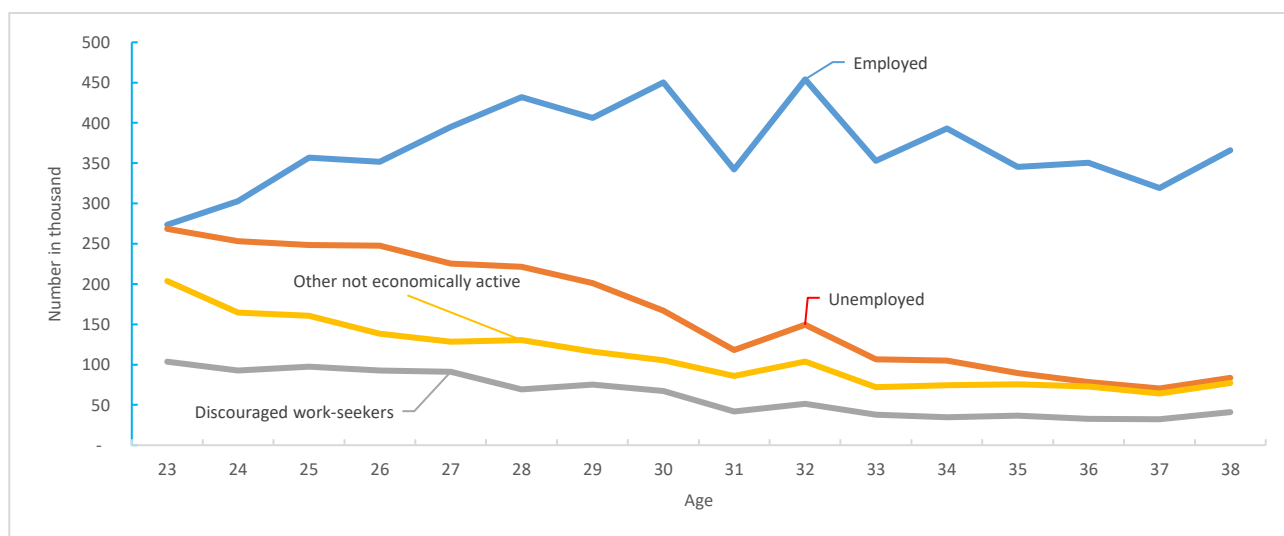
4.1 Labour market outcomes of Generation X adults aged 23–38 in 2002

Adults with low educational attainment make up a significant share of the South African population. As seen in the previous chapter, close to 69% of South African adults aged 20 years and older had on average not completed secondary education in 2002. By 2018, this percentage had only reduced to 54% among adults within the same age group. Better educated individuals tend to have better outcomes in the labour market than their less skilled peers. They are more likely to be employed and, if employed, to occupy positions that earn higher wages. This section presents labour market outcomes of 23–38 year olds Generation X individuals during 2002. The section describes the workforce in this cohort and the skills available for the various jobs and sectors.

Figure 4.1: Generation X adults aged 23–38 labour market characteristics, 2002

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Among Generation X individuals aged 23–38 in 2002, more than half (52,2%) were employed while 23,3% were unemployed. Close to a quarter (24,5%) were not economically active. Among those who were not economically active, close to 9% were discouraged work-seekers⁴. These include individuals who wanted to work and were available to work or start a business but who did not take active steps to find work during the reference period.

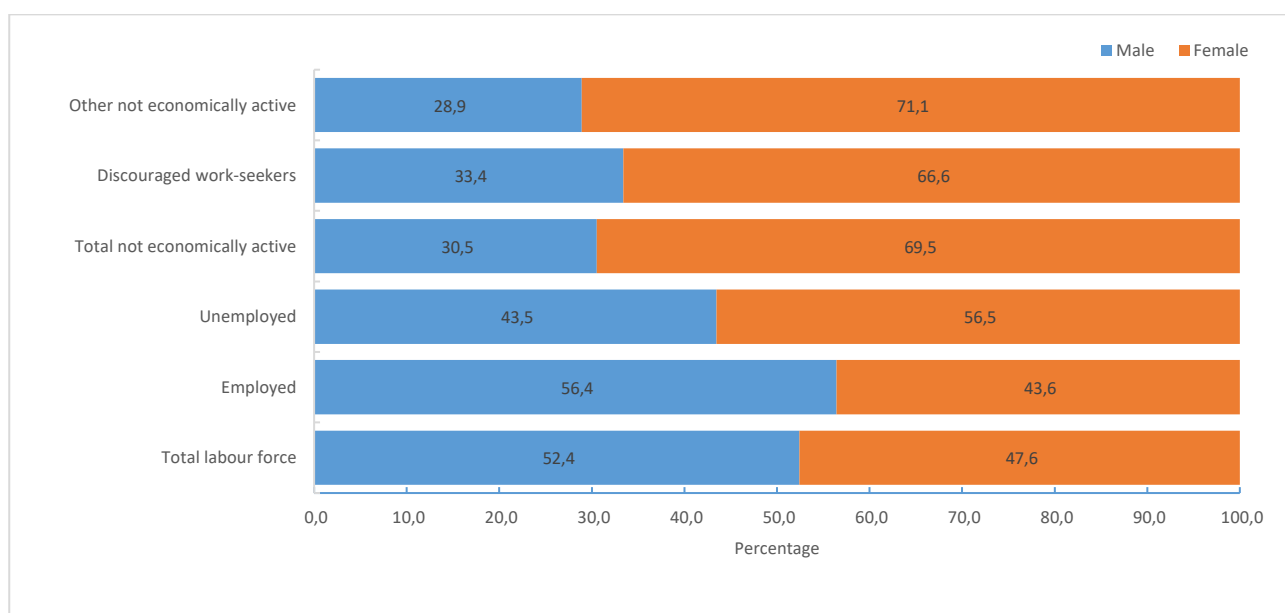
Figure 4.2: Generation X adults aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by age, 2002

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

⁴ A discouraged work-seeker is a person who was not employed during the reference period, wanted to work, was available to work/start a business but did not take active steps to find work during the last four weeks, provided that the main reason given for not seeking work was any of the following: no jobs available in the area; unable to find work requiring his/her skills; lost hope of finding any kind of work (Source: QLFS)

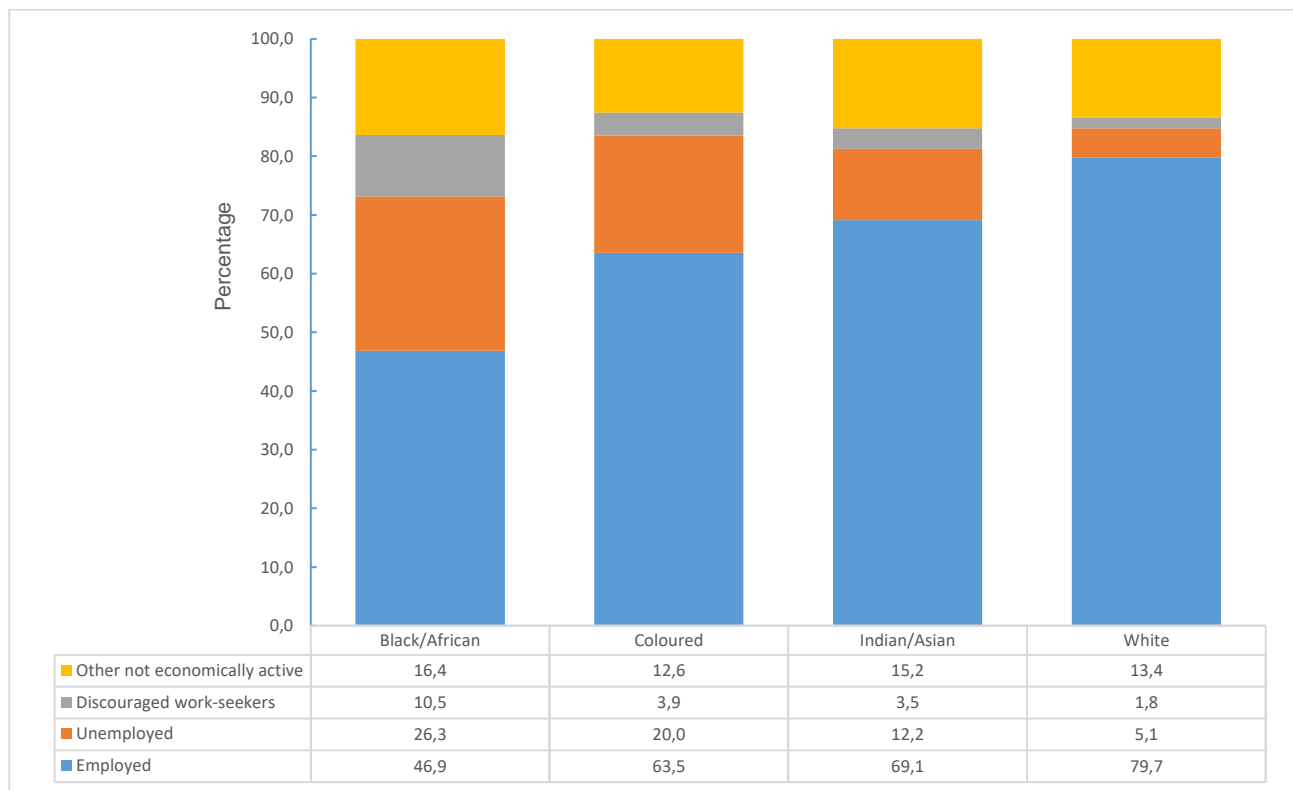
Figure 4.2 shows that the relationship between age and employment tends to follow a positive trend, with a peak between the late twenties and the early thirties. By contrast, unemployment among individuals aged 23–38 declined more or less steadily with increasing age. During 2002, unemployed individuals in the cohort 23–38 years were mostly youth 28 years old and younger (55,6%). Furthermore, seven out of ten (69,6%) among unemployed individuals in this age cohort were 30 years old or younger. Similarly, discouraged work-seekers within this age cohort were mostly 30 years and younger (69,1%).

Figure 4.3: Generation X adults aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by gender, 2002



Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

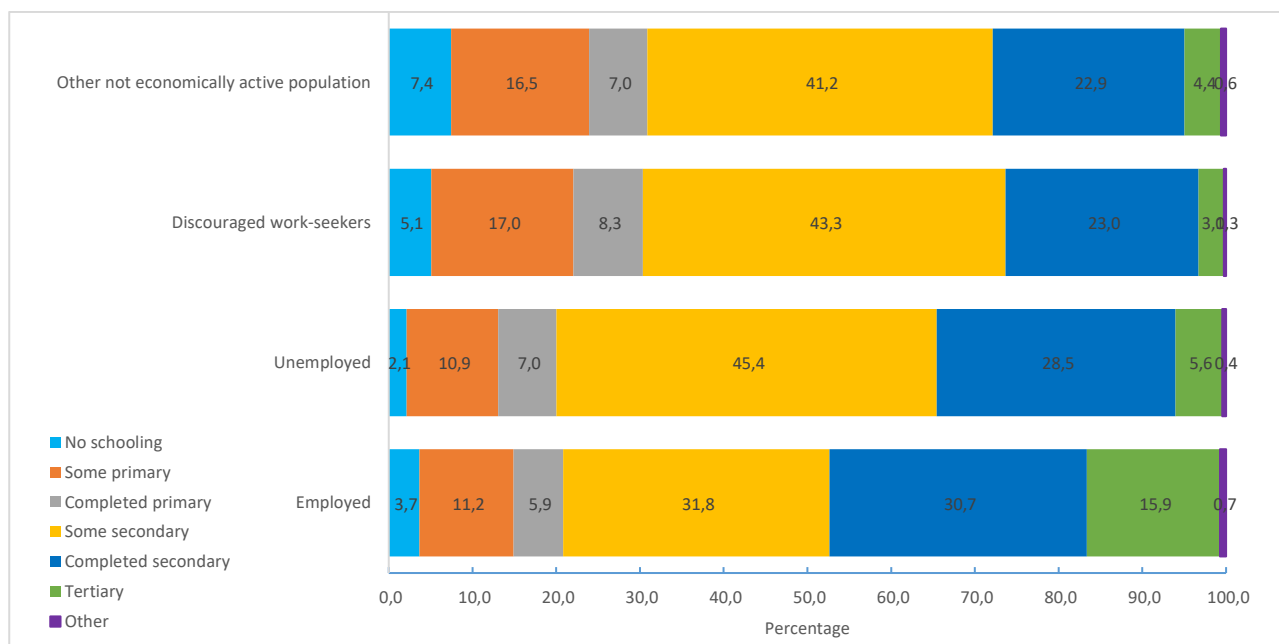
Figure 4.3 shows, males participated in the labour market at a higher rate than their female counterparts did in 2002. Among those employed, 56,4% were males. Gender gaps in employment rates can be partly explained by the over-representation of women who were not economically active. The gender composition of the labour force aged 23–38 during 2002 shows that a higher proportion of women (close to 70%) were not economically active compared to men. Among discouraged work-seekers, two-thirds (66,6%) were females.

Figure 4.4: Generation X adults aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by population group, 2002

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Population group imbalances were displayed in labour force participation rates among Generation X members aged 23–38. In 2002, less than half (46,9%) of black Africans in the age group 23–38 were employed, while 63,5% coloureds, 69,1% Indians/Asians and 79,7% whites in the same cohort were employed. Furthermore, during the same period, 26,3% black Africans in the age group 23–38 were unemployed, while there were proportionately fewer unemployed individuals among the other population groups, and considerably less among whites compared to black Africans (five times less at 5,1%).

Figure 4.5: Generation X adults aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by highest level of education, 2002



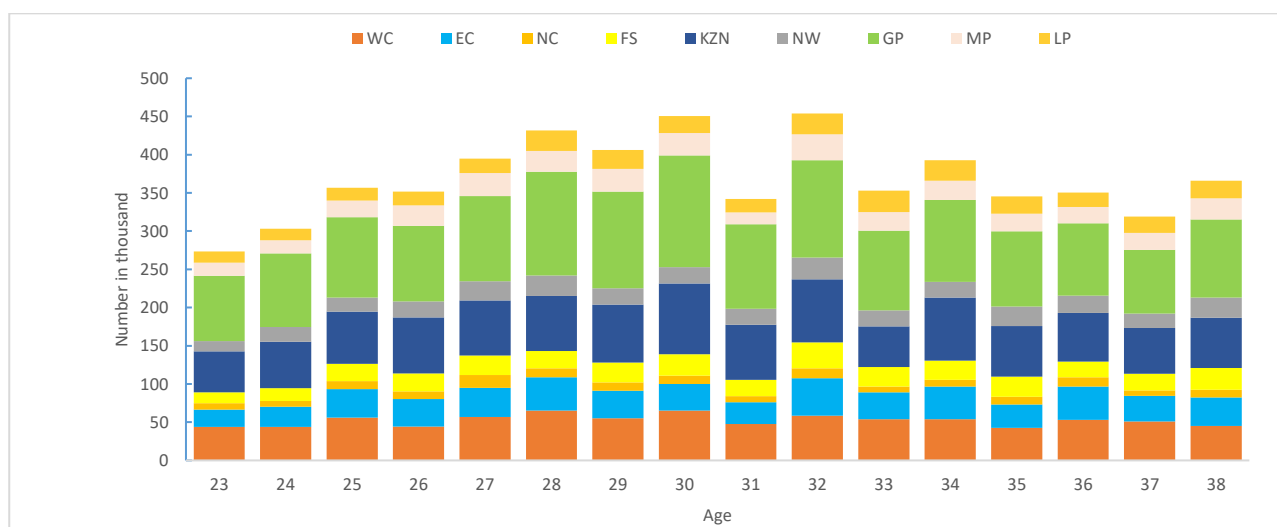
Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Employment was the highest among those with higher educational attainments. Amongst those who were employed, 30,7% had completed secondary education and 15,9% had a tertiary qualification. Yet close to one-third of employed individuals (31,8%) did not complete secondary education; close to six per cent (5,9%) only completed primary education; 11,2% had some primary schooling and close to 4% (3,7%) had no education. Lower levels of educational attainment was a barrier to entry into the labour market, as close to 65% of unemployed Generation X individuals had no schooling or were school dropouts. However, among those unemployed, close to 29% had completed secondary schooling whereas close to six percent had a tertiary qualification. Similarly among discouraged work-seekers, 23,0% had completed secondary school education while 3,1% had a tertiary qualification.

Figure 4.6: Generation X adults aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by province, 2002

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

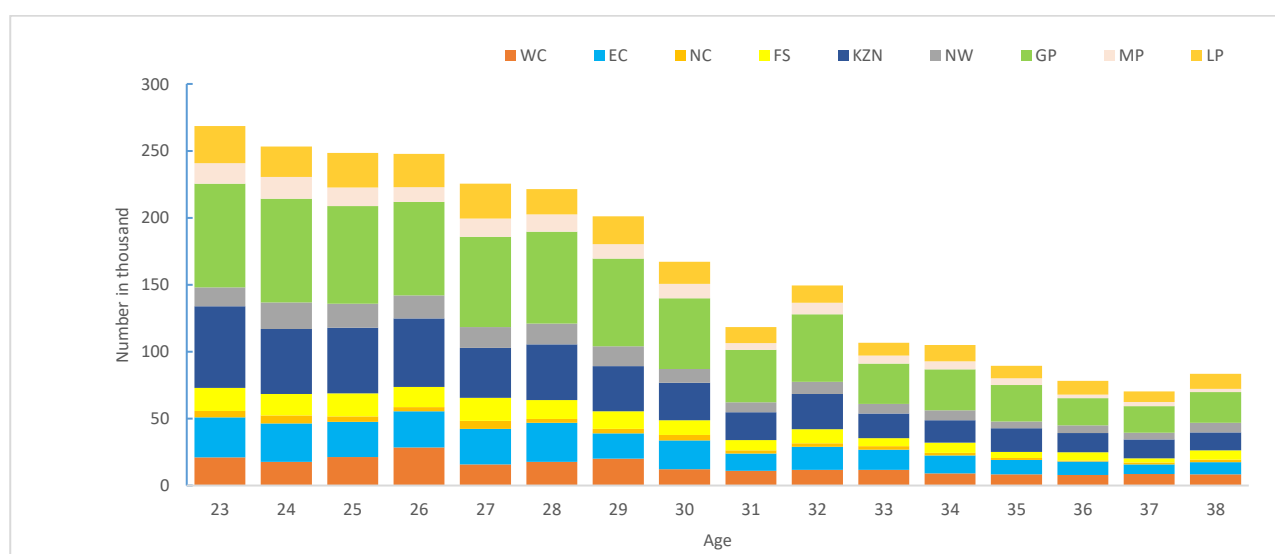
The percentage of employed people aged 23–38 in 2002 was the highest in the Western Cape (64,6%) and the lowest in Limpopo (34,8%). Gauteng was the province with the third highest percentage of employed people (57,8%) but also, together with Limpopo, the province with the highest percentage of unemployed people (close to 27%). It was also the province with the lowest percentage of other not economically active people. Furthermore, in 2002, Limpopo was the province where the highest percentage of discouraged work-seekers aged 23–38 resided (17,4%), whereas the Western Cape had the lowest percentage of such individuals (3,4%).

Figure 4.7: Employed Generation X adults aged 23–38 by age and province, 2002

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

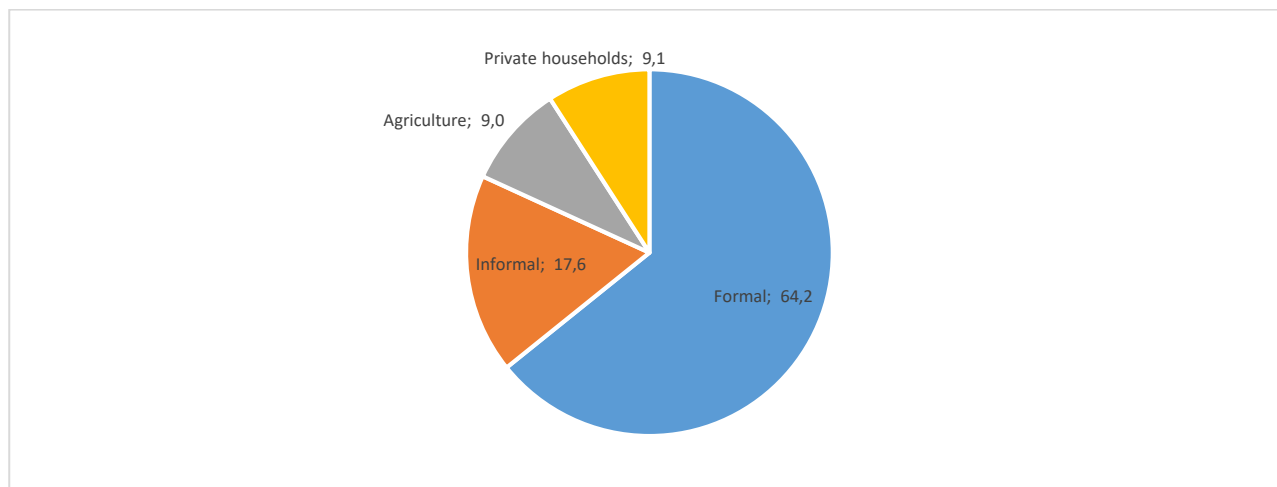
Figure 4.7 ranks the provinces by their number of employed Generation X individuals aged 23–38 years, in 2002. There were major differences in the number of employed Generation X individuals by age between the provinces. In 2002, Gauteng had the highest number of total employed 23–38 year old Generation X individuals in South Africa with about 1,7 million, followed by KwaZulu-Natal (1,1 million) and Western Cape (835 000). Northern Cape, Limpopo and North West had the lowest number of employed 23–38 year old Generation X individuals in South Africa with about 163 000, 344 000 and 352 000 employed people, respectively. While the number of employed persons increases with age for all the provinces, the numbers remain steady for most of the provinces between age 28 to 32 years, except for Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape, where employment levels peaked within these age groups.

Figure 4.8: Unemployed Generation X adults aged 23–38 by age and province, 2002



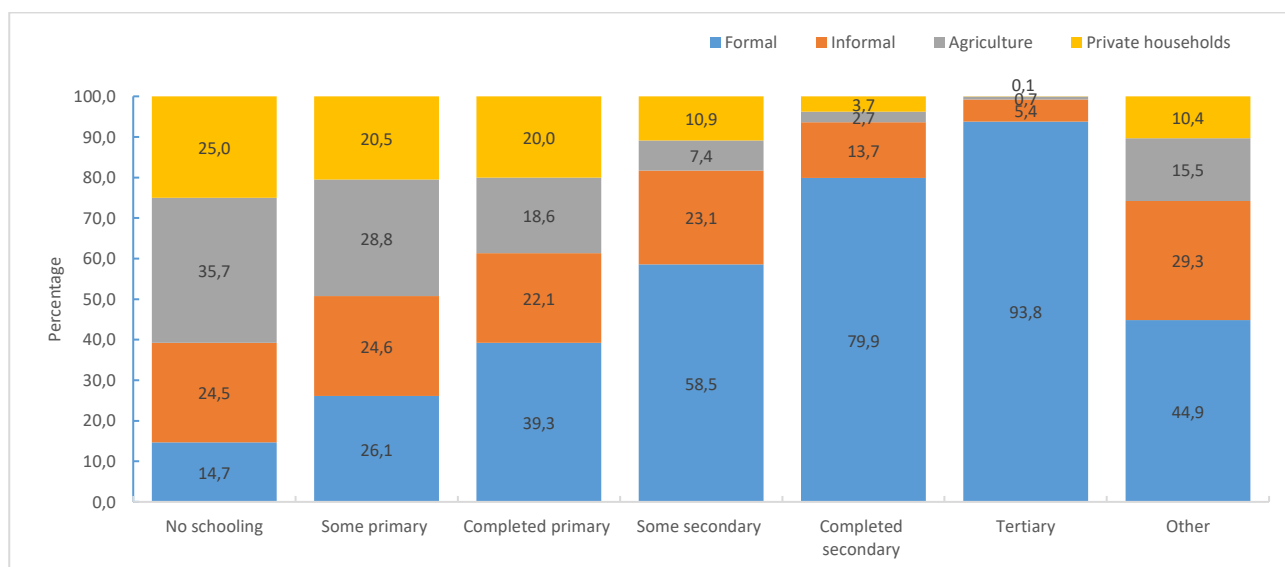
Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Figure 4.8 depicts the number of unemployed Generation X individuals in 2002 by province. Unemployment declined by age for all the provinces but most discernibly in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. In 2002, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal had the highest number of unemployed 23–28 year old Generation X individuals in South Africa with about 793 000 and 493 000, respectively, unemployed in this age group. Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, Free State and North West had the lowest numbers of unemployed 23–38 year old Generation X individuals in South Africa.

Figure 4.9: Employed Generation X adults aged 23–38 by sector, 2002

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Figure 4.9 displays the percentage of employed Generation X individuals aged 23–38 by sector in 2002. The majority (64,2%) of Generation X individuals were employed in the formal sector. However, the informal sector was an important factor of the economy that provides employment, livelihoods and income for millions of Generation X workers and business owners as close to 18% were employed in this sector. Furthermore, agriculture and private households employed 9,0% each of Generation X workers.

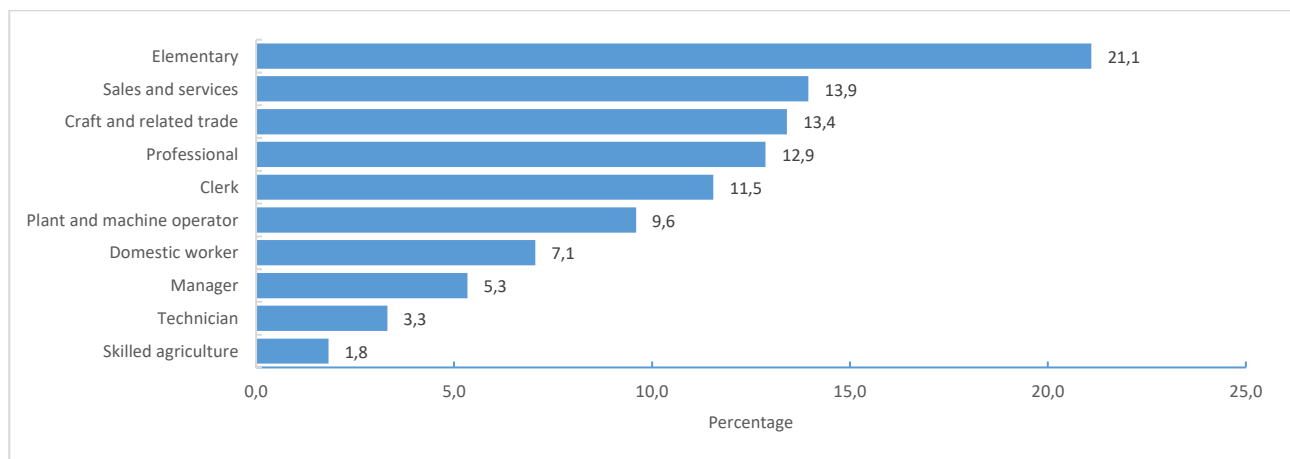
Figure 4.10: Employed Generation X adults aged 23–38 by sector and highest education level, 2002

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Figure 4.10 presents the percentage of employed 23–38 year-olds according to their highest level of education and sector of employment. Education has a substantial impact on the sector employment as shown above. Among those with no schooling, a quarter were employed in private households, another quarter in the informal sector, nearly 36% in agriculture and close to 15% in the formal sector. The

percentage of employment in the formal sector rises with the level of educational attainment. Among those with only some primary education, the percentage of employed people in the formal sector was 26,1% and amounted to three times more (79,9%) for those who had completed secondary education. The percentage of employment grew to 94% among those with a tertiary level education. Conversely, employment in the rest of the sectors declined with the level of educational attainment with employment in agriculture and private households accounting for less than one per cent of employed individuals with a tertiary education qualification. However, the informal sector still occupies 5,4% of employed individuals with a tertiary qualification.

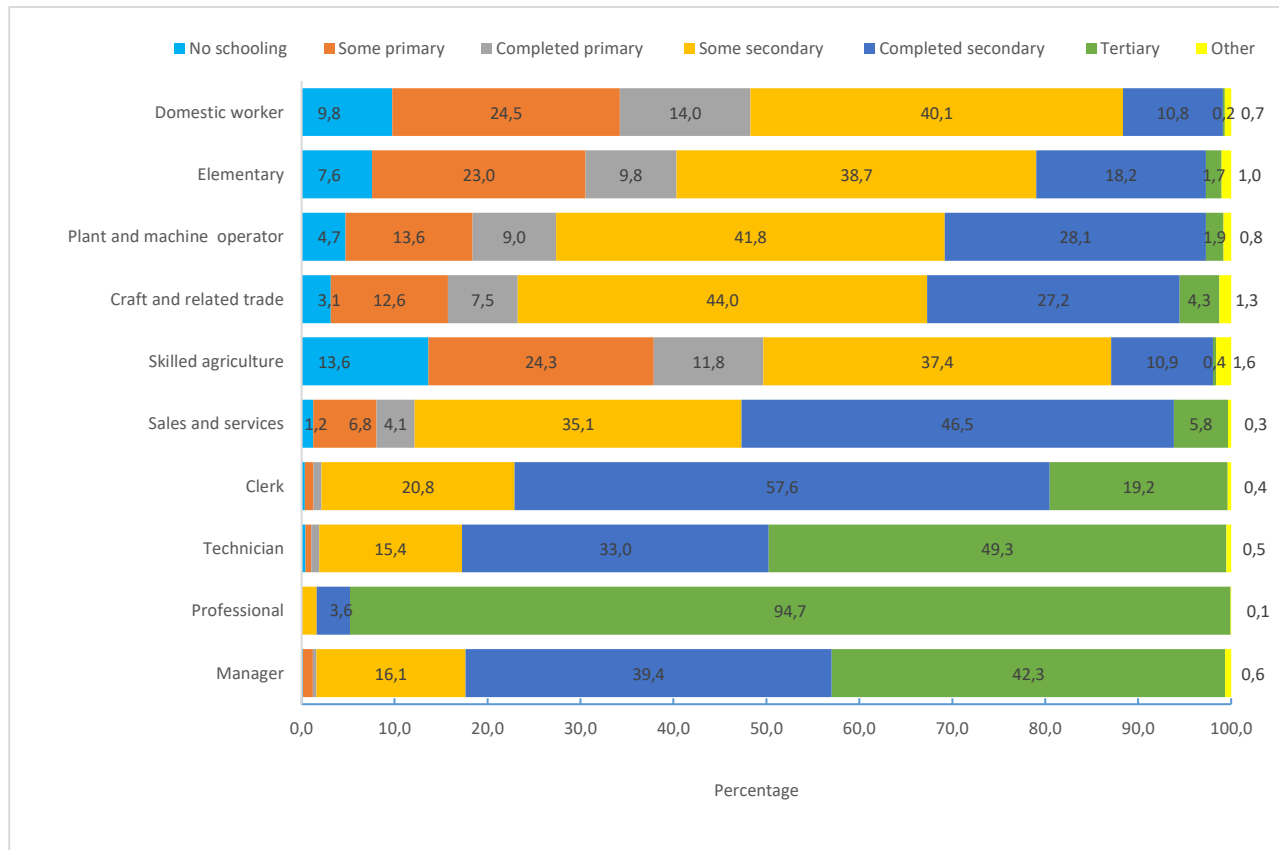
Figure 4.11: Employed Generation X adults aged 23–38 by occupation, 2002



Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Figure 4.11 shows the occupational composition of 23–38 year old Generation X workers in 2002. Elementary workers, sales and services workers, craft and related trade workers and professional workers had the highest employment shares accounting for 21,1%, 13,9%, 13,4% and 12,9%, respectively of total employment. Jobs in skilled agriculture had the lowest employment concentrations with only 1,8% of 23–38 year old Generation X workers working in this occupation.

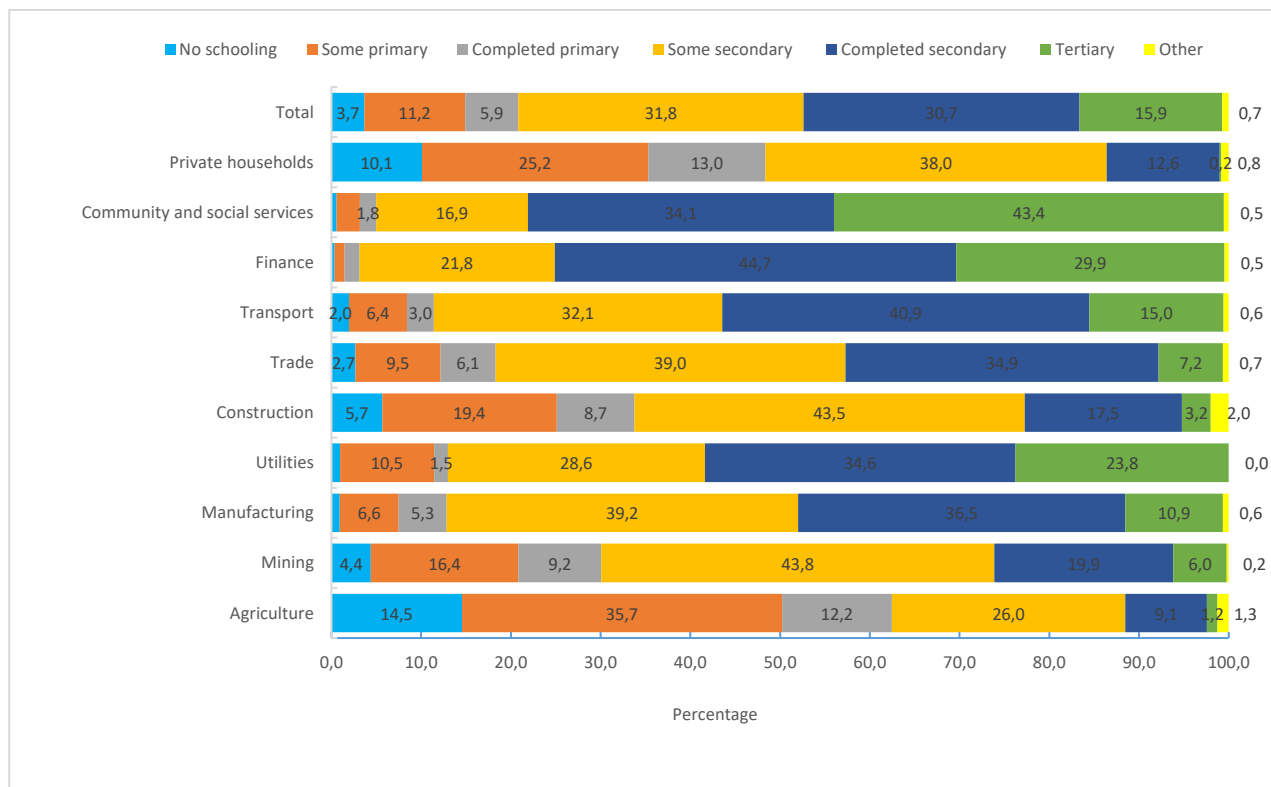
Figure 4.12: Employed Generation X adults aged 23–38 by occupation and highest education level, 2002



Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Occupations such as professionals and technicians require very highly skilled workers that need specialised training at post-secondary level. Hence, close to 95% of 23–38 year old Generation X professionals had a tertiary qualification while 49,3% of technicians had such qualifications. Similarly, three out of seven (42,3%) of 23–38 year old Generation X managers had a tertiary qualification. Among those employed as clerks, the majority (57,6%) had completed their secondary education while 19,2% had a tertiary qualification.

Figure 4.13: Employed Generation X adults aged 23–38 by industry and highest level of education, 2002



Source: Stats SA LFS 2002

Figure 4.13 shows the distribution of employed Generation X individuals aged 23–38 in 2002. The private households, construction and agriculture sectors employed predominantly low- or middle-skilled workers. More than half (50,2%) of the workers employed in the agricultural sector had no education or only some primary school education while the same was true for 35,3% of workers employed in private households and 25,1% employed in the construction industry. The traditionally knowledge intensive industries such as the community and social services sector, and finance and utilities sectors were more likely to employ highly skilled workers. In 2002, the community and social services sector employed 43,4% Generation X workers with tertiary qualification. Furthermore, three out of ten Generation X workers employed in the finance sector (29,9%) had a tertiary qualification while the same was true for close to 24% of workers employed in the utilities industry.

4.2 Labour market outcomes for Millennials

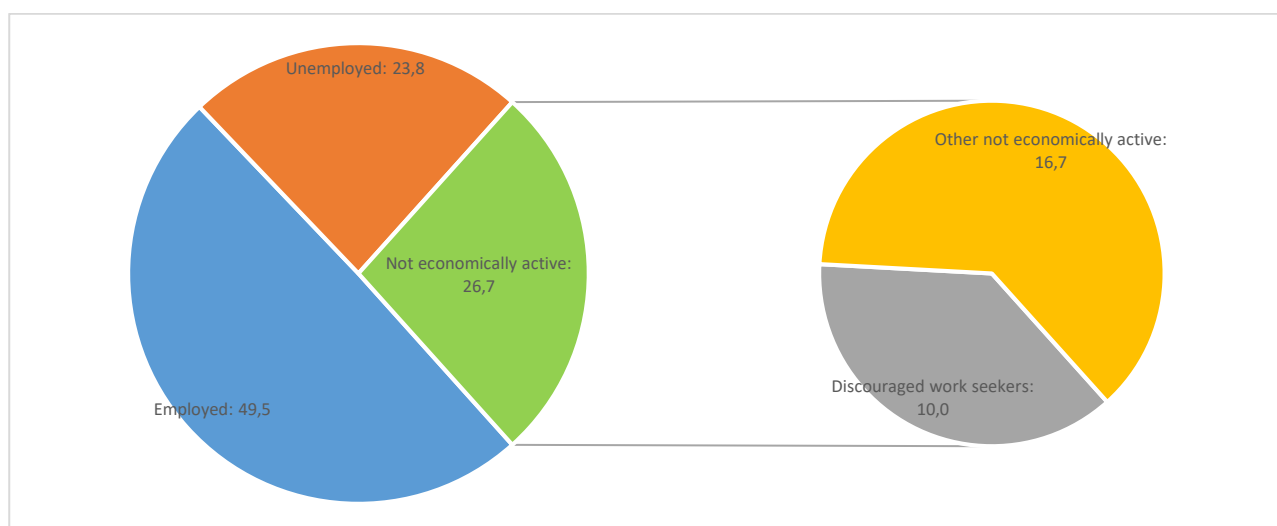
According to QLFS 2018, in 2018, the labour market participation rate among graduates was 89,2%, while it was 85,6% among other tertiary qualification holders. The labour market absorption rate was also high among graduates (83,0%) and 71,5% among other tertiary qualification holders. Furthermore, both the labour market participation and absorption rates were the highest among 35–44 year old (80,7% and 63,6% respectively). However, the unemployment rate was the highest among 15–24 year old youth (53,7%) while it was 33,6% among 25–34 year old youth. Nonetheless, in 2018, 23–34 year old graduates had the lowest unemployment rate (8,8%) while it was 25,9% for youth in the same age group with other tertiary

qualifications (Stats SA, 2018). In 2018, Generation X individuals turned 39 to 58 years old and were most likely employed especially if they had the required skills. Similarly, during the same period, Millennials turned 19 to 38 years old and would most likely be employed only if they benefited from vocational training and skills development opportunities.

Unlike Generation X individuals, Millennials in their 20s and 30s came of age during the bad economic conditions in South Africa, and consequently full and productive employment remained elusive for many youth in this generation. During 2008 to 2018, the unemployment rate fluctuated between the 20% and 30% band.

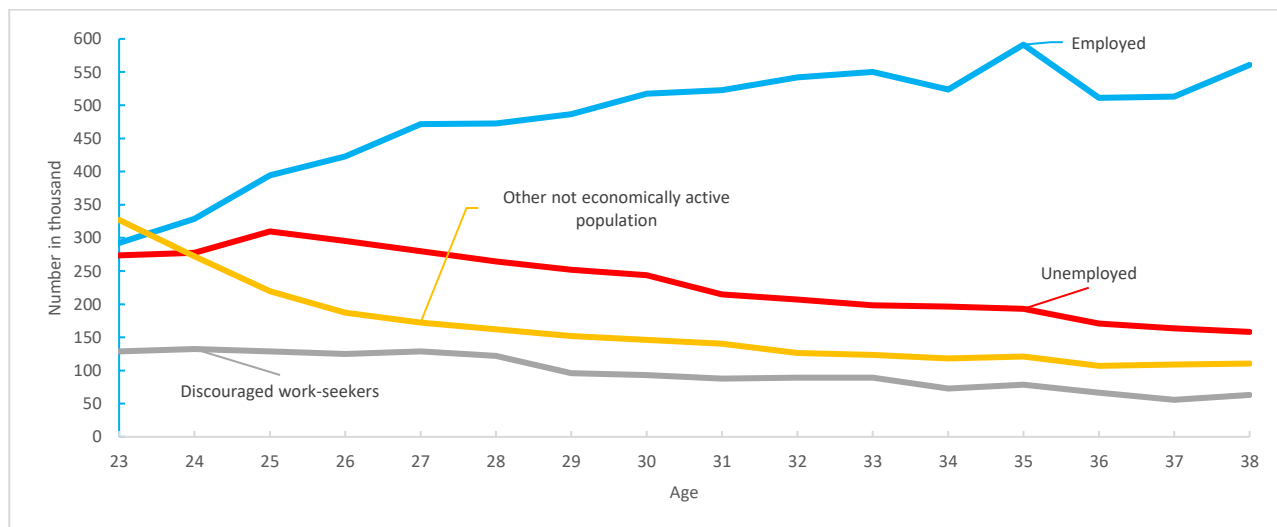
Close to three in ten (31,6%) 15–24 year old young people were not in employment, education or training (NEET) in quarter 2 in 2018; the same was true for 39,3% of 15–34 year olds (Stats SA, Q2018). Such young people were not gaining skills that were valued in the labour market, and thus this reduced their future chances of employment. This section presents labour market outcomes for this generation and compares them to their preceding generation.

Figure 4.14: Millennials aged 23–38 labour market characteristics, 2018



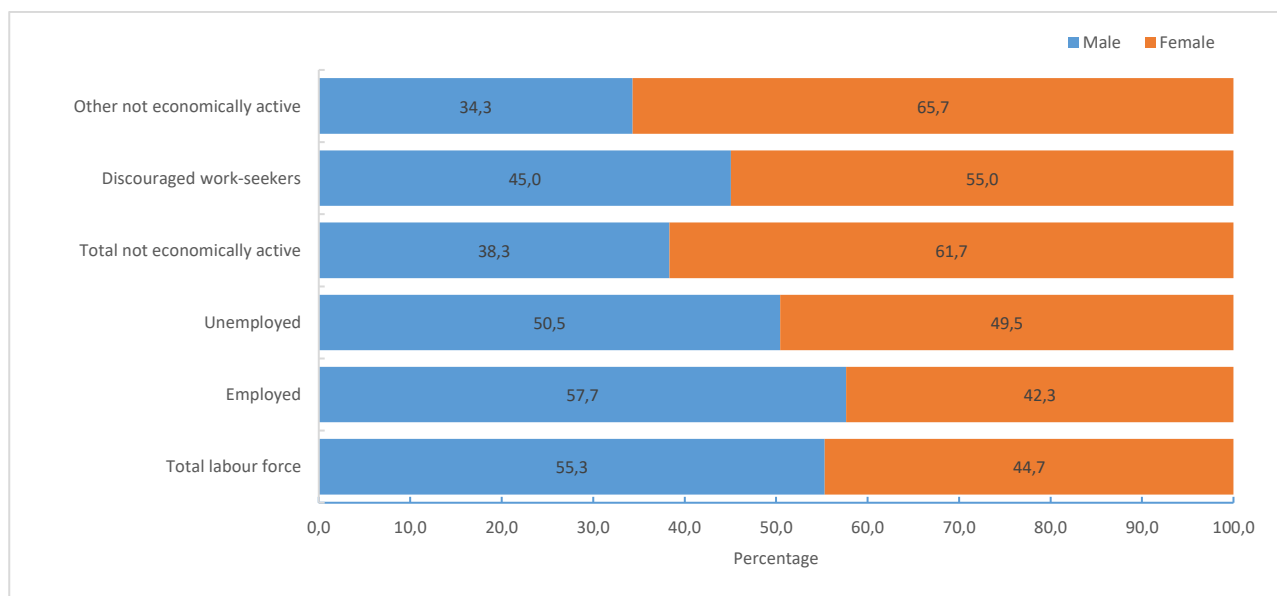
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Among Millennials aged 23–38 in 2018, close to half (49,5%) were employed while 23,8% were unemployed, and 26,7% were not economically active. This was close to a three-percentage-point decline from 2002 to 2018 among employed people across Generation X and Millennials. While comparing the two generations, during 2002 to 2018, the percentage of not economically active individuals had risen by close to two percentage points from 24,5% to 26,7%. This was due to a 1,2 percentage points rise in the percentage of discouraged work-seekers and a one percentage point rise in the other not economically active individuals.

Figure 4.15: Millennials aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by age, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

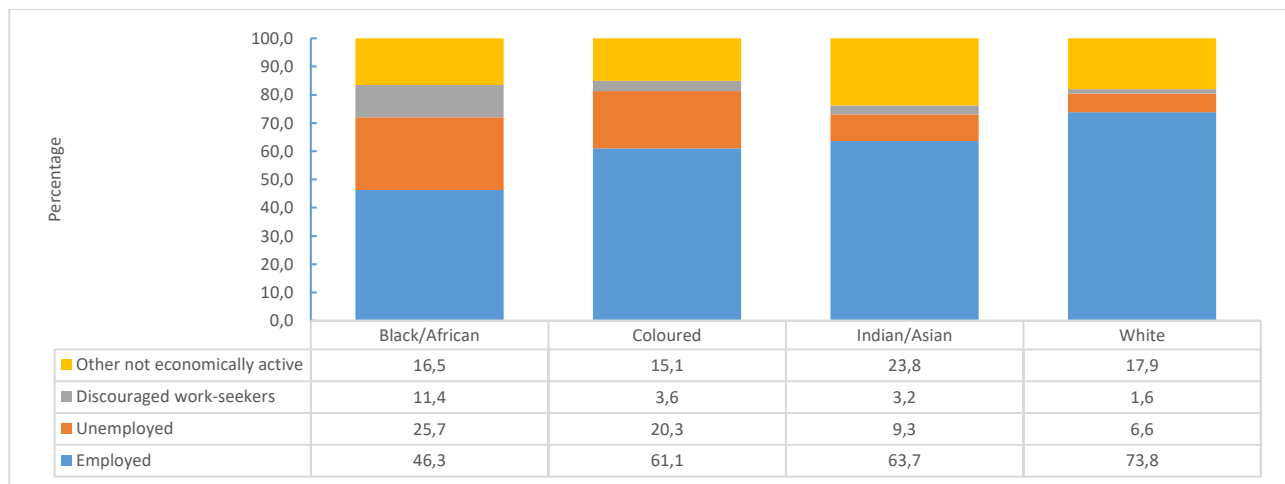
The Millennials cohort size was bigger than their preceding generation and continued to challenge the pace of job creation rates as more young people entered the world of work. From 2002 to 2018, the number of employed 23–38 year olds grew by nearly 1,8 million, while that of unemployed 23–38 year olds grew by nearly 1,1 million. In 2018, the peak age of employment among Millennials was 35, while in 2002, the peak age of employment among Generation X was 32. Furthermore, compared to 2002, there were more discouraged work-seekers aged 23–30 years old in 2018 (close to 1 million).

Figure 4.16: Millennials aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by gender, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Millennial women on average exceeded Millennial men in educational attainment, and constituted the largest share of skilled individuals (Stats SA, 2019b). Hence, they were expected to enter the labour market and close the existing gender gap in employment. However, as Figure 4.16 shows, the labour force constituted mostly male Millennials (55,3%) and among employed Millennials, the majority (57,7%) were males. Furthermore, female Millennials made up the majority among the discouraged work-seekers (55,0%).

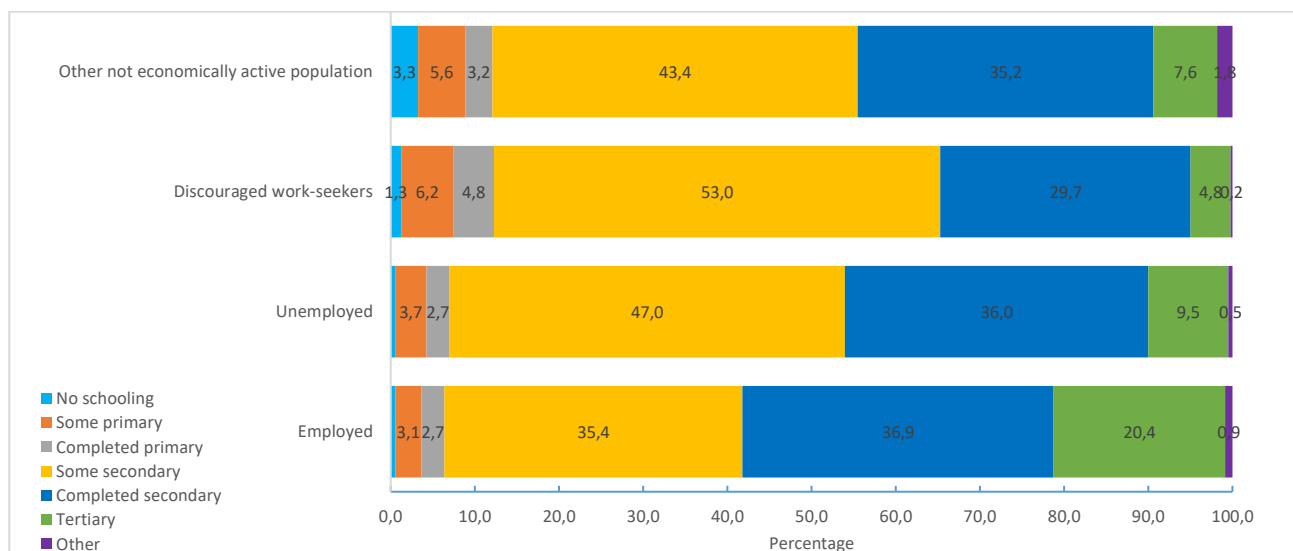
Figure 4.17: Millennials aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by population group, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Black African Millennials did not make a strong start in the labour market in the same way as their preceding generation. Although black African Millennials were better educated, this did not result in better labour market outcomes as only 46,3% were employed, 26% were unemployed and 11,4% were discouraged work-seekers. By contrast, among the rest of the population groups, the majority were employed and whites and Indians/Asians had the lowest percentage of unemployed Millennials (6,6% and 9,3%, respectively).

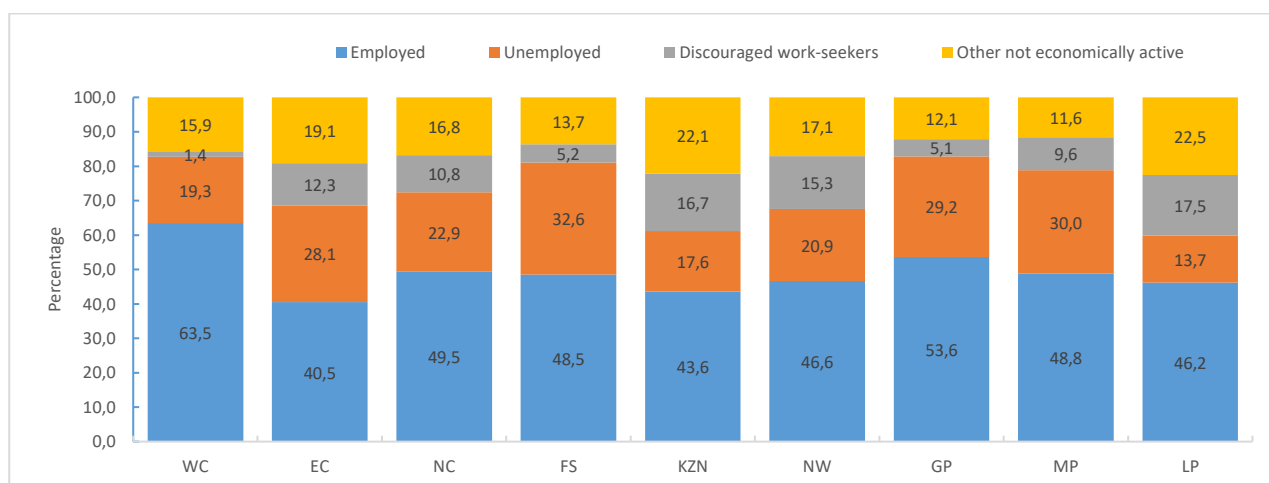
Figure 4.18: Millennials aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by highest level of education, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

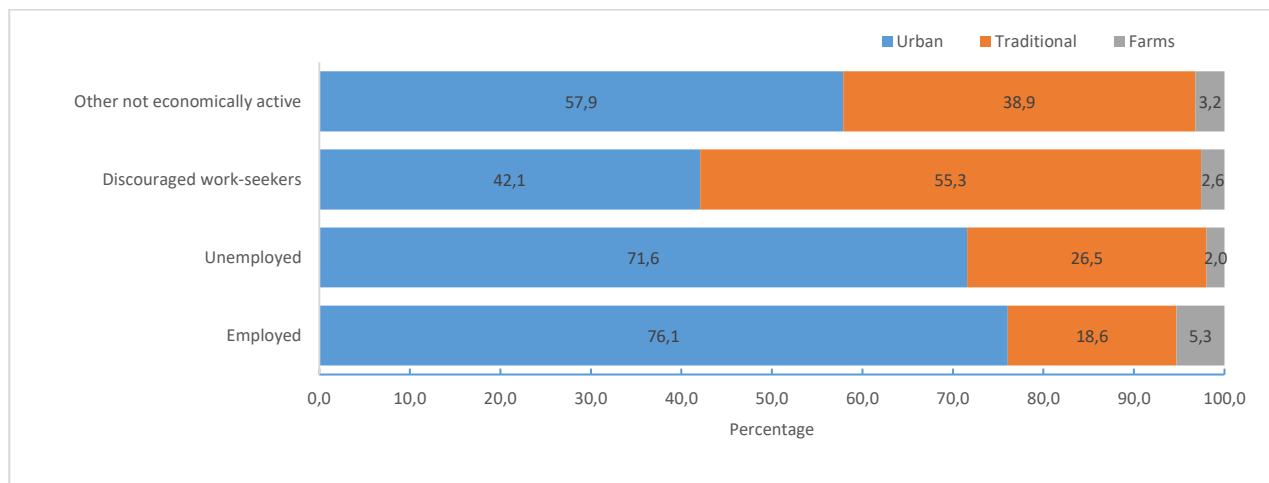
The labour market experience for Millennials differed slightly from that of their previous generation but low-skilled unemployment remained to be the similar feature of the labour market in both generations. These include individuals with no schooling, primary and some secondary education. Middle-skilled Millennials who completed secondary education were also struggling to access employment opportunities. Four out of seven employed Millennials (57,3%) had either completed secondary education or had a tertiary qualification while close to 41% of employed Millennials did not complete school and close to 0,6% had no schooling. By contrast, among Generation X employees, close to 47% had either completed secondary education or had a tertiary qualification while close to 49% of such employees did not complete school and close to 4% had no schooling. Furthermore, among all labour market categories, the largest percentage of Millennials who had primary education or less were either discouraged work-seekers or were not economically active. Among unemployed Millennials, the majority (47%) had some secondary schooling only showing that young people with low skill levels were finding it hard to secure jobs. Furthermore, among unemployed Millennials, close to 10% had a tertiary qualification, which was almost more than twice more than the Generation X individuals in the same category.

Figure 4.19: Millennials aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by province, 2018



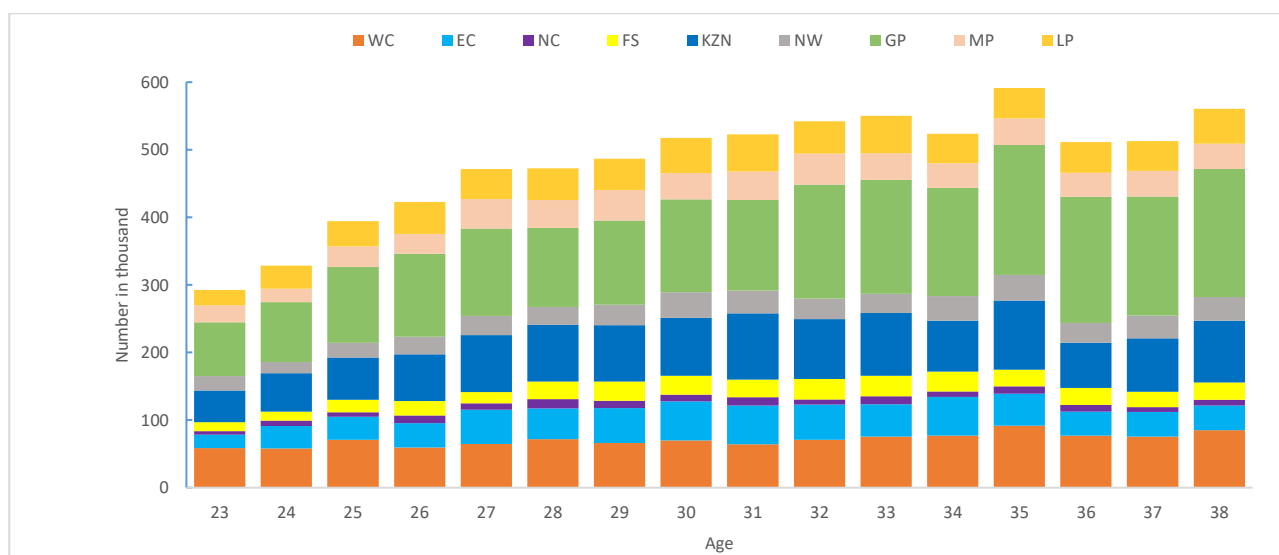
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.19 presents provincial labour market differences, as the rate of labour force participation, is an important determinant of labour supply at provincial level. Similar to the experience of their preceding generation, the percentage of employment was the highest among Millennials residing in the Western Cape (close to 64%) followed by those residing in Gauteng (close to 54%). The lowest percentage of employment among Millennials was observed in Eastern Cape (40,5%), which was 4,6 percentage points lower than their preceding generation residing in the same province during 2002. One in three Millennials in Free State were unemployed (32,6%) making it the province with the highest percentage of unemployed Millennials followed by Mpumalanga (30%). By contrast, Limpopo which was the province with the highest percentage of unemployed Generation X individuals (27,2%) in 2002 had almost half of this percentage of unemployed in 2018 (13,7%) making it the province with the lowest percentage of unemployed Millennials in 2018. However, compared to 2002, while the Western Cape remained the province with the lowest percentage of discouraged work-seekers in 2018, Limpopo also remained the province with the largest percentage of discouraged work-seekers for both generations. Unemployment in some provinces might be linked to the long-term decline of employment in agriculture.

Figure 4.20: Millennials aged 23–38 labour market characteristics by geography type, 2018

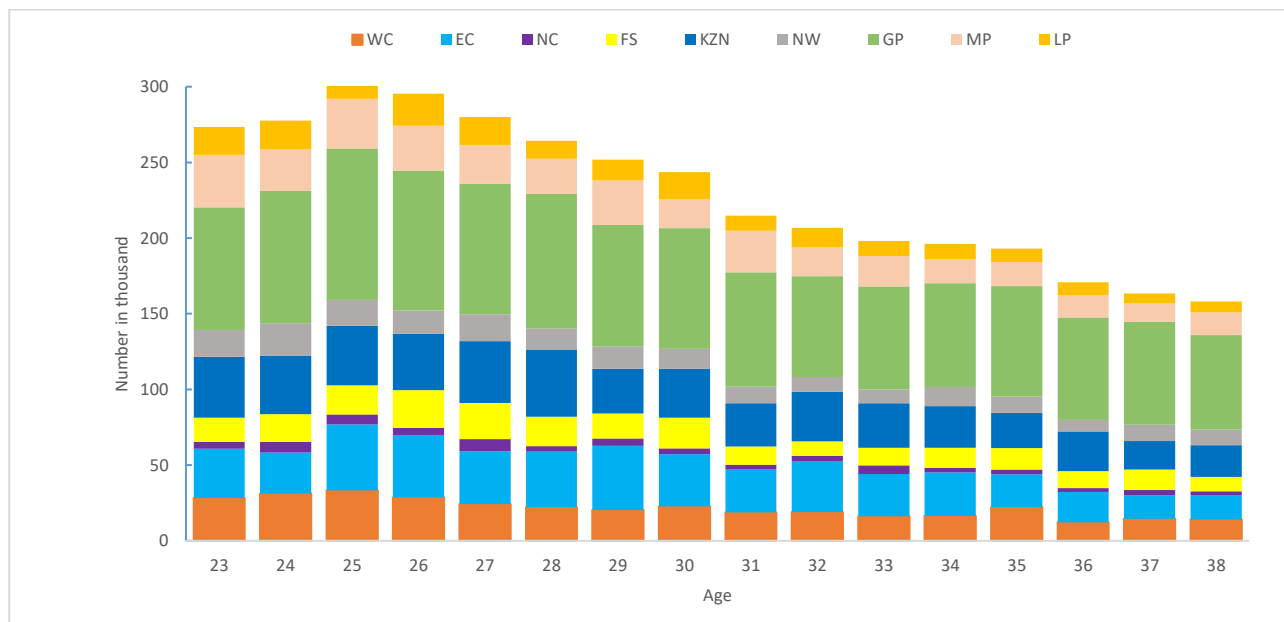
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.20 describes the labour market characteristics of 23–38 year old Millennials in 2018 by geography type. Large differences typically exist between rural and urban labour market opportunities. Close to three out of four employed Millennials (76,1%) were residing in urban areas while 18,6% were residing in traditional areas and 5,3% in farm areas. Five out of seven (71,6%) unemployed Millennials were residing in urban areas while 26,5% and 2,0% of unemployed Millennials were residing in traditional and farm areas, respectively. Among discouraged Millennial work-seekers, the majority (55,3%) were staying in traditional areas.

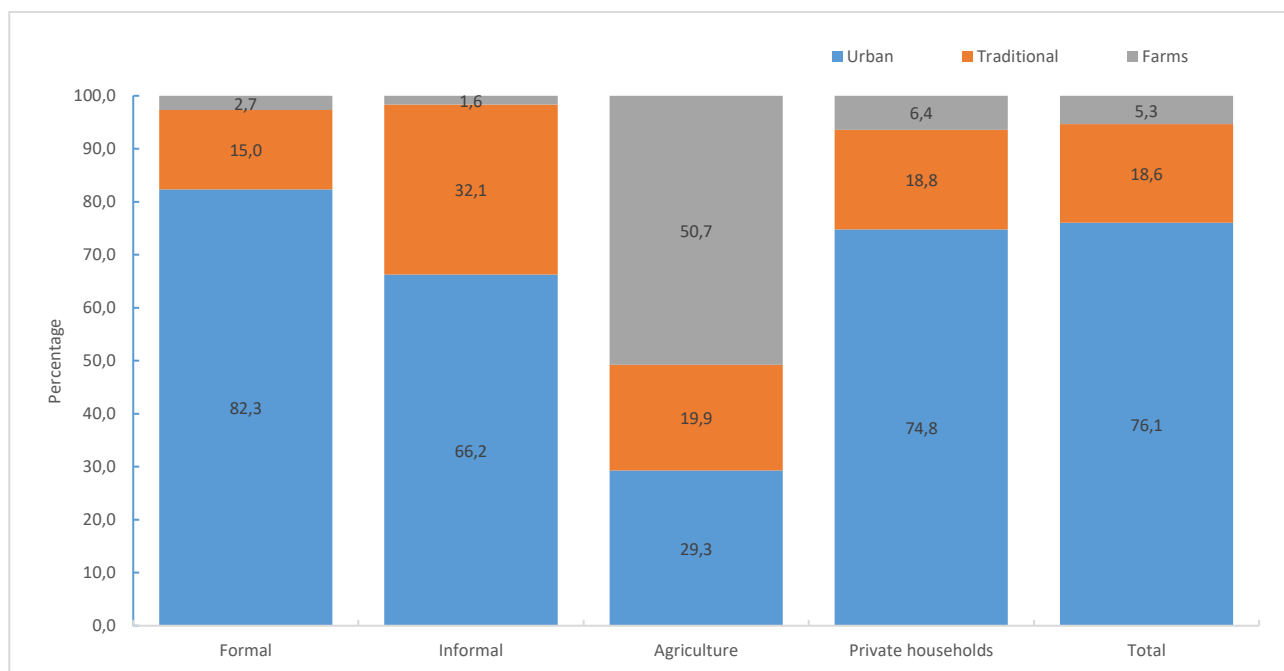
Figure 4.21: Employed Millennials aged 23–38 by age and province, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Gauteng and Western Cape were the provinces employing the majority of 23–38 year old Millennials since they were the most economically advanced provinces.

Figure 4.22: Unemployed Millennials aged 23–38 by age and province, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

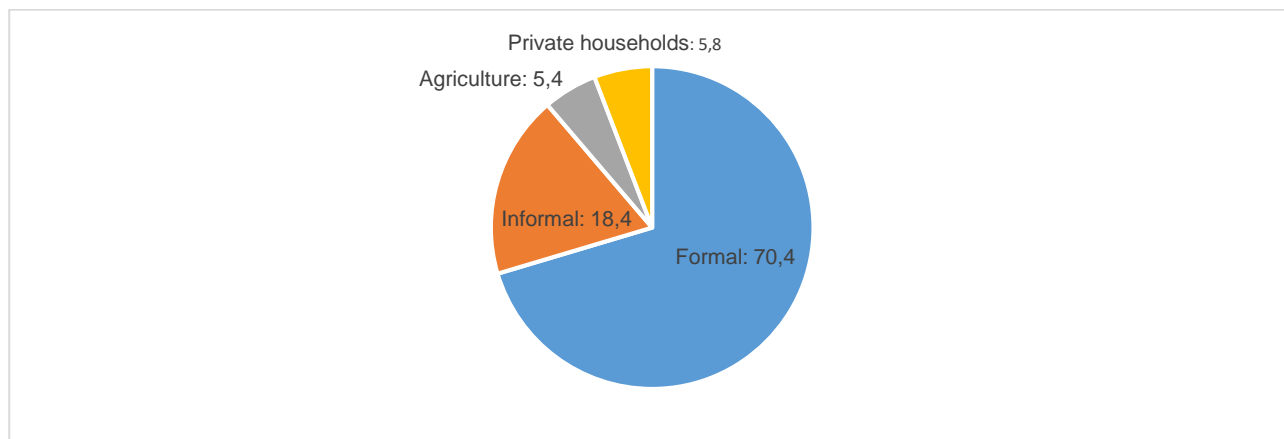
Figure 4.23: Employed Millennials aged 23–38 by geography type, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.23 shows that close to four out of five (82,3%) of 23–38 year old Millennials employed in the formal sector were residing in urban areas. By contrast, two-thirds (66,2%) of 23–38 year old Millennials employed in the informal sector were residing in urban areas. Similarly, three-fourths of Millennials employed in private households were residing in urban areas. Seven out of ten (70,6%) Millennials working in the agricultural sector were residing in traditional or farm areas while the remaining 29,3% were residing in urban areas.

Traditional areas also had a sizeable percentage of Millennials (32,1%) working in the informal sector. As depicted in the above graph, a large percentage of Millennials continue to depend on subsistence agriculture or the urban informal economy, often creating their own employment opportunities.

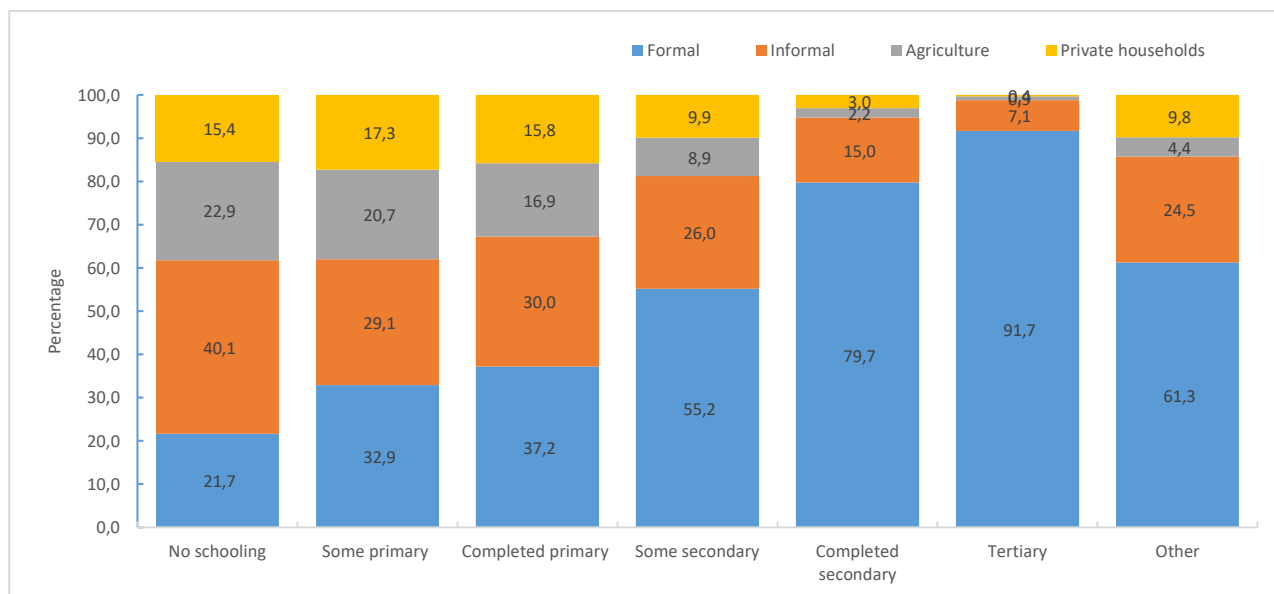
Figure 4.24: Employed Millennials aged 23–38 by sector, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

The distribution of sectors of employment did not show much change across Generation X and Millennials. Employing 70,4% of 23–38 years old Millennials, the formal sector was still the predominant sector of employment for this generation, but grew by 6,2 percentage points compared to employment figures for Generation X. Additionally, employment in the informal sector remained stable across the two generations. However, employment in agriculture and private households shrank for the Millennium generation as only 5,4% and 5,8% were employed in these sectors respectively.

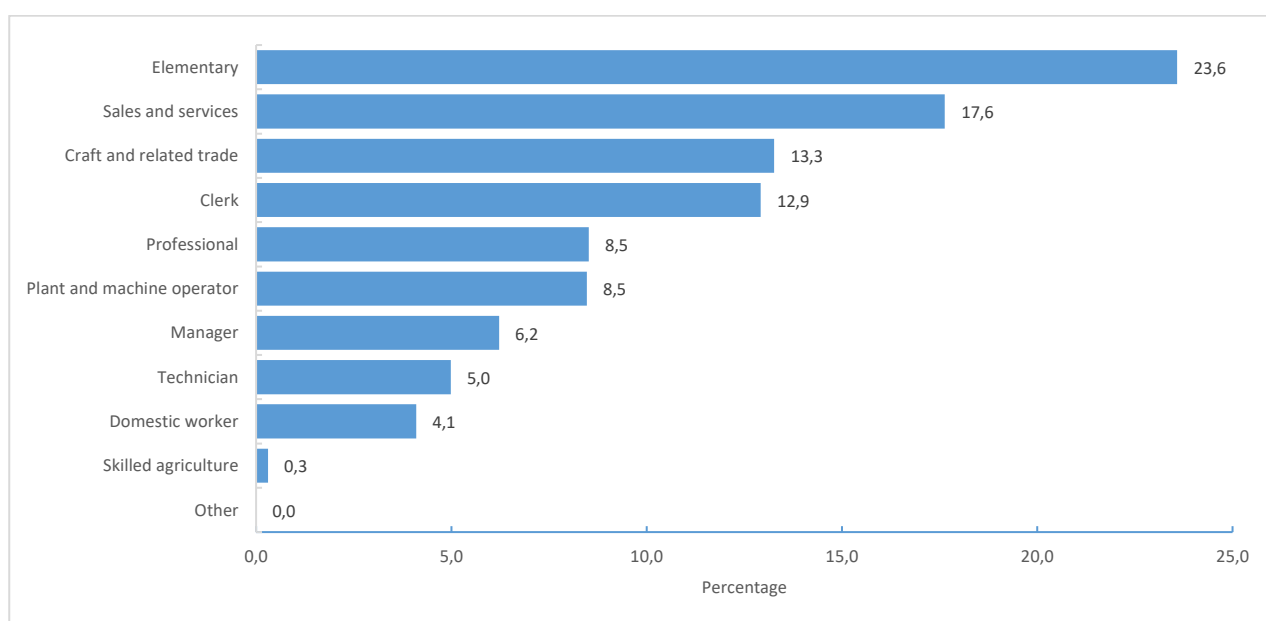
Figure 4.25: Employed Millennials aged 23–38 by sector and highest level of education, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

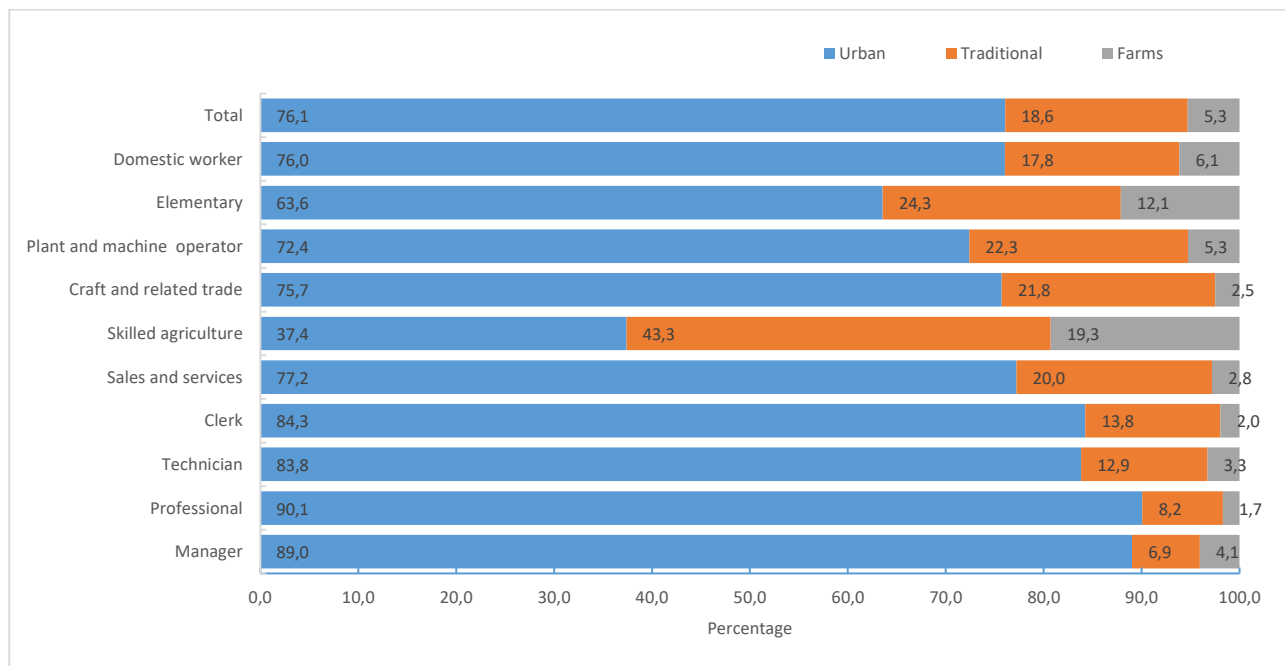
The distribution of the sector of employment by the highest level of education reveals differing patterns across generations. For Generation X, the largest sector of employment among those with no schooling was agriculture (35,7%), whereas it was the informal sector for Millennials (40,1%). Informal sector employment had risen for Millennials among all qualification holders. As discussed previously, employment in private households shrunk by all educational categories including those with no schooling (15,4%), and reduced by ten percentage points compared to Generation X individuals with similar qualifications (25%). Similarly, when comparing Millennials to their preceding generation, employment in agriculture declined largely among those with no schooling from 35,7% among Generation X to 22,9% among Millennials; and among those with some primary schooling, from 28,8% among Generation X to 20,7% among Millennials.

Figure 4.26: Employed Millennials aged 23–38 by occupation, 2018



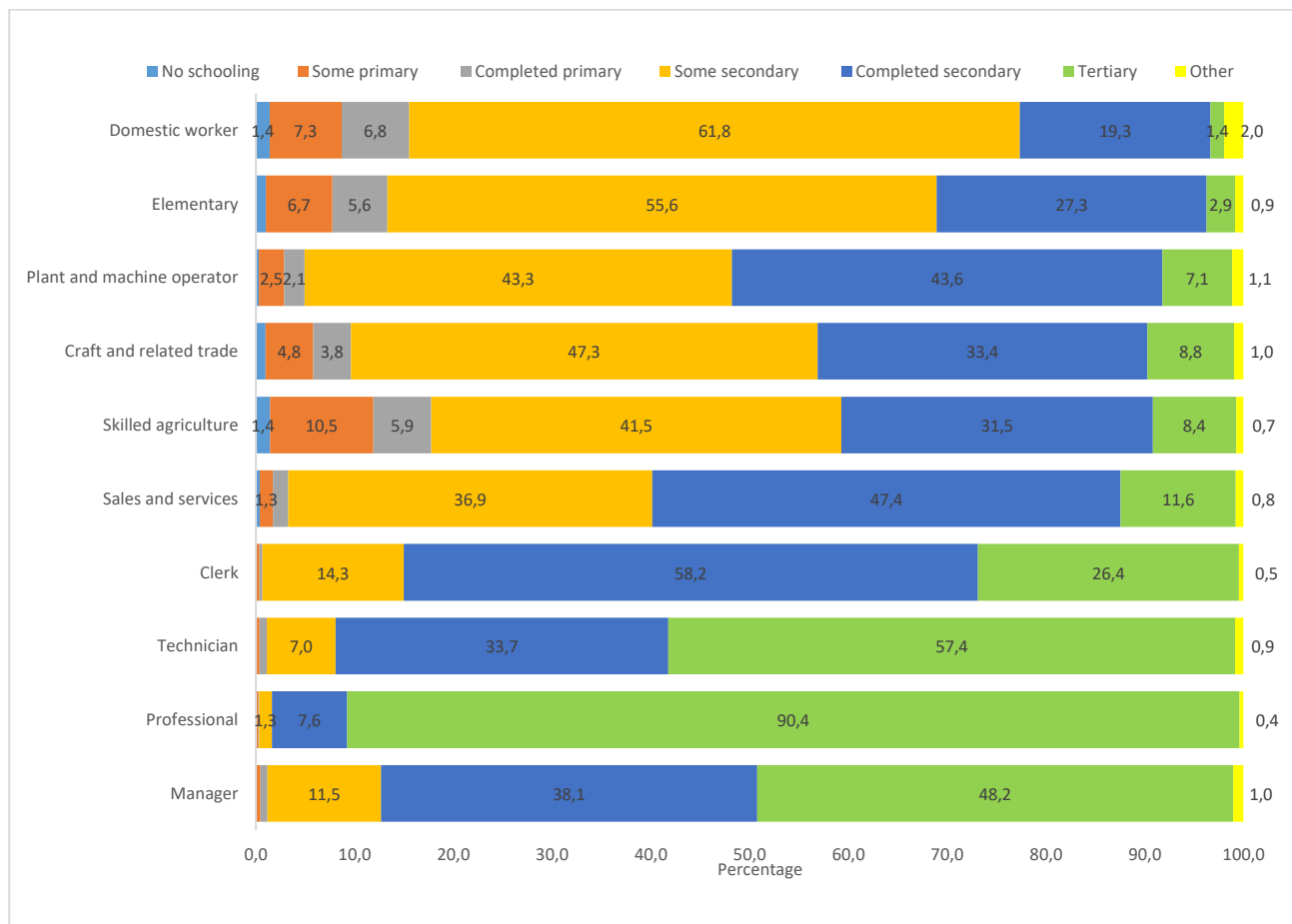
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

The distribution of employed Millennials by their occupation shows some pattern changes compared to their preceding generation. In both generations, the leading occupations were elementary occupations with 23,6% of Millennials employed in this occupation compared to 21,1% of their Generation X counterparts. Furthermore, while employment in occupations such as sales and services, clerk, manager and technician had shown some growth across the two generations, the rest remained either stable or decreased. Most notably, professional employment reduced by 4,4 percentage points and domestic work reduced by three percentage points across the two generations.

Figure 4.27: Employed Millennials aged 23–38 by occupation and geography type, 2018

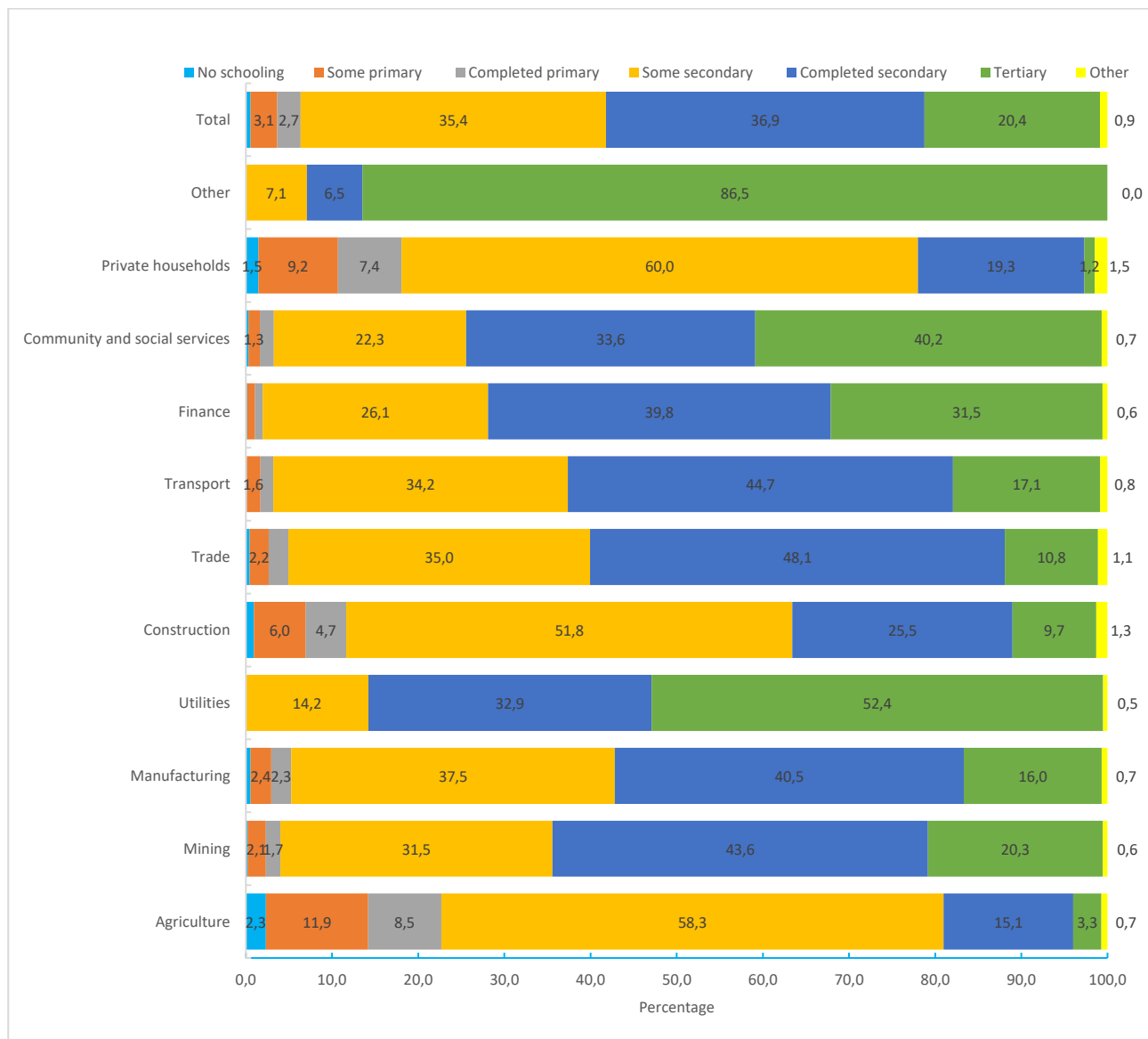
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Overall in 2018, the majority (76,1%) of Millennials aged 23–38 were employed in the urban economy, while close to 19% were employed in traditional and 5% in farm areas. While agriculture continues to be an important source of job creation for 43,3% of Millennials staying in traditional areas where subsistence agriculture sustains the local economy, in farm areas, the sector employed 19,3% of Millennials. Moreover, three out of eight (37,4%) Millennials employed as skilled agricultural employees were residing in urban areas. Eight out of nine Millennials in managerial occupations (89%) and nine out of ten Millennials in professional occupations (90,1%) stayed in urban areas. By contrast, elementary occupations constituted the highest share of occupations in traditional and farm areas (36,4%) followed by occupations in plant and machine operators (27,6%).

Figure 4.28: Employed Millennials aged 23–38 by occupation and highest level of education, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

The demand for low skilled labour has declined over the years. At the same time, there has been a considerable improvement in the educational achievement of the new generation. In 2018, occupations such as domestic work and skilled agriculture that had a very low percentage of high-skilled employees in 2002 employed 1,4% and 8,4% employees with a tertiary qualification, respectively. However, some occupations such as manager, professional, technician and clerk remain exclusively available to middle or high-skilled individuals. Among employed Millennials, nine out of ten professionals (90,4%) had a tertiary qualification while four out of seven technicians (57,4%) had a tertiary qualification. Similarly, 48,2% of managers had a tertiary qualification while the same was true for 26,4% technicians.

Figure 4.29: Millennials aged 23–38 employed by industry and highest level of education, 2018

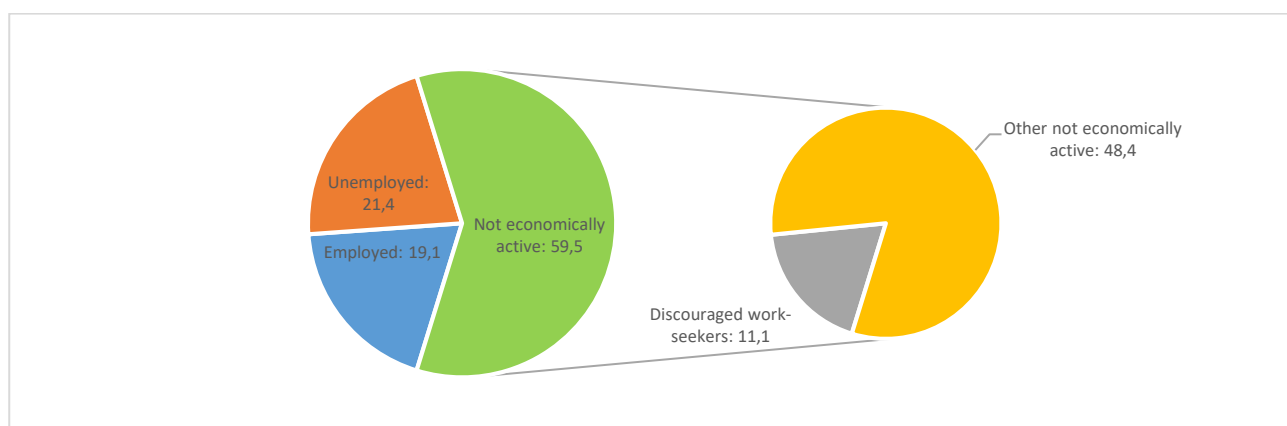
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.29 shows most Millennials employed in the agriculture sector were low-skilled as close to eight out of ten Millennials (81%) who were employed in the sector had no schooling or dropped out of school. The same was true for 78% of Millennials working in private households. By contrast, their preceding generation comprised 88,4% and 86,3% of low-skilled individuals working in agriculture and private households respectively. High-wage, high-skill industries such as utilities, finance, and community and social services would most likely employ middle or high-skilled Millennials. More than half of Millennials working for the utility sector had a tertiary qualification (52,4%). The same was true for only less than half (23,8%) of the Generation X employees in this sector.

4.3 Labour market outcomes for Born-free Millennials

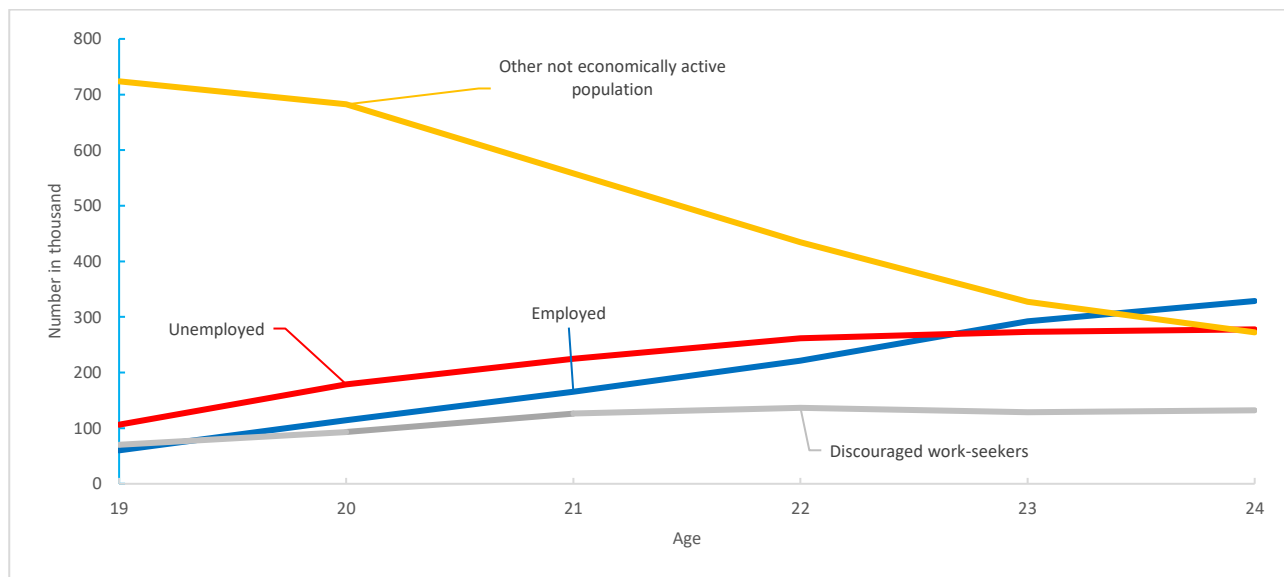
Born-free Millennials have made substantial investment in their human capital compared to the other generations, but the weak labour market in South Africa did not do much to encourage South Africans to acquire further skills, especially since financial resources were a major constraint for those who wanted to pursue a post-school education (Stats SA, 2019b). Born Free Millennials with high levels of educational achievements may typically be from better-off families or youth who benefited from some educational funding. Some qualifications may not be fully realised at the time of the GHS 2018 data collection since some Born-free Millennials may still be attending educational institutions. The analysis in this section includes 19–24 year old youth, who were descendants of Generation X individuals, and may have been pushed to higher levels of educational attainment by their parents. This section presents labour market outcomes for Born-free Millennials and compares this generation to their preceding generations.

Figure 4.30: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 labour market characteristics, 2018



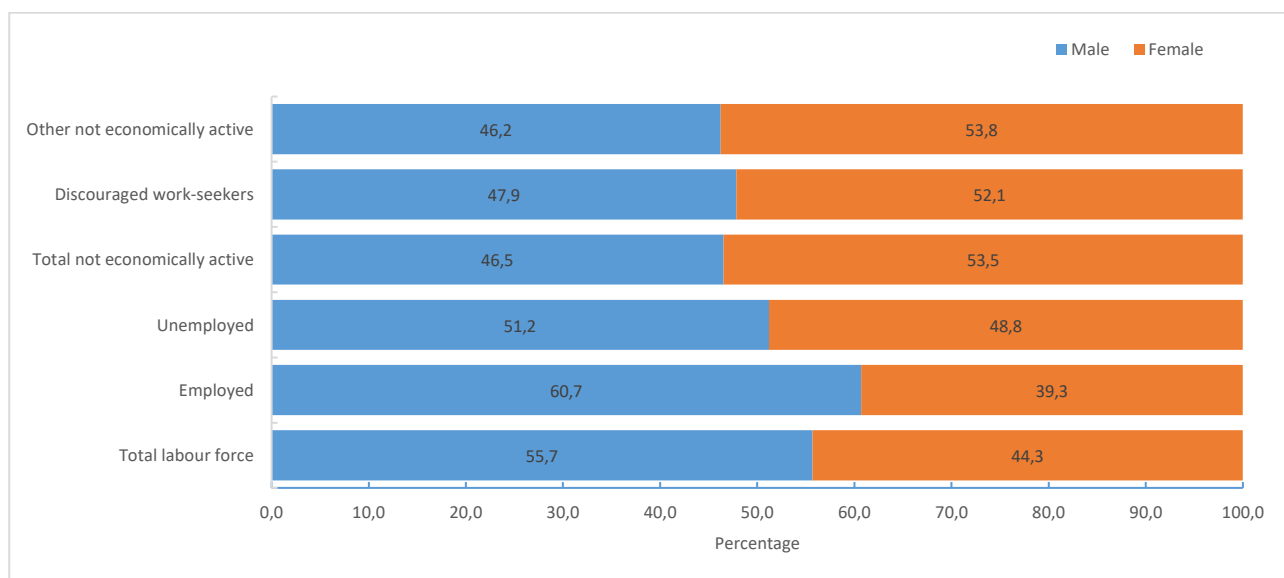
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 were significantly less likely to be employed compared to the other two generations. The pool of the economically not active was rather large compared to the other two generations, with most Born-free Millennials still more likely engaged with school activities. However, Born-free Millennials were also more likely to give up too quickly in their search for jobs, and become discouraged work-seekers (11,1%).

Figure 4.31: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 labour market characteristics by age, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Born-free Millennials struggled with employment due to a lack of jobs or because they were lacking the skills required to secure jobs. Some of them participated in higher education and training to improve their employability. The number of unemployed Born-free Millennials rises with age as they exit schooling to join the labour market. Additionally, while the number of employed individuals also rises with age, it outpaced the number of unemployed Born-free Millennials by age 23.

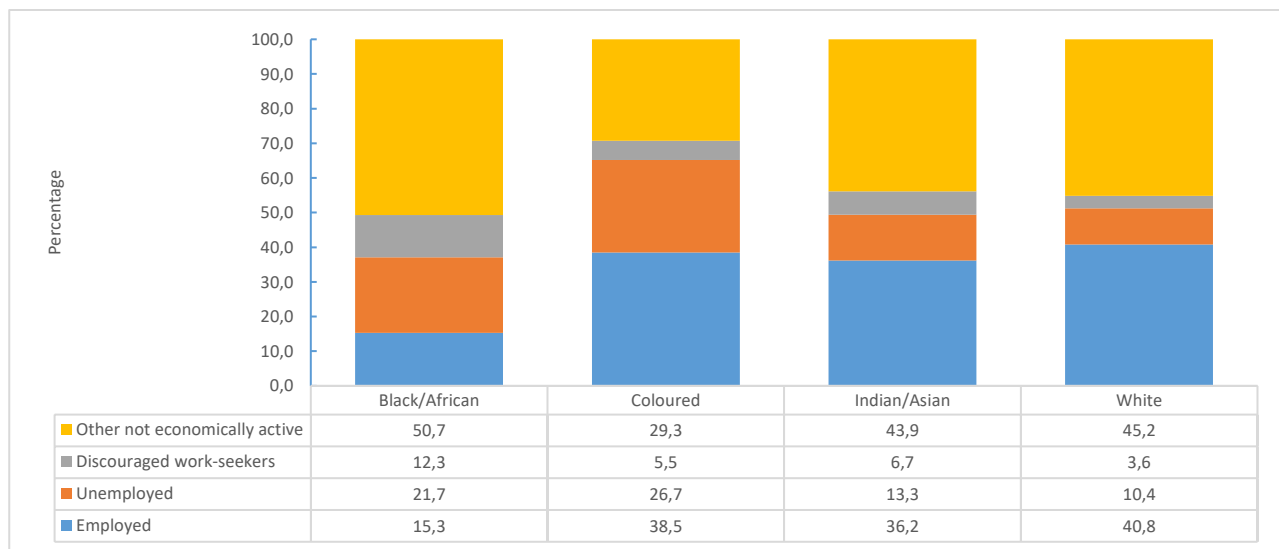
Figure 4.32: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 labour market characteristics by gender, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Labour market opportunities still favour more males than females among Born-free Millennials. Given a disproportionately larger percentage of male labour force participation (55,7%) in this generation, the gender

gap in employment was the highest in this generation compared to the preceding generations, as only 39,3% of females were employed. While women constituted the majority of the economically not active population (53,8%), they also constituted the majority of discouraged work-seekers (52,1%).

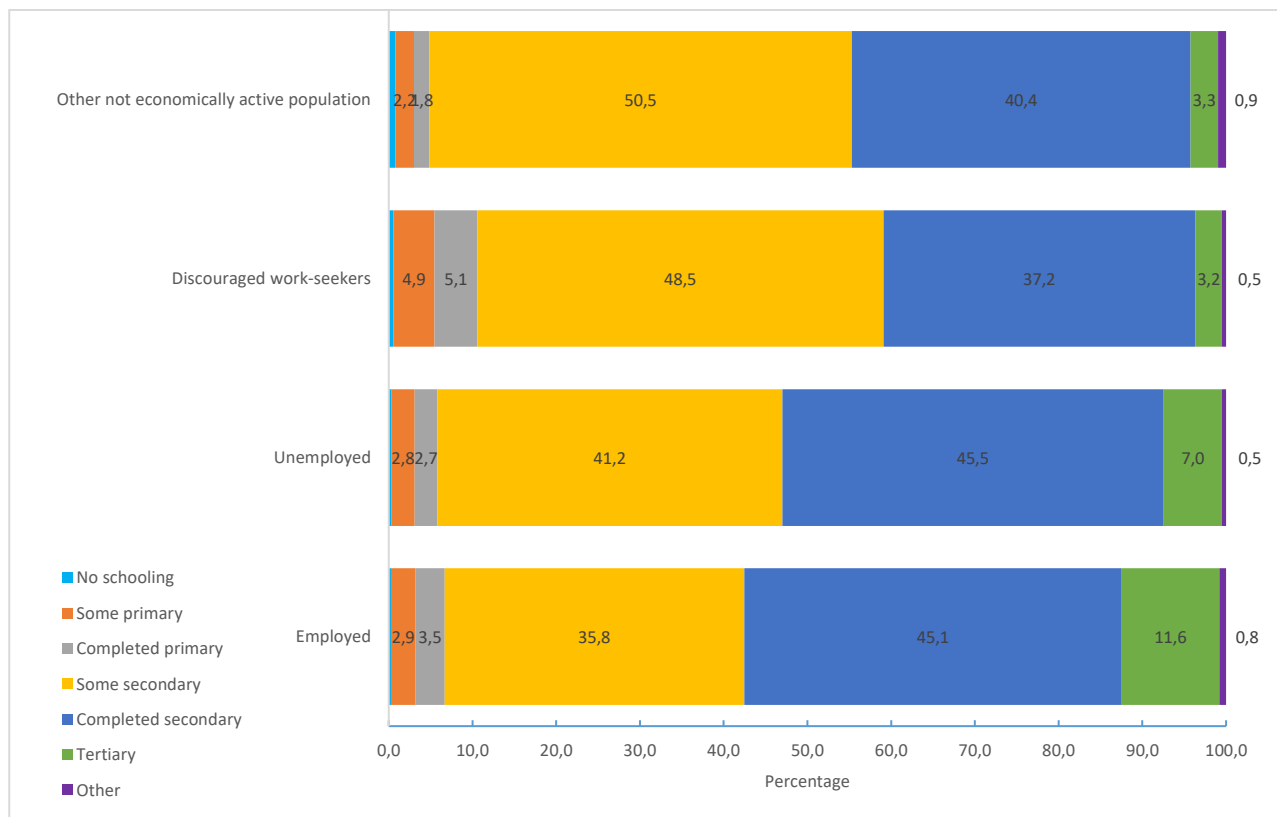
Figure 4.33: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 labour market characteristics by population group, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

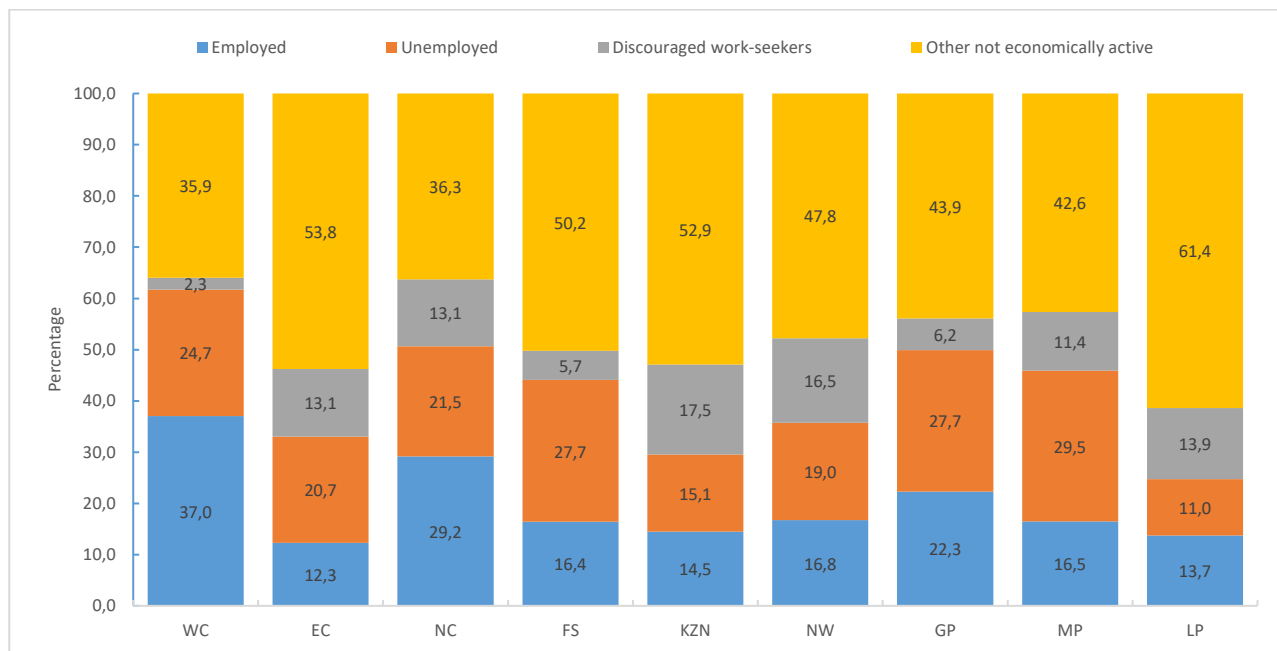
While comparing Generation X to Millennials, we had observed a small decline in the percentage of employed individuals among coloureds, Indians/Asians and whites while the percentage of employed black Africans remained practically unchanged. However, the distribution of the labour market characteristics by population group continued with the same trend across the three generations with whites having the highest percentage of employed individuals (40,8%) and black Africans having the lowest (15,3%) among Born-free Millennials. Two in nine black African Born-free Millennials (22%) were unemployed, while 27% Born-free coloured Millennials, 13% Born-free Indian/Asian Millennials and 10% Born-free white Millennials were unemployed. The percentage of discouraged work-seekers was relatively higher among Born-free Millennials compared to the other generations with black Africans having the highest percentage of discouraged work-seekers (12,3%) compared to whites who had three times fewer (3,6%) discouraged work-seekers.

Figure 4.34: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 labour market characteristics by highest level of education, 2018



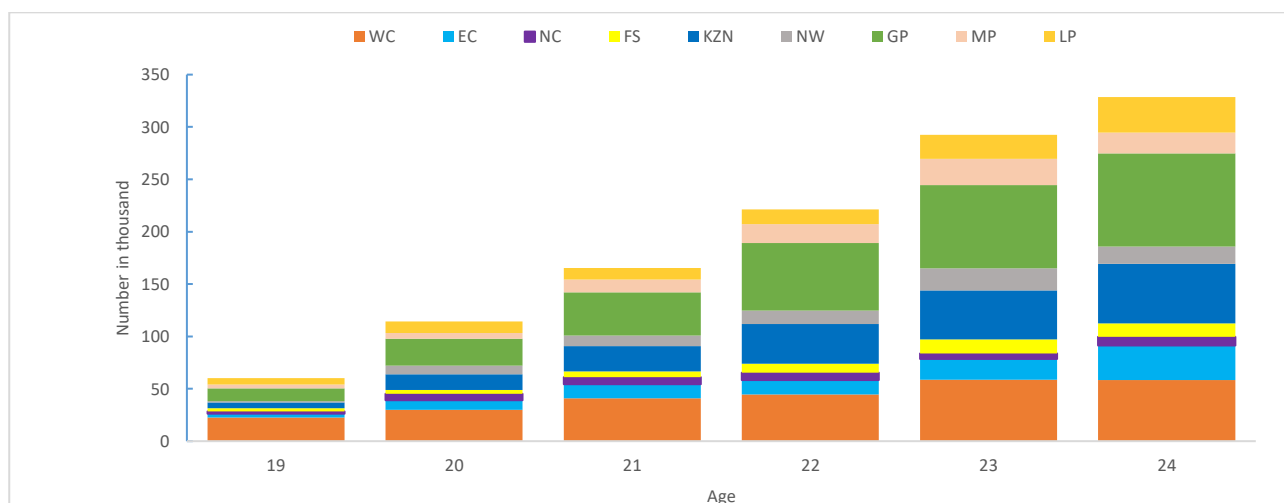
Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Comparing Generation X individuals to Millennials in general, the decline in employment was steeper among those with low levels of educational attainment. In 2018, employment among Born-free Millennials who had lower secondary schooling or less was 42,5%, which was similar to Millennials (41,8%) but was almost ten percentage points lower than Generation X individuals in 2002 (52,6%). Stark disparities across generations were also observed among unemployed individuals who completed secondary schooling or had a tertiary qualification. In 2018, among unemployed Born-free Millennials, more than half (52,5%) had either completed secondary schooling or had a tertiary qualification whereas the same was true for 45,6% unemployed Millennials during the same period and in 2002, for only 34,1% of unemployed Generation X individuals with similar educational achievements.

Figure 4.35: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 labour market characteristics by province, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

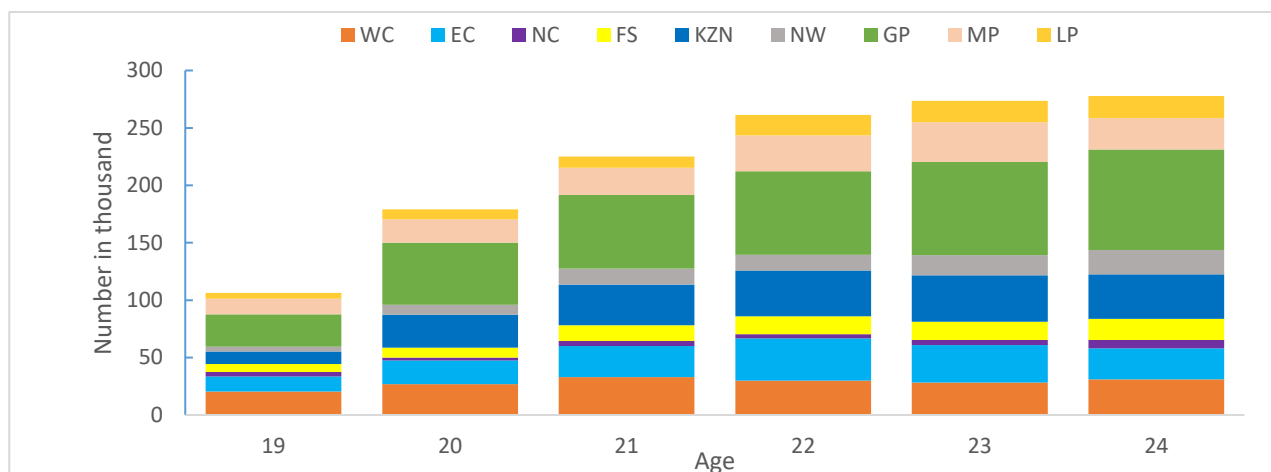
The above graph shows the labour market characteristics of Born-free Millennials by province. The top three provinces with the most Born-free Millennial employees were Western Cape (37%), Northern Cape (29,2%) and Gauteng (22,3%) while the bottom three were Eastern Cape (12,3%), Limpopo (13,7%) and KwaZulu-Natal (14,5%). The highest percentage of unemployed Born-free Millennials were found in Mpumalanga (30%), Gauteng and Free State (both with 28%). The largest percentage of discouraged work-seekers was found in KwaZulu-Natal and North West (17,5% and 16,5%, respectively). Western Cape had the lowest percentage of Born-free Millennials who were discouraged work-seekers (2,3%), followed by Free State (5,7%). The largest percentage of other not economically active Born-free Millennials resided in Limpopo (61,4%) and the lowest in Western Cape (35,9%).

Figure 4.36: Employed Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by age and province, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.36 shows the number of Born-free Millennials in 2018. In 2018, Gauteng had the highest number of employed 19–24 year old Born-free Millennials with about 312 000, followed by Western Cape (255 000) and KwaZulu-Natal (186 000). Northern Cape, Free State and North West had the lowest number of employed 19–24 year old Born-free Millennials with about 35 000, 47 000 and 70 000 employed people, respectively.

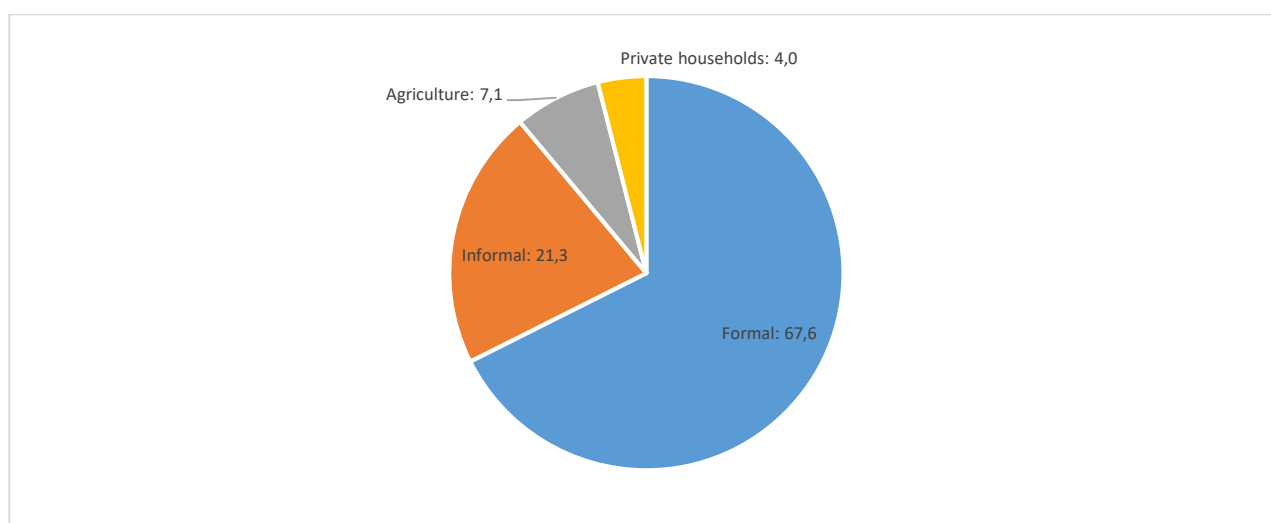
Figure 4.37: Unemployed Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by age and province, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.37 depicts the number of unemployed 19–24 year old Born-free Millennials in 2018, by province. Similarly to the trend observed in the other generations, unemployment increased by age for all the provinces, but mostly rapidly for Gauteng. In 2018, in total there were 1,3 million unemployed 19–24 year old Born-free Millennials. Gauteng had by far the largest number of unemployed Born-free Millennials with 387 000. The second largest number of unemployed Born-free Millennials was found in KwaZulu-Natal (194 000), followed by Western Cape (170 000).

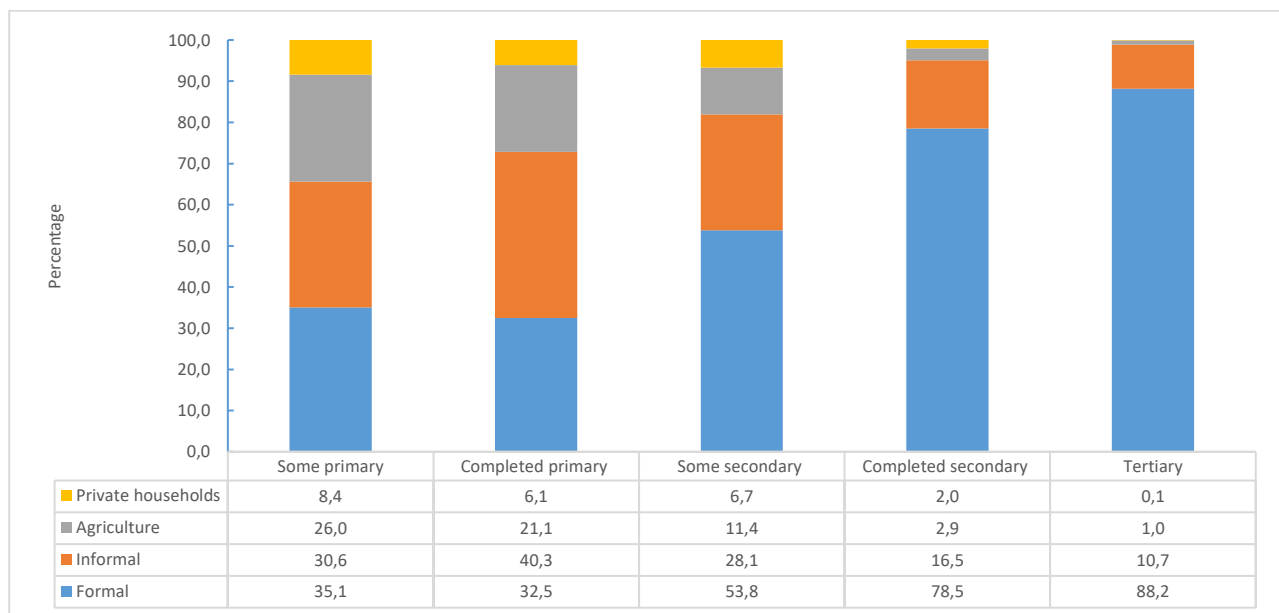
Figure 4.38: Employed Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by sector, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

The largest sector employing 19-24 year old Born-free Millennials was the formal sector (67,6%). Employing 21,3% of Born-free Millennials, the informal sector was the sector employing the second largest percentage of employed individuals in this generation; and employing more youth compared to other generations. Close to seven percent (7,1%) of Born-free Millennials were employed in agriculture while the remaining four per cent were employed in private households.

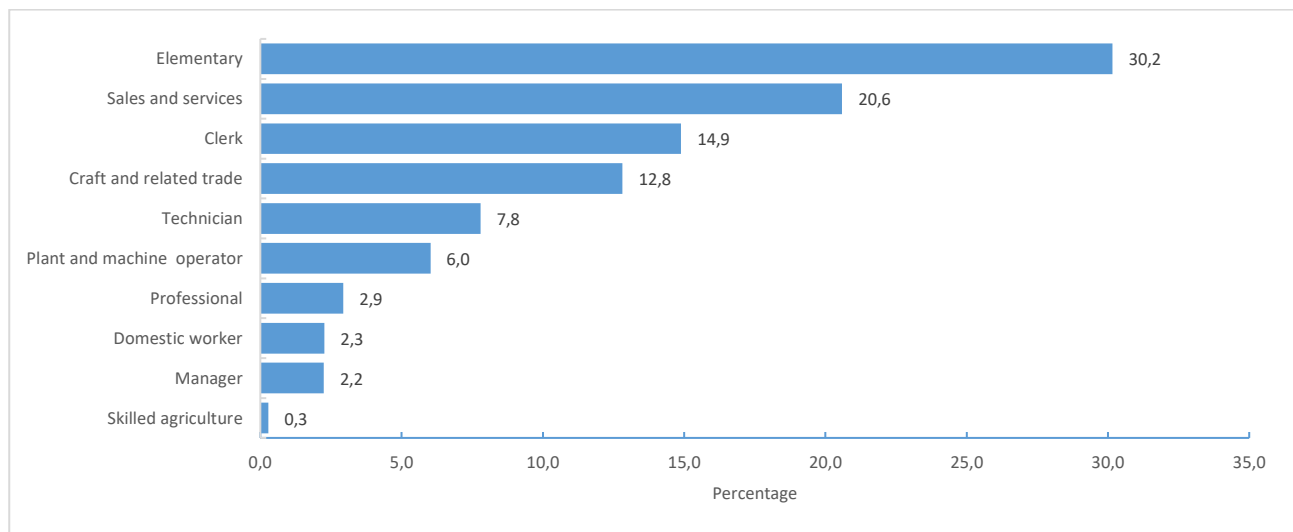
Figure 4.39: Employed Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by sector and highest level of education, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

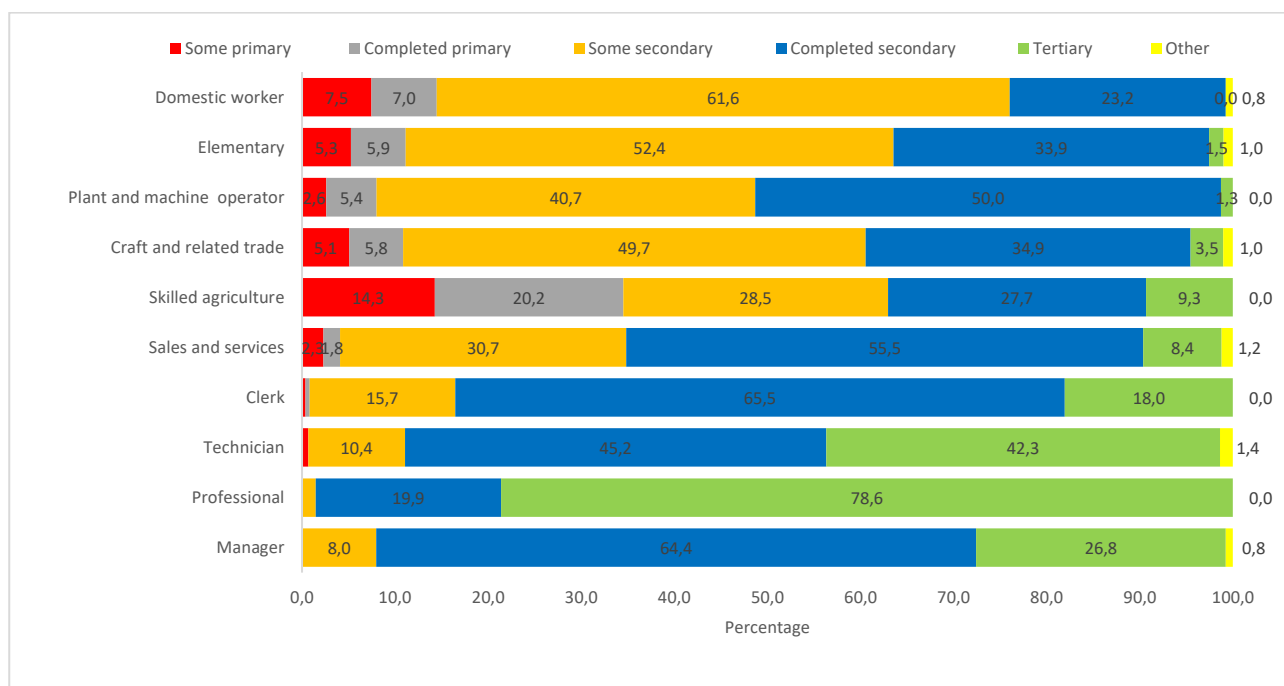
Note: No schooling and some primary have been combined, "other" has been excluded from the analysis due to low estimates.

Figure 4.39 shows the distribution of employment by sector and educational achievement among Born-free Millennials. The percentage of employment in the formal sector more than doubled between individuals who only had some primary education (35,1%) and those who had completed secondary education (78,5%). Poor educational achievement translates into high shares of informal employment among Born-free Millennials. Informal employment among individuals who had some secondary education accounted for 28,1%, while it reduced to 16,5% and 10,7% among those who completed secondary education and those who had tertiary qualification respectively. Three out of ten (30,6%) Born-free Millennials who had only some primary schooling were employed in the informal sector while four out of ten (40,3%) Born-free Millennials who completed primary schooling were employed in the same sector.

Figure 4.40: Employed Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by occupation, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.40 presents the occupational distribution of employed Born-free Millennials. The graph shows a high share of employment in elementary occupations (30,2%) followed by employment in the sales and services occupations (20,6%). These two occupational categories employed more than half of the Born-free Millennials. The third and fourth occupations among Born-free Millennials were clerical (14,5%) and craft and related trade occupations (12,8%). However, Born-free Millennials were the least likely to work as skilled agricultural employees, with only 0,3% employed in the sector.

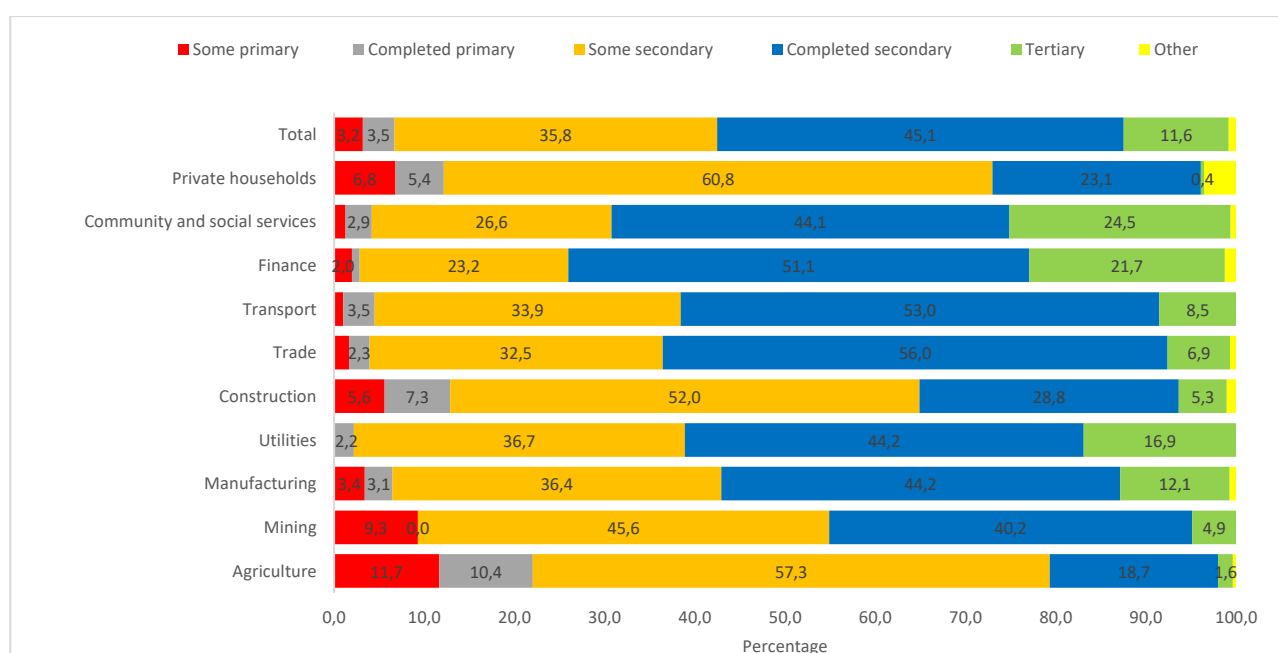
Figure 4.41: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 employed by occupation and highest level of education, 2018

Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Note: No schooling and some primary have been combined due to low estimates.

Figure 4.41 presents the educational distribution of Born-free Millennials by occupation. The increase in the level of education attained among young people compared to their preceding generation gave them an opportunity to be engaged in better paying jobs, increasingly moving away from occupations such as domestic work, elementary occupations and plant and machine operators for those with a tertiary qualification. Among Born-free Millennials, 79% of individuals occupying professional positions had tertiary qualifications while 42,3% among technicians, and 26,8% among managers, were tertiary qualification holders. The completion of high school and some basic computer skills are sufficient for clerical jobs and hence close to eight out of ten young employees in this category had only achieved secondary education or less, while the rest 18% had a tertiary qualification.

Figure 4.42: Employed Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by industry and highest level of education, 2018

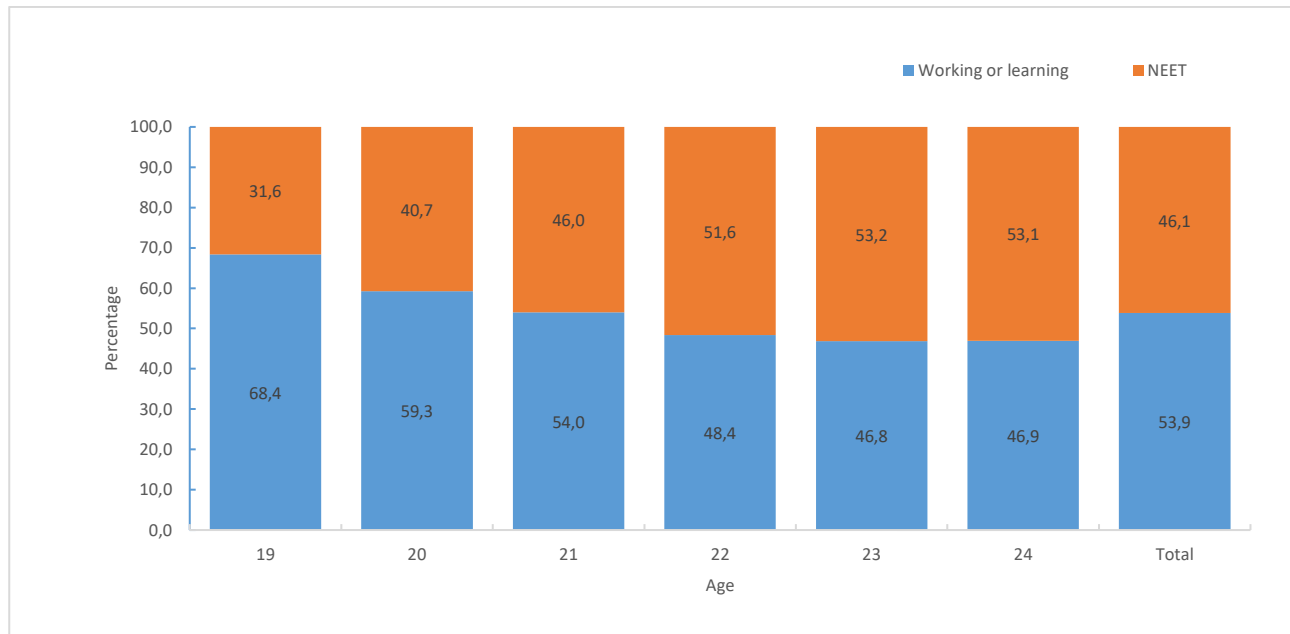


Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Note: No schooling and some primary have been combined due to low estimates.

Overall, among employed Born-free Millennials close to 12% had a tertiary qualification while the majority (45,1%) had completed secondary schooling and close to 36% had not completed secondary schooling. The rest (6,7%) had achieved primary schooling or less. While most industries in 2018 mostly employed individuals who only completed secondary schooling, 24,5% of Born-free Millennials employed in the community and social services had a tertiary qualification. Similarly, 21,7% employed in finance had a tertiary qualification and 16,9% employed in utilities had a tertiary qualification. However, private households, and the construction and agriculture industries had the highest concentration of school dropouts (close to 73%, close to 65% and close to 79% respectively).

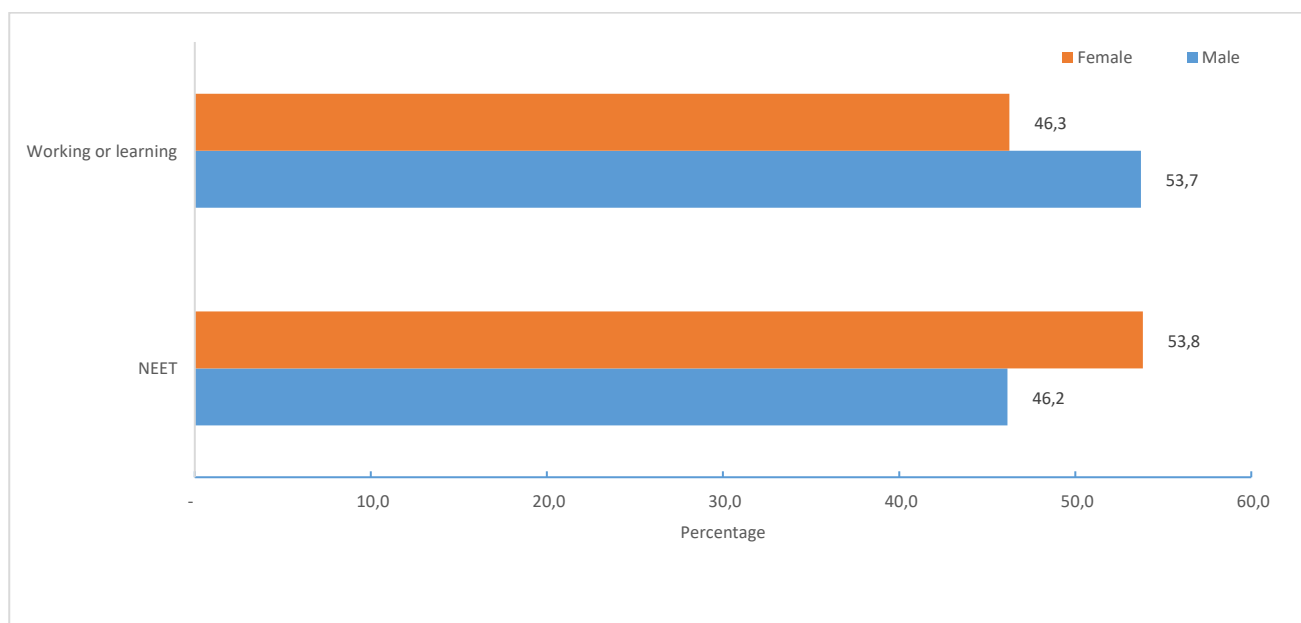
Figure 4.43: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 who were not in education, employment or training by age, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

In 2018, overall, the share of young people with NEET status was close to 46% among Born-free Millennials in South Africa. The percentage of NEET was the highest among young people aged 23 and 24 years old (both close to 53%), and the lowest among 19 year olds (close to 32%).

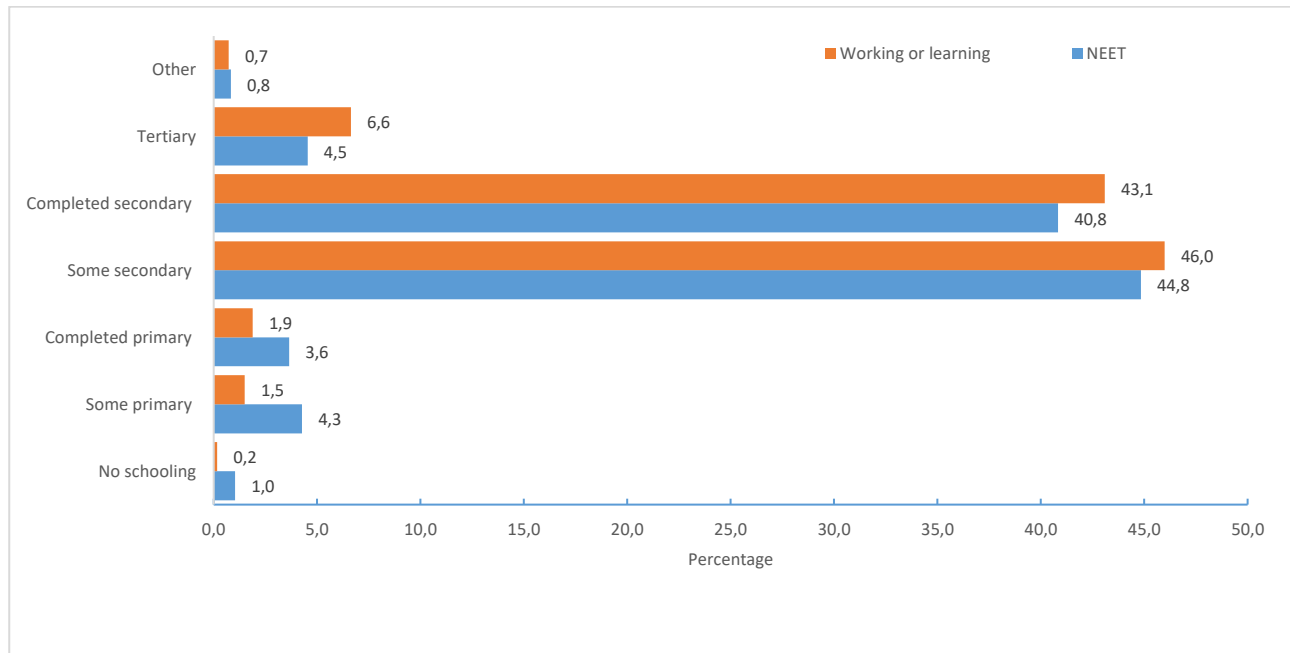
Figure 4.44: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 who were not in education, employment or training by gender, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

The percentage of female Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 who were NEET was considerably higher than the percentage of males. The gender gap in NEET among Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 was 7,6 percentage points.

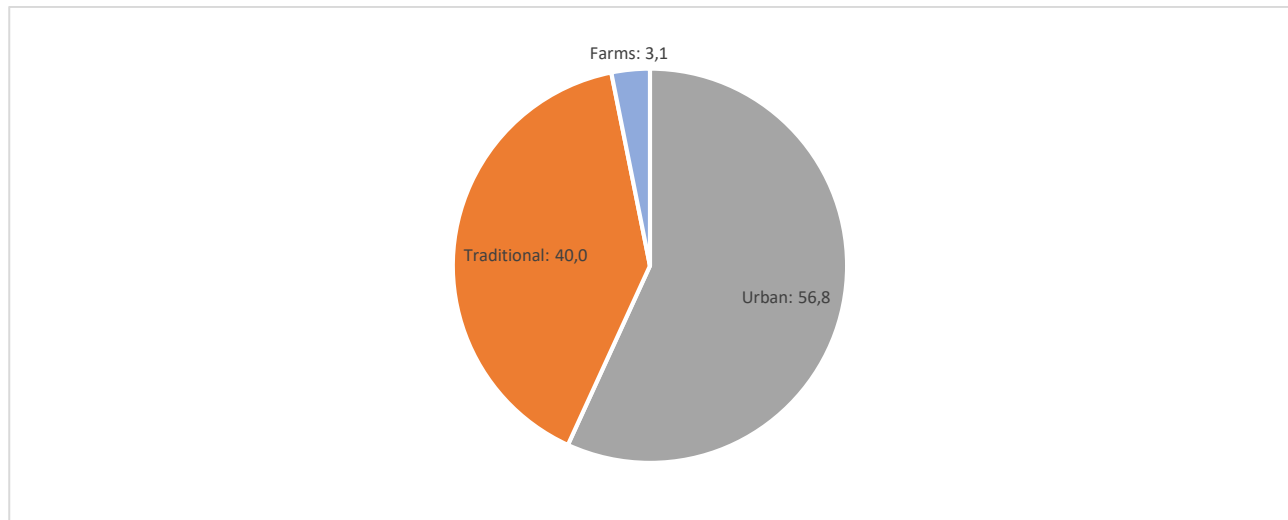
Figure 4.45: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 who were not in education, employment or training by highest level of education, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Figure 4.49 displays the distribution of NEET Born-free Millennials by highest level of education. The percentage of NEET among 19–24 year old Born-free Millennials was the highest among those with only some secondary education (44,8%) but was also large among those who completed secondary education (40,8%). It was the lowest among those with no schooling or other type of schooling. The figure also shows that the highest percentage of 19-24 year old Born-free Millennials engaged with labour market activities or with education had not completed secondary schooling (46%). However, among those who were tertiary qualification holders, 6,6% were engaged with labour market activities or were still studying, whereas 4,5% were NEET.

Figure 4.46: Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 who were not in education, employment or training by geography type, 2018



Source: Stats SA QLFS 2018

Four out of seven (56,8%) of 19–24 year olds Born-free Millennials who were NEET were residing in urban areas while two out of five (40%) were found in traditional areas. Furthermore, 3,1% were staying in farm areas.

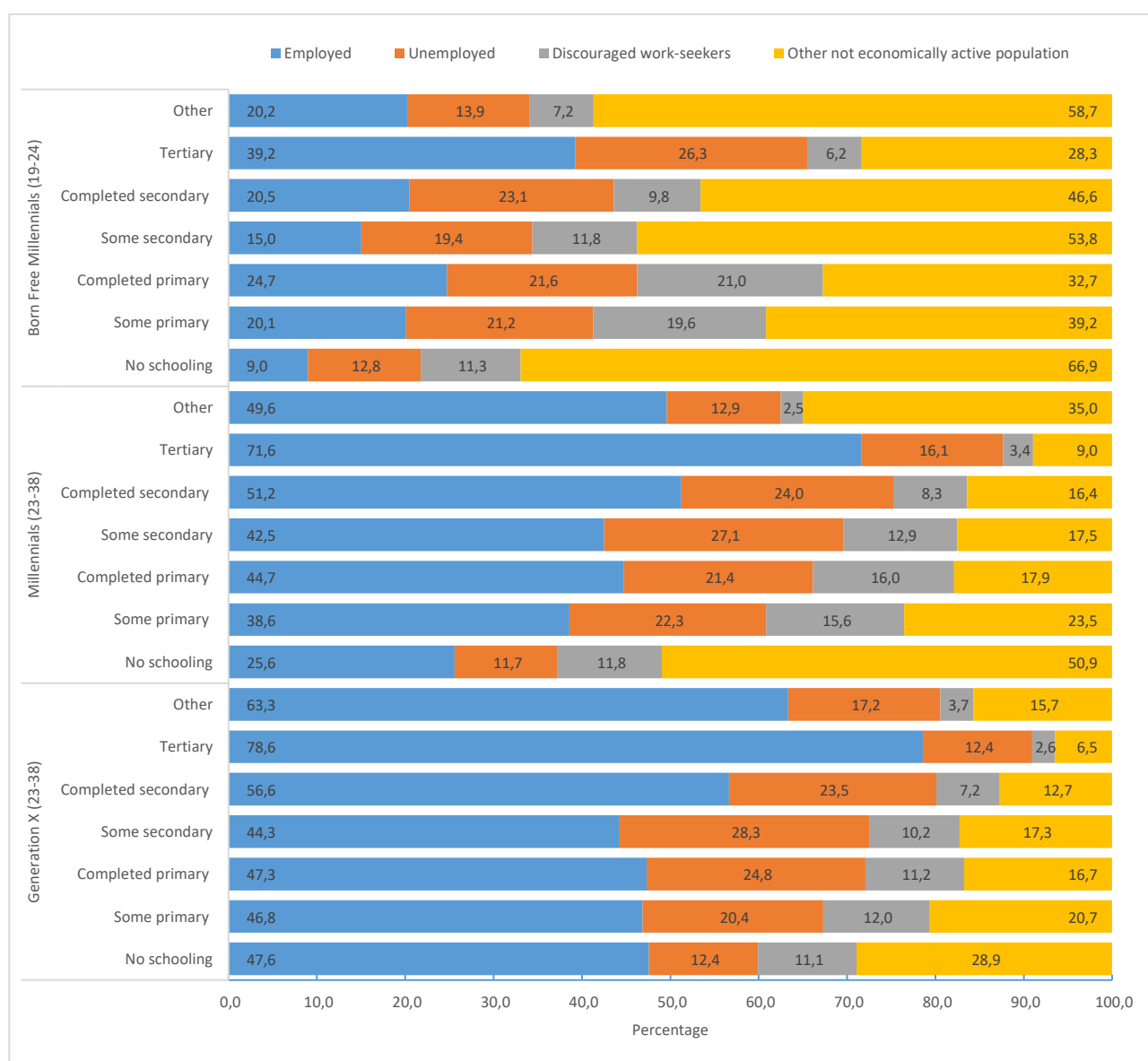
Table 4.1: Labour market characteristics by type of generation and gender, 2002 and 2018

Labour market characteristics (Number in thousand)	Generation X (23–38)			Millennials (23–38)			Born-free Millennials (19–24)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total labour force	4 469	4 056	8 526	6 306	5 092	11 398	1 395	1 110	2 505
Employed	3 325	2 567	5 892	4 441	3 260	7 701	718	464	1 182
Unemployed	1 145	1 489	2 634	1 866	1 832	3 697	677	646	1 323
Total not economically active	846	1 925	2 771	1 592	2 561	4 153	1 715	1 971	3 686
Discouraged work-seekers	333	664	998	702	856	1 558	329	358	687
Other not economically active	513	1 261	1 774	891	1 705	2 595	1 386	1 612	2 998
Total	5 316	5 981	11 297	7 899	7 653	15 551	3 110	3 081	6 191
Labour market characteristics (Percentage)									
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total labour force	84,1	67,8	75,5	79,8	66,5	73,3	44,9	36,0	40,5
Employed	74,4	63,3	69,1	70,4	64,0	67,6	51,4	41,8	47,2
Unemployed	25,6	36,7	30,9	29,6	36,0	32,4	48,6	58,2	52,8
Total not economically active	15,9	32,2	24,5	20,2	33,5	26,7	55,1	64,0	59,5
Discouraged work-seekers	39,4	34,5	36,0	44,1	33,4	37,5	19,2	18,2	18,6
Other not economically active	60,6	65,5	64,0	55,9	66,6	62,5	80,8	81,8	81,4

Source: Stats SA LFS 2002, QLFS 2018

Overall, in 2002, there were 11,2 million Generation X individuals aged 23–38, out of which 8,5 million were in the labour force, thus accounting for 75,5% of the labour force. In 2018, there were 15,5 million Millennials aged 23–38, out of which 11,4 million were in the labour force, thus accounting for 73,3% of the labour force; and there were 6,2 million Born-free Millennials aged 19–24, out of which 2,5 million were in the labour force, thus accounting for 40,5% of the labour force. Gender disparities in the labour market did not narrow much across Generation X and the Millennials. The gender gap in labour force participation, which stood at 16,3 percentage points in 2002 reduced to only 13,3 percentage points in 2018. The gender gap in employment, which stood at 11,1 percentage points in 2002, reduced to only 6,4 percentage points in 2018. There were also considerable gender gaps in unemployment among young people. Among Born-free Millennials, the percentage of unemployed young women aged 19–24 in 2018 was 58,2%, which was 9,6 percentage points higher than those of young men in the similar category.

Figure 4.47: Labour market characteristics by type of generation and highest level of education, 2002 and 2018



Source: Stats SA LFS 2002, QLFS 2018

Figure 4.47 shows that Born-free Millennials were already better educated than the other generations, even though they were still young in 2018 to have realised their full education potential. Comparing those with no schooling across the three generations, 47,6% were employed among Generation X individuals, while only 25,6% among Millennials and 9,0% among Born-free Millennials were employed. While more than half (50,9%) of Millennials with no schooling were not economically active, the same was true for close to 67% of Born Free Millennials with no schooling and 29% of Generation X individuals. The percentage of unemployed tertiary qualification holders almost doubled across the generations, from 12,4% among Generation X individuals in 2002 to 26,3% among Born-free Millennials in 2018. The percentage of economically not active tertiary qualification holders increased across the generations from 6,5% among Generation X individuals in 2002 to 9% among Millennials in 2018 and 28,3% among Born-free Millennials in 2018. Furthermore, the percentage of discouraged work-seekers with a tertiary qualification increased across the generations from 2,6% among Generation X individuals in 2002 to 3,4% among Millennials in 2018 and 6,2% among Born-free Millennials in 2018. Similarly, the percentage of discouraged work-seekers who completed secondary schooling was the highest among Born-free Millennials in 2018 (9,8%) compared to Generation X individuals (7,2%).

4.4 Summary

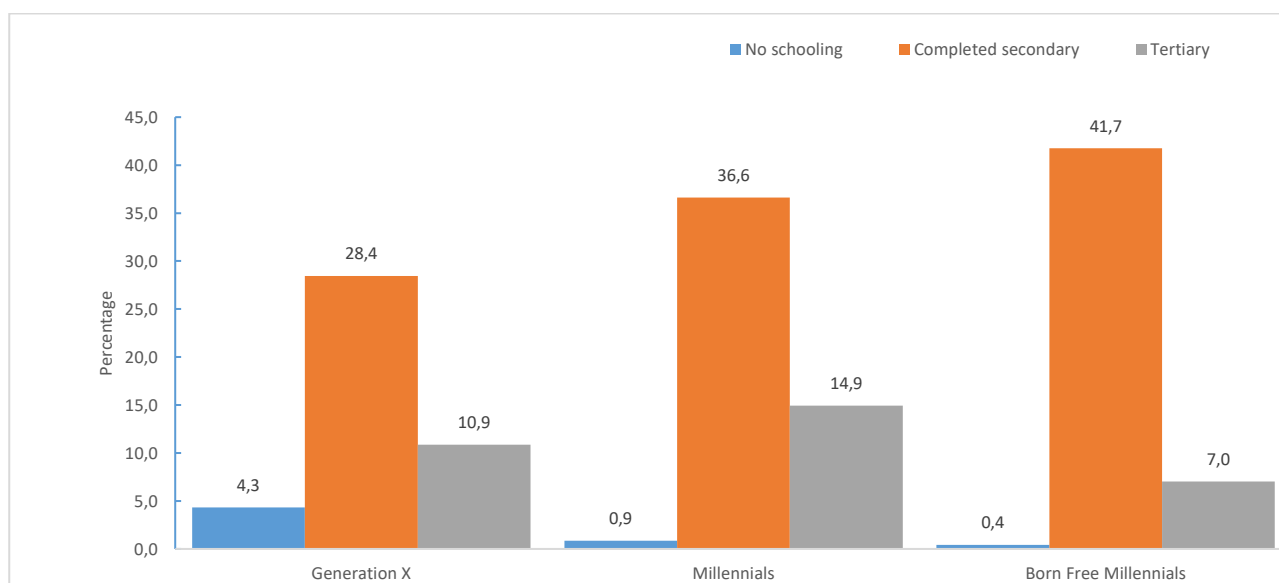
There has been a remarkable growth in the completion of secondary education in South Africa since 1996, and access to tertiary education also increased in South Africa. This was observed across the three generations featured in this report. However, labour market outcomes have evolved differently across the generations. Generation X may have benefited from a time when completion of secondary education and tertiary educational attainments were in shorter supply. Among unemployed Generation X individuals 28,5% had completed secondary education, whereas the same was true for 36% unemployed Millennials and 45,5% unemployed Born-free Millennials. Similarly, among unemployed Generation X individuals, 5,6% were tertiary qualification holders, whereas the same was true for 9,5% unemployed Millennials and 7% unemployed Born-free Millennials. In addition, the increased supply of individuals who completed secondary school education have infiltrated occupations that did not necessarily require such qualifications. However, progress in technology and automation have brought drastic changes for skilled and unskilled workers. There is a growing demand for specialised skills in particular. Among Generation X individuals employed in elementary occupations, 18,2% had completed secondary education while the same was true for 27,3% Millennials and 33,9% Born-free Millennials employed in similar positions. The profile of plant and machine operators had also changed across the three generations as individuals who completed secondary education were increasingly employed in these occupations (28,1% among Generation X, 43,6% among Millennials and 50% among Born-free Millennials).

In 2018, 46,1% of Born-free Millennials were NEET. The NEET status rises with age as young people cease to engage in learning activities and is at its peak at age 23 with 53,2% of people in this age group being NEET. Among Born-free Millennials who were NEET, 40,8% had completed secondary education and 4,5% had a tertiary qualification. Moreover, close to 1% of Born-free Millennials who were NEET did not complete school, and were thus unable to gain skills that could make them employable.

Chapter 5: Summary and conclusion

The Generation X individuals considered in this report were born between 1960 and 1979 and comprised of close to 11,5 million individuals aged 39–58 in 2018, with 63% amongst them still below 50 years. They were the youth during the democratic transition of the country from its apartheid past as the youngest were just 15 years old and the oldest were 34 years old in 1994. The Millennials were born between 1980 and 1999 and comprised of close to 20,5 million individuals aged 19–38 in 2018, with more than half (56,2%) amongst them still below 30 years and some not even born when the democratic transition took place in South Africa. The Born-free were born in 1994 and after, and this cohort constituted close to 26,3 million individuals aged 0–24 in 2018. This report compared educational participation among these three generations, their educational attainment as well as labour market outcomes. For reasons of comparability between Generation X adults and Millennials, the 23–38 year old cohorts were analysed in 2002 and 2018. Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 were also analysed to assess the extent to which they had acquired education and labour market experiences compared to their predecessors.

Figure 5.1: Highest level of education of Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38, and Born-free Millennials aged 19–24, 2002 and 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002, 2018

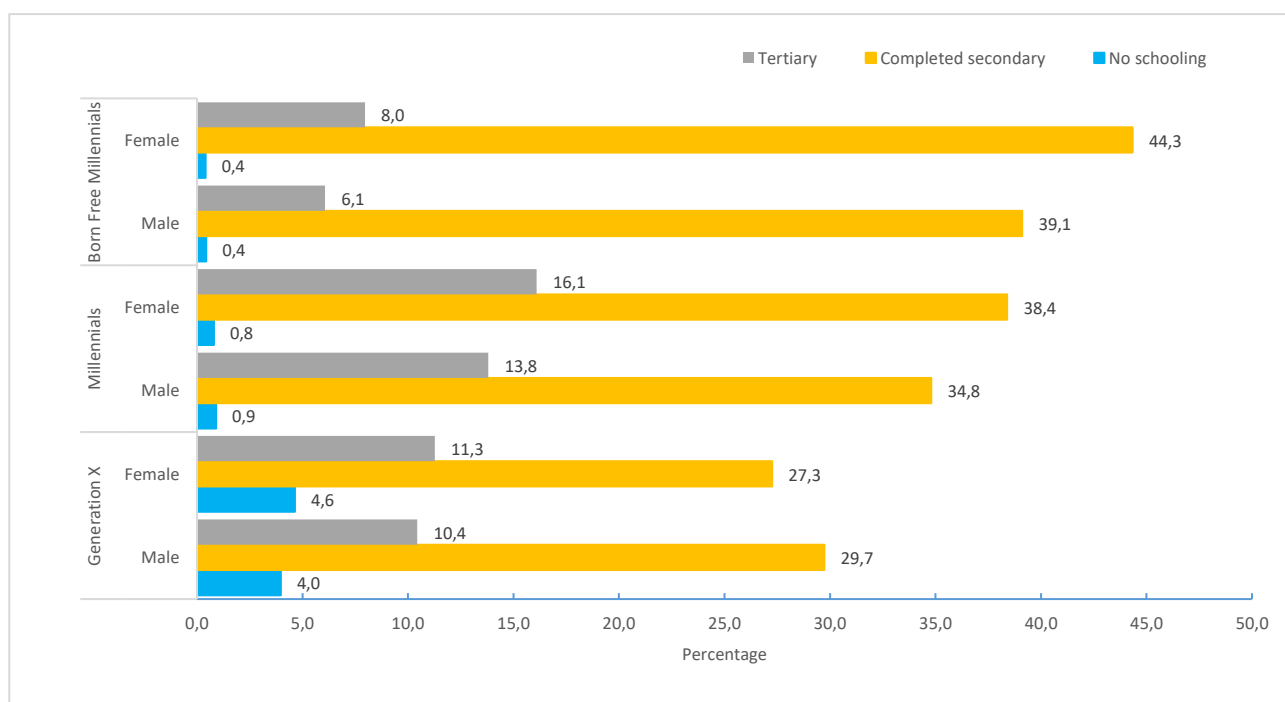
On average, in 2002, in South Africa, close to 69% of adults aged 20 years and older had not completed secondary education. This percentage had only reduced to 54% in 2018 among adults within the same age group.

Both Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38 had made substantial investment in their human capital. The biggest achievement was in the reduction of individuals who had no schooling or who did not pursue an education beyond primary school level. In 2018, Millennials aged 23–38 were about four times less likely to have dropped out of primary school or not have received any education compared to their counterparts in 2002 (7,5% and 23,8%, respectively). However, while completion of secondary education was a major achievement for both generations, the percentage of Millennials who had completed secondary education was 36,6% which was 8,2 percentage points higher than the preceding generation while the

percentage of Millennials who dropped out of secondary school was 40,4% in 2018 which was an increase of 3,6 percentage points from 2002. Furthermore, the growth in the percentage of tertiary qualification achievement also remained modest, with only a four- percentage-points increase from 2002 to 2018.

For both generations, Gauteng was the province with the highest percentage of adults aged 23–38 with a tertiary qualification followed by Western Cape. The growth in the percentage of tertiary qualification achievements in these provinces from 2002 to 2018 was higher than the national average (6,6 percentage points in Gauteng and 6,4 percentage points in Western Cape). All provinces have also reduced considerably the share of primary school dropouts. In particular, while, Eastern Cape had more than one-third (33,8%) of Generation X adults who completed primary school or less in 2002, this reduced to 11,8% in 2018. Similarly, in Free State, the percentage of Generation X adults who completed primary school or less reduced from 29,1% in 2002 to 7,7% in 2018.

Figure 5.2: Highest level of education of Generation X adults and Millennials aged 23–38, and Born-free Millennials aged 19–24 by gender, 2002 and 2018



Source: Stats SA GHS 2002, 2018

While educational attainment increased for both genders, the share of Millennial and Born-free Millennial women who completed secondary schooling was higher than that of men in 2018, which was a reversal from the Generation X women. However, Generation X women had already outpaced men in tertiary educational attainment, with close to a one-percentage-point gap which increased to close to two-percentage points in 2018.

There has also been an expansion of secondary school education to previously disadvantaged individuals. The highest gains were among black African and coloured adults aged 23–38. Since 2002, secondary school achievement for black Africans increased by ten-percentage-points and secondary school achievement for coloureds increased by 13 percentage points. Although modest, some gains were achieved in tertiary

educational attainments for black Africans and coloureds (close to five per cent each from 2002 to 2018). However, the racial gap in tertiary educational attainment had in fact increased between black Africans and whites (from 28,4 percentage points in 2002 to 35,7 percentage points in 2018).

Among Millennials aged 23–38 in 2018, close to half (49,5%) were employed while 23,8% were unemployed, and 26,7% were not economically active. This was close to a three-percentage-point decline from 2002 to 2018 among employed people across Generation X and Millennials. Millennial adults aged 23–38 with a tertiary qualification in 2018 were more likely to be employed (20,4%), similar to Generation X adults (15,9%) in 2002. There was however, a higher percentage of unemployed Millennials with a tertiary qualification in 2018 (9,5%) compared to unemployed Generation X adults aged 23–38 with a tertiary qualification in 2002 (5,6%).

Sectors of employment varied by levels of education across generations. Among Generation X adults aged 23–38 with no schooling or who dropped out of primary school, the majority were employed in the agriculture sector (close to 36% and 29%, respectively). By contrast, Millennials aged 23–38 with no schooling were mostly employed in the informal sector (close to 40%) while this sector was the second most important sector of employment for Millennials who dropped out of primary school. Furthermore, as the demand for low-skilled labour declined, employment of Millennials in private households declined for all educational groups, while employment in the informal sector increased.

Overall, close to 46% of Born-free Millennials were NEET, with 23-year-olds having the highest percentage in this category (53,2%). Furthermore, the gender gap in NEET status was 7,6 percentage points. The majority of NEET Born-free Millennials did not complete secondary school (44,8%), and 40,8% of Born-free NEET Millennials completed secondary school.

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Concepts and Definitions of education terms

Concept	Definition
Early childhood development (ECD)	Early childhood development (ECD) is a generic term that refers to a child's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development from pre-natal period to school-going age. The same term is often used to describe a range of programmes which have ultimate goal of improving young children's capacity to develop and learn and which may occur at many different levels such as child, family and community, and across different sectors such as health, education, and social protection.
Note: "Unspecified", "Other " and "Do not know"	Educational categories were excluded from the analysis.
Diploma	A diploma is a certificate or deed issued by an educational institution to testify that the recipient has successfully completed a particular course of study. For the purpose of this questionnaire, all references to diplomas and certificates only refer to courses that lasted six months or longer. Any certificates or diplomas related to courses that lasted less than six months should not be included as responses to questions related to the highest level of education or attendance of educational institutions.
Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)	All learning and training programmes for adults from level 1 to 4, where ABET level 4 is equivalent to grade 9 in public schools, or a National Qualifications Framework level1, as stipulated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, (Act 58 of 1995). Aims to provide basic foundational learning tools that addresses the fundamental skills of reading, writing, understanding, listening, numeracy and mathematics, thus improving communication and problem solving skills.
AET	Adult Education and Training Levels 1-3 / Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET): A qualification at Level 1 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) is offered to students who have not had any formal schooling, or who may not have completed formal basic schooling to the equivalent of NQF Level 1. ABET level 4 qualification allows students to write a national examination in order to obtain a GETC: ABET Level 4 certificate upon completion. (Source: DHET)
Higher education institution	Any Institution that provides higher education on a full time, part time or basis and which is established or deemed to be established as a public higher education institution under the Higher Education Act, 1997.
Highest level of education	The highest grade completed at school or the highest post-school qualification obtained.
No schooling	None education
Some primary	Grade R/0 -Grade 6
Completed	Grade 7

primary	
Some secondary	Grade 8, Grade 9, Grade 10, Grade 11, NTC1/N1/NC (V) Level 2, NTC2/N2/NC (V) Level 3, Certificate with less than Grade 12/Std 10 and Diploma with less than Grade 12/Std 11.
Completed secondary	Grade 12/Standard 10/Form 5/Matric (No Exemption), Grade 12/Standard 10/Form 5/Matric (Exemption) or NTC3/N3/NC (V) Level 4.
Tertiary	<p>Certificate with Grade 12/Std 10, N4/NTC 4, N5/NTC 5 or Diploma with Grade 12/Std 11.</p> <p>N6/NTC 6, Higher Diploma (Technikon/University of Technology), Bachelor's Degree, Bachelor's Degree and post-graduate diploma or Honours Degree.</p> <p>Post Higher Diploma (Technikon/University of Technology Masters, Doctoral) or Higher degree (Masters, Doctorate).</p>
Grade	That part of educational programme that a learner may complete in one school year, or any other education programme, which the Members of the Executive Council may deem equivalent thereto.
Attend (educational institution)	<p>Enrol at and go regularly to any accredited educational institution (public or private) for organised learning at any level of education. Attendance can be full-time or part-time, and distance</p> <p>Learning is included. Temporary absence, e.g. due to illness, does not interrupt attendance.</p>
School	An educational institution or that part of such an institution at which education and training, including pre-primary education, is provided and which is maintained, managed and controlled or Subsidised by a provincial education department, excluding a university and Technikon.
Literacy	<p>Ability to read and write with understanding in any language. A</p> <p>Person, who can with understanding, both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life is considered literate.</p>
Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)	TVET is understood as comprising education, training and skills development relating to a wide range of occupational fields, production, services and livelihoods. TVET, as part of lifelong learning, can take place at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels and includes work-based learning and continuing training and professional development.

Concepts and Definitions of other terms

Urban settlements (formal)	Urban settlements (formal) occur on land that has been proclaimed as residential. A formal urban settlement is usually structured and organized. Plots or erven make up a formal and permanent arrangement. A local council or district council control development in these areas. Services such as water, sewage, electricity and refuse removal are provided; roads are formally planned and maintained by the council. This includes suburbs and townships.
Tribal Settlements	This is communally owned land under the jurisdiction of traditional leader. The appearance and organization of villages in tribal areas varies in different parts of the country. Tribal authorities are found in tribal settlements.
Farms	<p>Farms cover an extensive area. The land is cultivated and the field size is usually quite large. Farm boundaries can be easily distinguished on aerial photos, and are normally fence lines, edges of the fields, roads or rivers. The fields tend to be cultivated with a variety of crops and the crops may differ from season to season and from area to area. The field size will vary and may be affected by the size of the farm, local climate (rainy or not) and the amount of mechanization on the farm. Most fields on farms are large.</p> <p>Cattle, sheep and other livestock (horses, ostrich and game on a smaller scale) are also reared on farms. These farms have large fenced grazing areas (paddocks) with grass cover grazing.</p>
Household	<p>A household is defined as a person, or group of persons, who occupied a common dwelling unit (or part of it) for at least four nights in a week on average during the past four weeks prior to the survey interview. Basically, they live together and share resources as a unit. Other explanatory phrases can be 'eating from the same pot' and 'cook and eat together'.</p> <p>Persons who occupy the same dwelling unit but do not share food or other essentials, are regarded as separate households. For example, people who share a dwelling unit, but buy food separately, and generally provide for themselves separately, are regarded as separate households within the same dwelling unit.</p> <p>Conversely, a household may occupy more than one structure. If persons on a plot, stand or yard eat together but sleep in separate structures (e.g. a room at the back of the house for single young male members of a family), all these persons should be regarded as one household.</p>
Household Head/Acting Household Head	<p>The head of the household is the person identified by the household as the head of that household and must (by definition of 'household') be a member of the household. If there is difficulty in identifying the head, the head must be selected in order of precedence as the person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owns the household accommodation. • Is responsible for the rent of the household accommodation. • Has the household accommodation as an allowance (entitlement), etc. • Has the household accommodation by virtue of some relationship to the owner, lessee, etc. who is not in the household. • Makes the most decisions in the household.

	<p>If two or more persons have equal claim to be head of the household, or if people state that they are joint heads or that the household has no head, then denote the eldest as the head. Remember that the person who responds may not necessarily be the head of the household. You must ask the respondent who the head of the household is, and record it as given to you. If the head of the household is an absentee head, i.e. does not reside at the dwelling unit for at least four nights a week, the acting head of the household (as indicated by the respondent) should be recorded as the head in the first column of page 1 (Question A) of the questionnaire.</p>
Household members	<p>Household members include all those that reside at the property for at least four nights a week. Do not include domestic workers as part of the household unless they are paid in kind. Children at boarding school should not be included.</p>

