

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**1 June 2017**

### **Quarterly Labour Force Survey - QLFS Q1:2017**

The growth in employment by 144 000, was offset by the growth in the number of job-seekers by 433 000 driving the unemployment rate to 27,7% in the first quarter of 2017. This is the highest unemployment rate observed since September 2003.

The growth in employment was observed in all industries except Agriculture, trade and services. The biggest growth was observed in Manufacturing (62 000), Finance & other business services (49 000) and Mining (26 000). Mining grew for the first time in Q1:2017 after declining for four successive quarters. Furthermore, employment grew in all provinces quarter to quarter except in Eastern Cape and Limpopo. All Metros registered growth in employment except Nelson Mandela Bay, Mangaung and City of Johannesburg which remained virtually unchanged.

There were approximately 500 000 extra people in employment in Q1:2017 compared to the same period last year. The year-on-year employment growth was driven by manufacturing (145 000), construction (143 000) and finance (152 000).

Of the 433 000 people who joined the ranks of the unemployed, approximately 58% were young people aged 15-34 increasing the youth unemployment rate by 1,6 percentage points to 38,6%. The proportion of those in short term unemployment (i.e those who have been looking for work for less than a year ) increased by 2,4 percentage points to 34,2% a further indication that these were young people who joined the labour force at the beginning of the year.

Unemployment rate remained high among those with education level of less than matric at 33,1% which is 5,4 percentage points higher than the national average. While the unemployment rate among graduates remained at 7,3%.

Unemployment rate increased or remained virtually unchanged in all provinces except Northern Cape. The biggest increase in unemployment rate was observed in Eastern Cape which increased by 3.8 percentage points to 32,2%.

The expanded unemployment which includes those who wanted to work but did not look for work increased by 391 000 people, resulting in an increase of 0,8 of a percentage point in the expanded unemployment rate to 36,4%. This is approximately 9,3 million persons who did not have work but wanted to work in Q1:2017.

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