

MEDIA RELEASE

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Quarterly Labour Force Survey - QLFS Q2: 2017

The results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the second quarter of 2017 released by Statistics South Africa today, indicate that employment declined by 113 000 to approximately 16,1 million. However, the number of job-seekers also declined by 37 000 to approximately 6,2 million resulting in the unemployment rate remaining unchanged at 27,7%. Over the same period the absorption rate (employment to population ratio), which is a proportion of those who are employed among the population aged 15-64 declined by 0,4 of a percentage point to 43,3%.

The net quarterly employment decline of 113 000 in Q2: 2017 was driven by six of the ten industries. The largest decreases were recorded in Construction (110 000) and Agriculture (40 000). However, employment gains were observed in Trade (58 000), Finance (17 000), Manufacturing (10 000) and Utilities (2 000).

The number of employed persons decreased in five of the nine provinces between Q1: 2017 and Q2: 2017. The largest employment losses were recorded in Gauteng (143 000) and Eastern Cape (26 000), while Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal recorded employment gains of 32 000 and 29 000 respectively.

The official unemployment rate remained unchanged at 27,7% quarter-to-quarter, but it increased by 1,1 percentage points year-on-year. The highest annual increases in unemployment rate were recorded in Eastern Cape (5,8 percentage points), Mpumalanga (3,5 percentage points), Northern Cape (3,1 percentage points) and Free State (2,2 percentage points). Western Cape and North West were the only provinces that recorded year-on-year declines in the unemployment rate.

Young people aged 15-24 remain vulnerable in the labour market with unemployment rate of almost 56% and absorption rate of 12%. Among those in this age group, 32,2% are Not in employment, education or training (NEET). This is approximately 3,3 million young people aged 15-24 who are idle.

The expanded unemployment rate which includes an extra 3,1 million persons who were available to work but did not look for work during the reference period increased by 0,2 of a percentage point to 36,6%. This is approximately 9,3 million people aged 15-64 who wanted to work and were available to work but their labour was not utilised.

Issued by Statistics South Africa

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