

Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q2:2025

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Statistician-General



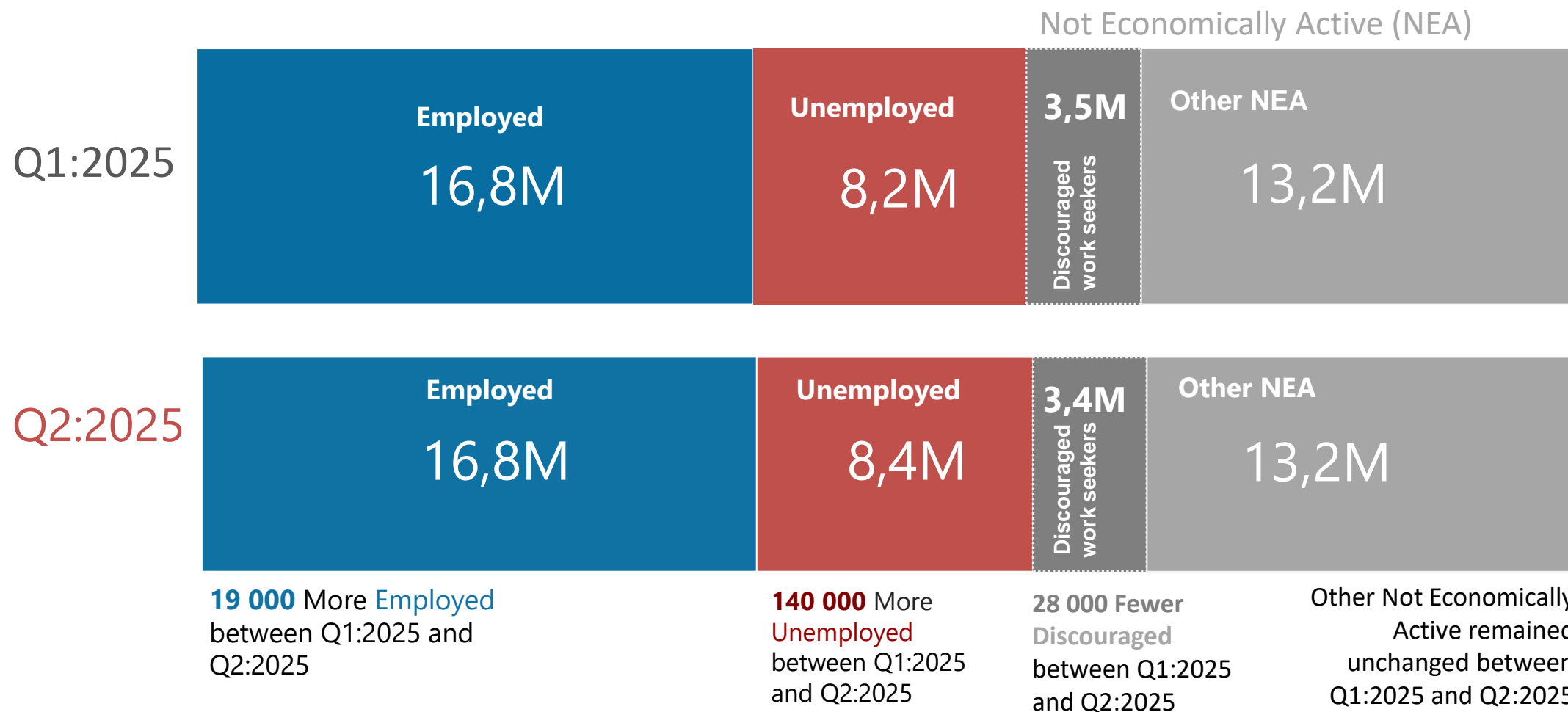
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IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS

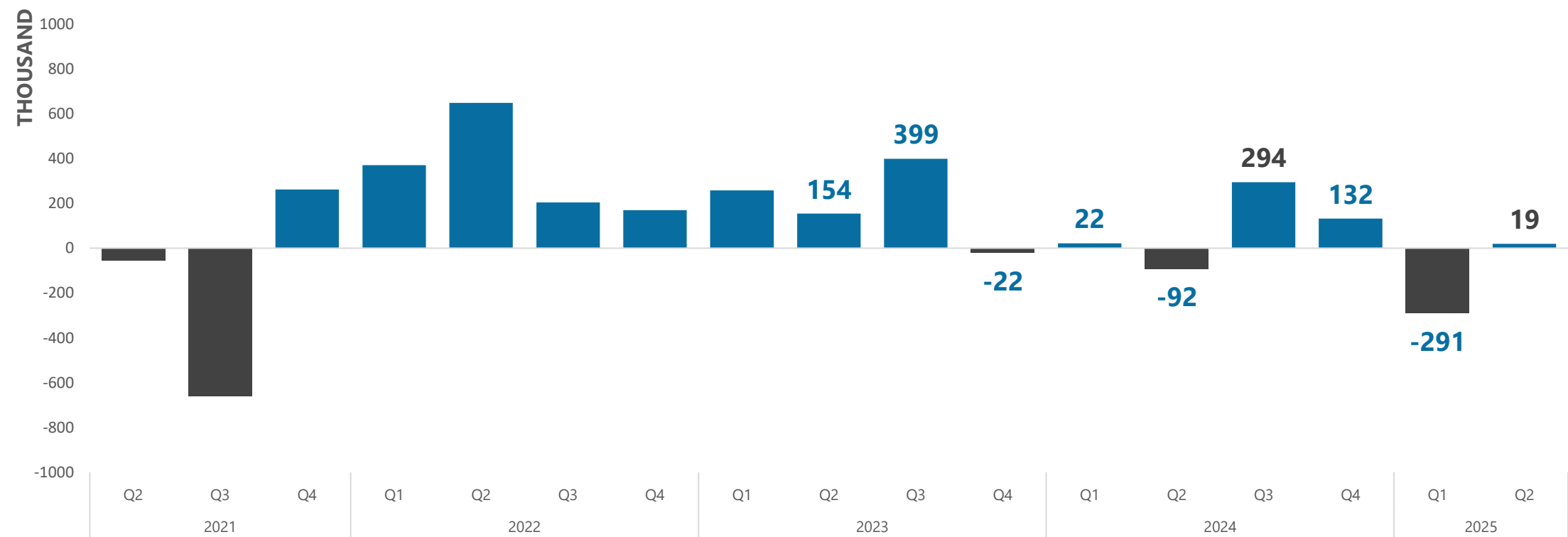


There were **140 thousand** more people unemployed in Q2:2025 than in Q1:2025.

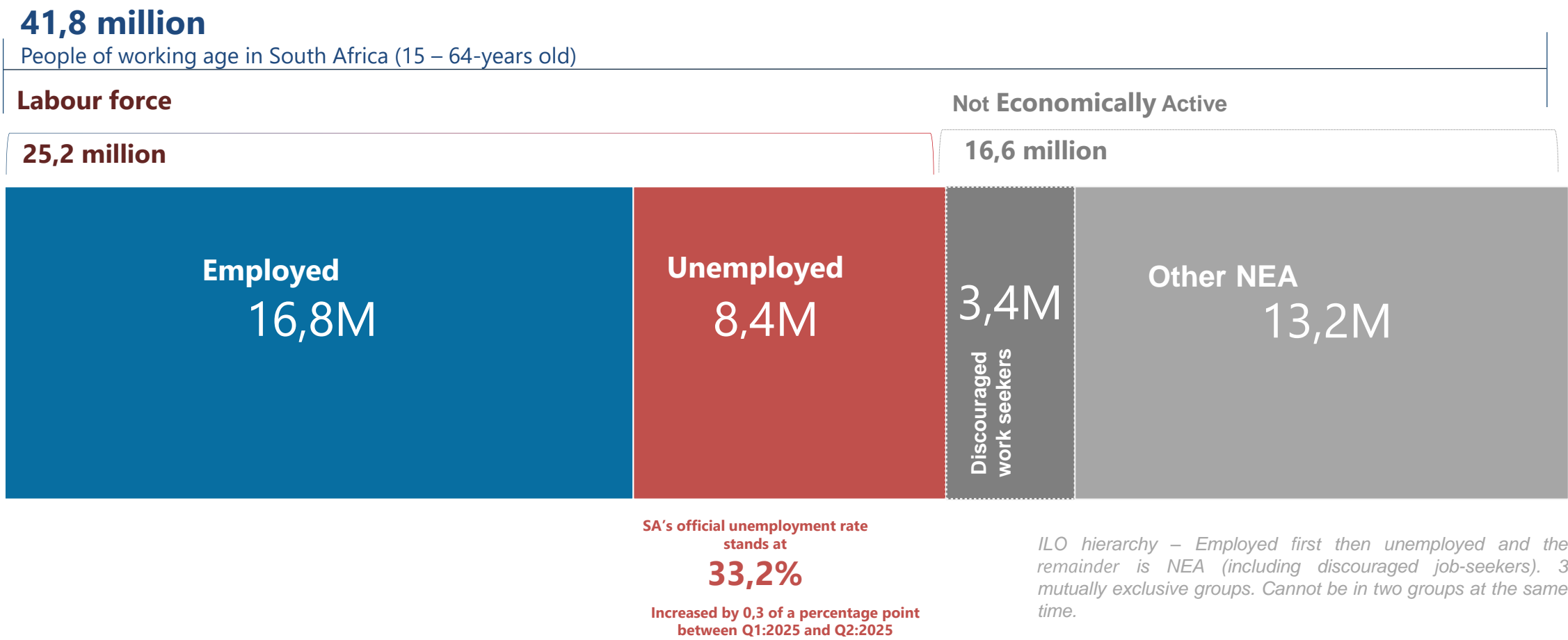


Employment increased by 19 000 in the second quarter of 2025, following a decrease of **291 000** in the first quarter of 2025.

Employment changes Q2:2021-Q2:2025 (Quarter-on-quarter)

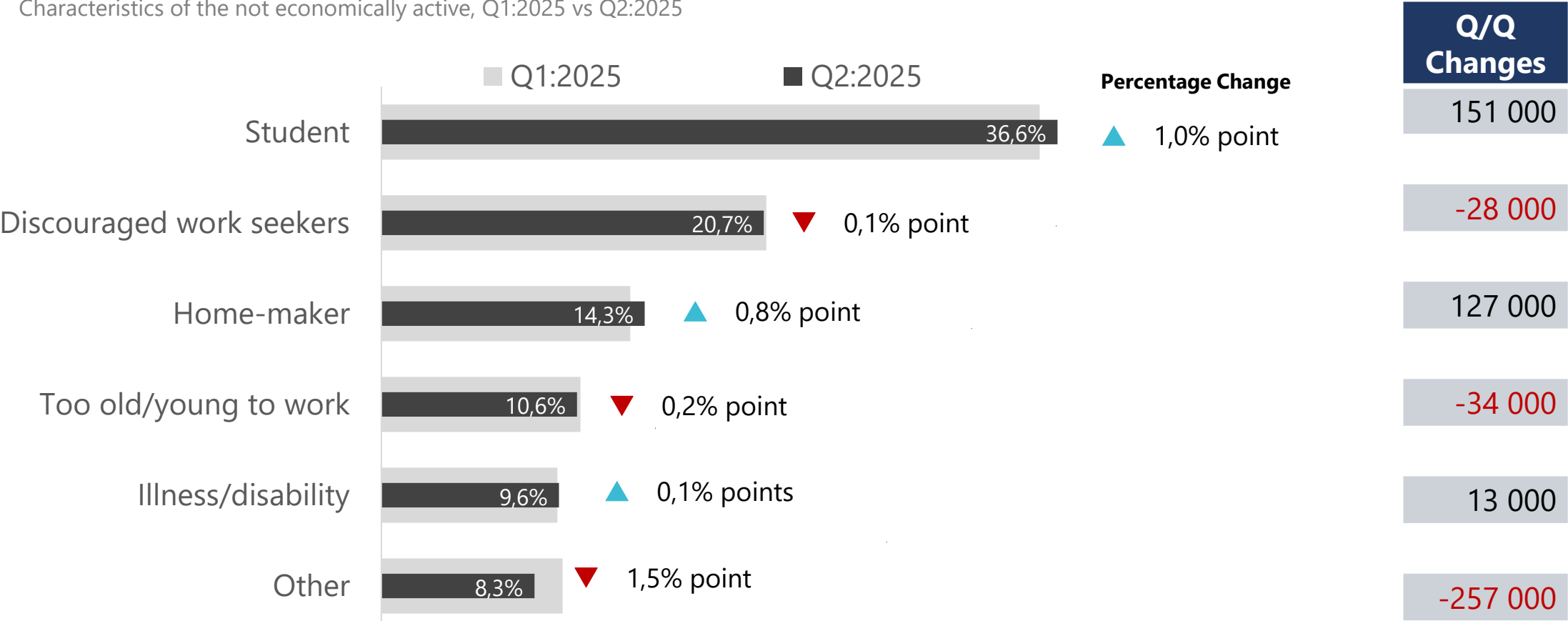


The official unemployment rate increased by 0,3 of a percentage point to **33,2%** in Q2:2025 compared to Q1:2025.



The number of **Not Economically Active** persons **decreased by 28 000** in Q2:2025 compared to Q1:2025

Characteristics of the not economically active, Q1:2025 vs Q2:2025



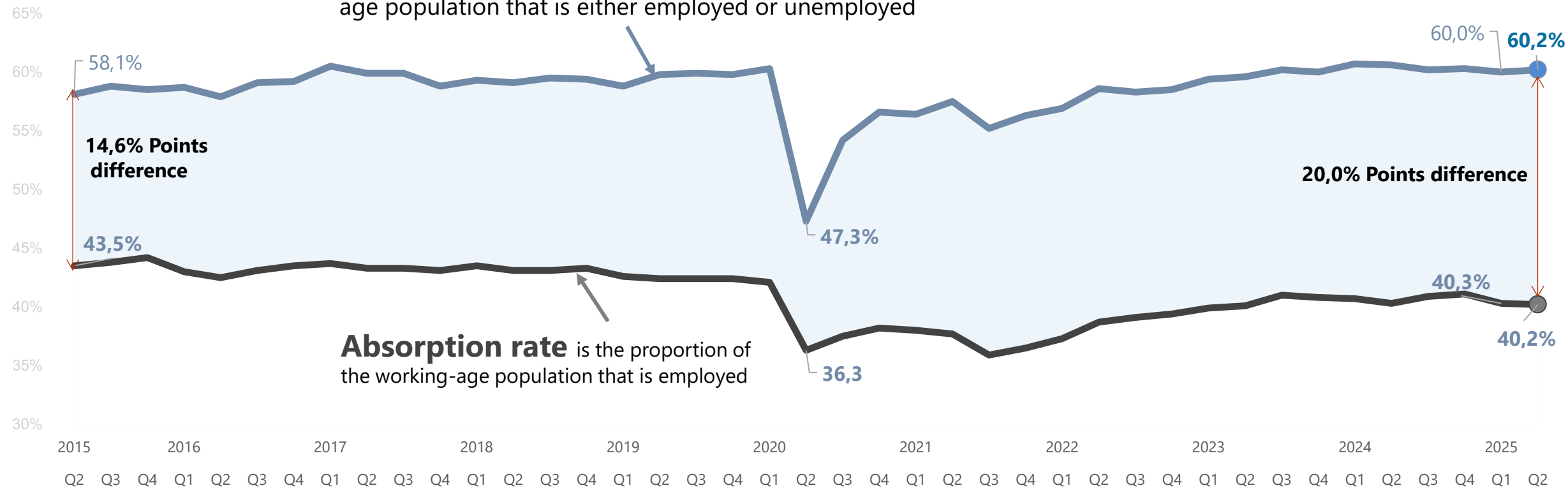
Due to rounding numbers may not add up

The **labour force participation rates** increased by 0,2 of a percentage point to **60,2%** in Q2:2025 compared to Q1:2025.

Labour force participation and absorption rates Q2:2015-Q2:2025

Labour force participation rate is the proportion of the working-age population that is either employed or unemployed

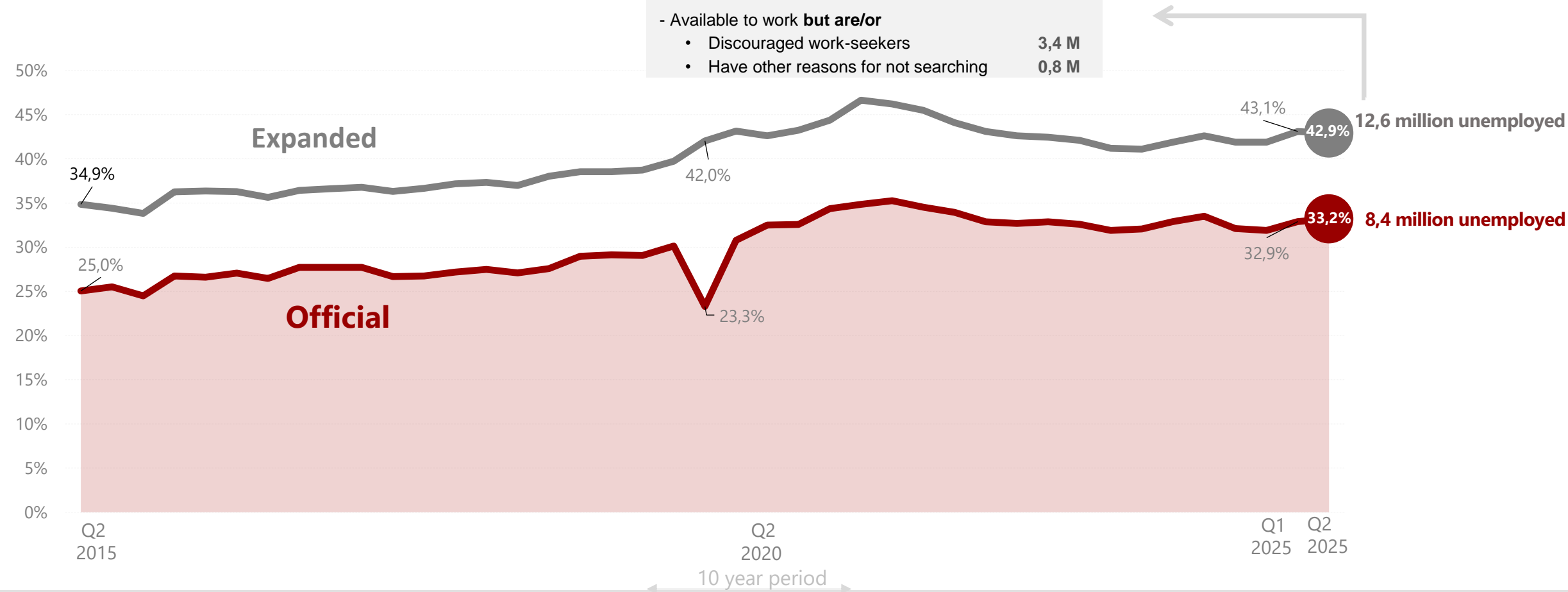
Absorption rate is the proportion of the working-age population that is employed



The expanded unemployment rate decreased by 0,2 percentage points to 42,9% in Q2:2025 compared to Q1:2025.

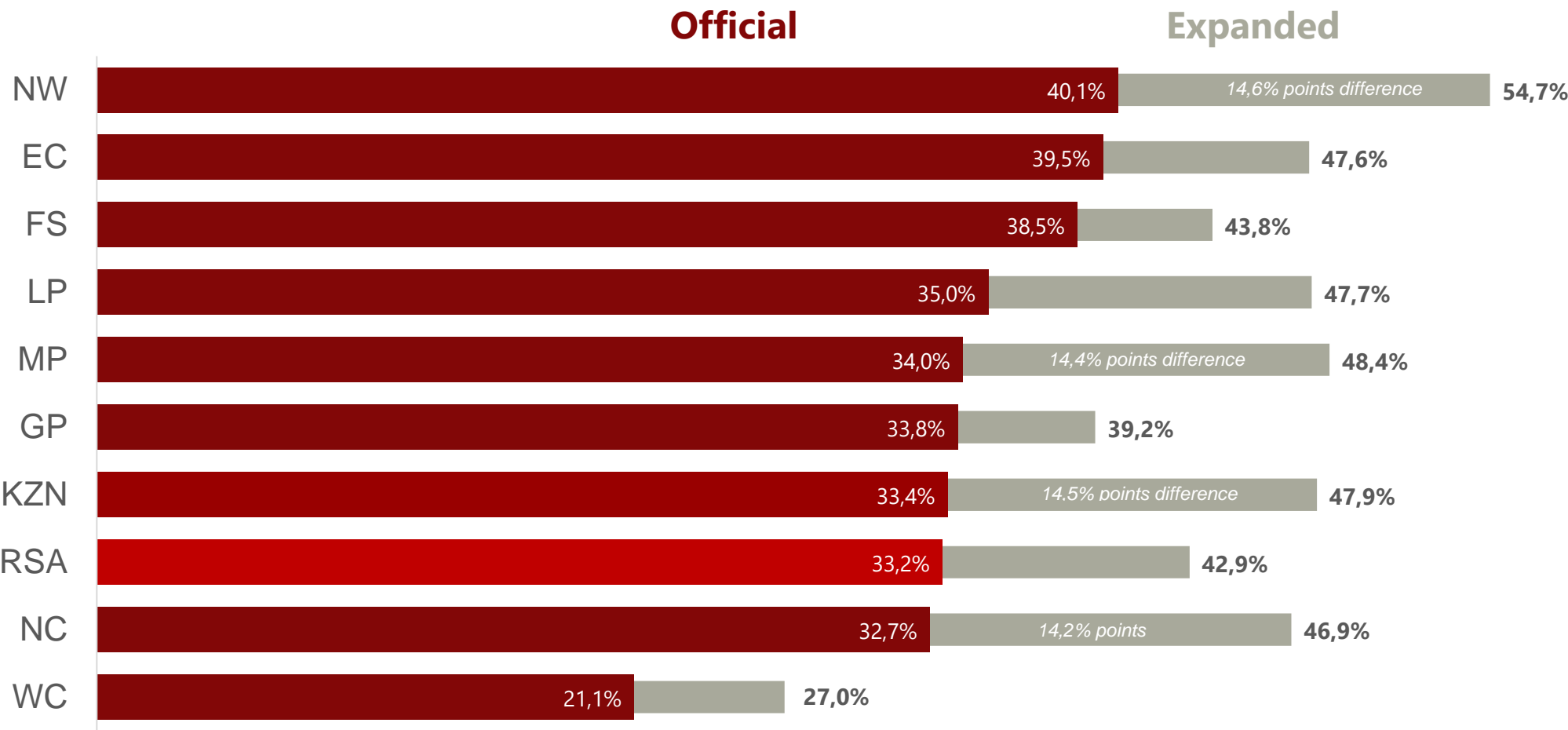
Official vs Expanded unemployment: Q2:2015-Q2:2025

| Expanded Definition includes the following | |
|--|-------|
| - Official unemployment (searched and available) | 8,4 M |
| - Available to work but are/or | |
| • Discouraged work-seekers | 3,4 M |
| • Have other reasons for not searching | 0,8 M |



NW (54,7%) recorded the **highest expanded unemployment rate** in Q2:2025, followed by **MP** (48,4%).
NW, KZN, MP, and NC recorded more than 14 percentage points difference between expanded and official unemployment rates

Provincial unemployment rates: **Official** vs Expanded Q2:2025

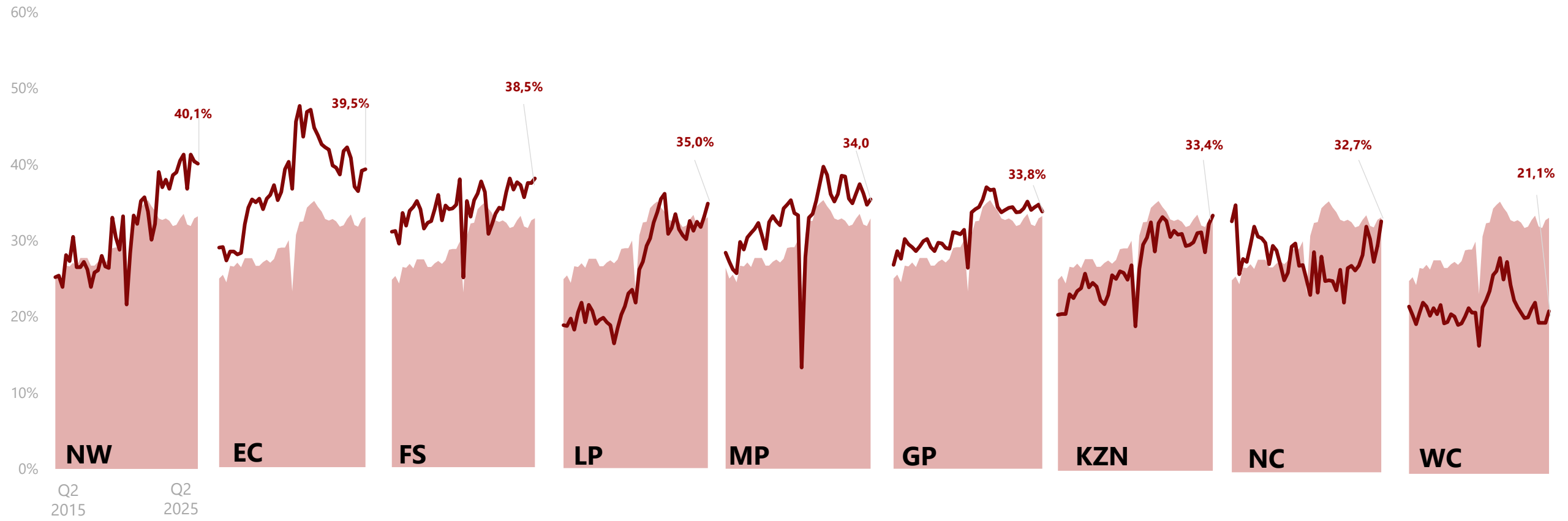


Over the past ten years, the unemployment rate in the **WC** has consistently remained below South Africa's national average, while the **EC** has consistently recorded unemployment rates above the national level.

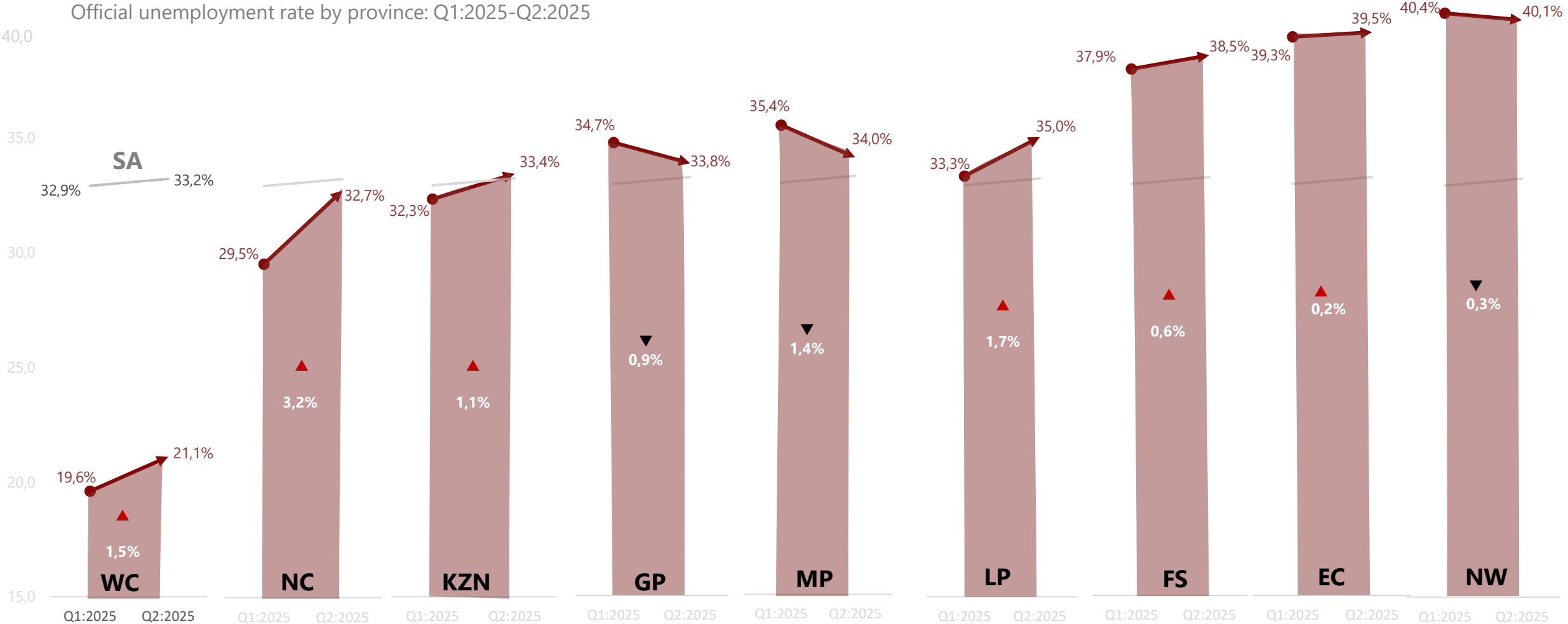
Official Unemployment rate by province, Q2:2015-Q2:2025

SA
Unemployment Rate

Provincial Unemployment Rate

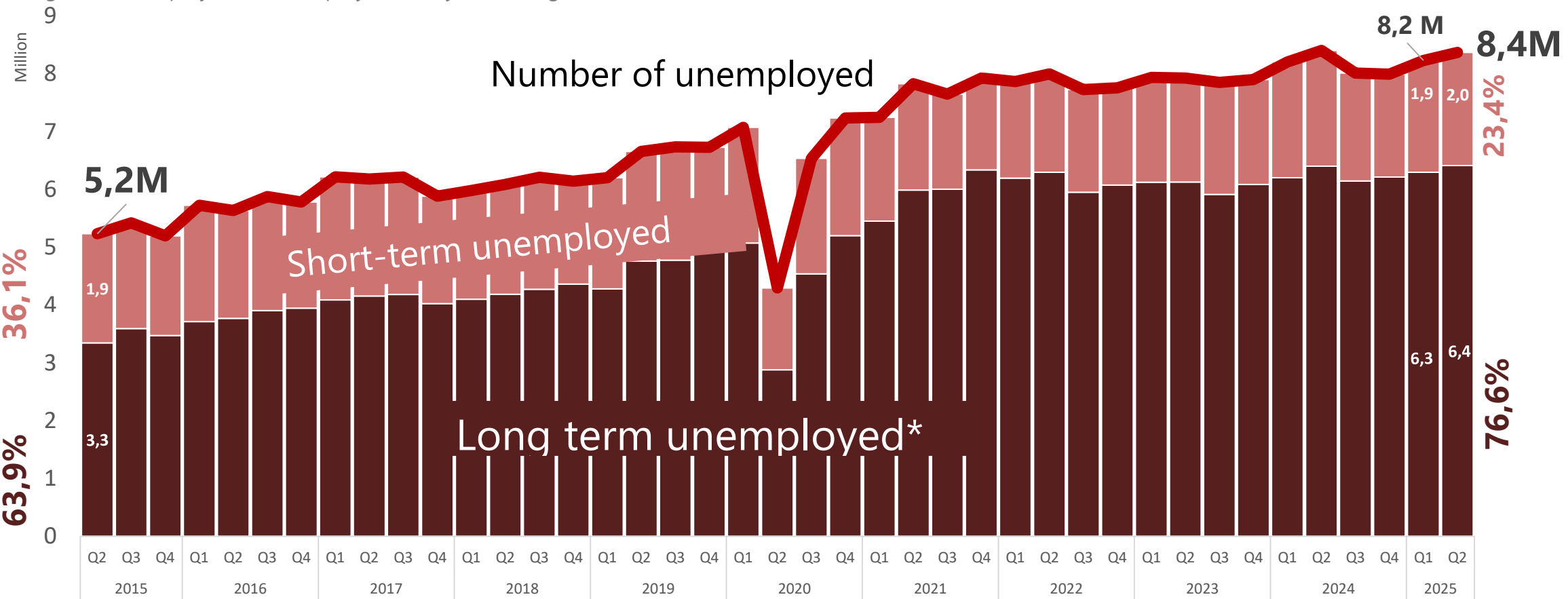


The **official unemployment rate** increased in six provinces between Q1:2025 and Q2:2025. *The largest increase was recorded in NC.*



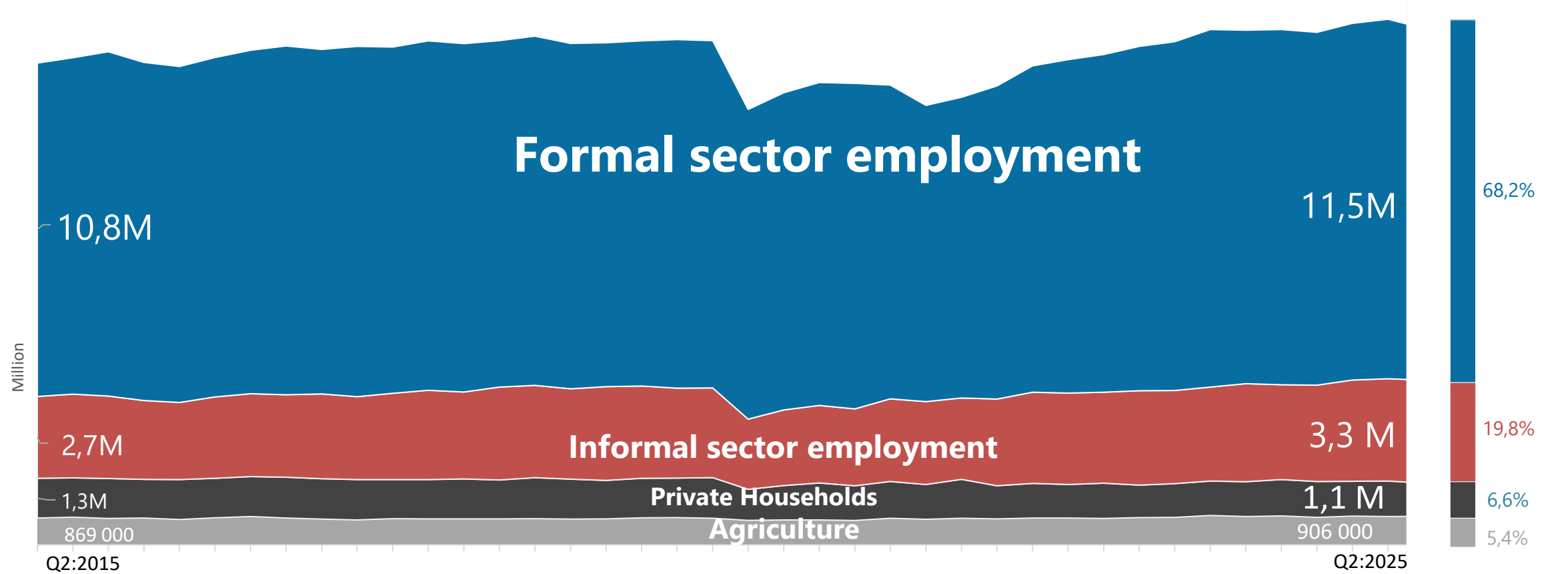
Between Q2:2015 and Q2:2025, the **number of unemployed** people in South Africa **increased from 5,2 million to 8,4 million**, with the proportion of those in long-term unemployment increasing from 63,9% to 76,6% over the same period.

*Long term unemployment–unemployed for a year or longer



Over the past ten years, the **formal sector** has been the main contributor to total employment in South Africa, accounting for **68,2%** of total employment in Q2:2025.

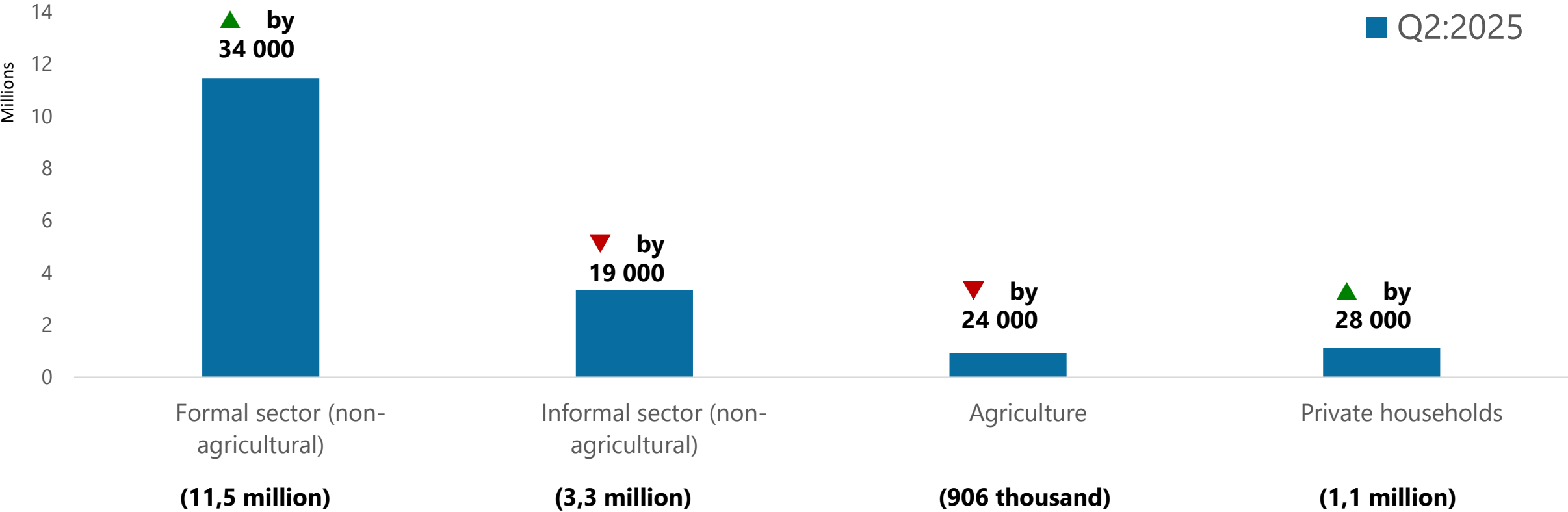
Employment share by sector, Q2:2015 to Q2:2025



Due to rounding numbers may not add up

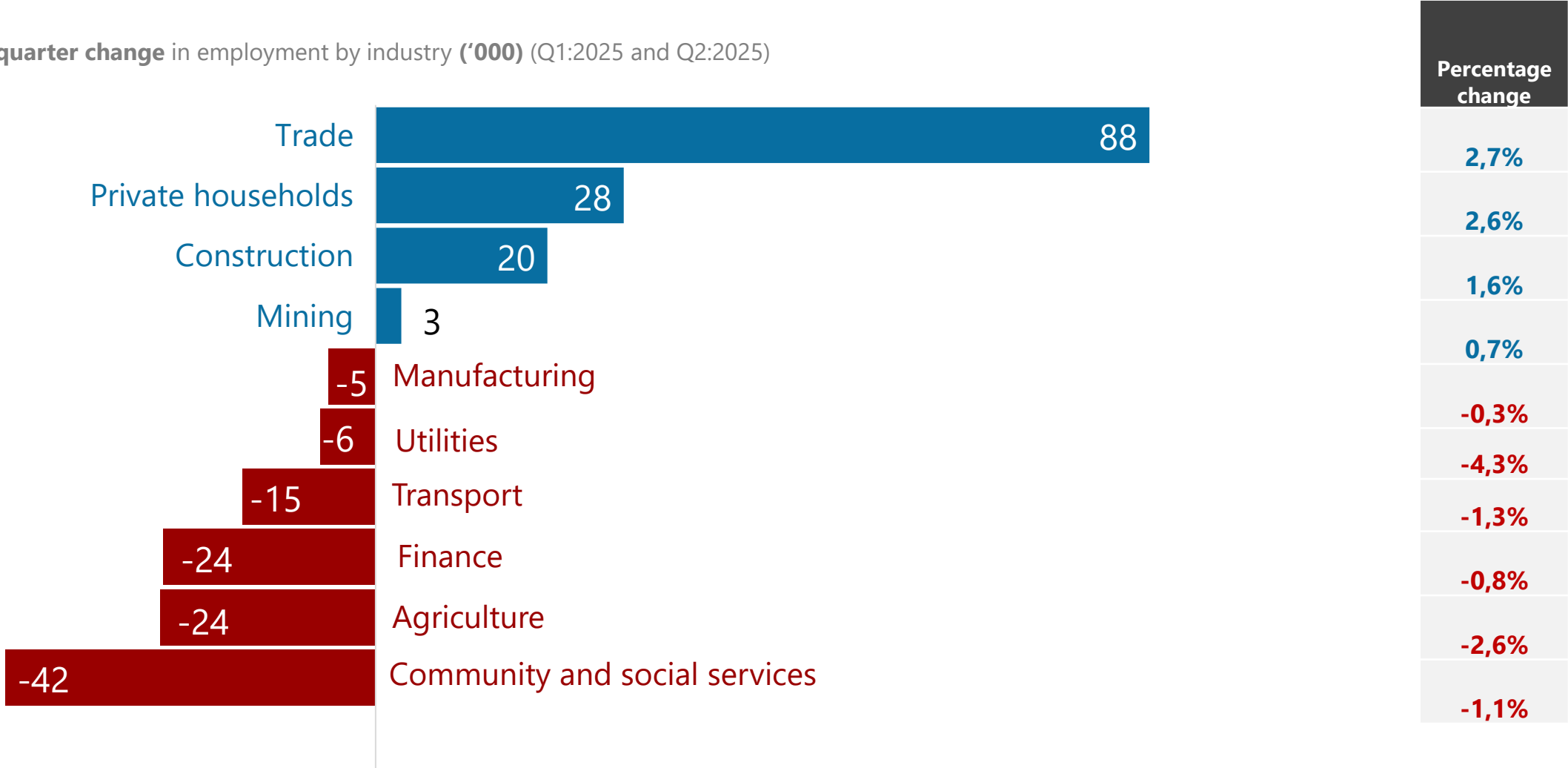
Formal employment increased **by 34 000** jobs in the second quarter of 2025.

Employment by sector, (Quarter-on-quarter)



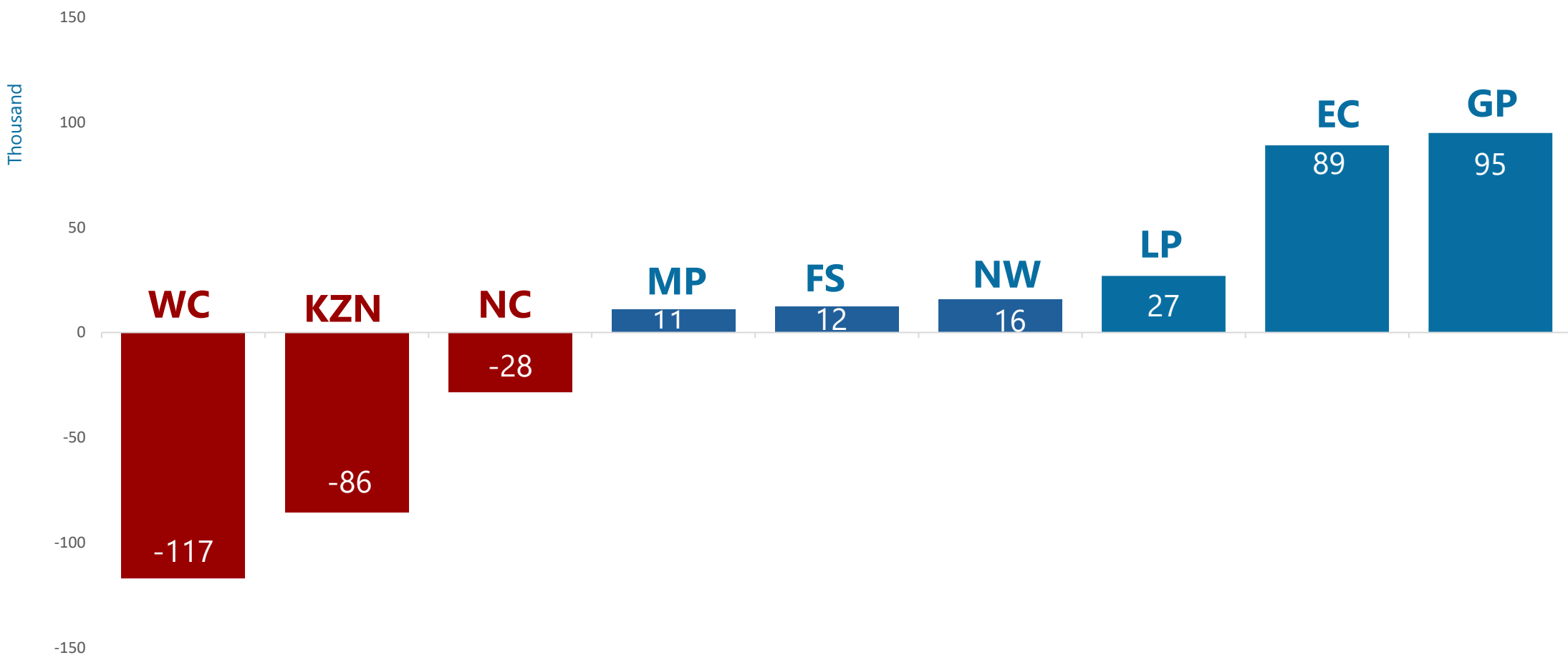
Employment increases were mainly in the **Trade and Private households industries**. However, the largest **decreases in employment** were recorded in the **Services, Agriculture, and Finance industries**.

Quarter-on-quarter change in employment by industry ('000) (Q1:2025 and Q2:2025)



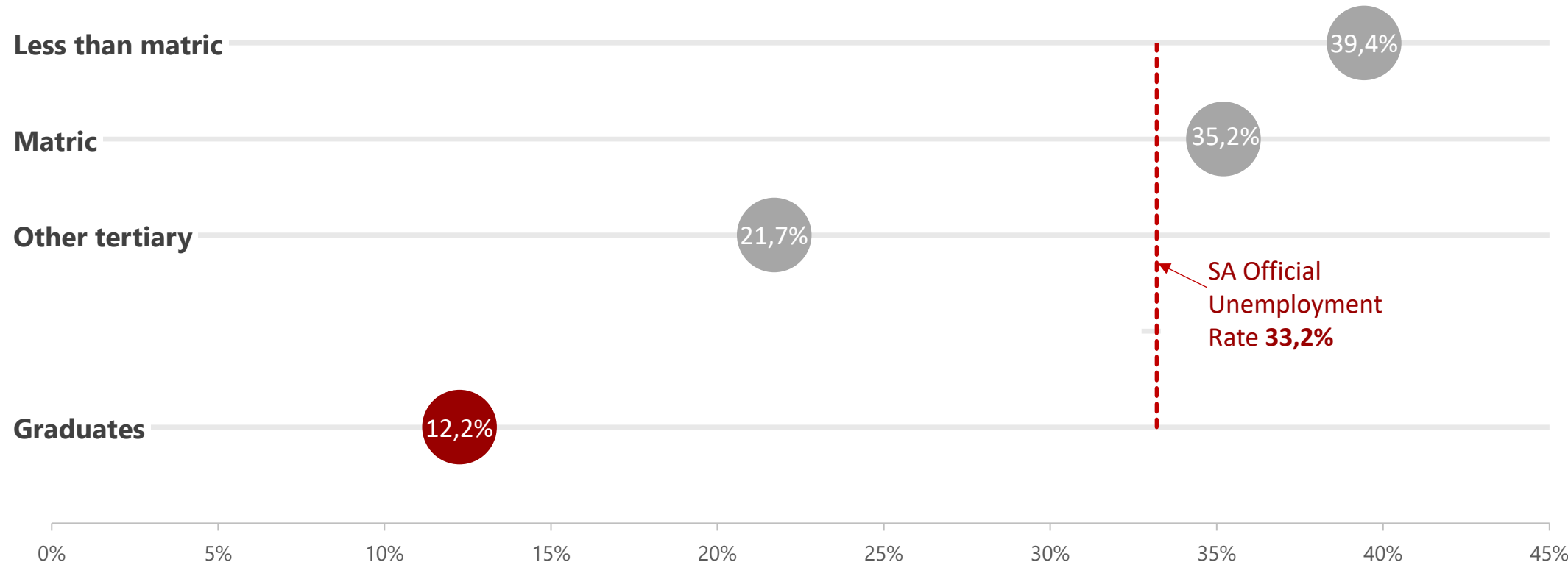
GP and EC recorded the largest increases in employment in Q2:2025, while **WC and KZN** recorded the largest decreases.

Quarter-on-quarter change in employment by province (Q1:2025 and Q2:2025)

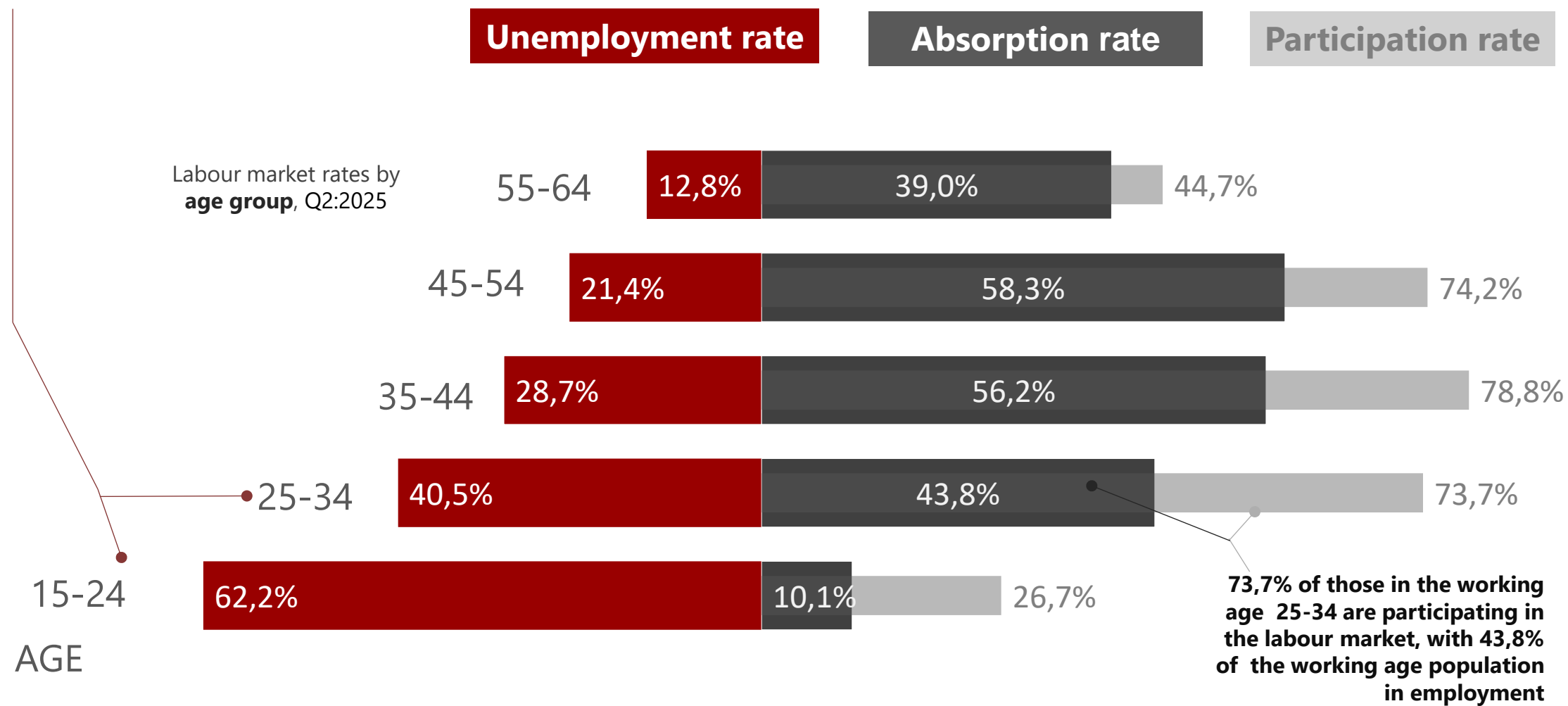


Graduate unemployment rate increased by 0,5 of a percentage point from 11,7% in Q1:2025 to **12,2%** in Q2:2025. Those with **matric** and **less than matric** remain vulnerable with unemployment rates of 35,2% and 39,4% respectively.

Official Unemployment rate by level of education, Q2:2025

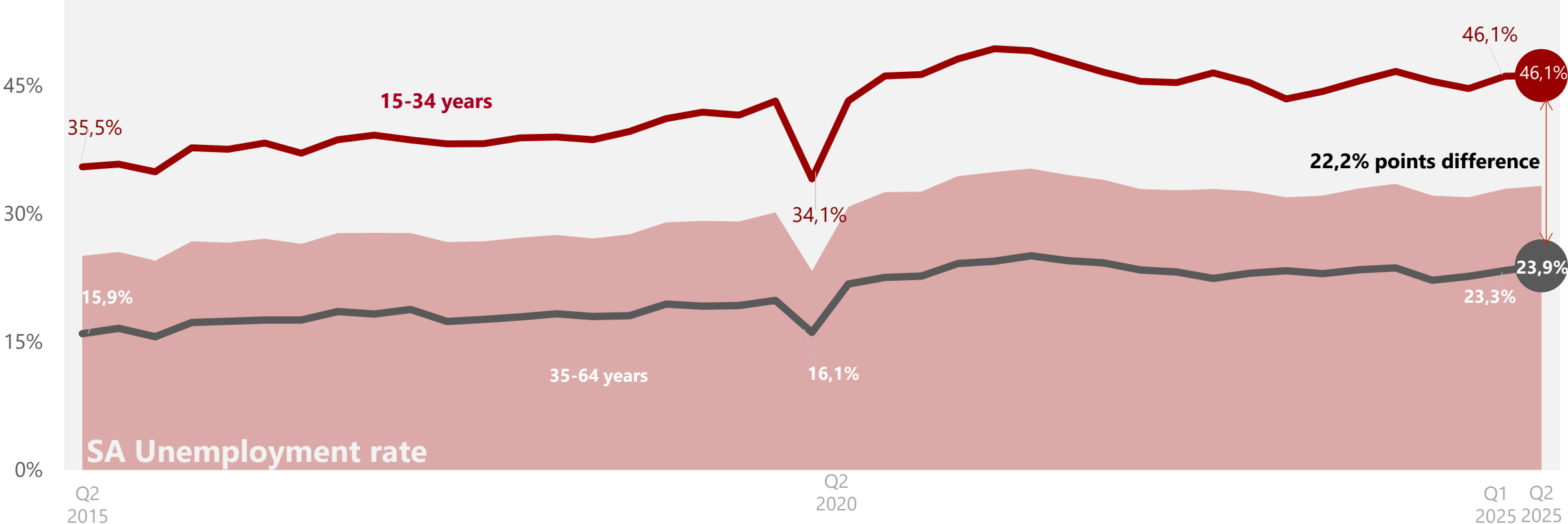


Youth aged 15-24 years and 25-34 years continue to have the highest unemployment rates at **62,2%** and **40,5%** respectively.

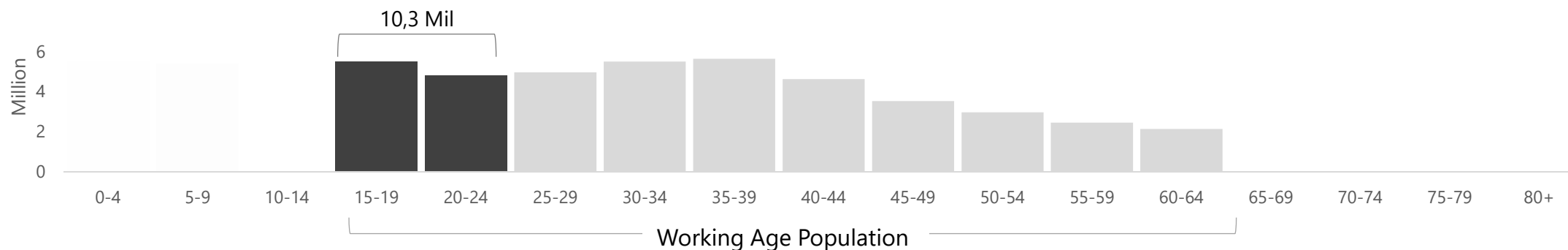


Youth aged **15-34 years** are more vulnerable to unemployment when compared to older age groups

Official Unemployment rates by age group, **Q2:2015-Q2:2025**



Approximately **3,6 million out of 10,3 million (or 35,2%)** young people aged 15-24 years were not in employment, education or training (NEET).



Number of NEET for ages 15-24
Q2:2025

**3,6 Million
NEET**

6,7 Million

**Employed or in
Education or Training**

Due to rounding numbers may not add up



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The overall NEET rate (15 – 24 years) remained unchanged between Q2:2024 and Q2:2025.

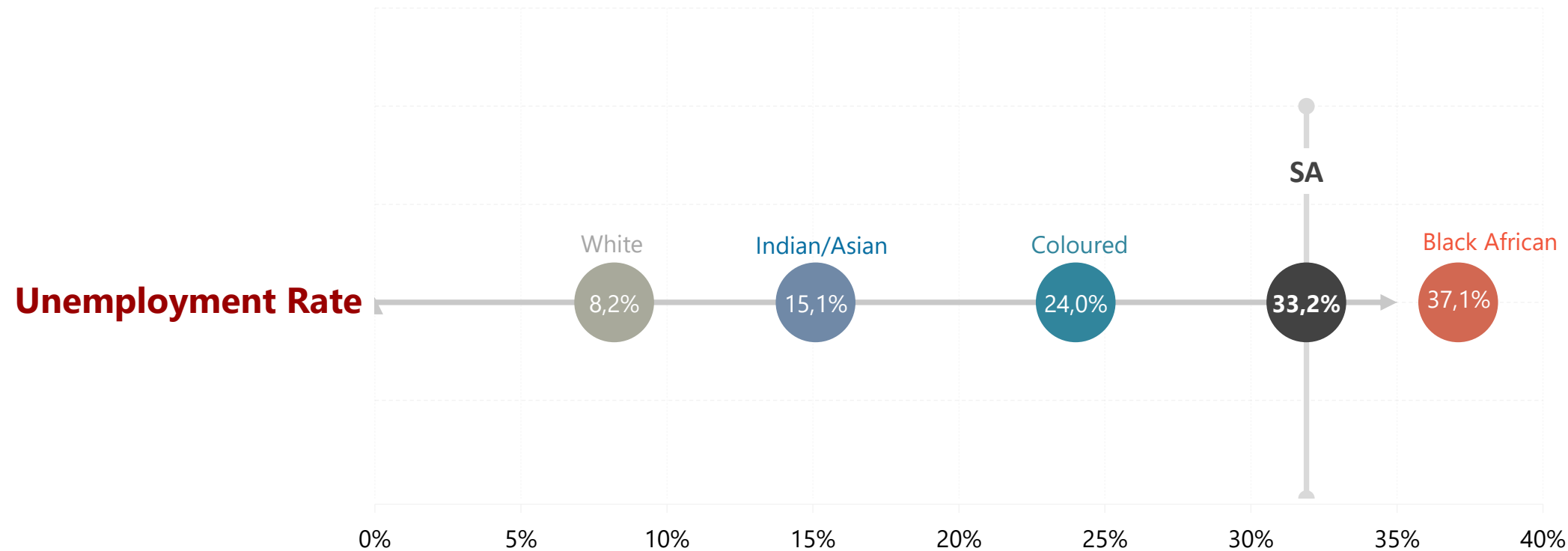
Q2:2021-Q2:2025 NEET rate for ages 15-24 & 15-34 year old



Due to rounding numbers may not add up

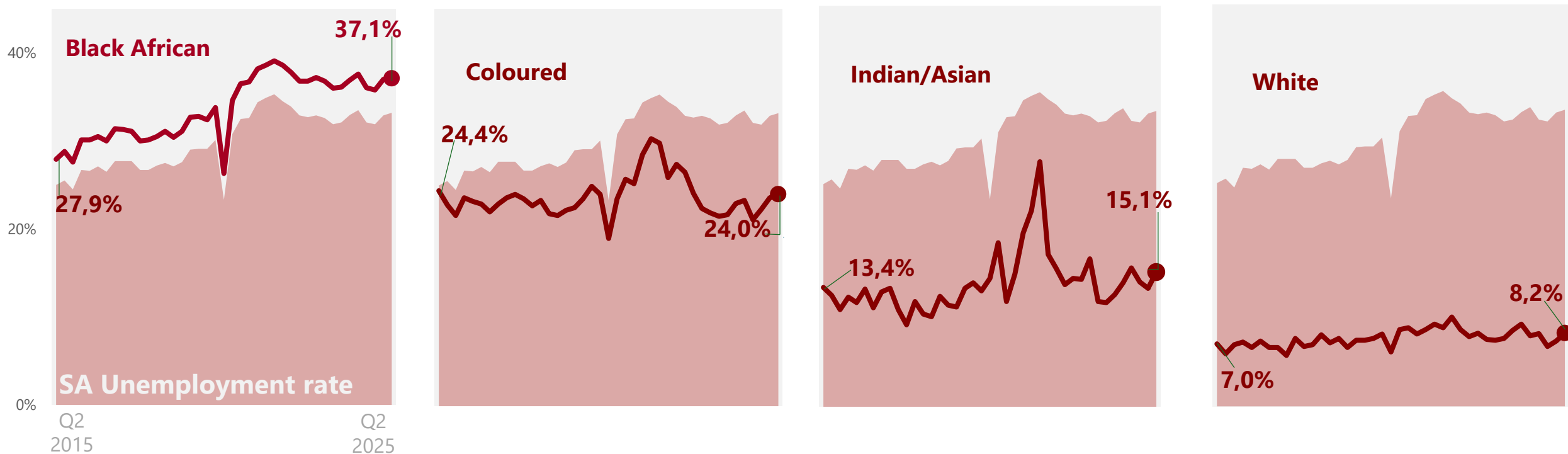
The unemployment rate among the **Black African (37,1%)** population group remains higher than the national average and other population groups.

OFFICIAL unemployment rate by population group, Q2:2025



Black African unemployment rate has consistently been higher than the national average and other population groups over the past 10-year period.

Official Unemployment rates by population group,
Q2:2015-Q2:2025



Women in South Africa



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The unemployment rate for women stands at 35,9 % in Q2:2025.

21,0 million

People of working age in South Africa (15 – 64-year-old)

Labour force

Not Economically Active

11,5 million

9,5 million

Employed
7,4M

Unemployed
4,1M

1,9M
Discouraged
work seekers

Other NEA
7,6M

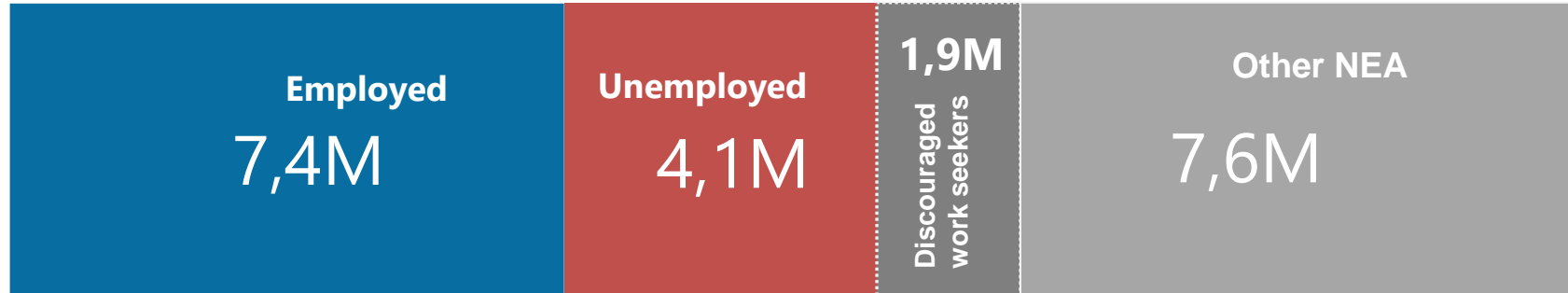
SA's women unemployment rate
stands at
35,9%
increased by 0,4 of a percentage point
between Q1:2025 and Q2:2025

ILO hierarchy – Employed first then unemployed and the remainder is NEA (including discouraged job-seekers). 3 mutually exclusive groups. Cannot be in two groups at the same time.

There were **7,4 million women** employed in Q2:2025 compared to 9,4 million men.

Not Economically Active (NEA)

Women



Men



Less Women **Employed** than Men

More Men **Unemployed** than Women

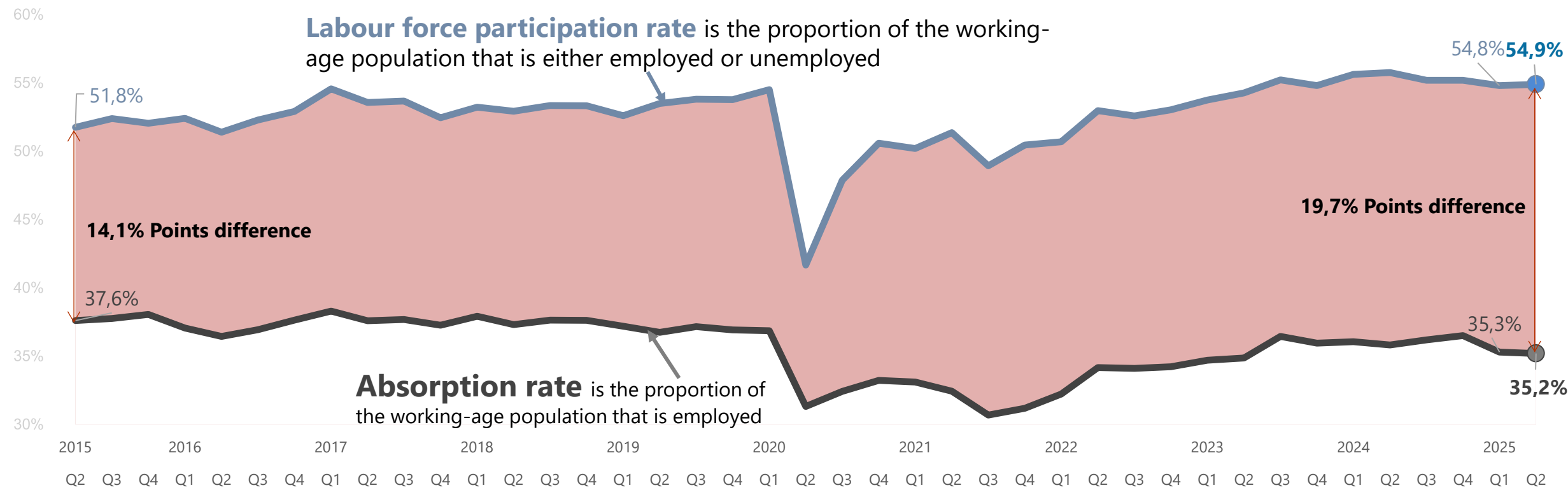
More **Discouraged Women** than Men

More **Women** not economically active than Men



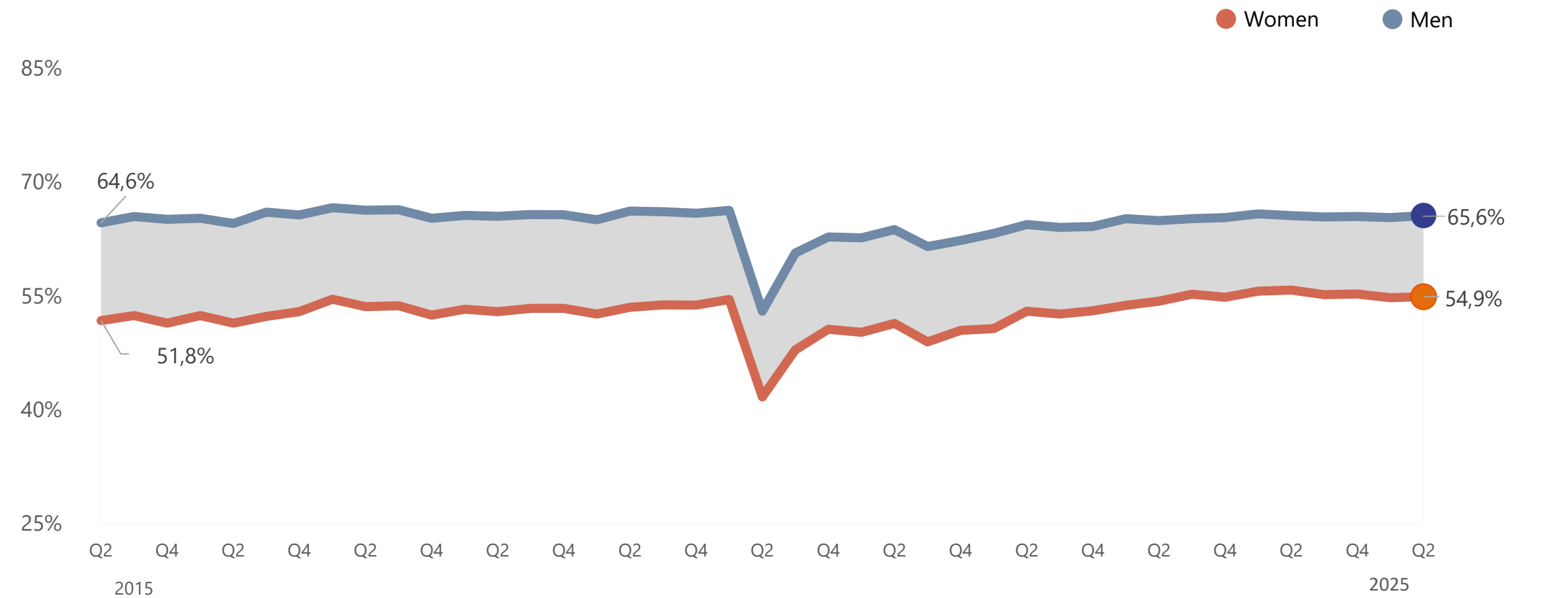
The **labour force participation rate** for women increased from 51,8% to 54,9% over a ten-year period, while the **absorption rate** decreased from 37,6% to 35,2% over the same period.

Labour force participation and absorption rates Q2:2015-Q2:2025



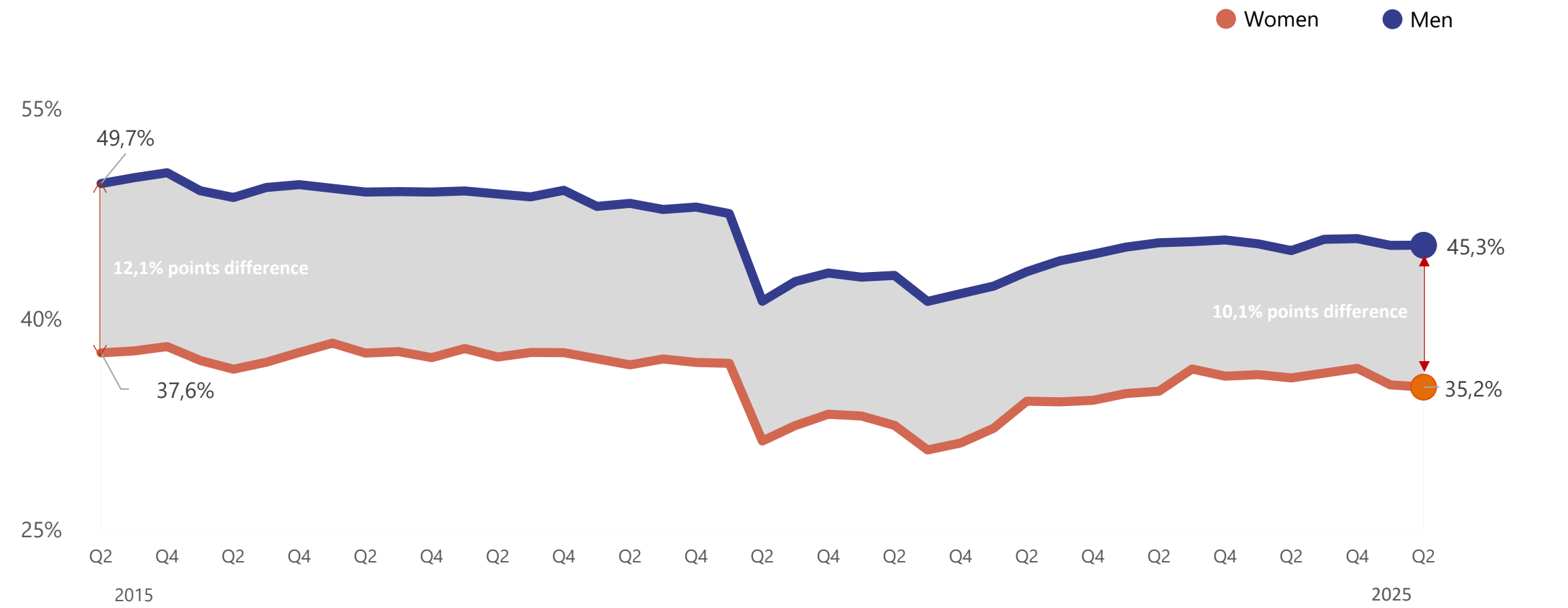
Although **women's** labour force participation rate has been increasing over time, **men's** participation in the labour force is higher than that of women.

Labour force participation by sex Q2:2015 - Q2:2025



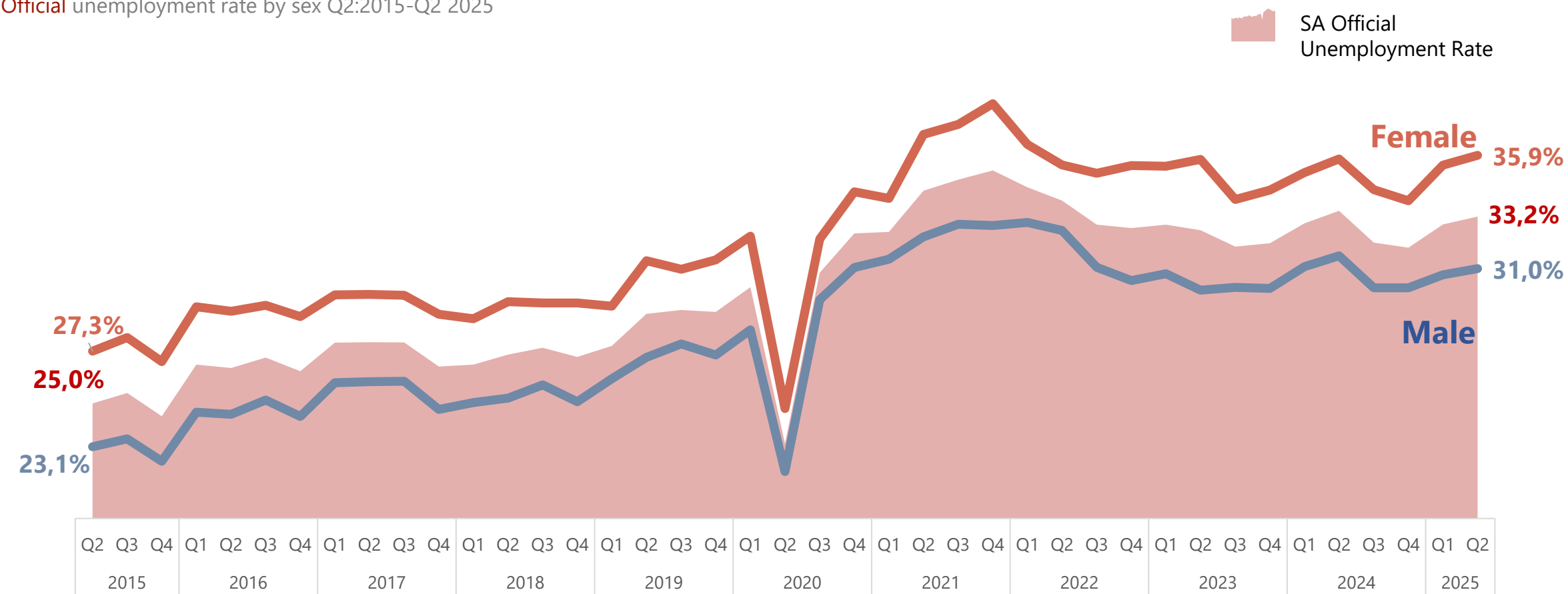
Women's **absorption rate** has been lower than that of men, with a 10,1 percentage points difference in Q2:2025.

Absorption rate by sex Q2:2015 - Q2:2025



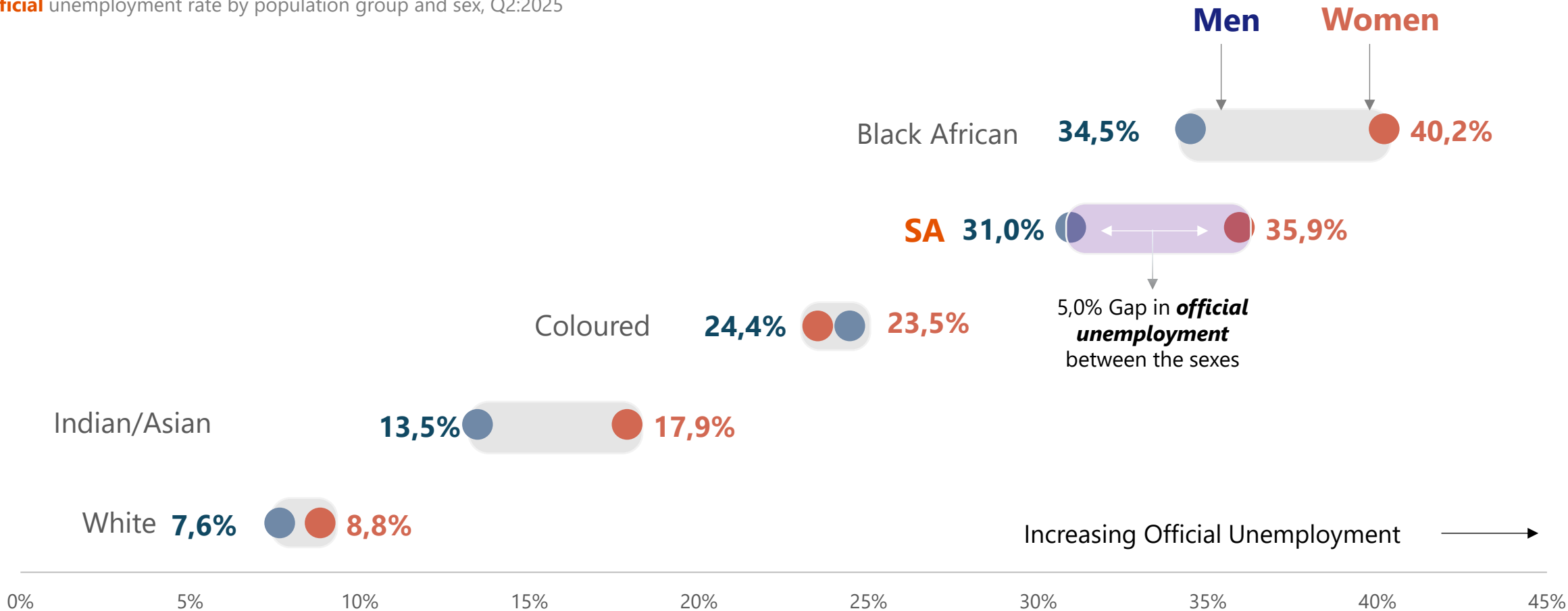
Since Q2:2015, the unemployment rate for women has consistently been higher than that of men. It increased from 27,3% in Q2:2015 to **35,9% in Q2:2025**.

Official unemployment rate by sex Q2:2015-Q2 2025



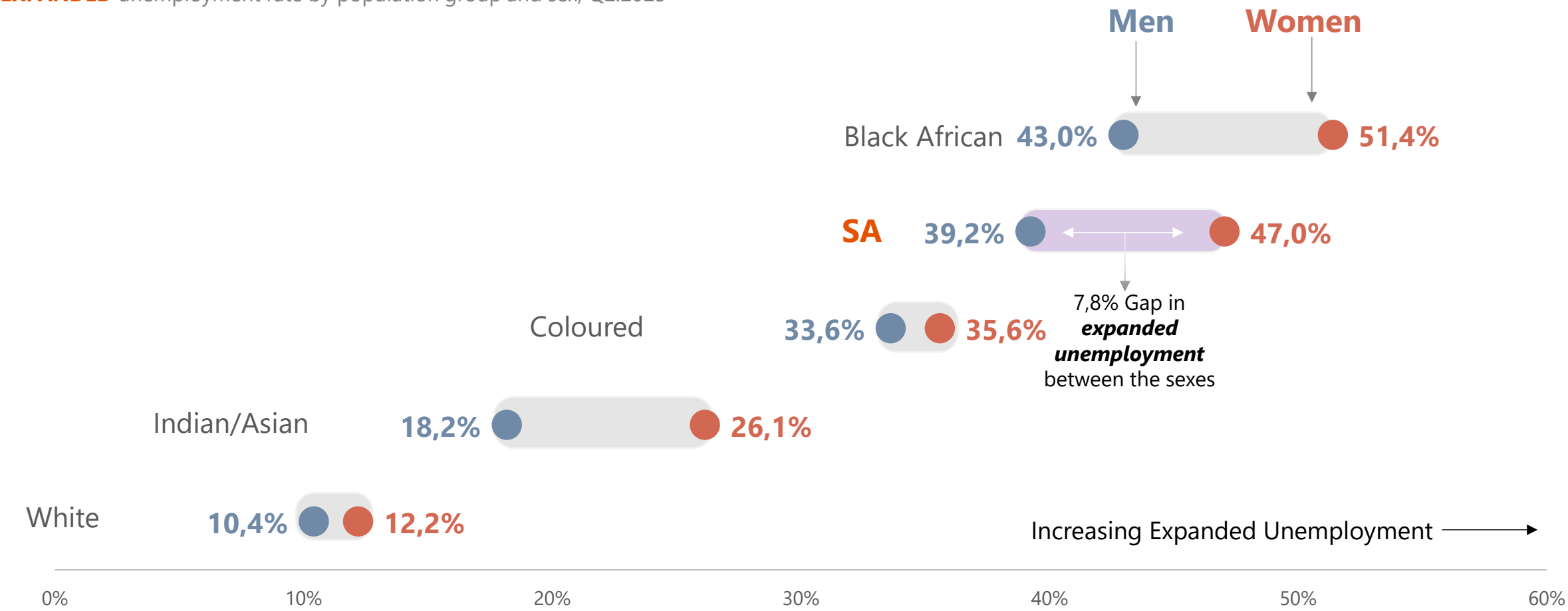
Black African women continue to be the most vulnerable with an unemployment rate of **40,2%** in Q2:2025. *This is 4,3 percentage points higher than the national average for women at 35,9%.*

Official unemployment rate by population group and sex, Q2:2025



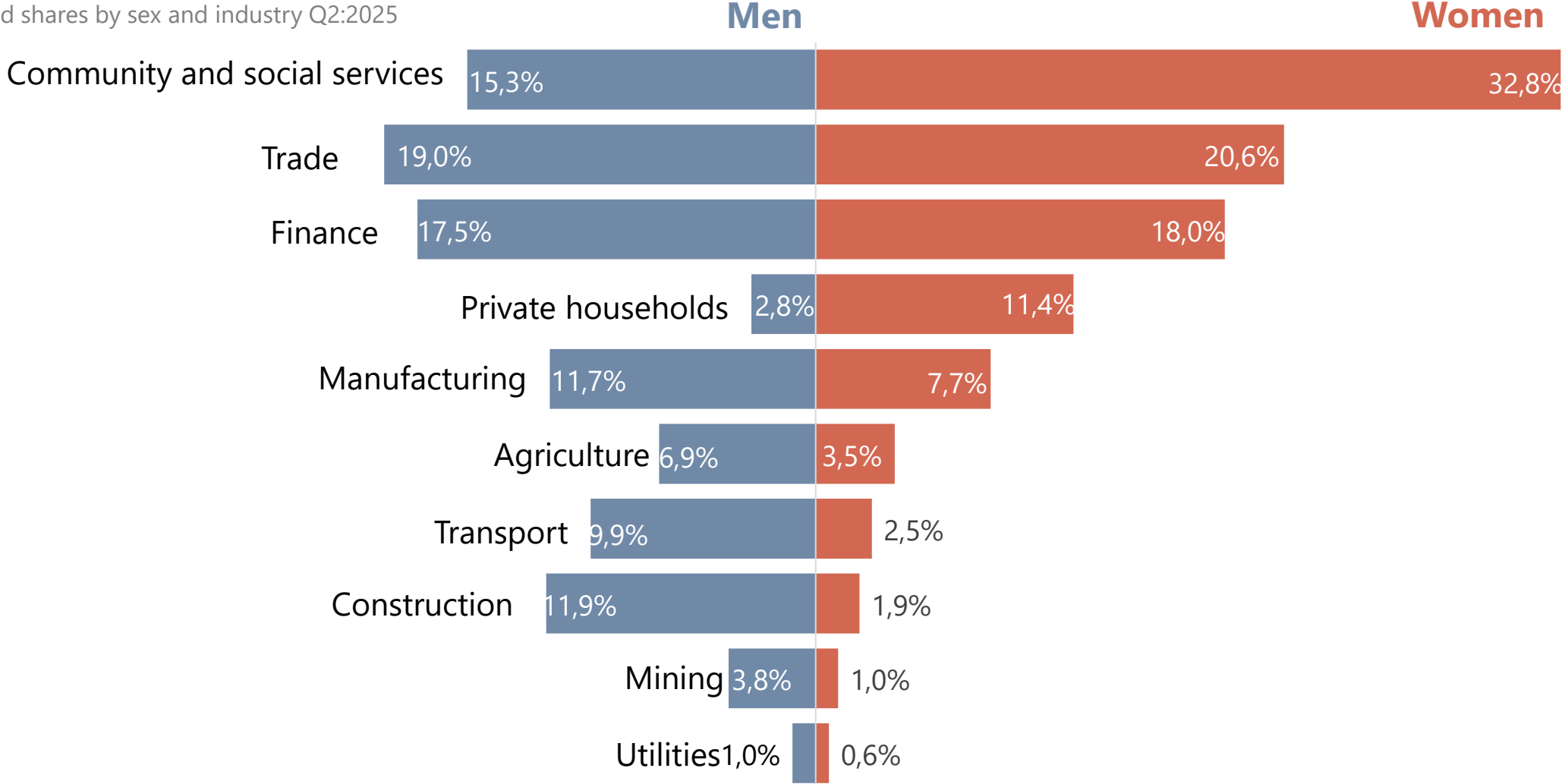
Using the expanded unemployment rate definition, **gender disparity** persists throughout all population groups.

EXPANDED unemployment rate by population group and sex, Q2:2025



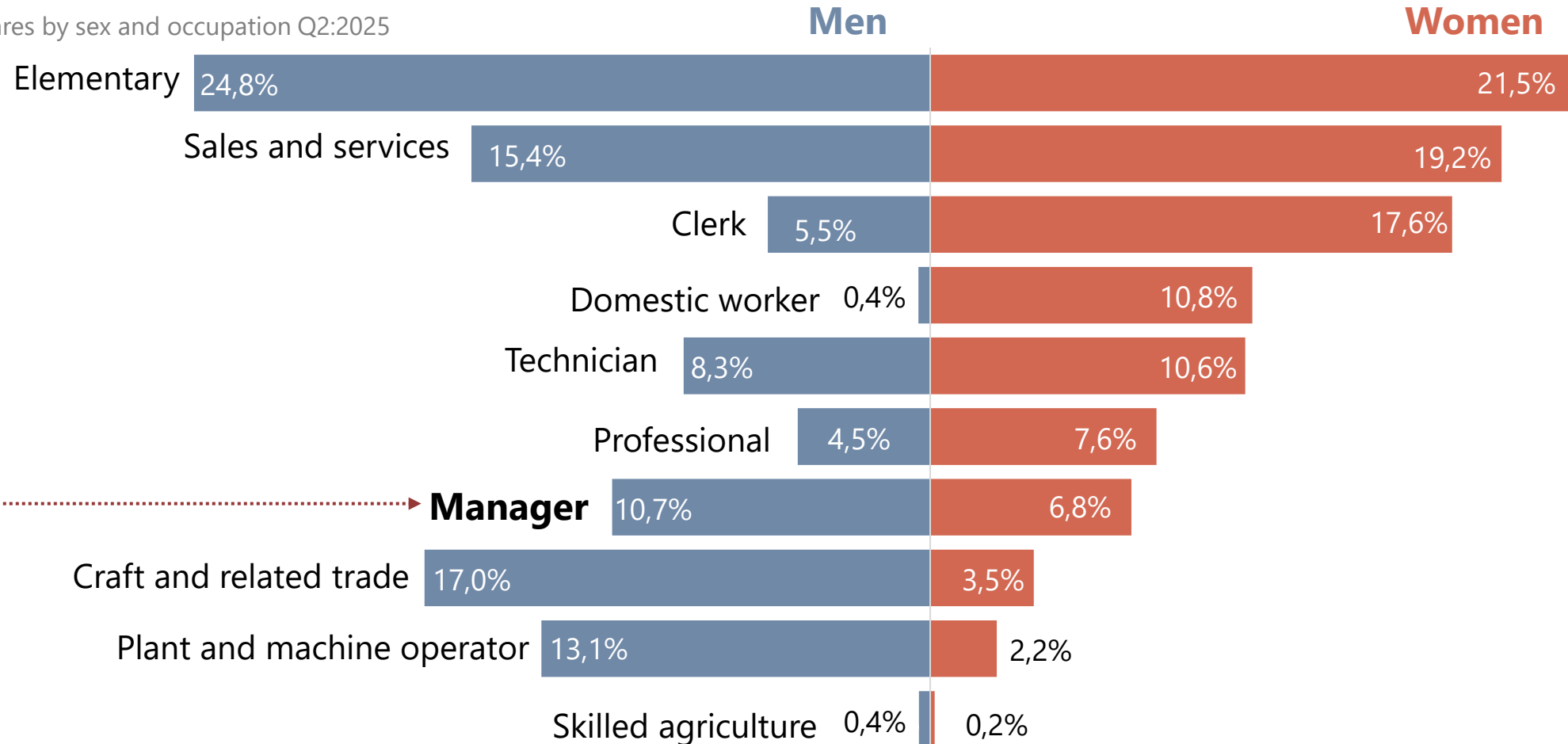
Women were more likely to be employed in **Community and social services, Trade, Finance, and Private households** compared to men.

Employed shares by sex and industry Q2:2025



- **Women** occupying managerial positions account for **6,8%** compared to **10,7%** for men. *Women were more likely to be employed in elementary work, sales and services, clerical work, domestic work, technical, and professional occupations.*

Employed shares by sex and occupation Q2:2025



RECAP (QLFS, Q2:2025)

- ❖ Unemployment rate **increased** by 0,3 of a percentage point to 33,2% in Q2:2025. The absorption rate decreased by 0,1 of a percentage point, while the labour force participation rate **increased** by 0,2 of a percentage point in Q2:2025 compared to Q1:2025.
- ❖ The number of unemployed and employed persons **increased** by 140 000 and 19 000, respectively, in Q2:2025 compared to Q1:2025.
- ❖ The largest **employment gains** were recorded in Trade (88 000) and Private households (28 000) industries. While the largest **employment losses** were recorded in Services (42 000), Agriculture (24 000), and Finance (24 000).
- ❖ Women are more likely to be employed in **Community and social services, Trade and Finance** industries, as well as in Elementary work, Sales and services, Clerical work, domestic work, technical, and professional occupations.



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Geospatial Information Frame

Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (April 2025-March 2026)

Quarterly Labour Force Survey(Collected quarterly)

General Household Survey (January-December)

Domestic Tourism Survey (January-December)

Consumer Price Index (Collected monthly)

Living Condition Survey

Frame Update Project



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QLFS
Q2:2025

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