Total employment decreased by **22 thousand** to **16,7 M** in Q4:2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Q3:2023</th>
<th>Q4:2023</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>16,7M</td>
<td>16,7M</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>7,8M</td>
<td>7,9M</td>
<td>0.1M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NEA</td>
<td>13,1M</td>
<td>13,4M</td>
<td>0.3M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**22 000** Fewer Employed between Q3:2023 and Q4:2023

**46 000** More Unemployed between Q3:2023 and Q4:2023

**107 000** Fewer Discouraged work seekers between Q3:2023 and Q4:2023

**218 000** More Other Not Economically Active between Q3:2023 and Q4:2023
After eight consecutive increases, employment decreased by 22 000 in the last quarter of 2023.
The number of **employed** persons remains at 16,7M in Q4:2023 compared to Q3:2023 having surpassed **pre-COVID** level of 16,4M in Q1:2020.
**The official unemployment rate** stands at **32.1%**, an increase of 0.2 of a percentage point in Q4:2023 compared to Q3:2023.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labour force</th>
<th>Not Economically Active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.6 million</td>
<td>16.4 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **16.7M** Employed
- **7.9M** Unemployed
- **3.0M** Discouraged work seekers
- **13.4M** Other NEA

SA’s official unemployment rate stands at **32.1%**

Increased by 0.2 of a percentage point between Q3:2023 and Q4:2023

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.
The number of **Not Economically Active** persons increased by **111 000** in Q4:2023 compared to Q3:2023.

Characteristics of the not economically active, Q3:2023 vs Q4:2023:

- **Student**: Increased by **38.0%** in Q4:2023.
- **Discouraged work seekers**:Remained unchanged with **0.8%** point decrease.
- **Home-maker**: Increased by **0.3%** point.
- **Illness/disability**: Increased by **0.2%** point.
- **Too old/young to work**: Decreased by **0.1%** point.
- **Other**: Increased by **0.4%** point.

Due to rounding numbers may not add up.
In Q4 of 2023, the labour force participation rate and absorption rate both decreased by 0,2 of a percentage point to 60,0% and 40,8%, respectively.

Labour force participation and absorption rates Q4:2013-Q4:2023

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.

13,8% Points difference
19,2% Points difference
13,8% Points difference
19,2% Points difference

Pre-COVID
41,0%
40,8%
The expanded unemployment rate decreased by 0.1% of a percentage point to 41.1% when comparing Q4:2023 and Q3:2023.


**Expanded Definition includes the following**
- Official unemployment (searched and available) 7.9 M
- Available to work but are/or
  - Discouraged work-seekers 3.0 M
  - Have other reasons for not searching 0.8 M

11.7 million unemployed

10 year period

The expanded unemployment rate decreased by 0.1% of a percentage point to 41.1% when comparing Q4:2023 and Q3:2023.
NW (52.2%) recorded the highest expanded unemployment rate in Q4:2023, followed by EC (47.1%). LP and NC recorded more than a 15 percentage points difference between expanded and official unemployment rates.
While the unemployment rates in **WC** and **KZN** have consistently been below the official unemployment rate in SA for the past ten years, the unemployment rate in **EC** has continuously exceeded it.
The unemployment rate increased in six provinces between Q3:2023 and Q4:2023. The largest increase was recorded in EC up by 3.1 percentage points.

Official unemployment rate by province: Q3:2023-Q4:2023
The number of unemployed people in South Africa increased from 4.8 million in Q4:2013 to 7.9 million in Q4:2023. The proportion of those in long-term unemployment increased from 66.4% in Q4:2013 to 77.1% in Q4:2023.

*Long term unemployment – unemployed for a year or longer
The **formal sector** in South Africa accounts for **68.7%** of total employment.

Employment share by sector, Q4:2013 to Q4:2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Q4:2013</th>
<th>Q4:2019</th>
<th>Q4:2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Households</td>
<td>713 000</td>
<td>920 000</td>
<td>1,1 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>10,8 M</td>
<td>3,2 M</td>
<td>68,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal sector employment</td>
<td>2,4 M</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total employment</td>
<td>11,5 M</td>
<td>11,5 M</td>
<td>68,7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formal sector employment decreased by **128 thousand jobs** between Q3:2023 and Q4:2023.

Employment changes by sector, (Quarter-on-quarter)

- **Formal sector (non-agricultural)**: (11.5 million) → (3.2 million) → (1.1 million)
  - Decreased by 128 000

- **Informal sector (non-agricultural)**: (3.2 million) → (1.1 million)
  - Increased by 124 000

- **Agriculture**: (920 thousand) → (35 000)
  - Decreased by 35 000

- **Private households**: (1.1 million) → (18 000)
  - Increased by 18 000
**Employment** decreases were mainly in the Services, Construction, and Agriculture industries. However, the largest employment increases were recorded in Finance, Transport and Mining.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Quarter-on-quarter change ('000)</th>
<th>Percentage change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>4,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>9,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private households</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>-28</td>
<td>-0,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>-35</td>
<td>-3,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>-36</td>
<td>-2,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and social services</td>
<td>-171</td>
<td>-4,2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EC, LP and NW recorded the largest decreases in employment in Q4:2023 while KZN, MP and WC recorded the largest employment increases.

Quarter-on-quarter change in employment by province ('000) (Q3:2023 and Q4:2023)
Graduate unemployment rate increased by 1.1 percentage points to 9.6% in Q4:2023 compared to 8.5% in Q3:2023. Those with less than matric remain vulnerable with an unemployment rate of 38.6% which is higher than SA official unemployment rate.
Youth aged 15-24 years and 25-34 years continue to have the highest unemployment rates at **59.4%** and **39.0%** respectively.

Labour market rates by **age group**, Q4:2023

- **55-64** age group:
  - Unemployment rate: 11.4%
  - Absorption rate: 38.3%
  - Participation rate: 43.2%

- **45-54** age group:
  - Unemployment rate: 20.4%
  - Absorption rate: 58.7%
  - Participation rate: 73.8%

- **35-44** age group:
  - Unemployment rate: 27.7%
  - Absorption rate: 57.4%
  - Participation rate: 79.5%

- **25-34** age group:
  - Unemployment rate: 39.0%
  - Absorption rate: 45.1%
  - Participation rate: 74.0%

74% of those in the working age 25-34 are participating in the labour market with 45.1% of working age in employment.

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

Official Unemployment rates by age group, Q4:2013-Q4:2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Q4 2013</th>
<th>Q4 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-34 years</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-64 years</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA Unemployment rate
Approximately **3,4 million (33,0%)** out of **10,2 million** young people aged 15-24 years were not in employment, education or training (NEET).
The overall NEET rate (15 – 24yrs) decreased by 0,7 of a percentage point in Q4:2023 compared to Q4:2022.

The unemployment rate among the **Black African (36.1%)** population group remains higher than the national average and other population groups.
Black African unemployment rates have been consistently higher than other population groups over the past 10-year period.

Official Unemployment rates by population group, Q4:2013-Q4:2023
RECAP (QLFS, Q4:2023)

- Unemployment rate increased by 0.2 of a percentage point to 32.1% in Q4:2023. Both Absorption rate and labour force participation rate decreased by 0.2 of a percentage point to 40.8% and 60.0% respectively.

- The number of unemployed persons increased by 46,000 in Q4:2023 compared to Q3:2023. While the number of those who were employed decreased by 22,000 in the same quarter.

- The largest industry employment losses were recorded in Community and social services (171,000), Construction (36,000), and Agriculture (35,000). While the largest industry employment gains were recorded in Finance (128,000), Transport (57,000), and Mining (37,000).
NOW IN THE FIELD

Geospatial Information Frame
Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (April 2023-March 2024)
Quarterly Labour Force Survey (Collected quarterly)
General Household Survey (January-December)
Domestic Tourism Survey (January-December)
Consumer Price Index (Collected monthly)
Ndzi hela kwala!