

EMPLOYMENT

DEC
2024



Labour Market Participation | Labour Absorption | Formal and Informal Employment | Employment Equity | Unemployment

**EMPLOYMENT
DECEMBER 2024**

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EMPLOYMENT

Anlu Keeve Carika Middelberg

At a glance^a

Workers employed in the formal sector (excluding agriculture) as a proportion of total employed	68.9%
Workers employed in the informal sector (excluding agriculture) as a proportion of total employed	18.8%
Workers employed in agriculture (formal and informal) as a proportion of total employed	5.4%
Workers employed in private households as a proportion of total employed	7.0%
Change in formal (non-agricultural) employment (2023-24)	up 1.2%
Change in informal (non-agricultural) employment (2023-24)	up 3.3%
Change in employment in agriculture (formal and informal) (2023-24)	up 0.2%
Change in employment in private households (2023-24)	up 6.1%
Change in total employment (1994-2024)	up 108.9%
Change in number of government sector employees (1990-2024)	up 75.7%
Labour market participation rate (Stats SA)	60.6%
Labour force participation rate (ILO)	58.1%
Labour absorption rate	40.8%
Change in economically active population (2023-24)	up 3.2%
Change in not economically active population (2023-24)	down 1.3%
Change in number of discouraged workseekers (2001-24)	up 85.2%
Change in labour market absorption rate (2001-24)	down 10.9%
Change in total number of unemployed (2001-24)	up 87.4%
Unemployment rate	33.5%
Unemployment rate (expanded definition)	42.6%
Youth unemployment rate (15-24)	60.7%
Unemployed Black people as a proportion of total unemployed	90.8%
Unemployed aged 15-34 as a proportion of total unemployed	67.8%
Short-term unemployment (less than 1 year) as proportion of total unemployed	22.7%
Long-term unemployment (1 year and more) as proportion of total unemployed	77.4%
<p>a All figures are for the second quarter of 2024, unless otherwise stated. All unemployment figures are according to the official definition, unless otherwise stated.</p>	

THE OVERALL EMPLOYMENT PICTURE

Labour market trends

Labour market trends 2001 and 2024

	2001	2024	Change	
			Number	Proportion
Total population	44 819 778	63 015 904^a	17 207 725	38.4%
Total aged 15-64	27 265 000	41 556 419	14 291 419	52.4%
Total economically active	16 575 000	25 036 158	8 461 158	51.0%
Proportion aged 15-64 economically active	60.8%	60.2%	—	-0.9%
Total not economically active^b	10 690 000	16 260 000	5 570 000	52.1%
— discouraged workseekers ^c	1 725 000	3 195 000	1 470 000	85.2%
— other not economically active ^d	8 965 000	13 065 000	4 100 000	45.7%
Proportion aged 15-64 not economically active	39.2%	39.1%	—	-0.2%
Total employed	12 494 000	16 652 000	4 158 000	33.3%
— formal sector (not agriculture)	6 984 000	11 467 000	4 483 000	64.2%
— informal sector (not agriculture)	3 353 000	3 129 000	-224 000	-6.7%
— agriculture (formal and informal)	968 000	896 000	-72 000	-7.4%
— private households	1 188 000	11 160 000	9 972 000	839.4%
Total unemployed	4 081 000	8 384 000	4 303 000	105.4%
Total unemployed (expanded)	6 609 000	11 579 000	4 970 000	75.2%
Proportion aged 15-64 unemployed	15.0%	20.2%	—	34.5%
Proportion aged 15-64 unemployed (expanded)	24.2%	27.9%	—	14.9%
Unemployment rate (official)	24.6%	33.5%	—	36.2%
Unemployment rate (expanded)	31.7%	42.6%	—	34.4%
Labour market participation rate^e	60.8%	60.6%	—	-0.3%
Labour absorption rate^f	45.8%	40.3%	—	-12.0%

Source: Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), *Labour Force Survey Historical revision March series 2001 to 2021*, Statistical release P0210, p8, 16; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 August 2024; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2024*, accessed 18 August 2024; *Mid-year population estimates 2024*, Statistical release P0302, p14, accessed 18 August 2024

a Census 2022 data.

b People aged between 15 and 64 who were neither employed nor unemployed during the reference week of the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*. This category includes students, homemakers, people with a disability, those too old/young to work, discouraged, and other.

c People who were not employed during the reference week of the survey, wanted to work/start a business but did not take active steps to find work during the last four weeks prior to being interviewed by Stats SA, 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 their skills or lost hope of finding any kind of work.

d This category includes students, homemakers, people with a disability, those too old/young to work, and other.

e Measures the proportion of the working-age population that is economically active, since it distinguishes between economic activity (the employed plus the unemployed) and non-activity (including full-time students, homemakers and pensioners).

f Measures the proportion of the working-age population that is employed — in other words, all those who do any work for pay, profit or family gain.

Labour market trends, 2023 and 2024

	2023	2024	Change	
			Number	Proportion
Total population	62 027 503^a	63 015 904^a	988 401	1.6%
Total aged 15-64	41 673 701	41 556 419	-117 282	-0.3%
Total economically active	24 594 000	25 036 158	442 158	1.8%
Proportion aged 15-64 economically active	59.0%	60.2%	—	2.1%
Total not economically active^b	16 292 000	16 260 000	-32 000	-0.2%
— discouraged workseekers ^c	3 182 000	3 195 000	13 000	0.4%
— other ^d	13 296 000	13 065 000	-231 000	-1.7%
Proportion aged 15-64 not economically active	39.1%	39.1%	—	0.1%
Total employed	16 346 000	16 652 000	306 000	1.9%
— formal sector (not agriculture)	11 329 000	11 467 000	138 000	1.2%
— informal sector (not agriculture)	3 029 000	3 129 000	100 000	3.3%
— agriculture (formal and informal)	894 000	896 000	2 000	0.2%
— private households	1 093 000	1 160 000	67 000	6.1%
Total unemployed	7 921 000	8 384 000	463 000	5.8%
Total unemployed (expanded)	11 872 000	11 579 000	-293 000	-2.5%
Proportion aged 15-64 unemployed	19.0%	20.2%	—	6.1%
Proportion aged 15-64 unemployed (expanded)	28.5%	27.9%	—	-2.2%
Unemployment rate (official)	32.6%	33.5%	—	2.8%
Unemployment rate (expanded)	42.1%	42.6%	—	1.2%
Labour market participation rate^e	59.6%	60.6%	—	1.7%
Labour absorption rate^f	40.1%	40.3%	—	0.5%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 August 2024; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2024*, accessed 18 August 2024

a Mid-year population estimates 2024 data.

b People aged between 15 and 64 who were neither employed nor unemployed during the reference week of the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*. This category includes students, homemakers, people with a disability, those too old/young to work, discouraged, and other.

c People who were not employed during the reference week of the survey, wanted to work/start a business but did not take active steps to find work during the last four weeks prior to being interviewed by Stats SA, 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 their skills or lost hope of finding any kind of work.

d This category includes students, homemakers, people with a disability, those too old/young to work, and other.

e Measures the proportion of the working-age population that is economically active, since it distinguishes between economic activity (the employed plus the unemployed) and non-activity (including full-time students, homemakers and pensioners).

f Measures the proportion of the working-age population that is employed — in other words, all those who do any work for pay, profit or family gain.

The employed, unemployed and discouraged workseekers, 1994-2024

Year ^b	Employed		Unemployed		Discouraged workseekers ^a		Real GDP growth
	Number	Year-on-year change	Number	Year-on-year change	Number	Year-on-year change	
1994	7 971 000	—	1 988 000	—	1 684 000	—	3.2%
1995	8 069 000	1.2%	1 644 000	-17.3%	1 677 000	-0.4%	3.1%
1996	7 590 000	-5.9%	2 019 000	22.8%	2 178 000	29.9%	4.3%
1997	7 548 000	-0.6%	2 238 000	10.8%	2 313 000	6.2%	2.6%
1998	9 390 000	24.4%	3 163 000	41.3%	2 471 000	6.8%	0.5%
1999	10 369 000	10.4%	3 158 000	-0.2%	2 724 000	10.2%	2.4%
2000	11 880 000	14.6%	4 333 000	37.2%	2 220 000	-18.5%	4.2%
2001	12 494 000	5.2%	4 081 000	-5.8%	1 725 000	— ^c	2.7%
2002	11 995 000	-4.0%	4 603 000	12.8%	1 958 000	13.5%	3.7%
2003	11 666 000	-2.7%	4 843 000	5.2%	2 067 000	5.6%	2.9%
2004	11 823 000	1.3%	4 231 000	-12.6%	2 285 000	10.5%	4.6%
2005	12 503 000	5.8%	3 993 000	-5.6%	2 324 000	1.7%	5.3%
2006	13 237 000	5.9%	3 984 000	-0.2%	2 445 000	5.2%	5.6%
2007	13 236 000	0.0%	4 119 000	3.4%	2 511 000	2.7%	5.4%
2008	14 584 000	10.2%	4 267 000	3.6%	1 101 000	— ^c	3.2%
2009	14 357 000	-1.6%	4 341 000	1.7%	1 536 000	39.5%	-1.5%
2010	13 809 000	-3.8%	4 622 000	6.5%	1 960 000	27.6%	3.0%
2011	13 922 000	0.8%	4 782 000	3.5%	2 214 000	13.0%	3.2%
2012	14 330 000	2.9%	4 721 000	-1.3%	2 360 000	6.6%	2.4%
2013	14 692 000	2.5%	4 972 000	5.3%	2 425 000	2.8%	2.5%
2014	15 094 000	2.7%	5 154 000	3.7%	2 419 000	-0.2%	1.4%
2015	15 657 000	3.7%	5 230 000	1.5%	2 434 000	0.6%	1.3%
2016	15 545 000	-0.7%	5 634 000	7.7%	2 526 000	3.8%	0.7%
2017	16 100 000	3.6%	6 177 000	9.6%	2 361 000	-6.5%	1.2%
2018	16 288 000	1.2%	6 083 000	-1.5%	2 864 000	21.3%	1.5%
2019	16 313 000	0.2%	6 655 000	9.4%	2 749 000	-4.0%	0.3%
2020	14 148 000	-13.3%	4 295 000	-35.5%	2 471 000	-10.1%	-6.4%
2021	14 942 000	5.6%	7 826 000	82.2%	3 317 000	34.2%	4.9%
2022	15 562 000	4.1%	7 994 000	2.1%	3 568 000	7.6%	1.8% ^d
2023	16 346 000	5.0%	7 921 000	-0.9%	3 182 000	-10.8%	1.1% ^d
2024	16 652 000	1.9%	8 384 000	5.8%	3 195 000	0.4%	0.4% ^d
1994-2024	108.9%	—	321.7%	—	89.7%	—	—

Source: Stats SA, *Stats in brief*, 2004, p67; *Labour Force Survey Historical Revision March Series 2001–2007*, Statistical release P0210; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Historical revisions of the QLFS 2008 to 2013*, Statistical release P0211.3, 11 February 2014; *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 August 2024; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2024*, Table 1, p1, accessed 18 August 2024

a People who were not employed during the reference week of the survey, wanted to work/start a business but did not take active steps to find work during the last four weeks prior to being interviewed by Stats SA, 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.

b From 1994 to 1999 the figures are based on *October Household Surveys*. For 2000, the figures are from the February 2000 *Labour Force Survey*. From 2001 to 2007 the figures are based on the *Labour Force Survey Historical Revision March Series*. From 2008 to 2024 the figures are based on the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*, and refers to the second quarter. Therefore only the figures are from 2008 to 2024 is strictly comparable.

c The definition of discouraged workseekers was changed by Stats SA in 2008 to make it more restrictive. The figures from 2001 onwards have been revised and refer to the 2008 definition, whereas the figures for 1994 to 2000 refer to the old definition. The large drop in the number of discouraged workseekers between 2000 and 2001 can be explained by this, and for this reason a year-on-year change has not been calculated between these years. In 2014, the figures from 2008 to 2013 were revised to incorporate the new population benchmarks from *Census 2011*.

d Bureau for Economic Research (BER) forecast, 25 October 2023.

Change in employment and main economic indicators, 1994-2023

Year	GDP ^a	GFCF ^a	Consumer spending ^{ab}	CPI	Prime over-draft rate	Employment	Labour productivity	Remuneration per worker ^a	Nominal unit labour costs
1994	3.2%	8.2%	4.0%	9.0%	15.8%	1.1%	1.7%	3.7%	11.5%
1995	3.1%	10.7%	5.9%	8.7%	17.9%	1.8%	1.9%	0.4%	9.4%
1996	4.3%	9.0%	4.5%	7.4%	19.5%	1.5%	2.2%	2.5%	8.9%
1997	2.6%	5.7%	3.3%	8.6%	20.0%	0.1%	2.5%	2.2%	7.9%
1998	0.5%	4.8%	1.7%	6.9%	21.8%	-2.1%	3.0%	8.5%	13.0%
1999	2.4%	-7.6%	1.7%	5.1%	18.0%	-0.7%	3.3%	2.6%	6.0%
2000	4.2%	3.9%	4.1%	5.3%	14.5%	-1.1%	5.5%	0.1%	3.8%
2001	2.7%	2.8%	3.5%	5.7%	13.8%	-0.5%	3.6%	1.1%	4.7%
2002	3.7%	3.5%	3.2%	9.2%	15.8%	1.1%	2.6%	-0.2%	9.5%
2003	2.9%	10.2%	2.8%	5.8%	15.0%	-1.3%	4.4%	1.5%	3.6%
2004	4.6%	12.9%	6.2%	1.4%	11.3%	3.0%	1.6%	3.5%	7.3%
2005	5.3%	11.0%	6.1%	3.4%	10.6%	4.2%	1.1%	2.6%	6.8%
2006	5.6%	12.1%	8.8%	4.7%	11.1%	2.9%	2.8%	2.9%	5.6%
2007	5.4%	13.8%	6.5%	7.1%	13.1%	3.0%	2.4%	-0.6%	4.6%
2008	3.2%	12.8%	1.2%	11.5%	15.1%	2.1%	0.8%	3.8%	11.9%
2009	-1.5%	-6.7%	-2.6%	7.1%	11.9%	-2.8%	1.4%	2.1%	10.3%
2010	3.0%	-3.9%	5.7%	4.3%	9.9%	-0.5%	3.5%	7.0%	10.1%
2011	3.2%	6.8%	4.1%	5.0%	9.0%	2.6%	0.5%	1.9%	6.6%
2012	2.4%	1.8%	3.2%	5.7%	8.8%	1.5%	0.7%	3.3%	7.0%
2013	2.5%	5.4%	1.6%	5.7%	8.5%	0.8%	1.7%	1.5%	5.5%
2014	1.4%	-1.3%	0.7%	6.1%	9.1%	0.4%	0.9%	1.6%	5.8%
2015	1.3%	1.3%	2.2%	4.6%	9.4%	-0.1%	1.4%	1.9%	5.6%
2016	0.7%	-1.9%	0.7%	6.4%	10.4%	0.6%	0.4%	-0.6%	5.4%
2017	1.2%	-2.0%	1.7%	5.3%	10.4%	-0.1%	0.9%	0.2%	5.5%
2018	1.6%	-1.2%	3.2%	4.7%	10.1%	0.7%	1.0%	1.4%	3.9%
2019	0.3%	-1.7%	1.3%	4.1%	10.1%	0.8%	-0.4%	-0.5%	4.5%
2020	-6.2%	-14.8%	-6.1%	3.3%	7.7%	-4.9%	-1.6%	-4.7%	2.5%
2021	5.0%	-0.4%	6.2%	4.6%	7.0%	-0.8%	5.5%	0.9%	1.7%
2022	1.9%	4.8%	2.5%	6.9%	8.8%	0.3%	1.6%	-0.4%	2.4%
2023	0.7%	3.9%	0.7%	6.0%	11.5%	1.1%	-0.2%	-0.2%	4.7%

Source: South African Reserve Bank (SARB), www.resbank.co.za, time series data, accessed 10 October 2024

a At constant 2015 prices.

b By households.

Compensation of employees as a proportion of GDP, 1994-2023

Year	Proportion	Year	Proportion
1994	54.8%	2009	49.8%
1995	54.7%	2010	50.7%
1996	54.2%	2011	51.7%
1997	54.4%	2012	53.0%
1998	55.6%	2013	53.9%
1999	55.4%	2014	54.7%
2000	53.2%	2015	55.7%
2001	51.4%	2016	55.6%
2002	48.7%	2017	55.5%
2003	49.2%	2018	55.4%
2004	49.6%	2019	55.3%
2005	49.3%	2020	54.4%
2006	49.2%	2021	52.5%
2007	48.9%	2022	51.5%
2008	49.6%	2023	51.6%

Source: SARB, www.resbank.co.za, time series data, accessed 10 October 2024

Dependency on the employed by race, 1994-2024

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
1994	490	180	140	220	380
1995	490	200	130	230	390
1996	580	180	150	220	430
1997	590	200	130	240	450
1998	450	220	210	130	350
1999	400	190	180	120	320
2000	330	190	180	120	270
2001	300	190	190	120	260
2002	330	190	200	120	280
2003	370	190	190	110	300
2004	360	180	190	120	290
2005	330	190	180	110	280
2006	310	190	160	110	260
2007	310	180	170	110	260
2008	300	180	160	120	250
2009	320	180	170	120	270
2010	340	200	160	130	280
2011	340	220	160	130	290
2012	320	210	170	140	280
2013	331	223	160	139	286
2014	291	198	180	135	257
2015	280	200	180	130	250
2016	280	200	170	130	250
2017	280	200	168	134	250
2018	284	196	165	144	254
2019	287	207	184	152	260
2020	356	272	216	176	321
2021	331	274	217	138	303
2022	316	249	186	173	289
2023	302	213	201	166	275
2024	307	217	195	160	278
1994-2024	-37.3%	20.6%	39.3%	-27.3%	-26.8%

Source: CRA calculations based on Stats SA data

This table shows the number of people not working (including both the officially unemployed, those who choose not to work, and those too young or old to work) for every 100 employed people. For example, in 1994, there were on average 490 black people who were not working for every 100 employed black people. The total column reflects the average for the whole country. So, in 1994, there were 380 people not working for every 100 employed. This data gives a more comprehensive picture of dependency than the official dependency ratio, which assesses the ratio of the young and old to the working-age population, regardless of whether they are actually working or not (also see the Demographics chapter).

Labour market participation and absorption rates

The **labour market participation rate** refers to the proportion of the working-age population (between 15 and 64) that is economically active (employed or unemployed). Excluded are people of working age who are not available for work — among them, pupils, students, homemakers, those who are retired and those unwilling or unable to work. In other words, the labour market participation rate refers to the supply of labour or the economically active expressed as a percentage.

The **labour absorption rate** measures the proportion of the working-age population that is employed — in other words, all those who do any work for pay, profit or family gain. Put differently, the labour absorption rate refers to the demand for labour [Stats SA, *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*].

Labour market participation by race, 1994-2024

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
1994	43.1%	60.5%	52.9%	63.3%	47.7%
1995	41.2%	55.9%	54.7%	60.9%	45.5%
1996	39.0%	56.8%	52.3%	61.7%	44.0%
1997	39.5%	55.1%	54.0%	58.1%	43.9%
1998	44.9%	58.3%	54.5%	65.0%	48.8%
1999	47.2%	62.6%	60.8%	67.7%	51.5%
2000	59.2%	67.6%	64.5%	68.6%	61.3%
2001	58.8%	66.9%	60.8%	68.5%	60.8%
2002	57.0%	68.9%	59.1%	69.6%	59.7%
2003	55.3%	68.4%	62.7%	68.5%	58.3%
2004	52.7%	65.6%	58.0%	67.2%	55.7%
2005	53.3%	65.2%	58.9%	68.4%	56.3%
2006	55.4%	64.9%	58.3%	68.8%	57.8%
2007	55.4%	66.0%	56.2%	67.9%	57.7%
2008	57.3%	65.0%	61.6%	69.9%	59.5%
2009	55.4%	65.0%	59.3%	70.1%	57.9%
2010	53.3%	64.1%	61.1%	68.8%	56.1%
2011	53.5%	61.0%	60.9%	68.4%	55.9%
2012	53.6%	63.7%	56.8%	67.7%	55.9%
2013	54.3%	63.7%	62.4%	68.1%	56.6%
2014	55.2%	65.3%	57.4%	67.6%	57.3%
2015	56.4%	64.2%	57.9%	67.3%	58.1%
2016	56.4%	62.2%	58.0%	67.6%	57.9%
2017	58.7%	62.7%	61.0%	67.3%	59.9%
2018	57.6%	65.0%	60.9%	67.5%	59.1%
2019	58.7%	62.6%	59.1%	67.5%	59.8%
2020	45.4%	49.7%	55.9%	61.8%	47.3%
2021	56.7%	56.0%	58.8%	67.4%	57.5%
2022	57.9%	59.2%	62.0%	65.3%	58.6%
2023	58.7%	61.6%	59.9%	66.9%	59.6%
2024	59.4%	60.8%	58.0%	67.7%	60.6%
1994-2024	37.8%	0.5%	9.6%	7.0%	27.0%
2023-24	1.2%	-1.3%	-3.2%	1.2%	1.7%

Source: QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 27 September 2024

Labour market participation rate^a by race and sex, 2023 and 2024

Sex	Black		Coloured		Indian/Asian		White		Total	
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
Male	63.6%	64.4%	67.8%	67.0%	72.4%	73.3%	73.7%	74.3%	64.9%	65.6%
Female	53.8%	55.5%	55.8%	55.2%	46.2%	47.2%	60.2%	62.8%	54.3%	55.8%
Total	58.7%	59.9%	61.6%	60.9%	59.9%	60.8%	66.9%	68.6%	59.6%	60.6%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

a Stats SA defines the labour market participation rate as the proportion of the working-age population (between 15 and 64) that is economically active (employed or unemployed). Excluded are people of working age who are not available for work — among them pupils, students, homemakers, those who are retired, and those unwilling or unable to work.

Labour absorption rate^a by race, 2001-24

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
2001	42.1%	51.8%	51.5%	63.3%	45.8%
2002	38.6%	51.3%	48.0%	64.6%	43.1%
2003	36.2%	52.1%	50.5%	63.2%	41.2%
2004	36.0%	52.6%	48.4%	63.5%	41.0%
2005	38.1%	52.2%	50.7%	64.5%	42.6%
2006	40.4%	51.8%	52.8%	64.8%	44.4%
2007	40.1%	51.9%	50.1%	64.9%	44.1%
2008	42.2%	52.3%	54.1%	66.8%	46.0%
2009	40.3%	52.4%	52.9%	66.9%	44.5%
2010	37.8%	49.6%	55.2%	64.3%	42.0%
2011	37.6%	46.9%	54.3%	65.0%	41.6%
2012	38.4%	47.8%	51.5%	63.9%	42.0%
2013	38.8%	47.6%	54.3%	64.0%	42.3%
2014	39.6%	48.8%	50.5%	62.2%	42.7%
2015	40.7%	48.5%	50.1%	62.6%	43.5%
2016	39.4%	47.8%	51.2%	63.1%	42.5%
2017	40.4%	47.9%	52.9%	63.5%	43.3%
2018	40.0%	49.8%	54.1%	62.0%	43.1%
2019	39.5%	48.5%	52.4%	62.5%	42.4%
2020	33.4%	40.3%	47.9%	58.0%	36.3%
2021	35.0%	40.0%	47.4%	61.6%	37.7%
2022	36.0%	43.0%	52.4%	59.7%	38.7%
2023	37.1%	48.2%	49.9%	62.0%	40.1%
2024	37.9%	47.6%	51.3%	62.0%	40.8%
2001-24	-10.0%	-8.1%	-0.4%	-2.1%	-10.9%
2023-24	2.2%	-1.2%	2.8%	0.0%	1.7%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2023Q2, accessed 27 September 2024

a The labour absorption rate measures the proportion of the working-age population that is employed — in other words, all those who do any work for pay, profit or family gain.

**Labour force participation^a and unemployment rates^b,
selected countries, 2009 and 2024**

Country	Male		Female		Total		Unemployment rate 2024 ^c
	2009	2024	2009	2024	2009	2024	
Australia	82.5%	71.7%	70.1%	62.8%	76.4%	67.2%	4.2%
Botswana	71.5%	73.1%	58.5%	63.1%	65.0%	67.8%	25.9%
Brazil	81.7%	73.1%	59.9%	53.1%	70.6%	62.8%	6.6%
Chile	79.7%	71.4%	51.9%	52.0%	65.8%	61.5%	8.7%
China	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.3%
Denmark	83.7%	67.7%	76.8%	59.7%	80.3%	63.6%	2.6%
Egypt ^d	78.1%	69.2%	24.4%	15.0%	51.6%	42.8%	6.5%
France	75.0%	60.1%	65.6%	52.8%	70.3%	56.3%	7.3%
Germany	82.2%	66.7%	70.4%	56.4%	76.4%	61.5%	6.0%
Ghana ^d	73.6%	65.2%	68.8%	62.0%	71.1%	63.4%	3.6%
Greece	78.7%	60.0%	57.0%	44.8%	67.9%	52.2%	9.9%
Hong Kong	79.1%	63.6%	61.2%	52.2%	69.5%	57.3%	3.0%
India	83.9%	76.4%	28.4%	35.1%	57.1%	55.8%	8.5%
Indonesia	84.3%	82.2%	52.2%	53.4%	68.4%	67.9%	4.8%
Ireland	80.9%	70.8%	65.2%	60.4%	73.1%	65.5%	4.3%
Israel	76.0%	68.9%	66.1%	61.4%	71.0%	65.1%	2.6%
Italy	73.5%	58.8%	50.9%	41.5%	62.2%	49.9%	6.5%
Japan	84.9%	71.4%	62.8%	54.8%	74.0%	62.9%	2.7%
Kazakhstan	80.3%	74.6%	72.7%	63.3%	76.4%	68.7%	4.7%
Lithuania	71.7%	68.5%	67.7%	58.5%	69.6%	63.1%	8.5%
Mexico	83.4%	76.4%	46.1%	46.2%	64.6%	60.4%	2.9%
Mozambique	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nigeria	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.3%
Pakistan ^e	83.3%	81.0%	21.7%	24.5%	53.2%	52.7%	5.7%
Philippines ^d	77.8%	72.5%	49.8%	50.2%	64.0%	61.4%	4.7%
Poland	71.7%	66.3%	57.7%	52.0%	64.7%	58.8%	5.0%
Russia	77.4%	70.5%	68.6%	56.2%	72.9%	62.7%	2.4%
Saudi Arabia	75.4%	83.6%	18.0%	34.6%	51.8%	66.6%	3.3%
South Africa	65.7%	61.4%	50.6%	49.0%	58.0%	55.0%	33.5%
Spain	81.1%	63.0%	65.1%	53.4%	73.2%	58.1%	11.3%
Switzerland	87.8%	72.9%	77.1%	62.6%	82.5%	67.7%	2.4%
Thailand	86.0%	76.6%	70.7%	60.6%	78.2%	68.2%	1.1%
Turkey	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.8%
Uganda ^e	76.7%	84.2%	67.0%	74.5%	71.8%	79.2%	2.9%
United Kingdom	81.7%	66.6%	69.3%	58.1%	75.5%	62.2%	4.1%
United States	78.8%	68.1%	67.8%	57.3%	73.3%	62.6%	4.2%
Venezuela ^f	82.2%	72.7%	54.4%	47.2%	68.3%	59.9%	5.9%

Source: International Labour Organisation (ILO), *ILO modelled estimates*, January 2024, accessed 28 October 2024; tradingeconomics.com, accessed 27 September 2024

a The figures used for labour force participation are drawn from the International Labour Organisation statistical database. The figures used are from 2023 unless indicated otherwise.

b The labour force participation rate is the proportion of the population aged 15 and older that is economically active: all people who supply labour for the production of goods and services during a specified period.

c The unemployment figures are for the latest period of 2023 or the latest available data.

d 2022 data.

e 2021 data.

f 2020 data.

N/A — Not available.

**Labour force participation^a and unemployment rates^b,
emerging and selected frontier markets, 2009 and 2024**

Country	Male		Female		Total		Unemployment rate 2024 ^b
	2009	2024	2009	2024	2009	2024	
Brazil	81.7%	73.1%	59.9%	53.1%	70.6%	62.8%	6.6%
Bulgaria	72.8%	62.2%	62.3%	49.8%	67.6%	55.7%	5.3%
Chile	79.7%	71.4%	51.9%	52.0%	65.8%	61.5%	8.7%
China	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.3%
Colombia	85.4%	76.4%	58.9%	52.0%	71.9%	63.7%	9.9%
Czech Republic	78.4%	68.5%	61.5%	51.7%	70.0%	59.9%	3.8%
Egypt	78.1%	69.2%	24.4%	15.0%	51.6%	42.8%	6.5%
Estonia	77.9%	71.6%	70.6%	62.0%	74.2%	66.5%	7.6%
Greece	78.7%	60.0%	57.0%	44.8%	67.9%	52.2%	9.9%
Hungary	67.7%	68.3%	54.9%	54.5%	61.2%	61.0%	4.3%
India	83.9%	76.4%	28.4%	35.1%	57.1%	55.8%	8.5%
Indonesia	84.3%	82.2%	52.2%	53.4%	68.4%	67.9%	4.8%
Jordan	71.7%	60.5%	16.5%	13.8%	44.8%	38.6%	21.4%
Kuwait	84.3%	87.8%	53.4%	49.9%	72.0%	73.8%	2.1%
Latvia	76.9%	67.9%	70.8%	55.7%	73.7%	61.2%	6.9%
Lithuania	71.7%	68.5%	67.7%	58.5%	69.6%	63.1%	8.5%
Malaysia ^d	78.6%	81.9%	46.2%	55.8%	63.0%	69.3%	3.3%
Mauritius	79.5%	69.7%	46.1%	46.9%	62.8%	57.9%	6.3%
Mexico	83.4%	76.4%	46.1%	46.2%	64.6%	60.4%	2.9%
Morocco ^d	79.3%	69.6%	27.4%	19.8%	52.7%	44.3%	13.1%
Oman ^d	82.6%	86.5%	27.6%	39.9%	62.1%	70.6%	1.5%
Pakistan ^e	83.3%	80.7%	21.7%	24.5%	53.2%	52.7%	5.7%
Peru	88.6%	80.5%	73.5%	65.1%	81.0%	72.7%	6.1%
Philippines	77.8%	72.5%	49.8%	50.2%	64.0%	61.4%	4.7%
Poland	71.7%	66.3%	57.7%	52.0%	64.7%	58.8%	5.0%
Qatar ^d	95.2%	95.3%	49.7%	61.7%	85.7%	87.4%	0.1%
Romania	70.7%	61.9%	55.1%	41.9%	62.8%	51.5%	5.4%
Russia	77.4%	70.5%	68.6%	56.2%	72.9%	62.7%	2.4%
Slovakia	76.3%	67.3%	60.6%	56.3%	68.4%	61.6%	5.0%
South Africa	65.7%	61.4%	50.6%	49.0%	58.0%	55.0%	33.5%
Sri Lanka	80.7%	70.5%	39.7%	31.0%	59.7%	49.7%	4.5%
Thailand	86.0%	76.6%	70.7%	60.6%	78.2%	68.2%	1.1%
Turkey	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.8%
United Arab Emirates	94.1%	90.8%	43.0%	54.5%	82.9%	78.5%	3.0%
Vietnam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.3%

Source: ILO, *ILO modelled estimates*, January 2024, accessed 28 October 2024; tradingeconomics.com, accessed 27 September 2024

a The labour force participation rate is the proportion of the population aged 15 and older that is economically active: all people who supply labour for the production of goods and services during a specified period.

b The unemployment figures are for the latest period of 2022 or the latest available data.

c The unemployment figures are for the latest period of 2024 or the latest available data.

d 2022 latest data.

e 2021 data.

N/A — Not available.

Economically active population (EAP)

The **economically active population** is defined by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) as people between the ages of 15 and 64 who are either employed in the formal and informal sector, or unemployed people who are actively looking for work. This does not include people who are not available for work, such as students, homemakers, people who are too ill to work and discouraged jobseekers. Unemployed people are defined as follows:

- They had not worked in the week in which the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey* was conducted.
- They had actively looked for work or tried to start a business in the four weeks prior to the survey.
- They were available for work in the week in which the survey was conducted.
- They had not actively looked for work in the four weeks prior to the survey, but were starting at a definite date in the future.

People are divided into those who work in the formal and those who work in the informal sector. People who work in the informal sector are those who:

- Work in an establishment that employs fewer than five people, and income tax is not deducted from wages and salaries.
- Are unpaid people who help in a household business not registered for income tax or value-added tax.

Economically active population by race, 2001-24

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total ^a
2001	12 127 000	1 747 000	456 000	2 245 000	16 575 000
2002	12 046 000	1 830 000	453 000	2 268 000	16 598 000
2003	11 950 000	1 847 000	491 000	2 219 000	16 509 000
2004	11 626 000	1 802 000	465 000	2 162 000	16 054 000
2005	12 009 000	1 818 000	482 000	2 187 000	16 497 000
2006	12 710 000	1 840 000	487 000	2 184 000	17 221 000
2007	12 927 000	1 901 000	479 000	2 137 000	17 444 000
2008	14 082 000	1 937 000	543 000	2 289 000	18 851 000
2009	13 915 000	1 971 000	531 000	2 280 000	18 698 000
2010	13 677 000	1 977 000	556 000	2 220 000	18 431 000
2011	14 037 000	1 913 000	563 000	2 191 000	18 703 000
2012	14 364 000	2 005 000	532 000	2 149 000	19 051 000
2013	14 869 000	2 062 000	593 000	2 140 000	19 663 000
2014	15 447 000	2 144 000	552 000	2 105 000	20 248 000
2015	16 113 000	2 135 000	564 000	2 075 000	20 887 000
2016	16 452 000	2 094 000	572 000	2 062 000	21 179 000
2017	17 504 000	2 134 000	606 000	2 033 000	22 277 000
2018	17 509 000	2 236 000	610 000	2 015 000	22 370 000
2019	18 201 000	2 175 000	597 000	1 994 000	22 968 000
2020	14 325 000	1 744 000	571 000	1 803 000	18 443 000
2021	18 240 000	1 981 000	605 000	1 941 000	22 768 000
2022	18 948 000	2 108 000	643 000	1 858 000	23 556 000
2023	19 554 000	2 210 000	626 000	1 878 000	24 268 000
2024	20 300 000	2 197 000	641 000	1 898 000	25 036 000
2001-24	67.4%	25.8%	40.6%	-15.5%	51.0%
2023-24	3.8%	-0.6%	2.4%	1.1%	3.2%

Source: Stats SA, *Labour Force Survey Historical Revision March Series 2001-2007*, Statistical release P0210, 28 August 2008; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Historical revisions of the QLFS 2008 to 2013*, 11 February 2014; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 2: 2021*, Statistical release P0211, 24 August 2021, pp21-22; *Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa 2022*, p236; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2022*, accessed 4 October 2022; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2023*, accessed 20 November 2023; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2024*, accessed 19 September 2024

a Figures should add up horizontally but may not, owing to rounding, and to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.

Economically active population by race and sex, 2024

Employed	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total ^a
Male	6 977 323	911 758	365 131	950 111	9 204 322
Female	5 690 686	772 758	187 003	797 564	7 448 011
Total^a	12 688 009	1 684 516	552 134	1 747 675	16 652 333
Unemployed					
Male	3 859 955	261 182	38 661	76 917	4 236 715
Female	3 771 874	251 643	50 129	73 463	4 147 109
Total^a	7 631 829	512 825	88 791	150 380	8 383 824
Total EAP					
Male	10 837 278	1 172 940	403 793	1 027 027	13 441 038
Female	9 462 560	1 024 401	237 132	871 027	11 595 120
Total^a	20 299 837	2 197 341	640 924	1 898 055	25 036 158

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding, and to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.

Economically active population by race and age (actual numbers), 2001-24

2001	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total ^a
15-24 years	2 157 000	404 000	96 000	330 000	2 987 000
25-34 years	4 355 000	600 000	136 000	549 000	5 639 000
35-44 years	2 958 000	439 000	114 000	620 000	4 130 000
45-54 years	1 836 000	224 000	81 000	516 000	2 657 000
55-64 years	821 000	80 000	30 000	231 000	1 162 000
Total^a	12 127 000	1 747 000	456 000	2 245 000	16 575 000
2023					
15-24 years	2 238 002	333 445	63 897	150 290	2 785 633
25-34 years	6 451 087	624 385	175 870	433 620	7 684 961
35-44 years	5 847 384	562 951	191 294	464 146	7 065 776
45-54 years	3 824 803	511 501	141 706	463 417	4 941 427
55-64 years	1 192 340	177 935	53 144	366 350	1 789 770
Total^a	19 553 616	2 210 216	625 911	1 877 824	24 267 567
2024					
15-24 years	2 257 920	328 322	36 542	156 988	2 779 772
25-34 years	6 637 423	643 579	193 433	470 670	7 935 105
35-44 years	6 045 847	542 093	201 075	461 752	7 250 767
45-54 years	4 032 309	489 870	145 335	459 726	5 127 240
55-64 years	1 336 339	193 477	64 540	349 918	1 943 273
Total^a	20 299 837	2 197 341	640 924	1 898 055	25 036 158
2001-23	67.4%	25.8%	40.6%	-15.5%	51.0%
2022-23	3.8%	-0.6%	2.4%	1.1%	3.2%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

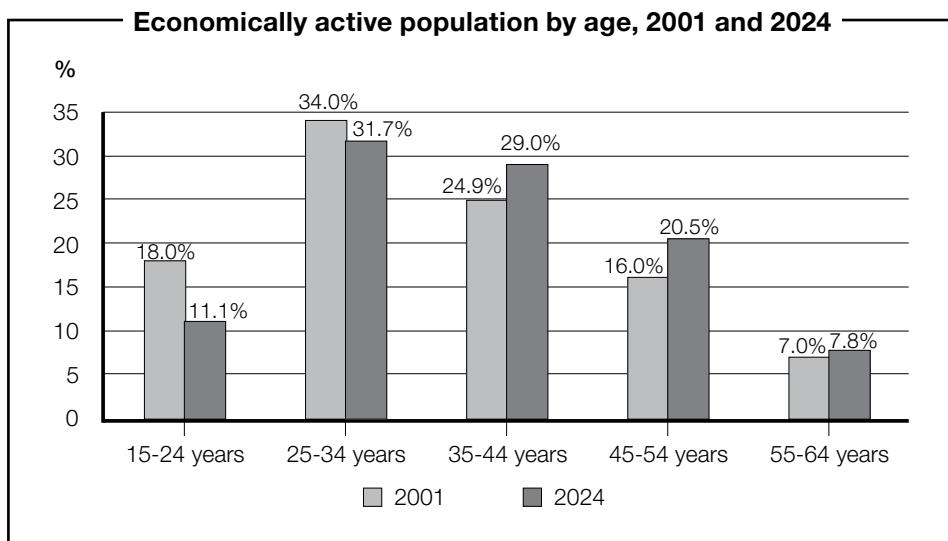
a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding, and to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.

**Economically active population by race and age
(proportions), 2001-24**

2001	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total^a
15-24 years	17.8%	23.1%	21.1%	14.7%	18.0%
25-34 years	35.9%	34.3%	29.8%	24.5%	34.0%
35-44 years	24.4%	25.1%	25.0%	27.6%	24.9%
45-54 years	15.1%	12.8%	17.8%	23.0%	16.0%
55-64 years	6.8%	4.6%	6.6%	10.3%	7.0%
Total^a	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
2023					
15-24 years	11.4%	15.1%	10.2%	8.0%	11.5%
25-34 years	33.0%	28.2%	28.1%	23.1%	31.7%
35-44 years	29.9%	25.5%	30.6%	24.7%	29.1%
45-54 years	19.6%	23.1%	22.6%	24.7%	20.4%
55-64 years	6.1%	8.1%	8.5%	19.5%	7.4%
Total^a	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
2024					
15-24 years	11.1%	14.9%	5.7%	8.3%	11.1%
25-34 years	32.6%	29.3%	30.2%	24.8%	31.7%
35-44 years	29.8%	24.7%	31.4%	24.3%	29.0%
45-54 years	19.9%	22.3%	22.7%	24.2%	20.5%
55-64 years	6.6%	8.8%	10.1%	18.4%	7.8%
Total^a	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding, and to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.



EMPLOYMENT

Stats SA defines the **employed** as people aged 15 to 64 who, during the reference week: did any work for at least one hour; or had a job or business but were not at work (temporarily absent). This is in accordance with the International Labour Organisation's definition of employment.

This chapter contains employment figures obtained from Stats SA, primarily from the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS)*, which measures both formal and informal employment. The formal, non-agricultural employment data is obtained from the *Quarterly Employment Statistics (QES) survey*, which collects data from VAT registered businesses (excluding those in agriculture).

Employment by race, 1994-2024

Year ^a	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total ^b
1994	4 980 000	1 220 000	421 000	1 351 000	7 971 000
1995	5 124 000	1 160 000	453 000	1 332 000	8 069 000
1996	4 535 000	1 262 000	419 000	1 375 000	7 590 000
1997	4 580 000	1 202 000	457 000	1 309 000	7 548 000
1998	5 922 000	1 177 000	342 000	1 935 000	9 390 000
1999	6 668 000	1 288 000	392 000	2 004 000	10 369 000
2000	8 124 000	1 318 000	395 000	2 037 000	11 880 000
2001	8 680 000	1 352 000	386 000	2 075 000	12 494 000
2002	8 161 000	1 363 000	368 000	2 104 000	11 995 000
2003	7 815 000	1 408 000	396 000	2 047 000	11 666 000
2004	7 945 000	1 445 000	388 000	2 045 000	11 823 000
2005	8 572 000	1 455 000	415 000	2 062 000	12 503 000
2006	9 271 000	1 469 000	441 000	2 056 000	13 237 000
2007	9 362 000	1 494 000	427 000	2 042 000	13 236 000
2008	10 363 000	1 560 000	477 000	2 185 000	14 584 000
2009	10 119 000	1 588 000	474 000	2 176 000	14 357 000
2010	9 700 000	1 531 000	502 000	2 076 000	13 809 000
2011	9 868 000	1 470 000	502 000	2 082 000	13 922 000
2012	10 297 000	1 524 000	482 000	2 027 000	14 330 000
2013	10 623 000	1 541 000	516 000	2 011 000	14 692 000
2014	11 072 000	1 601 000	485 000	1 936 000	15 094 000
2015	11 625 000	1 613 000	488 000	1 930 000	15 657 000
2016	11 506 000	1 609 000	505 000	1 926 000	15 545 000
2017	12 025 000	1 631 000	526 000	1 918 000	16 100 000
2018	12 172 000	1 716 000	547 000	1 853 000	16 288 000
2019	12 250 000	1 687 000	530 000	1 845 000	16 313 000
2020	10 555 000	1 412 000	488 000	1 693 000	14 148 000
2021	11 264 000	1 416 000	487 000	1 941 000	14 942 000
2022	11 789 000	1 531 000	543 000	1 699 000	15 562 000
2023	12 358 000	1 727 000	522 000	1 739 000	16 346 000
2024	12 668 000	1 685 000	552 000	1 748 000	16 652 000
1994-2024	154.4%	38.1%	31.1%	29.4%	108.9%
2023-24	2.5%	-2.4%	5.7%	0.5%	1.9%

Source: Stats SA, *Stats in brief*, 2004, 2004, p67; *Labour Force Survey Historical Revision March Series 2001-2007*, Statistical release P0210, 28 August 2008; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Historical revisions of the QLFS 2008 to 2013*, 11 February 2014; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 2: 2021*, Statistical release P0211, 24 August 2021, pp21-22; *Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa 2022*, p238; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2022*, accessed 4 October 2022; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2023*, accessed 20 November 2023; *Economically active population QLFS Q2 2024*, accessed 18 August 2024

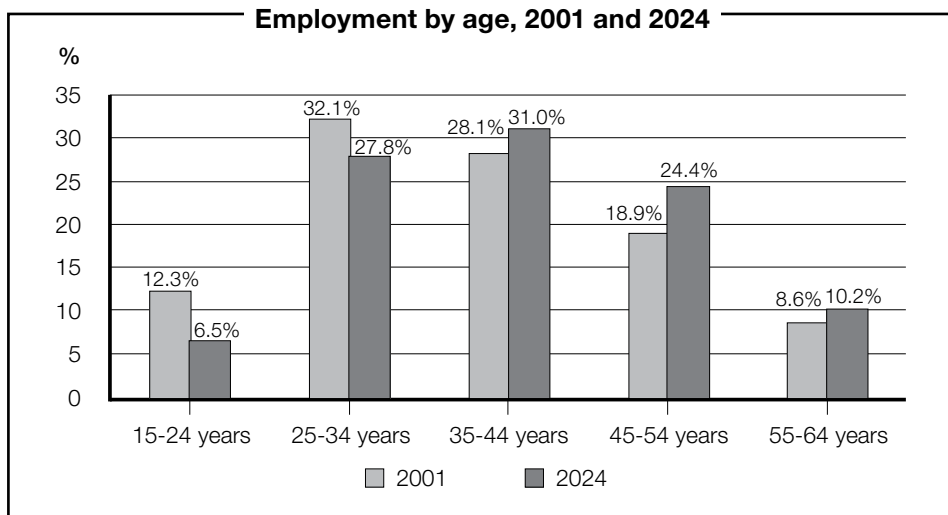
- a From 1994 to 1999, the figures are based on *October Household Surveys*. For 2000 the figures are from the February 2000, *Labour Force Survey*. From 2001 to 2007, the figures are based on the *Labour Force Survey Historical Revision March Series*. From 2008 to 2013 the figures are based on the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Historical revisions of the QLFS 2008 to 2013*, and refers to the second quarter. Therefore, only the figures from 2008 to 2024 are strictly comparable.
- b Totals should add up horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

Employment by race and age (proportions), 2001-24

2001	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total ^a
15-24 years	11.2%	17.3%	15.5%	12.9%	12.3%
25-34 years	33.4%	35.4%	31.9%	24.6%	32.1%
35-44 years	28.2%	27.5%	26.9%	28.5%	28.1%
45-54 years	18.5%	14.3%	18.4%	23.5%	18.9%
55-64 years	8.7%	5.4%	7.5%	10.6%	8.6%
Total^a	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
2023					
15-24 years	6.0%	11.7%	6.8%	6.3%	6.7%
25-34 years	29.4%	27.2%	27.3%	22.4%	28.3%
35-44 years	32.5%	25.7%	33.1%	25.3%	31.0%
45-54 years	23.8%	26.0%	24.1%	25.3%	24.2%
55-64 years	8.3%	9.4%	8.7%	20.7%	9.8%
Total^a	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
2024					
15-24 years	6.1%	9.9%	4.3%	7.3%	6.5%
25-34 years	28.2%	28.9%	27.5%	24.0%	27.8%
35-44 years	32.5%	26.4%	33.7%	24.1%	31.0%
45-54 years	24.3%	24.5%	23.7%	25.3%	24.4%
55-64 years	8.9%	10.4%	10.7%	19.3%	10.2%
Total^a	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 28 October 2024

a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding, and to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10000 as unreliable.



Employment by industry

Formal employment by industry^a (actual numbers), 1990-2024

Year	Mining ^b	Manufacturing ^c	Utilities ^d	Construction ^e	Trade ^f	Transport
1990	692 900	1 537 511	50 920	417 600	788 100	361 268
1991	653 134	1 499 484	47 940	391 100	781 600	343 340
1992	607 950	1 453 151	45 890	373 700	775 000	334 995
1993	561 655	1 425 626	42 480	374 529	762 000	303 072
1994	613 584	1 421 815	39 975	366 173	730 005	280 642
1995	599 885	1 437 553	39 684	359 126	751 629	284 348
1996	563 396	1 456 367	40 112	325 926	757 475	283 275
1997	558 256	1 395 636	39 613	313 608	764 162	276 085
1998	462 166	1 351 568	38 519	284 132	800 433	245 483
1999	441 459	1 314 488	43 167	232 174	872 316	243 180
2000	412 752	1 306 795	39 743	222 999	865 977	221 522
2001	404 963	1 259 672	39 235	224 906	884 877	207 723
2002	409 677	1 261 309	38 663	213 528	885 193	199 843
2003	419 942	1 237 015	42 565	295 597	1 263 937	206 112
2004	457 295	1 265 358	43 932	272 693	1 276 554	206 134
2005	443 790	1 182 056	43 698	431 841	1 373 336	320 398
2006	458 506	1 331 332	51 503	455 772	1 663 744	352 494
2007	496 894	1 323 498	53 641	472 571	1 729 861	358 939
2008	519 943	1 306 588	58 686	474 108	1 725 813	363 556
2009	487 132	1 203 405	55 366	424 138	1 641 843	361 340
2010	496 710	1 176 113	56 156	437 721	1 676 307	379 547
2011	517 104	1 161 491	58 572	469 231	1 741 054	396 255
2012	534 344	1 161 333	59 405	509 477	1 811 938	436 190
2013	510 753	1 162 172	59 665	523 979	1 843 680	453 245
2014	490 684	1 159 827	59 255	554 291	1 889 445	459 663
2015	488 746	1 164 076	60 203	556 166	1 926 183	464 175
2016	458 346	1 181 812	62 369	614 046	2 051 377	463 566
2017	471 579	1 193 089	63 860	626 785	2 122 156	469 989
2018	459 380	1 212 249	62 595	637 948	2 199 340	482 684
2019	462 492	1 219 499	61 074	599 369	2 264 106	497 347
2020	452 138	1 112 947	58 818	488 703	2 074 255	459 891
2021	461 026	1 092 557	57 437	476 185	2 118 834	453 251
2022	462 231	1 170 357	59 607	521 403	2 140 172	411 919
2023	477 574	1 185 686	58 977	505 089	2 138 408	407 234
2024	472 153	1 292 451	63 630	590 714	2 322 445	479 596
1990-2024	-31.9%	-15.9%	25.0%	41.5%	194.7%	32.8%
2023-24	-1.1%	9.0%	7.9%	17.0%	8.6%	17.8%



→ **Formal employment by industry^a (actual numbers),
1990-2024 (continued)**

Year	Finance ^g	Community, social and personal services		Total ⁱ	TOTAL
		Government sector	Other services ^h		
1990	186 280	1 310 484	N/A	1 323 884	5 358 463
1991	186 545	1 321 498	N/A	1 335 498	5 238 641
1992	190 503	1 330 333	N/A	1 344 433	5 125 622
1993	193 076	1 324 937	N/A	1 340 037	5 002 475
1994	193 779	1 572 706	N/A	1 587 386	5 233 359
1995	200 981	1 450 838	N/A	1 465 808	5 139 014
1996	215 250	1 582 721	N/A	1 596 771	5 238 572
1997	217 180	1 583 855	N/A	1 596 745	5 161 285
1998	218 286	1 566 896	N/A	1 577 616	4 978 203
1999	204 665	1 523 932	N/A	1 534 583	4 886 032
2000	196 699	1 462 605	N/A	1 473 408	4 739 895
2001	192 649	1 436 272	N/A	1 445 723	4 659 748
2002	186 092	1 441 396	N/A	1 451 710	4 646 015
2003	1 131 230	1 428 056	310 927	1 738 983	6 335 381
2004	1 171 798	1 453 547	344 303	1 797 850	6 491 614
2005	1 478 210	1 500 771	307 390	1 804 584	7 077 913
2006	1 744 558	1 574 021	427 436	2 001 457	8 059 366
2007	1 824 609	1 622 622	405 783	2 028 405	8 288 420
2008	1 907 412	1 700 459	399 599	2 100 058	8 456 164
2009	1 794 979	1 781 092	429 581	2 210 673	8 178 876
2010	1 815 187	1 816 509	430 166	2 246 676	8 284 416
2011	1 906 361	1 903 542	452 380	2 355 922	8 605 990
2012	1 967 082	1 943 360	466 183	2 409 543	8 889 313
2013	2 009 599	1 973 835	472 929	2 446 764	9 009 858
2014	2 037 537	2 230 396	485 067	2 715 463	9 366 164
2015	2 088 548	2 060 843	484 106	2 544 948	9 293 045
2016	2 188 533	2 079 220	534 475	2 613 694	9 633 743
2017	2 232 988	2 037 886	582 982	2 620 868	9 801 315
2018	2 301 337	2 048 505	638 348	2 686 853	10 042 386
2019	2 342 519	2 109 362	664 726	2 774 088	10 220 494
2020	2 179 761	2 077 812	602 577	2 683 999	9 506 902
2021	2 164 836	2 136 451	607 018	2 743 469	9 567 595
2022	2 311 673	2 216 843	656 173	2 873 016	9 950 378
2023	2 339 992	2 302 335	662 021	2 964 355	10 077 316
2024	2 473 349	2 293 428	656 335	3 021 246	10 715 584
1990-2024	1 227.8%	75.0%	111.1%	128.2%	100.0%
2023-24	5.7%	-0.4%	-0.9%	1.9%	6.3%

Source: Stats SA, *South African Statistics 2010-12; Quarterly employment statistics (QES) details breakdown*, Statistical release P0277, 28 September 2021, accessed 7 October 2021; *Quarterly Employment Statistics: June 2022 (QES) details breakdown 2009-2022*, accessed 12 October 2022; *Quarterly Employment Statistics: September 2023 (QES) details breakdown 2009-2023*, accessed 12 November 2023; *Quarterly Employment Statistics (QES) details breakdown details breakdown 2009-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

- a The figures in this table are based on the *Survey of employment and earnings*, Statistical release P0275, and, as from 2005, on the *Quarterly employment statistics survey*.
- b Former Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) states figures are included as from January 1994. The total employment in these states for January 1994 amounted to approximately 9% of the total employment of the mining and quarrying sector.
- c Former TBVC states figures are included as from January 1996. The total employment in these states for January 1996 amounted to 5.8% of the total employment of the manufacturing sector.
- d The figures are based on a sample survey and refer to private establishments and public corporations which have as their main activity the generation and/or distribution of electricity, gas, and water supply. As from January 1996, figures are on the electricity sector also include particulars of the former TBVC states. The contribution regarding former TBVC states for March 1996 was 1.9% of the total employment of the electricity sector. As from 1998, there has been a reclassification of water boards from local governments into the electricity, gas, and water supply industry.

- e As from January 1996, figures representing employment in the private construction industry also include particulars of the former TBVC states. The former TBVC contribution to the employment of the construction industry in 1996 was 0.1%.
- f The figures on the formal TBVC states relating to wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods and hotels and restaurants were included as from the first quarter of 1996. The total employment of the commercial industries in these areas for March 1996 was about 0.1% of the total employment for the wholesale trade industry, 1% for the retail trade industry, and 0.7% for the motor trade industry. For the hotels industry, the former TBVC states figures were included from 1995. The total employment in these states was approximately 16% of the total employment of the hotels industry.
- g The former TBVC states figures for banking institutions, building societies and insurance companies, were included as from the first quarter of 1995. The total employment in these states for March 1995 was approximately 1% of the total employment of the financial institutions industry.
- h The 'Other' services include activities of membership organisation; recreational, cultural, and sporting activities; and other services.
- i The information on the governments and the local governments of the former TBVC states was included in the public sector from the first quarter of 1995. The total employment in these states for June 1994 was approximately 12% of the total employment of the public sector. The information on all the universities of the former TBVC states is included in the public sector from the first quarter of 1996. The total employment for universities in these states for March 1996 was approximately 11% of the total employment of the universities.

From 1990 to 2004, data coverage is restricted to both employing and non-employing VAT registered enterprises with an annual turnover of R300 000 or more.

As from December 2004, the employment statistics survey covers employing enterprises in the formal non-agricultural non-domestic business sector that are registered for income tax (IT), resulting in the extensive coverage of all small businesses. The samples for the survey are drawn from Stats SA's Business Register, a registry of business information which serves as a key source of economic information. It records when businesses enter, perform in and exit the economy. The information is collected from businesses that operate within the borders of South Africa through questionnaires.

The new sample was introduced from the June quarter of 2006.

It is important to distinguish between the lift in the level of the series from improvements in the coverage of employers and the growth in employment shown by the series due to new employer entities entering the economy and continuing employers taking on additional staff.

This break in series relates mainly to the level of employment, rather than the growth rate of employment. The published series based on the 2004 sample show somewhat smaller growth than would have been shown from a sample revised in 2005.

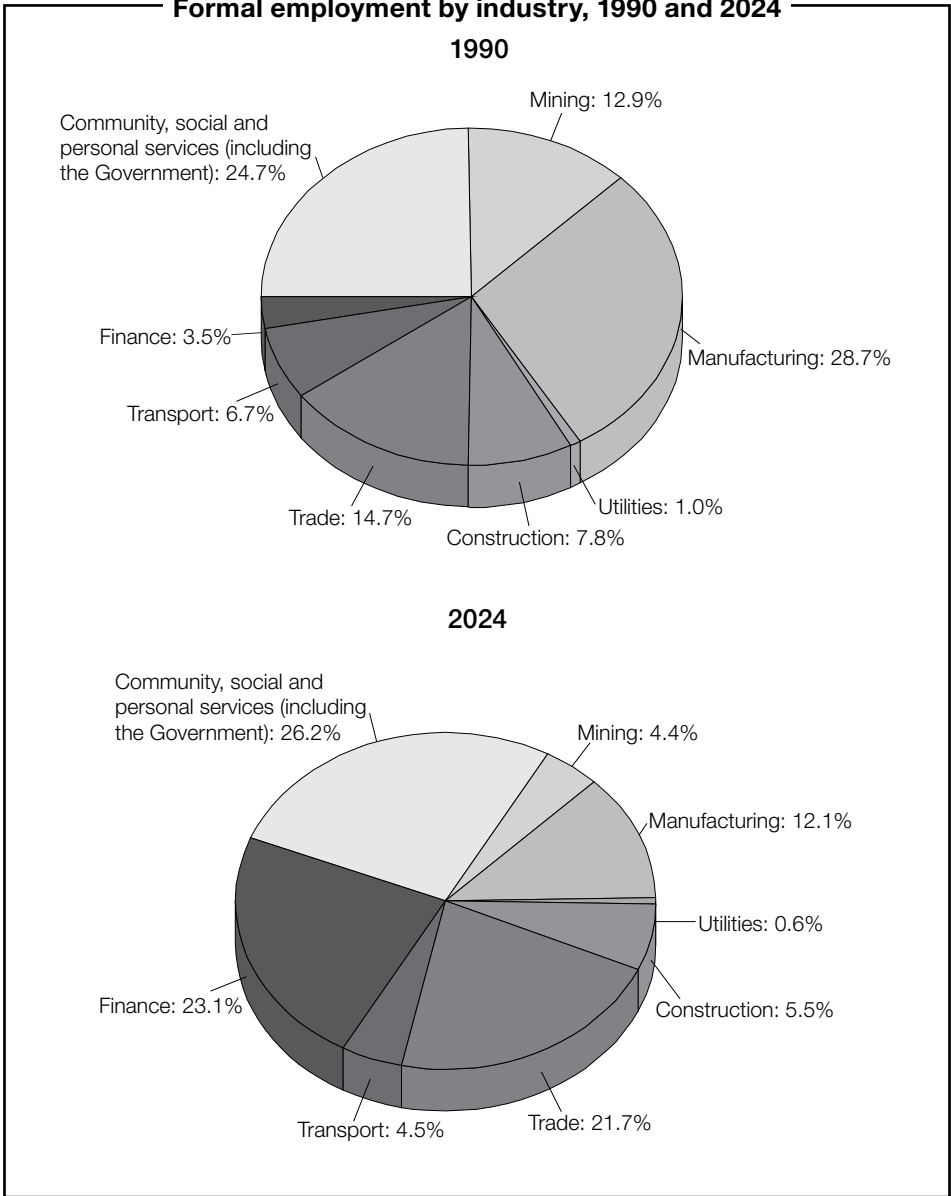
The growth of the series between 2004 and 2006 was affected by the expansion of the formal sector as a result of legislative changes, growth resulting from small businesses moving from the informal to the formal sector, and greater overall compliance by businesses in registering for PAYE and/or UIF.

Employment refers to the number of people employed by the business who received payment (in salaries; wages; commission, in addition to a retainer, salary or wage; piece rates; or payments in kind) for any part of the reference period. This excludes independent contractors and consultants; working proprietors, sole and joint owners; employees paid on commission where a retainer, salary or wage was not paid; and employees based in South Africa but paid from abroad, e.g. embassy employees.

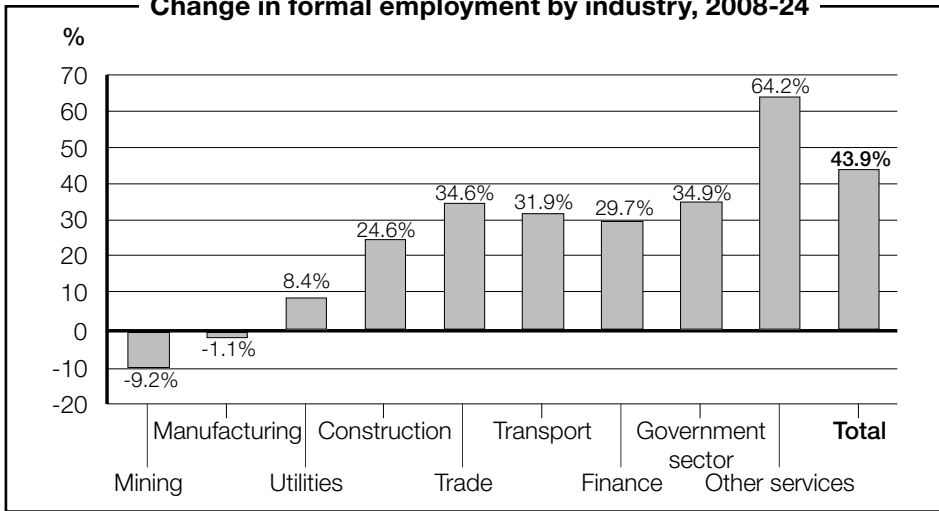
Annual employment data is shown as at 30 June of the relevant year.

For the sectoral contributions to GDP, please refer to the Economy chapter.

Formal employment by industry, 1990 and 2024



Change in formal employment by industry, 2008-24



Employment by economic sector and industry, 2001-24

Sector and industry	2001		2023		2024	
	Number ^a	Proportion	Number ^a	Proportion	Number ^a	Proportion
Formal (non-agricultural)						
Mining	485 000	3.9%	431 000	2.6%	438 000	2.7%
Manufacturing	1 462 000	11.7%	1 371 000	8.4%	1 430 000	8.7%
Utilities	77 000	0.6%	120 000	0.7%	109 000	0.7%
Construction	342 000	2.7%	808 000	4.9%	744 000	4.6%
Trade	1 365 000	10.9%	2 204 000	13.5%	2 168 000	13.3%
Transport	493 000	3.9%	675 000	4.1%	681 000	4.2%
Finance	988 000	7.9%	2 290 000	14.0%	2 583 000	15.8%
Community and social services ^b	1 772 000	14.2%	3 418 000	20.9%	3 306 000	20.2%
Other	— ^c	— ^c	11 000	0.1%	9 000	0.1%
Total	6 984 000	55.9%	11 329 000	69.3%	11 468 000	68.9%
Informal (non-agricultural)						
Mining	— ^d	— ^d	12 000	0.1%	19 000	0.1%
Manufacturing	382 000	3.1%	187 000	1.1%	225 000	1.4%
Utilities	— ^d	— ^d	9 000	0.1%	5 000	0.0%
Construction	299 000	2.4%	496 000	3.0%	461 000	2.8%
Trade	1 998 000	16.0%	1 157 000	7.1%	1 192 000	7.3%
Transport	190 000	1.5%	310 000	1.9%	383 000	2.3%
Finance	146 000	1.2%	309 000	1.9%	322 000	2.0%
Community and social services ^b	330 000	2.6%	547 000	3.3%	521 000	3.2%
Other	— ^c	— ^c	2 000	0.0%	1 000	0.0%
Total	3 353 000	26.8%	3 029 000	18.5%	3 129 000	18.8%
Agriculture	969 000	7.7%	894 000	5.5%	896 000	5.4%
Private households	1 188 000	9.5%	1 093 000	6.7%	1 160 000	7.0%
TOTAL	12 494 000	100.0%	16 346 000	100.0%	16 652 000	100.0%

Source: Stats SA, Labour Force Survey Historical revision March series 2001 to 2021, Statistical release P0210, p16; QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 18 August 2024

a Figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding.

b Including government.

c In revised LFS data for 2001 there was no category 'Other'.

d Sample too small for reliable estimates.

**Change in employment by economic sector and industry^a,
2001-24 and 2023-24**

Sector and industry	2001-24		2023-24	
	Number	Change	Number	Change
Formal (non-agricultural)				
Mining	-47 000	-9.7%	7 000	1.6%
Manufacturing	-32 000	-2.2%	59 000	4.3%
Utilities	32 000	41.6%	-11 000	-9.2%
Construction	402 000	117.5%	-64 000	-7.9%
Trade	803 000	58.8%	-36 000	-1.6%
Transport	188 000	38.1%	6 000	0.9%
Finance	1 595 000	161.4%	293 000	12.8%
Community and social services ^b	1 534 000	86.6%	-112 000	-3.3%
Other	— ^c	— ^c	-2 000	-18.2%
Total	4 484 000	64.2%	139 000	1.2%
Informal (non-agricultural)				
Mining	— ^d	— ^d	7 000	58.3%
Manufacturing	-157 000	-41.1%	38 000	20.3%
Utilities	— ^d	— ^d	-4 000	-44.4%
Construction	162 000	54.2%	-35 000	-7.1%
Trade	-806 000	-40.3%	35 000	3.0%
Transport	193 000	101.6%	73 000	23.5%
Finance	176 000	120.5%	13 000	4.2%
Community and social services ^b	191 000	57.9%	-26 000	-4.8%
Other	— ^d	— ^d	-1 000	-50.0%
Total	-224 000	-6.7%	100 000	3.3%
Agriculture	-73 000	-7.5%	2 000	0.2%
Private households	-28 000	-2.4%	67 000	6.1%
TOTAL	4 158 000	33.3%	306 000	1.9%

Source: Stats SA, *Labour Force Survey Historical revision March series 2001 to 2021*, Statistical release P0210, p16; *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 August 2024

a This table shows the actual and percentage change in overall employment.

b Including government.

c In the revised LFS data for 2001, there was no category 'Other'.

d Sample too small for reliable estimates.

All employment by industry and sex, 2008 and 2024

Male	2008		2024		Change ^a
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	
Agriculture	563 000	3.9%	622 000	3.7%	10.5%
Mining	337 000	2.3%	367 000	2.2%	8.9%
Manufacturing	1 418 000	9.7%	1 050 000	6.3%	-26.0%
Utilities	83 000	0.6%	90 000	0.5%	8.4%
Construction	1 101 000	7.5%	1 072 000	6.4%	-2.6%
Trade	1 663 000	11.4%	1 750 000	10.5%	5.2%
Transport	650 000	4.5%	874 000	5.2%	34.5%
Finance	1 028 000	7.0%	1 690 000	10.1%	64.4%
Community and social services ^b	1 194 000	8.2%	1 391 000	8.4%	16.5%
Private households	281 000	1.9%	289 000	1.7%	2.8%
Other	2 000	0.0%	9 000	0.1%	350.0%
Total	8 319 000	57.0%	9 204 000	55.3%	10.6%
Female					
Agriculture	257 000	1.8%	274 000	1.6%	6.6%
Mining	36 000	0.2%	90 000	0.5%	150.0%
Manufacturing	681 000	4.7%	605 000	3.6%	-11.2%
Utilities	26 000	0.2%	24 000	0.1%	-7.7%
Construction	122 000	0.8%	132 000	0.8%	8.2%
Trade	1 608 000	11.0%	1 610 000	9.7%	0.1%
Transport	182 000	1.2%	191 000	1.1%	4.9%
Finance	785 000	5.4%	1 214 000	7.3%	54.6%
Community and social services ^b	1 591 000	10.9%	2 436 000	14.6%	53.1%
Private households	975 000	6.7%	871 000	5.2%	-10.7%
Other	3 000	0.0%	0	0.0%	-100.0%
Total	6 266 000	43.0%	7 447 000	44.7%	18.8%
Both sexes					
Agriculture	820 000	5.6%	896 000	5.4%	9.3%
Mining	373 000	2.6%	457 000	2.7%	22.5%
Manufacturing	2 099 000	14.4%	1 655 000	9.9%	-21.2%
Utilities	109 000	0.7%	114 000	0.7%	4.6%
Construction	1 223 000	8.4%	1 204 000	7.2%	-1.6%
Trade	3 271 000	22.4%	3 360 000	20.2%	2.7%
Transport	832 000	5.7%	1 064 000	6.4%	27.9%
Finance	1 813 000	12.4%	2 905 000	17.4%	60.2%
Community and social services ^b	2 785 000	19.1%	3 827 000	23.0%	37.4%
Private households	1 255 000	8.6%	1 160 000	7.0%	-7.6%
Other	5 000	0.0%	10 000	0.1%	100.0%
TOTAL	14 584 000	100.0%	16 652 000	100.0%	14.2%

Source: Stats SA, Labour Force Survey Historical revision March series 2001 to 2021, Statistical release P0210, p16; QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 18 August 2024

a Figures from 2008 to 2024 are strictly comparable. Refers to the change in number.

b Including government.

All employment by industry, race and sex (actual numbers), 2024

Male	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total^a
Agriculture	482 776	108 287	50	31 691	621 805
Mining	290 660	20 479	4 023	51 923	367 085
Manufacturing	751 105	117 188	49 768	131 990	1 050 051
Utilities	65 044	11 546	— ^b	13 493	90 083
Construction	859 998	113 215	13 591	85 185	1 071 988
Trade	1 290 438	141 857	153 763	164 044	1 750 103
Transport	703 456	78 105	23 421	68 615	873 597
Finance	1 181 248	157 137	85 361	265 985	1 690 426
Community and social services ^c	1 078 248	147 471	30 786	134 615	1 391 120
Private households	270 520	15 099	16	17	288 935
Other	3 134	2 373	2 766	855	9 129
Total	6 977 323	911 758	365 131	950 111	9 204 322
Female					
Agriculture	233 310	34 572	— ^b	6 238	274 120
Mining	74 440	2 407	— ^b	12 770	89 617
Manufacturing	412 710	103 319	22 554	66 169	604 752
Utilities	20 124	— ^b	10	2 906	24 021
Construction	102 862	11 381	4 128	14 049	132 421
Trade	1 300 937	139 321	42 913	126 834	1 610 005
Transport	126 225	18 115	12 167	34 348	190 855
Finance	799 267	148 793	41 457	224 848	1 214 365
Community and social services ^c	1 822 509	248 572	62 793	302 217	2 436 091
Private households	798 302	65 799	— ^b	7 185	871 287
Other	— ^b	477	— ^b	— ^b	477
Total	5 690 686	772 758	187 003	797 564	7 488 011
Both sexes					
Agriculture	716 086	141 859	50	37 929	895 924
Mining	365 100	22 886	4 023	64 693	456 702
Manufacturing	1 163 814	220 508	72 321	198 159	1 654 803
Utilities	85 168	11 546	991	16 399	114 104
Construction	962 860	124 596	17 719	99 234	1 204 409
Trade	2 591 375	281 178	196 676	290 878	3 360 108
Transport	829 681	96 221	35 588	102 963	1 064 453
Finance	1 981 210	305 931	126 818	490 832	2 904 791
Community and social services ^c	2 900 757	396 043	93 579	436 832	3 827 211
Private households	1 068 822	80 898	1 602	8 900	1 160 223
Other	3 134	2 851	2 766	855	9 606
TOTAL	12 668 009	1 684 516	552 134	1 747 675	16 652 333

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

b For all values of 10 000 or lower, the sample size is too small for reliable estimates.

c Including government.

All employment by industry, race and sex (proportions), 2024

Male	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total^a
Agriculture	6.9%	11.8%	0.0%	3.3%	6.8%
Mining	4.2%	2.3%	1.1%	5.5%	4.0%
Manufacturing	10.8%	12.9%	13.6%	13.9%	11.4%
Utilities	0.9%	1.3%	0.0%	1.4%	1.0%
Construction	12.3%	12.4%	3.7%	9.0%	11.7%
Trade	18.5%	15.6%	42.1%	17.3%	19.0%
Transport	10.1%	8.6%	6.4%	7.2%	9.5%
Finance	16.9%	17.2%	23.4%	28.0%	18.4%
Community and social services ^b	15.5%	16.2%	8.4%	14.2%	15.1%
Private households	3.9%	1.7%	0.4%	0.2%	3.1%
Other	0.0%	0.3%	0.8%	0.1%	0.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Female					
Agriculture	4.1%	4.5%	0.0%	0.8%	3.7%
Mining	1.3%	0.3%	0.0%	1.6%	1.2%
Manufacturing	7.3%	13.4%	12.1%	8.3%	8.1%
Utilities	0.4%	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%
Construction	1.8%	1.5%	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%
Trade	22.9%	18.0%	23.0%	15.9%	21.6%
Transport	2.2%	2.3%	6.5%	4.3%	2.6%
Finance	14.1%	19.3%	22.2%	28.2%	16.3%
Community and social services ^b	32.0%	32.2%	33.6%	37.9%	32.7%
Private households	14.0%	8.5%	0.0%	0.9%	11.7%
Other	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Both sexes					
Agriculture	5.7%	8.4%	0.0%	2.2%	5.4%
Mining	2.9%	1.4%	0.7%	3.7%	2.7%
Manufacturing	9.2%	13.1%	13.1%	11.3%	9.9%
Utilities	0.7%	0.7%	0.2%	0.9%	0.7%
Construction	7.6%	7.4%	3.2%	5.7%	7.2%
Trade	20.5%	16.7%	35.6%	16.6%	20.2%
Transport	6.6%	5.7%	6.5%	5.9%	6.4%
Finance	15.6%	18.2%	23.0%	28.1%	17.4%
Community and social services ^b	22.9%	23.5%	17.0%	25.0%	23.0%
Private households	8.4%	4.8%	0.3%	0.5%	7.0%
Other	0.0%	0.2%	0.5%	0.1%	0.1%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

b Including government.

Comparison between the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) and the Quarterly Employment Statistics (QES)

Key differences between the QLFS and the QES

	QLFS	QES
Coverage	Private households and workers' hostels	Payroll of VAT registered businesses
	Non-institutional population (15 years and older)	Employees only
	Total employment (including informal sector, private households, agriculture and small businesses)	Formal sector excluding agriculture
Sample size	Quarterly sample of approximately 30 000 dwellings in which households reside	Quarterly sample of 20 000 non-agricultural formal sector businesses
Reference period	One week prior to the interview	Payroll on the last day of the quarter
Standard industrial classification (SIC)	All industries	Excluding agriculture and private households
Formal sector definition (excluding agriculture and private households)	Employers and own-account workers registered for VAT or income tax and those not paying tax but who work in firms with 5 or more workers.	Employees on payroll of VAT registered businesses.

Source: Stats SA, Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 2: 2024, Statistical release P0211, 18 August 2024, p14

Employment by industry, 2024

Sector	QLFS	QES	Difference: — QLFS vs QES —	
			Number	Proportion
	— 2Q 2024 —			
Agriculture	896 000	—	—	—
Mining	457 000	472 000	15 000	3.3%
Manufacturing	1 655 000	1 293 000	-362 000	-21.9%
Utilities	114 000	64 000	-50 000	-43.9%
Construction	1 204 000	591 000	-613 000	-50.9%
Trade	3 360 000	2 322 000	-1 038 000	-30.9%
Transport	1 064 000	480 000	-584 000	-54.9%
Finance	2 905 000	2 473 000	-432 000	-14.9%
Community and social services	3 827 000	3 021 000	-806 000	-21.1%
Private households	1 160 000	—	—	—
Other	10 000	—	—	—
Total	16 652 000	10 716 000	-5 936 000	-35.6%

Source: Stats SA, Quarterly Employment Statistics: March 2024 (QES) details breakdown 2009-2024, accessed 18 August 2024; Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Trends 2008-24Q2, accessed 18 August 2024

All employment by occupation

Employment^a by occupation, 2001 and 2024

Category	2001		2024		Change 2001-24 ^c
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	
Skilled	2 436 000	19.5%	4 333 000	26.0%	77.9%
Manager	664 000	5.3%	1 451 000	8.7%	118.5%
Professional	385 000	3.1%	1 102 000	6.6%	186.2%
Technician	1 387 000	11.1%	1 780 000	10.7%	28.3%
Semi-skilled	6 065 000	48.5%	7 374 000	44.3%	21.6%
Clerk	1 202 000	9.6%	1 705 000	10.2%	41.8%
Sales and services	1 796 000	14.4%	2 584 000	15.5%	43.9%
Skilled agriculture	215 000	1.7%	105 000	0.6%	-51.2%
Craft and related trade	1 734 000	13.9%	1 672 000	10.0%	-3.6%
Plant and machine operator	1 118 000	8.9%	1 308 000	7.9%	17.0%
Low-skilled	3 990 000	31.9%	4 937 000	29.7%	23.7%
Elementary	3 036 000	24.3%	4 094 000	24.6%	34.8%
Domestic worker	954 000	7.6%	843 000	5.1%	-11.6%
Total^b	12 494 000	100.0%	16 644 000	100.0%	33.2%

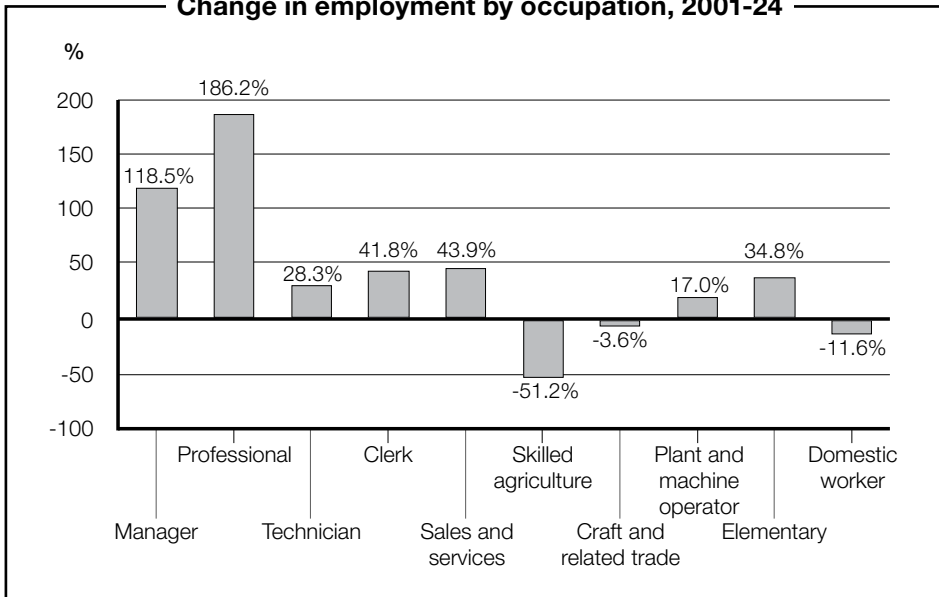
Source: Stats SA, *Labour Force Survey Historical Revision: March Series 2001-2021*, Statistical release P0210, 28 August 2008, p15; *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 August 2024

a Employers, employees and self-employed, including all sectors.

b Figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding.

c Refers to the change in number.

Change in employment by occupation, 2001-24



All employment by occupation, race and sex (actual numbers), 2001

Male	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total^a
Manager	146 000	30 000	38 000	314 000	528 000
Professional	68 000	14 000	12 000	109 000	202 000
Technician	353 000	61 000	37 000	220 000	671 000
Clerk	211 000	43 000	36 000	76 000	366 000
Sales and services	673 000	74 000	24 000	118 000	889 000
Skilled agriculture	174 000	15 000	— ^b	— ^b	189 000
Craft and related trade	962 000	157 000	39 000	234 000	1 391 000
Plant and machine operator	795 000	80 000	30 000	45 000	951 000
Elementary	1 115 000	250 000	25 000	43 000	1 435 000
Domestic worker	43 000	2 000	— ^b	— ^b	44 000
Total	4 540 000	725 000	241 000	1 159 000	6 666 000
Female					
Manager	40 000	12 000	5 000	80 000	137 000
Professional	80 000	11 000	10 000	83 000	183 000
Technician	413 000	78 000	17 000	208 000	716 000
Clerk	274 000	127 000	51 000	385 000	836 000
Sales and services	697 000	80 000	24 000	107 000	908 000
Skilled agriculture	26 000	1 000	— ^b	— ^b	27 000
Craft and related trade	271 000	30 000	11 000	29 000	342 000
Plant and machine operator	115 000	35 000	12 000	5 000	167 000
Elementary	1 413 000	159 000	13 000	16 000	1 602 000
Domestic worker	811 000	94 000	1 000	4 000	910 000
Total	4 140 000	627 000	145 000	916 000	5 827 000
Both sexes					
Manager	186 000	42 000	43 000	393 000	664 000
Professional	148 000	24 000	21 000	191 000	385 000
Technician	766 000	139 000	54 000	428 000	1 387 000
Clerk	485 000	170 000	87 000	460 000	1 202 000
Sales and services	1 370 000	154 000	47 000	225 000	1 796 000
Skilled agriculture	200 000	15 000	— ^b	— ^b	215 000
Craft and related trade	1 233 000	187 000	50 000	263 000	1 734 000
Plant and machine operator	910 000	115 000	43 000	50 000	1 118 000
Elementary	2 528 000	410 000	39 000	60 000	3 036 000
Domestic worker	854 000	96 000	1 000	4 000	954 000
Total	8 680 000	1 352 000	386 000	2 075 000	12 494 000

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 22 October 2014

a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

b Sample size was too small for reliable estimates.

All employment by occupation, race and sex (actual numbers), 2024

Male	Black	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Total^a
Manager	419 800	81 722	109 140	308 245	918 908
Professional	273 619	46 580	46 885	179 886	546 970
Technician	508 979	92 719	30 533	140 186	772 417
Clerk	339 986	77 265	26 810	41 663	485 723
Sales and services	1 136 046	105 292	72 517	62 727	1 376 583
Skilled agriculture	70 788	3 897	— ^b	4 122	78 807
Craft and related trade	1 169 294	131 554	27 495	112 804	1 441 147
Plant and machine operator	994 023	97 680	19 796	40 914	1 152 413
Elementary	2 030 694	268 711	29 189	59 563	2 388 157
Domestic worker	32 384	3 964	— ^b	— ^b	36 348
Total^a	6 975 613	909 385	362 365	950 111	9 197 473
Female					
Manager	255 620	51 383	41 625	183 372	531 999
Professional	321 024	45 272	23 435	165 392	555 123
Technician	651 755	132 749	42 140	180 952	1 007 596
Clerk	821 240	162 631	56 353	178 808	1 219 032
Sales and services	1 013 012	124 111	13 547	57 068	1 207 738
Skilled agriculture	26 447	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	26 447
Craft and related trade	189 595	26 420	1 096	13 827	230 937
Plant and machine operator	123 799	24 560	5 675	1 746	155 779
Elementary	1 539 715	148 223	3 133	15 127	1 706 198
Domestic worker	748 481	56 930	— ^b	1 273	806 684
Total^a	5 690 688	772 281	187 003	797 564	7 447 534
Both sexes					
Manager	675 420	133 105	150 765	491 617	1 450 906
Professional	594 645	91 852	70 320	345 278	1 102 093
Technician	1 160 734	225 468	72 673	321 138	1 780 013
Clerk	1 161 225	239 896	83 163	220 471	1 704 756
Sales and services	2 149 058	229 403	86 064	119 795	2 584 320
Skilled agriculture	97 235	3 897	— ^b	4 122	105 254
Craft and related trade	1 358 888	157 974	28 591	126 631	1 672 084
Plant and machine operator	1 117 822	122 241	25 471	42 660	1 308 193
Elementary	3 570 409	416 935	32 322	74 690	4 094 355
Domestic worker	780 865	60 894	— ^b	1 237	843 032
Total^a	12 668 009	1 684 516	552 134	1 747 675	16 652 333

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

a Figures should add up vertically and horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

b Sample size was too small for reliable estimates.

All employment by occupation, race and sex (proportions)^a, 2024

Male	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total^b
Manager	28.9%	5.6%	7.5%	21.2%	63.3%
Professional	24.8%	4.2%	4.3%	16.3%	49.6%
Technician	28.6%	5.2%	1.7%	7.9%	43.4%
Clerk	19.9%	4.5%	1.6%	2.4%	28.5%
Sales and services	44.0%	4.1%	2.8%	2.4%	53.3%
Skilled agriculture	67.3%	3.7%	— ^c	3.9%	74.9%
Craft and related trade	69.9%	7.9%	1.6%	6.7%	86.2%
Plant and machine operator	76.0%	7.5%	1.5%	3.1%	88.1%
Elementary	49.6%	6.6%	0.7%	1.5%	58.3%
Domestic worker	3.8%	0.5%	— ^c	— ^c	4.3%
Female					
Manager	17.6%	3.5%	2.9%	12.6%	36.7%
Professional	29.1%	4.1%	2.1%	15.0%	50.4%
Technician	36.6%	7.5%	2.4%	10.2%	56.6%
Clerk	48.2%	9.5%	3.3%	10.5%	71.5%
Sales and services	39.2%	4.8%	0.5%	2.2%	46.7%
Skilled agriculture	25.1%	— ^c	— ^c	— ^c	25.1%
Craft and related trade	11.3%	1.6%	0.1%	0.8%	13.8%
Plant and machine operator	9.5%	1.9%	0.4%	0.1%	11.9%
Elementary	37.6%	3.6%	0.1%	0.4%	41.7%
Domestic worker	88.8%	6.8%	— ^c	0.2%	95.7%
Both sexes					
Manager	4.1%	0.8%	0.9%	3.0%	8.7%
Professional	3.6%	0.4%	0.4%	2.1%	6.6%
Technician	7.0%	1.4%	0.4%	1.9%	10.7%
Clerk	7.0%	1.4%	0.5%	1.3%	10.2%
Sales and services	12.9%	1.4%	0.5%	0.7%	15.5%
Skilled agriculture	0.6%	0.0%	— ^c	0.0%	0.6%
Craft and related trade	8.2%	0.9%	0.2%	0.8%	10.0%
Plant and machine operator	6.7%	0.7%	0.2%	0.3%	7.9%
Elementary	21.4%	2.5%	0.2%	0.4%	24.6%
Domestic worker	4.7%	0.4%	— ^c	0.0%	5.1%

Source: CRA calculations based on Stats SA data

a The figures indicate the proportion of each occupational level filled by people of each sex and race. For example, 28.9% of all managers are Black men.

b Figures should add up horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

c Sample size too small for reliable estimates.

Change^a in all employment by occupation, race and sex, 2001-24

Male	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
Manager	187.5%	172.4%	187.2%	-1.8%	74.0%
Professional	302.4%	232.7%	290.7%	65.0%	170.8%
Technician	44.2%	52.0%	-17.5%	-36.3%	15.1%
Clerk	61.1%	79.7%	-25.5%	-45.2%	32.7%
Sales and services	68.8%	42.3%	202.2%	-46.8%	54.8%
Skilled agriculture	-59.3%	-74.0%	— ^b	— ^b	-58.3%
Craft and related trade	21.5%	-16.2%	-29.5%	-51.8%	3.6%
Plant and machine operator	25.0%	22.1%	-34.0%	-9.1%	21.2%
Elementary	82.1%	7.5%	16.8%	38.5%	66.4%
Domestic worker	-24.7%	98.2%	— ^b	— ^b	-17.4%
Total	53.6%	25.4%	50.4%	-18.0%	38.0%
Female					
Manager	539.1%	328.2%	732.5%	129.2%	288.3%
Professional	301.3%	311.6%	134.4%	99.3%	203.3%
Technician	57.8%	70.2%	147.9%	-13.0%	40.7%
Clerk	199.7%	28.1%	10.5%	-53.6%	45.8%
Sales and services	45.3%	55.1%	-43.6%	-46.7%	33.0%
Skilled agriculture	1.7%	— ^b	— ^b	— ^b	-2.0%
Craft and related trade	-30.0%	-11.9%	-90.0%	-52.3%	-32.5%
Plant and machine operator	7.7%	-29.8%	-52.7%	-65.1%	-6.7%
Elementary	9.0%	-6.8%	-75.9%	-5.5%	6.5%
Domestic worker	-7.7%	-39.4%	— ^b	-68.2%	-11.4%
Total	37.5%	23.2%	29.0%	-12.9%	27.8%
Both sexes					
Manager	263.1%	216.9%	250.6%	25.1%	118.5%
Professional	301.8%	282.7%	234.9%	80.8%	186.3%
Technician	51.5%	62.2%	34.6%	-25.0%	28.3%
Clerk	139.4%	41.1%	-4.4%	-52.1%	41.8%
Sales and services	56.9%	49.0%	83.1%	-46.8%	43.9%
Skilled agriculture	-51.4%	-74.0%	— ^b	— ^b	-51.0%
Craft and related trade	10.2%	-15.5%	-42.8%	-51.9%	-3.6%
Plant and machine operator	22.8%	6.3%	-40.8%	-14.7%	17.0%
Elementary	41.2%	1.7%	-17.1%	24.5%	34.9%
Domestic worker	-8.6%	-36.6%	— ^b	-69.1%	-11.6%
Total	45.9%	24.6%	43.0%	-15.8%	33.3%

Source: CRA calculations based on Stats SA data

a The figures in this table are based on the preceding pair of tables.

b Sample size too small for reliable estimates.

Informal sector (excluding agriculture and private households)

Informal sector employment (non-agricultural)^a by industry, 2009-24

Industry	2009	2011	2013	2015	2019
Mining	2 000	1 000	2 000	5 000	5 000
Manufacturing	207 000	222 000	220 000	237 000	226 000
Utilities	4 000	4 000	1 000	8 000	4 000
Construction	284 000	314 000	354 000	454 000	497 000
Trade	989 000	1 006 000	1 058 000	1 067 000	1 272 000
Transport	196 000	210 000	219 000	259 000	303 000
Finance	117 000	155 000	151 000	212 000	247 000
Community and social services	310 000	301 000	354 000	419 000	492 000
Other	— ^b	1 000	1 000	— ^b	1 000
Total^c	2 109 000	2 213 000	2 360 000	2 661 000	3 048 000

Industry	2022	2023	2024	Change 2009-24
Mining	15 000	12 000	19 000	850.0%
Manufacturing	202 000	187 000	225 000	8.7%
Utilities	9 000	9 000	5 000	25.0%
Construction	452 000	496 000	461 000	62.3%
Trade	1 175 000	1 157 000	1 192 000	20.5%
Transport	298 000	310 000	383 000	95.4%
Finance	327 000	309 000	322 000	175.2%
Community and social services	482 000	547 000	521 000	68.1%
Other	5 000	2 000	1 000	—
Total^c	2 965 000	3 029 000	3 129 000	43.6%

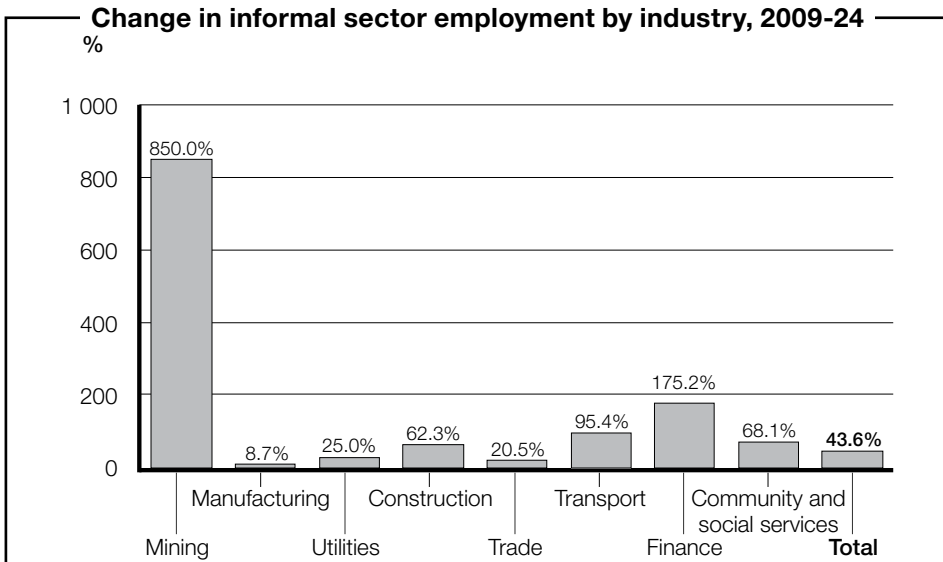
Source: Stats SA, *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Historical revisions of the QLFS 2009 to 2023*, Statistical release P0211.5, 11 February 2014, p49; *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 August 2024

a According to Stats SA, the informal sector has the following two components:

- 1 Employees working in establishments that employ fewer than five employees and who do not deduct income tax from their salaries/wages; and
- 2 Employers, own account workers, and persons helping unpaid in their household business who are not registered for either income tax or value-added tax.

b The sample size is too small for reliable estimates.

c Apart from the last column, figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding.



Agriculture and private households

Employment in agriculture and private households, 2001-24

Year	Agriculture		Private households		Households per domestic worker ^a
	Number	Year-on-year change	Number	Year-on-year change	
2001	969 000	—	1 188 000	—	9.7
2002	1 153 000	19.0%	1 266 000	6.6%	9.1
2003	808 000	-29.9%	1 215 000	-4.0%	9.8
2004	828 000	2.5%	1 125 000	-7.4%	10.8
2005	778 000	-6.0%	1 226 000	9.0%	10.1
2006	886 000	13.9%	1 288 000	5.1%	9.8
2007	703 000	-20.7%	1 251 000	-2.9%	10.3
2008	820 000	16.6%	1 255 000	0.3%	10.5
2009	752 000	-8.3%	1 286 000	2.5%	10.5
2010	655 000	-12.9%	1 251 000	-2.7%	11.0
2011	626 000	-4.4%	1 216 000	-2.8%	11.8
2012	674 000	7.7%	1 255 000	3.2%	11.5
2013	742 000	10.1%	1 215 000	-3.2%	12.0
2014	670 000	-9.7%	1 290 000	6.2%	12.1
2015	869 000	29.7%	1 292 000	0.2%	12.5
2016	825 000	-5.1%	1 296 000	0.3%	12.9
2017	835 000	1.2%	1 311 000	1.2%	12.4
2018	843 000	1.0%	1 296 000	-1.1%	12.9
2019	842 000	-0.1%	1 251 000	-3.5%	13.7
2020	799 000	-5.1%	1 005 000	-19.7%	17.3
2021	862 000	7.9%	1 005 000	0.0%	17.9
2022	874 000	1.4%	1 124 000	11.8%	16.4
2023	894 000	2.3%	1 093 000	-2.8%	17.4
2024	896 000	0.2%	1 160 000	6.1%	—
2001-24	-7.7%	—	-8.0%	—	—

Source: Stats SA, *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Historical revisions of the QLFS 2008 to 2013*, Statistical release P0211.5, 11 February 2014; p49; *QLFS Trends 2008-2022 Q2*, accessed 4 October 2022; *General Household Survey 2019*, Statistical release P0318, 15 December 2020, p3; *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 August 2024

a CRA calculations.

Public sector employment

Government sector employment, 1991-2024

Year ^a	National departments ^b	Provincial administrations ^c	Local governments ^d	Other government institutions ^e	Total	As a proportion of total formal employment
						Total
1991	554 463	427 259	232 319	107 457	1 321 498	25.2%
1992	542 423	448 118	230 616	109 176	1 330 333	26.0%
1993	530 298	464 006	224 907	105 726	1 324 937	26.5%
1994	535 460	697 364	240 175	99 707	1 572 706	30.1%
1995	337 223	761 117	246 801	105 697	1 450 838	28.2%
1996	359 680	860 837	247 515	114 689	1 582 721	30.2%
1997	351 398	868 528	254 132	109 797	1 583 855	30.7%
1998	345 689	877 680	243 790	99 737	1 566 896	31.5%
1999	339 802	864 790	223 516	95 824	1 523 932	31.2%
2000	326 858	822 195	221 152	92 400	1 462 605	30.9%
2001	324 867	800 098	220 899	90 408	1 436 272	30.8%
2002	325 151	802 237	222 866	91 142	1 441 396	31.0%
2003	338 867	795 246	207 949	85 994	1 428 056	22.5%
2004	350 617	807 508	203 052	92 370	1 453 547	22.4%
2005	380 011	839 295	202 553	78 912	1 500 771	21.2%
2006	383 903	866 559	199 503	124 056	1 574 021	19.5%
2007	396 292	892 192	208 625	125 513	1 622 622	19.6%
2008	407 585	943 634	216 946	132 294	1 700 459	20.1%
2009	412 995	993 491	235 484	139 122	1 781 092	21.8%
2010	418 337	1 018 072	243 576	136 525	1 816 509	21.9%
2011	431 907	1 066 670	255 377	149 588	1 903 542	22.1%
2012	451 279	1 086 937	257 500	147 645	1 943 360	21.9%
2013	452 164	1 093 170	273 040	155 461	1 973 835	21.9%
2014	455 891	1 118 748	310 366	345 391	2 230 396	23.8%
2015	473 701	1 085 872	313 059	188 210	2 060 843	22.2%
2016	482 091	1 071 815	323 734	201 581	2 079 220	21.6%
2017	475 142	1 035 957	319 923	206 864	2 037 886	20.8%
2018	466 801	1 037 790	325 614	218 300	2 048 505	20.4%
2019	463 774	1 060 147	341 671	243 646	2 109 238	20.7%
2020	457 420	1 072 827	338 386	208 531	2 077 164	21.5%
2021	449 891	1 126 201	337 477	221 063	2 134 632	21.6%
2022	453 633	1 202 096	341 132	219 982	2 216 843	22.3%
2023	449 324	1 285 242	344 809	222 960	2 302 335	22.8%
2024	458 721	1 173 292	344 880	316 535	2 293 428	21.4%
1991-2024	-17.3%	174.6%	48.5%	194.6%	73.5%	-15.2%
2023-24	2.1%	-8.7%	0.0%	42.0%	-0.4%	-6.1%

Source: Stats SA, *South African Statistics 2010-12; Quarterly employment statistics (QES) Details Breakdown*, Statistical release P0277, June 2024, accessed 27 September 2024

- a The information on the governments and local governments of the former TBVC states was included in the public sector from the first quarter of 1995. The total employment in these states for June 1994 was approximately 12% of the total employment of the public sector. The information on all the universities of the former TBVC states is included in the public sector from the first quarter of 1996. The total employment for universities in these states for March 1996 was approximately 11% of the total employment of the universities.
- b National departments do not include Transnet Ltd, SA Post Office Ltd or Telkom SA Ltd. Particulars relating to elected office-bearers and part-time members of commissions are excluded.
- c Particulars of elected office-bearers are not included.
- d Local governments include city councils, municipalities, town councils and health committees. Local governments of the former TBVC states are included as from the second quarter of 1994.
- e Contains data regarding parastatals, universities, and technikons.

Characteristics of the employed

Employment by age group, 2009 and 2024

Age group	— Number employed —		— Number ^a in age group —		— Absorption rate ^b —	
	2009	2024	2009	2024	2009	2024
15-24	1 463 000	1 089 000	9 825 000	10 262 000	14.9%	10.6%
25-34	4 691 000	4 630 000	8 629 000	10 600 000	54.4%	43.7%
35-44	4 199 000	5 169 000	6 420 000	9 138 000	65.4%	56.6%
45-54	2 838 000	4 065 000	4 555 000	6 884 000	62.3%	59.0%
55-64	1 166 000	1 701 000	2 855 000	4 411 000	40.9%	38.6%
Total	14 357 000	16 652 000	32 285 000	41 296 000	44.5%	40.3%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, Census 2022, accessed 18 August 2024

a Total population between the ages of 15 and 64, broken down by age.

b The absorption rate shows the proportion in the age group that is employed.

Employment by highest level of education, 2009 and 2024

Level of education	— Number employed —		— Proportion ^a of total —		Absorption rate ^a by highest level of education	
	2009	2024	2009	2024	2009	2024
No schooling	515 000	180 000	3.6%	1.1%	33.7%	25.0%
Less than primary completed	1 357 000	643 000	9.5%	3.9%	37.0%	29.1%
Primary completed	756 000	470 000	5.3%	2.8%	37.1%	30.8%
Secondary not completed	4 773 000	5 100 000	33.2%	30.6%	34.5%	30.1%
Secondary completed	4 148 000	6 066 000	28.9%	36.4%	53.8%	43.8%
Tertiary	2 673 000	3 954 000	18.6%	23.7%	82.2%	71.5%
Other	136 000	239 000	0.9%	1.4%	51.1%	45.5%
Total	14 357 000	16 652 000	100.0%	100.0%	44.5%	40.3%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 18 August 2024

a CRA calculations. The proportion column refers to the proportion of the total number of people employed who are in each level of education category. The absorption rate refers to the proportion of people in each category who are employed. For example, 1.1% of all employed people have no schooling and 25% of all people with no schooling are employed.

Employment by nature of contract/agreement, 2009-24

	2009		2023		2024	
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion
Male	6 611 000	55.9%	7 456 000	54.6%	7 509 000	53.9%
Limited duration	731 000	6.2%	1 059 000	7.8%	1 005 000	7.2%
Permanent nature	4 378 000	37.0%	4 545 000	33.3%	4 526 000	32.5%
Unspecified duration	1 502 000	12.7%	1 852 000	13.6%	1 979 000	14.2%
Female	5 222 000	44.1%	6 199 000	45.4%	6 410 000	46.1%
Limited duration	610 000	5.2%	1 104 000	8.1%	1 043 000	7.5%
Permanent nature	3 253 000	27.5%	3 591 000	26.3%	3 832 000	27.5%
Unspecified duration	1 359 000	11.5%	1 504 000	11.0%	1 534 000	11.0%
Both sexes	11 833 000	100.0%	13 656 000	100.0%	13 919 000	100.0%
Limited duration	1 341 000	11.3%	2 163 000	15.8%	2 048 000	14.7%
Permanent nature	7 631 000	64.5%	8 136 000	59.6%	8 358 000	60.0%
Unspecified duration	2 861 000	24.2%	3 357 000	24.6%	3 513 000	25.2%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 18 August 2024

Employment equity**Employment equity: occupational level by race and sex^a, 2001 and 2023**

Race	-Top management-		Senior management		Professionally qualified		-Technically skilled-	
	2001	2023	2001	2023	2001	2023	2001	2023
Black	6.0%	17.2%	9.0%	27.6%	33.0%	49.4%	58.0%	66.8%
Coloured	3.0%	6.1%	5.0%	8.5%	6.0%	10.0%	18.0%	11.4%
Indian/Asian	4.0%	11.6%	5.0%	12.4%	5.0%	9.2%	6.6%	5.1%
White	87.0%	62.1%	81.0%	48.5%	56.0%	29.2%	18.0%	15.2%
Sex								
Male	87.0%	73.1%	80.0%	62.3%	62.0%	51.9%	60.0%	50.1%
Female	13.0%	26.9%	20.0%	37.7%	38.0%	48.1%	40.0%	49.9%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 31 March 2023 pp17-33

a Data on foreign nationals is not included.

**Employment equity: top management employment
by race, sex and industry, 2024**

Male	Black	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Foreign nationals	Total^a
Agriculture	5.4%	2.8%	0.9%	70.2%	0.6%	79.9%
Mining and quarrying	22.6%	2.7%	3.0%	47.1%	3.8%	79.2%
Manufacturing	6.0%	3.6%	10.2%	55.2%	3.7%	78.7%
Electricity, gas and water	8.3%	4.2%	20.8%	33.3%	0.0%	66.6%
Construction	15.5%	5.9%	6.1%	51.0%	1.9%	80.4%
Retail and motor trade/ repair services	5.2%	3.0%	12.7%	52.9%	1.4%	75.2%
Wholesale and retail trade/ repair of motor vehicles	5.2%	3.0%	12.7%	52.9%	1.4%	75.2%
Transport/storage/ communications	10.7%	3.6%	12.0%	44.2%	2.5%	73.0%
Finance/business services	10.6%	2.9%	8.2%	44.7%	3.4%	69.8%
Community/social/ personal services ^b	13.8%	0.0%	6.9%	27.6%	3.4%	51.7%
Female						
Agriculture	2.8%	2.0%	0.4%	14.6%	0.2%	20.0%
Mining and quarrying	9.7%	1.3%	2.1%	7.3%	0.4%	20.8%
Manufacturing	4.2%	2.1%	4.1%	10.4%	0.6%	21.4%
Electricity, gas and water	8.3%	4.2%	8.3%	12.5%	0.0%	33.3%
Construction	7.0%	3.2%	2.9%	6.3%	0.3%	19.7%
Retail and motor trade/ repair services	2.9%	1.8%	4.4%	15.2%	0.5%	24.8%
Wholesale and retail trade/ repair of motor vehicles	6.5%	3.2%	2.5%	22.5%	0.5%	35.2%
Transport/storage/ communications	6.7%	2.3%	6.0%	11.5%	0.4%	26.9%
Finance/business services	8.2%	2.8%	4.3%	14.1%	0.9%	30.3%
Community/social/ personal services ^b	10.3%	3.4%	3.4%	31.0%	0.0%	48.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-24*, June 2024, pp20-21

a The male and female proportion in each category add up to 100%. Black males thus account for 5.4% of all top managers in agriculture, black females for 2.8% and so on.

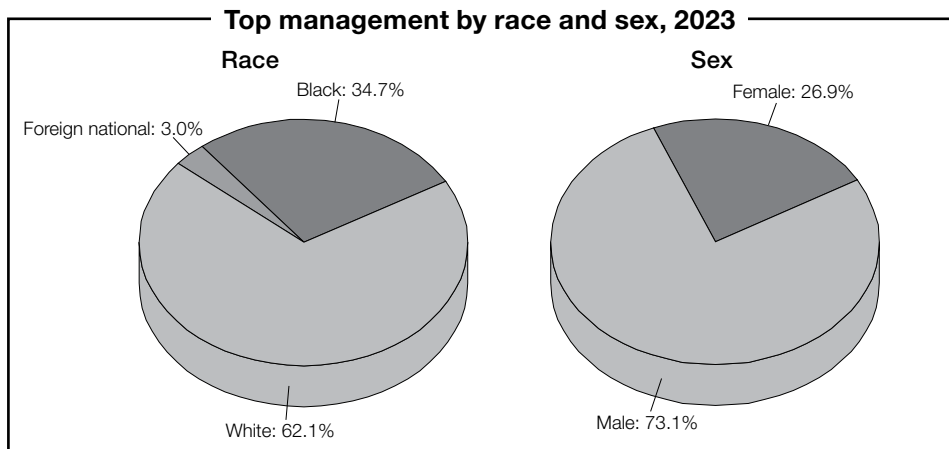
b Including government.

Employment in management by race and sex, 2000-23

Year ^a	Top managers		Senior manager	
	Black ^b	Female	Black ^b	Female
2000	12.7%	12.4%	18.5%	21.0%
2001	25.1%	11.9%	19.1%	17.7%
2002	18.4%	13.8%	22.2%	21.6%
2003	23.8%	14.1%	27.3%	22.3%
2004	21.1%	15.1%	25.7%	23.7%
2005	27.2%	16.5%	27.5%	23.6%
2006	22.2%	21.6%	26.9%	27.4%
2007	28.8%	17.8%	32.4%	24.9%
2008	24.2%	17.8%	32.5%	27.8%
2009	32.2%	18.0%	35.5%	26.7%
2010	33.5%	18.0%	36.4%	27.4%
2011	24.7%	19.1%	34.4%	29.5%
2012	32.0%	19.5%	39.4%	27.0%
2013	33.3%	20.2%	40.1%	29.4%
2014	26.6%	20.4%	37.6%	31.4%
2015	27.6%	21.4%	38.8%	32.4%
2016	28.2%	22.0%	40.4%	33.3%
2017	28.8%	22.9%	40.7%	38.8%
2018	30.1%	23.5%	42.1%	34.5%
2019	31.1%	24.4%	42.9%	35.3%
2020	32.1%	24.9%	44.3%	35.7%
2021	33.8%	25.8%	45.6%	36.4%
2022	34.2%	26.5%	46.9%	37.2%
2023	34.7%	26.9%	48.5%	37.7%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2021-2022*, 31 March 2022, pp23-24, pp27-28, *Annual Report 2022-2023*, 31 March 2023, pp37-38, p43, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp17-18, pp23

- a Employers with more than 150 employees previously had to submit reports to the Commission for Employment Equity every year, whereas those with between 50 and 149 employees had to submit reports only every other year. It is for this reason that the figures in the above table fluctuate slightly. Even years (2000, 2002, etc.) were those in which all employers with 50 or more employees had to submit reports, and odd years (2001, 2003, etc.) were those in which only employers with 150 or more employees had to submit reports. In general, the figures are higher in odd years, suggesting that larger companies tend to employ slightly higher proportions of black and female managers. Since the commencement of the amended Act in August 2014, all employers, both large and small, are required to report annually. Employees with disabilities are included.
- b Black people in the context of this table include African (black), Coloured, and Indian, but data does not include foreign nationals.



National government, 2024

Race	Proportion of top managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	76.7%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	6.9%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	7.1%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	9.0%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of senior managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	73.2%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	6.6%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	7.8%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	12.3%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of professionals ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	70.6%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	8.5%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	4.4%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	16.4%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of skilled technical ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	77.8%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	10.2%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	2.5%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	9.5%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp22-37; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2023*, Statistical release P0318, 23 May 2024, Appendix D, p87

a Foreign nationals are excluded, so the total in this column does not add up to 100%.

b CRA calculations.

c Refers to a degree/diploma/certificate with grade 12. 2023 figures.

Provincial government, 2024

Race	Proportion of top managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	78.7%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	9.9%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	5.7%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	5.1%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of senior managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	79.6%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	8.4%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	4.1%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	7.5%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of professionals ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	76.9%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	9.0%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	4.5%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	9.2%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of skilled technical ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	85.4%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	6.1%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	1.4%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	6.7%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp22-37; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2023*, Statistical release P0318, 23 May 2024, Appendix D, p88

a Foreign nationals are excluded, so the total in this column does not add up to 100%.

b CRA calculations.

c Refers to a degree/diploma/certificate with grade 12. 2023 figures.

Local government, 2024

Race	Proportion of top managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	72.4%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	13.8%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	3.8%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	10.1%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of senior managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	76.4%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	6.8%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	5.6%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	11.0%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of professionals ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	66.8%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	14.8%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	3.5%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	14.2%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of skilled technical ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	70.0%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	16.9%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	4.3%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	8.7%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp22-37; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2023*, Statistical release P0318, 23 May 2024, Appendix D, p89

a Foreign nationals are excluded, so the total in this column does not add up to 100%.

b CRA calculations.

c Refers to a degree/diploma/certificate with grade 12. 2023 figures.

State-owned enterprises, 2024

Race	Proportion of top managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	66.1%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	7.9%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	9.2%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	15.6%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of senior managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	66.3%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	6.6%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	9.0%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	16.0%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of professionals ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	68.7%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	7.0%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	7.0%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	15.6%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Race	Proportion of skilled technical ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	80.8%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	7.1%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	3.0%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	8.8%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp22-37; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2023*, Statistical release P0318, 23 May 2024, Appendix D, p91

a Foreign nationals are excluded, so the total in this column does not add up to 100%.

b CRA calculations.

c Refers to a degree/diploma/certificate with grade 12. 2023 figures.

Private sector, 2024

Race	Proportion of top managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	14.0%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	5.9%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	12.0%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	65.1%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of senior managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	21.0%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	8.7%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	13.4%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	53.7%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of professionals ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	34.8%	80.6%	71.4%	14.3%
Coloured	11.1%	9.1%	7.7%	1.5%
Indian/Asian	11.8%	2.6%	2.3%	1.4%
White	39.6%	7.7%	7.1%	5.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of skilled technical ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	58.1%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	13.4%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	6.7%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	19.7%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp22-37; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2023*, Statistical release P0318, 23 May 2024, Appendix D, p90

a Foreign nationals are excluded, so the total in this column does not add up to 100%.

b CRA calculations.

c Refers to a degree/diploma/certificate with grade 12. 2023 figures.

Non-profit organisations, 2024

Race	Proportion of top managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	40.3%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	9.0%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	7.6%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	37.5%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of senior managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	50.5%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	9.3%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	6.1%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	30.9%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of professionals ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	59.1%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	12.0%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	4.6%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	21.5%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of skilled technical ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	66.8%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	19.0%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	2.1%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	11.6%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp22-37; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2023*, Statistical release P0318, 23 May 2024, Appendix D, p92

a Foreign nationals are excluded, so the total in this column does not add up to 100%.

b CRA calculations.

c Refers to a degree/diploma/certificate with grade 12. 2023 figures.

All employers, 2024

Race	Proportion of top managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	17.2%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	6.1%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	11.6%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	62.1%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of senior managers ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	27.6%	81.1%	45.6%	13.6%
Coloured	8.5%	8.8%	4.9%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	12.4%	2.6%	4.6%	1.1%
White	48.5%	7.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	56.9%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of professionals ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 25-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	49.4%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	10.0%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	9.2%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	29.2%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%
Race	Proportion of skilled technical ^a	Proportion of economically active population (EAP) ^b	EAP 35-64 as a proportion of national EAP ^b	Over 20s with post-school qualification ^c as a proportion of national EAP ^b
Black	66.8%	81.1%	72.1%	13.6%
Coloured	11.4%	8.8%	7.4%	1.6%
Indian/Asian	5.1%	2.6%	2.4%	1.1%
White	15.2%	7.6%	7.0%	5.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	22.1%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, pp22-37; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2023*, Statistical release P0318, 23 May 2024, Appendix D, p90

a Foreign nationals are excluded, so the total in this column does not add up to 100%.

b CRA calculations.

c Refers to a degree/diploma/certificate with grade 12. 2023 figures.

Employment equity: proportion of employed, with disabilities^a, 2003-23

Year	Proportion
2003	1.3%
2005	1.8%
2007	0.5%
2009	0.9%
2011	0.8%
2013	0.9%
2014	1.2%
2015	1.2%
2016	0.8%
2017	1.0%
2018	1.0%
2019	1.1%
2020	1.1%
2021	1.3%
2022	1.2%
2023	1.2%

Source: Commission for Employment Equity, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, 26 June 2024, p47

a The Employment Equity Act of 1998 defines a person with a disability as someone who has 'a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in, employment'. The Government set a target for people with disabilities to account for 2% of the employed workforce.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Stats SA defines the unemployed as follows:

- They had not worked during the survey reference week of the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*.
- They had actively looked for work or tried to start a business in the four weeks prior to the reference week of the survey.
- They were available for work during the reference week of the survey.
- They had not actively looked for work in the four weeks prior to the survey, but were starting a job or business at a definite date in the future.

Stats SA includes an expanded definition of unemployment in the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*. It measures anybody without a job who wanted to work and was available to take up employment during the reference period, regardless of whether they actively looked for a job in the four weeks prior to the reference week.

Statistics

Unemployment trends, 1994-2024

Year	— Official definition —		— Expanded definition —	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
1994	1 988 000	20.0%	3 672 000	31.5%
1995	1 644 000	16.9%	3 321 000	29.2%
1996	2 019 000	21.0%	4 197 000	35.6%
1997	2 238 000	22.9%	4 551 000	37.6%
1998	3 163 000	25.2%	5 634 000	37.5%
1999	3 158 000	23.3%	5 882 000	36.2%
2000	4 333 000	26.7%	6 553 000	35.5%
2001	4 081 000	24.6%	6 609 000	34.6%
2002	4 603 000	27.7%	7 490 000	38.4%
2003	4 843 000	29.3%	7 968 000	40.6%
2004	4 231 000	26.4%	7 871 000	40.0%
2005	3 993 000	24.2%	7 673 000	38.0%
2006	3 984 000	23.1%	7 474 000	36.1%
2007	4 119 000	23.6%	7 504 000	36.0%
2008	4 267 000	22.6%	6 109 000	29.5%
2009	4 341 000	23.2%	6 678 000	31.7%
2010	4 622 000	25.1%	7 509 000	35.2%
2011	4 782 000	25.6%	7 921 000	36.3%
2012	4 721 000	24.8%	7 922 000	35.6%
2013	4 972 000	25.3%	8 289 000	36.1%
2014	5 154 000	25.5%	8 332 000	35.6%
2015	5 230 000	25.0%	8 378 000	34.9%
2016	5 634 000	26.6%	8 880 000	36.4%
2017	6 177 000	27.7%	9 304 000	36.6%
2018	6 083 000	27.2%	9 634 000	37.2%
2019	6 655 000	29.0%	10 226 000	38.5%
2020	4 295 000	23.3%	10 259 000	42.0%
2021	7 826 000	34.4%	11 923 000	44.4%
2022	7 994 000	33.9%	12 282 000	44.1%
2023	7 921 000	32.6%	11 872 000	42.1%
2024	8 384 000	33.5%	12 383 000	42.6%
1994-2024	321.7%	—	237.2%	—

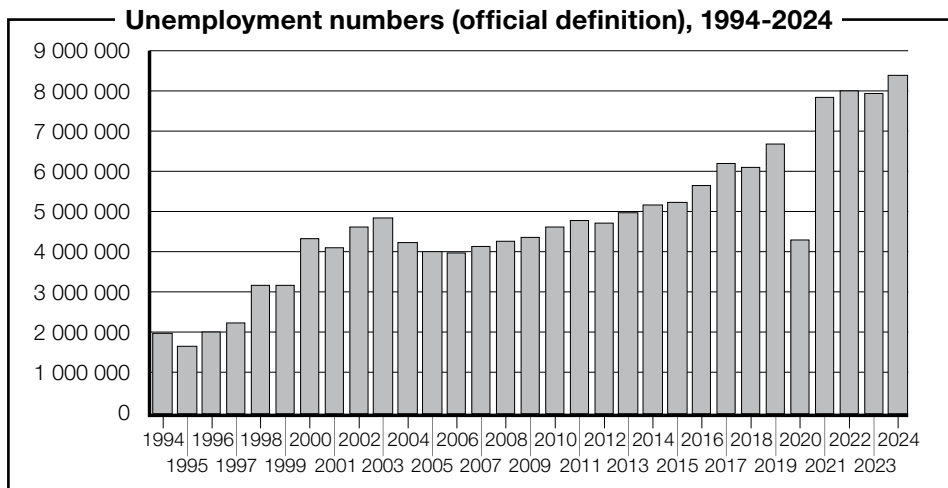
Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 27 September 2024; Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa 2023, p264

Unemployment numbers by race (official definition), 1994-2024

Year ^a	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total ^b
1994	1 637 000	260 000	48 000	42 000	1 988 000
1995	1 336 000	229 000	41 000	38 000	1 644 000
1996	1 714 000	191 000	58 000	57 000	2 019 000
1997	1 895 000	229 000	52 000	62 000	2 238 000
1998	2 793 000	220 000	59 000	89 000	3 163 000
1999	2 751 000	232 000	72 000	99 000	3 158 000
2000	3 748 000	339 000	98 000	148 000	4 333 000
2001	3 447 000	395 000	70 000	170 000	4 081 000
2002	3 886 000	468 000	85 000	165 000	4 603 000
2003	4 136 000	439 000	95 000	173 000	4 843 000
2004	3 681 000	357 000	77 000	116 000	4 231 000
2005	3 437 000	364 000	37 000	125 000	3 993 000
2006	3 439 000	372 000	46 000	127 000	3 984 000
2007	3 565 000	407 000	52 000	95 000	4 119 000
2008	3 719 000	378 000	66 000	104 000	4 267 000
2009	3 796 000	383 000	58 000	104 000	4 341 000
2010	3 977 000	447 000	54 000	144 000	4 622 000
2011	4 169 000	442 000	61 000	109 000	4 782 000
2012	4 067 000	482 000	50 000	123 000	4 721 000
2013	4 246 000	521 000	76 000	128 000	4 972 000
2014	4 375 000	543 000	67 000	170 000	5 154 000
2015	4 488 000	522 000	75 000	145 000	5 230 000
2016	4 946 000	485 000	67 000	136 000	5 634 000
2017	5 479 000	503 000	80 000	115 000	6 177 000
2018	5 337 000	520 000	63 000	162 000	6 083 000
2019	5 951 000	489 000	67 000	148 000	6 655 000
2020	3 770 000	332 000	82 000	111 000	4 295 000
2021	6 976 000	565 000	118 000	167 000	7 826 000
2022	7 159 000	577 000	99 000	159 000	7 994 000
2023	7 195 000	483 000	104 000	139 000	7 921 000
2024	7 632 000	513 000	89 000	150 000	8 384 000
1994-2024	366.2%	97.3%	85.4%	257.1%	321.7%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024; *Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa 2023*, p265

- a From 1994 to 1999, figures are based on *October Household Surveys*. For 2000, figures are from February 2000 LFS. From 2001 to 2007, figures are based on revised LFS March series. For 2008 to 2013, data is based on revised *QLFS series*. The figures for 2001 to 2024 are strictly comparable.
- b Figures should add up horizontally, but may not owing to rounding, and owing to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.



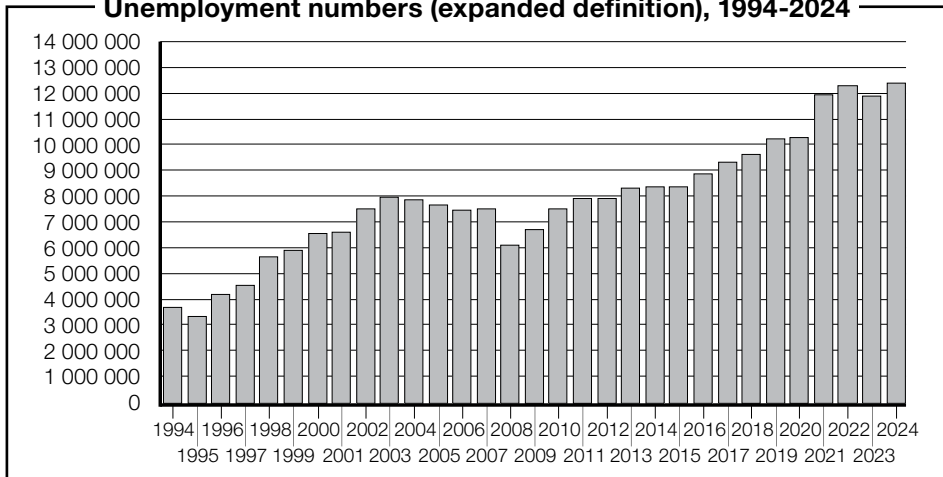
Unemployment numbers by race (expanded definition)^a, 1994-2024

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
1994	3 216 000	339 000	62 000	55 000	3 672 000
1995	2 879 000	344 000	51 000	48 000	3 321 000
1996	3 703 000	328 000	83 000	83 000	4 197 000
1997	4 028 000	358 000	71 000	94 000	4 551 000
1998	5 048 000	367 000	83 000	133 000	5 634 000
1999	5 235 000	397 000	99 000	146 000	5 882 000
2000	5 686 000	489 000	148 000	229 000	6 553 000
2001	5 683 000	584 000	99 000	243 000	6 609 000
2002	6 514 000	627 000	116 000	233 000	7 490 000
2003	7 029 000	588 000	113 000	238 000	7 968 000
2004	7 041 000	543 000	102 000	186 000	7 871 000
2005	6 791 000	565 000	113 000	204 000	7 673 000
2006	6 537 000	617 000	108 000	213 000	7 474 000
2007	6 600 000	647 000	88 000	170 000	7 504 000
2008	5 448 000	450 000	77 000	134 000	6 109 000
2009	6 001 000	459 000	85 000	133 000	6 678 000
2010	6 673 000	567 000	72 000	197 000	7 509 000
2011	7 076 000	600 000	87 000	158 000	7 921 000
2012	7 082 000	602 000	71 000	166 000	7 922 000
2013	7 369 000	646 000	102 000	172 000	8 289 000
2014	7 349 000	668 000	104 000	211 000	8 332 000
2015	7 440 000	648 000	117 000	174 000	8 378 000
2016	7 971 000	626 000	100 000	182 000	8 880 000
2017	8 311 000	699 000	130 000	164 000	9 304 000
2018	8 624 000	658 000	107 000	245 000	9 634 000
2019	9 233 000	695 000	97 000	201 000	10 226 000
2020	9 104 000	700 000	173 000	282 000	10 259 000
2021	10 714 000	820 000	165 000	224 000	11 923 000
2022	11 018 000	875 000	186 000	203 000	12 282 000
2023	10 799 000	735 000	162 000	177 000	11 872 000
2024	11 247 000	793 000	155 000	188 000	12 383 000
1994-2024	249.7%	133.9%	150.0%	241.8%	237.2%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024; *Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa 2023*, p266

a Stats SA's expanded definition of unemployment measures anybody without a job who wanted to work and was available to take up employment during the reference period, but who was not actively seeking work — that is, a 'discouraged' workseeker for reasons cited at the beginning of this chapter.

Unemployment numbers (expanded definition), 1994-2024

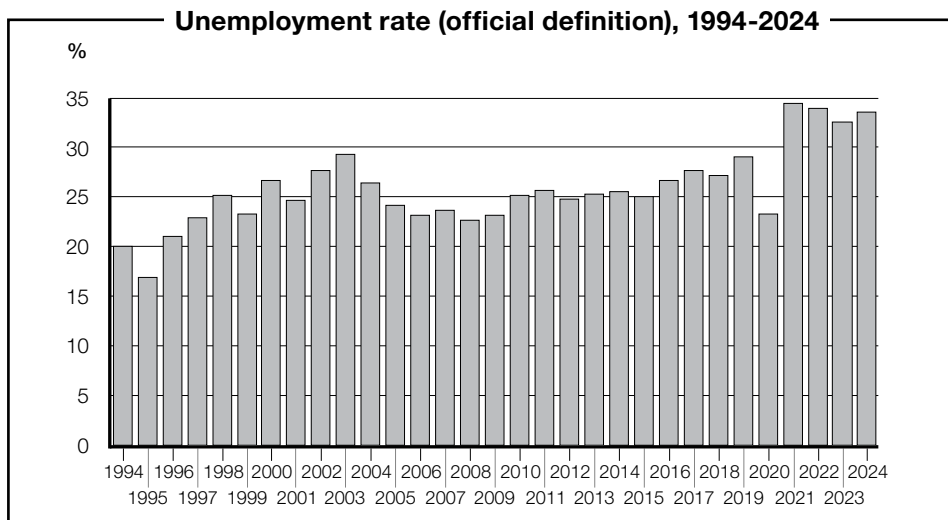


Unemployment rate^a by race (official definition), 1994-2024

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
1994	24.7%	17.6%	10.2%	3.0%	20.0%
1995	20.7%	16.5%	8.3%	2.8%	16.9%
1996	27.4%	13.1%	12.1%	4.0%	21.0%
1997	29.3%	16.0%	10.2%	4.6%	22.9%
1998	32.0%	15.8%	14.7%	4.4%	25.2%
1999	29.2%	15.2%	15.6%	4.7%	23.3%
2000	31.6%	20.4%	19.9%	6.8%	26.7%
2001	28.4%	22.6%	15.3%	7.6%	24.6%
2002	32.3%	25.6%	18.9%	7.3%	27.7%
2003	34.6%	23.8%	19.3%	7.8%	29.3%
2004	31.7%	19.8%	16.5%	5.4%	26.4%
2005	28.6%	20.0%	14.0%	5.7%	24.2%
2006	27.1%	20.2%	9.4%	5.8%	23.1%
2007	27.6%	21.4%	10.9%	4.4%	23.6%
2008	26.4%	19.5%	12.1%	4.5%	22.6%
2009	27.3%	19.4%	10.9%	4.6%	23.2%
2010	29.1%	22.6%	9.7%	6.5%	25.1%
2011	29.7%	23.1%	10.9%	5.0%	25.6%
2012	28.3%	24.0%	9.3%	5.7%	24.8%
2013	28.6%	25.3%	12.9%	6.0%	25.3%
2014	28.3%	25.3%	12.1%	8.1%	25.5%
2015	27.9%	24.4%	13.4%	7.0%	25.0%
2016	30.1%	23.2%	11.7%	6.6%	26.6%
2017	31.3%	23.6%	13.3%	5.7%	27.7%
2018	30.5%	23.3%	10.4%	8.0%	27.2%
2019	32.7%	22.5%	11.2%	7.4%	29.0%
2020	26.3%	19.0%	14.4%	6.1%	23.3%
2021	38.2%	28.5%	19.5%	8.6%	34.4%
2022	37.8%	27.4%	15.5%	8.6%	33.9%
2023	36.8%	21.9%	16.6%	7.4%	32.6%
2024	37.6%	23.3%	13.9%	7.9%	33.5%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024; *Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa 2023*, p267

a From 1994 to 1999, the figures are based on October *Household Surveys*. For 2000, the figures are from the February 2000 *LFS* from 2001 to 2007, the figures are based on the revised *LFS* March series. For 2008 to 2013, the figures are based on revised *QLFS* series. The figures for 2001 to 2024 is strictly comparable.



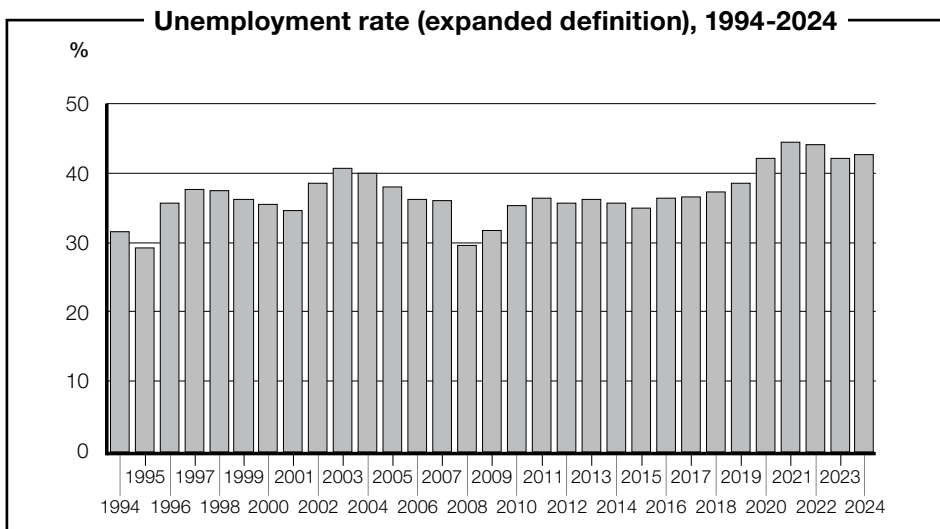
Unemployment rate^a by race (expanded definition)^b, 1994-2024

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
1994	39.2%	21.7%	12.9%	3.9%	31.5%
1995	36.0%	22.9%	10.1%	3.4%	29.2%
1996	45.0%	20.6%	16.6%	5.7%	35.6%
1997	46.8%	23.0%	13.5%	6.7%	37.6%
1998	46.0%	23.8%	19.4%	6.4%	37.5%
1999	44.0%	23.6%	20.2%	6.8%	36.2%
2000	41.2%	27.1%	27.3%	10.1%	35.5%
2001	39.6%	30.2%	20.4%	10.5%	34.6%
2002	44.4%	31.5%	24.0%	10.0%	38.4%
2003	47.4%	29.4%	22.1%	10.4%	40.6%
2004	47.0%	27.3%	20.7%	8.3%	40.0%
2005	44.2%	28.0%	21.4%	9.0%	38.0%
2006	41.4%	29.6%	19.6%	9.4%	36.1%
2007	41.3%	30.2%	17.0%	7.7%	36.0%
2008	34.5%	22.4%	13.9%	5.8%	29.5%
2009	37.2%	22.4%	15.3%	5.8%	31.7%
2010	40.8%	27.0%	12.6%	8.6%	35.2%
2011	41.8%	29.0%	14.8%	7.1%	36.3%
2012	40.8%	28.3%	12.9%	7.5%	35.6%
2013	41.0%	29.5%	16.5%	7.9%	36.1%
2014	39.9%	29.4%	17.7%	9.8%	35.6%
2015	39.0%	28.6%	19.3%	8.3%	34.9%
2016	40.9%	28.0%	16.6%	8.6%	36.4%
2017	40.9%	30.0%	19.8%	7.9%	36.6%
2018	41.5%	27.7%	16.4%	11.7%	37.2%
2019	43.0%	29.2%	15.5%	9.8%	38.5%
2020	46.3%	33.1%	26.2%	14.3%	42.0%
2021	48.7%	36.7%	25.2%	11.2%	44.4%
2022	48.3%	36.4%	25.5%	10.7%	44.1%
2023	46.6%	29.9%	23.6%	9.2%	42.1%
2024	47.0%	32.0%	21.9%	9.7%	42.6%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024; *Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa 2023*, p268

a See previous page.

b Stats SA's expanded definition of unemployment measures anybody without a job who wanted to work and was available to take up employment during the reference period, but who was not actively seeking work — that is, a 'discouraged' workseeker for reasons cited at the beginning of this chapter.



International comparisons

Unemployment rates, international comparisons, 2024

— Selected countries —		— Emerging markets —		— Selected African countries —	
Country	Unemployment rate ^a	Country	Unemployment rate ^a	Country	Unemployment rate ^a
Australia	4.2%	Brazil	6.6%	Algeria	11.8%
Botswana	25.9%	Bulgaria	5.3%	Angola	32.4%
Brazil	6.6%	Chile	8.7%	Botswana	25.9%
Chile	8.7%	China	5.3%	Burundi	0.9%
China	5.3%	Colombia	9.9%	Cameroon	3.7%
Denmark	2.6%	Czech Republic	3.8%	Central African Republic	6.3%
Egypt	6.5%	Egypt	6.5%	Congo (DRC)	N/A
France	7.3%	Estonia	7.6%	Congo (Republic)	21.8%
Germany	6.0%	Greece	9.9%	Egypt	6.5%
Ghana	3.6%	Hungary	4.3%	Eritrea	5.9%
Greece	9.9%	India	8.5%	Eswatini	22.2%
Hong Kong	3.0%	Indonesia	4.8%	Ethiopia	18.9%
India	8.5%	Jordan	21.4%	Ghana	3.6%
Indonesia	4.8%	Kuwait	2.1%	Ivory Coast	2.6%
Ireland	4.3%	Latvia	6.9%	Kenya	4.9%
Israel	2.6%	Lithuania	8.5%	Lesotho	16.3%
Italy	6.5%	Malaysia	3.3%	Liberia	2.9%
Japan	2.7%	Mauritius	6.3%	Libya	18.5%
Kazakhstan	4.7%	Mexico	2.9%	Madagascar	1.8%
Lithuania	8.5%	Morocco	13.1%	Malawi	5.0%
Mexico	2.9%	Oman	1.5%	Mauritius	6.3%
Mozambique	N/A	Pakistan	5.7%	Morocco	13.1%
Nigeria	5.3%	Peru	6.1%	Mozambique	N/A
Pakistan	5.7%	Philippines	4.7%	Namibia	19.6%
Philippines	4.7%	Poland	5.0%	Nigeria	5.3%
Poland	5.0%	Qatar	0.1%	Rwanda	16.8%
Russia	2.4%	Romania	5.4%	Senegal	23.2%
Saudi Arabia	3.5%	Russia	2.4%	Somalia	N/A
South Africa	33.5%	Slovakia	5.0%	South Africa	33.5%
Spain	11.3%	South Africa	33.5%	Sudan	20.8%
Switzerland	2.4%	Sri Lanka	4.5%	Tanzania	8.9%
Thailand	1.1%	Thailand	1.1%	Tunisia	16.0%
Turkey	8.8%	Turkey	8.8%	Uganda	2.9%
Uganda	2.9%	United Arab Emirates	3.0%	Zambia	6.1%
United Kingdom	4.1%	Vietnam	2.3%	Zimbabwe	9.1%
United States	4.2%				
Venezuela	5.9%				

Source: Trading economics, www.tradingeconomics.com, accessed 27 September 2024

a Figures refer to the latest available data in November 2024.

N/A — Not available.

Characteristics of the unemployed

Unemployment by industry^a, 2009-24

Industry	2009	2022	2023	2024	—Change 2023-24—	
					Number	Proportion
Agriculture	123 000	151 000	162 000	189 000	27 000	16.7%
Mining	30 000	52 000	37 000	65 000	28 000	75.7%
Manufacturing	333 000	219 000	255 000	255 000	0	0.0%
Utilities	13 000	23 000	13 000	23 000	10 000	76.9%
Construction	355 000	357 000	390 000	467 000	77 000	19.7%
Trade	473 000	502 000	542 000	549 000	7 000	1.3%
Transport	101 000	144 000	165 000	152 000	-13 000	-7.9%
Finance	221 000	391 000	322 000	371 000	49 000	15.2%
Community and social services	154 000	461 000	534 000	613 000	79 000	14.8%
Private households	242 000	228 000	221 000	271 000	50 000	22.6%
Total^p	2 046 000	2 528 000	2 640 000	2 954 000	314 000	11.9%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 27 September 2024

a Those who have worked in the past five years only.

b Figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding.

Unemployment by occupation^a, 2009-24

Occupation	2009	2022	2023	2024	—Change 2023-24—	
					Number	Proportion
Manager	33 000	58 000	59 000	58 000	-1 000	1.7%
Professional	27 000	51 000	57 000	73 000	16 000	11.8%
Technician	86 000	138 000	136 000	316 000	180 000	-1.4%
Clerk	200 000	361 000	279 000	314 000	35 000	-22.7%
Sales and services	317 000	437 000	568 000	403 000	-165 000	30.0%
Skilled agriculture	7 000	10 000	7 000	12 000	5 000	-30.0%
Craft and related trade	381 000	372 000	372 000	464 000	92 000	0.0%
Plant and machine operator	186 000	145 000	172 000	221 000	49 000	18.6%
Elementary	623 000	807 000	836 000	893 000	57 000	3.6%
Domestic worker	185 000	147 000	155 000	199 000	44 000	29.9%
Total^p	2 046 000	2 528 000	2 640 000	2 954 000	314 000	11.9%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 27 September 2024

a Those who have worked in the past five years only.

b Figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding.

Categories of unemployed people, 2009-24

Category	Number ^a				Proportion ^a of total	Change	
	2009	2022	2023	2024		2024	Number ^a
Job losers	1 505 000	2 086 000	2 114 000	2 402 000	28.6%	288 000	1.3%
Job leavers	361 000	186 000	238 000	237 000	2.8%	-1 000	28.0%
New entrants	1 726 000	3 703 000	3 522 000	3 523 000	42.0%	1 000	-4.9%
Re-entrants	180 000	256 000	288 000	315 000	3.8%	27 000	12.5%
Other	569 000	1 763 000	1 759 000	1 907 000	22.7%	148 000	8.4%
Total	4 341 000	7 994 000	7 921 000	8 384 000	100.0%	463 000	5.8%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

a Due to rounding, numbers do not necessarily add up to total.

These are the reasons given by unemployed people for not working during the reference week arising from their circumstances prior to becoming unemployed.

- **Job losers** are unemployed people who had been working during the five years prior to becoming unemployed and had lost their job, or they had been laid off, or the business in which they had previously worked had been sold or closed down.
- **Job leavers** are those among the unemployed who had been working during the five years prior to becoming unemployed, and had stopped working at their last job for any of the following reasons:
 - * Caring for own children/relatives
 - * Pregnancy
 - * Other family/community responsibilities
 - * Going to school
 - * Changed residence
 - * Retired
 - * Other reasons
- **New entrants** are people who were unemployed during the reference period and had never worked before.
- **Re-entrants** are unemployed people who worked before whose main activity before looking for work was either managing a home or going to school [Stats SA, *Guide to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey*, Report number 02-11-01, August 2008].

Unemployment by age group, 2024

Age group	—Number unemployed—		Number EAP ^a	Number not economically active	—Unemployment rate—	
	(official definition)	(expanded definition)			(official definition)	(expanded definition)
15-24 years	1 691 000	2 615 000	2 780 000	7 483 000	60.8%	70.6%
25-34 years	3 306 000	4 654 000	7 935 000	2 665 000	41.7%	50.1%
35-44 years	2 082 000	2 993 000	7 251 000	1 888 000	28.7%	36.7%
45-54 years	1 063 000	1 681 000	5 127 000	1 757 000	20.7%	29.3%
55-64 years	242 000	440 000	1 943 000	2 468 000	12.5%	20.6%
Total	8 384 000	12 383 000	25 036 000	16 260 000	33.5%	42.6%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

a Economically active population is defined by Stats SA as people between the ages of 15 and 64 who are either employed or unemployed. EAP data in the table is based on the official definition.

**Unemployment – numbers and rates – by age,
race and sex (official definition), 2024**

	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	Total
Number						
Black						
Male	754 095	1 517 993	950 942	529 169	107 757	3 859 955
Female	731 663	1 538 013	977 160	425 148	99 890	3 771 874
Total	1 485 758	3 056 006	1 928 102	954 317	207 646	7 631 829
Coloured						
Male	89 379	73 452	46 775	40 597	10 980	261 182
Female	73 239	83 420	51 372	36 611	7 003	251 643
Total	162 617	156 872	98 146	77 208	17 983	512 825
Indian/Asian						
Male	4 468	16 032	4 604	10 530	3 027	38 661
Female	7 706	25 811	10 460	3 515	2 638	50 129
Total	12 174	41 843	15 064	14 044	5 665	88 791
White						
Male	15 780	26 162	23 056	6 051	5 868	76 917
Female	14 677	24 711	17 846	11 000	5 230	73 463
Total	30 457	50 873	40 901	17 051	11 098	150 380
South Africa						
Male	863 722	1 633 639	1 025 376	586 347	127 632	4 236 715
Female	827 284	1 671 955	1 056 837	476 273	114 760	4 147 109
TOTAL	1 691 006	3 305 594	2 082 213	1 062 619	242 392	8 383 824
Rate						
Black						
Male	62.1%	42.8%	29.4%	24.6%	15.7%	35.6%
Female	70.2%	50.0%	34.8%	22.6%	15.3%	39.9%
Total	65.8%	46.1%	31.9%	23.7%	15.5%	37.6%
Coloured						
Male	49.1%	21.7%	16.0%	15.7%	10.7%	22.3%
Female	50.1%	27.3%	20.5%	15.8%	7.7%	24.6%
Total	49.5%	24.4%	18.1%	15.8%	9.3%	23.3%
Indian/Asian						
Male	18.7%	14.3%	3.6%	11.2%	6.5%	9.6%
Female	61.0%	31.7%	14.2%	6.8%	14.8%	21.1%
Total	33.3%	21.6%	7.5%	9.7%	8.8%	13.9%
White						
Male	18.1%	10.8%	9.0%	2.4%	3.0%	7.5%
Female	21.1%	10.8%	8.6%	5.3%	3.3%	8.4%
Total	19.4%	10.8%	8.9%	3.7%	3.2%	7.9%
South Africa						
Male	57.3%	38.5%	26.2%	21.3%	12.4%	31.5%
Female	65.1%	45.3%	31.6%	20.1%	12.5%	35.8%
TOTAL	60.8%	41.7%	28.7%	20.7%	12.5%	33.5%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

**Unemployment – numbers and rates – by age,
race and sex (expanded definition), 2024**

	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	Total
Number						
Black						
Male	1 154 841	2 075 336	1 305 181	744 087	181 869	5 461 314
Female	1 152 998	2 227 284	1 453 374	758 807	193 327	5 785 790
Total	2 307 839	4 302 620	2 758 555	1 502 894	375 196	11 247 103
Coloured						
Male	126 539	110 665	70 736	63 750	20 970	392 659
Female	115 682	130 323	82 116	55 449	16 453	400 022
Total	242 221	240 987	152 851	119 198	37 423	792 681
Indian/Asian						
Male	10 350	23 445	9 441	20 738	6 618	70 592
Female	19 093	27 704	20 920	12 889	3 408	84 014
Total	29 443	51 148	30 361	33 628	10 025	154 605
White						
Male	15 780	29 959	25 312	10 273	10 148	91 472
Female	19 874	28 893	25 969	14 686	7 444	96 866
Total	35 654	58 852	51 281	24 960	17 592	188 338
South Africa						
Male	1 307 510	2 239 404	1 410 670	838 849	219 604	6 016 036
Female	1 307 646	2 414 204	1 582 379	841 831	220 632	6 366 692
TOTAL	2 615 156	4 653 607	2 993 049	1 680 679	440 236	12 382 728
Rate						
Black						
Male	71.5%	50.5%	36.3%	31.5%	24.0%	43.9%
Female	78.7%	59.1%	44.2%	34.3%	25.9%	50.4%
Total	74.9%	54.6%	40.1%	32.8%	24.9%	47.0%
Coloured						
Male	57.7%	29.5%	22.4%	22.6%	18.6%	30.1%
Female	61.3%	36.9%	29.2%	22.2%	16.4%	34.1%
Total	59.4%	33.1%	25.6%	22.4%	17.6%	32.0%
Indian/Asian						
Male	34.7%	19.6%	7.1%	19.9%	13.2%	16.2%
Female	79.5%	33.2%	24.8%	21.2%	18.3%	31.0%
Total	54.7%	25.2%	14.0%	20.4%	14.6%	21.9%
White						
Male	18.1%	12.2%	9.8%	4.0%	5.1%	8.8%
Female	26.5%	12.4%	12.1%	6.9%	4.7%	10.8%
Total	22.0%	12.3%	11.0%	5.3%	4.9%	9.7%
South Africa						
Male	67.0%	46.2%	32.8%	27.9%	19.6%	39.5%
Female	74.7%	54.4%	40.9%	30.7%	21.6%	46.1%
TOTAL	70.6%	50.1%	36.7%	29.3%	20.6%	42.6%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024

Unemployment by highest level of education, 2009-24

Highest level of education	Number unemployed				Proportion of total ^a	Unemployment rate ^b 2024
	2009	2022	2023	2024		
No schooling	105 000	79 000	64 000	56 000	0.7%	23.7%
Less than primary completed	409 000	336 000	290 000	382 000	4.6%	37.3%
Primary completed	217 000	233 000	284 000	253 000	3.0%	35.0%
Secondary not completed	1 947 000	3 467 000	3 338 000	3 441 000	41.0%	40.3%
Secondary completed	1 408 000	3 074 000	3 187 000	3 387 000	40.4%	35.8%
Tertiary	226 000	742 000	708 000	817 000	9.7%	17.1%
Other	29 000	63 000	50 000	49 000	0.6%	17.0%
Total	4 341 000	7 994 000	7 921 000	8 384 000	100.0%	33.5%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2009-24Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

a Proportion of the total number of unemployed people who are in each education category.

b Proportion of people in each education category who are unemployed.

Unemployment by duration, 2023 and 2024

Length of unemployment	Number		Change		Proportion of labour force	Proportion of unemployed
	2023	2024	Number	Proportion		
Long-term unemployment (1 year and more)	6 127 000	6 385 000	258 000	4.2%	15.5%	76.2%
Short-term unemployment (less than 1 year)	1 795 000	1 999 000	204 000	11.4%	4.8%	23.8%
Total unemployed	7 921 000	8 384 000	463 000	5.8%	20.3%	100.0%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2009-24Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

Reasons for termination in commercial employment as reported to the UIF, 2007/08-2021/22

Year	Business closed	End of contract	Retrenched	Dismissed
2007/08	3 005	17 092	85 247	28 899
2008/09	4 462	139 867	30 252	42 581
2009/10	3 502	126 582	29 292	35 298
2010/11	3 141	129 211	25 033	33 712
2011/12	42 716	246 401	53 081	84 935
2012/13	14 539	238 727	90 254	119 135
2013/14	18 486	235 470	79 552	111 062
2014/15	47 340	94 306	48 004	142 507
2015/16	15 361	223 804	81 356	101 978
2016/17	19 332	259 710	102 109	134 426
2017/18	18 749	287 711	105 358	144 081
2018/19	17 788	223 996	206 725	96 819
2019/20	23 308	413 757	130 860	170 007
2020/21	28 191	440 131	223 370	150 055
2021/22	26 043	617 799	152 066	185 648
2007/08-2021/22	766.7%	3 515%	78.4%	542.4%

Source: Department of Labour, *Job Opportunities and Unemployment in the South African Labour Market 2019-20*, 23 February 2021, Figure 8, p24; *Job Opportunities and Unemployment in the South African Labour Market 2020-21*, 16 March 2022, Figure 8, p11; *Job Opportunities and Unemployment in the South African Labour Market 2021-22*, 31 January 2024, Figure 7, p10

UNDERUTILISATION AND NON-PARTICIPATION OF LABOUR

Not economically active

People who are **not economically active** are those who were neither employed nor unemployed during the week of the survey. This includes students, pensioners, discouraged workseekers, and people who are without jobs but do not meet all of Stats SA's criteria to be defined as officially unemployed [Stats SA, *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*].

People not economically active, 2023 and 2024

Category	2023		2024		Change 2023-24	– Proportion of total – aged 15-64	
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion		2023	2024
Student/pupil	6 097 000	37.0%	6 029 000	36.6%	-1.1%	15.2%	14.8%
Homemaker	2 525 000	15.3%	2 263 000	13.7%	-10.4%	6.3%	5.6%
Illness/disability	1 669 000	10.1%	1 658 000	10.1%	-0.7%	4.2%	4.1%
Too old/young to work	1 753 000	10.6%	1 757 000	10.7%	0.2%	4.4%	4.3%
Discouraged workseekers	3 182 000	19.3%	3 195 000	19.4%	0.4%	7.9%	7.8%
Other	1 252 000	7.6%	1 358 000	8.2%	8.5%	3.1%	3.3%
Total	16 478 000	100.0%	16 260 000	100.0%	-1.3%	41.0%	39.9%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2009-24Q2*, accessed 17 September 2024

Inactivity rate^a by age group, 2009-24

Male	2009	2021	2022	2023	2024
15-24	68.5%	75.6%	70.8%	70.8%	70.7%
25-54	15.5%	18.5%	19.4%	18.8%	18.5%
55-64	43.2%	48.2%	50.9%	51.3%	48.1%
Total	34.3%	36.3%	35.6%	35.1%	34.4%
Female					
15-24	73.9%	78.7%	76.0%	74.8%	75.2%
25-54	34.7%	33.4%	31.9%	30.9%	29.0%
55-64	67.8%	65.6%	67.0%	64.4%	62.3%
Total	49.4%	48.6%	47.0%	45.7%	44.2%
Both sexes					
15-24	71.2%	77.1%	73.4%	72.8%	72.9%
25-54	25.4%	25.9%	25.6%	24.8%	23.7%
55-64	56.8%	57.8%	59.8%	58.5%	55.9%
Total	42.1%	42.5%	41.4%	40.4%	39.4%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2009-24Q2*, accessed 17 September 2024

a Not economically active as a proportion of population of working age (15-64). For each age group, the inactivity rate refers to the not economically active as a proportion of the population in that age group. For example, 70.7% of men aged 15 to 24 were not economically active in 2024.

Discouraged workseekers

Stats SA defines **discouraged workseekers** as those who had not been employed during the reference period covered by the survey. These people are not considered to be part of the labour force. To be classified as discouraged workseekers, they had to be available to work or start a business, but had not taken active steps to do so in the survey reference period for any reason. In 2008, the definition was made more restrictive in that the main reason for not seeking work had to be one of the following:

- No jobs available in the area.
- Unable to find work fitting the respondent's skills.
- Lost all hope of finding any kind of work.

This change had the effect of substantially reducing the number of workers counted as 'discouraged', excluding, for instance, people who do not have enough money for transport to look for work, or those awaiting seasonal work.

In 2014, Stats SA has updated the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey* results for 2008 to 2013 to reflect the new population benchmarks from *Census 2011*.

Discouraged workseekers by race^a, 2001-24

Year	Black	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total ^b
2001	1 468 000	150 000	19 000	88 000	1 725 000
2002	1 758 000	112 000	28 000	60 000	1 958 000
2003	1 897 000	100 000	13 000	56 000	2 067 000
2004	2 073 000	142 000	22 000	48 000	2 285 000
2005	2 122 000	119 000	22 000	60 000	2 324 000
2006	2 162 000	161 000	51 000	72 000	2 445 000
2007	2 256 000	170 000	28 000	56 000	2 511 000
2008	1 041 000	44 000	4 000	11 000	1 101 000
2009	1 459 000	48 000	14 000	15 000	1 536 000
2010	1 818 000	91 000	14 000	36 000	1 960 000
2011	2 054 000	125 000	13 000	21 000	2 214 000
2012	2 247 000	83 000	9 000	21 000	2 360 000
2013	2 287 000	90 000	15 000	32 000	2 425 000
2014	2 272 000	90 000	27 000	31 000	2 419 000
2015	2 297 000	82 000	34 000	21 000	2 434 000
2016	2 382 000	95 000	19 000	30 000	2 526 000
2017	2 157 000	141 000	31 000	31 000	2 361 000
2018	2 666 000	96 000	31 000	71 000	2 864 000
2019	2 563 000	130 000	20 000	36 000	2 749 000
2020	2 289 000	126 000	26 000	30 000	2 471 000
2021	3 054 000	183 000	34 000	46 000	3 317 000
2022	3 242 000	230 000	61 000	36 000	3 568 000
2023	2 938 000	172 000	46 000	26 000	3 182 000
2024	2 918 917	207 335	42 055	26 501	3 194 808
2001-24	98.8%	38.2%	121.3%	-69.9%	85.2%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 9 September 2024; *Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa Survey 2023*, p276

a A discouraged workseeker is a person who was not employed during the reference week of the survey, wanted to work, was available to work or 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.

b Figures should add up horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

Underutilisation

Underutilisation of labour, 2023 and 2024

	2023		2024	
	Number		Proportion of people aged 15-64 ^a	Proportion of labour force ^b
Male				
Underemployed ^c	338 000	299 000	0.7%	1.2%
Unemployed	3 938 900	4 237 000	10.3%	16.9%
Discouraged workseekers	1 526 000	1 526 000	3.7%	6.1%
Total	5 802 900	6 062 000	14.7%	24.2%
Female				
Underemployed ^c	378 000	378 000	0.9%	1.5%
Unemployed	3 983 000	4 147 000	10.0%	16.6%
Discouraged workseekers	1 657 000	1 657 000	4.0%	6.6%
Total	6 018 000	6 182 000	15.0%	24.7%
Both sexes				
Underemployed ^c	716 000	677 000	1.7%	2.7%
Unemployed	7 921 000	8 384 000	19.2%	33.5%
Discouraged workseekers	3 182 000	3 182 000	7.7%	12.7%
Total	11 819 000	12 243 000	28.6%	48.9%

Source: Stats SA, *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 2, 2023*, Statistical release P0211, 13 August 2024, Table 3.9, p74; *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

a The working-age population, which comprises all persons aged 15 to 64.

b The labour force comprises all persons who are employed and unemployed, excluding the not economically active.

c Persons in underemployment (time-related) are employed persons who are willing and available to work additional hours and whose total number of hours actually worked during the reference period was below 35 per week.

Time-related underemployment by occupation, 2024

Occupation	Time-related underemployment ^a	Total employed	Underemployment as a proportion of total employment
Manager	13 000	1 451 000	0.9%
Professional	7 000	1 102 000	0.6%
Technician	26 000	1 780 000	1.5%
Clerk	17 000	1 705 000	1.0%
Sales and services	73 000	2 584 000	2.8%
Skilled agriculture	7 000	105 000	6.7%
Craft and related trade	80 000	1 672 000	4.8%
Plant and machine operator	26 000	1 308 000	2.0%
Elementary	287 000	4 094 000	7.0%
Domestic worker	140 000	843 000	16.6%
Total^b	677 000	16 652 000	4.1%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 17 September 2024

a People in underemployment (time-related) are employed persons who are willing and available to work additional hours and whose total number of hours actually worked during the reference period was below 35 per week.

b Numbers should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding.

Time-related underemployment by industry, 2024

Industry	Time-related underemployment	Total employed	Underemployment as a proportion of total employment
Agriculture	17 000	896 000	1.9%
Mining	— ^a	457 000	— ^a
Manufacturing	27 000	1 655 000	1.6%
Utilities	1 000	114 000	— ^a
Construction	59 000	1 204 000	4.9%
Trade	119 000	3 360 000	3.5%
Transport	21 000	1 064 000	2.0%
Finance	61 000	2 905 000	2.1%
Community and social services	179 000	3 827 000	4.7%
Private households	194 000	1 160 000	16.7%
Other	— ^a	— ^b	— ^b
Total	716 000	16 652 000	4.3%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 17 September 2024

a For all values of 10 000 or lower, the sample size is too small for reliable estimates.

b Stats SA did not include the category 'Other' under time-related underemployment.

PROVINCIAL LABOUR MARKET DATA

Overall data

Economically active population by province, 2024

Province	Employed	Proportion of employed people	Proportion of unemployed		Unemployed (expanded) ^a	Economically active	Economically active
			Unemployed (official)	unemployed people		population (official)	population (expanded) ^a
EC	1 369 000	8.2%	951 000	11.3%	1 354 000	2 319 000	2 723 000
FS	745 000	4.5%	449 000	5.4%	613 000	1 194 000	1 358 000
GAU	5 103 000	30.6%	2 756 000	32.9%	3 296 000	7 858 000	8 399 000
KZN	2 842 000	17.1%	1 281 000	15.3%	2 318 000	4 124 000	5 160 000
LIM	1 526 000	9.2%	699 000	8.3%	1 359 000	2 225 000	2 885 000
MPU	1 192 000	7.2%	712 000	8.5%	1 133 000	1 904 000	2 325 000
NW	887 000	5.3%	624 000	7.4%	1 050 000	1 511 000	1 937 000
NC	314 000	1.9%	147 000	1.8%	256 000	461 000	570 000
WC	2 675 000	16.1%	765 000	9.1%	1 003 000	3 439 000	3 678 000
SA^b	16 652 000	100.0%	8 384 000	100.0%	12 383 000	25 036 000	29 035 000

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2, accessed 27 September 2024

a Stats SA's expanded definition of unemployment measures anybody without a job who wanted to work and was available to take up employment during the reference period.

b Figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding, and owing to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.

Trends

Labour market trends by province, 2023 and 2024

Eastern Cape	2023	2024	Change
Total employed	1 444 000	1 369 000	-5.2%
Total unemployed	949 000	951 000	0.2%
Total economically active	2 393 000	2 319 000	-3.1%
Total not economically active	2 105 000	2 234 000	6.1%
Total aged 15-64	4 498 000	4 553 000	1.2%
Unemployment rate	39.7%	41.0%	3.3%
Labour market participation rate	53.2%	50.9%	-4.3%
Labour absorption rate	32.1%	30.1%	-6.2%
Free State			
Total employed	730 000	745 000	2.1%
Total unemployed	423 000	449 000	6.1%
Total economically active	1 153 000	1 194 000	3.6%
Total not economically active	781 000	745 000	-4.6%
Total aged 15-64	1 934 000	1 939 000	0.3%
Unemployment rate	36.7%	37.6%	2.5%
Labour market participation rate	59.6%	61.6%	3.4%
Labour absorption rate	37.8%	38.4%	1.6%
Gauteng			
Total employed	4 988 000	5 103 000	2.3%
Total unemployed	2 617 000	2 756 000	5.3%
Total economically active	7 605 000	7 858 000	3.3%
Total not economically active	3 499 000	3 417 000	-2.3%
Total aged 15-64	11 104 000	11 275 000	1.5%
Unemployment rate	34.4%	35.1%	2.0%
Labour market participation rate	68.5%	69.7%	1.8%
Labour absorption rate	44.9%	45.3%	0.9%
KwaZulu-Natal			
Total employed	2 642 000	2 842 000	7.6%
Total unemployed	1 187 000	1 281 000	7.9%
Total economically active	3 829 000	4 124 000	7.7%
Total not economically active	3 701 000	3 509 000	-5.2%
Total aged 15-64	7 529 000	7 633 000	1.4%
Unemployment rate	31.0%	31.1%	0.3%
Labour market participation rate	50.9%	54.0%	6.1%
Labour absorption rate	35.1%	37.2%	6.0%
Limpopo			
Total employed	1 469 000	1 526 000	3.9%
Total unemployed	677 000	699 000	3.2%
Total economically active	2 146 000	2 225 000	3.7%
Total not economically active	1 839 000	1 811 000	-1.5%
Total aged 15-64	3 984 000	4 036 000	1.3%
Unemployment rate	31.6%	31.4%	-0.6%
Labour market participation rate	53.9%	55.1%	2.2%
Labour absorption rate	36.9%	37.8%	2.4%



→ **Labour market trends by province, 2023 and 2024 (continued)**

Mpumalanga	2023	2024	Change
Total employed	1 158 000	1 192 000	2.9%
Total unemployed	723 000	712 000	-1.5%
Total economically active	1 881 000	1 904 000	1.2%
Total not economically active	1 243 000	1 264 000	1.7%
Total aged 15-64	3 124 000	3 168 000	1.4%
Unemployment rate	38.4%	37.4%	-2.6%
Labour market participation rate	60.2%	60.1%	-0.2%
Labour absorption rate	37.1%	37.6%	1.3%
North West			
Total employed	881 000	887 000	0.7%
Total unemployed	513 000	624 000	21.6%
Total economically active	1 394 000	1 511 000	8.4%
Total not economically active	1 367 000	1 288 000	-5.8%
Total aged 15-64	2 761 000	2 799 000	1.4%
Unemployment rate	36.8%	41.3%	12.2%
Labour market participation rate	50.5%	54.0%	6.9%
Labour absorption rate	31.9%	31.7%	-0.6%
Northern Cape			
Total employed	322 000	314 000	-2.5%
Total unemployed	118 000	147 000	24.6%
Total economically active	441 000	461 000	4.5%
Total not economically active	392 000	378 000	-3.6%
Total aged 15-64	833 000	840 000	0.8%
Unemployment rate	26.9%	32.0%	19.0%
Labour market participation rate	52.9%	54.9%	3.8%
Labour absorption rate	38.7%	37.4%	-3.4%
Western Cape			
Total employed	2 711 000	2 675 000	-1.3%
Total unemployed	715 000	765 000	7.0%
Total economically active	3 426 000	3 439 000	0.4%
Total not economically active	1 552 000	1 615 000	4.1%
Total aged 15-64	4 978 000	5 054 000	1.5%
Unemployment rate	20.9%	22.2%	6.2%
Labour market participation rate	68.6%	68.1%	-0.7%
Labour absorption rate	54.5%	52.9%	-2.9%
SOUTH AFRICA			
Total employed	16 346 000	16 652 000	1.9%
Total unemployed	7 921 000	8 384 000	5.8%
Total economically active	24 268 000	25 036 000	3.2%
Total not economically active	16 478 000	16 260 000	-1.3%
Total aged 15-64	40 746 000	41 296 000	1.3%
Unemployment rate	32.6%	33.5%	2.8%
Labour market participation rate	59.6%	60.6%	1.7%
Labour absorption rate	40.1%	40.3%	0.5%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2009-24Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

Unemployment

Unemployment numbers by province, 2009-24

Province	Official definition			Expanded definition ^a		
	2009	2023	2024	2009	2023	2024
Eastern Cape	514 000	949 000	951 000	854 000	1 103 000	1 354 000
Free State	275 000	423 000	449 000	421 000	573 000	613 000
Gauteng	1 370 000	2 617 000	2 756 000	1 612 000	3 224 000	3 296 000
KwaZulu-Natal	565 000	1 187 000	1 281 000	1 247 000	2 313 000	2 318 000
Limpopo	314 000	677 000	699 000	671 000	1 351 000	1 359 000
Mpumalanga	358 000	723 000	712 000	605 000	1 135 000	1 133 000
North West	328 000	513 000	624 000	510 000	1 012 000	1 050 000
Northern Cape	102 000	118 000	147 000	162 000	246 000	256 000
Western Cape	515 000	715 000	765 000	596 000	917 000	1 003 000
South Africa^b	4 341 000	7 921 000	8 384 000	6 678 000	11 872 000	12 383 000

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

- a Stats SA's expanded definition of unemployment measures anybody without a job who wanted to work and was available to take up employment during the reference period.
- b Figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding, and owing to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.

Unemployment rate^a by province, 2009-24

Province	Official definition			Expanded definition ^a		
	2009	2023	2024	2009	2023	2024
Eastern Cape	27.7%	39.7%	41.0%	38.9%	43.3%	49.7%
Free State	26.4%	36.7%	37.6%	35.4%	44.0%	45.1%
Gauteng	22.8%	34.4%	35.1%	25.8%	39.3%	39.2%
KwaZulu-Natal	18.9%	31.0%	31.1%	33.9%	46.7%	44.9%
Limpopo	24.6%	31.6%	31.4%	41.1%	47.9%	47.1%
Mpumalanga	26.2%	38.4%	37.4%	37.4%	49.5%	48.7%
North West	27.4%	36.8%	41.3%	37.0%	53.5%	54.2%
Northern Cape	25.7%	26.9%	32.0%	35.5%	43.3%	44.9%
Western Cape	20.1%	20.9%	22.2%	22.6%	25.3%	27.3%
South Africa^b	23.2%	32.6%	33.5%	31.7%	42.1%	42.6%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 18 September 2024

- a Stats SA's expanded definition of unemployment measures anybody without a job who wanted to work and was available to take up employment during the reference period.
- b Figures should add up vertically but may not, owing to rounding, and owing to the fact that Stats SA disregarded sample sizes smaller than 10 000 as unreliable.

MUNICIPAL LABOUR MARKET DATA

Labour market status

Labour market status by non-metro and metro municipality^a, 2024

Eastern Cape	Non-metro	Buffalo City	Nelson Mandela Bay	
Total employed	768 000	250 000	350 000	
Total unemployed	666 000	127 000	157 000	
Total economically active	1 434 000	378 000	507 000	
Total not economically active	1 669 000	182 000	383 000	
Total aged 15-64	3 103 000	559 000	890 000	
Unemployment rate	46.5%	33.7%	30.9%	
Labour market participation rate	46.2%	67.5%	57.0%	
Labour absorption rate	24.8%	44.7%	39.3%	
Free State	Non-metro	Mangaung		
Total employed	513 000	233 000		
Total unemployed	347 000	102 000		
Total economically active	860 000	335 000		
Total not economically active	522 000	223 000		
Total aged 15-64	1 382 000	557 000		
Unemployment rate	40.4%	30.5%		
Labour market participation rate	62.2%	60.1%		
Labour absorption rate	37.1%	41.7%		
Gauteng	Non-metro	Ekurhuleni	Johannesburg	Tshwane
Total employed	611 000	1 249 000	1 978 000	1 265 000
Total unemployed	409 000	626 000	1 031 000	689 000
Total economically active	1 020 000	1 875 000	3 009 000	1 954 000
Total not economically active	472 000	957 000	1 173 000	815 000
Total aged 15-64	1 492 000	2 832 000	4 182 000	2 769 000
Unemployment rate	40.1%	33.4%	34.3%	35.3%
Labour market participation rate	68.4%	66.2%	72.0%	70.6%
Labour absorption rate	41.0%	44.4%	47.3%	45.7%
KwaZulu-Natal	Non-metro	eThekweni		
Total employed	1 590 000	1 252 000		
Total unemployed	1 565 000	373 000		
Total economically active	908 000	1 625 000		
Total not economically active	2 499 000	1 049 000		
Total aged 15-64	4 959 000	2 674 000		
Unemployment rate	36.4%	23.0%		
Labour market participation rate	50.4%	60.8%		
Labour absorption rate	32.1%	46.8%		



→ **Labour market status by non-metro and metro municipality^a, 2024 (continued)**

Limpopo	Non-metro	
Total employed	1 526 000	
Total unemployed	699 000	
Total economically active	2 225 000	
Total not economically active	1 811 000	
Total aged 15-64	4 036 000	
Unemployment rate	31.4%	
Labour market participation rate	55.1%	
Labour absorption rate	37.8%	
Mpumalanga	Non-metro	
Total employed	1 192 000	
Total unemployed	712 000	
Total economically active	1 904 000	
Total not economically active	1 264 000	
Total aged 15-64	3 168 000	
Unemployment rate	37.4%	
Labour market participation rate	60.1%	
Labour absorption rate	37.6%	
North West	Non-metro	
Total employed	887 000	
Total unemployed	624 000	
Total economically active	1 511 000	
Total not economically active	1 288 000	
Total aged 15-64	2 799 000	
Unemployment rate	41.3%	
Labour market participation rate	54.0%	
Labour absorption rate	31.7%	
Northern Cape	Non-metro	
Total employed	314 000	
Total unemployed	147 000	
Total economically active	461 000	
Total not economically active	378 000	
Total aged 15-64	840 000	
Unemployment rate	32.0%	
Labour market participation rate	54.9%	
Labour absorption rate	37.4%	
Western Cape	Non-metro	Cape Town
Total employed	925 000	1 750 000
Total unemployed	229 000	536 000
Total economically active	1 154 000	2 285 000
Total not economically active	680 000	934 000
Total aged 15-64	1 834 000	3 220 000
Unemployment rate	19.9%	23.4%
Labour market participation rate	62.9%	71.0%
Labour absorption rate	50.4%	54.3%

Source: Stats SA, *QLFS Trends 2008-2024Q2*, accessed 27 September 2024

a Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, and Northern Cape do not have metropolitan municipalities.



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