

Unemployment rises to 35.3%

Unemployment in South Africa grew by 0.4 of a percentage point to reach 35.3% in the final quarter (Q4) of 2021, Statistics South Africa has revealed.



Image source: Getty Images

Releasing the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) statistics on Tuesday, Statistician-General Risenga Maluleke said Q4 of 2021 showed that the number of employed persons increased by 262,000 to 14.5 million.

However, the number of unemployed persons also increased by 278,000 to 7.9 million, compared to the 3rd quarter of 2021.

“While the number of not economically active population decreased by 397,000 to 17.4 million during this quarter. The number of discouraged work-seekers decreased by 56,000 (1.4%) and the number of people who were not economically active for reasons other than discouragement decreased by 341,000 (2.4%) between the two quarters,” said the statistics agency during a press briefing at the Isibalo House in Pretoria.

“The unemployment rate according to the expanded definition of unemployment decreased by 0.4 of a percentage point to 46.2 % in quarter 4 2021 compared to quarter 3 2021,” Maluleke said.



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“These changes in the labour market resulted in the official unemployment rate increasing by 0.4 of a percentage point from 34.9% in the third quarter of 2021 to 35.3% in the fourth quarter of 2021 - the highest since the start of the QLFS in 2008.

“The unemployment rate according to the expanded definition of unemployment decreased by 0.4 of a percentage point to 46.2% in quarter 4 2021 compared to quarter 3 2021.”

Stats SA said formal sector employment increased by 143,000 jobs between Q3:2021 and Q4:2021, while the informal sector shed jobs by 48,000 in the same period.

Between the Q3 2021 and Q4 2021, a net increase in employment of 262,000, was mainly due to an increase recorded in Private households (129,000), Trade (118,000) and Community and social services (73,000). Decreases were observed mainly in Manufacturing (85,000), followed by Construction (25,000).

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