

Unemployment increases in first quarter of 2019

South Africa's unemployment rate increased by 0.5% point to 27.6% compared to the fourth quarter of 2018.



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The increase in the unemployment rate is a result of a decline of 237,000 in the number of people in employment and an increase of 62,000 in the number of people who were unemployed between the fourth quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2019.

This is according to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the first quarter of 2019 released by Statistics South Africa on Tuesday.

The report indicates that the South African working-age population increased by 149,000 in the first quarter of 2019 compared to the fourth quarter of 2018.

The labour force decreased by 176,000. The results further indicate that the number of discouraged work-seekers increased by 156,000 and the other not economically active population by 169,000.

This, resulting in the net increase of 325,000 in the number of those who were not economically active.

A decline in employment was observed in all sectors - formal sector, informal sector, agriculture and private households - in the first quarter of 2019, compared to the fourth quarter of 2018.

The net loss of 237,000 in the number of people in employment was mainly driven by construction with 142,000, followed by finance 94,000, community and social services 50,000, private households 31,000, mining 20,000 and agriculture with 12,000.

Employment gains were recorded in transport with 59,000, trade 25,000, utilities 16,000 and manufacturing with 14,000.

Furthermore, the survey indicates that there were approximately 10.3 million persons aged 15 - 24 years in the first quarter of 2019.

Between the fourth quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2019, the percentage of young persons aged 15 - 24 years who were not in employment, education or training increased by 2.1% points to 33.2% or about 3.4 million.

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