



nyda

NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE.



NYDA
Knowledge Brief



Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q2 Analysis

Financial Year of 2024-2025

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. RATIONALE OF QLFS ANALYSIS.....	3
3. CATEGORISED YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT	4
4. NEET-BASED PRESENTATION.....	5
5. OVERALL NEET	6
6. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT STATUS IN PROVINCES.....	7
7. JUXTAPOSING PROVINCIAL AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT	8
8. CONCLUSION	10
LIST OF REFERENCES	11

1. INTRODUCTION

On the 13th of August 2024, Statistic South Africa (Stats-SA) released a Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Report which shows a decrease in employment. A decrease in employment and an increase in unemployment resulted in an increase of **0,6** of a percentage point in the unemployment rate from **32,9%** to **33,5%** in the second quarter of 2024. The labour force participation rate decreased by **0,1** of a percentage point to **60,6%**, and the absorption rate decreased by **0,4** of a percentage point to **40,3%** between Q1: 2024 and Q2: 2024 (Stats-SA 2024: 1). Employment losses were observed in the formal sector (down by 77 000), the Agricultural sector (down by 45 000) and Private households (down by 18 000), while informal sector employment increased by 48 000 in Q2: 2024 (Stats-SA 2024: 2). Formal sector employment in South Africa has been a challenge for quite sometimes, and this requires attention from government, business and labour unions to come up with resolute mechanism and strategies to create formal and decent employment opportunities. This unemployment conundrum affects mostly young people and women. South Africa is sitting on the timed bomb to burst concerning this issue of high rate of unemployment.

2. RATIONALE OF QLFS ANALYSIS

It is important to state the rationale for analysing the QLFS report concerning its impact on youth development after a brief outline in the introductory remarks. The role of the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) as it is codified in Act Number 54 of 2008 is to mobilise resources, lobby and advocate for youth development. Furthermore, the Act also mandate NYDA to mainstream, coordinate, and facilitate youth development across the land and breadth of South Africa's territory. The release of the QLFS report inspires interest for NYDA in wanting to observe its outcome and assess if it negatively or positively affects young people in various spheres of development. It is therefore important to observe the release of the QLFS report through the lens of youth development since NYDA is an entity representing youth interest in the Republic of South Africa.

The gist of this analysis shall therefore be focussing on the young female rate of employment juxtaposed with the rate of unemployment. The analysis shall also zoom into young males

employed in comparison with young females to draw a clear picture of the overall of employment and unemployment rate of the young people in a country. This approach will enable us to perhaps suggest or recommend other alternative mechanisms of employment creation for youth, in particular. Another point that is often neglected is to explore the rate of employment and unemployment per province, specifically focusing on youth. The subsequent section will be the conclusion, and thereafter the list of references.

3. CATEGORISED YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

As depicted in the Stats-SA (2024: 17) presentation, the rate of unemployment for young people aged between 15 and 24 is **60,8%**, while for those who are between 25 and 34 their unemployment rate stands at **41,7%**. However, this presentation of young people's unemployment especially in the first category of 15 to 24 years of age does not hold water. It requires in-depth scrutiny. At least the category of the 25 to 34 makes sense, and 41,7% tells a real story. To put the latter into perspective, it is illogical to label young persons whose ages are between 15 and 24 as unemployed or unemployable and discouraged from searching for employment as it is always conceptualised.

The position of this analysis is that such young people are supposed to be going through skills development training in various institutions of post-school education. The sooner this is demystified, the better! To quantify this approach, South Africa consists of 50 public TVET colleges, and therefore the 15 and 24 categories of young people are supposed to be in learning institutions, as well as Universities to hone their skills and career development. Otherwise, focusing on young people in this category becomes a futile exercise by government institutions. Thus, this analysis proposes that state departments, including Stats-SA, must pay special attention to 25 to 34 categories, so that, everybody shall be clear about what the country is dealing with and this approach will undoubtedly help a government with clear and uninterrupted focus. It is expected that this category has gone through training institutions and learning centres by this age. Therefore, focusing on them will make sense. Below, the information is graphically represented for easy reading and better understanding:-

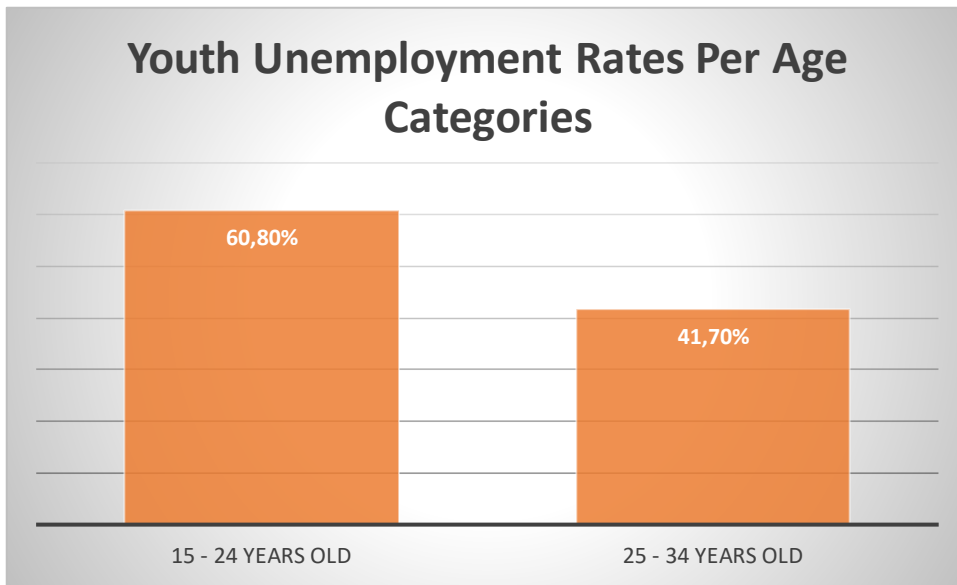


Figure 1: depicts that young people of categories between 15 and 24 are more affected by levels of unemployment (60,8%), whereas, regarding those beyond the latter category, that is, from 25 to 34 years old the unemployment rate stands at 41,7% as shown in the graph above.

Regarding this presentation of statistics, nothing further to be said about it than what has been strongly articulated in the preceding analysis above. At this current juncture, the state needs to ensure that the 41.7% of the 25 to 34-year-olds unemployed is reduced by at least 10% downwards because if the current status remains unchanged, the country would face a risk of revolt.

4. NEET-BASED PRESENTATION.

As stated in the rationale section, it is essential also to assess young females' and males' representation concerning the question of youth employment and unemployment rates. This is presented graphically and also in the form of narratives. It is also important to emphasise that the approach followed is based on those young females and males who are **Not in Employment, Education, or Training** (NEET), as is popularly known in the public domain. As per the presentation by Stats-SA (2024: 22), 36,6% of young females aged between 15 and 24 were not in employment, education or training, and for young males in the same age group,

viz., 15 and 24, their percentage stands at 33,9%, which is a bit lower than young females. This is represented below in the graph for easy analysis: -

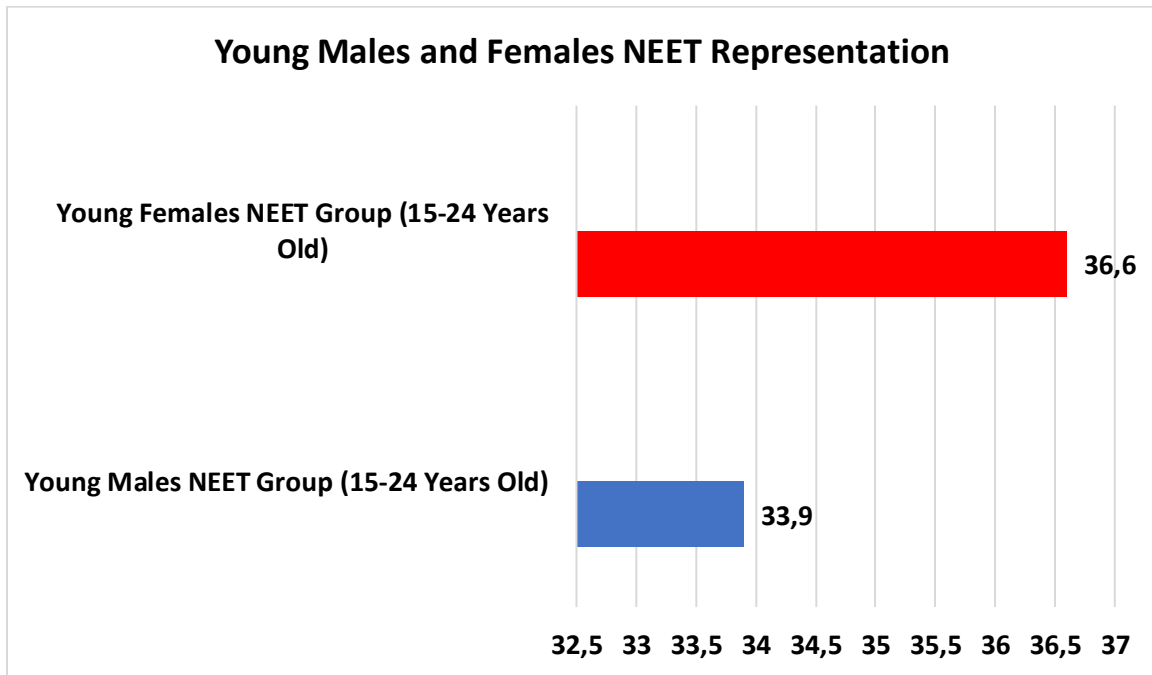


Figure 2: The graph illustrates a simple representation of young females NEET group aged between 15 and 24 sitting at 36,6%, in contrast with young males presently with 33,9% less than the young females cohort. *Emphasis – these are young females and males who are not at schools/training centres or in employment.*

In whichever way this could be viewed, the objective reality still stands that this cohort group of young people whether males or females must be at training centres for furthering studies for fashioning their careers in various disciplines. The following section deep dive into the provincial presentation of youth employment and unemployment and this enables the analysis to observe provinces that are trailing from behind in creating employment for young people.

5. OVERALL NEET

This section combined both genders to give the overall NEET group presentation on youth employment and unemployment rate. The information is graphically represented below.

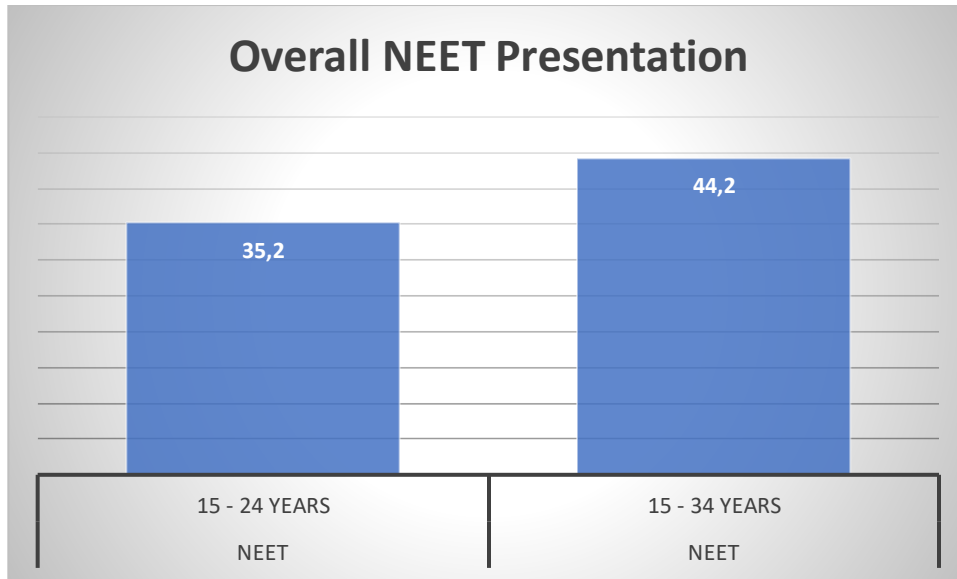


Figure 3: - The graph above represents the overall NEET presentation concerning unemployment. The 15 – 24 youth cohorts are counted at 35,2%, while when considering the entire 15 – 34 years youth cohorts the figure is up to 44,2%.

The section below dovetail the quarter 1 data presentation of youth unemployment rates across the 9 provinces, and juxtapose it with the currently released statistics, viz., quarter 2.

6. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT STATUS IN PROVINCES.

The analysis provided in the preceding section is part of discussing national presentation outcomes of the QLFS survey concerning youth employment and unemployment rates. In this section, the provincial youth employment and unemployment rates require attention to understand the youth unemployment status in provinces. The table below succinctly shows how provinces have performed for both quarters 1 and 2 regarding the youth labour force: -

Provinces	Q1: 2024	Q2: 2024
	%	%
Western Cape	28,7	31,2
Eastern Cape	53,3	52,1
Northern Cape	39	46,1
Free State	54,2	51,9
KwaZulu Natal	42,1	53,7

North West	55,9	58
Gauteng	48,3	49,8
Mpumalanga	49,2	51,3
Limpopo	46,6	44,4
Republic of South Africa	46,5	46,6

Figure 4: - The table above illustrates provincial rates of unemployment. Percentages in red denote provinces that are negatively affected by the high rates of youth unemployment. The trend does not change from the previous quarter, for instance, in Mpumalanga, in the first quarter, the unemployment rate was 49,2%, and in the second quarter, it has risen by 2,1 percentage points, which is calculated to 51,3%, as appears in the table. In Eastern Cape and Free State, despite that there are meagre of youth unemployment rates improvement but these are still dramatically high.

Overall, it is clear that the Western Cape province more often than not outsmarts other South African provinces. This is noticeable in other public service functions. This could range from basic services such as health care deliverables, and education. By observation, the figures contained in the table do not consoling whatsoever because the expanded provincial youth unemployment rates are not included. We have deliberately decided to extract ONLY an official provincial youth unemployment statistics. It can only be concluded that more interventions must pragmatically be put in place and actioned as well.

7. JUXTAPOSING PROVINCIAL AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

This section intends to contrast unemployment rates in provinces as opposed to ones of youth. This section juxtaposes provincial youth unemployment against the generally recorded unemployment in provinces. It is critically important to zoom at provincial levels to determine the rate of youth unemployment in each province. This approach would undoubtedly help the NYDA to know exactly which main provinces are in serious need of government interventions. This is depicted in the graph below: -

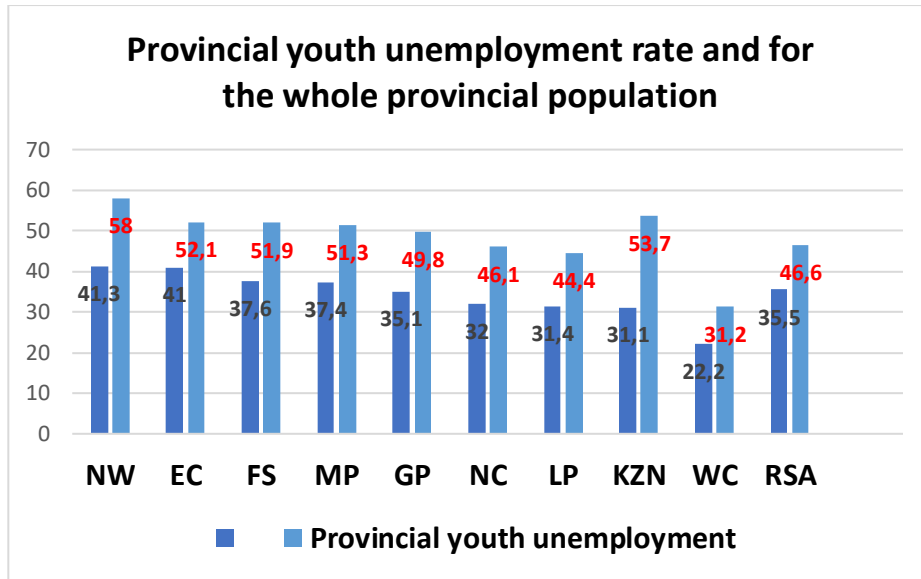


Figure 5: - Importantly, the figures shown written in red colour represent youth unemployment in provinces, while those written in black colour are for the general provincial population and represent provincial unemployment across all ages. For more information, this can be found in the preceding table in which they are clearly shown.

It is easy to see that young people are the most affected by the levels of unemployment. As already mentioned in the introductory remarks the official unemployment has risen to **35,5%**, and for youth is more than this and it is counted to **46,6%**. For such challenges, it has already vehemently been stated that all sectors of society need to cease to work in silos and come together in attempts to ameliorate youth and public unemployment in general. This tormenting unemployment is linked to the unprecedented poor performance in certain sectors of the economy such as finance, construction, agriculture and trade (Maluleke 2024: 15).

On one hand, sectors that did not shed jobs are manufacturing, community social services, utilities and mining. It does not augur well that employment is being shed in industries like the financial services sector knowing finance is not seasonal. Unlike agriculture, wherein it is understood that the second quarter of the year is the winter season, and therefore, it is from time to time anticipated that the agricultural industry would not do as in during the summer time. Similarly, the contradiction is noticeable in the construction sector, wherein jobs were shed as well. There is no connection whatsoever, knowing that at this juncture, the government direct more money into infrastructural development and thus, there could be no

sound reason for such a awful outcome in the construction industry. At one point last year in February, former Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Ms Patricia de Lille, once opined that the Government is a key player in the construction sector, accounting for about 40% of the country's total infrastructure budget¹. Thus, it does not make sense that construction has shed some jobs. It means there is some fishy in the industry.

8. CONCLUSION

Disappointingly, the QLFS report paints a concerning picture of South Africa's youth unemployment. The reporting of youth unemployment needs to have a more uniform range within government institutions. The utilization of different cohorts in the reporting of youth unemployment may paint a different picture depending on which cohort is being analysed. The government needs to place more emphasis on education and skills development within the cohort of 15-24 Years to improve their career aspirations. The youth cohort between the ages of 25-34 are the most likely to be seeking employment.

There is also a need to address the gender parity between young females and males (NEET) where a higher percentage is observed for young females. While the youth unemployment rates between provinces vary, there are specific provinces which experienced a substantial increase such as Kwa-Zulu Natal, from 42,1% to 53,7%, and the Northern Cape, which increased from 39% to 46,1%. As the NYDA, we view these concerning figures as requiring much attention.

As a public youth entity, we will continuously play a role in supporting the youth through programmes and partnerships with various stakeholders in the public and private sectors to respond to the obstinacy of youth unemployment. That being said, NYDA would be unable to address all youth challenges, but working together with all public sector and private sector organisations would enable it to realistically address all challenges that may face the youth of this country.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Maluleke, R. 2024. *Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q2:2024*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

South Africa. Statistics South Africa. 2024. *Media Release: Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) – Q2: 2024*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

De Lille, P. 2023. *Joint statement by Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Patricia de Lille and the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) CEO, Bongani Dladla*. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements/public-works-and-infrastructure-implementation-infrastructure-investment#:~:text=Government%20is%20a%20key%20player,over%20the%20next%20three%20years>. (Accessed on 17 August 2024).