



# LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT & TOURISM

### Indicator 1

#### 2.1.1 Number of Economic Development Reports compiled on Economic Indicators

#### Quarter 4: 2024

Branch	Economic Development Branch
Directorate	Economic Research, Planning and Coordination
Report Compiled by	Moloko Mapatha

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## **Executive Summary**

Stats SA has announced that the Limpopo Province official unemployment rate decreased from 32,6% to 31,9% in the fourth quarter of 2024, with the unemployment rate according to the expanded definition increasing by 0,3 of a percentage point to 46.5% in the fourth quarter of 2024.

The results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) indicate that the number of employed people in the province decreased by 16,000 to 1 543 000 in the fourth quarter of 2024 compared to 1 559 000 in the third quarter of 2024.

The QLFS indicates that the number of unemployed people in the province decreased by 31,000 to 724 000 in the fourth quarter of 2024 compared to 755 000 in the third quarter of 2024.

Discouraged jobseekers increased by 23,000 in the fourth quarter of 2024 compared to the third quarter of 2024.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents key findings of the QLFS conducted from October to December 2024 (Q4: 2024).

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) is a household-based sample survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). It collects data on the labour market activities of individuals aged 15 years and above who live in South Africa. However, this report only covers labour market activities of persons aged 15–64 years. The quarter-to-quarter and year-on-year changes are influenced by the changes in the updated sample.

Unemployment rate is one of the key economic indicators that measure the performance of the economy. The NDP and LDP, as National and Provincial development blueprints, are primarily aimed at eliminating poverty and reducing unemployment rate. As such, QLFS and its findings requires considerable attention in order to reflect on the labour market performance and realization of economic targets in the province.

The labour market and its characteristics are comprehensively analyzed in this report to provide valuable insights to policy makers, investors, academics, and the general society.

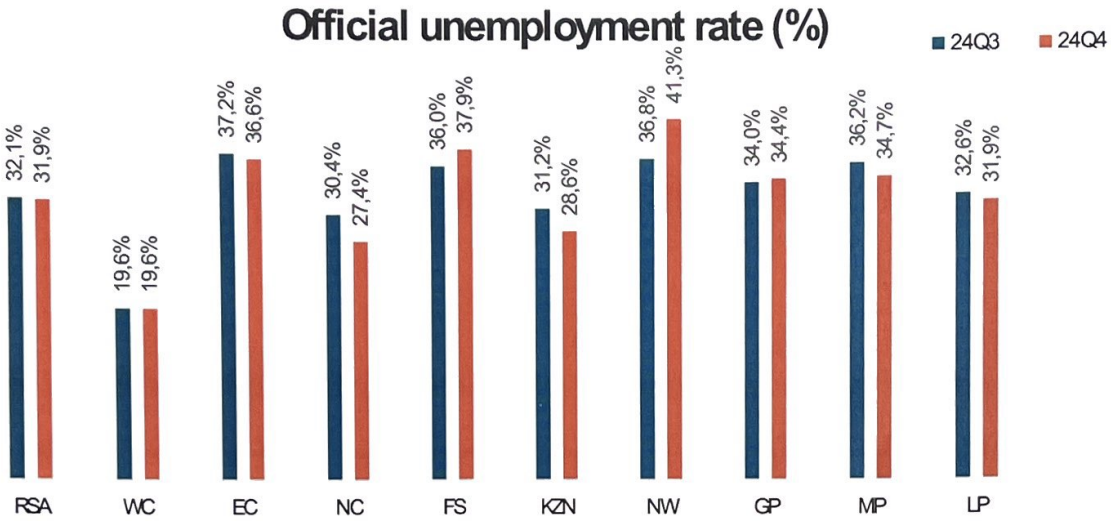
In Q4:2024

- UR (Official Unemployment Rate) = 31.9%
- EUR (Expanded Unemployment Rate) = 46.5%
- AR (Absorption Rate) =38.0%
- LFPR (Labour Force Participation Rate) =55.8%

**\*Please see full definitions on Annexure A on page 8 of this report**

## 2. Official Unemployment Rate

Figure 1: Official unemployment rate per province

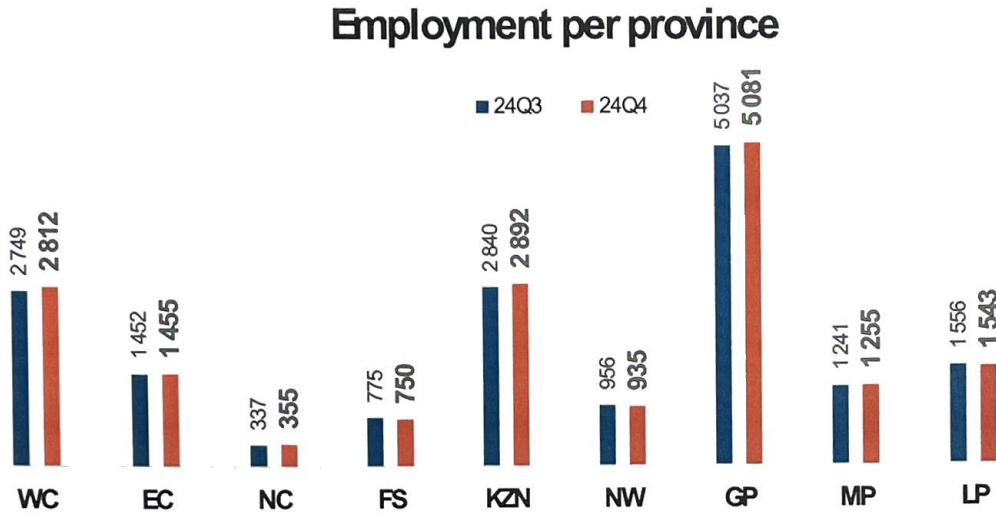


Source: StatsSA

The official unemployment rate decreased by 0,2 of a percentage point to 31,9% in Q4: 2024 compared with Q3: 2024. The official unemployment rate decreased in five of the nine provinces. The largest decreases were recorded in Northern Cape (3,0 percentage points), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (2,6 percentage points) and Mpumalanga (1,5 percentage points). Increases in the unemployment rate were recorded in North West (4,5 percentage points), Free State (1,9 percentage points) and Gauteng (0,4 of a percentage point), while Western Cape remained unchanged.

Year-on-year, the official unemployment rate decreased by 0,2 of a percentage point. The official unemployment rate decreased in four provinces. The decreases in the unemployment rate were recorded in Eastern Cape (5,3 percentage points), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (0,9 of a percentage point), Western Cape (0,7 of a percentage point) and Mpumalanga (0,2 of a percentage point). The increases in the unemployment rate were recorded in North West (2,3 percentage points), Limpopo (1,6 percentage points), Free State (0,9 of a percentage point), Gauteng (0,6 of a percentage point) and Northern Cape (0,5 of a percentage point).

Figure 2: Employment by Province



Source: StatsSA

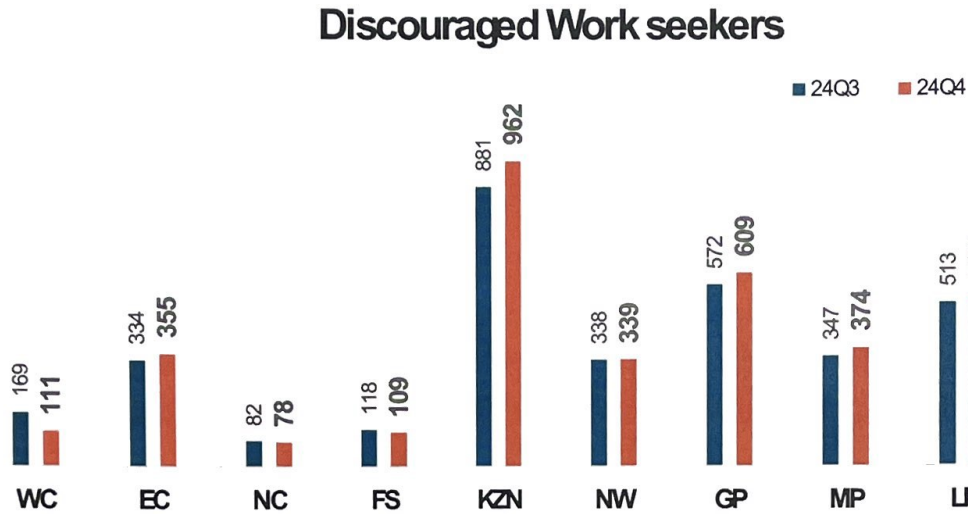
Figure 2 shows that the number of employed persons increased in six provinces between Q3: 2024 and Q4: 2024. Employment gains were recorded in Western Cape (62 000), KwaZulu-Natal (52 000), Gauteng (45 000), Northern Cape (18 000), Mpumalanga (13 000) and Eastern Cape (4 000).

Employment decreases were recorded in Free State (25 000), North West (20 000) and Limpopo (16 000) during the same period. Compared with Q4: 2023, the largest increases in employment were recorded in Eastern Cape (108 000), Western Cape (55 000), Gauteng (47 000) and Limpopo (45 000).

Mpumalanga recorded the lowest increase in employment with 4 000 during the same period. Northern Cape had the largest year-on-year percentage change increase in employment of 8,5%.

#### 6 4. Discouraged Work Seekers

Figure 3: Discouraged Work Seekers

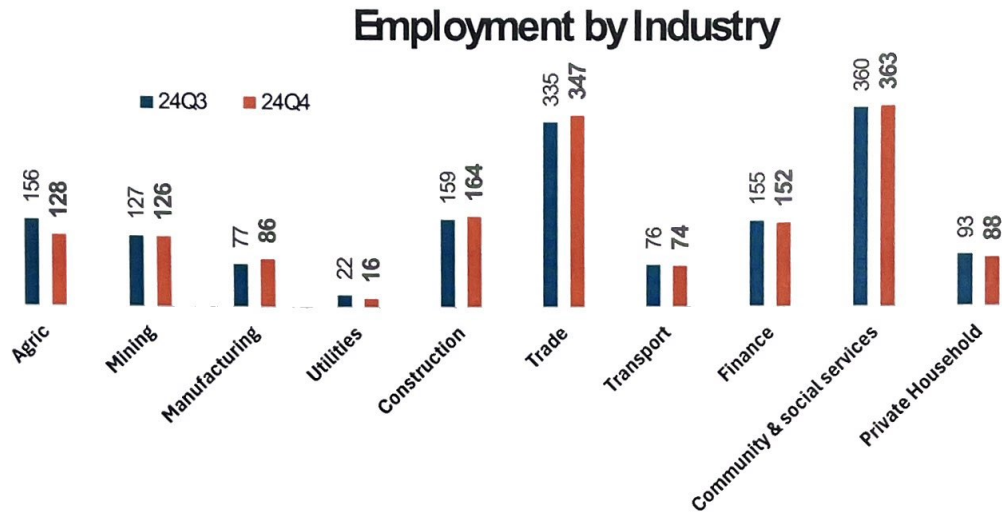


Quarterly comparison between Q2:2024 and Q3:2024 indicates that the largest increase in discouraged workers was recorded in Gauteng (111 000), KwaZulu Natal (56 000), Eastern Cape (34 000) and Western cape (23 000). Four provinces recorded a decline in the number of discouraged workers with the highest been Limpopo (46 000), Mpumalanga (11 000), Free State (11 000) and Northern Cape (8 000).

An increase, in some provinces, in the number of discouraged work seekers required a considerable attention from policy makers. History provides many cases of successful and failed economic transformation from which crucial lessons can be drawn. Limpopo province has adopted an industrialisation path, through the LDP, in its attempt to create jobs and reduce the high level of unemployment and poverty rates.

## 5. Employment per Industry

Figure 4: Employment per Industry

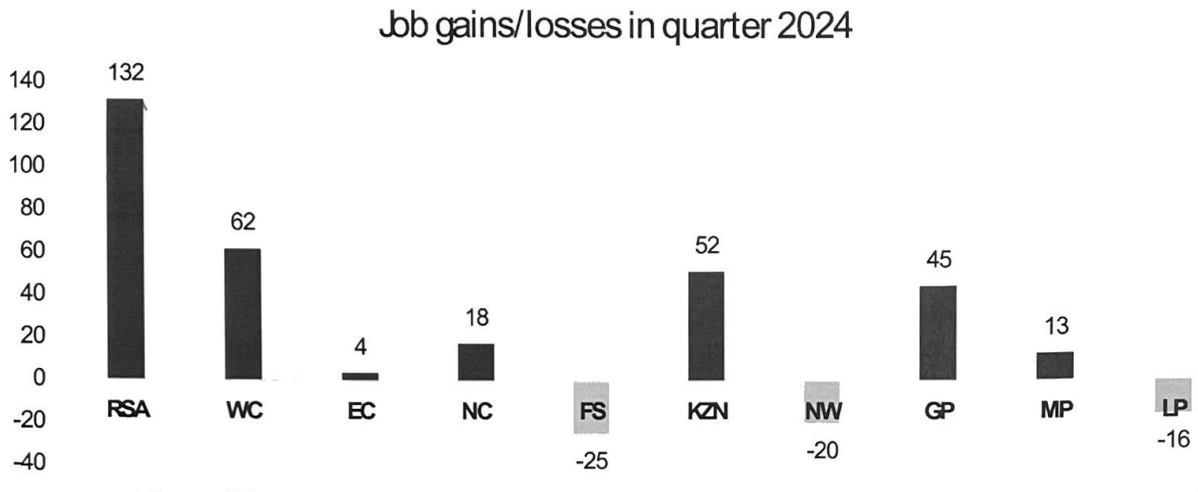


Source: StatsSA

Figure 4 shows that between Q3: 2024 and Q4: 2024, the number of employed people increased in four of the ten industries. The increases in employment were recorded in Trade (12 000), followed by Manufacturing (9 000), Construction (5 000) and Community and Social services (3 000) industries.

The largest decreases in employment were recorded in Agriculture (28 000), followed by Utilities (6 000), Private Household (5 000), Finance (3 000), Transport (2 000) and Mining (1 000).

**Figure 5: Job gains/ losses between 24Q3 and 24Q4**



Source: StatsSA

Figure 5 shows the number of jobs gained or lost between quarter 3 and quarter 4 of 2024.

During the period, six provinces recorded jobs increases and three recorded job losses. Western Cape recorded the highest jobs increase between the two quarters by 62 000, followed by KwaZulu Natal (52 000), Gauteng (45 000), Northern Cape (18 000), Mpumalanga (13 000), and Eastern Cape (4 000).

In the same period, provinces that recorded the highest number of job losses were Free State (25 000), followed by North West (20 000) and Limpopo Province (16 000).

To turn the tide and raise economic growth sustainably, government is prioritising structural reforms, where value addition and beneficiation could serve as strategic approaches to improving the economic performance as well as job creation endeavours.

## **6. Conclusion**

Limpopo Province's economy made considerable strides over the past three decades. Driven primarily by the boom in global commodity prices and favorable macroeconomic conditions. The relatively strong economic performance since the dawn of democracy, however, has been overshadowed by the lack of enough jobs in the labour market. Many economists associate these outcomes in terms of the quantity and quality of jobs created with the slow pace of structural transformation. External pressures e.g. geopolitical tensions, financial crisis, etc. weigh down on the province's efforts to address challenges of unemployment. The provincial government is drafted the LDP 2025-2030 in line with Medium Tern Development Plan (MTDP) prioritizing inclusive growth and job creation, poverty reduction and tackling the high cost of living and developing a capable, ethical and developmental state. The LDP prioritising industrialisation programmes through the Musina Makhado SEZ and Fetakgomo Tubatse Industrial Park and other catalytic programmes in order to tackle its socio-economic challenges.

## 7. Annexure A

### Definitions

**Discouraged work-seeker** is a person who was not employed during the reference period, wanted to work, was available to work/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.

**Economic activities** are those that contribute to the production of goods and services in the country. There are two types of economic activities, and they are: (1) Market production activities (work done for others and usually associated with pay or profit); and (2) Non-market production activities (work done for the benefit of the household, e.g. subsistence farming).

**Employed** persons are those aged 15–64 years 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).

The **labour force** comprises all persons who are employed plus all persons who are unemployed.

**Labour force participation rate** is the proportion of the working-age population that is either employed or unemployed.

**Not economically active:** Persons aged 15–64 years who are neither employed nor unemployed in the reference week.

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

**Underutilised labour** comprises three groups as follows: persons who are underemployed, persons who are unemployed, and persons who are discouraged.

**Unemployed** persons are those (aged 15–64 years) who:

- a) Were not employed in the reference week **and**;
- b) Actively looked for work or tried to start a business in the four weeks preceding the survey interview **and**;
- c) Were available for work, i.e. would have been able to start work or a business in the reference week **or**;

d) Had not actively looked for work in the past four weeks but had a job or business to start at a definite date in the future and were available.

Compiled by:


  
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**Mr. Mapatha M**  
**Director: Economic Research, Planning and Coordination**

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Date

Approved/ ~~Not approved~~:

  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Mrs. Talane M**  
**Acting Chief Director: Trade and Sector**

01/04/2025

Date