

# Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q4:2024

---

**Risenga Maluleke**  
Statistician-General



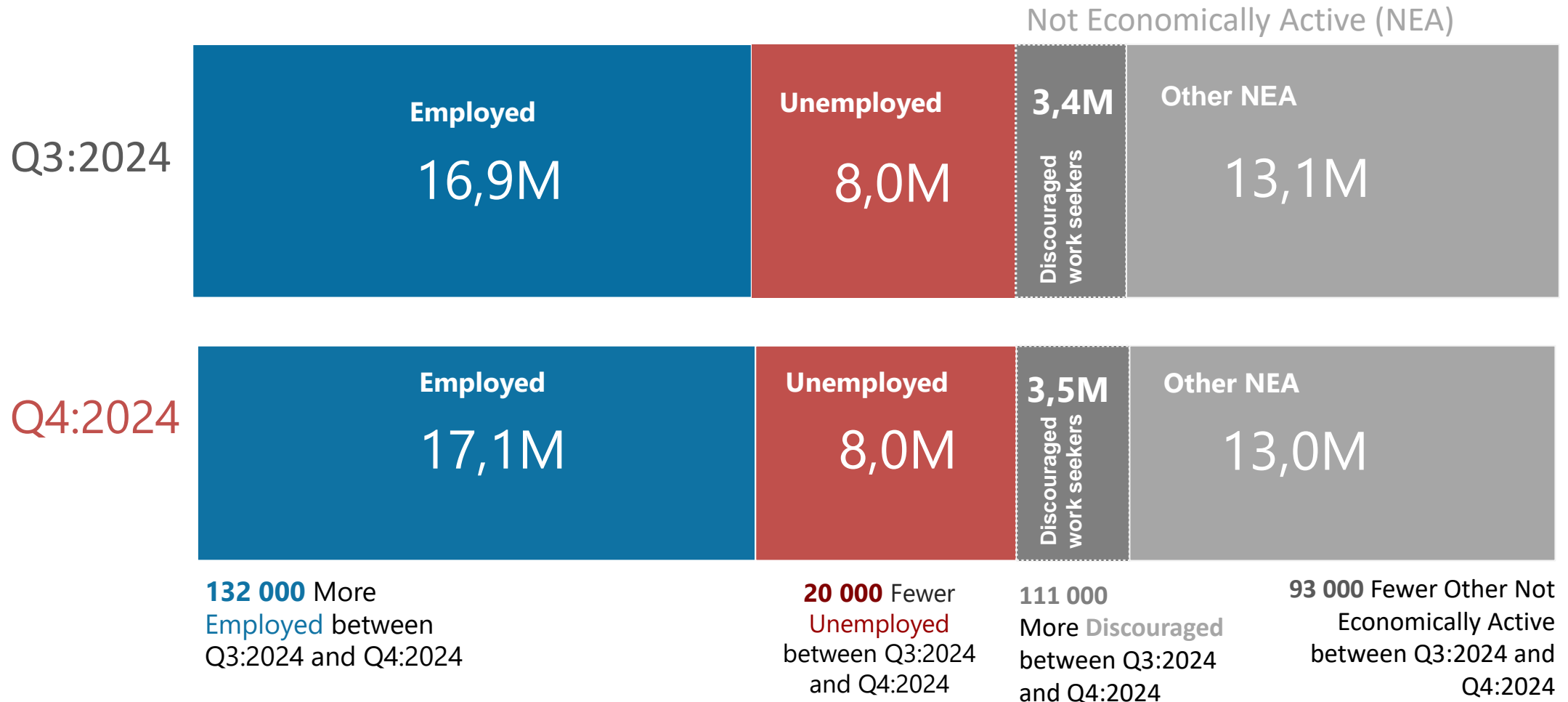
**stats sa**

Department:  
Statistics South Africa  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS

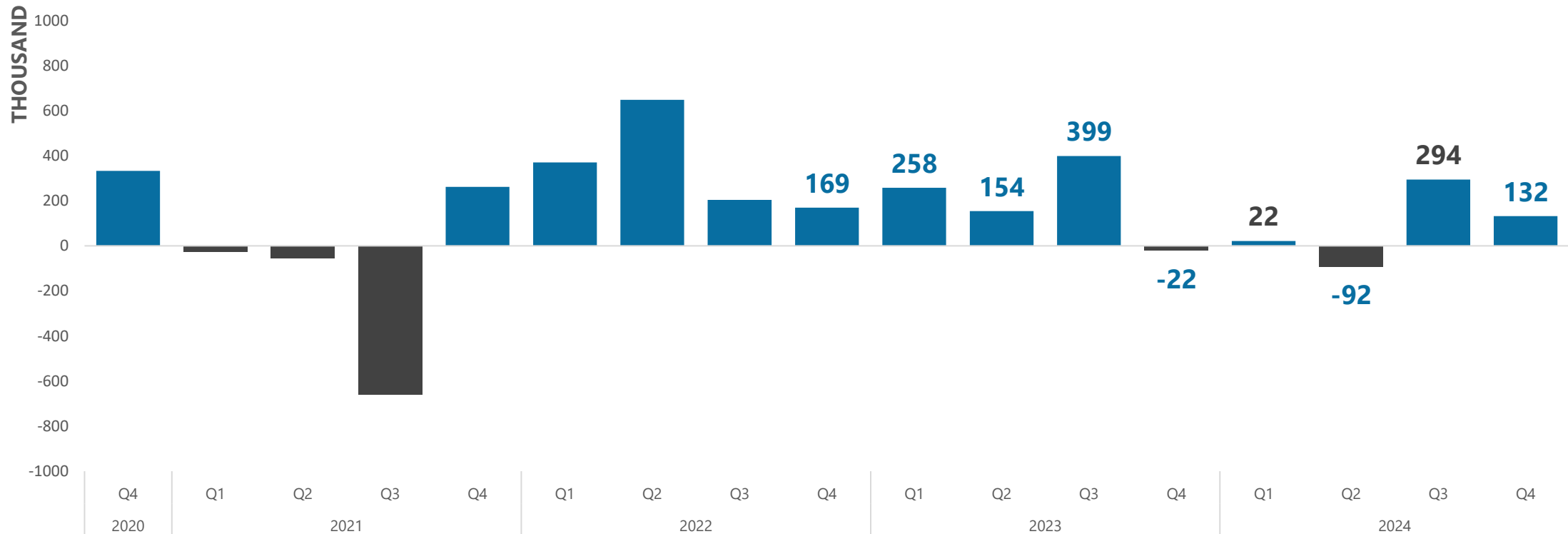


There were about 132 **thousand** more people who were employed in Q4:2024 than in Q3:2024



**Employment** increased by **132 000** in the last quarter of 2024, following an increase of **294 000** in the third quarter of 2024.

Employment changes Q4:2020-Q4:2024 (Quarter-on-quarter)



**The official unemployment rate** decreased by 0,2 of a percentage point to **31,9%** in Q4:2024 compared to Q3:2024.

**41,6 million**

People of working age in South Africa (15 – 64-years old)

**Labour force**

**Not Economically Active**

**25,1 million**

**16,5 million**



SA's official unemployment rate stands at

**31,9%**

Decreased by 0,2 of a percentage point between Q3:2024 and Q4:2024

*ILO hierarchy – Employed first then unemployed and the remainder is NEA (including discouraged job-seekers). 3 mutually exclusive groups. Cannot be in two groups at the same time.*



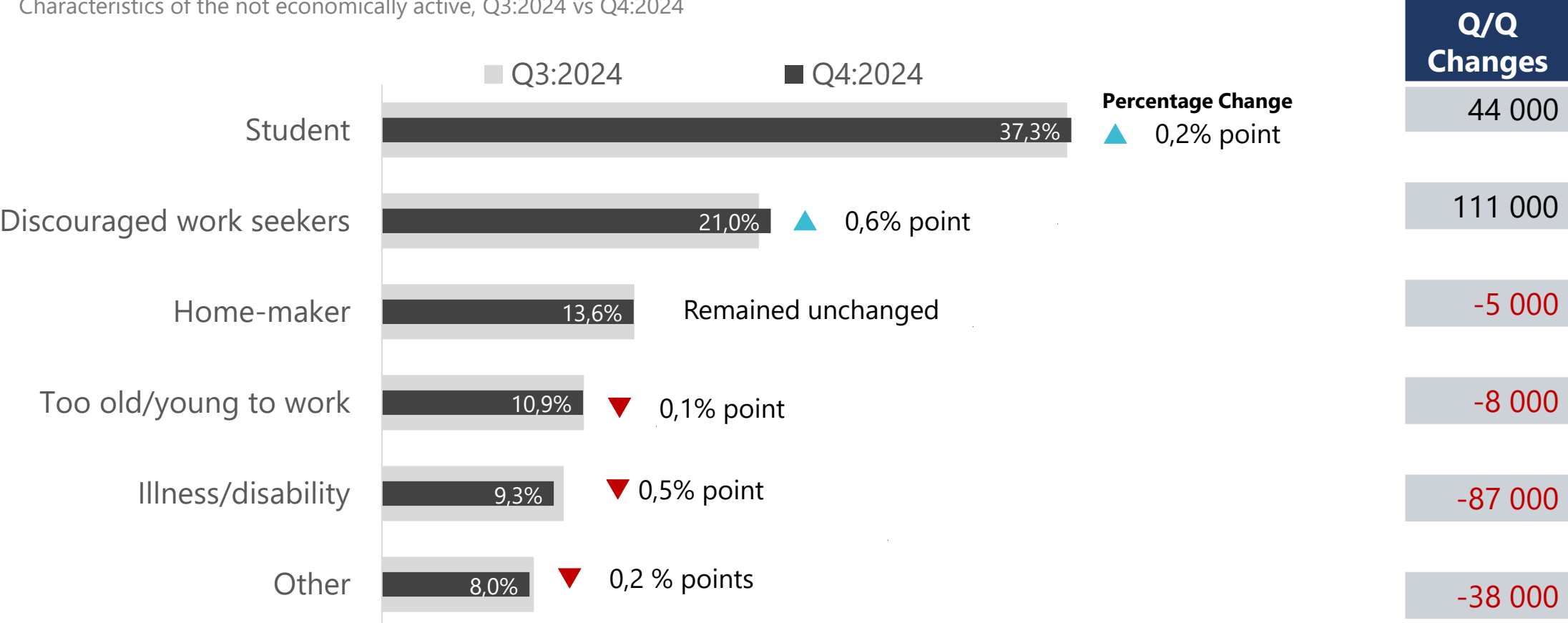
stats sa

Department:  
Statistics South Africa  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# The number of **Not Economically Active** persons **increased by 18 000** in Q4:2024 compared to Q3:2024

Characteristics of the not economically active, Q3:2024 vs Q4:2024



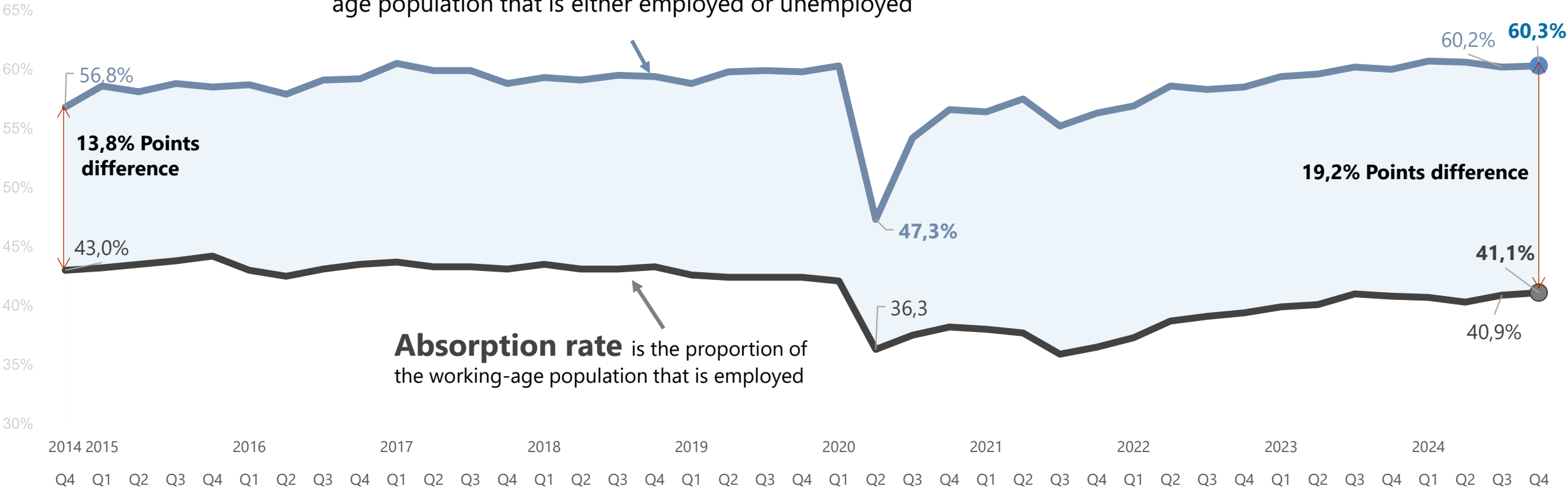
Due to rounding numbers may not add up

The **absorption rate and participation rate** increased by 0,2 and 0,1 of a percentage point to 41,1% and 60,3% respectively in Q4:2024.

Labour force participation and absorption rates Q4:2014-Q4:2024

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

**Absorption rate** is the proportion of the working-age population that is employed

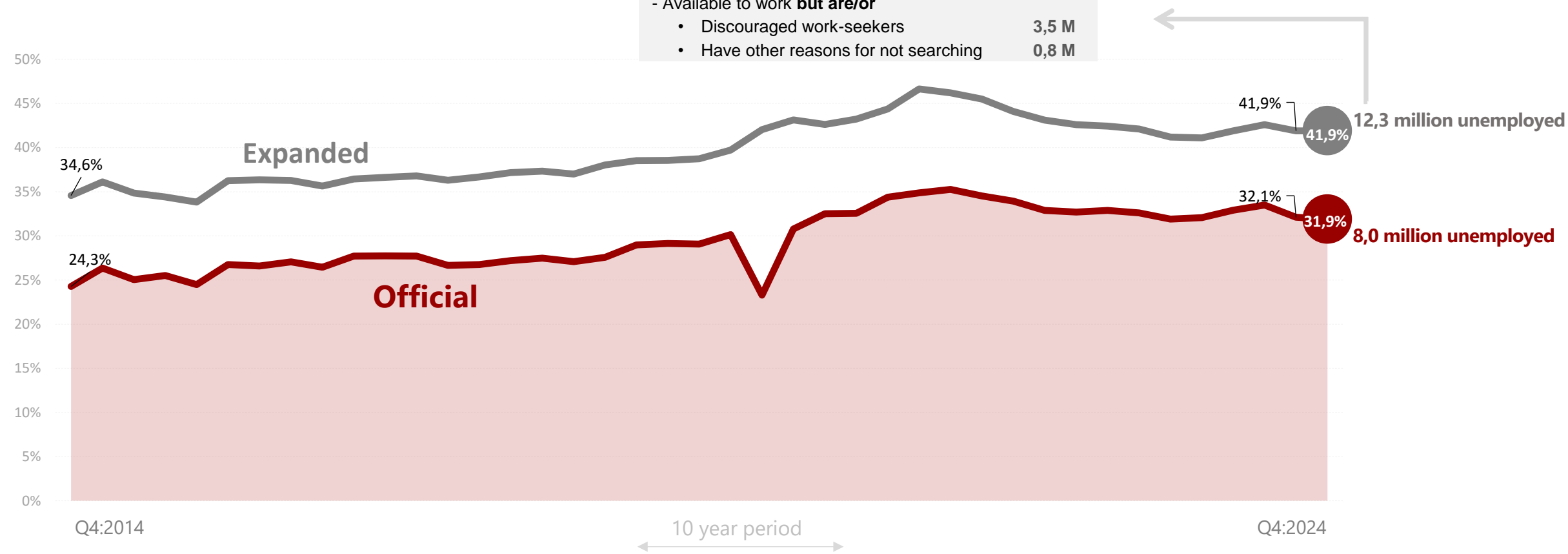


# The expanded unemployment rate remained unchanged from Q3:2024 and Q4:2024.

Expanded Definition includes the following

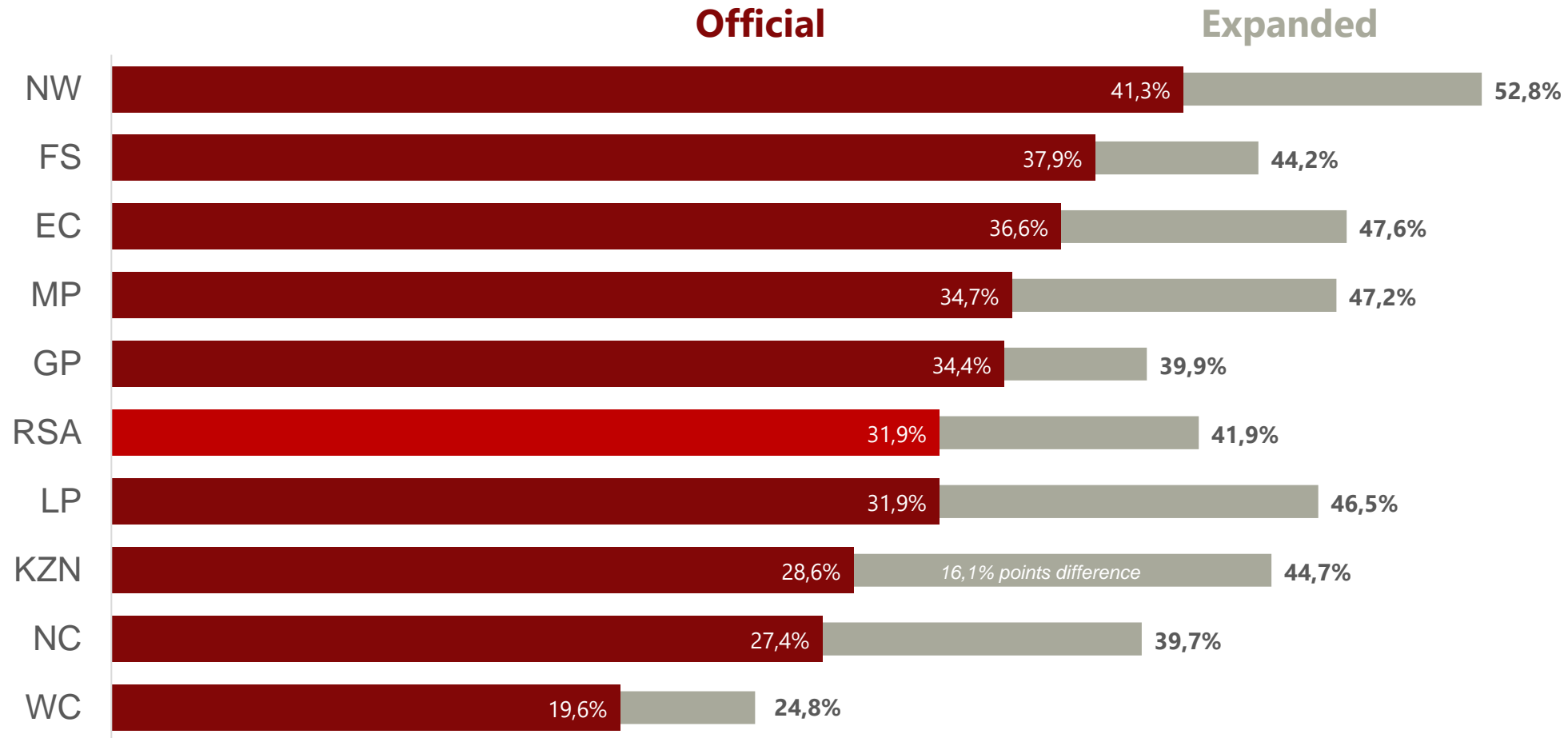
- Official unemployment (searched and available) **8,0 M**
- Available to work **but are/or**
  - Discouraged work-seekers **3,5 M**
  - Have other reasons for not searching **0,8 M**

Official vs Expanded unemployment: Q4:2014-Q4:2024



**NW** (52,8%) recorded the **highest expanded unemployment rate** in Q4:2024, followed by EC (47,6%). **KZN** recorded the highest difference between **expanded** and **official** unemployment rates of **16,1** percentage points.

Provincial unemployment rates: **Official** vs Expanded Q4:2024

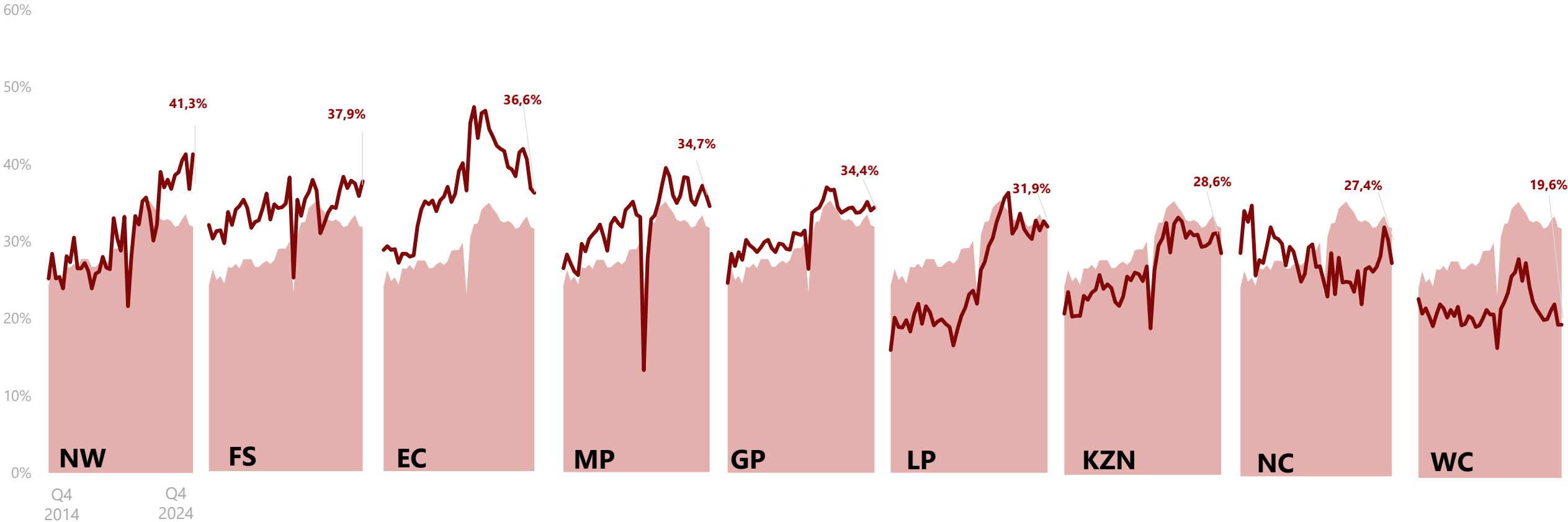




While the unemployment rates in **WC and KZN** have consistently been below the official unemployment rate in SA for the past ten years, the unemployment rate in **EC** has continuously exceeded it.

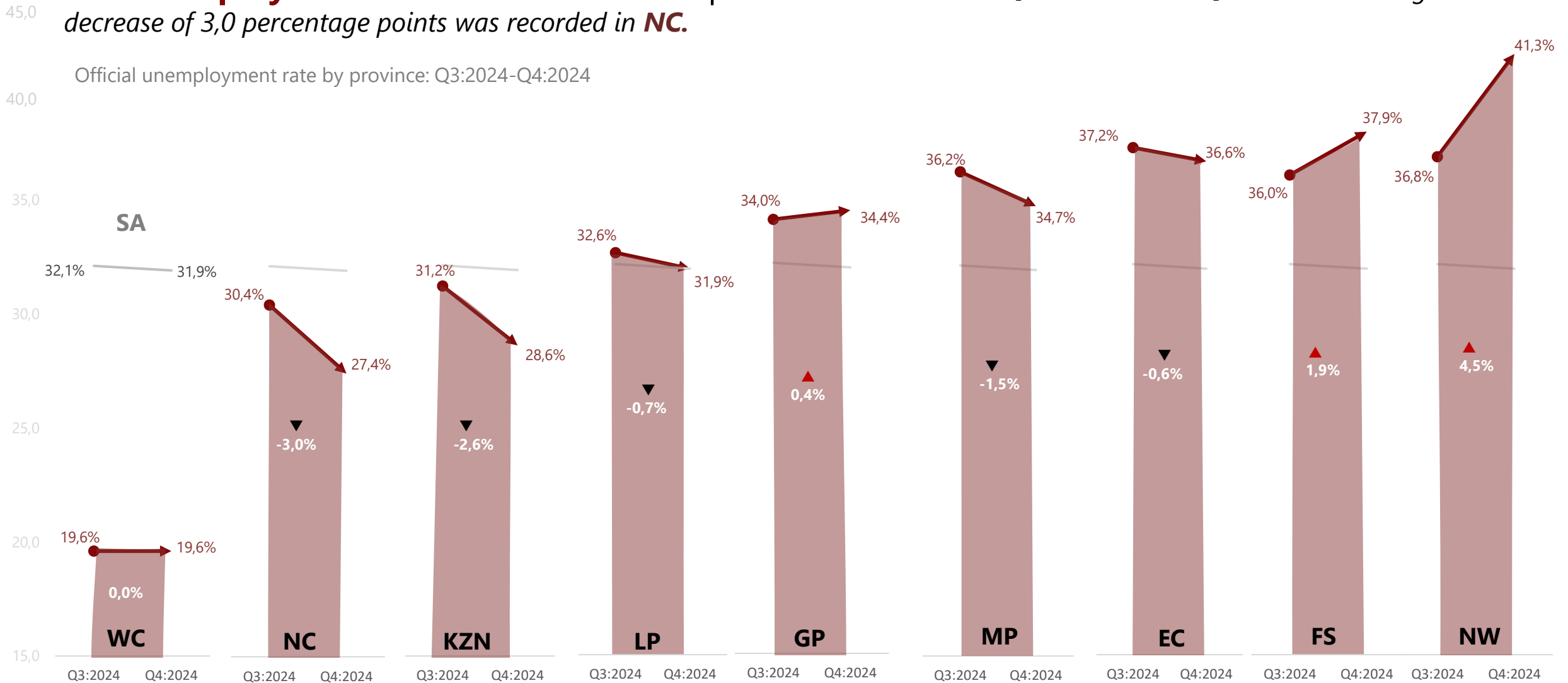
Official Unemployment rate by province, Q4:2014-Q4:2024

SA Unemployment Rate (light red area) Provincial Unemployment Rate (dark red line)



The **unemployment rate** decreased in five provinces between Q3:2024 and Q4:2024. *The largest decrease of 3,0 percentage points was recorded in **NC**.*

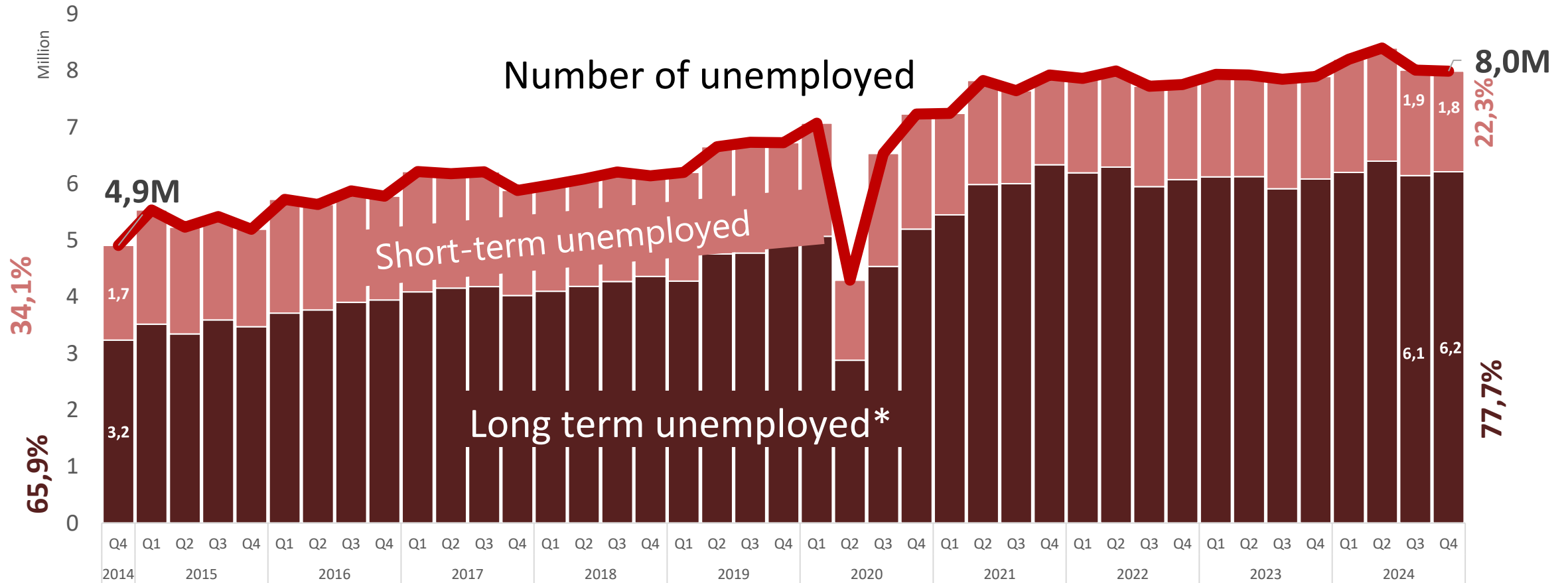
Official unemployment rate by province: Q3:2024-Q4:2024



IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH DATA ECOSYSTEMS

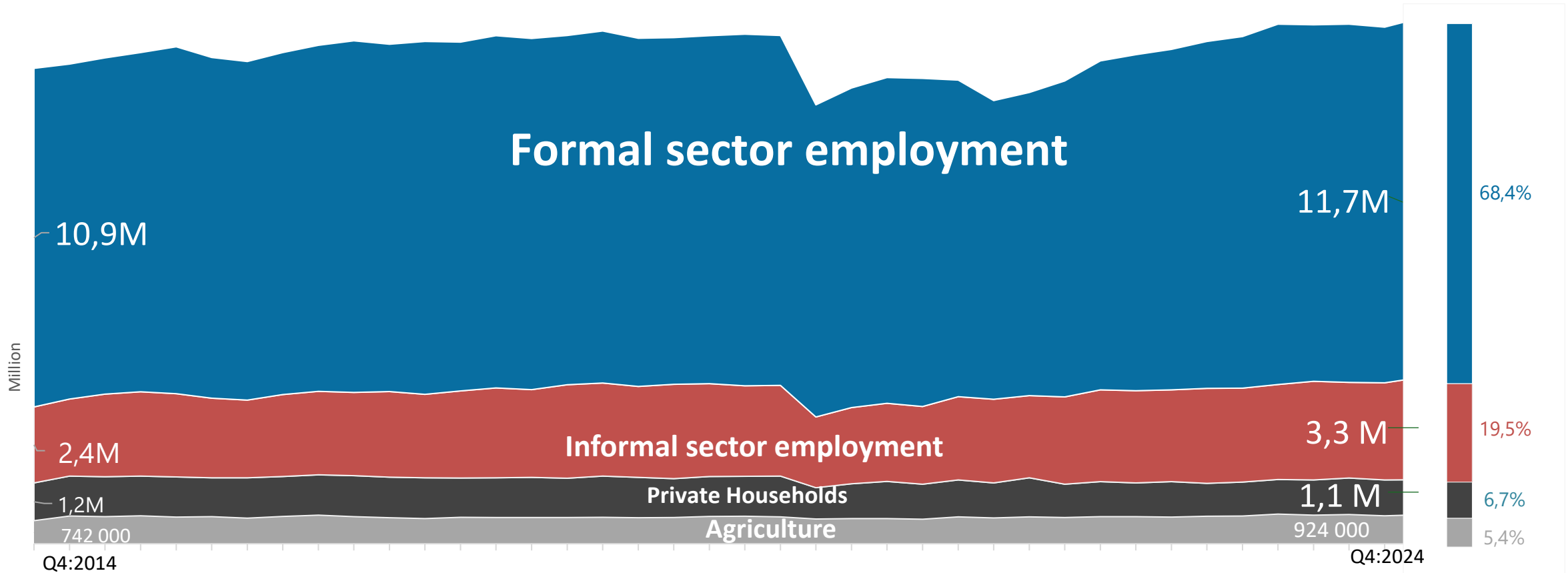
The **number of unemployed** people in South Africa **increased from 4,9 million** in Q4:2014 to **8,0 million** in Q4:2024. The proportion of those in long-term unemployment increased from 65,9% in Q4:2014 to 77,7% in Q4:2024

\*Long term unemployment –unemployed for a year or longer



# The **formal sector** in South Africa accounts for **68,4%** of total employment.

Employment share by sector, Q4:2014 to Q4:2024



Due to rounding numbers may not add up



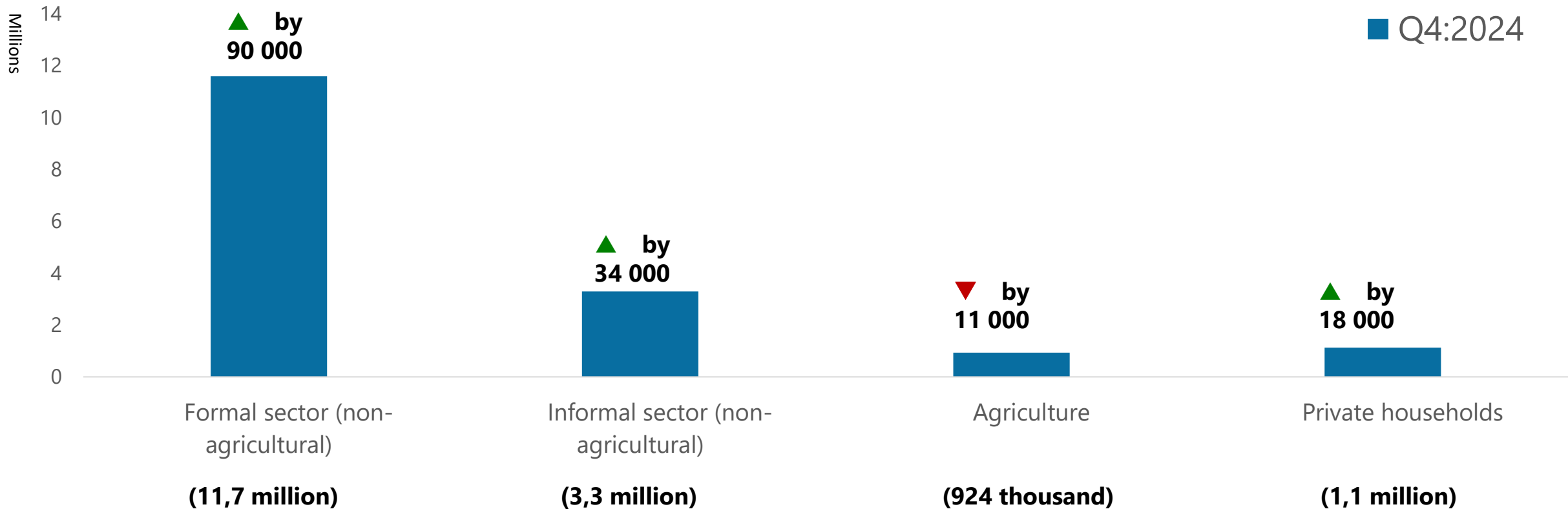
stats sa

Department:  
Statistics South Africa  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



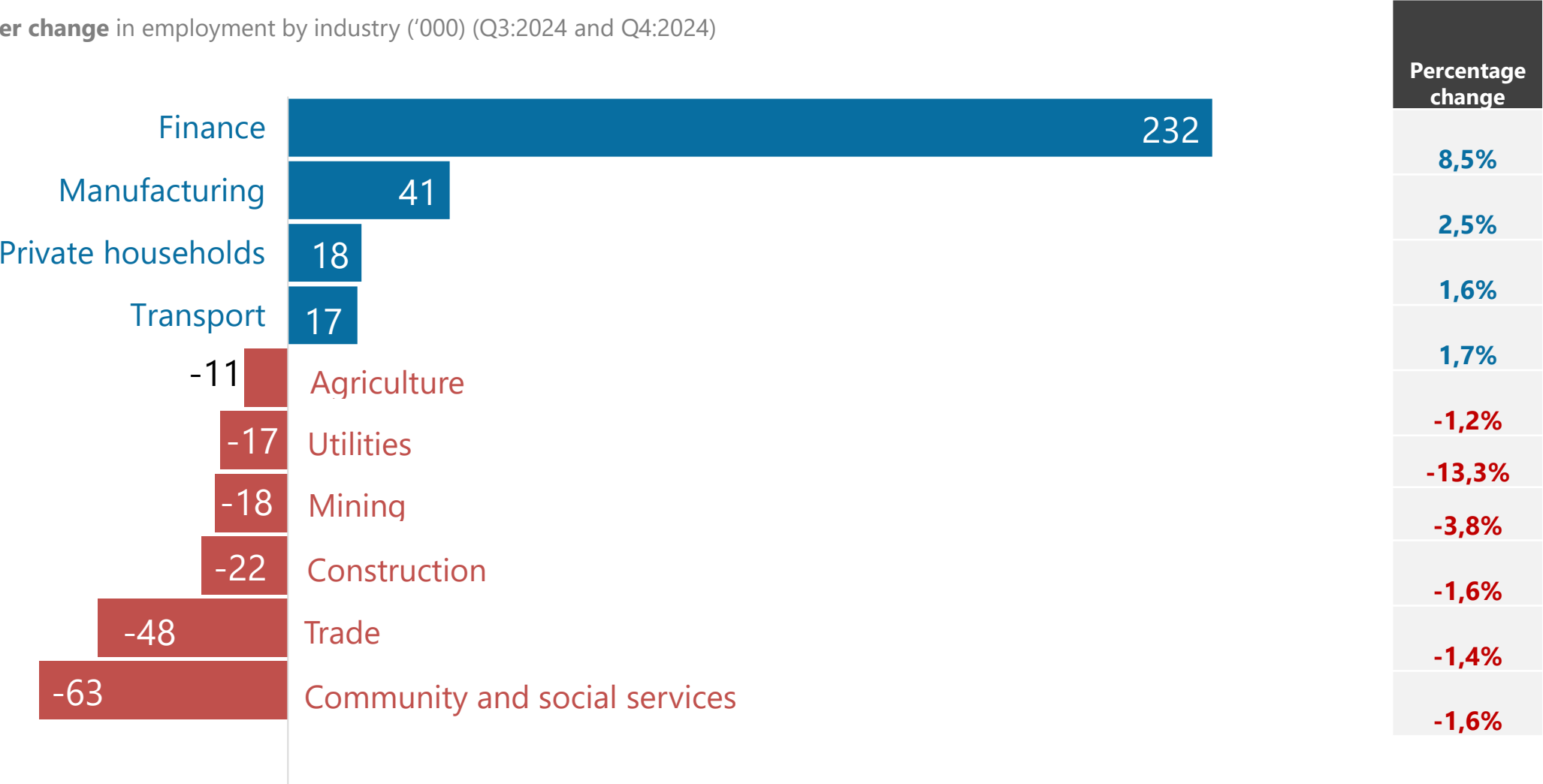
Employment increased in all sectors between Q3:2024 and Q4:2024, except in agriculture which decreased by **11 000 jobs**.

Employment by sector, (Quarter-on-quarter)



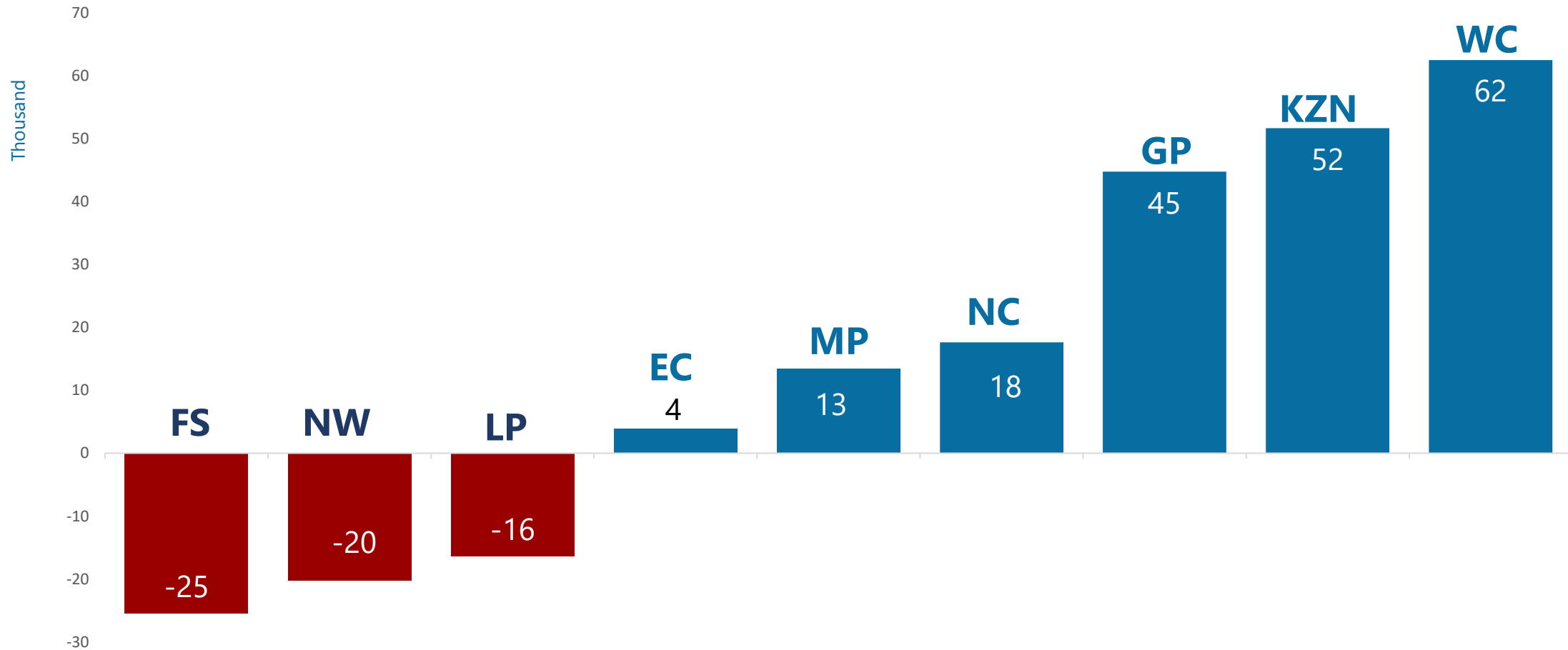
**Employment** increases were mainly in the Finance and Manufacturing industries. However, the largest decreases in employment were recorded in Community & social services and Trade industries.

Quarter-on-quarter change in employment by industry ('000) (Q3:2024 and Q4:2024)



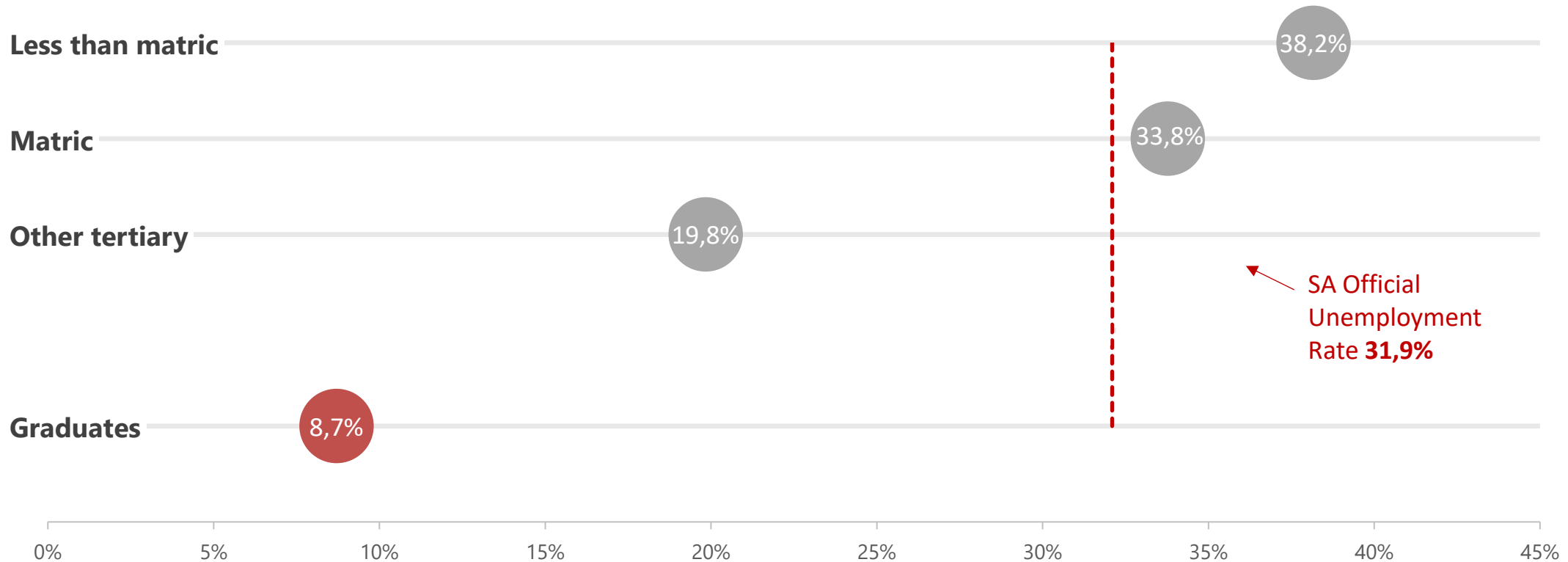
**WC, KZN and GP** recorded the largest increases in employment in Q4:2024, while **FS, NW and LP** recorded decreases.

Quarter-on-quarter change in employment by province (Q3:2024 and Q4:2024)



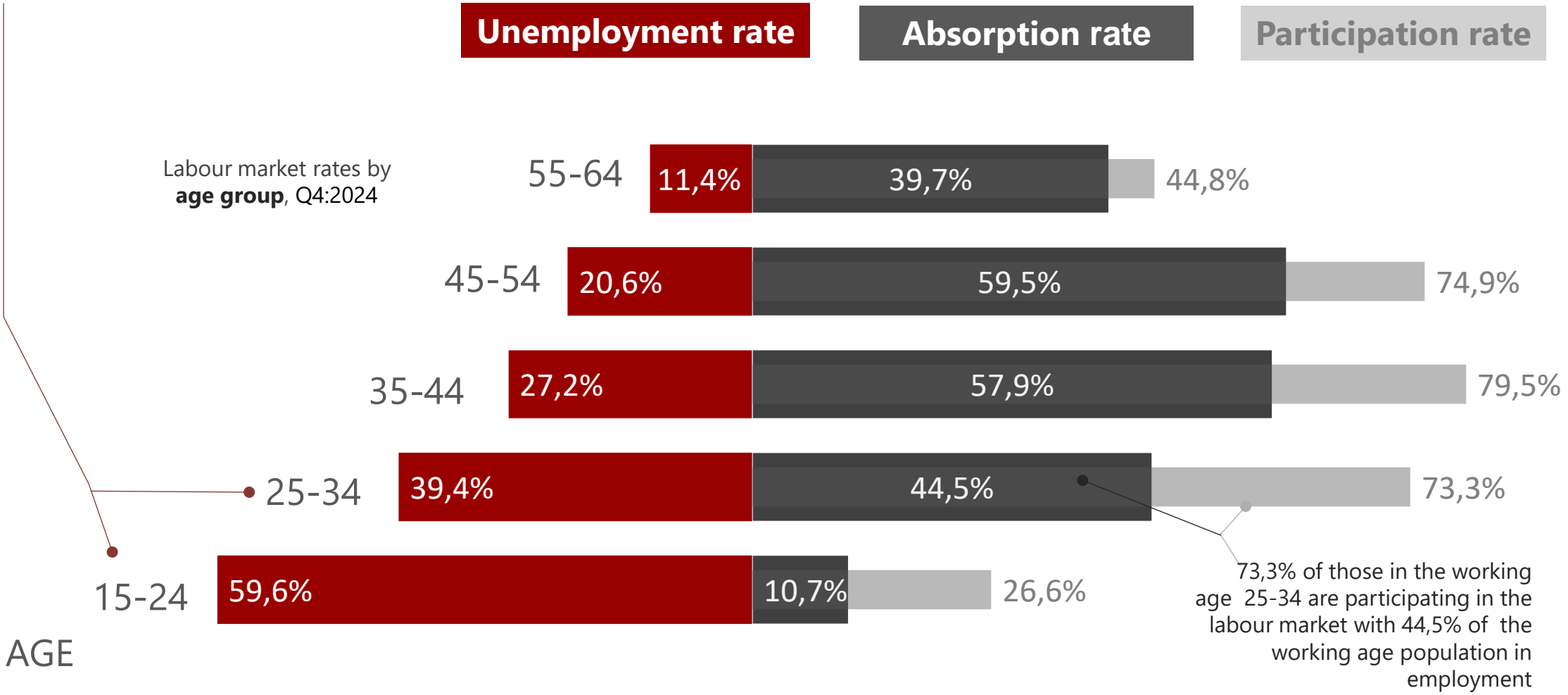
**Graduate** unemployment rate decreased by 1,1 percentage points from 9,8% in Q3:2024 to **8,7%** in Q4:2024. Those with **matric** and **less than matric** remain vulnerable with unemployment rates of 33,8% and 38,2% respectively.

Official Unemployment rate by level of education, Q4:2024



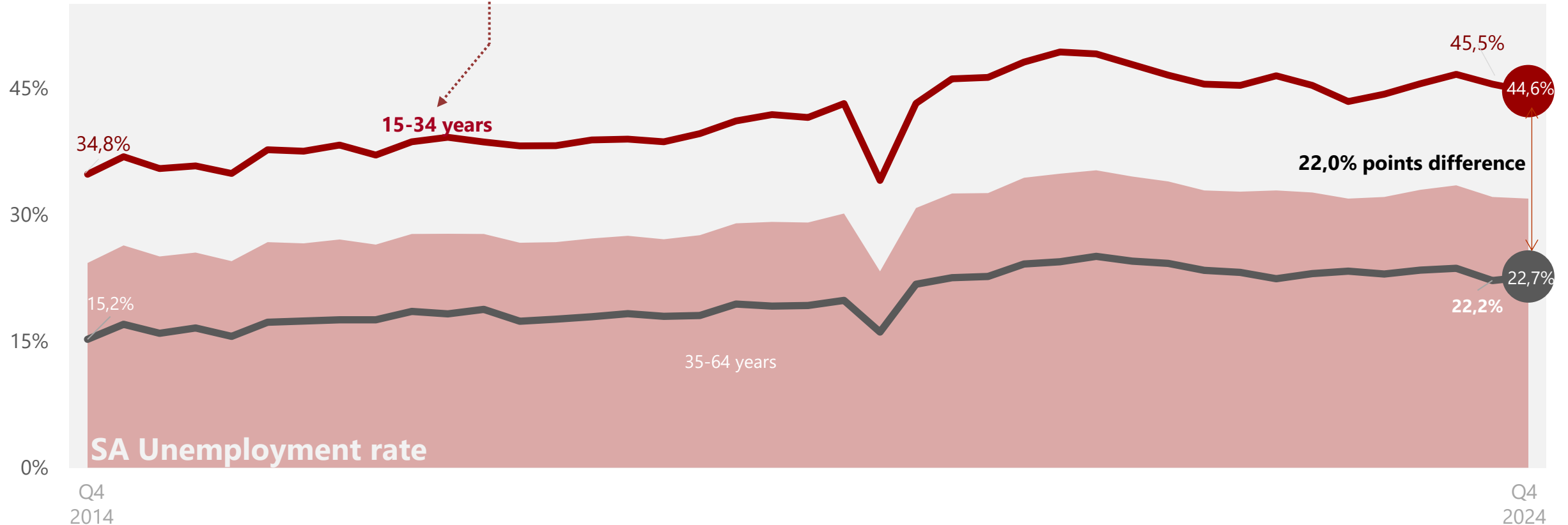


Youth aged 15-24 years and 25-34 years continue to have the highest unemployment rates at **59,6%** and **39,4%** respectively.

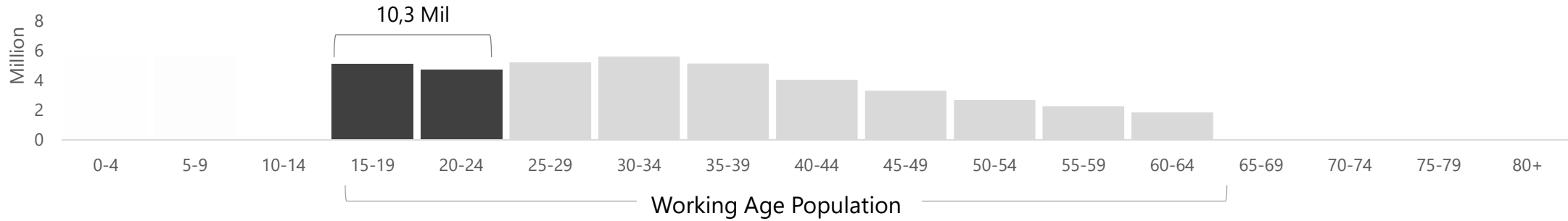


# Youth aged **15-34 years** unemployment rate is higher as compared to older age groups

Official Unemployment rates by age group,  
**Q4:2014-Q4:2024**



Approximately **3,5 million out of 10,3 million (or 33,5%)** young people aged 15-24 years were not in employment, education or training (NEET).



Number of NEET for ages 15-24  
Q4:2024

**3,5 Million**  
**NEET**

**6,8 Million**

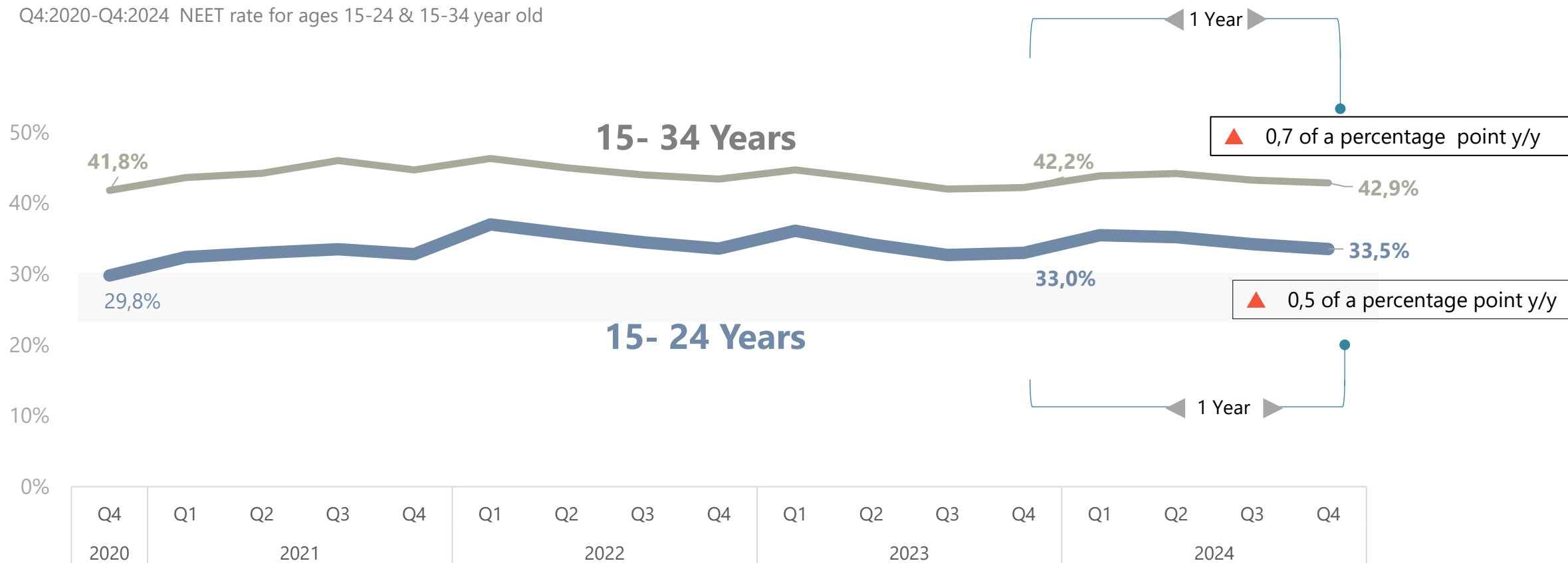
**Employed or in  
Education or Training**

*Due to rounding numbers may not add up*



The overall NEET rate (15 – 24yrs) increased by 0,5 of a percentage point in Q4:2024 compared to Q4:2023.

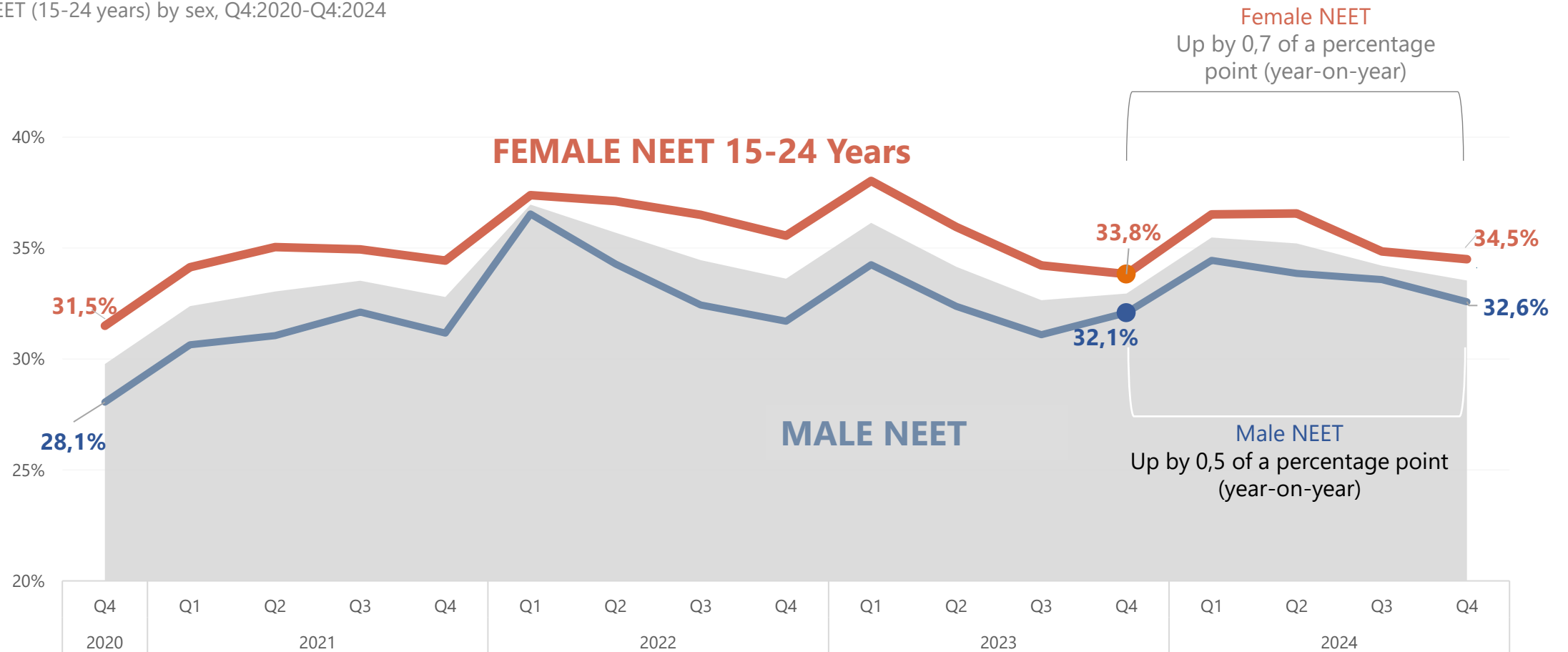
Q4:2020-Q4:2024 NEET rate for ages 15-24 & 15-34 year old



Due to rounding numbers may not add up

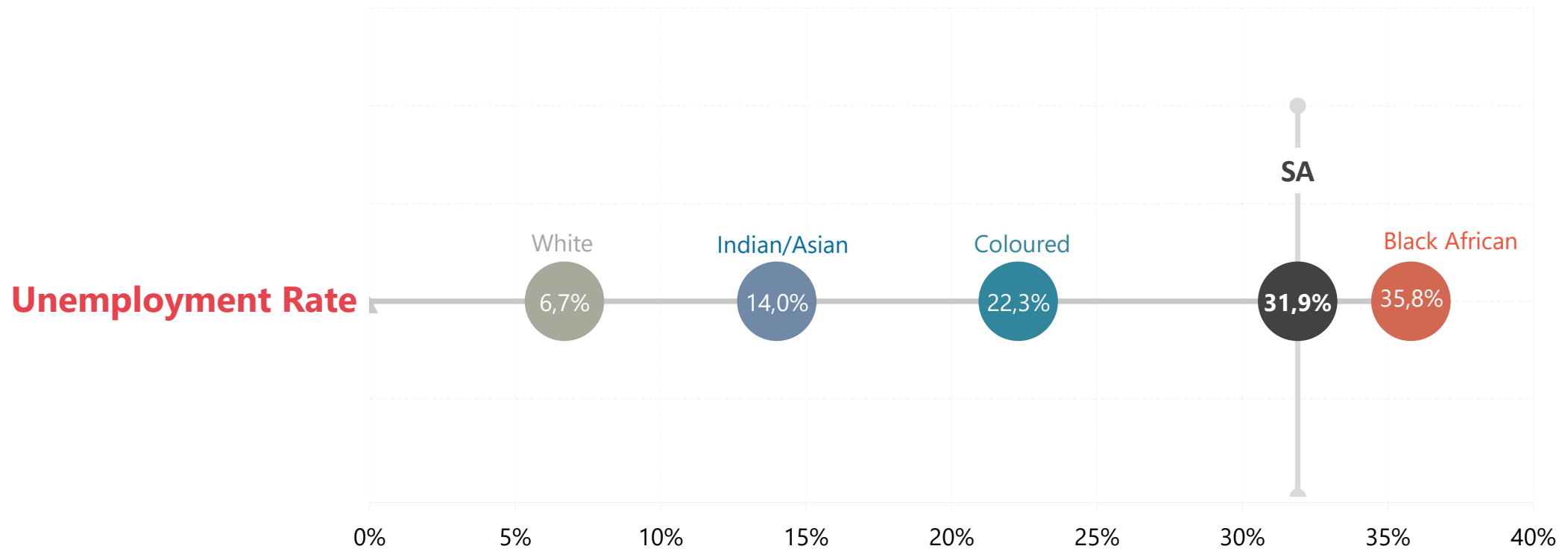
**34,5% of young females** aged 15-24 years were not in employment, education or training (NEET) in Q4: 2024. This is a 0,7 of a percentage point increase compared to Q4: 2023.

NEET (15-24 years) by sex, Q4:2020-Q4:2024



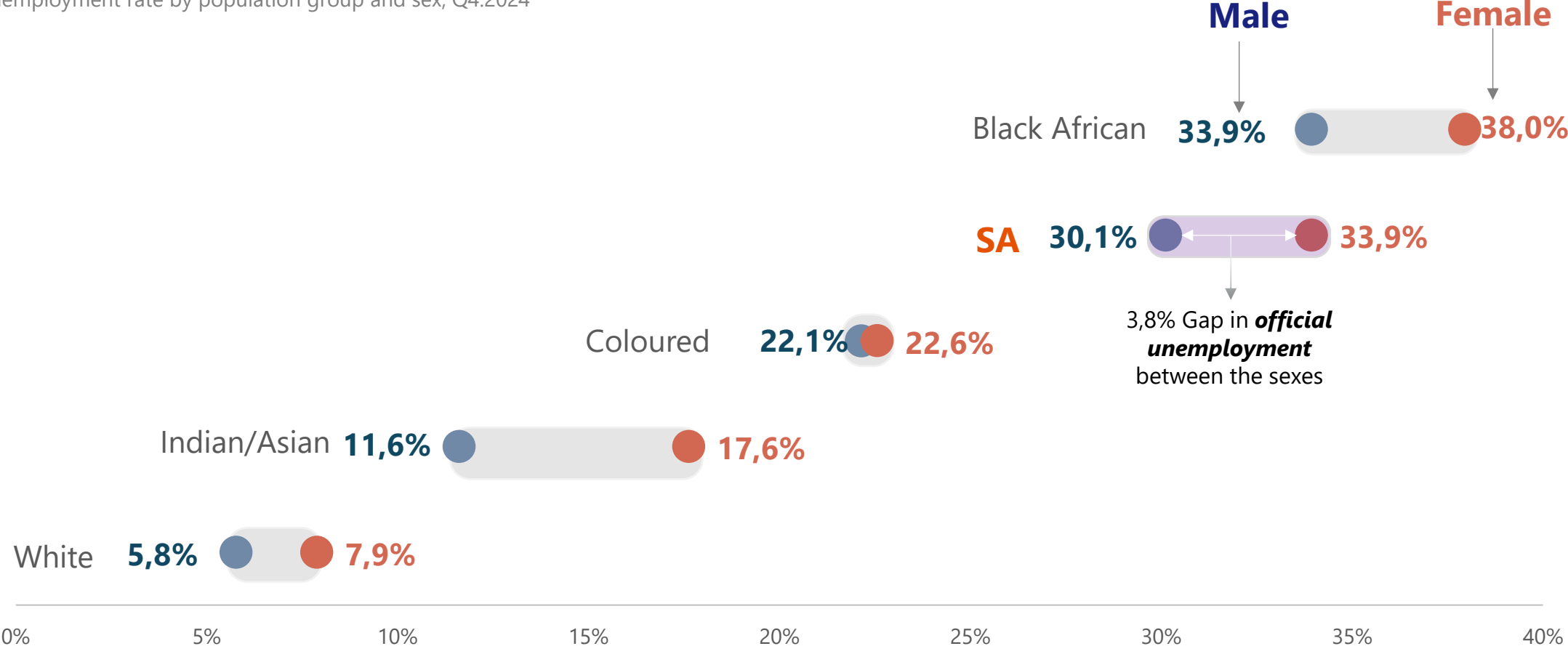
The unemployment rate among the **Black African (35,8%)** population group remains higher than the national average and other population groups.

**OFFICIAL** unemployment rate by population group, Q4:2024



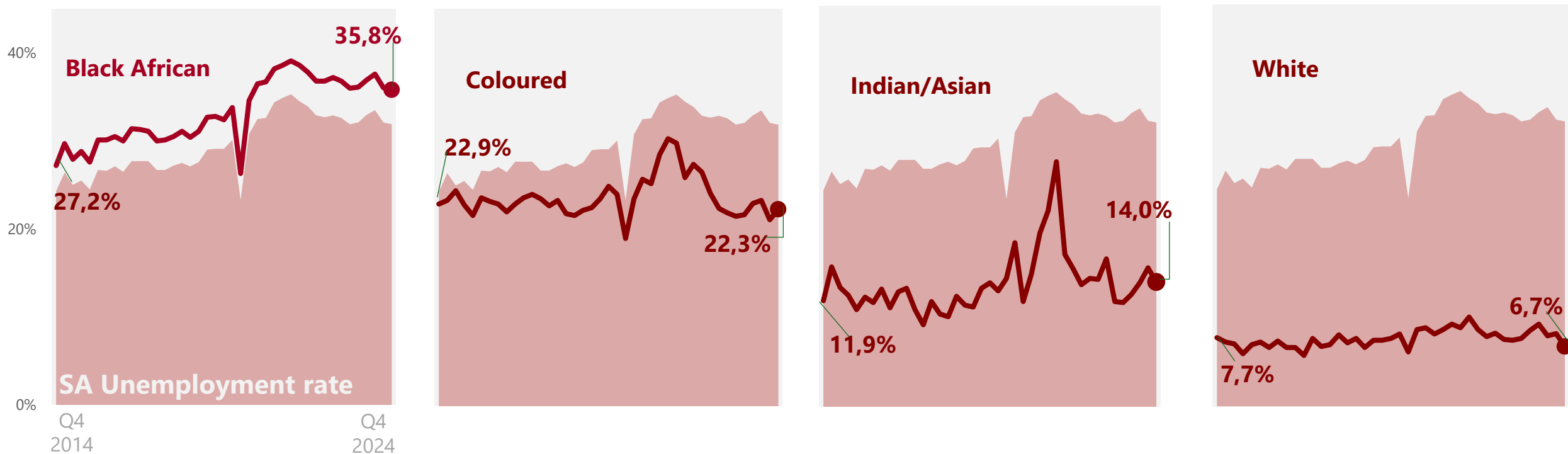
**Black African women** continue to be the most vulnerable with an unemployment rate of **38,0%** in Q4:2024. *This is 4,0 percentage points higher than the national average for women at 33,9%.*

Official unemployment rate by population group and sex, Q4:2024



Black African unemployment rate has consistently been higher than the national average and other population groups over the past 10-year period.

Official Unemployment rates by population group,  
Q4:2014-Q4:2024





# RECAP (QLFS, Q4:2024)

- ❖ Unemployment rate **decreased** by 0,2 of a percentage point to 31,9% in Q4:2024. Both the absorption rate and labour force participation rate **increased** by 0,2 and 0,1 of a percentage point respectively, to 41,1% and 60,3% in Q4:2024 compared to Q3:2024.
- ❖ The number of unemployed persons **decreased** by 20 000 in Q4:2024 compared to Q3:2024. The number of employed persons **increased** by 132 000 in the same quarter.
- ❖ The largest **employment gains** were recorded in Finance (232 000) and Manufacturing (41 000), while the largest **employment losses** were recorded in Community and social services (63 000) and Trade (48 000).



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PARTICIPATION**

# **NOW IN THE FIELD**

**Geospatial Information Frame**

**Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (April 2024-March 2025)**

**Quarterly Labour Force Survey(Collected quarterly)**

**General Household Survey (January-December)**

**Domestic Tourism Survey (January-December)**

**Consumer Price Index (Collected monthly)**



**stats sa**

Department:  
Statistics South Africa  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

QLFS  
Q4:2024

# Ndzi hela kwala!



[statssa.gov.za](http://statssa.gov.za)



[twitter.com/StatsSA](https://twitter.com/StatsSA)



[facebook.com/StatsSA](https://facebook.com/StatsSA)



**stats sa**

Department:  
Statistics South Africa  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA