



## **EFF STATEMENT ON QUARTERLY LABOUR FORCE SURVEY FOR FIRST QUARTER OF 2024**

Tuesday, 14 May 2024.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) notes, with deep concern, the latest unemployment statistics in South Africa. Earlier today, Statistics South Africa released the first Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for quarter one of 2024, revealing a rise in unemployment rates compared to the last quarter of the previous year.

According to Stats SA, there has been an increase of 330,000 unemployed people in the first quarter of 2024, marking the largest increase in unemployment since the COVID-19 national lockdown in the second quarter of 2020. This troubling trend highlights the ongoing failure of the ruling party to address the pressing issue of unemployment in our country.

Of particular concern is the grave impact on the youth, with approximately 35.5% of young people aged 15–24 years not in employment, education, or training (NEET). Despite slight improvements compared to previous years, the persistently high youth unemployment rate reflects the systemic challenges and barriers faced by young South Africans in accessing opportunities for economic empowerment and advancement.

Even more disturbing is that individuals with higher educational qualifications still face significant barriers to employment. In quarter one of 2024, graduates experienced an unemployment rate of 11.8%, representing an increase of 2.3 percentage points compared to the previous quarter.

Although this figure is notably lower than the overall unemployment rate, it remains disheartening for our nation to have such a substantial number of unemployed

graduates. These individuals represent a valuable resource that could be instrumental in driving economic growth and contributing to the overall welfare of our country.

It is evident from this survey that there is a distinct lack of political will to enact effective policies and interventions to address the root causes of unemployment, particularly among individuals with educational attainment below matric. Unemployment rates for this demographic group continue to exceed the national average, highlighting the urgent need for targeted strategies to enhance skills development, job creation, and economic inclusion.

As the incoming government, the EFF is prepared to implement a series of bold policies aimed at addressing the pressing issue of unemployment, particularly among the youth, as expressed in our manifesto. Firstly, we will create millions of quality jobs from 2024 to 2029 by bolstering state capacity, driving state-led industrialisation, diversifying industries, safeguarding infant and existing industries, facilitating black ownership through subsidies, raising tariffs, and promoting South African products domestically and internationally, especially in strategic trading partnerships.

Secondly, we will introduce legislation mandating all government departments and public institutions to allocate a minimum of forty percent (40%) of their workforce to young people aged between eighteen and thirty-five (18 and 35). This proactive measure will create significant employment opportunities for the youth within the public sector.

Additionally, the EFF government will provide Monthly Job Seeking Allowances to young individuals actively seeking employment, offering financial support during their job search and easing the burden of unemployment. Furthermore, we will enact laws requiring all private firms and corporations to dedicate a minimum of thirty-five percent (35%) of their workforce to young people aged between eighteen and thirty-five (18 and 35).

By implementing these policies, the EFF aims to not only reduce unemployment but also foster inclusive economic growth and empower the next generation of workers.

Furthermore, the EFF emphasises the importance of free, quality education as a pathway to economic empowerment and social mobility.

As we approach the upcoming elections, the EFF stands ready to take decisive action to rectify the failures of the current government and implement bold, progressive policies that will create sustainable employment opportunities and empower all South Africans to thrive.


**ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS**


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