



EFF STATEMENT ON 2023 1ST QUARTERLY LABOUR FORCE SURVEY BY STATISTICS SOUTH AFRICA

Thursday, 18 May 2023

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) notes with deep concern the findings from the 2023 1st Quarter Labour Force Survey published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) today. The report distressingly reveals an increase in the number of unemployed people to 11.2 million, a surge of 179,000 more unemployed people compared to Q4 of 2022, despite new job opportunities in the same period.

What is more troubling is that certain groups are bearing the brunt of this economic plight. Black African women remain the most vulnerable, with an unemployment rate of 39.9% in Q1:2023, a staggering 4.5 percentage points higher than the national average for women at 35.4%. This is a distressing demonstration of the systemic and structural economic barriers that continue to hamper the economic participation of black African women.

The survey also shows that the decade-long trend of rising unemployment continues unabated, underlining the ruling party's continued inability to stimulate the economy and generate job opportunities. The black African population suffers an unemployment rate of 37.2%, higher than the national average and other population groups, signifying the lack of economic transformation post-apartheid.

Most worryingly, 3.7 million young people aged 15-24 years are not in employment, education, or training (NEET), constituting 36.1% of the age group. Although the overall NEET rate saw a marginal decrease of 0.9 of a percentage point in Q1:2023 compared to Q1:2022, these statistics remain dishearteningly high. Additionally, the youth aged 15-24 and 25-34 continue to record the highest unemployment rates of 62.1% and

40.7% respectively, symbolising a bleak future for the upcoming generations.

Meanwhile, graduate unemployment has increased from 5.5% in Q1:2013 to 10.6% in Q1:2023. This data points to a betrayal of our educated youth, who were promised a brighter future with their degrees but now face a barren employment landscape.

All these troubling numbers are further compounded by the fact that Statistics South Africa admits to its limited capacity to provide deeper insights into these startling figures due to insufficient funding and strategic support. This clearly demonstrates the ruling party's indifference and negligence towards the very institutions that should be at the forefront of informing national policy and strategies.

The EFF persistently offers feasible solutions to the mounting unemployment problem, yet these suggestions seem to be disregarded by the ruling party. We urge all workers and the unemployed to join us in demanding immediate action to stabilise the electricity supply, enhance funding for institutions like StatsSA, and initiate a path towards authentic economic recovery.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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