



**stats sa**

Department:  
Statistics South Africa  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

# Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q3:2023

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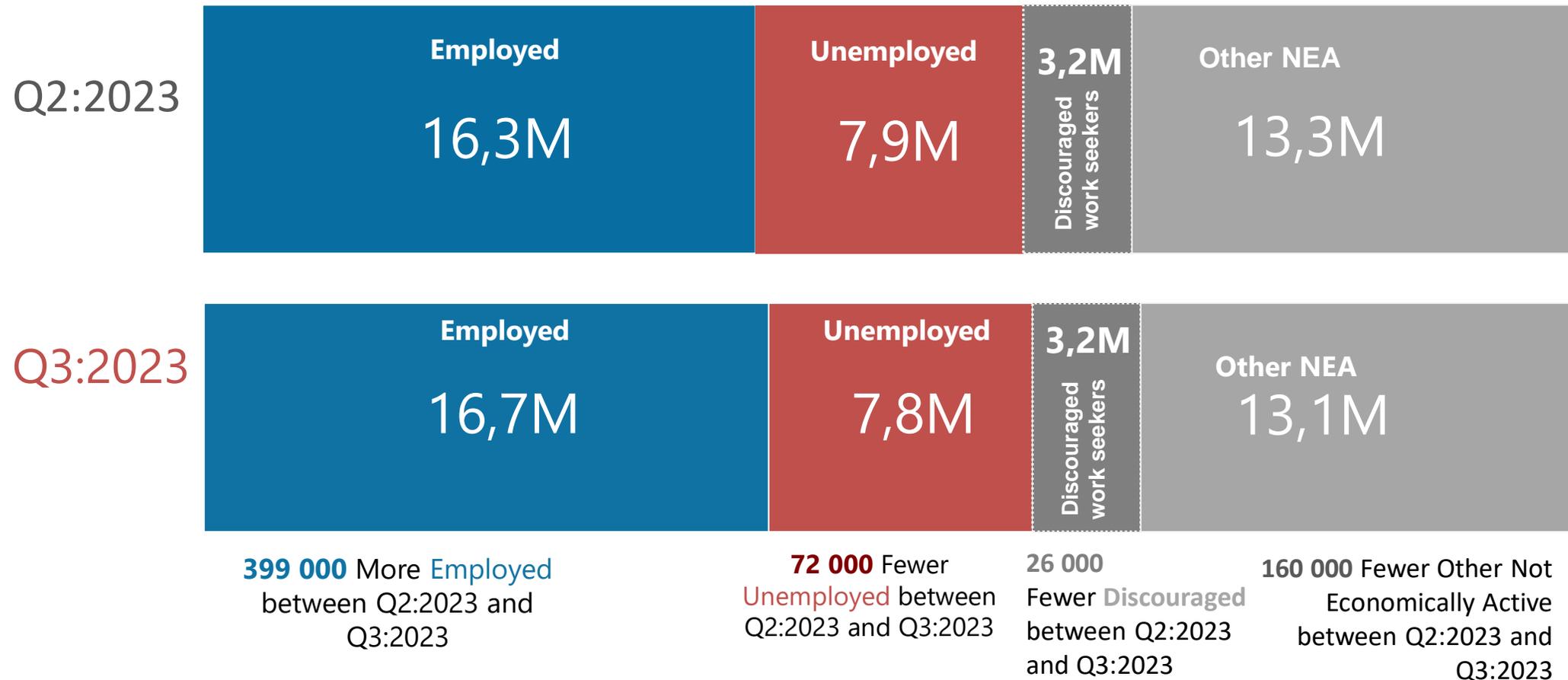
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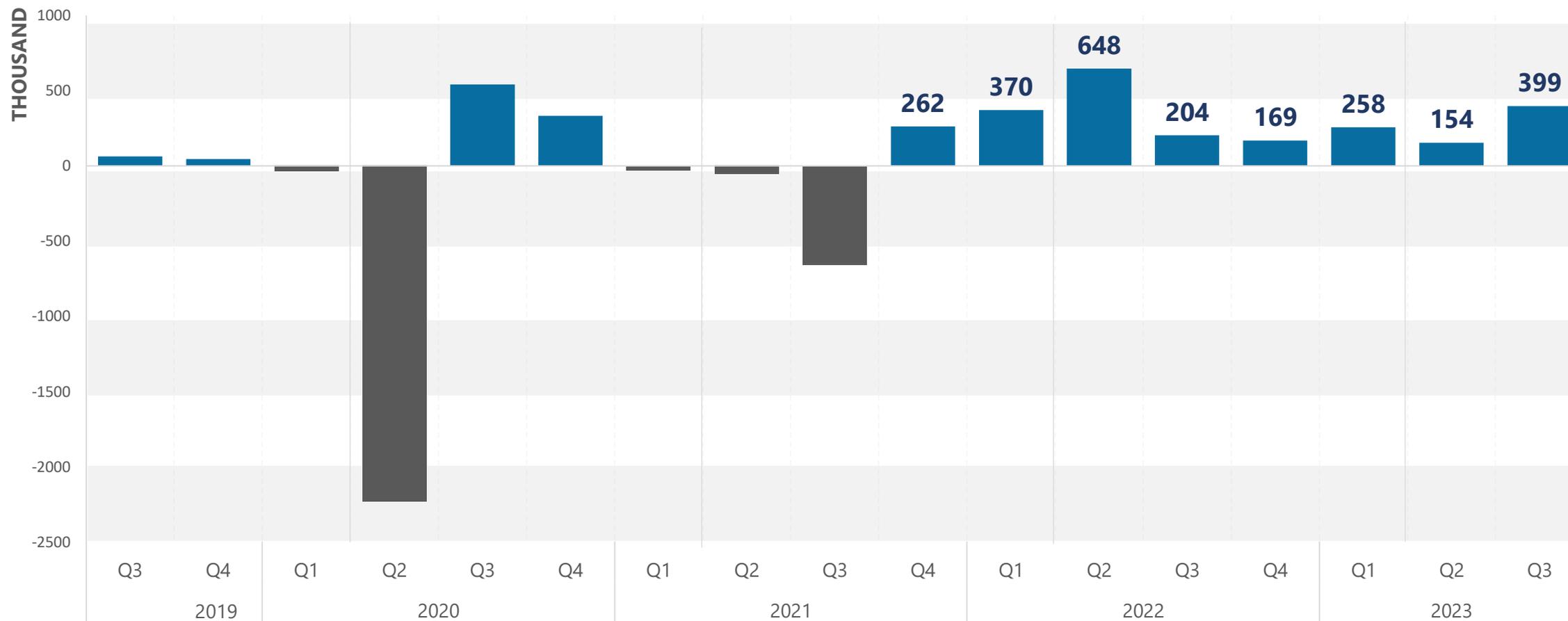
# Total employment increased by **399 thousand** to **16,7 M** in Q3:2023

Not Economically Active (NEA)



# The 399 thousand employment increase in the third quarter of 2023 is the 8th consecutive increase and second-largest increase since Q4: 2021

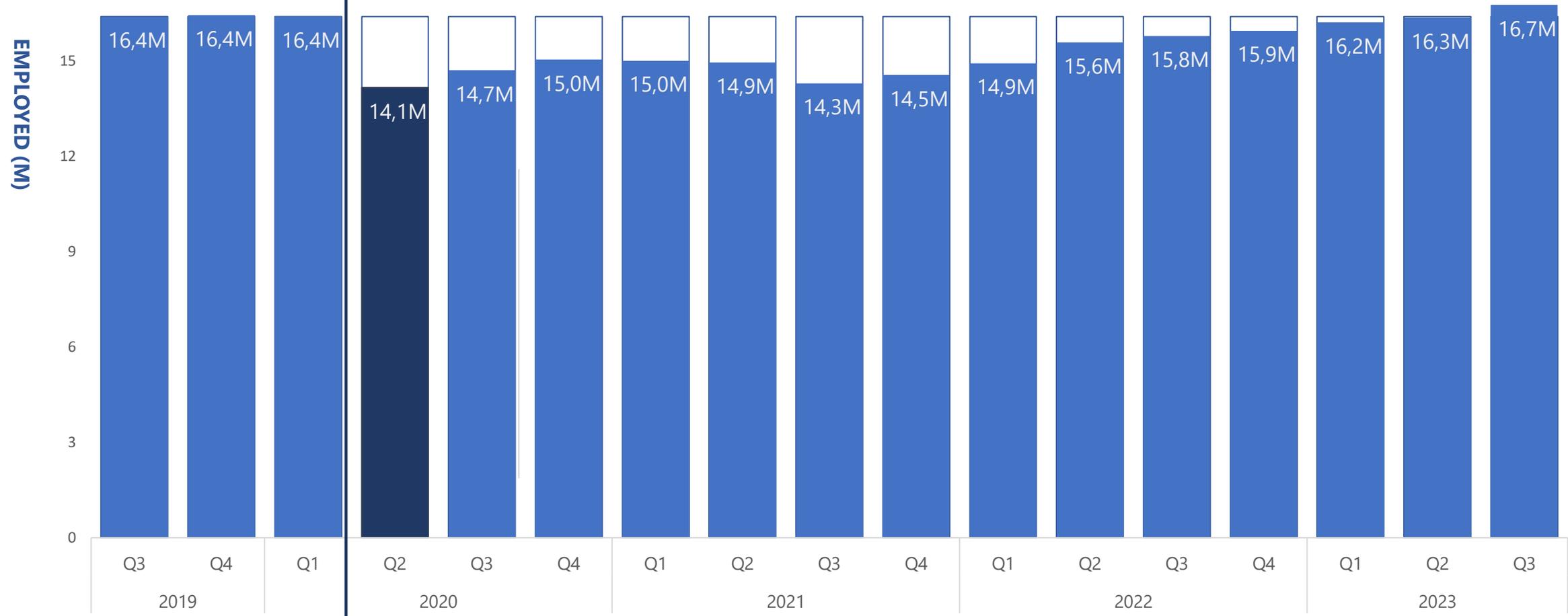
Employment changes Q3:2019 – Q3:2023



The number of **employed** increased to 16,7M and has surpassed **pre-COVID** levels of 16,4M.

Employed Q3: 2019 – Q3: 2023

◀ Pre - COVID



The official unemployment rate stands at **31,9 %**, a decrease of 0,7 of a percentage point in Q3:2023 compared to Q2:2023.

## 40,9 million

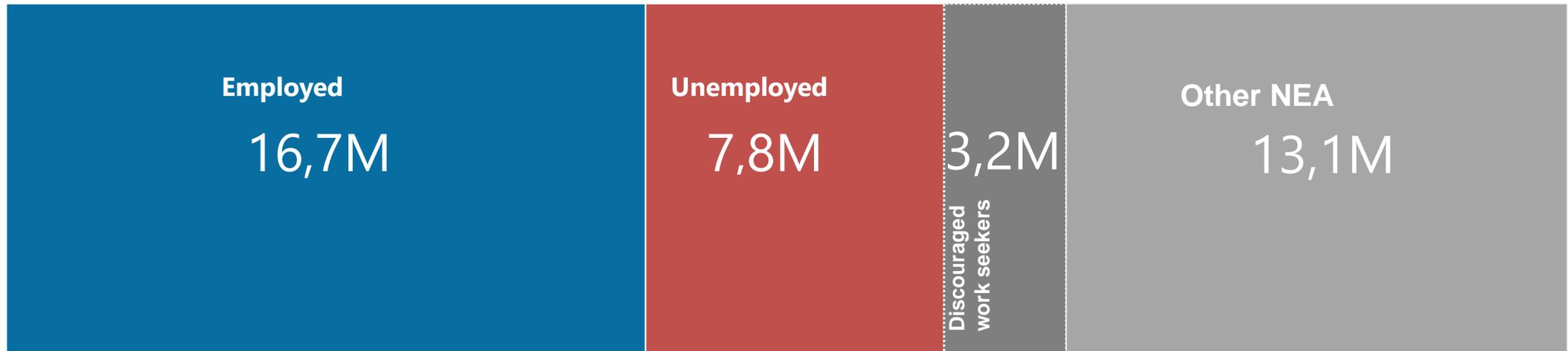
People of working age in South Africa (15 – 64-year-old)

### Labour force

24,6 million

### Not Economically Active

16,3 million



SA's official unemployment rate stands at

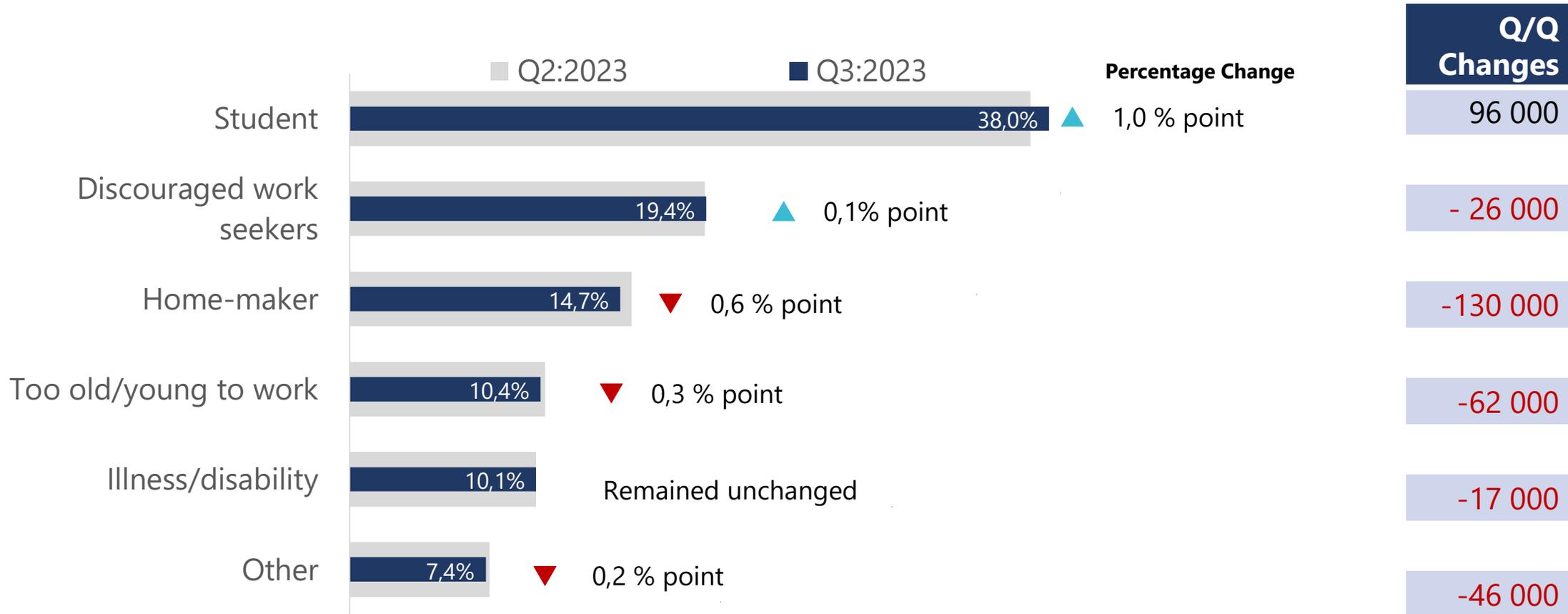
**31,9%**

Decreased by 0,7 of a percentage point between Q2:2023 and Q3:2023

*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.*

# The number of **Not Economically Active** persons **decreased by 186 000** in Q3:2023 compared to Q2:2023

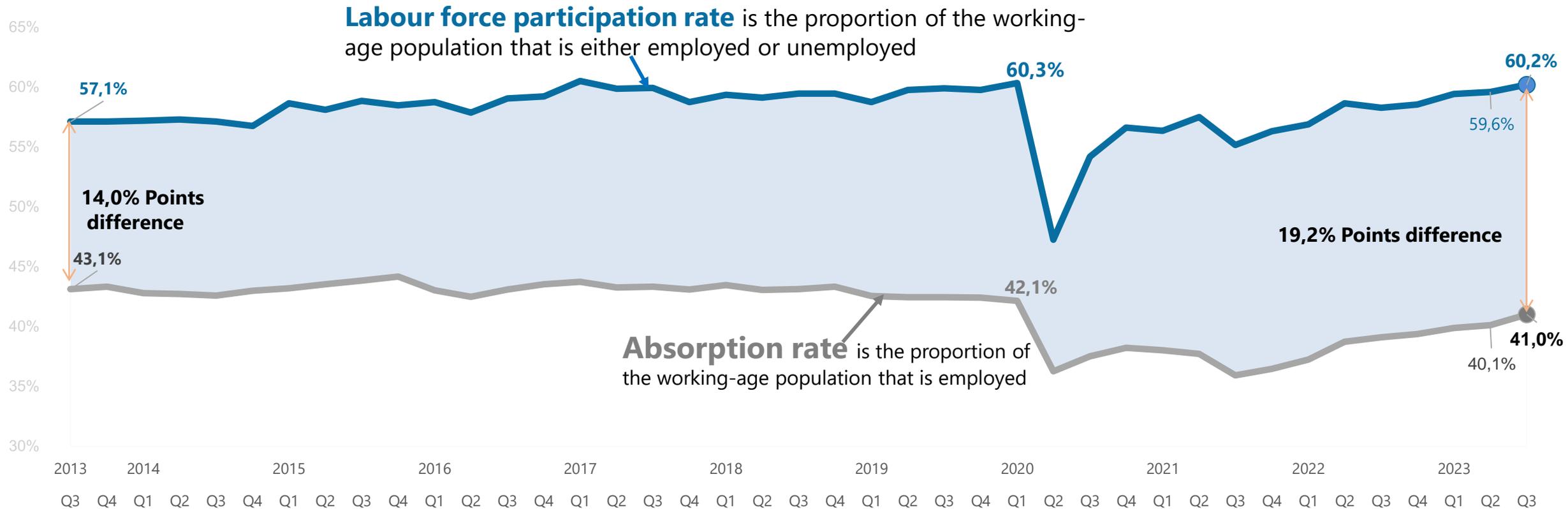
Characteristics of the not economically active, Q2:2023 vs Q3:2023



*Due to rounding numbers may not add up*

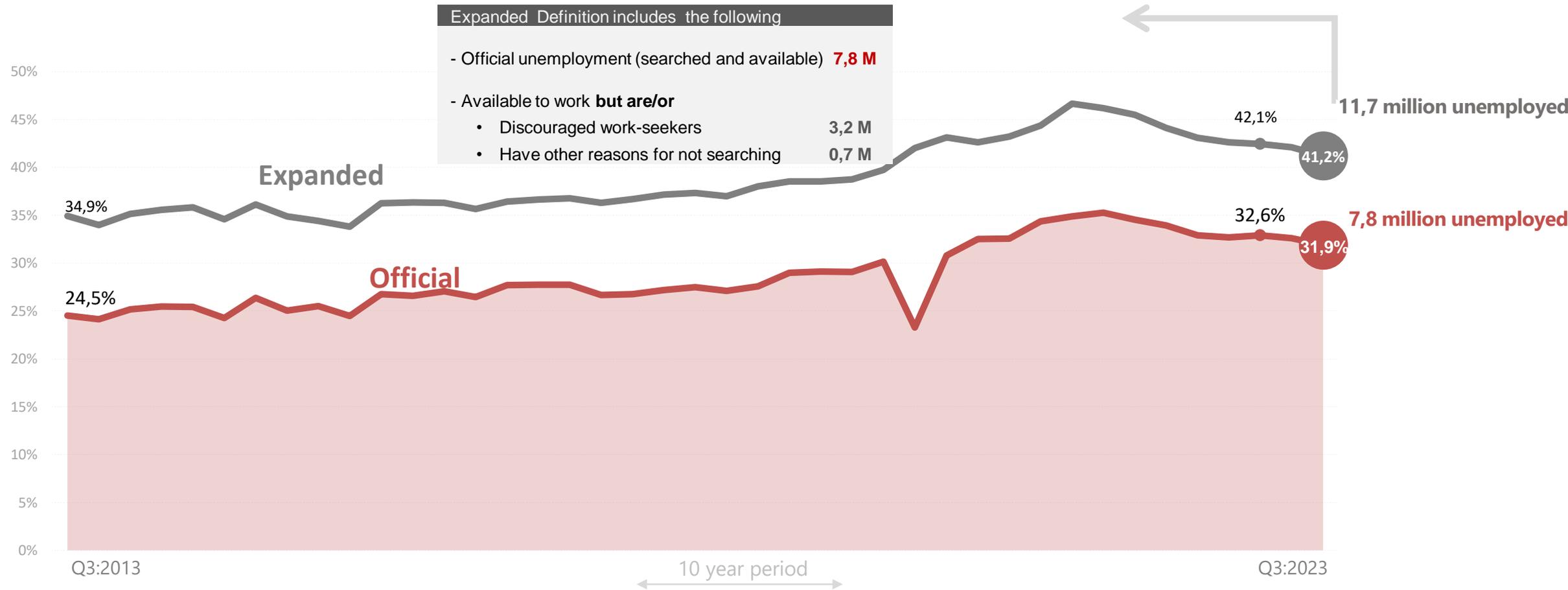
The **absorption rate** increased by 0,9 of a percentage point from 40,1% in Q2:2023 to 41,0% in Q3:2023, whereas the labour force participation rate increased by 0,6 of a percentage point to 60,2%

Labour force participation and absorption rates Q3:2013-Q3:2023



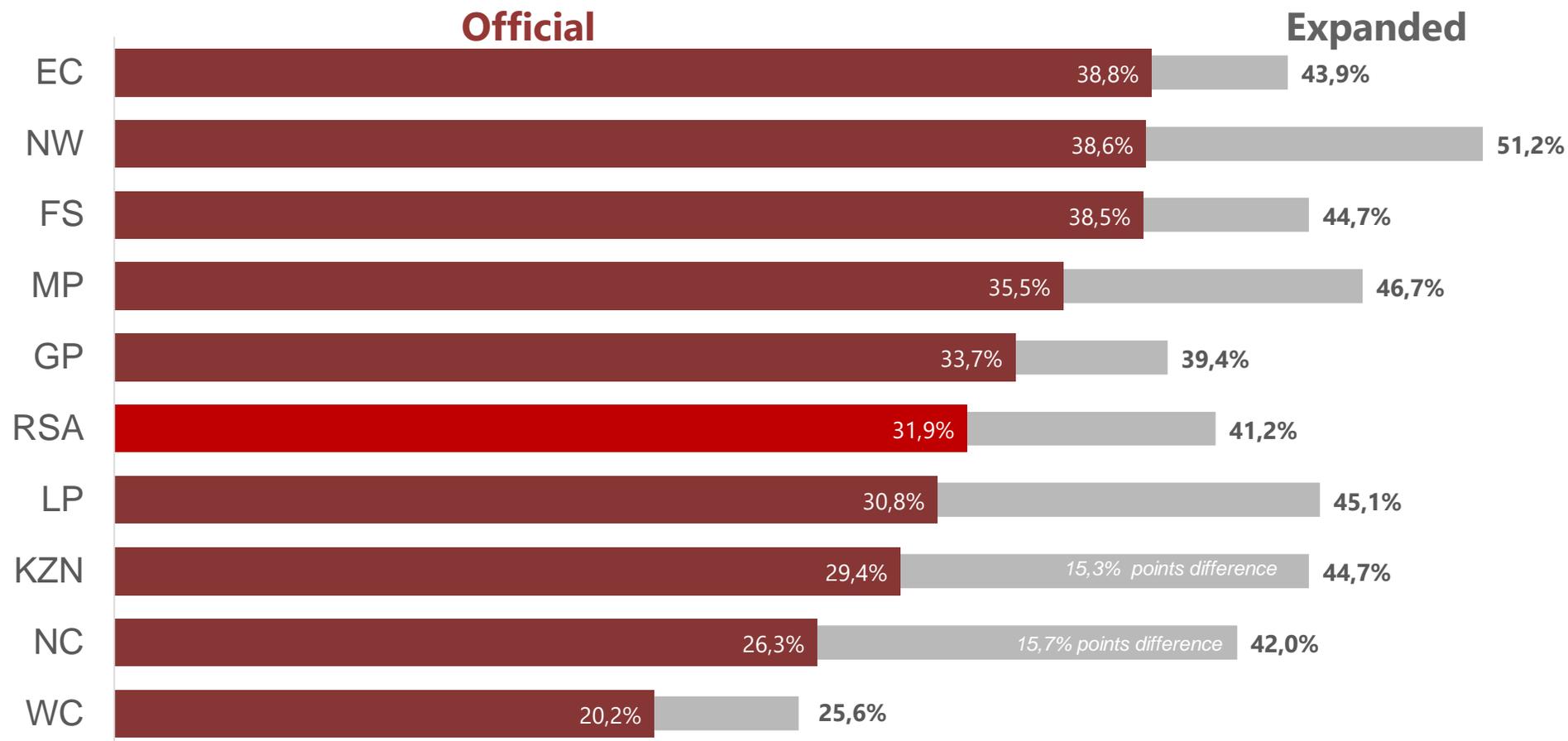
# The expanded unemployment rate decreased by 0,9 of a percentage point to 41,2% when comparing Q3:2023 and Q2:2023.

Official vs Expanded unemployment: Q3:2013-Q3:2023



**NW** (51,2%) recorded the **highest expanded unemployment rate** in Q3:2023, followed by MP (46,7%). **NC and KZN** recorded more than a 15 percentage points difference between **expanded** and **official** unemployment rates

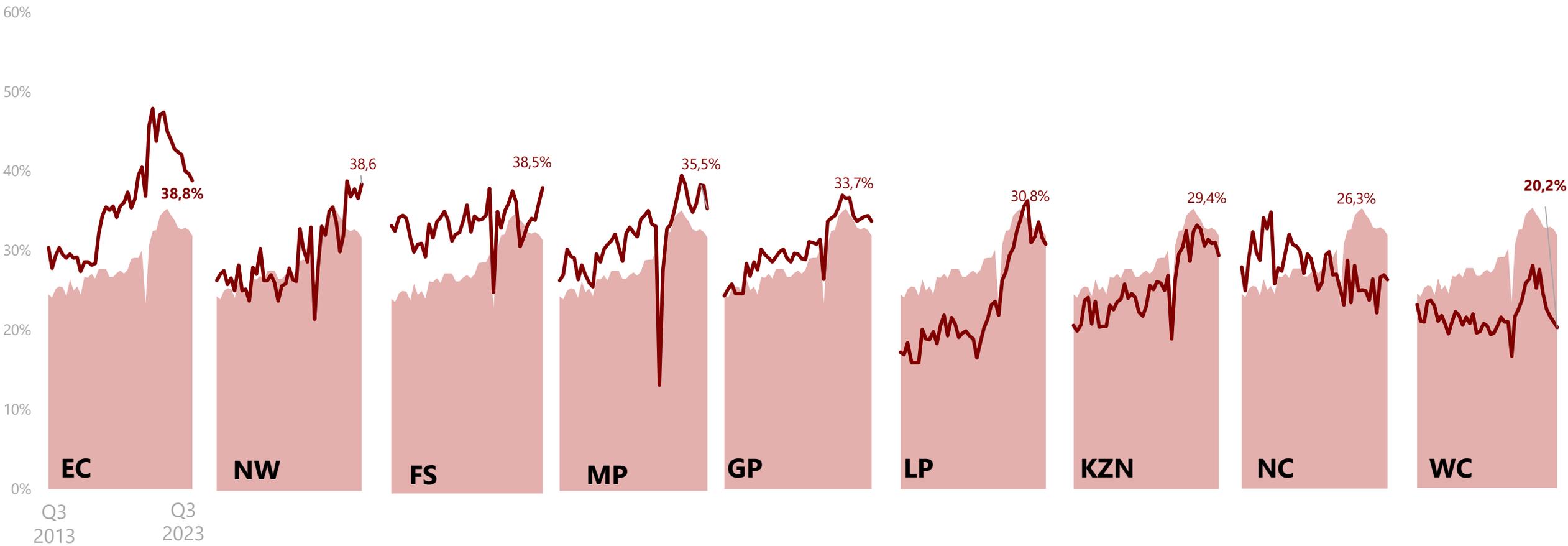
Provincial unemployment rate: **Official** vs Expanded Q3:2023



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.

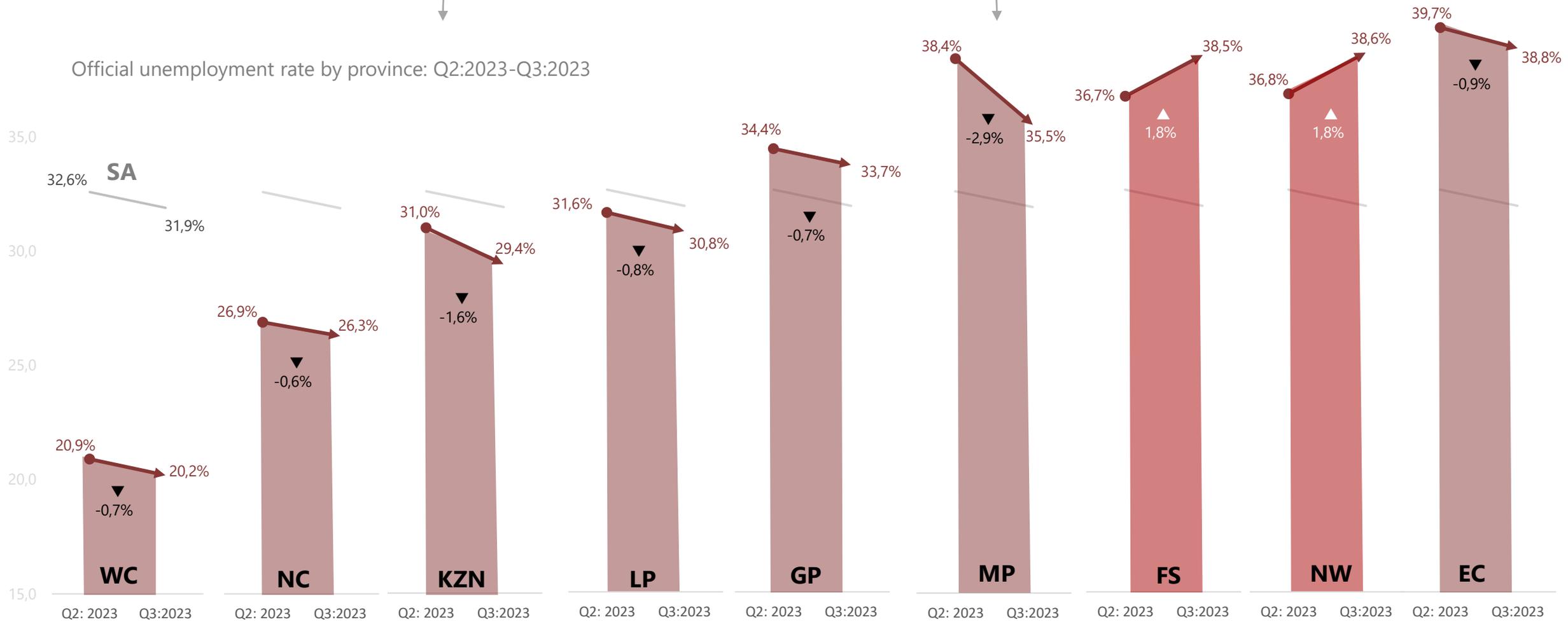
Official Unemployment rates by province, Q3:2013-Q3:2023

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



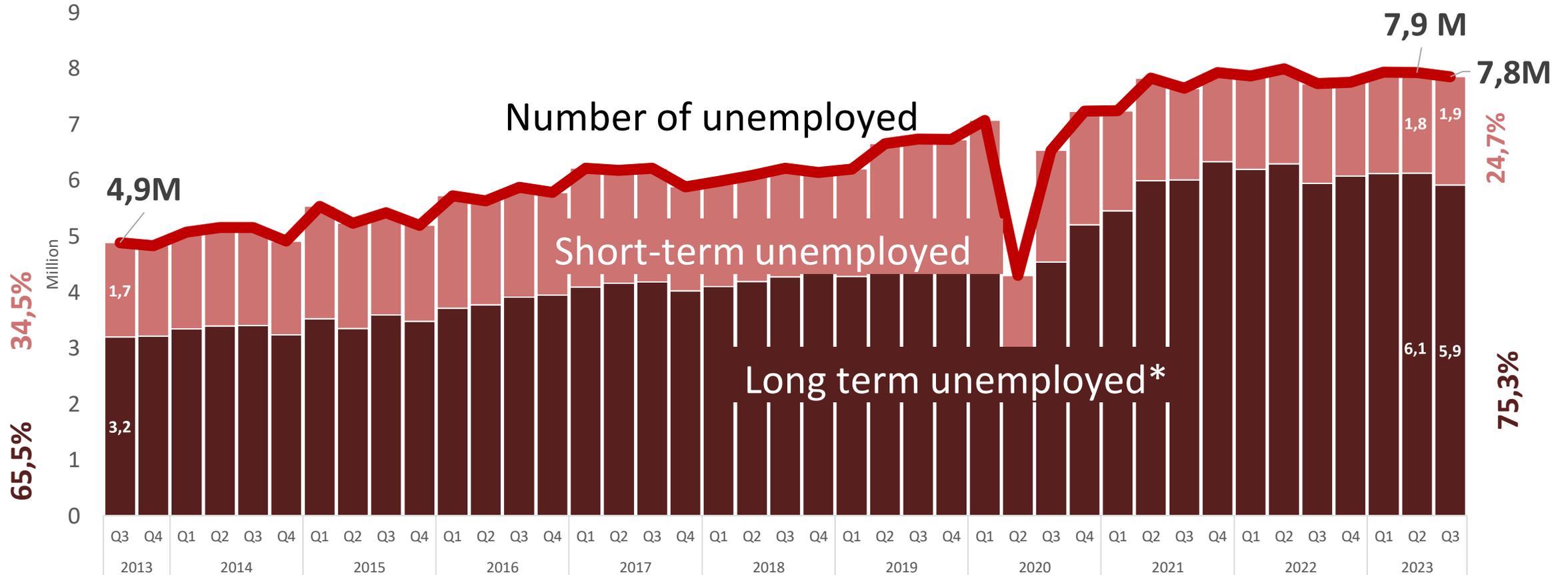
The **unemployment rate** decreased in seven provinces between Q2:2023 and Q3:2023.  
 The largest decreases were recorded in **MP** (down by 2,9 percentage points, followed by **KZN** (down by 1,6 percentage points)

Official unemployment rate by province: Q2:2023-Q3:2023



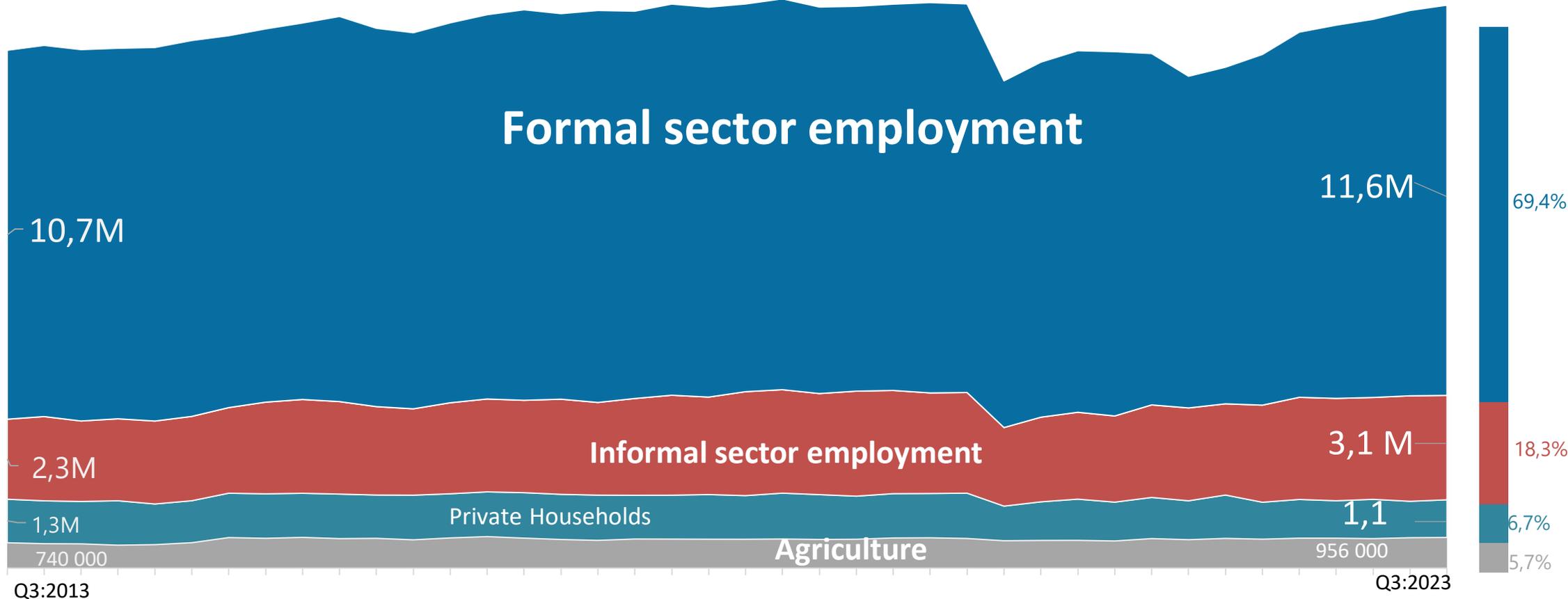
The number of unemployed people in South Africa increased from 4,9 million in Q3:2013 to 7,8 million in Q3:2023. The proportion of those in long-term unemployment increased from 65,5% in Q3:2013 to 75,3% in Q3:2023

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



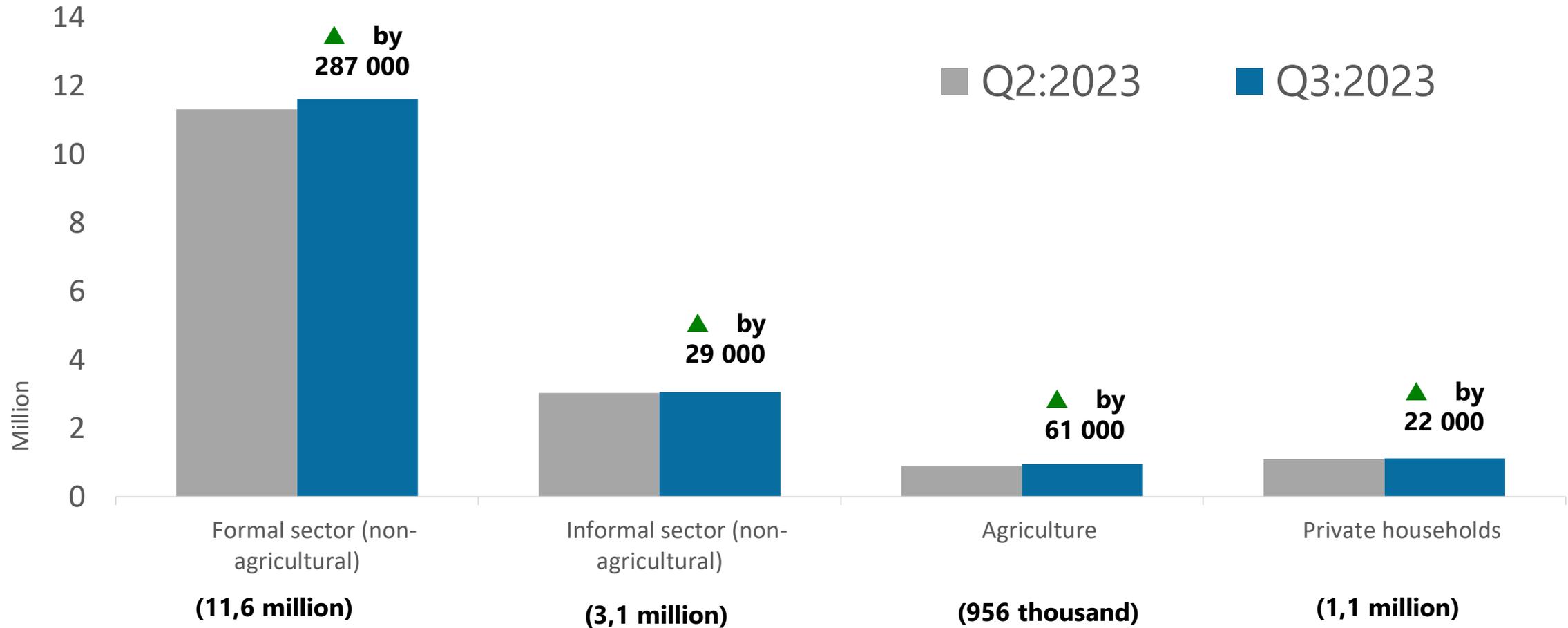
# The **formal sector** in South Africa accounts for **69,4%** of total employment.

Employment share by sector, Q3:2013 to Q3:2023



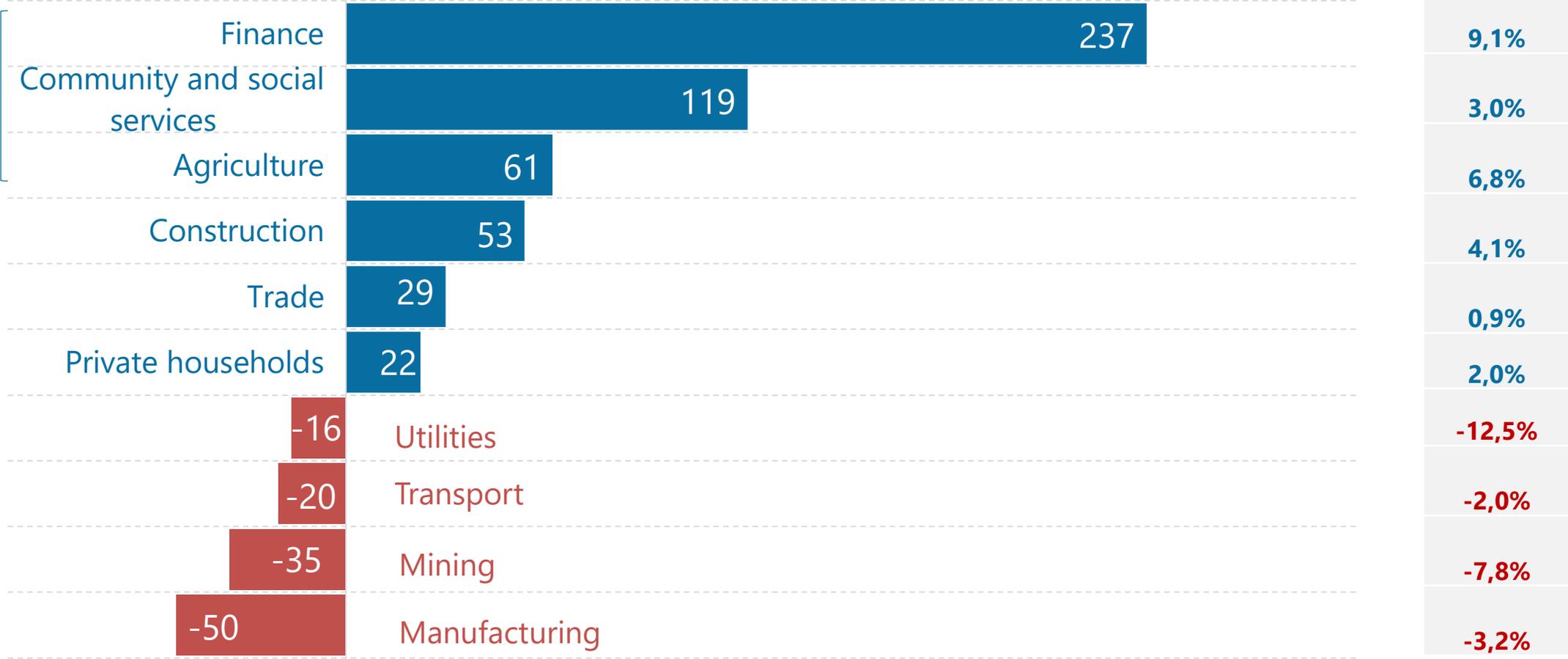
All the sectors experienced an increase in employment with the formal sector employment increasing by **287 thousand jobs** between Q2:2023 and Q3:2023.

Employment changes by sector, (Quarter-on-quarter)



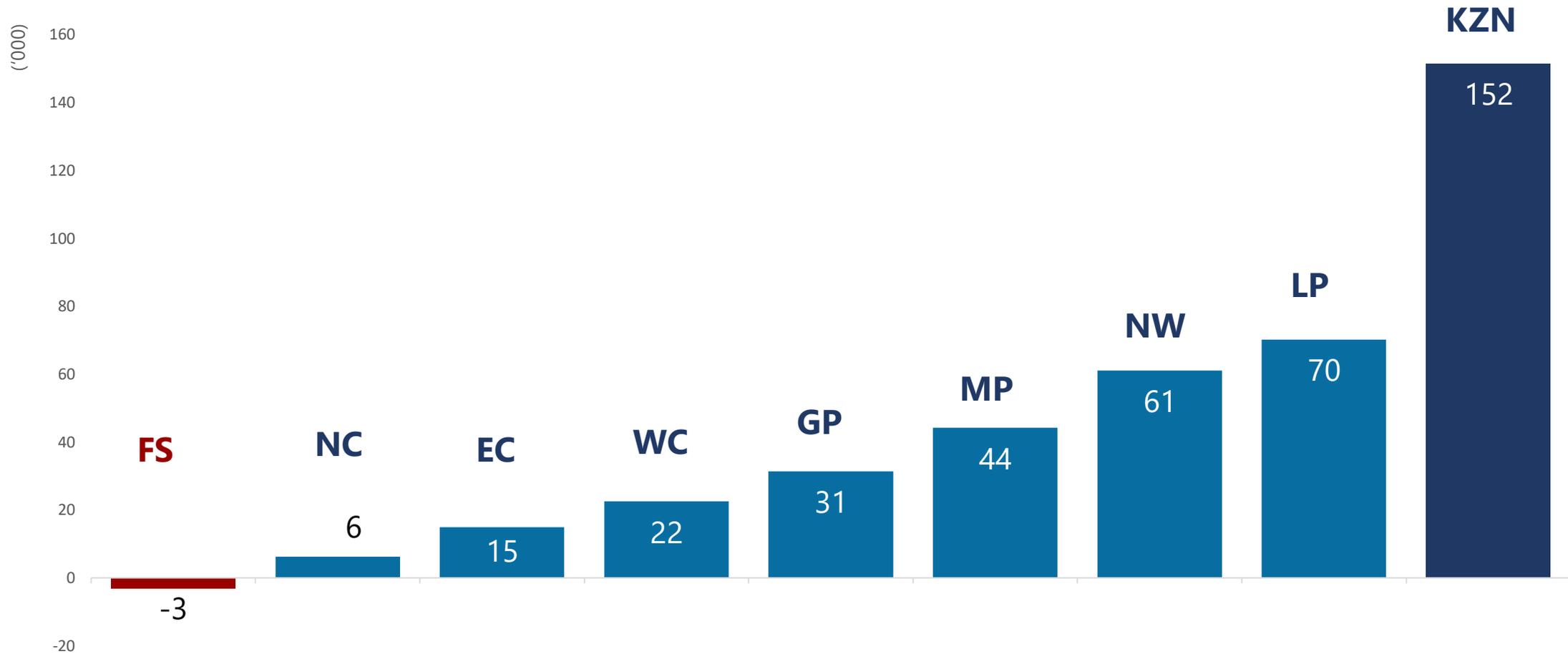
# Employment increases were mainly in the Finance, Community and Social Services, and Agriculture industries.

Employment changes by industry, **Quarter-on-quarter change ('000)**



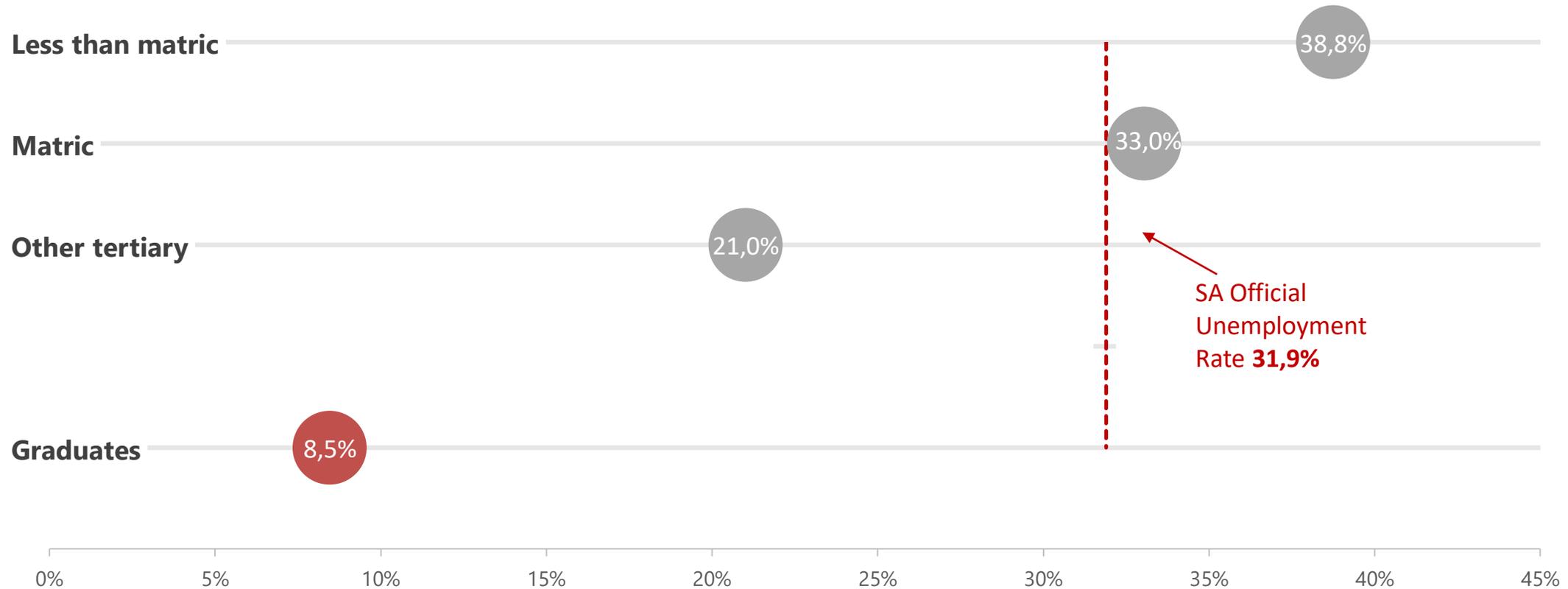
# KZN, LP and NW recorded the largest employment increases in Q3:2023

Quarter-on-quarter change in employment by province ('000) (Q2:2023 and Q3:2023)



**Graduate** unemployment rate decreased by 1,1 percentage points to **8,5%** in Q3:2023 compared to 9,6% in Q2:2023. Those with **less than matric** remain vulnerable with an unemployment rate of 38,8% which is higher than SA official unemployment rate.

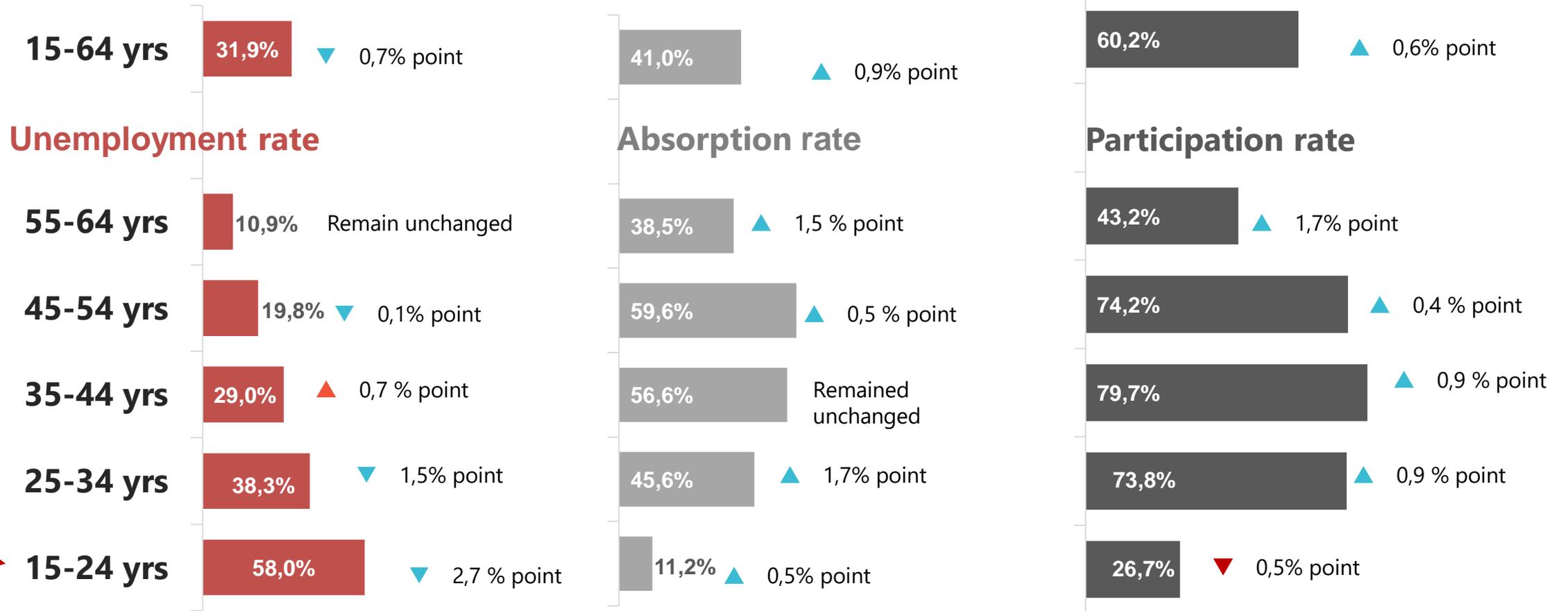
Official Unemployment rate by level of education, Q3:2023



Youth aged 15-24 years and 25-34 years continue to have the highest unemployment rates at 58,0% and 38,3% respectively.

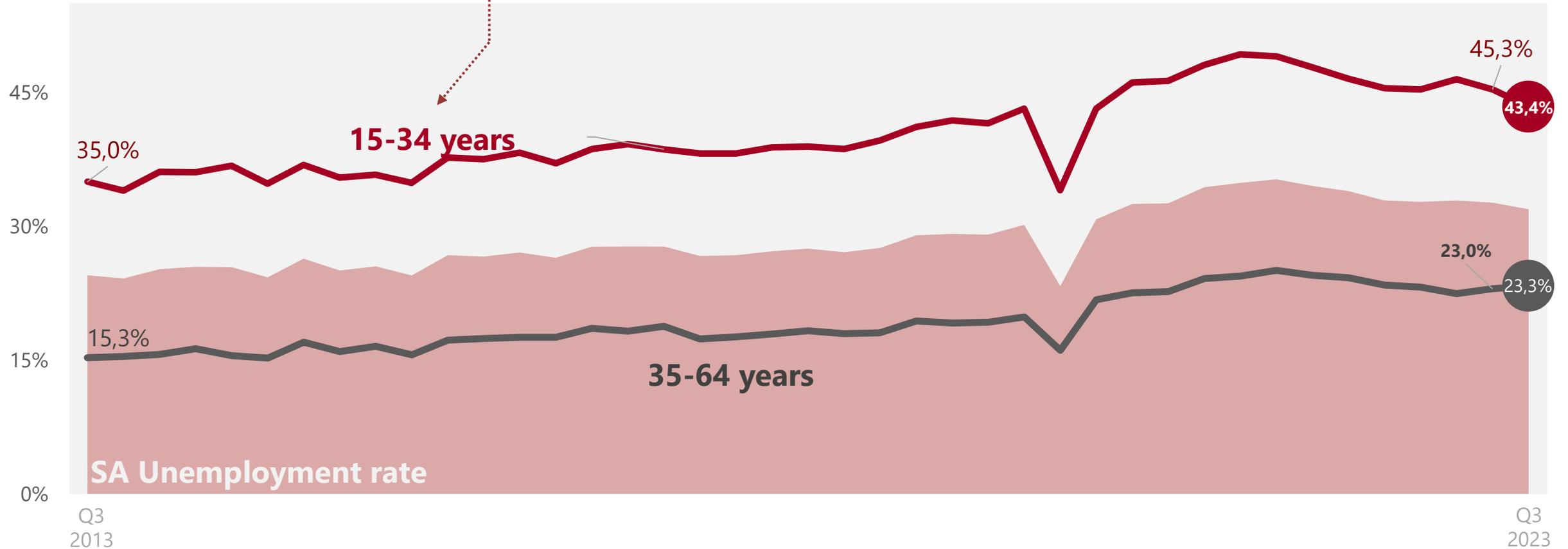
Labour market rates by age group, Q3:2023

Change: Percentage points  
Q2:2023 to Q3:2023

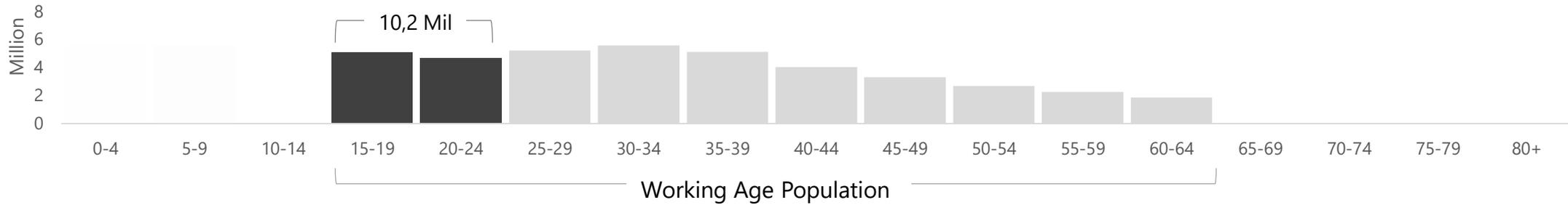


# Youth aged **15-34 years** are more vulnerable to unemployment when compared to older age groups

Official Unemployment rates by age group,  
**Q3:2013-Q3:2023**



Approximately **3,3 million (32,7%)** out of **10,2 million** young people aged 15-24 years were not in employment, education or training (NEET).



Number of NEET for ages 15-24  
Q3:2023

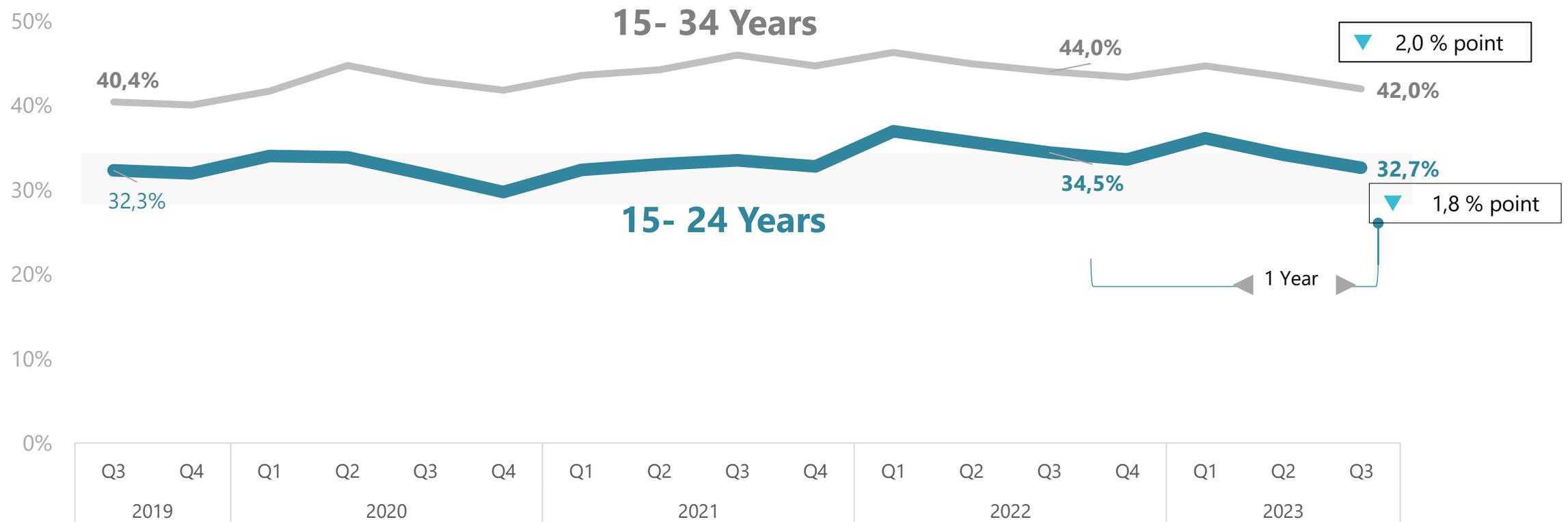
**3,3 Mil NEET**

**6,9 Mil**

**Employed or in  
Education or Training**

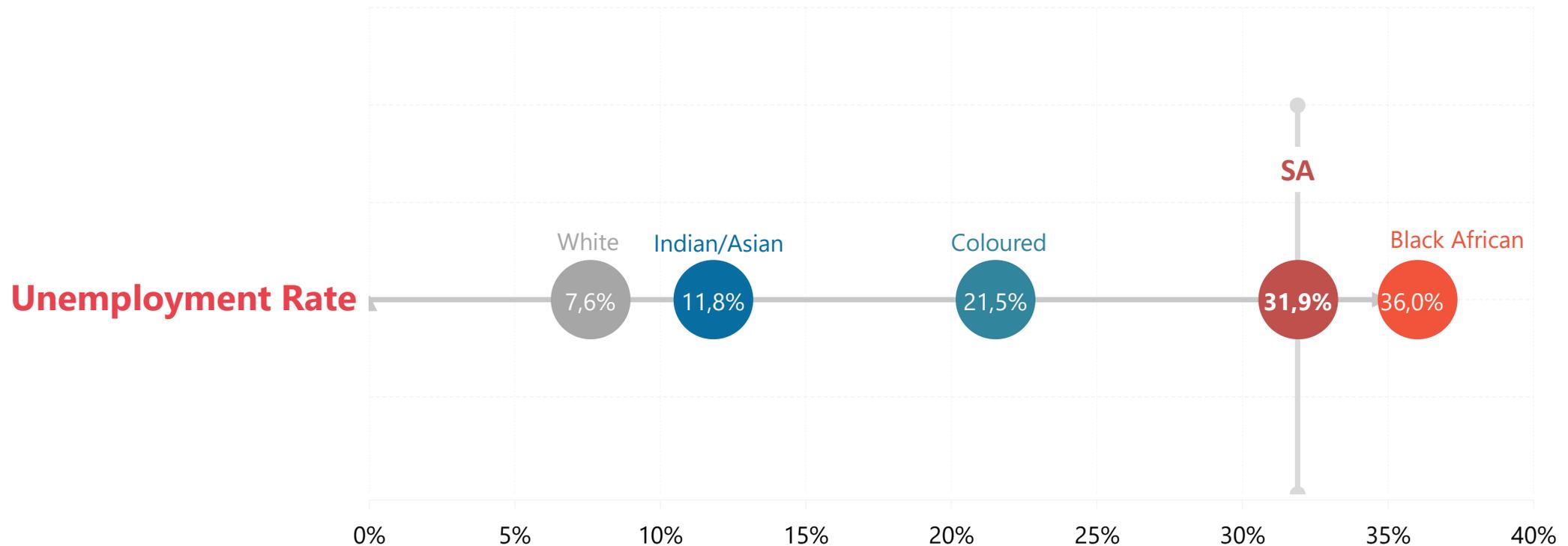
The overall NEET rate (15 – 24yrs) decreased by 1,8 percentage points in Q3:2023 compared to Q3:2022.

Q3:2019-Q3:2023 NEET rate for ages 15-24 & 15-34 year old



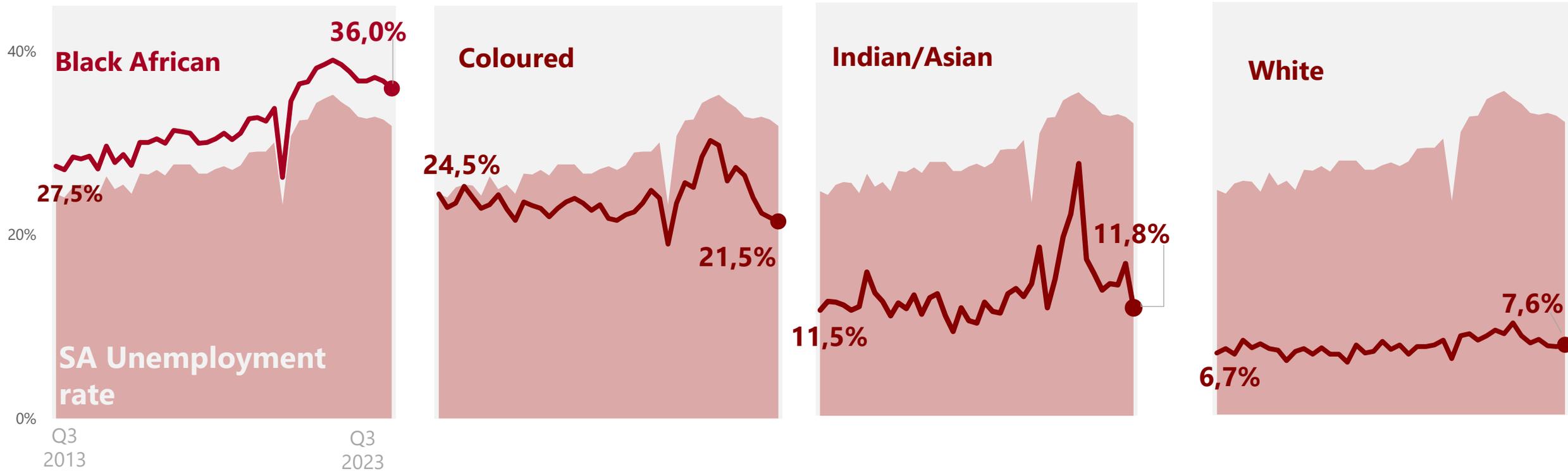
The unemployment rate among the **Black African (36,0%)** population group remains higher than the national average and other population groups.

**OFFICIAL** unemployment rate by population group, Q3:2023



# Black African unemployment rates have been consistently higher than other population groups over the past 10-year period.

Official Unemployment rates by population group,  
Q3:2013-Q3:2023



# RECAP (QLFS, Q3:2023)

- ❖ Unemployment rate **decreased** by 0,7 of a percentage point to 31,9% in Q3:2023. Both Absorption and labour force participation rates increased by 0,9 and 0,6 of a percentage point to 41,0% and 60,2% respectively.
- ❖ The number of those who were employed **increased** by 399 000 in Q3:2023 compared to Q2:2023. The number of those who were unemployed **decreased** by 72 000 in the same quarter.
- ❖ The largest **industry employment gains** were recorded in Finance (237 000), Community and social services(119 000), and Agriculture (61 000).



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

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

**Consumer Price Index (Collected monthly)**

**Income and Expenditure Survey 2022/23 (Nov 2022-Nov 2023)**



QLFS

Q3:2023

Ndzi hela kwala!



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