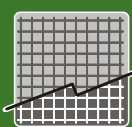


THE  
YOUTH  
OF  
SOUTH AFRICA

Selected findings from Census '96



**Statistics**  
**South Africa**

**Statistics South Africa  
Private Bag X44  
Pretoria 0001  
South Africa**

**Steyn's Building  
274 Schoeman Street  
Pretoria**

**Users enquiries: (012) 310-8600  
Fax: (012) 310-8500  
Main switchboard: (012) 310-8911  
Fax: (012) 322-3374**

**E-mail: [info@statssa.pwv.gov.za](mailto:info@statssa.pwv.gov.za)  
Website: [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za)**

**THE  
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**Statistics South Africa  
Pretoria  
2001**

**Mr PL Lehohla  
Statistician-General**

THE YOUTH OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**Authors:** Welcome M. Sekwati  
Research and Development  
Statistics South Africa

Ros Hirschowitz  
Chief Director: Research and Development  
Statistics South Africa

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# Introduction and executive summary

“Youth are a valued possession of the nation. Without them there is no future. Their needs are immense and urgent.” — former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela

After the transition to democracy in 1994, South Africa emerged as a society with a variety of inherent problems. The legacy of racial, gender and urban/rural inequality inherited from the policies of the previous government had a negative impact on the living conditions of certain sectors of the population. These policies affected the provision of basic services such as water and electricity, the provision of housing, and access to education, health care and employment.

Since 1994 the government has been addressing these imbalances. Particular attention has been paid to improving the living conditions of rural communities, women and the youth.

Using data from Census '96, this report presents a comprehensive picture of the youth of South Africa. Areas highlighted include the demographic profile, marital status and childbearing patterns, access to education and participation in the labour market.

The statistics presented in the study provide a baseline measurement to facilitate planning, implementation and monitoring of policies for developing youth as an important sector of the population.

According to the National Youth Act of 1996, youth in South Africa are defined as persons in the age group 14 to 35 years. This age bracket is used in most instances to define youth in this report. However, in some sections of the report this age bracket differs somewhat. For example, as 15 is the age at which children are permitted formally to enter the labour market, this age is used as the lowest age in the chapters on employment and unemployment. Breakdowns by five-year age groups exclude 14 year olds and 35 year olds. Another deviation from the defined age category is in the case of childbearing, where 12 years is used as the lowest age in the age bracket. This was prompted by the fact that a small percentage of girls have a first child at age 12 or 13.

## Demographic profile

- Of the 40,6 million people living in the country in October 1996, just over 16,1 million or 40% were youth, i.e. people in the age bracket 14 to 35. South Africa's population is thus relatively youthful, a feature of the population of many developing countries.
- Nearly four in every five of the youth in the country were African, somewhat less than one tenth coloured, one tenth white and the remaining 3% Indian.
- The proportion of African youth (79%) is higher than the proportion of Africans in the entire population (77%) while the proportion of white youth (10%) is smaller than the proportion of whites in the population as a whole (11%).
- About 21% of all youth in South Africa live in KwaZulu-Natal, followed by Gauteng (20%) and Eastern Cape (14%). Only 2% of the country's youth live in Northern Cape.

- Proportionately, more youth are living in urban areas (57%) than the rest of the population (54%).
- Indian youth are the most urbanised (97%), followed by whites (91%), while African youth are the least urbanised (48%).

### Marital status

- Women in South Africa tend to marry earlier than men. In the 20-24 years age category, 7% of women were married according to traditional African custom and a further 8% according to civil/religious rites. In the same age bracket, 2% of men were married according to traditional African custom and 3% according to civil/religious rites.
- Proportionately more women than men indicated that they were divorced or separated from their spouses. For example, 4% of women in the 30-35 years age category were either divorced or separated from their spouses compared with 2% of men in the same age category.

### Childbearing

- Of all women aged between 12 and 35 years who had given birth to at least one child, 0,7% had given birth to their first child at the age of 12 and 1% at the age of 13 years.
- The highest proportion (11%) gave birth to their first child at the age of 19 or 20 years.
- African women tended to give birth to a first child at a younger age than women in other population groups. About 1% of African women gave birth to their first child at 12 years of age, compared to a small fraction of a percentage of women in the other population groups.

### Education

- Of the different age categories of youth, the largest proportions of those studying were the 14 year olds (94%) and the 15 year olds (93%).
- Of the 14-year-old youth who were studying, 2% did not have any formal education, increasing to 4% among those aged 35 years.
- From 30 years onwards, the proportion of youth studying with no education increases.
- Two per cent of youth aged 20 had qualifications in higher education. This rose to 8% among those aged 35 years.
- Twelve per cent of all youth who were not studying in 1996 did not have any formal education. In the 14-year-old group this percentage was higher (52%) than in the age group 35 years (16%).
- The largest proportion of youth aged 15-35 years had 'some secondary' education.

## The labour market

- There were 15,0 million youth in South Africa in the age group 15 to 35 years. Of these, 7,3 million were not economically active, 4,5 million were employed while 3,1 million were unemployed (expanded definition).

## The employed

- Regarding industry, the community, social and personal services sectors provided the highest proportion of jobs (19,6%) to youth. This was followed by trade (15,3%) and manufacturing (14,2%).
- Of employed female youth, the largest proportion worked in community, social and personal services (25,3%) followed by private households (20,9).
- Of employed male youth, the largest proportion worked in community services (15,7%) followed by manufacturing (15,3%).
- Regarding occupation, the largest proportion of employed young females had elementary jobs (36%) while the largest proportion of employed young males were craftsmen (23%).
- Four per cent of employed male youth compared with 2,8% of employed female youth worked in management positions.
- More than two in every five employed male African youth (45%) worked as artisans and operators, while about half (49,7%) of employed female African youth held elementary jobs.
- Fifty-five per cent of employed male African youth and 70,6% of employed female African youth earned R1 000 and less per month in 1996.

## Unemployment

- The overall unemployment rate (expanded definition) for youth in South Africa according to Census '96 was 40,9%.
- Eastern Cape had the highest youth unemployment rate (55,7%), followed by Northern Province (53,4%) while Gauteng (35,2%) and Western Cape (22,3%) had the lowest rates.
- The unemployment rate for economically active youth was higher for females (49,6%) than for males (33,0%).
- The problem of lack of jobs is more intense in non-urban areas where the unemployment rate was at 51,3% compared to 35,7% in urban areas.
- African youth (50,2%) had the highest unemployment rates of all the population groups.
- The unemployment rates for male youth and female youth without any formal education was 33,8% and 52,3% respectively.

In October 1996, the first non-racial, nationwide census in South Africa's history was conducted. For the first time in a quarter of a century, the census included all South Africans in every part of the country. The results of Census '96 thus provided a comprehensive picture of the entire population.

Due to its full-scale coverage, Census '96 highlighted numerous inequalities ignored in previous censuses. These included areas such as access to services. By showing the interaction between demographic, economic, social and political factors, Census '96 provides indispensable information for effective policy formulation and development planning.

The aim of this report is to give a picture of youth in South Africa based on an analysis of Census '96 data.

## Demarcation and enumeration

In preparation for Census '96, the country was first divided into 86 000 little clusters of 100-200 households called enumerator areas (EAs). These enumerator areas covered suburbs, townships, informal settlements, farms and tribal villages. Close to 100 000 enumerators were employed to collect information by means of questionnaires. Enumerators visited people in their homes, and in hostels, prisons and other institutions. The homeless were also enumerated. In total, more than nine million households were visited.

## Questionnaires

Whereas in earlier censuses questionnaires were printed only in English and Afrikaans, the Census '96 questionnaire was made available in all the eleven official languages of South Africa. Respondents in each household could select the language of their choice when supplying information, by interview or by filling out the form.

Different questionnaires were used to accommodate different situations. There were questionnaires for:

- **Households**

This type of questionnaire was designed to obtain information on persons who belonged to a household on census night. Information requested included the age, educational status and access to services of all persons in the household.

- **Hostels**

This questionnaire in the form of a summary book was designed specifically for people living in hostels, e.g. mine compounds or hostels of local authorities. The supervisor or hostel manager was required to list all the households and persons living in the hostel. The people themselves supplied information on separate personal questionnaires.

- **Institutions and homeless persons**

This questionnaire was designed to obtain information on the type of institution and a list of the inmates.

This questionnaire contained a small sub-set of only seven questions as against the approximate 50 questions in the household and personal questionnaires.

A special questionnaire was designed for homeless persons and this was administered during a sweep on census night. In order to facilitate coding and data entry, results obtained during this type of enumeration were later transcribed to standard enumerator books for special enumeration.

### **Adjusting for undercount**

In certain instances, households or individuals could have been missed, resulting in an undercount, or counted twice, resulting in an overcount. Immediately after enumeration, a nationwide post-enumeration survey (PES) was undertaken. This served as a 'post-mortem' to estimate the percentage of undercount or overcount.

One per cent of the total number of census enumerator areas (EAs) countrywide was sampled for the PES. Skilled enumerators from Statistics South Africa re-listed the households within these EAs and later revisited them to check the count.

The results from this exercise were compared with those from the wider census by matching households and individuals. Accordingly, an adjustment of 10,6% for undercount was made.

### **Chapter outline of the remainder of the report**

In the second chapter, the report focuses on the demographic background of the youth in South Africa. The chapter gives a breakdown of youth by population group, province, urban–rural distribution, first language, and sex.

In the third chapter, marital status and childbearing among youth are examined.

Education is the theme of the fourth chapter. The chapter highlights important issues on the educational status of youth in South Africa. Topics dealt with include the level of enrolment in educational institutions, and the highest educational achievement of those attending or not attending educational institutions.

The last two chapters deal with the labour market in South Africa in relation to the youth.

First, in chapter five, labour statistics are analysed to identify the level of employment among youth in South Africa. The analysis looks at employment sectors, occupational status and monthly income.

In chapter six, the rate of unemployment (using an expanded definition) among the youth in South Africa is discussed. Differences in the unemployment rate in the nine provinces, according to the urban–rural divide, are highlighted. The chapter concludes with a discussion of other factors that affect the differences in unemployment among youth. These include sex, population group and the level of education.

# The demographic picture of youth in South Africa

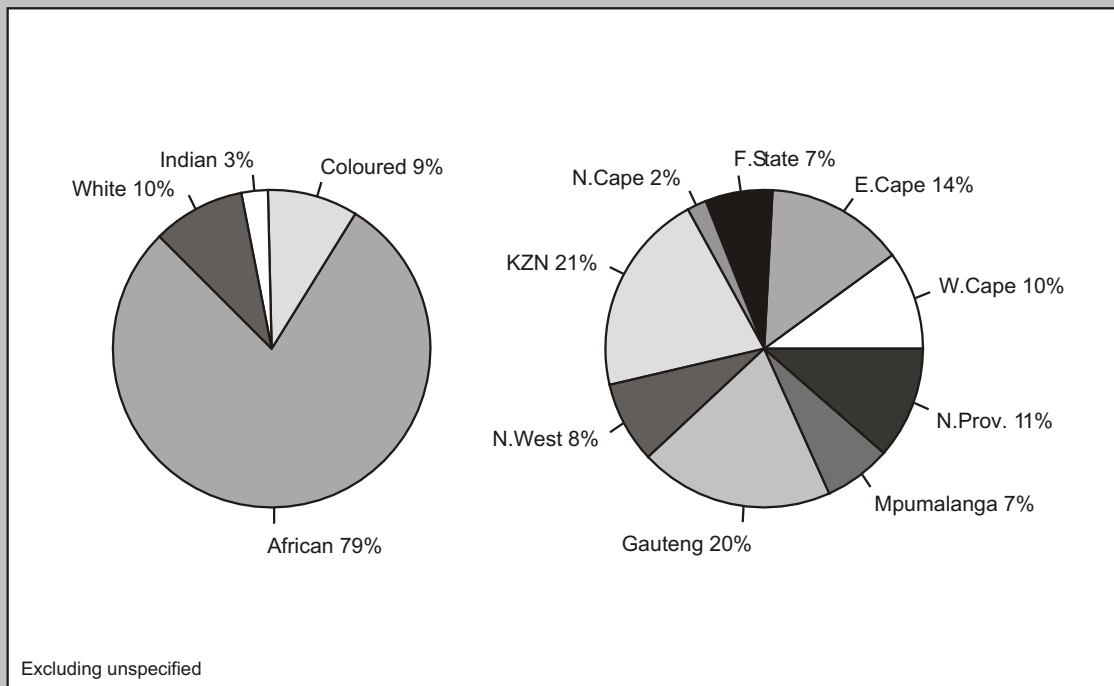
# 2

## Who are the youth and where are they in the country?

The National Youth Act of 1996 defines youth as persons aged from 14 to 35 years.

In 1996 there were 16,2 million youth in South Africa, constituting approximately 40% of the 40,6 million people countrywide. Of these, African youth accounted for 79%, coloured youth 9%, Indian youth 3% and whites 10%.

Figure 2.1: The youth of South Africa by population group and province



The proportion of African youth (79%) is increasing, compared to the proportion of Africans in the entire population (77%), while the proportion of white youth is decreasing (10%) compared with the proportion of whites in the country as a whole (11%).

As shown in Figure 2.1, 21% of youth lived in KwaZulu-Natal at the time of Census '96, while 20% lived in Gauteng, 14% in Eastern Cape, 11% in Northern Province and 10% in Western Cape. In South Africa as a whole, there is a slightly different profile: for example, 18% of the people in the country were in Gauteng, and 12% in Northern Province. Thus there seems to be a movement of younger people from predominantly rural provinces such as Northern Province and Eastern Cape into mainly urban provinces such as Gauteng.

A further breakdown of the youth of South Africa in each of the nine provinces by population group is shown in Table 2.1. The table shows that Africans form the largest proportion of the youth in seven of the nine provinces. At least 97% of the youth in Northern Province are African, followed by 92% in North West and 90% in Mpumalanga. This reflects the distribution of people by population group in the country as a whole.

Table 2.1: The youth of South Africa by population group and province

	African		Coloured		Indian		White		Unspecified		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
WC	399 370	25	874 558	54	16 074	1	274 947	17	45 682	3	1 610 631	10
EC	1 981 985	86	188 214	8	7 570	0	107 997	5	11 721	1	2 297 487	14
NC	113 989	35	167 554	52	830	0	35 981	11	4 358	1	322 712	2
FS	931 333	86	33 084	3	1 214	0	109 089	10	3 960	0	1 078 680	7
KZN	2 786 490	83	48 418	1	317 641	9	175 898	5	24 640	1	3 353 087	21
NW	1 246 054	92	19 242	1	3 734	0	79 131	6	6 050	0	1 354 211	8
GP	2 359 623	74	121 956	4	66 275	2	614 263	19	21 309	1	3 183 426	20
MP	1 015 639	90	8 616	1	5 071	0	92 320	8	5 659	1	1 127 305	7
NP	1 781 961	97	3 103	0	1 975	0	38 891	2	10 594	1	1 836 524	11
<b>SA</b>	<b>12 616 444</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1 464 745</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>420 384</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1 528 517</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>133 973</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16 164 063</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 2.2: Percentage of youth living in urban areas by province

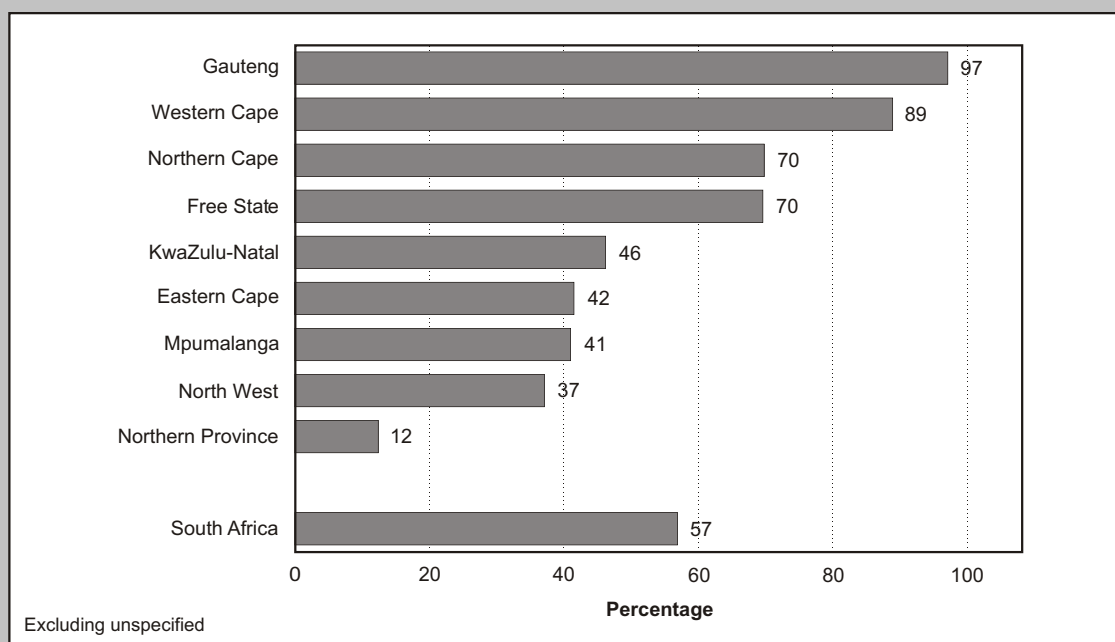
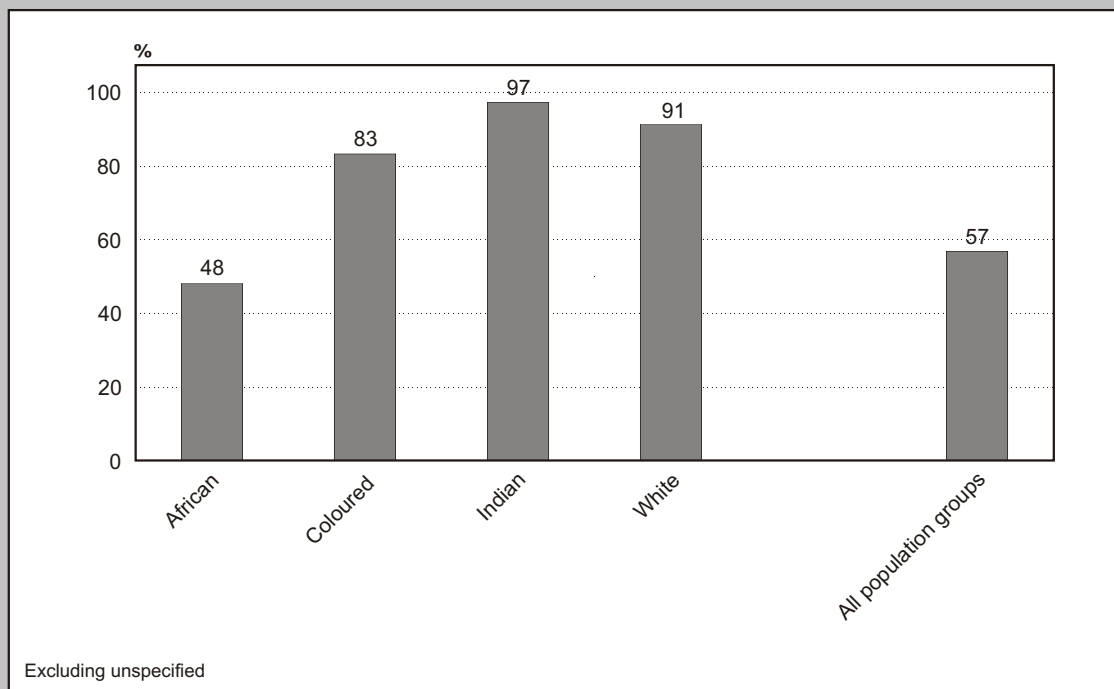


Figure 2.2 shows that 57% of the youth lived in urban areas, as against 54% of all South Africans (not shown here). This confirms the view that youth are moving into urban areas.

However, as regards the nine provinces, vast differences can be observed in the urban/non-urban distribution of the youth in each of them. Gauteng has the largest proportion (97%) of youth who live in urban areas, followed by Western Cape (89%), and Northern Cape and Free State (70%). On the other hand, Mpumalanga (41%), North West (37%) and Northern Province (12%) have the least urbanised youth in the country.

Differences in terms of urbanisation of youth are also observable among the population groups. Figure 2.3 indicates that there are proportionately more Indian youth in urban areas (97%), followed by white (91%) and coloured youth (83%) and then African (48%).

Figure 2.3: Percentage of youth living in urban areas by population group

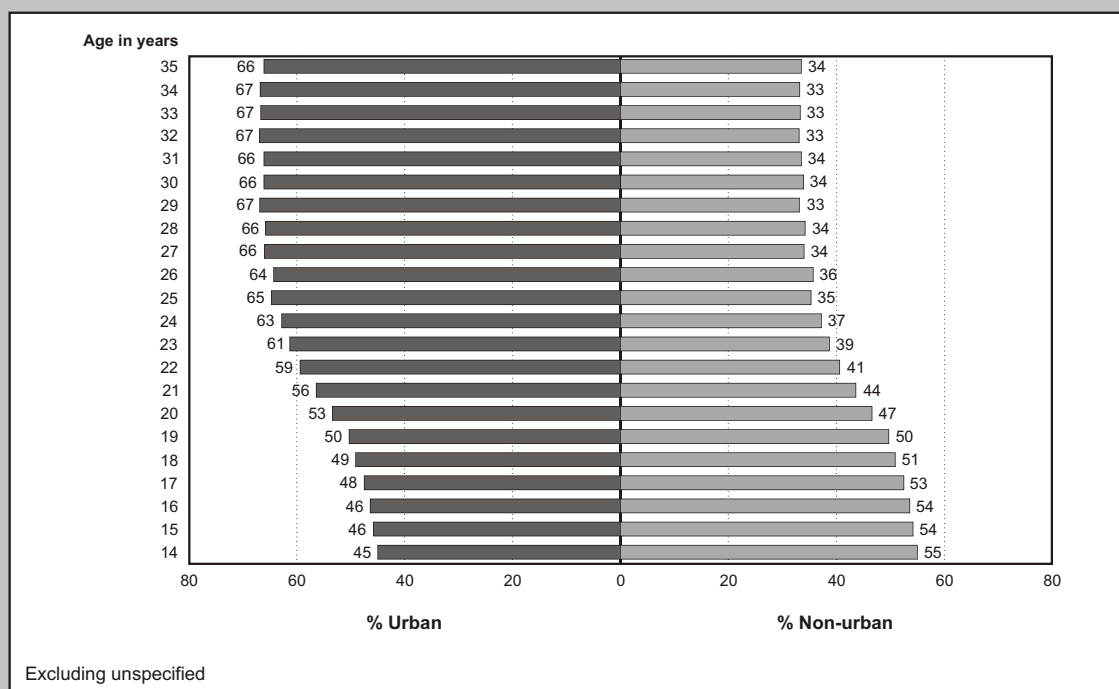




## Internal migration of youth in South Africa

We have seen from the above that there appears to be a tendency for youth to migrate from non-urban to urban areas. This applies in particular to African males. Figure 2.4 shows that whereas more males aged 14-18 lived in non-urban than urban areas, this pattern reverses from the age of 15 upwards, and the proportion of young males in non-urban areas decreases steadily with increasing age.

Figure 2.4: Migratory pattern of male youth between urban and non-urban areas by age in years



By age 27 upwards, two-thirds of all young males were living in urban areas.

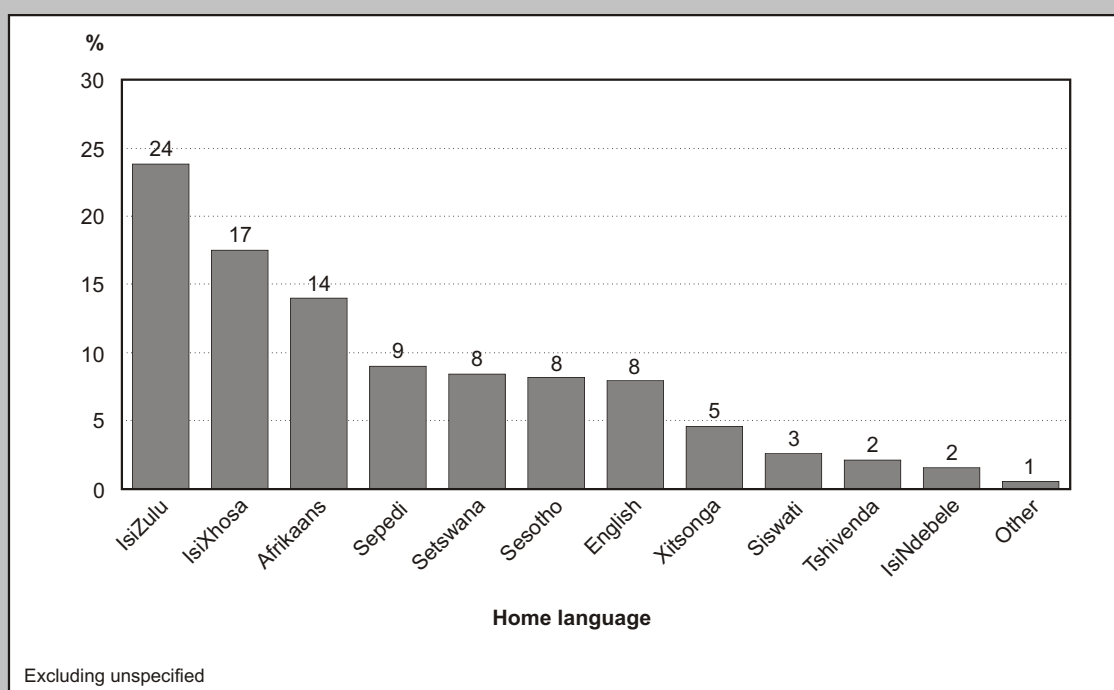
Although not shown here, a similar but less pronounced pattern is found among females, particularly African females.

To complete the picture for South Africa generally, there is a return to the non-urban areas as people retire or lose their jobs. Both older and younger people cluster in non-urban areas while those of working age cluster in urban areas.

## Languages of South Africa spoken by the youth

Eleven official languages are spoken in South Africa. Figure 2.5 below shows that among the youth, isiZulu is the most widely spoken home language (24%), followed by isiXhosa (18%).

Figure 2.5: Percentage of youth in each language category



In the country as a whole, 23% of people speak isiZulu as their home language. The proportion of isiZulu speakers in the country is therefore increasing.

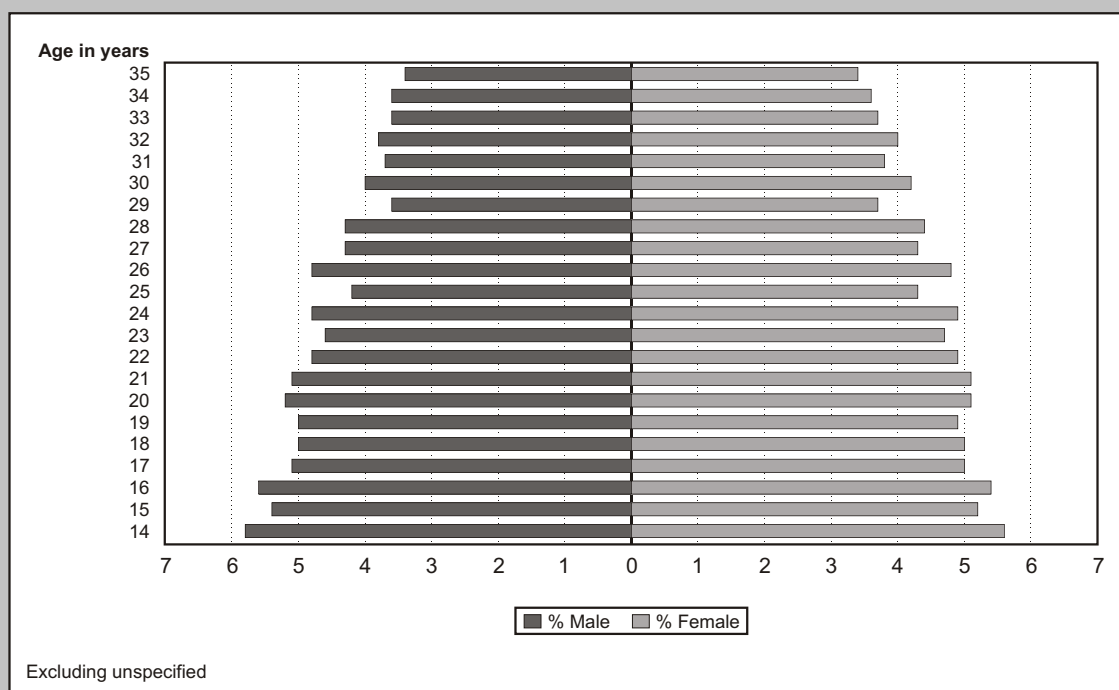
## The age-sex distribution of the youth

The age distribution of the population in South Africa characteristically resembles that of other developing countries, with a large proportion of young people. Youth aged from 14 years to 35 years account for 40% of the entire population in the country.

Figure 2.6 shows the age–sex structure of the youth aged from 14 years to 35 years on census night in October 1996.

Characteristically, the structure in Figure 2.6 is broader at the bottom indicating the higher concentration of youth in the younger age groups. Thereafter, it narrows towards the top with increasing age.

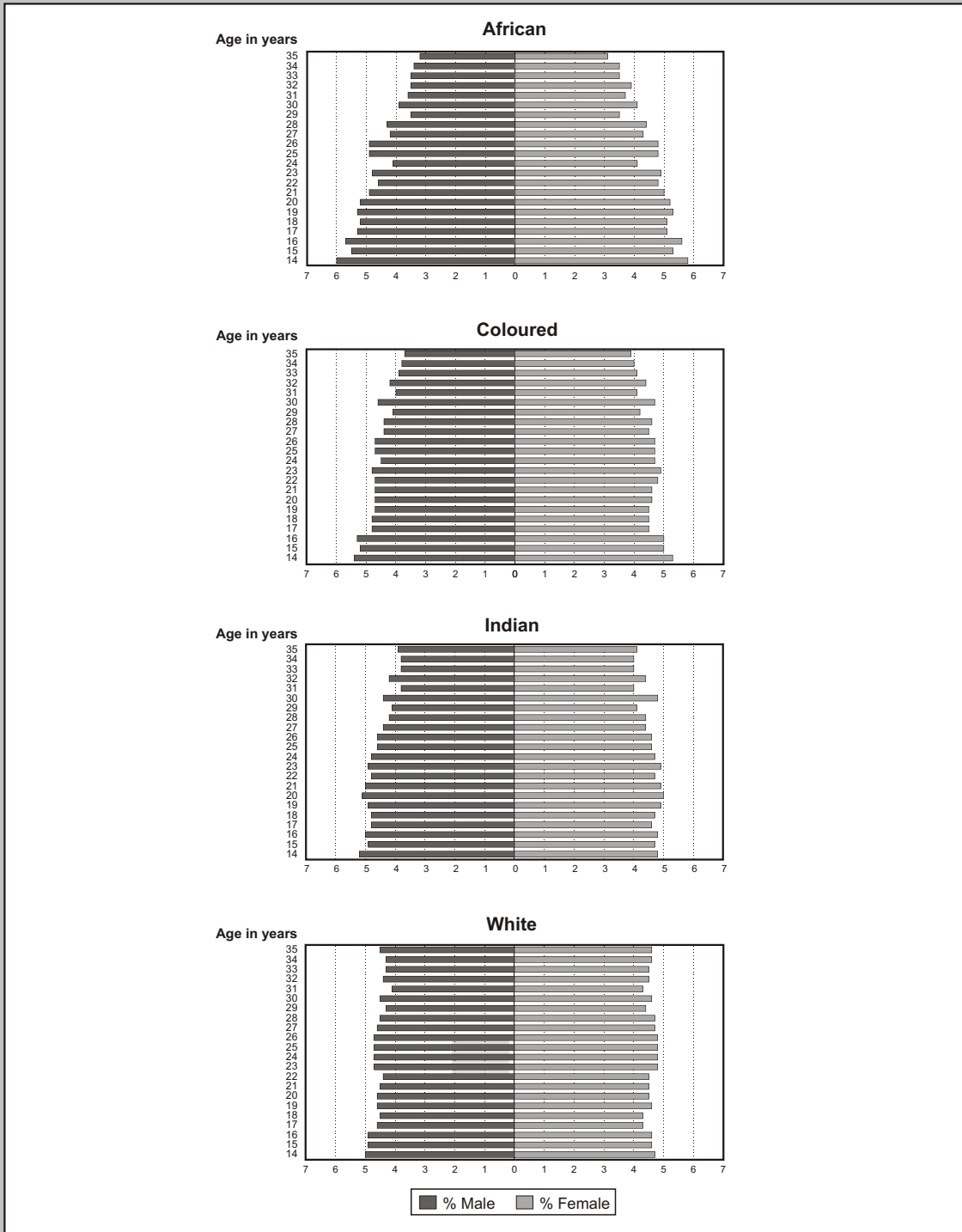
Figure 2.6: The youth of South Africa in single year age categories by sex



However, the overall age–sex distribution structure masks some notable differences between the four population groups, shown in Figure 2.7. The national distribution is largely influenced by that of the African youth, who are in the majority. The age–sex distribution structures for both coloured and Indian youth have a narrower base and taper less rapidly towards the apex with increasing age.

The age–sex distribution for white youth displays an almost cylindrical, barrel-shaped structure commonly found in developed nations. The white population has often been referred to as an ‘ageing population’ because of the relative consistency in the proportion of those in the younger and older age categories.

Figure 2.7: The youth of South Africa in single year age categories by sex and population group



## Implications

The proportion of the African population, particularly African youth, is increasing in proportion to the population of the country as a whole.

The white population is ageing, with a proportionately smaller percentage of youth (10%) compared to the proportion of whites in the population as a whole (11%).

Young Africans, particularly males, show a tendency to move from non-urban into urban areas, probably in search of higher education or work opportunities. Nevertheless, large proportions remain in non-urban areas. Both rural development and urban renewal are important for the youth of our country, particularly for those from formerly disadvantaged communities.

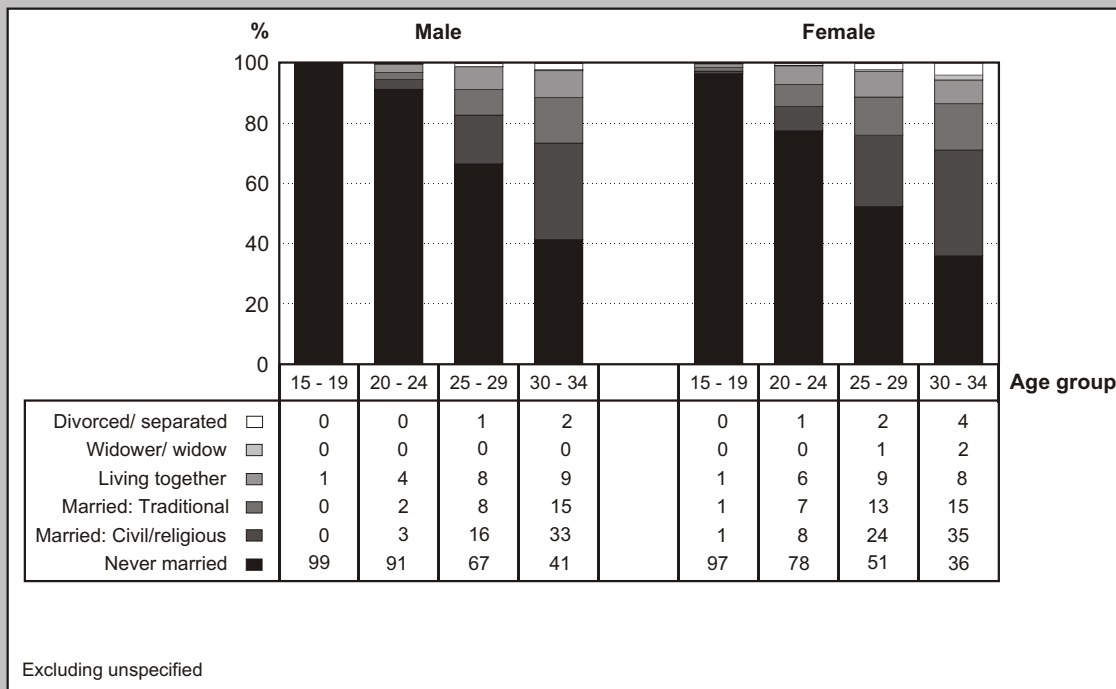
# Marital status and childbearing

# 3

## Marital status

South African women tend to marry earlier than men. For example, Figure 3.1 below indicates that in the 20-24 year age group 7% of women had entered traditional marriages and 8% civil/religious marriages while married men in the same age bracket accounted for a smaller proportion: 2% in traditional marriages, and 3% in civil/religious marriages.

Figure 3.1: Marital status of youth by age and sex



In general, more female than male youth were married, according to civil, religious or traditional rites.

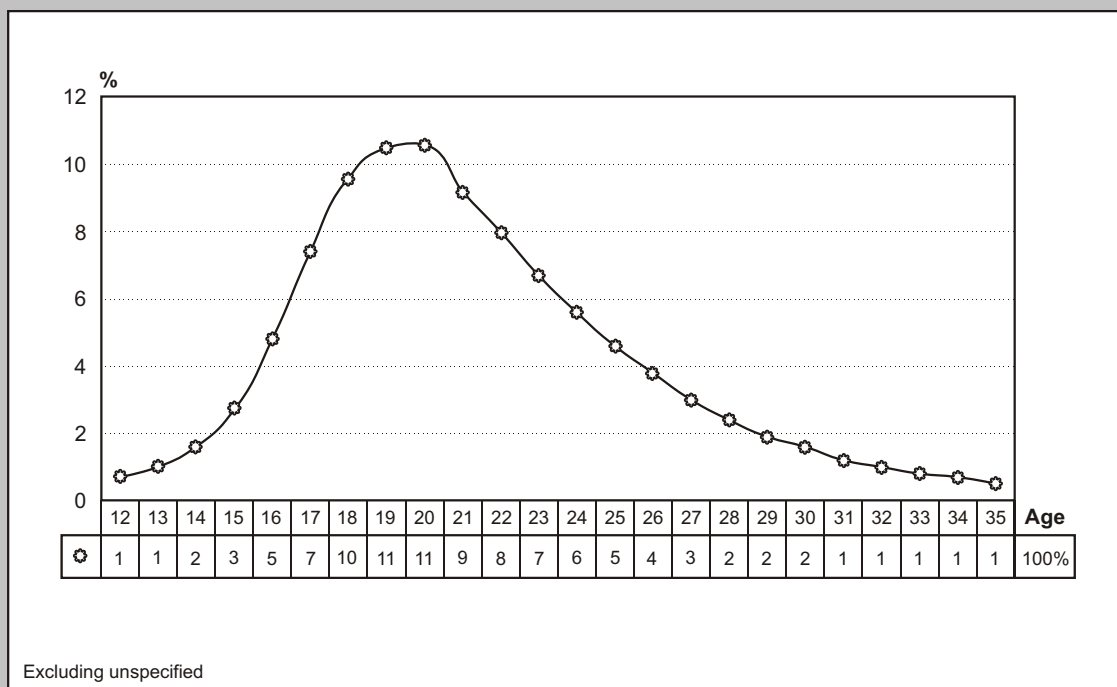
At 30-34 years of age, 15% females had entered traditional marriages and 35% civil/religious ones, while among males in the same age bracket the percentages were 15% and 33% respectively.

Similarly, proportionately more females than males in all age categories of youth (Figure 3.1) indicated that they had been divorced or separated from their spouses. For example, 2% of males aged 30-34 years indicated that they were divorced or separated compared with 4% of females in the same age bracket.

### Age of mother at birth of first child

Findings from Census '96 (Figure 3.2) indicate that among all women aged 12-35 who had given birth to at least one child, 0,7% had given birth to their first child at the age of 12 years, and 1,0% at the age of 13 years.

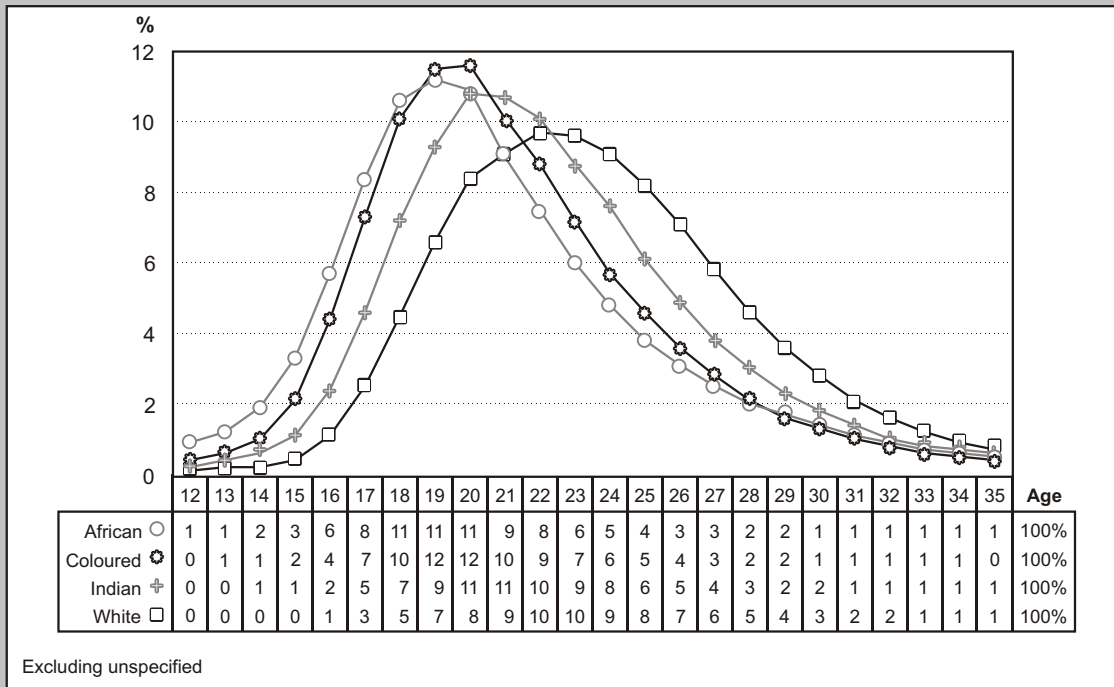
Figure 3.2: Percentage of mothers in each age category at birth of first child



The graph shows that the largest percentage of women gave birth to their first child between the ages of 18 and 22.

Figure 3.3 below shows the percentages of young women who had ever given birth, by their age at time of birth of their first child, in each population group.

Figure 3.3: Percentage of mothers in each age category at birth of first child, for each population group



Generally, African women tend to have given birth to their first children at a younger age than women in other population groups. Slightly under 1% of African young women compared to 0,4% of coloured, 0,2% of Indian, and 0,1% of white female youth reported having given birth to their first child at 12 years of age.

Among African women, the largest proportion had given birth to their first child at 18, 19 or 20 years of age (11%). For coloured women, the peak age is 19-20 years (12%), and for Indian women, 20-21 years (11%). Among white women the peak age is 22-23 years (10%).

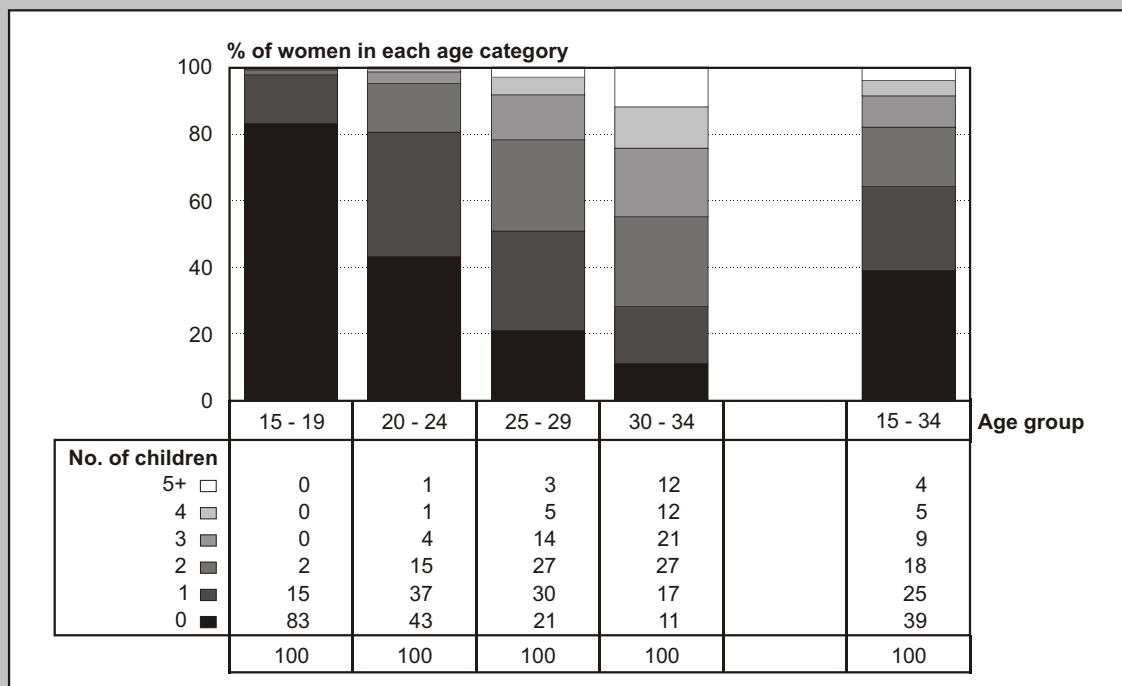


Figure 3.4 indicates that, on average, among female youth aged 15 to 34 years (right hand column), two in every five (39%) had never given birth to any children. One in every four (25%) had given birth to one child, and 18% had given birth to two children. Those who had given birth to five or more children make up 4% of the entire population of young women.

In October 1996, 83% of women in the 15-19 years age category had never given birth to any children, 15% had given birth to one child, and 2% to two children.

The proportion of women who had never given birth drops to 43% in the 20-24 years age category. In this category, 37% had given birth to one child, 15% to two children and 4% to three children.

Figure 3.4: The percentage of women in each age category by the number of children they had given birth to



Among women aged 25-29 years, 30% had given birth to one child, followed by 27% who had given birth to two children, and 14% to three. Three per cent of women in this age bracket indicated having given birth to five or more children.

The proportion of young women who had given birth to five or more children was highest (12%) among those aged 30-34 years. Similarly, the proportion of those who had given birth to four children (12%) and three children (21%) was higher than in other categories. However, those who had given birth to only one child (17%) were proportionately fewer. About one in every ten women in this age category (11%) had not given birth.

## Implications

There is a growing tendency among the youth to either postpone or disregard marriage. For instance, while by age 30-34 years many female youth (50%) were married in October 1996, a large proportion (36%) indicated that they had never been married.

One of the important aspects about childbirth to emerge from Census '96 is that some female youth become mothers for the first time in their early adolescent years. There are females, particularly among African and coloured youth, who indicated that they had their first children at the age of 12 years. This situation demonstrates the need for efficient intervening strategies and policies to empower youth, particularly females, with regard to decisions on reproduction.

Adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive behaviour and health has become one of the major population concerns in South Africa. The devastating impact of HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases on the youth of South Africa adds to the complexity of adolescent sexual and reproductive problems.

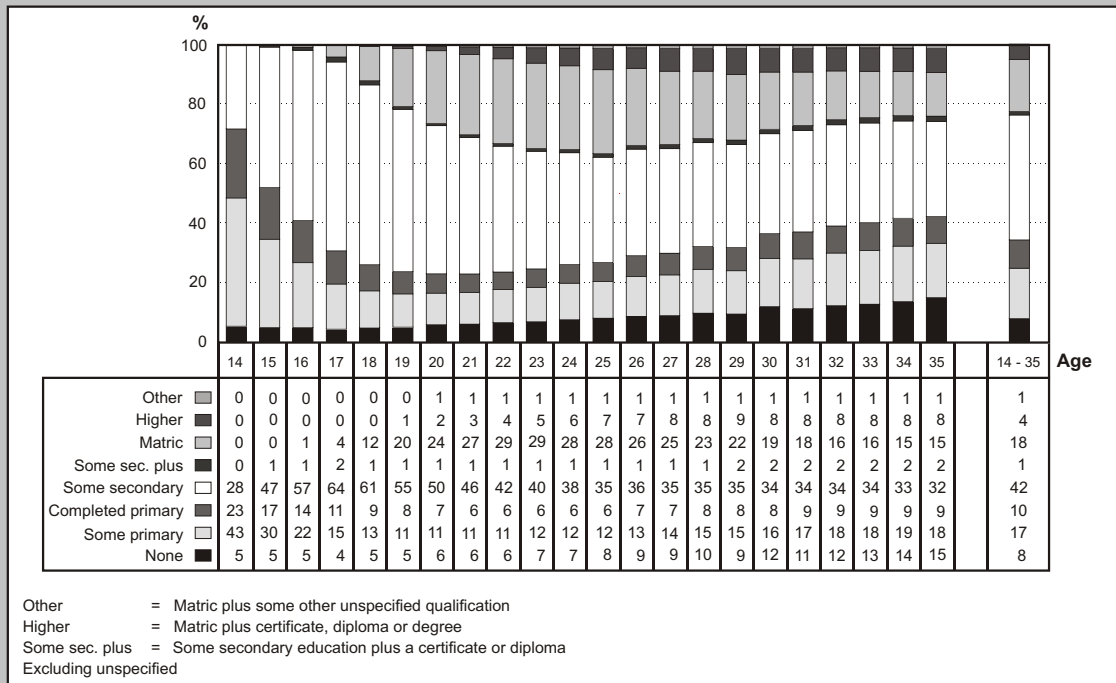
In South Africa, the official compulsory age for school attendance is from 7 years to 15 years. Children who are in the last two years of compulsory education, i.e. 14 and 15 years, fall within the category of youth. Children of this age should have completed primary school, which comprises seven years of education.

## Education levels of youth aged 14-35 years

Figure 4.1 below shows the total population of youth of South Africa in each age category by their highest level of educational attainment.

Those who indicated that they had no formal education are proportionately fewer among younger youth. As Figure 4.1 indicates, the proportion of youth without any formal education gradually increases with age, from 5% among those aged 14 years to 15% among those aged 35 years. Nationally, 8% of all youth indicated having had no formal education.

**Figure 4.1: Highest level of education attained by youth, by age**



A large proportion of youth in the age category 14-17 years had only ‘some primary education’, that is, between grades 1 and 6. This group constitutes 43% among 14-year-old youth but moves down to 15% among those aged 17 years. The national proportion of all youth with similar educational qualifications stood at 17% in 1996.

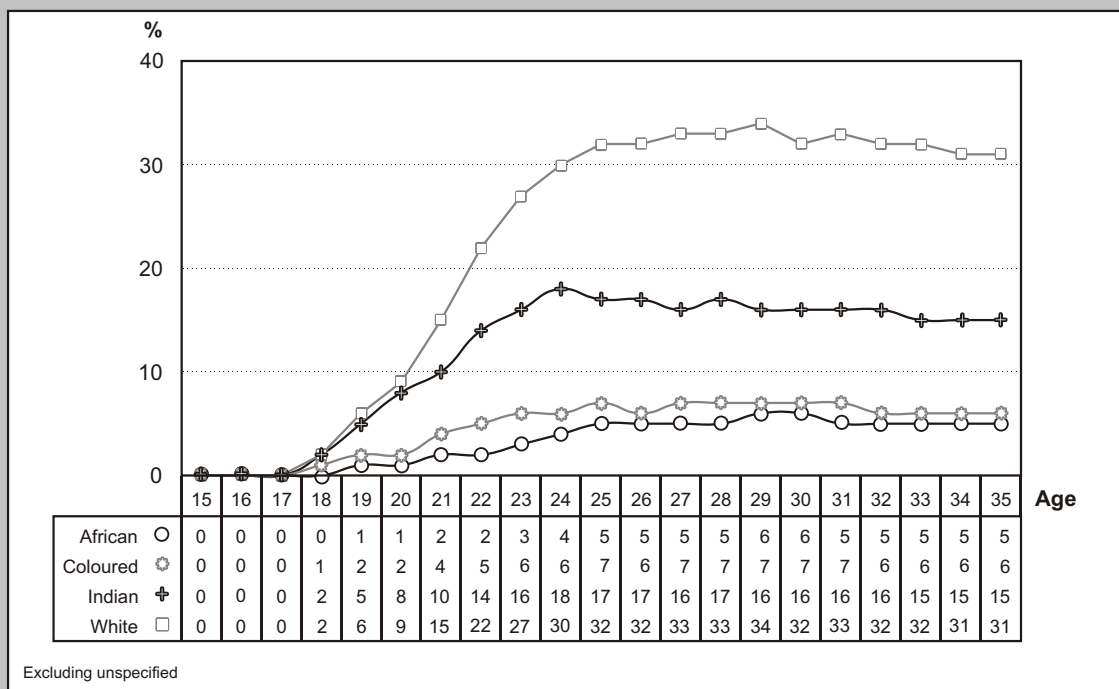
Generally youth whose highest educational level was ‘some secondary’, that is grades 8 to 11, were the largest proportion in all the age categories except the 14 years age category. Nationally more than two in every five youth (42%) had ‘some secondary’ education.

The proportions of youth with standard 10 or matric (grade 12) as their highest qualification was largest (29%) among those in the 22 and 23 years age category. A smaller proportion of 15% of youth in the 35 years age category had grade 12 or matric as their highest qualification. Of all the youth in South Africa, those who had matric as their highest qualification made up 18%.

Regarding post-matric qualifications, 8% of youth aged 35 years had qualifications higher than matric.

On average, white youth form the largest percentage of youth with post-matric qualifications, followed by Indian and coloured youth. Figure 4.2 shows that at 18 years, 2% of white and Indian youth and 1% of coloured youth already had post-matric qualifications.

Figure 4.2: Percentage of youth with post-matric qualifications in each age category, for each population group



Among African youth, the proportion of youth with post-matric qualifications remains comparatively small throughout, for example, 5% among those aged 35 years.

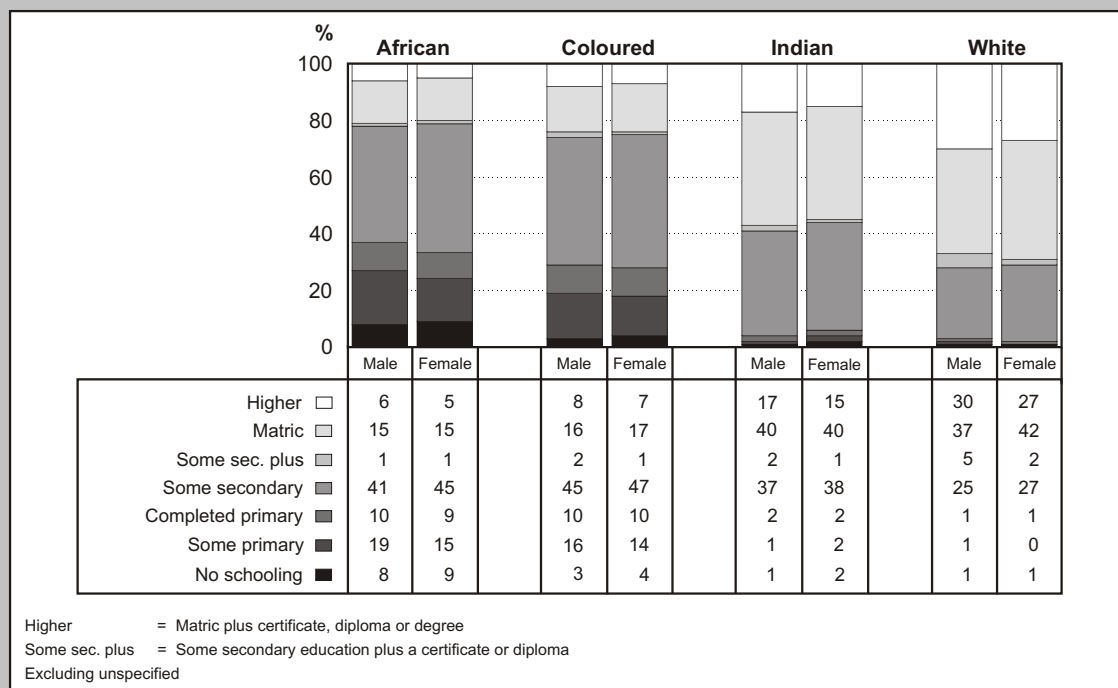
Coloured youth show a similar trend to African youth. The proportion of coloured youth with post-matric qualifications is also relatively small throughout; only 6% of coloured youth aged 35 years had such qualifications.

Compared to Africans and coloureds, the percentage of Indian youth with post-matric qualifications is larger throughout, e.g. 10% among those aged 21 years, 18% among those aged 24 years and 15% among those aged 35 years.

Among white youth, however, Figure 4.2 portrays a picture totally different to that of other population groups, particularly of African and coloured youth: 15% of white youth aged 21 years have post-matric qualifications. This proportion doubles to 30% among those aged 24 years. From the age of 24 to 35 years, at least three in every ten white youth reported having post-matric qualifications.

The overall picture of the education levels attained by youth in the different population groups in South Africa is shown in Figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3: Highest qualification of youth by population group and sex



Comparatively, African youth are the most disadvantaged group as regards access to educational opportunities. Eight per cent of young African males and 9% of African females reported having had no formal education while 41% of African males and 45% of African females had completed 'some secondary education' (between grade 8 and 11) as their highest qualification.

Although the proportion of youth without any formal education was relatively smaller among both male and female coloured youth, (3% and 4% respectively), they also share educational characteristics with African youth. Forty-five per cent of coloured male youth, and 47% of coloured female youth had some secondary education.

Among Indian and white youth in particular, those with lower qualifications form only a small proportion. A large proportion of Indian youth, i.e. 57% of males and 55% of females, had matric or higher while among white youth 67% of males and 69% of females had matric or higher.

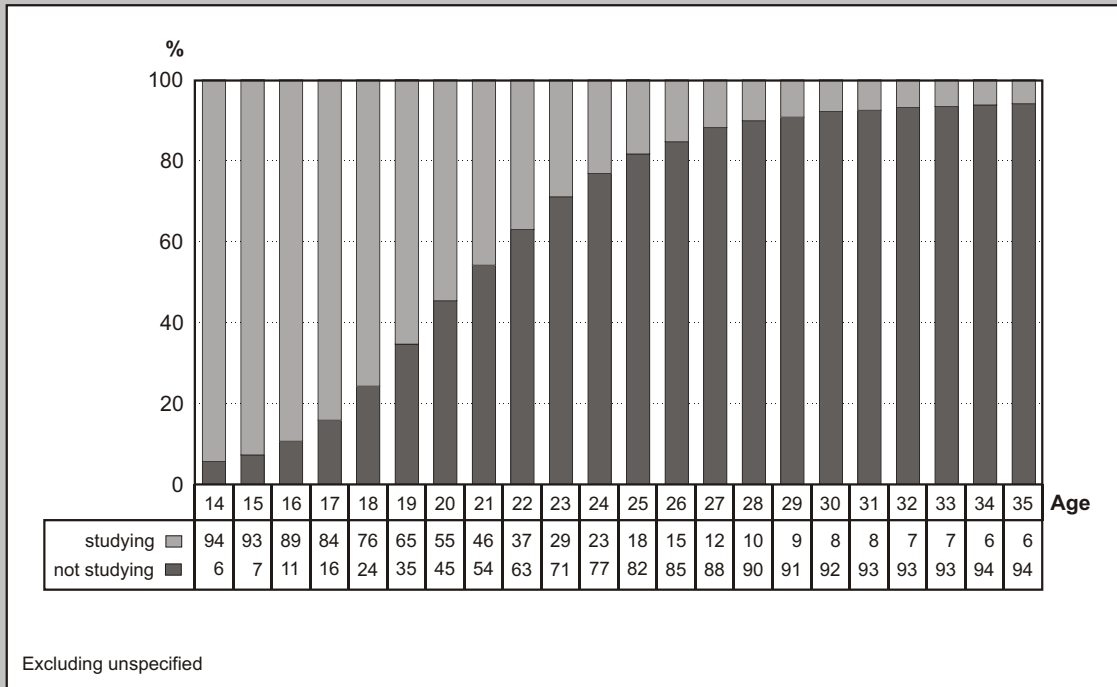
The percentage of youth with post-matric qualifications was higher among whites, both males and females, than the other population groups.

### Attendance at educational institutions

Figure 4.4 shows the percentage of youth in each age category by whether or not they were studying. The age category with the highest proportion of youth studying at the time of Census '96 was the 14 year olds (94,3%).

From 15 years upward, the proportion of youth in each age category that was studying decreased. For example, 12% among those aged 27 years were studying decreasing to 6% of all those aged 35 years.

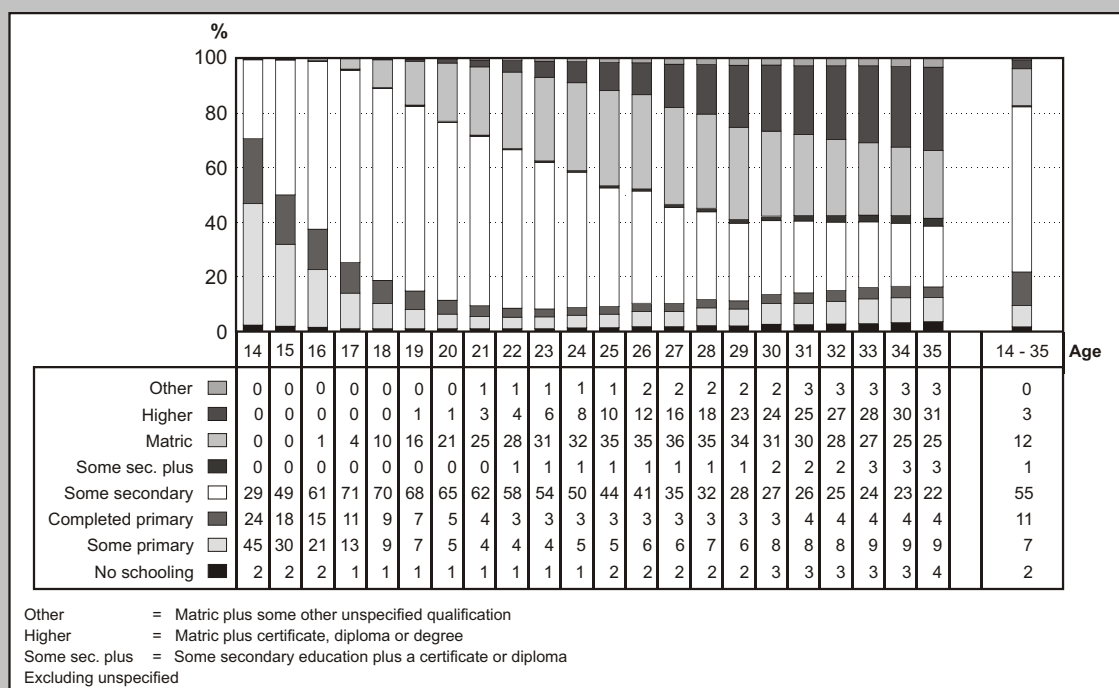
Figure 4.4: Percentage of studying and non-studying youth in each age category



## Those who were studying

Figure 4.5 indicates that among those who indicated that they were studying there were those without any formal education. Among those aged 14 years, this proportion is 2%, and it gradually decreases with increasing age to 1% among those aged from 19 to 21 years. Then it starts to increase, so that those who were studying and did not have any formal education constitute 4% of the youth aged 35 years who were actually studying.

Figure 4.5: Highest level of education among youth who were studying, by age



The largest proportion of 14-year-old youth who were studying had ‘some primary education’ (45%), although children of this age should have completed primary school.

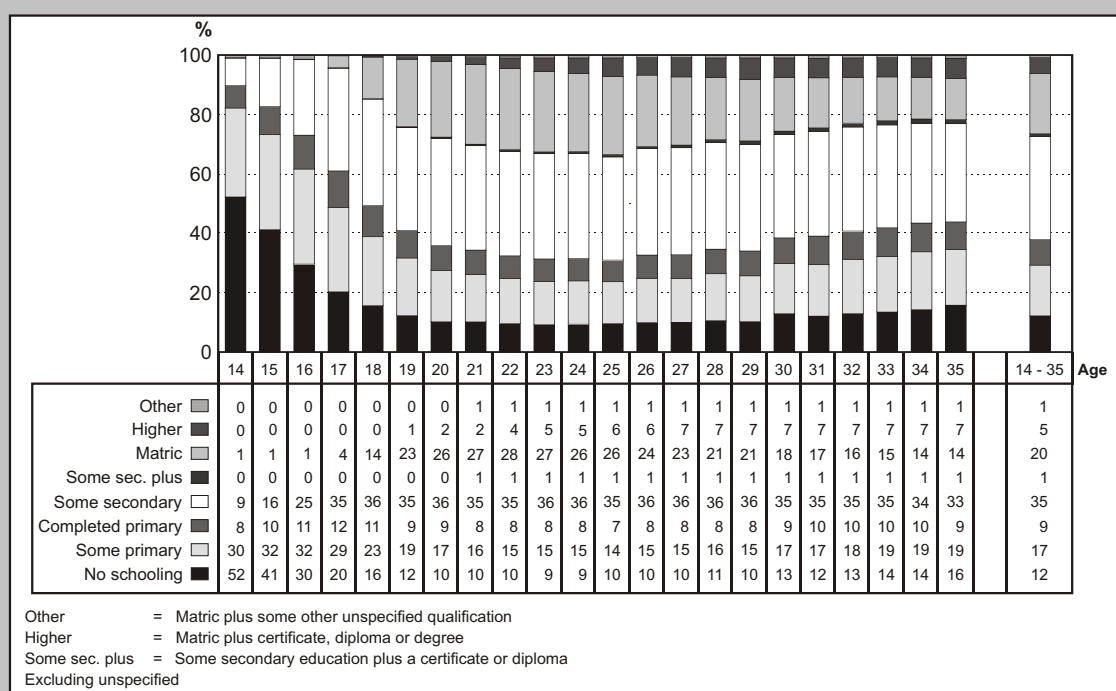
Among the youth who were studying, the proportion with some secondary education (grades 8 to 11) tends to decrease as age increases, while the proportion with matric or higher tends to increase, and then to level off from the age of 29 years and older.



## Those who were not studying

Figure 4.6 displays the highest education level of youth that were not studying in October 1996 within each single year age category from 14 to 35 years.

Figure 4.6: Highest level of education among non-studying youth, by age



Comparing youth who were studying (Figure 4.5) with those who were not (Figure 4.6), it can be seen that among those not studying the proportions with no education are larger in all age groups than among those studying.

More than half (52%) of 14 year olds who were not studying and about two in every five (41%) of 15 year olds who were not studying did not have any formal education at all. Nationally across all age categories more than one in every ten youths (12%) who were not studying had no formal education at all.

About three in every ten youths within each of the age categories 14, 15 and 16 years that were not studying in 1996 had only some primary education.

### **Implications**

Prospects for a life of quality, particularly in relation to job opportunities and general living standards, remains a major concern in respect of a large proportion of youth in South Africa, given their low level of education.

## Introduction

Census '96 revealed that there are disparities in the labour market regarding population group, place of residence and sex. These disparities have been extensively documented in many publications of Statistics South Africa.

Data from Census '96 also show the effects of these factors in respect of the participation of youth in the labour market. In this chapter we show that, among the economically active youth, access to jobs also varies on the basis of population group, place of residence and sex. Among employed youth there are some variations in occupational status and income.

## Labour market status of those aged 15-35 years

The total working-age population comprises people between the ages of 15 and 65. Below the age of 15 years, work is not legal. This chapter therefore focuses on the age group 15 to 35 years of age. A comparison is drawn between this age group and people in the age group 36-65 years, as well as the working age population as a whole, in order to highlight some disparities between these groups in relation to the labour market.

More than nine in every ten youth aged 15 years (93%) reported being at school in 1996. However a small proportion were in the labour market.

It can be seen in column 1 of Tables 5.1 and 5.2 that there were 15 million people aged between 15 and 35 years in South Africa in 1996.

Among the youth (Table 5.1), the labour market status of 7,7 million is given as economically active and of 7,3 million as not. Among the economically active, 4,5 million were employed and 3,1 million unemployed, according to the expanded definition of unemployment.<sup>1</sup> Among those who were not economically active, 0,7 million were housewives or homemakers, 4,8 million were students or scholars and 0,1 million were permanently disabled and thus unable to work.

<sup>1</sup> For an explanation of the expanded definition of unemployment, see Chapter 6.

Table 5.1: Labour market status of those aged 15-35 years by population group

	Total population aged 15-35 years	Economically active			Not economically active	Labour force participation rate <sup>2</sup>	Labour absorption rate <sup>3</sup>	Unemployment rate <sup>4</sup>
		Employed	Unemployed	Total				
	(a) N	(b) N	(c) N	(d) N	(e) N	(f) %	(g) %	(h) %
African	11 813 442	2 812 890	2 838 616	5 651 506	6 161 936	47,8	23,8	50,2
Coloured	1 377 876	664 579	222 968	887 547	490 329	64,4	48,2	25,1
Indian	398 299	200 008	35 052	235 060	163 239	59,0	50,2	14,9
White	1 449 209	869 415	52 759	922 174	527 035	63,6	60,0	5,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 038 826</b>	<b>4 546 892</b>	<b>3 149 395</b>	<b>7 696 287</b>	<b>7 342 539</b>	<b>51,2</b>	<b>30,2</b>	<b>40,9</b>

Table 5.2: Labour market status of those aged 15-35 years by province

	Total population aged 15-35 years	Economically active			Not economically active	Labour force participation rate <sup>2</sup>	Labour absorption rate <sup>3</sup>	Unemployment rate <sup>4</sup>
		Employed	Unemployed	Total				
	(a) N	(b) N	(c) N	(d) N	(e) N	(f) %	(g) %	(h) %
W. Cape	1 488 102	741 066	214 540	955 606	532 496	64,2	49,8	22,5
E. Cape	2 100 241	367 280	461 133	828 413	1 271 828	39,4	17,5	55,7
N. Cape	296 288	111 258	61 909	173 167	123 121	58,4	37,6	35,8
F. State	1 008 745	330 259	197 390	527 649	481 096	52,3	32,7	37,4
KZN	3 112 089	800 129	711 073	1 511 202	1 600 887	48,6	25,7	47,1
N. West	1 264 796	349 385	297 935	647 320	617 476	51,2	27,6	46,0
Gauteng	3 037 433	1 275 633	692 656	1 968 289	1 069 144	64,8	42,0	35,2
Mpumalanga	1 050 909	302 537	203 640	506 177	544 732	48,2	28,8	40,2
N. Prov	1 680 223	269 345	309 119	578 464	1 101 759	34,4	16,0	53,4
<b>S. Africa</b>	<b>15 038 826</b>	<b>4 546 892</b>	<b>3 149 395</b>	<b>7 696 287</b>	<b>7 342 539</b>	<b>51,2</b>	<b>30,2</b>	<b>40,9</b>

<sup>2</sup> The labour force participation rate (LFPR) (f) is the sum of those who are employed (b) and unemployed (c) expressed as a percentage of the total population under consideration (a).

<sup>3</sup> The labour absorption rate (g) is the number of employed people (b) expressed as a percentage of the total population under consideration (a).

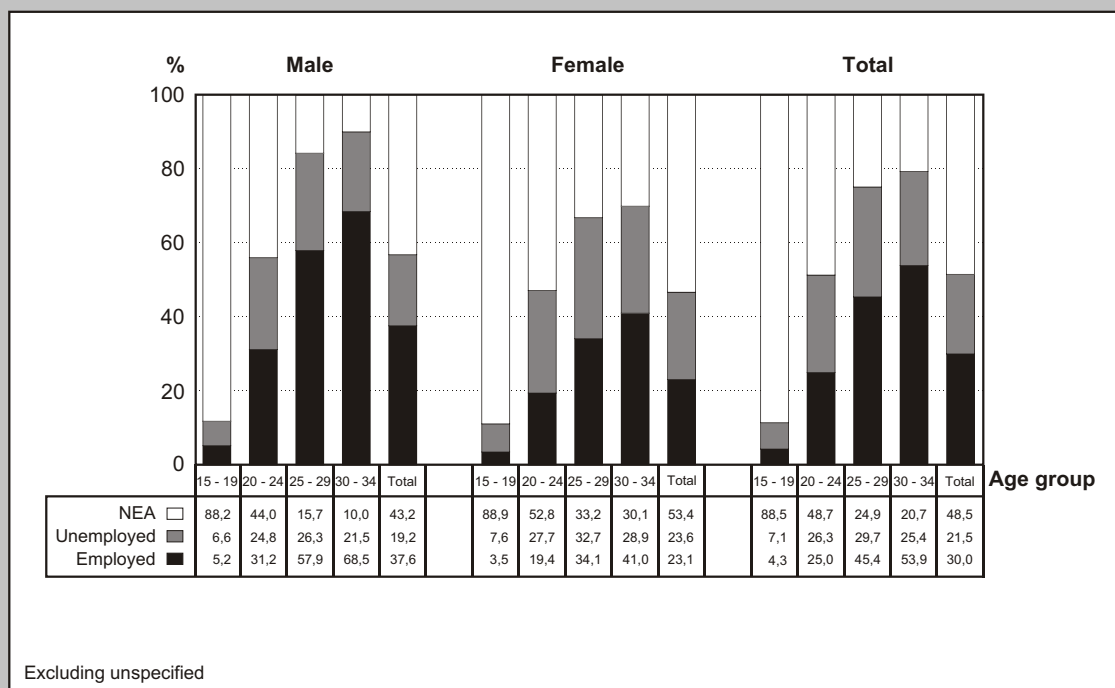
<sup>4</sup> The unemployment rate (h) is the number of people who are unemployed (c) expressed as a percentage of the total economically active (d).

Figure 5.1 shows the labour market status of youth as a whole in five-year age categories from the age of 15 to 34 years by sex.

In comparing males and females, the figure shows that proportionately higher percentages of females were not economically active compared to males across all the five-year age categories. For example 44,0% of males aged 20-24 years compared to 52,8% of females in the 20-24 years age category were not economically active.

About 43,2% of male youth aged 15-34 years, compared with 53,4% of female youth, were not economically active.

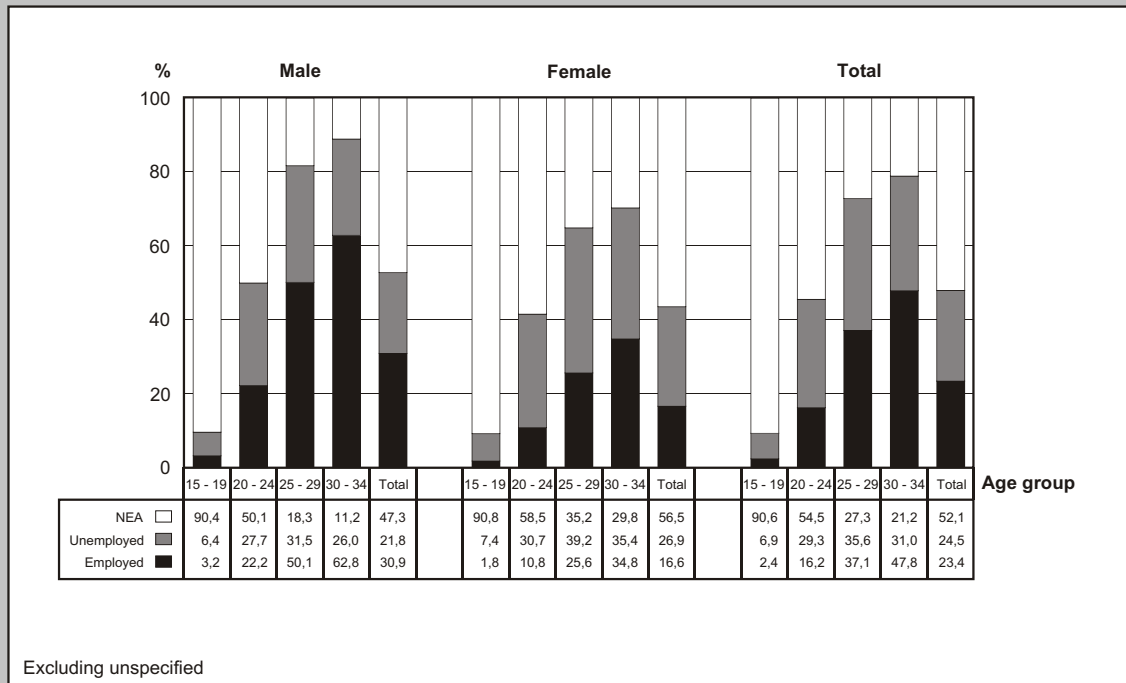
Figure 5.1: Labour market status of South African youth in five-year age intervals by sex



The proportions of youth that were not economically active tend to be larger among Africans than among the other population groups, particularly females, as Figure 5.2 indicates.

While 48,5% of all youth aged 15-34 years were not economically active (Figure 5.1), among African youth (Figure 5.2), 52,1% were not economically active.

Figure 5.2: Labour market status of African youth in five-years age intervals by sex



While, on average, a higher percentage of young African females (56,5%) were not economically active than of their male counterparts (47,3%), both percentages were higher than the national percentages of all youth of working age (43,2% among all males and 53,4% among all females).

## Labour force participation rate

The labour force participation rate shows the proportion (in percentages) of the economically active population, i.e. employed people and those unemployed (expanded definition), of the total population under consideration. In other words, it is the sum of the employed and the unemployed, expressed as a percentage of the total (including the 'not economically active').

Figures from Census '96 show that the labour force participation rate was lowest for African youth (47,8%) followed by Indian (59,0%), white (63,6%) and coloured youth (64,4%).

As seen in Table 5.3, the overall labour force participation rate for the youth is lower than in the 36-65 age group. This discrepancy is particularly apparent in the African group, where the labour participation rate for youth is 47,8% and for older Africans is 65,3%. However the rates for coloured and Indian youth (64,4% and 59,0% respectively) are higher than for their older counterparts (61,4% and 56,6% respectively).

Table 5.3: Labour market rates of those aged 15-35 years, 36-65 years and 15-65 years by population group

	Labour force participation rate			Labour absorption rate			Unemployment rate		
	15-35 yrs	36-65 yrs	15-65 yrs	15-35 yrs	36-65 yrs	15-65 yrs	15-35 yrs	36-65 yrs	15-65 yrs
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
African	47,8	65,3	54,0	23,8	44,2	31,0	50,2	32,3	42,5
Coloured	64,4	61,4	63,2	48,2	52,7	50,0	25,1	14,1	20,9
Indian	59,0	56,6	57,9	50,2	51,7	50,9	14,9	8,6	12,2
White	63,6	65,6	64,6	60,0	63,2	61,7	5,7	3,5	4,6
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,2</b>	<b>64,7</b>	<b>56,3</b>	<b>30,2</b>	<b>48,5</b>	<b>37,2</b>	<b>40,9</b>	<b>25,0</b>	<b>34,0</b>

Table 5.4 gives the breakdowns by province. Northern Province had the lowest labour force participation rate among youth (34,4%) followed by Eastern Cape (39,4%). Western Cape (64,2%) and Gauteng (64,8%) had the highest. As regards people aged 36-65 years, Eastern Cape had the lowest labour force participation rate (53,0%) followed by Northern Province (56,1%).

Table 5.4: Labour market rates of those aged 15-35 years, 36-65 years and 15-65 years by province

	Labour force participation rate			Labour absorption rate			Unemployment rate		
	15-35 yrs	36-65 yrs	15-65 yrs	15-35 yrs	36-65 yrs	15-65 yrs	15-35 yrs	36-65 yrs	15-65 yrs
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
W. Cape	64,2	65,8	64,9	49,8	58,1	53,2	22,5	11,7	18,0
E. Cape	39,4	53,0	44,6	17,5	31,7	22,9	55,7	40,2	48,6
N. Cape	58,4	59,6	58,9	37,6	48,6	42,1	35,8	18,5	28,5
F. State	52,3	71,9	60,0	32,7	56,3	42,0	37,4	21,6	30,0
KZN	48,6	58,3	52,1	25,7	42,1	31,7	47,1	27,7	39,1
N. West	51,2	67,3	57,3	27,6	48,6	35,5	46,0	27,9	38,0
Gauteng	64,8	77,1	69,8	42,0	62,0	50,1	35,2	19,6	28,2
Mpumalanga	48,2	67,6	55,1	28,8	51,7	37,0	40,2	23,5	32,9
N. Prov	34,4	56,1	41,7	16,0	35,3	22,5	53,4	37,0	46,0
<b>S. Africa</b>	<b>51,2</b>	<b>64,7</b>	<b>56,3</b>	<b>30,2</b>	<b>48,5</b>	<b>37,2</b>	<b>40,9</b>	<b>25,0</b>	<b>34,0</b>

## The labour absorption rate

The labour absorption rate gives a measurement in percentages of the proportion of employed people out of the total population under consideration.

In Census '96 proportionately fewer African youth indicated that they were employed than youth in other population groups. The labour absorption rate for African youth was (23,8%) followed by coloured (48,2%), Indian (50,2%) and white youth (60,0%).

The labour absorption rate for the youth in all population groups was lower than that of people aged between 36 and 65 years (see Table 5.4). The discrepancy in this regard is widest among Africans (23,8% for the youth as opposed to 44,2% for the older working population).

Comparing the provinces, Northern Province with 16,0% and Eastern Cape with 17,5% had the lowest labour absorption rate among the youth, while Gauteng with 42,0% and Western Cape with 49,8% had the highest. The labour absorption rate for youth in the country as a whole was 30,2%.

Table 5.4 shows that the labour absorption rates for youth was lower than for people in the 36-65 age group in each of the nine provinces.



## Youth employment in South Africa by industry

The distribution by industry of employed youth aged 15-35 years and the employed aged 36-65 is shown in Figure 5.3.

The highest proportion of jobs held by both the youth (19,6%) and those aged 36-65 (19,7%) was in community, social and personal services. These included jobs in the civil service.

The second largest proportion of jobs held by employed youth was in trade (15,3%) followed by manufacturing (14,2%) and agriculture (11,0%).

However, for those aged 36-65 years, the private household industry provided the second largest proportion of jobs (15,4%), followed by manufacturing (13,6%) and trade (12,1%).

Figure 5.3: Employed people aged 15 to 35 years and 36 to 65 years in South Africa by industry

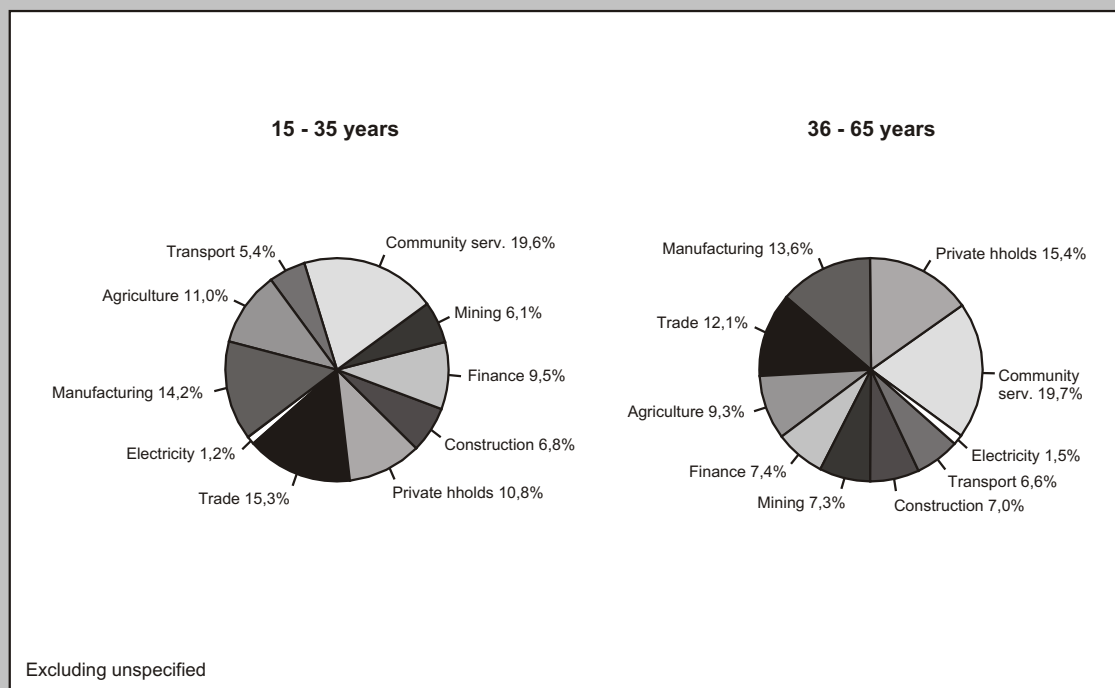
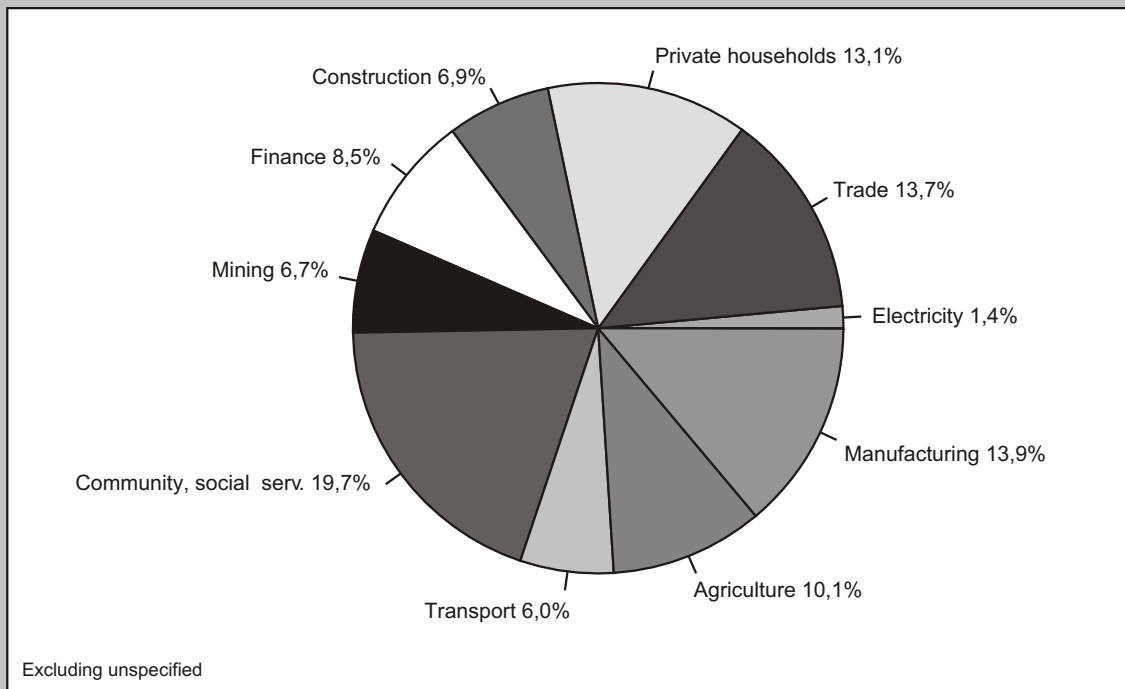


Figure 5.4: All the employed people in South Africa (aged 15-65 years) by industry



The national picture of job distribution by industry for all employed people aged 15-65 years, as shown in Figure 5.4, resembles that of the youth. It can be seen however that the proportion of jobs in manufacturing and trade is on the increase whilst that in private households is on the decrease.

The next two figures reveal the gender bias in job distribution for both groups of the employed – the youth and the older group. Certain types of industries tend to employ proportionately more males, while others employ proportionately more females.

Figure 5.5: The employed youth in South Africa by industry and sex

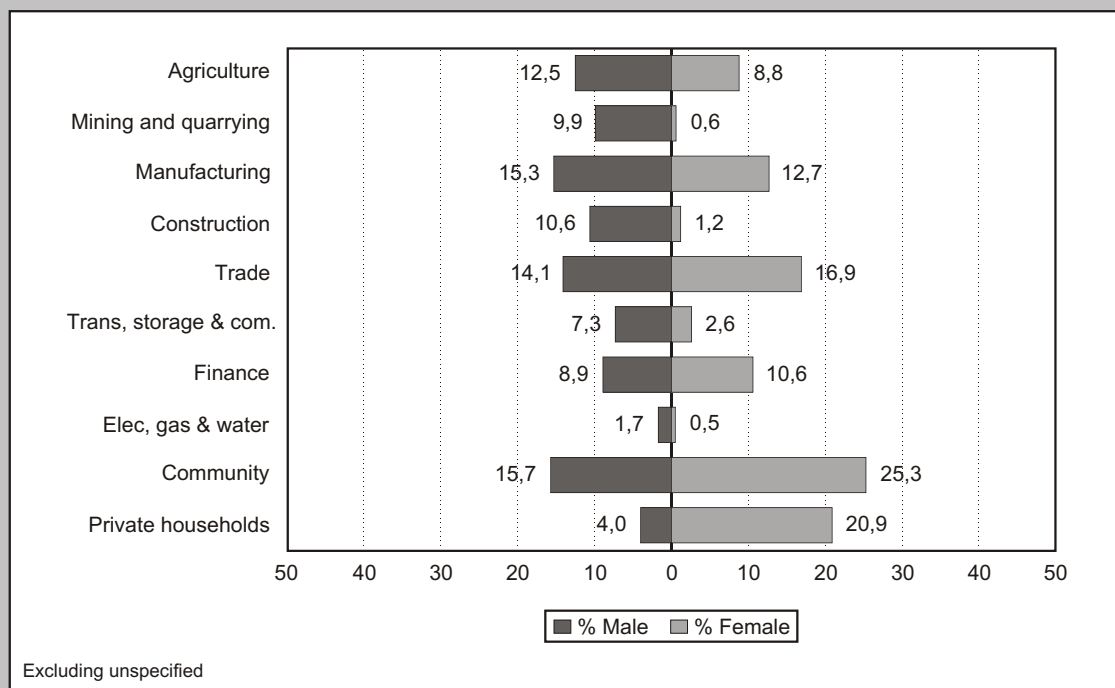


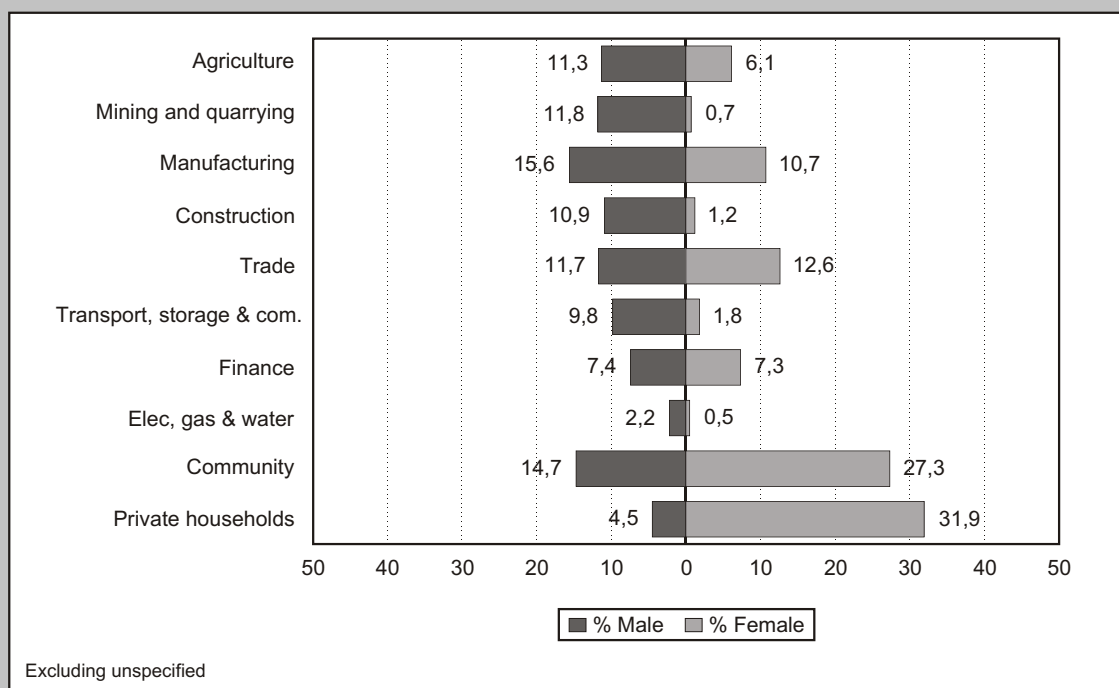
Figure 5.5 shows that the largest group of employed young females (aged 15-35) worked in community, social and personal services (25,3%), followed by private households (20,9%), and trade (16,9%).

Young males were more evenly spread between community, social and personal services (15,7%), manufacturing (15,3%) and trade (14,1%).

When these patterns are compared to those shown for the employed aged 36-65 years (Figure 5.6), however, it can be seen that young females have started to move away from jobs in private households and community, social and personal services in favour of other industries. While in 1996, 31,9% of females aged 36-65 years were working in private households, this proportion decreases to 20,8% among younger females. Jobs in community, social and personal services also decreases from 27,3% among females aged 36-65 years to 25,3% among females aged 15-35 years.

On the other hand, industries that attracted more young females than those aged 36-65 years include trade (16,9% among female youth and 12,6% among the 36-65 age group), finance (10,6% among young females and 7,3% among the 36-65 years age group), and agriculture (8,8% for young females and 6,1% among females aged 36-65 years).

Figure 5.6: The employed aged 36-65 by industry and sex



Proportionately more young males were in trade related jobs (14,1%) than males aged 36-65 years (11,7%). The proportion of jobs held by young males in finance (8,9%) and community, social and personal services increased compared to the proportion in these industries held by males in the 36-65 years age category.

On the other hand, mining seems to have attracted proportionately fewer young males (9,9%) than those aged 36-65 years (11,8%).

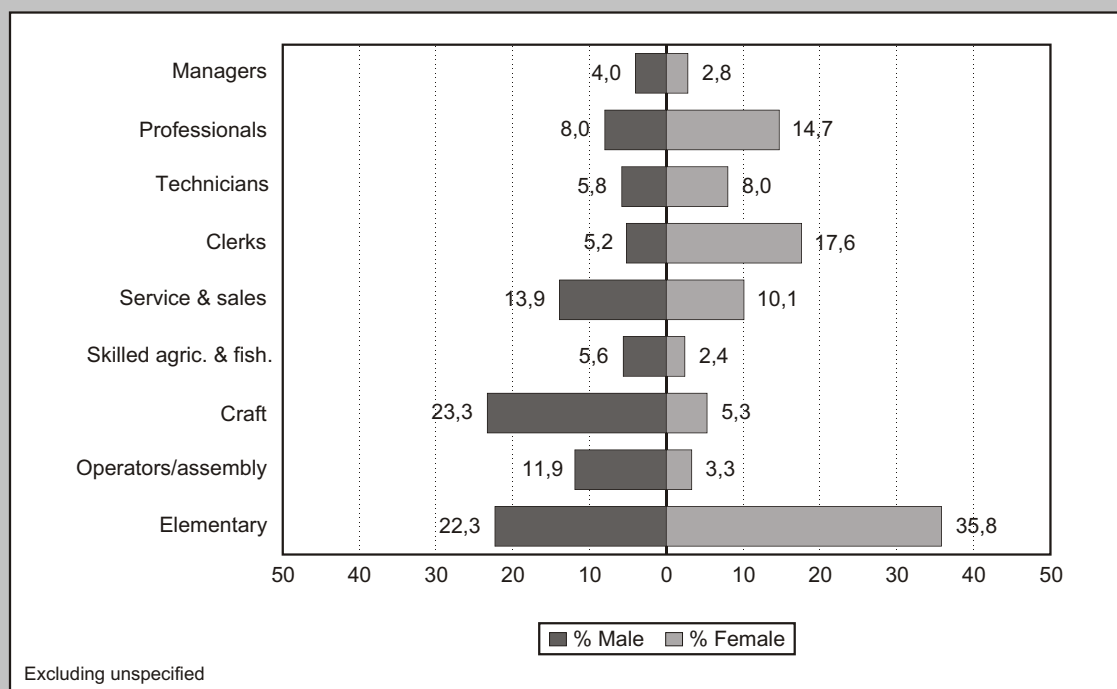
### Occupational status of employed youth

The differences between males and females identified above regarding work in the different industries also emerge in their occupations. Data from Census '96 also reflect population group differences in the occupations of those employed.

Figure 5.7 shows that more than a third (35,8%) of all employed female youth were in elementary jobs as against about a fifth (22,3%) of employed male youth.

The second largest proportion of employed female youth worked as clerks (17,6%), followed by professionals (14,7%), and those in retail services and sales (10,1%).

Figure 5.7: The employed youth by occupational status and sex



For male youth, 23,3% worked as craftsmen followed by 23% in elementary jobs and 13,9% in services and sales related jobs.

In comparing female youth with females aged 36-65 years (see Figure 5.8), employed female youth show a positive move from elementary and operational jobs towards other higher jobs i.e. clerical jobs and service and sales related jobs.

For instance, Figure 5.8 shows that while 46,1% of all females aged 36-65 years old were doing elementary jobs, only 35,8% among young females were in similar jobs. On the other hand, from a proportion of 11,8% among females aged 36-65 years, the proportion of clerks increased to 17,6% among young females.

The proportion of jobs at management level among employed male youth (4,0%) and female youth (2,8%) is smaller than for males (7,0%) and females (3,2%) in the 36-65 years age category.

Figure 5.8: The employed aged 36-65 years by occupational status and sex

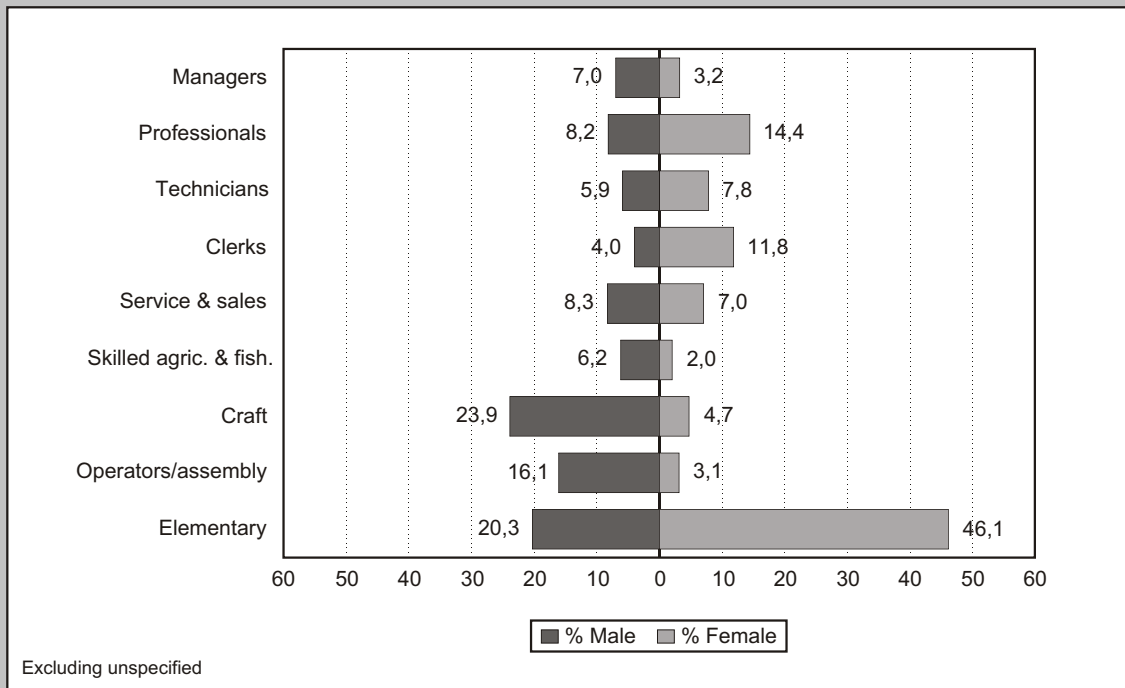


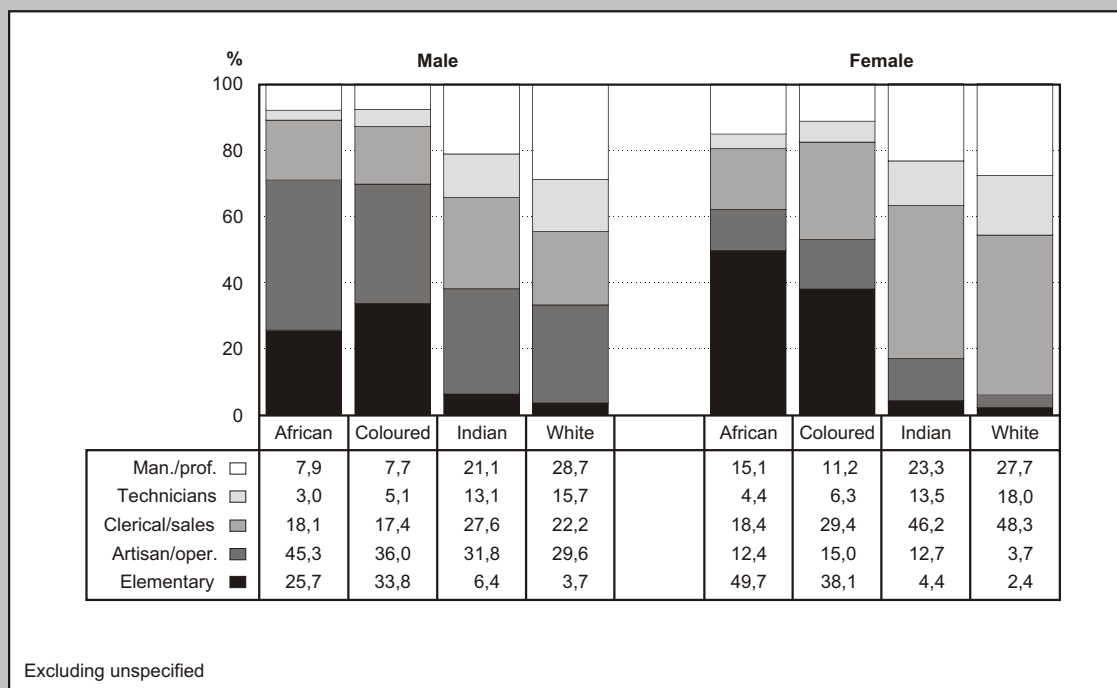
Figure 5.9 below shows the proportions of employed youth in each population group by sex and occupational status.

Some of the differences in occupational status between males and females become more prominent when each population group in South Africa is viewed individually.

While, on average, elementary jobs account for the largest share of jobs held by African people, Figure 5.9 shows that about half (49,7%) of employed African female youth compared with 25,7% of employed African male youth held jobs at this level.

The proportion of employed African males with jobs at the elementary level was lower (at 26,0%) than that of coloured males (33,8%) employed at the same level. Among employed African females, about 49,7% were in elementary jobs as against 38,0% of coloured employed female youth in the same job category.

**Figure 5.9: The employed youth by population group, sex and occupational status**



The largest proportion of African males (45,3%) was concentrated around jobs at the artisan or operator level. This is the case for all population groups, but by a smaller margin. For example, of young white males, 29,6% are in the artisan or operator group, while 28,7% are in the managerial and professional group.

## Income

Income is unequally distributed by sex and population group among employed youth.

Data from Census '96 show that, among youth, distribution of income varied by population group in South Africa, between males and females as well as by provinces and urban and non-urban location.

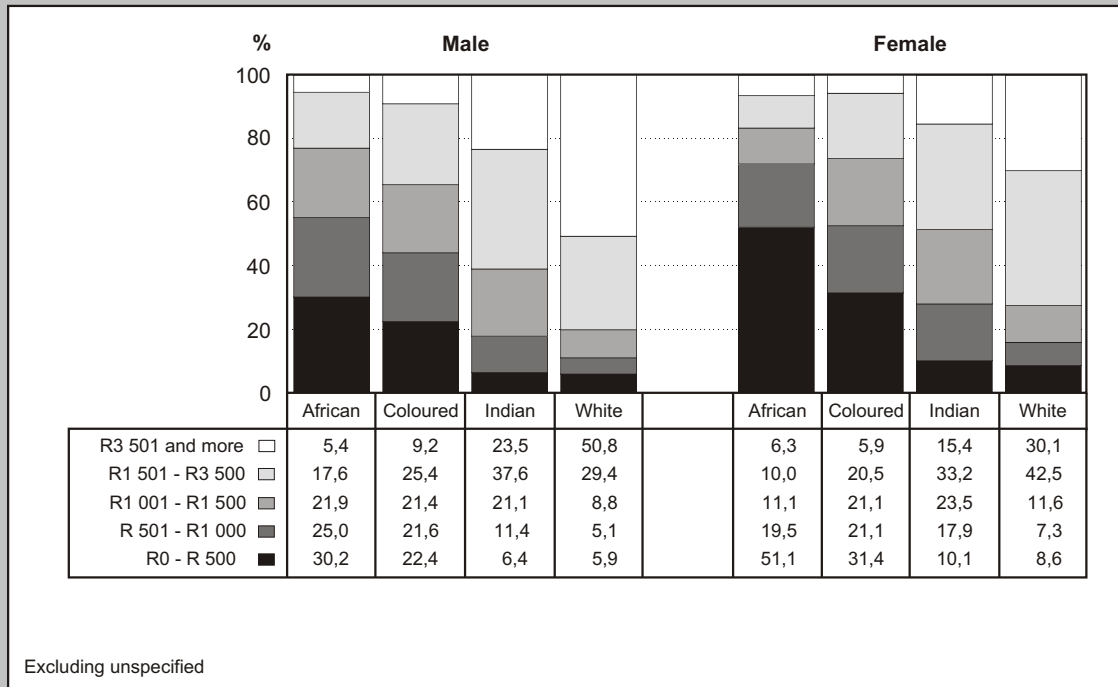
Figure 5.10 shows that more than half of all working African male youth (55,2%) had a monthly income of R1 000 and less while among the employed African female youth, the proportion of people in this income group is as large as 70,6%.

In addition, 44,0% of all working coloured male youth and more than half (52,5%) of all working coloured female youth reported earning an income of R1 000 and less per month.

Although, on average, proportions of working youth (both males and females) among whites and Indians earning R1 000 or less were comparatively smaller, they also showed sex-based differences.



Figure 5.10: Monthly income of employed youth by population group and sex



About 17,8% of working Indian male youth compared with 28,0% of working Indian female youth was in this income category, while a comparatively lower proportion of 11,0% among working white male youth and 15,9% of working white female youth received similar amounts of money per month.

At the highest income category of R3 501 and more, African male youth and female youth were almost equally represented with 5,4% and 6,3% respectively. However, these proportions were smaller than those in the other population groups.

Among coloureds, those who were in the highest income category among male youth made up 9,2%, while among women they constituted 5,9%.

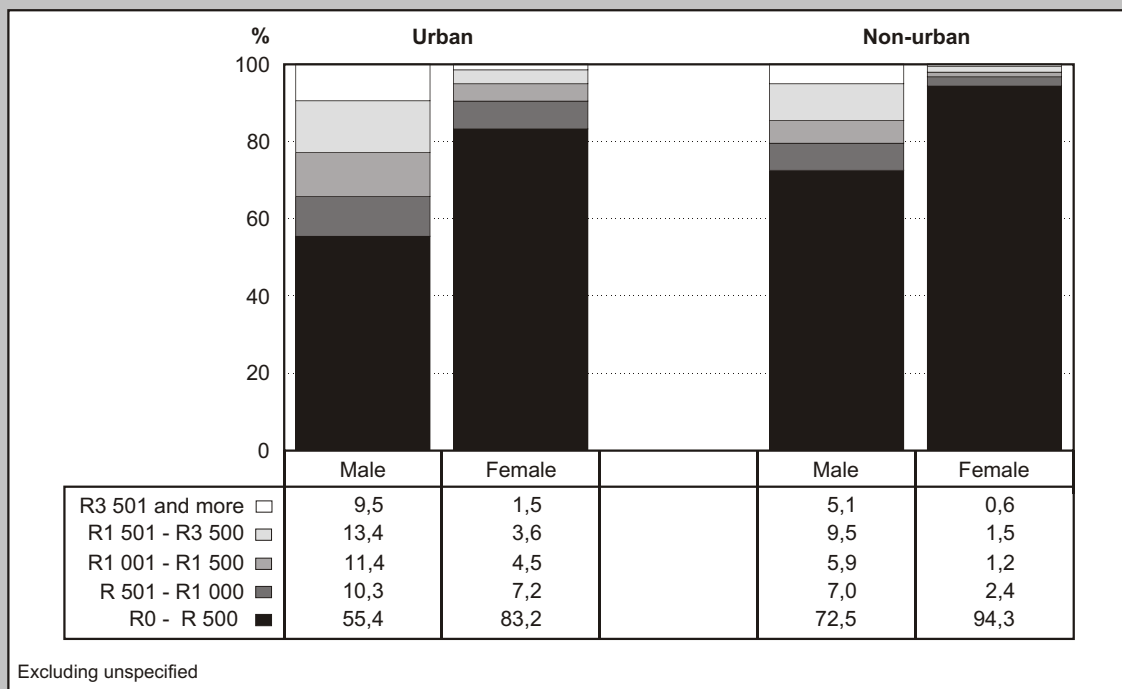
About a quarter of all working Indian male youth (23,5%) and 15,4% of all working Indian female youth were earning R3 501 and more per month.

On the other hand, more than half of all working white male youth (50,8%) and three out of every ten working white female youth (30,1%) were in this income band.

In addition to sex, one of the key factors that influence the income of workers is their milieu, i.e., whether they work in an urban or non-urban area.

Figure 5.11 shows the monthly income of employed youth by sex and milieu. While generally female youth tend to be concentrated in the lowest monthly income category, the percentage of females in this category was larger in non-urban areas (94,3%) than in urban areas (83,2%). Similarly, more male youth in non-urban areas (72,5%) than urban areas (55,4%) were earning a monthly income of R500 and less.

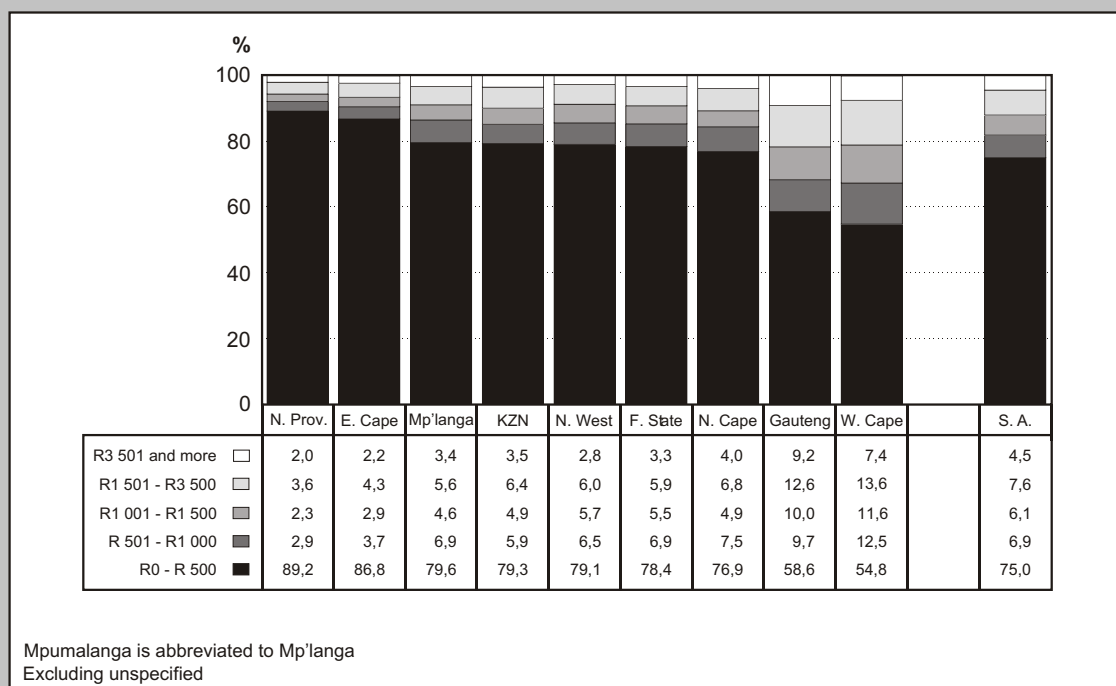
Figure 5.11: Monthly income of employed youth by milieu and sex



In the highest income category the same urban male bias is reflected. Less than 1% of young females in non-urban areas had a monthly income of R3 501 or more, compared with 5,1% of non-urban males; in urban areas 1,5% of young females were in this earning bracket compared with 9,5% of young males.

In provinces with large non-urban populations, the proportion of working youth (both males and females) with monthly incomes of R500 and lower tended to be higher than in the more urbanised provinces.

**Figure 5.12: Monthly income of employed youth by province**



While on the one hand three in every four working youths nationally (75,0%) had an income of R500 or less, in the four more rural of the nine provinces, the proportion of people in this income band ranged from 79,6% in Mpumalanga to 89,2% in Northern Cape.

Western Cape (54,8%) and Gauteng (58,6%) had the lowest proportions of working youth with a monthly income of R0 to R500.

At the highest income band of R3 501 and more, the proportion of working youth earning this amount per month ranged from 7,4% in Western Cape to as low as 2,0% in Northern Cape. Nationally only 4,5% of youth reported earning salaries in excess of R3 500 per month.

# South African youth and unemployment



At least two definitions of unemployment are used in South Africa – the official definition (also called the strict definition) and the expanded definition.

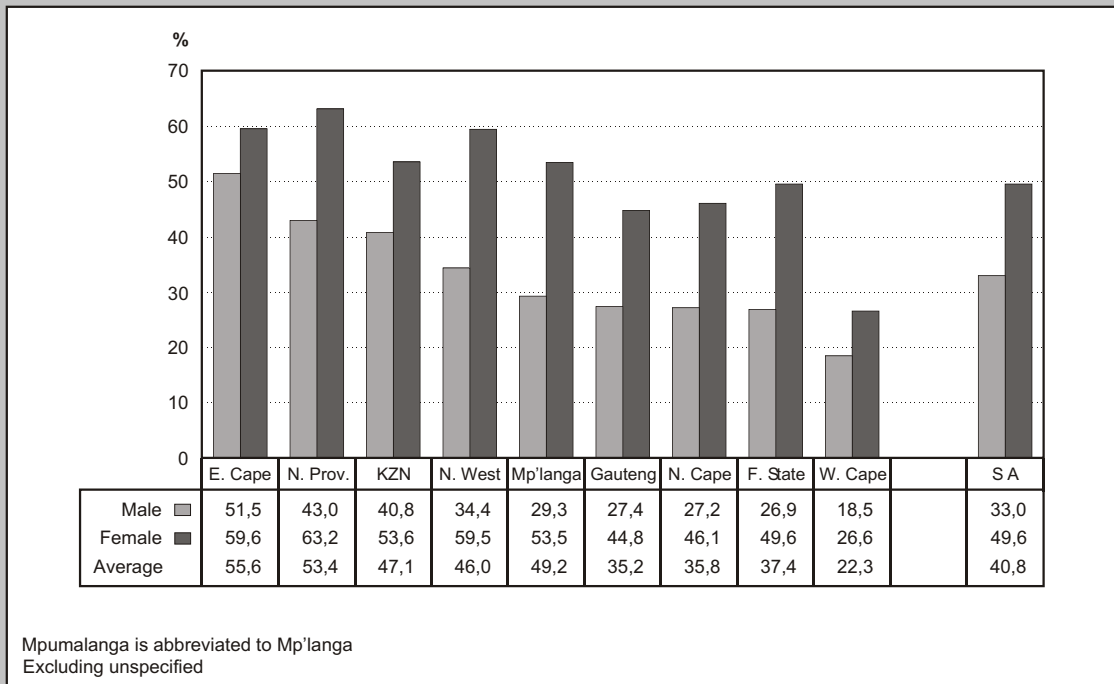
While both definitions include people aged 15 or older who are not employed but are available for work, the main requirement as regards the official definition is that an individual must have taken specific steps to seek employment in the four weeks prior to a given point in time. With the expanded definition, however, the main focus is on the availability for work, irrespective of whether or not a person has taken active steps to find work.

Unemployment rates calculated according to the official definition are therefore, by definition, lower than the expanded definition.

Unemployment figures from Census '96 are assumed to be according to the expanded definition, since no questions were asked about steps taken to seek work.

Figure 6.1 shows that the expanded unemployment rate was 40,8% for all youth of both sexes countrywide. For male youth it was 33,0% while for females it was 49,6%.

**Figure 6.1: Unemployment (expanded definition) among youth by province and sex**



Eastern Cape had the highest expanded unemployment rate for youth (55,6%), followed by Northern Province (53,4%), Mpumalanga (49,2%) and KwaZulu-Natal (47,1%).

Of all the provinces, Northern Province recorded the highest expanded unemployment rate among young females (63,2%) followed by Eastern Cape (59,6%) and North West (59,5%).

Expanded unemployment rates for young males in all the nine provinces were lower than those for females. The lowest expanded unemployment rate was recorded in Western Cape (18,5%), followed by Free State (26,9%) and Northern Cape (27,2%).

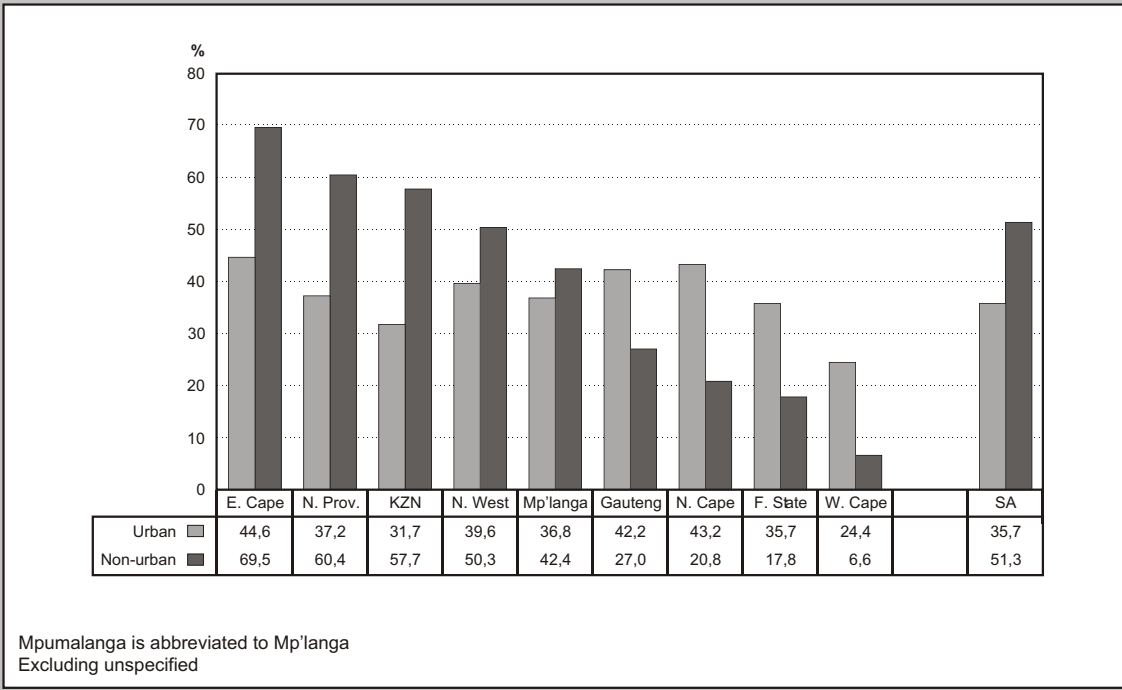
After Eastern Cape (51,5%), Northern Province had the second highest expanded unemployment rate (43,0%) for young males followed by KwaZulu-Natal (40,8%).

Figure 6.1 also shows that the five provinces with an average expanded youth unemployment rate higher than the national average of 40,8% were all part of the former homeland system, as was Free State (37,4%). A greater part of the territory that used to belong to the old homeland system was rural. Therefore, in addition to sex being a factor in the level of unemployment among the youth, the milieu, that is, whether people live in urban or non-urban areas, also appears to be influential.

This is confirmed when we look at Figure 6.2, which gives the provincial breakdown of youth unemployment by milieu. Nationally more than five in every ten economically active youth (51,3%) in non-urban areas were unemployed, compared to a lower proportion of 35,7% in urban areas.

Again the five provinces which reflect this national pattern of greater unemployment in non-urban areas were part of the old homeland system.

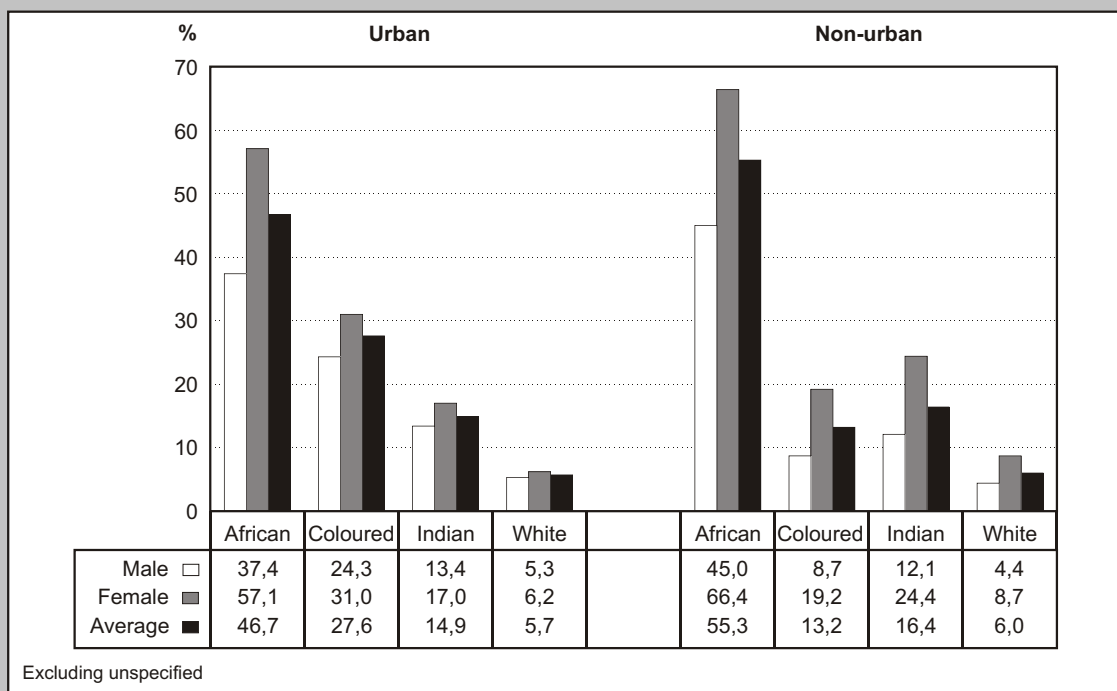
Figure 6.2: Unemployment (expanded definition) among youth by province and milieu



## Comparing unemployment among the population groups

While the expanded unemployment rate among youth in South Africa stood at 40,9% in October 1996, there were significant variations among the youth in the different population groups in the country. For instance, as Figure 6.3 shows, the unemployment rate among economically active Africans in both urban (46,7%) and non-urban areas (55,3%) is higher than for other population groups, (e.g. coloureds: 27,6% urban; 13,2% non-urban).

Figure 6.3: Unemployment rate (expanded definition) among youth by milieu, population group and sex

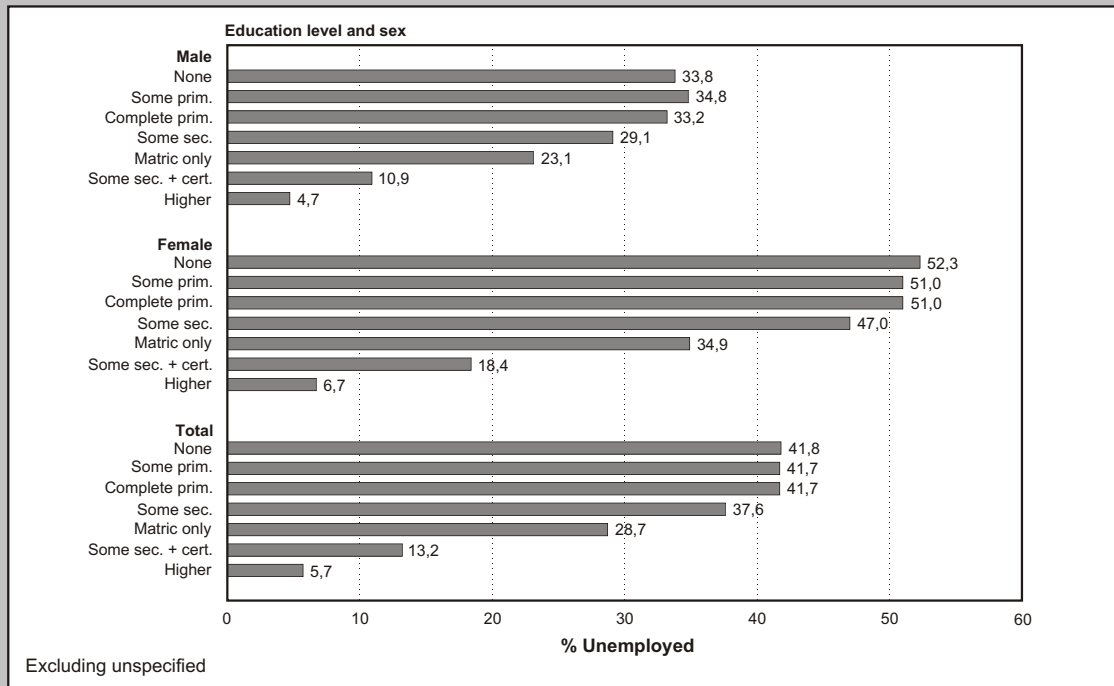


## Unemployment and education

Education and gender had an impact on unemployment rates. Figure 6.4 below shows wide variations in unemployment rates between economically active male and female youth with similar education qualifications.

Proportionately fewer males than females across all educational levels indicated that they were unemployed in 1996.

Figure 6.4: Unemployment rate (expanded definition) of economically active youth by level of education and sex



While 33,8% of economically active male youth were unemployed, among females with similar educational status 52,3% were unemployed.

There is a difference of more than ten percentage points between the proportion of unemployed economically active male youth with matric only (23,1%) and their female counterparts (34,9%).



## Implications

On average, the unemployment rate of 40,9% among youth in South Africa in October 1996 was high. Of the four population groups, Africans had the highest unemployment rate followed by coloureds.

Women in particular were highly affected by unemployment. Whereas about half (49,6%) of all young females who were economically active had no jobs, about 33,0% of young men were unemployed.

Such discrepancies also appeared between the provinces; for example Eastern Cape recorded an unemployment rate among youth of 55,6% while Western Cape recorded 22,3%.

## Conclusion

This report highlights some of the essential findings from Census '96 about the youth of South Africa. The report singles out the youth as an important but often neglected sector of society. Some of the problems faced by the youth in South Africa are of a unique nature and have major implications on the nature and scope of service delivery in the country both presently and in the future. It is therefore important that such problem areas be foregrounded to facilitate proper planning and implementation of developmental policies.

Youth form a large constituency (40%) within the population of South Africa and their proportion, particularly among Africans, is on the increase. Figures on the age of mothers at first childbirth point to one of the major population concerns in South Africa namely, adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive behaviour.

Twelve per cent of all young females in South Africa became mothers between 12 and 16 years of age. This highlights the seriousness of the problem of unwanted and unplanned pregnancy, particularly among teenagers of school-going age. A related problem is the inaccessibility of proper health care facilities and education on reproductive health and contraceptives.

Added to this, is the devastating impact of HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases, particularly on the youth in South Africa. Because of 'the deprivation trap' a large percentage of youth live in poverty. Their households do not have adequate money for basic needs and as a result youth, particularly females, become vulnerable to abuse and prostitution. Under such circumstances, youth are often left powerless regarding decisions and choices pertaining to the quality of their own lives.

Education is a very valuable means through which people are empowered. This report highlights the differences in educational achievement, with particularly low levels among African youth in non-urban areas. A large percentage of African youth (8%) indicated having had no formal education at all, while only a small minority (5%) of African youth acquired post-matric qualifications, compared to a larger proportion (28%) of white youth.

Without proper qualifications, the chances of getting a job are remote. Also, the type of jobs available for those with inadequate qualifications is at an elementary level. A large percentage of female youth (21%) worked as domestic workers in private households and, on average, 26% of youth held jobs at elementary level in 1996. This includes 25,7% of African youth, while the proportion is as low as 2,4% among white youth.

The repercussions of the differences in the industries in which the youth are employed and their occupational levels are notable in their monthly incomes. Many employed youth, particularly females both in urban areas (83,2%) and non-urban areas (94,3%), live in conditions of poverty. Four in every ten employed African youth and a quarter of all employed coloured youth were earning a monthly income of R500 or less.

Added to this are the high unemployment rates among the youth. Using the expanded definition of unemployment, two in every five economically active youth (40,9%) were unemployed in 1996. Unemployment was particularly high in provinces that are mostly rural, e.g. Eastern Cape (55,7%), Northern Province (53,4%) and KwaZulu-Natal (47,1%). The unemployment rate for older economically active people aged 36-65 years is 25,0%, which is relatively low compared to that of the youth.

Of all population groups, African youth had the highest rate of unemployment of 50,2%, i.e. just over half of those that were economically active. The situation is worse among African youth in non-urban areas where, on average, 55,3% of economically active youth were unemployed in 1996; 45,0% among young males and 66,4% among young females.

Poor living conditions, starting a family at a young age, inadequate education, lack of employment opportunities and high unemployment rates are indicators of poverty. Large proportions of South African youth are living in poverty.