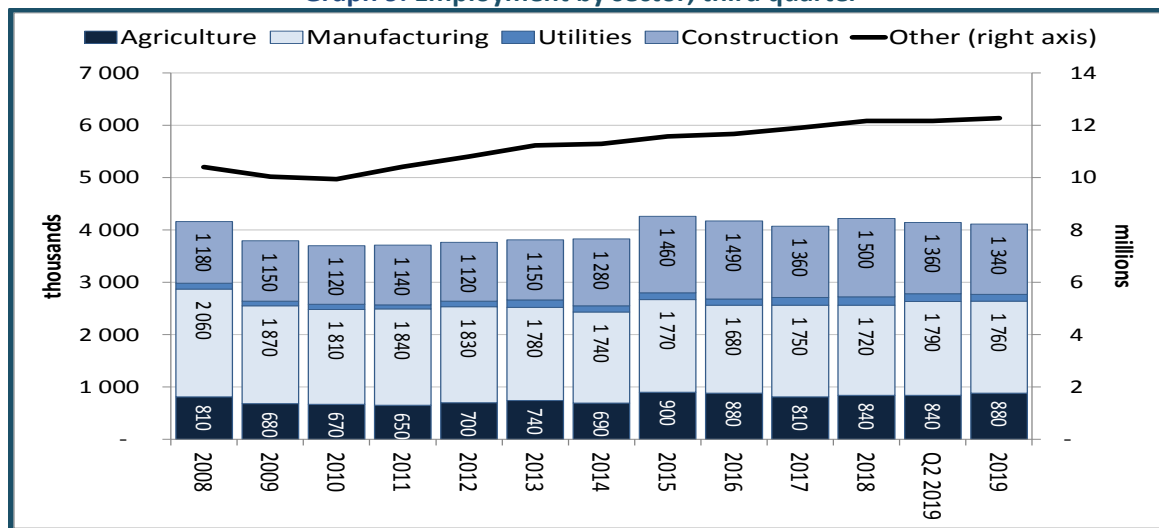


Employment

Total employment remained virtually unchanged over the past year. Construction lost 160 000 jobs, however, which was offset by growth in other industries. Quarterly figures are hard to interpret because they are not seasonally adjusted.

From the third quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019, total employment did not change significantly. Construction, however, shed 160 000 jobs, or over 10% of the total. The contraction in construction was offset mostly by a gain of 100 000 jobs in retail, as well as 40 000 each in agriculture and manufacturing. Employment in agriculture and manufacturing has remained almost unchanged since 2015.

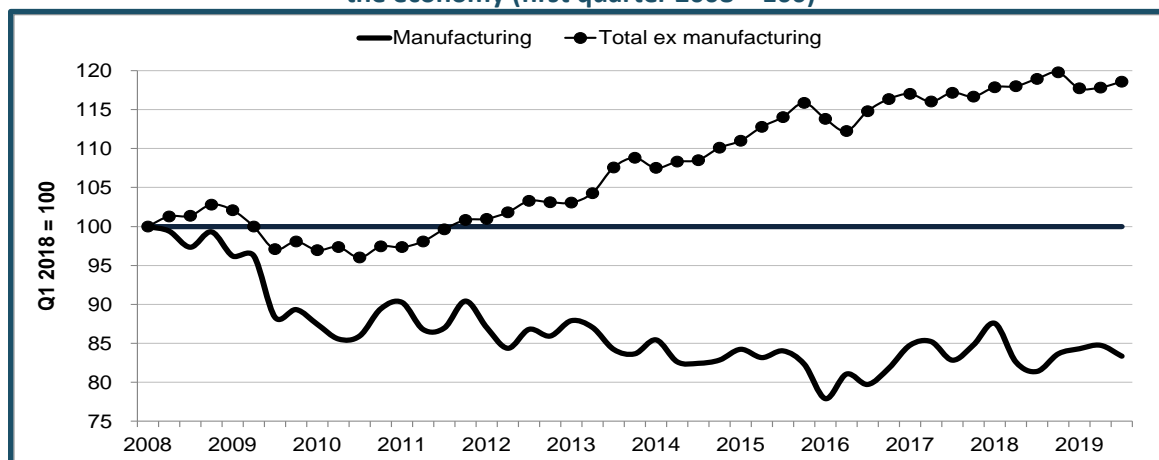
Graph 9. Employment by sector, third quarter



Source: Calculated from StatsSA. QLFS –2008-2019 Q3. Electronic database. Downloaded from www.statssa.gov.za.

As Graph 9 shows, for the past five years manufacturing employment has fluctuated in a narrow band around 1.75 million. In the third quarter of 2019, it reported employment at just 22 000 above the third quarter of 2015, which is a statistically insignificant change. In contrast, employment in the rest of the economy climbed by 335 000 in this period, or 2.3%. For comparison, the working age population increased by 2.5 million, or over 6%.

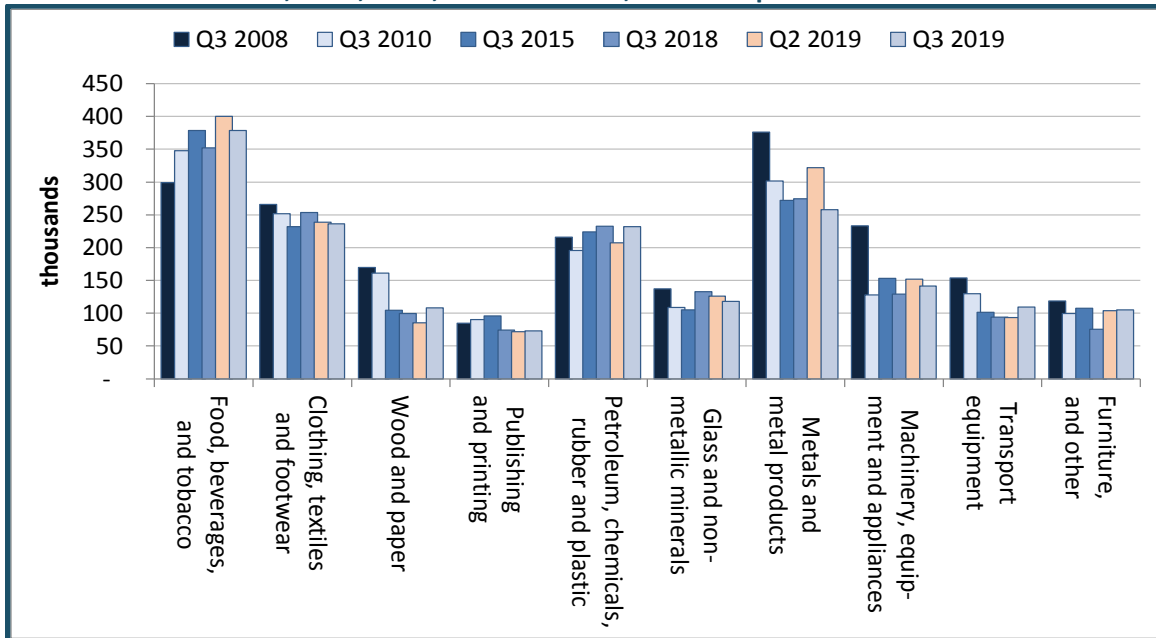
Graph 10. Indices of employment in manufacturing and the rest of the economy (first quarter 2008 = 100)



Source: Calculated from StatsSA. QLFS –2008-2019 Q3. Electronic database. Downloaded from www.statssa.gov.za.

Within manufacturing, metals, clothing and non-metallic minerals saw net job losses. Overall, heavy industry has not recovered from the severe job shedding it experienced in the 2008/9 global financial crisis. Employment in food processing, which saw rapid gains through 2015, has stagnated since then.

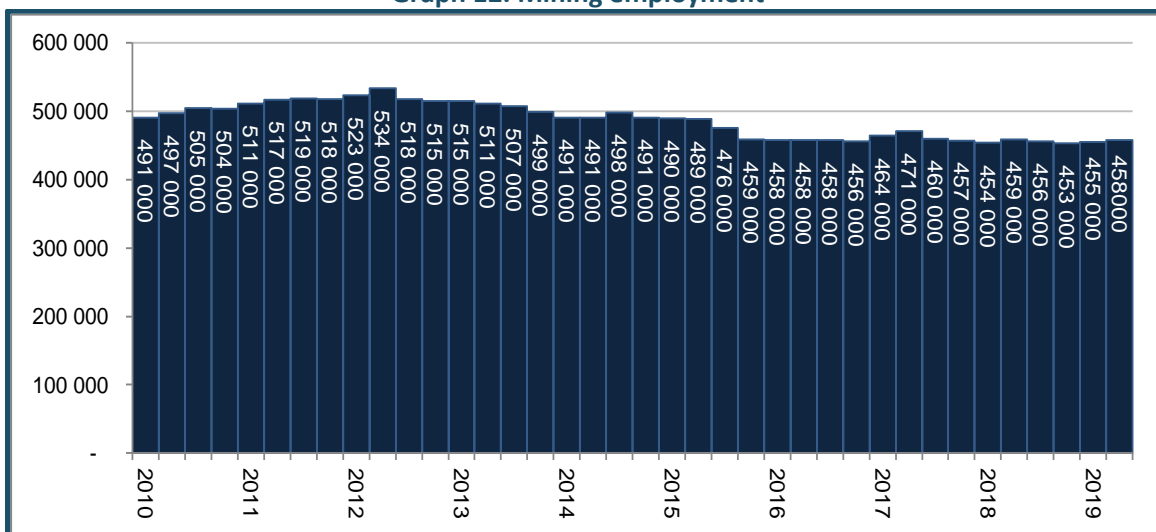
Graph 11. Employment by manufacturing industry, second quarter of 2008, 2010, 2017, 2018 and 2019, and first quarter of 2019



Source: Calculated from Statistics South Africa. Quarterly Labour Force Survey. Electronic database. Relevant quarters. Downloaded from Nesstar facility at www.statssa.gov.za.

For mining, Statistics South Africa recommends use of its employer survey, the Quarterly Employment Statistics, which lags a quarter behind the household-based Quarterly Labour Force Survey. The mines shed around 75 000 jobs from 2012 to mid-2017, but since then mining employment has flattened out.

Graph 12. Mining employment



Source: StatsSA. Quarterly Employment Survey. Third quarter 2019. Downloaded from www.statssa.gov.za.