

SOUTH AFRICA'S ARTISAN AND ENGINEER SHORTAGE

In 2014, the Department of Higher Education and Training launched the *Decade of the Artisan* campaign, aiming to produce 30 000 qualified artisans per year in South Africa by 2030.

30 000



“One of the key ingredients for economic growth and competitiveness is **the ability to attract skills which the economy needs.**”

– President Cyril Ramaphosa at the 2023 State of the Nation Address

In 2022 Dr Blade Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, said that South Africa needed at least 60% of all learners that leave school to train as artisans to meet industries' need for these skills and support economic growth.

60%

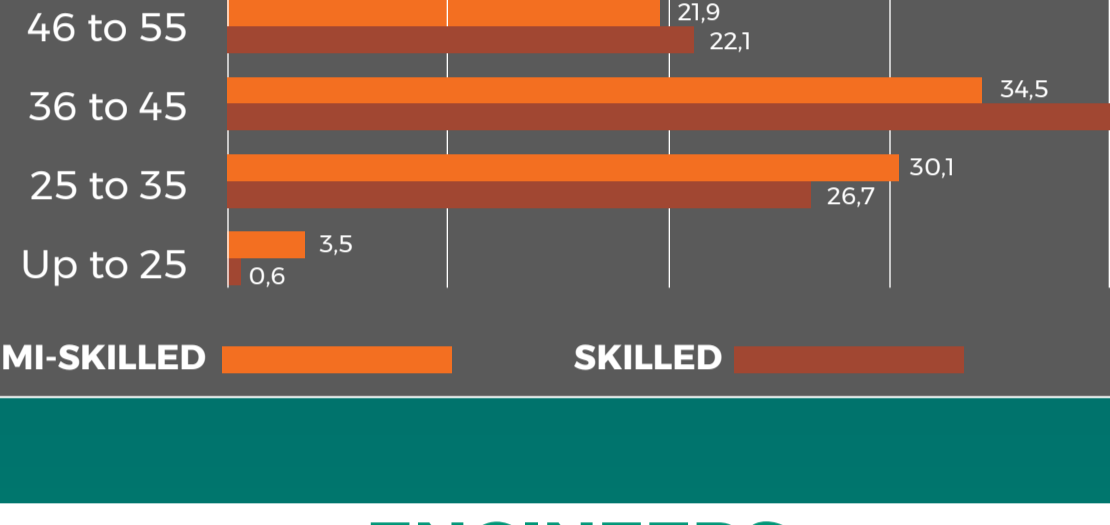
THE SKILLS GAP ISN'T CLOSING

Despite the government's efforts, the latest Remchannel Salary Survey shows that, even after nine years, the *Decade of the Artisan* has yet to gain traction.

ARTISANS

An age analysis of artisans across all industries shows that fewer than 1% of skilled artisans are **younger than 25**. What's also noteworthy is that only 3.5% of semi-skilled artisans are **younger than 25**.

ARTISANS: NATIONAL ALL INDUSTRIES AGE DISTRIBUTION



ENGINEERS

Remchannel's analysis of the engineering field shows that 2.7% of skilled engineers are **younger than 25**. On the other hand, experienced engineers aged 61 or older are still employed by participating organisations – many of them in senior management positions.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN THEY RETIRE?

ENGINEERS: NATIONAL ALL INDUSTRIES AGE DISTRIBUTION



WHAT ELSE DID REMCHANNEL FIND?



ESKOM

Remchannel's survey findings mirror figures published by *The Sunday Times*, highlighting the critical skills shortage at Eskom. More than 60% of all technical employees leaving Eskom have at least 11 years' experience, while some have as many as 30 years' experience.

80% of those who replace them have **less than 10 years' experience.**

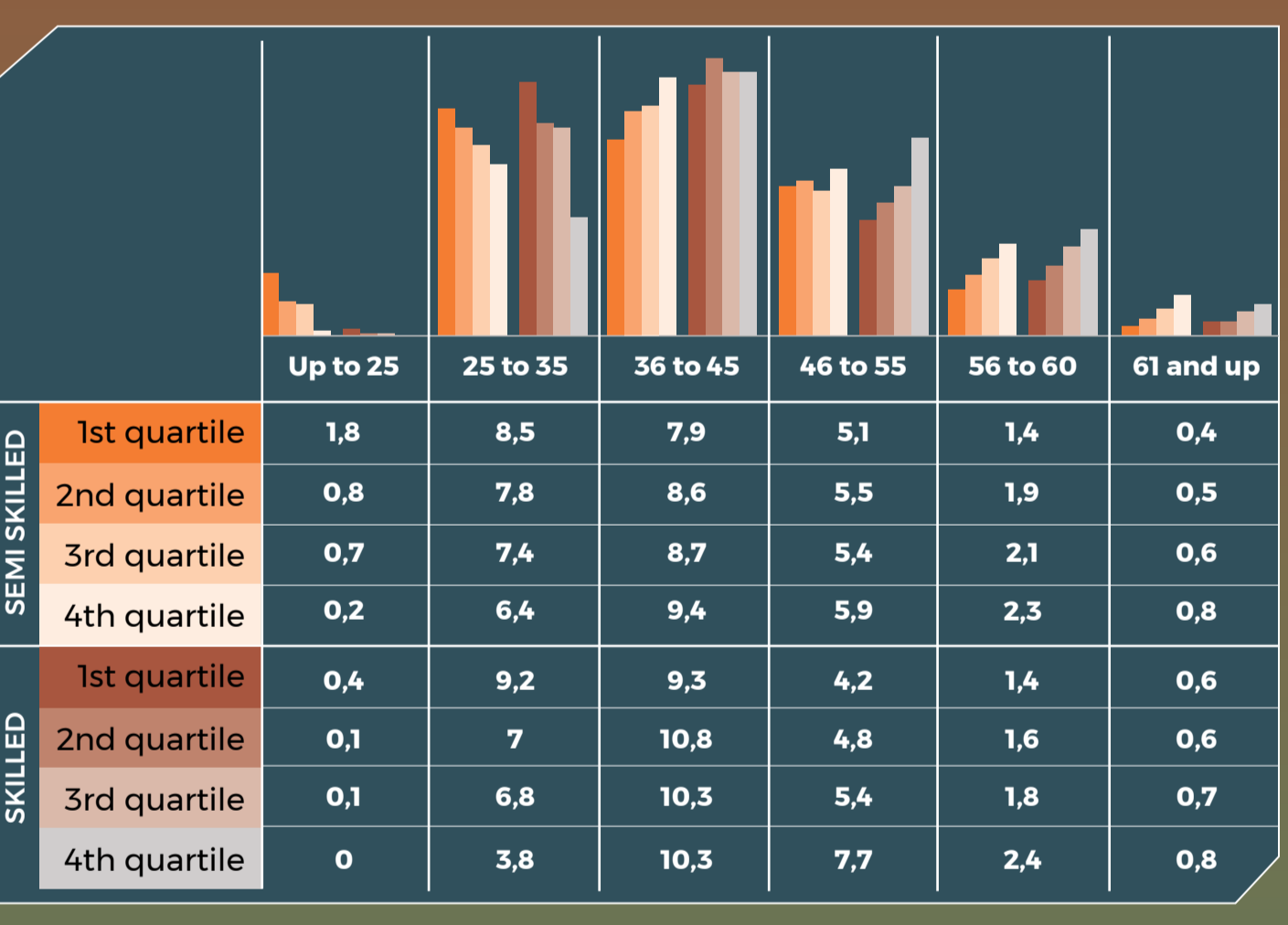


SALARIES AND AGE

ARTISANS

Most semi-skilled and skilled artisans aged 25 to 35, are positioned within the first quartile, while most semi-skilled and skilled artisans between 36 and 45 are paid within the fourth quartile.

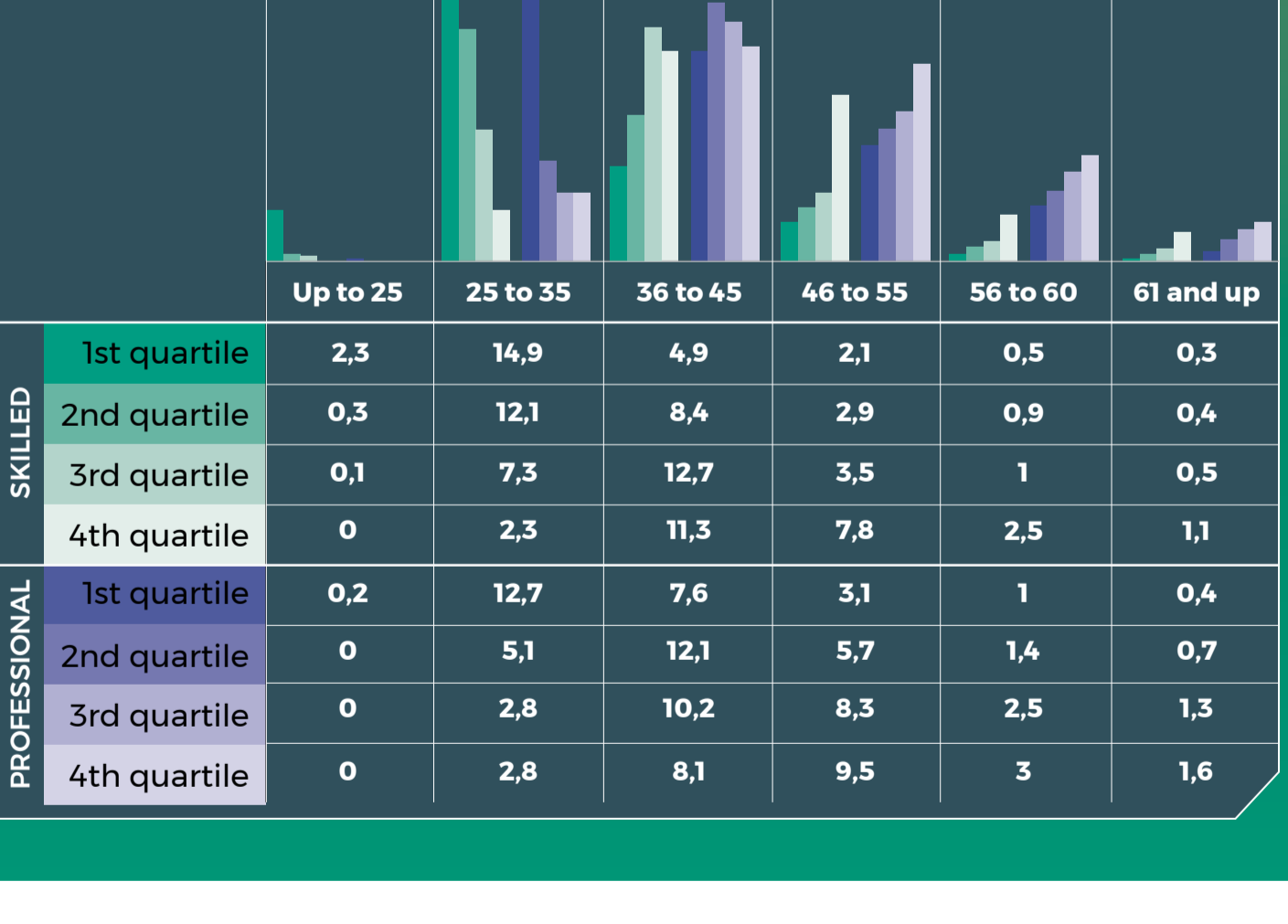
THE TAKEOUT: Most young artisans earn a salary **below 25%** of industry wages, while those in the sweet spot of youth and experience, **ages 36 to 45**, earn a salary that's **more than 75%** of the industry standard.



ENGINEERS

The majority of skilled engineers aged 25 to 35, are positioned within the first quartile, while most of those aged 36 to 45 are paid within the fourth quartile. As a result, there's a direct link between age or experience and income.

THE TAKEOUT: The younger you are, the less you're paid. And while that's to be expected, it means that when experienced employees leave, organisations like ESKOM, are left with inexperienced and low-earning replacements.



WOMEN

The *Decade of the Artisan* campaign also aims to encourage women to pursue a career in these traditionally male-dominated fields.



11% According to the Remchannel survey database, only 11% of women are in artisan roles.

21% of women are in engineering roles. However, **64%** of the individuals matched to Remchannel's Chemical Engineer I job spec are women.

“It is possible to automate aspects of many jobs in different sectors to free up workers for more creative and meaningful work. **But artisans and engineers have skills that cannot be automated.** They are unique and it is critical to find ways to create new opportunities for them and to ensure that their remuneration and rewards package can compete with offers from outside our borders.”



Emily Zuccarini
Key Account Manager at Remchannel