Sector Skills Plan (SSP)
Update 2026/27

Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA)

higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Foreword

PSETA is pleased to present the 2026/27 Sector Skills Plan – a vital roadmap for ensuring that our public service workforce is equipped, ethical, and fit for the future. This SSP arrives at a time when our country is navigating economic uncertainty, social demands, and the imperative to professionalise the state. It gives us a sharper understanding of where the skills gaps lie, where opportunities are emerging, and – most importantly – what we must do next.

This Plan makes it clear: the work of state-building rests on the shoulders of capable public servants. That means acting decisively to close hard-to-fill vacancies, investing in relevant and responsive qualifications, and making work-based learning part of the culture of employers in the Sector. We must also embrace new demands – from digital governance to climate resilience – while staying grounded in the values of service and accountability.

Our focus now shifts to implementation. We are confident in the PSETA's strategic direction, and we are determined, with the support of the PSETA Management, to see this Plan realised. We will need your continued partnership to make this happen.

We extend our sincere thanks to the departments, entities, unions, institutions and individuals who participated in the research, validation and review of this SSP. Your voices shaped this work. We now call on you to remain engaged – as collaborators, champions, and contributors – as we move from planning to delivery.

Let us build the public service we all believe in.

Ms Bontle Lerumo

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Accounting Authority
21 August 2025

AUTHORISATION OF THE PSETA 2026/27 Sector Skills Plan (SSP)

We, the undersigned, hereby endorse and approve, on behalf of the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority and Management, the contents of the 2026/27 Sector Skills Plan (SSP).

Ms Bontle Lerumo

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Ms Bontle Lerumo

PSETA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND ACCOUNTING AUTHORITY

21 August 2025

Executive Summary

The 2026/27 Sector Skills Plan (SSP) of the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) presents a comprehensive, evidence-informed account of labour market trends, occupational shifts, and strategic responses within South Africa's Public Service Sector. Anchored in national development priorities and informed by rigorous research, the SSP outlines the evolving skills demands and PSETA's corresponding interventions across the skills planning value chain.

Chapter 1 sets the economic and demographic context. While South Africa's GDP shows slight recovery (0.6% in 2024), persistent macroeconomic fragilities – particularly high unemployment (32.9%) and fiscal austerity – are constraining public sector recruitment and wage growth. The Public Service labour market remains dominated by large employers (especially provincial departments), with the workforce skewed toward the 35–55 age group and persistent underrepresentation of youth and people living with disabilities. These trends signal a need for more dynamic workforce planning to anticipate succession risks, expand talent pipelines, and ensure inclusive recruitment. The cost-containment environment and headcount freezes demand strategic prioritisation of occupational training, with stronger alignment to future roles and performance-based career pathing.

Chapter 2 identifies five change drivers reshaping skills demand: professionalisation of the public service, digital transformation, growth in e-government, climate resilience imperatives, and the emergence of public-private partnerships (PPPs). These drivers have wide-reaching implications. On the planning side, they necessitate more agile and forward-looking skills forecasts, while on the training side, they require tailored, modular offerings that build transversal and emerging competencies. Notably, digital and green economy demands are placing pressure on the system to fast-track qualifications in cybersecurity, data analytics, ESG compliance, and digital records management. The Just Transition Framework, the Digital and Future Skills Strategy, and the Professionalisation Framework converge around a core priority: strengthening state capacity through targeted skilling of public servants at all levels.

Chapter 3 details the occupational dynamics through analysis of hard-to-fill vacancies (HTFVs), skills gaps, and emerging roles. Transversal occupations with high vacancy levels include Programme and Project Managers, various managers (finance, risk, human resources), and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)related roles. Causes are consistently linked to a lack of specialist skills and 2 or 5 years of experience – often exacerbated by unattractive remuneration and limited career mobility. The skills gaps identified across all occupational levels lean towards soft skills (notably leadership and emotional intelligence) and finance and management skills. These gaps highlight critical weaknesses in both initial training pipelines and ongoing in-service development. To address them, the SSP recommends intensifying occupationally aligned qualifications, strengthening workplace-based learning, and embedding ethics and performance in career development systems.

Emerging occupations such as AI Specialist, ICT Security Specialist, Data Analyst, and Sustainability Manager signal a shift in the sector's occupational structure. These roles reflect growing demand for future-oriented technical capabilities that were not previously core to the Sector. Whilst addressing future-fit capabilities is important, "core" occupations are still required. Responding to this, PSETA is planning a suite of qualifications – including Diplomat, Civic Service Officer, Diplomatic Mission Administrator, and Public Sector M&E roles – many of which are already aligned to NQF levels and undergoing Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) registration. This reflects a decisive shift toward professionalisation through formal recognition of career-aligned, fit-for-purpose qualifications.

PSETA's Sectoral Priority Occupations and Interventions (SPOI) list synthesises the skills planning insights into a focused funding and delivery strategy. Priorities include leadership, finance, ICT, law, and governance roles – all of which are vital for achieving a capable and ethical state. The SPOI list informs Discretionary Grant allocations, enabling the Authority to target funding toward occupations with high systemic importance and low current supply. Importantly, the SPOI framework supports not only qualification development but also practical interventions such as Learnerships, internships, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Chapter 4 underscores the centrality of partnerships in enabling PSETA's delivery mandate. Partnerships with national and provincial departments, legislatures, higher education institutions (HEIs), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, unions, and professional bodies ensure reach, contextualisation, and legitimacy of interventions. The Authority's relationship with institutions like the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), National School of Government (NSG), National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA), and bargaining councils ensures alignment with national frameworks and access to critical data and delivery platforms. These collaborations support joint curriculum design, workplace placement, and co-funded training – crucial levers in expanding both access and quality.

Chapter 5 reflects on the role of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) as both a regulatory and strategic function. The SSP introduces a performance-oriented M&E framework that tracks outcomes across learning pathways, including learner progression, completion, employment, and relevance of programmes. Emphasis is placed on the use of empirical evidence to refine planning, target interventions, and improve accountability in qualification development and grant allocation. This is especially important in light of the limited uptake of in-service programmes and the need to improve throughput and workplace integration.

Chapter 6.3 presents PSETA's Strategic Priority Actions. These actions centre around five pillars: occupational qualification development, professionalisation of the workforce, expanded access to work-based learning, improved alignment between skills and demand, and M&E system strengthening. Among the most critical priorities are the finalisation and rollout of qualifications in key roles (e.g., Programme Manager, Senior Government Official, Diplomat); expansion of short, credit-bearing skills programmes; implementation of RPL for experienced officials; and scaling up of foundational digital skills training through platforms like the Batho Pele Digital Skills Programme. These interventions aim to address both short-term delivery challenges and long-term capability deficits. Notably, they also integrate policy and compliance dimensions, e.g., embedding the Public Service Regulations and Professionalisation Framework into curricula.

In summary, the SSP 2026/27 reflects a maturing skills ecosystem in the Public Service Sector, increasingly driven by national strategy alignment, responsive qualification design, and evidence-based planning. The document provides a roadmap for transitioning from a fragmented skills supply landscape toward a strategically coherent, ethically grounded, and digitally enabled public workforce. The challenge ahead lies not only in execution but in sustaining momentum under tight fiscal constraints and evolving socio-political pressures.

Ms Bontle Lerumo

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Ms Bontle Lerumo
PSETA Chief Executive Officer
21 August 2025

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

- **AI** – Artificial Intelligence
- **CPD** – Continuing Professional Development
- **DDM** – District Development Model
- **DHET** – Department of Higher Education and Training
- **DPSA** – Department of Public Service and Administration
- **ERRP** – Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
- **ESG** – Environmental, Social and Governance
- **GDP** – Gross Domestic Product
- **GPSSBC** – General Public Service Sector Bargaining Council
- **HEIs** – Higher Education Institutions
- **HRD** – Human Resource Development
- **HRDSA** – Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa
- **HTFVs** – Hard-to-Fill Vacancies
- **ICT** – Information and Communication Technology
- **M&E** – Monitoring and Evaluation
- **MTSF** – Medium-Term Strategic Framework
- **MTDP** – Medium-Term Development Plan
- **NEHAWU** – National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union
- **NEMISA** – National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa
- **NDP** – National Development Plan
- **NSDP** – National Skills Development Plan
- **NSG** – National School of Government
- **NQF** – National Qualifications Framework
- **OFO** – Organising Framework for Occupations
- **PLWD** – People Living with Disabilities
- **PoMiSA** – Potential of Micro-credentials in Southern Africa
- **PPP** – Public-Private Partnership
- **PS-HRDSF** – Public Service Human Resource Development Strategic Framework
- **PSETA** – Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority
- **QCTO** – Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
- **RPL** – Recognition of Prior Learning
- **SAAPAM** – South African Association of Public Administration and Management
- **SETA** – Sector Education and Training Authority
- **SPOI** – Sectoral Priority Occupations and Interventions
- **TVET** – Technical and Vocational Education and Training
- **WIL** – Work Integrated Learning

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Research Process and Methods

PSETA's research methodology is based on a mixed methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches. This comprehensive technique ensures that research studies include both measurable results and detailed insights into programme performance. The approach provides a systematic framework for understanding the contribution of interventions to intended results, and the mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) component enables data triangulation and validation of findings using various tools (typically desktop research, interviews, surveys, focus groups and workshops).

PSETA recognises that effective research in the public service sector necessitates techniques that can handle complex social and economic issues while preserving scientific accuracy. By taking a mixed-methods, multi-layered data collection and analysis approach, PSETA ensures that its research findings are both statistically valid and relevant to the unique difficulties confronting the sector.

The studies conducted by PSETA that have informed this SSP are summarised in the table below.

Table 1: Research Studies

Type of Study	Topic	Nature (Design) of the study	Objectives of study	Data collection tool	Sample size and scope of the study	List of data sources and data sets	Time frame of the study	Chapters Informed
Track and Tracer Study	Tracking and tracing participants of Developmental Programmes within the Public Sector to understand socio-economic and employment changes.	The study follows phases such as Project Initiation, Literature Review, Data Collection and Analysis, Reporting, and Closure. It uses a logic model (Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes, Impacts) and a "Rotation" flow chart to guide programme evaluation. The design applies a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative data from interviews with quantitative analysis of sample sizes and departmental submissions.	The primary objectives include understanding changes in socio-economic and employment status, exploring the transition to the workplace, facilitating work entrance and career outlook, assessing the relevance of learned competencies (skills, knowledge, experience), strengthening the design, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of developmental programmes, and providing informed recommendations for improving and implementing these programmes.	Interview schedules were used as a data collection tool. These were tailored for different target groups, namely TG1, TG2, and TG3, to capture relevant insights from each group.	The study included different Target Groups. Specific sample sizes and response numbers are provided for some groups: a sample size of 193 with 189 complete responses analysed for one group, a sample size of 28 with 24 complete responses analysed for another, and a sample size of 7 with 0 responses received and 8 analysed responses for a third. Target groups mentioned include Tertiary Institutions, Students/Learners, and Government. The scope covers Developmental Programmes at both the National and Provincial levels, across various sectors and occupations. The study also incorporates data related to submissions from 154 departments.	Data was collected directly from Target Groups, such as Tertiary Institutions, Students/Learners, and Government. Administrative or programme data was also used, specifically concerning submissions from 154 departments (142 submissions in 2022–23). Data on National and Provincial Developmental Programmes for the years 2020–21, 2021–22, and 2022–23 was also included.	The report is dated 2024. The data analysed in the study spans the years 2020–21, 2021–22, and 2022–23.	5

Type of Study	Topic	Nature (Design) of the study	Objectives of study	Data collection tool	Sample size and scope of the study	List of data sources and data sets	Time frame of the study	Chapters Informed
Research Report	Free State Provincial Sector Skills Plan	The study is structured as a research report. It involves examining various factors affecting skills demand and supply, identifying occupational shortages and skills gaps, and analysing existing partnerships and monitoring systems. The research study adopts both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.	The objective of the report includes profiling the Free State Province Public Service Sector; analysing key drivers of skills demand and supply; identifying occupational shortages and hard-to-fill vacancies; evaluating partnerships related to skills development; assessing monitoring and evaluation systems; and proposing strategic skills priority actions for the sector.	Online survey, interviews and focus groups.	The study focuses on the Free State Province Public Service Sector, including provincial administration and entities.	Online surveys, interviews, WSPS/ATR, SARS Levy File, and Focus Groups	The report examines issues such as hard-to-fill vacancies for the years 2020 to 2024	1-5
Research Report	Legislative Sector Skills Needs Analysis	The study is descriptive and analytical, drawing on existing reports and administrative data to evaluate skills requirements and gaps. It includes employer profiling, labour market information analysis, and the identification of hard-to-fill vacancies, using quantitative methods.	The study aims to: (1) profile the Legislative Sector, including Parliament and provincial legislatures; (2) identify skills change drivers such as digitalisation and evolving public expectations; (3) analyse occupational shortages and emerging skills; and (4) present insights from ATRs and WSPs submitted by sector institutions.	n/a (used secondary data from desktop review).	The study encompasses the entire Legislative Sector of South Africa, including the Parliament and all nine Provincial Legislatures: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, Northern Cape, and Western Cape Provincial Legislatures.	The study is based on administrative data drawn from ATRs and WSPs for the years 2021 to 2024. It also incorporates employer and employment profiles across the 2019–2024 period, data on hard-to-fill vacancies, and identified skills gaps per Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) category for each institution.	The time frame for the data analysed spans from 2019 to 2024. Specifically, it includes employer profile trends from 2019 to 2024, employment profiles for the 2023/2024 financial year, and training and skills planning reports from 2021 to 2024.	2 & 3

Type of Study	Topic	Nature (Design) of the study	Objectives of study	Data collection tool	Sample size and scope of the study	List of data sources and data sets	Time frame of the study	Chapters Informed
Tracer Study	Tracer study of unemployed beneficiaries of PSETA's training programmes in the Public Service Sector: North West Legislature Learnerships	The study adopts a mixed-methods strategy, incorporating both quantitative data (such as employment status and programme completion statistics) and qualitative insights (such as beneficiaries' perceptions of programme value and their personal experiences).	The study aims to trace the employment status of beneficiaries who participated in the Learnership and Bursary programmes. It also seeks to understand the job-seeking methods used by these individuals, determine their interest in pursuing further studies, and explore their perceptions regarding the value and effectiveness of the PSETA-funded programmes they completed, both in terms of skills gained and opportunities accessed.	The primary data collection method used in the study was a survey. Beneficiaries were asked to provide feedback and information about their experiences, employment status, and perspectives. A total of 26 individuals responded directly to the survey, forming the core data set. These responses were then analysed to draw conclusions about the overall impact of the programmes and the experiences of the beneficiaries in the labour market and education system following their participation in the PSETA-funded initiatives.	The sample size for the study consisted of a total of 38 responses. Of these, 28 were from individuals who completed the National Certificate in Public Administration (NQF Level 5), and 10 were from those who completed the Diploma in Public Administration (NQF Level 6). Notably, 10 of the bursary recipients were also beneficiaries of the Learnership programme. Although 26 individuals completed the survey, the findings incorporate all 38 responses to present a more comprehensive understanding of the programmes' reach and impact. The scope of the study was limited to youth under the age of 35, who are predominantly female (60%) and of Black African descent. All participants are residents of rural areas in the North West province and come from Child Headed Households.	The study draws primarily on the survey responses of the beneficiaries. In addition to this primary data, a variety of secondary sources are used to contextualise the findings. These include PSETA's Learning Programmes Policy (2023), Discretionary Grant Criteria and Guidelines (2022), and Memoranda of Agreement. External sources such as SAQA, StatsSA, the World Bank, and academic literature are also referenced.	The research report was published in September 2024. The programmes evaluated were implemented between the financial years 2019/2020 and 2023/2024. All Learnership participants completed their programme in 2022, while the 10 bursary recipients concluded their studies in May 2024. A graduation ceremony for the bursary recipients was held on 22 March 2024.	5

Type of Study	Topic	Nature (Design) of the study	Objectives of study	Data collection tool	Sample size and scope of the study	List of data sources and data sets	Time frame of the study	Chapters Informed
Research Report	Limpopo's Provincial Sector Skills Plan 2024-2025	This study adopts a qualitative research design, which is considered suitable for capturing in-depth insights into skills planning. While predominantly qualitative, the inclusion of survey distribution and document analysis introduces elements of quantitative investigation. Therefore, the study takes a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative depth with quantitative scope to enhance reliability and triangulation of findings.	The main objectives are to collect and analyse data to identify occupational shortages and skills gaps within the Limpopo Provincial Government, address skills demand and supply through up-to-date research, and align findings with organisational performance needs. Additionally, the study seeks to establish skills development priorities tailored to the specific demands of the public service sector in Limpopo.	Data was collected through three key tools. First, focus groups and in-depth interviews allowed for rich qualitative insights into skills-related challenges. Where necessary, individual interviews were conducted to fill information gaps. Second, an online survey was disseminated to 300 stakeholders, though due to a low completion rate (20 respondents), its findings were excluded. Third, critical document analysis was used to establish a foundation for the research and support findings, using a variety of institutional, provincial, and national strategic documents.	The study's primary data was gathered from 15 in-person focus group discussions involving 128 participants and five in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. Though 300 people were targeted for an online survey, only 20 completed it and their data was excluded. The study applied purposive and snowball sampling techniques to reach relevant officials. The scope of the study includes 11 Limpopo Provincial Government departments and 22 local municipalities across Waterberg, Sekhukhune, Vhembe, Capricorn, and Mopani Districts. The research is situated within the PSETA mandate, specifically SIC codes 9100–9108, covering public service entities.	The study drew from both primary and secondary data sources. Primary sources included focus groups and in-depth interviews, while survey data was collected but excluded. Secondary sources involved an extensive review of documents, such as WSPs, ATRs, annual reports, PERSAL records, strategic frameworks, StatsSA data, and various national and provincial planning documents. Additional sources include reports from the DHET, PSETA, DPSA, HSRC, and academic collaborations like WITS' MOU with LPG.	The PSSP covers the 2024–2025 period. Data collection took place between 26 and 30 August 2024, with additional online interactions from 12 to 25 September 2024. Preparatory activities began with a virtual meeting on 30 July 2024.	3

1. Chapter 1: Sector Profile

1.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the Public Service Sector, detailing its scope, the key role-players' economic performance, trends, and labour market changes. It further includes an employer summary, highlighting the number, size, and geographical distribution of employers across the Sector and its subsectors, as well as an overview of the employees, including employee demographics. The analysis draws on diverse data sources such as Personnel and Salaries (PERSAL) for Public Service staffing information, the 2025 Annexure A (Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs) and Annual Training Reports (ATRs), national data from Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) for contextual insight, and financial statistics from the National Treasury and the South African Reserve Bank (SARB).

1.2. Scope of Coverage

PSETA is tasked with addressing the demand and supply of skills within South Africa's Public Service Sector. Its coverage includes national and provincial government departments, public entities registered with the PSETA, as well as the National Parliament and provincial legislatures. This scope corresponds with the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes[1] 9100 to 9108, which categorise activities related to Public Administration. Specifically, national departments are typically classified under SIC code 91101, provincial administrations under 91102, and legislatures and parliament under 91108. Public entities are assigned various SIC codes within the broader Public Service sector. The subsectors covered by PSETA are illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 1: PSETA Subsectors

| National Departments | Provincial Departments | Legislative Subsector | Public Entities |
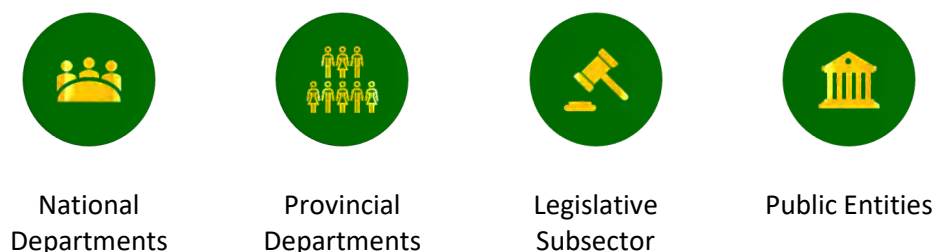
PSETA focuses on the transversal skills essential to the functioning of South Africa's Public Service. These transversal skills refer to the "business of government", encompassing core government functions such as administration, management, planning, legislation, and policy formulation. As cross-sectoral competencies, these skills are fundamental across the entire Public Service landscape.

South Africa's governance framework operates through three spheres: national, provincial, and local, with officials employed under various legislative frameworks. PSETA's mandate is focused on the national and provincial spheres, specifically covering employees appointed in terms of the Public Service Act (PSA) of 1994 (Public Service Act, 1994). Employees within the national and provincial government who fall under other legislative Acts, such as health practitioners, educators, police, and military personnel, are served by other relevant SETAs. For instance, the Local Government SETA (LGSETA) is responsible for the local government sphere. Certain departments, such as Health and Education, operate under "dual reporting"

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[1] SIC codes are a standardised international system used to group similar business activities into Sectors/ industries (DTIC).

structures, reporting to PSETA for PSA-governed staff, and to their respective line-function SETAs, like the Health and Welfare SETA (HWSETA). There are 42 nationally gazetted departments implementing legislation and policy passed by Parliament or Cabinet (Republic of South Africa, 2025). The increase in the number of national departments from 39 in 2023 to 42 in 2025 is due to the splitting of national departments, namely, the Department of Electricity and Energy and the Department of Minerals and Petroleum. Additionally, there are 112 provincial departments, each under the direction of a Premier's Office (Republic of South Africa, 2025). In the case of the nine provincial legislatures and the National Parliament registered with PSETA, the authority's scope mainly pertains to administrative personnel, while the Education, Training and Development Practices SETA (ETDP SETA) addresses the training needs of Members of Parliament and provincial legislature members.

1.3. Key Role Players

The Public Service sector in South Africa is governed by a comprehensive regulatory framework, underpinned by the work of several statutory bodies. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) plays a central role in setting norms and standards for Public Service operations. In collaboration with DPSA and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the country's primary authority on skills development, PSETA, interprets relevant policies (as discussed in Chapter 2.3), assesses skills supply and demand, and designs targeted skills development interventions to address the needs of the Public Service workforce and contribute to broader national economic objectives.

The table below outlines the principal role players in the Public Service sector, their respective roles in skills development, and their contributions toward the implementation of the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP).

Table 2: Key role players in the Sector

Institution/ Statutory body	Role in Public Service Sector Skills Development
Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)	The DHET, as the Executive Authority, plays a key role in overseeing PSETA and the broader network of 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) across South Africa. DHET holds a central role in policy development, regulatory oversight, and the disbursement of funding to SETAs, including PSETA, to enable the development of sector-specific skills. Within the context of the Public Service Sector. DHET is instrumental in ensuring that education and training initiatives are aligned to national priorities, responsive to labour market needs, and of high quality. It also facilitates stakeholder coordination to address critical skills shortages and improve human capital within the public sector. Furthermore, DHET is responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), which guides skills planning and development across the country (SA Skills, 2025).
Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)	The DPSA is responsible for shaping the governance and operational framework of the Public Service by establishing norms and standards related to organisational design, human resource management, labour relations, ethical conduct, and digital transformation. Its mandate is to promote a professional, capable, and developmental state by improving the efficiency and accountability of service delivery. In the context of skills development, the DPSA supports the implementation of the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030, particularly Outcome 3: "Improving the level of skills in the South African workforce". It achieves this by coordinating human resource development policies, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and driving innovation across the Public Service. The department also champions employee wellness and anti-corruption initiatives, which contribute to creating enabling environments for skills planning and talent retention (DPSA , 2025); (NSDP, 2019).

Institution/ Statutory body	Role in Public Service Sector Skills Development
Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)	The DPME guides and coordinating performance monitoring and evaluation across the public service. In the context of skills development, DPME facilitates policy coherence and progress tracking to ensure that initiatives are effectively implemented and aligned with national priorities. It collaborates with stakeholders to promote programmes that support the achievement of the eight strategic outcomes of the NSDP 2030. These include increasing the supply of occupations in high demand, improving the linkage between education and employment, enhancing workforce skills, expanding access to occupational training, strengthening public TVET colleges, supporting entrepreneurship and cooperative development, enabling worker-driven training, and enhancing career development services (DPME, n.d.).
National Treasury	The National Treasury coordinates skills development within the Public Sector. It is responsible for developing policy frameworks, managing the allocation of funding, overseeing the implementation of skills programmes, and engaging with key stakeholders to strengthen capacity-building initiatives. A significant contribution by the National Treasury is the creation and upkeep of the Financial Management Competency Framework, which outlines the critical skills and competencies required for effective financial management across the Public Service. These efforts directly support the NSDP by advancing Outcome 1, which focuses on increasing the supply of high-demand occupations, and Outcome 3, aimed at improving the overall skills level of South Africa's workforce (National Treasury, 2024).
The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)	The QCTO is the regulatory body responsible for safeguarding the quality and relevance of occupational qualifications across South Africa, including those developed by PSETA. It oversees the design and approval of occupational qualifications, ensures the integrity and credibility of assessment practices, and manages the registration of qualifications on the national Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF). By upholding rigorous quality standards and ensuring qualifications meet current industry requirements, the QCTO actively contributes to NSDP Outcome 4: "Increasing access to occupationally directed programmes," thereby supporting the expansion and recognition of credible skills development pathways (QCTO, 2025).
The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)	The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) oversees the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), ensuring the quality and coherence of all qualifications in South Africa. Working with bodies like the QCTO, SAQA registers and monitors occupational qualifications, maintains learner records, and advises government on skills development. This oversight supports key NSDP goals by increasing high-demand skills, improving workforce competencies, and expanding access to occupational training in the Public Service Sector. By fulfilling this oversight role, SAQA ensures that qualifications within the Public Service Sector contribute to critical NSDP outcomes, particularly by increasing high-demand occupations, improving workforce skills, and expanding access to occupationally directed learning programmes (SAQA, 2023).
Human Resource Development Council of South Africa (HRDC)	The HRDC functions as a national advisory body dedicated to fostering collaboration among key stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of human resource development (HRD) strategies. It creates a consultative space for government, business, labour, academia, and civil society to collectively identify and resolve systemic challenges related to skills development. Through its work, the HRDC helps to ensure alignment between education and training systems and the country's socio-economic priorities. This directly contributes to achieving NSDP Outcome 1: Identifying and increasing the production of occupations in high demand, by promoting integrated planning and coordinated action to ensure that skills supply meets labour market demand (HRDC, 2021)
National School of Government (NSG)	The NSG drives the professionalisation of South Africa's Public Service by offering targeted training and development programmes that build the capacity of public servants across all levels. The NSG's interventions are closely aligned with several outcomes of the NSDP 2030, including Outcome 1 (addressing the production of occupations in high demand), Outcome 3 (Improving the overall skills levels in the workforce), Outcome 4 (enhancing access to occupationally directed programmes), and Outcome 7 (supporting worker-initiated learning). In addition to its training mandate, the NSG plays a strategic role in shaping a professional and ethical public sector through its contribution to the development and implementation of the National Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Sector (NSG, 2021)

Institution/ Statutory body	Role in Public Service Sector Skills Development
Provincial and State Academies	Provincial and state academies serve as decentralised training and development hubs that support the professional growth and capacity-building of public servants at the provincial and local government levels. These academies align their programmes with national frameworks such as the NSDP 2030 and the National Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Sector to ensure a coherent and standardised approach to public sector training across all spheres of government. Their primary role is to contextualise and implement national learning strategies in a manner that addresses the specific service delivery challenges and skills needs of their respective provinces (GCRA, 2022). Provincial and State Academies complement the work of the NSG by contributing to the development of a skilled and professional Public Service workforce.
Trade Unions and Bargaining Councils	Trade unions represent the collective interests of public service employees by engaging with government institutions on matters such as remuneration, working conditions, and employee wellbeing. They also play a central role in resolving workplace disputes and contributing to labour policy development. Bargaining Councils support these efforts by negotiating sector-wide agreements on employment conditions and providing formal dispute resolution mechanisms. In line with NSDP Outcome 7 – Encouraging and supporting worker-initiated training – PSETA works in partnership with trade unions to promote training programmes initiated by workers, ensuring their direct involvement in shaping skills development initiatives relevant to their roles and career progression (Barter, n.d.); (Workplace Law Chambers, n.d.).
Legislative Sector Support South Africa (LSS)	The LSS unit plays a strategic coordination and administrative role within South Africa's Legislative Sector. It supports the effective functioning of the Speakers' Forum and other key structures by facilitating communication, collaboration, and policy alignment across provincial legislatures and Parliament. As the central point of coordination for sector-wide initiatives, LSS ensures the cohesive implementation of the Legislative Sector Policy Framework and related strategies. By enhancing institutional capacity and enabling the rollout of development-focused strategies, LSS contributes to NSDP Outcome 3 – Improving the level of skills in the South African workforce – through its support for systems that drive skills development and organisational performance within the legislative environment (South African Legislative Sector, 2021).
Universities, TVETs and CETs	Higher education and training institutions, including universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, and Community Education and Training (CET) institutions, form a critical component of the Public Service Sector's skills development landscape. These institutions offer a variety of learning pathways that cater to different occupational levels and learner needs. Through partnerships with PSETA, they help ensure that training programmes are contextually relevant and aligned with the skills demands of the Public Service. By facilitating workplace-integrated learning and continuous professional development, these institutions support NSDP Outcome 2 – Linking education and the workplace – with PSETA serving as a vital intermediary that connects academic provision with public sector skills requirements.

1.4. Employer Profile

The employer profile of the Public Service sector based on the 2025 WSP submissions is outlined in the table below and shows the size and the proportion of each of the subsectors.

Table 3: Employers Registered & Submitting WSPs to PSETA

Subsector	Size of Employer			Number of employers submitting WSPs to PSETA	Percentage of employers submitting WSPs to PSETA
	0-49	50-149	150+		
National departments	0	0	28	28	15%
Provincial departments	1	3	82	86	47%
Provincial Legislatures and Parliament	0	2	8	10	6%
Public entities	13	17	28	58	32%
Total	**14**	**22**	**146**	**182**	**100%**

Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025)

PSETA received 182 WSP submissions from employers, a majority of which (146 out of 182) are large employers employing 150 or more individuals. An analysis of the employers submitting WSPs among the subsectors reveals a dominance by provincial departments. These departments comprise 47% of all reporting subsectors, followed by public entities at 32%, and national departments at 15%. Legislatures and Parliament constitute the smallest contingent within the Sector, representing only 6%. This is to be expected given the proportion of each sub-sector within the sector.

The figure below provides an analysis of the geographical spread of employers in the Sector that are registered with PSETA and have submitted Annexure 2 to PSETA in 2025.

Figure 2: Geographical Spread of Employers
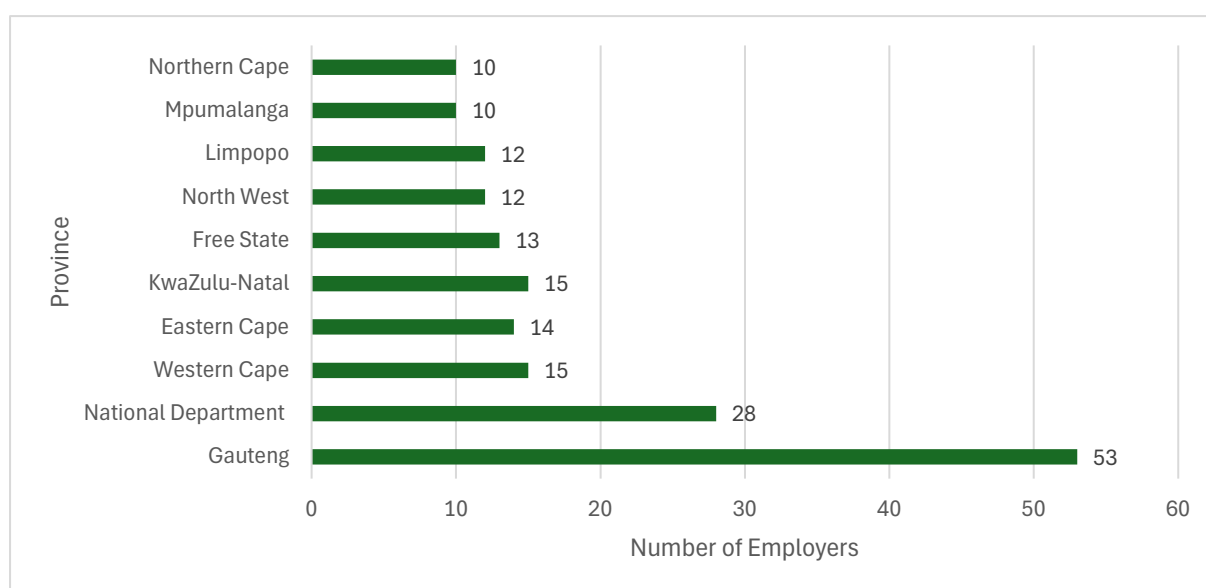
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025)

National departments are concentrated in Gauteng province, while other employers within the Sector show a more dispersed presence across the country. Western Cape province emerges as the second-largest employer after Gauteng (excluding national departments), while the Northern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo have the lowest presence of Public Service Sector employers.

1.5. Labour Market Analysis

This section presents an analysis of the labour market by providing an assessment of the economic performance of the Sector in relation to the labour market, the rate of unemployment in the country, the changes in employment in the Sector, as well as the geographic location and demographic characteristics of Public Service Sector employees.

1.5.1. Economic Performance

This section presents the country's economic performance to provide a broader context for the performance of the Public Service Sector. Economic growth constitutes a cornerstone metric for evaluating a nation's economic performance. It catalyses job creation, fostering wider access to essential goods and services, and ultimately leading to enhanced overall well-being for the citizenry (IMF, 2025). To quantify economic activity and identify periods of expansion or contraction, economic indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP) are instrumental.

In 2024, South Africa's GDP grew by 0.6% year-on-year, with notable contributions from the agriculture, finance, and trade sectors. The agriculture sector experienced a significant rebound, growing by 17.2% in the fourth quarter, primarily due to increased production of field crops and animal products. On the demand side, household consumption spending rose, reflecting positively on economic growth (Stats SA, 2025).

Looking ahead, the South African Reserve Bank has revised its GDP growth forecast for 2025 from 1.7% to 1.2%, citing challenges such as underperformance in the mining and manufacturing sectors and rising unemployment. However, factors such as a stronger exchange rate and lower global oil prices have contributed to a downward revision in the inflation forecast, with inflation remaining below 3% in April 2025 (Reuters, 2025).

Regarding employment, the official unemployment rate increased to 32.9% in the first quarter of 2025, up from 31.9% in the previous quarter. This rise is attributed to job losses in sectors such as trade, construction, and community and social services. The youth unemployment rate also saw an uptick, reaching 46.1% in Q1 2025 (QLFS, 2025).

Key factors contributing to high unemployment in South Africa include structural economic issues, skills mismatches, and limited job growth. To address this complex issue, targeted policy interventions are needed, focusing on economic reforms, skills development programmes, and initiatives that promote job creation across various sectors. Notably, the burden of unemployment falls most heavily on young people. As of the fourth quarter of 2024, the youth unemployment rate for individuals aged 15–24 was 59.6%, highlighting the urgent need for interventions aimed at this demographic (Independent, 2025).

In response to diminished economic confidence and constrained investment following the COVID-19 pandemic, the South African government launched the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) in 2020. Despite achieving some milestones in ERRP implementation, challenges persist. The lack of measurable targets and inconsistent reporting has hindered a comprehensive assessment of progress. While interventions outlined in the ERRP Programme have commenced, their long-term impact is yet to be fully realised. Notably, the ERRP has facilitated significant infrastructure projects, including investments in water, sanitation, energy, and transport. Projects worth R134.2 billion are in procurement, R232.3 billion are under construction, and R3.9 billion have been completed. These efforts aim to stimulate economic activity and job creation (DPME, 2024). Persistent power outages and operational disruptions within the Freight Rail and Port Sectors continue to stifle economic activity and constrain the nation's export capabilities (National Treasury, 2024). While comprehensive reforms are currently being implemented in these areas, a full recovery in economic growth is likely to be a gradual process (National Treasury, 2024).

1.5.2. Sector Performance

South Africa's GDP increased by 0.6% in the fourth quarter of 2024, following a decrease of 0.1% in the third quarter of 2024. Notably, three out of ten sectors demonstrated growth from the third quarter to the fourth quarter of 2024, namely Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing; Finance, Real Estate and Business Services; and Trade (StatsSA, 2025); (Stats SA, 2025). As seen in the figure below, the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector was the largest positive contributor to growth in the fourth quarter (StatsSA, 2025). Conversely, the Transport,

Storage and Communication Sector saw a decline of 1.0%, while the Electricity, Gas and Water sector experienced the most substantial decrease at 1.4%.

Figure 3: Sector Growth Rates – Q4: 2024 Compared with Q3: 2024
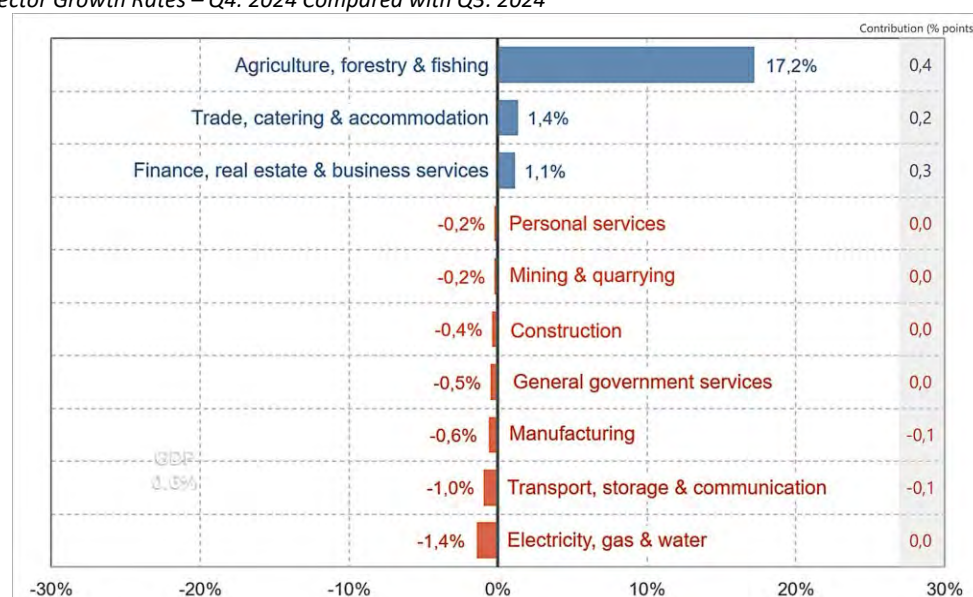
Source: Gross Domestic Product - Fourth Quarter 2024 (Stats SA, 2025)

The figure below illustrates the growing contribution of the General government services Sector to South Africa's economy, measured in Rand million. Utilising data from the South African Reserve Bank's quarterly gross value-added series (adjusted for seasonal variations) for General Government Services (encompassing all three spheres of government), the figure reveals a consistent upward trend in the Sector's value added (SARB, 2025). The Sector's value-add experienced an approximate 0.55% increase from the first quarter of 2024 to the fourth quarter of the same year, as seen in figure 4. While South Africa has experienced over a decade of weak economic growth, entrenched with high levels of unemployment and poverty, its economy is forecast to grow at an average of 1.6% over the next three years (National Treasury, 2024)[2]. This forecast is supported by an expected recovery in household spending as inflation declines and an increase in energy-related fixed investments (National Treasury, 2024).

1.5.3. Government Finances

There is a correlation between the economic performance of the country (see chapter 1.5.1) and government finances. The South African Revenue Services (SARS) collected a gross tax revenue of R2.155 trillion in the 2023/24 financial year and the amount of R414 billion paid in refunds, representing a year-on-year growth of 6% (South African Government News Agency, 2024). For the 2024/25 fiscal year, consolidated government spending is projected at R2.4 trillion, increasing to R2.83 trillion by 2027/28 (Norton Rose Fulbright, 2025). The budget deficit was expected to be 4.9% of GDP in 2023/24, with a planned reduction to 3.4% by 2027/28, influenced by underperforming corporate tax collections, increased public sector wages, and higher borrowing costs (National Treasury, 2025). For the 2025/26 fiscal year, the

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[2] It is noted that that this positive forecast may now be threatened by the tariff increases recently imposed by the United States, in addition to increasing global "trade wars".

National Treasury projected a consolidated budget deficit of 4.6% of GDP. The revision was primarily due to the government's decision to cancel a planned Value-Added Tax (VAT) increase, which was expected to generate additional revenue (Gumbi, et al., 2025).

In addition, government debt-service costs remain a significant pressure point, with R430.6 billion allocated to servicing debt in 2024/25, equivalent to about 20% of the main budget revenue. This is a higher proportion than is spent on any individual social programme, such as basic education or health. Managing these costs is critical for fiscal sustainability, particularly as interest rates and global borrowing conditions remain uncertain.

Figure 4: Gross Value Add of General Government Services (Current prices, seasonally adjusted) Q1:2022 to Q4: 2024
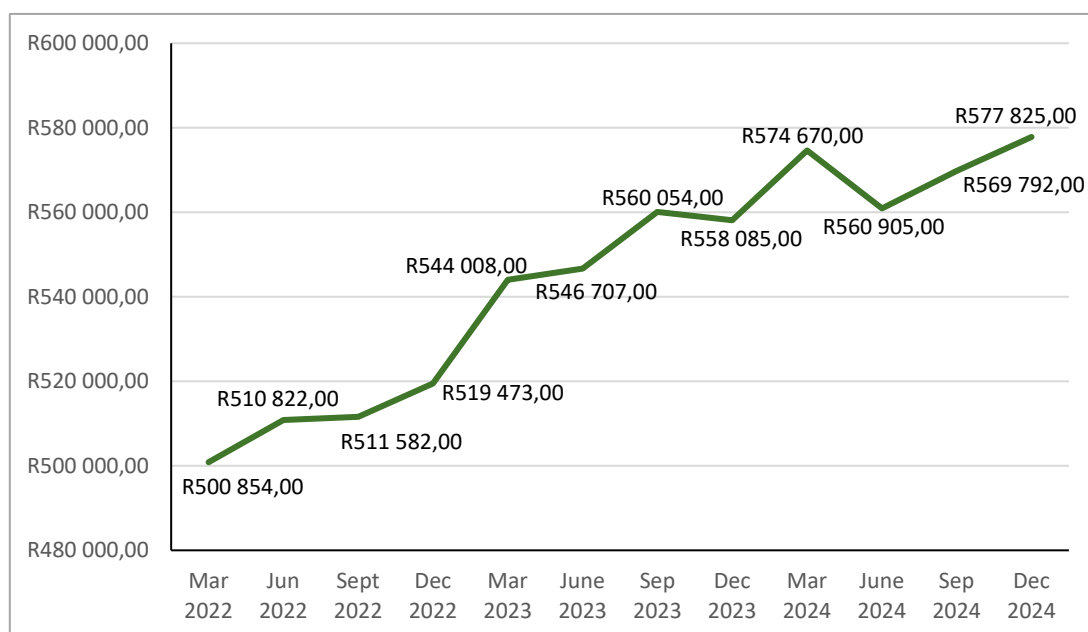
Source: SARB Economic and Financial Statistics for South Africa (SARB, 2025)

Additionally, a proposed increase in the VAT from 15% to 15.5% scheduled for May 2025 was withdrawn following political pushback. This reversal has created a R75 billion ($4 billion) gap in the national budget, necessitating alternative revenue measures (Financial Times, 2025). In addition, the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) has introduced complexities in fiscal policy making. Disagreements within the GNU, particularly over tax policies like the VAT increase, have led to policy reversals and highlight the challenges of coalition governance (Naidoo, 2025).

Since the introduction of the two-pot retirement system on 1 September 2024, which splits retirement contributions into a "savings" pot (one-third, accessible early) and a "retirement" pot (two-thirds, preserved until retirement), SARS has seen a substantial increase in tax revenue from withdrawals (National Treasury, 2024) (Moonstone Information Refinery, 2025). In the six weeks following the implementation of a reform permitting partial pension withdrawals before retirement, a total of R21.4 billion had been disbursed (Reuters, 2024). By the end of October, withdrawals under the new system had generated R7.6 billion in tax revenue, surpassing the initial projection of R5 billion for the final seven months of the 2024/25 fiscal year (Moonstone Information Refinery, 2025). Consequently, this reform not only provided households with emergency liquidity but also had a meaningful positive effect on government revenue collection.

Moreover, the government has committed R23.4 billion to a new public-service wage agreement, providing a 5.5% salary increase in 2025, with additional benefits such as revised housing and transport allowances. To manage costs, a hiring freeze for all non-essential government positions has been implemented for 12 months, alongside a national audit to identify and eliminate "ghost employees" (Maqhina, 2025). The Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) outlines a strategy to reduce the main budget deficit from 4.7% of GDP in 2024/25 to 3.4% by 2027/28. This includes plans to propose new tax measures aimed at raising R20 billion in the 2026 Budget (Godongwana, 2024).

Further to the above, the Department of Public Service and Administration, the National Treasury and the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation are continuing efforts over the medium term to review and reconfigure executive functions across government. This includes addressing duplication of mandates, phasing out ineffective or overlapping programmes, and consolidating or closing departments and entities that no longer align with strategic priorities (National Treasury, 2025). Despite the implementation of multiple cost-recovery mechanisms since 2023, including early retirement incentives and hiring freezes, National Treasury has acknowledged that these have not been sufficient to offset the growing fiscal burden of the escalating public sector wage bill. As a result, stringent controls on headcount remain in place, with a continued moratorium on recruitment for non-critical posts in national and provincial departments. This has direct implications for workforce planning and skills supply in the public sector. To further manage fiscal pressure, Treasury reissued and expanded its Cost Containment Guidelines in early 2025, building on the September 2023 directive. These updated guidelines place stricter controls on spending related to recruitment, travel, accommodation, catering, conferences, ICT procurement, and non-essential capital projects (National Treasury, 2025).

Entities are also required to report quarterly on their adherence to these guidelines, with non-compliance potentially resulting in budget withholding. These measures are part of a broader strategy to improve the efficiency and affordability of public administration, while ensuring that state resources are directed towards core service delivery functions. However, the government has warned that without structural reforms, including long-term changes to wage-setting and departmental functions, fiscal space will remain limited over the coming years (National Treasury, 2025).

Over the past three decades, the public-service wage bill has risen significantly, increasing from 5.6% of GDP in 1994/95 to 10.4% in 2023/24. This growth is primarily attributed to escalating average remuneration costs for public-service employees (National Treasury, 2024). Above-inflation growth of the wage bill has ultimately led to decreases in the allocation of funds to critical areas such as social services and infrastructure development (National Treasury, 2023). The figure below shows a downward trend from 2019/20 in the wage bill as a share of expenditure. However, between 2022/23 and 2023/24, there was a minimal increase from 31.4% to 32%.
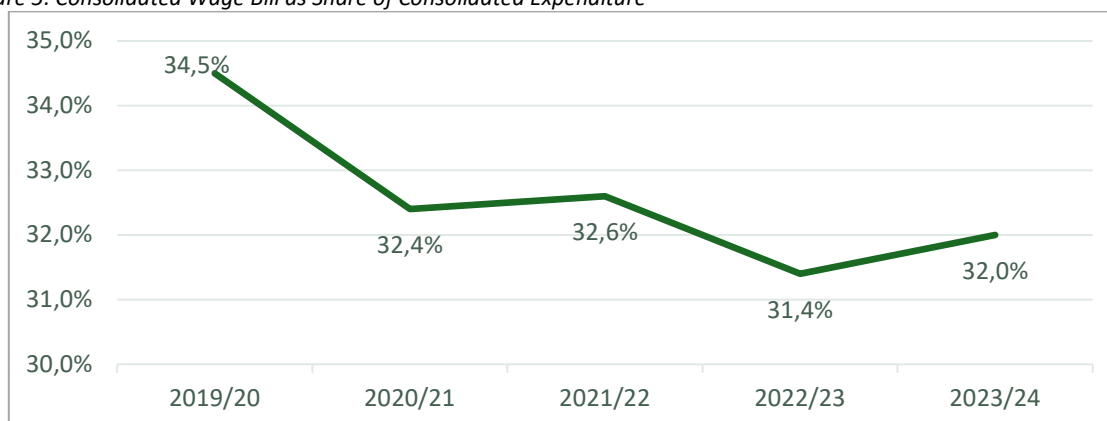
The associated expenditure and headcount share by earning range in 2022/23, illustrated in Figure 6 below, highlight the increase in the number of employees in higher earning categories over time. This is largely to account for cost-of-living adjustments. The number of employees with annual earnings over R1 million per annum has increased from above 10 000 in 2013/14 to over 550 000 in 2023/24.

Figure 6: Public Service Headcount by Earning Range[4]
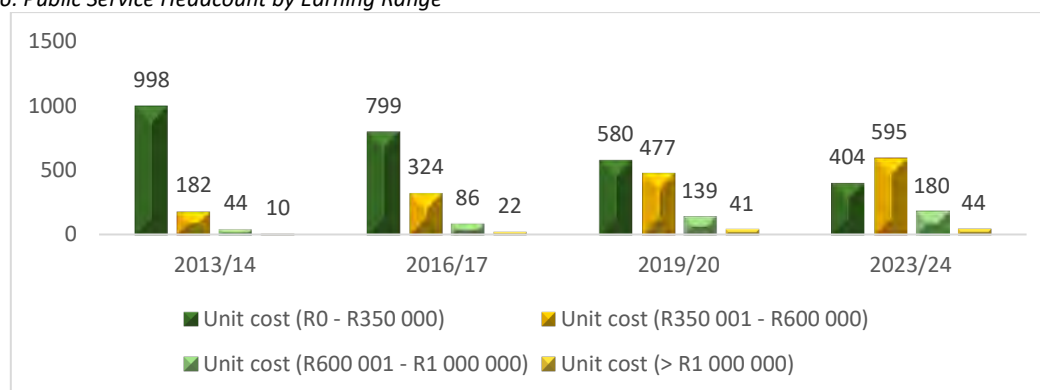
South Africa's economy is vulnerable to both internal and external disruptions, such as climate, social, economic, and technological disruptors. Government can bolster resilience by investing in infrastructure, increasing labour and capital market flexibility, and facilitating a just transition to a climate-resilient economy (Presidential Climate Commission, 2022). PSETA acknowledges that skills development in the Public Service Sector is paramount, and so in the face of the current Sectoral and national challenges, PSETA remains particularly focused on enabling effective skills development and improving labour productivity within the Sector.

1.5.4. Employment in Public Service Sector

To assess the state of the Public Service Sector labour market, data from two sources, namely the 2025 Annexure 2 and PERSAL datasets, have been analysed. Data on employees in Legislatures, Parliament, and Public Entities is sourced from the 2025 Annexure 2 data, while PERSAL data, provided by the DPSA for the SSP, indicates insights on employees in national and provincial departments. This analysis focuses solely on employees employed under the

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[3] The latest publicly available data is for 2023/24. The data will be updated as and when released.
[4] The latest publicly available data is for 2023/24.

Public Service Act. The number of employees employed under the Public Service Act is defined as all employees on the PERSAL database, excluding health practitioners, nurses, teachers, police, and military personnel who fall under other Acts (such as the Health Act, Education Act, etc.) and all employees employed under the Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD).

Table 4: Employees in the Sector

Subsector	Number of employees	% in the Sector
National departments	122 226	19,27%
Provincial departments	481 191	75,87%
Legislatures and Parliament	2 830	0,45%
Public entities	28 017	4,42%
Total	**634 264**	**100.00%**

Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025) and PERSAL Data (DPSA, 2025)

As seen in the table above, Provincial departments account for the largest proportion of employees in the Sector, with 75.87%. National departments account for 19.27% of employees whilst Legislatures and Parliament employ the smallest proportion of individuals, representing only 0.45% of the workforce.

Figure 7: Employment Trends in Subsectors
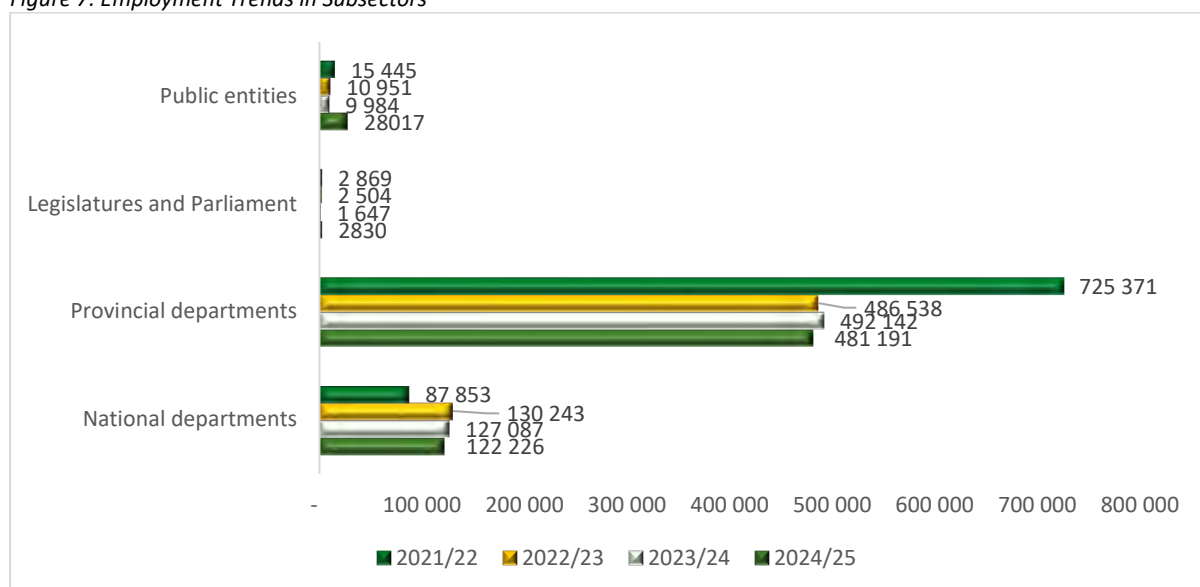
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025), PERSAL Data (DPSA, 2025), PSETA SSP 2023 (PSETA, 2023)

The figure above illustrates the distribution of employment across the subsectors, examining data from 2021/22 to 2024/25. Employment numbers have varied within the subsectors over the past four years. Particularly noteworthy is the substantial 33% decrease in employees within provincial departments between 2021/22 and 2022/23. Although the number of employees in national departments decreased between 2022/23 and 2023/24, there was a significant increase of 45% from 2021/22 to 2023/24. The number of employees in public entities also significantly increased between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

1.5.5. Employee Demographics

This section presents the race, gender, age, and disability characteristics of the employees in the Public Service Sector. It also presents the geographical locale of Public Service employees and the broad OFO occupational groups to which employees belong. Figure 8 and Figure 9 depict the Public Service Sector's gender and racial demographics, respectively.

Figure 8: Gender Demographics of Employees per Subsector
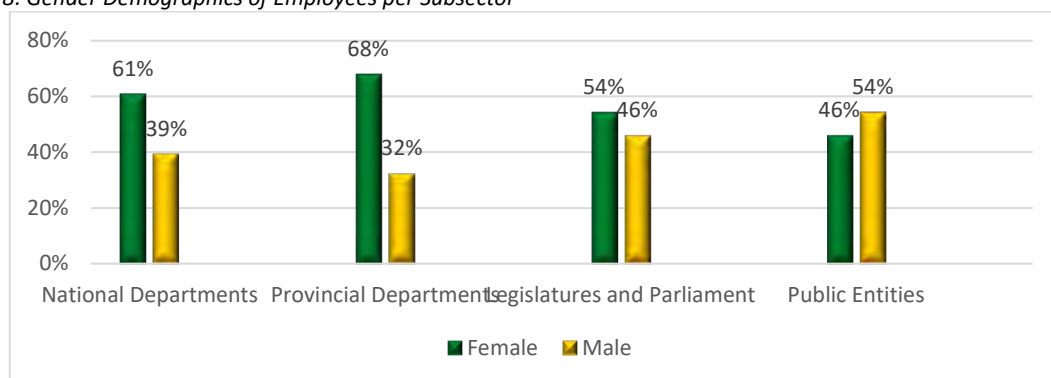
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025) *and PERSAL Data* (DPSA, 2025)

According to the figure above, women outnumber men across all Public Service subsectors – with the exception of public entities. Gender disparities within National and Provincial departments are stark, compared to Public Entities and Legislatures/ Parliament.

Figure 9: Race demographics of Employees
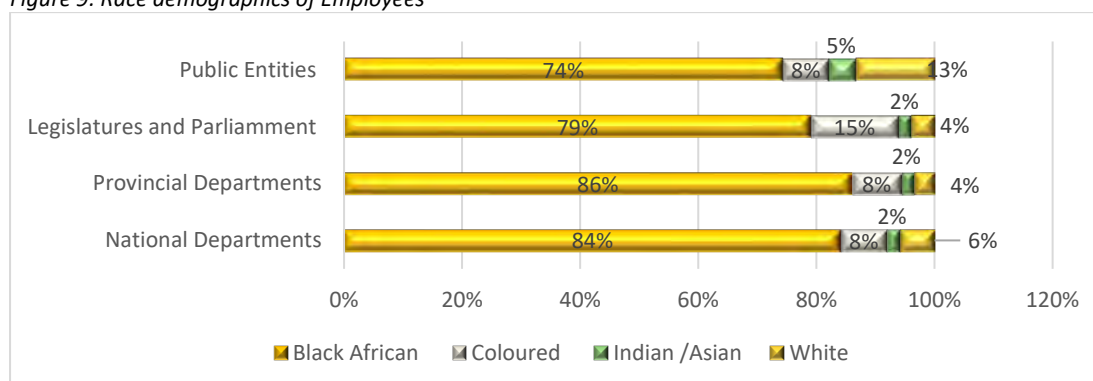
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data *(PSETA, 2025)* and PERSAL *(DPSA, 2025)*

As illustrated in the figure above, the racial composition of the Public Service Sector workforce closely aligns with the national population distribution. Black Africans constitute the majority across all subsectors, exceeding 80% in National and Provincial Departments, as well as Public Entities. Legislatures and Parliament also demonstrate a significant African majority, with representation at 79%. The Public Service Sector's Senior Management Service (SMS) comprises 8 346 individuals. While females hold 45.99% (3 838 positions) in comparison to a representation of 35.8% females in the private Sector (Department of Employment and Labour, 2023), males still occupy the majority (54.01% or 4 508 positions). In terms of race, Black Africans constitute the largest group within SMS positions (6 605), followed by Whites (698), Coloureds (591), and Indians/Asians (452). Similarly, the Middle Management Service (MMS) employs 15 357 individuals. The racial composition within MMS mirrors that of SMS, with Black Africans again forming the majority (12 551), followed by Whites (1 238), Coloureds (1 094), and Indians/Asians (474).

Disaggregating the data by OFO major group in the table below, a distinct pattern in gender distribution can be observed. Female employees are predominantly concentrated within the Professional category (47.17%). The Technicians and Associate Professionals major group follows behind, representing 13.63% of female employees. Similar to the female employees, the Professional major group holds the largest share (33.57%) of males, followed by Service

and Sales Workers major group (15.71%), and the Managers major group comprising 14.93% of male employees. This is demonstrated below.

Table 5: Gender Demographics by OFO Major Group

OFO Major Group	% Female	% Male
Managers	8.83%	14.93%
Professionals	47.17%	33.57%
Technicians and Associated Professionals	13.63%	10.88%
Clerical Support Workers	11.39%	10.88%
Service and Sales Workers	11.77%	15.71%
Skilled Agricultural, Forestry, Fishery, Craft and Related Trade Workers	0.27%	1.44%
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	0.30%	2.14%
Elementary Occupations	6.65%	9.72%

Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025)

Compared to the national population (Stats SA, 2023), South Africa's Public Service exhibits a significant age disparity, that is while individuals under 35 and those between 56 and above comprise 18,4% and 15,6% of the national population, respectively, the Public Service workforce is heavily concentrated within the 35-55 age group, accounting for 66% of workers. These figures suggest a potential need for initiatives to address the age distribution within the Public Service and ensure a more balanced workforce.

Figure 10: Number of Employees per Age Group
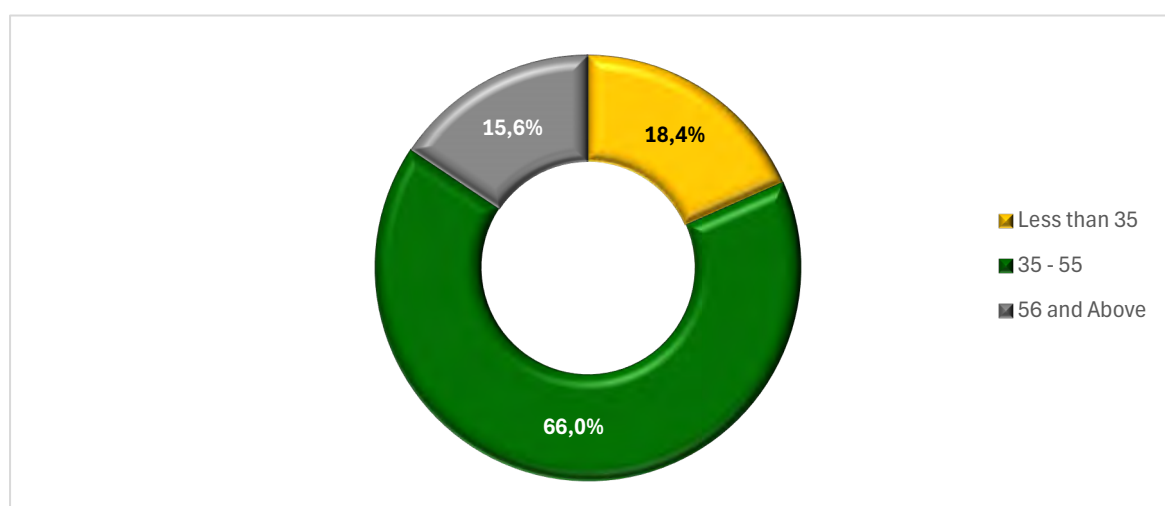
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025) *and PERSAL* (DPSA, 2025)

There is an underrepresentation of employees living with disabilities. Overall, representation of people living with disabilities (PLWDs) within the Sector remains low at 1.83%. This is lower than, for example, the broad national disability prevalence rates of 9%, 9.8% and 11.1% amongst 25–29-year-olds, 30–34-year-olds and 35–39-year-olds, respectively (Statistics South Africa, 2024). Delving into the different race groups, as illustrated in the figure below, the highest representation of people living with disabilities is among White employees, at 0.93% of all white employees. This is followed closely by Indian PLWDs at 0.88% of all Indian employees. In contrast, African and Coloured PLWDs have lower representation, at 0.59% and 0.57% within their respective race groups.

Figure 11*: Percentage of People Living with Disabilities in Race Groups*
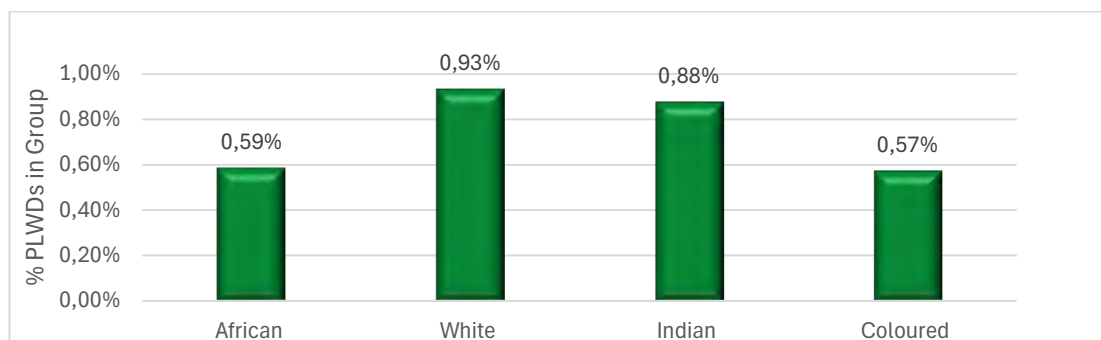
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025)

According to the 23rd Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report, only 1.4% of those in employment in top and senior management in 2022 were people living with disabilities (Department of Employment and Labour, 2023).

The figure below illustrates the geographic distribution of employees within the Public Service Sector. Gauteng holds the largest share of employees, reflecting its central role as the economic hub of the country. This is followed by national departments, which are also located in Gauteng. The Northern Cape has the lowest percentage of Public Service employees, with the province representing only 2.2% of those employed in the Sector.

Figure 12: *Geographical spread of employees*
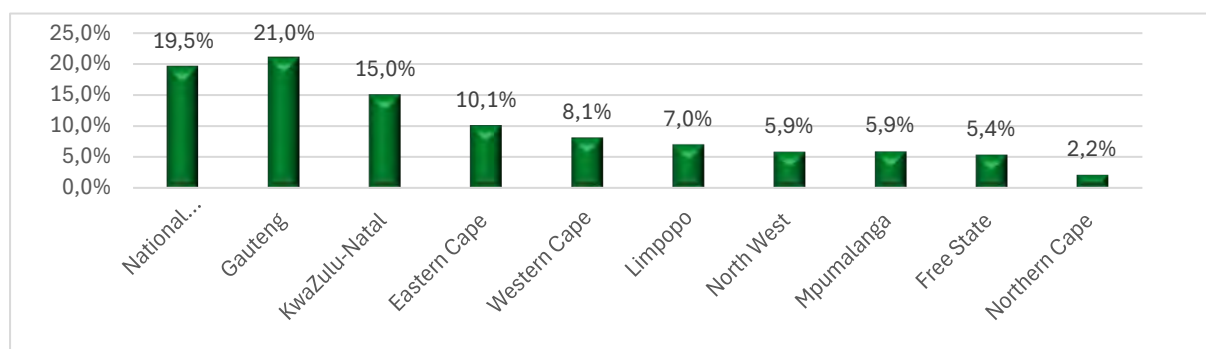
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025) *and PERSAL* (DPSA, 2025)

The table below leverages Public Service Act employee data exclusively, sourced from the PERSAL system. It is important to note that PERSAL employs the Occupational Classification System (OCS) rather than the Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) categories[5]. Consequently, major OFO groups like 'Managers' and 'Professionals' are presented as a combined category within the table.

Table 6: *Employment per major occupational category*

Major Occupational Category	Number of Employees	Percentage
Professionals and Managers	52,209	8.65%
Administrative Office Workers	150,429	24.93%
Technicians and Associated Professionals	143,500	23.78%
Elementary Occupations	96,332	15.96%
Social, Natural, Technical and Medical Sciences	99,823	16.54%
Drivers Operators and Ship's Crew	36,267	6.01%

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[5] Unlike the PSETA Management Information System, where WSP and ATR data is captured in line with the DHET skills planning classification system, the PERSAL system does not categorise occupational data according to the Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) categories. Instead, it utilises the Occupational Classification System (OCS), resulting in the grouping together of major OFO categories such as Managers and Professionals.

Major Occupational Category	Number of Employees	Percentage
Service Workers	6,706	1.11%
Craft and Related Trades Workers	6,419	1.06%
Other Occupations	10,518	1.74%
Information Technology Personnel	147	0.02%
National Security and Custodian Personnel	1,067	0.18%

Source: PERSAL Data (DPSA, 2025)

Analysis of the 2025 PERSAL data reveals that Professionals and Managers constitute 8.65% of employees. Administrative Office Workers are 24.93%, with Elementary Occupations comprising 15.96%. Given this occupational distribution and PSETA's primary focus on fostering transversal skills development in areas like administration and management, the majority of PSETA's interventions strategically target employees within the Professionals, Managers, and Administrative Office Workers categories.

Figure 13: Employees per OFO major group
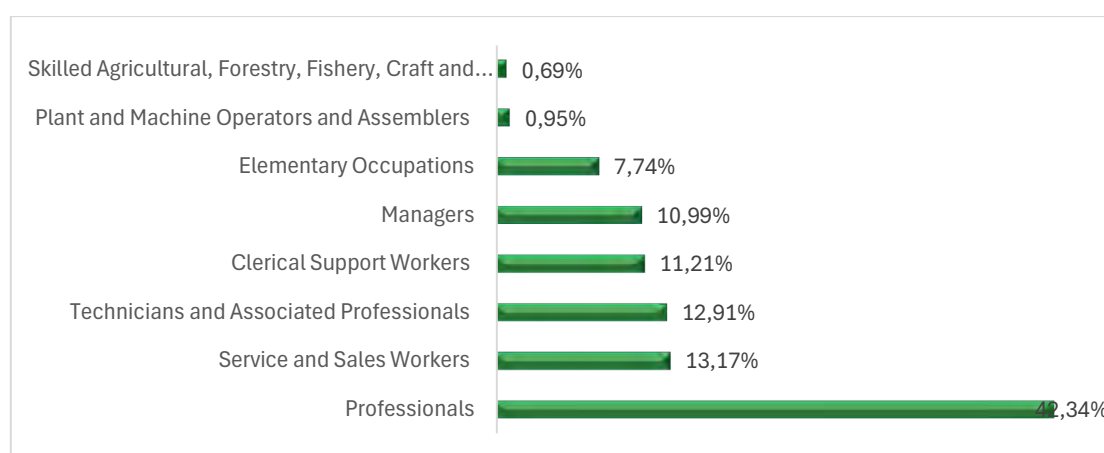
Source: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025)

The figure above reflects employment by the OFO major group. The distribution indicates that the largest proportion of employees (42.34%) are within the Professional workers major group followed by Service and Sales Workers (13.17%), and Technicians and Associate Professionals at 12.91% of employees and Clerical Support workers constituting 11.21% of the Sector. Managers make up 10.99% of the employees at the Senior Management Service (SMS) level within the Public Service Sector.

1.6. Conclusion

The Sector remains pivotal in driving national development and service delivery, supported by transversal skills in administration, planning, and management. Notably, the Sector's age profile is skewed toward the 35–55 age group, highlighting the need to attract and retain younger professionals. Furthermore, persistent underrepresentation of people living with disabilities and continued gender disparities in senior roles suggest the need for more inclusive workforce strategies. Despite slight GDP growth and stabilising inflation, South Africa continues to grapple with high unemployment and fiscal pressures. Rising debt-servicing costs, a growing public-sector wage bill, and constrained recruitment budgets are likely to impact future workforce planning and skills supply. Nonetheless, PSETA remains committed to addressing these challenges through targeted skills development and strategic partnerships to ensure a professional, ethical, and future-ready Public Service.

2. Chapter 2: Key Skills Change Drivers

2.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the various factors influencing the demand and supply of skills within the Public Service Sector. It identifies five major change drivers affecting skills and examines their implications for skills development in the Sector. The chapter also evaluates how Sector skills planning aligns with broader national strategies and policy frameworks. The findings presented are based on desktop research, including a review of relevant studies and policy documents, and are further enriched by input gathered from consultations with Sector stakeholders.

2.2. Factors Affecting Skills Demand and Supply

This section highlights five key factors influencing skills demand and supply within the Public Service Sector. These include the Professionalisation of the Public Service Sector, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), advancements in digital technology, the growth of e-government and digitalisation, and the increasing focus on climate change and environmental sustainability.

Table 7: Change Drivers Affecting Skills Demand and Supply

Change Driver	Description	Implications for skills Planning	
		Demand-related implications	**Supply-side related implications**
Professionalisation of the Public Service Sector	The drive to professionalise the Public Service remains a pivotal strategy to confront persistent challenges such as weak service delivery, limited productivity, and a shortage of technical and managerial expertise (NSG, 2022). The NDP 2030 continues to emphasise the importance of a competent and ethical public service that can respond effectively to the needs of citizens. To realise this vision, strategic interventions are required. These include strengthening career progression frameworks, aligning qualifications to defined occupational pathways, and enhancing training and development systems that promote internal mobility and performance (NSG, 2022). The implementation of Volume 1 of the Directive on Human Resource Management and Development for Public Service Professionalisation (DPSA, 2024) provides concrete guidance on operationalising the Professionalisation Framework across departments. The importance of professionalising the public service has also been reaffirmed within the Government of National Unity (State of the Nation, 2025).	There is a growing need for skilled and ethically grounded public servants, and concurrently, a requirement to realign qualifications, build new learning pathways, and establish career-aligned development initiatives. Additionally, there is a shortfall in middle managers and professionals like engineers and IT specialists (DPSA, 2022).	• Develop structured career progression pathways and targeted development opportunities, with PSETA playing a key role in shaping occupationally aligned training programmes. • Align legacy qualifications with clearly defined occupational pathways to support coherent career development and mobility within the Sector.
Public-Private Partnerships	a. Considering ongoing budget constraints, including economic stagnation and increased debt servicing costs (National Treasury, 2023), PPPs offer potential avenues for financing training initiatives and modernising tools of trade across the Sector. This, in turn, supports the closing of critical skills gaps and enhances the attractiveness of the Sector to prospective entrants (EY-Parthenon, 2020). b. PPPs can contribute meaningfully to skills development by financing training interventions, supporting research initiatives, investing in infrastructure, developing digital learning platforms, and sharing industry knowledge that bridges the gap between education and employment (NSDP Outcome 2) (EY-Parthenon, 2020). These partnerships offer mutual benefits to both public and private stakeholders, as well as beneficiaries, thereby strengthening their appeal as viable investment models (South African Government, 2025). c. Recent revisions to the regulatory framework governing PPPs are aimed at improving procedural efficiency, encouraging smaller-scale PPP initiatives, and promoting increased engagement from the private sector. These regulatory improvements are intended to mitigate longstanding barriers, such as administrative delays and limited internal capacity within public institutions (National Treasury, 2024).	There is an increasing requirement for competencies in project management, monitoring and evaluation, contract oversight, and financial modelling among public service personnel.	• Support the implementation of Public-Private Partnerships by building specialised competencies in areas such as project management, contract negotiation, monitoring and evaluation, and financial modelling. • Embed structured skills development components within partnership agreements to strengthen the capacity of public servants to manage PPP initiatives effectively and sustainably.
Digital Technology and Digitisation	a. Digitisation refers to the conversion of physical documents, records, or items into digital formats and represents the foundational step toward broader digital transformation (ICLEI, 2023). This includes actions such as converting hardcopy documents into digital files and enabling online access to Public Services.	• There is an increasing need for public servants to acquire ICT and automation-resilient competencies. Public servants will need to adapt to digital platforms,	• The Public Service Commission (PSC) has recommended several interventions, including comprehensive training on the Integrated Financial

Change Driver	Description	Implications for skills Planning	
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications
	Progress within the Sector remains limited, hindered by factors such as centralised IT governance and procurement processes, capacity limitations in HR departments, and a lack of coordinated digitisation initiatives across institutions. Resistance to technological adoption, shortages of skilled professionals in HRM and ICT, and outdated infrastructure further delay advancement in Human Resource Management (PSC, 2024). b. Although improvements have been made in digital records management within government departments, the loss and mismanagement of records continues to be a concern (Matlala & Maphoto, 2022). Matlala & Maphoto (2022) contend that records in many public organisations are "unfavourably and poorly managed, resulting in poor Public Services operations and inefficiency". c. The shortcomings in e-records implementation are linked to inadequate infrastructure and a lack of skilled personnel within national archival systems, which hampers the long-term preservation of digital records (Matlala & Maphoto, 2022). d. Globally, hybrid and remote work arrangements have been associated with cost savings for employers and employees, as well as enhanced employee well-being and productivity (Goldberg & Priest, 2023). While South Africa has begun to explore these benefits, the Sector lacks the necessary systems, policies, and infrastructure to fully capitalise on hybrid and remote work (DPSA, 2023), (Public Service Commission, 2023). The PSC has recommended that the DPSA, in partnership with National Treasury and the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, lead the digital transformation efforts in government. This includes ensuring widespread access to the tools and training needed to support effective hybrid work models (Public Service Commission, 2023).	flexible workspaces, and emerging technologies such as blockchain (DPSA, 2022). • There is a demand and global competition for remote workers. The recent amendment of Immigration Regulations by the Department of Home Affairs to introduce a digital nomad visa is a positive step towards enabling remote work and integrating South Africa into the global digital workforce (Bowmans, 2024).	Management System (IFMS)[6] delivered through the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the National School of Government (NSG), with support from National Treasury. This training is intended to reinforce the operational and reporting benefits of digitisation. The PSC further urges the accelerated rollout of the Public Service Digital Transformation Strategy to address both the systemic delays in digitisation and opportunities arising from the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) (PSC, 2024). • Educational and training programmes must expand to include specialised areas such as IT governance, cybersecurity, and digital information management. Public servants will need to adapt to digital platforms, flexible workspaces, and emerging technologies such as blockchain (DPSA, 2022). • Prioritise capacity-building in interpersonal and cognitive domains such as people management, decision-making, negotiation, and cognitive flexibility, complementing automation-resilient skillsets. In parallel, develop targeted programmes addressing IT governance, cybersecurity, electronic records management, and broader information management. • Strengthen cybersecurity training to ensure that public servants are adequately equipped to manage

[6] The IFMS Programme is a joint initiative between DPSA, National Treasury and SITA to replace the current legacy enterprise resource type systems such as BAS, LOGIS and PERSAL in the Public Service by implementing a single Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) system (IFMS, 2024) .

Change Driver	Description	Implications for skills Planning	
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications
			governance and mitigate risks associated with increasing cyber threats. • Invest in human resource development initiatives that respond to digital transformation challenges, particularly by aligning management practices with evolving technological advancements.
e-Government and Digitalisation	a. Digitalisation refers to the application of advanced digital technologies, such as cloud computing and artificial intelligence (AI), to transform business operations, enhance efficiency, and generate value (SAP, 2024). This is evident in initiatives such as online self-service platforms and chatbot-driven service delivery. The South African government has articulated its digitalisation ambitions through the e-Government Strategy *and Roadmap* (Republic of South Africa, 2017), which seeks to digitalise public services and transition the country toward an inclusive digital society and economy. b. The increasing integration of advanced digital systems in public administration heightens the risk of cyber threats, including cyber-warfare, which could disrupt the delivery of e-Services (DCDT, 2023). Addressing these risks requires a strong focus on developing skills in cybersecurity governance and related areas within the Public Service (Nhede, et al., 2022). c. The Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has identified Applied Artificial Intelligence (AAI)[7] as a key driver for national economic development. Within the Public Sector, studies suggest that AI implementation in administrative functions could potentially save South Africa up to \$9 billion annually by reducing inefficiencies such as absenteeism (DPSA, 2023). d. The effective deployment of AI in government requires access to extensive datasets, which underscores the need for strong regulatory frameworks governing data protection, privacy, and ethical AI deployment. Concerns include algorithmic bias, breaches of privacy, and the displacement of jobs. Ethical challenges also extend to the need for transparency, accountability, and equitable application of AI in sensitive sectors such as healthcare and public safety. Striking a balance between technological advancement and ethical safeguards is critical to responsible AI governance (Brand, 2022).	• There is a demand for cybersecurity governance, problem solving skills, and adaptive capabilities. • The expansion of e-Government services necessitates targeted reskilling and investment in new competencies and roles (DPSA, 2023). Complementing this is the National Digital and Future Skills Strategy, which calls on SETAs to prioritise investment in digital capabilities, including digital innovation skills (DCDT, 2020).	• On the supply side, training in non-automatable competencies, such as human resource management, strategic decision-making, negotiation, and cognitive flexibility, remains essential to complement technological integration (Nhede et al., 2022). • Deliver training programmes focused on project management, digital literacy, e-governance, and the management of IT infrastructure to support digital transformation initiatives. • Promote the acquisition of applied AI skills for effective integration into administrative functions, while simultaneously ensuring that training incorporates ethical considerations related to data privacy, bias, and accountability. • Direct skills planning efforts towards HR departments to strengthen their capacity in human resource management, effective use of ICT, and the establishment of functional e-government structures. • Build specialised policy expertise to support the implementation of the

[7] Applied AI involves using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to tackle real-world or global challenges, with significant implications for governments and industries. This AI can enhance economic and social Sectors by increasing efficiency and reducing human inconveniences. In business, AAI has the potential to boost profitability and introduce new business models (DCDT, 2023).

Change Driver	Description	Implications for skills Planning	
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications
	e. Digitalisation represents the initial stage in the broader process of digital transformation, an enterprise-wide shift involving the integration of digital tools across all operational levels to fundamentally reshape organisational functions and value delivery. By adapting processes, systems, and organisational cultures, digitalisation creates the foundation for this deeper transformation (ICLEI, 2023). f. Digital technologies encompass the tools and platforms that facilitate the generation, processing, and storage of data. As such, technologies evolve, continuous upskilling is required to ensure that employees remain aligned with emerging demands		Public Service Digital Transformation Strategy and facilitate the adoption of remote and hybrid work models.
Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability	a. The Just Transition Framework[8] forms a key component of the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024–2029 under Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive Growth and Job Creation. This framework emphasises aligning skills development with emerging labour demands in environmentally sustainable sectors. It advocates for structured training interventions that enable workers in the formal economy to transition into green occupations, building on existing skill sets and recognising prior learning (Presidential Climate Commission, 2022). b. The National Development Plan (NDP) calls for the adoption of agile, climate-responsive policies across all tiers of government. Reinforcing this, the Just Transition Framework highlights the pivotal role of education and skills development in addressing just transition imperatives and strengthening national climate resilience (Presidential Climate Commission, 2022).	There remains a significant shortage of expertise in the areas of climate policy formulation, implementation, and impact assessment, posing a challenge for public institutions tasked with delivering on environmental mandates (UNESCO, 2021). The Public Service Sector must therefore prioritise skills planning that addresses these deficits.	• On the supply side, it is essential to expand access to reskilling and upskilling opportunities, particularly those offered by educational and training institutions focused on preparing the workforce for green and climate-aligned roles. • Direct skills planning within the public service sector towards developing capabilities in environmental policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. This includes proficiency in interpreting regulatory frameworks, conducting impact assessments, and designing effective risk mitigation strategies. • Promote the setting of objectives grounded in environmentally responsible decision-making, guided by environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles. • Implement training interventions aligned with the recommendations of the Just Transition Framework to support

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[8] The Presidential Climate Commission (2022) describes the Just Transition Framework as "a planning tool for achieving a just transition in South Africa, setting out the actions that the government and its social partners will take to achieve a just transition, and the outcomes to be realised in the short, medium, and long term". The framework sets out the policy measures and undertakings by different social partners to minimise the social and economic impacts of the climate transition, and to improve the livelihoods of those vulnerable to climate change.

Change Driver	Description	Implications for skills Planning	
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications
			seamless transitions into emerging career pathways. • Design and roll out reskilling, upskilling, and retraining programmes aimed at fostering green job creation and addressing existing skill shortages in renewable energy and related fields. • Ensure that workforce development strategies are inclusive by addressing skills requirements across all occupational levels to support a just and effective transition.

2.3. Policy Frameworks Affecting Skills Demand and Supply

Public Service Sector skills development must align with NDP goals and be guided by policy and government priorities for effective planning. The major national strategies and plans affecting skills demand and supply, and their implications for skills planning, are outlined in the table below.

Table 8: Skills Planning Implications of National Strategies and Plans

Policy Framework	Description	Implications for skills Planning		PSETA's Response to Skills Implications
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications	
National Development Plan (NDP)	The NDP emphasises building a capable and developmental state, able to address the causes of poverty and inequality in South Africa. Accurate identification of present and future skills demand is crucial for realising the NDP goals in the Public Service Sector.	There is a need for strategic planning, socio-economic research, digital literacy, service delivery innovation, and inclusive development skills in the public service sector. These competencies are essential to ensure that government departments can plan effectively, base decisions on evidence, leverage technology for efficiency, design and deliver innovative public services, and promote inclusive growth that benefits all segments of society.	On the supply side, SETAs must ensure their interventions are aligned with NDP outcomes and work in partnership with educational institutions to deliver responsive training programmes.	PSETA's strategic priorities are directly aligned with the NDP's vision of building a capable and developmental state. These priorities include promoting the Public Service as a viable and attractive career choice, addressing technical skills shortages within the workforce, enhancing management effectiveness, improving procurement systems, and strengthening accountability structures (PSETA, 2023).
New Growth Path (NGP)	The NGP aims to enhance government, boost economic competition, and accelerate skills development. It stresses the role of SETAs in meeting targets for scarce skills, focusing on professional and	There is a need for economic development policy expertise, project management capabilities, infrastructure delivery skills, and job creation strategies	On the supply side, effective skills development necessitates coordinated efforts between the DHET and SETAs to set clear targets and	PSETA, in partnership with DHET, sets annual targets aimed at addressing identified skills gaps. These interventions are designed to support both employed individuals seeking career progression and unemployed

Policy Framework	Description	Implications for skills Planning		PSETA's Response to Skills Implications
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications	
	technical training, including workplace and on-the-job programmes for 10% of the workforce yearly.	to stimulate economic growth and reduce unemployment.	implement strategic interventions.	individuals in need of skills acquisition to enhance their employability and access to opportunities in the Public Service Sector.
White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (WP-PSET)	The WP-PSET details strategies for an improved education and training system by 2030, including SETAs training employees and unemployed entrants, and collecting data for national skills.	Skills forecasting, qualification alignment with government demands, and good workforce planning are required to provide a suitably trained public sector.	The implications of the WP-PSET are primarily supply-side in nature.	In response, PSETA aims to align its initiatives with the objectives of the WP-PSET by strengthening sectoral capacity through targeted training programmes for labour representatives and facilitating capacity-building sessions. These efforts are intended to promote greater employer participation and encourage the submission of credible WSPs.
National Plan for Post-School Education and Training (NP-PSET), 2019-2030	Guided by the NDP, the NP-PSET seeks to give effect to the vision of the WP-PSET of an integrated post-school education system.	To fulfil the changing needs of the public sector, workforce planning skills, competence mapping abilities, and responsive training design are required.	The implications of the NP-PSET are supply-side focused.	PSETA will prioritise initiatives that support effective skills planning, strengthen industry engagement, facilitate funding mechanisms, and expand WPBL opportunities. These activities will be guided and monitored by the NSA, in accordance with the implementation directives of the NP-PSET.
National Skills Development Plan (NSDP)	The NSDP focuses on eight outcomes pursued by SETAs with DHET, TVET Colleges, CETs, Universities, and NSF. It stresses linking education to the workplace, improving skills, and training artisans for technical skills needs, aligning with the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) goals.	On the demand side, there is a pressing need to strengthen technical competencies, particularly among artisans, to meet sectoral performance requirements.	On the supply side, educational institutions and SETAs must align their programmes and interventions with the outcomes of the NSDP to effectively address these demands.	PSETA's strategic focus areas and identified skills priorities are closely aligned with NSDP objectives. This alignment is evident in its core functions, which include conducting labour market research, addressing identified Sector skills gaps, implementing targeted programmes, supporting the TVET system, promoting artisan development, and collaborating with the QCTO.

| Policy Framework | Description | Implications for skills Planning | | PSETA's Response to Skills Implications |
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications	
Human Resources Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDSA)	HRDSA's theory of change posits that while government departments engage in HRD activities, coordinated efforts are necessary. Global digital transformation trends affect these activities, influencing the Public Service Sector. The HRD Strategy delineates five programmes aligned with national imperatives.	There is a need for talent management, leadership development, and succession planning to ensure continuity and improved organisational performance.	The implications of the HRDSA are primarily supply-side, as addressing HRD challenges requires coordinated efforts among government departments, education and training institutions, and relevant stakeholders.	PSETA, in collaboration with the DPSA, plays a key role in monitoring progress towards HRD objectives. Specifically, PSETA is actively involved in the implementation and support of Programmes 2, 3, 4, and 5[9] of the HRDSA, contributing to the advancement of human resource development across the Public Service Sector.
Public Service Amendment Bill	This Bill aims to strengthen and reform the Public Service by empowering department heads, enhancing the Presidency's Director-General role, defining the PSC's duties, and improving transparency in appointments and career management. These changes focus on enhancing accountability, anti-corruption measures, and Public Service delivery in South Africa.	There is a need for policy compliance skills, governance expertise, and ethical conduct to enhance accountability and service delivery.	This represents a supply-side implication, focusing on the development and delivery of targeted capacity-building interventions to strengthen leadership within the Public Service.	PSETA acknowledges the importance of tailored training programmes, competency assessments, and structured mentorship initiatives to equip accounting officers with the necessary skills to manage increased administrative responsibilities effectively.
Public Administration Management Amendment Bill	This Bill, led by the Minister of Public Service and Administration, aims for a unified and effective Public Service at all government tiers. It emphasises efficiency, ethics, contemporary training, fairness, and streamlined procedures.	There is a need for intergovernmental coordination skills, ethics awareness, and advanced public sector management capabilities.	There is a need for the supply of standardised qualifications and continuous professional development across all spheres of the public service.	To support the objectives of the Public Service Amendment Bill, particularly in relation to employee mobility, ethical conduct, and interdepartmental collaboration, PSETA must utilise its stakeholder partnerships and sectoral expertise to design supply-side training interventions. These should emphasise the development of transferable skills, embed ethics training across learning programmes, and incorporate collaborative strategies tailored to the specific training needs of government departments.

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[9] The HRD Strategy consists of five programmes that focus on improving foundational education in STEM, expanding access and quality in TVET and college systems, enhancing education, developing skills, and building a capable state. These include: (1) Foundation Education with Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Languages and Life Orientation/Skills, (2) TVET and the Rest of the College System Programme, (3) Higher Education and Training, Research and Innovation Programme, (4) Skills for the Economy, (5) Capable State Programme.

| Policy Framework | Description | Implications for skills Planning | | PSETA's Response to Skills Implications |
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications	
Public Service Human Resource Development Strategic Framework (PS-HRDSF) 2015	This framework is a sub-system of a larger human resource development framework that addresses the focused demand for human resource development in the Public Service. The PS-HRDSF Vision 2015 rests on four distinct pillars relating to Capacity Development, Organisational Support Systems, Governance and Institutional Development and Economic Growth and Development.	There is a need for enhanced workforce capability, leadership skills, and effective management competencies.	There is a need for skills planning and training that aligns with the HRD priorities of government.	The strategic direction for HRD in the Public Service now places greater emphasis on aligning internal workforce development priorities with broader labour market trends and demands. Through targeted learning programmes and sectoral projects, PSETA is actively working to enhance the responsiveness of skills supply in meeting the evolving talent and competency needs of the Public Service Sector.
Medium-Term Development Framework (MTDP) 20242029	This framework is also a sub-system of a larger human resource development framework that addresses the focused demand for human resource development in the Public Service . The MTDP 2024–2029 outlines three overarching strategic priorities: Inclusive Growth and Job Creation; Reducing Poverty and Addressing the High Cost of Living; and Building a Capable, Ethical, and Developmental State. Among these, Inclusive Growth and Job Creation is identified as the Apex priority, requiring coordinated efforts across all spheres of government, clusters, and sectors to drive targeted economic interventions. A capable state is recognised as a foundational enabler of economic development, both directly and indirectly, through effective regulation, oversight of key industries, maintenance of public order, and the creation of a conducive environment for inclusive economic participation.	There is a need for strategic implementation capabilities, policy monitoring skills, and development project management expertise.	There is a need for training supply pipelines aligned to MTDP priorities and adaptive learning to respond to emerging policy needs.	PSETA is responding to the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024-2029 by aligning its strategic priorities and implementation plans with the MTDP's focus areas, especially supporting the government's strategic priority of "a capable, ethical, and developmental state" and its ultimate priority of "inclusive growth and job creation" through skills development and sector-specific capacity building.

Policy Framework	Description	Implications for skills Planning		PSETA's Response to Skills Implications
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications	
Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP)	The ERRP seeks to actively change the economy towards growth, and this requires an active and immediate adaptation by parts of the PSET system – the Skills Strategy. The Skills Strategy lays out 10 interventions[10] to ensure that the skills required are developed.	To accelerate recovery and growth, talents in entrepreneurship promotion, economic revival strategies, and infrastructure delivery are required.	There is a need for training that will allow public officials to contribute to economic recovery projects and local job development efforts.	PSETA's implementation plan aligns with the ERRP skills strategy by focusing on funding youth work-based training programmes and digital skills for Public Service Sector staff, to meet the skills demands identified in the ERRP. Additionally, PSETA partners with DHET to support TVET colleges in aligning with industrial advancements. Furthermore, PSETA collaborates with the DHET to support TVET colleges in adapting their programmes to meet evolving industry requirements and technological advancements.
National Framework Towards the Professionalisation of the Public Sector	The framework, which aligns to the NDP, aims to professionalise public administration as one of the key imperatives for building state capacity.	There is a need for professional ethics, competency-based performance management, and accountability skills.	From a supply-side perspective, structured internships and targeted training interventions will address specific skills shortages, while the implementation of clearly defined occupational pathways and recognition of prior learning will help ensure alignment between employee qualifications and job-role requirements (NSG, 2022).	In support of Continuous Learning and Professional Development (CLPD) initiatives aimed at fostering ongoing skills enhancement and career progression, PSETA must develop customised training pathways tailored to the diverse needs of employee categories across the Sector. This approach aligns with broader professionalisation objectives.

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[10] The Skills Strategy outlines ten interventions to ensure the production of required skills. Six interventions focus on immediate skill production linked to Sectoral strategies, while four are systemic, refining and adding skills and qualifications for rapid responsiveness to changing economic needs through ERRP interventions.

Policy Framework	Description	Implications for skills Planning		PSETA's Response to Skills Implications
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications	
Public Service Regulations (PSR) 2016	The PSR regulates the conduct of employees in the Public Service Sector so that public servants serve the public with integrity, accountability, and efficiency.	There is a need for policy compliance skills, human resource management expertise, and governance capabilities.	There is a need for training aligned with regulatory and HR standards, with emphasis on compliance and regulatory requirements.	PSETA aligns its skills planning initiatives with the core values and competencies set out in the PSR. As a supply-side implication, the PSR necessitates that PSETA prioritise training programmes that cultivate ethical behaviour, reinforce accountability mechanisms, and promote efficiency in service delivery. Furthermore, it is essential for PSETA to integrate compliance-focused training on PSR provisions into its learning offerings to ensure that public servants fully understand their roles and obligations under the regulatory framework. By embedding PSR principles into its skills development agenda, PSETA supports the creation of a more capable, ethical, and accountable Public Service workforce.
District Development Model Strategic Implementation Framework (DDM)	Within the DDM all three spheres of government coordinate and integrate development plans and budgets and mobilise the capacity and resources of government, business, labour and community, in pursuit of inclusive growth and job creation.	On the demand side, the shift towards DDM implementation necessitates a re-evaluation of Public Service sector skills planning. The implementation of the DDM requires a recalibration of skills planning within the Public Service Sector to support integrated and localised service delivery.	The corresponding supply-side implication is that PSETA must align its training interventions to develop competencies in intergovernmental collaboration, including joint planning, coordination, and effective communication across all spheres of government. In addition, strengthening leadership and management capabilities is essential to support DDM governance structures, ensuring accountability, coherence, and the successful execution of service delivery mandates.	PSETA must align training to equip personnel with collaborative and intergovernmental skills, including joint planning, co-ordination, and communication across government levels. Leadership and management development are crucial to support DDM governance structures, ensuring accountability and coherent service delivery.

Policy Framework	Description	Implications for skills Planning		PSETA's Response to Skills Implications
		Demand-related implications	Supply-side related implications	
Digital Skills Framework (National Digital and Future Skills Strategy)	The strategy outlines a framework to address the digital skills gap arising from rapid technological advancements. The strategy acknowledges the convergence of 4IR (advanced materials, biotechnology) with the digital revolution (cloud computing, big data, AI). The strategy encourages SETAs to include sectoral digital skills development within training programmes and internships, and to consider funding for basic digital skill sets that will assist job seekers and form the basis for later upskilling.	There is a need for ICT expertise, data analytics skills, cybersecurity capabilities, and digital service delivery competencies.	There is a need for the training supply to adapt curricula to emerging technology requirements and to foster partnerships with technology providers.	PSETA aims to build a skilled, capable public service workforce with interventions that support digital competency as a critical enabler of modern government services and economic growth.
Skills Audit Methodology Framework	The Framework provides a uniform approach, standard and quality for identifying current skills against required skills (i.e., skills gaps) to inform planning, recruitment, training, retention, and performance management in the Public Service sector. It aims to improve human resource planning by understanding the specific skills and training needs within departments.	On the demand side, the framework calls for a more structured and coordinated approach to identifying skills gaps and training needs across government departments.	There is a need for the training supply to adapt curricula to emerging technology requirements and to foster partnerships with technology providers.	In response, PSETA has developed a complementary Skills Audit Toolbox, offering a step-by-step guide and standardised tools to support departments in conducting effective skills audits. To further facilitate implementation and build sector-wide capacity, PSETA will roll out a series of Masterclasses aimed at equipping departments with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out comprehensive audits, ultimately contributing to a more strategically aligned and skilled Public Service workforce.
National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP) and Employment Services Amendment Bill	The NLMP represents a comprehensive approach to managing labour migration in South Africa by balancing the needs of the South African population and economy with the rights of migrant workers. The NLMP includes an amendment to the Employment Services Act, which seeks to establish a clear framework for labour migration governance, data collection, and management.	There is a need for migration management skills, labour market intelligence expertise, and foreign qualifications evaluation capabilities.	On the supply side, the NLMP requires education and training institutions to focus on high-demand occupations, with the objective of cultivating local talent to fill these roles.	Within the Public Service Sector, this necessitates a stronger emphasis on targeted skills development programmes to reduce reliance on foreign expertise. Furthermore, the policy's stipulations on skills transfer from foreign nationals to South African citizens will require the design and implementation of structured mentorship and training initiatives to ensure effective knowledge sharing and capacity building.

The overarching implications drawn from the analysis of national strategies and plans can be distilled into two central themes:

Alignment and Collaboration: There is a clear need for strengthened alignment and interdepartmental collaboration across various spheres and entities within the Public Service. This includes harmonising skills development initiatives, aligning sector-specific plans with broader national frameworks such as the NDP, MTDP, HRDSA, and NP-PSET, and fostering integrated planning and execution across departments. Enhanced collaboration will ensure cohesive and streamlined responses to national priorities and improve the overall efficiency of skills planning and service delivery.

Building a Capable and Responsive Workforce: Initiatives such as the ERRP Skills Strategy and the Professionalisation Framework underscore the importance of developing digital competencies, critical thinking, adaptability, leadership capabilities, and ethical awareness within the Public Service. The National Digital and Future Skills Strategy provides a comprehensive framework to advance digital proficiency in the Sector. It promotes the introduction of new curricula and pedagogical approaches in the post-school education and training (PSET) system, supports research on digital skills, invests in lecturer capacity-building, and enhances the role of technology hubs and incubators (DCDT, 2020). Similarly, the Just Transition Framework highlights the need for "green skills" development, advocating for training in areas such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate change adaptation. Complementing these efforts, the NQF Amendment Act reinforces the legitimacy of qualifications through verification mechanisms, thereby encouraging a skills-based approach to recruitment and contributing to a more competent public workforce. Collectively, these initiatives support the creation of an efficient, ethical, and responsive Public Service capable of advancing South Africa's socio-economic development agenda.

PSETA has put measures in place to support the MTDP 2024-29 priorities through the following interventions:

Table 9: Measures to support the Medium-Term Development Plan

MTDP PRIORITIES	PSETA ALIGNMENT
Inclusive growth and job creation	PSETA will focus on research to identify and then support skills required for the Just Energy Transition, focusing on skills required for the state. Additionally, through collaboration with TVET colleges, PSETA actively implements Learnerships and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programmes to ensure graduates acquire practical training and seamlessly transition from education to employment within the public sector.
Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living	PSETA's contribution to the MTDP priorities will be realised by facilitating access to workplace-based learning and programmes that lead to qualifications in priority sectors, thus addressing the demand for Critical Occupations and enabling earning opportunities for young people through skills development. This will be achieved through the HEI and TVET Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and internship programmes. In addition, the rural development projects targeted for youth contribute to priority 2 of the MTDP in ensuring that skills development is linked more closely to demand in the economy.

MTDP PRIORITIES	PSETA ALIGNMENT
Building a capable, ethical and developmental state	PSETA will address priority three of the MTDP through the training of public service officials on Skills Programmes as immediate and short-term interventions that provide access to targeted, credit-bearing training. Furthermore, resources will be allocated to implement the PSETA-developed occupational qualifications and RPL for public service officials. Through the Batho Pele Digital Skills Platform, PSETA offers foundational digital skills training to enhance public service efficiency. Additional targeted training programmes include upskilling labour relations officers to manage disciplinary processes effectively, alongside developing digital skills needed for remote and emerging workplace environments. PSETA has formalised partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with key government departments (DPSA, DHA, DIRCO, DPME) for joint development of occupational qualifications aligned to public service needs.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the key implications for skills planning within the Public Service, shaped by a range of change drivers. These include the imperative to establish structured career pathways and foster collaboration with educational institutions to advance professionalisation efforts. The facilitation of PPPs calls for targeted development of specialised skills, while the progression of e-government and digitalisation underscores the need for digital literacy and robust IT infrastructure management capabilities. In response to climate change and environmental sustainability, reskilling and upskilling initiatives are essential to support a green transition. Additionally, the growing influence of digital technologies demands focused training in areas such as cybersecurity and the ethical integration of AI. Collectively, these factors highlight the critical role of strategic, forward-looking skills planning in equipping the Public Service Sector to effectively respond to an increasingly complex and dynamic environment.

3. Chapter 3: Sectoral Skills Demand and Supply Analysis

3.1. Introduction

This chapter examines occupational shortages and skills gaps in the Sector by analysing hard-to-fill vacancies, emerging occupations existing skills gaps and supply-side factors such as education enrolments, completions, and challenges. The chapter draws on the 2025 Annexure 2 (Workplace Skills Plans and Annual Training Reports) data analysis, the analysis of the higher education management information system (HEMIS) databases, and literature from studies and national strategies and plans. Additional insights are informed by data collected from Sector stakeholders.

3.2. Occupational Shortages and Skills Gaps

3.2.1 Occupations with Hard-to-Fill Vacancies (HTFVs)

According to the DHET SSP framework, occupational shortages occur when the demand for workers in specific occupations exceeds the supply of workers who are qualified, available, and willing to work (DHET, 2024). This subsection considers occupational shortages as vacancies that take a considerable time to fill. The HTFVs' information presented in the table below was gathered through an analysis of the occupational data submitted by stakeholders to PSETA in the 2025 Annexure 2 submissions, as well as fieldwork (interviews, surveys, and a validation workshop).

Table 10: Transversal Occupations with Hard-to-fill Vacancies

OFO Code	Occupation	Quantity Needed	Reasons for Vacancies
2021-121905	Programme or Project Manager	77	• High salary expectations • Lack of specialist skills
2021-252901	ICT Security Specialist (Cybersecurity Specialist)	72	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations
2021-111202	General Manager Public Service (Chief Director, Director, Senior Manager & deputies)	66	• Lack of specialist skills • Employment equity considerations • Political appointment
2021-111207	Senior Government Manager (Director General, HOD Provincial Dept, Secretary of Legislature/ Parliament & deputies)	66	• Political appointment • Lack of specialist skills • Employment equity considerations • Lack of relevant qualifications
2021-242202	Policy & Strategy Analyst	61	• Lack of specialist skills • Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years)
2021-242101[11]	Business Analyst	55	• Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years) • Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations • Lack of relevant qualifications
None	Cloud Architect	55	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations • Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years)
None	Artificial Intelligence (AI) Specialist (Developer)	50	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations

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[11] In the OFO codes, Business Analysts are given as an alternative title or specialisation of the occupation "Management Consultant", along with other unrelated or loosely related occupations. In this case, the OFO titles do not correctly reflect the titles and functions in the Sector as Business Analysts (business-technology role) are different to Management Consultants (various advisory roles).

OFO Code	Occupation	Quantity Needed	Reasons for Vacancies
None	Data Analyst	50	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations • Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years)
2021-251101	ICT Systems Analyst	50	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations • Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years)
2021-242208[12]	Organisational Development Practitioner	50	• Lack of specialist skills • Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years)
2021 - 112101	CEO/ Managing Director (Enterprise Director)	44	• High salary expectations • Political appointment • Lack of specialist skills • Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years)
2021-121101	Finance Manager	44	• High salary expectations • Lack of relevant qualifications
2021-121201	Human Resource Manager	44	• Employment equity considerations • High salary expectations
2021-242208	Organisational Risk Manager	44	• Lack of relevant experience (More than 5 years) • Lack of specialist skills • Poor organisational design (misplacement in organograms)
2021-251102	Data Scientist	39	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations
2021-263101	Economist	39	• High salary expectation • Lack of relevant experience (2-5 years)
2021-251201	Software Developer	39	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations
2021-251302	Website Developer	39	• High salary expectations • Lack of specialist skills
2021-121202	Learning and Development Manager (Training Manager)	33	• Lack of specialist skills • High salary expectations • Lack of relevant qualifications • Unsuitable job location

Sources: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025)*; SSP Interviews, Surveys & Validation Workshop (2025)*

The vacancies noted as hard-to-fill in the Public Service, as cited in the table above, are largely due to high salary expectations and a lack of specialist skills and relevant experience (more than 5 years). In addition to the "traditional" transversal occupations, stakeholders cited technology roles such as AI Specialist, Cloud Architect, Business Analyst, ICT Systems Analyst, Software Developer and Website Developer as hard-to-fill – highlighting their importance in addressing the change drivers of Digital Technology and Digitisation, as well as e-Government and Digitalisation (see Chapter 2.2).

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[12] In the OFO codes, Organisational Development Practitioner are given as an alternative title or specialisation of the occupation "Organisational Risk Manager", along with other unrelated or loosely related occupations. In this case, the OFO titles do not correctly reflect the titles and functions in the Sector as Organisational Development Practitioners (human resource role) are different to Organisational Risk Managers (risk role).

3.2.2 Emerging Occupations and Skills in the Sector

Overall, the roles forecasted to be growing and/ or emerging over the last few years, according to the World Economic Forum (2023), are largely because of technological adoption or automation within industries. Emerging roles, which have been highlighted in all four Future of Jobs reports spanning 2016 to 2023, include data analysts and scientists, AI and machine learning specialists, and digital transformation specialists. It is estimated that by 2027, both new roles created because of technological change drivers as well as roles with diminishing demand within the Public Service, will make up 29% of the current workforce within the Sector (World Economic Forum, 2023). In response, some Public Service employers have been conducting training in emerging technologies and the future of work. The courses undertaken include skills programmes in Emerging Management, Emerging Leadership and Emerging Future Skills and Competencies needed in the Public Service.

The Compendium of Skills Set for the Present and Future Public Service provides a framework for addressing current challenges as well as future skills required (PSETA, 2024). The framework outlines the skills and competencies required for both current and future public servants and it is categorised into five main areas:

1. **Work readiness skills**: These skills focus on enhancing employability and include literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, CV writing as well as self-presentation. Interventions for developing these skills include coaching and mentoring, experiential learning, graduate recruitment schemes, aligning internship schemes with entry-level positions and collaborating with post-school institutions to optimise work-integrated learning programmes.

2. **Fundamental human skills**: These skills are crucial for effective interpersonal interactions and include empathy and compassion, ethical disposition, public service etiquette, communication and problem-solving. Interventions include intensifying training programmes with an outcomes-based approach instead of compliance-driven, as well as embedding these skills into accreditation processes and public service education and curriculum.

3. **Leadership and management skills**: Skills such as these are important for individuals in supervisory roles and encompass skills such as strategic thinking, decision-making, financial management as well as change management. Interventions for this skill include reimagining and redesigning the existing leadership programmes, collaborating with higher education institutions as well as ensuring the continuous assessment and quality assurance of these programmes.

4. **Technology skills**: Due to the increasing importance of technology within the Public Sector, these skills include skills such as digital literacy, data analytics, cybersecurity, and software engineering. Interventions involve incorporating technology skills modules into education and training programmes, investing more into technology and infrastructure relating to the fourth industrial revolution as well as emphasising that these technologies should complement human efforts, not replace humans.

5. **Functional or occupational skills**: These are specific skills that are required for different roles within the public service, such as project management, budgeting, public financial management, legal services and technical skills. The interventions include incorporating these scarce skills into the post-school curricula and exploring bursaries and grants to incentivise careers within the field as well as to intensify the mechanisms for apprenticeships.

By focusing on these areas and implementing the interventions, the public service will be able to work towards overcoming the skills challenges faced and build a more capable and skilled workforce (PSETA, 2024).

A structured process was followed to identify emerging occupations. This involved a review of relevant literature and an analysis of Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs) and Annual Training Reports (ATRs) to determine emerging trends and align with national priorities. These initial findings were further validated through stakeholder interviews and consultations. Based on this process, the following emerging occupations have tentatively been identified for the Public Service.

Table 11: Emerging Occupations

SETA NAME	Period	OFO Code	Occupation	Intervention(s) Planned	NQF Level	NQF Aligned (Y/N)	Quantity needed	Quantity to be supported	Rationale (digitisation or national strategy and specify the national strategy)
PSETA	2026/27	None	Data Analyst	Bursaries toward diplomas and bachelor's degrees Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards a professional designation Internship	6, 7 & 8	Y	50	40	With the increased availability of data from GPS systems and engagements with citizens, data analysts may extract useful insights to improve operations, customer satisfaction, and strategic planning.
PSETA	2026/27	None	Artificial Intelligence (AI) Specialist	Bursaries toward bachelor's & master's degrees	7, 8 & 9	Y	50	40	The adoption of AI and machine learning due to technological innovations drives demand for AI specialists.
PSETA	2026/27	2021-121909	Sustainability Manager (Environmental, social, and governance (ESG))	Bursaries toward diplomas and bachelor's degrees	6, 7 & 8	Y	28	20	ESG mandates and climate-related risks drive the need for professionals to implement sustainability frameworks and manage ESG reporting and regulations.
				Internship	6, 7 & 8	Y			
PSETA	2026/27	None	Cloud Architect	Bursaries toward diplomas and bachelor's degrees	6, 7 & 8	Y	55	40	The public and private sectors are moving to securely store data and improve accessibility, creating demand for cloud infrastructure specialists.
				Learnerships	4 & 5	Y			
				Internship	7 & 8	Y			
				Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards a professional designation	7 & 8	N			
				Learnerships	4 & 5	Y			
				Internship	7 & 8	Y			
				Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards a professional designation	7 & 8	N			

SETA NAME	Period	OFO Code	Occupation	Intervention(s) Planned	NQF Level	NQF Aligned (Y/N)	Quantity needed	Quantity to be supported	Rationale (digitisation or national strategy and specify the national strategy)
PSETA	2026/27	2021-242211	ICT Auditor	Bursaries toward diplomas and bachelor's degrees	6, 7 & 8	Y	33	20	With increased digitalisation, auditors skilled in ICT, particularly advanced or emerging technologies such as AI and cloud computing, are required to maintain audit controls over crucial systems and sensitive data.
				Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards a professional designation	7 & 8	Y			
				Short programme	7 & 8	N			
PSETA	2026/27	2021 - 252901	ICT Security Specialist	Internships or WIL or Bursaries or Skills Programmes: Certificate with Workplace Experience, Diploma or Bachelor of Information Systems.	7	Y	72	50	This occupation is emerging from the increased focus and need to digitise within government and to safeguard against the associated cyber-risks.

Sources: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025); SSP Interviews, Surveys & Validation Workshop (2025)

3.2.3. Major Skills Gaps

According to the DHET SSP Framework (DHET, 2024), skills gaps refer to "skills deficiencies in employees or lack of specific competencies by employees to undertake job tasks successfully to required industry standards". Further, the Framework states that skills gaps may arise due to a lack of training, new job tasks, technological changes, or new production processes. Literature suggests that a skills gap is a mismatch in the skills employers require their employees to have and the skills employees or job seekers have instead (SSACI, 2024).

The skills gaps in the Public Service Sector are presented below according to occupational groups (e.g., managers and senior professionals), with examples of occupations impacted.

Table 12: Skills Gaps at Major Occupation Levels

	Skills Gap	Managers & Senior Professionals	Junior Professionals & Clerical/ Admin Workers	Trainees & Inexperien-ced Workers	Elementary Workers (e.g., cleaners, messengers, maintenance)
1.	Leadership	• Director • General Manager Public Service • Senior Government Official			
2.	Emotional intelligence	• Director • General Manager Public Service • Senior Government Official			
3.	Change management	• Senior Government Official • HR Manager • Organisational Development Practitioner			
4.	Monitoring and Evaluation	• Economic Research Manager • Programme or Project Manager • Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist			
5.	Coaching and mentoring	• Director • General Manager Public Service • Senior Government Official			
6.	Financial management	• Director • General Manager Public Service • Senior Government Official			
7.	Problem solving & critical thinking	• HR Officer • Transformation Officer	• HR Clerk • Supervisors		
8.	Supervisory/ Management skills (People and Performance Management)	• Senior Government Official • HR Manager • Organisational Development Practitioner • Finance Manager	• Administrative Manager		
9.	Digital communication and marketing		Digital Marketing Specialist		
10.	Technical, job-specific skills		Administrative Officer	Interns & learners	
11.	Report writing		• General Clerk • Legal Secretary	Interns & learners	
12.	Communication			Interns & learners	
13.	Etiquette			Interns & learners	
14.	Basic computer skills				• Cleaners • Messengers • Maintenance personnel
15.	Basic literacy and numeracy				• Cleaners • Messengers • Maintenance personnel

Sources: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025); SSP Interviews, Surveys & Validation Workshop (2025); Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025); PSETA SSP (2024)

Seven skills gaps apply to managers and senior professionals. These include leadership – which is the most cited skills gap – emotional intelligence, change management and monitoring and evaluation, amongst others. Managers and senior professionals also intersect with junior professionals and clerical or administrative workers in showing gaps in problem solving and critical thinking, as well as supervisory/ management skills (people and performance management). Advancing technology and greater access to it, changing consumer preferences and a younger population have given rise to digital communication and marketing, necessitating the need for more digital marketing specialists. Trainees & inexperienced workers are said to be lacking in technical, job-specific skills, as well as report writing, communication and etiquette. Meanwhile, elementary workers such as cleaners, messengers and maintenance personnel require skilling in basic computer skills and basic literacy and numeracy.

3.3. Extent and Nature of Supply

This section examines skills provision from various supply pipelines such as Universities and TVET Colleges.

3.3.1. Extent of Occupational Skills Supply in the Sector

A well-functioning Public Service Sector depends on a comprehensive and coordinated approach to developing occupational skills. In South Africa, this multi-pronged strategy draws on a wide range of education and training providers. The country currently hosts 26 public universities, 50 public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges (Department of Employment and Labour, 2021), and 142 registered private higher education institutions and colleges (DHET, 2024).

On the supply side, a diverse network of institutions contributes to skills provision. Universities, Universities of Technology, and TVET colleges play a pivotal role in producing graduates equipped with competencies in areas such as public administration, finance, policy development, and other fields relevant to the Public Service Sector. In addition, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) work closely with employers and training providers to address identified skills gaps through workplace-based learning initiatives and sector-aligned programmes.

The Public Service Sector also benefits from specialised training offered by dedicated public institutions, including the NSG, provincial training academies, and sector-specific academies such as the Home Affairs Academy, DIRCO Academy, and Justice College. These institutions play a key role in ensuring that public servants receive context-specific and occupation-relevant training that supports professional growth and improved service delivery. These academies not only reinforce sector-specific competencies but also foster a culture of continuous learning and professionalism within the Public Service, aligning training efforts with evolving governance priorities and national development goals.

3.3.2. State of Education and Training Provision

The National Senior Certificate (NSC or "Matric") pass rate has improved substantially over the past ten years; from 75.8% in 2014 to a record-high of 87.3% in 2024. The figure below shows that the pass rate has been improving since the drop in 2020. The most recent results, which represent 615 429 candidates who passed the 2024 Matric examination sitting, showed an improvement of 4.4 percentage points from the previous year.

Figure 14: National Matric Pass Rates (2014-2024)
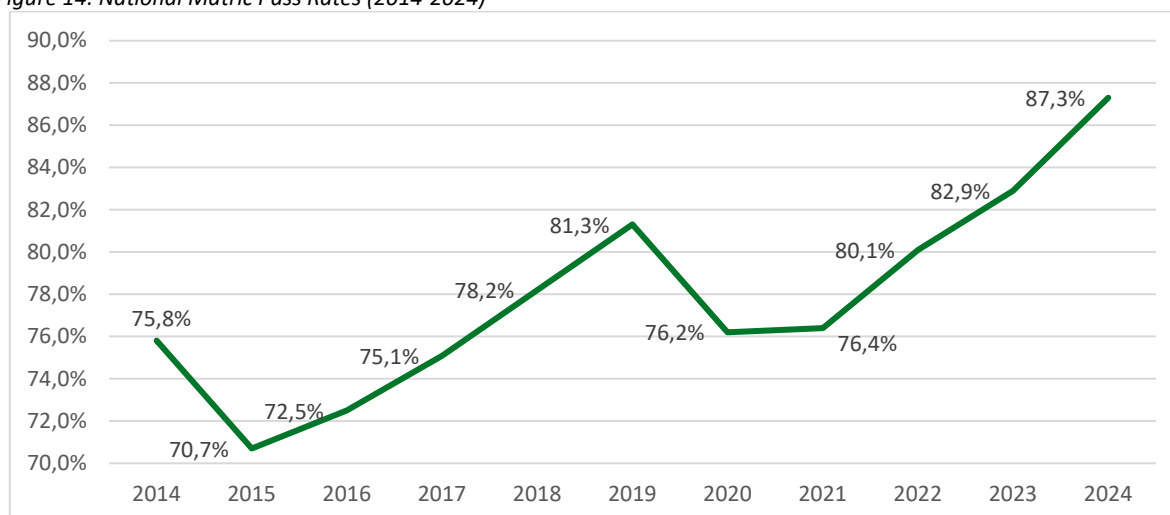
A total of 47.8% of candidates qualified for admission to Bachelor studies in 2024, marking a notable improvement from the 40.9% recorded the previous year - an increase of 6.9%. This outcome represents the highest proportion of Bachelor passes in recent history. Comparatively, in 2014, the system produced 150,752 Bachelor-level passes, a figure that has more than doubled over the past decade to reach 337,158 in 2024. In addition to the bachelor's passes, 26.8% of learners achieved diploma passes, and 12.7% achieved higher certificate passes. Only 0.017% achieved an NSC pass.

In 2018, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) introduced the Technical Occupational Curriculum as part of efforts to strengthen the Three Stream Model in the basic education sector. This model aims to provide alternative pathways for learners with practical or technical aptitudes by channelling them into non-academic streams. While full implementation across all schools is still underway, the model represents a significant shift in the structure of the schooling system and may influence the future skills supply into the Public Service Sector.

The General Education Certificate (GEC), intended to be awarded at the end of Grade 9, is in its pilot phase. In 2023, the pilot expanded to 1,000 schools across all nine provinces. While a full rollout was initially planned for 2024, the DBE has extended the pilot phase, with nationwide implementation now expected in 2025 (BusinessTech , 2023). Additionally, high dropout rates remain a concern, with approximately 35% of learners leaving the school system without obtaining a National Senior Certificate (NSC). The introduction of the GEC aims to address this by providing an alternative qualification at Grade 9, facilitating smoother transitions into vocational education and reducing redundancy in the education system (BusinessTech , 2023).

The PSET system continues to face challenges, including limited access, curriculum relevance, staffing, institutional management, funding, and student support services. In 2023, public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) enrolled approximately 1,112,439 students, reflecting a steady growth in enrolment (SA News, 2023). However, the demand for higher education far exceeds the available capacity. For instance, in 2025, the University of Johannesburg received 693,990 applications for only 10,900 undergraduate spaces, highlighting the intense competition for university placements (Independent, 2025).

Table 13: Students enrolled in Higher Education Institutions 2014-2023[13]

Year	Public HEIs	Private HEIs
2014	969 155	142 557
2015	985 212	147 210
2016	975 837	167 408
2017	1 036 984	185 046
2018	1 085 568	197 898
2019	1 074 912	208 978
2020	1 094 808	219 031
2021	1 068 046	232 915
2022	1 077 768	258 915
2023	1 071 715	286 454

Source: HEMIS Data (DHET, 2025)

The figure below illustrates the number of student enrolments in public HEIs by educational subject matter between 2019 and 2023. The educational subject matters illustrated in the graph are Business and Management (BUS/MAN), Education (EDUCATION), Other Humanities (OTHER HUM), and Science, Engineering and Technology (SET). Overall, enrolments in public HEIs have increased marginally over the past four years, from 1 074 911 in 2019 to 1 077 768 in 2022. However, overall enrolments in public HEIs declined slightly in 2023 to 1 071 250. The discipline that saw the largest decline was Education, which decreased by 12% overall since 2019. SET has consistently seen the highest number of enrolments over all five years, with the highest in 2019 at 323 287 enrolments.

Figure 15: Student Enrolments in Public HEIs by Educational Subject Matter 2019 – 2023[14]
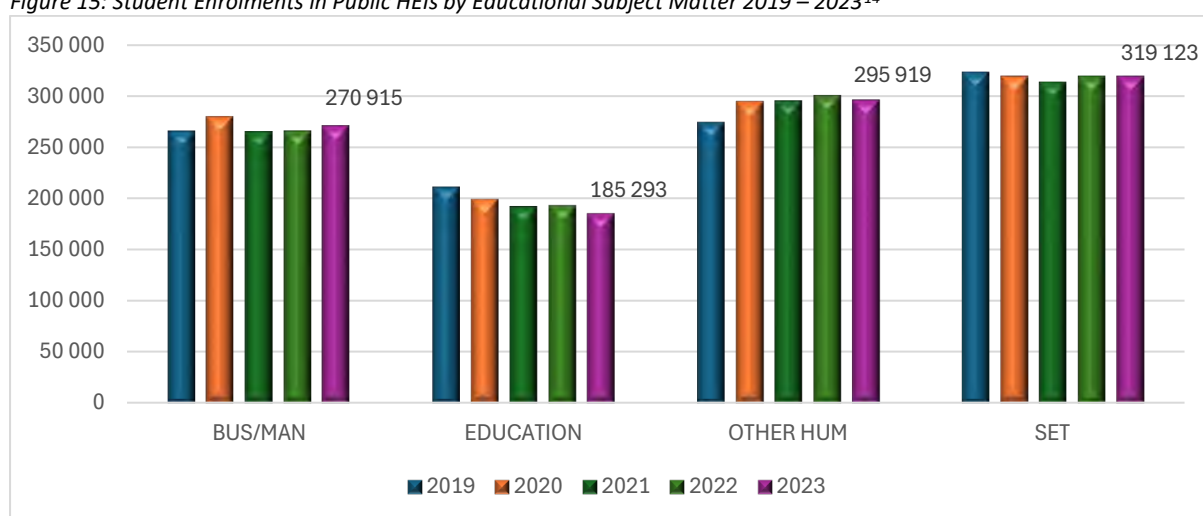
Source: HEMIS Data (DHET, 2025)

As demand for post-Matric qualifications increases, an increased supply of well-educated graduates is needed to meet demand in the Public Service. The figure below indicates the number of graduates by type of qualification from 2019 to 2023. In 2023, a total of 34 936 students completed their studies, a decline from the 39 855 students who completed their studies in 2022. The number of graduates declined for diplomas, masters, and other postgraduate qualifications, with 10 631, 1 433, and 0 students completing these qualifications in 2023, respectively. On a positive note, there was an increase in students completing honours and doctoral qualifications, as compared to 2022. In 2023, 3 131 students graduated with honours and 56 students graduated with doctoral degrees.

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[13] The 2023 data is the latest available year.
[14] The 2023 data is the latest available year.
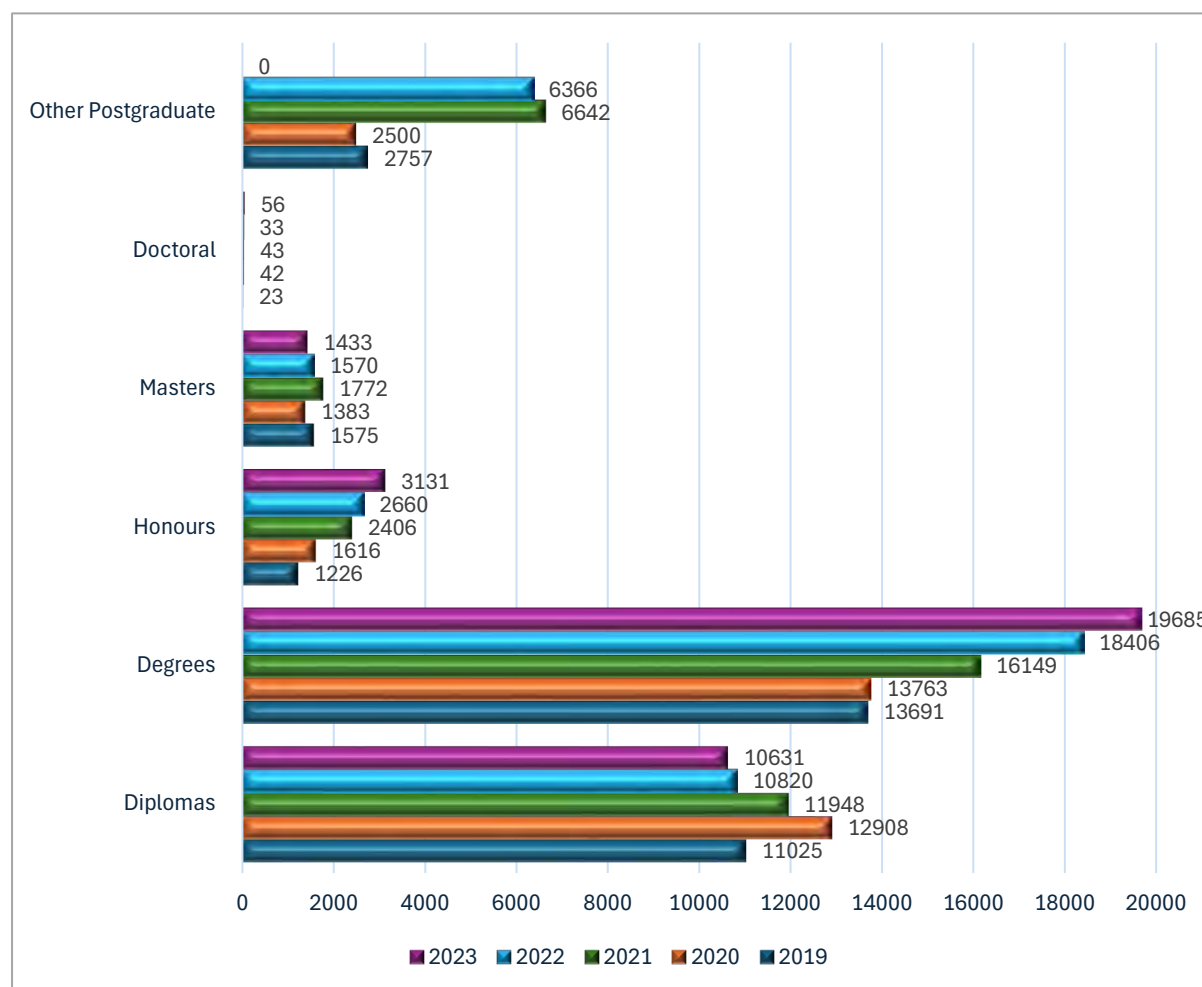
Source: HEMIS Data (DHET, 2025)

Similar to the trend in enrolments, Science, Engineering and Technology continue to produce the highest number of graduates, as has been the trend over the last decade. In 2023, 65 978 students graduated in this subject matter, followed by 60 159 graduates in Business and Management, 57 965 graduates in Other Humanities and 41 526 graduates in Education. While the overall decline of students completing their studies in 2023, when compared to 2022, has already been noted above, the Other Humanities faculty saw the largest decline (from 58 006 graduates in 2022 to 57 965 graduating students in 2023). This is illustrated in the figure below.

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[15] The 2023 data is the latest available year.
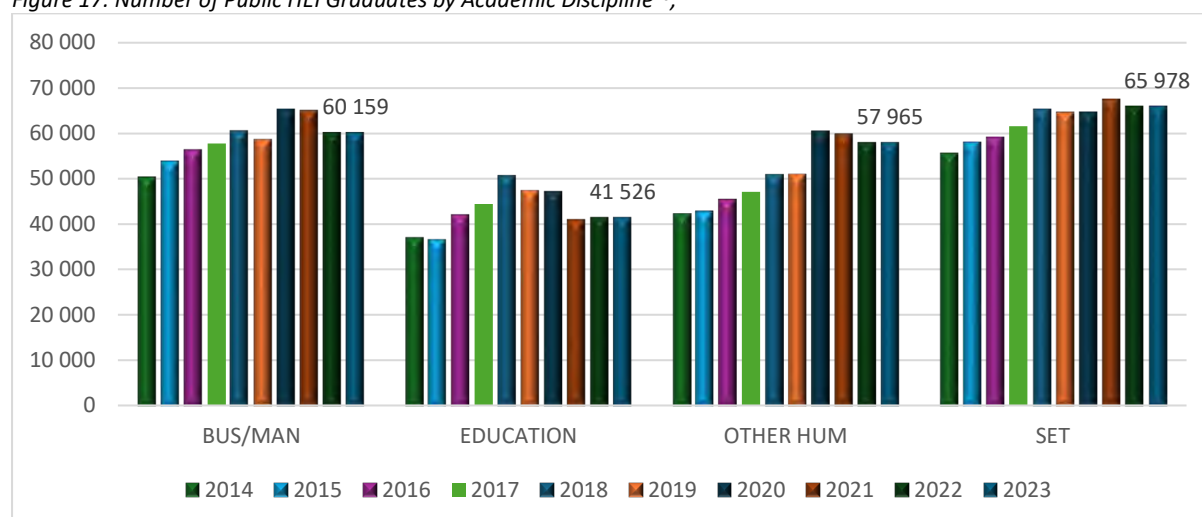
TVET Colleges have been identified by the government as a vehicle to improve through-put rates and expand the number of qualified people entering the workforce (DHET, 2024). The NDP emphasises the need to increase the enrolment in TVET colleges to 2.5 million and CET colleges' enrolment to 1 million students by 2030. From 2014 to 2021, university enrolments have steadily risen, contrasting with a decline in enrolments at TVET colleges since 2016. This suggests that while the PSET system is expected to meet the NDP target of 1.6 million university enrolments by 2030, the target of 2.5 million TVET college enrolments by the same year is unlikely to be achieved. Moreover, the throughput rate at TVET colleges has remained notably low, with approximately 11% of initial National Certificate (Vocational) (NC[V]) level 2 students completing their qualifications within three years by 2021. Moreover, there are substantial gender-based differences in graduation rates at TVET colleges, as the completion rate for females is nearly double that of males (DHET, 2024).

The table below depicts the enrolment and completion rates of individuals in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVET) enrolled in programs related to the Public Services Sector in 2023. The data shows that several National Certificate Vocational (NC(V)) and Report 191 N6 programmes directly feed into critical skills areas for the public services sector, particularly in administration, management, finance, and ICT. NC(V) programmes such as Office Administration and Management have strong completion rates above 70%, indicating a solid pipeline of entry-level talent. However, low completion rates in Finance, Economics, and Accounting (46.7%) and Information Technology and Computer Science (43.8%) highlight potential gaps in financial and digital skills, which are increasingly essential in government. For N6 programmes, Public Management, Human Resource Management, and Financial Management show strong performance, suggesting a healthy supply in governance, HR, and finance roles. Conversely, low completion in Legal Secretary and Public Relations may indicate limited output for specialised administrative and communication roles, potentially creating shortages in these critical support functions.

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[16] Graduation rates are used as a proxy for through-put rates.

[17] The 2023 data is the latest available year.

Table 14: TVET Enrolments and Completions (2023)

Programme	Number Registered	Number Wrote	Number Completed	Completion Rate (%)
NC(V) Level 4				
Office Administration	4,097	3,640	2,634	72.4%
Education and Development	540	471	387	82.2%
Finance, Economics and Accounting	812	703	328	46.7%
Management	619	565	414	73.3%
Information Technology and Computer Science	468	402	176	43.8%
Total	**6,536**	**5,781**	**3,939**	**68.14%**
Report 191 N6 Programmes				
Programme	Number Registered	Number Wrote	Number Completed	Completion Rate (%)
Educare	3,815	3,546	3,216	90.7%
Business Management	6,967	6,263	3,937	62.9%
Financial Management	5,698	5,193	3,843	74.0%
Marketing Management	3,072	2,593	1,313	50.6%
Human Resource Management	6,158	5,610	3,971	70.8%
Legal Secretary	649	567	237	41.8%
Management Assistant	10,114	8,819	4,932	55.9%
Public Management	8,938	8,161	5,630	69.0%
Public Relations	298	283	104	36.7%
Total	**45,709**	**41,035**	**27,183**	**66.24%**

Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training 2023 (DHET, 2025)

Improved quality through effective training of college managers and academic staff, as well as strengthened student support services, is a key focus of the National Plan for Post-School Education and Training (NP-PSET) 2021–2030, which builds upon the 2013 White Paper for PSET. The Plan outlines strategies such as capacity building for institutional leadership and governance, continuous professional development for academic staff, and the development of responsive curricula aligned to labour market demands. It also promotes the integration of digital learning technologies and the expansion of infrastructure to support blended and online learning. In addition, the NP-PSET emphasises the importance of holistic student support, covering academic, psychosocial, and career guidance, and calls for broader access to financial aid. To ensure greater workplace relevance, the Plan advocates for strong partnerships between colleges and employers in both the public and private sectors, including enhanced work-integrated learning opportunities and stronger collaboration with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). These reforms aim to strengthen the post-school system and develop a skills pipeline that supports inclusive economic growth (DHET, 2023).

The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) has in terms of Section 26I (2) of the Skills Development Act No 97 of 1998 as Amended (SDA) and the Council's delegation policy, delegated the Quality Assurance Partner (QAP) functions to the PSETA. The PSETA has 22 registered pre-2009 qualifications, which include registered unit standards, qualifications, and learning provisions, including learnerships. The QAP function also focuses on accrediting training providers, registering assessors and moderators, auditing the quality of learning provision and assessment, as well as certifying learners. Three processes are undertaken to develop occupational qualifications, namely the realignment of historically registered (pre-2009) qualifications, the development of new occupational qualifications, and the review of existing occupational qualifications.

All historically registered qualifications had to be realigned to occupational qualifications within the new Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) by 30 June 2024. However, this date was subsequently extended by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, in Gazette No. 51771, in December 2024, for further case-by-case extensions of up to 2 years for pre-2009 expired qualifications. In the case of PSETA, despite having developed and registered relevant occupational qualifications, three Public Administration qualifications at NQF level 5, 6 and 7 were extended to accommodate providers who were still in the process of acquiring accreditation with the QCTO, thus ensuring limited disruption to this particular pipeline.

In developing occupational qualifications, PSETA considers the HTFVs and skills gaps reflected in this SSP, as well as the change drivers and any other factors identified through research. In addition, stakeholders are consulted before and during the qualification development and realignment process, with subject matter experts forming part of the consultations. The following occupational qualifications are currently in the process of review and development[18]:

Table 15: Occupational Qualifications Currently in Development

	QUALIFICATION TITLE	OFO CODE
1.	Specialised Occupational Diploma: Programme Manager, NQF 8, credits 200	121905
2.	Advanced Occupational Certificate: Labour Inspector, NQF 6, credits 249	335901
3.	SP: Public Sector Ethics and Compliance Officer, NQF 5, credits 40	900254
4.	Occupational Certificate: Diplomat, NQF 7, 159 credits	99054
5.	SP: Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, NQF 7, 29 credits	900254
6.	SP: Public Sector Service Delivery Accelerator, NQF 5, 25 credits	900255
7.	SP: Policy Formulation Officer	121301
8.	SP: Policy Compliance Officer	121301
9.	SP: Planning Risk Management Custodian	121301
10.	SP: Planning Execution Implementer	121301
11.	Occupational Qualification: Civic Service Officer	
12.	Advanced Occupational Certificate: Senior Government Official, NQF 7, 244 credits	112161
13.	Higher Occupational Certificate: Immigration Officer, NQF 5, 178 credits	120684
14.	Higher Occupational Certificate: Refugee Status Determination Officer, NQF 5, 133 credits	120685
15.	Higher Occupational Certificate: Administrative Attache, NQF 5, 130 credits	120683
16.	Occupational Certificate: Diplomatic Mission Administrator, NQF 6, 207 credits	118095

Source: PSETA Quality Assurance (PSETA, 2025)

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[18] PSETA is committed to implementing work-based learning programmes in line with the SETA Skills Summit Outcomes.

PSETA currently has 11 occupational qualifications that have been registered with SAQA through the QCTO. These occupations are listed in the table below.

Table 16: PSETA Registered Occupational Qualifications

QUAL ID	QUALIFICATION TYPE	QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTOR	NQF LEVEL	CREDITS	REG. START DATE	REG. END DATE
91994	Occupational Certificate	Office Administrator: Public Service Administrator	5	52	2018/07/01	2023/06/30
99054	Occupational Certificate	Diplomat	7	159	2018/07/01	2025/12/31
118095	Occupational Certificate	Diplomatic Mission Administrator	6	207	2021/03/25	2026/03/25
118791	Occupational Certificate	General Manager Public Service	6	150	2022/02/03	2027/02/03
118766	Occupational Certificate	Public Service Administrator	5	120	2022/02/03	2027/02/03
120683	Higher Occupational Certificate	Administrative Attache	5	130	2023/03/08	2028/03/08
120684	Higher Occupational Certificate	Immigration Officer	5	178	2023/03/08	2028/03/08
120685	Higher Occupational Certificate	Refugee Status Determination Officer	5	133	2023/03/08	2028/03/08
120693	Advanced Occupational Certificate	Legislation Facilitator	6	172	2023/03/08	2028/03/08
120743	Occupational Certificate	Legislation Administrative Assistant	5	36	2023/03/08	2028/03/08
121166	Advanced Occupational Certificate	Senior Government Official	7	244	2023/11/14	2028/11/14

Source: PSETA Quality Assurance (PSETA, 2025)

In addition to HEIs and TVET institutions, Community Education and Training Colleges (CET) play an important role in developing a skilled workforce in the public sector. The table below shows the number of people who enrolled and completed the General Education and Training Certificate: Adult Basic Education and Training (GETC: ABET) Level 4 Learning Areas by content most relevant to transversal functions.

Table 17: CET Enrolments and Completions (2023)

Content Learning Area	Number Wrote	Number Completed	Completion Rate (%)
Economics and Management Sciences	3,985	1,803	45.2%
Human and Social Sciences	4,287	2,506	58.5%
Information and Communication Technology	1,355	1,083	79.9%
Life Orientation	27,348	21,327	78.0%
Technology	482	251	52.1%
Mathematical Literacy/ Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences	3,385	2,173	64.2%
Total	**40,842**	**29,143**	**71.36%**

Source: Statistics on Post-School Education and Training 2023 (DHET, 2025)

The GETC: ABET Level 4 data shows a solid supply of foundational skills relevant to the public service sector, with a total completion rate of 71.36%. High completion rates in Information and Communication Technology (79.9%) and Life Orientation (78.0%) indicate strong preparation in digital literacy and civic/workplace readiness. Moderate completion in Mathematical Literacy/Mathematics (64.2%) supports analytical functions, while lower completion in Economics and Management Sciences (45.2%) and Technology (52.1%) highlights potential gaps in financial, management, and technical skills needed for effective governance and infrastructure support in public service roles.

The figure below shows the number of employed learner entries of PSETA qualifications between the 2022/23 to 2023/24 period that were funded by the PSETA. A significant decrease in learner entries in the skills programme has been observed. This is the same for bursaries, where the data indicates that no employed learners were entering into bursary programmes in 2023/24 compared to 18 in 2022/23.

Figure 18: Number of employed learners entering PSETA-funded learning programmes 2024/25[19]
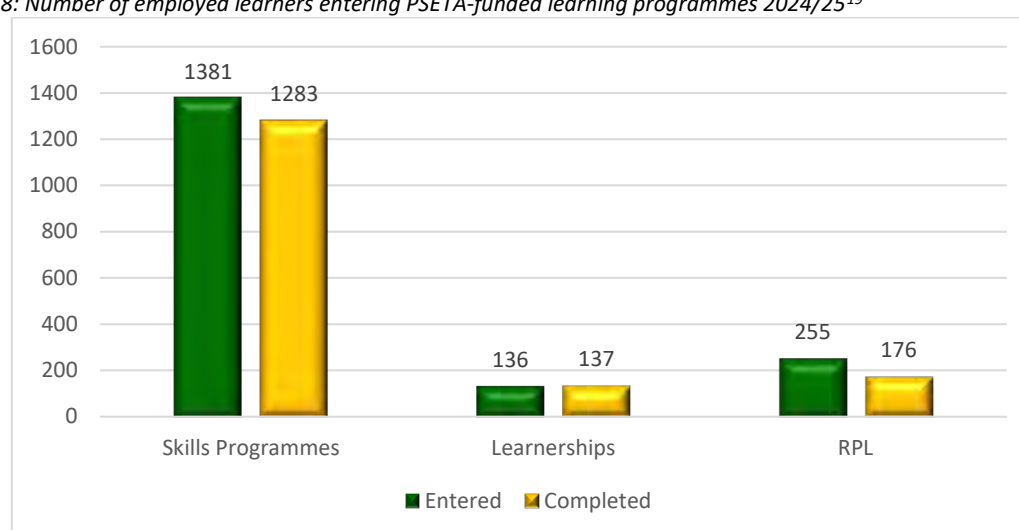
Source: PSETA Quarterly Monitoring Reports 2024/25 (PSETA, 2025)

According to the figure below, contrastingly, among unemployed learners, there has been a notable increase in learners entering internships, bursaries and learnerships. These figures cannot be used to directly correlate learner entries with completions. This is due to the variation in programme duration and start dates as some learners may complete programmes in a different financial year from when they started.

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[19] In certain instances, the number of completions exceed the number of entrants.

Figure 19: Number of unemployed learners entering PSETA-funded programmes 2024/25

DHET has emphasised its commitment to increasing access to post-school education and training by increasing the quality and size of the PSET system. In a statement made by the Minister of Higher Education and Training (DST, 2024), a number of key achievements were highlighted, including that Universities are on track to meet the National Development Plan (NDP) target of 1.6 million enrolments by 2030. Additionally, measures have been implemented to expand the TVET college system with a goal of 2.5 million enrolments (South African Government, 2024).

To support the PSET system, there are plans to build two new universities – the University of Science and Innovation in Ekurhuleni and the University for Crime and Policing Studies in Hammanskraal (South African Government, 2024). The University of Science and Innovation is in the concept design phase, with construction planned to begin in 2025 (Mthupha, 2024), while the University for Crime and Policing has technical planning underway, also planning to commence construction in 2025 (Mahope, 2024).

3.3.3. Supply Challenges Experienced by Employers

Employers in the public service sector continue to face significant supply-side challenges, including persistent skills mismatches, difficulties in aligning recruitment practices with job requirements, and the need for ongoing professional development to meet evolving service delivery demands. These challenges are compounded by competition with the private sector for skilled professionals and the imperative to professionalise the public service workforce. The following table expands on the challenges experienced by employers.

Table 18: Supply Challenges Experienced by Employers and Mitigating Measures

	Challenge	Mitigating Measure
1.	A notable mismatch exists between the competencies developed through higher education and the practical skills required by public service employers, leading to inefficiencies in service delivery and workforce performance. Moreover, a Labour Market Intelligence Partnership (LMIP) report (2024) reveals that uneven access to quality education, especially in disadvantaged communities, leads to a mismatch between the skills available and the skills required in the job market.	• To address persistent skills mismatches within the public service sector, the PSETA has implemented several targeted interventions, including strategic academic partnerships, comprehensive skills planning and addressing systemic challenges. • PSETA also acknowledged challenges such as budgetary constraints, lack of coherence in skills development efforts, and insufficient workplace opportunities for learners (PSETA, 2024); (PMG, 2023).
2.	Uneven access to quality education, especially in disadvantaged communities, leads to a mismatch between the skills available and the skills required in the job market.	• To mitigate these issues, PSETA is exploring sustainable funding models and strategies to centralise and streamline training priorities and learning programmes across the sector (PSETA, 2024); (PMG, 2023).
3.	Persistent misalignment between the skills produced by the education and training system and the actual needs of the public sector workforce.	• Public Sector organisations are encouraged to place more focus on recruitment campaigns and embracing flexible work arrangements (Thusi & Chauke, 2023).
4.	Inadequate reporting of skills requirements by employers, with many organisations perceiving the submission of WSPs and ATRs as burdensome compliance exercises rather than strategic tools for workforce development. This perception leads to underreporting or inaccurate reporting of skills needs (Matha & Jahed, 2024).	• Greater focus on upskilling and reskilling local professionals to maintain competitiveness in the job market.
5.	The Public Service Sector has historically struggled to compete with private companies when it comes to attracting and retaining top talent (Thusi & Chauke, 2023), with higher salaries and better benefits in the private sector making it difficult to fill positions, especially for leadership roles and those requiring technology related skills (Thusi & Chauke, 2023).	
6.	Concerns about limited career advancement and lower pay in the Public Service Sector continue to draw younger professionals towards private opportunities.	
7.	Administrative delays in workforce planning due to the implementation of the Amended Directive on the Implementation of Control Measures in Filling Vacant Posts, which requires departments to obtain ministerial or premier approval before creating and filling certain posts, and CFO consultation with Treasury ((DPSA, 2024); (Gabara, 2024)).	
8.	The introduction of South Africa's digital nomad visa aims to attract highly skilled remote workers, especially in technology-related fields. This initiative is intended to address skills shortages and stimulate economic growth by allowing foreign professionals to live and work in South Africa while contributing to the local economy (Empower Africa, 2024). The programme may bolster sectors like technology and tourism, and provide a short-term solution to specific skills gaps (Mackenzie, 2024) (Business Advisory Group on Migration, 2024). However, it also presents new challenges, including increased competition for local talent. Employers may be inclined to favour foreign workers due to specialised expertise or potential cost advantages, necessitating a greater focus on upskilling and reskilling local professionals to maintain competitiveness in the job market (Petersen, 2024); (Hlophe, 2024).	

Collectively, these developments highlight the urgent need for a more agile and adaptive approach to workforce planning and talent development within the Public Service. This approach must go beyond addressing longstanding challenges such as skills mismatches and budgetary limitations. It should also encompass proactive strategies to respond to evolving policy directives, labour market shifts, and global trends that influence talent mobility and the overall competitiveness of the public sector workforce.

3.4. Sectoral Priority Occupations and Interventions (SPOI)

The Sectoral Priority Occupations and Interventions (SPOI) list in the table below was identified through an analysis of HTFVs submitted by employers in the 2025 Annexure 2 submission, as well as input from desktop research and stakeholders through interviews, surveys and a workshop to validate these findings. A summary of the methodology followed includes:

- An analysis of HTFVs listed by employers in Annexure 2 submitted to PSETA in 2025.
- An analysis of the HTFV transversal occupations list against the previously identified Sectoral priority occupations.
- Consideration of the strategic importance of occupations in the Sector and in accordance with national priorities.
- Consultation with stakeholders through surveys and interviews.
- Validation of the draft SSP findings relating to HTFVs and the SPOI list in a workshop with stakeholders.

The SPOI list shapes the Discretionary Grant funding that informs interventions. The SPOI list is also derived and informed by the strategic objectives of public service employers. The interventions proposed are informed by the career pathways and minimum requirements to enter and progress in these careers – which supports the professionalisation change driver identified in chapter 2. The quantity needed is based on data collected from employers and ranked by the number of vacancies. It should be noted that whilst Cloud Architect, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Specialist and Data Analyst appear higher in the HTFV list, as they do not have OFO codes they cannot be listed in the SPOI list. The SETA will engage with DHET on the need to update the OFO codes to capture such missing occupations and align the codes more closely with Sector realities.

Table 19: Sectoral Priority Occupations and Interventions (SPOI) List (PIVOTAL List) 2026/27

SETA Name	PERIOD	OFO CODE	OCCUPATION	SPECIALISATION/ ALTERNATIVE TITLE	INTERVENTION PLANNED BY PSETA	NQF LEVEL	NQF ALIGNED	QUANTITY NEEDED	QUANTITY TO BE SUPPORTED BY SETA
PSETA	2026/27	2021 – 121905	Programme or Project Manager	Project Director	Bursaries towards degrees: Advanced Project Management	6, 7 & 8	Yes	77	50
					Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards professional designation	6, 7 & 8	No		
PSETA	2026/27	2021-252901	ICT Security Specialist (Cybersecurity Specialist)	• Information Technology Security Manager • ICT Security Architect	Bursaries toward diplomas, bachelor's degrees and postgraduate diplomas in Information Technology or similar	6, 7 & 8	Yes	72	60
					Learnership	4 & 5	Yes		
					Internship	7 & 8	Yes		
					Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards professional designation	6, 7 & 8	No		
PSETA	2026/27	2021-111202	General Manager Public Service	• Chief Director, Director, Senior Manager & deputies	Skills Programmes: Management Development, Public Development Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (postgraduate); Governance and Public Leadership; Change Management, Leadership Management	8	Yes	66	50
PSETA	2026/27	2021 – 111207	Senior Government Manager	• Director General, HOD Provincial Dept, Secretary of Legislature/ Parliament & deputies	Skills Programmes or bursaries: Management (postgraduate); Management Development, Public Development Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (postgraduate); Governance and Public Leadership; Change Management, Leadership Management	5-7, 9	Yes	66	50
PSETA	2026/27	2021-242202	Policy & Strategy Analyst	• Policy Consultant / Officer / Planner • Research and Evaluation Analyst • Policy Advisor • Strategic Advisor	Bursaries toward diplomas, bachelor's degrees and postgraduate diplomas in business management, economics, research or strategy-related qualifications	6, 7 & 8	Yes	61	50
					Internship	6, 7 & 8	Yes		

SETA Name	PERIOD	OFO CODE	OCCUPATION	SPECIALISATION/ ALTERNATIVE TITLE	INTERVENTION PLANNED BY PSETA	NQF LEVEL	NQF ALIGNED	QUANTITY NEEDED	QUANTITY TO BE SUPPORTED BY SETA
PSETA	2026/27	2021-242101[20]	Business Analyst	n/a	Bursaries toward diplomas, bachelor's degrees and postgraduate diplomas in Information Technology or similar	6, 7 & 8	Yes	55	40
					Internship	6, 7 & 8	Yes		
					Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards professional designation	6, 7 & 8	No		
PSETA	2026/27	2021-251101	ICT Systems Analyst	• ICT Systems Specialist • ICT Systems Consultant	Bursaries toward diplomas, bachelor's degrees and postgraduate diplomas in Information Technology or similar	6, 7 & 8	Yes	50	40
					Learnership	4 & 5	Yes		
					Internship	6, 7 & 8	Yes		
					Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programmes towards the achievement of a professional designation	6, 7 & 8	No		
PSETA	2026/27	2021-242208[21]	Organisational Development Practitioner	Organisational Development Manager	Bursaries toward diplomas in Human Resource Management	6, 7 & 8	Yes	50	40
					Internship	6, 7 & 8	Yes		
					Professional qualifications/ certifications: short programme towards the achievement of a professional designation	4, 5	Yes		
PSETA	2026/27	2021-121101	Finance Manager	• Chief Accountant • Finance Director • Financial Controller • Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	Bursaries toward Bachelor of Commerce/ Bachelor of Accounting	7 & 8	Yes	44	30
					Professional qualifications/ certifications: Learnerships towards the achievement of a professional designation	7 & 8	Yes		
PSETA	2026/27	2021-121201	Human Resource Manager	Employee Relations Manager	Bursaries toward diplomas in Human Resource Management	6, 7 & 8	Yes	44	30
					Internship	6, 7 & 8	Yes		
					Professional qualifications/ certifications: learnership or short programme towards the achievement of a professional designation	4, 5	Yes		

Sources: Annexure 2 WSP and ATR Data (PSETA, 2025); SSP Interviews, Surveys & Validation Workshop (2025)

[20] In the OFO codes, Business Analysts are given as an alternative title or specialisation of the occupation "Management Consultant", along with other unrelated or loosely related occupations. In this case, the OFO titles do not correctly reflect the titles and functions in the Sector as Business Analysts (business-technology role) are different to Management Consultants (various advisory roles).

[21] In the OFO codes, Organisational Development Practitioner are given as an alternative title or specialisation of the occupation "Organisational Risk Manager", along with other unrelated or loosely related occupations. In this case, the OFO titles do not correctly reflect the titles and functions in the Sector as Organisational Development Practitioners (human resource role) are different to Organisational Risk Managers (risk role).

3.5. Conclusion

The PSETA has made commendable progress in developing occupational qualifications that align with the evolving needs of the Public Service Sector. These qualifications, targeting areas such as diplomacy, and programme management, support the professionalisation agenda and provide critical pathways for both entry-level and in-service skills development.

However, uptake among employed learners remains limited, pointing to a need for stronger in-service upskilling strategies, better workplace integration, and improved alignment between qualifications and actual skills demand. Persistent mismatches, constrained workplace opportunities, and limited employer engagement hamper workforce readiness.

To address these gaps, PSETA must focus on scaling implementation, improving learner throughput, and enhancing employer-driven planning through tools like the HTFV list. In an increasingly competitive and digitised labour market, a responsive and co-ordinated skills ecosystem is essential to build and retain a capable, ethical, and future-fit public service workforce.

4. Chapter 4: PSETA Partnerships

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of PSETA's partnerships, drawing insights from memoranda of understanding and consultations with the PSETA. The chapter examines the PSETA's partnership model, existing partnerships, and examples of successful and innovative partnerships. The chapter also addresses challenges experienced with partnerships and lists proposed partnerships.

4.2. Analysis of Existing SETA Partnerships

4.3.1 Partnerships Model

PSETA prioritises strategic partnerships in local communities, especially those including underserved rural communities and women and youth initiatives. PSETA collaborates with national and provincial departments, educational institutions, and other relevant organisations. This ongoing cycle of planning, implementation and review leverages local partnerships to address stakeholder needs and support government policies. This is particularly valuable when direct service delivery by PSETA is not feasible. The partnership model has been successfully applied with partners such as the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU) and National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) on women and rural youth empowerment programmes, respectively. PSETA carefully considers the need for partnerships, ensuring they align with DHET guidelines for collaborative agreements and have defined goals and timeframes. In terms of identifying partnerships, the PSETA's partnership development model facilitates proper monitoring and control of its collaborative efforts. PSETA's partnership development model is presented below.

Figure 20: Partnership Development Model

PSETA implements an eight-step partnership model to establish and nurture collaborations for Public Service Sector skills development. Steps include defining clear selection criteria (Step 1), identifying strategic areas (Step 2), evaluating partners based on fit and commitment (Step 3), engaging potential partners to align objectives (step 4), formalising agreements (Step 5), implementing with monitoring (Step 6), and regular reviews for effectiveness (Step 7). These reviews guide PSETA in terminating unproductive partnerships and forming new partnerships that are aligned with the sector's evolving needs (Step 8).

4.3.2 Existing Partnerships

PSETA leverages Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) to establish partnerships critical to achieving the Strategic Plan. The tables that follow show the partnerships PSETA has entered into with TVET colleges, HEIs, government departments and entities, legislatures, trade unions, and other SETAs[22]. The partnerships are presented in three categories: Employer and Industry Partnerships, Education and Training Delivery Partnerships and Strategic and Special Projects Partnerships.

Employer and Industry Partnerships:

PSETA recognises the importance of partnerships with its key role players, including employers and trade unions, for effective skills development. The following partnerships with employers and trade unions have been established to support this goal:

Table 20: PSETA existing partnerships with Government Departments, Public Entities, Legislatures and Trade Unions

Employer and Industry Partnerships with Government Departments, Public Entities, Legislatures and Trade Unions			
Name of Department	**Term/ Duration of Partnership**	**Strategic Objective of Partnership**	**Value Add of Partnership**
Department of Public Service and Administration	June 2025 to Mar 2030	This Strategic partnership is forged through an MoU to support collaboration in research and the sharing of PERSAL data relevant to skills planning and HRD in the Public Service, and to support better integration of data reporting templates.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector • Promote coordination and alignment on skills development priorities across the public service sector
Department of Home Affairs	June 2025 to Mar 2030	To partner in the qualification development and implementation of training interventions, learning interventions include learnerships/ CADET for unemployed individuals.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector
National Treasury	June 2025 to Mar 2030	Cooperation in areas of information sharing, capacity building and learning programme implementation.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector • Promote coordination and alignment on skills development priorities across the public service sector

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[22] In addition to the partnerships detailed, PSETA has committed to implementing the outcomes of the SETA Skills Summit (April 2024) related to the implementation of the six (6) SETA Integrated High Impact Programmes (SIHIP).

Employer and Industry Partnerships with Government Departments, Public Entities, Legislatures and Trade Unions			
Name of Department	Term/ Duration of Partnership	Strategic Objective of Partnership	Value Add of Partnership
National School of Government	June 2025 to Mar 2030	Learning interventions include internships for unemployed individuals.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector • Promote coordination and alignment on skills development priorities across the public service sector
Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	April 2025 to Mar 2030	The nature of this partnership includes cooperation in areas of information sharing, capacity building and learning programme implementation.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector • Promote coordination and alignment on skills development priorities across the public service sector
Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities	April 2025 to Mar 2030		
Department of International Relations and Cooperation	April 2025 to Mar 2030	Learning interventions include learnership/cadet for unemployed individuals	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation • Promote coordination and alignment on skills development priorities across the public service sector. In terms of workplace-based learning, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Provide for workplace training that ensures that skills have real labour market relevance, and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work • Reach those already in employment and provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain workplace experience.
Northern Cape Provincial Legislature	Mar 2023 to Mar 2030	The nature of this partnership includes cooperation in areas of information sharing, capacity building and learning programme implementation.	In terms of workplace-based learning, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Provide for workplace training that ensures that skills have real labour market relevance, and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work •Reach those already in employment and provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain workplace experience.
KwaZulu Natal Legislature	May 2024 to Mar 2030		

Employer and Industry Partnerships with Government Departments, Public Entities, Legislatures and Trade Unions			
Name of Department	Term/ Duration of Partnership	Strategic Objective of Partnership	Value Add of Partnership
KwaZulu Natal Office of the Premier	April 2025 to Mar 2030	The nature of this partnership includes cooperation in areas of information sharing, capacity building and learning programme implementation.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector • Promote coordination and alignment on skills development priorities across the public service sector
Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency	June 2025 to Mar 2030	Partnered in delivering special projects targeted at youth, people living with disabilities and rural development	In terms of workplace-based learning, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Provide workplace training that ensures that skills have real labour market relevance and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work • Reach those already in employment and provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain workplace experience. Promote growth and youth employment and drive positive change from a societal benefits perspective.
National Youth Development Agency (SETA High Impact Programme)	May 2025 to Mar 2030		
South African Revenue Services	Sept 2024 to Mar 2030	The nature of this partnership includes cooperation in areas of information sharing, capacity building and learning programme implementation.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector • Promote coordination and alignment on skills development priorities across the public service sector
The Workers College	June 2025 to Mar 2030	Learning interventions include skills programme for employed individuals	In terms of workplace-based learning, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Provide workplace training that ensures that skills have real labour market relevance and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work • Reach those already in employment and provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain workplace experience.
General Public Service Sector Bargaining Council (GPSSBC)	Feb 2025 to Mar 2030	To deliver training for employees related to worker-initiated training, labour relations-related training and research.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of these partnerships is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation In terms of worker-initiated training through organised labour, the value-add of this partnership is to:
Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC)	Mar 2025 to Mar 2030		

Employer and Industry Partnerships with Government Departments, Public Entities, Legislatures and Trade Unions			
Name of Department	Term/ Duration of Partnership	Strategic Objective of Partnership	Value Add of Partnership
			• Reach those already in employment to complete relevant training relevant to the workplace.
Public Servants Association (PSA)	June 2025 to Mar 2030	To deliver training for employees related to worker-initiated and labour relations-related training.	In terms of worker-initiated training through organised labour, the value-add of this partnership is to reach those already in employment to complete relevant training relevant to the workplace.
The South African Association of Public Administration (SAAPAM)	June 2025 to Mar 2030	The nature of this partnership includes cooperation in areas of information sharing, capacity building and learning programme implementation. Internship/ Master's students are placed in various organisations to conduct research under the mentorship of SAAPAM academics	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector • Support and facilitate the public service sector's engagement in the local and international research space. In terms of research, these partnerships: • Support and facilitate the public service sector's engagement in the local and international research space • Understand the dynamics of best practice in the public service sector in relation to international trends and developments through credible and empirical research.
Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE)	May 2023 to March 2030	Training in fraud and investigation-related skills.	In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills development strategy, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Promote growth and drive change from a societal benefits perspective through training in fraud and investigation-related skills. • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector.
Institute of Risk Management of South Africa (IRMSA)	Jan 2025 to Mar 2030	The nature of this partnership is to collaborate with the professional bodies and to provide short programmes and webinars/seminars in these specialist areas	
South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA)	Jan 2025 to Mar 2030		
South African Institute of Government Auditors (SAIGA)	Mar 2025 to Mar 2030		

Education and Training Delivery Partnerships:

Educational institutions and training providers are also important in equipping the public service workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge. Partnerships with public universities, public TVET colleges and private HEIs and colleges ensure a diverse pool of talent and expertise. PSETA collaborates with these institutions to offer bursaries, internships, as well as work-integrated learning programmes, therefore ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills required by the public service sector. The following partnerships highlight PSETA's commitment to collaborating with these institutions to deliver effective education and training programmes:

Table 21: PSETA Education and Training Delivery Partnerships with TVET colleges

Education and Training Delivery Partnerships with TVET Colleges				
The PSETA plays the intermediary role of linking the world of work and education by assisting TVET colleges to connect with Public Service employers through the implementation of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programmes. The WIL programmes equip learners with experiential learning to obtain the requisite workplace experience to equip them for the labour market. The duration of Partnerships with TVET Colleges in respect of learners in Work Integrated Learning Programmes in the Public Service Sector is 18 months. The table below outlines PSETA's strategic partnerships with TVET colleges.				
Name of TVET College	**Term/ duration of Partnership**	**Nature of Partnership**	**Strategic Objective of Partnership**	**Value Add of TVET Partnerships**
• King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College • Gert Sibande TVET College	Sep 2024 to Mar 2030	To close the gap of TVET learners completing N6 certificate programmes and lack the 18 months' work experience needed to attain the qualification.	To collaborate and partner in building state capabilities for both employed and unemployed persons, geared towards assisting the PSETA to meet its Service Level Agreement obligations. The partnership with the TVET colleges model is two-pronged, focusing on the following: To encourage work-integrated learning for TVET College learners and to improve the employability of TVET graduates through work experience.	In terms of workplace-based learning, these partnerships: • Provide workplace training that ensures that skills have real labour market relevance and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work. • Provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain workplace experience.
• Letaba TVET College • Lovedale TVET College	Mar 2025 to Mar 2030			
• Goldfields TVET College • Maluti TVET College • Flavius Mareka TVET College • Motheo TVET College • Vuselela TVET College	May 2025 to March 2030 Aug 2025 to March 2030			
• Capricorn TVET College • Lephalale TVET College • Vhembe TVET College • Waterberg TVET College	May 2024 to March 2030			

Further to the above, the table below outlines PSETA's existing Education and Training Delivery Partnerships with HEIs.

Table 22: PSETA Existing Educational Partnerships with HEIs

Education and Training Delivery Partnerships with HEIs			
Name of HEI	**Term/ Duration of Partnership**	**Strategic Objective of Partnership**	**Value Add of HEI Partnerships**
Mangosuthu University of Technology	Mar 2025 to Mar 2030	Work-integrated learning for UOT students	In terms of research, these partnerships: • Support and facilitate the public service sector's engagement in the local and international research space • Understand the dynamics of best practice in the public service sector in relation to international trends and developments through credible and empirical research. In terms of workplace-based learning, these partnerships: • Provide workplace training that ensures that skills have real labour market relevance and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work • Reach those already in employment and provide opportunities for new entrants to
Tshwane University of Technology	Mar 2025 to Mar 2030	Work-integrated learning for UOT students	
Cape Peninsula University of Technology	Mar 2025 to Mar 2030	Work-integrated learning for UOT students	
Central University of Technology	Apr 2025 to Mar 2030	Work-integrated learning for UOT students	
University of Mpumalanga	Aug 2023 to March 2025	Collaborate on various projects, including Internships, Bursaries and Research	
North West University	March 2025 to March 2030		
Stellenbosch University	Mar 2025 to March 2030		
University of Pretoria	Mar 2025 to March 2030		
Walter Sisulu University	June 2024 to 31 Mar 2030		
University of Venda	May 2024 to 31 Mar 2030		
University of Johannesburg	June 2024 to 31 Mar 2030		

Education and Training Delivery Partnerships with HEIs			
Name of HEI	Term/ Duration of Partnership	Strategic Objective of Partnership	Value Add of HEI Partnerships
Sol Plaatje University	May 2025 to 31 Mar 2030		the labour market to gain workplace experience.
University of the Free State	Aug 2025 to 31 Mar 2030		

Strategic and Special Projects Partnerships

PSETA has also established key partnerships with other SETAs to align its initiatives with national priorities and enhance the skills of public servants. The table below outlines the strategic partnerships PSETA has established to support these goals.

Table 23: PSETA existing partnerships with SETAs

Strategic and Special Projects Partnerships with SETAs			
Inter-SETA partnerships aim to coordinate SETA expenditure and efforts, to improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of skills development efforts. To this end, the PSETA partners with many SETAs in the organised Inter-SETA Forums and various provinces where such structures are operational. A few current or emerging one-on-one SETA partnerships are described below to illustrate this principle of collaboration.			
SETA	Term/ Duration of Partnership	Strategic Objective of Partnership	Value Add of Partnership
LGSETA HWSETA	Ongoing until the end of the NSDP period 2030	Collaboration and sharing of data for skills planning purposes.	The value-add of these partnerships with other SETAs is to:
ETDP SETA	Ongoing until the end of the NSDP period 2030	Fully funded internship programmes for unemployed youth and learners for exposure to Public Service careers. Awarding of bursaries to PSETA staff for full and part qualifications.	• Explore areas for joint research collaboration. • Identify opportunities to collaborate on qualifications development.

SETA High Impact Programmes of a strategic or special projects nature include those with **Microsoft SA** and Afrika Tikkun. These allow PSETA to leverage industry expertise and resources to enhance the skills and knowledge of public servants. These partnerships facilitate the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and innovative solutions, ultimately contributing to a more efficient and effective Public Service.

Other **SETA High Impact Programmes** include partnerships with organisations such as the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development, which enable PSETA to implement targeted programmes that address specific societal needs. This and other successful partnerships are described below.

4.3.3 Successful and Innovative Partnerships

PSETA monitors its partnerships to identify challenges and successes. Two recent partnerships worth highlighting are the Women's Development Programme and the Rural Youth Development Programme.

PSETA, in partnership with the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), implemented a women's empowerment programme for POPCRU officials through a bursary programme. The beneficiaries of the programme are female employees at POPCRU, including provincial office bearers and gender coordinators. This training will consist of a twelve-month Higher Certificate in Economic Development and an Advanced Diploma in Public Administration at the University of Western Cape.

During the 2022/23 financial year, PSETA partnered with NYDA and the KZN Department of Social Development for a New Venture Creation learnership for 50 unemployed youth living with disabilities. This SETA High Impact Programme was implemented in the Ndumo area in KZN under the Umkhanyakude District Municipality, and learners completed the programme

in the fourth quarter of the 2023/24 financial year. In addition to the Learnership, learners enrolled on this programme received end-user computing training from accredited training providers as well as job preparedness, life skills and business management training from the NYDA. Through its partnership with IBM, the NYDA was also able to offer digital skills training to the learners. The programme achieved a 100% completion rate, and some learners established businesses following the completion of the programme.

In addition, partnerships with Offices of Premiers (OTPs) through skills development providers have yielded successful skills programmes, recognition of prior learning (RPL) and learnerships.

4.3.4 Challenges Experienced with Partnerships

Partnerships, while advantageous, sometimes encounter challenges. General challenges observed include a lack of commitment, missed deadlines, and compliance-related matters. The latter includes not submitting implementation plans within 14 days and missing documentation for learner registration. In addition, training providers have struggled with limited administrative and management capacity, which has hindered effective tracking of learner funding. These human resource challenges extend to a lack of project management and report writing skills. Of concern, there have been reports that some learners are then used by training providers to cover the capacity gaps when they were not contracted for those purposes. PSETA addresses these challenges through active engagements with partners, timely notifications of non-compliance, and enforcing memoranda.

It was also noted that finding meaningful work placements for learners can be difficult, and some of the workplace placements provide limited work exposure.

Challenges noted with specific partnerships relate to the capacity to monitor implementation, as well as a lack of soft skills to complement the technical portion of interventions. In rural areas in particular, monitoring was a challenge as partners did not have enough staff to effectively monitor learners. PSETA identified these challenges in its monthly and quarterly monitoring and engaged partners to provide more resources to focus on life skills training and allow for sufficient monitoring. The lessons learnt were that there must be thorough planning before implementation, and roles and expectations must be articulated and understood early in the project implementation plan.

4.3.   Proposed Partnerships

To expand interventions to more beneficiaries (especially previously disadvantaged individuals), there is a need for new partnerships and PSETA is considering these with HEIs to offer bursaries for identified skills gaps and occupational shortages. Furthermore, in support of strategic priority actions 1 and 2 around strategic partnerships and research, PSETA is looking to intensify knowledge sharing and coordinate with other entities. The table below outlines potential partners PSETA is currently engaging with to form new partnerships.

Table 24: Proposed Partnerships

Proposed Employer and Industry Partnerships			
These emerging partnerships are a result of ongoing engagements between the PSETA and stakeholders with whom there is mutual interest. Concerted efforts to enter new partnerships remain a standing item on PSETA's Partnerships agenda.			
Name of Potential Partner	Phase of Partnership	Nature of Partnership	Value Add of Partnership
Gauteng Office of the Premier	Planning		In terms of partnerships being central to PSETA's skills

Proposed Employer and Industry Partnerships			
These emerging partnerships are a result of ongoing engagements between the PSETA and stakeholders with whom there is mutual interest. Concerted efforts to enter new partnerships remain a standing item on PSETA's Partnerships agenda.			
Name of Potential Partner	**Phase of Partnership**	**Nature of Partnership**	**Value Add of Partnership**
North West Office of the Premier	Planning	Collaborate on various projects aimed at provincial skills development	development strategy, the value-add of these partnerships could: • Lead to innovation, efficiency, and a sense of collective achievement in the public service sector. • Contribute to policy and institutional transformation of the public service sector.
National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU)	Engagement Phase	To partner in worker-initiated training through organised labour.	In terms of worker-initiated training through organised labour, the value-add of this partnership is to: • Provide workplace training that ensures that skills have real labour market relevance and that young people gain an early appreciation of and exposure to the world of work • Reach those already in employment and provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain workplace experience.
Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU)	Engagement Phase	To partner in worker-initiated training through organised labour.	
Proposed Education and Training Delivery Partnerships with HEIs			
University of Zululand	Finalisation Phase	Collaborate on various projects including Internships and Bursaries	In terms of the research value-add this partnership it could: • Support and facilitate the public service sector's engagement in the local and international research space • Understand the dynamics of best practice in the public service sector in relation to international trends and developments through credible and empirical research.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter underscores the strategic partnerships' role in PSETA's Public Service skills development. Challenges, including limited capacity and non-compliance, call for capacity building, proactive coordination, and rigorous agreement enforcement. Despite challenges, partnerships expand the PSETA's reach, ultimately increasing access to skills interventions. PSETA's proactive approach to partnerships highlights PSETA's commitment to a collaborative, highly skilled Public Service workforce.

5. Chapter 5: SETA Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) at the PSETA. M&E is intended to track progress and assess the results of skills development and research initiatives. It evaluates programme results (outputs, outcomes, impacts), value for money, relevance, effectiveness, and overall sustainability. The chapter compares PSETA's plans to its achievements to determine if PSETA's strategic goals are being met. Continuous evaluation ensures that PSETA remains accountable and on track to achieve its stated objectives, which are aligned with priorities set in previous plans. The information in this chapter was sourced through the various M&E frameworks and plans, as well as workshops with the core business units within PSETA involved in the M&E process.

5.2. Reflections from the Past Five-Year Cycle

This section reflects on the M&E function of PSETA. It details how the M&E function has strengthened over the past five years, including the establishment of a central M&E unit and the development of various frameworks and tools. It also identifies areas that need prioritisation in the next five years, such as capacity building, filling vacancies, collaboration, data collection and analysis, as well as the communication of M&E findings.

PSETA has significantly enhanced its M&E function over the past five years. Initially, M&E was decentralised, but by 2022/23, a central M&E unit was established, and various frameworks and tools were developed to strengthen the function. In 2023/24, PSETA further refined its M&E approach, emphasising a cyclical process and developing additional tools like a digital business intelligence dashboard. To further enhance its M&E function in the next five years, the following areas have been identified for prioritisation:

- Upskilling staff in strategic planning, M&E methodologies, and data collection and analysis.
- Fostering collaboration between different units within PSETA to utilise M&E data effectively.
- Enhancing capabilities to generate robust evidence for evaluating interventions.
- Effectively communicating findings to stakeholders for transparency and accountability.

5.3. Sector Skills Planning Reflections

5.3.1 Approach to M&E

The PSETA has developed an M&E framework from strategic documents that include the Strategic Plan (SP), Sector Skills Plan (SSP), and Annual Performance Plan (APP), as well as guiding policies such as the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP). The M&E framework's guiding principle is that "what we plan, we must measure" and with that in mind, PSETA's M&E approach revolves around measuring the strategic objectives against pre-defined targets in the APP, with achievements reported quarterly and annually. Furthermore, the benefits or changes brought about by the implementation of programmes and projects (activities that PSETA conducts to produce outputs) are measured in terms of the systemic outcomes and impacts that interventions produce. The diagram below demonstrates that monitoring is an ongoing process, evaluation happens during or after a programme and the

findings of monitoring and evaluation inform future planning and programmes, which are in turn monitored.

Figure 21: PSETA's Accountability Process and Performance Information

MONITORING

Ongoing monitoring of programmes and projects through reports (desktop review) and site visits (fieldwork).

EVALUATIONS

PSETA periodically conducts evaluations of its programmes and projects (including impact on learners and employers).

A desktop evaluation involves reviewing performance data and research, with fieldwork providing further detail on the performance of programmes.

PLANNING

Monitoring data analysed and put into report to inform SETA planning (Annual Report, Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan and SSP)

Evaluation reports are analysed to improve the performance of the PSETA.

M&E data informs the creation of new programmes/ projects and updating existing ones.

Monitoring provides data on programme performance so that progress can be assessed against planned targets (DPME, 2007). Evaluation, on the other hand, is a periodic exercise focused on specific questions and designed to deliver credible and valuable information for decision-making. In line with international best practice (OECD, 2024), evaluations measure effects according to criteria that include relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of programmes or initiatives. Recently, the criteria of coherence, which measures the extent to which programmes complement each other, was added to the international guidelines (OECD, 2024). Impact assessments are a subcategory of evaluations that consider the impacts or long-term benefits of programmes – which are often developmental, i.e., social, environmental, and economic long-term effects (OECD, 2024). Tracking and tracer studies are another subcategory of evaluations that trace the socio-economic activity of beneficiaries post-intervention. It is envisaged that impact assessments may lead to longitudinal impact assessments where the same cohort of learners is tracked over a longer period at set intervals (e.g., 3 years, 5 years, 10 years).

The M&E process provides lessons learnt on what worked well and what could have been improved, allowing for future programmes to be improved (DPME, 2007). PSETA intends to map the recommendations emanating from impact assessments and other research that have been concluded to explore areas for possible further investigation and improve its delivery. M&E activities conducted included the analysis of Annexure 2 data submitted to PSETA and supporting stakeholders to complete the WSPs and engaging them post submission to address areas of concern. PSETA developed a monitoring tool framework which provides guidelines on how to monitor and evaluate the implementation of programmes and measure their impact. This includes the context, a framework to conduct such studies and questionnaires. Using these frameworks and tools, PSETA has since been able to conduct tracking and tracer studies internally, in line with the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with DHET. The findings and recommendations of tracking and tracer studies have directed PSETA on the inclusion of more youth, female, and rural learners in interventions.

Each business unit at PSETA has tools with varying approaches to M&E due to their different mandates. PSETA's Skills Planning and Research unit conducts research studies, including evaluations to assess interventions. Research areas include evaluations of outcomes, impact assessments and tracking and tracer studies at project and programme levels. The Learning Programmes and Projects units monitor and report on learning programme implementation through Quarterly Monitoring Reports (QMR)[23] and projects (including learning programmes quarterly reports). This monitoring focuses on learner well-being, implementation progress and compliance with SLAs. This monitoring identifies challenges as they occur during implementation. The Quality Assurance unit is responsible for monitoring and reporting on teaching and learning on the National Learner Records Database (NLRD)[24], assessing learning outcomes and implementing the recommendations emanating from research and evaluations conducted by the Skills Planning and Research Unit. The Risk and Compliance unit assists in planning and target setting that is in line with risk best practices, as well as monitors risks and advises on corrective actions to business units through the implementation of the risk management plan. M&E in PSETA informs planning and target setting, monitors organisation and programme implementation, coordinates M&E activities across units and implements the M&E Framework within the organisation. The figure below illustrates the different M&E functions at PSETA.

Figure 22: PSETA's M&E Approach

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[23] Sent to DHET every quarter, Quarterly Monitoring Reports account for the SETA's performance by indicating the number of learners who enter and complete programmes against the targets set (DHET, 2014).

[24] The NLRD is a management information system where learners who complete qualifications are recorded with the Qualifications Authority, SAQA (SAQA, 2023).

5.3.2 Strategic Skills Priorities

The PSETA's four strategic focus priorities are identified in Chapter 6. These priorities have informed and have been incorporated into PSETA's Strategic and Annual Performance Plans. These strategic priorities respond to the outcomes of the NSDP and the Medium-Term Development Plan, and are as follows:

a. Priority 1: Establish strategic partnerships with key stakeholders.
b. Priority 2: Increased research and impact assessment of programmes.
c. Priority 3: Strengthen the capacity of public institutions and provision of occupational qualifications.
d. Priority 4: Implement workplace-based learning programmes in building the workplace into a training space. (PSETA, 2023).

The table below presents the extent of implementation of previous strategic priorities. The plan of action to address areas of improvement is given in Chapter 5.4.

Table 25: Extent of Implementation of Previous Strategic Priority Actions

Programme	Strategic Priority Action	Achievements	Reasons for underperformance/ non-achievement
PSETA achieves its strategic priorities in the areas of partnerships, research, qualifications development and workplace-based learning.			
Programme 2: Skills Planning and Research:	• Priority 1: Increased research and impact assessment of programmes	• PSETA has a five-year Research Agenda updated on an annual basis and approved by its Accounting Authority. Research projects are identified on an annual basis in line with the agenda. • PSETA has established various research partnerships with public HEIs to conduct research and implement its research agenda. This includes the recent establishment of a Research Observatory. • All research outputs have provided credible, up-to-date insights that inform skills development for the sector. • The partnerships with HEIs have produced impact assessment tools which have subsequently informed planning and implementation. • Annually, impact assessment and tracer studies are conducted by PSETA. • Research dissemination initiatives such as podcasts, posters, webinars and an annual research colloquium have been implemented.	There are no areas for underperformance/non-achievement
Programme 3: Learning Programmes and Projects:	• Priority 1: Establish strategic partnerships with key stakeholders. • Priority 4: Implement workplace-based learning programmes in building the workplace into a training space.	• PSETA adopts a "delivery through partnerships" approach and actively collaborates with various role players. • PSETA reviewed all existing partnerships which ended in March 2025 and has renewed various relevant partnerships until 2030 (and outlined in chapter 4). • In addition, partnerships with professional bodies and associations that operate within the public service sector have been established. • The primary programmes funded through the PSETA's discretionary grant funding for unemployed beneficiaries are workplace-based learning programmes such as internships, learnerships and WIL. • The programmes for the employed include skills programmes, RPL and learnerships. • Specific skills programmes responding to the skills gaps identified in the SSP were developed and submitted to the QCTO for registration. • PSETA partnered with the Bargaining Councils and labour unions to train public service officials on various programmes. • In response to targeted transformation imperatives, PSETA has specific learnership projects that target youth, people living with disabilities and are aimed at rural development, which are delivered with strategic partners such as SEDFA, NYDA and provincial OTPs • Occupational qualifications were funded and implemented in KZN, GP and NW provinces for the first time	There are no areas for underperformance/non-achievement

Programme	Strategic Priority Action	Achievements	Reasons for underperformance/ non-achievement
Programme 4: Quality Assurance	• Priority 3: Strengthen the capacity of public institutions and provision of occupational qualifications.	• There has been significant progress in the review and development of occupational qualifications. • A total of 15 occupational qualifications, skills programmes and learnerships have been developed to date to address the sector needs. • PSETA continued to work with HEIs to develop learning material for occupational qualifications to standardise the quality of training on occupational qualifications. PSETA has initiated a project to develop an RPL mechanism for the occupational qualification within its scope. • PSETA continued its support to TVET Colleges, state academies, sector academies and skills development providers (SDPs). • Accredited skills development providers were monitored on an annual basis. • Comprehensive SDP capacity-building workshops, specifically focusing on accreditation requirements, implementation strategies and assessment standards for occupational qualifications, were conducted.	There are no areas for underperformance/non-achievement

5.3.3 Use of M&E Data

M&E data is used in research and planning to assess:

- Achievement against planned targets (e.g., QMR, QPR, APP)
- Alignment between interventions implemented by PSETA and identified Sectoral Priority Occupations (i.e., SPOI list of occupations) from the previous SSP.
- The extent to which SETA learning programmes have addressed the identified skills development priorities.
- Progress in addressing transformational imperatives in the Sector.
- Realisation of strategic goals and objectives.
- Lagging performance and gather lessons learned, challenges, mitigation measures, and make recommendations for improvement.
- Provide data for policy development and qualification development.
- Provide data for the planning and implementation of future projects.
- Provide reports used to assess the outcomes and impact of NSDP and SETA strategic objectives.

5.3.4 Implementation of Interventions and Measures in Support of National Strategies and Plans

The SETA responds to several plans, as outlined in Chapter 2.4 (Policy Frameworks Affecting Skills Demand and Supply). PSETA's response to three such policies namely: The Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP), the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) and the Economic Reconstruction and Development Plan (ERRP) is discussed below.

1. **Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP)**
- PSETA has aligned its strategic outcomes to the three priorities of the MTDP.
- In support of the priority on Inclusive Growth and Job Creation, PSETA will continue to implement workplace-based learning programmes such as internships, learnerships and WIL, and support small business development programmes targeted at youth and unemployed individuals.

- PSETA responds to the priority of Poverty Reduction by ensuring that there are targeted rural development and skills training programmes aligned with economic demand to enhance employability and reduce poverty. These programmes target unemployed youth and ensure that programmes for the unemployed include stipends and cover the training costs.
- The third priority of the MTDP of a Capable, Ethical, and Developmental State is aligned with the primary sectoral focus. PSETA ensures that there are targeted occupational qualifications and immediate training interventions in digital skills, financial management and governance to strengthen public service capability. Additionally, the SETA has expanded its collaboration with professional bodies to support the professionalisation agenda of the state.

2. **National Skills Development Plan (NSDP)**

- PSETA responds to the NDP's eight outcomes in its Strategic Priority Actions and partnerships with key role players. For instance, through research, occupations in high demand are identified (NSDP outcome 1) and occupationally directed learning programmes (NSDP outcome 4) that link education and the workplace, such as learnerships, internships and WIL (NSDP outcome 2), are developed and implemented to meet the demand.
- Through its various partnerships to support TVET colleges, labour unions and entrepreneurship (see Chapter 4), the SETA responds to NSDP outcomes 5, 6 and 7. The success of some of these programmes is highlighted in the Strategic Skills Priorities section above.

3. **Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP)**

- The ERRP Skills Strategy[25] speaks to skills development interventions and is the reference document for SETAs.
- PSETA, as the responsible SETA for the Public Service Sector, has a critical role to play in creating a capable state and to that effect, PSETA has worked to develop programmes and projects that capacitate the sector's employees.
- PSETA has committed to funding training programmes that offer work-based experiences for youth and support small businesses. This includes digital skills training for Public Sector employees, addressing a gap identified in the ERRP Skills Strategy.
- PSETA also enhances the post-school education system by partnering with TVET colleges to align with economic and occupational requirements.
- The SETA has also committed to enabling the provision of targeted skills programmes through increasing enrolments in qualification-based programmes that respond to occupational shortages identified in the strategy (including bursaries in Public Management, Advanced Project Management, Investigative and Forensic Accounting, Internal Audit, ICT and Economics), and the review and re-alignment of qualifications and curricula.
- An example of an initiative that is aligned with the ERRP Skills Strategy's focus on short skills programmes to address skills gaps is PSETA's collaboration with the Bargaining Councils to train on Labour Dispute Prevention.

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[25] There are 10 interventions in the ERRP Skills Strategy, including six for education and training delivery and four for enabling education-to-work transitions.

5.4. Plan of Action

PSETA values continuous progress in terms of its strategic skills priorities. As outlined in section 5.3.2, these priorities are integrated into PSETA's Strategic and Annual Performance Plans. Progress is ongoing, with PSETA increasing capacity through the skilling of its employees in planning, monitoring and evaluation and risk management. Additionally, the filling of vacancies and incorporation of a collaborative approach to produce planning documents as a mitigating control has been implemented.

PSETA is actively exploring additional M&E mechanisms to support its M&E function. To that effect, PSETA has established a centrally located M&E unit. In addition to this, as briefly mentioned in the section above, various frameworks were developed to strengthen the M&E process. These include the M&E framework, Monitoring Tool Framework, tracking and tracing reference framework, ERRP implementation plan and the research study recommendations implementation plan being developed. To ensure continuous improvements, the tools and templates used in daily operations are reviewed and updated. A digital business intelligence dashboard is also being developed to monitor programmes and projects more easily.

Measures to improve the implementation of planning documents and skills planning centre around the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The SETA has developed this plan to improve the planning and implementation and align the SSP, Strategic Plan (SP), Annual Performance Plan (APP) and Annual Operational Plan (AOP). In addition, the SETA implements feedback from the Auditor General and DHET regarding planning documents. These plans are monitored, and progress is reported against on a quarterly basis.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter explored PSETA's M&E approach, which is a cyclical approach of planning, implementation, continuous monitoring, and periodic evaluation. The chapter outlined M&E initiatives in the SETA and interventions to support the ERRP. M&E was identified by the Sector as a skills gap in Chapter 3, as the SETA also acknowledges its developing M&E abilities. Furthermore, the M&E data has revealed areas of success and for improvement, assist PSETA in creating relevant interventions to address skills gaps, occupational demands, and policy directives. By upholding principles of honesty and integrity, accountability, service excellence, fairness, and transparency through the M&E process, the PSETA ensures that its skills development initiatives are carried out with utmost diligence and effectiveness, thereby driving organisational learning and enhancing overall performance.

6. Chapter 6: Strategic Skills Priority Actions

6.1. Introduction

This chapter starts with a summary of the preceding chapters of this SSP and their key skills findings. The chapter then looks at the planned strategic priority actions, which are coupled with proposed interventions by PSETA. Furthermore, the chapter presents the measures in place to support the national strategies and plans identified in Chapter 2. Chapter 6 is informed by the rest of the SSP, which in turn is informed by desktop research and fieldwork to identify areas of strategic focus.

6.2. Key Skills Findings from Previous Chapters

Chapter 1: Sector Profile

The Public Service Sector is characterised by a large, ageing workforce, with provincial departments employing the majority of workers. Key skills challenges include an overconcentration of employees aged 35–55, underrepresentation of people living with disabilities, and gender disparities in senior positions. This demographic profile signals an urgent need to attract younger professionals, improve workplace inclusivity, and build gender equity in leadership. Additionally, the growing cost of the public-sector wage bill and hiring restrictions impact workforce planning, emphasising the need for cost-effective upskilling, succession planning, and transversal skills in administration, policy, and management. PSETA's role is therefore to focus skills development on high-leverage areas that strengthen public service delivery under fiscal constraints.

Chapter 2: Key Skills Change Drivers

Five major drivers – professionalisation, PPPs, digitisation, e-government, and environmental sustainability – necessitate significant reorientation in skills planning. There is a growing demand for strategic leadership, digital skills (e.g. AI, cybersecurity, digital records management), and environmental policy capability. On the supply side, interventions must support new occupational pathways, reskilling for green jobs, and continuous learning aligned with evolving public service roles. The implications also include embedding ethics training, enhancing interpersonal and cognitive capabilities (e.g. decision-making, negotiation), and improving ICT governance across departments. Overall, PSETA must lead in developing a digitally resilient, ethically grounded, and environmentally responsive public workforce.

Chapter 3: Skills Demand and Supply

The Sector experiences significant occupational shortages and skills gaps, particularly in roles such as Project Managers, ICT professionals and various managers. Many vacancies persist due to a lack of experience (often 5 years or more) and specialist skills. Emerging occupations (e.g. AI Specialists, Data Analysts, ESG Managers) reflect a shift towards a technology- and sustainability-oriented public service. Persistent supply-side issues – low throughput at TVETs, mismatches between qualifications and job demands, and poor employer reporting – undermine the skills pipeline. PSETA must therefore strengthen partnerships with higher education institutions, align occupational qualifications to real sectoral needs, and scale workplace-based learning to improve labour market responsiveness.

Chapter 4: PSETA Partnerships

Partnerships play a critical role in scaling impactful skills development. PSETA's collaborations with public entities, unions, and TVETs are key to expanding access to occupational qualifications, especially in digital and green sectors. Interventions target youth, rural learners, and people living with disabilities, reflecting inclusive skills development priorities. Support for Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) and public employers underscores a dual objective: building internal Public Service Sector capability while enabling broader economic participation. These interventions highlight a need for strategic and cross-sectoral capacity-building, especially through learnerships, internships, and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in critical occupations.

**Chapter 5: Monitoring and Evaluation**

PSETA's evolving M&E capacity directly influences its ability to track the effectiveness of skills interventions and align them with sectoral needs. Improved M&E frameworks, tracer studies, and digital tools allow for better identification of high-impact programmes and gaps. However, the Sector itself also lacks adequate M&E skills, underscoring a demand for capacity-building in evaluation methods, data analytics, and performance reporting. M&E is thus both a skills gap and a solution driver. Strengthening these capabilities across departments can support evidence-based planning, more efficient allocation of training resources, and greater accountability in public service skills development.

6.3. Planned Strategic Priority Actions

In determining the strategic priority actions, forces such as the key skills change drivers and imperatives such as Sector skills needs transformation, SMME development and transformation were mapped to the desired outcomes. Inclusive of this is the SETA Integrated High Impact Programmes (SIHIP), these Programmes are recognised in many Actions identified in the figure below, for example, "implement skills development initiatives to support small businesses and cooperatives, and to "establish partnerships to further the adoption of digital technologies and 4IR technologies such as AI in the Public Service."

The figure below depicts the process of identifying the Strategic Priority Actions.

Figure 23: Strategic Priority Actions
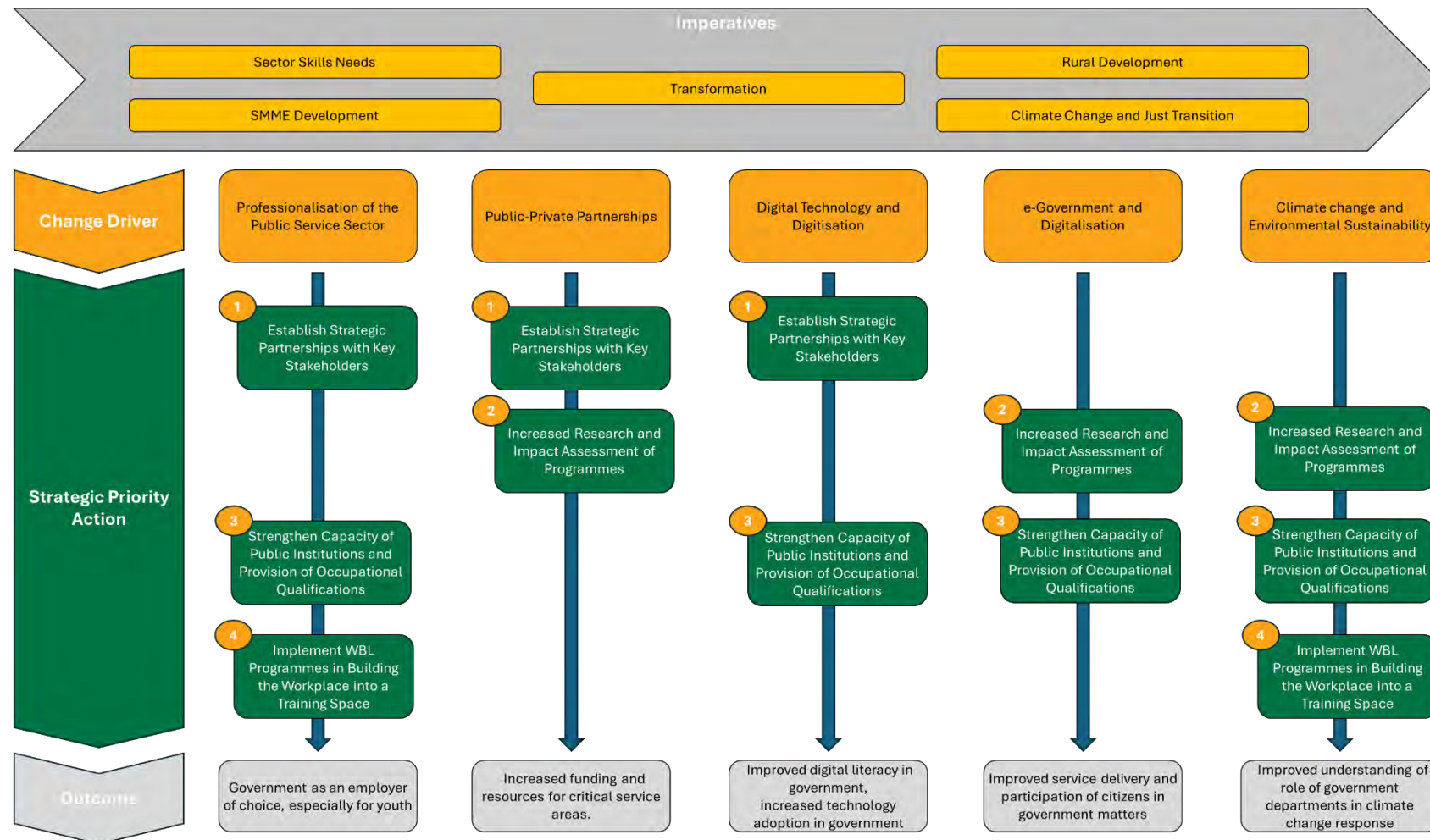
Four key strategic priorities have thus been identified. The core strategic priorities have remained relatively consistent across planning periods. In this regard, the NDP 2030 is noted, and the long-term vision remains a guiding force behind the priorities. Furthermore, there is still work to be done within the identified strategic priorities. These priorities will be implemented through programmes and projects, as follows:

Strategic Priority 1: Establish Strategic Partnerships with Key Stakeholders

Professionalism of the Public Service Sector: Foster partnerships with educational institutions and professional bodies to establish career paths through designing of occupationally directed programmes and realigning historical qualifications to occupations along defined career paths.

Public-Private Partnerships: Establish partnerships and integrate training programmes within partnership agreements to enhance the skills of public servants.

Digital technology & digitisation: Establish partnerships to further the adoption of digital technologies and 4IR technologies such as AI in the Public Service.

Establish partnerships to enhance the delivery of initiatives to strengthen key competencies required by the state as identified in the HTFVs and skills gaps.

Establish partnerships to enhance the number of learners who meet transformational imperatives to receive training development opportunities, particularly for critical skills and higher-level occupations.

Establish partnerships to support small businesses with training interventions.

Strategic Priority 2: Increased Research and Impact Assessment of Programmes

Professionalism of the Public Service Sector: conduct a study on the strategic role of HR departments in skills development and human resource development (HRD) systems and their implementation.

Public-Private Partnerships: Assess the long-term impacts of new or amended legislation and policies (i.e., the PPP regulatory framework) with a focus on the impact on skills planning in the Sector.

e-Government and Digitalisation: Conduct a study on the adoption of AI and other advanced technologies in the Sector and the ethical considerations.

Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability: Include environmental policy development, implementation, and evaluation as a focus in Sector skills planning.

Conduct longitudinal studies on the impact of learning programmes on learners.

Update the M&E Framework in line with Monitoring Tool Framework and Tracking and Tracing Reference Framework.

Strategic Priority 3: Strengthen Capacity of Public Institutions and Provision of Occupational Qualifications

Professionalisation of the Public Service: Maintain the focus on improving the professional standards and competencies within the Public Service.

Professionalisation of the Public Service: provide training on attracting and retaining talent, as well as succession planning.

Digital technology & digitisation: Allocate resources to support the use of technology for teaching and learning.

Develop training programmes that prioritise areas such as people management, decision-making, negotiation, and cognitive flexibility to complement automation-resistant skills.

e-Government and Digitalisation: Equip PSET institutions to provide qualifications that meet the needs of critical areas in the Public Sector (i.e., project management, digital literacy, IT infrastructure, policy development, human resources and cybersecurity).

Conduct training workshops with stakeholders on responding to legislation and policy changes, 4IR and technology and legislation and climate change (just transition) from a skills perspective.

Strategic Priority 4: Implement Workplace-Based Learning Programmes in Building the Workplace into a Training Space

Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability: Develop programmes that have an element of environmentally conscious decision making.

Professionalisation of the Public Service: fund more youth to ensure steady supply of new entrants in Public Sector.

Develop more programmes for manager roles, with content for self-development, development of teams, and championing and managing changes brought on by 4IR and the just transition.

Continue workplace-based learning programmes such as learnerships, skills programmes, internships and work integrated learning.

Implement skills development initiatives to support small businesses and cooperatives.

6.4. Measures to Support National Strategies and Plans

PSETA's strategic skills development initiatives are closely aligned with key national strategies and plans. The Authority recognises its role in enabling a capable, ethical, and future-fit Public Service. Below are the core actions it will take in support of each national plan:

National Skills Development Plan (NSDP 2030)

- **Develop and implement occupational qualifications** aligned with NSDP outcomes, including in areas such as programme management, internal auditing, and diplomacy.
- **Expand access to work-based learning** for both employed and unemployed learners through partnerships with HEIs and TVETs.
- **Promote worker-initiated learning** through partnerships with trade unions and bargaining councils.
- **Strengthen research and skills forecasting** to better inform future planning and resource allocation.

Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP 2024–2029)

- Fund learning programmes that support the **Just Transition and job creation**, including internships and WIL placements for youth in rural areas.
- **Roll out Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** across provinces to support internal progression.
- **Deliver short, credit-bearing skills programmes** in leadership, digital skills, and public service ethics to support institutional performance.
- Strengthen partnerships with provincial departments to deliver on **localised skills needs.**

Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP)

- **Prioritise workplace-based learning** and **youth-focused interventions**, especially in digital and infrastructure-related roles.
- **Support TVET readiness** through curriculum alignment and qualification development in emerging roles such as AI, cybersecurity and ESG.

Framework Towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service

- **Establish clearly defined occupational pathways** from NQF Levels 5-8.
- **Implement graduate entry schemes** and revise requirements for entry-level roles in line with DPSA directives.
- Embed public service **values, ethics, and professionalism** in all training programmes.
- Support HR planning with national roll-out of the **PSETA Skills Audit Toolbox** and masterclasses.

Other Strategic Frameworks and Legislation

PSETA's interventions also align with the Human Resources Development Strategy (HRDSA), Digital and Future Skills Strategy, District Development Model (DDM), NQF Amendment Act, Skills Audit Framework, and Just Transition Framework. Across these, key actions include supporting digital transformation through foundational and advanced ICT training, embedding climate and ESG skills in curriculum offerings, promoting data-informed workforce planning, and strengthening intergovernmental collaboration and localisation of service delivery through tailored leadership and co-ordination training.

6.5. Conclusion

This chapter identified four strategic priority actions for consideration by PSETA. The actions can be summarised as a response to the change drivers, imperatives and skills needs identified in this SSP through partnerships, training in key areas, provision of occupational qualifications and conducting research and impact assessments to foster continuous learning and improvement by PSETA. The interventions proposed seek to address past challenges, whilst preparing learners for the government workplace of the future.

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