

STATISTICS ON PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs) - 2017

RELEASED MARCH 2019

AN OVERVIEW

1. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary on enrolments, graduation, staffing and funding as presented in the DHET report with specific reference to public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Although excluded in the summary, the Department of Higher Education and Training also provided statistics for the three other PSET institutions, namely: private HEIs; Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges; and public and private Community Education and Training (CET) colleges.

2. Introduction

The Higher Education (HE) Sector is intended to perform the following three functions as outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP):

- Educate and equip people with high-level skills to meet the employment needs of the public and private sectors;
- Produce new knowledge and assess and find new applications for existing knowledge; and
- Provide opportunities for social mobility while strengthening equity, social justice and democracy to deal with the injustices brought about by the apartheid system.

It is worth noting that the Department uses the racial disparities such as “African”, “Coloured”, “White”, and “Indian/Asian” for planning, monitoring and funding purposes. To also measure the effects of present policy and practice on redressing past inequities in South Africa.

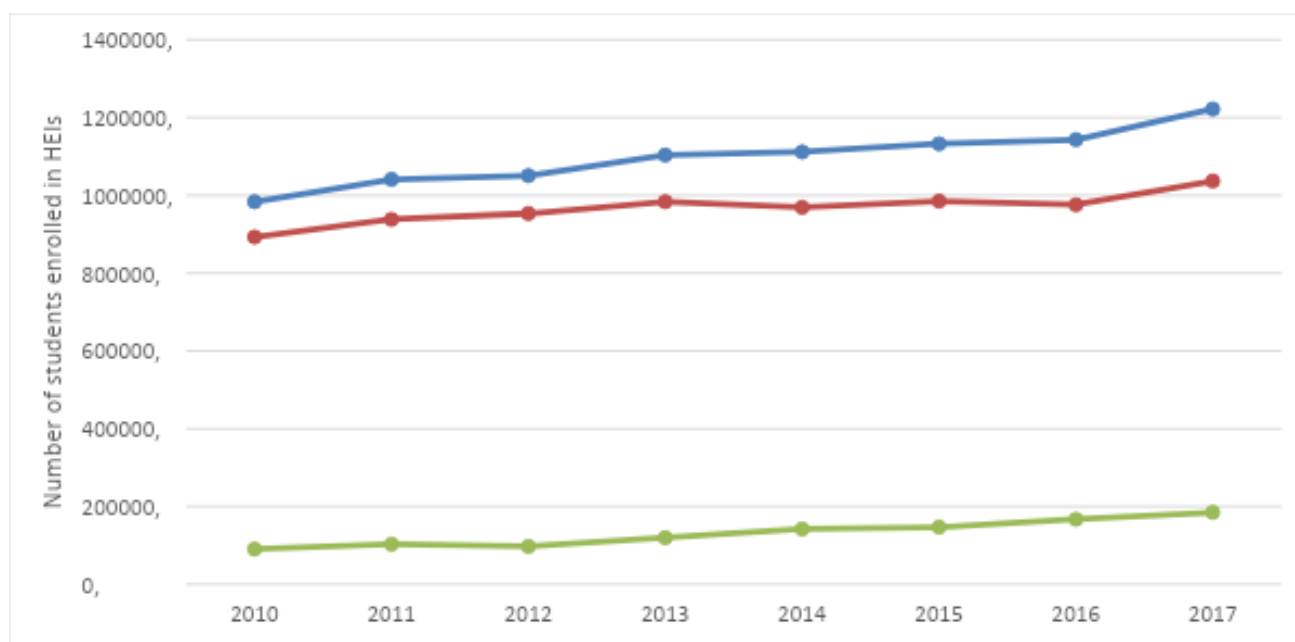
The public higher education sector consists of 26 universities, differentiated into eleven general academic universities; nine comprehensive universities and six universities of technology. The statistics reflected in the tables and figures below were provided to the Department by public HEIs. The figures can be considered to be fairly reliable since external

auditors appointed by the HEIs audited the data prior to it being submitted to the Department.

3. Enrolment in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

The total number of student enrolment in public and private HEIs in 2017 was 1 222 030, which represents a 6.9% (78 785) increase compared with 2016 enrolment (1 143 245). This was mainly due to enrolment increases in both public HEIs (61 147) and private HEIs (17 638). Out of 1 222 030 students enrolled in HEIs in 2017, more than three quarters of them enrolled in public HEIs (84.9% or 1 036 984), while fewer students enrolled in private HEIs (15.1% or 185 046).

Figure 1: Number of students enrolled in public and private HEIs, 2010 – 2017



Source:

Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2016.

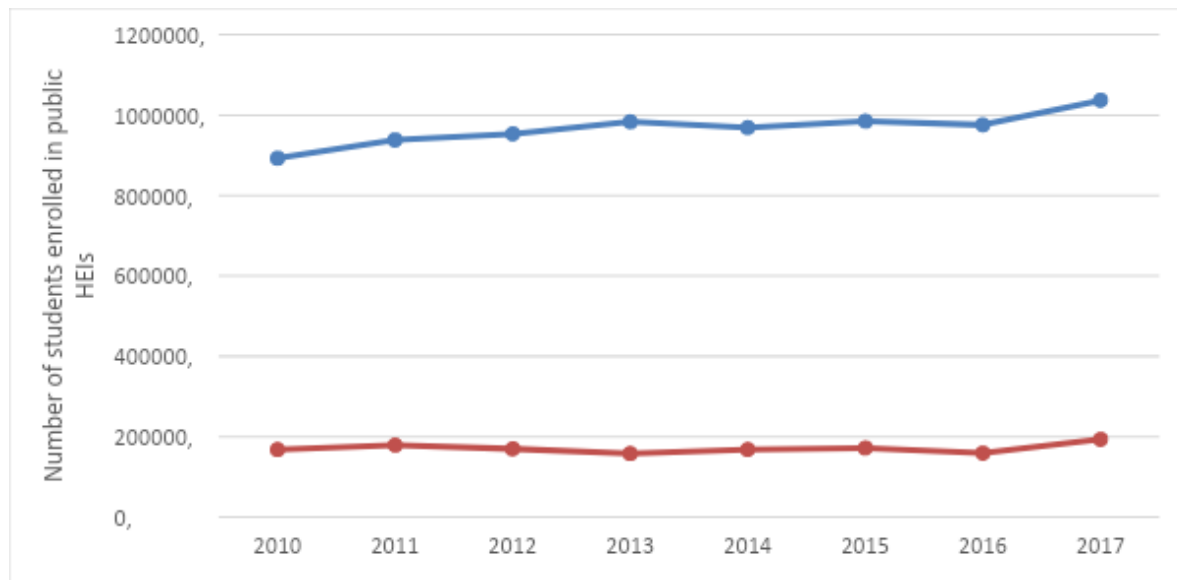
2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

Annual reports submitted by private HEIs to the DHET for the 2017 year of reporting.

- An increasing trend can be observed for access to HEIs for the period under review, with a growth of 24.2% or 238 327 students recorded;
- When comparing student enrolment between 2010 and 2017, large increases were reported for public HEIs (144 048) while private HEIs doubled their student enrolment and increased by 103.9% or 94 279;
- There were 1.2 million students enrolled at public and private HEIs in 2017;

- With majority of enrolments in public HEIs (1 036 984) while private HEIs enrolled 185 046 students;
- The target in the National Development Plan (NDP) is 1.6 million enrolments by 2030.

Figure 2: Number of first-time undergraduate students enrolled in public HEIs, 2010 – 2017

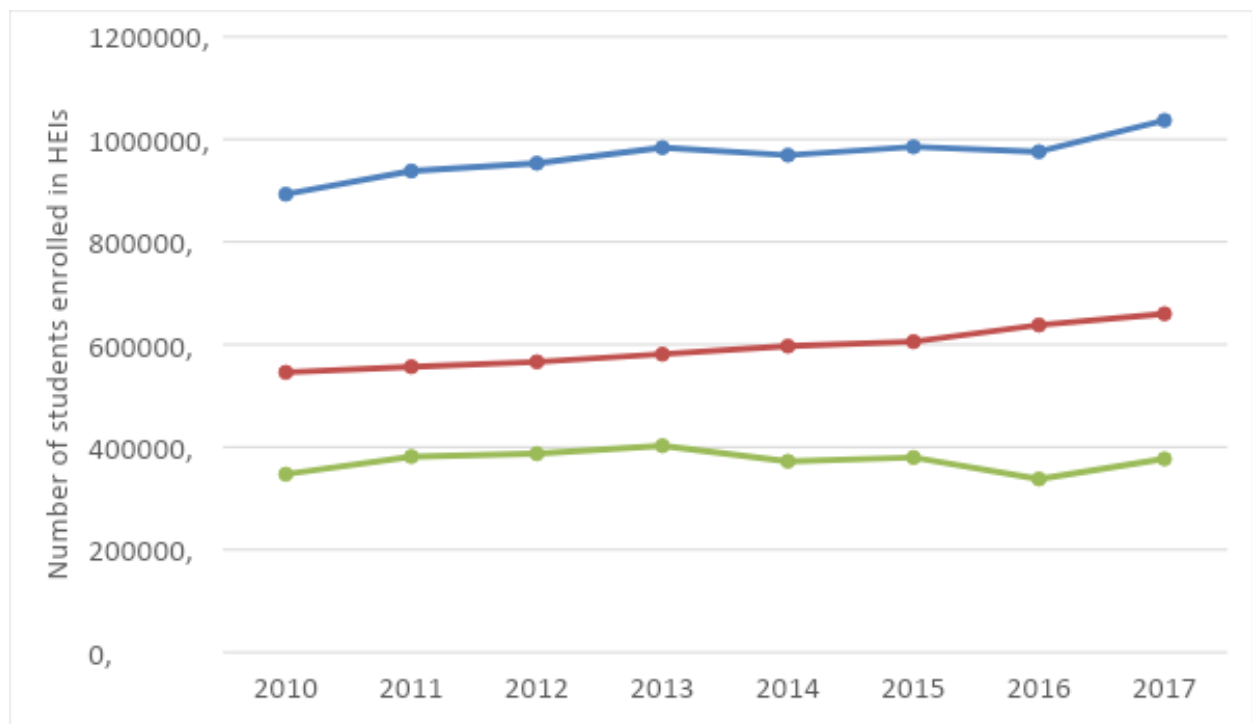


Sources:

Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2016.
2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- The total number of first-time entering students in public HEIs in 2017 was 193 282, which was 18.6% of total enrolment;
- This represented a 21.6% (34 391) increase compared with the number of first-time entering students in 2016 (158 891), with the major contributor being UNISA (35 270 increase);
- It is worth noting that UNISA enrolled most of the first-time entering students in 2017 (28.2% or 54 434).
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Figure 3: Number of students enrolled in public HEIs by attendance mode, 2010 – 2017



Source:

Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2016.
2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- In 2017, total enrolment in public HEIs reached 1 036 984;
- Majority of enrolments in public HEIs were through contact mode (659 970 or 63.6%), while 377 014 or 36.4% enrolled through distance mode of learning;
- A decreasing trend in the number of students enrolled through distance mode can be observed between 2014 and 2016;
- While an increasing trend for students enrolled through contact mode of learning has been recorded throughout the period under review.

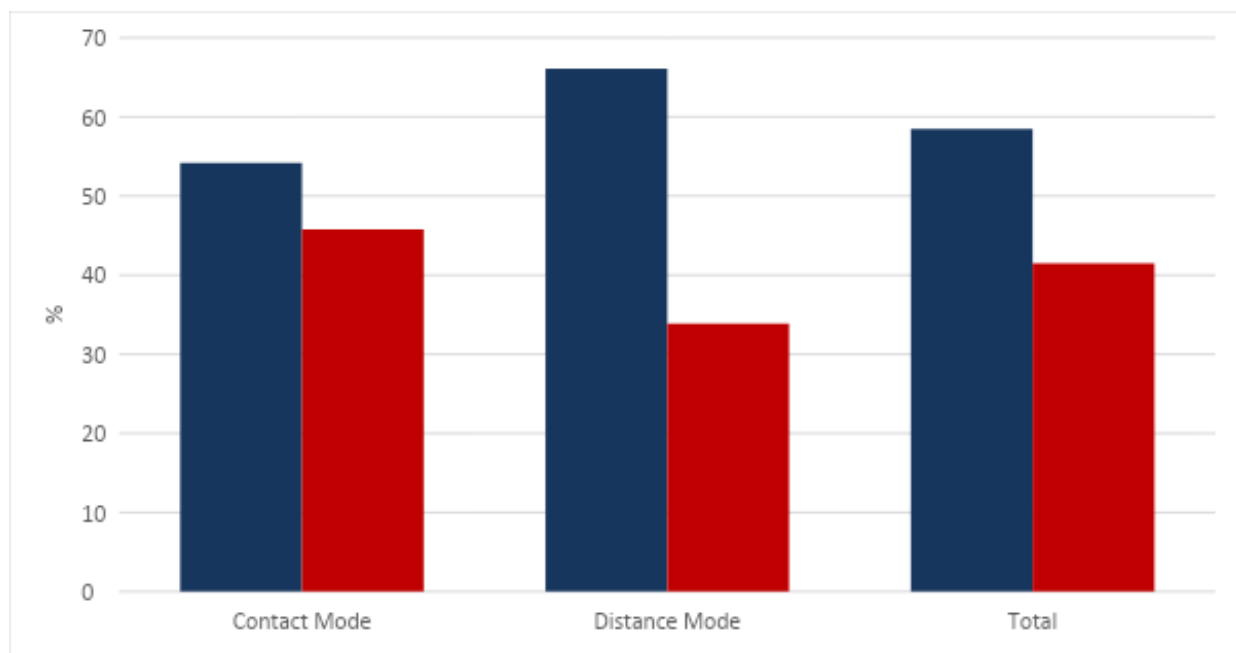
Table 1 : Number of students enrolled in public HEIs, by attendance mode, population group and gender, 2017

Population group	Contact			Distance			Total			
	Female	Male	No information	Female	Male	No information	Female	Male	No information	Total
African	258 989	221 179	12	187 957	95 629	1	446 946	316 808	13	763 767
Coloured	26 085	17 297	2	14 654	6 734	0	40 739	24 031	2	64 772
Indian/Asian	16 006	13 503	0	14 012	6 610	0	30 018	20 113	0	50 131
White	52 509	46 607	2	31 665	18 019	0	84 174	64 626	2	148 802
No information	4 036	3 739	4	985	748	0	5 021	4 487	4	9 512
Total	357 625	302 325	20	249 273	127 740	1	606 898	430	21	1 036 984

Source: 2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- Almost three quarters of the students enrolled in public HEIs in 2017 were Africans (73.7% or 763 767), followed by White students (14.3% or 148 802), Coloured students (6.2% or 64 772) and Indian/Asian students (4.8% or 50 131);
- The largest gender difference was within the African population group, where 130 138 more female students enrolled compared to males, while the Indian/Asian population group recorded the lowest gender difference (9 905 more males compared to females).

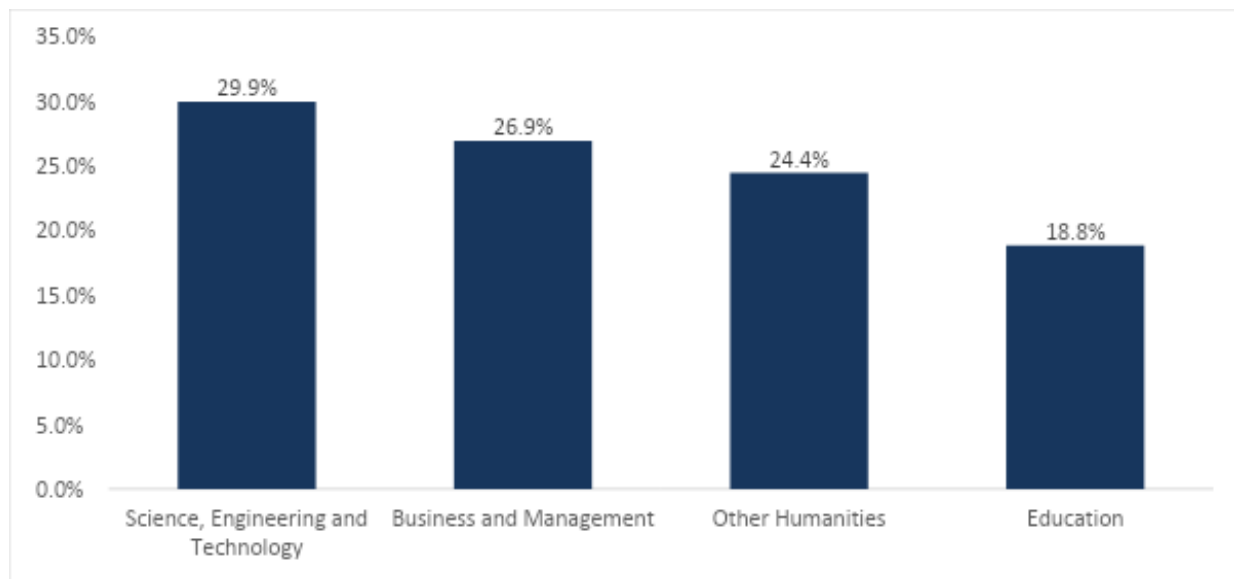
Figure 4: Proportion of student enrolment in public HEIs, by attendance mode and gender, 2017



Source: 2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- In 2017, the highest proportion of students enrolled in public HEIs were females (58.5%), while 41.5% were males;
- Both contact and distance mode of learning in public HEIs were dominated by female students (54.2% and 66.1% respectively);
- The largest gender disparity was recorded for distance mode of learning, where two thirds of students were females (66.1%) compared to just over a third of males (33.9%).

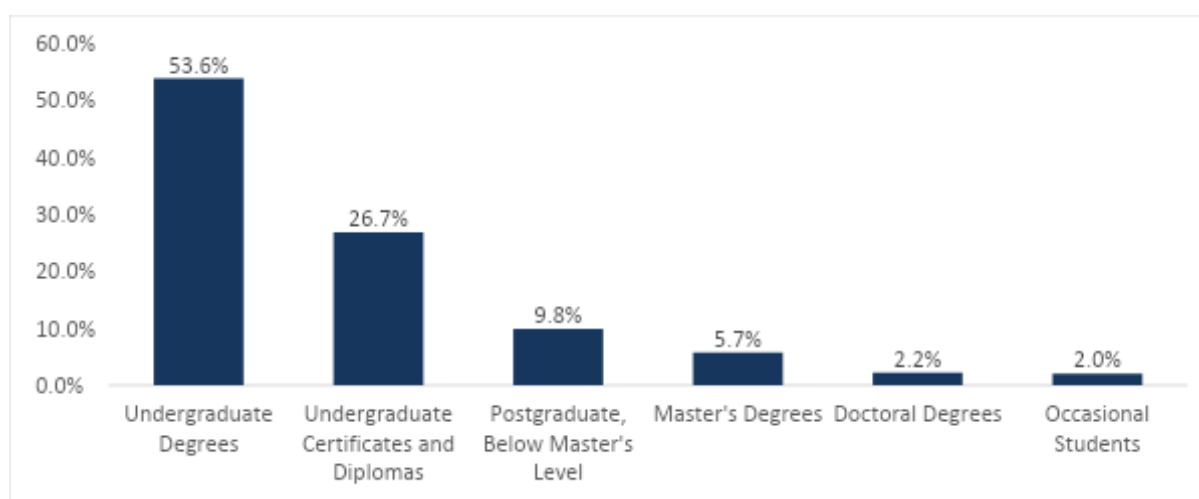
Figure 5: Proportion of students enrolled in public HEIs by major field of study, 2017



Source: 2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- The SET field of study accounted for 29.9% of total enrolment in public HEIs in 2017, followed closely by Business and Management (26.9%), other Humanities (24.4%) and Education (18.8%) fields of study;
- UNISA enrolled the majority of students in the SET field of study in 2017, followed by University of Pretoria and Tshwane University of Technology (38 837; 25 661 and 24 631 respectively).

Figure 6: Proportion of students enrolled in public HEIs by qualification type, 2017



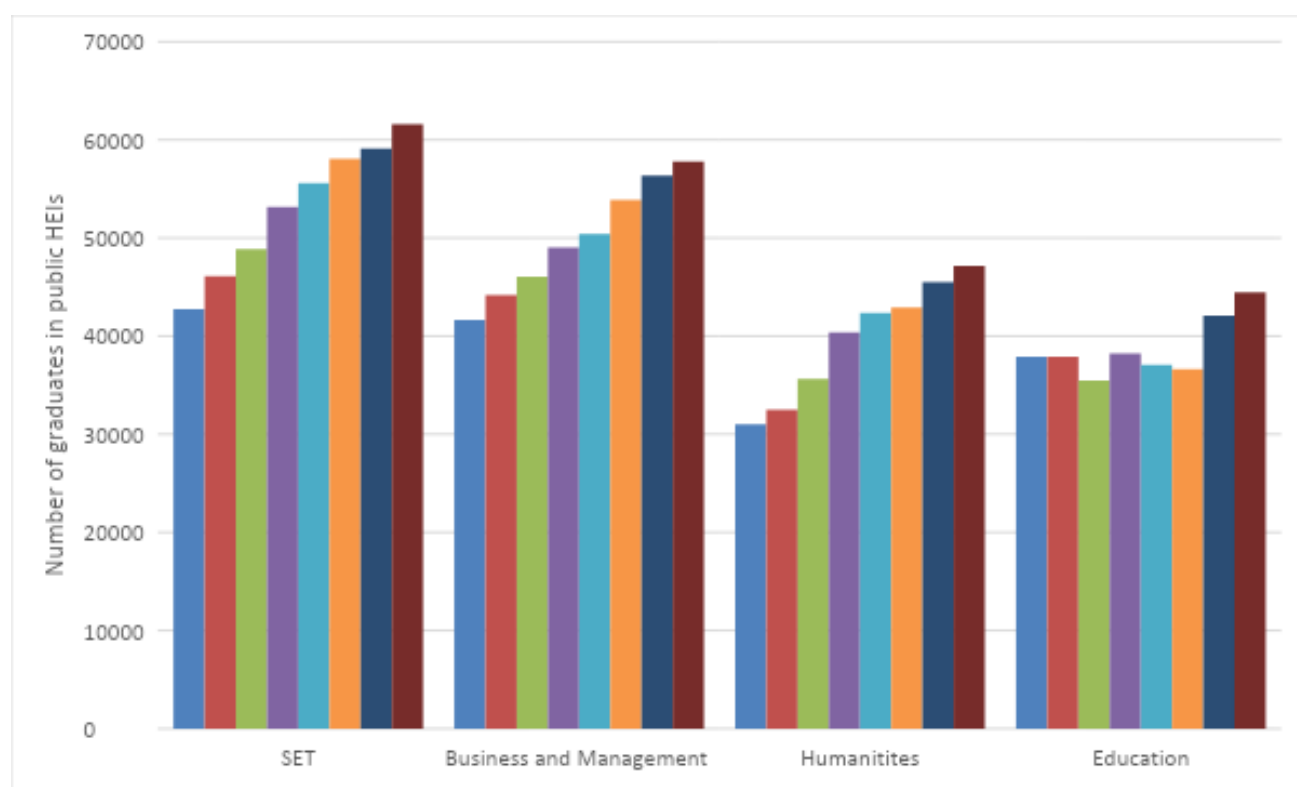
Source: 2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- More than half of the students in public HEIs in 2017 enrolled for undergraduate degrees (53.6% or 555 892) and over a quarter enrolled for undergraduate certificates and diplomas (26.7% or 276 459) while fewer students enrolled as occasional students (2.1% or 21 458);
- The institution that enrolled most of the undergraduate degree students was UNISA (187 380), followed by the University of Pretoria (34 359) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (34 254);
- UNISA also enrolled the highest of students for undergraduate certificates and diplomas (85 031), postgraduate below Master's level (48 387) and occasional students (15 659). The University of Witwatersrand enrolled most of the Master's degree students (7 392) while the University of KwaZulu-Natal enrolled most of the Doctoral degree students (3 164).

4. Graduates from public Higher Education Institution (HEIs)

An increasing trend in the number of graduates in public HEIs can be observed over the period 2010 to 2017, with a growth of 45.1% or 65 457 recorded. All major field of studies recorded an increase in the number of graduates during the period under review, of which Business and Management recorded the highest increase (70.8% or 23 955), followed by SET (48.3% or 20 070), other Humanities (36.6% or 12 620) and Education (25.1% or 8 902).

Figure 7: Number of graduates from public HEIs by major field of study, 2010 – 2017



Sources:

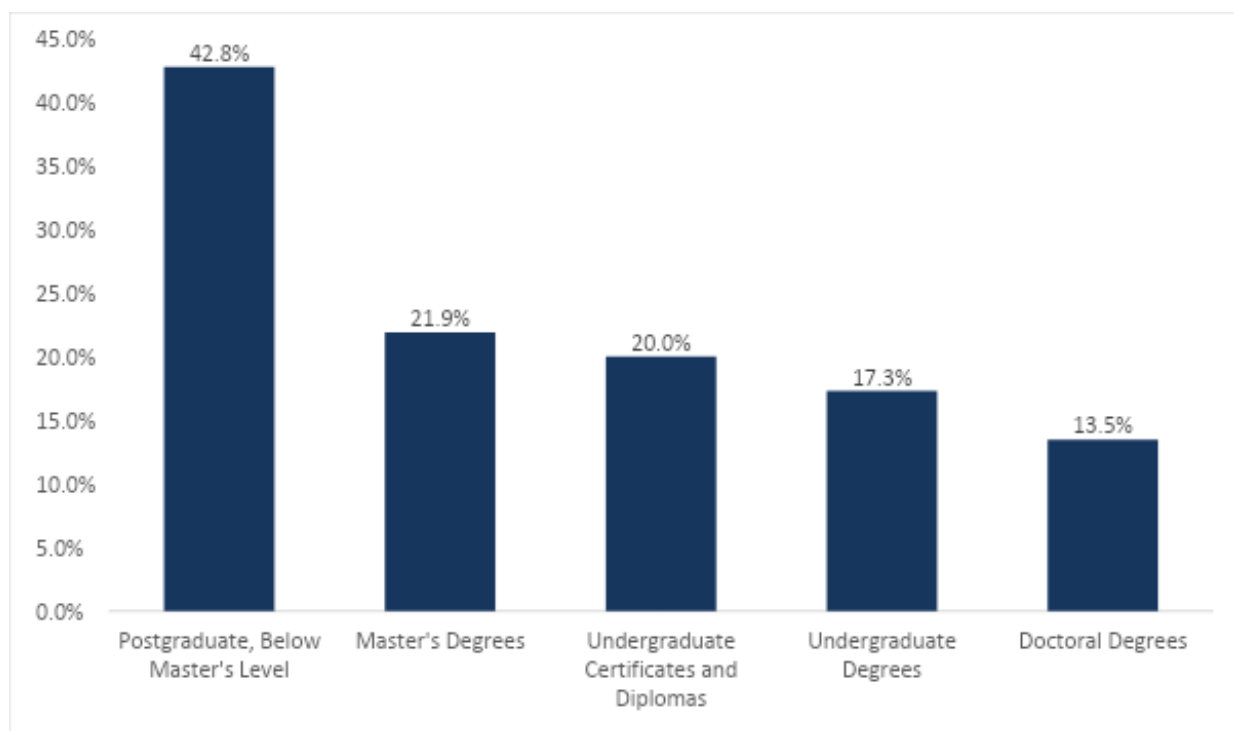
Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2016.

2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- In 2017, the total number of graduates in public HEIs was 210 931, which reflects the highest number of graduates recorded for the period under review;
- The highest number of graduates were recorded in SET in 2017 (61 581 or 29.2%), followed by Business and Management (57 772 or 27.4%), other Humanities (47 144 or 22.4%), while Education recorded the lowest number of graduates (44 434 or 21.1%) in 2017;

- There was an increase of 7 855 or 3.9% graduates in 2017 when compared with 2016, of which the highest increase was recorded for SET (2 456), followed by Education (2 327), other Humanities (1 664) and Business and Management (1 408) fields of study;
- It is worth noting that in 2017, the University of Pretoria recorded the highest number of graduates in the SET field of study (5 388), followed closely by Tshwane University of Technology (5 274). UNISA recorded the highest number of graduates in the Education (18 813), Business and Management (11 470) and other Humanities (10 940) fields of study.

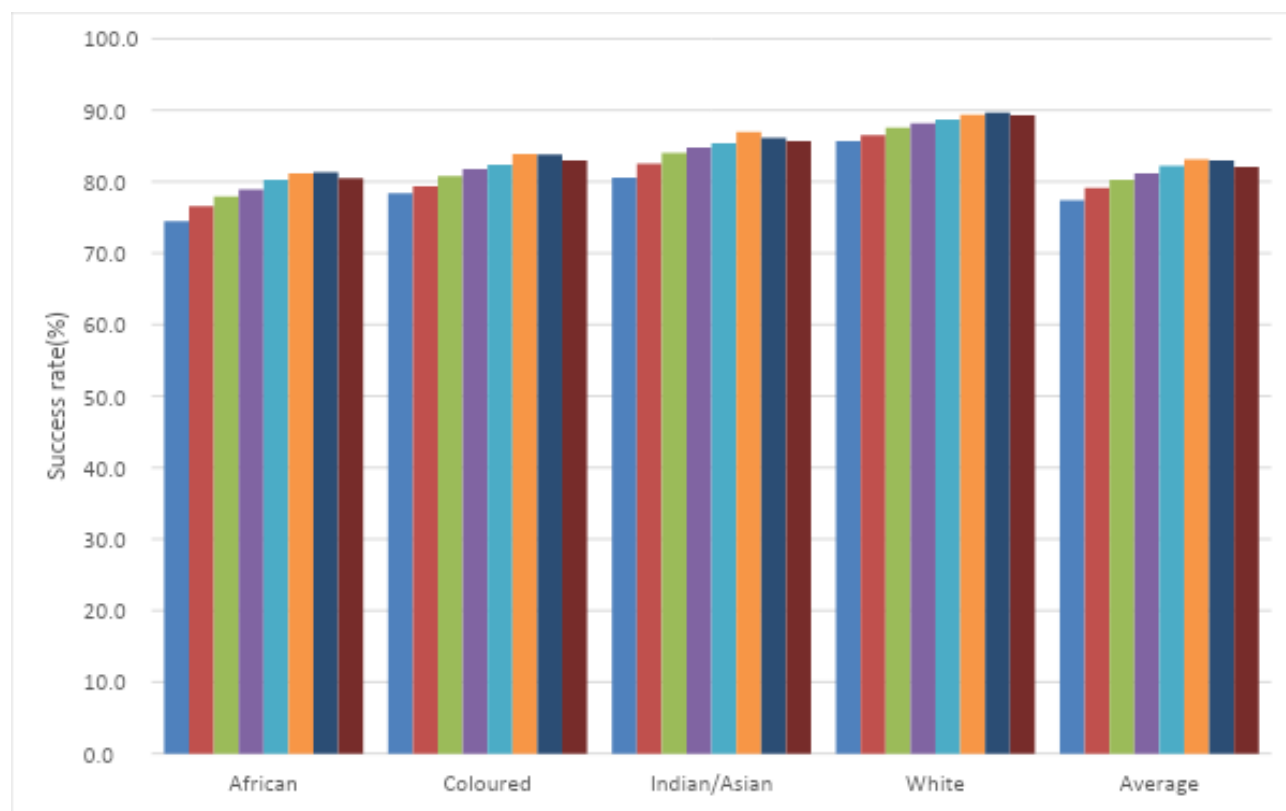
Figure 8: Average graduation rates in public HEIs by qualification type, 2017



Source: 2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- In 2017, the highest graduation rate was recorded for postgraduate below Master's level (42.8%) while the graduation rate for Doctoral degrees was the lowest (13.5%).

Figure 9: Percentage distribution of average undergraduate success rates in public HEIs for contact education programmes by population group, 2010 – 2017



Source: 2016 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018

- The average success rate for students enrolled through the contact mode of learning was 82.1% in 2017, with the White, Indian/Asian and Coloured students recording higher than average success rates (89.3%; 85.7% and 83.0% respectively) while African students recorded the lowest success rate (80.5%);
- There was a decrease of 0.8 of a percentage point in students' success rate between 2016 and 2017, of which Coloured and African students recorded the highest decrease (0.8 and 0.7 of a percentage point respectively) while Indian/Asian and White students recorded the same decrease (0.3 of a percentage point).

5. Staffing in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Just over half of the permanent staff were administrative staff (50.9% or 31 193), and more than one quarter were instruction and research staff (32.1% or 19 631) and fewer were employed as services staff (17.0% or 10 418). The only category where more male staff were employed compared to females was the instruction and research staff category. The largest gender difference was recorded for administrative staff, where 5 801 more females were employed in this category compared to males.

Table 2: Number of permanent staff in public HEIs, by population group, gender and personnel categories, 2017

Population group	Instruction and research			Administrative			Services			Total		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
African	3 058	4 453	7 511	8 813	7 645	16 458	4 717	4 568	9 285	16 588	16 666	33 254
Coloured	712	635	1 347	3 193	1 874	5 067	500	473	973	4 405	2 982	7 387
Indian/Asian	863	756	1 619	1 117	710	1 827	11	47	58	1 991	1 513	3 504
White	4 596	4 149	8 745	5 334	2 425	7 759	46	48	94	9 976	6 622	16 598
No information	93	316	409	40	42	82	6	2	8	139	360	499
Total	9 322	10 309	19 631	18 497	12 696	31 193	5 280	5 138	10 418	33 099	28 143	61 242

Source: 2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

- The total number of permanent staff employed in public HEIs in 2017 was 61 242, of which more than half of them were Africans (54.3% or 33 254), followed by White staff (27.1% or 16 598);
- The lowest proportion of permanent staff members were Coloured (12.1% or 7 387) and Indian/Asian (5.7% or 3 504);
- The proportion of female staff was the highest (54.0% or 33 099) as compared to male staff (46.0% or 28 143), and the largest gender difference was recorded for the White staff members, where 3 354 more female staff members were employed as compared to males;
- About 99% of services staff in public HEIs were black staff (i.e. African, Indian/Asian and Coloured) and only 53% of them were instruction and research staff.

6. NSFAS beneficiaries and amounts provided in public HEIs

NSFAS is responsible for the allocation of student financial aid funds to the 26 public universities. In 2017, a total of 260 002 students received NSFAS loans/bursaries in public HEIs which is an increase from 225 650 students in 2016. The number of NSFAS beneficiaries are expected to increase after the announcement of a “fully subsidised free higher education and training for poor and working-class South Africans” on 16 December 2017.

Table 3: Number of students who received loans/bursaries from the NSFAS and the amount provided in public HEIs, 2011 – 2017

Year	Public HEIs	
	Number of students	Amounts provided (in Rands)
2011	217 219	R 4 848 960 105
2012	194 932	R 5 888 373 557
2013	195 387	R 6 748 152 217
2014	186 160	R 6 970 982 424
2015	178 961	R 71 194 618 509
2016	225 650	R 10 304 756 649
2017	260 002	R 12 106 307 436

Sources:

Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2016.

→ In 2017, NSFAS allocated (R12.1 billion) to public HEIs, the amount provided to HEIs students increased by 17.5% (R1.8 billion) between 2016 and 2017.

7. Funza Lushaka bursary scheme

The total amount provided for Funza Lushaka bursaries was R1.1 billion in 2017. This was 146.5% (R648.9 million) higher compared with 2011, and 7.8% (R79.2 million) higher as compared with 2016. The number of students who were allocated with Funza Lushaka bursaries was 14 899 in 2017, reflecting a 67.5% (6 006) increase over the seven-year period, and a 5.4% (763) increase when compared with 2016.

Table 4: Number of public HEIs students who received Funza Lushaka bursaries by gender and the amount provided, 2011 – 2017

Year	Number of students enrolled in the Education Field			Number of students who received Funza Lushaka bursaries			Percentage of students who received Funza Lushaka bursaries	Amount provided (in Rands)
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total		
2011	122 296	42 580	164 939 *	6 115	2 778	8893	5,4%	R 442 846 392
2012	125 950	42 511	168 608 *	8 071	3 631	11702	6,9%	R 666 782 495
2013	129 736	43 255	172 991	9 912	4 561	14473	8,4%	R 890 104 296
2014	124 636	41 462	166 099 *	9 570	4 758	14328	8,6%	R 941 201 654
2015	128 130	42 417	170 550 *	8 986	5 040	14026	8,2%	R 965 591 611
2016	131 550	45 434	176 986 *	8 781	5 355	14136	8,0%	R 1 012 506 525
2017	144 759	50 143	195 113 *	8 172	6 727	14899	7,6%	R 1 091 737 945

Sources:

2017 HEMIS database, data extracted in November 2018.

Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2016.

NSFAS 2017/18 Annual Report.

Note: *Includes students with no information on gender.

- A higher proportion of female students enrolled in the education field of study, and more female students were allocated Funza Lushaka bursaries;
- The gender disparities in the number of students allocated with Funza Lushaka bursaries were higher during 2011-2016 and narrowed down in 2017 (8 172 females compared to 6 727 males).