FINAL REPORT
03 December 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

FOREWORD

His Excellency, the President of the

Republic of South Africa, Mr C.M. Ramaphosa

Since the dawn of democracy, South Africa has adopted world-acclaimed youth development policies and has made commendable progress through carefully crafted programmes. The need for youth empowerment can never be overemphasised. Our beloved late Nelson Mandela, in his presidential inaugural speech, described youth as "the valued possession of the nation. Without them there can be no future. Their needs are immense and urgent". Indeed, if the youth is empowered and developed, our country will be on the path to prosperity. As a government, we remain committed to this important aspect of the development of the South African population.

Youth development in South Africa is largely guided by the National Youth Policy (NYP 2020-2030), which is based on a series of legislative and policy frameworks that have been developed since 1994. These include the now approved Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS, 2022- 25); and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) Act (No. 54 of 2008).

According to the NYDA Act of 2008, the President of the Republic is required to table a *Status of Youth Report* (SYR) before Parliament every three years. We are fulfilling that obligation and at the same time I am fully confident that this SYR will assist policymakers and implementers to make informed decisions in executing the policy imperatives in the NYP approved by Cabinet in 2020. One of the cherished ideals and principles of our government is accountability. Through publishing the SYR, we are, therefore, demonstrating to all South Africans that their government remains committed to development and to the democracy they fought so hard to enjoy.

Therefore, I request all South Africans to study this report and use it in planning for youth development interventions. If all of us invest adequately in youth development, the impact made by such interventions will be evident when we report again in three years.

Mr C.M. Ramaphosa

His Excellency, the President of the Republic of South Africa

PREFACE

Honourable Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, MP Minister of Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities

The *Status of Youth Report* (SYR) is a legislated document that must be produced by the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). It is to be tabled before Parliament by the president of the Republic before it is released to the public. It is mandated by the NYDA Act of 2008, which was promulgated by the South African Parliament as Act number 54 of 2008. This SYR provides an analysis of the youth context and status in South Africa, and it also acts as a background document and basis for future regular assessment of the status of the youth in the country.

The SYR uses various forms of research methodologies. For the SYR 2022, the review of existing literature and secondary data, mainly from national surveys, as well as the processing and analysis of vital statistics from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) constituted the methodology. This SYR builds on the platform built by the extensive work undertaken by NYDA as part of the production of the *National Youth Policy* and the *Integrated Youth Development Strategy* in 2022. The production of the *Status of Youth Report* undertaken by the NYDA, involved the review of secondary literature and data, and a series of focus group interviews with heterogeneous groups of youth in South Africa was conducted in five provinces (two focus groups per province). The provinces and individuals who participated were carefully selected to closely represent the views of youth from various backgrounds in South Africa. The Western Cape and Gauteng were selected because they are largely prosperous and urban provinces, and the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo were selected due to their largely rural character and the high incidence of poverty in these provinces. Individuals were also selected to represent the diversity of youth in the country: the unemployed, the employed, graduates, pre-Grade 12 dropouts, entrepreneurs, the disabled, all races, and other important categories in the South African context.

The report shows that more still needs to be done on various fronts and by a wide range of stakeholders. Youth are in the majority in the country, but they equally comprise the largest proportion of the unemployed population in the country. Levels of youth participation in business are not encouraging. There continues to be many hurdles to youth participation in business. Although there have been some positive developments in the past few years, the education and skill levels of youth still require improvement. Health and wellbeing are also an area of concern and the burden of disease on the youth is largely preventable given that it is largely driven by underlying socio-economic issues.

This report is a valuable resource in decision making for policymakers and implementers of youth development programmes in public, private, civic society, and other sectors alike. It is central to an evidence-based approach in conceptualising and designing interventions in youth development.

We are grateful to all partners who contributed to the development of the SYR and are confident that it will inform future planning.

Honourable Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, MP

Minister of Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities

REMARKS BY NYDA CHAIRPERSON

Ms. Ayanda Luwaca

The *Status of Youth Report* (SYR) was compiled through a rigorous process of research and data analysis on the South African youth population. A comprehensive picture of elements that are key to youth development is necessary to plan better, implement better, and monitor and evaluate youth development interventions better at all levels. It is also important to understand the context in which young people thrive. Importantly, conducting research provides the opportunity to identify gaps and changes in trends and issues that need to be further explored.

This report covers issues relating to the key policy imperatives and areas identified in the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2030. These are economic participation and transformation; education, skills, and second chances; healthcare and combating substance abuse; nation-building and social cohesion; and effective and responsive youth development institutions. In addition to these policy imperatives, the document extensively covers youth demographics and vulnerable youth groups such as disabled youth, youth in conflict with the law, and youth-headed households.

Secondary data from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) and other research bodies were used to develop this report. Where published up-to-date data for the identified variables were not available, official statistical data were sourced from Stats SA. Data from various studies and surveys were used to update the variables in the preliminary status report. The inherent limitation of the use of data from different studies is that the studies were designed for different purposes. Consequently, certain youth development questions required for planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of youth interventions might not be addressed. Some of the studies used for this literature review were once-off, which makes it impossible to draw comparisons over a period or to update data as contained in the preliminary report.

I wish to thank the research institutions that partnered with the NYDA to provide the relevant youth data and information, and the technical team members who participated in the planning and finalisation of the Status of the Youth Report (SYR) 2022.

Ms Ayanda Luwaca

Executive Chairperson of the NYDA Board

REMARKS BY NYDA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Mr. Waseem Carrim

The critical success factor for the implementation of youth development programmes, of which the Status of Youth Report (SYR) 2022 is central, is effective and responsive youth development institutions. The SYR 2022 is an important instrument that informs youth development initiatives and the implementation of policy imperatives recommended in the National Youth Policy (2020-30). South Africa has adopted an integrated and mainstreamed approach to youth development. This means that all state organs at all spheres of government are expected to contribute to youth development. This is to be done through making youth development a priority in all state organs' budgets and programmes. In addition, the private sector and civil society are expected to be part of integrated and mainstreamed youth development, and this could be made easier through maximising the coordination and liaison role of the NYDA.

The analyses in the report demonstrate there are both challenges and opportunities that must still be addressed to effectively tackle issues that affect young people. The youth's inability to access economic opportunities because of poverty and lack of education also pose a major challenge.

Youth workers are an important element of youth development. To date, youth work is not recognised as a professional practice in South Africa. At present no qualifications (or registration with a professional body) are required for individuals to be referred to as youth workers. There have been efforts to create a professional body that will professionalise youth work. There is, however, ongoing debate about whether this process should be regulated. Although the professionalisation of youth work is being pursued, there has been limited information in the public sector about the status of the process. Academic institutions have initiated training programmes on youth work, but these efforts have not yet yielded results that are seen by most academic institutions as attractive for investment purposes.

This view is based on the small number of youth work practitioners enrolled in these institutions and the fact that some of these institutions are discontinuing the training programmes. In many countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Britain, youth work is promoted under the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). The CYP views young people as key partners in development and recognises that young people's skills are essential for the future of the Commonwealth. Higher education institutions (HEIs) can play a critical role in the development and professionalisation of youth work, as they provide formal and informal training of youth workers. South Africa has hosted two conferences on the professionalisation of youth work, and one of the resolutions was to speed up professionalisation. Limited data and literature are available on youth work in South Africa.

I wish to acknowledge the role played by the technical team members who participated in the conceptualisation and planning of the SYR 2022. I also wish to thank the research institutions that partnered with the NYDA in conducting the research used to compile the preliminary report, namely

the Human Science Research Council (HSRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC), Statistics SA, and the Population Unit of the Department of Social Development (DSD).

Mr. Waseem Carrim

Chief Executive Officer of the NYDA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Demographic data are a useful indicator of the human population, as they provide a body of information for future planning and evaluative assessments on different population group performances. The data presented in this report shows that approximately 20,6 million or 34,3% of the South African population (60,1 million) in 2021, is constituted of individuals aged between 15 to 34 years. Within the different youth age cohorts, the majority of young people are within the age categories of 25-29 years and 30-34 years, as compared to those between 15-19 years and 20-24 years.

Gender estimates show that 50,5% of young people are male, with 49,5% female; a trend that was similar across all of the youth age cohorts. Black African youth accounted for the majority of the youth population (84,4%) in 2021, followed by Coloured (8,3%), White (5,1%) and Indian/Asian (2,2%).

The study found that, in line with the national urban population rate of 63%, the majority of youth live in urban areas (63,4%), compared to rural areas (36,6%). The youth account for over a third of the population in each province, with almost 60% residing in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape.

There were an estimated 17,4 million households in South Africa in 2020, of which 26,5% (4,6 million) were headed by youth. The majority of youth-headed households (73,1%) are within the urban areas, with 26,9% in the rural parts of the country. Gauteng had the highest number of youth-headed households (1,5 million), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (798 000).

In terms of gender, 64,0% of youth-headed households were headed by male youth and 36,0% by female youth. Almost 90% of the youth-headed households were headed by Black African youth, followed by White (4,7%), Coloured (4,3%) and Indian/Asian youth (1,6%). The study found that rural areas are characterised by high levels of unemployment and poverty, and thus a majority of households are cushioned by social grants distributed by the state to deserving and qualifying members of the households such elderly, children and persons with disabilities. A higher proportion of urban youth-headed households were recorded as having no income (5,9%).

The study found that the number of youth living in households without an employed adult has increased between 2016 and 2020, with the proportion of male youth living in these vulnerable households increasing by an average of 5,5% (from 23,1% in 2016 to 28,6% in 2020), and females increasing by 5,8% (from 25,0% in 2016 to 30,8% in 2020).

Data shows that in 2020, the majority of youth resided in formal dwellings (84,9%), representing an increase of 4,2% from 2016, whilst the proportion of youth residing in traditional and informal dwellings declined over the same period (a decrease of 2% in traditional dwellings and 2.1% in informal dwellings).

The study found that almost 10,8% of South African households had experienced hunger in 2020, whilst 20,6% had inadequate or severe inadequate access to food. With regards to the youth population, 12,8% (2,6 million) in South Africa lived in households that experienced hunger in 2020. North West province recorded the highest proportion of youth in households that experienced hunger during the period (26,4%), followed by the Western Cape (21,4%) and Northern Cape (20,7%). Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng had the lowest percentages of youth in households that reported hunger (3,0%, 9,2% and 10,3% respectively).

With regards to poverty levels, the proportion of youth living below the Food Poverty Line (FPL) has increased between 2011 and 2015 by 3,4% (from 21,6% to 25,0%); with those living below the Lower-Bound Poverty Line (LBPL) increasing by 3,5% (from 36,7% to 40,2%%); and young people below the Upper-Bound Poverty Line (UBPL) increasing from 54,0% in 2011 to 56,6% in 2015 (increase of 2,6%).

According to available data, a total of 3,4 million youth relied on social grants (16,6% of the total youth population). The majority of the youth social grant beneficiaries were between the ages of 15 and 24 years (73,9%), whilst 26,1% of grant recipients were aged 25-34 years old. In terms of the gender split, a higher proportion of youth beneficiaries were male (57,6%), with 42,4% female.

In terms of the living conditions of youth, although marginal, are slightly lower than the overall population. In 2020, 72,9% of young people (15-34 years) had access to piped water, 81,9% had access to improved sanitation, 61,6% had their refuse/waste removed by the municipality, 92,6% had access to electricity connected to the mains, and 11,6% use solid fuels for cooking.

Available data on youth with disabilities show that in 2016, the total number of youth with disabilities (15-34 years) was roughly 551 000, and accounted for 2,7% of persons with disabilities (3,8 million persons). In terms of gender, there was a higher disability prevalence among female youth (59,0%) than male youth (41,0%). the majority of youth with disabilities were Black African (78,4%), followed by White (10,2%). The disability prevalence rates for Coloured and Indian/Asian youth were 8,6% and 2,8% respectively.

Attendance at secondary level was lowest amongst youth (15-19 years) with severe difficulties in the various functional domains. The results show that the majority of youth with disabilities aged 20-24 years were not attending tertiary education, particularly those with severe difficulty across all activity domains. In terms of employment, proportion of employed persons with disabilities was 62,0%, with 27,3% recorded as unemployed. Males with disabilities had higher employment levels compared to females (66,6% and 58,1% respectively). The profiles of the unemployed and not economically active show that females with disabilities had higher proportions compared to their male counterparts. Black African persons with disabilities had the lowest levels of employment (57,3%), the highest levels of unemployment (30,2%).

The centrality of education and training to youth development and development in general cannot be emphasised enough. Education is one of the areas identified by the National Development Plan (NDP) to contribute to the development of the country. The rationale is that education and training will equip the youth with the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute to the economy in a meaningful way. Although enrolments rates have improved at both basic and higher education levels, the success rates are still low by international standards. The dropout rates are also high between Grade 10 and Grade 12 and at higher education level. The success rate is also influenced by socio-economic dynamics like race and economic status. There is still more work to be done to improve the quality of education, especially at the basic education level. Almost 6 million youth were attending an educational institution in 2020, representing 28,7% of the total youth population. Youth attendance at educational institutions was higher for females (29,0%) in comparison to males (28,5%). The attendance for White youth was the highest (29,8%), followed by Black African (29,2%), Indian/Asian (27,5%) and Coloured (23,2%).

The proportion of individuals aged five years and older and who attended school was the highest in Limpopo (92,3%) and Eastern Cape (92,2%), and lowest in Gauteng (78,3%) and Western Cape (83,6%). Attendance at higher education institutions was the highest in Gauteng (10,5%) and Western Cape (8,6%). Northern Cape had the highest enrolment/attendance at TVET colleges (3,2%). Home

schooling was only conducted in 5 provinces – Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Western Cape, Northern Cape, and Mpumalanga. The attendance of at schools where no tuition fees were levied has increased notably from 0,4% in 2002, to 70,0% in 2020. The data shows that the lack of money for education has increasingly become a major hurdle for learners.

For the ages 15-17 years, low proportions of youth did not attend any educational institution in 2020 (2,3% for those aged 15 years), after which, non-attendance of educational facilities increased sharply (23,8% for 18 years). The most frequently cited reasons by individuals 7–18 years of age for not attending an educational institution, were illness and disability (22,7%), poor academic performance (21,2%) and a lack of money for fees (19,5%).

According to 2020 data, the majority of the youth had less than matric (52,9%) followed by those with matric (36,6%), other tertiary (5,3%), and graduates (4,1%) as their highest level of education. A higher proportion of male youth (54,3%) attained the highest level of education of less than matric in comparison to females (51,5%). Higher proportions of female youth had achieved their matric (36,7%), other tertiary qualification (6,1%), and had graduated from University/University of Technology (4,8%).

Educational attainments are still largely a function of historical and socio-economic factors like geographic location, class, gender, and race. This manifests in low levels of educational attainment among Black African and Coloured youth as compared to Indian/Asian and White youth. The Black African and Coloured population groups had the highest proportions of youth that had less than matric as their highest level of education attained (55,6% and 48,0% respectively). Indian/Asians were the highest proportion of youth with matric and other tertiary qualifications. The highest proportion of youth who were graduates were White (17,9%).

Northern Cape had the highest percentage of youth reported to have less than matric as their highest level of education attained (90,4%), followed by Eastern Cape (88,5%) and Limpopo (86,6%). Gauteng had the highest proportion of youth who had achieved their matric (28,0%), whilst Northern Cape had the most youth with other tertiary qualifications (2,6%). Gauteng and Western Cape had the highest proportion of youth graduates (3,6% and 1,8% respectively).

The study found that there has been substantial growth in terms of access to universities and TVET colleges. However, the population group differentials for university education shows a lower enrolment rate amongst Black Africans. In 2019, the gross enrolment rate for the South African university sector (public and private combined) was 25,6%, reflecting a significant increase compared to 2011, when the gross enrolment rate was 19,0%. This increase was the result of the enrolment of Black African students, which grew by 3,8% from 2010 to 2019, while the number of White and Indian/Asian students declined by 2,6% and 0,5% respectively.

Between 2010 and 2019, the gross enrolment rate for TVET colleges more than doubled, from 6,9% in 2010 to 14,6% in 2019. In 2019, the TVET college participation rate of Black African students (16,0%) was higher than that of other population groups in South Africa.

The labour market absorption rate for TVET graduates in 2020 was 40,5%. About 55,0% of graduates were either involved in some kind of work or studying, while about 45,0% were neither working nor studying. The incidence of qualification mismatch in South Africa is higher than most countries, especially where under-qualification is concerned, and international comparative studies attest to the extent of mismatches between education and the labour market is fairly high in South Africa. In 2019, 51,1% of South African workers were employed in an occupation for which they did not have the correct education level. About 21,6% of South African workers are over-qualified for their jobs, and a further 29,5% are under-qualified. The incidence of qualification mismatch in South Africa is higher

than most countries, especially where under-qualification is concerned. The overall incidence of qualification mismatch for OECD countries was only 35,7%, compared to South Africa's 51,5%.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education across all education sectors in South Africa. School closures as a result of COVID-19, interrupted the learning of an estimated 17 million learners from pre-school to secondary schools, and close to 2,3 million students enrolled in post-school education and training institutions. The transition to online teaching added challenges for many learners who did not have access to resources to continue learning remotely. Among individuals aged 5–24 years attending school in 2020, only close to 6,0% participated in remote learning as part of the measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19.

The 4IR presents a number of implications for skills development and education. The 4IR provides an opportunity for South African education institutions to create an environment of creativity and innovation. In order to develop a responsive PSET system relevant education opportunities must be created, and new approaches to teaching and learning developed. Tackling the digital divide is crucial to prevent and resolve issues of social inclusion. Learning needs to be opened so that all people can take advantage of the opportunities on offer. Partnerships are critical between learning institutions, employers, industry bodies, and government departments; whilst ensuring that a simpler policy framework is developed that is linked to the NDP's focus on integrated development and the government's district-based coordinated approach

In terms of youth employment, the study found a total of 4,7 million young people aged 15-34 years were employed in 2021, representing 32,7% of the total number of employed persons (15-64 years). Over 80% of the employed youth were between the ages of 25 and 34 years. There were 745 000 employed youth in the 15-24 year age group accounting for 15,9% of total employed youth, and a 5,2% share in the total employed in 2021. Male youth accounted for 59,9% of the youth employment figures for 2021, compared to 40,1% employed females.

In 2021, 7,4 million South African youth were unemployed, representing 59,3% of the total unemployed. Youth aged between 25 and 34 years made up 65,5% of the unemployed youth, and 38,9% of the total unemployed. Young people aged 15-24 years accounted for 34,5% of total youth unemployment and 20,5% of total unemployed. The largest share of unemployed youth was amongst the Black African population group (60,0%), followed by Coloured (58,4%). The Indian/Asian and White population groups recorded shares of unemployed youth of 55,5% and 41,1% respectively.

According to 2021 data, the youth unemployment rate for seven of the provinces exceeded 40%, except for Western Cape (36,8%) and Northern Cape (37,1%). Eastern Cape recorded the highest unemployment rate for youth in 2021 (62,6%). Free State had the second highest youth unemployment rate of 55,4%, followed by Mpumalanga (53,9%).

In 2021, there were about 10,3 million young people aged 15–34 years in of which 46,0% were not in employment, education or training (NEET). Of this total, 49,6% were female and 42,5% male youth. The highest proportion of unemployed youth not attending an educational institution of the total youth population were Black African (49,3%), followed by Coloured (40,3%), Indian (29,0%), and White (14,8%).

A study conducted in 2021 examined the impact of the COVID-19-related lockdown on youth labour market outcomes for the period February 2020 to June 2020. The study showed that youth unemployment rates were high and increased even more despite the gradual lifting of lockdown measures. The results further showed that very few youth managed to move from being unemployed to being employed during the different transitions, while many became unemployed. The registered

employment losses were disproportionately concentrated among young workers who were already vulnerable pre-COVID-19, including relatively younger youth (18–24 years old), female youth, African/black youth, youth with less education and youth in rural areas.

While entrepreneurship is seen as a possible solution to unemployment and lack of participation in the economy, data indicate that youth participation in entrepreneurship is relatively low. Youth-owned enterprises accounted for 23,9% (575 199) of the total number of SMMEs (2 404 564) in 2021. The majority of youth SMMEs were aged between 25-34 years (90,4%). A year of successive waves of COVID-19, subsequent lockdowns and the social unrest in July 2021 appear to have impacted on youth-owned businesses between 2020 and 2021, with an overall decline of 4,3% in 2021.

Despite the relatively low levels of youth entrepreneurship, a Global Entrepreneurship Monitor South Africa (GEM SA) study conducted in 2021/22 found an overall improvement in entrepreneurial activity amongst youth between 2001 and 2021 – with the total entrepreneurial activity increasing for 18-24 year olds from only 3,4% in 2001 to 19,3% in 2021; and 25-34 year olds from 5,3% (2001) to 19% (2021).

Improving the health and well-being of youth is crucial for their well-being today, and for their future economic productivity, because behaviour and health developed during these stages of life are key predictors of the adult burden of disease, and because health – like education – is a key factor in the intergenerational transmission of poverty. The study found that in 2020, 84,8% of the total population were not covered by medical aid. When disaggregated by age group, young people within the 20-29 year age category had the lowest medical aid coverage (8,1%). Overall, young people across the age spectrum 10-39 years, experience low access to medical aid.

Research suggests that youth aged between 15–24 years, are becoming more susceptible to Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) as a result of their exposure to cheap fast foods and inactive lifestyles, which puts them at risk of lifestyle diseases such as obesity, heart diseases and diabetes. The prevalence of hypertension rises with increasing age, and it is higher amongst males than females in both youth age groups (20,1% for 15-24 years and 33,2% 25-34 years respectively). The prevalence of diabetes reflects low prevalence levels amongst the youth aged between 15 and 34 years. Young females have the highest level of severe obesity in the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups. The proportion of female youth with anaemia is much higher than that of males (33,0%). The prevalence of asthma or respiratory disease is reported to be higher amongst male youth between the ages of 15 to 24 years and 25-34 years.

Suicide has become a significant public health problem in South Africa. In 2018 it was found that 25% of learners between 15 to 19 years reported having experienced feelings of sadness or hopelessness. Eighteen (18%) had considered suicide; 18% had attempted suicide; and 32% of those who attempted suicide required medical treatment. In addition to the many challenges that youth already faced, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic had severe and potentially long-lasting effects on the lives of many young people, triggering severe mental health problems during the lockdown. Studies indicate worsening mental health among youth, with an increase in the prevalence of depressive symptoms between 2017 and 2020 for the overall youth population as well as for different youth groups. Furthermore, data shows that depressive symptoms amongst youth continued to increase, despite the further, gradual easing of lockdown measures.

According to the Mid-Year Population Estimates (2021), an estimated 13,7% of the total population in South Africa is HIV positive. In terms of youth aged 15-24 years, the HIV prevalence rate was 5,5%. The total number of persons living with HIV in South Africa increased from an estimated 3,8 million in 2002 to 8,2 million by 2021, whilst HIV prevalence among the youth aged 15–24 years has remained

stable over time. Female youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years had a significantly higher HIV prevalence than their male counterparts, with the prevalence among females more than double that of males (10,9% and 4,8% respectively). In 2017, Black Africans had the highest HIV prevalence (8.9%), whereas whites and coloureds had considerably lower estimates at 2.6% and 2.5% respectively. Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga had the highest youth-related HIV prevalence in 2017 (12,3% and 12,2% respectively). A review of HIV deaths by province indicate that KwaZulu-Natal showed the highest percentage of male and female deaths from HIV in 2018 (24,6% males and 22,9%).

The study found that male youth are more likely to have multiple partners compared to female youth. Knowledge about contraceptive methods was almost universal amongst youth, with 98,8% of those aged 15–19 years to 100% for the 25–29-year-olds who have heard of at least one contraceptive method.

Youth pregnancy is associated with significant health risks and socioeconomic costs, and is one of the major public health issues globally and in South Africa. Teen mothers have poorer educational outcomes than non-teen mothers, which has negative implications for their future chances economically. The study found that a total of 106 383 live births were recorded for adolescents (10-19 years) in 2019. KwaZulu-Natal recorded the highest proportion of live births (24,7%), followed by Eastern Cape and Limpopo (both at 14,4%), Gauteng (13,7%), and Mpumalanga (10,0%). According to available data, a total of 374 (6,7%) women aged 15–34 years experienced terminated pregnancies in their lifetime. In 2019, Limpopo had the highest rates of TOPs (18,8%), followed by Northern Cape (14,4%) and Mpumalanga (14,2%).

Substance abuse continues to be a critical challenge amongst the youth population. The study found that alcohol consumption was more prevalent among male youth when compared to females, whilst the 20-24 year age cohort accounted for the highest alcohol consumption for both male and female youth (68,3% of males and 35,2% of females). Available statistics show that a larger proportion of male youth used tobacco than females for all youth age groups. The highest proportion of youth that were either still smoking tobacco or had smoked tobacco in the past, were in the 25-29 year age group.

Road traffic injuries are among the leading causes of death and life-long disability and the leading cause of death among young people aged 15–29 years. Transport accidents was the third leading non-natural cause of death amongst South African youth in 2018. Recent statistics highlight that youth contribute the highest number of road fatalities annually when compared to other age groups. KwaZulu-Natal had the highest proportion of crashes and fatalities among youth (20,9% and 20,8% respectively), followed by Gauteng (16,3% and 16,1%).

Data on external causes of mortality for youth shows that "assault" accounted for 24,2% of deaths in 2018, and was the second highest cause of death for youth (after "other external causes of accidental injury"). In 2019/2020, 42 289 rapes were reported, as well as 7 749 sexual assaults.

There were a total number of 643 372 confirmed COVID-19 cases in September 2020. Of this figure, 206 553 cases were recorded amongst youth aged 15-34 years. The rates of death among the young male and female population were low compared to the elderly population. There has been a low vaccine uptake among the youth. In the 18- to 34-year age group, about 38% (6.7 million) have been vaccinated, and the vaccine uptake for those aged 12 to 17 years sits at about 2.6 million. Of those within the youth age group 18-34 years that have been vaccinated, 55,8% are female (3 786 642) and 44,2% male (2 999 498).

There was an increase in voter registration across all the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups between the 2006 municipal elections and the 2016 general elections, and across all youth age groups, the voter turnout increased between 2016 and 2019.

The study found that a higher proportion of Indian/Asian and Black African youth (59,0% and 58,0% respectively) are more likely to be interested in political affairs than White (50,0%) and Coloured youth (42,0%). Male youth demonstrate greater interest public affairs than females (59,0% males and 52,0% females), whilst a larger proportion of youth residing in rural areas are more interested in public affairs than those in urban areas (62,0% and 52,0% respectively). Data for 2019 shows that the majority of the South African population are proudly South African. The youth aged between 16 and 24 years had the highest proportion of individuals who are proud to be South African (90,3%). For the 25-34 year age category, 85,1% indicated that they were proud to be South African.

Government and public institutions with the highest levels of trust among youth included government schools (90,3%), South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) (87,2%), South African Revenue Services (SARS) (86,4%), IEC (81,5%), and state-owned media (81,2%). However, young people expressed low levels of trust with certain government and public institutions, which included SAPS (68,6%), national government ((68,5%), provincial government (67,3%), and Parliament (65,4%). Overall, young people expressed low levels of trust in local government (59,5%). Data shows that youth indicated higher levels of satisfaction for the quality of service provided by certain government and public institutions, such as SASSA (93,3%), SARS (89,7%), and Correctional Services (86,6%). Institutions such as SAPS (77,0%), government clinics (77,5%), government hospitals (79,0%), and public housing services (71,4%), obtained the lowest percentage of youth satisfaction with the services provided.

There has been decline in the number of sentenced youth offenders between 2019/20 and 2020/21 across all age groups (from a total of 102 841 to 93 066). There are a higher proportion of male offenders (97,6% of total offenders) compared to females (2,3%). A higher proportion of male youth were victims of crime compared to females (29,5% and 25,8% respectively). In terms of gender differences, young males were nearly twice as likely as their female counterparts to be victims of assault and robbery crimes in 2019/20.

In order for any youth development policy intervention to be effective, strong, and functioning, institutional arrangements are necessary. The IYDS (2022/25) is an instrument for implementing policy imperatives recommended in the NYP (2020-30). Various organs of the state, led by National Treasury, are required to play a role in youth development. The integrated and mainstreamed approach to youth development aims to make youth development part and parcel of all state organs such that it is included in their budgets and their performance agreements. While current youth development institutional arrangements are intended to mainstream and integrate youth development in all sectors of society, the actual implementation still needs to be strengthened.

The NYS presents opportunities for young people, particularly those who are unskilled, unemployed, or out of school to contribute to the national development agenda by serving their communities and country. In addition to creating opportunities for young people and developing communities, the NYSP incorporates social cohesion. With gender based violence and femicide (GBVF) persistent and on the rise, racism and other forms of political and socio-economic discrimination, the NYS programme encompasses these issues as part of broad government programmes to foster social cohesion. The challenges presented by COVID-19 resulted in delays in the implementation of some

of the programmes. Despite this, there was significant uptake of the NYS programmes by young people, and many were still able to benefit from the programme(s).

Integration and mainstreaming of programmes is critical for youth development to have a desirable impact. Not only does this require fostering, nurturing and maintaining effective partnerships with key stakeholders, but it is also vital that the NYSP is aligned to the strategic intent of the IYDS and other youth intervention instruments. Strengthening partnerships, integration and alignment will not only serve to remove silos and avoid the duplication of efforts, but will also ensure that the maximum benefits are derived from available resources.

ABBREVIATIONS

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AI	Artificial Intelligence
BEEI	Basic Education Employment Initiative
CET	Community Education and Training
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DEL	Department of Employment and Labour
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DHIS	District Health Information System
DPWI	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
DSAC	Department of Sports, Arts & Culture
DWYPD	Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
EC	Eastern Cape
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FPL	Food Poverty Line
FS	Free State
GBVF	Gender-Based Violence and Femicide
GEM SA	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor South Africa
GHS	General Household Survey
GP	Gauteng
GTAC	Government Technical Advisory Centre
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IGT	Inter-Governmental Liaison
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IoT	Internet of Things
IPID	Independent Police Investigative Directorate
IYDS	Integrated Youth Development Strategy
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LBPL	Lower-Bound Poverty Line
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate

LP	Limpopo
MP	Mpumalanga
MYPE	Mid-Year Population Estimates
NARYSEC	National Rural Youth Service Corps
NC	Northern Cape
NDP	National Development Plan
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NW	North West
NCDs	Non Communicable Diseases
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NPMN	National Pathway Management Network
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NYP	National Youth Policy
NYSC	National Youth Service Challenge
OHCHR ROSA	High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for Southern Africa
PES	Presidential Employment Stimulus
PII	Poverty & Inequality Initiative
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
PYEI	Presidential Youth Employment Intervention
PYS	Presidential Youth Service
RTMC	Road Traffic Management Corporation
SAFMH	South African Federation for Mental Health
SANHPIBCS	South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey
SAPS	South African Police Service
SARB	South African Reconciliation Barometer
SARS	South African Revenue Services
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SMMEs	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SRDG	Social Relief of Distress Grant
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa

STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
SYR	Status of Youth Report
TOP	Termination of Pregnancy
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TYPP	The Young Patriots' Programme
UBPL	Upper-Bound Poverty Line
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
UN	United Nations
UN CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
WHO	World Health Organisation
YRBS	Youth Risk Behaviour Survey

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) exists and operates within the context of a large youth population (aged between 15 and 35 years), which constitutes an estimated 34,7% of the total South African population (59,62 million)[1]. In a climate of slow economic growth compounded by recent global economic challenges, young people bear a disproportionate burden of poverty and unemployment, which makes it difficult for them to participate optimally in the economy and in society in general. It is within this context that the NYDA works towards interventions that seek to address challenges such as a high unemployment rate; low absorption of young people in the job market; lack of universal access to business support services; unsustainable youth enterprises; and a lack of or minimal exposure to practical professional training[2].

As part of its mandate to ensure a mainstreamed and integrated approach towards youth development in South Africa, the NYDA is required to *"initiate, design, coordinate, evaluate and monitor all programmes aimed at integrating the youth into the economy and society, guide efforts and facilitate economic participation and empowerment, and the achievement of education and training"*[3]. In order to achieve this, thorough analysis and understanding of youth demographics is fundamentally important for the effective planning and structuring of youth development policies and programmes that are properly targeted and have a desired impact. In this regard, the Status of Youth Report (SYR) 2022 forms the basis for the development of evidence-based and relevant youth development interventions that appropriately respond to the needs of young people.

1.2 STATUS OF YOUTH REPORT (SYR) 2022

The SYR 2022 has been developed in accordance with the development priorities of the National Development Plan (NDP); as well as the key imperatives and areas identified in the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2020-30, and the Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS) 2022/25. The report provides a comprehensive analysis of current patterns and trends, fundamental demographic changes, and prevailing socioeconomic transitions all within the broad themes of: economic participation and transformation; education, skills, and second chances; healthcare and combating substance abuse; nation-building and social cohesion; and effective and responsive youth development institutions.

Various global and national developments have recently unfolded which have exacerbated the multiple and complex challenges affecting the youth population. The severe health and socioeconomic impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; and national government's response to mitigate these impacts through interventions such as the Presidential Employment Stimulus, the Social Relief of Distress Grant (SRDG), and the Presidential Initiative for Youth Employment (PYEI); are amongst some of the critical issues that are reflected upon in the SYR 2022.

The SYR 2022 serves as a critical tool to provide an understanding of the landscape of youth issues and current key challenges affecting young people; and as such, assists in directing the efforts of the

[1] Statistics South Africa, Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2020
[2] NYDA, Revised Strategic Plan, 2020-2025
[3] NYDA, Revised Strategic Plan, 2020-2025

NYDA towards youth development and support; allows for the formulation of appropriate policies and strategies; as well as ensures effective planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of youth development interventions.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The preparation of the SYR 2022 involved a comprehensive and extensive review of relevant documents and international, regional and national statistics pertaining to youth demographics, trends and issues. The report was compiled in close alignment to the priority areas and imperatives set out in the NYP (2020-30) and IYDS (2022/25), and also reflects on the impact of recent economic events and developments that have unfolded within the last three years; that have had a bearing on the youth population in South Africa.

The SYR 2022 primarily presents data for 2020 and 2021. However, in those cases where data for these years were unavailable, the most recent statistics were used. Secondary data used to compile the SYR 2022 included official statistical data published by Statistics South Africa - which included amongst others, the Mid-Year Population Estimates (2021), General Household Survey (2020), and Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (2019/20). Other data sources included official statistics released by the Department of Health (DoH), Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Department of Labour, and the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD); and various reports compiled by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Institute of Justice and Reconciliation, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, and World Health Organisation (WHO).

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The SYR 2022 has been developed in accordance with the policy priority areas of the NYP (2020-30) and IYDS (2022/25). In order to provide the overall context within which youth development should be viewed, the SYR 2022 addresses youth demographics, living conditions and poverty; and vulnerable youth groups such as youth with disabilities, and youth-headed households. The SYR 2022 is structured as follows:

- 1. Introduction - provides a brief descriptive context of the report and the report structure.
- 2. Youth demographics - focuses on the population dynamics of young people aged between 15-34 years including population size, structure and distribution. An analysis is also provided on youth-headed households in South Africa; characteristics of the household heads; and the distribution of households in 2020.
- 3. Youth Living Conditions & Poverty - examines the living conditions and hunger experiences of youth in South Africa, providing analyses on the main sources of income in youth-headed households and the extent of youth poverty
- 4. Youth with Disabilities – provides statistics and analyses relating to youth with disabilities.
- 5. Youth Education, Skills & Second Chances - examines various aspects of the education profile of youth, including youth attendance at educational institutions, educational attainment and higher education
- 6. Youth Economic Participation & Transformation - provides an overview of labour market participation rates, youth employment and unemployment; and addresses the issue of youth entrepreneurship

- 7. Youth Health & Substance Abuse - provides information on aspects that affect the health and well-being of the youth population in South Africa.
- 8. Youth Social Cohesion & Nation-Building - covers youth participation in social development and related activities in communities, including participation in political processes, sports, and crime.
- 9. Effective and Responsive Youth Development Institutions - provides an overview of institutions that play an important role in youth development.

2. SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Demographic data comprises an array of socioeconomic information, including the breakdown of a population by gender, ethnicity, age, income, employment status, disability, education, home ownership, and even location. Demographic profiles, changes and trends provide a body of information for government for future planning and evaluative assessments on different population groups, in terms of education, health care, labour market opportunities, access to public resources, and more generally, economic growth and welfare.

For effective youth development planning, a thorough understanding and analysis of the demographics and trends of this particular age category form the basis of structuring targeted policies, programmes and implementation frameworks that support, develop and empower youth to actively participate, engage and contribute to society.

Based on Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) Mid-Year Population Estimates (MYPE, 2021) and the General Household Survey (GHS, 2020), the following section focuses on the population dynamics of young people aged between 15-34 years including population size, structure and distribution.

2.2 YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.2.1 SOUTH AFRICAN POPULATION

In 2020, Africa's population reached 1,3 billion, representing the world's second largest population after Asia. Of the continent's total population, individuals under the age of 35 years represented almost a billion people (540,8 million 0-14 year olds and 454,5 million 15-34 year olds), amounting to 22.7% of the world's total youth population[4].

According to Statistics South Africa (2021), the South African population was estimated at 60,1 million in 2021, of which females accounted for 51,1% of the total population (30,8 million). Children (0-14 years) constituted almost a third of the South African population (28,3%), whilst adults (35-39 years) were estimated at 16,9 million and the elderly at 5,5 million. The youth population (15 – 35 years) was estimated at 20,6 million in 2021, representing the largest proportion of the total population (34,3%) (Table 1 and Figure 1 below)[5].

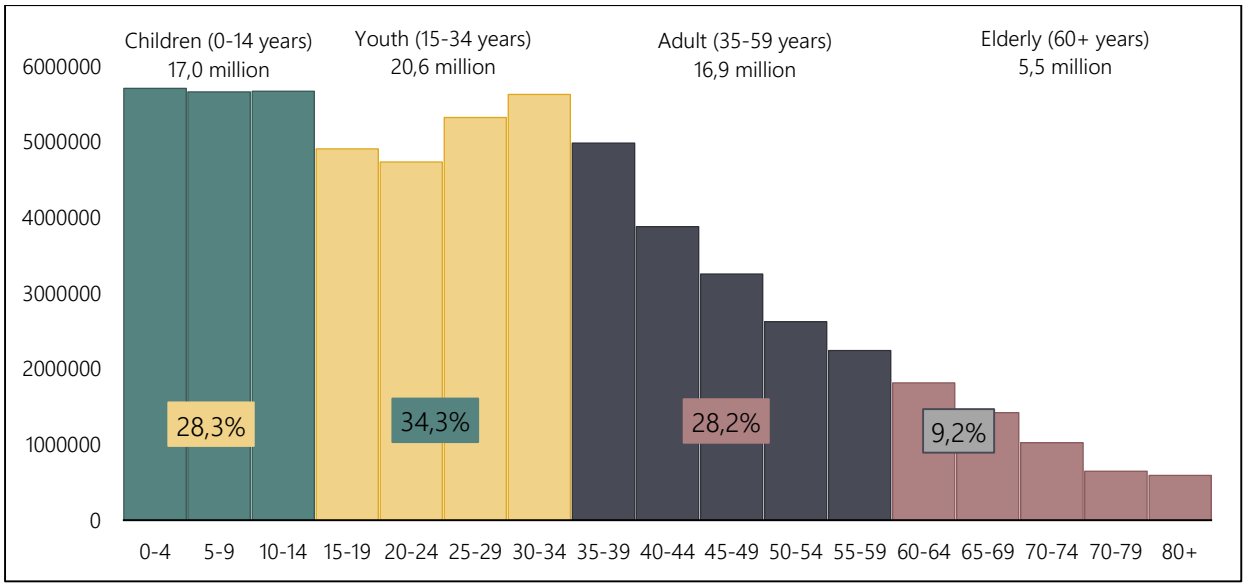
[4] Mo Ibrahim Foundation, "Africa's Youth: Action Needed to Support the Continent's Greatest Asset", 2021
[5] Stats SA, Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2021

Table 1: Mid-Year Population Estimates by Age Category and Gender (2021)

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	% of SA Population	Number	% of SA Population	Number	% of SA Population
0-14 years	8 625 386	29,3	8 417 889	27,4	17 043 275	28,3
15-34	10 394 990	35,4	10 209 033	33,2	20 604 023	34,3
35-59	8 208 293	27,9	8 782 040	28,6	16 990 333	28,2
60+	2 159 378	7,3	3 345 969	10,9	5 505 347	9,2
	29 388 047	48,9	30 754 931	51,1	60 142 978	100,0

Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

Figure 1: Mid-Year Population Estimates by Age Category (2021)

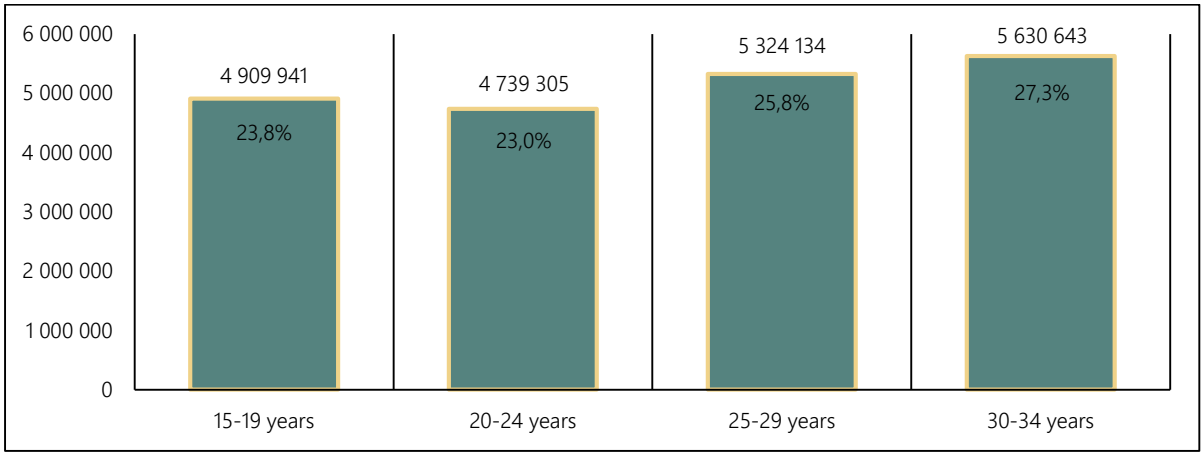


Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

2.2.2 Youth - Age Groups & Gender

Any intervention in youth development must take into account age distribution dynamics, as the needs of youth differ significantly at various stages of development in their lives. Figure 2 presents youth population estimates for 2021, which show that the majority of young people are within the age categories of 25-29 years and 30-34 years, as compared to those between 15-19 years and 20-24 years.

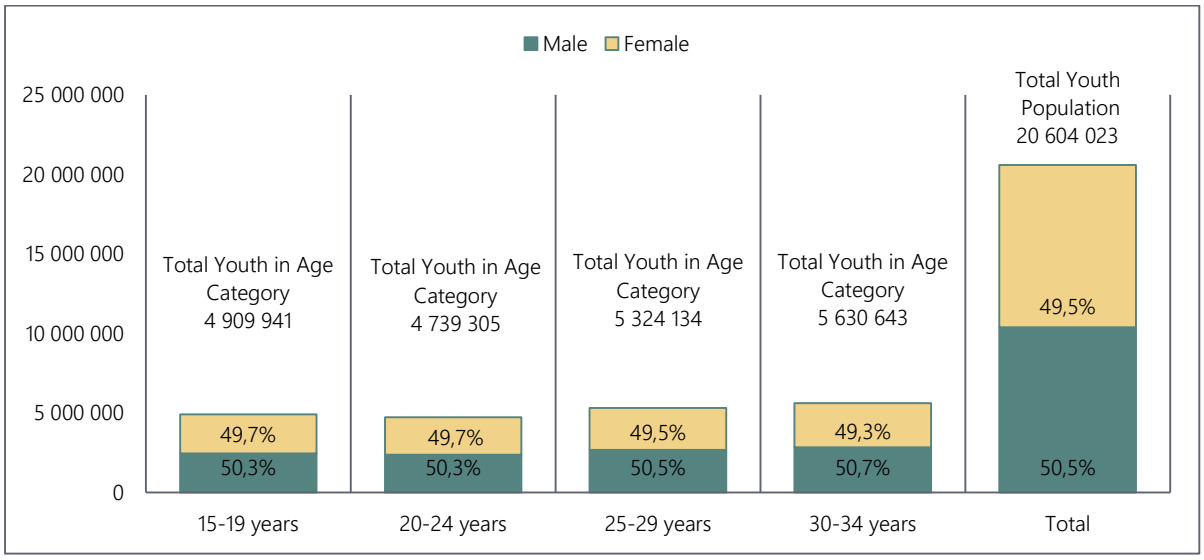
Figure 2: Youth Population by Age Group (2021)



Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

Gender estimates for 2021 show that of the total youth population (20,6 million), 50,5% were male, with 49,5% female[6]. This trend was similar across all of the youth age categories, with a marginally higher proportion of male to female youth (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Youth Population by Age Category & Gender (2021)



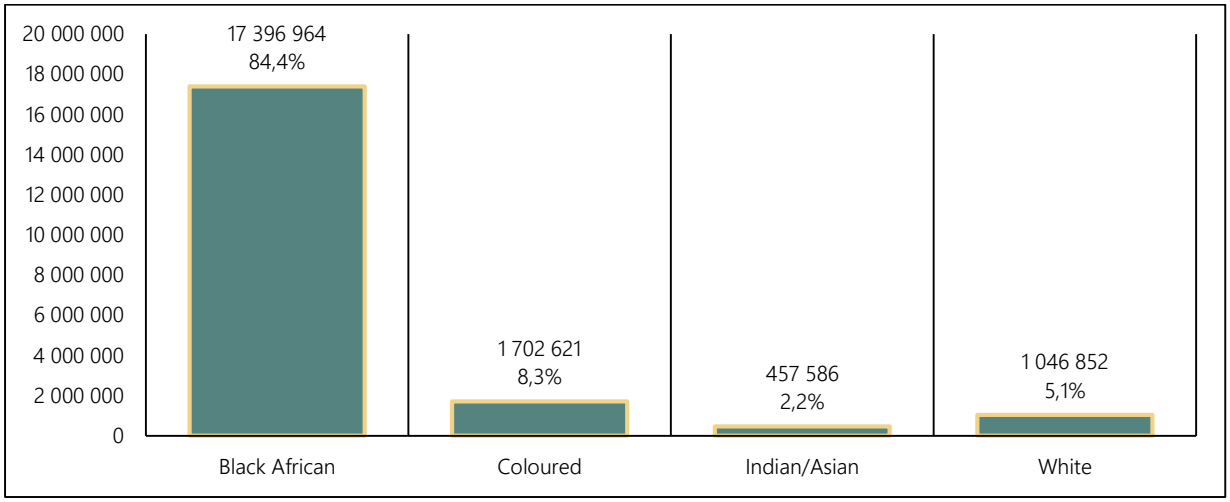
Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

2.2.3 Youth - Population Groups

In terms of population groups, Black African youth accounted for the majority of the youth population (84,4%) in 2021, followed by Coloured (8,3%), White (5,1%) and Indian/Asian (2,2%)[7] (Figure 4). Figure 5 depicts the youth population estimates by age category and population group. The majority of the youth across all population groups are between the ages of 30-34 years.

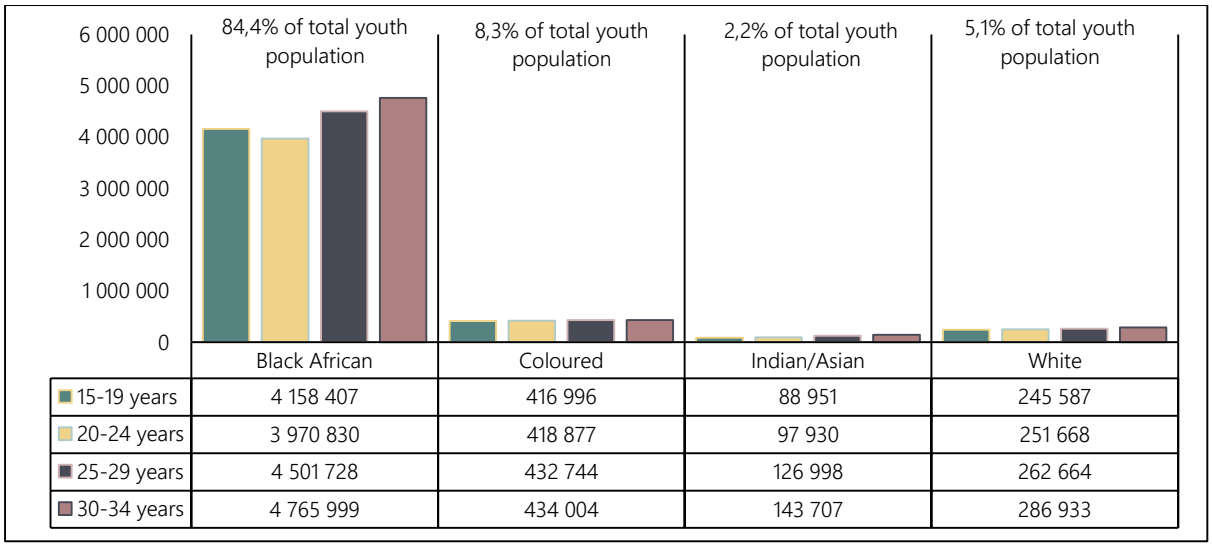
[6] Stats SA, MYPE, 2021
[7] Statistics SA, MYPE. 2021

Figure 4: Youth by Population Group (2021)



Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

Figure 5: Youth Population by Age Category and Population Group (2021)



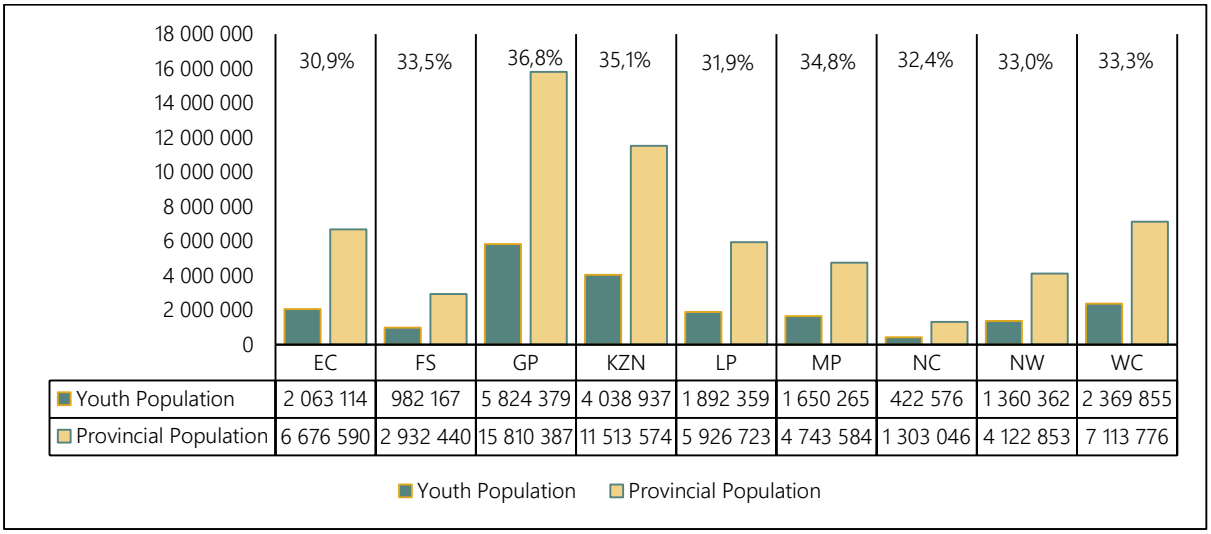
	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White
15-19 years	4 158 407	416 996	88 951	245 587
20-24 years	3 970 830	418 877	97 930	251 668
25-29 years	4 501 728	432 744	126 998	262 664
30-34 years	4 765 999	434 004	143 707	286 933

Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

2.2.4 Youth - Provincial Distribution

Table 2 and Figure 6 shows the distribution of the youth population across the provinces of South Africa. The youth account for over a third of the population in each province. In line with the provincial population distribution, the highest number of youth reside in Gauteng (5 824 379 – 36,8% of the provincial population) and KwaZulu-Natal (4 038 937 – 35,1% of the provincial population), and the lowest number in Northern Cape (422 576 – 32,4% of the provincial population).

Figure 6: Youth Population Estimates by Province (2021)



Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

The percentage distribution of the youth population by province and gender in 2021 is presented in Figure 7. Almost 60% of the total youth population live in Gauteng (28,3%), KwaZulu-Natal (19,6%), and Western Cape (11,5%). These provinces are known to be populous provinces and present better economic prospects to the youth. The lowest proportions of the youth population are found in North West (6,6%), Free State (4,8%) and Northern Cape (2,1%).

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Youth Population by Province & Gender (2021)

	Male Youth	% of RSA Youth	Female Youth	% of RSA Youth	Total Youth	% Share of RSA Youth
EC	1 037 848	10,0%	1 025 266	10,0%	2 063 114	10,0%
FS	492 732	4,7%	489 435	4,8%	982 167	4,8%
GP	2 913 583	28,0%	2 910 796	28,5%	5 824 379	28,3%
KZN	2 023 461	19,5%	2 015 476	19,7%	4 038 937	19,6%
LP	962 016	9,3%	930 343	9,1%	1 892 359	9,2%
MP	843 647	8,1%	806 618	7,9%	1 650 265	8,0%
NC	213 659	2,1%	208 917	2,0%	422 576	2,1%
NW	709 897	6,8%	650 465	6,4%	1 360 362	6,6%
WC	1 198 142	11,5%	1 171 713	11,5%	2 369 855	11,5%
	10 394 985	100,0	10 209 029	100,0	20 604 014	100,0

Source: Stats SA, MYPE, 2021

2.2.5 Youth - Distribution by Geo-Type

Table 3 provides an overview of youth by geo-type and gender for 2020. The table shows that the majority of youth in South Africa live in urban areas (63,4%), compared to rural areas (36,6%), which is in line with the national urban population rate of 63%[8]. These figures suggest the migration of

[8] Stats SA, GHS, 2020

young people from rural areas to urban areas in search of better employment or income-generating opportunities, better education, and access to health care, housing and welfare services.

Table 3: Youth Population by Geo-Type & Gender (2020)

	Number			Percentage		
	Male Youth	Female Youth	Total Youth	Male Youth	Female Youth	Total Youth
Urban	6 563	6 526	13 089	63,7%	63,2%	63,4%
Rural	3 740	3 801	7 541	36,3%	36,8%	36,6%
Total	10 303	10 327	20 630	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source, Stats SA, GHS, 2020

2.3 YOUTH-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Households are defined as all individuals who live together under the same roof or in the same yard, and who share resources such as food or money to keep the household functioning[9]. Most people consider their families and households as their most important social institutions and social reference groups, therefore the characteristics of these households have an important impact on their social and economic wellbeing.

The characteristics of households have changed over the years in South Africa. These changes range from household size, income, and composition, all of which have implications for the resources required to sustain the households. The number of youth-headed households has also increased and have become a common and integral part of South African society. An analysis of household characteristics within the context of youth is therefore critical given that the state and structure of households influence young people's access to various resources and forms of support.

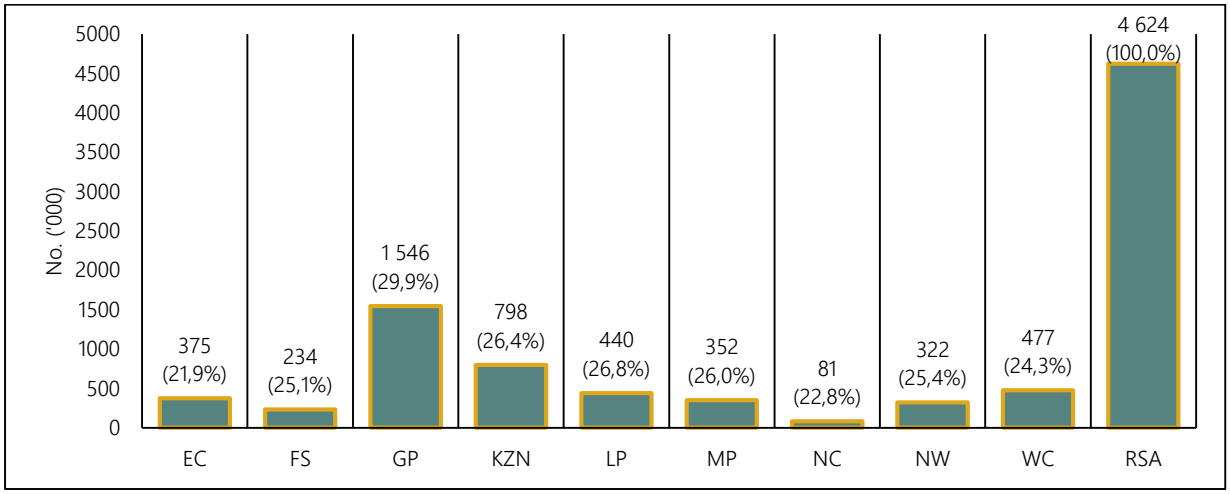
2.3.1 Characteristics of Youth-Headed Households

According to 2020 data, there was an estimated 17,4 million households in South Africa. Overall, there were a total of 4,6 million youth-headed households, representing 26,5% of the total number of households in South Africa[10].

Figure 7 sets out the distribution of youth-headed households (15-34 years) and the proportions in relation to the total number of households by province in 2020. Gauteng had the highest number of youth-headed households (1,5 million), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (798 000). Northern Cape had the lowest number of youth-headed households (81 000), accounting for 1,8% of the total youth-headed households across all provinces.

[9] Stats SA, GHS, 2020
[10] Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Figure 7: Distribution of Youth-Headed Households by Province (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Table 4 depicts the distribution of youth-headed households by gender and age-groups 15-24 years, 25-34 years, and 15-34 years (total). In 2020, households headed by youth aged 15-24 years accounted for 3,1% of the total households in South Africa, while those headed by their older counterparts accounted for 23,5%.

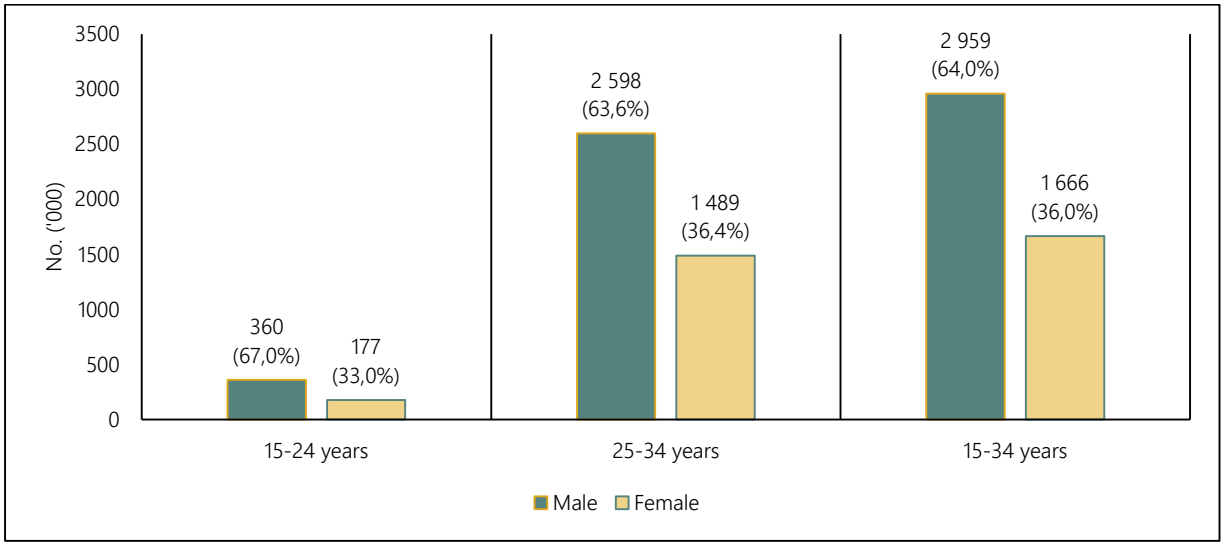
Table 4: Distribution of Youth-Headed Households by Gender & Age Group (2020)

	Youth-Headed Households		Percentage of Total Households
	No. ('000)	Percentage	
15-24 years	537	11,6%	3,1%
25-34 years	4087	88,4%	23,5%
Total (15-34 years)	4624	100,0%	26,5%
Total (RSA) Households	17 418		100,0%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

The gender split for youth-headed households across all the age groups in 2020, showed that the majority are headed by male youth (Figure 8). Data for the total youth-headed households (between the ages of 15 and 34 years) showed that 64,0% were headed by male youth and 36,0% by female youth.

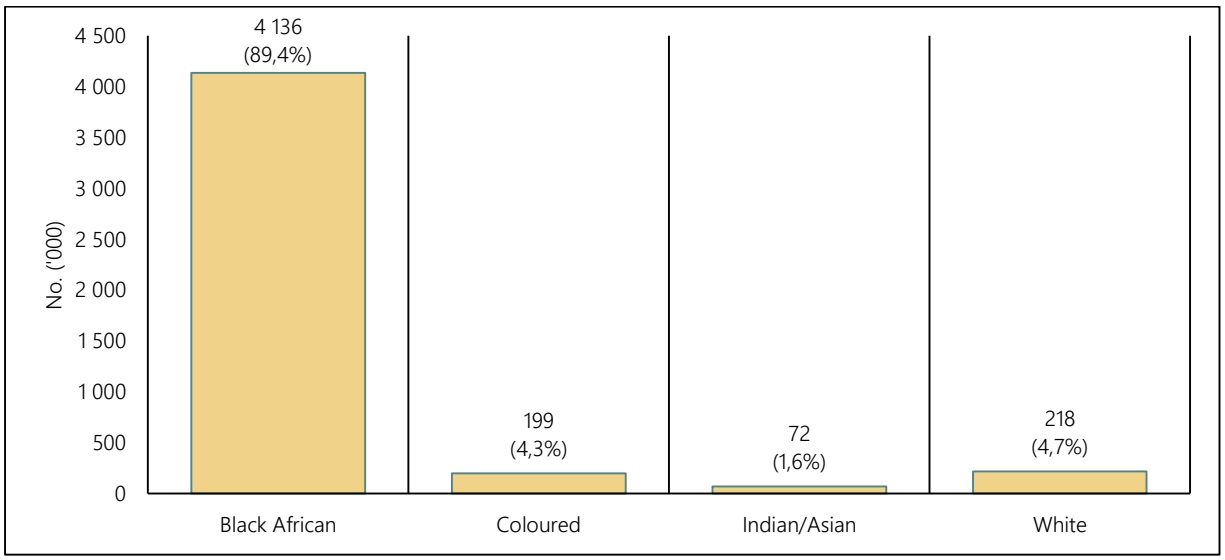
Figure 8: Distribution of Youth-Headed Households by Age Group & Gender (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

In terms of population groups, 89,4% of the households were headed by Black African youth, followed by White youth (4,7%) and Coloured (4,3%) in 2020. Indian/Asian youth headed 1,6% of the households in South Africa (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Distribution of Youth-Headed Households by Population Groups (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

In line with the distribution of the total youth population by geographic type, the majority of youth-headed households (73,1%) are within the urban areas, with 26,9% in the rural parts of the country. Table 5 shows the distribution of youth-headed households by geographic type.

Table 5: Distribution of Youth-Headed Households by Geo-Type (2020)

	Youth-Headed Households	
Geo-Type	Number ('000)	Percentage
Urban	3 381	73,1,%
Rural	1 244	26,9%
Total	4 624	100,0%

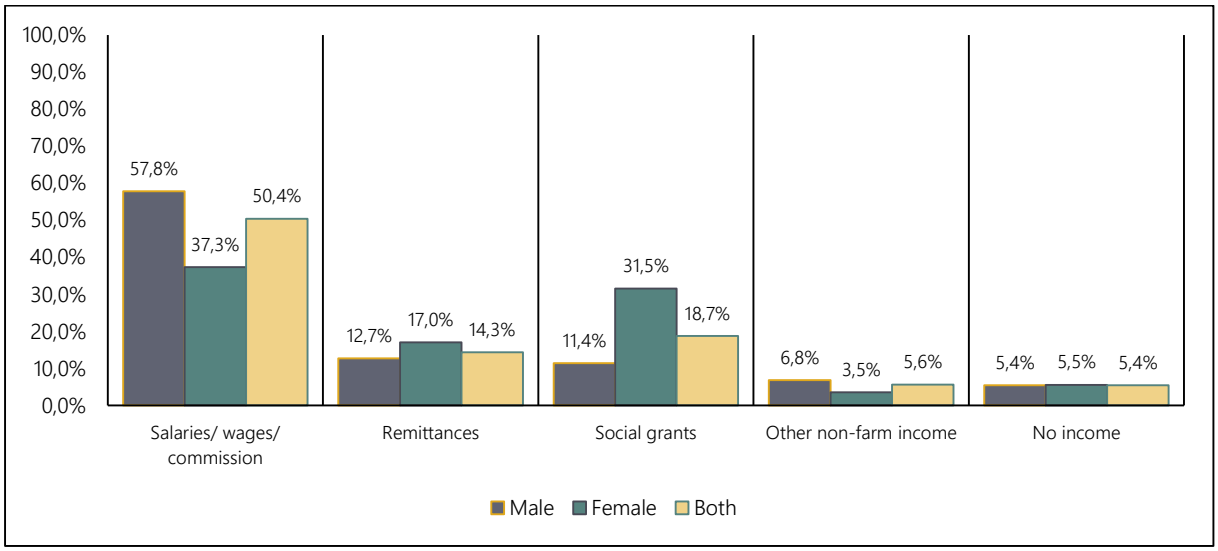
Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

2.3.2 Income Sources of Youth-Headed Households

Salaries/wages/commission were the main source of income for youth-headed households (50,4%) in 2020, with social grants the second most common source of income (18,7%). Remittances and other non-farm income accounted for 14,3% and 5,6% of the income sources for youth-headed households respectively. About 5% of the households were recorded as having no income in 2020 (Figure 10).

In terms of gender, the data shows a higher proportion of male youth-headed households (57,8%) compared to female youth-headed households (37,3%) whose main income source was salaries/wages/commission. There were more female-headed households that relied on remittances (17,0%) and social grants (31,5%) for their main source of income.

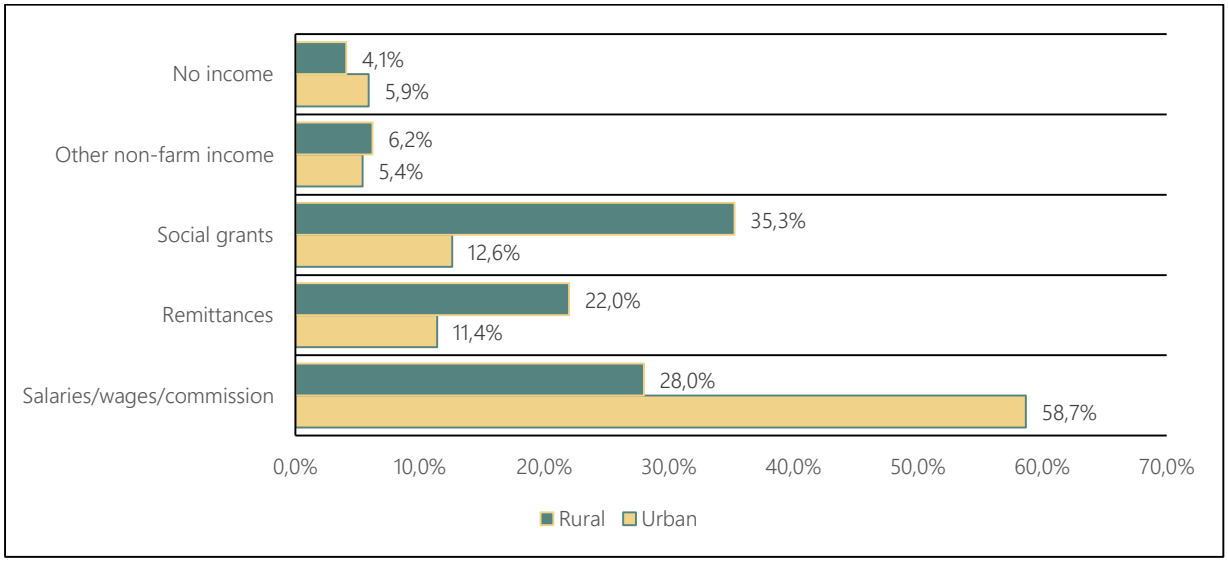
Figure 10: Distribution of Main Sources of Income for Youth-Headed Households by Gender (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

According to Figure 11, the main source of income for the majority of rural youth-headed households was social grants (35,3%). Income from remittances was also common among households found in rural areas (22,0%). A higher proportion of urban youth-headed households were recorded as having no income (5,9%). Salaries/wages/commission remained the most dominant source of income relative to others for both urban and rural households (58,7% and 28,0% respectively).

Figure 11: Distribution of Main Sources of Income for Youth-Headed Households by Geo-Type (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

2.4 SUMMARY

Approximately 20,6 million or 34,3% of the South African population (60,1 million) in 2021, is constituted of individuals aged between 15 to 34 years. Within the different youth age cohorts, the majority of young people are within the age categories of 25-29 years and 30-34 years, as compared to those between 15-19 years and 20-24 years. Gender estimates show that 50,5% of young people are male, with 49,5% female. Black African youth accounted for the majority of the youth population (84,4%) in 2021. In line with the national urban population rate of 63%, the majority of youth live in urban areas (63,4). The youth account for over a third of the population in each province, with almost 60% residing in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape.

There were an estimated 17,4 million households in South Africa in 2020, of which 26,5% (4,6 million) were headed by youth. The majority of youth-headed households (73,1%) are within the urban areas. Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal had the highest number of youth-headed households. Households headed by youth aged 15-24 years accounted for 3,1% of the total households in South Africa, while those headed by their older counterparts accounted for 23,5%. Almost 90% of the youth-headed households were headed by Black African youth. In terms of gender, 64,0% of youth-headed households were headed by male youth and 36,0% by female youth. The main source of income for the majority of rural youth-headed households was social grants and remittances. A higher proportion of urban youth-headed households were recorded as having no income.

South Africa, like many African countries, is a youthful country, with young people representing the largest segment of the population. It is widely recognised that the size of a country's youth population determines its ability and potential for growth. When given the knowledge and opportunities necessary to thrive, youth can be a positive force for development[11].

Each youth age cohort has different racial, gender, and geographic dimensions, indicating that the youth are not a homogeneous group, and as asserted in the NYP (2020-30), require differentiated

[11] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). 2015. Population Facts No.2015/1

and targeted interventions to address their specific needs and situations. Harnessing the full potential of South Africa's youth population requires key actions from all aspects of planning and nation-building – which include an in-depth understanding of the demographic composition and its prospects; incorporating this into all spheres of planning; and developing appropriate and targeted interventions that will realise the full potential of youth.

3. YOUTH LIVING CONDITIONS & POVERTY LEVELS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

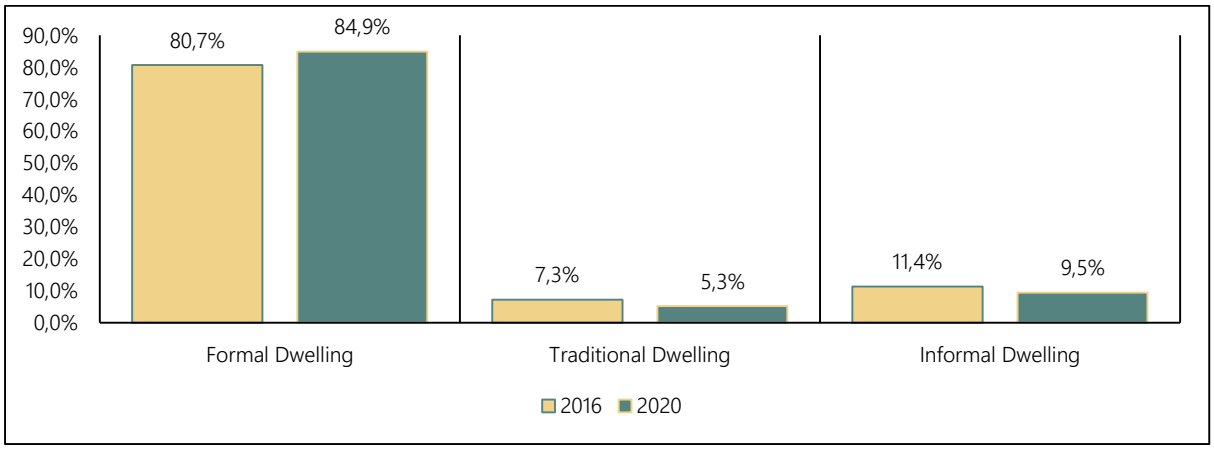
It is estimated that approximately 80 million of Africa's youth live in extreme poverty, representing more than three-quarters of the global total (104 million)[12]. More than two decades after South Africa's transition to democracy, more than half of the youth population in the country continue to live in income poverty. Despite the development of an array of policies and programmes specifically aimed at improving opportunities and correcting the inequities of the past, stubbornly high rates of poverty and inequality persist[13]. The consequences of these inequalities are a matter of grave concern. The circular relationship between poverty, educational outcomes and labour market returns to education means that children and youth who grow up poor are likely to continue to be poor as adults. In this way, the historic and structural patterns of poverty and inequality are reproduced. The importance of interrupting this cycle is widely acknowledged by policy-makers, and is one of the cornerstones of the National Planning Commission's 'Vision 2030', in which there is an explicit focus on building capabilities and substantially improving life chances[14].

This section of the report examines the living conditions and hunger experiences of youth in South Africa, providing analyses on the main sources of income in youth-headed households and the extent of youth poverty.

3.2 YOUTH - ACCESS TO HOUSING

Figure 12 depicts the distribution of youth by type of main dwelling for 2016 and 2020. During this period, the majority of youth resided in formal dwellings (84,9%), which was an increase of 4,2% from 2016. The proportions of youth residing in traditional and informal dwellings declined between 2016 and 2020 (a decrease of 2% in traditional dwellings and 2.1% in informal dwellings).

Figure 12: Distribution of Youth by Main Type of Dwelling (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

[12] Brookings, "More than 100 million young adults are still living in extreme poverty", https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2019/10/17/more-than-100-million-young-adults-are-still-living-in-extreme-poverty/, 2019

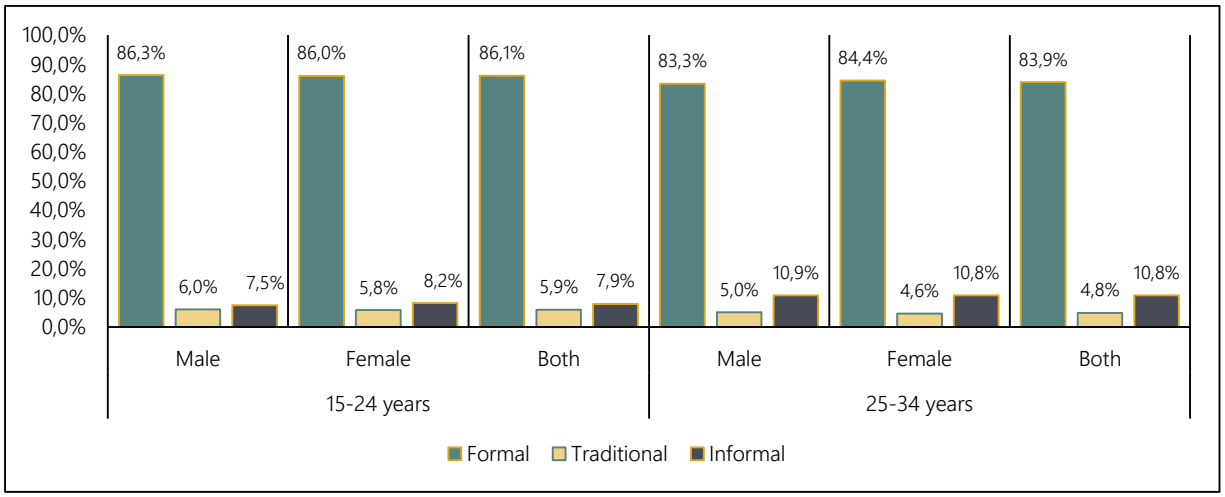
[13] Poverty & Inequality Initiative Policy Brief, "The State of Youth Well-Being in South Africa", 2018

[14] Transformation Audit, "The Youth Dividend: Unlocking the Potential of Young South Africans", 2012

The majority of male and female youth in both age groups resided in formal dwellings in 2020. A higher proportion of male youth between the ages 15-24 years lived in traditional dwellings (6,0%), whilst more female youth resided in informal dwellings (8,2%) compared to males. The same trend can be observed in the 25-34 years' age group.

In terms of the youth age categories, a higher proportion of youth (86,1%) between 15-24 years lived in formal dwellings compared to the 25-34 year age group. A higher proportion (10,8%) of youth in the 25-34 year age group resided in informal dwellings in 2020 (Figure 13).

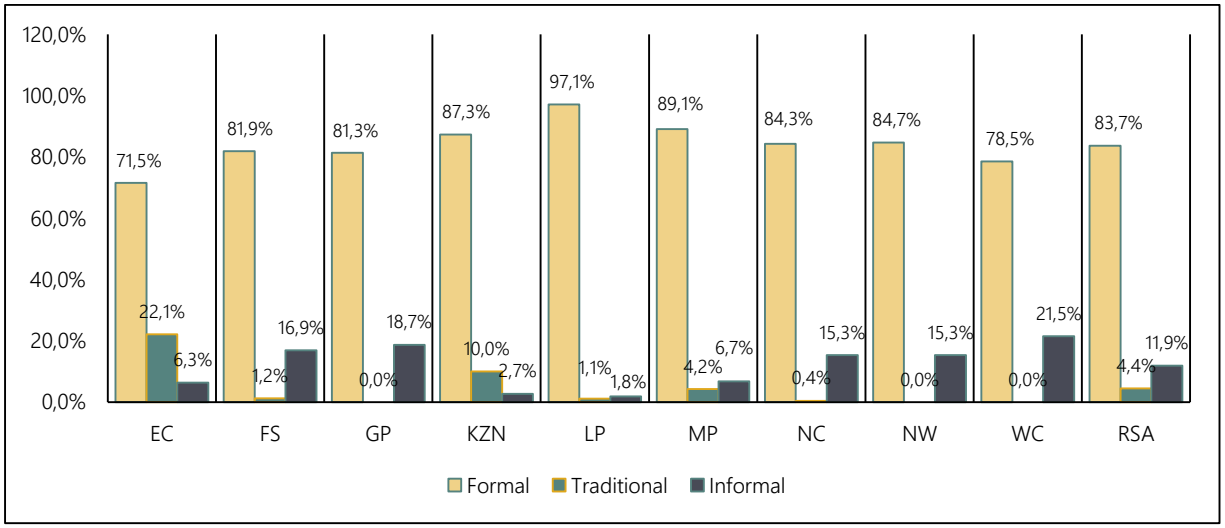
Figure 13: Distribution of Youth by Main Type of Dwelling by Age Group & Gender (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

The provincial profile in Figure 14 shows that Limpopo had the highest proportion of young people living in formal dwellings (97,1%), followed by Mpumalanga (89,1%) and KwaZulu-Natal (87,3%). Eastern Cape had the lowest proportion of youth in formal dwellings (71,5%), and accounted for the largest proportion of youth residing in traditional dwellings (22,1%). The highest proportion of youth living in informal dwellings was in Western Cape (21,5%).

Figure 14: Distribution of Youth by Main Type of Dwelling by Province (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

3.3 HOUSEHOLD INCOME SOURCES

Assessing income sources and income distribution is important for gauging the individuals' and households' economic well-being, as they influence households' access to resources and ability to meet their needs[15]. Household income sources such as social grants are critical in improving household welfare as they help households to achieve some minimum standard of living[16].

Table 6 presents the different sources of income for households with and without youth by province. Nationally, in 2020, the three main sources of income for households with youth were salaries/wages/commissions (52,4%), social grants (29,4%) and remittances (9,8%). At a provincial level, salaries/wages/commission were the main income source for households with youth in six provinces; whereas social grants were the main income source in Eastern Cape, Free State and Limpopo (43,9%, 43,5% and 44,5%). Remittances were the third main source of income for households with youth in all provinces, except for Western Cape where income from a business (7,2%) was in this position.

Table 6: Percentage of Households with Youth (15-34 Years) by Income Source & Province (2020)

	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	RSA (HH with youth)	RSA (HH without youth)
Salaries/ wages/ commissions	37,3%	41,9%	65,0%	50,4%	35,3%	45,5%	49,8%	42,7%	67,9%	52,4%	47,1%
Income from a business	4,6%	4,8%	7,6%	7,1%	6,0%	5,2%	4,8%	6,1%	7,2%	6,4%	12,1%
Remittances	11,9%	5,4%	7,8%	10,3%	13,1%	13,7%	5,4%	14,7%	3,7%	9,8%	6,3%
Pensions	1,9%	2,0%	0,7%	0,4%	0,8%	1,6%	2,0%	1,2%	0,6%	0,9%	5,7%
Grants	43,9%	43,5%	16,4%	31,3%	44,5%	33,9%	36,9%	34,9%	19,5%	29,4%	27,3%
Sales of farm products & services	0,0%	0,2%	0,1%	0,1%	0,1%	0,0%	0,2%	0,2%	0,0%	0,1%	0,2%
Other income sources e.g. rental income, interest	0,3%	1,0%	2,3%	0,4%	0,3%	0,1%	1,0%	0,3%	1,1%	1,0%	1,4%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

The World Bank defines cash transfers as the provision of assistance in the form of cash to the poor or to those who face a probable risk, in the absence of the transfer, of falling into poverty[17]. Rural areas are characterised by high levels of unemployment and poverty, therefore the majority of households are dependent on social grants for qualifying household members such as the elderly, children and persons with disabilities.

Figure 15 shows that the main sources of income for rural households with youth was social grants (46,9%), salaries/wages/commission (33,0%), and remittances (13,7%). Over 60% of the urban households with youth relied on salaries/wages/commission as their main income source (61,9%), with

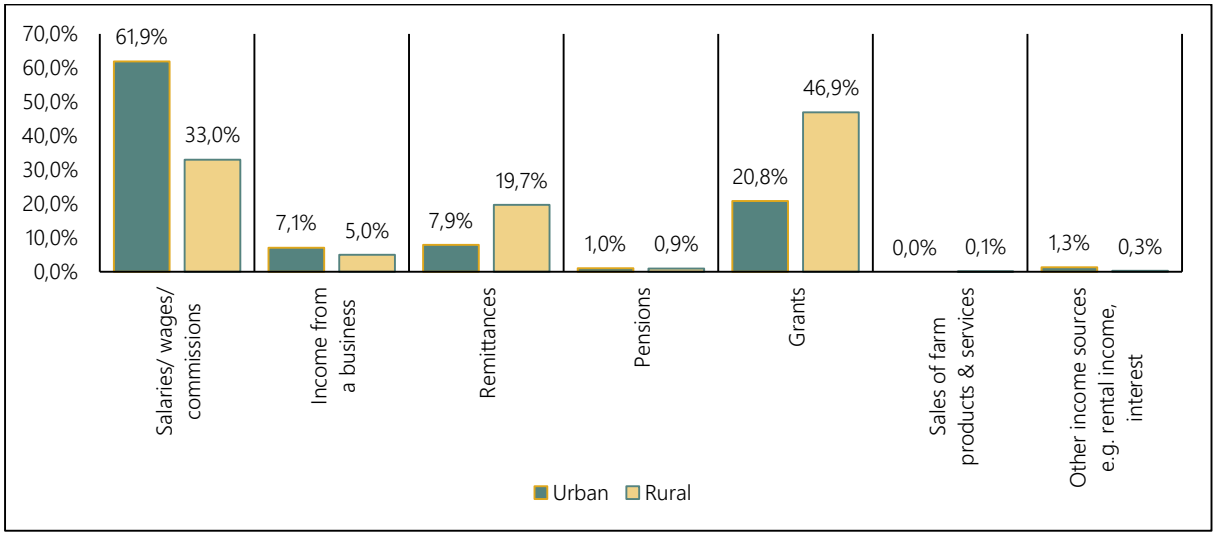
[15] Stats SA, Social Profile of Youth, 2014-20

[16] Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute, "The role of social grants in supporting economic development (LED)", 2012

[17] World Bank Institute, "Assisting the Poor with Cash: Design and Implementation of Social Transfer Programs", 2002

20,8% dependent on social grants. All other sources of income, with the exception of grants and remittances, were predominantly found in urban households.

Figure 15: Percentage of Household with Youth (15-34 Years) by Income Source & Geo-Type (2020)



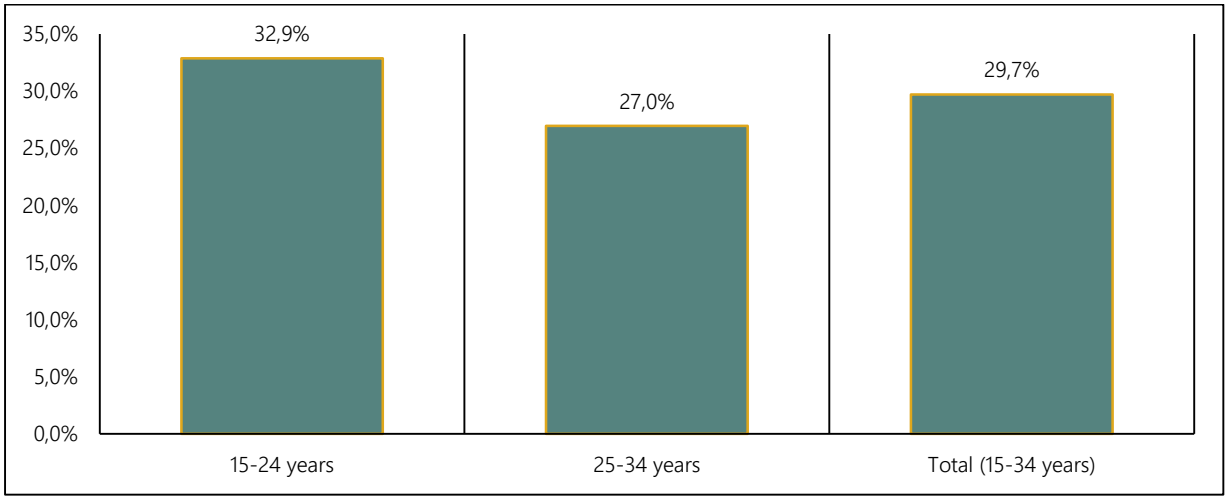
Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

3.4 YOUTH - HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT AN EMPLOYED ADULT

Employment is one of the main sources of income for households and a key driver of escaping poverty. Unemployment disrupts the economic well-being of many households, particularly with regards to the provision of essentials and necessities such as food, education, healthcare, and transportation. Therefore, households without employed adults are more susceptible to poverty.

In 2020, 29,7% of the total youth population lived in households without an employed adult (Figure 16). A higher proportion of young people within the 15-24 years' age group were affected (32,9%), compared to those aged 25-34 years (27,0%).

Figure 16: Youth Living in Households without an Employed Adult by Age Group (2020)

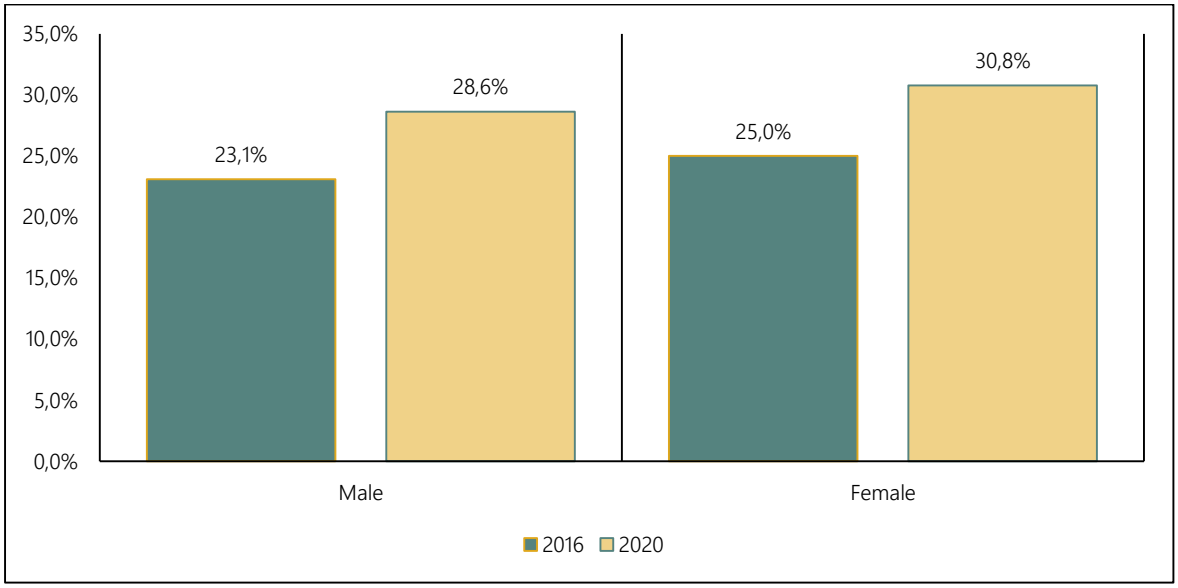


Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Figure 17 shows the proportion of males and females aged 15-34 years living in households without an employed adult. The data shows that the percentage of youth living in these vulnerable households

has increased, with males increasing by an average of 5,5% (from 23,1% in 2016 to 28,6% in 2020), and females increasing by 5,8% (from 25,0% in 2016 to 30,8% in 2020).

Figure 17: Youth Living in Households without an Employed Adult by Gender (2016 & 2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

3.5 YOUTH - HUNGER & POVERTY

Food security occurs when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy lifestyle. Food insecurity occurs when people's access to food is minimally adequate and they have trouble meeting their basic needs, while severe inadequate access to food occurs when there is a critical lack of access to food[18].

Whilst South Africa is food secure at a national level, the country is still food insecure at household level as not all households have access to adequate food[19]. Almost 10,8% of South African households had experienced hunger in 2020, whilst 20,6% had inadequate or severe inadequate access to food[20].

With regards to the youth population, 12,8% (2,6 million) in South Africa lived in households that experienced hunger in 2020. According to the youth age groups, 12,7% were between 15 and 24 years, and 13,0% aged between 25 and 34 years (Table 7).

Table 7: Youth Living in Households that Reported Hunger by Age Group (2020)

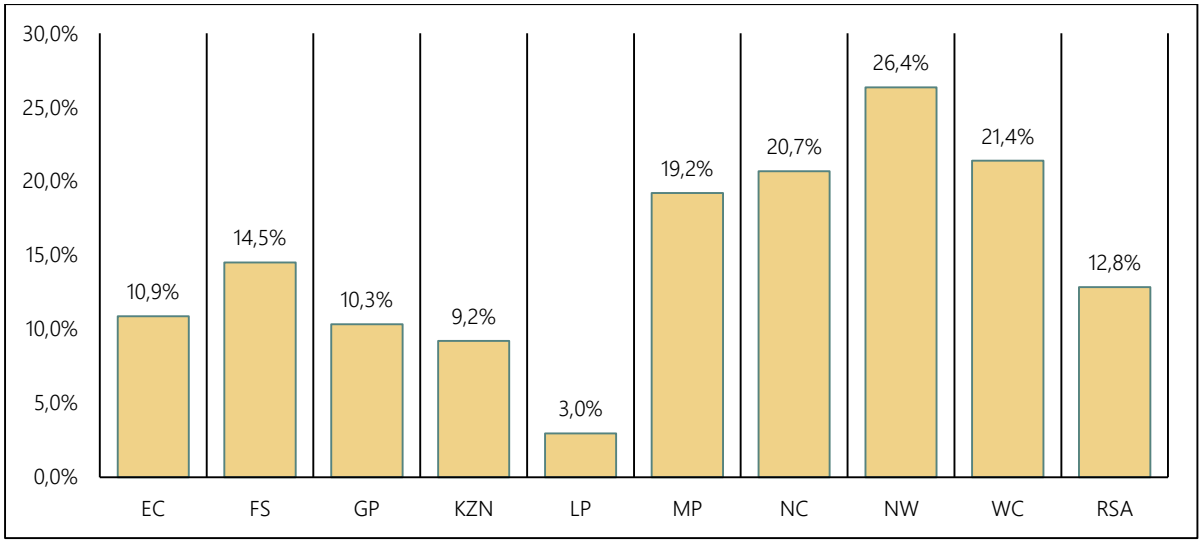
	Total Youth Population	No. Reported Hunger ('000)	% Reported Hunger
15-24 years	9 564	1 213	12,7%
25-34 years	11 024	1 431	13,0%
Total	20 588	2 644	12,8%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

[18] https://www.oxfam.org/en/food-insecurity-infographic
[19] Stats SA, "Towards Measuring the extent of Food Security in South Arica: an examination of hunger and food inadequacy", 2017
[20] Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Figure 18 depicts youth in households that experienced hunger by province in 2020. North West province recorded the highest proportion of youth in households that experienced hunger during the period (26,4%), followed by the Western Cape (21,4%) and Northern Cape (20,7%). Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng had the lowest percentages of youth in households that reported hunger (3,0%, 9,2% and 10,3% respectively).

Figure 18: Youth Living in Households that Reported Hunger by Province (2020)



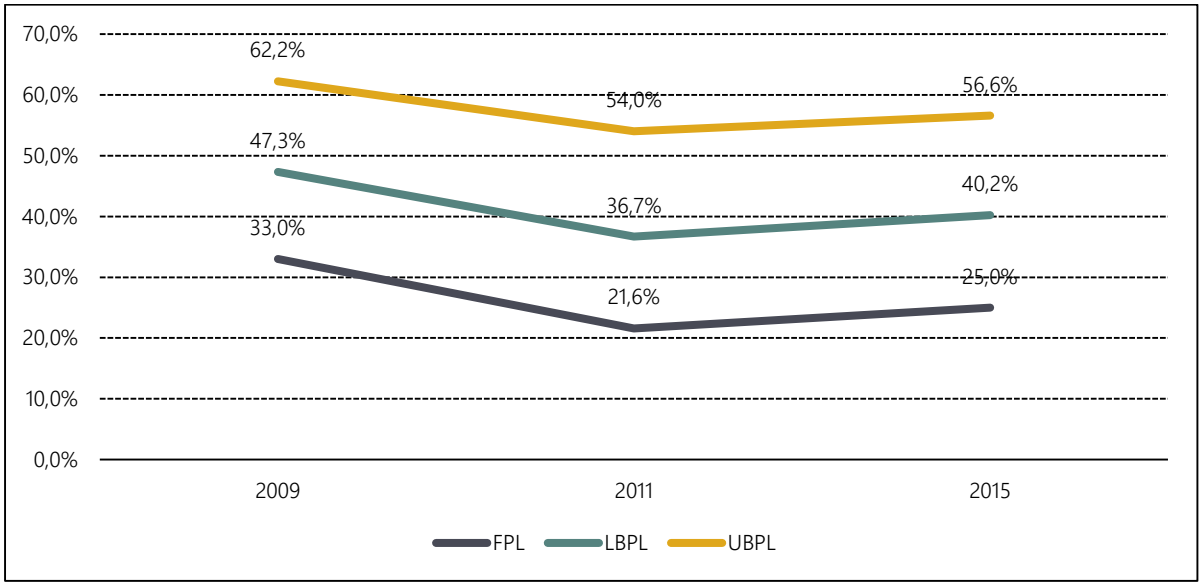
Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Poverty lines are important tools that allow for the statistical reporting of poverty levels and patterns. In South Africa, three national poverty lines were constructed using the cost-of-basic-needs approach which links welfare to the consumption of goods and services. The Food Poverty Line (FPL) refers to the amount of money that an individual will need to afford the minimum required daily energy intake. The rand values of the FPL were: R318 in 2009, R335 in 2011, and R441 in 2015. The Lower-Bound Poverty Line (LBPL) refers to a threshold below which individuals who do not have command over enough resources to purchase or consume both adequate food and non-food items, and are therefore forced to sacrifice food to obtain essential non-food items. The Rand values of the LBPL were: R456 in 2009, R501 in 2011 and R647 in 2015. The Upper Bound Poverty Line (UBPL) is a threshold of relative deprivation below which people cannot afford the minimum desired lifestyle by most South Africans. The Rand values of the UBPL were R709 for 2009, and R779 for 2011 and R992 for 2015[21].

Figure 19 shows the proportion of the youth population living below the FPL, LBPL and UBPL for the years 2009, 2011 and 2015. The data shows a decline in the proportions between 2009 and 2011 for all three poverty lines. However, an upward trajectory was then recorded between 2011 and 2015. The proportion of youth living below the FPL increased by 3,4% (from 21,6% to 25,0%); with those living below the LBPL increasing by 3,5% (from 36,7% in 2011 to 40,2%% in 2015); and young people below the UBPL increasing from 54,0% in 2011 to 56,6% in 2015 (increase of 2,6%).

[21] Stats SA, "Men, Women and Children: Findings of the Living Conditions Survey 2014/15", 2018

Figure 19: Proportion of Youth Living Below FPL, LBPL & UBPL (2009, 2011 and 2015)



Source: Stats SA, Living Conditions Survey 2014/15

3.6 YOUTH - SOCIAL GRANTS

Table 8 shows that in 2020, a total of 3,4 million youth relied on social grants (16,6% of the total youth population). The majority of the youth social grant beneficiaries were between the ages of 15 and 24 years (73,9%), whilst 26,1% of grant recipients were aged 25-34 years old. In terms of the gender split, a higher proportion of youth beneficiaries were male (57,6%), with 42,4% female (Table 9).

Table 8: Youth Beneficiaries of Social Grants by Age Group (2020)

	No. of Beneficiaries ('000)	Total Youth Population	% of Beneficiaries
15-24 years	2 530	9 582	73,9%
25-34 years	895	11 049	26,1%
Total	3 425	20 630	16,6%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Table 9: Youth Beneficiaries of Social Grants by Gender (2020)

	No. of Beneficiaries ('000)	Total Youth Population	% of Beneficiaries
Male	1 972	10 303	19,1%
Female	1 452	10 327	14,1%
Total	3 425	20 630	16,6%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

3.7 LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE YOUTH

The living condition indicators of youth (Table 10) show that, although marginal, the living conditions of youth are lower than the general population. In 2020, only 72,9% of young people (15-34 years) had access to piped water, 81,9% had access to improved sanitation, 61,6% had their refuse/waste removed by the municipality, 92,6% had access to electricity connected to the mains, and 11,6% use solid fuels for cooking.

Table 10: Living Conditions Indicators of Youth Compared to the Overall Population (2020)

	Access to Piped Water	Access to Improved Sanitation	Refuse/Waste Removal by Municipality	Access to Electricity Connected to Mains	Use Solid Fuels for Cooking
Not youth	73,7%	82,9%	62,1%	93,1%	11,5%
15-24 years	71,0%	81,5%	59,1%	94,0%	13,0%
25-34 years	74,5%	82,2%	63,8%	91,4%	10,4%
15-34 years	72,9%	81,9%	61,6%	92,6%	11,6%
Total	73,4%	82,5%	61,9%	92,9%	11,5%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

3.8 IMPACT OF COVID-19 & GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown has had adverse effects on the livelihood of many South Africans, particularly young people who constitute a large proportion of the South African population. In response, the South African government implemented a package of relief measures to expand social assistance. This included the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant (SRDG) of R350 per month, aimed at individuals aged 18 years and older, who were unemployed during the lockdown and who did not receive any form of income or social grant, support from the National Student Financial Aid, or benefits from the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)[22]. Upon further review, the government decided to extend the Distress Grant period several times to most recently, March 2023. In April 2022, the state of disaster was lifted and the SRDG began to be administered under the new Social Assistance Act. This changed the qualifying criteria for SRD grant beneficiaries.

In 2022, the NYDA commissioned a Rapid Evaluation of the SRDG, amongst which, some of the study objectives included measuring youth participation the SRDG and the impact of the grant on youth economic conditions[23]. The study was conducted in 2022, and reflects data collected during 2021. The following sub-sections summarises some of the main findings of the study, and provides additional data captured during 2022.

3.8.1 Youth Participation in the SRDG

With regards to the youth, a total of 8 877 054 applications were submitted for the SRDG, of which 5 746 748 were approved (64,7%), 2 833 560 were rejected (31,9%), and 296 746 (3,3%) were pending approval[24]. The highest number of applications were submitted by youth from KwaZulu-Natal (2,1

[22] Department of Labour, Notice 215 of 2020 - COVID -19 Temporary Employee/Employer Relief Scheme (C19 TERS), 2020

[23] NYDA, "Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant", 2022

[24] NYDA, "Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant", 2022

million), followed by Gauteng (1,7 million) and Limpopo (13,3%) – accounting for 56,3% of the total youth applications submitted for the SRDG (Table 11).

Table 11: National Youth Participation in SRDG by Province

Province	Total Youth Applications (No.)	% of Total Youth Applications
Gauteng	1 742 104	19,6%
Mpumalanga	809 612	9,1%
Limpopo	1 178 191	13,3%
North West	590 105	6,6%
Free State	479 565	5,4%
Northern Cape	189 862	2,1%
Eastern Cape	1 128 638	12,7%
Western Cape	680 690	7,7%
KwaZulu-Natal	2 078 287	23,4%
Total	8 877 054	100,0%

Source: Adapted from NYDA, Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant, 2022

3.8.2 Outcomes of Youth Applications by Province

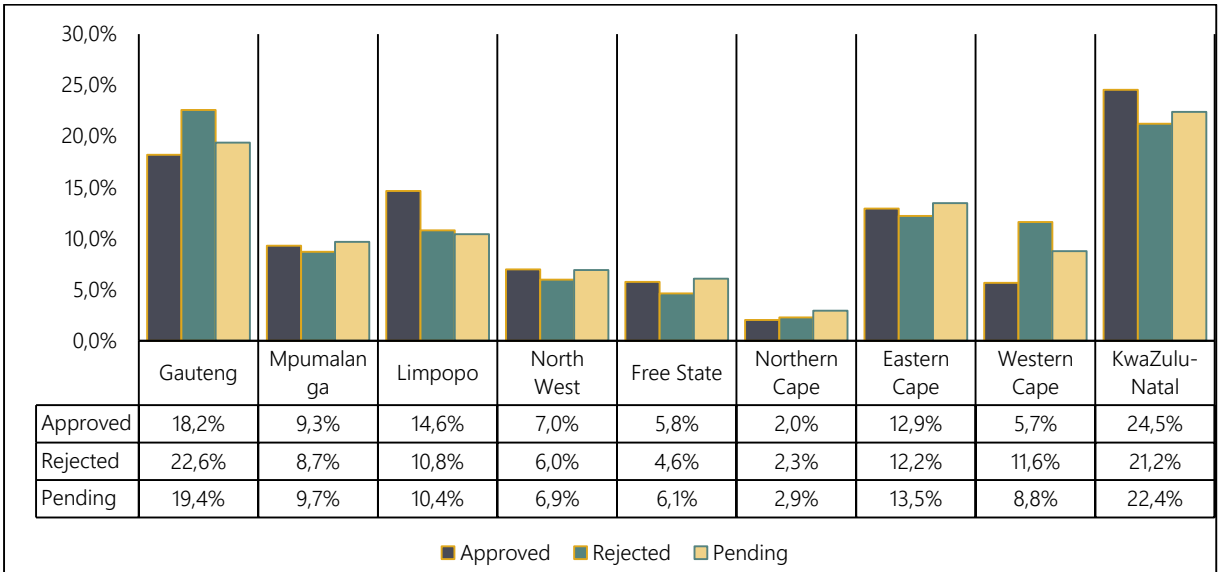
Table 12 and Figure 20 show that in line with the number of applications submitted, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Limpopo had the largest proportion of approved applications (24,5%, 18,2% and 14,6% respectively). In terms of rejected applications, 22,6% were from Gauteng, 21,2% from KwaZulu-Natal, and 12,2% from Eastern Cape.

Table 12: Outcomes of Youth Applications to SRDG by Province

	Number				Percentage			
Province	Approved	Rejected	Pending	Total	Approved	Rejected	Pending	Total
Gauteng	1 044 813	639 832	57 459	1 742 104	18,2%	22,6%	19,4%	100,0%
Mpumalanga	534 242	246 675	28 695	809 612	9,3%	8,7%	9,7%	100,0%
Limpopo	841 422	305 829	30 940	1 178 191	14,6%	10,8%	10,4%	100,0%
North West	400 274	169 288	20 543	590 105	7,0%	6,0%	6,9%	100,0%
Free State	330 574	130 984	18 007	479 565	5,8%	4,6%	6,1%	100,0%
Northern Cape	116 372	64 800	8 690	189 862	2,0%	2,3%	2,9%	100,0%
Eastern Cape	742 844	345 821	39 973	1 128 638	12,9%	12,2%	13,5%	100,0%
Western Cape	325 769	328 886	26 035	680 690	5,7%	11,6%	8,8%	100,0%
KwaZulu-Natal	1 410 438	601 445	66 404	2 078 287	24,5%	21,2%	22,4%	100,0%
Total	5 746 748	2 833 560	296 746	8 877 054	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: Adapted from NYDA, Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant, 2022

Figure 20: Outcomes of Youth Applications to SRDG by Province



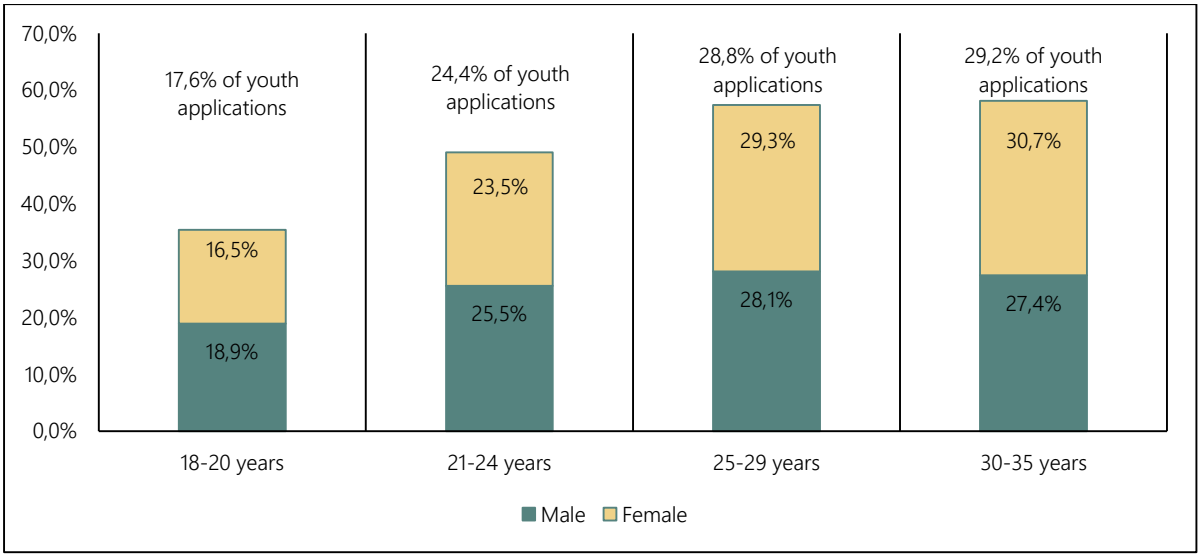
	Gauteng	Mpumalanga	Limpopo	North West	Free State	Northern Cape	Eastern Cape	Western Cape	KwaZulu-Natal
Approved	18,2%	9,3%	14,6%	7,0%	5,8%	2,0%	12,9%	5,7%	24,5%
Rejected	22,6%	8,7%	10,8%	6,0%	4,6%	2,3%	12,2%	11,6%	21,2%
Pending	19,4%	9,7%	10,4%	6,9%	6,1%	2,9%	13,5%	8,8%	22,4%

Source: Adapted from NYDA, Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant, 2022

3.8.3 Youth Applicants by Gender

The results show that the majority of the youth applications were made by females (53,8%) in relation to male youth (46,2%). In terms of the age groups, only a higher proportion of male youth applicants were in the age categories 18-20 years and 21-24 years. The largest proportion of SRDG applications were submitted by young people aged 30-35 years (29,2%). The lowest proportion of youth applicants were between the ages of 18 and 20 years (17,6%).

Figure 21: Youth Applications to SRDG by Age Group & Gender



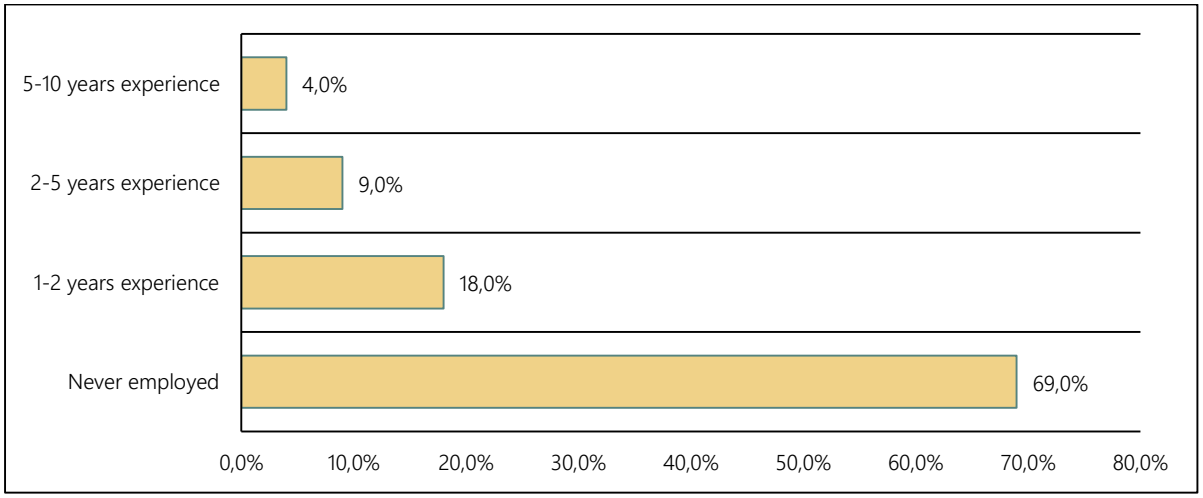
Source: Adapted from NYDA, Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant, 2022

3.8.4 Youth Applicants by Employment History

Results from the study indicated that the highest proportion of applications were submitted by young people who had not been employed before (69,0%). This result was anticipated given the high youth unemployment rate prior to the pandemic, and the need for youth to access a source of income to meet their basic needs. Youth with 1-2 years of work experience accounted for 18,0% of the

applications, 9,0% had 2-5 years of experience, whilst the lowest proportion of youth applicants (4,0%) had 5-10 years of prior work experience.

Figure 22: SRDG Youth Applications by Employment History

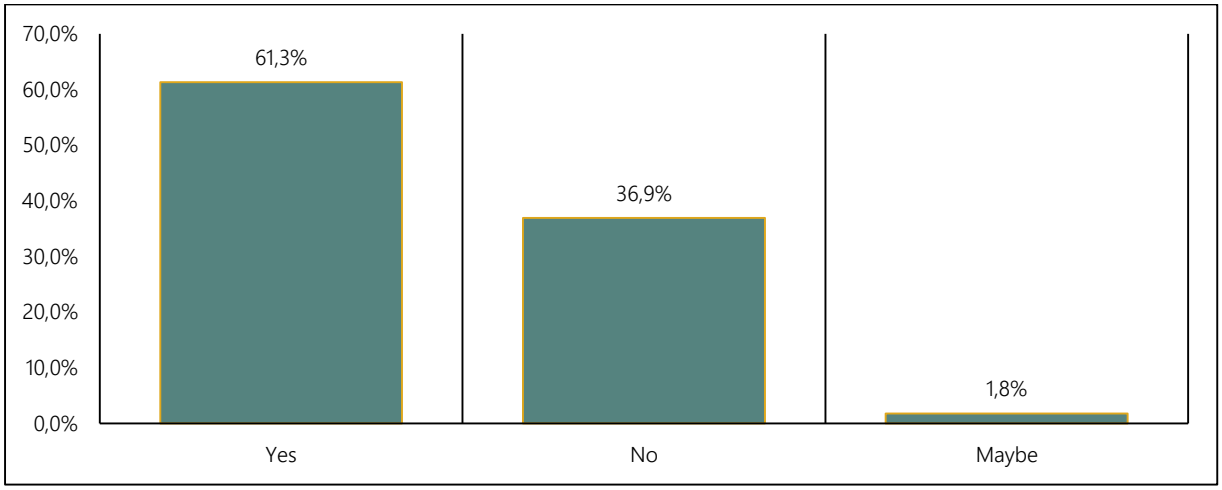


Source: Adapted from NYDA, Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant, 2022

3.8.5 Impact of the SRDG on Youth

The study results showed that of youth beneficiaries, 61,3% indicated that the SRDG had made a positive impact, 36,9% stated that the grant had no impact, whilst 1,8% felt that the grant might have had an impact.

Figure 23: Impact of the SRDG



Source: Adapted from NYDA, Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant, 2022

The study found that the most impact was created around consumer goods and services – namely food (53,0%), utility bills (16,0%), clothing (12,0%), education (8,0%), PPE (3,0%), and transport (4,0%) and rent (4,0%)[25]. In terms of those youth who indicated that the SRDG did not make an impact, this was mainly due to the perception that the R350 grant was insufficient to meet their needs.

3.8.6 Total SRDG Applications (May 2020-May 2022)

Table 13 below reflects the total number of youth applications submitted for the SRDG between May 2020 and May 2022. In April 2021, youth applications accounted for 62,8% of the total number of

[25] NYDA, "Rapid Evaluation of the Social Relief of Distress Grant", 2022

applications received. Almost 60% of the applications in March 2022 were submitted by youth. The figures for May 2022 reflect the applications received following the amendments to SRDG requirements/criteria.

Table 13: Number of Youth Applications for SRDG (30 April 2021-03 May 2022)

	30 April 2021		31 March 2022		03 May 2022	
Age group	No. of Applications	% of Total SRDG Applications Received	No. of Applications	% of Total SRDG Applications Received	No. of Applications	% of Total SRDG Applications Received
Under 20 yrs	638 212	6,0%	1 032 644	6,5%	430 652	5.1%
20-24	2 321 538	22,8%	2 946 189	18,6%	1 562 001	18.4%
25-29	1 775 222	17,7%	2 727 912	17,2%	1 492 093	17.6%
30-35	1 558 918	16,3%	2 785 890	17,6%	1 520 335	17.9%
Total Youth Applications	9 537 077	62,8%	15 862 684	59,8%	8 493 883	59,0%

Source: Adapted from: SASSA, First Report on COVID SRD, April 2022

3.9 SUMMARY

In 2020, the majority of youth resided in formal dwellings, mainly in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. The highest proportion of youth living in informal dwellings was in Western Cape.

Nationally, the three main sources of income for households with youth were salaries/wages/commissions, social grants, and remittances. The majority of rural households with youth relied on social grants as their main income source, whilst salaries/wages/commission was the main income source for households based in urban areas.

The number of youth living in households without an employed adult has increased between 2016 and 2020. A higher proportion of young people within the 15-24 years' age group live in these vulnerable households, compared to those aged 25-34 years.

Approximately 2,6 million youth in South Africa lived in households that experienced hunger in 2020. A quarter of the youth population live below the FPL, 40% below the LBPL, and over 50% below the UBPL. A total of 3,4 million youth relied on social grants, the majority of which were in the youth age cohort 15-24 years, and male youth. Although marginal, the living conditions of youth are still lower than the general population. The SRDG has had a positive impact, and has assisted youth in meeting their basic needs and improved participation in education.

The poverty dynamics described in the previous section highlight the fact that various dimensions of poverty affect the youth. Over half of the youth population live below the UBPL. Basic living conditions for the South African youth have improved, but they still fall below the levels for other age groups of the population. Significant proportions of young people are reported living in households that experienced hunger in 2020. Targeted policies and interventions that address each of these dimensions of poverty are necessary to break the cycle of poverty experienced by young people.

4. YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Estimates suggest that there are between 180 and 220 million youth with disabilities worldwide, and nearly 80% of them live in developing countries[26]. Over 7% of South Africa's population aged 5 years and older were classified as disabled in 2016[27]. The United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) define persons with disabilities in Article 1 as including "*… those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others*". Although having a disability is not an inherent reason to keep a person from participating in socioeconomic and recreational activities, it is widely acknowledged that persons with disabilities are often marginalised and their lives characterised by prejudice, social isolation, poverty and discrimination in almost all societies.

Mainstreaming disability in society has been well articulated at global, regional and national levels. However, there is a marked lack of empirical research on the prevalence of disabilities among the youth population[28]. It is widely recognised that in order for this to be realised, research is essential for increasing public understanding about disability issues, informing formulation of disability policies and programmes, and promoting efficiency in resource allocation. Disability statistics provide the basis for measuring progress in realising the rights of persons with disabilities. For South Africa's youth population, statistical evidence is important for the development of appropriate policies, programmes and interventions to ensure that youth with disabilities have equal access to education, employment and basic services.

There is a lack of recent statistics available on youth with disabilities. The following section therefore provides data and analyses relating to youth with disabilities, based on Statistics South Africa Census 2011 and Community Survey (CS, 2016) data.

4.2 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES BY PROVINCE

In 2016, the national disability prevalence rate was 7,7% (a total number of 3,8 million persons with disabilities). As presented in Table 14, provincial variations showed that the Free State and Northern Cape provinces had the highest proportion of persons with disabilities (11,0% and 10,7% respectively). Western Cape and Limpopo showed the lowest percentages of persons with disabilities (6,3% and 6,4% respectively)[29].

[26] United Nations, Division for Social Policy and Development, Fact sheet on Youth with Disabilities, http://social.un.org/youthyear/docs/Fact%20sheet%20youth%20with%20disabilities.pdf

[27] Stats SA, CS, 2016

[28] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Disability, 2022

[29] Stats SA, CS, 2016

Table 14: Distribution of Disabled Persons by Province (2016)

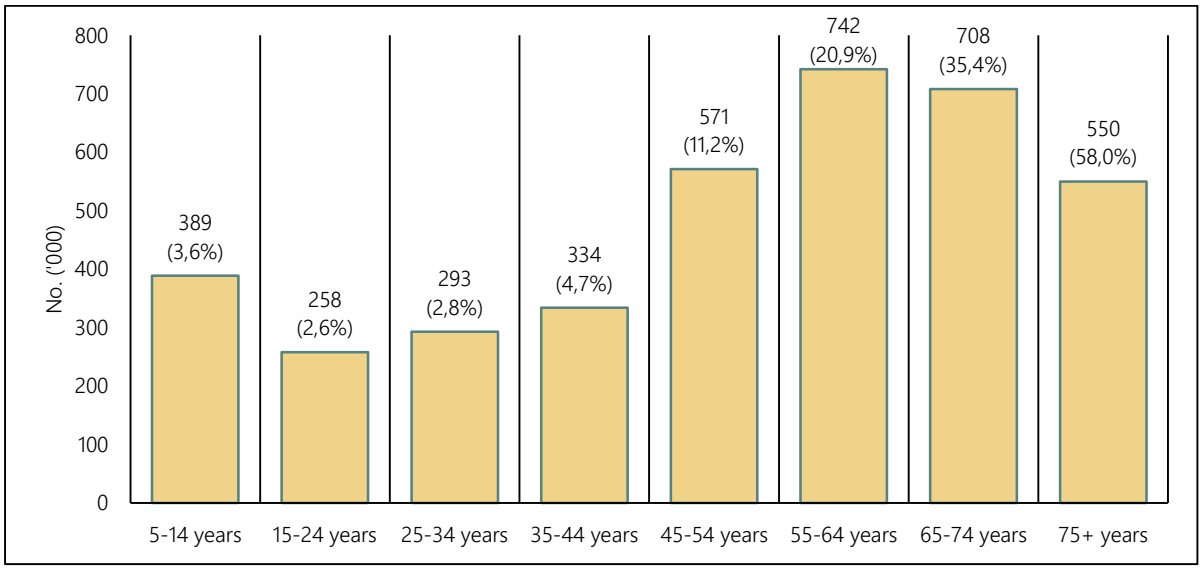
	No. ('000)		
	Disabled	Total Population	Percent Disabled
EC	529	6 179	8,6%
FS	282	2 560	11,0%
GP	811	12 148	6,7%
KZN	837	9 718	8,6%
LP	325	5 082	6,4%
MP	290	3 840	7,6%
NC	115	1 076	10,7%
NW	292	3 339	8,7%
WC	362	5 703	6,3%
RSA	3 843	49 645	7,7%

Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

4.3 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES BY AGE GROUP

Figure 24 profiles disability prevalence in South Africa by age based on population figures from the Statistics South Africa CS (2016). The results showed that although there were slightly higher rates in the 5-14 years' age group (3,6%)[30] which declined to 2,5% in the 15-24 years' age group, the proportion of persons with disabilities increased with age, with youth between 25 and 34 years accounting for 3,0%, and more than half of the persons aged 75+ years reported as having a disability.

Figure 24: Distribution of Disabled Persons by Age Group (2016)



Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

[30] It was noted that parents misreported on children by categorising them as either "unable to do" and/or "having a lot of difficulty to perform certain functions", when in reality this is an aspect that can be attributed to the child's level of development rather than an impairment (CS, 2016).

4.4 YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES BY AGE GROUP & GENDER

Table 15 shows that the total number of youth with disabilities (15-34 years) was roughly 551 000, and accounted for 2,7% of persons with disabilities in 2016 (3,8 million persons).

Table 15: Distribution of Youth with Disabilities by Age Group

	Youth with Disabilities	Total Population	Percentage Youth with Disabilities of Total Population
	No. ('000)		%
15-24 years	258	9 819	2,6%
25-34 years	293	10 618	2,8%
TOTAL (15-34 years)	551	20 437	2,7%

Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

In terms of gender, the results reflected in Table 16 show higher disability prevalence among female youth (59,0%) than male youth (41,0%). Male youth with disabilities had a higher prevalence rate (5,9%) than females (1,6%) in relation to the total number of persons with disabilities in South Africa.

Table 16: Distribution of Youth with Disabilities by Gender (2016)

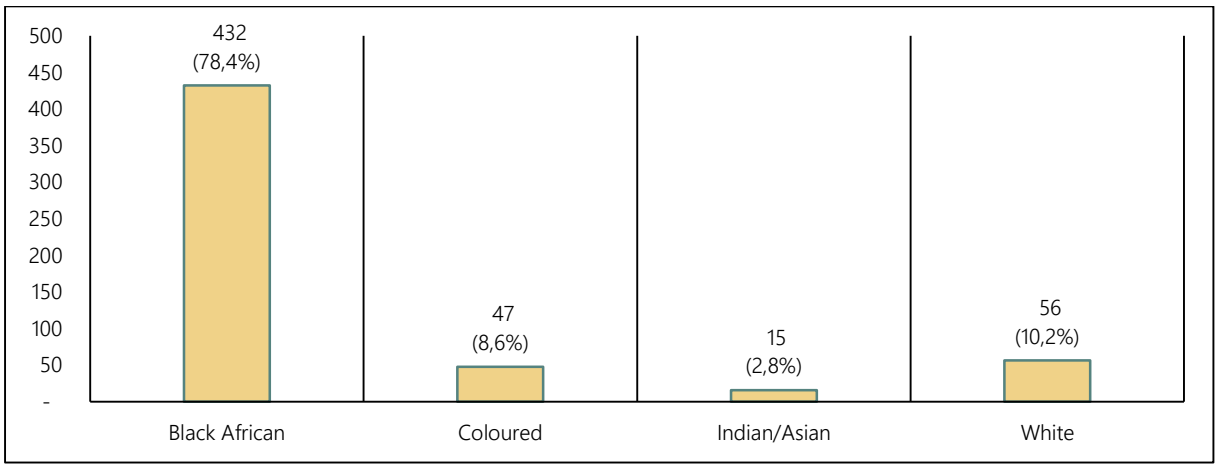
	No. ('000)		Percentage		
	Youth with Disabilities	Total Population	% of Total Population	% of Disabled Population	% of Youth with Disabilities
Male	226	24 215	0,9%	5,9%	41,0%
Female	325	25 429	1,3%	1,6%	59,0%
Total	551	49 644	1,1%	100,0%	100%

Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

4.5 YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES BY POPULATION GROUP

In 2016, the majority of youth with disabilities were Black African (78,4%), followed by White (10,2%). The disability prevalence rates for Coloured and Indian/Asian youth were 8,6% and 2,8% respectively (Figure 25).

Figure 25: Distribution of Youth by Population Group (2016)



Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

4.6 YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES & EDUCATION

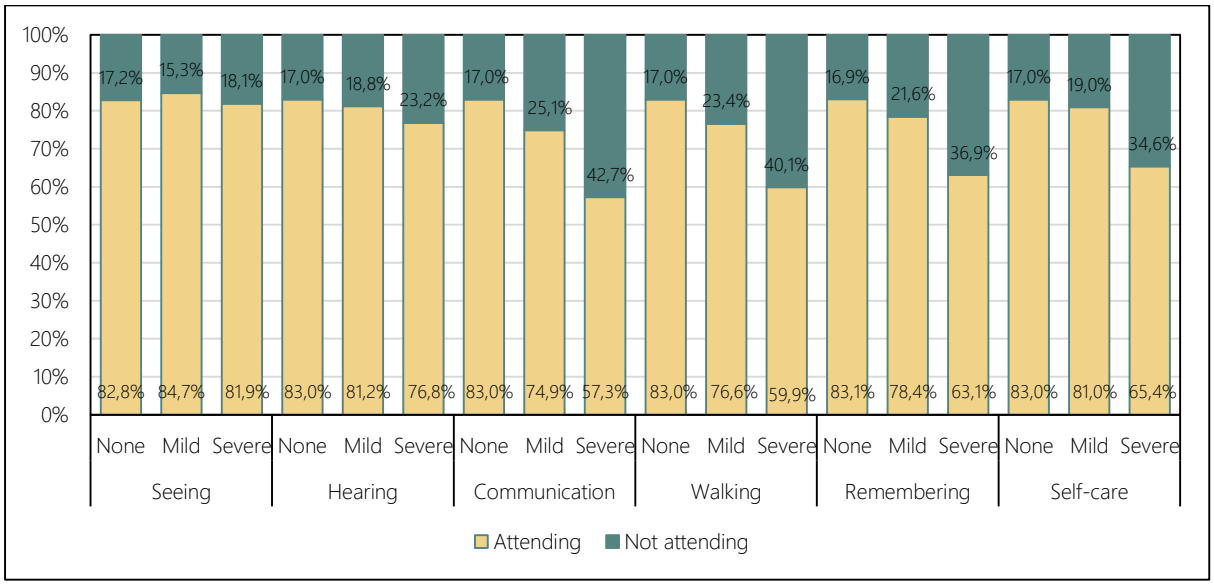
Universal access to education opportunities is a human right that is embedded in various international agreements and country specific policies. It plays a major role in human capital formation and it is a key determinant of personal well-being and welfare. The economies of the countries with good education systems grow faster as well as the living standard of their inhabitants[31]. However, in most cases, it is more common that persons living with disabilities are more marginalised when coming to the issues pertaining to access to education.

Numerous studies show associations between school attendance, level of education and disability, with children and youth with severe disabilities the most disadvantaged in terms of access to education. Limited access to education and other opportunities, such as employment, denies this vulnerable group a better life, and leads to confinement of persons with disabilities to a low socioeconomic status[32].

4.6.1 Attendance at Secondary Educational Institution

According to Census 2011 data, the type of disability and degree of difficulty impacted on the attendance of youth aged 15-19 years at secondary school. Attendance at secondary level was lowest amongst persons with severe difficulties in the various functional domains and highest amongst those with no difficulty. The results showed (Figure 26) that youth with severe difficulty in walking and communicating were the most marginalised in terms of access to secondary education[33].

Figure 26: Percentage Distribution of Youth aged 15–19 years Attending and Not Attending Secondary School by Disability Type & Degree of Difficulty (2011)



Source: Stats SA, Profile of Persons with Disabilities, 2011

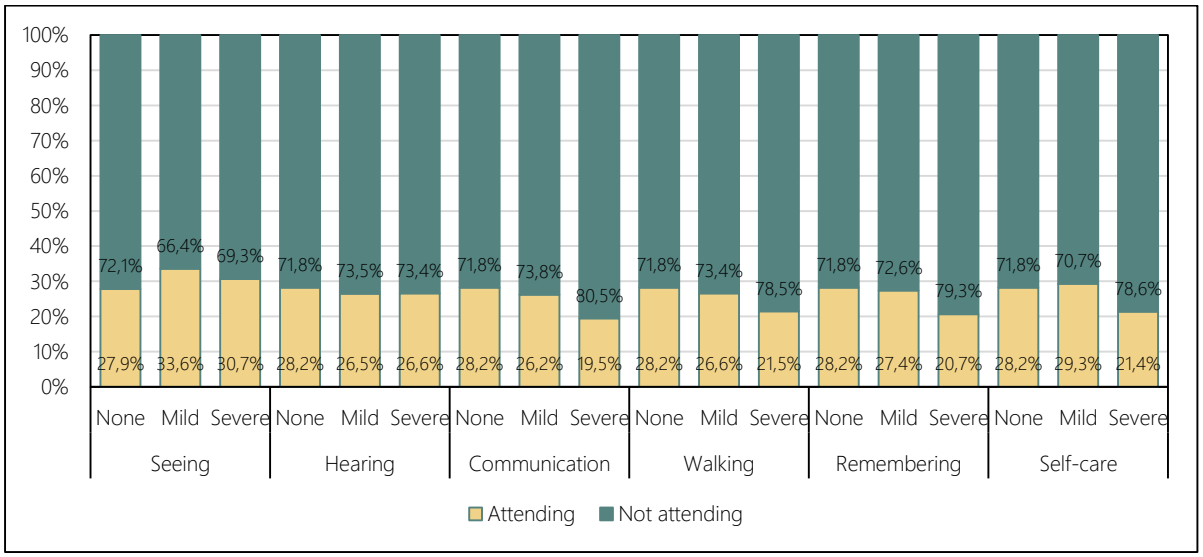
4.6.2 Attendance at Tertiary Level

Figure 27 compares attendance at tertiary educational level (which includes all persons with a post-school qualification) amongst youth aged 20–24 years with, and without difficulty in the activity domains by degree of difficulty. The results showed that in 2011, the majority of youth with disabilities within this age group were not attending tertiary education, particularly those with severe difficulty

[31] Stats SA, Profile of Persons with Disabilities, 2011
[32] NYDA, Integrated Youth Development Strategy, 2022-25
[33] Stats SA, Profile of Persons with Disabilities, 2011

across all activity domains. Only about one-fifth of youth with severe difficulties were attending tertiary education in 2011.

Figure 27: Percentage Distribution of Youth Aged 20–24 Years Attending and Not Attending Tertiary Level Education by Disability Type & Degree of Difficulty (2011)



Source: Stats SA, Profile of Persons with Disabilities, 2011

4.6.3 Educational Attainment

Table 17 below presents data for 2016 on the educational attainment of persons with disabilities aged 25 years with disabilities by province. The provincial profiles depicted show that Limpopo province recorded the highest proportions of persons with disabilities with no education (40,1%), followed by Mpumalanga (35,8%). Western Cape and Gauteng had the lowest proportions in 2016 (8,5% and 11,4% respectively). Gauteng had the highest proportion of persons with disabilities who had some secondary education (32,8%), had completed Matric/Grade 12 (17,4%), or had a higher level of education (9,3%). Approximately 1 in 3 persons in Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Free State with a disability, had some primary education.

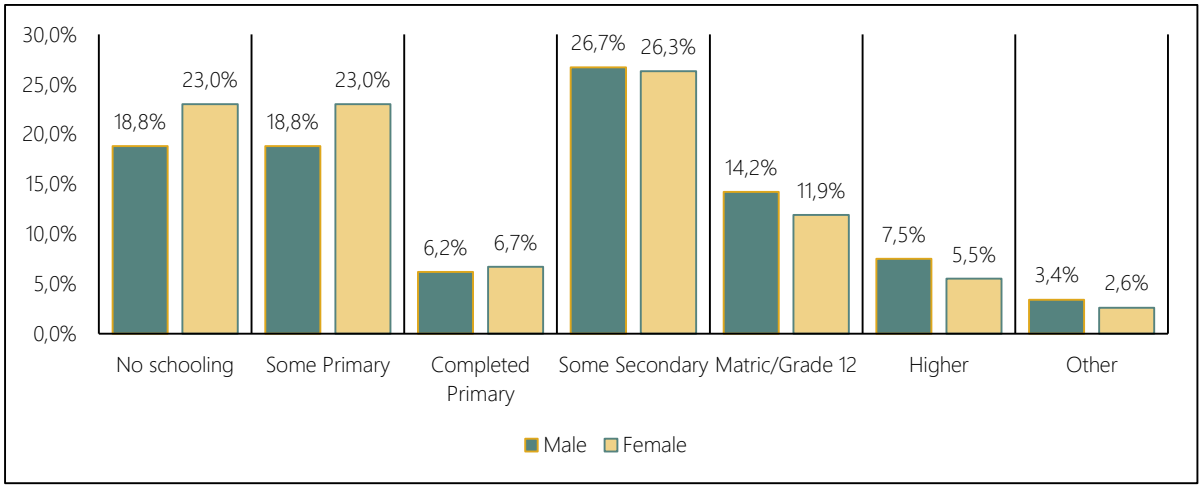
Table 17: Distribution of Highest Level of Education Obtained by Persons with Disabilities Aged 25 Years & Above by Province (2016)

	No schooling	Some Primary	Completed Primary	Some Secondary	Matric/ Grade 12	Higher	Other	Total
EC	21,3%	29,2%	7,9%	27,5%	8,2%	4,4%	1,5%	100,0%
FS	15,7%	28,8%	7,1%	27,3%	12,9%	5,8%	2,4%	100,0%
GP	11,4%	18,5%	6,1%	32,8%	17,4%	9,3%	4,5%	100,0%
KZN	26,6%	25,6%	5,8%	22,2%	12,8%	5,6%	1,4%	100,0%
LP	40,1%	20,2%	4,9%	18,4%	9,1%	4,6%	2,7%	100,0%
MP	35,8%	21,8%	5,0%	19,5%	10,6%	4,6%	2,7%	100,0%
NC	21,8%	28,7%	8,2%	25,5%	9,5%	3,4%	2,9%	100,0%
NW	24,6%	26,8%	6,6%	25,6%	10,2%	3,3%	2,9%	100,0%
WC	8,5%	21,3%	8,4%	31,6%	16,3%	9,2%	4,7%	100,0%
TOTAL	**21,3%**	**23,8%**	**6,5%**	**26,4%**	**12,8%**	**6,3%**	**2,9%**	**100,0%**

Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

Results from the CS (2016) show that among females with disabilities, 23,0% had no schooling or primary education, and only 5,5% had a higher education. In terms of males with disabilities over 25 years, 18,8% had no formal education, 14,2% had completed matric, and 7,5% had attained a higher education (Figure 28).

Figure 28: Distribution of Highest Level of Education Obtained by Disabled Persons aged 25 Years & Above by Gender (2016)

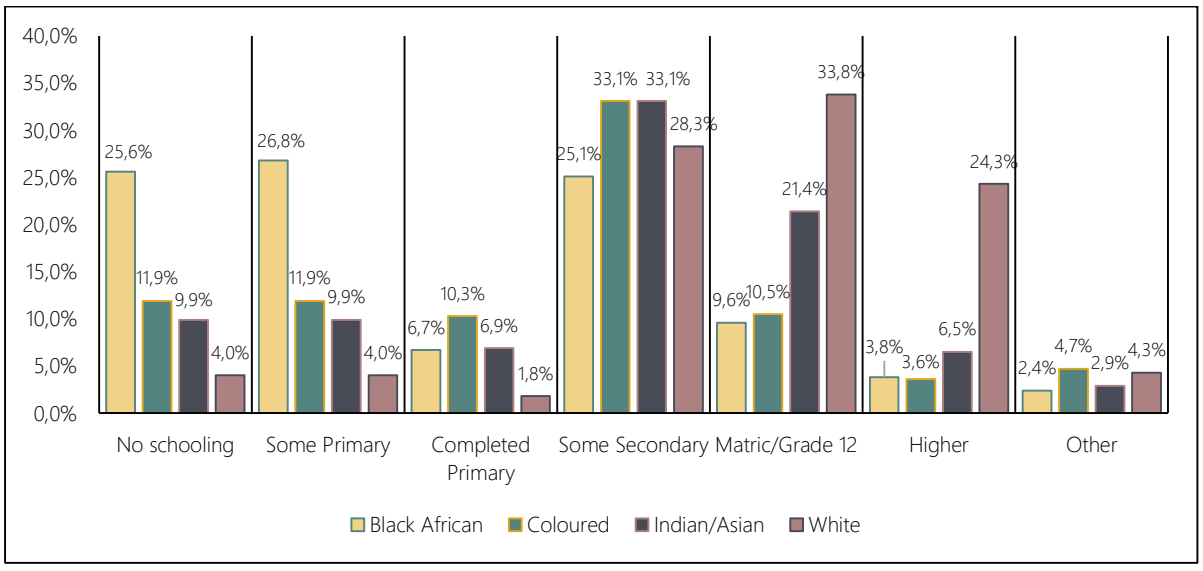


Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

Population group variations shown in Figure 29 indicate that Black Africans with disabilities had the highest proportion who had no education (25,6%) compared to the proportions for other population groups. They also recorded the highest proportion of those who had some primary education (26,8%), followed by the Coloured population group (11,9%). Coloured persons with disabilities accounted for the highest proportion of those who had completed primary education (10,3%).

The educational profiles of Whites and Indians/Asians show that persons with disabilities from these population groups had the highest proportions of persons who had completed Matric/Grade 12 (33,8% and 21,4% respectively) and had higher education (24,3% and 6,5% respectively).

Figure 29: Distribution of Highest Level of Education Obtained by Disabled Persons aged 25 Years & Above by Population Group (2016)



Source: Stats SA, CS, 2016

4.7 YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES & EMPLOYMENT

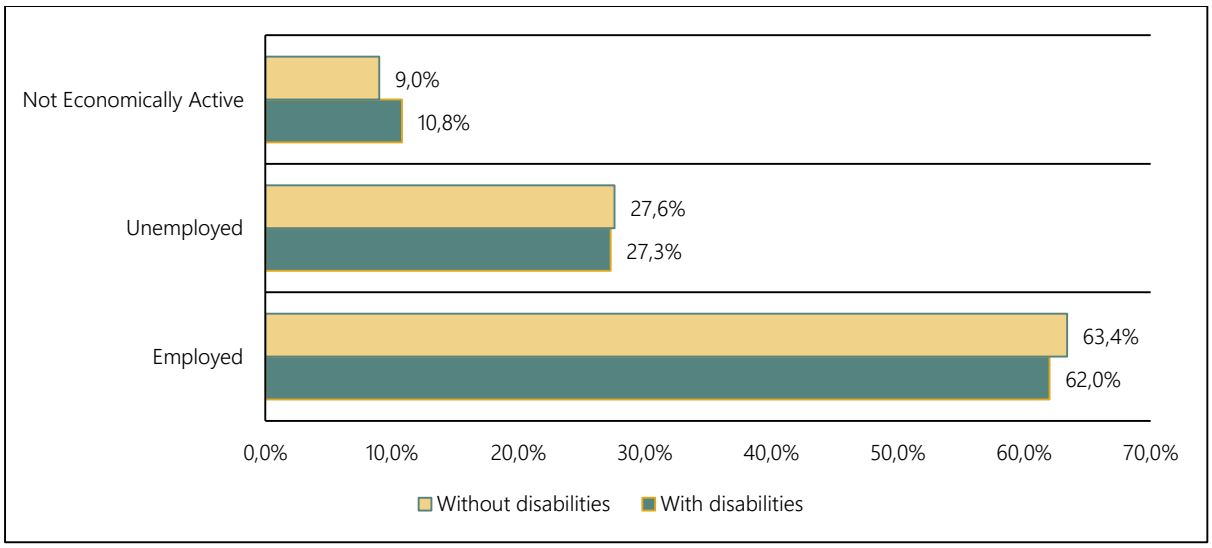
Unemployment is one of the major challenges affecting the majority of persons with disabilities. Research shows that people with disabilities in South Africa face interacting barriers that limit life chances and their ability to participate in economic activities. These barriers include lack of accessible transport to reach the workplace, lack of skills training, lack of educational qualifications, discriminating attitude and inappropriate wages. Literature also shows that different impairment characteristics, as well as the type of disability, also influence participation[34]. Such barriers are over and above those faced by people without disabilities, and as a result, people with disabilities experience difficulty in accessing education or have lower educational achievement and are economically inactive.

This section provides statistics on the labour market status of persons with disabilities based on Census 2011 information[35].

4.7.1 Disability & Employment Status

Figure 30 below shows the distribution of persons aged 15–64 years by labour market status (based on the official definition), disability status and gender. The statistics show that the proportion of persons with disabilities that are employed, is slightly lower than persons without disabilities (62,0% and 63,4% respectively). The profile of unemployed persons shows a similar pattern for those with and without disabilities (27,3% and 27,6% respectively). Results in 2011 show that amongst persons not economically active, persons with disabilities had a higher proportion (10,8%) in relation to those without disabilities (9,1%).

Figure 30: Percentage Distribution of Persons Aged 15–64 by Disability Status and Labour Market Status (official definition)



Source: Stats SA, Census 2011

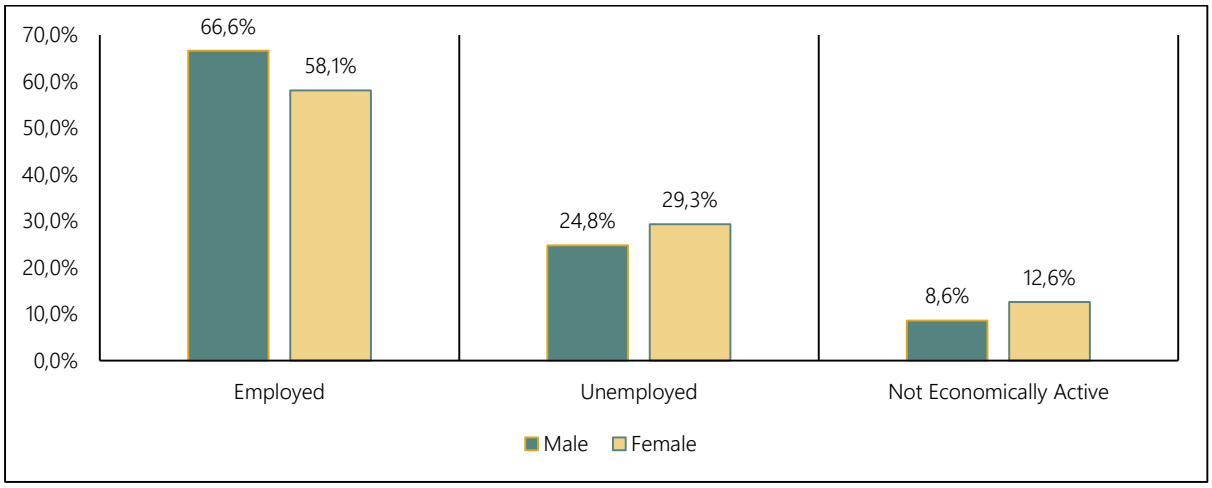
In terms of gender, the results reflected in Figure 31 show that males with disabilities had higher employment levels compared to females (66,6% and 58,1% respectively). The profiles of the

[34] Tinta N., Steyn H., & Vermaas J. (2020)

[35] It is important to note that employment statistics for persons with disabilities have not been disaggregated by age group. Therefore, the statistics presented provide a holistic overview of persons with disabilities between the ages 15 to 64 years.

unemployed and not economically active show that females with disabilities had higher proportions compared to their male counterparts.

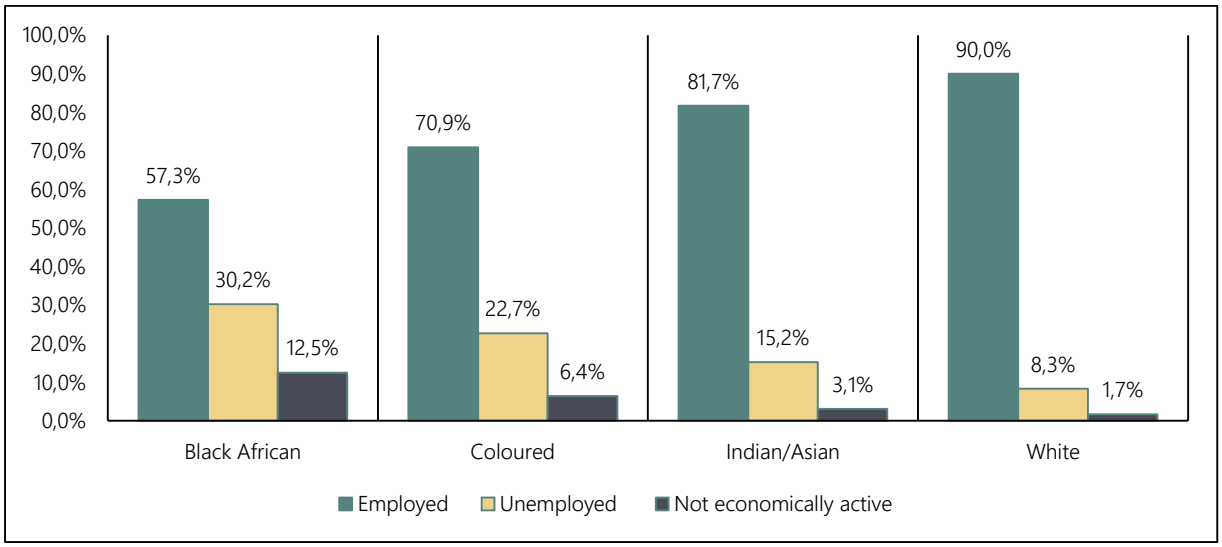
Figure 31: Percentage Distribution of Persons with Disabilities Aged 15–64 by Gender and Labour Market Status (2011)



Source: Stats SA, Census 2011

The severity of disability greatly impacts on economic outcomes pertaining to employment, and different population groups are affected differently. Figure 32 shows that Black African persons with disabilities had the lowest levels of employment (57,3%), the highest levels of unemployment (30,2%), and highest proportion of individuals that were not economically active (12,5%) across the four population groups. The highest levels of employment were found in the White population group (90,0%), as well as the lowest unemployment rate (8,3%). The Coloured population group had the second highest rates of unemployment (22,7%) and not economically active (6,4%). Indian/Asian persons with disabilities had the second highest level of employment (81,7%).

Figure 32: Percentage Distribution of Persons with Disabilities Aged 15–64 by Population Group & Labour Market Status (2011)

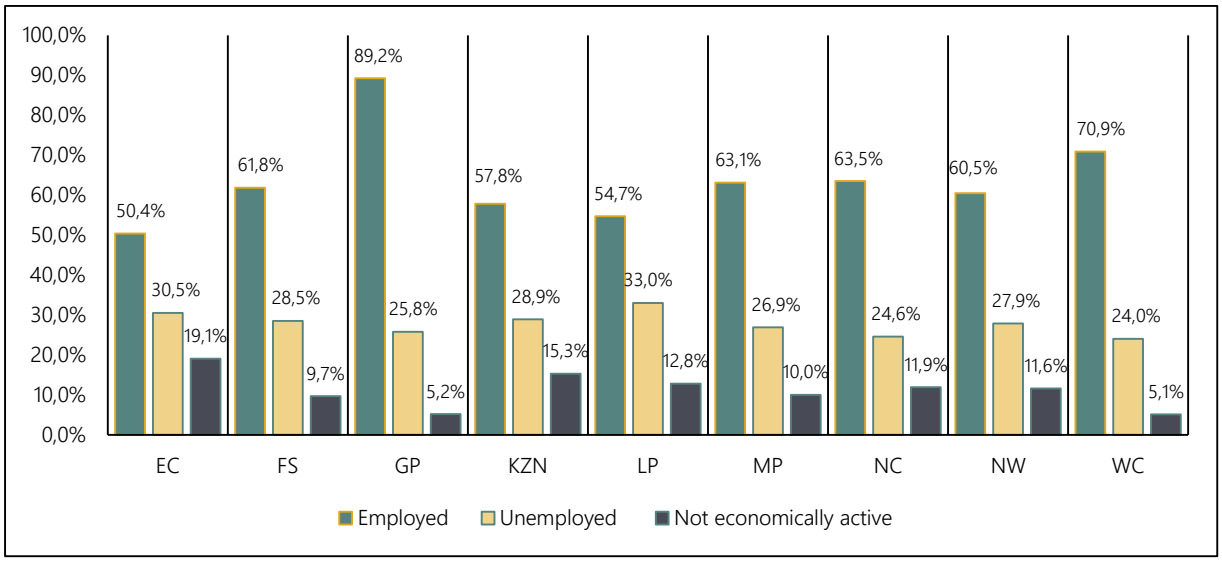


Source: Stats SA, Census 2011

As depicted below in Figure 33, Gauteng had the highest proportion of employed persons with disabilities (89,2%), followed by Western Cape (70,9%), and Northern Cape (63,5%). Limpopo and

Eastern Cape had the highest proportions of unemployed persons with disabilities (33,0% and 30,5% respectively). Eastern Cape also had the highest proportion of not economically active persons with disabilities (19,1%).

Figure 33: Percentage Distribution of Persons with Disabilities Aged 15–64 by Province & Labour Market Status (2011)



Source: Stats SA, Census 2011

4.8 IMPACT OF COVID-19

To enter mainstream participation, youth with disabilities often face obstacles in the form of direct or indirect discrimination, lack of an enabling environment, community support, and/or accessible education amongst others. These obstacles were only further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. For youth with disabilities, access to participation is very much linked to having their accessibility needs met in daily lives. COVID-19 and response measures disrupted much of this access, and the capacity of youth with disabilities to participate declined[36].

Numerous studies have been conducted on the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities, highlighting experiences and challenges of persons with disabilities during lockdown. In March 2021, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Regional Office for Southern Africa (OHCHR ROSA) and the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD) commissioned a research study on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities in South Africa. The study highlighted experiences and challenges of persons with disabilities during lockdown. In a study commissioned by the United Nations (UN) in 2021[37], some of the key barriers facing youth with disabilities were identified. Some of the key findings of these studies included:

- Movement restrictions obstructed gathering in conventional participatory spaces. Requirements for social distancing/self-isolation did not allow personal assistants (PAs) or social workers to visit or accompany youth with disabilities in their activities[38].

[36] Chupina K., "Youth with disabilities and COVID-19", 2021
[37] Chupina K., "Youth with disabilities and COVID-19", 2021
[38] Chupina K., "Youth with disabilities and COVID-19", 2021

- The pandemic also made it harder for young people with disabilities to access necessary healthcare, medicines, basic support services (interpreters, repair and maintenance of mobility aids, assistive devices, etc.)[39].
- Challenges were experienced in getting a Covid-19 test, which ranged from access to testing, access to transport, the cost of tests, not being able to lip-read through the masks, test results were hard to understand for some people[40].
- Youth with intellectual disabilities and autism who had their necessary routines and support services disrupted, as well as youth with psychosocial disabilities, developed increased anxiety and depression[41].
- Although the Department of Health provided information about COVID-19, its transmission and prevention via media including television, news and media briefings, radio and social media, much of the information was provided at a level that was not accessible for some persons with intellectual and learning impairments. In addition, a lack of consultation and involvement with persons with disabilities, and other NGOs supporting persons with disabilities resulted in a lack of dissemination of information and inclusion in COVID-19 related policies[42].
- Once the Department of Basic Education re-opened schools, strict procedures were developed in directions, guidelines and school operating procedures. However, these directions and guidelines excluded all categories of learners with disabilities, including learners with physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, severe to profound intellectual disabilities, and learners with Epilepsy[43]. More inclusive guidelines were published in September 2020. However, even after the published revised guidelines, many parents of children with disabilities still feared for the safety of their children and did not send them back to school. Some special schools refused to open due to safety concerns, shortage of staff, and the inability of learners and staff to social distance in areas such as dining halls, bathrooms and dormitories[44].
- Government's monthly social disability grants is available on a permanent or temporary basis to persons who are unable to work as a result of their impairment, and who do not have sufficient other means of support. As of January 2021, the disability grant amounted to R1 860 per month. However, at the end of December 2020 significant challenges were raised by the suspension of 210,778 temporary disability grants due to a lack of funds, 222,021 disability-related grants and 11,234 care dependency grants. This resulted in beneficiaries having to reapply for medical assessments during the peak of South Africa's second wave of COVID-19 infections and caused significant backlog.

[39] Chupina K., "Youth with disabilities and COVID-19", 2021
[40] United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRD), 2021
[41] Chupina K., "Youth with disabilities and COVID-19", 2021
[42] DWYPD, "Covid-19 & Rights of Persons with Disabilities: The Impact of Covid-19 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in South Africa", 2021
[43] DWYPD, "Covid-19 & Rights of Persons with Disabilities: The Impact of Covid-19 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in South Africa", 2021
[44] DWYPD, "Covid-19 & Rights of Persons with Disabilities: The Impact of Covid-19 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in South Africa", 2021

4.9 SUMMARY

The previous section of this report shows associations between school attendance, level of education and disability, with youth with severe disabilities the most disadvantaged in terms of access to education. With the majority of youth only attaining some primary education as their highest level of education, this limits their access to employment. Furthermore, the severity of disability greatly impacts on economic outcomes pertaining to employment, and different population groups are affected differently. Population group variations indicate that Black Africans with disabilities had the highest proportion who had no education and the lowest levels of employment compared to the proportions for other population groups. People with disabilities in South Africa face interacting barriers that limit life chances and their ability to participate in economic activities. These barriers include often take the form of direct or indirect discrimination, lack of an enabling environment, community support, and/or accessible education amongst others. The COVID-19 pandemic only further exacerbated the barriers facing youth with disabilities.

There is a lack of recent of statistics available on youth with disabilities. Disability statistics provide the basis for measuring progress in realising the rights of persons with disabilities. For South Africa's youth population, statistical evidence is important for the development of appropriate policies, programmes and interventions to ensure that youth with disabilities have equal access to education, employment and basic services.

5. YOUTH EDUCATION, SKILLS & SECOND CHANCES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Section 29(1) of the South African Constitution, everyone has a right to a basic education, including the right to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible. Human resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of a nation, and it is therefore vital that a country develops the skills and knowledge of its residents for the greater benefit of all[45]. Investments in education help break inter-generational cycles of poverty and aid socio-economic development, and in addition, can lead to a qualified and employable workforce which meets the demands of the labour markets for skills and competencies[46].

Countries across Africa have recognised the importance of education, investing significantly to improve access to education, and making substantial improvements in offerings for youth education and skills development. The proportion of primary school age children who are not in school has halved – from 35% in 2000 to 17% in 2019; whilst the proportion of children of lower secondary school age who are not in school dropped from 43% to 33%; and for children of upper secondary school age, it dropped from 63% to 53% over the last two decades[47].

Despite the progress, huge disparities and inefficiencies persist within the education system at all levels throughout the continent. In 2019, there were approximately 105 million children of primary and secondary school age who were out of school in Africa (representing 41% of the global number). The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector remains under-developed, with the average percentage of young people between 15 and 24 years old who are enrolled in vocational education estimated at 3% in 2019[48].

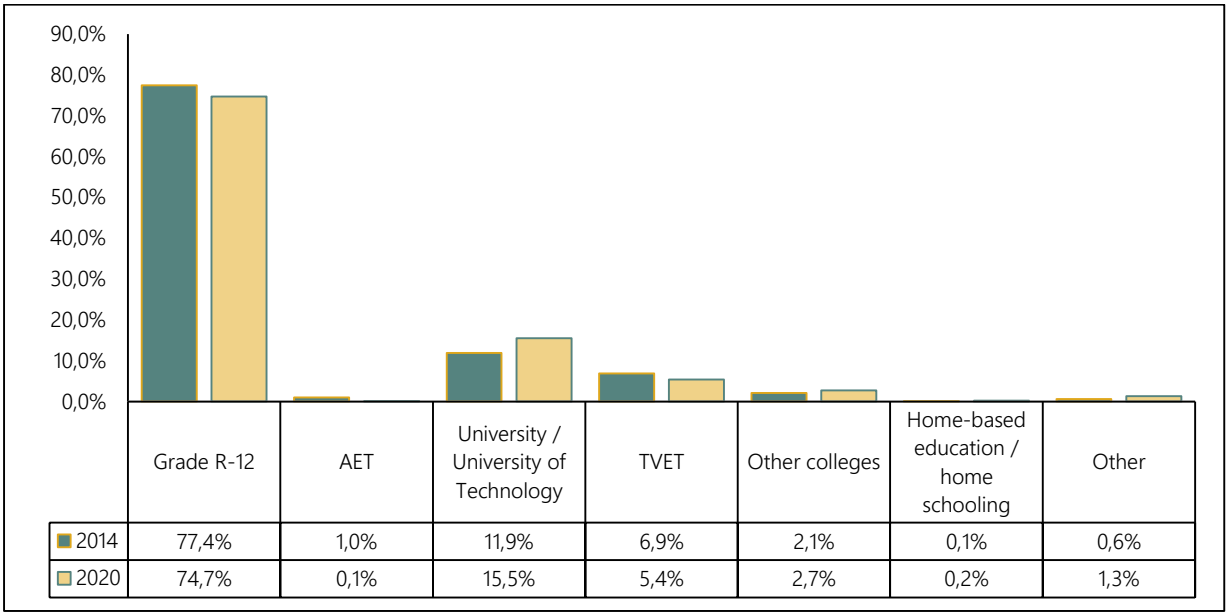
This section of the report examines various aspects of the education profile of South African youth, including youth attendance at educational institutions, educational attainment and higher education.

5.2 YOUTH ATTENDANCE AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

According to Stats SA, 5,9 million youth were attending an educational institution in 2020, representing 28,7% of the total youth population. Figure 34 below displays the percentage of youth attending an educational institution for the years 2014 and 2020. The data shows that school attendance by youth was higher in both years compared to other educational institutions. In 2020, there was an increase in the percentage of youth enrolled in University/University of Technology (from 11,9% to 15,5%), other colleges (0,6% increase), home-based education/home schooling (0,1% increase), and other (0,7% increase). Between 2014 and 2020, attendance at schools decreased by 2,7%, with AET attendance declining by 0,9%, and attendance by youth at TVET colleges decreasing by 1,5%.

[45] Statistics South Africa, GHS, 2020
[46] UNICEF, "Transforming Education in Africa", 2021
[47] UNICEF, "Transforming Education in Africa", 2021
[48] UNICEF, "Transforming Education in Africa", 2021

Figure 34: Percentage of Youth Attending an Educational Institution (2014 & 2020)

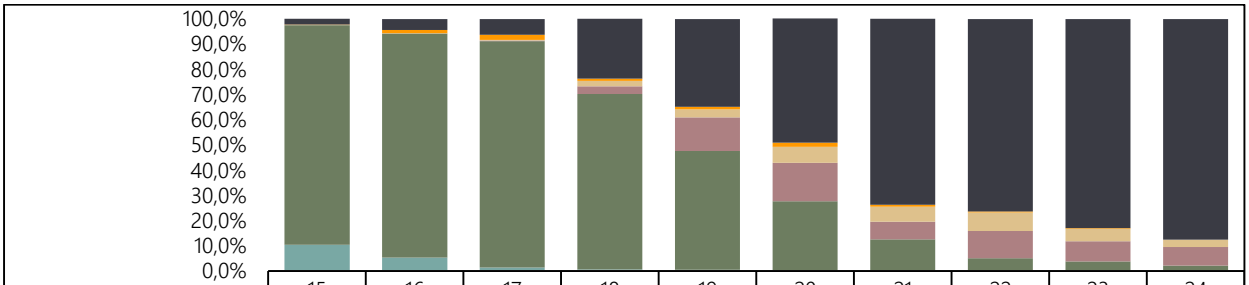


	Grade R-12	AET	University / University of Technology	TVET	Other colleges	Home-based education / home schooling	Other
2014	77,4%	1,0%	11,9%	6,9%	2,1%	0,1%	0,6%
2020	74,7%	0,1%	15,5%	5,4%	2,7%	0,2%	1,3%

Source: Stats SA, GHS 2014 and GHS 2020

The percentage of individuals aged 15–24 years that attended educational institutions by single ages in 2020 is presented in Figure 35. The figure shows that most 15-17 year olds were still attending secondary school. For those aged 18 (30,4%) and 19 years (52,9%), had dropped out of school. For those aged 17 years and above, the proportion of individuals not attending an educational institution increases significantly, with the majority of youth between the ages of 20 and 24 years not in education. The data shows that in 2020, 87,5% of individuals aged 24-years were not attending an educational institution, with approximately 12,2% still attending an educational facility. The figure also shows a noticeable representation of learners who were older than the ideal graduation age in primary and secondary schools[49].

Figure 35: Type of Educational Institution Attended by Individuals Aged 15-24 Years (2020)



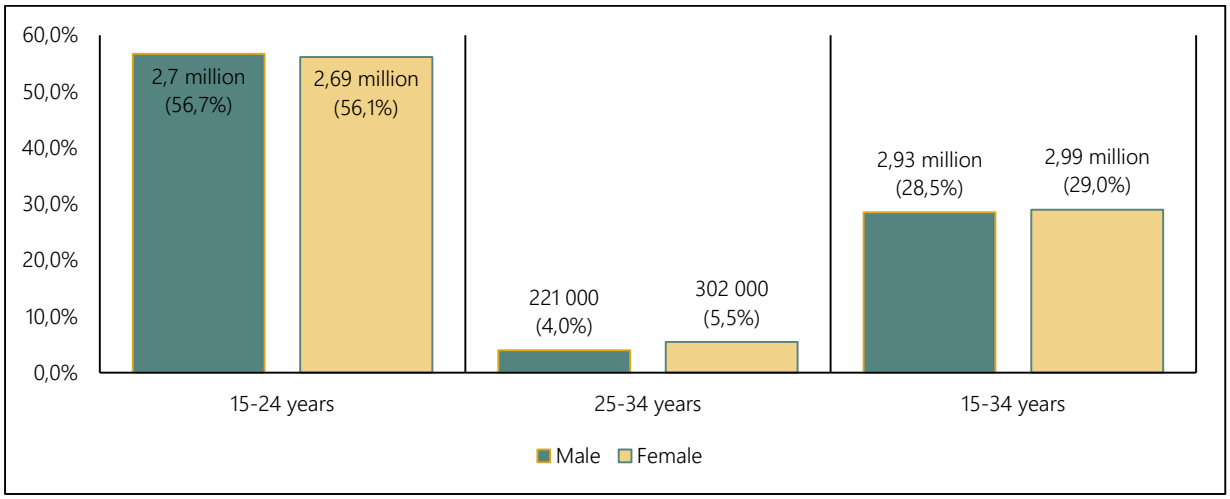
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Not in education	2,3%	4,4%	6,3%	23,8%	34,8%	49,2%	73,8%	76,3%	82,9%	87,5%
Other	0,1%	1,2%	2,0%	0,9%	1,0%	1,7%	0,8%	0,3%	0,3%	0,0%
TVET / Other colleges	0,2%	0,2%	0,3%	2,1%	3,2%	6,3%	5,9%	7,4%	4,9%	3,0%
University	0,0%	0,0%	0,2%	3,0%	13,3%	15,3%	7,0%	10,8%	8,0%	7,3%
Secondary school	87,0%	88,8%	89,8%	69,6%	47,1%	27,4%	12,4%	4,9%	3,8%	2,2%
Primary school	10,5%	5,4%	1,4%	0,7%	0,6%	0,3%	0,2%	0,2%	0,1%	0,0%
Pre-school	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%

Source: Stats SA, GHS 2020

[49] Statistics South Africa, GHS, 2020

Figure 36 shows that youth attendance at educational institutions in 2020 was higher for females (29,0%) in comparison to males (28,5%). In terms of the youth groups, there was a marginal difference between the attendance rates of male and female youth aged 15-24 years. For the 25-34 year age group, youth attendance was 5,5% for females and 4,0% for males.

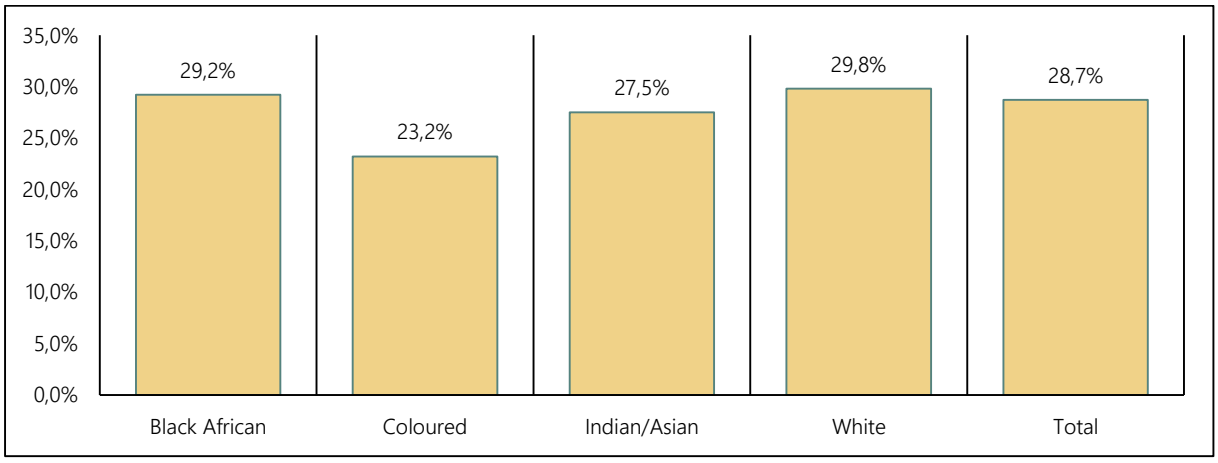
Figure 36: Youth Attendance at Educational Institutions by Age Group & Gender (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

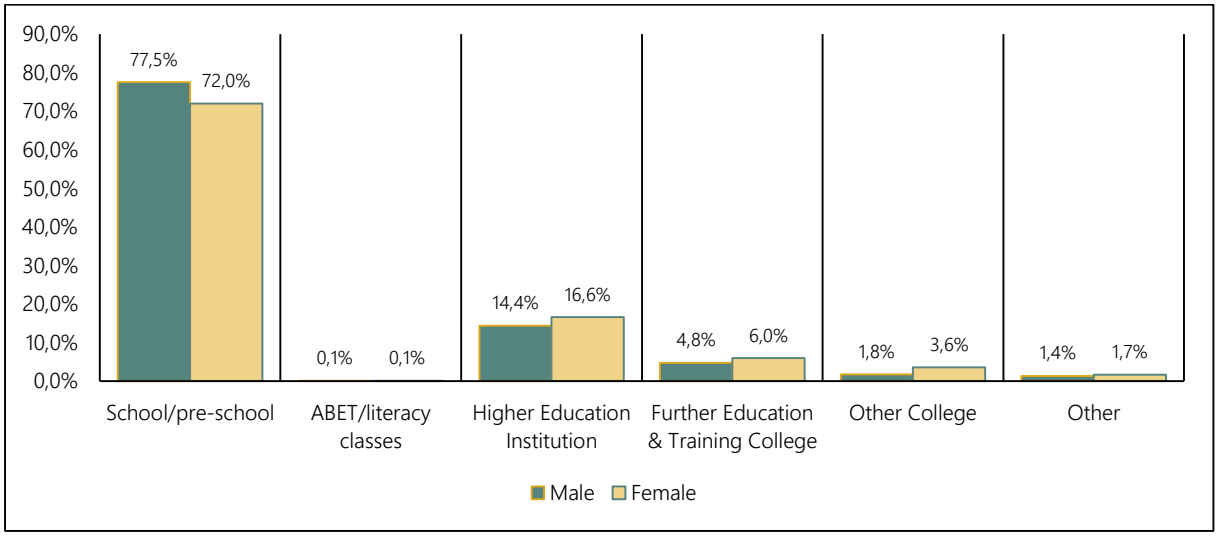
Figure 37 highlights youth attendance at educational institutions by population group. The attendance for White youth was the highest (29,8%), followed by Black African (29,2%), Indian/Asian (27,5%) and Coloured (23,2%). Overall attendance by youth across all population groups was 28,7% in 2020.

Figure 37: Youth Attendance at Educational Institutions by Population Group (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Figure 38: Distribution of the Types of Educational Institutions Attended by Youth by Gender (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Figure 38 above shows youth attendance in 2020 at educational institutions by gender. The attendance for male youth was highest for schools (77,5% males and 72,0% females). In 2020, a higher proportion of female youth (16,6%) were enrolled in a higher education institution compared to males (14,4%), with 6,0% attending a Further Education and Training (FET) College compared to 4,8% male youth.

The provincial profile of attendance at educational institutions (Table 18) shows that the proportion of individuals aged five years and older and who attended school was the highest in Limpopo (92,3%) and Eastern Cape (92,2%), and lowest in Gauteng (78,3%) and Western Cape (83,6%). Attendance at higher education institutions was the highest in Gauteng (10,5%) and Western Cape (8,6%). Northern Cape had the highest enrolment/attendance at TVET colleges (3,2%). Home schooling was only conducted in 5 provinces – Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Western Cape, Northern Cape, and Mpumalanga.

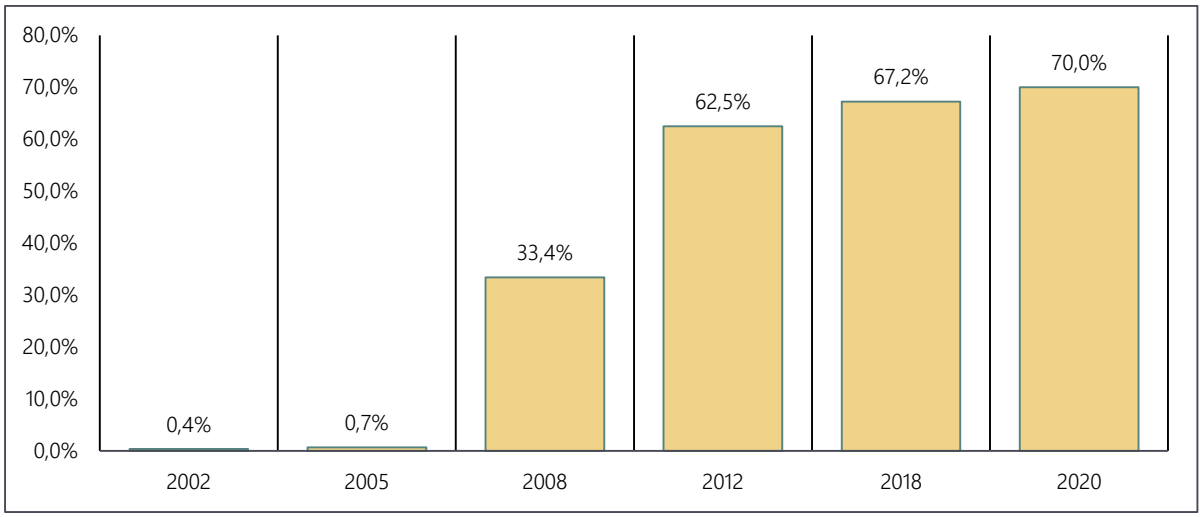
Table 18: Attendance at Educational Institutions by Individuals Aged 5 Years and Older by Province and Type of Institution Attended (2020)

	EC	FS	GP	KZN	NC	NW	LP	MP	WC	RSA
Pre-school	2,7%	2,3%	3,6%	1,5%	3,2%	1,1%	1,5%	3,7%	3,2%	2,5%
School	92,2%	87,7%	78,3%	90,1%	87,8%	91,1%	92,3%	89,5%	83,6%	87,2%
Higher education institutions	2,6%	6,4%	10,5%	6,7%	2,5%	4,8%	2,3%	3,2%	8,6%	6,2%
TVET	1,8%	2,6%	2,3%	1,1%	3,2%	1,5%	2,7%	2,6%	1,5%	2,0%
Other colleges	0,4%	0,2%	3,3%	0,4%	2,0%	0,8%	0,5%	0,8%	0,7%	1,2%
Home Schooling	0,1%	0,0%	0,2%	0,0%	0,6%	0,0%	0,1%	0,0%	1,1%	0,2%
Other	0,2%	0,8%	1,8%	0,3%	0,8%	0,8%	0,7%	0,2%	1,4%	0,8%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Figure 39 shows that the attendance of at schools where no tuition fees were levied has increased notably from 0,4% in 2002, to 33,4% in 2008, before increasing to 70,0% in 2020. The data shows that the lack of money for education has increasingly become a major hurdle for learners.

Figure 39: Individuals Aged 5 years and older who Attended Schools & Did Not Pay Tuition Fees (2002–2020)

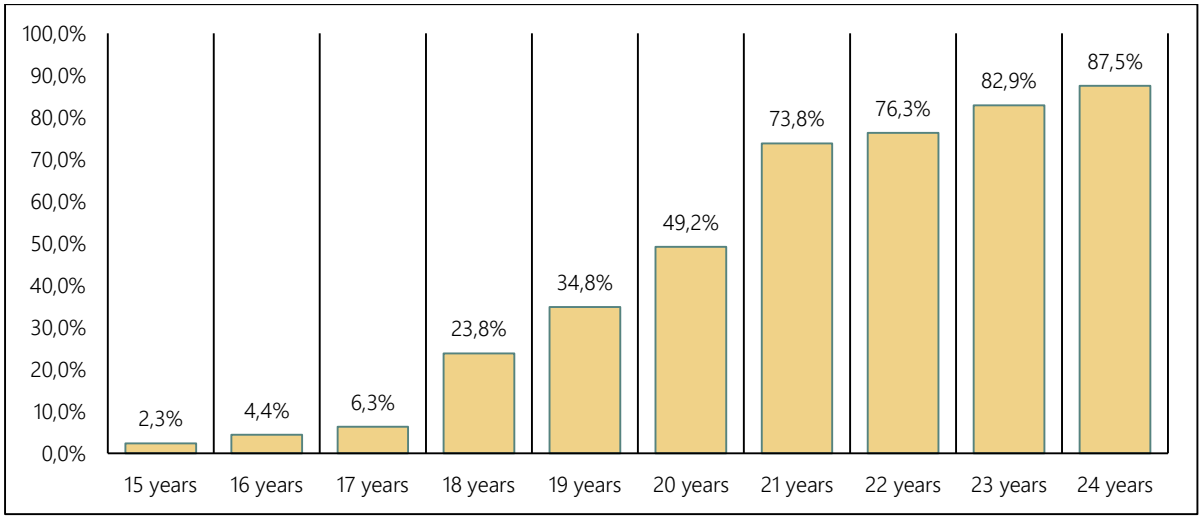


Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

The proportion of youth aged 15-24 years that were not attending educational institutions in 2020, by single ages is presented in Figure 40. For the ages 15-17 years, the data shows low proportions of youth not attending any educational institution, after which, non-attendance of educational facilities increases sharply (23,8% for 18 years). Non-attendance increases progressively, and by the age of 24 years, 87,5% of youth were not attending an educational institution.

In 2020, a rapid increase in the number of out-of-school children and youth in South Africa was noted. This was mainly due to school closures during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020. Distance learning was not an effective measure in South Africa as access to digital learning was limited.

Figure 40: Youth Aged 15-24 Years Not Attending any Educational Institution (2020)

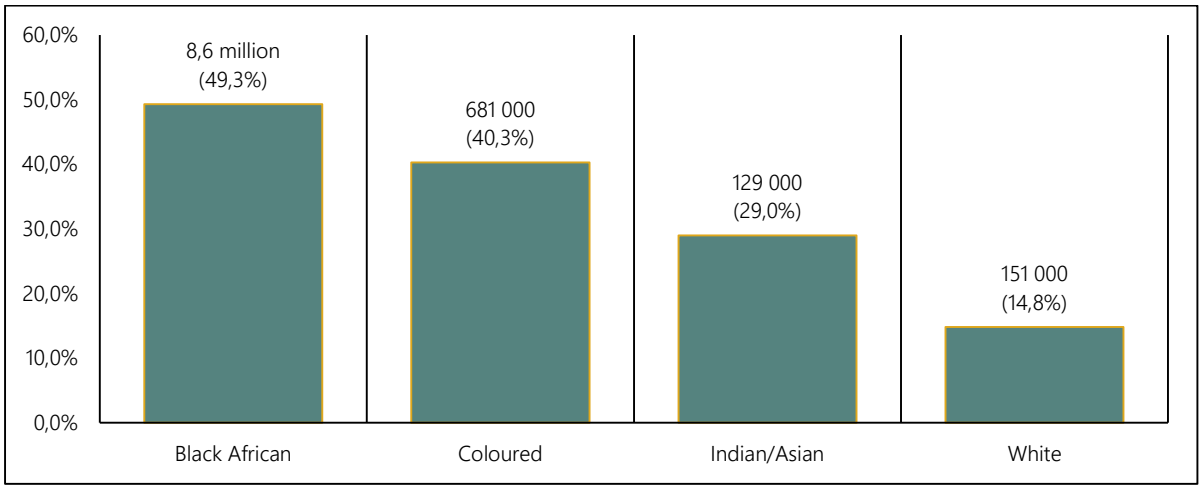


Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

In 2020, a total of 9,6 million youth were recorded as being unemployed and not attending any educational institution. Figure 41 shows that the highest proportion of unemployed youth not

attending an educational institution of the total youth population in 2020, were Black African (49,3%), followed by Coloured (40,3%), Indian (29,0%), and White (14,8%).

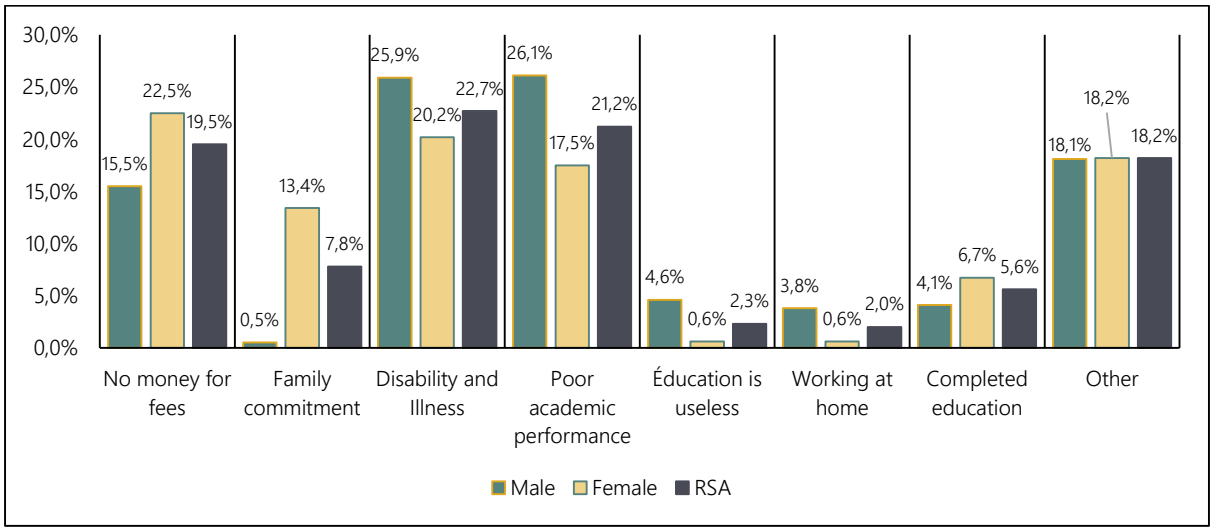
Figure 41: Distribution of Youth Not Attending any Educational Institution & Not Employed by Population Group (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

The main reasons provided by males and females 7–18 years of age for not attending any educational institutions are presented in Figure 42. The most frequently cited reasons for not attending an educational institution were illness and disability (22,7%), poor academic performance (21,2%) and a lack of money for fees (19,5%). Overall, 7,8% of individuals left their studies as a result of family commitments (i.e. getting married, minding children and pregnancy), but it is noticeable that females were much more likely to offer these as reasons than males (13,4% compared to 0,5%). Approximately 2,3% of individuals reported that education was useless, of which a higher proportion were males.

Figure 42: Main Reasons Given by Individuals aged 7-18 Years for not Attending an Educational Institution by Gender (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

The drop-out rates and survival rates for the periods 2009-2011 and 2017-2019 are presented in Table 19 below. For the 2009 to 2011 cohort, 98.9% of children attained Grade 1, which means that 989 out of 1000 children in this cohort attained Grade 1. This in turn means that 1.1% of children dropped out of school before attaining Grade 1. For the same cohort, 45.8% of children attained Grade 12, which

means that 28.5% of Grade 11 learners dropped out before attaining Grade 12. Comparing the survival and drop-out rates to the 2017-2019 cohort, the drop-out rate has improved to only 24.9% of Grade 11 learners dropping out before completing Grade 12. Out of 1000 learners, this means that 534 reached Grade 12, which is 76 learners more than 8 years ago[50].

Table 19: Survival & Drop-Out Rates per Grade (2009-2011 & 2017-2019)

	2009-2011			2017-2019		
	Survival Rate	Survival per 1 000 learners	% Dropping out with this Grade Attained	Survival Rate	Survival per 1 000 learners	% Dropping out with this Grade Attained
No schooling		1 000			1 000	
Grade 1	98,9%	989	1,1%	99,4%	994	0,6%
Grade 2	98,7%	987	0,2%	99,3%	993	0,1%
Grade 3	98,5%	985	0,3%	99,1%	991	0,2%
Grade 4	97,9%	979	0,6%	98,8%	988	0,3%
Grade 5	97,0%	970	0,9%	98,4%	984	0,4%
Grade 6	95,8%	958	1,2%	97,8%	978	0,6%
Grade 7	94,0%	940	1,8%	96,5%	965	1,4%
Grade 8	90,6%	906	3,7%	94,0%	940	2,5%
Grade 9	85,5%	855	5,6%	89,9%	899	4,4%
Grade 10	77,2%	772	9,7%	82,3%	823	8,5%
Grade 11	64,1%	641	17,0%	71,1%	711	13,6%
Grade 12	45,8%	458	28,5%	53,4%	534	24,9%

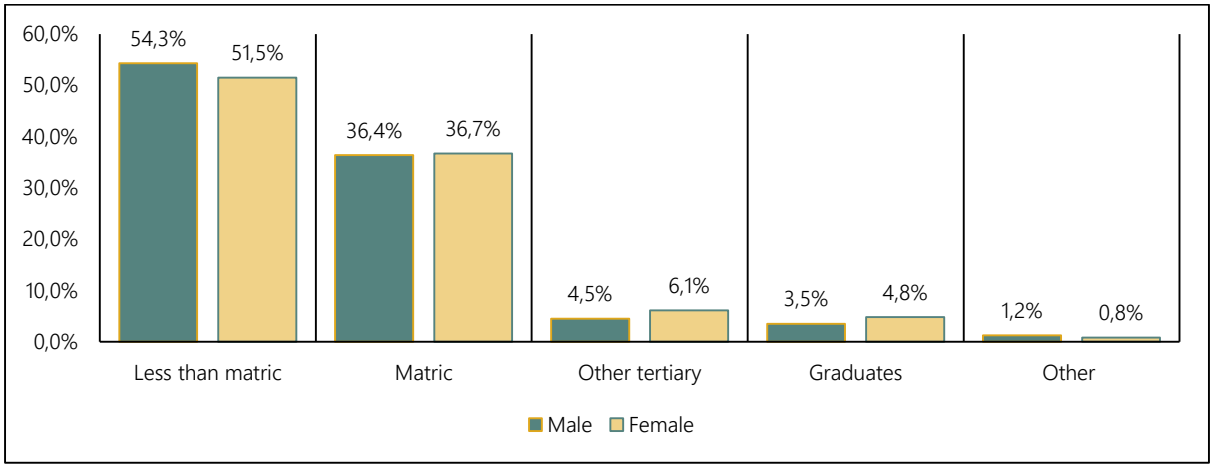
Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2019

5.3 YOUTH EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Figure 43 depicts the proportion of youth by educational attainment and gender. According to 2020 data, a higher proportion of male youth (54,3%) attained the highest level of education of less than matric in comparison to females (51,5%). Higher proportions of female youth had achieved their matric (36,7%), other tertiary qualification (6,1%), and had graduated from University/University of Technology (4,8%).

[50] Statistics South Africa, GHS: Focus on Schooling, 2019

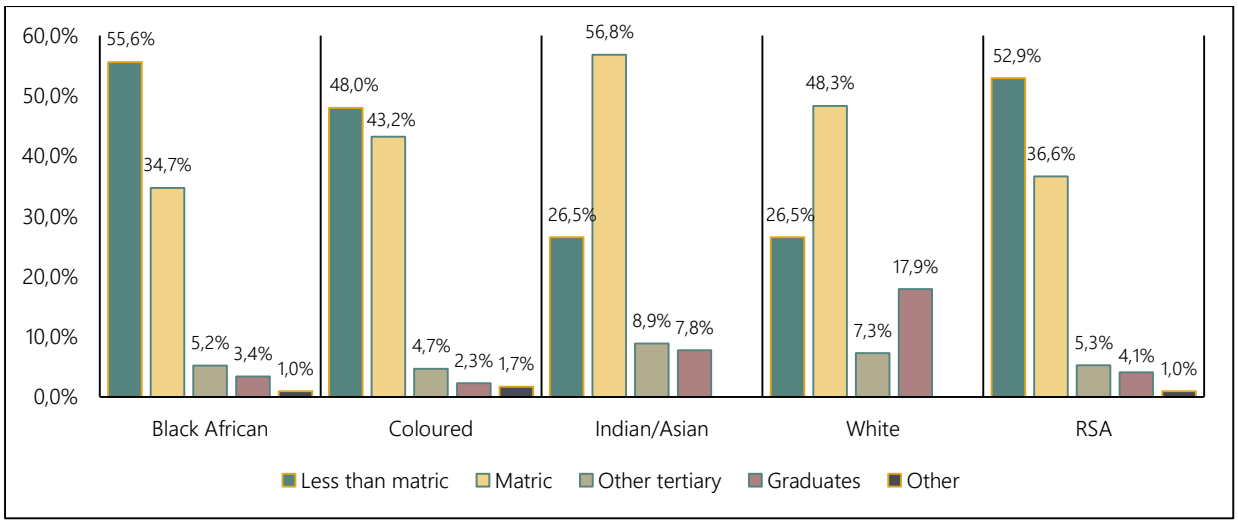
Figure 43: Youth by Educational Attainment & Gender (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Nationally, the majority of the youth indicated that they had less than matric (52,9%), followed by those with matric (36,6%), other tertiary (5,3%), and were graduates (4,1%) as their highest level of education attained (Figure 44). The Black African and Coloured population groups had the highest proportions of youth that had less than matric as their highest level of education attained (55,6% and 48,0% respectively). Indian/Asians were the highest proportion of youth with matric and other tertiary qualifications. The highest proportion of youth who were graduates were White (17,9%).

Figure 44: Youth by Educational Attainment & Population Group (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Table 20: Youth by Educational Attainment & Province (2020)

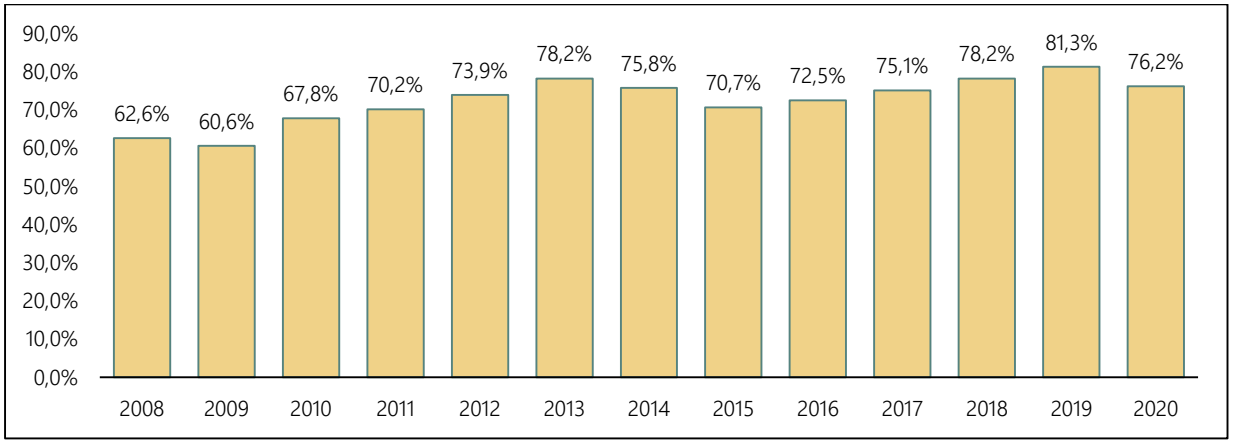
	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	RSA
Less than matric	88,5%	78,8%	66,2%	78,3%	86,2%	86,6%	90,4%	83,0%	72,6%	77,9%
Matric	9,8%	17,5%	28,0%	20,2%	12,3%	12,0%	6,8%	14,9%	23,9%	19,0%
Other tertiary	1,3%	2,2%	2,2%	1,0%	1,2%	1,5%	2,6%	0,8%	1,7%	1,6%
Graduates	0,4%	1,5%	3,6%	0,6%	0,3%	0,0%	0,2%	1,2%	1,8%	1,5%

Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

Table 20 above presents the percentage distribution by educational attainment and province in 2020. Northern Cape had the highest percentage of youth reported to have less than matric as their highest level of education attained (90,4%), followed by Eastern Cape (88,5%) and Limpopo (86,6%). Gauteng had the highest proportion of youth who had achieved their matric (28,0%), whilst Northern Cape had the most youth with other tertiary qualifications (2,6%). Gauteng and Western Cape had the highest proportion of youth graduates (3,6% and 1,8% respectively). There were no youth graduates from Mpumalanga in 2020 (0,0%).

Figure 45 reflects Grade 12 pass percentages for the period 2008 to 2020, since the inception of the National Senior Certificate (NSC). The figure shows that the overall candidate performance in the November 2020 NSC declined from previous years in terms of overall pass percentage. There are various factors that led to the decline in the pass percentage, which could be attributed in the main to the impact of COVID-19 on the school calendar and the restrictions on gatherings as per the disaster management regulations. Figures for 2020 reflect an overall pass percentage of 76,2%, which represented a decline of 5,1% compared to the performance of the November 2019 cohort[51].

Figure 45: National NSC Pass Rate (2008-2020)



Source: Department of Basic Education, NSC 2020 Examination Report

In terms of Bachelor achievement, pass rates have increased between 2015 and 2019 (from 25,8% to 36,9% respectively). The percentage of candidates who qualified for Bachelor studies declined from 36,9% in 2019 to 36,4 % in 2020. However, the actual number of candidates who obtained Bachelor passes increased by **24 762** from **186 058** in 2019 to **210 820** in 2020. Table 21 below provides a comparison of the number of candidates who qualified to register for Bachelor programmes from 2015 to 2020 at a national level, and the levels of achievement over the period.

Table 21: Bachelor Achievements (2015-2020)

	Total Number Wrote	Achieved	% Achieved
2015	644 536	166 263	25,8%
2016	610 178	162 374	26,6%
2017	534 484	153 610	28,7%
2018	512 735	172 043	33,6%
2019	504 303	186 053	36,9%
2020	578 468	210 820	36,4%

Source: Department of Basic Education, NSC 2020 Examination Report

[51] Department of Basic Education, NSC Examination Report, 2020

5.4 YOUTH ATTENDANCE AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

5.4.1 Public & Private Universities

In 2019, there were 26 public universities and 131 private universities in South Africa, with the total public and private enrolment being over 1,2 million in that year[52].

Table 22 presents the gross enrolment rates by race for both public and private universities over the period 2010–2019. Over this period, the number of students enrolled at universities grew by an average annual growth rate of 2,6%, with total enrolment at public and private universities reaching 1,25 million in 2019. In 2019, the gross enrolment rate for the South African university sector (public and private combined) was 25,6%, reflecting a significant increase compared to 2010, when the gross enrolment rate was 19,0%. This increase was the result of the enrolment of Black African students, which grew by 3,8% from 2010 to 2019, while the number of White and Indian/Asian students declined by 2,6% and 0,5% respectively[53].

Table 22: Public & Private Universities: Gross Enrolment Rate (2010-2019)

	2010		2019	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Black African	697 431	15,5%	959 316	23,4%
Coloured	66 838	15,2%	78 622	18,4%
Indian/Asian	60 611	51,7%	57 924	54,8%
White	200 676	61,2%	158 886	60,9%
Total	1 025 556	19,0%	1 254 748	25,6%

Source: DHET, PSET Monitor, PSET Monitor, 2021

5.4.2 Technical & Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Colleges

Between 2010 and 2019, the gross enrolment rate for TVET colleges more than doubled, from 6,9% in 2010 to 14,6% in 2019. Despite the significant increase in TVET participation rates in the last ten years, it is unlikely that the NDP target of 25,0% gross enrolment rate will be met by 2030, given the current slow growth trajectory[54]. Table 23 shows that in 2019, the TVET college participation rate of Black African students (16,0%) was higher than that of other population groups in South Africa.

Table 23: TVET Colleges: Gross Enrolment Rate (2010-2019)

	2010		2019	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Black African	266 620	6,2%	621 187	16,0%
Coloured	31 545	7,1%	45 374	11,1%
Indian/Asian	4 004	3,7%	1 535	1,7%
White	15 702	4,9%	5 243	2,1%
Total	358 393	6,9%	673 490	14,6%

Source: DHET, PSET Monitor, 2021

[52] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021
[53] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021
[54] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021

5.4.3 Community Education & Training (CET) Colleges

CET colleges constitute an effort to offer education and training opportunities to youth and adults who did not, for whatever reason, have access to sufficient education and training earlier in their lives. There are currently nine CET colleges in South Africa, with one in each province.

The 15–35 year age group is currently the dominant age group among CET college-going students. As Table 24 indicates, the gross enrolment rate at CET colleges declined from 1,5% in 2010 to 0,8% in 2019. This change is concerning, especially since the number of persons who are NEET has been increasing year on year[55].

Table 24: CET Colleges: Gross Enrolment Rate by Gender (2010-2019)

Year	Female	Male	Total
2010	2,1%	0,8%	1,5%
2012	2,1%	0,8%	1,5%
2016	1,8%	0,7%	1,3%
2019	1,1%	0,5%	0,8%

Source: DHET, PSET Monitor, 2021

5.5 GRADUATION RATES

Table 25 shows university graduation rates by gender and race for the period 2010-2019. In 2019, the average university graduation rate was 20,6%, reflecting an improvement from the 2010 graduation rate of 17,2%. University graduation rates for female students remained consistently higher than those for male students over the same period.

Despite the increases in the graduation rate of Black African students, from 15,8% in 2010 to 19,9% in 2018, the figures for this group constantly remained below the average graduation rate. The graduation rate of White students increased from 21,7% in 2010 to 27,0% in 2019. In 2019, the graduation rates of Coloured, Indian/Asian, and White students were above the 20,7% average graduation rate. The comparative statistics suggest that black Africans students are less likely to graduate relative to students in other race groups, while white students are more likely to graduate than students in the other race groups[56].

Table 25: Graduation Rates at Public Universities by Gender & Population Group (2010-2019)

	2010	2012	2016	2019
Gender				
Male	15,9%	16,0%	19,3%	19,1%
Female	18,2%	17,5%	21,9%	21,7%
Average	17,2%	17,1%	20,8%	20,6%
Population Groups				
Black African	15,8%	15,8%	19,8%	19,4%

[55] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021
[56] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021

	2010	2012	2016	2019
Coloured	18,2%	18,1%	20,5%	21,8%
Indian/Asian	15,8%	17,9%	21,2%	24,2%
White	21,7%	22,5%	25,4%	27,0%
Average	17,2%	17,4%	20,8%	20,7%

Source: DHET, PSET Monitor, 2021

The table below sets out TVET college certification rates for the N3 and N6 part-qualifications and the National Certificate (Vocational). In 2019, only 68,0% of students who wrote the N3 national examinations passed. Although this figure represents a significant improvement from the 2013 certification rate of 44,6%, it also reflects a significant drop (over 15,0%) from the 2018 certification rate of 83,2%.

The certification rate for the N6 increased significantly from 35,6% in 2013 to 53,9% in 2018, then decreased to 49,4% in 2019. Although the certification rates for NC(V) Level 4 increased from 37,0% in 2013 to 49,4% in 2019, they remain considerably lower than the N3 and N6 certification rates.

Table 26: Certification Rates for N3, N6 & NC(V) at TVET Colleges (2013-2019)

	N3	N6	NC(V) Level 4
2013	44,6%	35,6%	37,0%
2015	64,9%	61,0%	40,2%
2018	83,2%	87,1%	53,9%
2019	68,0%	96,4%	49,4%

Source: DHET, PSET Monitor, 2021

5.6 THROUGHPUT RATES

5.6.1 Public Universities

Throughput rates for universities are defined as "*the number of first-time entry undergraduate students of a specific cohort of a specific year who have graduated either within the minimum time, or up to two years beyond the minimum time, to the number of students in the baseline enrolments of that cohort*"[57].

Table 27 shows that there has been substantial and sustained improvement in the throughput rate of university undergraduate students, from 18.8% for the 2009 cohort, to 22,9% for the 2012 cohort, to 29,9% for the 2016 cohort. These students graduated within the expected three-year time frame. Despite the noticeable improvement in throughput rates, it should be noted that there are still many students who take too long to complete their university degrees, thereby burdening the system in terms of funding[58].

[57] Council on Higher Education, 2019

[58] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021

Table 27: Throughput Rates for First-Time Entering Student Cohort in 3-Year Degree Programmes through Contact and Distance Learning Modes (2009-2016 Intake Years)

	National Total: Contact & Distance Learning							
Intake Year	Graduates (%)							
Year 1	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
2009	18,8%	35,1%	46,0%	52,0%	55,7%	58,1%	59,7%	60,9%
2010	21,5%	39,0%	50,3%	55,8%	59,2%	61,3%	62,7%	
2011	20,9%	38,0%	48,9%	54,4%	57,5%	59,7%		
2012	22,9%	40,5%	51,7%	57,2%	60,5%			
2013	26,6%	46,2%	57,6%	63,4%				
2014	28,1%	47,8%	59,6%	Data not available				
2015	28,6%	49,1%						
2016	29,9%							

Source: DHET 2000–2016 First Time Entering Undergraduate Cohort Studies for Public Higher Education Institutions (2020b)

Table 28 shows the cumulative percentage of students who dropped out after successive years of study for first-time-entering student cohorts (contact and distance learning) that entered three-year university programmes from 2009 to 2017. The table shows that dropout rates at universities for contact mode are declining, with 10.3% of the 2017 cohort dropping out after one year of study compared to 16,5% of the 2009 student cohort. After five years, 20,8% of the 2009 contact student cohort that entered in 2009 had dropped out, relative to a 17.1% dropout of the student cohort that entered the system in 2014.

The data shows that dropout rates are substantially higher for distance students than for contact students. In 2010 (Year 2 of the study programme), 29,3% of the 2009 first-time-entering cohort had dropped out after their first year of study. By 2018 (after 10 years of study), 56,9% of this cohort had dropped out. For the 2017 first-time-entering cohort, the dropout rate after the first year of study had improved slightly, with 28,1% of the cohort having dropped out from their studies after the first year[59].

Table 28: Dropout Rates for First-Time Entering Student Cohort in 3-Year Undergraduate Degree Programmes through Contact and Distance Learning Modes (2009-2016 Intake Years)

	National Total: Contact & Distance Learning																	
Intake Year	Dropouts (%)																	
Year 1	Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10	
	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D
2009	16,5	29,3	19,2	41,8	20,5	47,8	20,8	48,6	22,1	53,5	22,5	55,1	22,6	57,5	22,1	57,1	21,7	56,9
2010	14,1	31,8	17,5	44,1	18,2	47,1	19,6	53,3	20,2	55,5	20,4	58,6	20,2	58,4	19,7	58,6		
2011	13,8	34,3	16,3	40,8	18,3	49,1	19,7	53,2	20,2	56,9	19,9	57,4	19,5	58,2				
2012	13,1	28,8	17,6	42,6	19,3	48,1	19,9	52,9	20,0	54,5	19,6	55,8						

[59] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021

	National Total: Contact & Distance Learning																	
Intake Year	Dropouts (%)																	
Year 1	Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10	
	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C	D
2013	15,3	31,6	19,1	44,0	18,6	52,1	18,3	52,7	18,5	52,4	Data not available							
2014	15,9	26,4	17,5	38,3	16,9	45,4	17,1	45,4										
2015	11,8	28,7	14,7	39,0	14,8	42,4												
2016	11,3	29,3	14,4	36,5														
2017	10,3	28,1																

Source: DHET 2000–2016 First Time Entering Undergraduate Cohort Studies for Public Higher Education Institutions (2020b)

5.6.2 TVET Colleges

The throughput rate of TVET colleges, which is currently based only on NC(V) students, is calculated by dividing the total number of students who completed NC(V) Level 4 in Year 3 of their studies by the total number of students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in Year 1[60].

Table 29 shows that in the 2016 academic year, 88 771 students had enrolled for the NC(V) Level 2 programme. However, only 8 135 students of this cohort completed the NC(V) Level 4 qualification after three years (in 2018). These figures mean that only 9,2% of all students enrolled in the NC(V) Level 2 programme in 2016 completed this qualification within the expected time frame. It is assumed that the low throughput rates are the result of a combination of repetition and dropout[61].

In terms of gender, the NC(V) Level 2 throughput rate for female students was 4,6% higher than that for male students, and 1,8% higher than the overall throughput rate of 9,2%.

Table 29: Overall Throughput Rate of NC(V) Level 2 Students Enrolled at TVET Colleges in 2016

	No. of Students Enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in 2016	No. of Students who Completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2018	Throughput Rate (%)
Male	35 046	2 226	6,4%
Female	53 725	5 909	11,0%
Total	88 771	8 135	9,2%

Source: DHET Throughput Rate of TVET College Students: National Certificate Vocational (2021)

5.7 NATIONAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID SCHEME

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is a student bursary and loan scheme for Post-School Education and Training (PSET) designed for students from poor- and working-class families who have a combined household income of up to R350 000 a year.

[60] Khuluvhe M. and Mathibe R., "Throughput Rate of TVET College Students: National Certificate Vocational", 2021

[61] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021

In 2019/20, the government- funded NSFAS amounted to R22,9 billion, up from R7,4 billion in 2011/12. Under the scheme, the number of students assisted for both universities and TVET colleges increased from 332 187 in 2011/12 to 740 037 in 2019/20, as reflected in Table 30 below.

Table 30: Total & Per Student NSFAS Allocation to Public Universities & TVET Colleges (2011/12-2019/20)

	University			TVET Colleges			Total				
	Expenditure (thousands)	Students Assisted	Per Student Expenditure	Expenditure (thousands)	Students Assisted	Per Student Expenditure	Expenditure (thousands)	Students Assisted	Per Student Expenditure	TVET Share of NSFAS Expenditure	TVET Share of NSFAS Supported Students
2011/12	6 015 607	217 219	27 694	1 385 239	114 968	12 049	7 400 846	332 187	22 279	18,7%	34,6%
2015/16	7 194 619	178 961	40 202	2 095 130	235 988	8 878	9 289 748	414 949	22 388	22,6%	56,9%
2017/18	10 876 571	260 002	41 833	1 807 722	200 339	9 023	12 684 293	460 341	27 554	14,3%	43,5%
2019/20	18 670 387	393 767	47 415	4 203 721	346 270	12 140	22 874 108	740 037	30 909	18,4%	46,8%

Source: DHET Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa (2019b)

In 2019/20, over one-third of students enrolled at universities were NSFAS beneficiaries, while over half of the students enrolled at TVET colleges were NSFAS beneficiaries. The real per student university NSFAS allocation increased on average by 7,0% from 27 694 in 2011/12 to 47 415 in 2019/20. Real TVET allocations increased by 14,9% on average from 2011/12 to 2019/20, and the number of students increased on average by 14,8% in the same period. The real per student TVET NSFAS allocation, however, showed an insignificant increase of about 0.1% on average in the nine-year period under review. While the TVET college share of NSFAS-supported students has increased from 34,6% in 2011/12 to 46,8% in 2019/20, the TVET share of NSFAS expenditure fluctuated from 2011/12 to 2019/20 but remained at 18,4% in 2019/20[62].

5.8 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Table 31 presents that the number of workers and unemployed persons registered for SETA-supported learning programmes (learnerships, internships, and skills programmes) between 2011/12 and 2019/20. The data shows an increase in numbers from 135 229 in 2011/12 to 222 210 in 2019/20, representing a 6,5% average annual growth rate since 2011/12. The number of certificated individuals grew at an average annual growth rate of 5,4% over the same period. However, the numbers of both registered and certificated individuals declined from 2018/19 to 2019/20, except for those who were certificated through internship programmes[63].

[62] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021
[63] DHET, PSET Monitor: Macro-Indicator Trends, 2021

Table 31: Number of Workers and Unemployed Persons Registered and Certificated at SETA-Supported Learning Programmes by Programme Type (2011/12–2019/20)

	Registered				Certificated			
	Learnerships	Internships	Skills Programmes	Total Registered	Learnerships	Internships	Skills Programmes	Total Certificated
2011/12	43 871	3 452	87 906	135 229	29 197	878	87 527	117 602
2015/16	94 369	13 135	123 593	231 097	43 322	3 352	127 144	173 818
2017/18	111 681	12 935	144 531	269 147	48 002	6 496	122 979	177 477
2019/20	81 988	11 784	128 438	222 210	57 888	7 711	114 032	179 631
Average Annual Growth (2011/12-2019/2020)	8,1%	16,6%	4,9%	6,4%	8,9%	31,2%	3,4%	5,4%

Source: DHET Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa (2013c, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017b, 2018, 2019b, 2020d, 2021d)

5.9 RESPONSIVENESS OF THE PSET SYSTEM TO THE LABOUR MARKET

A study was commissioned on behalf of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) by the Capacity Building Programme for Employment Promotion[64] in 2020 on the responsiveness of the PSET system to the needs of the economy and labour market and to individuals in terms of their employability. The study focussed on the transition of TVET graduates into the labour market based on three indicators: i) labour market absorption (i.e. whether there is a demand for particular kinds of qualifications in the labour market); ii) measurement of skills mismatches (i.e. the extent to which the levels and types of skills required for a job and the person doing the job do not match); and iii) measurement of the extent to which universities and TVET colleges are preparing students for occupations that are in high demand in the labour market.

The findings of the study included:

- Labour absorption: about 55,0% of graduates were either involved in some kind of work or studying, while about 45,0% were neither working nor studying. The labour market absorption rate[65] was 40,5%, whilst only 14,0% of graduates continued with their studies.
- Skills supply and demand mismatch: The levels of education–job mismatches in South Africa are very high. In 2019, 51,1% of South African workers were employed in an occupation for which they did not have the correct education level. About 21,6% of South African workers are over-qualified for their jobs (i.e. their highest educational attainment level is higher than the one usually required in the occupation they are employed in), and a further 29,5% are under-qualified (i.e. their highest educational attainment level is lower than the one usually required in the occupation they are employed in). In comparison to many other countries, South Africa has very high levels of education–job mismatches[66]. The incidence of qualification mismatch in South Africa is higher

[64] A European Union–funded programme implemented by the Government Technical Advisory Centre.
[65] The labour market absorption rate is a measure of the graduates who became self-employed, were employed by another person, or were participating in work-based learning (WBL) programmes.
[66] OECD Skills for Jobs Database, 2021

than most countries, especially where under-qualification is concerned. The overall incidence of qualification mismatch for OECD countries was only 35,7%, compared to South Africa's 51,5%.

5.10 IMPACT OF COVID-19 & GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education across all education sectors in South Africa. On 23 March 2020, the President announced a nationwide lockdown effective from 26 March 2020 and school closures were imposed in all schools across the country. These school closures interrupted the learning of an estimated 17 million learners from pre-school to secondary schools, and close to 2,3 million students enrolled in post-school education and training institutions[67].

During the lockdown in 2020, most students or learners in South Africa were attending school in a 'shift system', in order to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the schools offered remote learning for educational continuity. However, the transition could not be performed due to lack of remote learning services by most of the schools. Among individuals aged 5–24 years attending school in 2020, only close to 6,0% participated in remote learning as part of the measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19[68]. However, the lockdown involved a great deal of independent and self-instruction for which many learners were not prepared. Schools and educators had to adapt to new educational concepts and modes of delivery of teaching, for which they were not trained. Furthermore, the transition to online teaching added challenges for many learners who did not have access to resources to continue learning remotely and were at risk of falling behind. This transition also led to some schools not being able to complete the curriculum, leaving many gaps in children's education.

In response to the school closures, various plans were designed to mitigate the health risks and the loss in learning. Such plans included practical and comprehensive catch-up plans to be implemented by schools. Furthermore, remote learning policies were designed in order to continue learning during the various lockdown periods.

The rollout of the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccination programme for the Basic Education Sector commenced on 23 June 2021. A separate national vaccine rollout plan was launched for the social development sector from 19 July 2021 in all provinces. National relief packages provided by government to mitigate the impact of the national state of disaster did not initially include ECD facilities and programmes. To overcome the crisis in the sector, government established the Presidential Employment Stimulus for ECDs, which is a temporary employment protection support scheme to close this gap. The relief fund covers both registered and unregistered facilities and programmes to support their operation and reduce their risk of permanent closure[69].

[67] Stats SA, "Covid-19 and barriers to participation in education in South Africa", Education Series Volume VIII, 2020

[68] Stats SA, "Covid-19 and barriers to participation in education in South Africa", Education Series Volume VIII, 2020

[69] https://www.gov.za/documents/building-society-works-presidential-employment-stimulus-south-african-economic

5.11 FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (4IR) & EDUCATION

The 4IR is the current and developing environment in which changing technologies and trends such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are changing how materials, products, and services are produced and consumed. The 4IR is also characterised by the use of information and communications technology (ICT).

The 4IR presents a number of implications for skills development and education. The 4IR provides an opportunity for South African education institutions to create an environment of creativity and innovation. The use of technology can be used to resolve issues of social exclusion, and be used as a bridge to close the gap between the rich and the poor and between different races. In addition, the 4IR provides an opportunity for education institutions to foster partnerships with other stakeholders such as the government and private companies especially[70].

A report prepared by a Ministerial Task Team on the implications of the 4IR for the PSET in 2020[71], sets out some key recommendations in developing a responsive PSET system. Some of the key recommendations include:

- Create relevant education opportunities – this involves developing curricula, programmes, and courses that are informed by the demands of the labour market. Understanding this requires partnership and collaboration between employers, industry bodies, public and private PSET providers, the government, and civil society. These curriculum changes will also have to be coordinated with the primary and secondary school system.
- Enable new approaches to teaching and learning - the PSET system should be re-oriented to provide for a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and strategies, according to need. Such an approach requires flexibility in admissions criteria, curriculum design, learning and teaching modes, and assessment, with appropriate support systems and services – across the PSET sector and also within the specific subsectors.
- Tackle the digital divide in PSET at all levels – the emergence of technological innovations has tremendous potential to accentuate the already significant and growing digital divide within education, conferring a benefit on those with access to ICT and further marginalising those without such access. Factors that require consideration include access to hardware (including devices for students) and affordable/reliable Internet connections, information literacy, the extent of integration of ICT into the social fabric of everyday life, provision of technical and training support, and access to compelling applications and content.
- Ensure effective student support - learning needs to be opened so that all people can take advantage of the opportunities on offer. Effective student support will be critical for those students who come from schooling backgrounds that have not adequately prepared them for the rigours of study at a PSET level. This support requirement spans a broad range of skills and competencies, including literacy and numeracy, writing skills, information literacy, ICT proficiency, study and research skills, time management, and life skills of various kinds.
- Develop simpler policy frameworks - a more responsive, agile, and open PSET system will require simpler and more flexible policy frameworks, especially those responsible for governing programme accreditation and quality assurance. These policy frameworks should also be well aligned with broader and linked government policies.
- Adopt a regional approach to 4IR-related development - there is a need to develop a systemic regional approach to initiate integrated 4IR-related development at the regional level. This should

[70] Kayembe C., "Challenges and Opportunities for Education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution", 2019
[71] DHET, Report of a Ministerial Task Team on the Implications of the 4th Industrial Revolution for the Post-School Education and Training System, DHET, September 2020

link to the NDP's focus on integrated development and the government's district-based coordinated approach.

- Build effective partnerships – Partnerships are critical between learning institutions, employers, industry bodies, and government departments.

5.12 SUMMARY

Access to education, both at basic and higher level, has improved, which is evident in the higher enrolment rates at various levels of the education system. Enrolment in primary and lower secondary education has been high for the younger youth age cohorts, after which, non-attendance of educational institutions increases progressively. Consequently, enrolment in higher education is relatively low, despite moderate increases in recent years. Youth attendance at schools was higher for males, with a higher enrolment rate of females at higher education institutions. At a school level, the lack of money for education has increasingly become a major hurdle for learners, with attendance at schools where no tuition fees were levied more than doubling between 2008 and 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education across all education sectors in South Africa.

Educational attainments are still largely a function of historical and socio-economic factors like geographic location, class, gender, and race. This manifests in low levels of educational attainment among Black African and Coloured youth as compared to Indian/Asian and White youth.

There has been substantial growth in terms of access to universities and TVET colleges. Graduation rates for public universities have continued to grow for all race groups and among both female and male students. At TVET colleges, certification rates have also increased significantly for all the programmes offered. However, international comparative studies attest to the extent of mismatches between education and the labour market is fairly high in South Africa.

There has been substantial and sustained improvement in the throughput rate of university undergraduate students, although it is recognised that there are still many students who take too long to complete their university degrees, thereby burdening the system in terms of funding. dropout rates are substantially higher for distance students than for contact students. The low throughput rates for TVET colleges are thought to be the result of a combination of repetition and dropout. This phenomenon needs to be further interrogated so that appropriate solutions could be found to this highly concerning problem.

Under the NSFAS, the number of students assisted for both universities and TVET colleges increased, with the real per student university NSFAS allocation increasing for both university and TVET students.

The 4IR provides an opportunity for South African education institutions to create an environment of creativity and innovation. This will require the formal PSET system, working in partnership with government departments and employers, to repurpose and reconfigure curricula in coordination with the primary and secondary school system, to ensure a broader and responsive PSET system that can be used to tackle the issues of social exclusion.

6. YOUTH ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION & TRANSFORMATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Youth employment and economic empowerment are critical components of any society's strong foundation. For society, youth employment promotes social integration, intergenerational dialogue, citizenship and solidarity. Creating and fulfilling income-generating job opportunities for young people can have direct positive consequences for poverty alleviation. Youth employment thus benefits social development. It also benefits economic development by facilitating the entry of young skilled people into the productive sectors of an economy, and enabling the economy to sustain or increase its productivity and competitiveness in the global market place.

Globally, unemployment among young people is more than three times more common than among adults[72]. Growing and persistent youth unemployment has a negative impact on social development. It can lead to the marginalisation and exclusion of young people. Without adequate opportunities and investments, youth unemployment can lead to increased vulnerability among some young people to crime, violence, and substance abuse. Furthermore, there is evidence that unemployment can expose youth to greater risks of lower future wages, repeated periods of unemployment, longer unemployment spells as adults, and income poverty[73].

Regional indicators for 2021 show that the labour force participation rate for Africa was 43,4%. Employment estimates reflect that youth employment across the continent was 37,8% in 2021 (compared to a global figure of 33,6%), whilst youth unemployment was 23,8%[74]. In 2020, over one in five young people in Africa were not in employment, education or training (22,9%)[75].

The following section of this report examines the extent to which youth participate in the labour market by providing an overview of labour market participation rates, youth employment and unemployment; and addresses the issue of youth entrepreneurship as an alternative mode of job-creation.

6.2 LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION RATES

The figure below shows the time series of labour market indicators for South African youth aged 15-34 years for the period 2016 to 2021.

The labour force participation rate (LFPR) is a measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work[76]. The LFPR for youth has fluctuated between 2016 and 2021, declining by 5,2% from 49,9% in 2016, to 44,7% in 2021. The relatively high labour force participation rate reflects a lack of viable alternatives in

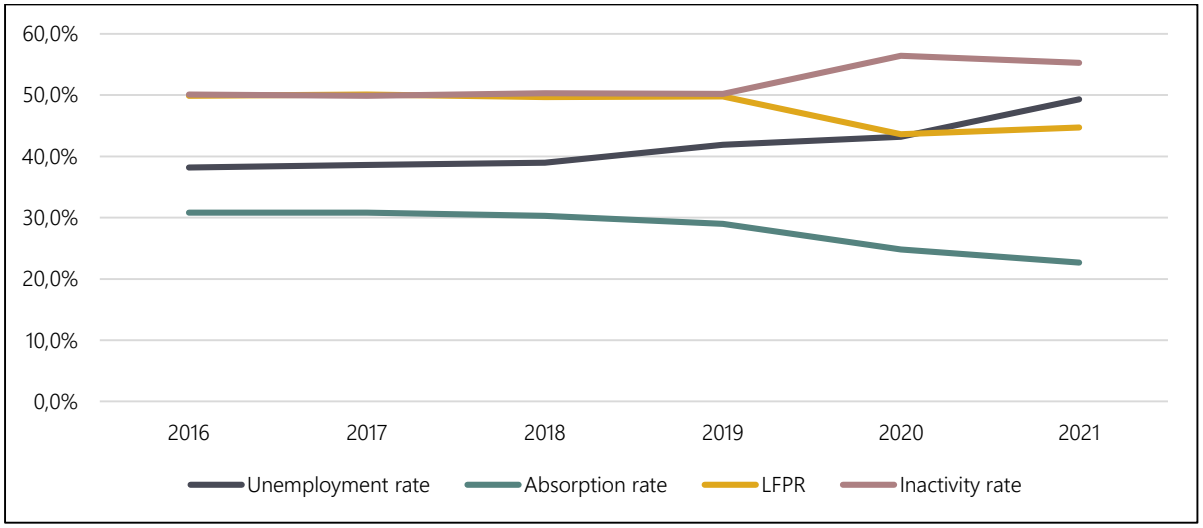
[72] ILO, "Global Youth Employment Trends: Africa", 2022
[73] Yiannakaris E., "The impact of the Raymond Ackerman Academy of Entrepreneurial Development (RAA) in creating improved and sustainable livelihoods amongst Academy graduates", 2019
[74] ILO, "Global Youth Employment Trends: Africa", 2022. It is important to note that the ILO defines youth as those aged between 15-24 years. Therefore, these figures exclude those aged between 25-34 years.
[75] ILO, "Global Youth Employment Trends: Africa", 2022.
[76] Stats SA, Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS), Q3: 2021

education or decent work - many young people are engaged in informal jobs with relatively little information and support with regard to other options[77].

The labour absorption rate (AR) is the proportion of the working-age population that is employed[78]. The youth absorption rate has steadily declined between 2016 and 2021, dropping by 8,1% over the period.

The youth unemployment rate increased from 38,2% in 2016 to 49,3% in 2021, representing an 11,1% increase in unemployed youth. An analysis of the size and composition of the inactive group is useful in assessing potential labour supply and the likelihood of people in the inactive group moving into the labour market at some point in the future[79]. In 2021, the inactivity rate for young people was 55,3% - an increase of 5,2% since 2016.

Figure 46: Youth Labour Market Indicators (2016-2021)



Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

6.3 YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Table 32 presents the employment figures for youth for 2021. A total of 4,7 million young people aged 15-34 years were employed in 2021, representing 32,7% of the total number of employed persons (15-64 years). Over 80% of the employed youth were between the ages of 25 and 34 years (84,1%), and had a 27,5% share in the total employed. There were 745 000 employed youth in the 15-24 year age group accounting for 15,9% of total employed youth, and a 5,2% share in the total employed in 2021.

[77] ILO, Report on Employment in Africa (Re-Africa): Tackling the Youth Employment Challenge, 2020.
[78] Stats SA, QLFS, Q3: 2021
[79] Stats SA, Social Profile of Youth, 2014-2020

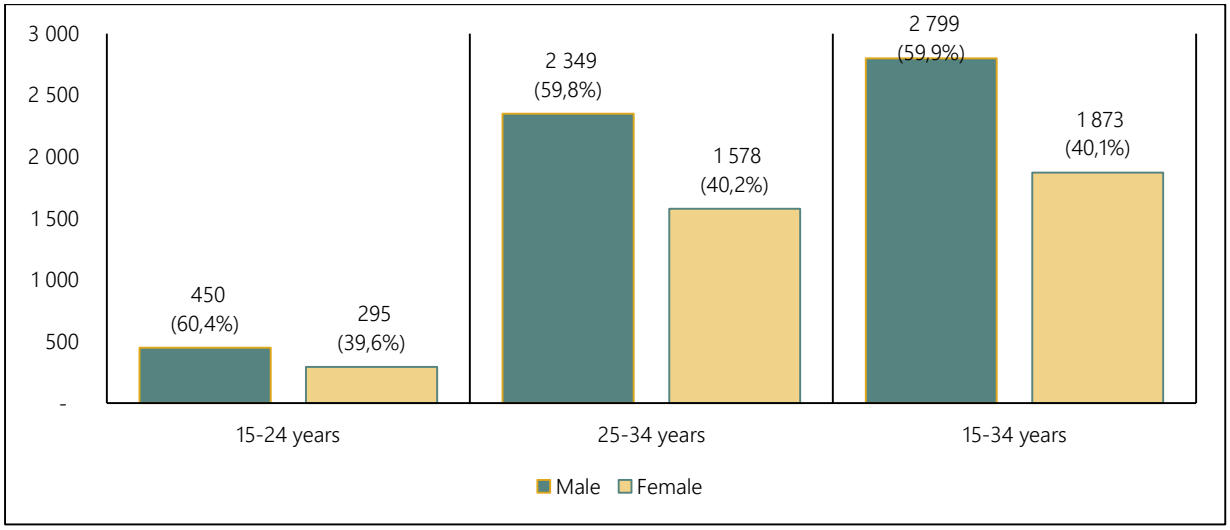
Table 32: Employed Youth by Age Group (2021)

	No. ('000)	Percentage of Total Employed Youth	Percentage of Total Employed
15-24 years	745	15,9%	5,2%
25-34 years	3 927	84,1%	27,5%
15-34 years	4 672	100,0%	32,7%
Total Employed (15-64 years)	14 282	-	-

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

In terms of gender, Figure 47 shows that male youth accounted for 59,9% of the youth employment figures for 2021, compared to 40,1% employed females. Higher proportions of male youth were employed across both the youth age categories in relation to females (60,4% for 15-24 years and 59,8% for 25-34 years).

Figure 47: Employed Youth (15-34 Years) by Gender (2021)



Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

6.4 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

In South Africa, 7,4 million youth were unemployed, representing 59,4% of the total unemployed. Youth aged between 25 and 34 years made up 65,5% of the unemployed youth, and 40,0% of the total unemployed. Young people aged 15-24 years accounted for 34,5% of total youth unemployment and 19,4% of total unemployed (Table 33).

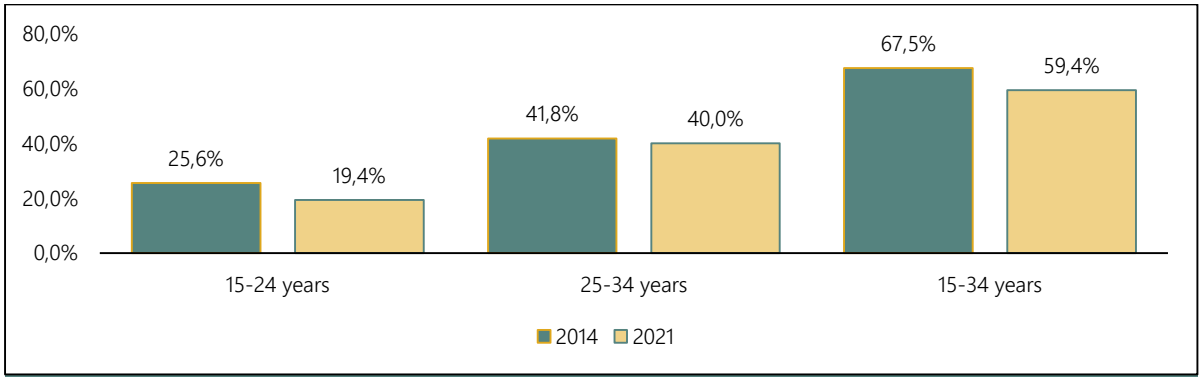
Table 33: Unemployed Youth by Age Group (2021)

	No. ('000)	Percentage of Total Unemployed Youth	Percentage of Total Unemployed
15-24 years	2 553	34,5%	19,4%
25-34 years	4 856	65,5%	40,0%
15-34 years	7 409	100,0%	59,4%
Total Unemployed (15-64 years)	12 484		

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

According to Statistics SA[80], more than 5 million South African youth were unemployed in 2014, increasing to 7,4 million in 2021. In 2014, young people aged 15-34 years made up approximately three quarters (3,5 million) of the unemployed, and increased to 4,5 million in 2021 (an increase of 1 million). However, as shown in Figure 48, the share of unemployed youth from 67,5% to 59,4% between the years 2014 and 2021 (8,1% decrease). Although the unemployed youth aged between 25-34 years contributed the largest share of unemployed youth for both years, the decline in the total share of youth unemployment was driven by younger persons between the ages of 15-24 years, with the share of unemployed persons in this age bracket declining by 6,2% (from 25,6% in 2014 to 19,4% in 2021). This decrease is considerably higher in comparison to the 25-34 year age bracket, which fell by 1,8% from 41,8% in 2014 to 40,0% in 2021.

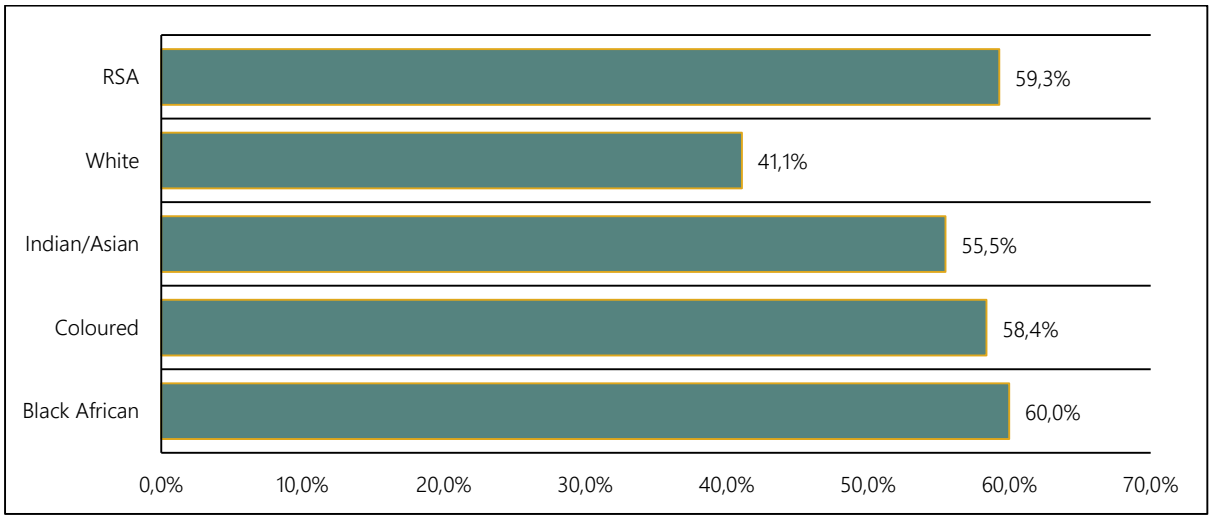
Figure 48: Share of Unemployed Youth Amongst the Total Unemployed (2014 & 2021)



Source: QLFS Q3: 2014, QLFS Q3: 2021

Figure 49 below depicts the share of unemployed youth within each population group in 2021. Nationally, the share of unemployed youth was 59,3%. In 2021, the largest share of unemployed youth was amongst the Black African population group (60,0%), followed by Coloured (58,4%). The Indian/Asian and White population groups recorded shares of unemployed youth of 55,5% and 41,1% respectively.

Figure 49: Share of Unemployed Youth (15–34 years) as a Proportion of the Unemployed by Population Group (2021)

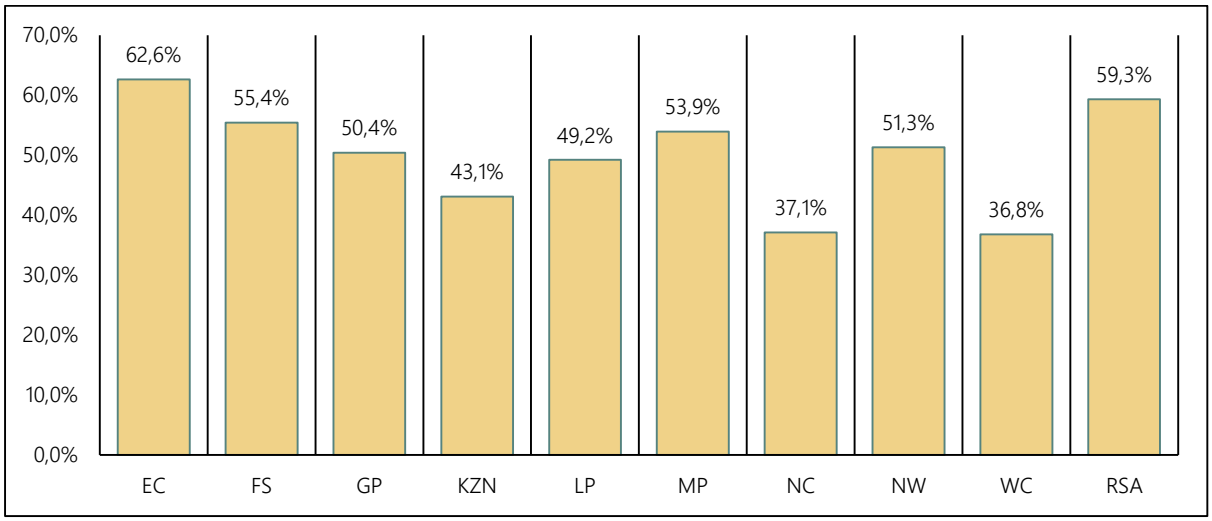


Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

[80] Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2014

In terms of the provincial profile, Figure 50 shows that Eastern Cape recorded the highest unemployment rate for youth in 2021 (62,6%). Free State had the second highest youth unemployment rate of 55,4%, followed by Mpumalanga (53,9%). The youth unemployment rate for seven of the provinces exceeded 40%, except for Western Cape (36,8%) and Northern Cape (37,1%).

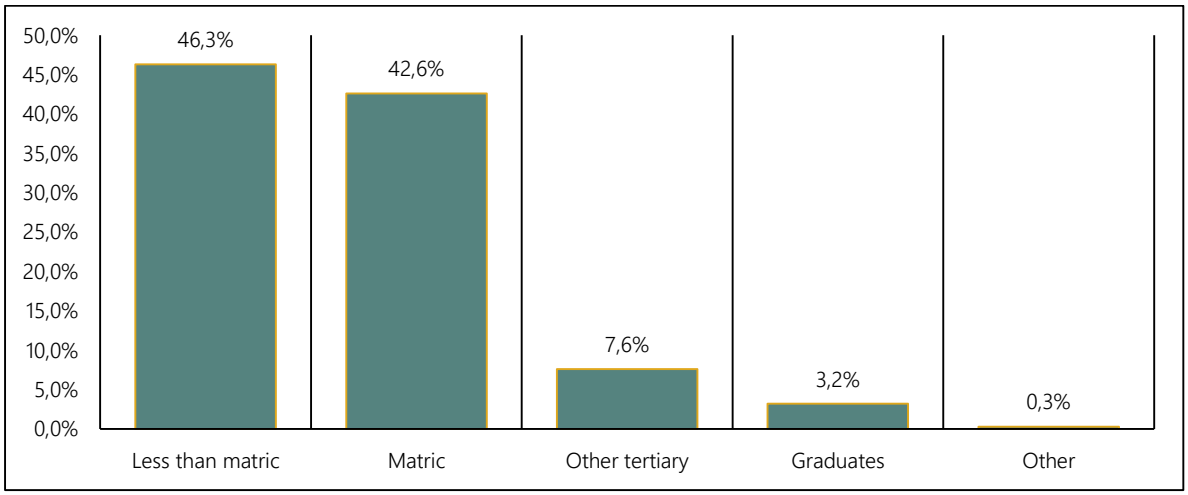
Figure 50: Youth (15-34 years) Unemployment Rate by Province (2021)



Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

Figure 51 below shows that the highest proportion of youth unemployment was amongst young people whose highest level of education attained was "less than matric" (46,3%), followed by those with a matric qualification (42,6%). Lower levels of unemployment were recorded for youth with "other tertiary qualifications" (7,6%) and graduates (3,2%).

Figure 51: Percentage of Unemployed youth (15–34 years) by the Highest Level of Education (2021)



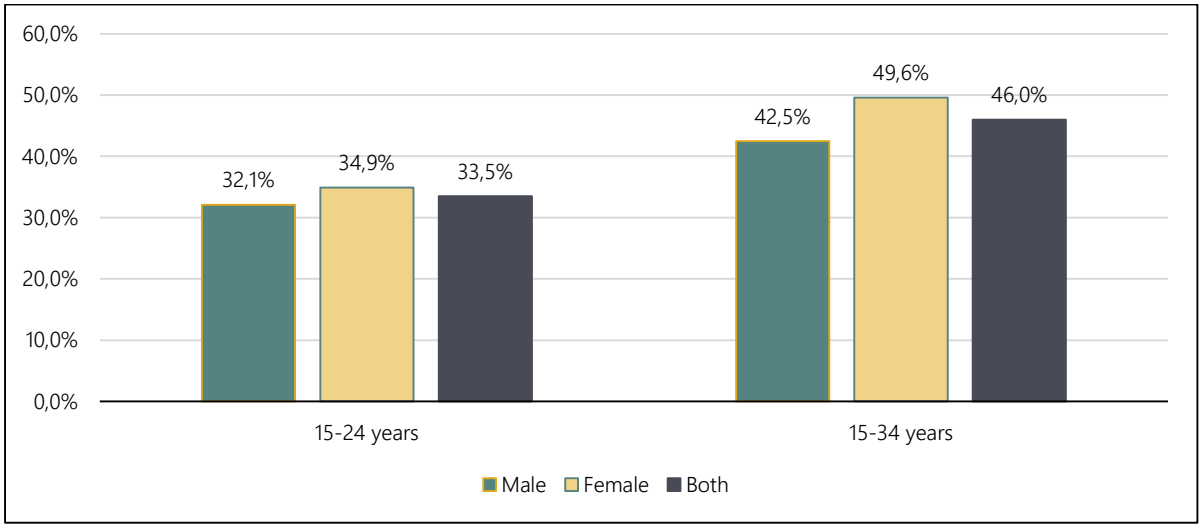
Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

6.5 YOUTH NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING (NEET)

Some young people have been discouraged with the labour market and they are also not building on their skills base through education and training - they are not in employment, education, or

training (NEET). The NEET rate serves as an important additional labour market indicator for young people[81].

Figure 52: Youth NEET Rate by Age Group (2021)



Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

According to the QLFS (Q3: 2021), there were about 10,3 million young people aged 15–34 years in of which 46,0% were not in employment, education or training (NEET). In the 15-24 year age group, the NEET rate for females was higher than that of their male counterparts (34,9% and 32,1% respectively). This was similar for the total youth population (15-34 years), where the female NEET rate exceeded the NEET rate for males (49,6% and 42,5% respectively).

6.6 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The table below presents youth employment by status in employment in 2021. According to the QLFS (Q3: 2021), entrepreneurs are defined as "employers" or "own account-workers". In 2021, about 2,4 million employed persons were recorded as entrepreneurs. Of this number, there were 575 199 recorded youth entrepreneurs, representing 12,3% of youth employment.

Table 34: Youth Aged 15-34 Years Employment by Status in Employment (2021)

Type of Employment	No. ('000)	Percentage
Employee	4 049	86,7%
Employer*	139	3,0%
Own account-worker*	436	9,3%
Unpaid household member	47	1,0%
Total	4 672	100,0%
Youth Entrepreneurs (15-34 years)	575	12,3%

Source: Stats SA, QLFS Q3: 2021

6.6.1 Youth Entrepreneurs by Age Group

According to the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)[82], there were a total of 2 404 564 small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in South Africa in 2021 (Q3), which represented 1,7%

[81] Statistics South Africa, QLFS, Q3: 2021
[82] SEDA, SMME Quarterly Update, 3rd Quarter 2021

increase from 2020Q3 figures (2 363 513). This increase was attributed to the increase in SMME owners ages 35 to 55 years (increase of 7,2% over the year)[83].

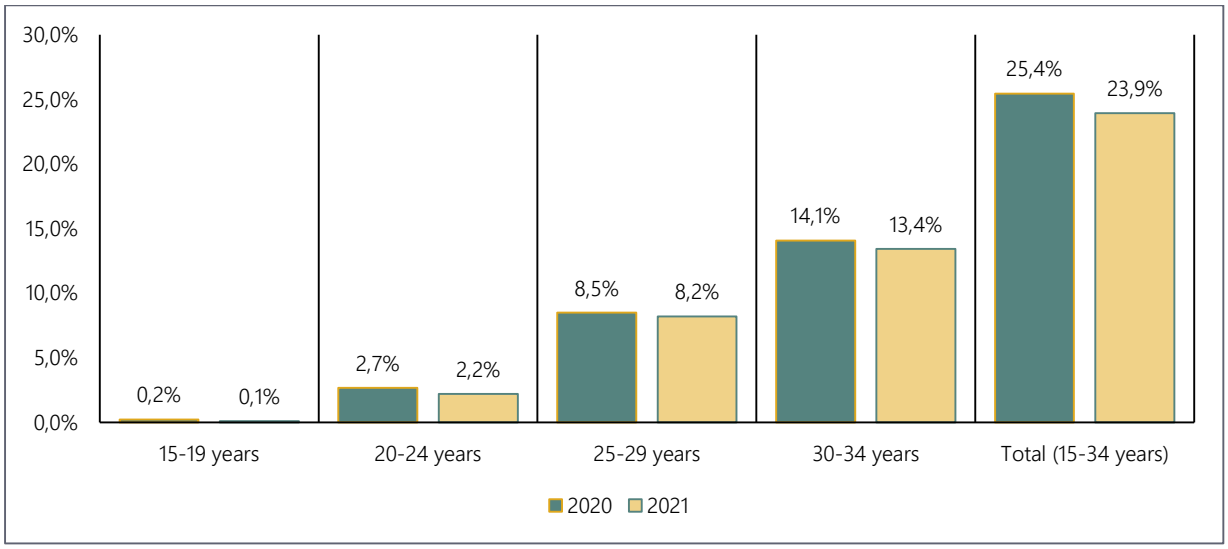
In the third quarter of 2021, youth-owned enterprises accounted for 23,9% (575 199) of the total number of SMMEs (Figure. The majority of youth SMMEs were aged between 25-34 years (90,4%). A year of successive waves of COVID-19, the subsequent lockdowns, and the social unrest in July 2021, appear to have impacted on youth-owned businesses across all age cohorts between 2020 and 2021, with an overall decline of 4,3% in 2021 (Q3). SMME closures for the period were concentrated amongst the youth SMMEs in the 15-19 year and 20-24 year age cohorts (-51,2% and -16,4% respectively) (Table 35).

Table 35: Number of Youth-Owned Enterprises (2020 & 2021)

	2020Q3	2021Q3	Yearly Change (No.)	Yearly Change (%)
15-19 years	5 045	2 464	-2 581	-51,2%
20-24 years	63 336	52 975	-10 361	-16,4%
25-29 years	200 433	197 038	-3 395	-1,7%
30-34 years	332 306	322 722	-9 584	-2,9%
Total (15-34 years)	601 120	575 199	-25 921	-4,3%
Total SMMEs	2 363 513	2 404 564	41 051	1,7%

Source: SEDA, Quarterly Update, 3rd Quarter 2021

Figure 53: Percentage of Youth SMMEs of Total SMMEs (Q3:2020 & Q3:2021)



Source: SEDA, Quarterly Update, 3rd Quarter 2021

6.6.2 Youth Entrepreneurial Activity

Key findings from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor South Africa (GEM SA, 2021/22)[84] regarding overall entrepreneurial activity in South Africa, included:

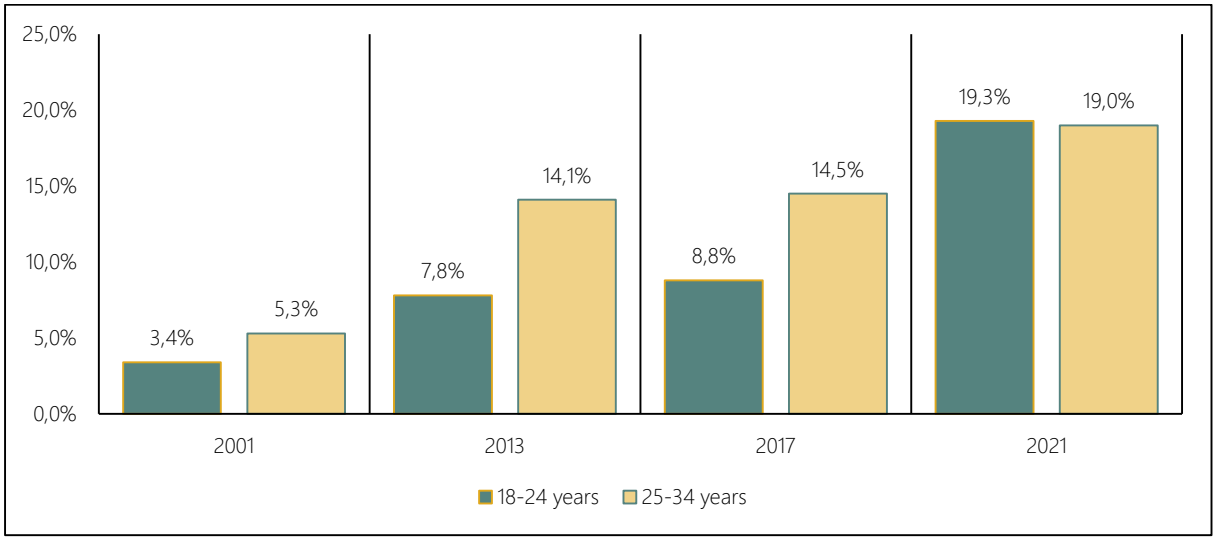
- The nascent entrepreneurial rate (those in the process of starting a business) increased from 7,3% in 2019 to 10,5% in 2021.

[83] SEDA, SMME Quarterly Update, 3rd Quarter 2021
[84] GEM SA, "Fostering Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Vitality", 2021/22

- The new business ownership rate (owner-managers of a new business less than 42 months old) almost doubled from 3,7% in 2019 to 7,3% in 2021.
- Total Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA)[85] increased by 6,7% (10,8% in 2019 to 17,5% in 2021).
- The established business ownership rate (the percentage of adults aged 18-64 years who are currently owner-manager of an established business for more than 42 months) increased by 1,7%.
- The business discontinuance rate increased from 4,9% in 2019 to 13,9% in 2021. A large portion (27,4%) of businesses exited due to the major economic constraints that the COVID-19 pandemic brought on, not only in South Africa but also globally.
- Compared to the average rates for the African region, South Africa reported slightly higher rates in three of the five categories (nascent, new business and TEA rates), with only a marginally lower rate for the established business ownership rate. The business discontinuance rate, was 3,3% higher than the African region's average.
- For the rates of established business ownership, South Africa is below the global average (5,2% South Africa and 6,8% global average), and for business discontinuation rates, more businesses exited in South Africa during this period (13,9% South Africa and 6,5% global average).

Figure 54 provides an overview of youth entrepreneurial activity between 2001 and 2021 based on the 2021/2022 GEM SA. The data shows a higher prevalence of entrepreneurial activity amongst youth aged 25-34 years, compared to the 18-24 year age group. The study also found significant improvements in entrepreneurial activity for both youth age groups – with the TEA increasing for 18-24 year olds from only 3,4% in 2001 to 19,3% in 2021; and 25-34 year olds from 5,3% (2001) to 19% (2021). These figures are generally higher in relation to comparative regions, but this may be due to young people seeking self-employment due to the lack of other employment opportunities[86].

Figure 54: Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) in South Africa by Age Group (2001-2021)



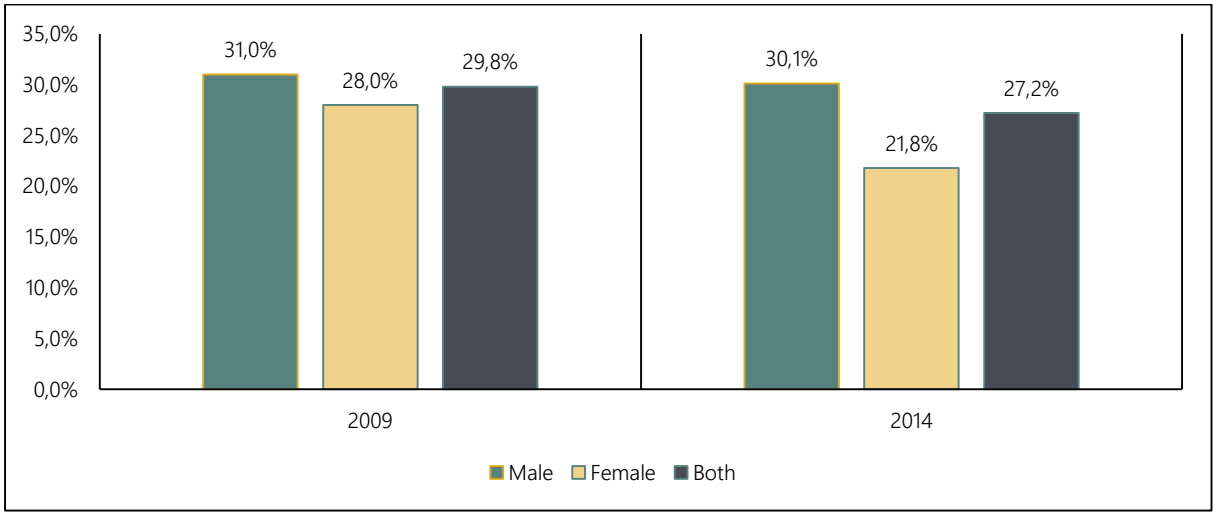
Source: GEM SA, 2021/22

Figure 55 shows the distribution of youth entrepreneurs by gender in 2009 and 2014. Young men are more likely to be entrepreneurs than young women, and youth in the age group 25 to 34 years and adults aged between 35 and 44 years are more likely to be involved in entrepreneurship than all the

[85] The percentage of adults (aged 18–64) who are starting or running a new business
[86] GEM SA, "Fostering Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Vitality", 2021/22

other population groups. The figure also shows a slight decline in the percentage of youth entrepreneurs from 2009 to 2014.

Figure 55: Share of Youth (15 to 34 years) Entrepreneurs by Gender (2009 and 2014)



Source: Stats SA, The Social Profile of the Youth: 2009-2014

Table 36 shows youth participation in entrepreneurship in 2009 and 2014. The table shows that youth entrepreneurs declined from 609 000 in 2009 to 543 000 in 2014. It also shows that youth in urban areas are more likely to be entrepreneurs compared to youth in rural areas. Furthermore, the data show that entrepreneurship is dominated by males.

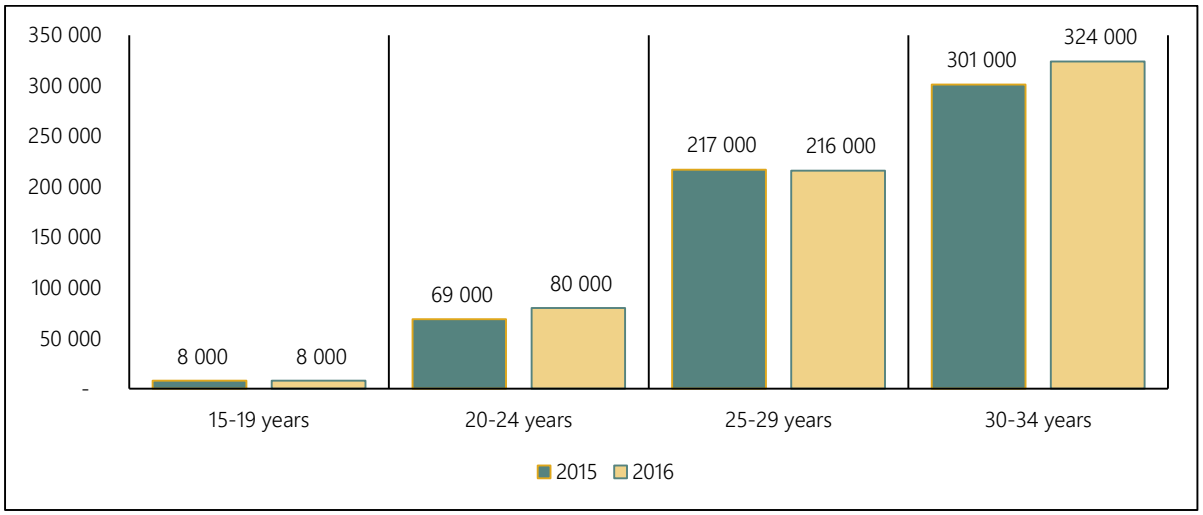
Table 36: Youth entrepreneurs by gender, age group, and geo-type: 2009 and 2014

Age group	Gender/Year (numbers & percentage)											
	Male		Female		Both		Male		Female		Both	
	2009						2014					
15-24 years	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Urban	37	62.9	27	63.5	64	63.2	35	62.9	15	63.0	50	62.9
Rural	22	37.1	16	36.5	37	36.8	20	37.1	9	37.0	29	37.1
Total	59	100	43	100	101	100	55	100	24	100	79	100
25-34 years												
Urban	245	75.0	115	63.9	361	71.0	234	69.9	82	63.3	316	68.0
Rural	82	25.0	65	36.1	147	29.0	101	30.1	48	36.7	148	32.0
Total	327	100	180	100	508	100	334	100	130	100	464	100
15-35 years												
Urban	282	73.1	142	63.8	425	69.7	268	68.9	97	63.3	365	67.3
Rural	104	26.9	81	36.2	184	30.3	121	31.1	57	36.7	178	32.7
Total	386	100	223	100	609	100	389	100	154	100	543	100

Source: Stats SA, The Social Profile of the Youth: 2009-2014

Figure 56 shows business ownership in 2015 and 2016 by age. Youth business ownership was at its highest in the age categories 30 to 34 years, followed by 25 to 29 years. Youth below 24 years are less likely to be business owners. This could be because most of those below 24 years are still attending an educational institution and most of them are less likely to have access to start-up capital.

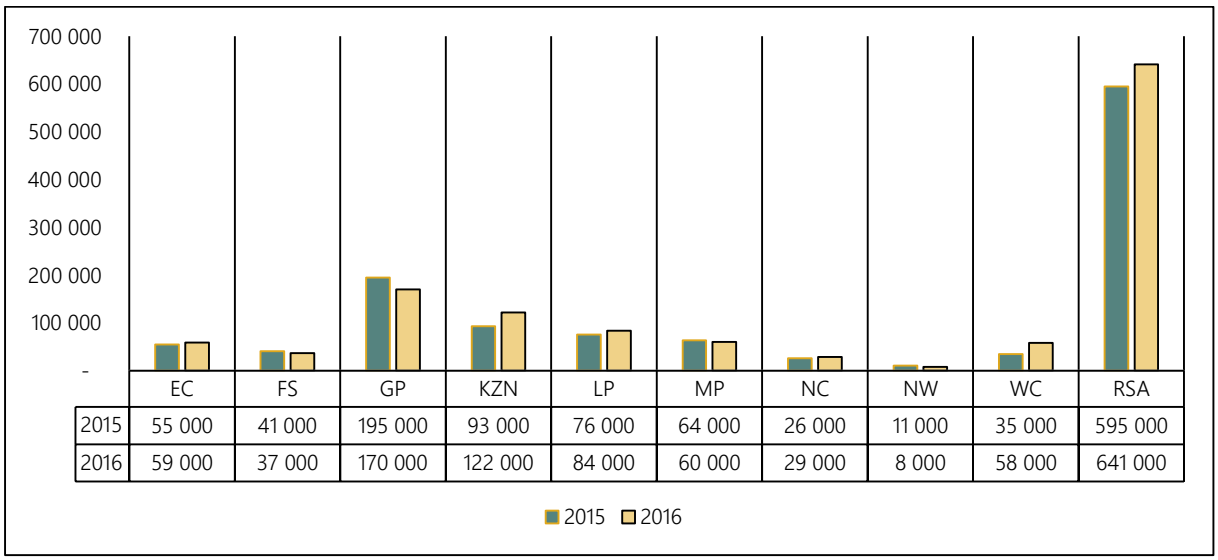
Figure 56: Age distribution of small businesses (2015 and 2016)



Source: Stats SA, 2015 and 2016 datasets

Figure 53 shows the distribution of youth business ownership across all the provinces. Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal had the highest youth business ownership, and together they contributed around 48% in 2015 and about 45% in 2016 to the total youth business owners in South Africa. This could be attributed to the provinces' large populations and high level of economic activity.

Figure 57: Youth-Owned Businesses by Province (2015 and 2016)



	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	RSA
2015	55 000	41 000	195 000	93 000	76 000	64 000	26 000	11 000	35 000	595 000
2016	59 000	37 000	170 000	122 000	84 000	60 000	29 000	8 000	58 000	641 000

Source: Stats SA, 2015 and 2016 datasets

6.7 IMPACT OF COVID-19 & GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating economic impact, threatening the jobs and livelihoods of many South Africans, and has exacerbated South Africa's pre-existing crises of poverty and unemployment.

A study conducted in 2021[87] examined the impact of the COVID-19-related lockdown on youth labour market outcomes for the period February 2020 to June 2020. The study showed that youth unemployment rates were high and increased even more despite the gradual lifting of lockdown measures. The results further showed that very few young people managed to move from being unemployed to being employed during the different transitions, while many became unemployed. The registered employment losses were disproportionately concentrated among young workers who were already vulnerable pre-COVID-19, including relatively younger youth (18–24 years old), female youth, African/black youth, youth with less education and youth in rural areas. These youth were both less likely to gain employment and more likely to lose employment during the lockdown. The findings of the study were consistent with results from other national and international studies that revealed that those already vulnerable pre-COVID-19, suffered disproportionately higher rates of job losses during lockdown[88]. Thus, existing high levels in South Africa of deprivation, poverty, inequality, hunger and food insecurity among young people and their households are likely to remain[89].

6.7.1 Presidential Youth Employment Intervention

The Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI) is a part of the Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme. The PYEI is directed at addressing South Africa's chronic youth unemployment challenge, by helping young people transition from learning to earning. Following the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the economy and employment, implementation of the PYEI forms an integral part of the post-COVID-19 recovery agenda and will help put South Africa on a path towards "a new economy and a new society."

The PYEI is a multi-sector action plan/programme that focuses on priority actions that will increase levels of alignment across government, and stimulate innovation in ways that accelerate delivery and catalyse further actions. The PYEI is delivered through a partnership approach. The Project Management Office in the Presidency is responsible for overall coordination and strategic oversight. Key government departments lead implementation, and the private sector, academia, development partners and civil society support the different components. The National Treasury allocates funding for PYEI activities. This includes dedicated funding for innovative approaches and key PYEI elements. In addition, the PYEI improves the alignment of sustainably funded activities across departments (such as those for skills development) to achieve more with existing resources[90].

The PYEI has identified several priority interventions to accelerate youth pathways into the economy over the next five years, including the establishment of a National Pathway Management Network (NPMN), delivery of agile workforce development (demand-led training), the strengthening of workplace experience, and the Presidential Youth Service programme:

- Officially launched by the President in his State of the Nation Address in February 2021, the NPMN, which is central, and aims to ensure that young people who enter the labour market will be able to access a national network to provide them with a wide range of opportunities to grow their

[87] Mudiriza G. et al, "Youth in the time of a global pandemic: An analysis of recent data on young people's experiences during COVID-19", 2021

[88] Ranchhod, V., and Daniels, R. C., "Labour market dynamics in South Africa at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic", 2021

[89] Mudiriza G. et al, "Youth in the time of a global pandemic: An analysis of recent data on young people's experiences during COVID-19", 2021

[90] https://www.stateofthenation.gov.za/presidential-youth-employment-intervention

employability and improve their income[91]. These linked up networks ensure that a young people are visible across the entire network and regardless of where they join, they can access all opportunities aggregated within the NPMN. This is enabled by information sharing and integration of the different systems within the network.

- The development of an agile workforce focuses on the provision of specific skills that will ensure that economically excluded young people are work-ready and absorbed into priority growth areas where demand for new entrants is growing. These growth areas include inter alia global business services, agricultural value chains, digital and technology, installation repairs and maintenance and automotive. These efforts also include a focus on enabling young people to access workplace experience.
- The PYEI includes support for local economies through the reduction of barriers facing youth, increasing the number of opportunities available to them to enter into self-employment, and to mobilise different forms of support within these communities that facilitate linkages and sustain these initiatives[92].
- The National Youth Service aims to unlock the agency of young people and provide opportunities for them to earn an income while contributing to nation building. National Youth Service programmes focus on providing opportunities for youth to contribute to the development of their community through the provision of services that meet priority needs[93].

6.7.2 SA Youth

SA Youth is an online platform created through a partnership between the Presidency and Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator, to address the barriers that young people face when looking for a job. SA Youth Partner Network enables employer partners to source and recruit new talent for available vacancies at no cost. Young people can create their profiles, view opportunities for learning and earning, and receive support through multiple channels (WhatsApp, email, hotline, and Facebook). NYDA Jobs Officers provide professional jobs placement services to job seekers, employment, and training opportunity providers, as well as to other relevant stakeholders on a provincial level[94].

6.7.3 Department of Basic Education Employment Initiative

The Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI), seeks to mitigate the devastating economic challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Implemented by the Department of Basic Education, the Initiative aims to provide 287 000 unemployed young people, (+/-192 000 Education Assistants and +/- 95 000 General School Assistants), employment and training opportunities in the education sector.

The BEEI is targeted at youth between the ages of 18 and 35, who are currently neither in education/training, nor receiving any form of government grant; as well as young people with disabilities and women. Candidates selected for placement, receive training on various skills that equip them for future employment opportunities. Phase 2 of the BEEI started in September 2001.

[91] NYDA, "National Pathway Management Network Report: 2021/22 Implementation Plan", 2021/22
[92] NYDA, "National Pathway Management Network Report: 2021/22 Implementation Plan", 2021/22
[93] NYDA, "National Pathway Management Network Report: 2021/22 Implementation Plan", 2021/22
[94] NYDA, "National Pathway Management Network Report: 2021/22 Implementation Plan", 2021/22

6.7.4 Key Results

The National Treasury allocated R 858 million for the PYEI in September 2021 as part of Phase 2 of the Presidential Employment Stimulus[95]. Some of the key PYEI results and statistics for the period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 include:

- 2,9 million young people registered on the SA Youth platform.
- 557 opportunity holders were listed on SA Youth (81% of which are in the private sector).
- 358 738 young people secured earning opportunities on SA Youth (46% were from the Department of Basic Education).
- 69% of the opportunities filled on SA Youth were filled by women.
- 30 735 young people received non-financial assistance from the NYDA and Department of Small Business Development (DSBD).
- 75,8% of young people that received non-financial support from DSBD live in either rural areas or townships[96].

6.8 SUMMARY

In 2021, 7,4 million South African youth were unemployed, representing 59,3% of the total unemployed. The highest level of unemployment is among the youth aged between 25 and 34 years. Rates of youth unemployment increased from 2010 to 2016, which suggests that current policy interventions are not having the desired impact. The labour force participation and absorption rates for youth have declined since 2016.

Youth participation in the economy is to a large extent influenced by historical and socio-economic factors, with White and Indian/Asian youth more likely to be employed and entrepreneurs than Black African and Coloured youth. The level of youth entrepreneurial activity in South Africa has increased between 2001 and 2021, which may be due to young people seeking self-employment due to the lack of other employment opportunities. However, the level of youth ownership of businesses is still low (23,9% of the total number of SMMEs in 2021), which was further impacted by the COVID-pandemic, lockdowns and social unrest. The low levels of entrepreneurship among young people have implications for job creation and income generation by this population group.

[95] NYDA, "National Pathway Management Network Report: 2021/22 Implementation Plan", 2021/22

[96] PYEI Dashboard, https://www.stateofthenation.gov.za/presidential-youth-employment-intervention/tracking-progress-and-facilitate-learning

7. YOUTH HEALTHCARE & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Improving the health and well-being of youth is crucial for their well-being today, and for their future economic productivity, because behaviour and health developed during these stages of life are key predictors of the adult burden of disease, and because health – like education – is a key factor in the intergenerational transmission of poverty[97].

Although better youth health is dependent on the provision of high quality health services, it is also intertwined with factors falling outside the realm of the health sector. Poverty undermines health and well-being through a variety of pathways, including poor nutrition and poor living conditions Furthermore, individual factors such as substance abuse impact on young people's well-being and are predictors of future ill health. Violence and the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the emotional and mental health of youth and may, in turn, undermine educational outcomes and employment prospects.

It is against this backdrop, that the following section provides information on aspects that affect the health and well-being of the youth population in South Africa.

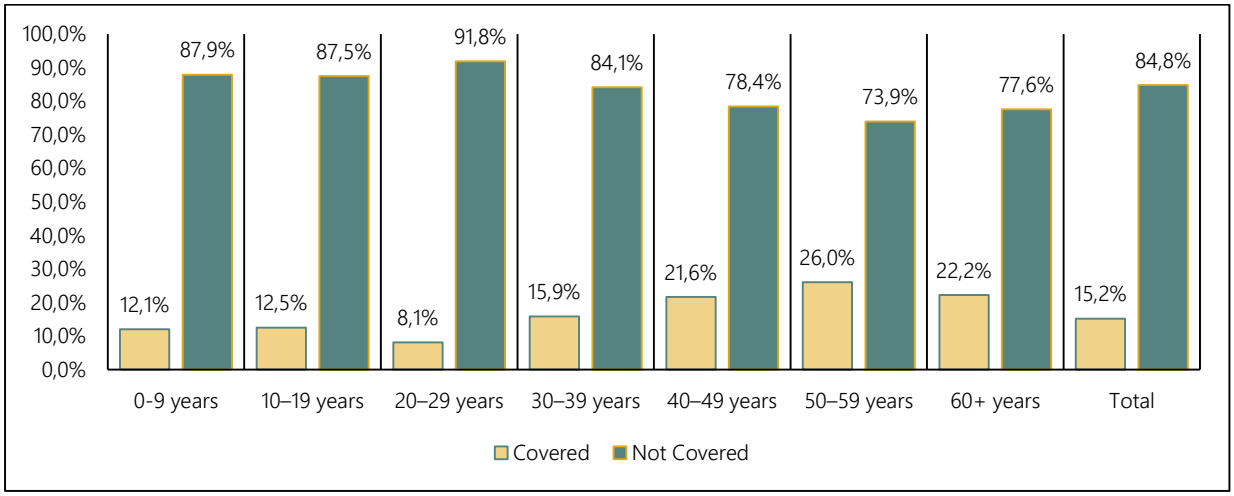
7.2 YOUTH MEDICAL AID COVERAGE

Access to medical aid is a significant issue that has a bearing on the health and wellbeing of young South Africans. For the South African population, access to adequate medical aid helps ensure better access to proper medical care.

Figure 58 below shows the medical coverage for the various age groups as recorded in the Statistics South Africa GHS 2020. The statistics show that in 2020, 84,8% of the total population were not covered by medical aid. When disaggregated by age group, young people within the 20-29 year age category had the lowest medical aid coverage (8,1%). Overall, young people across the age spectrum 10-39 years, experience low access to medical aid.

[97] Cooper D. et al, "Youth health and well-being: Why it matters", 2015

Figure 58: Youth Medical Aid Coverage by Age Group (2020)



Source: Stats SA, GHS, 2020

7.3 YOUTH LIFESTYLE DISEASES

It is widely recognised that youth face greater health risks around the world, including physical and psychological trauma from sexual abuse, gender-based violence, other forms of accident, and diseases in general[98]. Research suggests that youth aged between 15–24 years, are becoming more susceptible to Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) as a result of their exposure to cheap fast foods and inactive lifestyles, which puts them at risk of lifestyle diseases such as obesity, heart diseases and diabetes. Poverty, unemployment, and a lack of access to quality education are also some of the key factors that increase the risk of young people developing chronic conditions such as hypertension and high coronary heart disease.

The table below presents some of the prevalence estimates for common chronic conditions experienced by youth in South Africa. The data shows that the prevalence of hypertension rises with increasing age, and that it is higher amongst males in both youth age groups (20,1% for 15-24 years and 33,2% 25-34 years respectively). The prevalence of diabetes generally increases with age, therefore the data reflects low prevalence levels amongst the youth aged between 15 and 34 years. However, studies show that the risk of developing diabetes increases with increasing body mass index (BMI). Severe obesity is defined as those who have a BMI of 35 and more, among men and women by age group[99]. Table 37 shows that young females have the highest level of severe obesity in the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups. Anaemia may arise from iron deficiency, chronic infections or other nutritional deficiencies and health conditions. The proportion of female youth is much higher than that of males (33,0%) for both age groups. The prevalence of asthma or respiratory disease is reported to be higher amongst male youth between the ages of 15 to 24 years and 25-34 years.

[98] Stats SA, Morbidity and Mortality Patterns among the Youth of South Africa, 2013.
[99] Department of Health, Demographic and Health Indicators, 2016

Table 37: Prevalence of Chronic Conditions Amongst Youth (2016)

	Hypertension		Diabetes		Anaemia		Asthma/ Respiratory Disease		Obesity	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15-24 years	20,1%	17,0%	2,0%	1,0%	13,3%	33,0%	11,9%	9,5%	0,7%	5,8%
25-34 years	33,2%	26,6%	3,0%	5,0%	10,4%	33,0%	12,4%	11,5%	2,3%	17,3%

Source: Department of Health, South Africa Demographic and Health Survey, 2016

7.4 YOUTH STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as a state of well-being where an individual realizes their own potential, coping with the normal stresses of life, being able to work productively and fruitfully, and being able to make a contribution to their community.

There is growing evidence that poverty increases the risk of mental illness, and that people with mental illnesses are more likely to drift into or remain in poverty. Poverty is often associated with experiences of social exclusion, heightened stress, violence and trauma, which may increase the risk and severity of mental illness and substance misuse, and compromise access to care. At the same time people with mental illness are more likely to slide into poverty as a result of increased health expenditure, stigma, loss of employment and income[100]. In addition, exposure to violence, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS lead to increased vulnerability to mental health problems among young people[101].

In a recent review, it is estimated that 10-20% of the children and adolescents worldwide experience mental health problems, with one in seven children and adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa reported to have significant psychological challenges[102].

Suicide has become a significant public health problem in South Africa. The average rate of suicide in South Africa in 2012 was 17,2 per 100 000, accounting for 8% of all deaths. Research conducted by the South African Federation for Mental Health (SAFMH) in 2018 found that 25% of learners between 15 to 19 years reported having experienced feelings of sadness or hopelessness. Eighteen (18%) had considered suicide; 18% had attempted suicide; and 32% of those who attempted suicide required medical treatment[103].

A study on the association between traumatic events and suicidal behaviour in South Africa found that many factors influence suicide attempts among young people, including alcohol abuse, being threatened by someone with a weapon, bullying and previous suicide attempts, which have all been associated with a high prevalence of suicide and suicidal ideation among adolescents[104].

[100] Lund C. et al, "Poverty and mental disorders: Breaking the cycle in low-income and middle-income countries", 2011.
[101] Cooper D. et al, "Youth health and well-being: Why it matters", 2015
[102] Brits E., "High mental health burden for Africa's youth", 2021
[103] SAFMH, "Young People and Mental Health in a Changing World - Snapshots and Solutions", 2018.
[104] Khuzwayo N. et al, "High risk of suicide among high-school learners in uMgungundlovu District, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa", 2018

Poor mental health can also be related to other health and developmental concerns in young people such as lower educational achievement, substance abuse, and violence. Mental health disorders are also accompanied by suffering, stigma and financial strain. In addition to the many challenges that youth already faced, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic had severe and potentially long-lasting effects on the lives of many young people, to the extent that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) warned of the emergence of a "lockdown generation". While the virus itself threatened the health and survival of youth and their families, lockdown caused the physical separation of youth from their peers and loved ones, as schools and businesses closed, and non-essential movement and social engagements were prohibited.

Studies show that the pandemic triggered severe mental health problems during the lockdown. Age, gender, race, education, household hunger status, employment status and location were found to be key factors associated with depressive symptoms[105]. In a further study, a significantly high prevalence of symptoms of depression (72%) were found among a sample of young people (18–35 years old) during lockdown. The study showed that the prevalence of depressive symptoms was unevenly distributed across youth, with higher rates among participants who were older, female, had higher education, and lived in urban informal areas[106].

7.5 YOUTH SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Exploring sexuality and intimate relationships are key components of youth sexual and reproductive health and well-being. However various social factors such as peer pressure, intimate partner violence, rape, and a lack of knowledge of sexual and reproductive health, also contribute to high rates of unprotected sex. This places a substantial proportion of South Africa's youth at risk of unwanted pregnancies, sexually-transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV infection[107].

Sexual behaviour is defined as a person's choice of sexual practice or activity. Sexual activity determines the extent to which women are exposed to the risk of becoming pregnant. Early sexual activities also increase the risks for individuals to contract sexually transmitted infections[108]. Information from the South Africa Demographic and Health Survey (SADHS, 2016) found that more than half (58,1%) of young women aged 15–34 reported that they had their first intercourse when they were between the ages of 16 and 20 years. A further 16,2% reported that they had their first sexual intercourse before reaching the age of 16 years. The profile of men with regard to their first sexual intercourse was very similar to that of women with one in every two reporting becoming sexually active between ages 16–20, but unlike with the women, more than one in every four men (26,7%) made their first sexual intercourse before age 16 years[109].

Being sexually active places women at risk of becoming pregnant, which in turn can have a negative impact on their general functioning and health, e.g. dropping out of school; being exposed to risk at childbearing, etc. Risky sexual behaviour in terms of having multiple sexual partners exposes the youth to contracting a number of sexually transmitted diseases, which has a negative impact on their health.

[105] Oyenubi, A., and Kollamparambil, U., "COVID-19 and Depressive symptoms in South Africa", 2020.
[106] Mudiriza, G., and De Lannoy, A., "Youth in the time of a global pandemic: An analysis of recent data on young people's experiences during COVID-19", 2020
[107] Cooper D. et al, "Youth health and well-being: Why it matters", 2015
[108] Department of Health, South Africa Demographic and Health Survey, 2016
[109] Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020

Results from the SADHS (2016) showed that women aged 15–19 years already had an average of two sexual partners, whilst those aged 30–34 on average had five sexual partners in their life. The marital status of these women had little impact on the average number of sexual partners: those who had never been married had on average 3,9 partners while those who were married or who were living together with someone as being married had 3,8 partners on average.

Results among men show that those aged 15–19 years already had six sexual partners on average, whilst those aged 30–34 on average had eighteen sexual partners in their life. The marital status of men showed an interesting picture with regard to the average number of sexual partners. Men who had never been married had an average of eleven partners, whilst those who were married or who were living together with someone as being married had 17,6 partners on average. This behaviour also puts those women to whom they are married or with whom they are partnered with at a higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections.

The SADHS (2016) found that knowledge about contraceptive methods was almost universal amongst youth, with 98,8% of those aged 15–19 years to 100% for the 25–29-year-olds who have heard of at least one contraceptive method. The use of injectable contraceptives was the most popular, with 52,8% of women using this method of contraception. The second most used method of contraception among the youth was the condom (both male and female), with 24,3% of the youth using it as a contraceptive method[110].

7.6 TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Youth pregnancy is associated with significant health risks and socioeconomic costs, and is one of the major public health issues across the world. Determinants of teenage pregnancy in a study employed in developing countries included the following: lack of knowledge on sexuality education, ineffective utilisation of modern contraceptives, cultural obedience, socioeconomic dependence of females on males, and peer influence[111].

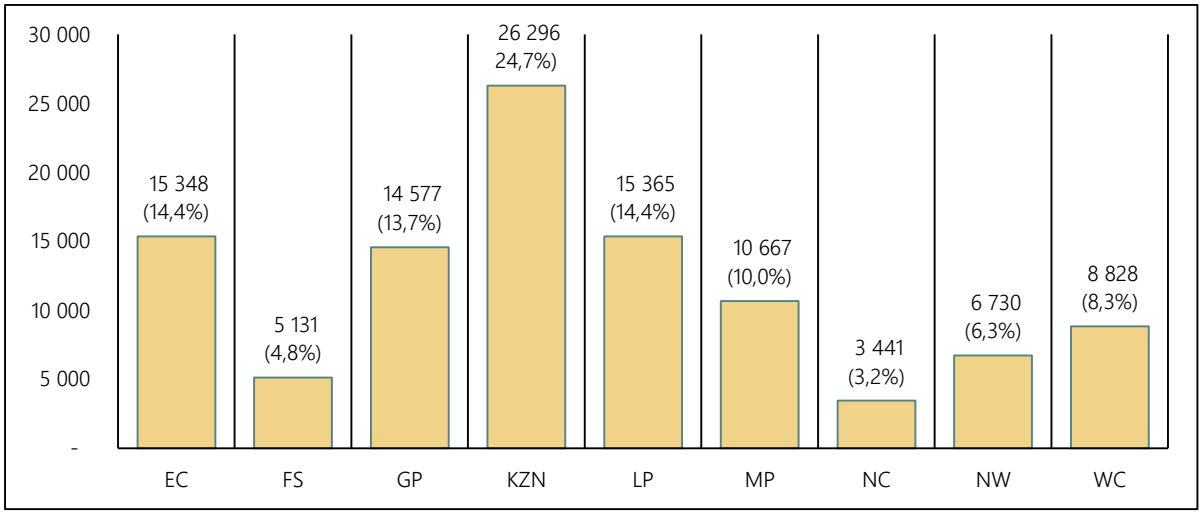
Teen mothers have poorer educational outcomes than non-teen mothers, which has negative implications for their future chances economically. Studies consistently find that pregnancy and childbearing contribute significantly to falling behind and dropping out of school, as well as discrimination and exclusion from school[112]. Teenage pregnancy is greatly associated with negative outcomes such as pre-eclampsia, anaemia, obstructed labour, operative deliveries, endometriosis, postpartum haemorrhage, low birth weight, pre-term delivery, and perinatal death among others[113]. Furthermore, children born to teen mothers are at risk of poorer health and educational outcomes, thus feeding the intergenerational cycle of poverty[114].

A review of adolescent pregnancy in Africa reported a prevalence rate of 18,8%, with the rate for sub-Saharan Africa recorded at 19,3% in 2019[115]. According to Statistics South Africa (2022), a total of 106 383 live births were recorded for adolescents (10-19 years) in 2019. As illustrated in Figure 59, the

[110] Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020
[111] Stats SA, "Profiling Health Challenges Faced by Adolescents (10-19 years) in South Africa", 2022
[112] Menendez A. et al, "Revisiting the 'Crisis' in Teen Births: What is the Impact of Teen Births on Young Mothers and their Children?", 2014
[113] Stats SA, "Profiling Health Challenges Faced by Adolescents (10-19 years) in South Africa", 2022
[114] Cooper D. et al, "Youth health and well-being: Why it matters", 2015
[115] Kassa GM. et al, "Prevalence and determinants of adolescent pregnancy in Africa", 2019

provincial profile shows that KwaZulu-Natal recorded the highest proportion of live births (24,7%), followed by Eastern Cape and Limpopo (both at 14,4%), Gauteng (13,7%), and Mpumalanga (10,0%). The remaining provinces reported less than 10% of registered live births: Western Cape (8,3%), Free State (4,8%), North West (6,3%), and Northern Cape, with the lowest percentage of 3,2%.

Figure 59: Number and Percentage Distributions of Recorded Live Births among Adolescents by Province (2019)



Source: Stats SA, "Profiling Health Challenges Faced by Adolescents (10-19 years) in South Africa", 2022

7.7 TERMINATION OF PREGNANCIES

Termination of pregnancy is referred to as the decision by a woman to end her pregnancy by medical procedure before the foetus/baby reaches full term. TOP was legal under very limited circumstances until 1 February 1997, when the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act (Act No. 92 of 1996) came into effect, providing abortion on demand (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

The SADHS (2016) provides data on the number of women who experienced a pregnancy that did not result in a live birth. Results show that a total of 374 (6,7%) women aged 15–34 years experienced terminated pregnancies in their lifetime. A total of 228 (4,8%) women experienced these terminated pregnancies between 2011 and 2016. Of those pregnancies, 28 were terminated deliberately by means of induced abortions[116].

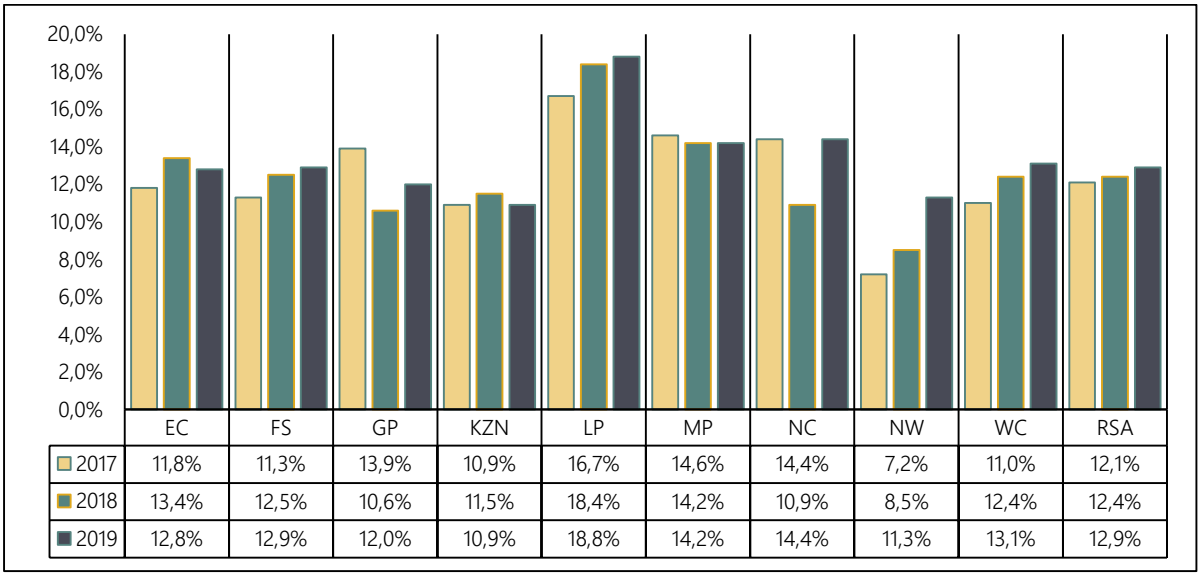
Figure 60 illustrates the rate of induced termination of pregnancy (TOP) or abortions for the years 2017-2019 by province, according to data from the District Health Information System (DHIS). Due to the limitation on data provided by the Department of Health, only TOPs experienced by women younger than 20 years is reported on[117].

At a national level, the rate of TOP was approximately 12% for all three reporting years, showing a slight increase from 2017 (12,1%) to 12,9% in 2019. Limpopo had the highest percentage of TOPs being performed overall for the three-year period (2017 to 2019), whilst North West had the lowest proportion over the same period. In 2019, Limpopo had the highest rates of TOPs (18,8%), followed by Northern Cape (14,4%) and Mpumalanga (14,2%). The lowest rate of TOPs performed in 2019 was

[116] Department of Health, South Africa Demographic and Health Survey, 2016
[117] Stats SA, "Profiling Health Challenges Faced by Adolescents (10-19 years) in South Africa", 2022

in KwaZulu-Natal (10,9%), North West (11,3%), and Gauteng (12,0%). KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape are the only provinces that have experienced a decline in TOPs between 2017 and 2019. The rate of TOPs in Mpumalanga remained the same between 2017-19, whilst the TOP rates for women aged 20 years and younger increased across the remaining provinces.

Figure 60: Rate of Termination of Pregnancy (TOP) for Women Aged Less than 20 Years (2017–2019)



	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	RSA
2017	11,8%	11,3%	13,9%	10,9%	16,7%	14,6%	14,4%	7,2%	11,0%	12,1%
2018	13,4%	12,5%	10,6%	11,5%	18,4%	14,2%	10,9%	8,5%	12,4%	12,4%
2019	12,8%	12,9%	12,0%	10,9%	18,8%	14,2%	14,4%	11,3%	13,1%	12,9%

Source: Department of Health, DHIS, 2019

7.8 YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE

Substance abuse refers to the use or abuse of harmful or hazardous substances such as tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs[118]. Recent studies in Africa indicate a high prevalence of substance use among young people when compared to the general population, with associated physical and psychosocial problems such as fighting, vandalism, theft, engaging in unprotected sex, personal injury, medical problems and impaired relationships with family and friends. The overall prevalence of any substance use among adolescents in sub-Saharan African is 41.6%, with alcohol and tobacco being the highest prevailing substances (i.e. 40.8% and 45.6%, respectively) across the continent compared to any other substance use[119]. Globally, an estimated 70% of premature adult deaths are the result of behaviours begun in adolescence, many of which relate to substance abuse[120]. Tobacco use, for example, is a leading cause of adult non-communicable diseases such as chronic respiratory diseases, heart diseases and cancer. Excessive alcohol use can create long-term liver and kidney problems, brain changes and can lead to negative social behaviour[121]. Intervening early is therefore key to enhancing young people's well-being today, and to ensuring better health in the future.

7.8.1 Alcohol Consumption

According to the SADHS (2016), alcohol consumption was found to be more prevalent among male youth when compared to females. The data in Table 38 shows that 29,3% of female and 60,3% of

[118] WHO, "Substance Abuse", 2019

[119] Jumbe S. et al, "Determinants of Adolescent Substance Abuse in Africa", 2021

[120] Cooper D. et al, "Youth health and well-being: Why it matters", 2015

[121] Ramsoomar L. & Morojele N.K., "Trends in alcohol prevalence, age of initiation and association with alcohol-related harm among South African youth: Implications for policy", 2012

male youth aged 15–34 years who participated in the survey reported that they had consumed a drink that contains alcohol in the past. Among the youth aged 15–19 years, 23,4% of females and 45,5% of males were reported to have ever consumed a drink that contains alcohol. Youth aged 20–24 years included 35,2% of females and 68,3% of males who ever consumed a drink that contains alcohol. This age group accounted for the highest consumption for both male and female youth who ever consumed a drink that contains alcohol. Male youth aged 25–29 years had more than double the proportion (66,3%) than females (31,6%) who ever consumed a drink that contains alcohol. Among the females and males aged 30–34 years, 26,4% and 64,6% respectively were among those who ever consumed a drink that contains alcohol[122].

Table 38: Percentage Distribution of the Youth (15–34) who Indulge In Alcohol Consumption (2016)

	Male		Female	
	No. ('000)	Percentage	No. ('000)	Percentage
15-19 years	647	45,5%	721	23,4%
20-24 years	588	68,3%	708	35,2%
25-29 years	506	66,3%	754	31,6%
30-34 years	450	64,6%	637	26,4%
Total	2 191	60,3%	2 819	29,3%

Source: Department of Health, SADHS, 2016

7.8.2 Tobacco Smoking

Findings from the SADHS (2016) show that 40,1% of male youth and 7,7% of female youth between the ages of 15 and 34 years who participated in the survey, indicated that they were smoking tobacco at the time, or have smoked tobacco in the past. Overall, a larger proportion of male youth used tobacco than females for all youth age groups. The highest proportion of youth that were either still smoking tobacco or had smoked tobacco in the past, were in the 25-29 year age group.

Almost a quarter (22,6%) of males and 5,3% of females aged 15–19 years have ever smoked tobacco. Among those aged 20–24 years, 44,6% of males and 8,2% of females reported that they were smoking tobacco at the time, or that they have smoked tobacco in the past. Among the group aged 25–29 years, half of the male youth surveyed (50,1%) and 7,8% of females indicated that they were either still smoking tobacco or that they have smoked tobacco in the past. In terms of youth aged between 30 to 34 years, 48,2% of males and 9,8% of females stated that they still smoked or had smoked tobacco in the past.

Table 39: Percentage Distribution of the Youth (15–34) who Indulge in Tobacco Smoking (2016)

	Male		Female	
	No. ('000)	Percentage	No. ('000)	Percentage
15-19 years	647	22,6%	721	5,3%
20-24 years	588	44,6%	708	8,2%
25-29 years	506	50,1%	754	7,8%
30-34 years	450	48,2%	637	9,8%
Total	2191	40,1%	2 819	7,7%

Source: Department of Health, SADHS, 2016

[122] Department of Health, South Africa Demographic and Health Survey, 2016

7.8.3 Drug Abuse

In a study conducted among learners in Grades 8, 9 and 10 in public schools in 2016, cannabis was reported as the third most regularly reported substance used (after alcohol and tobacco smoking), with almost a quarter of learners (23,6%) reporting ever having used this drug[123]. About 14% of the youth cannabis users reported initiation before the age of 13 years. The study found that males had higher prevalence rates than females on all measures of cannabis use (28,4% and 20,0%) for lifetime use. The use of cocaine, mandrax, ecstasy, heroin and methamphetamine, and drug injecting had percentages of less than 5% for each one of them, respectively[124].

7.9 YOUTH VIOLENCE, INJURIES AND TRAUMA

7.9.1 Violence

Most young people in South Africa are exposed to violence in their homes, schools and broader communities – this includes homicides, intimate partner violence and rape[125]. Exposure to violence and deviant peer behaviour increases the likelihood of high risk and violent behaviour among youth as they seek stronger connections with peers. Further, structural factors such as poor quality education, high levels of unemployment and economic hardship may lead youth to be attracted to gang-related activities[126].

Experiences of violence in South Africa are shaped by age, gender, socioeconomic status and geographical location. Data on external causes of mortality for youth shows that "assault" accounted for 24,2% of deaths in 2018, and was the second highest cause of death for youth (after "other external causes of accidental injury"). Violence is particularly prevalent in poor communities where poverty, unemployment, poor quality schooling and a lack of recreational facilities may leave little opportunity for young men to gain a sense of belonging and "respect". Feelings of frustration and marginalisation may find expression in violent encounters with women and other young men[127].

Sexual and intimate partner violence against girls and women are leading causes of health problems such as unwanted pregnancy, HIV infection, and mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder. In 2019/2020, 42 289 rapes were reported, as well as 7 749 sexual assaults[128].

The Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS, 2011) provides data on experiences of violence among public high school learners in grades 8-11. The survey reported a third of learners being bullied at school, 17% reported feeling unsafe travelling to school, and 13% reported carrying a weapon. Sexual and intimate partner violence were also prevalent, with 11% of learners reported being assaulted by their romantic partner in the six months preceding the survey; and just under 10% of learners had experienced forced sex[129].

[123] Morojele N.K. et al, "Tobacco and Alcohol Use among Adolescents in South Africa: Shared and Unshared Risks", 2016
[124] Morojele, N. et al., "Tobacco and Alcohol Use among Adolescents in South Africa: Shared and Unshared Risks", 2016
[125] Cooper D., "Youth health and well-being: Why it matters", 2015
[126] Cooper D., "Youth health and well-being: Why it matters", 2015
[127] Ward C.L. et al, "Youth Violence: Sources and Solutions in South Africa", 2013
[128] South African Police Service (SAPS), "Crime Statistics: Crime Situation in Republic of South Africa 2019-2020", 2020
[129] Reddy SP.et al, 3RD South African National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey, 2011

7.9.2 Road Traffic Injuries

Road traffic injuries are among the leading causes of death and life-long disability and the leading cause of death among young people aged 15–29 years[130]. Transport accidents was the third leading non-natural cause of death amongst South African youth in 2018[131]. Recent statistics highlight that youth contribute the highest number of road fatalities annually when compared to other age groups[132].

Table 40 presents information on crashes and fatalities among the youth by gender for 2018. Results show that a total of 4 161 crashes occurred on the roads between January and December 2018, resulting in 4 255 fatalities among the youth aged 15–34 years. Crashes and fatalities are more prevalent amongst male youth (78,0% and 21,0%, respectively). As can be expected, since all fatalities due to accidents must be investigated and reported, the percentages of crashes and fatalities are nearly the same. In absolute numbers, more fatalities than crashes are reported, i.e. 868 crashes occurred that involved females but 901 women were killed in these crashes. Similarly, 3 256 crashes occurred in which 3 317 men lost their lives in 2018[133].

Table 40: Number of Crashes and Fatalities Among Youth Aged 15–34 Years by Gender (2018)

	Crashes		Fatalities	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Male	3 256	78,3%	3 317	78,0%
Female	868	20,9%	901	21,2%
Unknown	37	0,9%	37	0,9%
Total	4 161	100,0%	4 255	100,0%

Source: Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020

Table 41 below indicates the number and percentages of crashes and fatalities among the youth in 2018 by province. KwaZulu-Natal had the highest proportion of crashes and fatalities among youth (20,9% and 20,8% respectively), followed by Gauteng (16,3% and 16,1%). The remainder of the provinces all had percentages below 15% for both crashes and fatalities. Northern Cape had the lowest proportions for crashes and fatalities (3,0% crashes and 3,1% fatalities), while North West had the second lowest proportions of crashes and fatalities (6,8% and 6,7% respectively).

[130] Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020
[131] Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020
[132] Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020
[133] Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020

Table 41: Number & Percentages of Crashes & Fatalities Among Youth (15–34) by Province (2018)

	Crashes		Fatalities	
Province	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
EC	566	13,6%	576	13,5%
FS	345	8,3%	364	8,6%
GP	677	16,3%	684	16,1%
KZN	869	20,9%	883	20,8%
LP	504	12,1%	515	12,1%
MP	469	11,3%	486	11,4%
NC	126	3,0%	131	3,1%
NW	285	6,8%	285	6,7%
WC	320	7,7%	331	7,8%
RSA	4 161	100,0%	4 255	100,0%

Source: Stats SA, "Determinants of Health among the Youth aged 15–34 years in South Africa", 2020

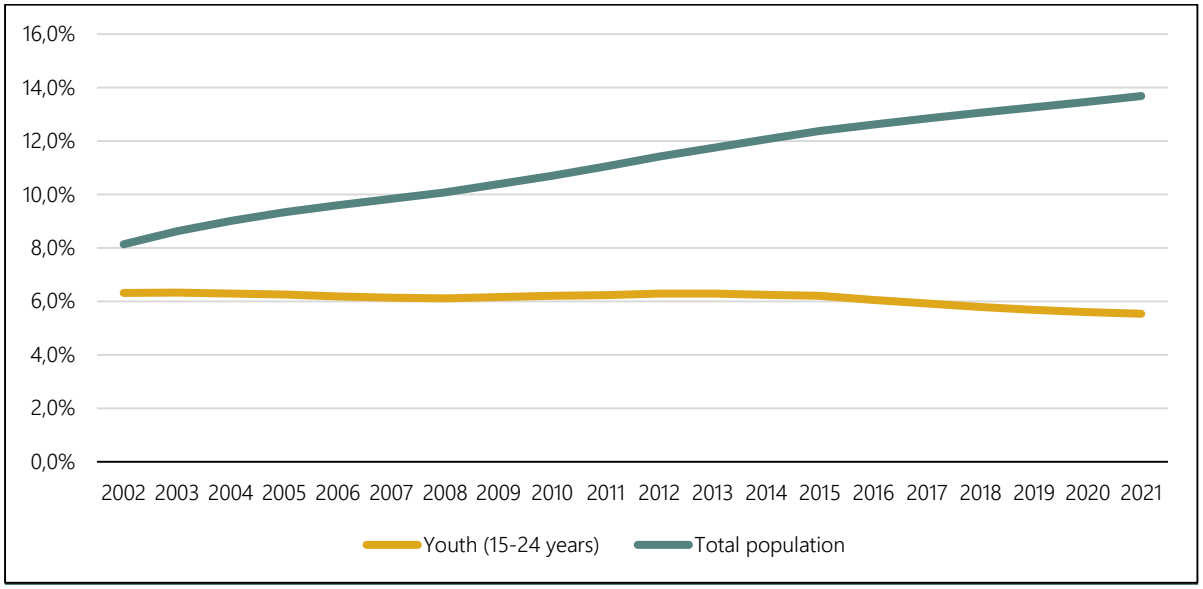
7.10 HIV PREVALENCE AMONG YOUTH

Global HIV statistics for 2021 show that there were 38,4 million people living with HIV, of which 36,7 million were 15 years or older, and 1,7 million were between 0–14 years. Globally, 54% of all people living with HIV were women and girls. In sub-Saharan Africa, six in seven new HIV infections among adolescents aged 15–19 years were among girls. Girls and young women aged 15–24 years are twice as likely to be living with HIV than young men. In sub-Saharan Africa, women and girls accounted for 63% of all new HIV infections in 2021[134].

According to the Mid-Year Population Estimates (2021), an estimated 13,7% of the total population in South Africa is HIV positive. In terms of youth aged 15-24 years, the HIV prevalence rate was 5,5%. Figure 61 illustrates HIV prevalence for youth and the total population over the period 2002-2021. The total number of persons living with HIV in South Africa increased from an estimated 3,8 million in 2002 to 8,2 million by 2021, whilst HIV prevalence among the youth aged 15–24 years has remained stable over time[135].

[134] UNAIDS, Global HIV Statistics, Fact Sheet 2022
[135] Stats SA, Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2021

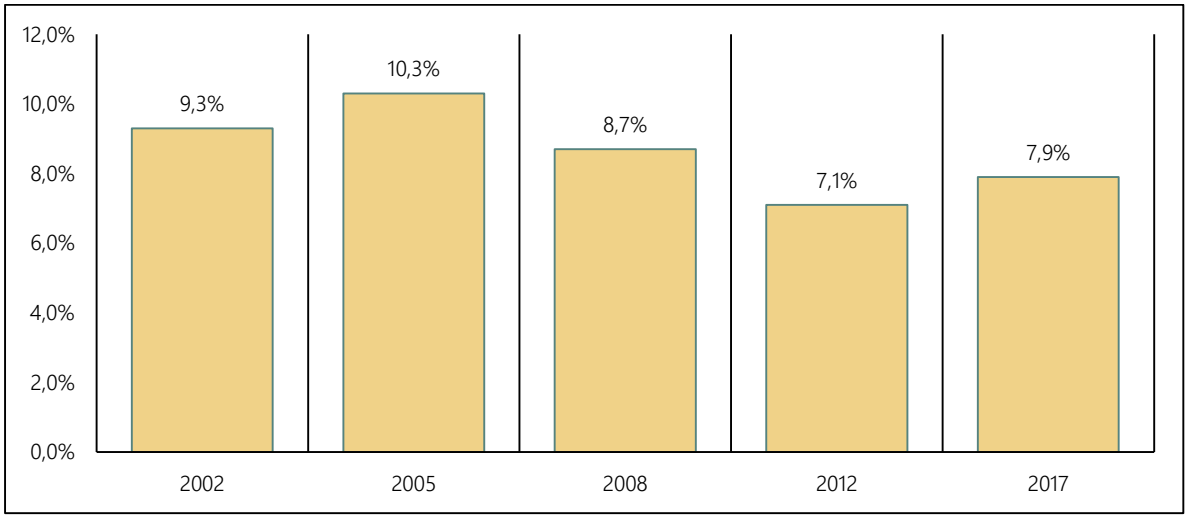
Figure 61: HIV Prevalence for Youth Aged 15-24 Years & Total Population (2002-2021)



Source: Stats SA, Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2021

The most recent South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey (SANHPIBCS, 2017) conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) provides an overview of HIV prevalence for youth aged 15–24 years. The survey found that the overall HIV prevalence among youth in this age group was 7.9% in 2017, slightly higher than the 7.1% estimated in 2012, and a decline of 1,4% from 2002 figures (9,3%).

Figure 62: HIV Prevalence Among Youth Aged 15-24 Years (2002-2017)



Source: HSRC, SANHPIBCS, 2017

The gender profile (Table 42) shows that female youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years had a significantly higher HIV prevalence than their male counterparts, with the prevalence among females more than double that of males (10,9% and 4,8% respectively). Table 42 also indicates the HIV prevalence rate by population group. In 2017, Black Africans had the highest HIV prevalence (8.9%), whereas whites and coloureds had considerably lower estimates at 2.6% and 2.5% respectively. No

cases were reported among Indian and Asian youth, meaning the HIV prevalence for this subgroup in 2017 was 0%[136].

Youth living in rural formal areas (farms) had the highest HIV prevalence of 11,2%, followed by those living in rural informal (tribal) areas (9,5%). Youth living in urban areas had the lowest prevalence in 2017 of 6,8%.

Table 42: HIV Prevalence Among Youth Aged 15-24 Years by Gender, Population Group & Locality Type (2017)

Demographic Variable	Number	Percentage
Total	4 572	7,9%
Gender		
Male	2 065	4,8%
Female	2 507	10,9%
Population Group		
Black African	3 393	8,9%
Coloured	825	2,5%
Indian/Asian	-	0,0%
White	130	2,6%
Locality Type		
Urban	2 729	6,8%
Rural informal (tribal areas)	1 338	9,5%
Rural formal (farms)	505	11,2%

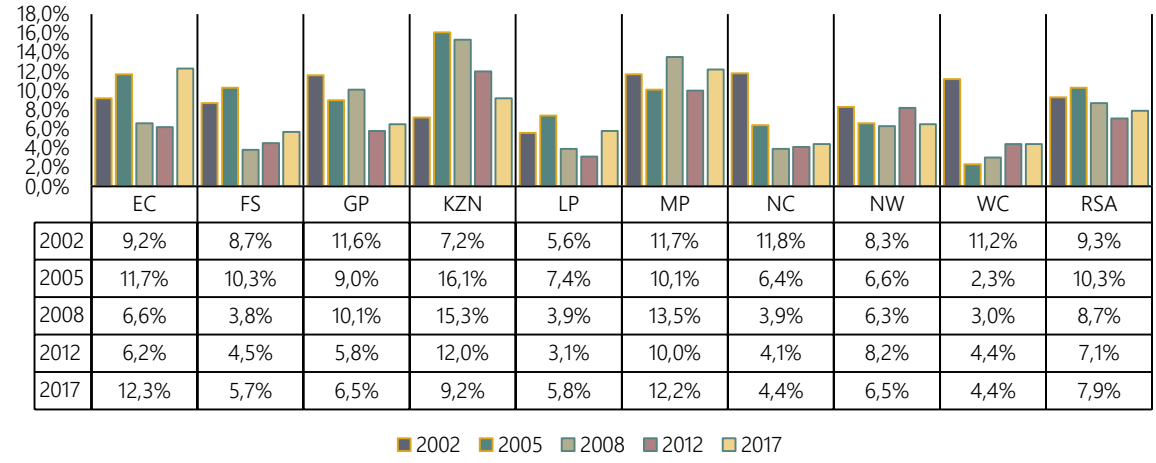
Source: HSRC, SANHPIBCS, 2017

Figure 63 shows the HIV trends among youth aged 15–24 years by province over the period 2002-2017 according to the SANHPIBCS (2017). Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga had the highest youth-related HIV prevalence in 2017 (12,3% and 12,2% respectively), whereas in 2012 it was highest among KwaZulu-Natal youth. Northern Cape and Western Cape had the lowest prevalence among youth in 2017 (4,4% for both provinces), with estimates largely unchanged from the 2012 levels. The data shows that prevalence among the youth in Eastern Cape had decreased to 6.2% in 2012 but rose sharply to 12.3% in 2017. Prevalence in KwaZulu-Natal fell from 12,0% in 2012 to 9,2% in 2017. In Mpumalanga and Limpopo, HIV prevalence increased from 10% and 3.1% in 2012 to 12.2% and 5.8% in 2017, respectively[137].

[136] HSRC, "South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey (SANHPIBCS), 2017

[137] HSRC, "South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey (SANHPIBCS), 2017

Figure 63: HIV Prevalence Among Youth Aged 15-24 Years by Province (2002-2017)



	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	RSA
2002	9,2%	8,7%	11,6%	7,2%	5,6%	11,7%	11,8%	8,3%	11,2%	9,3%
2005	11,7%	10,3%	9,0%	16,1%	7,4%	10,1%	6,4%	6,6%	2,3%	10,3%
2008	6,6%	3,8%	10,1%	15,3%	3,9%	13,5%	3,9%	6,3%	3,0%	8,7%
2012	6,2%	4,5%	5,8%	12,0%	3,1%	10,0%	4,1%	8,2%	4,4%	7,1%
2017	12,3%	5,7%	6,5%	9,2%	5,8%	12,2%	4,4%	6,5%	4,4%	7,9%

Source: HSRC, SANHPIBCS, 2017

7.11 YOUTH MORTALITY

Health trends are constantly evolving as observed from the global shift from communicable to non-communicable diseases, which continue to rise. These trends are accompanied by the continuous emergence of new diseases that challenge health systems globally[138]. In low-income countries health is frequently compromised by diseases and conditions that are preventable or treatable. Many premature deaths are associated with environmental factors or lifestyle choices, such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and unhealthy consumption of alcohol[139] - factors which youth are becoming increasingly susceptible to.

7.11.1 Death Occurrence

In 2018, the number of reported deaths was 451 398, with 237 752 male deaths and 213 646 female deaths. The absolute total number of deaths for the youth aged 15-34 years was 65 952, accounting for 14,6% of all recorded deaths in 2018. Table 43 shows that male youth deaths were higher than female deaths across all age groups except the 65 years and older age group. Male youth (15-34 years) accounted for 16,8% of all male deaths, whilst female youth had a comparison rate of 12,1% in 2018.

Table 43: Number of Deaths by Age Groups & Gender (2018)

	Male		Female		Total	
	No. ('000)	Percentage	No. ('000)	Percentage	No. ('000)	Percentage
0-14 years	17 440	7,3%	14 526	6,8%	31 966	7,1%
15-34 years	40 031	16,8%	25 921	12,1%	65 952	14,6%
35-64 years	107 665	45,3%	77 066	36,1%	184 731	40,9%
65+ years	72 616	30,5%	96 133	45,0%	168 749	37,4%
Total	237 752	100,0%	213 646	100,0%	451 398	100,0%

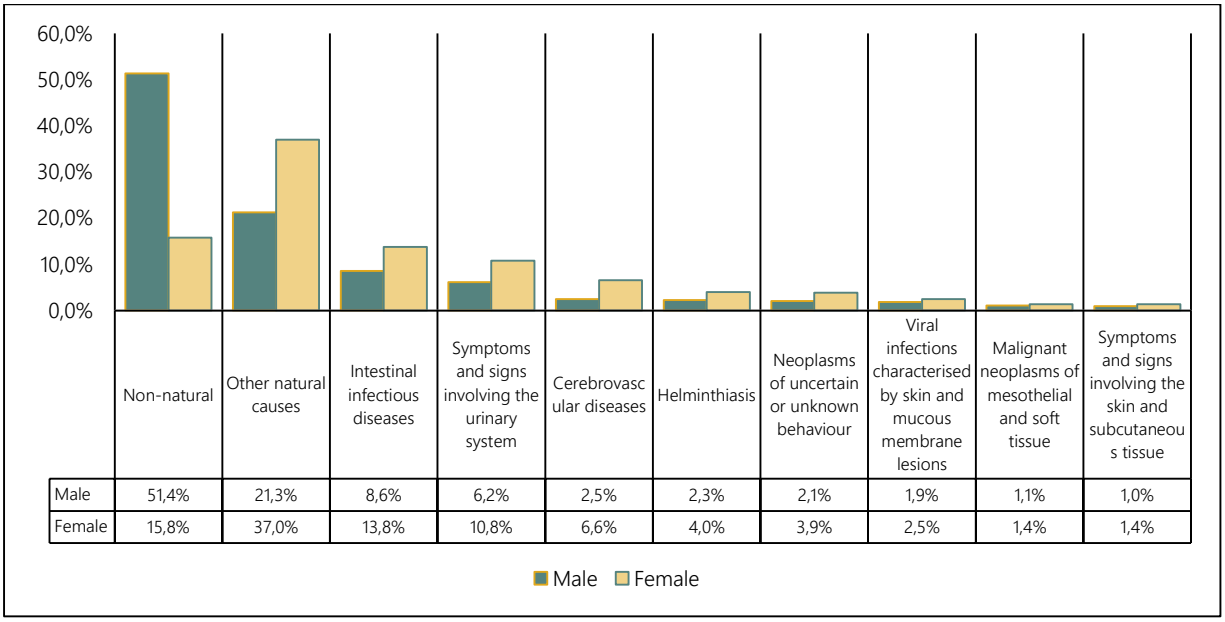
Source: Stats SA, Mortality & Causes of Death in South Africa, 2018

[138] Stats SA, "Mortality & Causes of Death in South Africa: Findings from Death Notification", 2018
[139] WHO, "World health statistics overview 2019: monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals, 2019

7.11.2 Causes of Death of Youth

"Non-natural causes" was the leading cause of death among male youth in 2018 (51,4%), followed by "other natural causes" (21,3%). "Intestinal infectious diseases" caused 8,6% of the male deaths. For female youth, the main cause of death in 2018 was "other natural causes" at 37,0%, followed by "non-natural deaths" and "intestinal infectious diseases" at 15,8% and 13,8% respectively.

Figure 64: Most Common Broad Underlying Causes of Death Among Youth Aged 15-34 Years by Gender (2018)



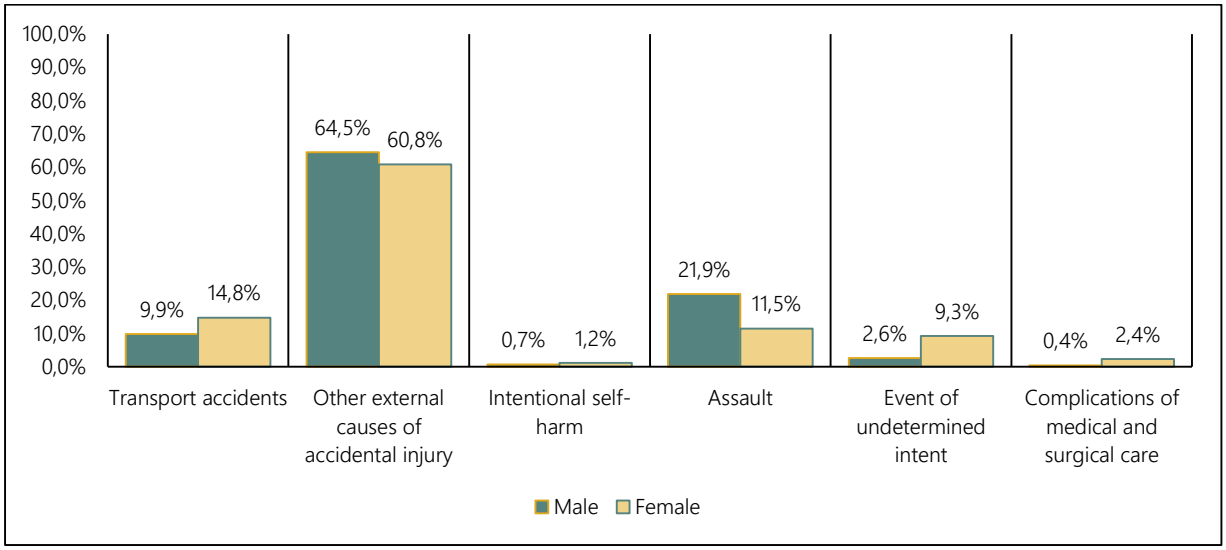
	Non-natural	Other natural causes	Intestinal infectious diseases	Symptoms and signs involving the urinary system	Cerebrovascular diseases	Helminthiasis	Neoplasms of uncertain or unknown behaviour	Viral infections characterised by skin and mucous membrane lesions	Malignant neoplasms of mesothelial and soft tissue	Symptoms and signs involving the skin and subcutaneous tissue
Male	51,4%	21,3%	8,6%	6,2%	2,5%	2,3%	2,1%	1,9%	1,1%	1,0%
Female	15,8%	37,0%	13,8%	10,8%	6,6%	4,0%	3,9%	2,5%	1,4%	1,4%

Source: Stats SA, Mortality & Causes of Death in South Africa, 2018

7.11.3 External Causes of Morbidity & Mortality

Figure 65 provides the immediate underlying causes of death of youth due to external causes of morbidity and mortality that occurred in 2018. Most of the deaths of male and female youth in 2018 were as a result of "other external causes of accidental injury" (64,5% for males and 60,8% for females). The second highest cause of deaths for males was "assault" (21,9%), followed by "transport accidents" (9,9%). For female youth, "transport accidents" was reported as the second highest cause of deaths (14,8%), followed by "assault" (11,5%). Similarly, assault was the second highest cause of death for females in 2013 at 8,6% in 2013 and 11,5% in 2018. More females in comparison to males died from "events of undetermined intent", "complications of medical and surgical care", "intentional self-harm" and from "transport accidents" in 2018.

Figure 65: External Causes of Morbidity & Mortality for Youth Aged 15-34 Years by Gender (2018)



Source: Stats SA, Mortality & Causes of Death in South Africa, 2018

Table 44 below presents the top 4 causes of youth deaths by province. In 2018, the proportion of youth deaths resulting from "tuberculosis" were higher for males than for females in Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape. The highest percentage of young males and females who died from tuberculosis during 2018 was found in KwaZulu-Natal (25,9% males and 22,8% females), followed by Eastern Cape (16,4% and 18,6%), and Gauteng (14,8% males and 13,2% females).

A review of HIV deaths by province indicate that KwaZulu-Natal showed the highest percentage of youth male and female deaths from HIV in 2018 (24,6% males and 22,9%). Eastern Cape had the second highest proportion of both male and female youth deaths as a result of HIV (18,9% males and 20,2% females). Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West and Northern Cape had a higher proportion of female deaths from HIV in comparison to males.

KwaZulu-Natal province reflected the highest percentage of deaths resulting from other viral diseases 2018 for both males (24,5%) and females (19,3%) in 2018. The second highest proportion in 2018 for both male and female deaths were found in Gauteng (18,9% males and 16,2% females), followed by Eastern Cape (11,4% males and 16,0% females).

In 2018, the proportion of deaths as a result of "external causes of mortality" were higher for female youth than males in Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga North West and Northern Cape. KwaZulu-Natal province reflected the highest proportion of deaths in 2018 for both males (22,8%) and females (22,2%). The second highest proportion for both male and female youth deaths were found in Gauteng (18,1% males and 18,8% females), followed by Eastern Cape (15,5% males and 14,0% females).

Table 44: Top 4 Causes of Youth Deaths by Province of Occurrence & Gender (2018)

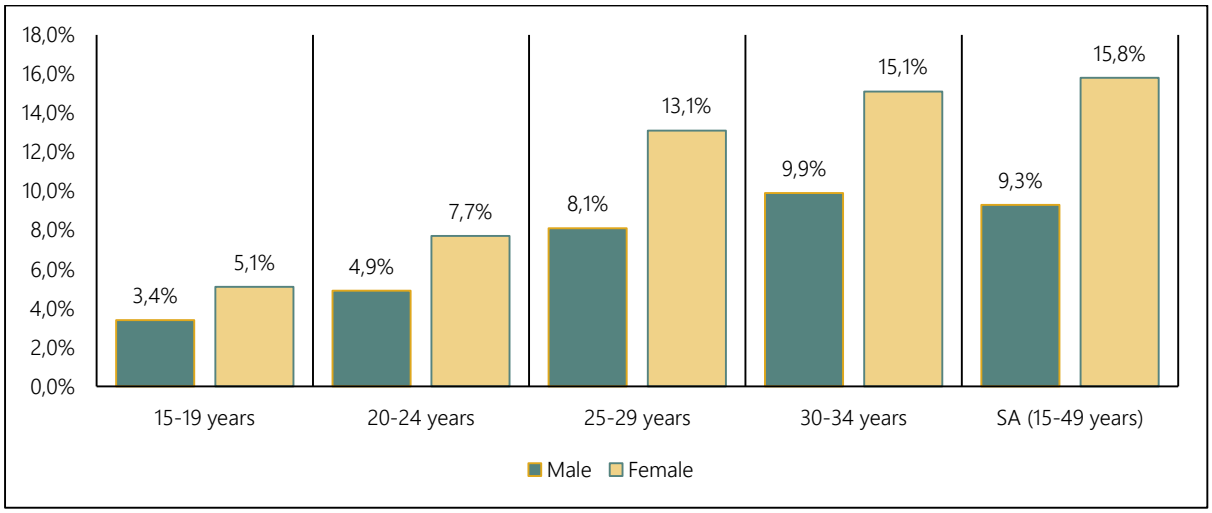
	Tuberculosis		HIV		Other viral diseases		External causes of mortality	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
EC	16,4%	18,6%	18,9%	20,2%	11,4%	16,0%	15,5%	14,0%
FS	5,7%	5,0%	7,2%	4,9%	7,7%	7,3%	5,4%	7,1%
GP	14,8%	13,2%	10,6%	8,7%	18,9%	16,2%	18,1%	18,8%
KZN	25,9%	22,8%	24,6%	22,9%	24,5%	19,3%	22,8%	22,2%
LP	6,2%	8,4%	6,1%	8,6%	12,0%	12,8%	5,8%	7,7%
MP	8,0%	9,5%	6,1%	7,0%	7,2%	10,4%	5,7%	6,5%
NC	3,4%	3,4%	3,8%	4,1%	2,4%	2,3%	2,1%	2,9%
NW	6,8%	7,5%	5,9%	6,3%	10,3%	8,2%	4,6%	6,0%
WC	9,4%	8,1%	13,1%	14,3%	2,9%	3,7%	14,2%	9,2%

Source: Stats SA, Mortality & Causes of Death in South Africa, 2018

7.12 IMPACT OF COVID-19 & GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

According to Stats SA, there were a total number of 643 372 confirmed COVID-19 cases in September 2020[140]. Of this figure, 206 553 cases were recorded amongst youth aged 15-34 years. Figure 66 below shows increasing rates of infection among males and females from the age group 15–19 years to 45–49 years. Across all age groups, the female population had a higher rate of infection compared to their male counterparts.

Figure 66: COVID-19 Infection Rates by Age & Gender (2020)



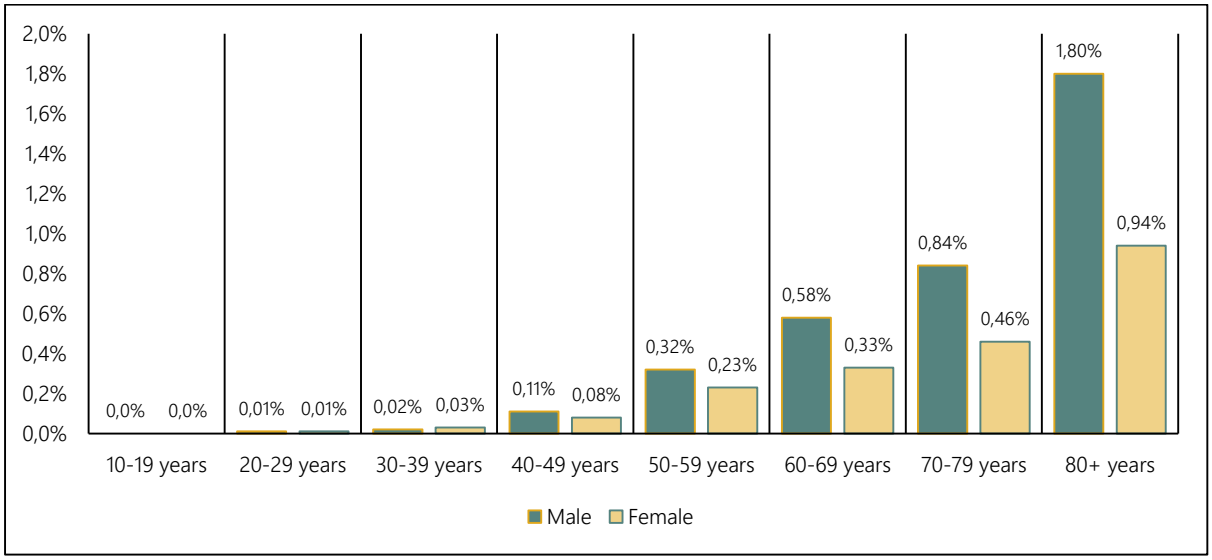
Source: Covid-19 Dashboard (NICD)

In terms of the death rates, the results presented in Figure 67 suggest that the rates of death among the young male and female population were low compared to elderly population. The death rate for those aged between 10-19 years and 20-29 years was 0% and 0,01% respectively. The rates of death started to show an increasing trajectory from male and female population aged 50–59 years to 80+ years. Death rates among the male population were higher than female ones amongst the older

[140] Stats SA, "COVID-19 Pandemic in South Africa: Demography Volume", 2020

population. They increased from a rate of 0,32% (50–59 years) to 1,80% for the 80+ year age category (rate per 1 000 population).

Figure 67: COVID-19 Death Rates by Age & Gender (2020)



Source: Covid-19 Sentinel Hospital Surveillance Update, Week 47 2020 (NICD)

While the virus itself threatened the health and survival of youth and their families, the lockdown measures changed young people's family and social lives. Lockdown caused the physical separation of youth from their peers and loved ones, as schools and businesses closed, and non-essential movement and social engagements were prohibited.

Studies further show that the pandemic triggered severe mental health problems in South Africa during the lockdown, specifically with regards to young people[141]. The results indicate worsening mental health among youth, with an increase in the prevalence of depressive symptoms between 2017 and 2020 for the overall youth population as well as for different youth groups. Worryingly, research using NIDS-CRAM, Wave 3 data shows that depressive symptoms continued to increase, despite the further, gradual easing of lockdown measures[142].

On 17 February 2021, South Africa started its national vaccination programme against COVID-19. The programme was rolled out in phases, prioritising healthcare and frontline workers. Other groups were categorised in accordance with group ages, with elders being the priority age group due to their co-morbidities and the last cohort being youth.

According to health officials, South Africa has administered 37 414 274 vaccine doses across the country as of 24 August 2022. It has been reported that there has been a low vaccine uptake among the youth, which remains a challenge for South Africa. In the 18- to 34-year age group, about 38% (6.7 million) have been vaccinated, and the vaccine uptake for those aged 12 to 17 years sits at about 2.6 million. Vaccine coverage is higher in older people, at 71% (3.9 million) for those 60 years and

[141] Mudiriza, G., and De Lannoy, A. (2020). 'Youth emotional well-being during the COVID-19-related lockdown in South Africa'.

[142] Oyenubi, A., and Kollamparambil, U., "COVID-19 and Depressive symptoms in South Africa", 2020

older, and 66% (3.2 million) for those aged 50 to 59[143]. Of those within the youth age group 18-34 years that have been vaccinated, 55,8% are female (3 786 642) and 44,2% male (2 999 498)[144].

In 2021, NYDA conducted a study to understand the responsiveness of youth to government's efforts in the fight against COVID-19[145]. Findings of the study showed that 87,0% of participants were aware of the vaccination, and that 57,0% had been vaccinated. About 36% of the participants indicated that they had been infected by the virus. In terms of their willingness to vaccinate, 75,0% of the participants indicated that they were willing to be vaccinated, whilst 16,0% were uncertain. About 9% indicated that they were not willing to participate in government's vaccination programme.

Reasons cited for not wanting to be vaccinated included: a lack of information/understanding about the vaccination; a fear caused by the negative comments on social media and media in general; pregnancy; various illnesses and health problems; lack of time to take the vaccine; and/or individuals had not registered to take the vaccination.

On the importance of vaccination, 72% of the participants acknowledged the importance of vaccination. However, about 10% indicated that they are not well informed on the importance of vaccination process; whilst 18% stated that they were unsure.

7.13 SUMMARY

Youth aged between 15–24 years, are becoming more susceptible to NCDs as a result of their exposure to cheap fast foods and inactive lifestyles, which puts them at risk of lifestyle diseases such as obesity, heart diseases and diabetes. Young females have the highest level of severe obesity in the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups.

Suicide has become a significant public health problem in South Africa. Poor mental health can also be related to other health and developmental concerns in young people such as substance abuse, and violence. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered severe mental health problems among youth, with an increase in the prevalence of depressive symptoms between 2017 and 2020 for the overall youth population.

Various social factors such as peer pressure, intimate partner violence, rape, and a lack of knowledge of sexual and reproductive health, contribute to high rates of unprotected sex. This places a substantial proportion of South Africa's youth at risk of unwanted pregnancies, sexually-transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV infection. Being sexually active places women at risk of becoming pregnant, which in turn can have a negative impact on their general functioning and health. A total of 106 383 live births were recorded for adolescents (10-19 years) in 2019.

According to the Mid-Year Population Estimates (2021), an estimated 13,7% of the total population in South Africa is HIV positive. In terms of youth aged 15-24 years, the HIV prevalence rate was 5,5%. Female youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years had a significantly higher HIV prevalence than their male counterparts, with the prevalence among females more than double that of males (10,9%

[143] Department of Health, "South Africa Covid-19 & Vaccine Social Listening Report", 19 August 2022
[144] https://sacoronavirus.co.za/latest-vaccine-statistics/
[145] National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), "The Perception of Youth Towards COVID-19 Vaccinations", 2021

and 4,8% respectively). KwaZulu-Natal showed the highest percentage of youth male and female deaths from HIV in 2018.

Young men, as compared to young women, are more likely to be involved in risky behaviour. Alcohol consumption was found to be more prevalent among male youth when compared to females. The youth age group 20–24 years accounted for the highest alcohol consumption for both male and female youth. A larger proportion of male youth used tobacco than females for all youth age groups. Males of all age groups are more likely to have multiple partners compared to females of all ages, which places them at an increased risk to HIV infection.

The absolute total number of deaths for the youth aged 15-34 years was 65 952, accounting for 14,6% of all recorded deaths in 2018. Most of the deaths of male and female youth in 2018 were as a result of "other external causes of accidental injury", "assault" and "transport accidents". Recent statistics highlight that youth contribute the highest number of road fatalities annually when compared to other age groups.

There is limited programmatic and survey data on youth health and wellbeing. Existing data and statistics are either outdated or insufficiently disaggregated to provide detailed insights into all aspects affecting the health and wellbeing of the youth in South Africa. Gaps in knowledge regarding youth health make it difficult to plan and implement interventions that aim to address some of the fundamental health issues among the youth.

8. SOCIAL COHESION & NATION BUILDING

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The Department of Arts and Culture defines social cohesion as the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities. Social cohesion influences economic and social development, and nurturing a more cohesive society is an important policy goal for South Africa. Social cohesion is perhaps one of the most fundamental policy challenges facing South Africa today. With regards to youth, the National Youth Policy (NYP, 2020-30) highlights the need for strengthening of social cohesion, moral regeneration, and integration into society, in order to overcome the obstacles preventing prosperity and equality.

Despite the national and international popularity of social cohesion as a concept in academic and policy arenas, there is nonetheless no standard method to measure social cohesion in groups and societies (Jenson, 2010). The NYP (2020-30) provides a definition of social cohesion that comprises various dimensions which include: fostering constitutional values; confronting discrimination and systemic racism and contributing to nation-building, dialogue, and healing; fostering leadership and active citizenry; and broadening sports and recreation.

The various dimensions of social cohesion outlined in the NYP (2020-30) therefore form the basis for which the following section of the report is structured.

8.2 CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Civic and political participation is an important indicator of social cohesion. As the Constitution guarantees the right to universal suffrage for youth aged 18 and older, data on youth voting are one of the indicators of young people's participation in society. Participation in civic and political matters is one way of ensuring that the Constitution is not just a document but is felt in the everyday lives of the citizens. Table 45 shows the number of South Africans of all age groups who registered to vote between the period of 2016 and 2019.

Table 45: Percentage of the Population that Registered for National & Municipal Elections by Age (2014, 2016 & 2019)

	2006 Municipal Elections	2009 National Elections	2011 Municipal Elections	2014 National Elections	2016 Municipal Elections	2019 National Elections
18-19 years	416 630	669 421	471 878	646 313	547 534	341 186
20-29 years	5 075 442	5 614 209	5 534 416	5 759 236	5 835 455	5 299 144
30-39 years	5 402 902	5 710 969	5 850 922	6 180 534	6 415 809	6 685 439
Total Voters Roll	21 054 957	23 181 997	23 655 046	25 390 150	26 333 353	26 756649

Source: Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) (2006-2019): Datasets

The figures above depict an increase in voter registration across all the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups between the 2006 municipal elections and the 2019 general elections. For example, the number of registered voters in the 20 to 29 age group increased by 760 013 voters between the 2006 municipal elections and 2016 municipal elections, representing an over 13% increase in registered voters.

However, the number of registered voters aged 18-19 years declined between 2014 and 2016. The number of registered voters across all youth age categories show a decline between the 2016 municipal elections and the 2019 national elections.

Table 46 shows the voter turnout by age group from 2006 to 2019. The proportion of new voters aged 18-19 years who participated in elections exceeded the national average in 2009 by 14,0%, by 11% in 2011, and by 9,1% in 2014. Across all youth age groups, the voter turnout increased between 2016 and 2019.

Table 46: Youth Voters Turnout by Age Group: 2006 to 2019

	2006 Municipal Elections	2009 National Elections	2011 Municipal Elections	2014 National Elections	2016 Municipal Elections	2019 National Elections
18-19 years	47,5%	91,3%	68,8%	82,6%	65,9%	80,0%
20-29 years	33,9%	72,9%	48,4%	72,1%	49,8%	55,7%
30-39 years	39,0%	67,1%	48,6%	69,2%	50,6%	58,3%
Total Voters	48,4%	77,3%	57,8%	73,5%	45,9%	66,0%

Source: Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) (2006-2019): Datasets

8.3 INTEREST IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Interest in public affairs and politics is a good indicator of the likelihood of people participating in democratic processes. A higher proportion of Indian/Asian and Black African youth (59,0% and 58,0% respectively) are more likely to be interested in political affairs than White (50,0%) and Coloured youth (42,0%). Male youth demonstrate greater interest public affairs than females (59,0% males and 52,0% females), whilst a larger proportion of youth residing in rural areas are more interested in public affairs than those in urban areas (62,0% and 52,0% respectively).

Table 47: Interest in Public Affairs Among Youth (18 To 35 Years) by Race, Gender, & Geographic Location (2015)

Population Group	Percentage
Black African	58,0%
Coloured	42,0%
Indian/Asian	59,0%
White	50,0%
Gender	
Male	59,0%
Female	52,0%
Geographic Location	
Rural	62,0%
Urban	52,0%

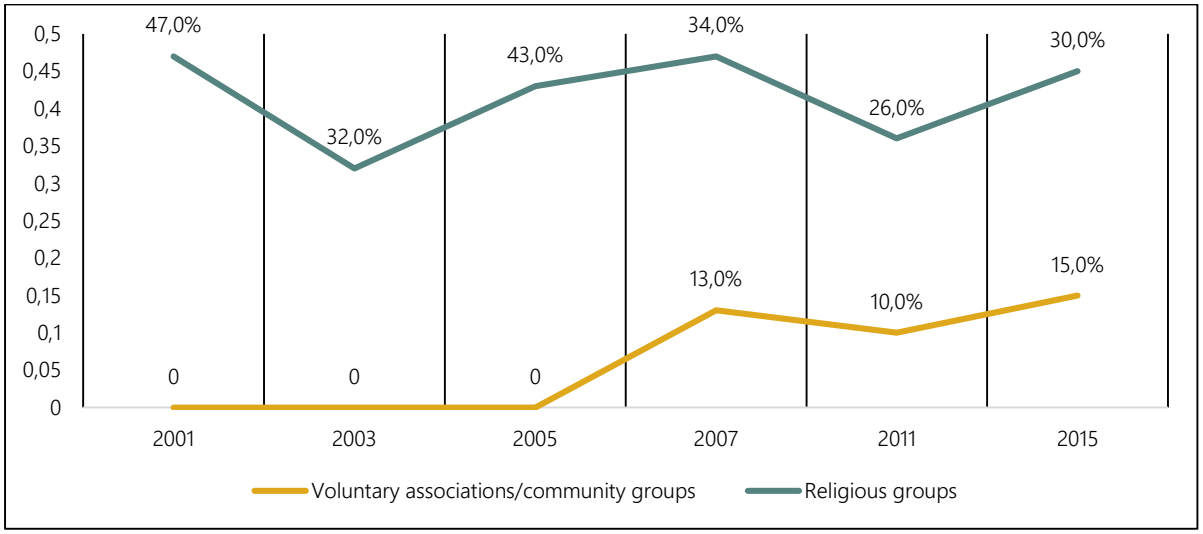
Source: Afrobarometer, 2016

8.4 YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC AND COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Social cohesion requires a high sense of community. Apart from the acknowledgement of the youth in civic affairs, the NYP also emphasises how participation in community activities encourages the holistic formation of an individual's identity. Furthermore, economists find a positive relationship between social cohesion and economic growth, on the basis that social cohesion improves formal and/or social institutions, which causally drives economic growth[146].

South African youth are more than twice as likely to join religious groups as they are to join voluntary associations or community groups[147]. On average since 2002, 35% of youth have been "active members" or "official leaders" of religious groups, compared to 13% for community groups since 2008. Active membership in religious groups has declined over time, from 47,0% in 2002 to 30% in 2015, while membership in voluntary associations has increased from 10,0% in 2011 to 15,0% in 2015.

Figure 68: Youth Membership in Civic Organisations (2002-2015)



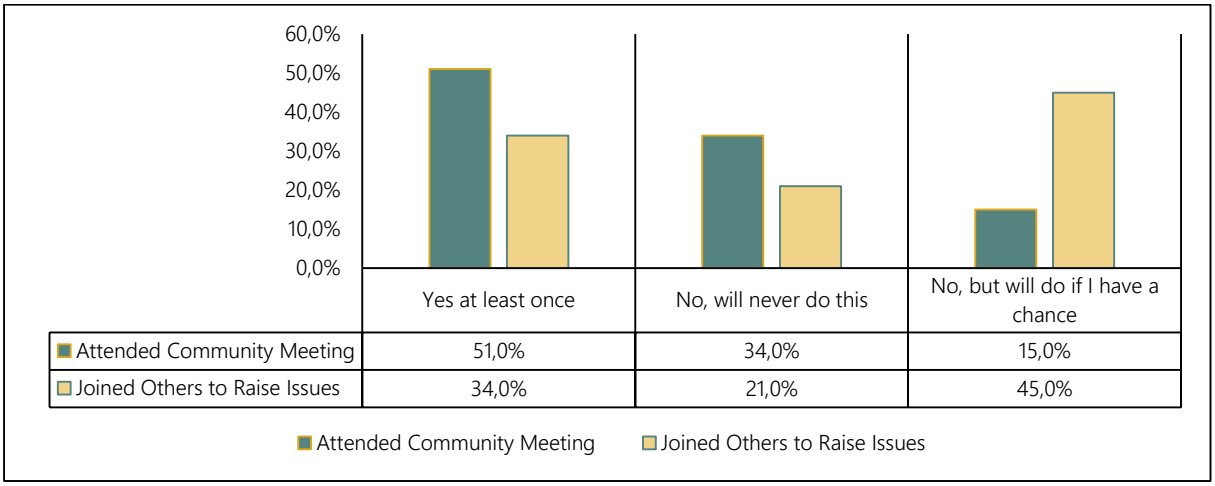
Source: Afrobarometer, 2016

The data presented in Figure 69 shows the attitudes of young people towards community participation. Over 50% (51,0%) of youth aged 18-35 years indicated that they attended a community meeting, whilst 33,0% joined together with others to raise an issue.

[146] Inclusive Society Institute, "Measuring Social Cohesion in South Africa: Results from the Inclusive Society's 2021 GovDem Survey", 2021

[147] Afrobarometer, "Youth political engagement in South Africa: Beyond student protests", 2016

Figure 69: Civic Participation by Youth Aged 18 to 35 Years (2016)



Source: Afrobarometer, 2016

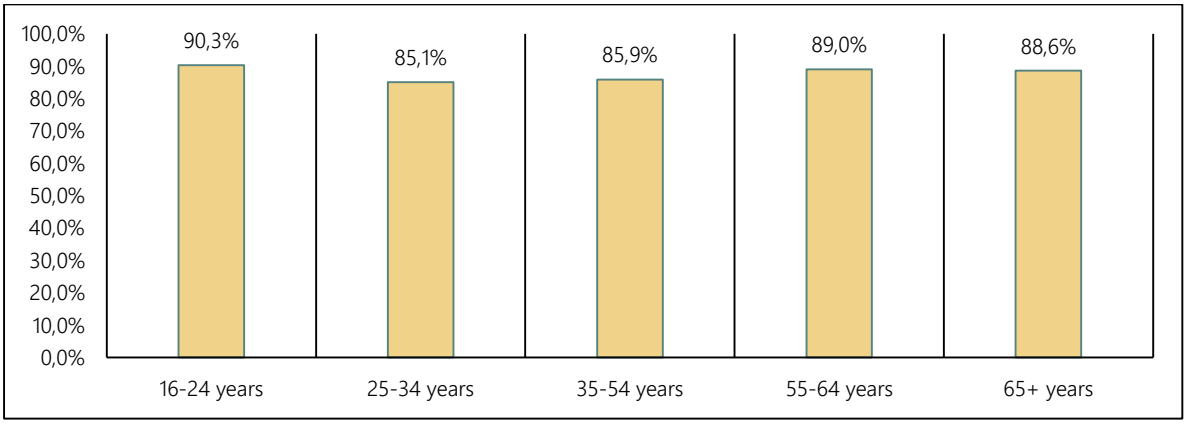
8.5 YOUTH NATIONAL IDENTITY & TRUST

The National Development Plan (NDP) envisions a South Africa in which South Africans will be more conscious of what they have in common, rather than of their differences. It envisions that, by 2030, South Africans' lived experiences will "progressively undermine and cut across the divisions of race, gender, disability, space and class". The NDP's vision for a transformed society places unity in diversity in the foreground, advanced by a shared commitment to constitutional values. The plan furthermore outlines its aim to create a society in which citizens are proud to be South African and live the values of the Constitution.

8.5.1 National Identity

Data for 2019[148] shows that the majority of the South African population are proudly South African. The youth aged between 16 and 24 years had the highest proportion of individuals who are proud to be South African (90,3%). For the 25-34 year age category, 85,1% indicated that they were proud to be South African (Figure 70).

Figure 70: Distribution of Population that is Proud to be South African (2019)



Source: Stats SA, Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey, 2018/19

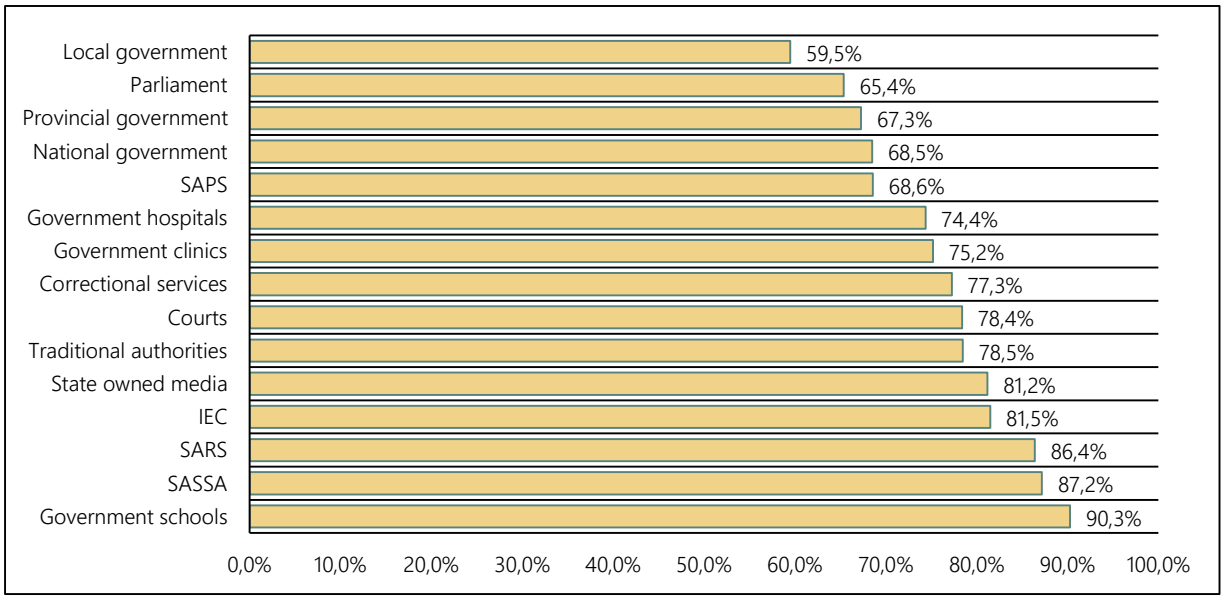
[148] Statistics South Africa, "Governance, Public Safety & Justice Survey", 2018/19

8.5.2 Trust in Government & Public Institutions

Trust is the bedrock upon which the legitimacy of public institutions and a functioning democratic system is built. It is critical for political participation and social cohesion. Furthermore, it is crucial to the success of a wide range of public policies that rely on public behavioural responses, as public trust can lead to greater adherence to regulations[149].

Figure 71 illustrates the level of trust in government and public institutions by young people aged 16–34 years. The data shows that government and public institutions with the highest levels of trust among youth included government schools (90,3%), South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) (87,2%), South African Revenue Services (SARS) (86,4%), IEC (81,5%), and state-owned media (81,2%). However, young people expressed low levels of trust with certain government and public institutions, (particularly those that attained below 70% of youth who had trust in them). These included SAPS (68,6%), national government (68,5%), provincial government (67,3%), and Parliament (65,4%). The level of trust for local government amongst youth was the lowest in 2019/20 (59,5%).

Figure 71: Level of Youth Trust in Government & Public Institutions (2019/20)



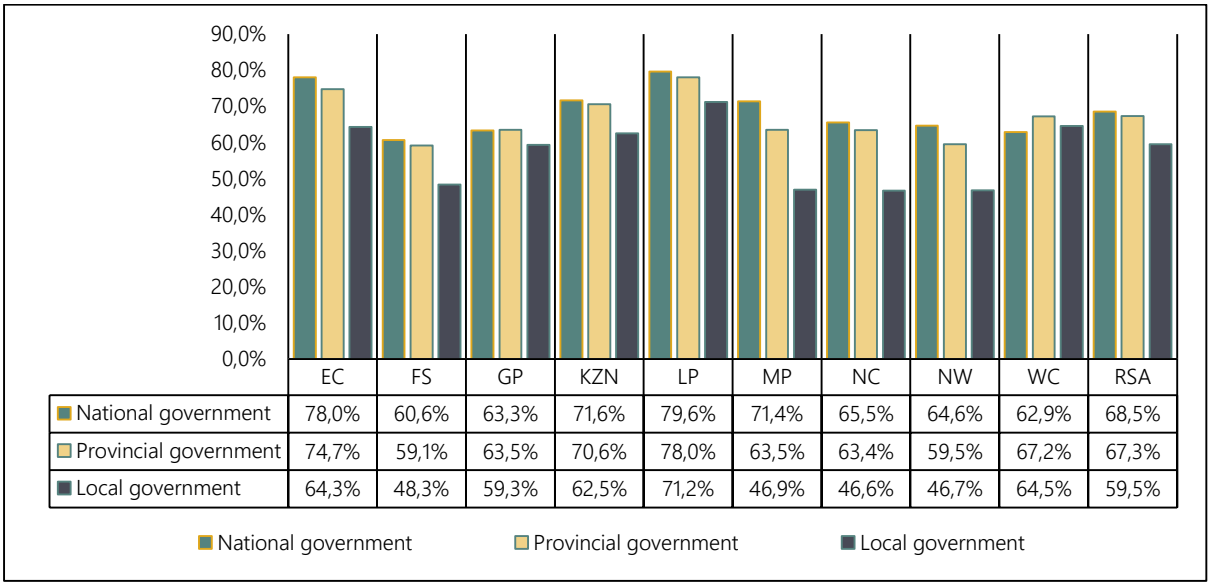
Source: Stats SA, Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey, 2019/20

Figure 72 presents the level of trust that young people have in different spheres of government by province. Overall, young people expressed low levels of trust in local government (59,5%). At a provincial level, Northern Cape (46,6%), Mpumalanga (46,9%), North West (46,7%), and Free State (48,3%) attained the lowest levels of trust in local government, with less than 50% of youth trusting their respective local governments in 2019/20.

For provincial government, the results show that youth had a reasonable level of trust in their provincial governments, with the exception of Free State (59,1%) and North West (59,5%). High levels of youth trust in provincial government was noted for Limpopo (78,0%) and Eastern Cape (74,7%). Youth from Limpopo had the had the highest levels of trust for national government (79,6%), followed by those from the Eastern Cape (78,0%).

[149] Statistics South Africa, "Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey", 2019/2020

Figure 72: Level of Youth Trust in National, Provincial & Local Government by Province (2019/20)



	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NC	NW	WC	RSA
National government	78,0%	60,6%	63,3%	71,6%	79,6%	71,4%	65,5%	64,6%	62,9%	68,5%
Provincial government	74,7%	59,1%	63,5%	70,6%	78,0%	63,5%	63,4%	59,5%	67,2%	67,3%
Local government	64,3%	48,3%	59,3%	62,5%	71,2%	46,9%	46,6%	46,7%	64,5%	59,5%

Source: Stats SA, Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey, 2019/20

8.5.3 Levels of Satisfaction with Government Services

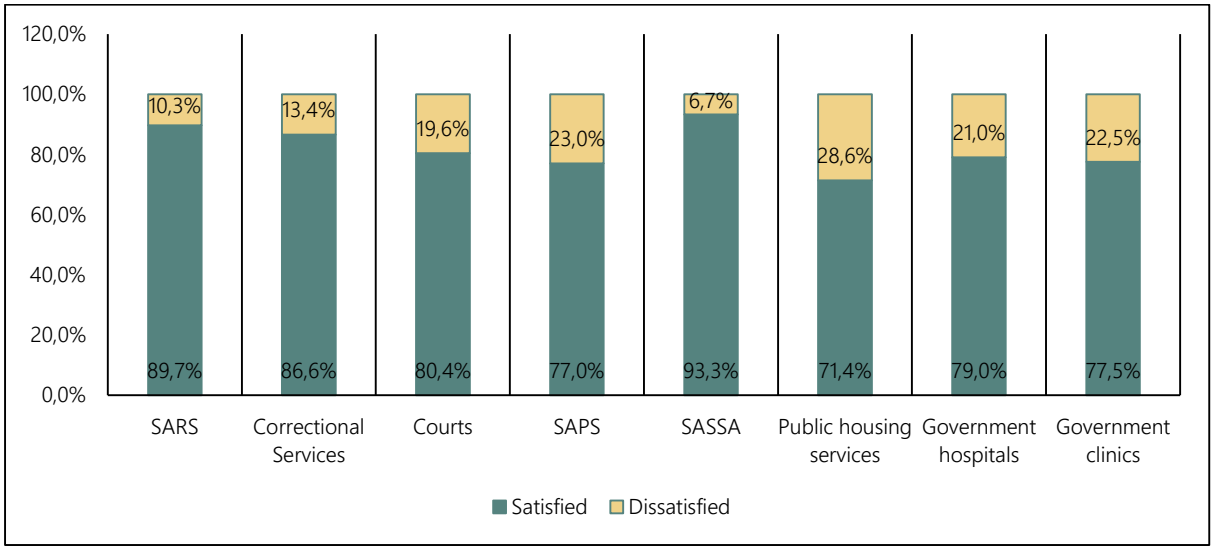
Measuring youth satisfaction with public services is central to a citizen-centric approach to service delivery, which is a critical component of government performance strategies for continuous improvement[150]. The existing body of literature states that levels of satisfaction with government performance influence citizens' degree of trust in government[151]

Figure 73 presents data on youth who were satisfied or dissatisfied with the quality of services provided by key government and public institutions, based on the Governance, Public Safety, and Justice Survey (GPSJS 2019/20). Youth indicated higher levels of satisfaction for the quality of service provided by certain government and public institutions, such as SASSA (93,3%), SARS (89,7%), and Correctional Services (86,6%). Despite the fact that more than 70% of youth were satisfied with the quality of service provided by public housing services (71,4%), it obtained the lowest percentage of youth satisfaction with the services provided when compared to other public institutions. Institutions such as SAPS (77,0%), government clinics (77,5%), and government hospitals (79,0%) also had lower levels of satisfaction amongst youth, falling below 80%.

[150] OECD, "Government at a Glance 2013", 2013

[151] Salim M. et al, "The Impact of Citizen Satisfaction with Government Performance on Public Trust in the Government: Empirical Evidence from Urban Yemen", 2017

Figure 73: Levels of Satisfaction with Government & Public Institutions Among Youth (2019/20)



Source: Stats SA, Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey, 2019/20

8.6 YOUTH & CRIME

According to research, crime levels in South Africa remain a concern, particularly in urban areas, with young people constituting the majority of victims of violent crimes as well as the majority of perpetrators of crimes in these areas[152]. This section of the report provides some highlights of youth as perpetrators of crime, and as victims of crime based on statistics released by the Department of Correctional Services, the Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (2019/20), and Victims of Crime Survey (2019/20).

8.6.1 Youth Offenders

The table below sets out the average number of sentenced offenders by age group as reported for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21. There has been decline in the number of sentenced offenders between 2019/20 and 2020/21 across all age groups (from a total of 102 841 to 93 066). There are a higher proportion of male offenders (97,6% of total offenders) compared to females (2,3%).

Table 48: Average Number of Sentenced Offenders by Age Group (2021)

	2019/20			2020/21		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Children (younger than 18 years)	65	0	65	40	0	40
Juveniles (18-20 years)	2 005	53	2 058	1 616	43	1 659
Youth & Adults (21 years & older)	98 237	2 481	100 718	89 241	2 126	91 367
Total	100 307	2 534	102 841	90 857	2 169	93 066

Source: Department of Correctional Services, Annual Report, 2020/21

[152] Stats SA, "The Marginalised Group Series V: The Social Profile of Youth 2014-2020", 2022

8.6.2 Youth - Victims of Crime

Victims of crime statistics are population estimates of the level of crime in South Africa derived from the Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (2019/20) and the Victims of Crime Survey (2019/20).

Table 49 below presents statistics for 2019/20 relating to assault, robbery and property, where the victims of the crime(s) were youth. In terms of the categories of crimes listed below, a higher proportion of male youth were victims of crime compared to females (29,5% and 25,8% respectively). In terms of gender differences, young males were nearly twice as likely as their female counterparts to be victims of assault and robbery crimes in 2019/20.

Table 49: Youth Victims of Crime (Assault, Robbery & Property Theft) by Gender (2019/20)

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Assault	213	43,0%	107	21,6%	321	64,8%
Robbery	360	32,5%	325	14,1%	685	61,8%
Property Theft	709	29,5%	618	25,8%	1 328	55,3%

Source: Stats SA, Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey, 2019/20

8.7 YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The absence of updated nationally representative data relating to youth participation in sport is a challenge, and additional research and more recent and accurate data is required in this respect. Considering all the beneficial aspects of sport, South Africa's comparatively low rate of involvement in sport or physical activity should be a point of concern for policymakers as only 42% of South Africans ever participate in some sort of physical activity. Table 50 disaggregates the reasons for non-participation in sport according to age groups. The table includes youth aged 26 to 35 years in the larger group of 26- to 60-year-olds. As such, the 16 to 20 and 21 to 25 year age cohorts provide the most pertinent information on youth non-participation in sport. While these two groups align closely with the remaining sample in indicating a lack of interest in sport – 25,8% and 22,5%, respectively, against a 25% mean – they are conspicuous in that they were considerably more likely to provide "no reason" as grounds for not taking part in sport. This seeming ambivalence needs to be investigated further, if youth between the ages of 16 and 25 are to be convinced of the benefits of sport.

Table 50: Reasons for Non-Participation in Sports by Age Group

Reasons	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-60 years	>60 years	Mean
	Percentage (%)				
Not interested	25,8	22,5	26,9	18,3	25,0
Age	2,3	2,6	18,9	60,5	19,9
No reason	22,2	23,7	13,8	6,8	15,3
Time constraints	14,2	16,9	13,1	1,4	12,3
No facilities/ opportunities	16,6	13,0	10,0	1,1	10,0
Not good at sport	9,7	11,3	6,9	2,6	7,3

Reasons	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-60 years	>60 years	Mean
	Percentage (%)				
Health/injury/disability	2,8	4,7	7,4	5,5	6,2
Financial constraints	1,4	1,0	1,4	5,0	1,2
Sport is dangerous	0,0	–	0,4	0,2	0,3
Transport problems	0,8	0,0	0,1	0,5	0,2
Other	4,1	4,3	1,1	2,7	2,1

Source: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA, 2005): Participation Patterns in Sport and Recreation Activities in South Africa

Table 51 demonstrates the differences and similarities between age groups, with respect to the reasons that encourage participation in sporting activities, as opposed to non-participation.

Table 51: Motivators for Participation in Sports by Age

Motivators	16-20	21-25	26-60	60+	Mean
	Percentage (%)				
School	46,9	36,0	23,2	2,5	33,7
To become more active/healthy	10,8	21,2	23,4	22,7	18,7
Friends	21,7	10,6	18,9	15,3	17,9
For social reasons	4,7	10,8	8,6	15,6	8,0
No specific reason	2,4	8,4	8,6	23,5	6,8
To lose weight and stay in shape	2,0	5,4	7,2	17,7	5,2
Other	5,1	3,0	9,5	2,6	6,4
Motivated by media	6,3	4,7	0,6	0	3,4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: SRSA (2005): Participation Patterns in Sport and Recreation Activities in South Africa

Table 51 shows that the most prominent factor that encourages participation in sport is experience of sport at school. This is especially true of the 16 to 20 and 21 to 25 year age groups, of which 46,9% and 36,0% reported being motivated by school experiences respectively. These figures emphasise the importance of school as an institution that has the potential to foster group interaction among young people. It is therefore cause for concern that literature points to a lack of time allocated to physical education, inadequate facilities, and insufficiently qualified Life Orientation educators to supervise the subject.

8.8 SUMMARY

Despite the national and international popularity of social cohesion as a concept in academic and policy arenas, there is nonetheless no standard method to measure social cohesion in groups and societies. This report focussed on areas such as civic and political participation among the youth, youth social integration, national identity, trust, and youth participation in sports. Youth registration for elections has increased over the years, as well as youth voter turnout. Male youth and youth

residing in rural areas are more likely to be interested in public affairs. The majority of the youth population are proud to be South African. Youth satisfaction with certain public services and institutions has an influence on their overall trust in government, which is one of the critical elements of social cohesion. The highest levels of trust of youth were expressed in government schools, SASSA and SARS, with the lowest levels of trust in SAPS, national, provincial and local government. Youth satisfaction was highest for SASSA, SARS and Correctional Services, whilst the lowest levels of satisfaction were shown for SAPS, government clinics and hospitals.

There has been a decline in the number of sentenced offenders between 2019/20 and 2020/21 across all youth age cohorts. A higher proportion of male youth were victims of crime in 2019/20 compared to females. Crime and lack of safety amongst youth can be a strong barrier to the development of solid communities, and an obstacle to social cohesion.

Just as social cohesion is a multifaceted concept, assessment of all existing data suggests that youth of different ages respond to and interact with society in different ways. To better understand social cohesion among youth and create unity in diversity, policymakers need to employ a wider range of indicators, disaggregated according to age, sex, and race. Accurate indicators of social cohesion in the context of contemporary South Africa would provide a platform to galvanise young people around nation-building.

9. EFFECTIVE & RESPONSIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

A robust institutional framework is crucial to ensure the effective implementation and co-ordination of youth development programmes. Underpinning the implementation of youth development programmes is the principle that youth development is a shared responsibility that requires a collaborative and coordinated effort from key role players in youth development. This principle recognises that that while the NYDA is tasked with the development of the IYDS (2022/25) (which covers all the areas of youth development identified in the NYP 2020-30), the Agency is not meant to take full responsibility for the implementation thereof. As a national strategy, the IYDS (2022/25) requires a holistic approach towards implementation, that encourages all stakeholders in the youth sector to coordinate, partner and synergise, to ensure effective youth development.

This section of the report sets out the institutional arrangements to ensure successful implantation of the IYDS (2022/25).

9.2 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

9.2.1 Catalytic Role of NYDA

The IYDS has been designed as a strategy that any role-player could get involved in at any point in time. The primary role of the NYDA within this strategy is to act as a catalyst. With the support of the Office of the Presidency, the NYDA is able to create the political will and momentum within government to allow the IYDS to gain the traction that is required for successful implementation. The opportunity to influence what other departments are doing in the youth development space must be driven quite strongly by both the NYDA and the Presidency. Interactions and consultations with the youth sector suggest that the current institutional arrangements are weak and need to be revisited. The main aim is to make youth development part and parcel of what other line departments are delivering, to the point where organisational and individual performance agreements include youth development as a clear area of focus. The role is therefore to remove barriers to success and to assist with the development and delivery of critical success factors. The role can broadly be described as to provide planning and decision-making information for projects; coordinate key engagement; facilitate critical discussions and to ease projects through conceptualisation into design and ultimately implementation; and to establish key partnerships with private sector organisations at national, provincial and local levels.

9.2.2 Financial Investment Support (from within Treasury)

The National Treasury is prescriptive about the process to be followed for the development of programmes and project budgets. The Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) provides a detailed budget projection for the next three financial years. All budgetary allocations are meant to be linked to specific programmes and projects and all budgetary expenditure must be linked back to programme and project delivery. Budget programme structures provide the key link between an institution's objectives and its detailed operational budgets. To provide this link, the budget programme structure (programmes and sub-programmes) should reflect the main areas of responsibility or service delivery within an institution's mandate. The framework for engagement,

interactions, and delivery of programmes delivered through the IYDS (2022/25) will require National Treasury to be involved. It is presently not possible to identify exactly what changes will be required, but some of the principles being considered are as follows:

- Private sector to easily invest: There may be instances where private sector organisations want to contribute financially, directly to identified programmes and projects. Should a Treasury mechanism not exist for this to be done, one would need to be introduced. Once the funding (co-funding either match or other) has been received, the necessary systems and structures need to be established to make certain that the funds are managed correctly. Decisions need to be made on who will manage this budget, either by the line department or by Treasury directly. The requirement is, therefore, for responsive, flexible, innovative methods to be employed.
- Structural reorientation: There is a need for the NYDA to have structural representation on all planning committees. Where there is no committee in place, the NYDA must, at the very least, be an integral part of the planning processes (particularly where youth issues are discussed).
- Opportunities for investment to be published (easy access point): Once programme and project budgets have been developed, it will be necessary to publish all opportunities for private sector investment and involvement. National Treasury will provide assistance on calculating the budget requirements/shortfall. This shortfall could then be met by partnering with private sector or civil society organisations. There is a need to make the opportunities easily visible and accessible. The mechanism for access could take on a number of forms, with contact centres or discipline-specific desks being set up in the Presidency. The specific selection will be made once the volume of requests is better understood.
- Joint internal funding: There may be instances where the budgets of two departments will be combined in order to realise optimal budget utilisation. The existing Treasury regulations will have to be reviewed to ascertain if this is possible through the merging of two line departments' budgets in project-specific areas.

9.2.3 Treasury Advisory Support Services (Treasury)

It is envisaged that there will be high levels of involvement from this department, since some of the major considerations will be about how they provide innovative solutions for utilising private sector funding. Public-private Partnerships (PPPs) are already a model that is used by Treasury. The suitability of this mechanism needs to be investigated to determine whether it is suitable for the delivery of these projects. Should it not be possible to deliver through the PPP model, alternatives will have to be designed, considered, and implemented.

9.2.4 Inter-Governmental Liaison (IGL) (From within NYDA)

Many of the societal, health, education, and service delivery challenges being faced by the national government cut across more than one specific delivery area of a department. In many instances, more than one department responds to a societal challenge through two separately funded and designed projects. The role of the IGL is to collect, collate, and present information on all departments (and organs of state) and the projects that they are currently running. The main aim is to present opportunities for working together and for creating synergy. The IGL's role also includes all monitoring, evaluation, and reporting requirements of the liaison function.

9.2.5 Private Sector Liaison (From within NYDA)

The role of the Private Sector Liaison desk is to act as a single point of entry into the IYDS (2022/25) and related programme/project framework. Of specific importance, within project information, is to identify exactly when, where, and how private sector companies can get involved. It essentially

presents a point of entry into any programme or project that is being run by the government that is focused on youth development.

9.2.6 Knowledge Advisory Services

A vast body of knowledge and information on youth development resides outside of the NYDA. With Treasury's emphasis on results-based management and evidence-based planning, it is very important that the NYDA forms strategic partnerships that will provide it with access to these bodies of knowledge. The main targets for these partnerships are public and private research institutes, as well as universities.

9.2.7 Marketing, Communication, and Public Relations (Multiple locations driven by NYDA)

The IYDS (2022/25) represents quite a considerable departure from how the nation traditionally organised its response to youth development. Its approach is thoroughly integrated and requires high levels of coordination and collaboration between the public and private sectors and civil society. The role players are the same, but the "rules of engagement" have changed. To ensure that everybody understands how the landscape has changed, it will be necessary to have a strong marketing, communications, and media campaign.

9.2.8 Civil Society Liaison

The civil society liaison is the same as the private sector liaison. The only difference is the "customer" base that they service.

9.3 SUMMARY

In order for any youth development policy intervention to be effective, strong, and functioning, institutional arrangements are necessary. The IYDS (2022/25) is an instrument for implementing policy imperatives recommended in the NYP (2020-30). Various organs of the state, led by National Treasury, are required to play a role in youth development. The integrated and mainstreamed approach to youth development aims to make youth development part and parcel of all state organs such that it is included in their budgets and their performance agreements. While current youth development institutional arrangements are intended to mainstream and integrate youth development in all sectors of society, the actual implementation still needs to be strengthened.

10. NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The National Youth Service (NYS) was introduced in South Africa in 2003 with the aim of fostering patriotism, social cohesion and nation building, whilst teaching the youth life skills and encouraging community service underpinned by volunteerism. The NYS provides a structured way of exposing the youth to experiential learning through community service. As an envisaged exit, the NYS programme aims to assist youth to gain key occupational skills and link participants to formal employment, further education and training, or business opportunities to access a sustainable livelihood upon completion of the programme[153]. In the long term, the NYS provides an effective and efficient means of restructuring underdeveloped societies, while simultaneously developing the skills and abilities of the youth.

The goals and objectives of the NYS Programme (NYSP), include:

- To inculcate a culture of service by supporting youth to participate constructively in nation building;
- To inculcate in young people an understanding of their role in the promotion of civic awareness and national reconstruction;
- To develop the skills, knowledge and ability of young people to enable them to make the transition to adulthood
- To improve youth employability through opportunities for work experience, skills development and support to gain access to economic and further learning opportunities; and
- To harness the nations untapped human resource and provide a vehicle for enhancing the delivery of the country's development objectives, especially to disadvantaged and underserved communities.

To achieve the goals and objectives of the NYSP, the National Youth Service Unit (NYSU) was established within the NYDA and is mandated to work with public, private and civil society to create an institutional delivery mechanism to facilitate the realisation of the objectives of NYS. This approach is underpinned by the philosophy that youth development is multifaceted and should therefore be driven by all institutions of society and address youth needs across all sectors.

10.2 THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE MODEL

Throughout the world, countries have initiated youth programmes that fall within the category of youth service initiatives. However, the types of programmes and their nature and purpose differ from country to country. In the context of South Africa, the NYS model is premised on the recognition that young people require interventions that address the personal, social and economic aspects of their lives in a holistic manner. To ensure a more targeted, contextual and focused approach, the NYS programme model is structured around the following key elements:

- The provision of structured training that includes accredited technical skills training, life skills, personal and leadership development;

[153] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22

- Exposure to a community service or work placement that benefits communities while young people gain practical experience in line with the training; and
- Access to sustainable economic opportunities such as formal employment, self-employment and further education and training[154].

Whilst the NYS programmes seek to reach all young people, it is recognised that certain groups of young people are more vulnerable, and given the limited resources at the disposal of the programme, their needs are therefore prioritised. These include: education students, Further Education and Training students, unemployed youth, and youth in conflict with the law[155].

Based on this, the NYSP focuses on young people in three categories, namely:

- Category 1: unemployed youth who are not in education and training, (which may include vulnerable youth and young persons with disabilities), who are engaged in service programmes for a minimum period of one year. Participants acquire skills, occupational experience, and career guidance, which strengthens their social inclusion, social capital and employability.
- Category 2: students at tertiary or higher learning institutions, who are provided a platform to perform community service. Participants gain occupational or practical work experience to improve their chances of being employed.
- Category 3: youth who have just completed Matric/Grade 12 and wish to take their "gap year" undertaking community service in their own communities. This category is also aimed at absorbing youth who have not gained admission to institutions of post school training; have not decided on their career choice; or those who do not have funding to pursue their studies.

10.3 THE NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE UNIT (NYSU)

The NYSU is located in the NYDA. As per the National Youth Service National Coordination Framework 2017, the NYSU is at the centre of the programme as the coordinator of NYS and as the provider of secretariat support. The NYSU is involved in the daily activities of the NYSP, providing technical training and assistance in developing appropriate models in accordance with existing NYSP norms and standards.

Amongst other responsibilities, the NYSU is tasked with lobbying state organs, private sector organisations, and the civil society to implement the NYS programmes. In addition, the NYSU has a responsibility to register programmes that meet the NYSP criteria and to facilitate their accreditation through the relevant Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) where necessary. The coordination function, which is intended to create and maintain an integrated national delivery mechanism for NYS, is supported through a Steering Committee. It is composed of various stakeholders that oversee the implementation of the NYS and provide strategic guidance[156].

Partnerships and participation by multiple institutions is an integral part of implementation of the NYSP. The partnerships provide opportunities for NYSP stakeholders to derive maximum benefit from

[154] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22
[155] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22
[156] Steering Committee members include: Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities, Department of Human Settlements, Department of Education, Department of Public Works, Department of Cooperative Governance, Department of Social Development, Department of Sports Arts and Culture, Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, South African Association of Youth Clubs, Youth Build South Africa, South African Youth Council, Harambe, City Year

learning, and leveraging of resources to support the NYSP. Key partnerships active in the 2021/2022 financial year, include:

- The Flemish Cooperation;
- Department of Sports, Arts and Culture (DSAC);
- Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID); and
- Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

10.4 FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES

10.4.1 Presidential Youth Service Programme

The National Youth Service component of the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention has been funded for the 2021/22 financial year to implement a National Youth Service programme targeted at 35 700 participants. The PYEI includes five priority interventions, as follows:

1. The establishment of a National Pathway Management Network (NPMN);
2. Delivery of agile workforce development;
3. Support for youth self-employment and enterprise in the township and rural economy;
4. Support to strengthen workplace experience
5. Revitalised National Youth Service

Sectors identified for service for 2021/22 include the following[157]:

- Sports and recreation - Sports and recreation for young people as after school programmes
- Arts and culture - Art, music, debate, animation, design as after school programmes
- Support services in the social economy - ending gender based violence; education support, alcohol and substance abuse programmes
- Community revitalisation - greening, urban agriculture and the environment;
- placemaking (Transformation of townships and informal) settlements

The organisations listed below were approved to implement the Presidential Youth Service (PYS) in 2022/23, with each allocated a target.

Table 52: List of Organisations Approved to Implement 2022/2023 Presidential Youth Service

NYS Project Name	NYS Partner	No. of Youth Approved/Allocated	Community Service Sector	Targeted Provinces
HH National Youth Service (NYS) Programme	Hand in Hand Development NPC	6 240	Surveys and digital mapping	EC, FS, LP, MP
National Youth Service Programme	Afrika Tikkun Foundation	3 120	Sports and recreation	EC, GP, KZN, LP, NW, WC
Pathways through Service	Small Projects Foundation	3 000	Health, education, social services support	EC
YearBeyond – a Service Sector Youth	The Community Chest of the Western Cape	3 201	Learner support programme	WC

[157] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22

NYS Project Name	NYS Partner	No. of Youth Approved/Allocated	Community Service Sector	Targeted Provinces
Service				
Enke – Youth 4 Service	Enke	3 000	Social support services, solidarity and care, Sports and recreation, Community	EC, GP, LP, NC
Learn, grow and are bapaleng	Seriti Institute	3 000	Early Childhood Development/ early learning	GP, KZN, LP, MP, NC, NW, WC
Empowering Rural Youth in Agriculture	Heifer Project South Africa (HPSA)	3 000	Food security (Animals census, animal vaccination, animals health, livestock management	KZN
Sports for Social Change South Africa	Sports for Social Network	4 260	Sports and recreation	EC, FS, GP, KZN, LP, MP, NC, NW, WC
Youth Job Creation through Cricket South Africa	Cricket South Africa NPC	3 130	Sports and recreation	EC, FS, GP, KZN, LP, MP, NC, NW, WC
Youth Development And Employment Programme	Lima Rural Development	3 744	Learner support programme, solidarity and care, Food security and nutrition	KZN, MP
National Youth Service	The Mvula Trust	300	Community care, revitalization and greening programmes	EC, GP, KZN, LP, MP
Maendeleo NSY Programme	South African Association of Youth Clubs	3 000	Arts and culture, food security, Solidarity and care, and learner support	EC, FS, GP, KZN, LP, MP, NC, NW, WC
ELRU Early Childhood Youth Development programme	Early Learning Resource Unit	3 000	Early Childhood Development/ early learning	WC

Source: NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22

10.4.2 The National Youth Service Challenge Project (NYSC)

The National Youth Service Challenge project (NYSC) is aimed at promoting the involvement of youth-led and youth-serving non-profit organisations in the implementation of NYS in communities. Organisations are given a challenge to design practical solution-oriented interventions to address current socioeconomic challenges faced by young people. These interventions are not to be less than a month or exceed 12 months in their duration.

In the 2021/2022 financial year, 13 organisations were selected and contracted to start implementing the programme in 2022/2023 financial year. The target set for this programmes was 50 000 young people[158].

As part of the National Youth Service NPO incubation and capacity building programme, the NYSU aims to engage the NPO's further to implement NYS Projects/programmes. These NPO's will have to develop and design poverty alleviation projects within the communities they are living in and ensure that there is a learning and service are embedded in them. The NPO's are exposed to a series of training opportunities through the National Development Agency (NDA), accredited governance programme after the induction. NPO's will be taken through the incubator programme with the aim of assisting them to improve systems in their organisations.

The NYS Challenge calls on youth-led and youth-servicing NPOs to submit their solution-oriented NYS initiatives that engage 100 young people in activities that benefit communities while learning skills relevant for the economy. The applications/submissions will be adjudicated by an independent panel that will select 100 organisations to be awarded a prize of R18 000 each for their winning projects. The organisations will then be supported by the Department of Social Development, NYDA, NDA and Harambee to implement their six-month projects[159].

10.4.3 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is run by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI). The programme uses labour-intensive projects to provide opportunities for youth in all its sectors - Infrastructure, Non-State, Environment & Culture, and Social sectors.

The EPWP provides temporary employment whilst contributing to building or maintaining public infrastructure, which in the process create learning opportunities. Participants acquired various trade qualifications were acquired during the course the programme. In total, 820 673 work opportunities were created and KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape were the largest beneficiaries at 187 658 (23%) and 170 197 (21%) respectively[160].

Table 53: EPWP Work Opportunities Created by Province

Province	Number of Work Opportunities Created
Eastern Cape	170 197
Free State	53 540
Gauteng	75 152
KwaZulu-Natal	187 658
Limpopo	91 338
Mpumalanga	65 497
Northern Cape	32 137
North West	55 638
Western Cape	89 516

Source: NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22

[158] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22
[159] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22
[160] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22

10.4.4 Community Work Programme - COGTA

The Community Work Programme (CWP) is intended to deal with poverty, unemployment and inequality. Work done through CWP includes: care work, support work at schools, early childhood development and looking after the local environment by cleaning and planting trees.

According to 2021/22 data, the following information relates to the Mpumalanga Community Work Programme (CWP), which shows the number of districts, sites and participants in the programme[161]:

- District - 3
- Sites - 19
- Site offices - 22
- Targeted participants – 26 900
- Actual participants – 27 626
- Young participants – 7703

10.4.5 National Rural Youth Service Corps

The National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC) focusses on rural youth, aiming to reduce the levels of youth unemployment, increase literacy and skills, and reduce the dependency on social grants and transfers. Its objectives are to:

- train youth through specifically developed programmes linked to community needs in rural areas;
- develop youth with multidisciplinary skills through civic education;
- capacitate youth in retaining knowledge and technical skills acquired during training; and
- increase the number of rural communities receiving support in their self- development through the CRDP[162].

10.4.6 Teachers' Assistant Programme

The Teachers' Assistant programme forms part of the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI)-Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) initiative. This programme is mainly intended to deal with the high levels of youth unemployment, and also provide learning opportunities for youth between the ages of 18 and 35. In the year under review, a total of 323 422 education and school assistants at schools in every province were engaged under this programme[163].

10.4.7 Jobs Fund

Launched in 2011, the Jobs Fund is address the critical challenge of unemployment. The fund provides a grant of between 3 million and 15 million to support job initiatives that also encompass community service. It also prescribes that a project should engage a minimum of 3 000 young people to qualify for the grant.

[161] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22
[162] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22
[163] NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22

10.5 NYSP ACHIEVEMENTS

The following table provides a broad overview of the performance and achievements of the various programmes that constitute the NYSP for the 2021/22 financial year.

Table 54: NYSP Programme Performance & Achievements (2021/22)

Programme	Partner	Description	Achievements
The Young Patriots' Programme (TYPP)	Department of Sports, Arts & Culture (DSAC)	The programme intends to cultivate patriotism, volunteerism and social cohesion	• 279 young people in the programme in 2021/22 • 56,8% female recruits
Collins Chabane School of Artisans	uMgungundlovu TVET College	The school delivers skills for unemployed youth through the National Youth Service Model.	• First pilot phase - 50 youth enrolled in boiler making and plumbing • Negotiations underway to implement the project in Capricorn and Sekhukhune TVET colleges (Limpopo province)
North West: Department of Social Development	Department of Social Development	Skills training targeted at out of school and unemployed youth from previously disadvantaged communities	300 youth targeted across 4 districts in North West province. Due to delays in the appointment of the service provider and COVID-19, targets were not met in the 2021/22 financial year.
IPID Learnership Programme	Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID)	Workplace experiential learning programme which gives youth an opportunity to take part in the Safety and Security sector by contributing as well as acquiring the required skills to help fight crime.	The programme targeted 66 youth in the financial year 2021/2022. 59 unemployed youth were recruited.
City Year South Africa	City Year South Africa	The programme focused on the following: • Self-development and coaching of young people • Structured youth service with partners and projects they design in the community • Promoting an opportunity mindset amongst young people to generate multiple income instead of waiting for	The young people who benefitted from the programme are listed below: • 260 young people in the 6-month program • 60 young people in the 10-month program • In total 260 young people in FY 2021/2022

Programme	Partner	Description	Achievements
		formal employment exclusively. • A culture of service within the community role modelled by young people. • Quality programming and youth experience in a service opportunity	
National Youth Camps: Community Service	Department of Sports, Arts & Culture (DSAC)	Coordination and implementation of the community service activity in all the nine provinces for the National Youth Camps (NYC) in partnership with the DSAC. The camp focused on learners at schools who are in Grade 9, 10 and 11 between the age of 14 – 20 years only.	Six provinces from the nine embarked on community service activities involving the 100 learners from various schools

Source: NYDA, "National Youth Service Programme Annual Report", 2021/22

10.6 SUMMARY

The NYS can be defined as a structured programme that engages youth in strengthening service delivery, promoting nation-building, fostering social cohesion, and assisting youth to gain the occupational skills necessary to be able to access a sustainable livelihood. The NYS presents opportunities for young people, particularly those who are unskilled, unemployed, or out of school to contribute to the national development agenda by serving their communities and country. In addition to creating opportunities for young people and developing communities, the NYSP incorporates social cohesion. With gender based violence and femicide (GBVF) persistent and on the rise, racism and other forms of political and socio-economic discrimination, the NYS programme encompasses these issues as part of broad government programmes to foster social cohesion. The challenges presented by COVID-19 resulted in delays in the implementation of some of the programmes. Despite this, there was significant uptake of the NYS programmes by young people, and many were still able to benefit from the programme(s).

Integration and mainstreaming of programmes is critical for youth development to have a desirable impact. Not only does this require fostering, nurturing and maintaining effective partnerships with key stakeholders, but it is also vital that the NYSP is aligned to the strategic intent of the IYDS and other youth intervention instruments. Strengthening partnerships, integration and alignment will not only serve to remove silos and avoid the duplication of efforts, but will also ensure that the maximum benefits are derived from available resources.

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