



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES:**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY:**

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**Mr A Arnolds (Western Cape: EFF) to ask the Minister of Tourism:**

***Women participation in tourism***

Whether the Government's initiatives to increase women's participation in the tourism industry are effective; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? CO160E

**REPLY:**

The participation of the women in the tourism workforce was estimated to be as high as 70% before Covid-19 hit South Africa. However, an overwhelming majority of women are employed at low levels in unstable and insecure positions. Thus, women participation is lacking in management and control and business ownership. In response, the Department of Tourism has put in place the Executive Development Programme for Women in Tourism, training middle management women from various companies in the tourism sector since 2016. This programme was prompted by the industry's claim in a Transformation Research Report that there was absence or difficulty to find qualified and competent women candidates in the sector to appoint into executive positions. Sixty-four (64) women graduated to date, out of 80 trained which is equivalent 80% graduation rate. Since the inception of the programme 15 women were promoted to senior positions in their organisation. A database of these women has been created, and the candidates for the programme have been profiled for marketing purposes. Employers have also reported improved performance of the candidates who have been through the programme. Current intake for 2020 and 2021 group of 20 students for each year totalling 40 students.

In terms of ownership and control, based on evidence, the Department of Tourism has established the women in tourism (WIT) in which women owned businesses are assisted in various ways to increase their success rate. WiT is aimed at women who own and operate SMMEs and Co-operatives within the tourism and hospitality sector; women who are engaged in informal income-generating activities but have aspirations to grow their enterprises and become formal entities in the future; and women who have an interest in operating businesses and Co-operatives but lack the “know-how” to start.

The Department has used Women in Tourism Chapters in each nine (9) provinces to engage women in the tourism sector. The structures were formed to drive women membership growth and objectives of the WiT programme related to the empowerment of women in the Tourism and Hospitality sectors. These provincial structures were created in collaboration with Provincial Departments of Tourism and Tourism Agencies who assist with mobilising women in the industry, address identified challenges and gaps in the tourism value chain. Eight out of nine provinces have successfully launched and registered NPOs some boasting membership in excess of 100 members to date.

The various chapters have been supported with various capacity building interventions which include but not limited to financial management, marketing, negotiations skills, development of comprehensive business plans, operations Management, entrepreneurship and Innovation and taxation, legal and compliance. Business Models and Strategy Development. Overall WiT has created a platform in which dedicated support is channeled towards women owned businesses.

The programmes that the department has put together to support women are effective however more resources are required for the programmes to be expanded so that more women can be supported.