



MINISTER
TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY:

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1018. Ms N Buthelezi (MK) to ask the Minister of Tourism:

What (a) concrete steps has she taken to ensure the meaningful inclusion of young persons in the tourism value chain, particularly with regard to (i) enterprise development support, (ii) targeted skills training programmes, (iii) access to procurement opportunities and (iv) dedicated youth-focused funding mechanisms and (b) measurable outcomes have been achieved to date?

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REPLY:

The Department of Tourism has prioritised the inclusion of young people as a central driver of the Tourism Growth Partnership Plan (TGPP), recognising that the sector has a high propensity for youth employment and relatively low barriers to entry and opportunities to train.

(a) Concrete Steps for Youth Inclusion (i) Enterprise Development Support

The Department facilitates inclusive participation through the Enterprise Development and Transformation sub-programme. Specific steps include:

- Developing and implementing an SME Innovation Fund designed to stimulate entrepreneurship and capture critical data on small businesses.
- Identifying localisation and supply-chain opportunities specifically tied to attractions and experiences to bring young entrepreneurs into the value chain.
- The TGPP Working Groups are currently mapping scalable pathways with partners to support new entrants.

(ii) Targeted Skills Training Programmes

We have implemented several demand-led initiatives to ensure training leads directly to work opportunities:

- Youth Placement Programmes: The "Learn and Earn" Youth Placement Programme and the Tourism Graduate Recruitment Programme are core components of our 2026/27 performance targets.

- The Department activated the G20 Hackathon project, where students from various Institutions of higher learning were afforded an opportunity to develop AI solutions that enhance the tourism experience, promote sustainability and are beneficial to society and the Sector.
- The AI solutions developed by these young people were presented at the G20 ministerial conference that was held in Mpumalanga.
- Specialised Training: Programmes include Culinary training, Tourist Guide training, and Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning (ARPL) to professionalise youth participation.
- Work-Integrated Learning (WIL): We are partnering with YES and Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator to place TVET students into WIL opportunities to bridge the gap between graduation and employment.

(iii) The Department's procurement does empower youth-owned businesses:

- The Department's Annual Performance Plan for 2025-2026 sets a mandatory minimum of 40% expenditure on procurement from SMMEs and a minimum of 40% specifically from women-owned businesses. These targets are aligned with Section 217 of the Constitution, the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act (PPPFA), and the Public Procurement Act of 2024.
- This also includes SMMEs and women-owned businesses that are youth-owned.
- Infrastructure Projects: Youth are targeted for employment and contracting through the Working for Tourism programme, which utilises labour-intensive methods for destination enhancement projects.

(iv) Dedicated Youth-Focused Funding Mechanisms

Support is provided through several incentive programmes managed under the **Tourism Incentive Programme (TIP)**:

- Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP): Provides funding for SMMEs to adopt water and energy efficiency measures.
- Market Access Programme (MASP): Targets SMMEs providing training and access to national and international trade platforms.
- The Department, through the Memoranda of Agreement signed with Public Institutions of Higher Learning (University of Pretoria, University of Johannesburg, University of KwaZulu-Natal, North-West University, University of Venda, Tshwane University of Technology), makes provision for financial support to postgraduate students pursuing tourism and related qualifications. The student financial support targets unemployed postgraduate students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. For the 2026 academic year, the Department has allocated R2 084 000 for student financial support.

(b) Measurable Outcomes to Date

As of March 2026, the following outcomes have been recorded:

- Job Creation: Created 3,282 work opportunities through "Working for Tourism" projects in the 2024/25 period, more than 893 in the current 2025/26 financial year to date and a target of 6,174 for the 2026/27 financial year.
- To include young people in the tourism value chain, the Department has awarded bursaries to 16 students for the academic year 2005 and created 10 new opportunities for the academic year 2026. Young people are given the opportunity to participate in the

Department Internship programme, where 35 interns will be placed in the next financial year.

- Sector Employment: Direct tourism employment was recorded at 733,000 jobs (based on 2022 baselines), with a strategic target to grow this to 1 million direct jobs by 2029/2030.
- Skills Pathways: TGPP working groups have successfully identified demand hotspots across hospitality, retail, and MICE sectors to guide future youth skilling investments.
- SMME Support: Maintained a consistent spend on SMMEs, achieving 43.31% of procurement expenditure from SMMEs in the 2024/25 period.

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