

DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR

i-DEAL

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE: 07 | 2026



BRICS Labour and Employment Engagements in India

South Africa participated in the 3rd BRICS Employment Working Group Meeting and the 12th BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting, held in Hyderabad, India, from 13–17 July 2026 under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."

The engagements brought together Ministers, senior officials, Heads of Delegation and technical experts from BRICS member states to deliberate on key labour and employment priorities aimed at strengthening cooperation and advancing inclusive growth. Representing South Africa was Employment and Labour Deputy Minister, Jomo Sibiya.

Discussions during the Working Group Meeting and the Ministerial Meeting focused on expanding social protection and the formalisation of labour markets, increasing women's participation in the economy, strengthening employability through skills development, and harnessing digital technologies to support workers in a changing world of work.

The programme also provided an opportunity for member states to share national experiences and best practices, culminating in the adoption of the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Declaration, which reaffirmed a shared commitment to decent work, social dialogue, innovation and sustainable development.

Diary of events

August 2026

21 July 2026 - 01 September 2026 = Department of Employment and Labour, CEE and CCMA have started 2026 national advocacy to promote equity in workplaces.

The 2026 EE workshops/roadshows began on 21 July in Kimberley, Northern Cape Province. This year's workshops/roadshows are held under the theme: "Bridging the Equity Gap Through Diversity & Inclusion".

The focus of 2026 workshops are:

Presentation on the Draft Amended Code of Good Practice on the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the EE Plan;

Presentation on practical demonstration of how to utilise the EE System online facilities to capture EE Reports and request EE Certificate of Compliance;

Presentation on sharing of all types of unfair discrimination cases by the CCMA; and

Presentation on labour law amendments – Labour Relations Act (LRA), Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), EE Act, National Minimum Wage Act (NMWA)

03 August 2026 = Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) exco meeting

04 August 2026 = Employment and Labour Deputy Minister Jomo Sibiya lead a department's Inspections and Enforcement Services (IES) branch advocacy session with Chinese employers on compliance with South African labour laws in Cape Town

09(10) August 2026 = National Women's Day (national holiday)

12 August 2026 = CCMA Exco meeting

12 August 2026 = Supported Employment Enterprises (SEE) Exco meeting

14 August 2026 = Labour Policy & Industrial Relations (LP&IR) branch meeting

19 August 2026 = Compensation Fund (CF) exco meeting

August 2026 = Department commemorate National Day Against Child Labour

21 August 2026 = Corporate Services (CS) branch meeting

25 August 2026 = Compensation Fund (CF) Manco meeting

27 August 2026 = CCMA Governing Body meeting

27 August 2026 = DEXCOM meeting

28 August 2026 = Labour Policy & Industrial Relations (LP&IR) branch meeting

28 August 2026 = NEDLAC Manco meeting

31 August 2026 = Department's Public Employment Services (PES) Branch Management Committee (BMC) meeting

September 2026

01 September 2026 = Labour Activation Programme Committee meeting

02-04 September 2026 = Supported Employment Enterprises Expo events

04 September 2026 = NEDLAC Annual Summit

07 September 2026 = Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) exco meeting

11 September 2026 = Labour Policy & Industrial Relations (LP&IR) branch meeting

11 September 2026 = Productivity SA Annual General Meeting

12 September 2026 = Supported Employment Enterprises (SEE) Exco meeting

14 September 2026 = Productivity SA monthly Meeting

15-17 September 2026 = IES branch Employment Standards conference

16 September 2026 = Compensation Fund exco meeting

18 September 2026 = Corporate Services (CS) branch meeting

21 September 2026 = Minister's In Year Monitoring (IYM) meeting

22 September 2026 = Compensation Fund board meeting

22 September 2026 = Productivity SA Annual strategic planning workshop

24 September 2026 = Heritage Day (national holiday)

25 September 2026 = Employment Services (ES) board meeting

25 September 2026 = LP&IR branch meeting

28 September 2026 = CF Manco meeting

30 September 2026 = Department's Public Employment Services (PES) Branch Management Committee (BMC) meeting

30 September 2026 = Unemployment Insurance Fund board meeting



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South Africa strengthens BRICS labour cooperation

South Africa joined BRICS leaders in Hyderabad, India, to advance cooperation on decent work, social protection, skills development, women's economic empowerment and innovation, culminating in the adoption of the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Declaration.

Note from the Editor-in- Chief

CCO Teboho Thejane



From Global Partnerships to Local Impact: Advancing Decent Work for All

BRICS member states convened in Hyderabad India in the month of July. The Department of Employment and Labour represented our beloved country in the discussions. Deputy Minister Jomo Sibiya led the delegation from the Department, and presented at the 12th BRICS labour and employment Ministers meeting.

The BRICS meeting met under the theme "Building for resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability". Deputy Minister Sibiya, on behalf of South Africa, reaffirmed our country's commitment to BRICS solidarity, he also on presenting South Africa's labour market reforms, as a significant example on how legislative modernisation can support economic growth while stretching decent work and workers' rights.

The Department also folded its sleeves and put boots on the ground in an endeavour to tackle and hasten the addressing the snail pace on the issue of resolving the matter of ex-mine workers who are owed their social security. To address this injustice government has put measures to give impetus to addressing the matter. Various interventions have been announced to speed up the claims of ex-mine workers or their dependents.

A few ex-mine workers or their dependents in Southern Africa are said to be eligible to claim billions of rands in unclaimed pensions, provident funds, and occupational disease compensation. This month the Department of Employment and Labour in a partnership with various government departments, the provincial government and institutions embarked on an outreach in which it reached out to the communities in which the former workers are located. The Department engaged in a week-long outreach to the community of Port St Johns to interact with ex-mine workers to resolve the issue of slow payments.

Data estimates that some R10 billion is owed to the ex-miners – these are unclaimed due to missing documentation, inaccurate contact information, or displaced migrant workers. Reports are that several former mineworkers left the industry without receiving social security benefits and many suffer from occupational diseases such as silicosis, tuberculosis, and hearing loss.

Government is now speeding up efforts to trace, register, and screen ex-mine workers and this also includes assisting families of deceased mineworkers may also be eligible to claim benefits. Stakeholders during the recent engagement have committed to conduct more outreach programmes to trace ex-miners and extend their benefits.

Another activity that the department has embarked upon in the month of July has been the start of the annual employment equity (EE) national roadshows/workshops. Through these workshops in a partnership with the Commission for Employment Equity and the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration the department seeks to deepen transformation and equity in the workplace. The initiative will continue until September 2026.

"Government is accelerating efforts to trace, register and assist ex-mine workers and their families in accessing long-overdue social security benefits."

Teboho Thejane



Former Commission for Employment Equity Chairperson, Nicole Deokiram ... said the Commission will continue to strive for diversity and inclusivity for all those persons previously disadvantaged in the workplace irrespective of the outcome of the litigation.

Amid pending court judgements, CEE urges all employers to continue implementing the EEA to promote equity, inclusivity, and fair treatment

The litigation landscape following the commencement of the Employment Equity (EE) Amendment Act, 2022, and the publication of the EE Regulations, 2025 reflects significant judicial scrutiny of the amended employment equity legislative framework; this is noted by the Commission for Employment Equity (CEE).

The organisation said in the recently released 26th Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) Annual Report 2025/26 that while interim relief aimed at suspending the sectoral numerical targets has thus far been unsuccessful, several constitutional and review challenges remain pending before the courts.

CEE report highlights the progress made in implementing and monitoring compliance with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (EEA) as amended. It also provides a progress update in the implementation of affirmative action measures aimed at achieving equitable representation of individuals from the designated groups (i.e. black people, women and persons with disabilities) across each occupational level of the workforce.

“After the commencement of the EE amendments and the publication of the EE Regulations, a number of legal challenges were instituted against the Minister of Employment and Labour, the Director-General of the Department of Employment and Labour, and the Commission for Employment Equity. These cases primarily concern the

constitutional validity, lawfulness, and implementation of the amended EE legislative framework and the sectoral numerical targets.

“The outcomes of these matters will have important implications for the interpretation and implementation of the amended Employment Equity legislative framework, the scope of ministerial powers, and the continued advancement of transformation objectives within the labour market,” CEE noted.

The EE Amendment Act, 2022 relates to the introduction of the 5-year Sector EE targets, including the issuing of the EE Compliance Certificate.

Also, on matters relating to disputes during the reporting period from 1 April 2025 to 31 January 2026, the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) received a total of 2,577 referrals under the EEA. These EEA referrals represented 1.7% of the CCMA's total case referrals, which amounted to 156,225. This marks a slight increase from the 1.5% (2,373 referrals) recorded during the same period in 2024/25.

The Commission for Employment Equity said the upper two decision-making occupational levels (i.e. top management and senior management) remain racialised and gendered, with the white and Indian population groups, and males being dominant at these levels.

The CEE report is tailored to cater for the labour market and society's current circumstances. Its report highlights the progress made in implementing and monitoring compliance with the requirements of the EEA, as amended. It highlights topical unfair discrimination disputes handled by the CCMA and other courts during the period under review.

The CEE is established in accordance with Section 28 of the Employment Equity Act (EEA), No. 55 of 1998, and plays a central role in advancing workplace equality in South Africa. As a statutory body, it is mandated to advise the Minister of Employment and Labour on the development of Codes of Good Practice, regulatory matters, policy directions, and any issues arising from the implementation of the Act.

The 26th CEE Annual Report covers the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. It reflects on the key strategic objectives of the CEE, and the highlights of the CEE's activities and achievements during the period under review.

This is the first report after the operationalisation of the Employment Equity Amendment Act no. 4 of 2022 (EE Amendment Act, 2022).

The CEE report is based on the EE data provided in the EE reports submitted by designated employers as required under Section 21 of the EEA. The report further highlights the state of employment equity for persons with disabilities per economic sector, and the comparison in relation to the employment of foreign nationals in the Education Sector and the Public Universities.

The CEE uses the Economically Active Population (EAP) as produced by Statistics SA as a benchmark to assist employers in the analysis of their workforce to determine the degree of under- or over-representation of the designated groups and non-designated groups in the workforce.

EAP, as per the report's review, the African population group for both gender (male and female) account for 81,3 percent; the Coloured population group for both genders 8,6 percent; the White population group total is 7,7 percent, and the Indian population group is 2,4 percent.

In the latest report, the White population representation at 57.1% is approximately seven times their EAP, and the Indian population representation at 12.2% is more than five times their EAP at the Top Management level. In contrast, the African population representation at 21.1% is approximately four times below their EAP and the Coloured population representation at 6.4% is slightly below their EAP at this occupational level. Foreign National representation stands at 3.1% at this occupational level.

CEE said the male representation remains dominant at the Top Management level, which is more than two times the female

representation. It also shows that males are overrepresented in terms of their EAP (54.3%) and females are underrepresented in terms of their EAP (45.7%) at this occupational level. The report further indicates that employees with disabilities remain low and only account for 2.5% of the representation at the Top Management level.

The report said the persistently low representation of persons with disabilities, remaining slightly above 1% across all occupational levels of all economic sectors for decades, remains a significant concern.

"Additionally, the high representation of Foreign Nationals across all occupational levels in the economy, particularly in the public universities, remains a concern and must be monitored vigilantly," cautioned CEE.

At the Senior Management level, the White population group representation at 44.1% - which is approximately six times their EAP and the representation of the Indian population group at 12.5% is approximately five times their EAP at the Senior Management level. The representation of the African population group at 31.5% is less

"Amid ongoing legal challenges, the Commission for Employment Equity urges employers to continue implementing the Employment Equity Act to advance fairness, inclusivity and workplace transformation."

than half their EAP at this level. The high representation of Foreign Nationals (3.3%) is noted at this occupational level.

For the Professionally Qualified level, the Africans are the only population group that is below their EAP at the Professionally Qualified level. The representation of Foreign Nationals at 2.2% is relatively high at this occupational level. The White and Indian population representation far exceeds their EAP in most sectors of the economy at the Professionally Qualified level.

In the Skilled level, Africans are the only population group that is under-represented in relation to their EAP at the Skilled level. It also shows that the representation of Foreign Nationals is at 1.3% at this occupational level. The representation of females is above the EAP at the Skilled level, with employees with disabilities' EAP at 1.2% of the total workforce at this occupational level.

For the Semi-Skilled level, Africans and Coloureds are over-represented. The White and Indian population groups are under-represented at this occupational level. The high representation of Foreign Nationals (1.7%) at this low occupational level remains a concern to the CEE.

The report said Indians and Whites are the population groups that are below their EAP at the Unskilled level. The CEE said considering the high unemployment rate in South Africa, it is crucial that the representation of Foreign Nationals (3.2%) should be monitored and managed at this occupational level.

By Shadrack Mashalaba

Orientation programme prepares New Employees for their journey



Department of Employment and Labour's Human Resource Development, Assistant Director Geelbooi Mosima set the scene recently during the three-day orientation programme for new employees into the department by emphasising its attendance within six months of joining public service. The orientation introduces new public servants to ethical conduct, policies, processes and delivery mechanisms of the department and public service, said Mr Mosima. He also encouraged new entrants to attend the compulsory induction programme offered through the National School of Government. He advised attendees that if they want growth, they must align themselves with training and advised employees to take advantage of learning opportunities using bursaries offered.

Every new appointment marks the beginning of a new journey. To ensure that its newest employees start that journey with confidence, the Department of Employment and Labour hosted its three-day Departmental Orientation Programme from 7–9 July 2026 at Laboria House, Head Office.

Coordinated by the Human Resource Development (HRD) Unit, the programme welcomed newly appointed employees from across the Department and provided an opportunity to learn, connect and gain a deeper understanding of the organisation they are now part of.

More than an introduction to policies and procedures, the orientation programme offered participants a broader perspective of the Department's mandate, strategic priorities and the collective responsibility of delivering quality services to the people of South Africa.

The programme opened with presentations by the Office of the Minister and the Office of the Director-General, setting the scene by outlining the Department's vision, strategic direction and commitment to responsive, people-centred service delivery. Over the following three days, participants engaged with colleagues from business units across the Department, gaining practical insight into how each function contributes to achieving the Department's goals.

From Human Resources, Organisational Development, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES), Supply Chain Management, Asset Management and Public Employment Services (PES), to Internal Audit, Performance Management, Financial

Management, Risk and Fraud Management, Employee Health and Wellness, Ethics Management, Labour Relations, Communications, the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) and several other support services, each presentation highlighted the importance of collaboration in delivering on the Department's mandate.

The sessions also reinforced the principles that guide the Department's work: professionalism, accountability, integrity, ethical leadership and service excellence. Participants were encouraged to ask questions, engage with presenters and take advantage of the opportunity to build relationships with colleagues from across the organisation, laying the foundation for collaboration beyond the orientation programme.

As the programme ended, participants completed evaluation forms, providing valuable feedback that will help strengthen future orientation programmes. While the three-day programme marked the end of their induction, it also signalled the beginning of their contribution to the Department's work and the communities it serves.

The Department extends its sincere appreciation to every presenter, organiser and participant whose commitment made the programme a success. By investing in the development of its people from the very beginning, the Department continues to strengthen its capacity to deliver on its mandate and build a workforce that is informed, connected and committed to making a meaningful difference in the lives of South Africans.

By Mahlatse Mokoena and Mahlatse Mashabela

Employment and Labour Minister Meth appoint the 6th commissioners of CEE to advice on equity in labour market

Employment and Labour Minister Nomakhosazana Meth has announced the appointment of the new members of the Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) to advice on EE issues in the labour market.

The 6th Commission for Employment Equity commissioners' term is effective from 1 July 2026. The new commissioners will serve for a period of five years on a part time basis.

The new commissioners are Chairperson Mr Meko Magida and the full complement of CEE members are: Ms Brenda Modise (Labour representative), Ms Tanya van Meelis (Labour representative), Mr John Botha (Business representative), Ms Nomthandazo Mavuso (Business representative), Ms Alina Mfulo (Community constituency), Ms Laura Kganyago (Community constituency), Dr Praveena Sukhraj-Ely (State representative) and Mr Kaemete Tsotetsi.

The 6th members of the CEE replace the 5th CEE members whose term ended on 30 June 2026. The outgoing members were: Chairperson Ms Nicole Deokiram, and included Ms Thembi Chagonda, Ms Zinzisa Mgolodela, Ms Dineo Mmako, Ms Steineke Jensma, Mr BKM Nhlapo, Mr Gerald Twala and Ms Laura Kganyago

The functions of the CEE as outlined in Section 30 of the EE Act are to advise the Minister on Codes of good practice, regulations and policy and any other matter concerning this Act. The CEE may also make awards recognising achievements of employers in furthering the purpose of the Act, including engaging in appropriate and well-researched norms and benchmarks for the setting of numerical goals in various sectors.

The CEE commissioners are appointed from the Nedlac constituencies as represented by Government, organised labour, organised business and community.

The Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) is a statutory body established in terms of section 28 of the Employment Equity Act (EEA).

By Shadrack Mashalaba



Mr Meko Magida has been appointed Commission for Employment Equity Chairperson. Magida is Executive Director: Human Resources at University of the Western Cape (UWC). Mr Magida is an academic who lectures on human resource. He is an Attorney of the High Court in the Republic of South Africa. He has held senior management and executive positions since 1999, including at the Department of Labour, City of Tygerberg, Woolworths (Pty) Ltd, Magida Human Capital Corporation, Western Cape Provincial Parliament, Golden Arrow Bus Services (Pty) Ltd, etc. A Philanthropist, he has also served in HR Committees of several Boards of Directors at various companies and institutions.

Mr Magida is an accomplished Corporate Governance advocate, Business Strategy specialist, Commuter Public Transport and Rapid Transit specialist, Human Capital Practitioner, Human Rights Lawyer & activist, and Employment & Labour Law Specialist with over 25 years of strategic and operational experience in South Africa. He has served on the Boards of several companies and institutions.

Ms Brenda Marilyn Modise

Ms Brenda Marilyn Modise is Social Policy, Gender and International Relations Officer at Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA). Ms Modise has previously worked for a few unions. She has a few diplomas and certificates in various fields. Modise is a dedicated professional with extensive experience in trade union movements and social justice advocacy.

She is fluent in multiple African languages, English, and proficient in Afrikaans. The unionist has represented the trade unions at various international conferences on gender, skills development, and trade union rights. She has also served/served in several boards, committees, and councils.



Ms Nomthandazo Mavuso

Ms Nomthandazo Mavuso is Senior Manager: Organisational Culture and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Transformation at Sasol. Ms Mavuso has served on National Employment Equity Committees of companies. Ms Mavuso has expertise in areas of culture transformation, change management and other human resource expertise including multi-industry exposures.

Currently studying for an MBA, she also boasts several qualifications from various tertiary institutions. Her strength lies in uses of equity, empowerment, transformation strategies, gender advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and change management.





Ms Tanya van Meelis

Ms Tanya van Meelis is Head of Policy Unit at COSATU. Ms van Meelis is an accompanied leader with strong experience in developing and implementing economic policy on competition, trade and industry, just transition, development and labour market policy. The trade unionist has a proven ability to research, advise on social and economic policy and strategy including management of projects. Ms van Meelis has extensive experience working at senior level in government, private financial sector and development finance institution.

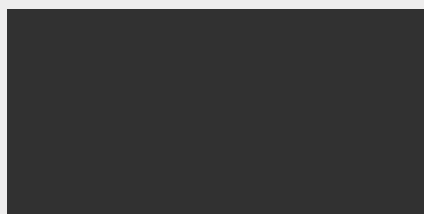
She has a Master's Degree in Industrial Sociology and degrees in various areas such as Economics, Sports Psychology, Industrial Sociology and Sociology. She has/serves in a few committees and organisations and has also represented the union at international forums.



Mr John Botha

Mr John Botha is Transformation Leader & Business Strategist, Joint CEO of Global Business Solutions and Circle and Square Global Business Solutions and Circle and Square. Mr Botha is a distinguished executive with 26+ years as a thought leader and catalyst for transformation in South Africa. He is Recognized nationally for expertise in employment law, business strategy, and sustainable workforce solutions. He is skilled driving organizational change through innovative leadership approaches and strategic implementation of BBBEE, Employment Equity, and skills development initiatives.

Mr Botha has previously served as Human Resource Executive. He holds several academic qualifications with local and overseas institutions.



Ms Alina Thandiwe Mfulu

Ms Alina Thandiwe Mfulu is board member of various organisations and Deputy Secretary General of Disabled Women South Africa (DWSA). Ms Mfulu is an advocate of people with disability. She has a high level of interpersonal skills, combined with sound problem analysis capacity. Well-developed communication, planning, organising skills with a strong aptitude to motivate, train individuals and teams to transfer skills.

She attended Leadership and Fundraising training in Japan (JICA Programme 2015) and has trained in Leadership by British Council 1998. Ms Mfulu has worked and served in several boards and organisations. She has also served as member of parliament.



Ms Laura Kganyago

Ms Laura Kganyago is a civil society leader and Secretary General of the Women's National Coalition (WNC). Ms Kganyago has studied in various fields including preschool management, project management, community development. She is an experienced community activist who has served in a "dozen" of organisations.

She is a member of several community organisations and has served as board member in a few organisations.



Dr Praveena Sukhraj-Ely

Dr Praveena Sukhraj-Ely is Chief Director: Governance & Compliance in the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. Dr Sukhraj-Ely has wealth of experienced having worked in both public and private sector. She holds four degrees and was admitted as an Advocate of the High Court of South Africa in March 2002 and passed the National Bar examinations for Advocates in December 2002 after serving pupillage at the Durban Bar.



Mr Kaemete Tsotetsi

Mr Kaemete Tsotetsi is Chief Director in the Economic Research Branch at the Department of Trade Industry and Competition. Mr Tsotetsi is a results-driven economic policy expert with over 15 years of comprehensive experience in formulating, implementing, and evaluating economic policies in the public sectors. He has a master's degree in economics and has worked for various organisations and has produced articles and books.



2026 NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT EQUITY WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

The Department of Employment and Labour will host Employment Equity workshops across all nine provinces to strengthen understanding and promote compliance with the Employment Equity Act among employers, employees, organised labour and other key stakeholders.:

Northern Cape

Kimberley – Horseshoe Inn 101 Memorial Road, Rooydene (21 July 2026)

Limpopo

Polokwane – Meropa Casino 59 Prov Roodepoort Street, Ivy Park X14 (23 July 2026)

Mpumalanga

Mbombela Khayalami Hotel 29 Van Wijk Street (28 July 2026)

North West

Rustenburg – Orion Safari Hotel, 1 Donkerhoek Road (30 July 2026)

KwaZulu-Natal

Durban (04 August 2026)
Pietermaritzburg (06 August 2026)

Western Cape

Cape Town (11 August 2026)

Eastern Cape

KuGompo (18 August 2026)
Gqeberha (20 August 2026)

Gauteng

Pretoria (25 August 2026)
Johannesburg (27 August 2026)

Free State

Bloemfontein (01 September 2026)

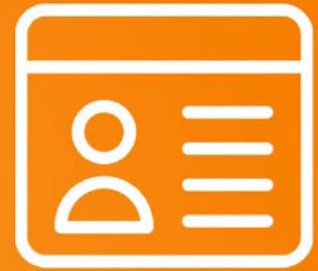
The EE workshops are targeted at Employers or Heads of organisations, employees and trade unions, Assigned Senior EE Managers, Consultative EE forum members, Human Resource Managers and Practitioners, Academics, Civil society, and interested stakeholders.

NB: All the workshops will be held from 09:00 to 16:00, and members of the media are invited.

More information on the EE workshops, including updates on the venues to be used, will be available on the department's and the CCMA's social media platforms as well as the Department's website: www.labour.gov.za

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The use of non-network facilities

GEMS would like to provide you with some important information to help make the most of your GEMS benefits and avoid unexpected healthcare costs.

As part of our commitment to provide affordable and high-quality healthcare, members on the Tanzanite One, Emerald Value (EVO) and Ruby options are required to use hospitals that are part of the GEMS Hospital Network for planned admissions.

Why this matters:

Using a non-network hospital will incur a co-payment of R15 000 payable by the member. GEMS understand that healthcare decisions can sometimes be stressful, and the scheme would like to ensure you always have the information you need to avoid unnecessary expenses.

There are situations where the co-payment will not apply:

- If there is no GEMS network hospital within 50 km of your home or workplace.
- In the event of a medical emergency.

(Kindly remember that all exceptions require pre-authorisation).

Benefits of choosing a GEMS Network Hospital:

- You avoid the R15 000 co-payment.
- You benefit from lower, negotiated rates which protect you from unexpected out-of-pocket costs.
- You receive care at facilities that meet GEMS quality standards.
- Your authorisation process is simpler and faster.
- Your benefits last longer because network rates help reduce unnecessary expenses.

Risks of using a non-network hospital:

- The mandatory R15 000 co-payment.
- Higher charges that may not be covered by the Scheme.
- Possible claim shortfalls that you may need to pay.
- Potential delays in treatment due to financial clearance requirements.

Using a GEMS Network Hospital ensures that you get quality care without unnecessary financial strain.

How to find a Network Hospital:

- Visit our website: [LINKSHIELD PROTECTED] www.gems.gov.zaoriginal-text:d3d3LmdlXMuZ292Lnph;
- Call us on 0800 00 4367
- Email: enquiries@gems.gov.za

You can access the GEMS Network list by visiting the GEMS website and navigating to designated service providers. - **Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS).**



138 million children in child labour: ILO calls for urgent action

Nearly 138 million children are still in child labour, including 54 million in hazardous work. In this message, Gilbert F. Hounbo, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), calls for urgent action to change this reality.

He points to a global push to speed up progress through decent work, education, social protection, and stronger laws. This year's theme, "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair play for children, decent work for adults," is a reminder that every child deserves to learn, play, and grow up safe.

Today, nearly 138 million children remain in child labour, including 54 million in hazardous work. This is unacceptable – we must accelerate action.

Marrakech Global Framework for Action against Child Labour gives us a roadmap grounded in decent work for parents, universal quality education, social protection and stronger laws and institutions.

For the first time, it includes clear indicators of progress and a built-in accountability mechanism to track implementation and to keep child labour high on the global agenda beyond 2030.

This year's theme – "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair play for children, decent work for adults" – reminds us that every child has the right to learn, to play and to grow up protected and safe.

Together, let us act with urgency and determination to end child labour. – (ILO)



ALWAYS ENSURE THAT YOUR TAX MATTERS ARE IN ORDER WITH SARS?

Your tax affairs must be in good standing before GEPF can pay out a lump sum, and tax must be deducted as per the SARS rules.

Check your SARS tax status, make sure you have a valid SARS number, update your personal details and submit outstanding details that match both the SARS and GEPF data (name, surname, ID). If your tax is not in order, GEPF will not process the claim. – (GEPF)

WHAT ARE NON-CONTRIBUTORY BENEFITS?

Apart from paying pension, death and resignation benefits, certain benefits paid to government employees are funded by the GEPF. These benefits are called non-contributory benefits because employees do not pay for them from their salaries. These complimentary benefits include the following.

Funeral Benefits

Paid when a member, spouse, or eligible child passes away.

- Member R20 000
- Spouse R2000
- Child: varies according to age
- Spouse Pension

If a deceased member has a legal or qualifying spouse or partner, the lawful spouse receive a lifelong pension funded by the employer.

Injury on duty

The Injury on Duty benefit is paid to government employees who are injured on duty or who sustain a fatal injury. The benefits payable depends on how serious the injury is. A gratuity (lump sum) is paid if the disability is determined to be between 1-30%. An annuity (monthly pension) is payable if the disability exceeds 30%.

Child Pension

The child pension is a benefit for the biological or adopted children of deceased members or pensioners, offering financial support until the child reaches the age of 22.

Eligibility Criteria

Beneficiaries: The child must be a biological or legally adopted child of the deceased member or pensioner. Stepchildren or children in case do not qualify unless legally adopted.

Age Limit: Eligible children can receive the pension until they turn 22, regardless of their student status. Disabled children may receive benefits indefinitely if they are financially dependent on the deceased. – **(GEPF)**

July 2026 Departmental Orientation Programme – Laboria House, Pretoria

The Department's Sub-Directorate: Human Resource Development recently hosted a new employees Departmental Orientation Programme.

The three-day programme is aimed at:

- Introducing newly appointed employees to the Department's structure, mandate, role, objectives, policies and procedures.
- Fostering a sense of belonging and alignment with the Department's culture, values, and service delivery principles.
- Enhancing knowledge of available support services, conditions of employment, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Supporting managers, supervisors, and mentors in ensuring that new employees are fully integrated and empowered to contribute meaningfully to the Department.

The Departmental Orientation Programme covered the following key areas:

- The Department's vision, mission, values and objectives.
- Core Human Resource Management areas including Conditions of Service, Training and Development, Employee Relations, Performance Management, Employee Health and Wellness Programme, Organisational Development, and Employment Equity.
- Ministry and Branches of the Department - their responsibilities, and contributions towards achieving the Department's service delivery mandate.





National Labour Migration Task Team meeting – Laboria House, Pretoria

The National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP) Task Team held its meeting on the back of the expected passing of the Employment Services Amendment Bill. The Bill has been introduced to Parliament and it is proposing significant changes to South Africa's labour market framework, including new measures to regulate the employment of foreign nationals including the introduction of quotas. The Bill is expected to be implemented alongside the National Labour Migration Policy.

As part of finalising its workplan the Task Team is finalising the regulations that will be implemented with the new Employment Services Act – these in relation to employment of foreigners and offshore recruitment.

A meeting of the Task Team discussed preparations for the hosting of National Labour Migration Dialogue(s); the implementation of international pilot projects; development of guidelines of offshore recruitment; development of draft framework on determination of quota system in sectors such as: Agriculture, Tourism, Hospitality and Transport, etc.; update on the implementation plan of exchange programmes; development on pre-departure booklet; guidelines for offshore recruitment and the enforcement of ES Act.





Photo: Vitaly Gariev, Unsplash

Youth unemployment:

Overcoming South Africa's biggest post-apartheid challenge

The immediate trigger of the 1976 Soweto Uprising was the apartheid government's decision to enforce Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in schools. This policy reflected a wider system of inferior, racially segregated education, which denied black learners quality education and future opportunity.

Today, youth in South Africa face a different challenge – but perhaps not entirely unrelated. With formal barriers to education abolished, they now navigate a paradox of expanded access without corresponding opportunity, where qualifications do not reliably translate into livelihoods. As a result, South Africa continues to record high rates of unemployment, with the youth most affected.

Youth unemployment: filling the research gap

Post-apartheid research on youth unemployment has generally highlighted low economic growth and gaps in literacy and numeracy as key demand and supply-side constraints affecting young people's access to work.

While this body of research has made important contributions in identifying present-day challenges and evaluating interventions, it has tended to pay less attention to how historical and structural dynamics interact with contemporary policies to shape outcomes.

To address this gap, HSRC researchers examined how historical inequalities continue to shape youth employment policies and opportunities across Africa. The work formed part of the HSRC's contribution to the eight-country study *Understanding Power, Institutions, and Policy Dynamics: A Political Economy Analysis of*

Youth Employment in Africa, which explored how historical structures influence current institutions, policies, and interventions.

Uneven development: the Minerals-Energy Complex

Structural factors refer to the deeply rooted political and economic arrangements that shape the distribution of resources and opportunities.

In South Africa, the structure of the economy and by extension employment trends were significantly shaped by what has been described as the Minerals-Energy Complex during apartheid. This system involved close linkages between private mining interests and state-owned enterprises in the energy sector, contributing to an economic model that relied heavily on migrant labour while restricting the permanent urbanisation of black South Africans.

Mining and energy developed strong linkages between them, such as cheap electricity from Eskom servicing mining, with weak connections between and with other sectors, producing a specific form of uneven industrial development. It was therefore not only the dominance of these sectors that is important but the way they shaped the rest of the economy through the lopsided formation that emerged.

In the post-apartheid period, this uneven structure has evolved rather than been fundamentally reconfigured. Some analysts describe a shift toward a Minerals-Energy-Finance Complex, with financialisation enabling segments of the private sector to expand globally while financial institutions have grown in prominence domestically, alongside relatively limited production of goods for trade.

This historically rooted system has contributed to uneven economic development and a lack of diversification, inhibiting job creation. It has also produced enduring spatial inequalities in both employment opportunities and living conditions. Former Bantustan areas remain among the most materially deprived, while many townships continue to be located far from centres of economic activity.

Unlike other African countries, South Africa has limited agriculture-based livelihoods because black South Africans were dispossessed of land. There are also lower rates of self-employment and a relatively small informal economy, because these were repressed in townships during apartheid.

Responses: Policies, programmes and institutions

Building on this historical overview, the study then considered how the post-apartheid youth employment ecosystem – including institutions, policies, interventions, and key stakeholders – has responded to these structural challenges.

Three broad categories of interventions were identified:

- a) Efforts to redress and expand access to education and skills development;
- b) State-led policies and work programmes, including public employment programmes, learnerships, and tax incentives for firms to hire youth; and
- c) The establishment of youth-focused policies and institutions.

Expanding access to schooling

Efforts to reform the education system have involved transforming historically segregated institutions into a formal non-racial system, with the aim of broadening access to skills and qualifications. The South African Schools Act (1996) introduced School Governing Bodies with fee-setting powers, partly to retain middle-class participation in public schooling, while no-fee schools were established to improve access for lower-income households.

These reforms have expanded access to schooling, but have also contributed to a system in which outcomes remain uneven. Inequalities are reproduced at tertiary level. Employers are heavily influenced by the universities students attend, which becomes an indicator of their employability, with historically advantaged institutions perceived to be in a different category in terms of the calibre of student they produce.

Unifying the college system

Post-apartheid, the focus of Technical Vocational Education and Training has been to unify the college system and integrate it into the vision for democratic South Africa, but limited work has been done to align industrial policy to this sector of education. More than 150 colleges were merged into 50 institutions between 2001 and 2006. A significant form of support for post-school youth has been National Student Financial Aid Scheme bursaries.

Public employment programmes

In terms of State-led policies and work programmes, public employment programmes, initially the Extended Public Works Programme and Community Works Programme, and more recently the Basic Education Employment Initiative, National Youth Service and Social Employment Fund, have provided important short-term work opportunities and income support. However, their longer-term effects on transitions into sustained employment appear to be limited.

Incentivising firms

The post-apartheid government has also offered incentives for firms to employ youth. The Employment Tax Incentive (ETI), introduced in 2014, is the most widely studied youth employment policy in South Africa. Overall, the ETI appears more effective at reducing labour costs and mitigating employment losses in specific firm contexts than at driving large-scale youth job creation. Learnerships are formal, work-based learning programmes funded through a skills levy, which firms pay to Sector Education and Training Authorities. As a low-skilled social inclusion and job creation mechanism, learnerships have produced notable results.

Youth-specific policies and institutions have expanded the visibility of youth issues within government, although challenges of coordination and integration into broader economic strategies remain. The National Youth Commission was established in 1996, followed by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund in 2001, and these amalgamated to form the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) in 2009. The NYDA remains a statutory agency, but as of 2019, it reports to the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities.

Three policies for youth development have been constructed post-apartheid, the first two led by the NYDA and the third by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. These policies have not been accompanied by implementation plans and therefore remain somewhat toothless.

A need to coordinate youth agencies and programmes

All provincial government growth strategies include youth, as do Integrated Development Plans at municipal level, but it is unclear how these policy documents and the programmes they refer to can be linked to national structures in a more coordinated manner.

In sum, these policies, institutions, interventions and actors have enabled South African youth to gain qualifications and compete in the labour market, albeit in a way that is far from equal or fair. They have provided some economic inclusion through public employment programmes, and have incorporated youth, largely symbolically, into the architecture of government. However, they have not transformed the key tenets of the Minerals-Energy Complex that structured the South African economy during apartheid.

Public employment programmes, bursaries and the NYDA are needed and helpful, as there will never be sufficient high-quality jobs for all. However, the HSRC's literature review for the project concluded that until industrial policy includes job creation for young people in diversified sectors, functioning to address some of the shortcomings of the lopsided Minerals-Energy Complex with its deeply entrenched spatial inequalities, attempts to deal with youth employment will be palliative rather than transformative. – (HSRC)

New WHO guidelines: up to 45% of dementia risk could be prevented or delayed

The World Health Organization (WHO) today released updated guidelines on reducing the risk of cognitive decline and dementia, providing countries with evidence-based recommendations to help prevent or delay the onset of dementia across the life course.

Dementia is a condition caused by brain diseases and affects memory, thinking and the ability to function. More than 57 million people live with dementia worldwide and nearly 10 million people get newly diagnosed every year. Alzheimer disease is the most common form of dementia and is estimated to account for 60–70% of cases.

While there is no cure for dementia, up to 45% of the risks can be attributed to modifiable risk factors such as tobacco, alcohol use, social isolation, physical inactivity, air pollution and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including high blood pressure and diabetes. Beyond health, dementia affects a person's independence, dignity and safety.

"We know more today than ever before about what drives dementia risk, and these guidelines translate that knowledge into action," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. "Countries now have clear, evidence-based recommendations they can put into practice immediately to protect people's cognitive health."

WHO's new guidelines reflect the latest evidence and innovations in dementia risk reduction providing proven interventions that can effectively lower dementia risk through early awareness and timely action. They represent an important opportunity to reduce the burden of dementia in the coming decades through stronger integration of services for noncommunicable diseases, mental health and brain health.

Reducing risk, preventing illness

The updated guidelines reflect significant growth in the evidence base since WHO first issued recommendations on dementia risk reduction in 2019. They provide consolidated recommendations on addressing unhealthy behaviours, managing medical conditions, and reducing exposure to environmental factors that may contribute to cognitive decline and dementia.

The guidelines recommend several healthy behaviours and lifestyle interventions to reduce dementia risk, including cognitive

training and cognitive stimulation and engagement in social activities for adults who have normal cognition or are experiencing mild cognitive impairment.

The updated advice also includes interventions that reduce risk of NCDs, including increasing physical activity, stopping tobacco use, reducing alcohol consumption, adopting a healthy diet, and a new recommendation to reduce exposure to air pollution.

Management of cardiometabolic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and high cholesterol can also help reduce dementia risk. Further, hearing aids may be offered as part of risk-reduction strategies.

As an intervention to reduce the risk of cognitive decline and/or dementia, the guidelines do not recommend supplementation with vitamins B and E, omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) and multivitamins/minerals in the absence of a diagnosed deficiency, due to the lack of evidence of any potential benefits to outweigh unexpected harmful effects.

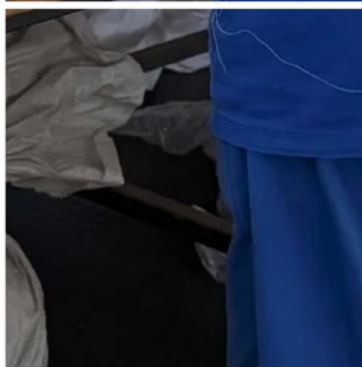
Human and economic cost

Dementia affects an individual's ability to live independently, work and function, while placing substantial burdens on families and carers. It carries a major economic loss, costing the global economy an estimated US\$ 1.3 trillion annually. About half of this cost is driven by unpaid care provided by families and friends. Understanding risk factors and taking action to prevent dementia can improve health and quality of life, helping people live longer, healthier and more independent lives. – (WHO)

"We know more today than ever before about what drives dementia risk, and these guidelines translate that knowledge into action." — Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

A PROUDLY
SA MEMBER

MY DISABILITY DOES NOT DEFINE ME



QUALITY MANUFACTURER

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT ENTERPRISES (SEE)

Founded in 1943, Supported Employment Enterprises (SEE) is a state-owned manufacturing entity with 13 factories across South Africa established with the mandate to create employment for persons with disabilities.

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Pretoria | Rand | Springfield | Seshego |
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Improving access to essential government services remains a key priority for the Department of Employment and Labour, particularly in rural and underserved communities

Bringing services closer to the people remains central to the Department of Employment and Labour's service delivery mandate. During an integrated outreach at Nkodusweni J.S. School in Port St Johns, officials provided residents with direct access to key Departmental services, including Public Employment Services (PES) and Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) support. The initiative enabled community members to register as work-seekers, receive career guidance and employment counselling, access UIF assistance, and engage directly with officials on employment and labour-related matters. Such outreach programmes continue to bridge the gap between government services and communities, particularly in rural and underserved areas, while advancing the Department's vision of inclusive economic participation and decent work for all.

By Sephewe Tshabalala





BRICS Labour and Employment Engagements in India

South Africa participated in the 3rd BRICS Employment Working Group Meeting and the 12th BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting, held in Hyderabad, India, from 13–17 July 2026 under the theme “Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability.” The engagements brought together Ministers, senior officials, Heads of Delegation and technical experts from BRICS member states to deliberate on key labour and employment priorities aimed at strengthening cooperation and advancing inclusive growth.

Discussions during the Working Group Meeting and the Ministerial Meeting focused on expanding social protection and the formalisation of labour markets, increasing women's participation in the economy, strengthening employability through skills development, and harnessing digital technologies to support workers in a changing world of work. The programme also provided an opportunity for member states to share national experiences and best practices, culminating in the adoption of the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Declaration, which reaffirmed a shared commitment to decent work, social dialogue, innovation and sustainable development.

By Tinyiko Masingi



655 million people still living without electricity underscore urgent need to deliver on universal energy access target

Latest data show uneven progress, highlighting the critical need to focus on affordability and vulnerable communities

At a time when energy security and affordability have risen to the top of the development agenda, 655 million people globally still lack access to electricity, and two billion use polluting fuels and technologies for cooking putting their health and well-being at risk. Sub-Saharan Africa bears a disproportionate share of these gaps, with over 560 million living without electricity and 970 million lacking access to clean cooking.

The latest edition of Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report, featuring new 2023 and 2024 data, shows while most regions are nearing universal access, progress in Sub-Saharan Africa has slowed significantly, and the pace of electrification must triple to achieve universal access by 2030. Despite these challenges, the report highlights encouraging progress in several areas of sustainable energy.

Renewable energy continued its strong expansion, accounting for over 30 per cent of global electricity consumption; while renewable energy-generating capacity reached a global record of 544 watts (enough to power a refrigerator) per person. International public financial flows supporting clean energy in developing countries increased slightly to US\$ 24.6 billion; and improvements in global energy efficiency continued to reach 3.76 megajoules per US dollar, although this remains an insufficient pace to meet Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 targets.

However, the report warns that without urgent and scaled-up action, the world will fall short of achieving SDG 7 to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy by 2030. Moreover, while the current global energy crisis is still unfolding, its impact on energy markets and the broader economy are expected to be significant.

In this context, accelerating domestic renewable energy deployment is increasingly seen as essential both for strengthening energy security and affordability as well as advancing long-term climate and development objectives. Distributed renewable energy solutions, including off-grid solar and mini-grids, are a cost-effective solution for electricity access, already serving hundreds of millions of people. Electric cooking, bioethanol and biogas are also gaining traction as scalable renewable energy cooking solutions, helping to further diversify clean cooking pathways.

Affordability remains a major obstacle to expanding electricity access. Even where infrastructure is available, many households cannot afford connection fees, wiring costs or basic energy services. As countries work to reach the remaining unelectrified population, target subsidies, innovative financing mechanisms and least cost electrification solutions will be essential to ensure that no one is left behind.

Financing constraints are hampering progress, with levels either insufficient to meet the SDG 7 goals or declining altogether in the poorest countries. International financial flows in support of clean energy to the least developed countries declined significantly, registering \$3.7 billion in 2024, an 11 per cent decrease from 2023.

Stronger political leadership, improved cross-sector coordination, and a strategic focus on the countries and communities most at risk of being left behind remain cross-cutting priorities in the lead up to 2030. Clear policy signals and sustained implementation are

fundamental to diversifying the national energy mix, increasing renewable energy, reducing dependence on fossil fuel imports and bolstering macroeconomic resilience against global supply chain disruptions.

Key findings across primary indicators:

- **Access to electricity.** Despite gains, progress remains far too slow. In 2024, the global access rate stagnated at 92 per cent, and annual growth halved compared to the previous decade. Sub-Saharan Africa and rural populations are increasingly left behind, with the rural deficit in Sub-Saharan Africa growing from 376 million in 2010 to 447 million in 2024. Achieving universal access by 2030 will now require the pace of progress to triple to 1.3 per cent a year.
- **Access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking.** This remains the largest energy gap, affecting approximately two billion people – roughly one quarter of the world's population. Progress is uneven, with a stark urban-rural divide: 89 per cent of the urban population have access to clean cooking compared to only 56 per cent of people living in rural areas. Without stronger action, 1.8 billion people could still rely on polluting fuels like charcoal, wood, kerosene, and coal by 2030. Sub-Saharan Africa again accounts for a disproportionate share, with the number of people lacking access expected to reach one billion by 2027. This has severe health consequences, with household air pollution being responsible for some 3 million deaths per year.
- **Renewable energy.** Renewables now supply over 30 per cent of electricity, but their share in heat and transport remains limited. Despite record growth, disparities in renewable energy-generating capacity persist; renewable energy-generating capacity in low-income countries stood at only 33.6 watts per person, compared to 1,224 watts per person in high-income countries.
- **Energy efficiency.** Progress is falling short of the pace required to meet global targets, with the rate of progress falling from 2.4 per cent in 2022 to 1.5 per cent in 2023. Recent improvements in energy intensity remain well below the level needed to align with SDG 7, highlighting a widening gap between ambition and implementation. Strengthening efficiency measures across sectors is essential not only for reducing energy demand but also for lowering costs and emissions.
- **International public financial flows to developing countries in support of clean energy.** The latest data reveals limited growth, insufficient relative to needs, with flows marginally increasing from US\$ 24.4 billion in 2023 to US\$ 24.6 billion in 2024. Despite the high cost of debt creating economic strain across developing countries, debt-based financing continues to be the main form of international public clean energy finance, accounting for about 80 per cent of total flows in 2024. Grants accounted for 13 per cent, while equity financing and risk guarantees remained comparatively marginal at 2 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively.

The report will be presented to decision-makers at a special launch event on 8 July 2026, following the in-depth review of SDG 7 at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York, which oversees progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - (ILO).

Wages lost dive by 64.5% to R47.3 million in 2025 as South Africa's strike action moderates - Department of Employment and Labour's IAR

South African labour market environment improved in 2025 compared with 2024, as characterized by a decrease in the number of strikes and lockouts, working days, duration of strike, number of workers participating in strike and wages lost.

According to the annual Industrial Action Report (IAR) 2025, the Department of Employment and Labour strike database indicates that the number of work stoppages declined by 21.1% from 114 in 2024 to 90 in 2025, signaling an easing of industrial unrest. The decline in strike activity was also accompanied by a significant reduction in the financial impact of the strikes.

The number of working days lost decreased by 72.7% from 832 490 in 2024 to 227 247, while the wages lost decreased by 64.5% (from R133 million in wages lost in 2024) to R47.3 million in 2025. In many industries unions averted or called off potential strikes, providing workers with labour stability and extending gains to employers to ensure that industry is protected from business interruptions.

The report notes that over the years, the community industry has been mostly impacted by strike. It is one of the industries that services are considered essential because it is directly linked to public safety, health, and social stability. In 2025, the community industry recorded more than half (57%) of strikes, resulting in 74 480 working days lost. These strikes were mainly caused the local authority and health workers who downed tools over the demand for higher wages, including delayed salaries, grievances over unpleasant working conditions in the industry.

The manufacturing and transport industries experienced 8.8% and 12% of all strike and lockout activities in 2025.

According to employers, disputes over wages, bonuses and other compensation continued to be the principal cause of strikes in the country. On the other hand, the primary bargaining tool at the worker's disposal in South Africa is industrial action, said the report.

Market Insights

21.1%
fewer work stoppages

R47.3 million
wages lost

227,247
working days lost

57%
of strikes in the community sector

70%
of strikes lasted fewer than 10 working days

7%
median wage settlement (above inflation)

"The trend reversed in 2025, with a notable decrease of 21.1% in the number of work stoppages compared to 2024."

"A yearly comparison shows work stoppages increase steadily between 2022 and 2024, with a sharp increase of about 32% from 2021 to 2022, followed by smaller increases of approximately 11.5% (2022-2023) and 17.5% (2023-2024). However, the trend reversed in 2025, with a notable decrease of 21.1% in the number of work stoppages compared to 2024, suggesting a potential easing of strike activities after several years of relative economic growth and earlier wage settlements," disclosed the report.

The Annual Industrial Action report is drafted from strike information provided by all affected organizations in compliance with the Labour Relations Act. This legal obligation helps with its overarching aim of providing policy makers and stakeholders with insights into

the performance of South Africa's economic and labour market disputes at a given period.

The report notes that total working days lost due to principal causes of work stoppages decreased from 832 490 working days lost in 2024 to 227 247 in 2025. It said this notable decrease suggests that the industrial unrest in 2025 was less unproductive than it was in 2024.

The Annual Industrial Action report reveals that the strikes were resolved at a short space of time in 2025. On average, the duration of most strikes lasted less than 10 working days at 70% while 14% of strikes lasted longer than 31 days. On the other hand, the results of collective bargaining in 2025 were characterized by wage settlements that were moderate and mostly above inflation, with a median wage increase of about seven percent in most industries. These wage settlements reflected ongoing efforts to strike a balance between worker demands and employer affordability.

Several multi-year wage agreements in some important industries like manufacturing, construction and mining were reached in 2025 without the need for strikes, according to the report.

"High Consumer Price Index (CPI) intensifies wage demands as workers and unions sought to protect their purchasing power, especially in inflation-linked and public-sector wage negotiations. This economic situation puts pressure on employers and the government to find a balance between raising wages and maintaining productivity and fiscal sustainability," revealed the report.

Unprotected strike action was most prevalent in the community and agriculture industries, where disputes were predominantly linked to wage demands, working conditions and broader grievances against employers.

The report said in 2025, collective bargaining in South Africa remained a vital tool for addressing wage settlements while operating in a complex environment.

By Shadrack Mashalaba



Honouring Madiba Through Service: Mandela Day Outreach 2026

The Department of Employment and Labour in the Free State proudly commemorated **Mandela Day** on 17 July 2026, once again demonstrating that the spirit of service remains at the heart of our work.

This year's outreach initiative was hosted in **Zastron**, where the **Local Employment Equity Consultative Forum (LEECF)** partnered with the local NGO, **Setshabelo**, to provide meaningful support to **three identified families in need**. The initiative served as another opportunity for departmental officials to make a lasting impact by extending compassion and practical assistance to members of the community.

In the lead-up to the outreach programme, officials generously contributed a variety of essential items, including:

- Toiletries
- Good-quality pre-owned clothing
- Shoes
- Non-perishable food items

These donations were presented to the identified families during the Mandela Day outreach, bringing hope, dignity and relief to those who need it most. Every contribution, regardless of its size, played an important role in making the initiative a success.

By supporting this outreach, officials honoured the values that **President Nelson Mandela** stood for – compassion, selflessness and service to others. The initiative also built on the success of previous years, reaffirming that even small acts of kindness can create a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of others.

A Message of Appreciation from the Chief Director: Provincial Operations

Free State Chief Director: Provincial Operations, **Ms Emily Maneli**, extends her sincere appreciation to all officials who supported the Mandela Day initiative through their generous donations and commitment to serving the community.

"Mandela Day reminds us that each of us has the power to make a positive difference in the lives of others. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to every official who contributed to this year's outreach programme. Your generosity, compassion and willingness to give back embody the values that Madiba championed throughout his life. Together, we have not only supported families in need but have also demonstrated the caring spirit of our Department. Thank you for making this initiative a resounding success and for continuing to inspire hope within the communities we serve."

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others." – Nelson Mandela

By Tshegofatso Mogapi

Old Skills for New Technologies?

AI has major implications for the skills workers need to access quality jobs. This article argues that foundational skills, more so than AI expertise, will be central for workforces to navigate this transformation.

The rapid adoption of AI is transforming labour markets. Given the current state of the technology, 24 per cent of workers worldwide are potentially exposed to AI. Some job losses are expected and will require a solid policy response to support the workers concerned. Yet, most jobs are likely to be transformed rather than made redundant (Berg 2024; Gmyrek et al. 2025).

Changing skills requirements are an important element of this transformation. This raises the question of which skills workers need to navigate AI and, ultimately, access quality jobs. It is straightforward to assume that “AI skills” will be required. In this blog, we unpack this notion.

We argue that the main challenge lies less in investing in AI expertise than in ensuring that the broader workforce can work effectively alongside AI. “Old skills” – especially foundational cognitive and socio-emotional skills – will play a key role as workforces adapt. Paired with domain-specific expertise, these foundational skills form the basis of rounded skills profiles that help workers access quality jobs in the AI era.

Which skills are in demand?

In its new flagship report on “Lifelong learning and skills for the future”, the ILO considers millions of online job vacancies from Brazil, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay (ILO 2026). Because these countries are from regions the skills literature focusses less on, the analysis sheds new light on how employers’ skills demand is evolving in different labour markets.

Across the online labour markets studied, socio-emotional and cognitive skills are among the most consistently requested competencies. In addition, employers seek workers with rounded skills profiles that combine, for example, communication and teamwork with analytical thinking and technical expertise. Jobs requiring such rounded skills profiles offer higher wages and better working conditions, including opportunities for career development and collaborative work environments (ILO 2026).

Perhaps surprisingly, the demand for specialised AI expertise remains low. In Brazil, Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, AI and machine learning skills account for only around 1 per cent of all skills requested in online vacancies. This share is even smaller in Morocco, South Africa and Uruguay (ILO 2026; these figures refer to 2025 for Morocco, 2024 for Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, 2023 for Brazil and Uruguay, and 2021 for South Africa).

Evidence from several OECD countries points in the same direction. In these countries, the demand for AI-related skills has grown rapidly following the emergence of generative AI, but largely among software developers, data scientists and workers in similar occupations (Feimi et al. 2026; Borgonovi et al. 2023). As a result, despite this rapid growth, AI skills remain a requirement in only a small share of job vacancies overall. A recent IMF study shows that in 2024 AI skills were mentioned in only around 4 per cent of job vacancies in the United States and Denmark, around 3 per cent in Great Britain, and around 2 per cent in Germany (Jaumotte et al. 2026).

AI changes how people work but not the importance of foundational skills

Even though the demand for AI and machine learning skills is expected to continue growing and may be more visible as more years of data become available, from a conceptual perspective, it makes sense that it will remain limited. And it does not mean that AI is unimportant. Quite the opposite. But most workers are users of AI, not creators. They increasingly rely on “ready-to-use” AI tools for writing, coding, designing, information retrieval and decision-making. They do not design and train AI models themselves.

This new way of working requires foundational skills rather than AI expert knowledge. Digital literacy provides the basis for navigating AI tools and

formulating prompts. Critical thinking enables workers to evaluate and adapt AI-generated outputs by detecting and correcting mistakes and adjusting content to specific work contexts. The ability to think critically while using AI tools is reinforced by expertise in a worker’s respective domain, but such expertise does not need to be AI-specific.

Even in jobs that require AI expertise, employers rarely seek these technical skills in isolation, with rounded skill profiles rewarded once again. In the United Arab Emirates, for example, vacancies requiring AI and machine learning skills are associated with a substantial wage premium of 17.6 per cent. The same vacancies require core cognitive skills in 84 per cent of the cases. Socio-emotional skills also have a crucial complementary function in such roles, with social skills demanded in 88 per cent of the cases and customer service skills in 67 per cent (ILO 2026; El Hage Sleiman et al. 2025).

The role of socio-emotional skills

An intriguing question is how the demand for socio-emotional skills will evolve. AI has begun to be part of human communication, whether in customer service, conflict mediation or as a source of advice. To the extent that this trend continues, its effects will be felt in the labour market and beyond. In the words of the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, human interaction is about “the face speak[ing] to me and thereby invit[ing] me to a relation” (Levinas, 1979, p. 198). This raises fundamental questions that will need to be answered to determine how much, and in which ways, machines should be involved in human interaction. After all, direct communication, possible disagreement, and subsequent alignment around decisions constitute a basis for interpersonal relations, including in workplaces.

Yet another scenario is also possible. AI can assist with strenuous activities, allowing workers to specialise more in socio-emotional tasks that technology cannot easily perform. Some Japanese nursing homes, for example, have introduced AI robots to lift patients and monitor information (see Lee et al. 2025). Human work remains a major component in these processes – who else would place the patient in the right position for the robot to lift them? – but there is also the potential for workers to spend more time interacting directly with patients. Such dynamics would echo earlier waves of workplace computerisation, when labour markets increasingly rewarded teamwork and worker-client interactions (Deming 2017).

Implications for policy

From a policy perspective, the centrality of rounded skills profiles and solid foundational skills in the AI era reinforces the importance of quality learning throughout working life. A vivid discussion currently highlights the needs of entry-level workers (for example, Brynjolfsson et al. 2025; Lambert and Schindler 2026). Inclusive skills development will be similarly important for experienced workers, particularly as many labour forces across the world continue to age.

The debate around the importance of socio-emotional skills also sheds light on how societies value different types of work, especially in sectors that generate social value. Socio-emotional skills carry a substantial wage premium in business services, but this is not the case for care workers, who paradoxically rely on these skills the most (Liepmann and Hegewisch, 2025).

The policy solution is therefore not just about investing in more skills. Societies and economies also need to better recognise, value and reward the skills that workers already possess (ILO 2026; ILO 2023). Investments in employment creation in growing sectors – including the care economy – help ensure that workers’ skills are matched with quality jobs, as do policies promoting decent working conditions. – (Article sourced from ILO)



the government cannot ignore the continued illegality.

Mr Nzuza said there was a worrying trend of continued disregard for immigration legislation. He said Home Affairs was on track to deal with those who are recalcitrant and breaking the laws.

Nationally, a total of 164 Labour Inspectors, 47 Immigration Officers, 123 SAPS officials, 56 Municipal/Law Enforcement officials, 2 Border Management Authority (BMA) officials, and a range of specialised stakeholders, including Environmental Health Practitioners, Agriculture officials, Liquor and Gambling Board representatives, Brand Protection officials, Consumer Protection officials, private security, Centlec, and media representatives, participated in the operation.

National Multidisciplinary High Impact Blitz Inspection report highlight the need for increased employer awareness and enforcement to improve legislative compliance

As part of ongoing efforts to deal with “labour market misdemeanours” the Department of Employment and Labour conducted a joint National Multidisciplinary High Impact Blitz Inspection aimed at strengthening compliance with South African labour legislation across high-risk economic sectors.

The national inspections were undertaken through a coordinated effort involving the Department of Employment and Labour, the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration), the South African Police Service (SAPS), municipal law enforcement authorities, and other strategic stakeholders.

The nationwide multidisciplinary inspection operation was conducted, targeting high-risk sectors including construction, manufacturing, agriculture, hospitality, wholesale, and retail.

Employment and Labour Deputy Minister Jomo Sibiya and his Home Affairs counterpart Deputy Minister Njabulo Nzuza, accompanied by Tshwane Mayor Dr Nasiphi Moya, led the Gauteng operations in the Centurion and Pretoria surroundings. They participated in the inspection of four workplaces in which eight illegal employees were arrested, including two employers.

Mr Sibiya said the unprecedented national high-impact inspection blitzes will be a common feature in the future. He stated that

The collaborative inspection campaign reflects a whole-of-government approach to promoting compliance with occupational health and safety, labour laws and immigration legislation while strengthening interdepartmental cooperation and enforcement in priority economic sectors across the country.

The national operation saw 114 workplaces inspected, and only three were compliant. The operations led to the arrest of 137 foreign nationals.

On the labour front the inspections focused on enforcing compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA), Unemployment Insurance Act (UIA), Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), and the National Minimum Wage Act (NMWA). There was also a focus on enforcement with the Immigration Act and bylaws.

The most common findings included the absence of workplace risk assessments, failure to appoint SHE representatives, lack of Certificates of Competency, non-submission of Unemployment Insurance declarations, outstanding COIDA assessment payments, and failure to provide employment contracts, payslips, and attendance registers. Additional non-compliance was identified with the Electrical Installation Regulations and General Safety Regulations.

Furthermore, one possible child labour case involving a 17-year-old Mozambican national was identified during an inspection and referred to the Department of Social Development for further investigation.

According to the Department’s Inspection and Enforcement Services branch, these findings highlight the need for increased employer awareness and enforcement to improve legislative compliance.

By Shadrack Mashalaba

National High Impact Blitz Inspection – Centurion, Gauteng Province

The Department of Employment and Labour recently coordinated one of the country's largest multi-departmental high-impact inspection blitzes aimed at strengthening compliance with South African labour legislation and related regulatory frameworks.

The national operation was led in Gauteng by Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour, Mr Jomo Sibiya, MP, together with Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Njabulo Nzuza, and Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, Dr Nasiphi Moya. Inspections were conducted across Centurion and Pretoria as part of a coordinated national initiative.

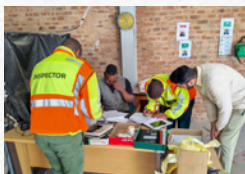
The multidisciplinary operation brought together the Department of Employment and Labour, the Department of Home Affairs, the South African Police Service (SAPS), municipalities and other government stakeholders. The inspections targeted non-compliance with labour legislation, immigration laws and municipal by-laws, while also supporting law enforcement efforts to identify individuals suspected of committing immigration-related offences.

Conducted simultaneously across all nine provinces, the intelligence-led operation inspected workplaces in key sectors including manufacturing, agriculture, construction, hospitality, wholesale and retail. The initiative formed part of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Migration's coordinated approach to strengthening compliance and enforcing legislation across government.

Inspectors identified several areas of non-compliance, including the absence of workplace risk assessments, failure to appoint Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) representatives, lack of Certificates of Competency, non-submission of Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) declarations, outstanding Compensation Fund assessment payments, and the failure to provide employment contracts, payslips and attendance registers. Additional contraventions were recorded in relation to the Electrical Installation Regulations and the General Safety Regulations.

During the operation, inspectors also identified a possible child labour case involving a 17-year-old Mozambican national. The matter was referred to the Department of Social Development for further investigation.

The Department's Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES) branch said the findings underscored the need for continued employer awareness, strengthened enforcement and improved compliance with South Africa's labour and occupational health and safety legislation.



WHO calls for urgent action as new cancer cases are projected to nearly double by 2050

Millions of people are facing physical, emotional and financial toll of cancer, a disease that claims more than 26 000 lives every day, according to a report released by the World Health Organization (WHO).

With an estimated 20.6 million new cases and close to 10 million deaths annually, cancer remains the second leading cause of death globally, after cardiovascular disease.

Reversing this trend will require a fundamental shift towards a people-centred approach that responds to the health needs and lived experiences of affected people and communities. Without urgent action, annual cancer cases are projected to rise to nearly 35 million by 2050.

The WHO Global Status Report on Cancer 2026, developed jointly with the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), provides comprehensive analysis of progress across key areas such as political commitment, cancer prevention – particularly through tobacco control and vaccination programmes – and investment in treatment.

However, the report also reveals persistent and widening inequities in access to prevention, diagnosis, treatment and supportive care, leaving millions of people without the services they need. Its analysis shows that while 87% of women with breast cancer survive at 5 years after their diagnosis in high-income countries, only about 42% do so in low-income countries. Fewer than one in three countries currently include cancer care in their universal health coverage packages.

“Cancer is a deeply personal disease that touches nearly all of us. But whether a person survives cancer should never depend on where they were born or what they earn,” said WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. “The inequities documented in this report are not inevitable; they are the consequence of choices, and they can be reversed through stronger and unified action.”

Most people will be affected by cancer at some point in their lives, either through their own diagnosis or that of a close family member. Beyond its health impact, cancer remains one of the most financially and socially devastating challenges a household can face. WHO's first-ever survey of people affected by cancer found that at least 45% experience financial hardship, more than half report mental health challenges, and nearly all caregivers report strain including unpaid services and social isolation.

Cancer rates in different regions

The burden of cancer varies markedly across regions. In 2024, Asia accounted for the largest share, with more than half of all cancer cases (50.7%) and deaths (56.5%), reflecting its large population. Europe carried a disproportionately high burden, contributing 21% of global cases and 20% of deaths despite having only about 9% of the world's population. In contrast, many countries in Africa and parts of Asia experience lower incidence but disproportionately high mortality.

Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death globally. Lung, prostate and colorectal cancers are among the most common cancers in men, while breast, lung and colorectal cancers account for a substantial share of the burden among women.

Nearly four in ten cancer cases globally are linked to preventable risk factors, particularly infections such as human papillomavirus (HPV), hepatitis B and C, and *helicobacter pylori*, alcohol, tobacco use, high body mass index and insufficient physical activity, highlighting the critical role of prevention.

“While we are seeing reductions in some cancer rates in countries that have implemented prevention policies, progress has been too slow,” said Dr Elisabete Weiderpass, Director of WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). “The cancer profile is evolving, increasingly driven by rising rates of obesity, physical inactivity, unhealthy diets, and air pollution. Cancer prevention must remain a political priority.”

Major gains, yet gaps persist

The report notes substantial gains in key policy areas. Tobacco use has declined by 27% since 2010, contributing to reductions in lung cancer cases and deaths in some regions. Infection-related cancers are also decreasing thanks to expanding vaccination coverage and improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) as well as infection prevention and control.

Political commitment has strengthened, with 82% of countries now having national cancer control plans, up from 50% in 2010. In high-income countries, early detection programmes catch most breast cancers and 74% of women have been screened for cervical cancer. Scientific innovation is accelerating; registered clinical trials have increased at an annual rate of 7.3% between 2005 and 2021.

Yet these advances are not translating into life-saving actions at the pace required. Essential cancer medicines remain far out of reach for many: availability of the top 20 priority cancer medicines ranges from just 9% to 54% in low- and lower-middle-income countries, compared with 68% to 94% in high-income countries. And the consequences of these gaps are felt most acutely by people living with cancer and their families.

“Cancer is not just a medical diagnosis – it profoundly, indefinitely affects every aspect of a person's life, and their family's as well,” said Clarissa Schilstra, a childhood cancer survivor and a lead of WHO's survey. “We urge policymakers to meaningfully engage with people affected by cancer. By voicing our lived experiences, we can inform more equitable, effective solutions to protect and promote the lives and wellbeing of future generations.”

Moving towards a people-centered cancer control agenda

The report marks an important opportunity to place people affected by cancer at the centre of cancer control efforts. It calls on governments, international organisations, civil society, academic institutions, the private sector, and WHO to work together to deliver a people-centred and holistic approach to care for individuals and families affected by cancer.

To support this vision, the report outlines seven key recommendations and three strategic shifts to be implemented across all countries and communities:

- **Better capabilities:** Integrate cancer control into universal health coverage and invest in human capital to prevent and control cancer;
- **Better protections:** Place people with lived experience at the centre of cancer systems while strengthening social protection; and
- **Better value:** Align research and innovation with public health needs and ensure equitable access to valued-based advances in care.

The choices made and actions taken today will shape the cancer burden borne by future generations. By adopting a people-centred approach, making strategic and sustained investments, and maintaining an unwavering commitment to equity, countries can reduce the cancer burden and improve outcomes for everyone, everywhere. – **(Article sourced from WHO).**



Every day Ethics in the Public Service: Doing What's Right, Always

As employees of the Department of Employment and Labour, we are entrusted with the responsibility to serve people with honesty, fairness, and integrity. Ethical conduct isn't just about major decisions—it's about the small, everyday choices we make that either build or break public trust.

Every day, ethics means doing the right thing even when no one is watching:

- Processing claims with diligence and care
- Refusing bribes or favours
- Treating colleagues and members of the public with respect
- Using the resources of the department responsibly
- Reporting unethical conduct, even if it's uncomfortable

These actions may seem small, but they are powerful. They uphold the values of the Constitution, the department and reinforce the principle of Batho-Pele, ensuring that as employees of the department, we put people first in all we do

Why does it matter

It matters because unethical behaviour, no matter how small, erodes trust in public service and weakens service delivery. On the other hand, everyday ethical choices promote transparency, fairness, and professionalism in all spheres of the public service.

Let's be reminded that ethics is not an event or a campaign - it's a way of life for every public servant.

Serve with integrity, lead by example. Honour the public trust, build stronger relationships and a positive reputation.



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Reflection to the month that was

01 JULY 2026

SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

PROGRESS ON DEL RECONFIGURATION AND UNBUNDLING OF COMPENSATION FUND AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND

The Department convened a Special Executive Committee (EXCO) meeting on 1 July 2026. The meeting, chaired by Deputy Director-General, Bahumi Matebele, focused on the progress of the Department's reform programme, legislative developments, organisational restructuring and the business cases that will guide the legal separation of the Department from its two entities, The Unemployment Insurance Fund and The Compensation Fund.

Opening the meeting, Mr Nyiko Mabunda from the Project Management Office (PMO) assured the EXCO members that significant progress had been made in advancing the reform programme despite legislative challenges. Officials acknowledged that delays in finalising amendments to the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases (COID) legislation remain one of the key risks affecting the legal separation process. However, the Unemployment Insurance Amendment Bill had progressed to the Ministerial Cluster process while engagements on the COID Amendment Bill continue.

The Department also provided an update on its change management programme, reporting that reform engagements had already taken place in Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape, with the remaining provinces expected to be consulted before the end of July. Management stressed the importance of strengthening communication with employees to minimise uncertainty surrounding the restructuring process.

Importantly, the reform programme would not result in job losses. Employees would retain their employment, benefits and years of service throughout the transition, with management urging senior officials to communicate this message consistently across the Department to reduce anxiety among staff.

"No one will be losing their jobs in terms of the reforms that we're putting in. They will also not be losing their benefits as well as their service records".

#Yazini

BUSINESS CASES ENDORSED TO REPOSITION THE DEPARTMENT AS A POLICY-LED INSTITUTION WHILE STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE UIF AND COMPENSATION FUND

GTAC outlines roadmap for Department's organisational transformation

A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to presentations by the Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC), which sought EXCO's endorsement of four comprehensive business cases covering the Department, the UIF, the Compensation Fund and Supported Employment Enterprises (SEE). The endorsed business cases will now be submitted through the required governance processes, including consideration by the Minister, Deputy Ministers, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the Joint Evaluation Committee.

Presenting the strategic reforms, Mr Jeets Hargovan, outlined the long-standing governance and operational challenges experienced by both the UIF and Compensation Fund, including limited institutional autonomy, governance constraints, information technology weaknesses and service delivery challenges. The Department itself was also described as requiring stronger policy capacity and greater focus on labour market leadership.

The proposed reforms seek to reposition the Department as a policy-led institution responsible for labour market policy development, employment facilitation, regulation and oversight, while enabling the UIF and Compensation Fund to operate as autonomous institutions with stronger governance structures, greater accountability and improved operational efficiency.

The proposed organisational model places policy development at the centre of the Department's future operating model. Mr Jeets Hargovan explained that the reconfigured Department would strengthen policy coordination, improve employment facilitation and maintain a decentralised service delivery model through provincial offices and labour centres while introducing a dedicated Service Delivery Support Branch to provide operational oversight and support.

Mr Hargovan also presented the legislative reforms required to establish fully autonomous governance arrangements for both the UIF and Compensation Fund. The proposed amendments will replace the Director-General as the accounting authority with independent accounting authority boards in line with the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), strengthen governance and accountability arrangements, and modernise the governance frameworks of both institutions.

He further reported that the UIF Amendment Bill has progressed through both the Economic and Social Cluster processes and is expected to proceed to Cabinet for approval before being released for public comment. Progress on the COID Amendment Bill remains dependent on certification by the Office of the Chief State Law Adviser.

"We are seeking to reposition the Department as a policy-led department while enabling the funds to operate with stronger autonomy, stronger governance and accountability, and improved service delivery capability," said Mr Jeets Hargovan.

#Yazini

BUSINESS CASES ENDORSED TO REPOSITION THE DEPARTMENT AS A POLICY-LED INSTITUTION WHILE STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE UIF AND COMPENSATION FUND

STAFF ASSURED AS EMPLOYEE TRANSITION PLAN PRIORITISES JOB SECURITY AND FAIR PLACEMENT

Ms Blaine, from GTAC outlined a comprehensive employee migration strategy designed to ensure that staff transfers comply with section 197 of the Labour Relations Act while protecting employees' existing conditions of service, pension benefits and accumulated leave.

Ms Blaine said rather than requiring employees to reapply for their positions, the Department proposes a structured "match and place" approach that will assess employees' qualifications, competencies and experience against the requirements of future positions. The process will include extensive consultation, competency assessments and transparent communication to ensure fairness throughout the transition.

She reiterated that every effort would be made to retain employees within the new organisational structures, officials acknowledged that redeployment, reskilling and transitional arrangements may be necessary where organisational requirements change.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Technology was identified as one of the most critical components of the institutional separation. Mr Daniel Makoni proposed fully independent ICT environments for the Department, UIF and Compensation Fund, supported by cloud-based platforms, enhanced cybersecurity and modern digital service delivery systems.

Mr Makoni warned that several strategic decisions must be taken urgently regarding shared ICT infrastructure, enterprise systems, hosting environments, vendor contracts and the future of existing SAP projects. Failure to resolve these issues promptly could significantly increase implementation costs, delay the transition and heighten programme risks.

#Yazini

BUSINESS CASES ENDORSED TO REPOSITION THE DEPARTMENT AS A POLICY-LED INSTITUTION WHILE STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE UIF AND COMPENSATION FUND

FINANCIAL ROADMAP OUTLINES BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

Financial modelling presented to senior officials revealed that unbundling the Department from the two funds will require significant adjustments to current cost-sharing arrangements. Mr Mehleli Mpofu indicated that while both the UIF and Compensation Fund are expected to remain financially sustainable after separation, the Department is projected to face a substantial budget shortfall because of the withdrawal of shared funding arrangements currently supporting departmental operations.

Mr Mpofu proposed several mitigation measures, including reviewing accommodation costs, optimising office utilisation, freezing vacant posts where appropriate and improving operational efficiencies to reduce expenditure. Additional recommendations included revising property cost-sharing arrangements during the transition period while the three institutions continue to share facilities over the next two to three years.

The Executive Committee members unanimously endorsed the four business cases, clearing the way for the Department's institutional reform proposals to proceed to the Minister for consideration and the next stage of the approval process. The PMO team continues with the remaining governance, consultation and implementation processes required to realise the institutional reform programme.

This message is brought to you by the Department's Corporate Communication

#Yazini

The Department welcomes new employees through the Orientation Programme



#Yazini

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The Department welcomes new employees through the Orientation Programme

The Department of Employment and Labour today commenced its three-day Departmental Orientation Programme at Laboria House, Head Office, welcoming newly appointed employees from across the organisation.

The programme, coordinated by the Human Resource Development (HRD) Unit, was officially opened with a warm welcome to participants and an encouragement to fully engage in the sessions designed to support their successful integration into the Department. The orientation serves as an important platform for new employees to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Department's mandate, strategic objectives, organisational structure, and operational environment.

As part of the first day's programme, participants received presentations from the Office of the Minister and the Office of the Director-General, which provided valuable insight into the Department's strategic priorities, service delivery objectives, and commitment to improving the lives of South Africans through effective labour market regulation and employment services.

The orientation also featured presentations from several key business units, including Organisational Development (OD), Human Resources Operations (HRO), Employment Relations, Supply Chain

Management (SCM), Asset Management, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES), and Human Resource Development (HRD). These sessions offered participants a deeper understanding of the respective functions of each unit and their collective contribution towards achieving the Department's mandate.

The Departmental Orientation Programme is designed to equip newly appointed employees with the knowledge, tools and information necessary to perform their responsibilities effectively, while fostering a culture of professionalism, accountability and service excellence. It also aims to instill a sense of purpose and commitment to the Department's vision of delivering quality services to all citizens.

The programme will continue on 8 and 9 July 2026, with additional business units presenting on their roles and responsibilities to further enhance participants' understanding of the Department's work, its services, and its ongoing commitment to responsive and people-centred service delivery.

This message is brought to you by the Department's Corporate Communication.

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Corporate Communication**

Reflection to the month that was

17 July 2026



Family photo: BRICS Member Heads

South Africa joins BRICS partners for Employment and Labour Meetings in India



Deputy Minister: Jomo Sibiya



The Department of Employment and Labour joined fellow BRICS member states in Hyderabad, India, for four days of engagements focused on strengthening cooperation on social protection, employment creation, skills development, gender equality and the changing world of work.

Convened under India's BRICS Chairship theme, "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," the meetings brought together representatives from Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

The programme began with the 3rd BRICS Employment Working Group Meeting from 13-14 July 2026, followed by the 12th BRITS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting from 15-16 July 2026.



Deputy Minister Sibiya leads South Africa at Ministerial Meeting

The technical engagements were followed by the 12th BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting, the highest political platform for labour and employment cooperation within BRICS.

South Africa's delegation was led by the Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour, Honourable Jomo Sibiya.

The meeting opened with welcoming remarks and a keynote address by India's Minister of Labour and Employment, Honourable Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, before Ministers and Heads of Delegation presented their national statements on the priorities under India's BRICS Chairship.

In his intervention, Deputy Minister Sibiya congratulated India on its stewardship of the BRICS Presidency and welcomed the practical, people-centred approach underpinning the four priorities, noting their alignment with South Africa's national development agenda and its commitment to decent work, reduced inequality and inclusive economic transformation.

He also reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to BRICS solidarity and South-South cooperation, and stressed the importance of implementing the meeting's commitments for the benefit of workers, economies and communities.

South Africa presents labour-market reforms as a national good practice

During the showcasing of best practices by BRICS member countries, Deputy Minister Sibiya presented South Africa's labour-market reforms as an example of how legislative modernisation can support economic growth while strengthening decent work and workers' rights.

The reform proposes amendments to the Labour Relations Act, Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Employment Equity Act and National Minimum Wage Act. Developed through social dialogue at the National Economic Development and Labour Council, it seeks to strengthen worker protection, improve regulatory certainty, enhance labour-market institutions and support sustainable enterprise development.

03

Employment Working Group concludes technical engagements

South Africa's technical delegation was led by Mr Sipho Ndebele, Acting Deputy Director-General for Labour Policy and Industrial Relations, and Mr Siyabonga Hadebe, Acting Chief Director: Labour Relations in the Department of Employment and Labour.

Member states exchanged national experiences and good practices across the four priorities of India's BRICS Chairship:

- advancing social security and labour-market formalisation; enhancing women's participation and inclusion in the workforce;
- strengthening cooperation on employability, skills mapping and skills development;
- and leveraging digital technologies for the benefit of all workers, including gig and platform workers.

The discussions were supported by technical presentations from the International Labour Organization, the International Social Security Association and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in India.

South Africa contributed by sharing its experience in expanding social protection, strengthening employment equity, advancing women's economic participation, developing relevant skills and extending labour and social protections to workers in the platform economy.

A significant part of the Working Group's programme focused on finalising the outstanding provisions of the draft Twelfth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Declaration, ahead of consideration by Ministers and Heads of Delegation at the Ministerial Meeting. The Working Group concluded after two days of deliberations and technical exchanges, having made progress towards finalising the Declaration.



Sipho Ndebele, Acting Deputy Director-General for Labour Policy and Industrial Relations, and Mr Siyabonga Hadebe, Acting Chief Director: Labour Relations

02

A key focus is extending protection to workers in emerging and non-standard forms of employment. Proposed measures include safeguards for on-call and zero-hour workers, action against the misclassification of platform workers, broader protection against workplace harassment, modernised parental-leave provisions and stronger enforcement of minimum labour standards.

"Protecting workers' rights and promoting economic competitiveness are complementary rather than competing objectives," said Deputy Minister Sibiya.

He said effective social dialogue and balanced labour regulation could promote labour-market stability, investor confidence, enterprise development and decent work, and called for stronger cooperation among BRICS countries in exchanging policy solutions and building labour markets that are inclusive, resilient and responsive to the changing world of work.

Ministers adopt BRICS Labour and Employment Declaration

A central outcome of the Ministerial Meeting was the adoption of the Twelfth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Declaration by Ministers and Heads of Delegation.

The Declaration reflects the consensus reached by member states through the Employment Working Group's technical negotiations, and sets the collective policy direction for continued BRICS cooperation on decent work, inclusive labour markets, social justice and sustainable development.

It recognises the diverse national circumstances, legal frameworks and development priorities of participating member states, while affirming cooperation across the four priorities considered during the Employment Working Group.

It also strengthens member states' commitment to South-South cooperation, policy exchange and practical collaboration on shared labour and employment challenges.



04

Reflection to the month that was

EXCO WRITE-UP

EXCO sharpens focus on accountability, performance and service delivery

The Department of Employment and Labour's Executive Committee convened virtually on 23 June 2026, Chaired by Acting Director-General, Jacky Molisane

Issued on Exchange Postmaster

Date issued: Tuesday, 23 June 2026

WRITE-UP

21 JULY 2026



THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MEET WITH THE CITY OF TSHWANE TO ENHANCE LABOUR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Deputy Minister Jomo Sibiya calls for stronger intergovernmental collaboration

The Department of Employment and Labour has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening intergovernmental collaboration as a key strategy to improve labour law enforcement, protect workers from exploitation, and stimulate inclusive economic growth.

Addressing a strategic engagement with the Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, Dr Nasiphi Moya, in Pretoria on Monday, 21 July 2026, Deputy Minister (DM) Jomo Sibiya said closer cooperation between the Department, municipalities, the Department of Home Affairs and the South African Police Service (SAPS) would significantly improve the effectiveness of inspections and enforcement operations.

"The work of the Department of Employment and Labour cannot be completed by the Department alone. It requires coordinated action across all spheres of government to ensure that employers comply with labour laws while protecting the rights of workers," said Deputy Minister Sibiya.

Deputy Minister Sibiya said government institutions could no longer operate in isolation if they were to effectively address complex labour market challenges, particularly the exploitation of workers, non-compliance with labour legislation and the employment of undocumented foreign nationals. He emphasised that labour legislation is designed not only to regulate employment relationships but also to safeguard workers' rights through fair working conditions.



Deputy Minister Jomo Sibiya

DM Sibiya stressed that the Department's ultimate objective is not to shut down businesses, but to achieve sustained compliance with labour laws while protecting employment opportunities for South Africans.

#Yazini



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Deputy Minister Sibiya explained that municipalities play a critical role in enforcing business licensing requirements and by-laws, making their participation essential during workplace inspections. He said that closer collaboration could enable government to address unsafe business premises, non-compliant establishments and other regulatory shortcomings more effectively.

DM Sibiya said the Department remained concerned about employers who deliberately recruit undocumented foreign nationals to exploit cheap labour while avoiding compliance with legislation such as the National Minimum Wage Act, the Unemployment Insurance Act and the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA). He warned that forthcoming legislative amendments would strengthen enforcement measures and introduce harsher penalties for employers found violating labour and immigration laws.

Deputy Minister encouraged the City of Tshwane to embed labour law compliance requirements into its procurement and tender processes to ensure that companies doing business with government meet their obligations towards employees. He said government should not award contracts to businesses that undermine workers' rights through non-compliance with labour legislation.

Beyond enforcement, DM Sibiya said the Department is expanding its advocacy programmes to educate employers about legal obligations before resorting to punitive measures. He highlighted ongoing engagements with the hospitality sector and Chinese-owned businesses in Newcastle as examples of collaborative compliance initiatives that have produced positive results while preserving economic activity and jobs.

A United Front for Safer Workplaces and Decent Jobs

Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, Dr Nasiphi Moya, said the City is reviewing and strengthening its informal trade and township economy bylaw to better regulate the sector while promoting inclusive economic participation. She explained that the revised bylaw expands its scope beyond street trading to include businesses such as car washes and spaza shops, while remaining aligned with the Immigration Act regarding the participation of refugees and other eligible foreign nationals.

Dr Moya said that the City believes it is among the first metropolitan municipalities to introduce such measures and welcomed the Department's input to ensure the bylaw is legally sound and supports sustainable job creation.

Dr Moya described the engagement with the Department as timely and valuable, saying the City often implements innovative initiatives without the benefit of national support. She welcomed the opportunity to strengthen collaboration with the Department of Employment and Labour to improve enforcement, enhance compliance, and create sustainable employment opportunities for the people of Tshwane.

"We are looking to build partnerships that will help us maximise job creation, improve compliance and support inclusive economic growth across the City of Tshwane."



This message is brought to you by the Department's Corporate Communication

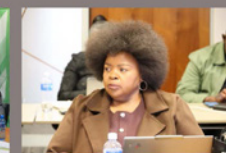
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IN PICTURES



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Reflection to the month that was

22 July 2026

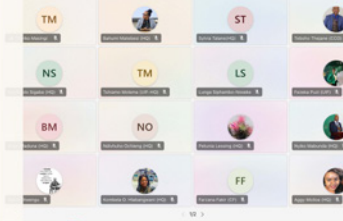
EXCO WRITE-UP

EXCO Reviews First-Quarter Performance and Strategic Departmental Priorities

The Department of Employment and Labour convened its Executive Committee meeting on 22 July 2026 to assess progress on strategic projects, review institutional performance during the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year and consider key operational and governance matters. The virtual meeting was chaired by Deputy Director-General (DDG) Public Employment Services, Mr Sam Morotoba.

In his opening and welcome remarks, the DDG reflected on the Department's ongoing participation in the coordinated government response to migration-related pressures. He noted that migration remains an important matter under consideration within the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure and the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration, given its wider social, economic and diplomatic implications.

The chairperson reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to meeting its international and United Nations obligations by ensuring that migration is managed in a lawful, orderly and humane manner. He acknowledged the contribution of Inspection and Enforcement Services officials, who continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Home Affairs, the South African Police Service and other relevant authorities. Through coordinated inspections, verification processes and enforcement operations, the participating institutions have helped maintain stability, uphold the law and protect the rights and safety of affected individuals.



Project 20k and 10K record key implementation milestones

EXCO received a progress report on the implementation of Project 20 000 and Project 10K, with the presentation highlighting measurable achievements recorded during the reporting period and the preparatory work underway to strengthen alignment between the two initiatives.

To date a total of 4, 017 interns have been recruited, placed and captured, representing over 38.6% of the recruitment target. Of these, 1,069 were newly recruited through the Department's onboarding partner, SPAAN.

The presentation further highlighted the contribution of the interns to the work of Inspection and Enforcement Services. Their deployment has increased the visibility of the inspectorate, strengthened administrative support and expanded the number of officials available to participate in risk-based and blitz inspections, particularly in vulnerable sectors.

#Yazini



Compensation Fund records marked improvement in first-quarter performance

The Compensation Fund's performance improved steadily over the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year. Overall achievement rose from 54.5% in April to 72.7% in May and 81.8% by the end of June 2026, with the Fund achieving nine of its 11 performance indicators. Gains were recorded across all four programmes:

- Programme 1 improved from 50% to 76%,
- Programme 2 increased from 33% to 67%,
- and Programmes 3 and 4 both recorded 100% performance by the end of the reporting period.

Among the key service-delivery achievements, the Fund assessed 99% of Returns of Earnings received during the reporting period, adjudicated 97% of registered claims within the prescribed turnaround time (exceeding the 90% target), finalised 90% of medical invoices within 30 working days, and processed 99.5% of requests for the pre-authorisation of assistive devices (exceeding the 95% target). Payment of approved benefits within 10 working days improved from 84% in the previous financial year to 94.1%.

The Fund also reported progress in strengthening its financial position and investment activities. A 6% increase in total assets was recorded against an annual target of 10%, while transactions valued at approximately R600 million were undergoing due diligence as part of the Fund's investment commitments relating to small, medium and micro enterprises.

Another significant achievement was the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Home Affairs, which will enable real-time verification of death and personal information when the Fund processes claims and pensions, strengthening controls, reducing the risk of fraudulent payments and improving processing efficiency.

The Fund further implemented additional ICT internal controls relating to payment and banking processes, while advancing projects aimed at tracking and tracing claims and introducing greater automation in claims adjudication.

COMPENSATION FUND: KEY SERVICE-DELIVERY ACHIEVEMENTS



IES exceeds key inspection and enforcement targets

Inspection and Enforcement Services achieved all four of its planned performance indicators for the first quarter.

The branch conducted 80 324 inspections against a quarterly target of 78 252, exceeding the target by 3%, or 2 072 inspections. The increased inspection activity strengthened the Department's presence in workplaces and supported efforts to protect vulnerable workers and promote compliance with labour legislation.

IES also ensured that all 18 330 non-compliant employers, workplaces and users identified during inspections were issued with notices within 14 days, exceeding the applicable target by 3%.

Interns are also being exposed to inspections relating to the informal economy, platform work and other emerging areas of the labour market.

Progress was also reported on the Department's institutional readiness for Project 10K. Work is underway to develop a coordinated funding proposal for submission to National Treasury, strengthen the alignment between Project 20 000 and Project 10K and prepare for the phased recruitment of permanent inspectors. The Department is also exploring group and remote mentoring models, alternative accommodation arrangements, ICT modernisation and possible amendments to the transport policy to support the effective deployment and development of interns.

The report acknowledged that several areas still require accelerated implementation, particularly recruitment in provinces with significant shortfalls, technical training, accommodation and the finalisation of a unified implementation framework.

UIF advances digital service-delivery improvements

EXCO received an update on the Unemployment Insurance Fund's performance during the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year, with the presentation highlighting progress on several digital initiatives aimed at improving access to services and reducing pressure at Labour Centres.

A key development was the completion of development and testing of the automated Continuation of Benefits system in March 2026.

The system is intended to streamline the continuation of benefits process and address one of the longest queues experienced at Labour Centres. Its pilot phase is awaiting the finalisation of the necessary regulatory amendments.

The rollout of the Mobile Client Service Officer system also advanced during the quarter, with 50 mobile tablets deployed to 25 Labour Centres across all nine provinces. A further 50 devices are expected to reach another 25 Labour Centres by the end of the second quarter, with the longer-term objective of extending the system to all Labour Centres by the end of the financial year.

Project 20K: Building Labour Inspection Capacity



4,017

Interns Recruited and Placed

All candidates have been successfully captured on the PERSAL system.



3,609
Completed Public Service Induction

The vast majority of recruits have finished their fundamental orientation and induction.



1,069

Placed in July 2026 Alone

This figure demonstrates the accelerated implementation and momentum of the project.



250
Specialized in Legislative Frameworks

Interns have received advanced training on BCEA and EEA inspection governance.

The mobile capability will enable UIF officials to provide services beyond the physical Labour Centre network and reach clients more efficiently.

The development of the UIF Online Employer System has also been completed. The system is awaiting quality-assurance testing infrastructure from the Department's ICT branch, with the pilot targeted to commence by 1 September 2026.

In the resolution and escalation of non-compliance matters, 1 928 of the 1 963 cases received by Statutory Services (39% were settled out of court, referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, or referred for prosecution within 30 working days, exceeding the target by 28%.

The branch also delivered an Occupational Health and Safety seminar during the first quarter, contributing towards its annual advocacy and awareness target.



PES records strong first-quarter delivery despite ICT and capacity pressures

Public Employment Services delivered positive results across several of its core service-delivery indicators, exceeding quarterly targets for the registration of work seekers and employment opportunities while also recording strong performance in counselling services and the placement of work seekers.

The improved delivery of counselling services was partly attributed to the additional capacity provided by interns deployed within the branch, who supported Employment Services Practitioners in registering and counselling work seekers, enabling officials to expand the reach of services without limiting their other responsibilities. However, the expected departure of approximately 241 interns at the end of July 2026 presents a potential risk to performance during the second quarter.

On the branch's policy and legislative programme, Cabinet memoranda relating to the National Employment Policy have been finalised and will be submitted to the relevant principals and Cabinet structures for consideration. On labour migration, the relevant policy notice has been published, the Bill has been tabled in Parliament, and a workshop was conducted to familiarise the Portfolio Committee on Employment and Labour with the policy and legislative proposals. Further engagement with the National Council of Provinces is awaited.

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES: Q1 PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS



The EXCO meeting gave executive management an opportunity to assess first-quarter performance, identify areas requiring urgent intervention and strengthen the Department's readiness for the Minister's In-Year Monitoring meeting scheduled for 23 July 2026.

Brought to you by the Department's Corporate Communication.

23/07/2026

Write-Up

Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

Employment and Labour Minister: Nomakhoasazana Meth

Provinces achieve 100% on Public Employment Services: 2025/26 financial year

"I wish to congratulate all provincial offices, labour centres and officials who have worked tirelessly to ensure that unemployed South Africans are connected to opportunities. These achievements bring us closer to our vision of creating pathways into employment, supporting inclusive economic growth and restoring hope to millions of job-seekers." — Minister Nomakhoasazana Meth

#Yozini

DEL Group records marked improvement in annual performance

The Department of Employment and Labour and its public entities recorded a significant improvement in their unaudited annual performance for the 2025/26 financial year.

Based on the performance information submitted by the Department and entities, the DEL Group achieved 88 of its 99 annual performance indicators, resulting in an overall achievement rate of 89%. This represents a 17-percentage-point improvement from the 72% recorded during the 2024/25 financial year.

The improvement was reflected across the Department and its entities. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration achieved all 24 of its planned indicators, recording 100% performance. Productivity SA improved from 85% to 92%, while NEDLAC increased its performance from 88% to 94%.

Supported Employment Enterprises recorded the largest improvement, rising from 33% to 75%, while the Unemployment Insurance Fund improved from 62% to 71%. The Department's overall performance increased from 71% to 86%, with 24 of its 28 annual indicators achieved.

The Department's improvement was driven largely by strong performance in its service-delivery programmes. Inspection and Enforcement Services, Public Employment Services and Labour Policy and Industrial Relations each achieved 100% of their annual performance indicators.

The Minister noted that the Department's performance had recovered strongly following the decline recorded during the previous financial year, reflecting improved monitoring, stronger leadership oversight and sustained implementation at operational level.

The improvement was welcomed as evidence that sustained monitoring, leadership oversight and implementation at operational level were beginning to translate into stronger organisational performance.

Minister Meth welcomed the progress but emphasised that enterprise-support interventions should also contribute directly to employment creation and workplace exposure.

"We want to use both small and big businesses to open up opportunities for our people." — Minister Nomakhoasazana Meth



The Department's improvement was driven largely by strong performance in its service-delivery programmes. Inspection and Enforcement Services, Public Employment Services and Labour Policy and Industrial Relations each achieved 100% of their annual performance indicators.

Following the Executive Committee's assessment of first-quarter performance and departmental priorities, the Department of Employment and Labour convened the Minister's In-Year Monitoring meeting on 23 July 2026. Chaired by Employment and Labour Minister Nomakhoasazana Meth, the meeting provided a platform for the Ministry and senior management to interrogate performance, assess progress against strategic commitments and determine the interventions required to strengthen delivery during the remainder of the financial year.

Productivity SA reports strong progress in enterprise support and job retention

The Minister's In-Year Monitoring meeting started on a high note, with Productivity SA presenting strong progress across its key programmes.

The entity achieved all nine of its planned performance indicators during the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year, recording 100% performance for the reporting period.

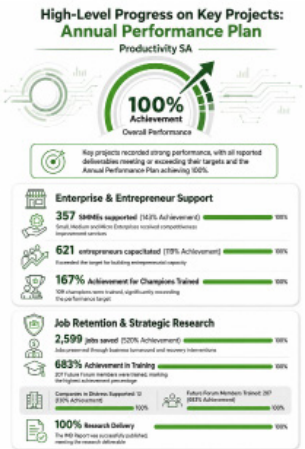
Under the Competitiveness Improvement Services programme, the entity supported 357 formal and informal SMMEs, achieving 143% of its target. It also capacitated 621 entrepreneurs, representing 119% achievement, and trained 109 productivity champions as part of the District Development Model, exceeding the applicable target by 67%.

The Business Turnaround and Recovery programme also recorded significant results. Productivity SA supported 13 companies in distress, saved 2,599 jobs and trained 207 Future Forum members. The number of jobs retained represented 520% achievement against the quarterly target, while the training of Future Forum members exceeded the target by 583%.

The entity further reported that South Africa had improved its position in the 2026 IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, moving from 64th place in 2025 to 54th out of 70 participating economies. The improvement was welcomed as a positive development, although the ranking continues to highlight the need to strengthen the country's economic performance, institutional effectiveness, business environment and infrastructure.

Minister Meth welcomed the progress but emphasised that enterprise-support interventions should also contribute directly to employment creation and workplace exposure.

"We want to use both small and big businesses to open up opportunities for our people." — Minister Nomakhoasazana Meth



PES provinces surpass all Quarter 1 targets

Public Employment Services recorded exceptional provincial performance during the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year, with all nine provinces surpassing their targets across the branch's four key service-delivery indicators. By the end of June 2026, PES had registered 329,331 work-seekers on ESSA against a target of 252,000, achieving 131%. A total of 73,487 employment opportunities were registered against a target of 31,250, representing 235% achievement, while 110,006 work-seekers received employment counselling services against a target of 67,200, achieving 164%. The branch also facilitated the filling of 33,600 employment opportunities, exceeding the quarterly target of 18,750 and achieving 179%.

Limpopo emerged as the strongest-performing province by percentage across the four indicators, while Gauteng recorded the highest volumes of work-seeker registrations and employment opportunities. The broad-based overachievement across all provinces demonstrates the growing reach of PES services and the effectiveness of provincial offices in connecting work-seekers with counselling, employment opportunities and placement support.



Public Employment Services: Q1 2026 Performance Dashboard

Public Employment Services exceeded all four Quarter 1 targets by the end of June 2026. The performance highlights a surge in both work-seeker engagement and job opportunity fulfilment compared to established goals.



Reflection to the month that was

Funds, entities and departmental programmes report on performance

The meeting also received presentations from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, Compensation Fund, Supported Employment Enterprises, NEDLAC and the Department's programmes. The reports provided a high-level account of performance, financial and operational matters, risks and the interventions required to sustain delivery. These presentations were considered within the broader context of the Department's improved annual performance and the need to maintain momentum during the 2025/27 financial year.

Minister's remarks

Minister Meth welcomed the overall improvement recorded by the Department and its entities and commended the political and administrative leadership, provincial offices, labour centres and officials whose work contributed to the results. She said the performance presented during the IYM demonstrated that the Department's interventions were beginning to make a meaningful impact in the lives of South Africans. While recognising the achievements, the Minister urged the Department to build on the gains, intensify efforts to connect unemployed people to opportunities, protect workers' rights and improve labour-market outcomes across the country.

"I wish to congratulate all provincial offices, labour centres and officials who have worked tirelessly to ensure that unemployed South Africans are connected to opportunities. These achievements bring us closer to our vision of creating pathways into employment, supporting inclusive economic growth and restoring hope to millions of job-seekers." – Minister Nomakhosazana Meth

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placements and achieving 166% of target. Limpopo achieved 234%, Gauteng 220%, Free State 183%, Northern Cape 172%, Mpumalanga 155%, and North West 155%.

The Department further provided 357 843 registered work-seekers with employment counselling services, representing 133% achievement against target, while also conducting 11 job and career fairs, exceeding the planned nine events.

Minister Meth said: "The performance reported during our Minister's In-Year Monitoring process demonstrates that the Department of Employment and Labour is making a meaningful impact in the lives of South Africans. Through the Employment Services of South Africa platform, we have surpassed all our targets for work-seeker registrations, employment opportunities and job placements. The fact that every province exceeded its registration targets, while provinces such as Gauteng, Free State, Limpopo and North West recorded exceptional achievements in employment opportunities, confirms that our interventions are yielding positive results."

"I wish to congratulate all provincial offices, labour centres and officials who have worked tirelessly to ensure that unemployed South Africans are connected to opportunities. These achievements bring us closer to our vision of creating pathways into employment, supporting inclusive economic growth and restoring hope to millions of job-seekers."

Minister Meth also applauded the performance of the Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES) Branch, which achieved all four of its annual targets. During the reporting period, the branch conducted 309 659 workplace inspections, exceeding the target of 298 104 inspections. In addition, 99% of non-compliant employers were served with notices within the prescribed 14 days, while 85% of referred cases were settled or referred for prosecution within 30 working days, significantly exceeding the target of 65%.

The branch also conducted 26 high-impact blitz inspection campaigns across sectors such as construction, hospitality, wholesale and retail, contributing to improved compliance with labour legislation and strengthening worker protections.

The Minister further welcomed the performance of the Labour Policy and Industrial Relations (LP&IR) Branch, which achieved 100% of its annual targets. Notable achievements included the successful review and publication of the National Minimum Wage, publication of Employment Equity reports and public registers, production of labour market research reports, and the processing of 100% of labour organisation registration applications within prescribed timelines.

Minister Meth encouraged the Department to continue with its commitment to building on these achievements throughout and intensifying efforts to create employment opportunities, protect workers' rights and improve labour market outcomes across South Africa.

For media inquiries, please contact:

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MEDIA STATEMENT

Date: 23 July 2026

MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING GAINS AS PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ACHIEVES 100% PERFORMANCE

According to the Department's 2025/26 Annual Performance Report presented during the Minister's In-Year Monitoring meeting, Public Employment Services, Inspection and Enforcement Services, and Labour Policy and Industrial Relations each achieved 100% of their annual performance targets, while the Department attained an overall performance level of 86%.

Minister of Employment and Labour, Nomakhosazana Meth, has commended provincial offices and officials of the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) for delivering exceptional results across key employment and labour market programmes during the 2025/26 financial year.

The commendation follows the presentation of the Department's Annual Performance Report during the Minister's In-Year Monitoring (IYM) Meeting held on 23 July 2026, where the Department reported an overall performance achievement of 86%, with 24 out of 28 annual targets achieved. Three core programmes, Public Employment Services (PES), Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES), and Labour Policy and Industrial Relations (LP&IR), each achieved a perfect 100% performance score.

A major highlight of the report was the outstanding performance of the Public Employment Services (PES) Branch, which improved from 83% in 2024/25 to 100% achievement in 2025/26, successfully attaining all eight of its annual targets.

Through the Employment Services of South Africa (ESSA) system, the Department registered 1 129 464 work-seekers, exceeding the target of one million registrations and achieving 113% of the target. Every province exceeded its registration target, with Free State achieving 147%, Mpumalanga 127%, Limpopo 119%, Eastern Cape 115%, Northern Cape 114%, North West 112%, Gauteng 111%, KwaZulu-Natal 108%, and Western Cape 103%.

The Department also recorded exceptional results in the registration of employment opportunities on ESSA. Against a target of 120 000 opportunities, a total of 268 210 employment opportunities were registered nationally, translating to an impressive 224% achievement rate. Gauteng led with 307% achievement, followed by Free State (279%), North West (262%), Limpopo (248%) and Northern Cape (239%).

These opportunities translated into real employment outcomes, with 116 044 work-seekers successfully placed into employment opportunities, surpassing the target of 70 000.



Website: www.labour.gov.za

-ENDS-

Issued by: Department of Employment and Labour

Minister's In-Year Monitoring Reveals Outstanding Employment Gains as Public Employment Services Achieves 100% Performance

Employment and Labour's 2025/26 Annual Performance Report presented during the Minister's In-Year Monitoring meeting, Public Employment Services, Inspection and Enforcement Services, and Labour Policy and Industrial Relations each achieved 100% of their annual performance targets, while the Department attained an overall performance level of 86%

Minister of Employment and Labour, Nomakhosazana Meth, has commended provincial offices and officials of the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) for delivering exceptional results across key employment and labour market programmes during the 2025/26 financial year.



#DELivers #ESSAWorks #JobsOpportunitiesForSA #EmploymentServices

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

DEL DELIVERS: 100% PERFORMANCE IN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES 2025/26

DEL CONNECTING SOUTH AFRICANS TO OPPORTUNITIES

Public Employment Services Achieved

100% PERFORMANCE

During the 2025/26 Financial Year.

KEY FIGURES

- 1 129 464 Work-Seekers Registered
- 268 210 Employment Opportunities Registered
- 116 044 Work-Seekers Placed into Opportunities
- 357 843 Work-Seekers Provided with Employment Counselling

Through the Employment Services of South Africa (ESSA) platform.



#DELivers #ESSAWorks #JobsOpportunitiesForSA #EmploymentServices

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

ESSA EXCEEDED ALL TARGETS

Indicator	Target	Achievement
Work-seekers Registered	1 Million	1.13 Million
Job Opportunities Registered	120 000	268 210
Employment Counselling	270 000	357 843
Job Placements	70 000	116 044

Every major employment target exceeded.

FOOTER ESSA continues to connect job-seekers with opportunities across South Africa.



#YAZINI #PERFORMANCEEXCELLENCE #ESSA

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

ALL PROVINCES SURPASSED REGISTRATION TARGETS

Top Performers:

- ✓ Free State - 147%
- ✓ Mpumalanga - 127%
- ✓ Limpopo - 119%
- ✓ Eastern Cape - 115%
- ✓ Northern Cape - 114%
- ✓ North West - 112%
- ✓ Gauteng - 111%
- ✓ KwaZulu-Natal - 108%
- ✓ Western Cape - 103%

Every province exceeded its target through ESSA.

FOOTER More South Africans are accessing employment services than ever before.



#Yazini #ESSAWorks #JobSeekers #DELivers

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

268 210 JOB OPPORTUNITIES REGISTERED

Target: 120 000

Achievement: 268 210

224% Achievement

Top Performing Provinces:

- ✓ Gauteng – 307%
- ✓ Free State – 279%
- ✓ North West – 262%
- ✓ Limpopo – 248%
- ✓ Northern Cape – 239%

FOOTER Creating pathways to employment through partnerships and employer participation.



#Yazini #JobsForSA #EmploymentOpportunities #DELivers

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

DEL Group records marked improvement in annual performance

The improvement was reflected across the Department and its entities. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration achieved all 24 of its planned indicators, recording 100% performance. Productivity SA improved from 85% to 92%, while NEDLAC increased its performance from 88% to 94%.

Supported Employment Enterprises recorded the largest improvement, rising from 33% to 75%, while the Unemployment Insurance Fund improved from 62% to 71%. The Department's overall performance increased from 71% to 86%, with 24 of its 28 annual indicators achieved.



#DELivers #ESSAWorks #JobsOpportunitiesForSA #EmploymentServices

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

116 044 SOUTH AFRICANS CONNECTED TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Achievement: 166% of Target

Top Performing Provinces:

- 🏆 Limpopo – 234%
- 🏆 Gauteng – 220%
- 🏆 Free State – 183%
- 🏆 Northern Cape – 172%
- 🏆 Mpumalanga – 155%
- 🏆 North West – 155%

FOOTER QUOTE "Every job opportunity filled represents hope restored."



#Yazini #WorkingForSA #ESSA #DELivers

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

MINISTER METH REMARKS

"The performance reported during our Minister's In-Year Monitoring process demonstrates that the Department of Employment and Labour is making a meaningful impact in the lives of South Africans. Through ESSA, we have surpassed our targets for work-seeker registrations, employment opportunities and job placements." – Minister Nomakhosazana Meth



FOOTER #MinisterMeth #DELivers #ESSAWorks

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Reflection to the month that was

MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

DEL PERFORMANCE SCORECARD 2025/26

- ✓ Public Employment Services – 100%
- ✓ Inspection and Enforcement Services – 100%
- ✓ Labour Policy & Industrial Relations – 100%
- ✓ Overall DEL Performance – 86%

24 of 28 annual targets achieved.

FOOTER Building a capable labour market and creating opportunities for all.



#Yazini #Performance #DELivers #GoodGovernance

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

PROTECTING WORKERS. ENFORCING COMPLIANCE.

Inspection & Enforcement Services achieved:

- ✓ 309 659 Workplaces Inspected
- ✓ 99% Notices Issued Within 14 Days
- ✓ 85% Cases Referred Within Prescribed Timeframes
- ✓ 26 High-Impact Blitz Inspections

100% Programme Achievement.

FOOTER Promoting decent work and fair labour practices.



#Yazini #WorkerProtection #Compliance #DELivers

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

ADVANCING FAIR LABOUR PRACTICES

Labour Policy and Industrial Relations achieved:

- ✓ 100% Annual Performance
- ✓ National Minimum Wage Reviewed
- ✓ Employment Equity Reports Published
- ✓ 100% Labour Organisation Applications Processed Within 90 Days
- ✓ Labour Market Research Produced

FOOTER Driving transformation in South Africa's labour market.



#LabourRelations #EmploymentEquity #DELivers

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MINISTER'S IN-YEAR MONITORING REVEALS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE GAINS

DEL's Public Employment Services achieved 100% performance in 2025/26!

- ✓ 1.1 million work-seekers registered on ESSA
- ✓ 268 210 job opportunities registered ✓ 116 044 work-seekers placed ✓ 357 843 received employment counselling

Every province exceeded registration targets.



#Yazini #DELivers #ESSAWorks #JobOpportunitiesForSA

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Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

Following the Executive Committee's assessment of first-quarter performance and departmental priorities, the Department of Employment and Labour convened the Minister's In-Year Monitoring meeting on 23 July 2026. Chaired by Employment and Labour Minister Nomakhosazana Meth, the meeting provided a platform for the Ministry and senior management to interrogate performance, assess progress against strategic commitments and determine the interventions required to strengthen delivery during the remainder of the financial year.



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Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

Productivity SA reports strong progress in enterprise support and job retention

The Minister's In-Year Monitoring meeting started on a high note, with Productivity SA presenting strong progress across its key programmes.

The entity achieved all nine of its planned performance indicators during the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year, recording 100% performance for the reporting period.

Under the Competitiveness Improvement Services programme, the entity supported 357 formal and informal SMMEs, achieving 143% of its target. It also capacitated 621 entrepreneurs, representing 119% achievement, and trained 109 productivity champions as part of the District Development Model, exceeding the applicable target by 67%.



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Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

Productivity SA reports strong progress in enterprise support and job retention

The Business Turnaround and Recovery programme also recorded significant results. Productivity SA supported 13 companies in distress, saved 2,599 jobs and trained 207 Future Forum members. The number of jobs retained represented 520% achievement against the quarterly target, while the training of Future Forum members exceeded the target by 583%.

The entity further reported that South Africa had improved its position in the 2026 IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, moving from 64th place in 2025 to 54th out of 70 participating economies. The improvement was welcomed as a positive development, although the ranking continues to highlight the need to strengthen the country's economic performance, institutional effectiveness, business environment and infrastructure.



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Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

Productivity SA reports strong progress in enterprise support and job retention

Minister Meth welcomed the progress but emphasised that enterprise-support interventions should also contribute directly to employment creation and workplace exposure.

"We want to use both small and big businesses to open up opportunities for our people." — Minister Nomakhosazana Meth.



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Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

DEL Group records marked improvement in annual performance

The Department of Employment and Labour and its public entities recorded a significant improvement in their unaudited annual performance for the 2025/26 financial year.

Based on the performance information submitted by the Department and entities, the DEL Group achieved 88 of its 99 annual performance indicators, resulting in an overall achievement rate of 89%. This represents a 17-percentage-point improvement from the 72% recorded during the 2024/25 financial year.



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Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

DEL Group records marked improvement in annual performance

The improvement was reflected across the Department and its entities. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration achieved all 24 of its planned indicators, recording 100% performance. Productivity SA improved from 85% to 92%, while NEDLAC increased its performance from 88% to 94%.

Supported Employment Enterprises recorded the largest improvement, rising from 33% to 75%, while the Unemployment Insurance Fund improved from 62% to 71%. The Department's overall performance increased from 71% to 86%, with 24 of its 28 annual indicators achieved.



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Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

DEL Group records marked improvement in annual performance

The Department's improvement was driven largely by strong performance in its service-delivery programmes. Inspection and Enforcement Services, Public Employment Services and Labour Policy and Industrial Relations each achieved 100% of their annual performance indicators.

The Minister noted that the Department's performance had recovered strongly following the decline recorded during the previous financial year, reflecting improved monitoring, stronger leadership oversight and sustained implementation at operational level.

The improvement was welcomed as evidence that sustained monitoring, leadership oversight and implementation at operational level were beginning to translate into stronger organisational performance.



Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

PES provinces surpass all Quarter 1 targets

Public Employment Services recorded exceptional provincial performance during the first quarter of the 2026/27 financial year, with all nine provinces surpassing their targets across the branch's four key service-delivery indicators. By the end of June 2026, PES had registered 329,331 work-seekers on ESSA against a target of 252,000, achieving 131%. A total of 73,487 employment opportunities were registered against a target of 31,250, representing 235% achievement, while 110,006 work-seekers received employment counselling services against a target of 67,200, achieving 164%. The branch also facilitated the filling of 33,600 employment opportunities, exceeding the quarterly target of 18,750 and achieving 179%.

Limpopo emerged as the strongest-performing province by percentage across the four indicators, while Gauteng recorded the highest volumes of work-seeker registrations and employment opportunities. The broad-based overachievement across all provinces demonstrates the growing reach of PES services and the effectiveness of provincial offices in connecting work-seekers with counselling, employment opportunities and placement support.



Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

Funds, entities and departmental programmes report on performance

The meeting also received presentations from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, Compensation Fund, Supported Employment Enterprises, NEDLAC and the Department's programmes. The reports provided a high-level account of performance, financial and operational matters, risks and the interventions required to sustain delivery. These presentations were considered within the broader context of the Department's improved annual performance and the need to maintain momentum during the 2026/27 financial year.



Minister's In-Year Monitoring Meeting

Ministers remarks

The Minister welcomed the overall improvement recorded by the Department and its entities and commended the political and administrative leadership, provincial offices, labour centres and officials whose work contributed to the results. She said the performance presented during the IYM demonstrated that the Department's interventions were beginning to make a meaningful impact in the lives of South Africans. While recognising the achievements, the Minister urged the Department to build on the gains, intensify efforts to connect unemployed people to opportunities, protect workers' rights and improve labour-market outcomes across the country.

"I wish to congratulate all provincial offices, labour centres and officials who have worked tirelessly to ensure that unemployed South Africans are connected to opportunities. These achievements bring us closer to our vision of creating pathways into employment, supporting inclusive economic growth and restoring hope to millions of job-seekers." — Minister Nomakhosazana Meth



MEDIA RELEASE

Date: 29 July 2026

Department of Employment and Labour cautions of bogus and self-designated inspectors

The Department of Employment and Labour is concerned about the impersonation of inspectors by imposters. These imposters pose as inspectors.

The department has noted with concern that for some time, civic movements and pressure groups such as LACO (Labour and Civic Organisation), Labour Laws Enforcement Organisation, and others have become self-appointed labour inspectors. The department condemns this vigilante conduct.

These pressure movements have been targeting businesses across many parts of South Africa. The *modus operandi* of these groups is characterised by claims that they are conducting inspections to enforce labour laws, investigate employment practices, check on workforce representations. They also make demands that there should be employment of locals over foreign nationals.

In summary, these bogus inspectors present themselves to workplaces claiming that they are enforcing labour laws such as Labour Relations Act (LRA), Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), National Minimum Wage, Employment Services Act, Unemployment Insurance Acts, the Compensation for Occupation and Injuries and Diseases Act, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

To this end, the department will not hesitate to act and pursue legal action.

The appointment of labour inspectors is a statutory mandate of government. In terms of the BCEA S63, Labour Inspectors are legally mandated to be appointed by Employment and Labour Minister. They should be in possession of a signed certificate and an inspector's card. The appointment provides for the labour inspector to monitor and enforce labour laws.

The functions of labour inspectors include:

- advising employees and employers of their rights and obligations in terms of an employment law;
- conducting inspections;
- investigating complaints made to a labour inspector;
- endeavouring to secure compliance with an employment law by securing undertakings or issuing compliance orders

In addition, labour inspectors are by law, empowered with powers of entry - which means that in order to monitor and enforce compliance with an employment law, a labour inspector may, without a notice, at any reasonable time, enter any workplace or any other place where an employer conducts a business or keeps employment records.



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Reflection to the month that was

The laws further expect employers and employees to cooperate with the labour inspectors by making workplaces accessible as required by a labour inspector to perform their functions effectively.

The Department of Employment and Labour through Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES) branch is the only mandated institution to enforce labour market legislation.

Employers have a right to demand proof of appointment as a Labour Inspector before allowing any person/person's access to their workplaces and employees.

For media inquiries, please contact:

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-ENDS-

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WRITE-UP

28 JULY 2026

BEHIND EVERY INSPECTION: HOW STRATEGIC PLANNING STRENGTHENS LABOUR-LAW ENFORCEMENT

Effective labour inspections begin long before an inspector sets foot in a workplace.

Behind every national campaign or sector-focused inspection lies a process of planning, research, risk assessment and consultation. That process was on full display on 28 July 2026, when Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour, Honourable Jomo Sibiya, met the leadership of the Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES) Branch at Laboria House in Pretoria.

The Branch briefed the Deputy Minister on first-quarter performance, occupational health and safety, advocacy and statutory services, targeted inspection projects, sector-focused interventions, research-based inspections, and cooperation through national law-enforcement structures, the meeting offered a insightful overview into the groundwork behind inspectors' work.

Inspectors commended for national blitz operations

Deputy Minister Sibiya opened by commending the work done by inspectors for protecting workers and enforcing compliance, singling out the recent high-level blitz inspections conducted nationally, the first coordinated operation of its scale, bringing together Departmental inspectors, the South African Police Service, the Department of Home Affairs and other authorities across the country.



#Yazini

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Inspections built on evidence and risk

The discussions showed that IES uses evidence and risk analysis to determine where inspection interventions are most needed. Its programmes draw on incident reports, complaints, research, compliance history, emerging risks, and information from workers, employers and partner institutions.

Where an industry involves specialised equipment or processes, inspectors work alongside qualified technical experts but the statutory authority stays with the inspector. Experts contribute specialised knowledge; inspectors assess compliance, investigate, and decide on enforcement action. That division keeps inspections both technically sound and legally defensible.

Inspection and enforcement aren't just about issuing notices or shutting workplaces down. Enforcement remains necessary where employers won't comply or workers face serious, immediate risk but the wider goal is compliance that sticks.

Deputy Minister Sibiya emphasised helping employers understand the risks inspectors identify and what's needed to fix them particularly for emerging or complex risks employers may not fully grasp. Where it makes sense, IES works with employers on corrective plans, prioritises urgent issues, and monitors progress, rather than treating enforcement as the end point.

Advocacy as a strategic tool

Compliance isn't built through enforcement alone. Sector-focused advocacy lets inspectors explain labour legislation in plain, practical language — particularly valuable in sectors where employers and workers have limited access to specialised labour-law information.

Advocacy and training can help employers understand their obligations before non-compliance turns into an incident, a dispute, or an enforcement action, closing knowledge gaps and encouraging voluntary compliance while keeping enforcement in reserve where it's needed.

This commitment to proactive engagement will continue on Wednesday, 29 July 2026, when Deputy Minister Sibiya delivers the keynote address at the IES Employer Breakfast Session at Birchwood Hotel in the City of Ekurhuleni.



Planning for greater impact

The agenda demonstrated the breadth of matters requiring coordination within the inspectorate, including targeted projects, agricultural interventions, occupational health and safety operations, hospitality-sector advocacy, informal-economy research and national law-enforcement coordination.

Meetings like this one give IES leadership the room to step back, review past interventions, spot gaps, and prioritise before resources are deployed.

The visible inspection is the end of a longer chain research, planning, technical assessment, advocacy, intergovernmental cooperation and follow-up that runs well before any inspector arrives on site.

INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

EMPLOYER BREAKFAST SESSION

Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour, Mr Jomo Sibiya, MP will deliver a keynote address at the IES Employer Breakfast Session to be held in the City of Ekurhuleni, Gauteng Province.

The session will provide platform for engagement and knowledge sharing on different Labour Legislations such as OHSA, BCEA, NMWA, UIF and CIDA.

The session brings together Organised Labour & Business, OHS Practitioners, Rand Mutual Assurance as a collaborative effort to prevent workplace injuries and occupational diseases.

Event Details

Date: Wednesday, 29 July 2026

Time: 08:00-13:00 | Venue: Birchwood Hotel

#Yazini



Balancing enforcement, advocacy and economic sustainability

In his closing remarks, Deputy Minister Sibiya encouraged IES to remain responsive to changes in the economy and the world of work. He cautioned against continuing to use the same approaches merely because they had been followed for many years, emphasising the need to identify new and effective ways of achieving the Department's mandate.

“Our work shouldn’t be a stumbling block to business,” said Deputy Minister Sibiya.

He stressed that inspection and enforcement must protect workers while also recognising the importance of sustaining viable businesses and preserving employment. Inspectors must therefore carefully balance firm enforcement with advocacy, guidance and constructive engagement.

Where an employer demonstrates a genuine willingness to correct non-compliance, the Department should, where legally and practically appropriate, work with the employer to develop a credible path towards compliance. This may involve identifying priority risks, agreeing on corrective measures and monitoring progress within reasonable timeframes.

This approach does not mean overlooking deliberate, persistent or serious violations. Immediate and decisive enforcement remains necessary where workers face imminent danger, employers refuse to cooperate or non-compliance is severe. However, where challenges can be corrected through structured intervention, advocacy should be used alongside enforcement to secure sustainable results.

His remarks reinforced the principle that government, employers and workers are not opposing forces. They are partners in building productive and stable workplaces where businesses can operate sustainably, jobs can be protected and the rights of workers are respected.

The meeting concluded with a call for IES to continue adapting, strengthening its advocacy work and applying enforcement in a manner that is firm, fair and responsive to the realities of South Africa's labour market.



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IN PICTURES



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WRITE-UP

29 JULY 2026

Deputy Minister Sibiya calls for partnership-driven compliance in the petroleum sector

Employment and Labour Deputy Minister, Honourable Jomo Sibiya, has called on employers in the petroleum sector to work with government, organised labour and bargaining councils to strengthen compliance, protect workers and support sustainable business growth.

The Deputy Minister delivered the keynote address at the Petroleum Industries Employers' Breakfast Session hosted by the Department of Employment and Labour's Inspection and Enforcement Services at Birchwood Hotel on 29 July 2026.

The engagement brought together employers, organised business, organised labour, bargaining councils, the Department of Home Affairs, Rand Mutual Assurance, the Compensation Fund, the Unemployment Insurance Fund and officials from the Department of Employment and Labour.

Deputy Minister Sibiya responded directly to concerns raised by employers during the question-and-answer session, including challenges in accessing departmental services, delays caused by information technology systems, inspection procedures and allegations of unethical conduct by inspectors.

He acknowledged the difficulties experienced by some employers when attempting to obtain assistance from the Department and apologised for instances where businesses had struggled to access services or had resorted to appointing consultants.

The Deputy Minister committed the Department to improving its accessibility and addressing internal systems and service-delivery shortcomings.

#Yazini

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He emphasised that employers should not have to plead for assistance from government and said the Department had a responsibility to guide businesses in understanding and complying with employment legislation.

Deputy Minister Sibiya described the petroleum sector as a strategic part of the South African economy, noting that it enables the movement of people and goods and supports industrial and agricultural activity.

The industry supplies fuel to more than 12 million vehicles and employs more than 140,000 people nationally, with Gauteng accounting for approximately one-third of petrol-station employment. He said the sector's economic importance must be matched by a strong commitment to labour-law compliance.

The Deputy Minister stressed that the Department's responsibility was not limited to protecting workers but also included supporting businesses to grow, expand and create employment.

He said government must maintain a balance in which businesses are able to operate profitably while workers receive fair wages, social protection and safe working conditions.

The Department would therefore continue combining employer education and advocacy with inspection and enforcement. Deputy Minister Sibiya described this as a "carrot-and-stick" approach: employers willing to correct shortcomings would receive guidance and reasonable assistance, while persistent or serious violations would result in enforcement action.

Gauteng Provincial Chief Inspector, Mr Mbongeni Tshabalala, presented the findings of inspections conducted in the petroleum and filling-station sector since April 2026 in the province.

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Corporate Communication**

Of the 682 occupational health and safety inspections conducted, 308 employers, or 45%, were compliant, while 374 employers, or 55%, were non-compliant. The inspections resulted in 361 contravention notices, 92 improvement notices and 17 prohibition notices. Key concerns included inadequate risk assessments, unsafe LPG-cylinder storage, electrical installations, pressure equipment and the management of hazardous chemical agents.

The findings also identified employers who had not registered with the Compensation Fund or Rand Mutual Assurance and high levels of non-compliance with monthly Unemployment Insurance Fund employee declarations.

Deputy Minister Sibiya said these findings should form the beginning of a longer partnership rather than a once-off enforcement exercise. He called for the sector to work towards higher levels of voluntary compliance and greater self-regulation through cooperation with bargaining councils and the Department.

Looking to the future, Deputy Minister Sibiya warned that electric and hybrid vehicles, digital diagnostics and technological changes would transform the skills required in the petroleum and motor industries.

He called on employers to invest in apprenticeships, learnerships and training beyond the minimum legal requirements and encouraged trade unions to champion skills development alongside wages and working conditions.

***"A skill is a wage that cannot be retrenched."* Deputy Minister Jomo Sibiya**

The Deputy Minister concluded by calling for a culture of compliance across government, business and society and reaffirmed the Department's commitment to working with employers and workers to advance decent work. The Department will continue with employer education, stakeholder engagements and inspections aimed at protecting workers, supporting responsible businesses and improving compliance throughout the petroleum sector.



Reflection to the month that was



THABO'S STORY

– Episode 6: Arbitration



EDUCATIONAL INSIGHT — Arbitration

Arbitration:

- Is a formal hearing.
- Involves sworn testimony.
- Evidence is strictly evaluated.
- Results in a final, legally binding decision (Award).

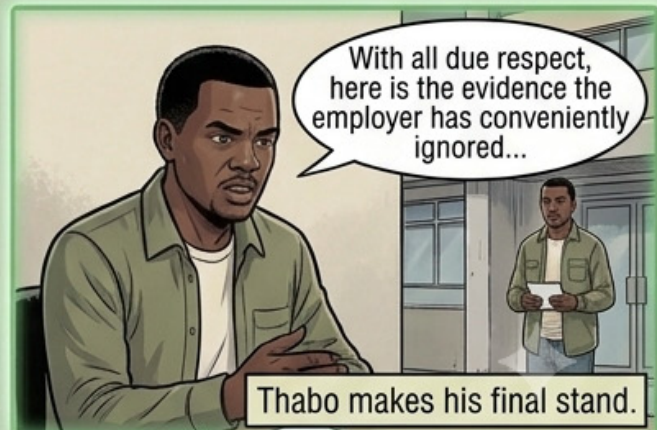


Highlight: Final and Binding Decision

The arbitrator's final award must be followed by all parties.



Not all battles end in peace—but every step brings clarity.



Look out for the August publication for Episode 7: The Outcome

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