

MONITOR

A monthly briefing sheet to keep communities informed about what is happening in Parliament

Did you know?	Impact of drought in South Africa
<p>Cabinet has made public the Presidential Handbook, which provides guidelines for the administrative, logistical, security and general support services to be rendered by the state to the President and Deputy President. The Handbook is available here: http://bit.ly/1Onplyh</p> <p>The Independent Commission for the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers recommended a 5% increase for President Zuma and all top positions across the executive, legislatures and judiciary for the 2015/16 financial year.</p> <p>The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development launched the “<i>I Serve Equally</i>” campaign to address challenges faced by LGBTI people when reporting criminal and discrimination cases.</p> <p>The per person cost of incarceration is R350.50 per day, whereas the cost of electronic monitoring amounts to just R192.00 per person.</p> <p>According to the 2015 Afrobarometer survey, public approval of the performance of the President, MPs and local government councillors has declined. Find out more here: http://bit.ly/111BrSq</p> <p>The AG reported irregular expenditure of R25.7-billion across the country’s national and provincial departments and public entities for the 2014-2015 year.</p> <p>South Africa has the biggest HIV treatment programme in the world, with more than 3 million people on life-saving antiretrovirals.</p>	<p>The current drought and water crisis has been at the forefront of the national debate in Parliament leading to several committee meetings, media briefings, debates and parliamentary questions on this issue. South Africans have been urged to use water sparingly as the drought, brought on by the El Nino event, affects large parts of the country.</p> <p>The government says it is strategic and cautious about how it uses, conserves and manages this precious resource as South Africa is a water scarce country and is ranked as one of the 30 driest countries in the world. Despite all this, between 37% and 42% of potable water (drinking water) is unaccounted for. This water is lost through leaks, wastage and illegal connections.</p> <p>To date, six provinces are under observation with four (Kwazulu-Natal, Limpopo, Free State and North West Province) declared drought-stricken areas, and two (Mpumalanga and Western Cape) being monitored. The current state of water storage across the country is estimated at 64.3% compared with 74.6% storage level at the same time last year.</p> <p>Several metropolitan municipalities have already announced water restrictions in order to curb the increased demand and over-usage of water by households and industries in recent months, in their efforts to deal with the impact of the heat wave. The government expects the El Nino phenomenon to continue at least until March 2016. To ensure the development and implementation of a coherent and integrated government response, relevant sector Ministries have come together.</p> <p>The Department of Water and Sanitation has put aside more than R400 million for water tankering, borehole drilling and rehabilitation, water conservation and demand management and water source augmentations. Stats SA notes that the agricultural sector contracted by 17% quarter on quarter largely due to drought conditions in 2015. The damage to the sector has been severe and has the following results: stress on the grain stocks, crop failure and death of livestock in the four declared provinces, the loss of income and the inability to service loans where the farming enterprises suffered losses due to drought and the threat to household food security on farms and in remote rural communities.</p> <p>The Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Rural Development and Land Reform have introduced various interventions and reallocated resources to mitigate the effects of drought on farmers, farm workers and rural communities.</p> <p>The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs has written to all the mayors in the country to take action to respond to the situation. These include the introduction of water restrictions; monitoring adherence to water restrictions and application of penalties where necessary; prioritisation of the repair of water leaks, and the promotion of water-efficient technologies such as low-flush toilet cisterns, rainwater harvesting, and use of grey water for irrigation.</p> <p>Opposition parties are critical of the government’s response. They argue that it does not understand the seriousness of the current drought gripping the country as it does not appreciate the value of water. They point out the failure to improve broken and crippling water infrastructure at municipalities countrywide. The government disagrees with this assertion and maintains that it has put together short, medium and long-term plans to address the problem. It also continues to urge South Africans to change their behaviour and use water responsibly.</p>

Socio-Economic Rights for All

Parliament, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees organised a two-day conference to discuss how national legislatures can successfully contribute to ending statelessness worldwide. **Statelessness, or the absence of nationality**, is a problem affecting at least 10 million people globally. There is no region on the planet that does not host stateless persons. In addition to the indignity of being without nationality, stateless persons are often denied basic rights, such as access to education and health care. While statelessness is a serious problem, it can be resolved and parliamentarians can play a vital role in achieving law reforms to prevent, reduce and, ultimately, end statelessness worldwide. Lawmakers were encouraged to persuade their governments to accede to the Statelessness Conventions as well as relevant international / regional treaties, adopt legislation that correspond to the provisions contained in the Conventions and institute safeguards against statelessness, regardless of whether they are parties to the Conventions. Delegates identified that there was a need to understand and address the root causes of displacement - from conflict over resources, to poor governance; human rights violations or unequal access to development benefits, amongst others, and explore what governments, parliamentarians, the private sector, humanitarian organisations, civil society and others can do to address these pressing challenges. Awareness raising campaigns and partnerships between parliaments and civil society were critical to ending statelessness and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Department of Trade and Industry briefed MPs on SA's acceptance of the Protocol Amending the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement. The agreement addresses the access of developing countries to drugs, local manufacturing capacity and the development of new drugs. The Africa Group spearheaded the initiative to ensure that developing countries had access to medicine that would deal with key health challenges. The proposal ensures that the agreement does not undermine the legitimate right of WTO members to formulate their own public health policies. The emphasis is on access to medicines for the prevention and treatment of diseases predominantly affecting people in developing countries. The aim is to adopt the Protocol amending the TRIPS agreement and submit it to WTO members for acceptance. The Protocol will take effect upon acceptance by two thirds of WTO membership. The ratification of the Protocol by South Africa is aligned with the Constitution. Section 27(1) provides that everyone has the right to have access to health care services, including reproductive health care. Section 27(2) provides that the State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights. MPs were pleased with the Agreement and commented that it would contribute to job creation and is an opportunity to develop a pharmaceutical highway to export to the rest of the country. The Department admitted that the delay in bringing the Agreement was because of the huge outcry from civil society and in particular the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC). TAC had initially felt that the Agreement had procedures that were cumbersome to developing countries. Over the years much engagement had ensued and civil society had given its full endorsement to ratify the Agreement.

The National Assembly adopted the final report of the Ad Hoc Joint Committee on Probing Violence Against Foreign Nationals. Parliament set up the multi-party committee earlier this year to investigate the outbreak of violence against foreign nationals, where seven people, three of them South Africans, lost their lives and shops were looted. The report identifies the following root causes - social, economic and political issues affecting both South African nationals and foreign nationals and finds that the main causes of the violent attacks were criminal actions that started with the stealing of goods from foreign owned spaza shops by South African criminals who are often drug addicts. The report recommended that the affected countries and parliaments work together to address socio-economic and political conditions and that the relevant government bodies should continue to monitor, pre-empt and protect vulnerable communities. The Democratic Alliance described the report as flawed as it failed to recognise xenophobia as a crime. Meanwhile, the EFF criticised the report for not offering any new solutions.

The Department of Energy informed MPs that SA is 87% electrified and that it had completed 247 485 connections through the Integrated National Electrification Programme (INEP) in the past financial year. However, as the programme continues to connect deep rural areas, the delivery of connections has been significantly impacted by the lack of bulk infrastructure and inadequate human resources within implementing agencies and local municipalities. Regional steering committees are being established to enhance project assessments before funds are allocated and the oversight, monitoring and evaluation has been strengthened during the implementing and completion phase of projects.

The Labour Minister announced that wages in the domestic worker sector will be adjusted upwards from 1 December 2015. Employees were divided into categories – those in major metropolitan areas versus those in other areas and employees who work more than 27 hour per month and those who work less than that amount. An employee that works more than 27 hours in major metropolitan areas should be paid no less than an hourly rate of R11.44, R514.82 weekly and R2 230.70 per month. The new rate will be effective until 30 November 2016.

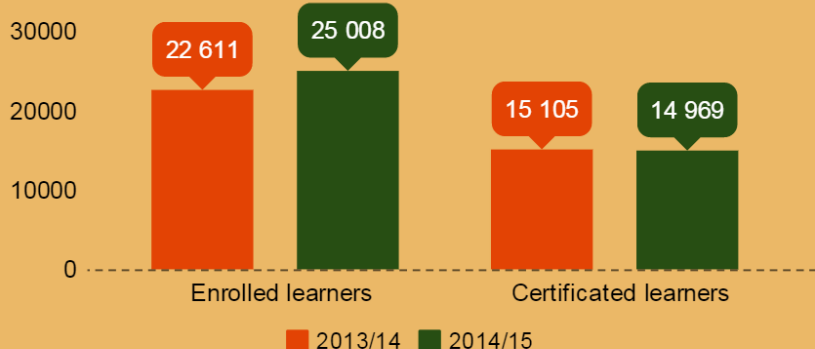
Legislative developments....

- Parliament passed and submitted several bills to the President for assent. These include the [Judicial Matters Amendment Bill](#), [Defence Laws Repeal and Amendment Bill](#), [Medicines and Related Substances Amendment Bill](#), [Protection of Investment Bill](#), [Criminal Matters Amendment Bill](#), [Division of Revenue Amendment Bill](#), [Disaster Management Amendment Bill](#), [Taxation Laws Amendment Bill](#), [Tax Administration Laws Amendment Bill](#), [Finance Bill](#), [New Development Bank Special Appropriation Bill](#) and [Adjustments Appropriation Bill](#).
- The Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform invites the public to submit written comments on the [Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Bill](#). Comments can be emailed to Ms Phumla Nyamza at pnnyamza@parliament.gov.za by no later than Friday, 18 December 2015.
- Cabinet approved the introduction of the [Broadcasting Amendment Bill](#) and the [Protected Disclosures Amendment Bill](#) to Parliament.
- The [Foreign Service Bill](#) was introduced in the National Assembly on 4 November 2015. The proposed law seeks to provide for the management, administration and functioning of the Foreign Service of the Republic of South Africa.
- The [Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences Amendment Bill](#) was tabled in Parliament.
- The [Films and Publications Amendment Bill](#) was tabled in Parliament, paving the way for the introduction of a co-regulation system allowing accredited independent industry bodies to classify digital films, games and publications.
- Comment is requested on a [draft Labour Laws Amendment Bill](#) to be tabled in Parliament by the African Christian Democratic Party with the aim of providing for paid parental, paternity, adoption and surrogacy leave. People can submit written comments on the draft bill to the Secretary to Parliament by 25 December 2015. Comments can be delivered to the Secretary to Parliament or emailed to gmgidlana@parliament.gov.za and copied to cdudley@parliament.gov.za
- Parliament's Police Committee rejected the DAs [Protection of Critical Infrastructure Bill](#). The Bill sought to repeal the National Key Points Act of 1980, create offences and penalties and provide for parliamentary oversight over the Critical Infrastructure Board.
- The Public Works Committee was unable to complete its deliberations on the [Expropriation Bill](#) due to the parliamentary strike. It will finalise the bill in the new year.
- Two draft bills: [National Public Health Institute of SA Bill](#) and [National Health Laboratory Service Amendment Bill](#) were published for comment. The former establishes an institute tasked with promoting co-operation between SA and other countries on epidemiological surveillance and disease/injury management. The latter seeks to: strengthen the NHLS's governance and funding mechanism; and make it subject to preferential procurement legislation. Interested parties have until 11 December to comment on each Bill.
- The [Higher Education Amendment Bill](#) was tabled in Parliament. The law has been criticised in some quarters as giving too much power to the Minister of Higher Education and Training, which could result in the interference in all spheres of the functioning of tertiary institutions.
- The Standing Committee on Finance held public hearings on the [Financial Sector Regulation Bill](#).
- An explanatory summary of the [2015 Insurance Bill](#) was gazetted recently, heralding its imminent introduction in Parliament.
- The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs approved a legislative proposal to amend the Immigration Act 13 of 2002. Section 30 would be amended to allow for declaration of a person who overstayed as an undesirable person, even where such person has overstayed for the first time.
- Comment on the proposed [Debt Collectors Amendment Bill](#) has been extended to 31 January 2016.
- The Department of Small Business Development is reviewing the National Small Business Act.
- The Department of Energy and National Treasury are developing a Radioactive Waste Fund Bill.

If you want to know the current status of any Bill, go to <https://pmg.org.za/bills/current>

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Artisan Development



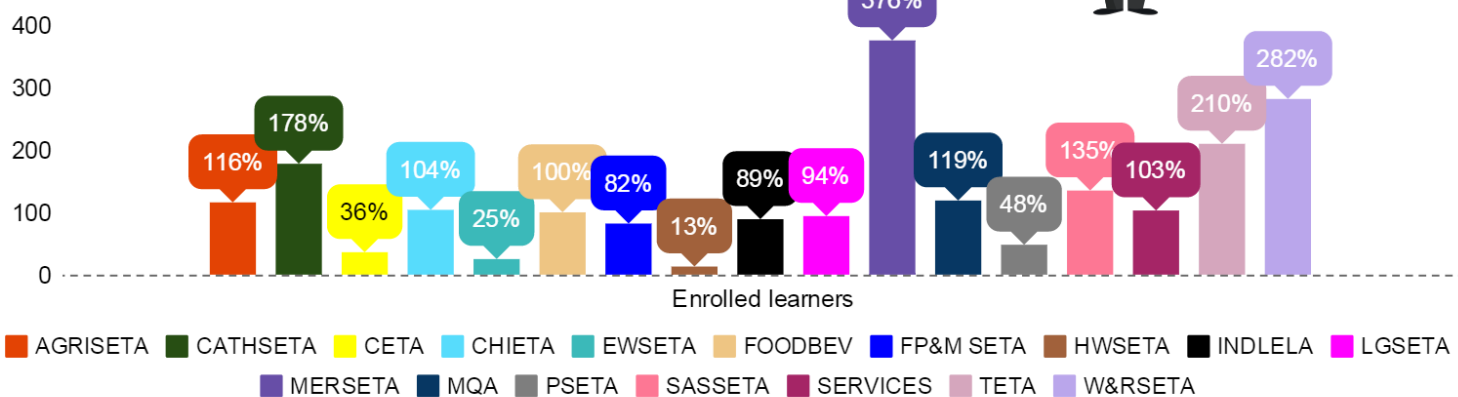
Total unemployed learners certificated through artisan development for 2014/15 = 14 969



1% decrease from 2013/14

SETA Performances: Artisan development

2014/15 achievement against enrolment targets

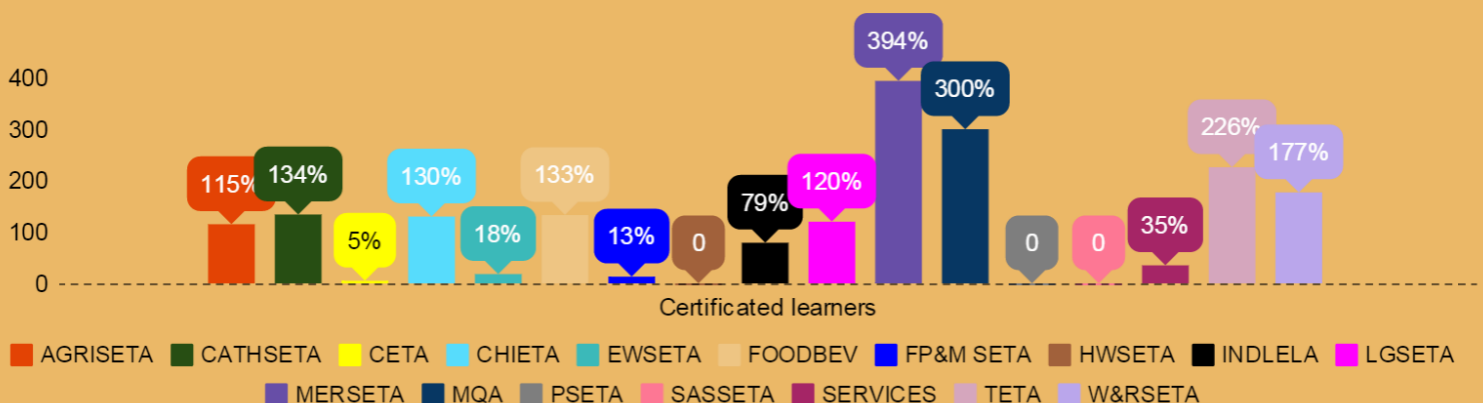


59% of SETAs achieved/exceeded artisan development enrolment targets for 2014/15



18% increase from 2013/14

2014/15 achievement against certification targets



47% of SETAs did not achieve their development certification targets for 2014/15



3 SETAs achieved 0% against this target

*No correlation between number of enrolled and certificated learners - programme entry and exit may span over more than 1 year