



NSFAS

National Student Financial Aid Scheme



The National Student
Financial Aid Scheme
(NSFAS) Vital Statistics:

2018

Background and the objective of the Vital Statistics series

The NSFAS Act NO 56 of 1999 sets out the functions of NSFAS as the:

- a. allocation of funds for loans and bursaries to eligible students;
- b. development of criteria and conditions for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students in consultation with the Minister;
- c. raising of funds as contemplated in section 14(1);
- d. recovery of loans;
- e. maintenance and analysis of a database and undertaking research for the better utilisation of financial resources;
- f. advising of the Minister on matters relating to student financial aid; and
- g. performance of other functions assigned to it by this Act or by the Minister.”

The Vital Statistics Series provides a formalized document that, on an annual basis, will present and regularly communicate information based on a descriptive analysis of available NSFAS data. This aligns with fulfilling mandates e), b) and f). The greater communication and availability of NSFAS data will assist in the post-school education and training (PSET) system evaluation of the role of student financial aid in reaching education and training, and broader societal goals in South Africa.

The series aims to provide the latest audited data available on NSFAS funded students in an easy to use and consistent format. This inaugural issue will only present 2018 data . Most of the graphs in the publication are based on data extracted from the NSFAS Business Intelligence, Operational Data Store (ODS) and Phoenix (payment) systems. The NSFAS Vital Statistics document is designed to provide consistent messaging and reporting.

This issue will report along four key areas:

- **Area 1:** Who applies for NSFAS funding?
- **Area 2:** Who does NSFAS fund?
- **Area 3:** How much money is spent, on what and where?
- **Area 4:** Performance of students funded by NSFAS?

Introduction

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has a very clear social mission: to alleviate financial constraint for admission to post school education and training (PSET) for those that are academically qualified. The scheme focusses on increasing accessibility of the poor and other marginalized groups to public universities and Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) colleges. In 2018 NSFAS implemented two major changes announced in the Presidential pronouncement of December 2017;

- household income limit for the assessment of financial eligibility, increased from R122,000 p.a. to R350,000 p.a.
- from 2018, all support would be in the form of a bursary, rather than a combination of bursary and loan.

A key expectation based on the change in funding policy, is that 2018 would see an increase in demand for bursaries and substantially increased disbursements to students. That is why certain sections differentiate between applications, financially and academically eligible individuals, and disbursements.



In **2018**

NSFAS received over 500 000 applications and funded over 600 000 students

Majority of NSFAS funded students are

FEMALE

The overwhelming majority of NSFAS beneficiaries are

AFRICAN

The majority of NSFAS funded students can be found at

UNIVERSITIES



The majority of NSFAS applications come from KZN

The majority of NSFAS beneficiaries are found in institutions in GAUTENG

In 2018 NSFAS disbursed a total of

R20,6 billion

across South African public PSET institutions

NSFAS funded students constituted roughly a quarter of graduates in 2016.

NSFAS funded graduates are relatively equally distributed in terms broad field of study:

- Education **(26%)**
- Business, Economics and Management studies **(23%)**
- Science and Engineering related studies **(24%)**
- Humanities with **(27%)**

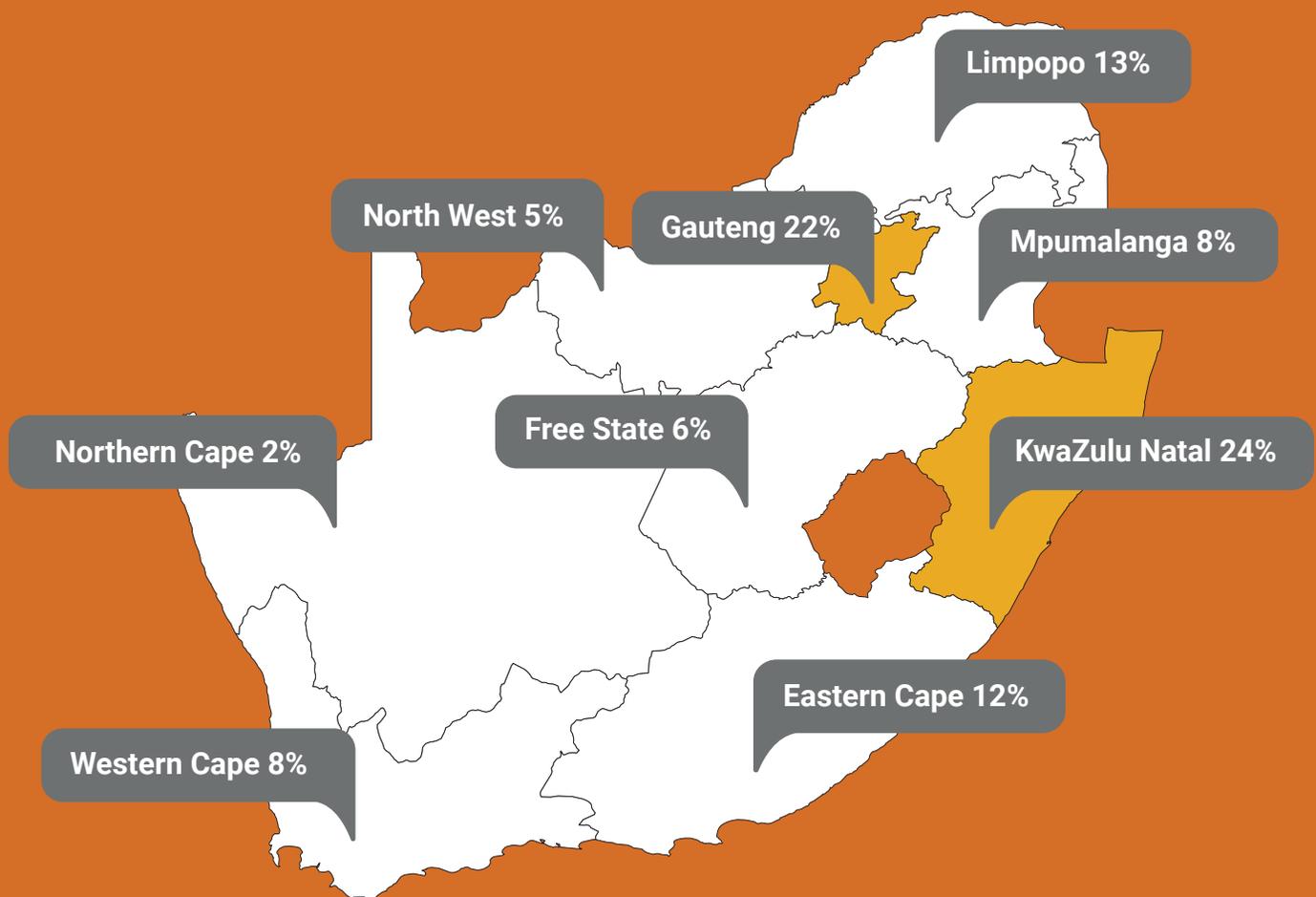


area 1

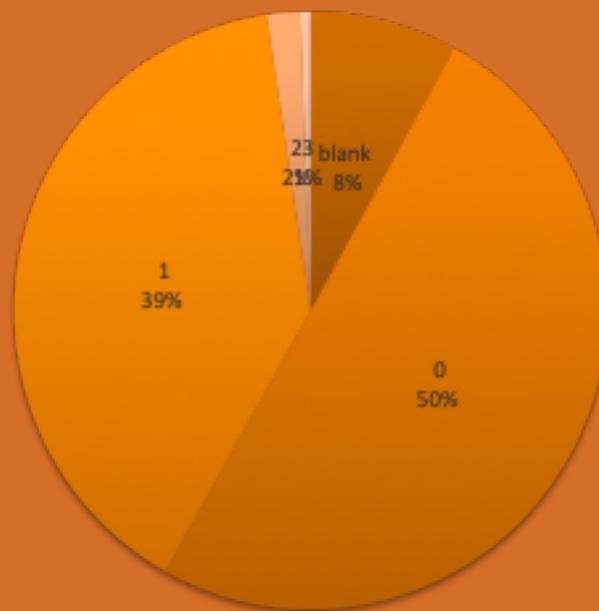
Who applies to NSFAS?

In 2018 NSFAS received a total of **522 176** applications.

Of these the majority came from KZN (23.9%) and Gauteng (22.3%) provinces, with the smallest proportions of applications coming from the Northern Cape (1.5%). This does not compare poorly with the provincial proportions in terms of schooling participation; where the Western Cape constitutes 9.3%, Eastern Cape 12.9%, Kwazulu-Natal 20.8%, Free State 5.3%, Northern Cape 2%, North-West 6.4%, Gauteng 22.4%, Limpopo 12.4% and Mpumalanga 8.3%.



An explicit goal of the social support system in the country is ensuring that vulnerable and marginalized social groups receive available support as quickly and efficiently as possible. Since 2017 there has been consistent effort to grow this cohort of applicants for NSFAS support.



2018 NSFAS applications, disaggregated by number of siblings also studying

In 2018, about 9% of applications came from individuals from families that receive social grant support (aka SASSA applicants) (47 177).

9%

To better understand and serve our applicant base, it was interesting to note that the majority of applicants in 2018 did not have other siblings that were studying at the time (50%).

50%

A substantial proportion of applicants' families however do have at least 1 other sibling also attempting to complete a qualification (39%) at the time of application.

39%

area 2

Who does NSFAS fund?

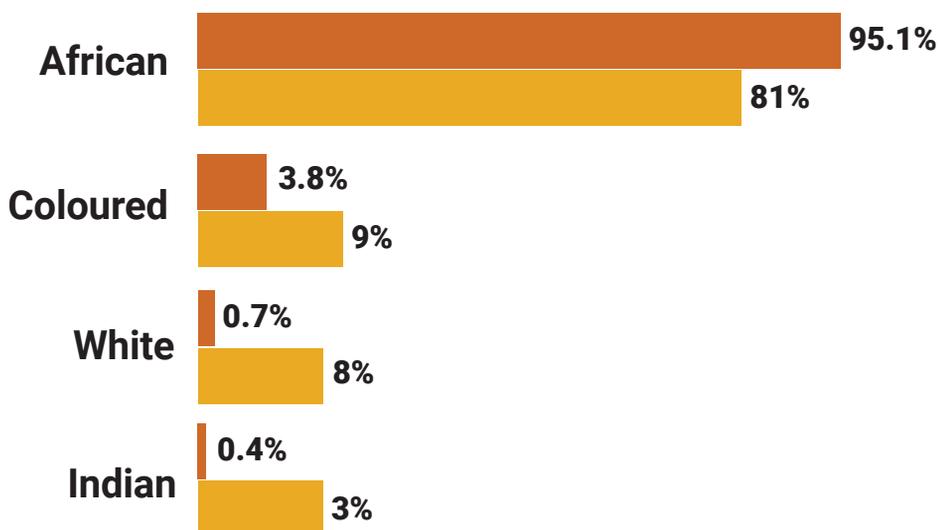
Demographic, 2018

In 2018 a total of **607 129** students met both the academic and financial eligibility criteria to benefit from the DHET Bursary Scheme, administered by NSFAS. Of these:



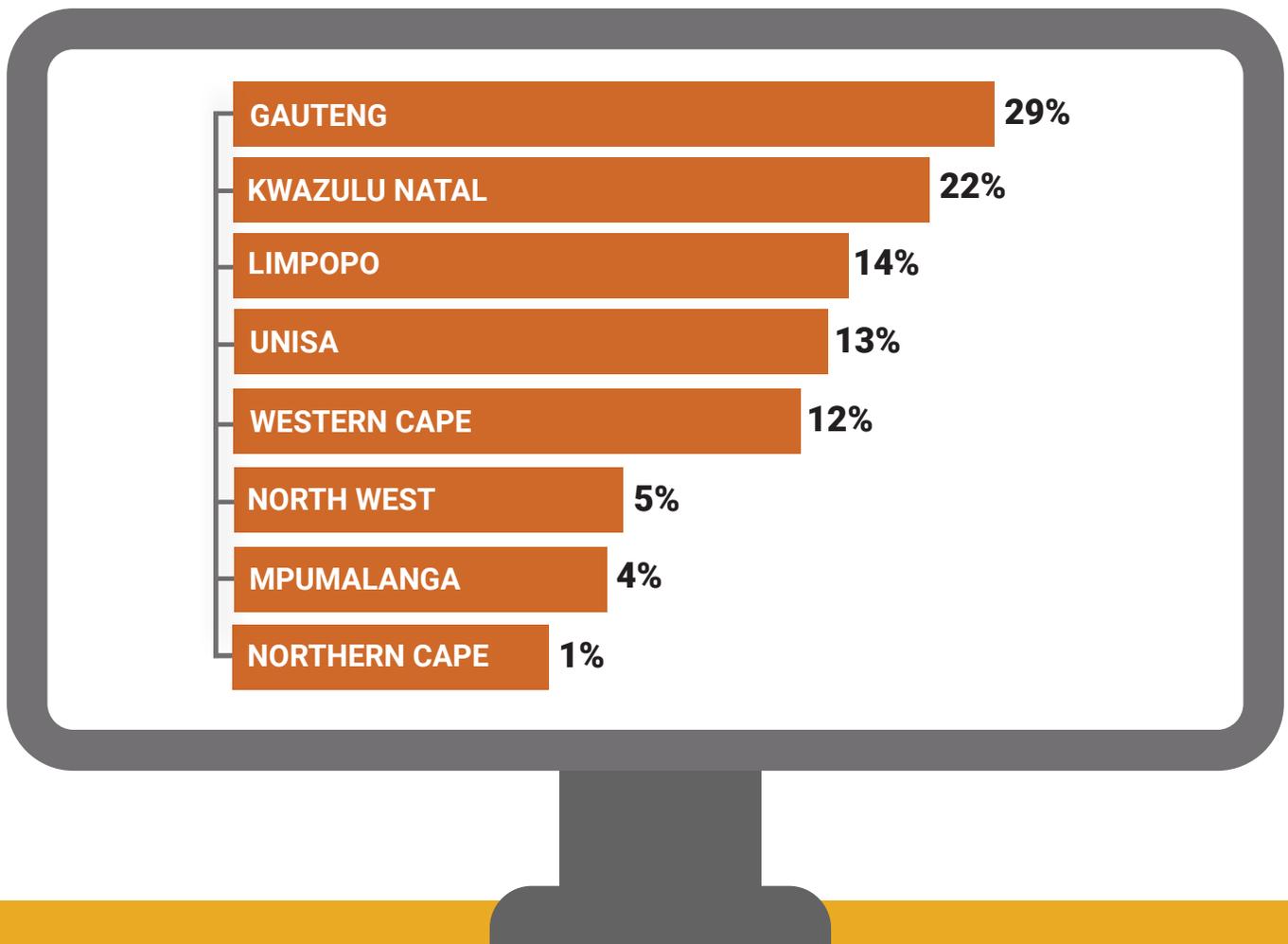
61.4% 372 617 were females **38.6%** 234 512 were male

The overwhelming majority of beneficiaries were African students (95.1%), followed by Coloured students (3.8%), White students (0.7%) and Indian students (0.4%). The proportion of African students is some 14% higher than the proportion of Africans in South African society. Coloured, White and Indian students are all underrepresented, compared to society by 5%, 7.3% and 2.6%, respectively. The overwhelming majority of 2018 NSFAS funded students are under the age of 35 (95%), with a small proportion being over the age of 35 (5%).



■ NSFAS Funded ■ South Africa

Locational profile, 2018



In accordance with the **location of institutions**, the majority of beneficiaries can be found at institutions located in Gauteng (26%) and KZN (20%). In the main, the origin of applications aligns well with province of study. It is only in Gauteng (22% of applications compared to 26% of NSFAS beneficiaries studying there), KZN (24% of applications compared to 20% of NSFAS beneficiaries studying there) and Mpumalanga (8% of applications compared to 3.5% of NSFAS beneficiaries studying there) that there are notable deviations between provincial proportions of applications in comparison to provincial proportions of location of study.

Universities

The majority of NSFAS funded students can be found at universities. Across 26 Universities a total of 352 401 students were funded for the 2018 academic year. In line with NSFAS funding policy, the majority of NSFAS funded students are registered for undergraduate qualifications:

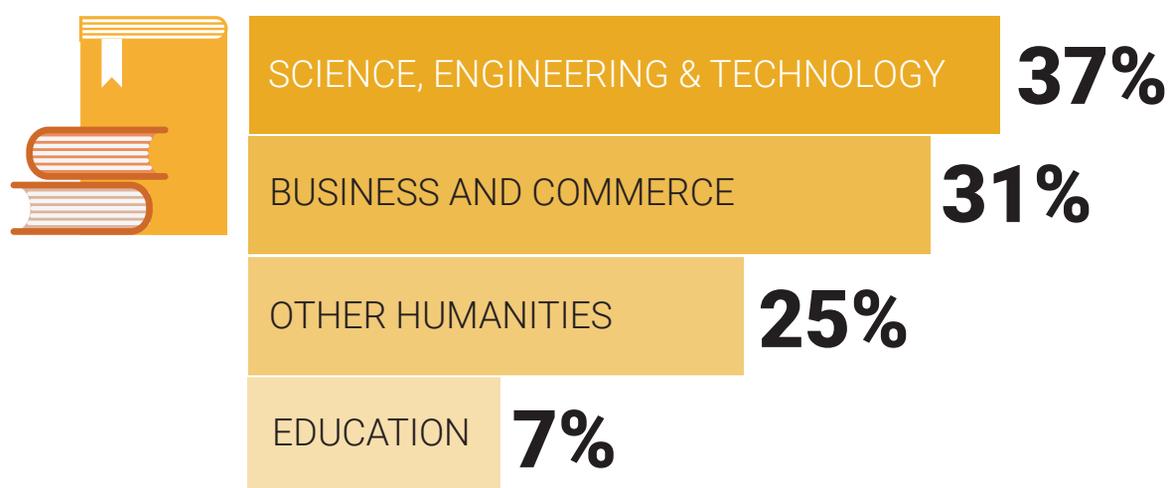
2018 UNIVERSITY NSFAS FUNDED STUDENTS BY QUALIFICATION TYPE

59.5%	BACHELORS
24.1%	NATIONAL DIPLOMAS
3.3%	HIGHER CERTIFICATE ABET
2.8%	HIGHER CERTIFICATE
1.0%	POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA
0.5%	POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATE
0.5%	HONOURS
0.5%	B TECH
0.1%	MASTERS
0.001%	PHD
7.8%	UNCLASSIFIED

A set list of eligible post-graduate qualifications explains why there would be a proportion of 2018 NSFAS funded students that received funding for post-graduate graduate qualifications (less than 1% for each category). A small number of Masters (0.1%), Doctoral (0.001%) qualifications have been erroneously supported.

The proportion of unclassified qualifications could be due to poor classification when uploading into the ODS or could derive from poor classification at institutional level and is an area where improvement is required.

2018 University NSFAS funded students by field of study



Furthermore, the most NSFAS funded students were funded for qualifications from the broad field of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) (37%), followed by Business and Commerce (31%); other humanities (25%) and Education at (7%). For the Humanities the majority of NSFAS funded students were found in the Arts and related studies (7%) and the smallest proportions come from the field of Philosophy, Religion and Theology (1%). The largest proportion of SET NSFAS funded students are from the fields of Engineering (20%), and smallest from the Architecture (1%).

TVET Colleges

Across 50 TVET colleges a total of

255 205

were funded for the 2018 academic year.

The majority of NSFAS funded students at TVET Colleges in 2018, were enrolled for Report 191 programmes

71%

with the minority enrolled in NCV programmes

29%

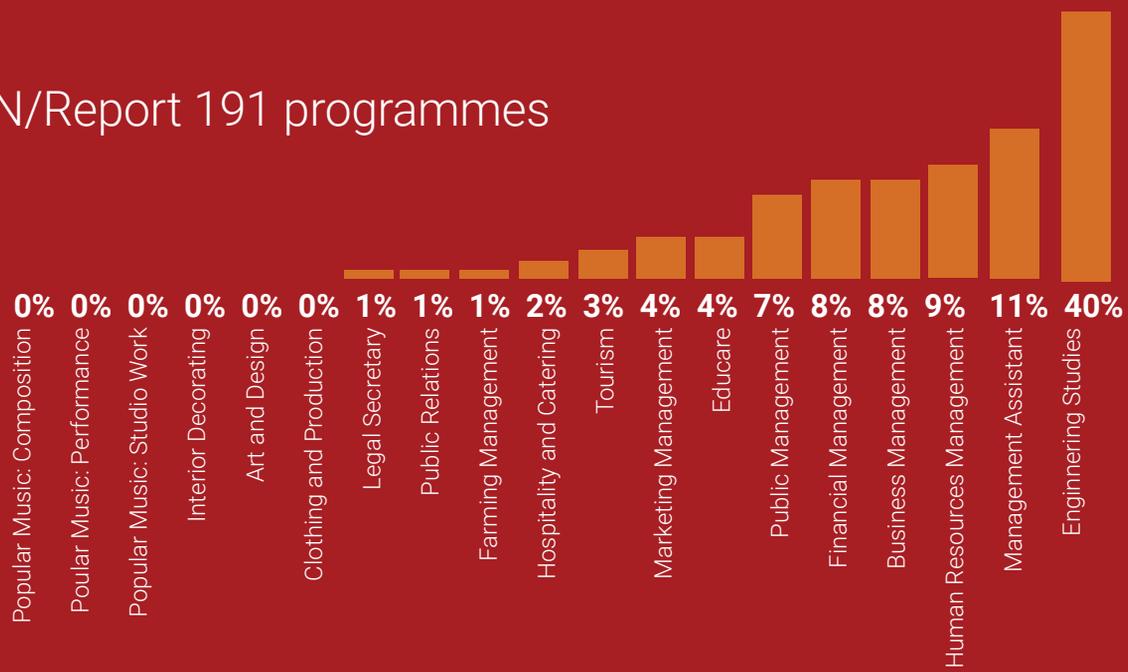


The majority of students enrolled in Report 191 programmes were enrolled for Engineering studies.

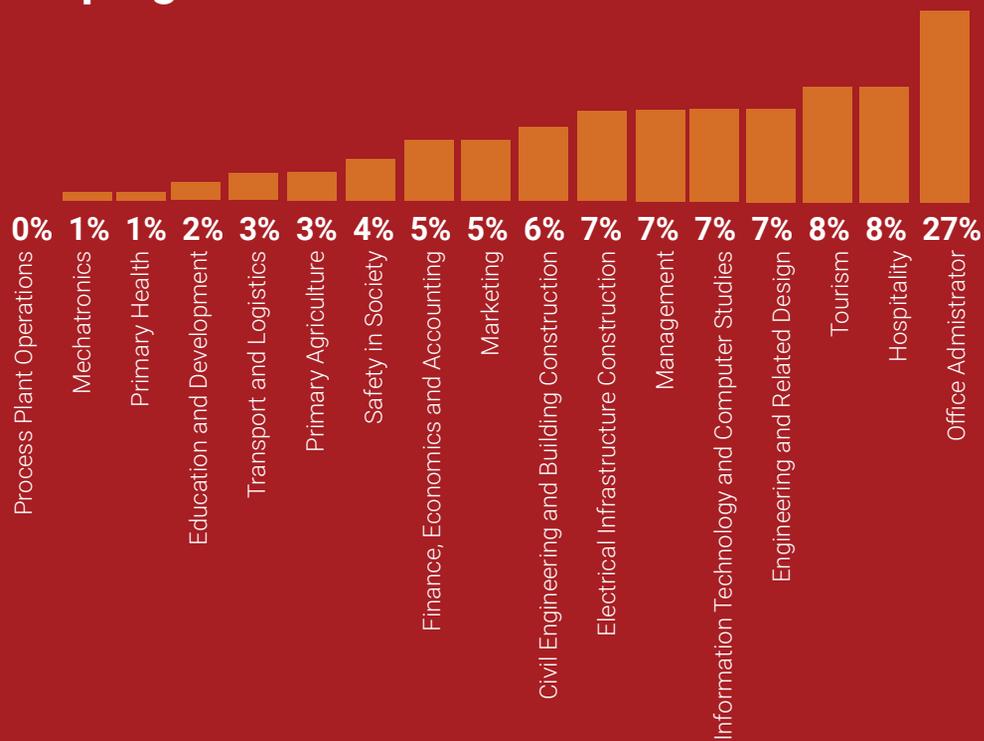
For **NCV programmes**, the majority of students were studying in Office Administration

Treasury guidelines for TVET funding indicates that TVETS only receive 20% of the fees proportion from NSFAS and the remainder coming directly from DHET.

N/Report 191 programmes



2018 TVET NSFAS funded students by qualification: NCV programmes



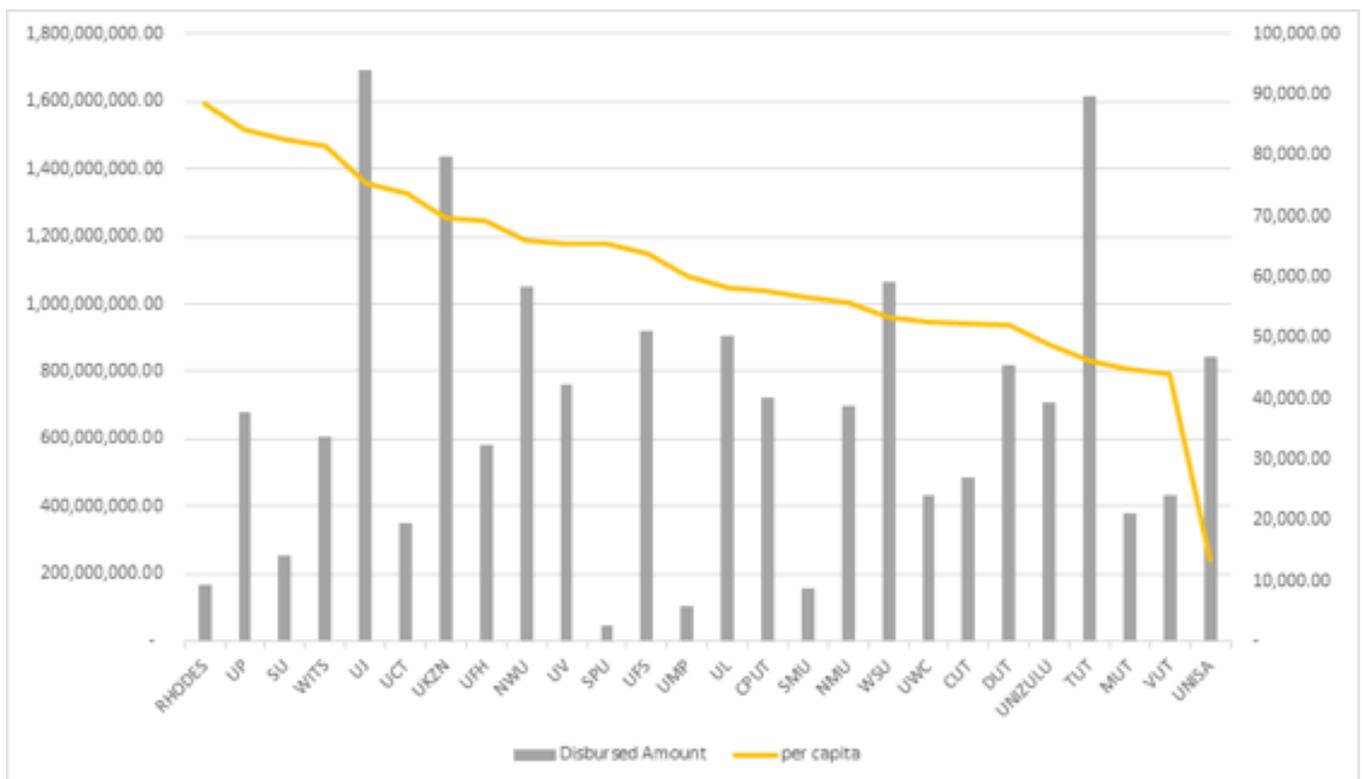
area 3 How much money is spent, on what and where?

■ To which institutions, 2018

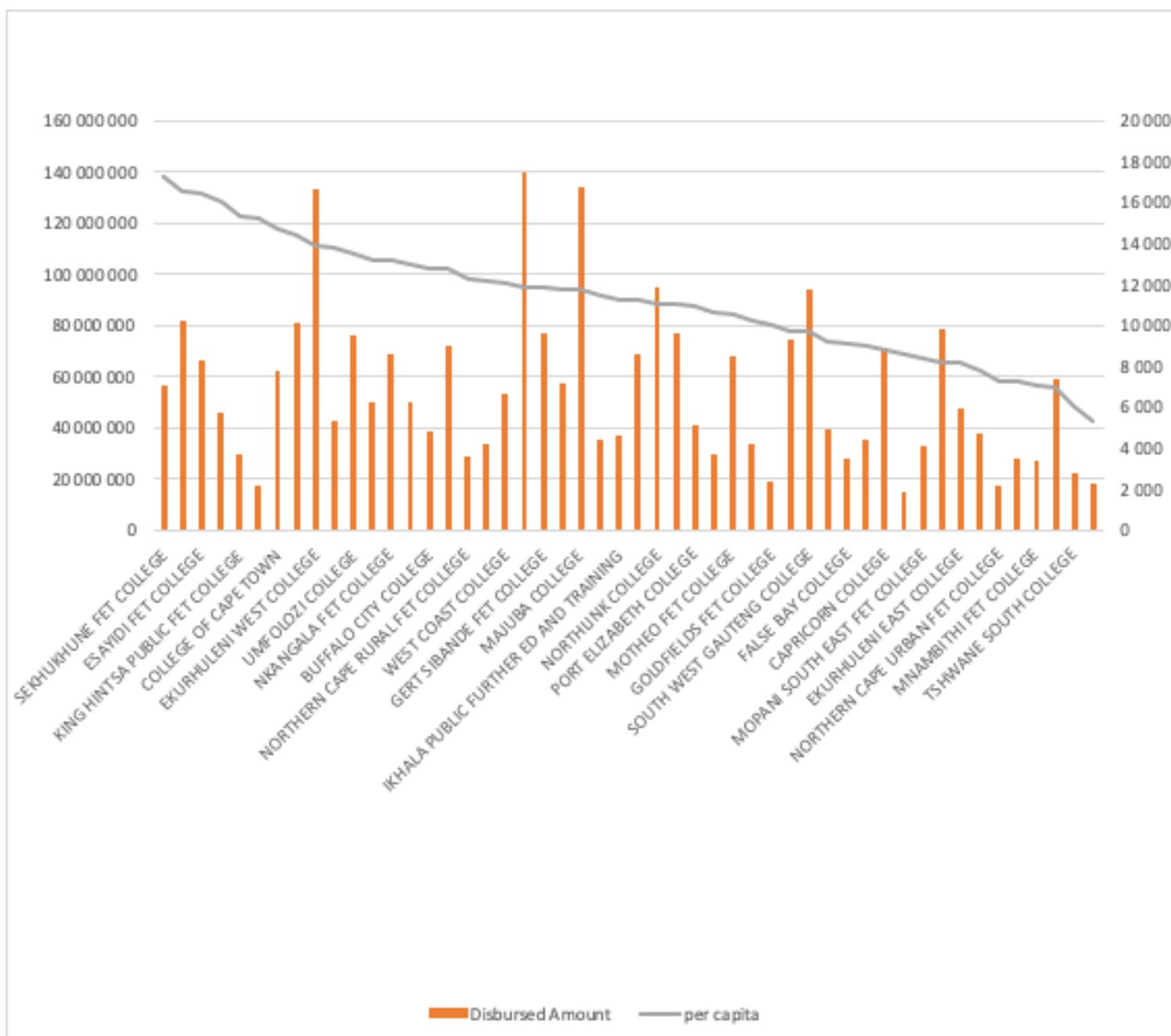
In 2018 NSFAS disbursed a total of R21,1 billion across South African public PSET institutions, with Universities accounting for 18.2 billion and TVETs 2.9 billion aligning with the treasury guidelines for TVET funding which indicates that TVETs only receive 20% of the fees proportion from NSFAS and the remainder coming directly from DHET. The Figure below represents actual disbursement values for universities for 2018 per institution.

From the data UJ, UKZN and TUT received the highest disbursement amounts, with SPU, UMP and SMU the least. Using the number of students funded against the disbursed amount per institution results in a per capita funding rate, which shows a range in funding at Universities from a minimum of R13 605 to a maximum of R88 633. This works out to an average per capita spend on students of R62 000, with a standard deviation of roughly R18 000.

When the number of students funded at each institution is taken into account, we find that UNISA (R 13 605) and VUT (R44 095) are the institutions with the lowest NSFAS per capita spend and Rhodes (R88 633), UP (R83 932), SU (R82 636) and WITS (R81 688) have the highest NSFAS per capita spend.



The figure below represents actual disbursement values for TVET Colleges for 2018 per institution. From the data Vhembe, Majuba and Ekurhuleni West College received the highest disbursement amounts, with Lephalale, Northern Cape Urban and Flavius Mareka Colleges receiving the least. Using the number of students funded against the disbursed amount per institution results in a per capita funding rate, which shows a large range in funding at TVET Colleges from a minimum of R5 788 to a maximum of R19 777, with an average cost of roughly R12 000, and a spread of costs with a standard deviation of roughly R3 000. When the number of students funded at each institution is taken into account, we find that Flavius Mareka (R5 788) and Tshwane South College (R6 290) are the institutions with the lowest NSFAS per capita spend and Sekhukhune (R18 383), Esayidi (R19 777) and Ehlanzeni (R17 267) have the highest NSFAS per capita spend.



area 4 Performance of students funded by NSFAS?

Completion and/or graduation

Establishing performance of NSFAS-funded students in the absence of tracer or cohort study data will always be only a rough and crude measure. Towards establishing some measure of performance of NSFAS funded students, in this document we calculate the proportion of NSFAS funded students that graduated in 2016. We will repeat the calculation of this indicator annually. In doing so we hope to establish a robust measure of trends in the relative success of NSFAS funded students over time.

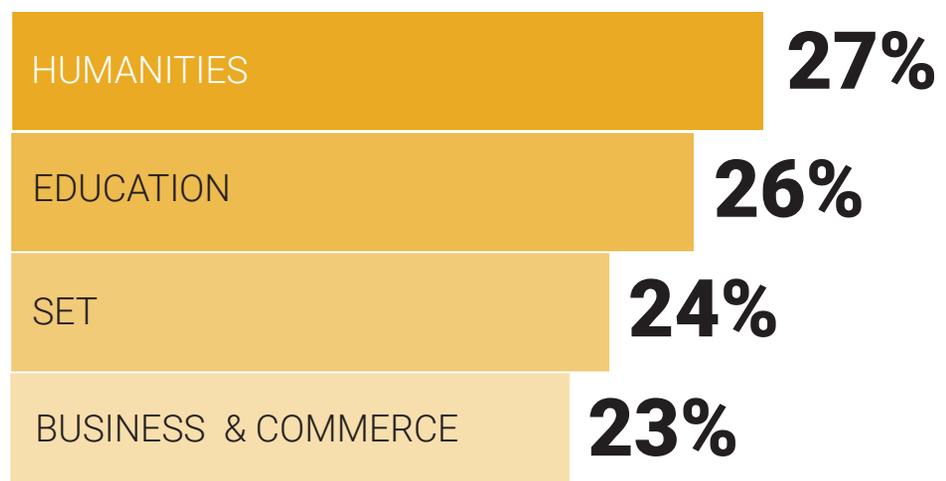


It was possible to identify **53 623** NSFAS funded students that had graduated in 2016. The total number of graduates from public HEIs in 2016 was **203 096**. This means that NSFAS funded students constituted

26,4%
of graduates in 2016

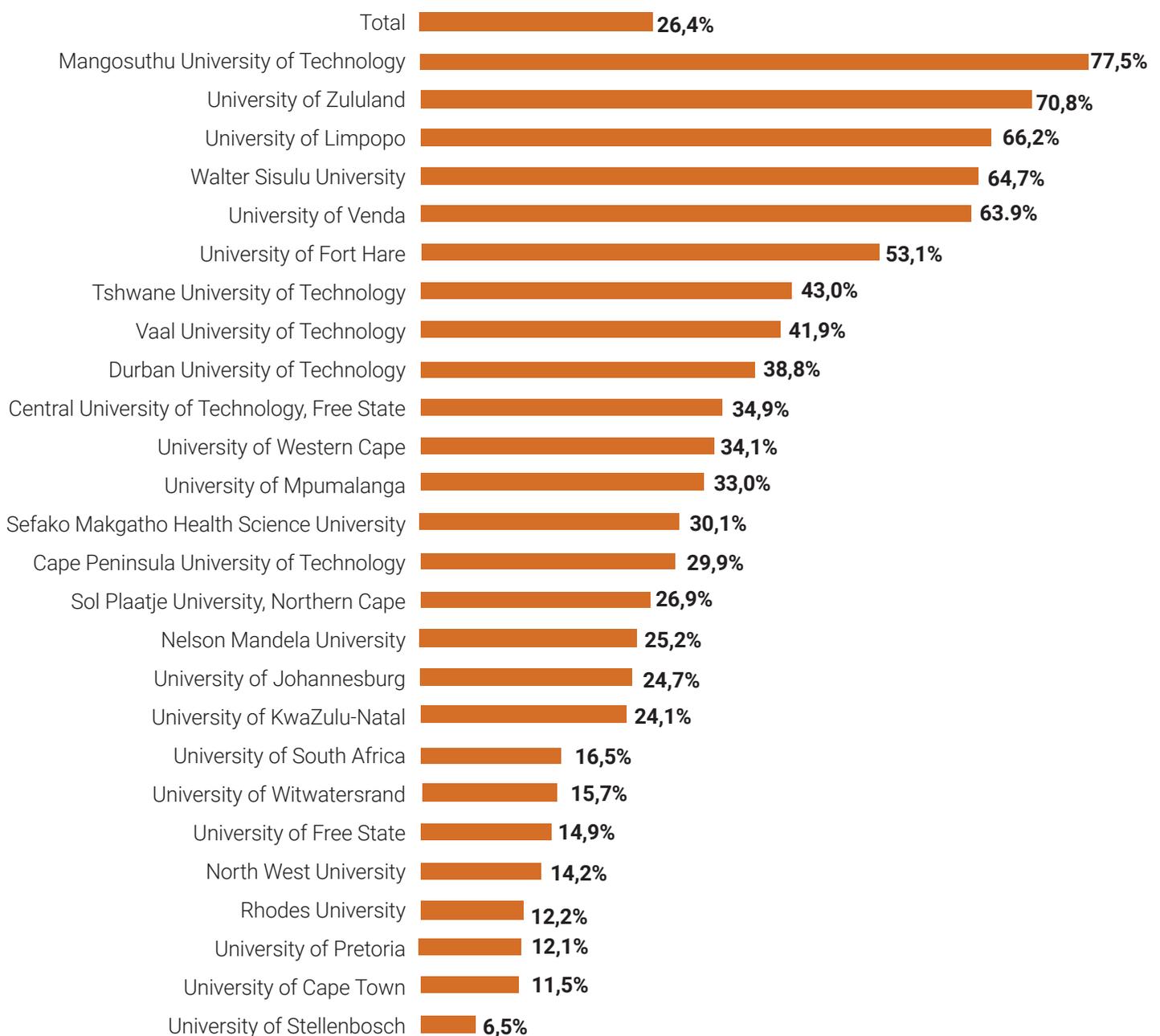
In which fields of study

This figure depicts the proportion of NSFAS funded students who graduated in 2016 disaggregated by broad field of study. From the figure above, we see that the most NSFAS funded graduates came from the broad field of Humanities (27%), followed by Education (26%); Science, Engineering and Technology (24%) and Business, Economics and Management studies at (23%). For the Humanities the majority of graduates can be found in the Social Sciences (29%) and the smallest proportions come from the field of Philosophy, Religion and Theology (2%). The largest proportion SET graduates are from the fields of Engineering (19%), and smallest from the Architecture (5%).



Which institutions?

The figure below illustrates the disaggregation of this overall statistic by institution. The variation in proportion by institution is important to reflect, but it is a statistic that must be interpreted carefully. We present these proportions as baselines for trend analysis, but of course the average proportion that NSFAS funded students constitute at each institution needs to be taken into account in assessing the extent to which this indicator is a measure success. For example, based on 2018 data, we know that University of Zululand has the highest proportion of NSFAS funded students, whereas only 10% of SU students are NSFAS funded. The figure shows that NSFAS funded students constitute a very small proportion of 2016 graduates at the University of Stellenbosch (6.5%), while at the University of Zululand (70.8%) and Mangosuthu University of Technology (77.5%), they represent over 70% of graduates. This measure does NOT illustrate throughput, but does indicate the extent to which NSFAS funding has contributed to national and institutional graduation numbers.



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