

# Focusing on job creation and skills development in the province

**L**ooking at the situation since 2014, the provincial economy recorded a growth rate of almost 3% in 2014, but it declined to less than 1% last year.

## Job creation

Premier Refilwe Mtshweni noted that the unemployment rate has increased from 26,6% in 2014 to 32% in 2018.

- The expanded unemployment rate which includes discouraged workers, who have stopped looking for work, was 41,1% at the end of 2018 and the total number of unemployed people according to the expanded definition was 868 809.
- We have recorded a net job creation of 107 350 between 2014 and 2018. This is an average of 26 837 jobs per annum, achieving almost 40% of the provincial job creation target.
- The highest job creation was recorded in finance and utilities industries, with 32 264 and 22 321 jobs created, respectively.
- Through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the province created more than 346 000 work opportunities and over 142 000 full-time equivalents, which translates into an overall figure

of 488 000 employment opportunities.

- Of the 488 000 job opportunities created, 328 876 were apportioned to women, 292 803 youth and 8 872 people living with disabilities.
- For economic empowerment, through the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, we awarded 30% of all contracts to women and 15% to youth.

## Skills development

To address skills shortages from the youth, the province has customised the National Skills Development Strategy and forged informed partnerships with the private sector.

- The solid partnership with Sasol has resulted in 45 874 students attending Techno X in 2015 and 2017. Techno X is a mathematics, science and technology orientated expo which aims to inspire learners towards careers in that field.
- MRTT, TVET colleges, private sector and SETAs such as Construction SETA (CETA), Manufacturing and Engineering SETA (merSETA), Chemical Industries SETA (CHIETA) and Mining Qualifications Authority (Mining SETA) contribute immensely to the much needed number of artisans

in our province.

- The province has increased the number of young people attending at TVET colleges to 40 000 annually. The enrolment figures at TVET colleges have doubled in the last five years. The Department of Higher Education and Training indicate that 6 413 students in the province have in the past five years qualified as artisans.

“In encouraging life-long learning and increasing the capacity of the state to deliver maximum public value, over 32 000 employees have been trained on various programmes. One of the key milestones within this period is the establishment and operation of the University of Mpumalanga (UMP), which provides a closer access to higher education for our youth.

“The programme offering since inception has increased to 13 study fields with an additional 16 new areas of study by 2021. Since 2014 student enrolment has increased immensely. We have enrolled 6 612 and a further 3 406 are projected to be enrolled in the current financial year. We are proud to announce that positive returns in our investment on higher education are emerging. A total of 569 students have already graduated in 2018, with a further 661 expected to graduate in 2019.