



**YOUTH IN TOURISM
SURVEY
09 JUNE 2023**

According to the National Youth Policy 2020–2030, the youth population in South Africa, comprised of individuals aged 15 to 34 years, is diverse and significant, making up 36%¹ of the total population. This demographic is characterised by various cultural, linguistic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds, influenced by the country's history and ongoing social inequalities.

Youth unemployment is a major issue in South Africa, and according to StatsSA's Labour force survey (Q1 2023), unemployment among the youth is higher than most other age groups² at 51.4%.

[When considering global statistics for youth, "15–24" is the benchmark used by Trading Economics⁴; to define youth, therefore, this age group was used only for comparative purposes, and several countries have notable youth unemployment rates. As of March 2023, South Africa has the highest youth unemployment rate at 62.1%. As of December 2020, Nigeria had a youth unemployment rate of 53.4%. As of April 2023, Spain had a youth unemployment rate of 28.4%, while Greece and Italy, as of April 2023, had rates of 27.4% and 20.4%, respectively. These figures provide comparative insights into the youth unemployment situation in these countries, with South Africa displaying the highest unemployment rate among youth within the "15–24" age category].

Recognising the diverse landscape of the youth population in South Africa, along with their challenges and aspirations, is crucial for developing effective policies, programs, and initiatives that cater to their needs, unlock their potential, and foster a more inclusive and prosperous society.

Empowering youth through education and skills development is vital for their advancement. Given the high unemployment, implementing programs designed to equip and empower youth is most important; however, this function depends on the government and the private sector.

A recent survey conducted by South African Tourism³ provides insights into the views of the youth in Tourism from those who participated in the survey. The survey took place between May and June 2023 and included respondents from across South Africa's nine provinces. The purpose of the survey was to understand the conditions of work for youth in the tourism industry and identify identifiable challenges and opportunities according to youth in the tourism industry. Analyzing the survey results helps identify the specific requirements for training, professional development, inclusion, and career progression among young workers. Addressing these needs will help retain talented youth, providing the tourism industry a competitive advantage.

Sources:

1. https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202103/nationalyouthpolicy.pdf
2. Quarterly Labour Force Survey – Q1 2023 (StatsSA)
3. SAT Youth Survey conducted in May and June 2023 (sample achieved 127)
4. [https://tradingeconomics.com/Youth Unemployment Rate - Countries - List \(tradingeconomics.com\)](https://tradingeconomics.com/Youth Unemployment Rate - Countries - List (tradingeconomics.com))

Objective

To understand;
The state of Tourism according to the Youth of South Africa,
What according to the Youth are the opportunities and challenges in the industry as well as;
What the future of Tourism could possibly look like in South Africa

Data collection & Sample



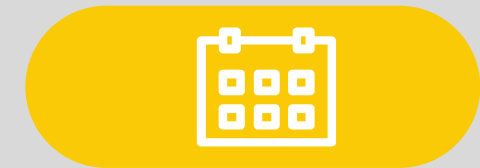
Who?

Convenience Sample of Youth in Tourism.
(Age 18 – 35)
Sample Achieved 127



What?

Online
Self complete survey -
on the state of Tourism according to Youth



When?

22 May – 07 June 2023



DEMOGRAPHICS



The national Youth Policy defines youth as any persons between the ages of 14 and 35 years. This is a very broad definition of youth. It is a definition that embraces varied categories of the youth, which have been exposed to different socio-political and historical experiences. For the study we focused on 18 – 35 as consent is required when doing research with anyone younger than 18 years.

Demographics

Profile:

59% Female

54% African (Black), 33% Caucasian (White)

46% of respondents are between 31 to 35 year olds and 45% are between ages 24 to 30 years old

Participants were from all nine provinces however, Gauteng (28%), Western Cape (28%) and KwaZulu Natal (14%) had the highest response rate.

Education level:

45% have obtained tertiary education (either a university or college), and 28% have a post graduate qualification.

30% are entry level employees,

23% of respondents are Executive level

6% internship

Employment:

29% are Self Employed and 61% are in fulltime employ in the following; Tour operation (31%); Accommodation establishments (15%) and Travel agencies (14%).

52% work 40 hours or more a week.

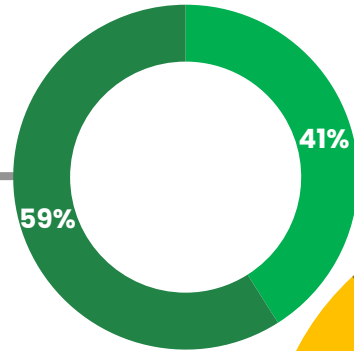
43% of youth (respondents) have a monthly salary of less than R10 000, and 39% have monthly salary of between R10 000 and R30 000

46% of self employed youth mention their company annual revenue is less than R100 000 per annum, whilst 19% claim an annual revenue of between R1 million and R10 million.

DEMOGRAPHICS 1/2

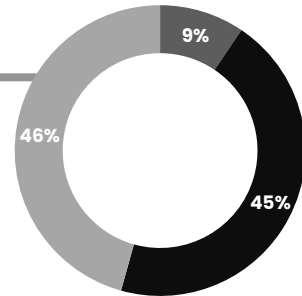
GENDER

Female	59%
Male	41%



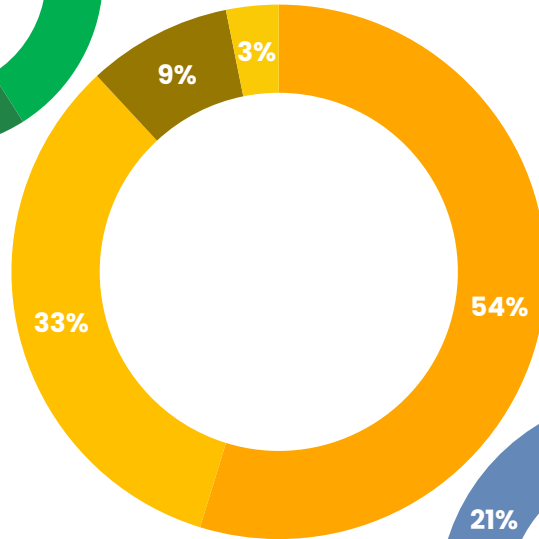
AGE

18 - 23	9%
24 - 30	45%
31 - 35	46%



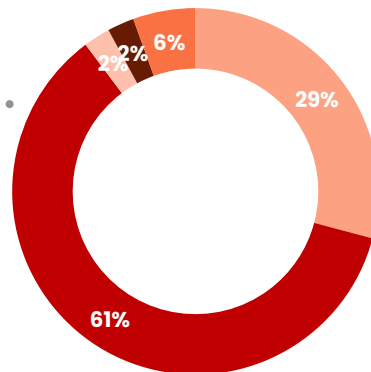
RACE

African (Black)	54%
Caucasian (White)	33%
Coloured	9%
Indian	3%



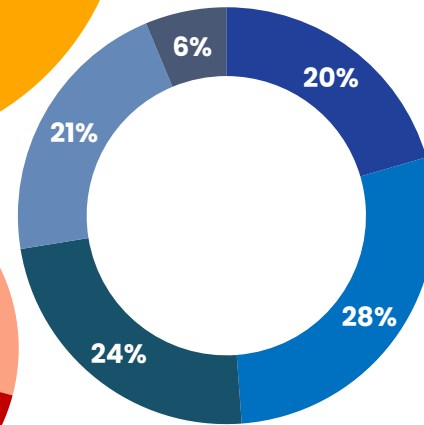
EMPLOYMENT TYPE

Self employed	29%
Employed F/T	61%
Employed P/T	2%
Employed PT / FT Student	2%
Internship	6%



QUALIFICATION

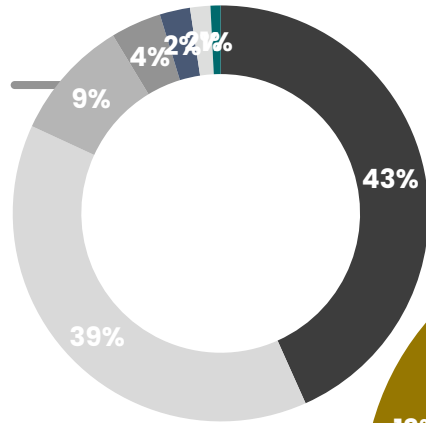
High school	20%
Post-graduate	28%
Technical / College	24%
University degree	21%



DEMOGRAPHICS 2/2

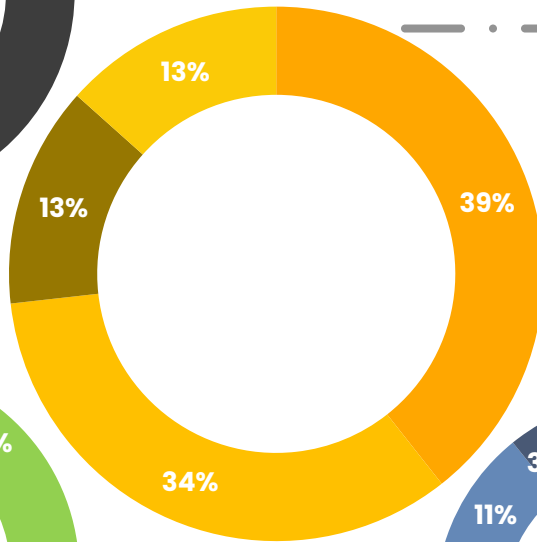
MONTHLY SALARY

<R10 000	43%
R10 000 – R30 000	39%
R31 000 – R50 000	9%
Not specified	4%
R51 000 – R75 000	2%
> R150 000	2%
R101 000 – R150 000	1%



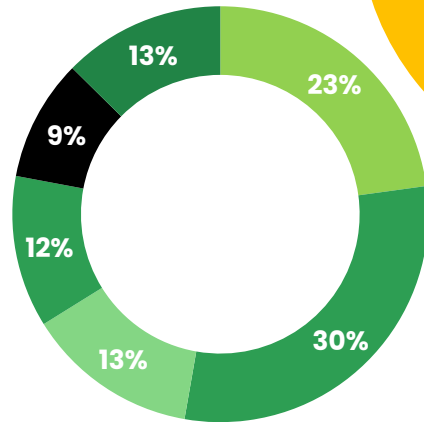
HOURS PER WEEK

41 – 60 hours	39%
40 hours	34%
Less than 40 hours	13%
More than 60 hours	13%



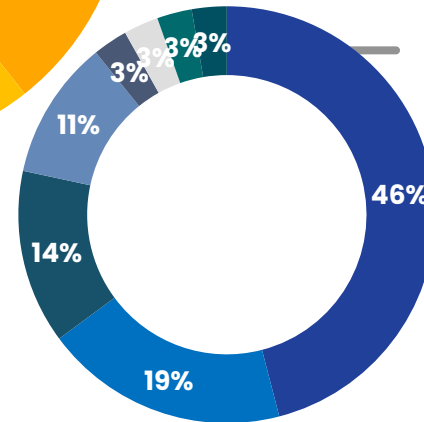
JOB PROFILE

Executive	23%
Junior / Entry level	30%
Junior manager	13%
Senior manager	12%



*ANNUAL REVENUE

<R100 000	46%
R1,1 Million – R10 Million	19%
R101 000 – R150 000	14%
R151 000 – R250 000	11%
R10,1 Million – R15 Million	3%
R251 000 – R600 000	3%
R601 000 – R1 Million	3%
>R15 million	3%



*Asked only to self employed



WORK/LIFE

WORK, CAREER IN TOURSIM

68%

Of youth respondent that is self employed mentioned they have never received training from government

70%

Respondents say their employer is supportive of them on work related stresses

87%

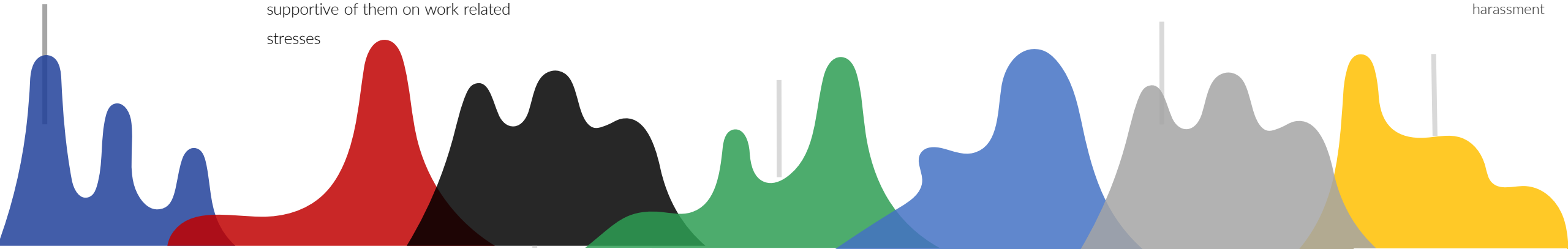
Are likely to advise others to consider a career in tourism

61%

Are always/often able to maintain a work-life balance.

29%

Have experienced some form of discrimination, and 30% have experienced some form of harassment



TRAINING/ DEV

48%

Of respondents that are employed say that they receive regular training

STRESS SUPPORT

WORK/LIFE BALANCE

61%

Are always/often able to maintain a work-life balance.

ADVOCACY

WORKSATISFACTION

73%

7 in 10 say there are satisfied in their current role

WORK HOURS

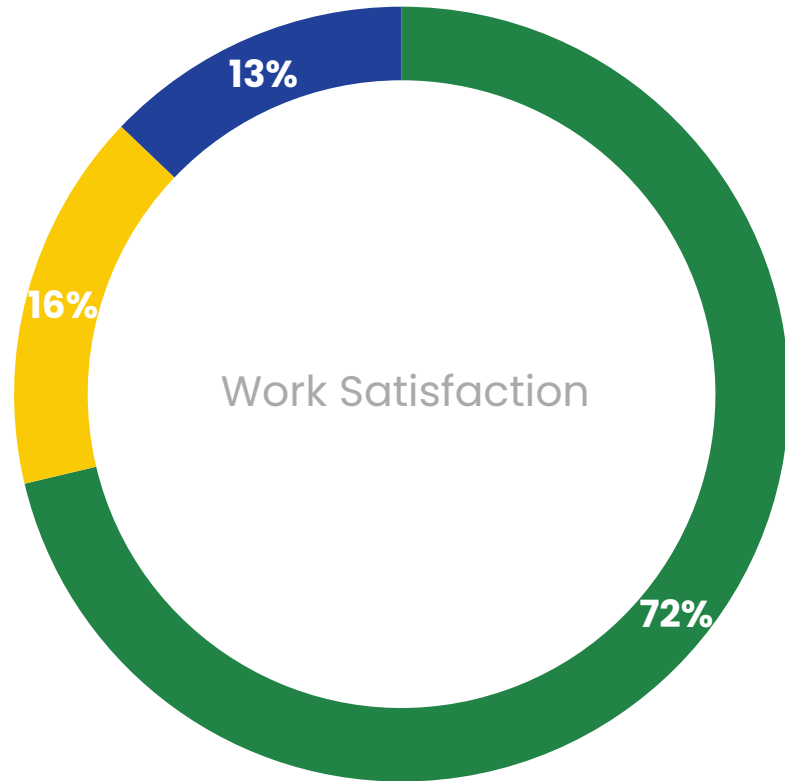
INCLUSIVITY & FAIRNESS

39%

Self employed youth mention having experienced some form of discrimination, and 28% have experienced some form of harassment

WORK SATISFACTION

A considerable number of youth express satisfaction in their current role. Furthermore, they perceive their employer to be supportive towards them, on work-related stress experiences.



■ T2B (Somewhat/Satisfied) ■ Ambivalent ■ B2B (Somewhat / Dissatisfied)

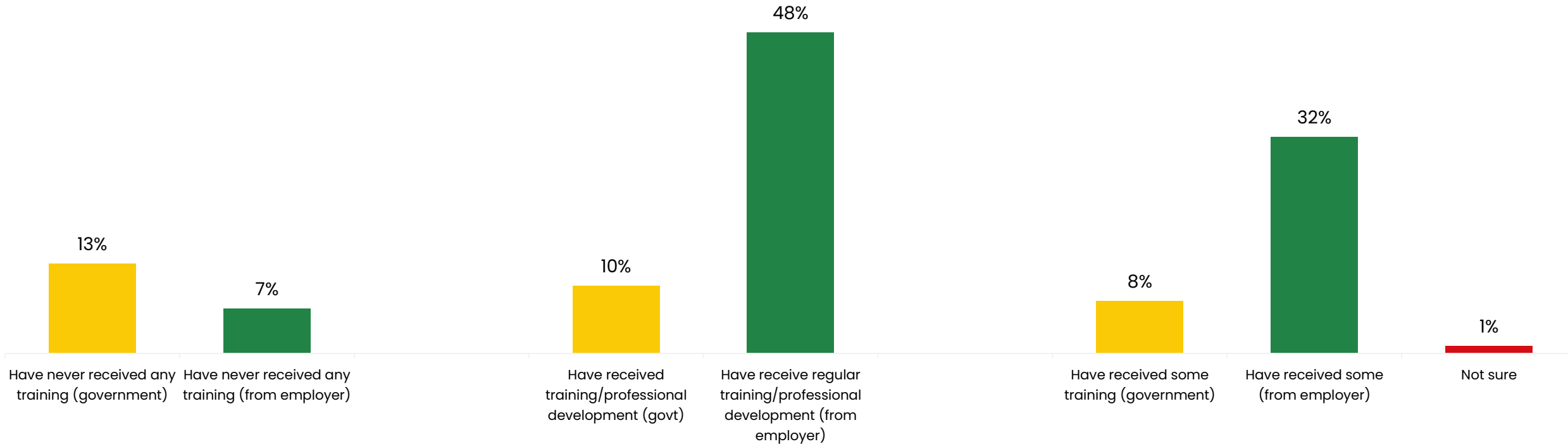
■ T2B (Somewhat / Supported) ■ Ambivalent ■ B2B (Somewhat /Not supported)

On a scale of one to five, where one means dissatisfied and five means satisfied, how satisfied are you with your role currently? (Sample: n = 127)
On a scale of one to five, where one means NOT supportive and five means supportive, how supportive is your employer to you on work-related stress experiences? (Sample: n = 90)

Industry related training and/or professional development

Among the youth interviewed who are employed in the tourism sector, a higher proportion of them are inclined to receive training from their employers rather than from the government.

Training and/or professional development

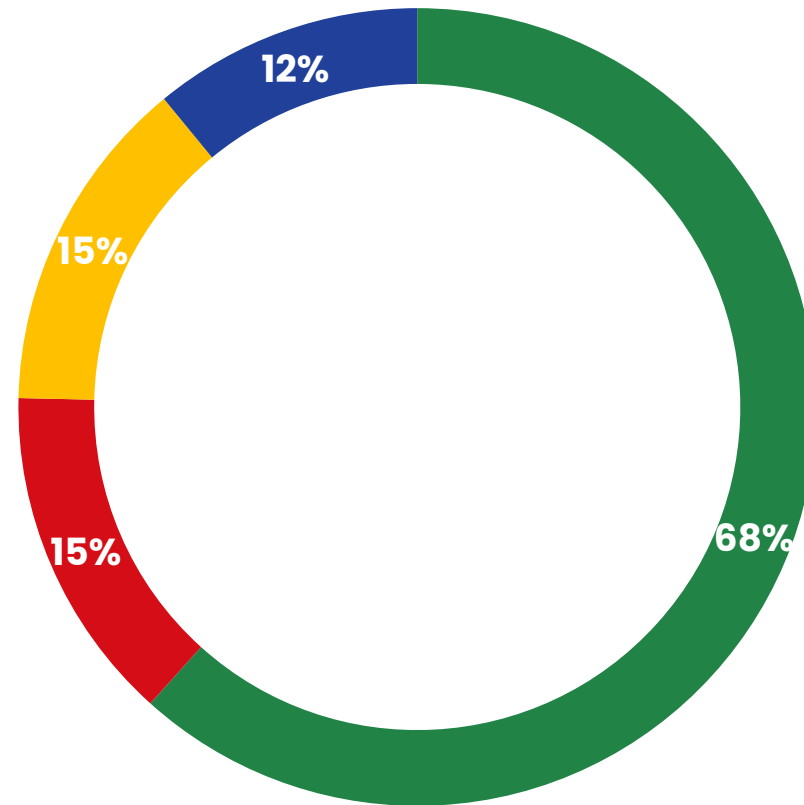


EMPLOYED

Please advise which of the following statements applies to you regarding training and professional development
Sample: n = 90

Industry related training and/or professional development

More than two thirds of self employed respondents claim to have never received any industry training from government



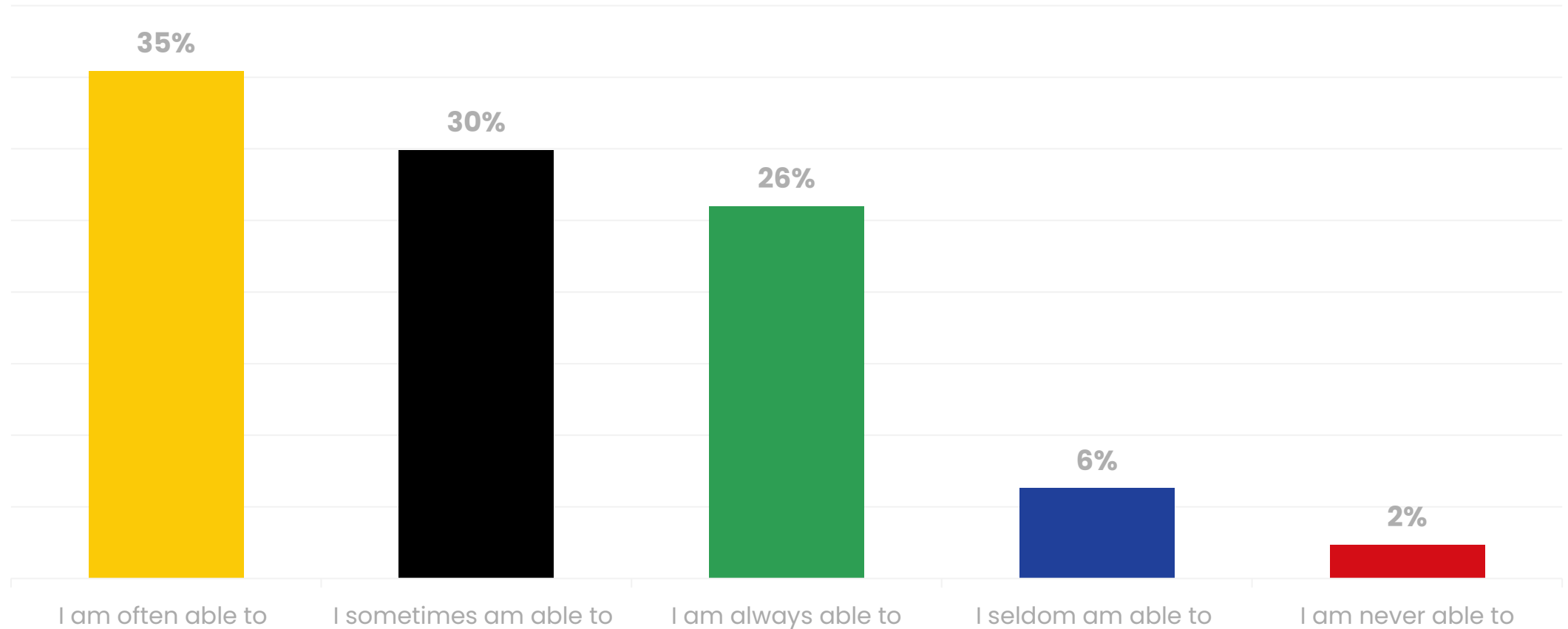
■ Never received ■ Receive training regularly ■ Received some ■ Not sure

SELF EMPLOYED

Please advise which of the following statements applies to you regarding training and professional development
Sample: n = 37

MAINTAINING A WORK LIFE BALANCE

A significant number of youth working in the tourism industry are able to maintain a work-life balance, albeit varying degrees of it



ALL

Are you able to maintain a work/life balance in your current role?
Sample: n = 127

WORK PLACE DISCRIMINATION/HARRASSMENT

About 29% have experienced some form of discrimination either from a colleague, manager or client. Another 30% have encountered instances of harassment in the workplace

	%
I have experienced discrimination from colleague who is not my manager	9%
I have experienced discrimination from Stassi's a customer /client	9%
I have experienced discrimination from someone in management	11%
I have experienced harassment from a colleague who is not my manager	7%
I have experienced harassment from a customer /client	16%
I have experienced harassment from someone in management	7%
Not applicable to me	62%
Not sure	9%

DISCRIMINATION/HARRASSMENT IN THE INDUSTRY

Although some self-employed youth have not had any experiences of harassment or discrimination, some have experienced harassment or discrimination mostly from clients or customers

	%
I have experienced discrimination from a business partner	14%
I have experienced discrimination from a potential investor	5%
I have experienced discrimination from Stassi's a customer /client	19%
I have experienced harassment from a business partner	3%
I have experienced harassment from a customer /client	16%
I have experienced harassment from a potential investor	5%
Not applicable to me	59%
Not sure	11%

SELF EMPLOYED

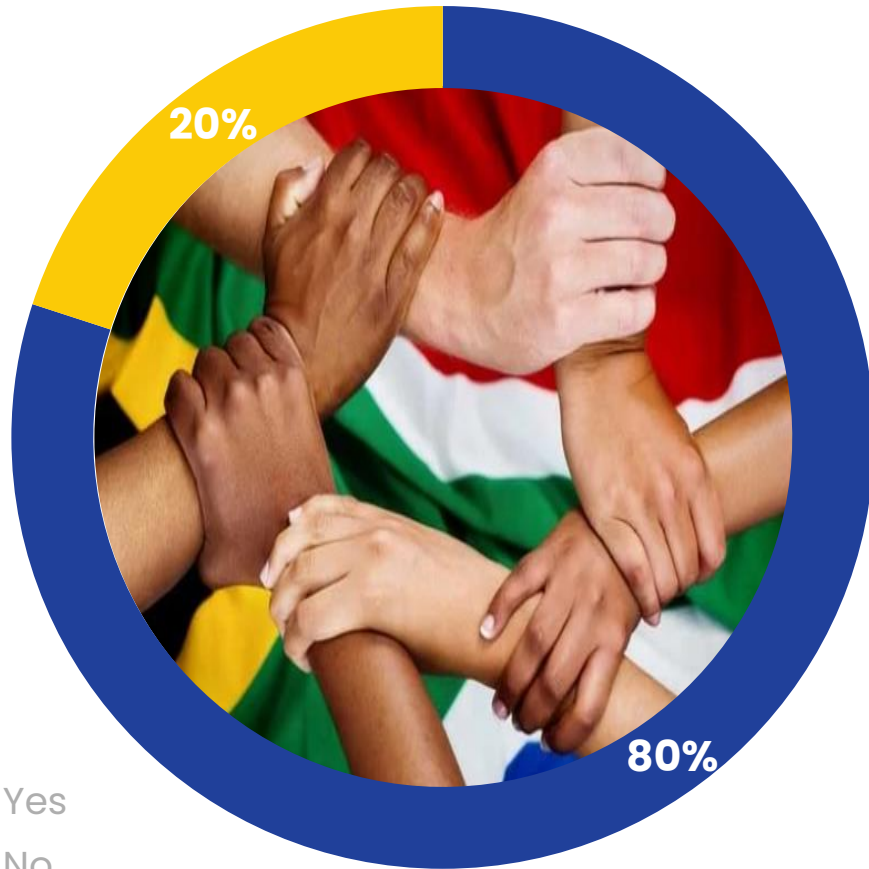
Which of the following, would apply to you regarding discrimination or harassment in the industry?
Asked only to those who are self employed
Sample: n = 37



INDUSTRY

YOUTH REPRESENTATION

4 in 5 respondents feel that there is a lack of youth representation in industry, and that key reasons for such are attributed to gate keeping in the industry, lack of knowledge transference, and that there are biases towards younger people in the industry



■ Yes
■ No

No decent work

“Provide decent work experience while studying so there is some experience when entering the workforce”

Ageist Industry/ Gate Keeping

“Stop only promoting people into **positions based on their age** and how long they have been at a company for...The youth want to know that if we step into the workplace, there will be guaranteed growth...”

Entrepreneurship Support

“Support youth owned small businesses in the tourism industry, implement meaningful mentoring and trainings programmes for the youth in the tourism industry”

ADVOCACY FOR CAREER IN TOURISM

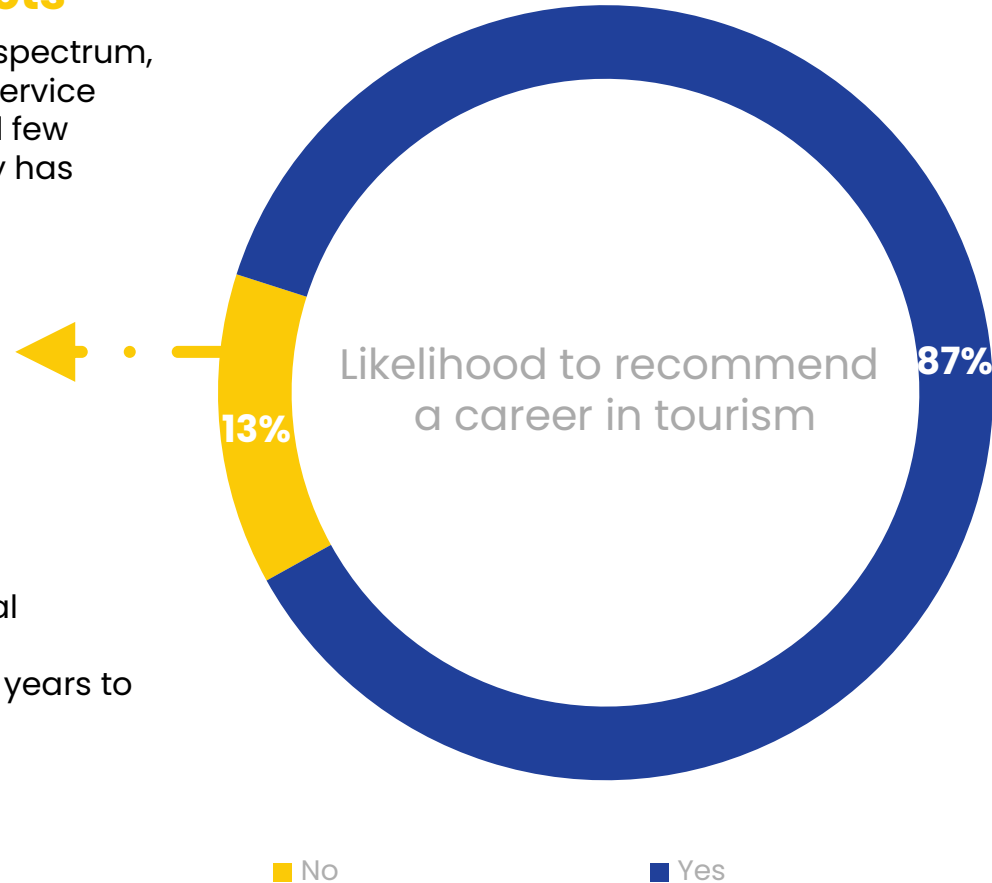
Despite feeling under-represented, respondents are likely to advise other people to consider a career in Tourism, with some showing some degree of apathy and discontent about the industry

Limited growth prospects

High stress, high hours, low on pay spectrum, long and thankless hours spent in service industry with little appreciation and few opportunities for growth as industry has proven to be very volatile

Non-compliance to labour laws

The Tourism industry employs illegal immigrants, what's the point of recommending someone to spend years to such industry.



Room to learn & Explore

“As its an amazing industry to go in and you are always constantly learning something new. I thoroughly enjoy the industry.

Because it opens up ones mind to the different types of sectors that are part of the travel industry. You can learn something new everyday.

Provides varied career opportunities

“It is inclusive, not only one can be on the ground dealing with tourists but we also need people who can work with admin, logistics as well as other career opportunities within the sector which are also in Hospitality”

ALL

Would you advise other people to consider a career in tourism?
Sample: n = 127

GLOBAL INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

20

Access, the effect of the pandemic on the current economic state – and its effects on the industry are identified by youth as global challenges

ACCES (VISA) & CRIME

Safety and Security, Visas (so accessibility)...

ENVIRON-EOCONO & POLITICO

Inflation and the rising cost of travel especially post covid
Cross border challenges (Visa)
Security



PANDEMIC LEGACY

Covid still has an impact although we choose to move on. The Flight prices, availability of flights , Visas etc are still restricting certain markets.

Pandemics, war. For instance the global Corona pandemic that crippled the tourism industry globally.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure Development and Maintenance: Insufficient infrastructure, inadequate transportation systems, and poor maintenance can hinder tourism growth and impact visitor experiences.

SOUTH AFRICAN INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

21

The Youth identifies many gaps in the country's sector relating directly to political, and socio-economic effects on the industry to market entry barriers and unfairness in the work space

LACK OF INVESTMENT IN SMMEs & NEGATIVE BRAND PERCEPTIONING

Innovation and Investment in SMME's, destination perception from incorrect sources, safe well equipped hostels/backpackers around the country (Cape Town has a few).



EFFECTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC & POLITICAL ISSUES

The drop in the ZAR against the USD. Instability in the leadership of the country. Loadshedding. Signal Issues. Wifi Issues. Protests. Lack of Service Delivery.

INEXPERIENCED VALUE CHAIN & MAREKT ENTRY BARRIERS

We are unexperienced as compared to the other operator's in the industry and it is difficult for us to make connections to them in the industry as some are really not too forthcoming to the new face in the industry.

We are also not so familiar with selling the country itself and the properties.

ALL

And which challenges would you say are unique to South African youth in tourism?

Sample: n = 127

UNEQUAL OPPORTUNTIES AT WORK

Youth of colour not being motivated and promoted to managerial position. Getting minimal opportunities to broaden they learnings within the industry. .

INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Although some youth recognise that there are opportunities that exist in the industry; some necessitated by the pandemic, some due to South Africa's industry still being under-developed or nascent compared to more developed markets, to realities about the industry being a poor paying industry where labour inputs ratio is considerably disproportioned to wage output

Pandemic opened up opportunities

"COVID has opened up a number of job opportunities as lots of individuals have left the industry."

"Covid-19 provided South Africa with opportunity to rethink and strategies the tourism that we want."

Government Funded Opportunities

Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development: South Africa's **tourism industry** provides a platform for young entrepreneurs to start their own businesses. This can include...guesthouses, restaurants, adventure tourism operations, and niche tourism...

Promising Market Opportunities

Many and plenty. Finding new services or products are countless when compared to what is offered internationally. South Africa is **just an infant relative to the rest of the world** and all the different products and services we could still offer to attract larger markets.

Limited Job Opportunities

I do not see many opportunities in tourism for youth whom hope to build a career stretching an entire work-lifetime in Tourism. Salaries are disastrously poor, making saving up for retirement close to impossible... The sad reality for most lower level tourism employees is that they might very well spend 45+ years in the industry and end up on some form of failing government backed pension fund barely scraping by, ...

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

On equipping the youth – relevant and pragmatic training is paramount as early as in school, including digital skills and exchange programme learning well onto business training

IMPROVING TOURISM CURRICULUM

Tourism subjects from a school level need to better. Students tend to look at tourism subjects as a free lesson because it is so easy. When I was in school, tourism was not even a subject I could choose. More universities need to offer tourism degrees, and not keep it general. They must have a wide range of options to choose from.

EQUIPPING YOUTH WITH DIGITAL SKILLS

“Digital Skills : Recognize the importance of digital skills in the modern tourism industry and invest in programs that equip young people with relevant digital competencies. This includes training in social media management, digital marketing, data analytics, website development, and online booking systems...”

TARGETED BUSINESS TRAINING & INTELLECTUAL RIGHTS PROTECTION

Create more engagements in proper relevant business trainings that will make the youth more fundable and sustainable... Look into ways to reinforce and stop theft of business models from the youth when they are seeking for advice and looking for investors.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES & BURSARY OPPORTUNITIES

Broaden the knowledge of youth on the opportunities on Cruise Ships, cabin crew etc, provide Learner-ships and bursaries to matriculants who don't have opportunity to study.

Any other feedback you'd like to give to the SANCB team? This could be on logistics, communication, what worked well, what didn't and on overall services
Sample: n =127

Key findings:

Demographics and Employment:

The profile of respondents included 46% of respondents between the ages 31 to 35 years old and 45% between the ages 24 to 30 years old. About a third (34%) reported working a standard 40-hour work week, while 52% worked more than 40 hours weekly. Among the interviewed youth, 31% were employed in the tour operator space, with accommodation establishments (15%) and travel agents (14%) being the second and third prominent employment categories. Most youths held Junior positions (30%), while 23% occupied executive roles.

Qualifications and Income:

Among the respondents, 54% identified as Black, and a considerable majority possessed postgraduate qualifications, having completed university or college, obtaining either a degree or diploma from a higher learning education institution. Additionally, one out of every five respondents held a university degree. Regarding income, approximately 43% of young individuals earned a monthly income of less than R10,000, while 39% reported earning between R10,000 and R30,000 per month. 29% of respondents were self-employed, with 46% of self-employed youth grossing a company annual revenue of less than R100 000 per annum, whilst 19% claim an annual revenue of between R1 million and R10 million.

Employment Conditions and Training:

A considerable number (68%) of self-employed youth had never received industry training from the government, while only 30% claim to have received some form of training occasionally or regularly. Among employed youth, a higher proportion have received training from their employers instead of the government.

Job Satisfaction and Work-Life Balance:

Most employed youth expressed a certain level of satisfaction in their current roles. Furthermore, they perceived their employers to be supportive of them when dealing with work-related stressors. Significantly, many youths working in the tourism industry reported being able to achieve a satisfactory work-life balance (even though 52% worked more than 40 hours per week), with only 8% facing challenges in maintaining such balance.

Opportunities and Challenges:

The youth in South Africa are seeking job opportunities in the tourism industry, as they have qualifications and are eager to find meaningful employment. The youth believe there is a tremendous opportunity in the tourism industry, and given their fresh perspective and modern thinking, they believe they can add value to grow the industry.

The youth perceive the tourism industry as a growing sector with abundant opportunities. They strongly desire training programs, leadership initiatives, and access programs, as they value practical training that complements their existing qualifications.

With their entrepreneurial spirit, the youth have innovative ideas for contributing to the tourism industry and desire a platform to voice their opinions. They feel that government support is lacking, and if government programs exist, very few are aware of them. Social media is their preferred communication channel, emphasizing the importance of reaching out to the youth where they are present.

Most of the youth interviewed expressed advocacy for a career in the tourism industry. However, a notable portion reported instances of discrimination or harassment in the workplace, originating from either a manager or a customer/client. This trend was also observed among self-employed youth (who experienced discrimination or harassment mostly from patrons/clients). Additionally, 80% of the surveyed youth felt a lack of youth representation in the tourism industry. The youth's aspiration for better pay is evident in their willingness to work long hours and strive for improved financial opportunities.

Recommendations

Enhance Tourism Education: Improve the perception of tourism subjects at the school level by highlighting their importance and potential career opportunities. Encourage schools to offer tourism subjects with a comprehensive curriculum that goes beyond the perception of being an "easy" subject. This will help students understand the diverse aspects and potential of the tourism industry.

Develop Specialised Tourism Degrees: Increase the availability of specialized tourism degrees in universities. Offer a wide range of options and specializations within the field of tourism, allowing students to pursue their interests and develop expertise in specific areas of the industry.

Digital Skills Training: Recognise the significance of digital skills in the modern tourism industry. Invest in programs and training initiatives that equip young people with relevant digital competencies, such as social media management, digital marketing, data analytics, website development, and online booking systems. This will prepare them for the evolving digital landscape in the industry.

Business Training and Support: Provide more engagements and training opportunities in relevant business skills for aspiring youth entrepreneurs in the tourism sector. Address issues such as intellectual property protection and theft of business models to ensure that young entrepreneurs are supported and can thrive in their ventures.

Promote Opportunities: Raise awareness among young individuals about the various career opportunities available in sectors like cruise ships, cabin crew, and related areas. Create learner-ships and offer bursaries to matriculants who may not have the opportunity to pursue higher education but are interested in entering these fields.

Foster Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development: Encourage and support young entrepreneurs to start their own tourism-related businesses, such as guesthouses, restaurants, adventure tourism operations, and niche tourism services. Provide mentorship programs, access to finance, and business development resources to help them succeed in the industry.

Recommendations

Innovation and Unique Offerings: Highlight the vast opportunities for innovation and developing new services and products within the South African tourism industry. Encourage young entrepreneurs to think creatively and offer unique experiences that can attract larger domestic and international markets.

Improve Salaries and Long-term Career Prospects: Address the issue of low salaries in the tourism industry, particularly for lower-level employees. Focus on improving remuneration and benefits to make careers in tourism more sustainable and attractive. Explore options for retirement savings and pension funds to ensure long-term financial security for those working.



thank you

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