

# School Realities

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In 2016, there were 12 932 565 learners in ordinary public and independent schools (hereinafter collectively referred to as ordinary schools) in South Africa, who attended 25 574 schools and were served by 418 611 educators (see Tables 2 and 3). These data are from the survey conducted on the 10th school day. Approximately 99.9% of functional ordinary schools submitted the survey forms. No imputation was done on the data. The figures in this publication are preliminary, and the final figures will be published in the more comprehensive Education Statistics in South Africa 2016.

**Table 1: List of abbreviations**

<b>ECD</b>	Early Childhood Development	<b>LER</b>	Learner-Educator Ratio
<b>ESR</b>	Educator-School Ratio	<b>LSR</b>	Learner-School Ratio
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training	<b>SGB</b>	School Governing Body
<b>GET</b>	General Education and Training	<b>SNE</b>	Special Need Education

**Table 2: Number of learners, educators and schools in the ordinary school sector, by province, in 2016**

Province	Public			Independent			Public and Independent					
	Learners	Educators	Schools	Learners	Educators	Schools	Learners	As % of National Total	Educators	As % of National Total	Schools	As % of National Total
Eastern Cape	1 898 723	58 372	5 469	62 824	3 257	207	1 961 547	15.2	61 629	14.7	5 676	22.2
Free State	671 712	22 465	1 214	16 637	1 058	68	688 349	5.3	23 523	5.6	1 282	5.0
Gauteng	2 048 558	63 092	2 083	278 026	18 986	730	2 326 584	18.0	82 078	19.6	2 813	11.0
KwaZulu-Natal	2 808 137	84 810	5 895	69 407	4 989	247	2 877 544	22.3	89 799	21.5	6 142	24.0
Limpopo	1 706 725	51 650	3 867	58 830	2 768	151	1 765 555	13.7	54 418	13.0	4 018	15.7
Mpumalanga	1 046 234	34 034	1 725	28 118	370	122	1 074 352	8.3	34 404	8.2	1 847	7.2
Northern Cape	287 435	8 841	545	4 080	295	30	291 515	2.3	9 136	2.2	574	2.2
North West	811 340	24 876	1 471	19 207	1 232	63	830 547	6.4	26 108	6.2	1 535	6.0
Western Cape	1 063 349	33 254	1 450	53 223	4 264	237	1 116 572	8.6	37 518	9.0	1 687	6.6
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>12 342 213</b>	<b>381 394</b>	<b>23 719</b>	<b>590 352</b>	<b>37 219</b>	<b>1 855</b>	<b>12 932 565</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>418 613</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>25 574</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 shows the number of ordinary public and independent schools, learners and educators there were in 2016. It further shows that the highest and lowest percentages of learners, educators and schools in the ordinary school sector occurred in KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Cape, respectively. Majority of independent schools were situated in Gauteng (730) followed by KwaZulu-Natal with 247 schools.

**Table 3: Number of learners, educators and schools in the ordinary school sector, by province, from 2014 to 2016**

Province	Learners			Educators			Schools		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Eastern Cape	1 946 885	1 953 397	1 961 547	64 258	64 256	61 629	5 732	5 727	5 676
Free State	672 290	682 704	688 349	24 552	23 661	23 523	1 376	1 332	1 282
Gauteng	2 191 475	2 262 319	2 326 584	77 265	79 354	82 078	2 721	2 780	2 813
KwaZulu-Natal	2 901 697	2 881 518	2 877 544	95 560	86 493	89 799	6 151	6 137	6 142
Limpopo	1 720 585	1 753 734	1 765 555	57 256	55 930	54 418	4 076	4 045	4 018
Mpumalanga	1 057 788	1 079 280	1 074 352	35 000	35 153	34 404	1 867	1 862	1 847
Northern Cape	289 004	290 139	291 515	9 182	9 162	9 136	577	581	574
North West	800 316	813 873	830 547	26 086	25 126	26 108	1 570	1 544	1 535
Western Cape	1 075 396	1 097 509	1 116 572	35 931	36 958	37 518	1 671	1 683	1 687
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>12 655 436</b>	<b>12 814 473</b>	<b>12 932 565</b>	<b>425 090</b>	<b>416 093</b>	<b>418 613</b>	<b>25 741</b>	<b>25 691</b>	<b>25 574</b>

Sources:

2014: As published in Education Statistics in South Africa 2014.

2015: As published in School Realities 2015

From the figures reflected in Table 3 it can be deduced that, from 2014 to 2016, the number of learners increased by 2.1% nationally, while the number of educators and schools decreased by 1.5% and 0.6% respectively. Nearly all provinces experienced an increase in learner numbers.

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# E M I S

**Table 4: Number of learners in ordinary schools, by province, sector, gender and grade, in 2016 (concluded)**

Province	Sector	Gender	FET Band				Other	Total Primary (Gr.1-7)	Total Secondary (Gr.8-12)	Total (Gr. R-12)	Grand Total
			Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total					
Eastern Cape	Independent	Female	1 539	1 729	2 644	5 912	39	19 054	9 633	28 687	31 775
		Total	3 102	3 318	4 617	11 037	105	38 011	18 497	56 508	62 824
	Public	Female	74 155	67 727	55 200	197 082	0	542 592	322 080	864 672	930 197
		Total	148 346	124 764	99 334	372 444	0	1 137 136	627 206	1 764 342	1 898 723
	Both	Female	75 694	69 456	57 844	202 994	39	561 646	331 713	893 359	961 972
		Total	151 448	128 082	103 951	383 481	105	1 175 147	645 703	1 820 850	1 961 547
Free State	Independent	Female	553	451	433	1 437	0	4 987	2 639	7 626	8 309
		Total	1 039	848	742	2 629	0	10 294	4 938	15 232	16 637
	Public	Female	30 625	20 736	15 887	67 248	0	197 099	117 190	314 289	333 001
		Total	61 244	38 403	28 773	128 420	0	407 072	227 228	634 300	671 712
	Both	Female	31 178	21 187	16 320	68 685	0	202 086	119 829	321 915	341 310
		Total	62 283	39 251	29 515	131 049	0	417 366	232 166	649 532	688 349
Gauteng	Independent	Female	9 626	9 117	8 276	27 019	186	80 708	46 538	127 246	141 038
		Total	18 491	17 435	15 338	51 264	408	160 881	89 433	250 314	278 026
	Public	Female	86 026	71 682	56 347	214 055	1 845	605 181	362 622	967 803	1 023 548
		Total	172 507	134 582	103 103	410 192	5 323	1 228 212	707 006	1 935 218	2 048 558
	Both	Female	95 652	80 799	64 623	241 074	2 031	685 889	409 160	1 095 049	1 164 586
		Total	190 998	152 017	118 441	461 456	5 731	1 389 093	796 439	2 185 532	2 326 584
KwaZulu-Natal	Independent	Female	2 558	2 564	3 870	8 992	37	18 650	14 225	32 875	36 101
		Total	4 825	4 936	6 998	16 759	61	36 378	26 557	62 935	69 407
	Public	Female	120 340	119 874	90 135	330 349	22	759 321	528 226	1 287 547	1 380 991
		Total	243 935	226 121	167 561	637 617	47	1 569 955	1 048 839	2 618 794	2 808 137
	Both	Female	122 898	122 438	94 005	339 341	59	777 971	542 451	1 320 422	1 417 092
		Total	125 862	108 619	80 554	315 035	49	828 362	532 945	1 361 307	1 460 452
Limpopo	Independent	Female	1 984	1 979	2 351	6 314	0	17 078	10 240	27 318	29 918
		Total	3 853	3 810	4 158	11 821	0	34 093	19 532	53 625	58 830
	Public	Female	87 236	74 433	61 085	222 754	23	438 488	338 681	777 169	837 152
		Total	184 028	138 332	110 803	433 163	41	907 668	677 289	1 584 957	1 706 725
	Both	Female	89 220	76 412	63 436	229 068	23	455 566	348 921	804 487	867 070
		Total	98 661	65 730	51 525	215 916	18	486 195	347 900	834 095	898 485
Mpumalanga	Independent	Female	774	915	1 473	3 162	0	8 044	4 614	12 658	13 896
		Total	1 604	1 942	2 714	6 260	0	16 371	9 264	25 635	28 118
	Public	Female	46 056	42 524	32 109	120 689	72	286 897	198 000	484 897	516 799
		Total	90 201	78 520	57 663	226 384	210	597 045	384 616	981 661	1 046 234
	Both	Female	46 830	43 439	33 582	123 851	72	294 941	202 614	497 555	530 695
		Total	91 805	80 462	60 377	232 644	210	613 416	393 880	1 007 296	1 074 352
Northern Cape	Independent	Female	190	180	185	555	3	900	931	1 831	2 170
		Total	335	297	315	947	4	1 838	1 589	3 427	4 080
	Public	Female	11 764	8 417	6 433	26 614	10	84 883	48 083	132 966	142 185
		Total	22 797	15 632	11 794	50 223	29	175 612	92 960	268 572	287 435
	Both	Female	11 954	8 597	6 618	27 169	13	85 783	49 014	134 797	144 355
		Total	11 178	7 332	5 491	24 001	20	91 667	45 535	137 202	147 160
North West	Independent	Female	505	491	419	1 415	20	5 988	2 577	8 565	9 547
		Total	990	953	810	2 753	39	12 158	5 136	17 294	19 207
	Public	Female	33 789	25 880	19 063	78 732	15	236 674	139 113	375 787	400 746
		Total	66 835	48 575	35 455	150 865	54	487 710	273 261	760 971	811 370
	Both	Female	34 294	26 371	19 482	80 147	35	242 662	141 690	384 352	410 293
		Total	67 825	49 528	36 265	153 618	93	499 868	278 367	778 235	830 547
Western Cape	Independent	Female	1 713	1 809	1 753	5 275	16	14 986	9 082	24 068	26 957
		Total	3 435	3 540	3 486	10 461	50	29 947	17 780	47 727	53 223
	Public	Female	41 459	33 351	28 928	103 738	384	325 408	182 018	507 426	540 584
		Total	77 182	59 689	50 869	187 740	981	659 095	337 572	996 667	1 063 349
	Both	Female	43 172	35 160	30 681	109 013	400	340 394	191 100	531 494	567 541
		Total	80 617	63 229	54 355	198 201	1 031	689 042	355 352	1 044 394	1 116 572
South Africa	Independent	Female	19 442	19 235	21 404	60 081	301	170 395	100 479	270 874	299 711
		Total	37 674	37 079	39 178	113 931	667	339 971	192 726	532 697	590 352
	Public	Female	531 450	464 624	365 187	1 361 261	2 371	3 476 543	2 236 013	5 712 556	6 105 203
		Total	1 067 075	864 618	665 355	2 597 048	6 685	7 169 505	4 375 947	11 545 452	12 342 213
	Both	Female	550 892	483 859	386 591	1 421 342	2 672	3 646 938	2 336 492	5 983 430	6 404 914
		Total	1 104 749	901 697	704 533	2 710 979	7 352	7 509 476	4 568 673	12 078 149	12 932 565

Note 1: Data exclude learners at stand-alone ECD sites and special schools.

Note 2: Owing to a shortage of space in the table, the male enrolment figures for ordinary public and independent schools are intentionally omitted in the provincial data, but are included in the national data.

- 1) Learners not grouped in any of the grades provided

**Figure 1: Percentage distribution of learners in ordinary schools, by phase, in 2016**

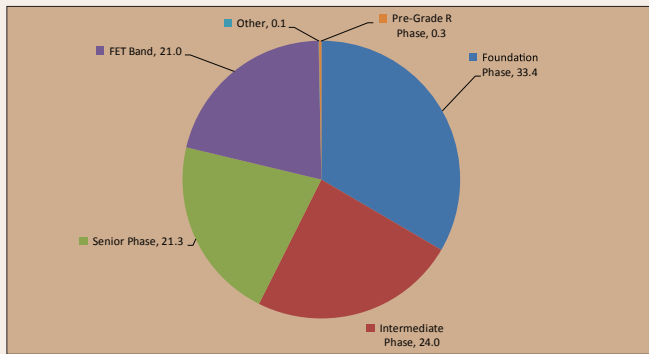


Figure 1 reveals that the highest proportion of learners in ordinary schools nationally was located in the foundation phase (33.4%) followed by the intermediate phase and the senior phase with 24.0% and 21.3%.

**Figure 2: Percentage distribution of female learners in ordinary schools, by grade, in 2016**

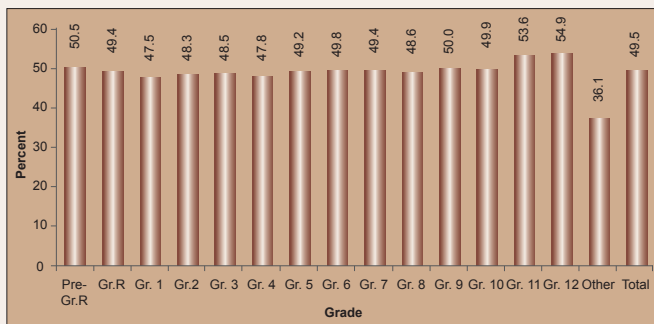


Figure 2 shows that, in the schooling system, there were more male than female (49.5%) learners. The lowest percentage of female learners in ordinary schools nationally was in Grades 1 (47.5%) and the highest percentage was in Grades 11 and 12 (53.6 and 54.9% respectively).

**Figure 3: Percentage distribution of learners in ordinary schools, by grade, in 2016**

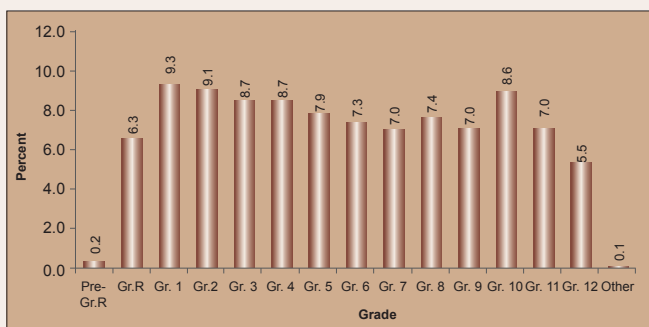


Figure 3 indicates that enrolment is generally very high in Grade 1 (9.3%) and declines as learners move to higher grades within the schooling system with 5.5% in Grade 12.

Table 5 reflects the following indicators:

- (a) When counting all educators, the LER for ordinary public schools nationally was 32.5, while, when counting only state-paid educators in these schools, the LER increased to 35.7.
- (b) The LSR for ordinary public schools nationally was 521, with six provinces (Free State, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, the Northern Cape, North West and the Western Cape) higher than the national average.

**Table 5: Indicators for ordinary PUBLIC schools, by province, in 2016**

Province	LER		LSR	ESR
	State-paid and SGB-paid Educators	State-Paid Educators 1)		
Eastern Cape	32.5	35.3	347	10.7
Free State	29.9	32.3	553	18.5
Gauteng	32.5	36.2	983	30.3
KwaZulu-Natal	33.1	38.3	480	15.2
Limpopo	33.0	34.0	441	13.4
Mpumalanga	31.8	33.4	607	19.1
Northern Cape	32.5	34.7	529	16.3
North West	32.6	35.0	551	16.9
Western Cape	32.0	38.0	733	22.9
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>32.5</b>	<b>35.7</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>16.2</b>

1) Underlying data not shown in the publication.

- (c) The ESR for ordinary public schools nationally was 16.2, with five provinces (the Free State, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, the Northern Cape, North West and the Western Cape) higher than the national average.

**Figure 4: Frequency distribution of learners in ordinary PUBLIC schools in 2016**

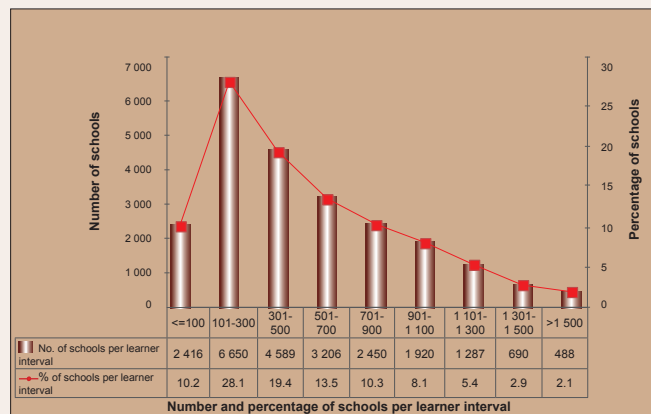


Figure 4, a histogram, shows that the highest number of ordinary public schools nationally (6 650, or 28.1%) was in the 101 to 300 learner interval. Furthermore, there were 2 416 schools (10.2%) and 488 schools (2.1%) in, respectively, the 100 and below learner interval and the above 1 500 learner interval.

**Figure 5: Frequency distribution of LER in ordinary PUBLIC schools in 2016**

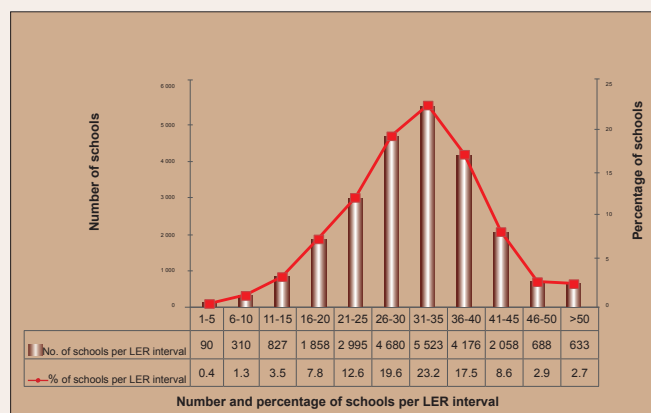


Figure 5, a histogram, reflects that the highest number of ordinary public schools nationally (5 523, or 23.2%) was in the 31 to 35 LER interval. Furthermore, there were 90 schools (0.4%) and 633 schools (2.7%) in, respectively, the one to five LER interval and the above 50 LER interval.