

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA commends decision by Portfolio Committee to call Higher Learning Institutions to submit statistics on employment of foreign-national staff
DATE	14 May 2025
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the recent directive for universities and colleges to update their data on foreign-national staff as a significant step towards enhancing transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in South African educational institutions.

Recent revelations showed worrisome patterns where some tertiary institutions seem to be prioritising the employment of foreign nationals, irrespective of available and qualified citizens. Whilst the PSA recognises the invaluable contributions by foreign-national staff to the academic and cultural richness of institutions, the country's immigration policy and the *Employment Equity Act* must be strictly followed. By updating and maintaining accurate data, the sector can better appreciate and support the diverse talents that drive innovation and excellence in education. South Africa has a high unemployment rate, and every available opportunity must assist in addressing the challenge. Some of these institutions are dismally failing to ensure the implementation of skills transfer and mentoring programmes to ensure that citizens are developed to be able to assume higher responsibilities. The Portfolio Committee and the Department of Higher Education and Training must address this matter.

Accurate data on foreign-national staff is essential for ensuring compliance with immigration regulations and employment standards. This initiative assist institutions in adhering to best practices, thus fostering a fair and equitable work environment for all employees. This directive will strengthen the integrity of educational institutions. Transparent and up-to-date records will facilitate better resource allocation, policy-making, and strategic planning, ultimately benefiting employees and students.

The PSA is committed to promoting inclusivity and diversity in the public sector. The Union commends this decision as a positive move towards creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for foreign-national staff at universities and colleges. All institutions are encouraged to prioritise the updating of data on foreign-national staff, ensuring that the South African education system thrives through diversity and excellence.

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