

# SKILLS DEMAND AND SUPPLY INSIGHTS



## OVERVIEW

This section links the profile of registered unemployed graduates on the MKRI Unemployed Graduate Database to broader skills demand and supply signals from national and sector-level skills planning sources.

The purpose is to identify areas where qualifications and fields of study of registered unemployed graduates may align with occupations in demand, scarce skills and sector priorities. The analysis draws on the DHET National List of Occupations in High Demand, SETA Sector Skills Plans, the KZN EDTEA Strategic Plan and the Department of Home Affairs Critical Skills List.



## INSIGHT

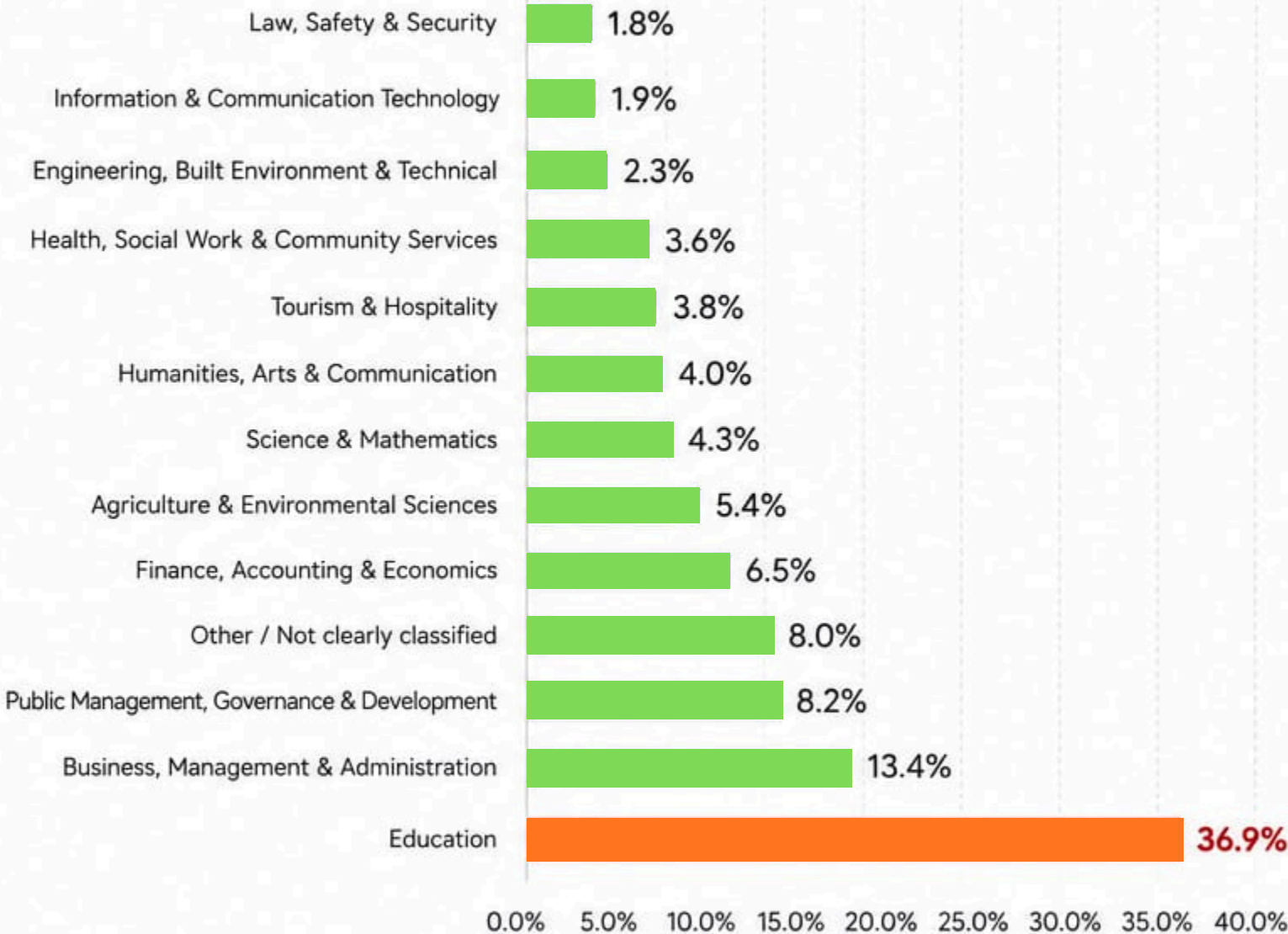
Education-related qualifications form the largest group at 36.9%, followed by Business, Management and Administration (13.4%) and Public Management, Governance and Development (8.2%).

The strong concentration in Education is an important labour market signal. It suggests that many graduates registered on the database may be seeking opportunities in teaching, education assistance, tutoring, early childhood development and related public-sector or community-based roles.

At the same time, the relatively low shares in ICT (1.9%), Engineering (2.3%) and technical fields may indicate either lower registration of such graduates on the platform or a smaller supply pipeline in these fields within the database.



## 2.1 – FIELDS OF STUDY OF REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES (n = 4,680)



## KEY TAKEAWAY

The database shows a heavy concentration of graduates in Education and administrative fields, highlighting the need for targeted opportunities in these areas while also strengthening pathways in scarce skills and technical fields to support a more balanced skills supply.



## 2.2 – ALIGNMENT BETWEEN GRADUATE FIELDS AND SKILLS DEMAND SOURCES

|  GRADUATE DATABASE FIELD                     |  EVIDENCE FROM SKILLS DEMAND SOURCES |  LABOUR MARKET INTERPRETATION                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Education                                   | ETDP SETA / DHET OIHD                                                                                                   | <p>▶ Large graduate supply; absorption pathways need strengthening</p>                        |
|  Business, Management & Administration       | Services SETA / DHET OIHD                                                                                               | <p>▶ Demand exists, but graduates need work experience and practical workplace exposure</p>   |
|  Public Management, Governance & Development | PSETA                                                                                                                   | <p>▶ Relevant to public sector, municipalities and governance support</p>                     |
|  Finance, Accounting & Economics            | BANKSETA / DHET OIHD                                                                                                    | <p>▶ Potential link to finance, compliance, data and business support roles</p>              |
|  Agriculture & Environmental Sciences      | KZN EDTEA Strategic Plan / DHET OIHD                                                                                    | <p>▶ Relevant to agriculture, green economy and rural development</p>                       |
|  ICT                                       | MICT SETA / DHET OIHD                                                                                                   | <p>▶ Smaller supply in MKRI database but important for digital economy and data skills</p>  |

*Source: Adapted from KZN Knowledge Repository | Unemployed Graduate Database, DHET National List of Occupations in High Demand, KZN EDTEA Strategic Plan and selected SETA Sector Skills Plans.*



### INSIGHT

The MKRI graduate database contains fields of study that are relevant to a number of national and sector-level skills demand areas. However, alignment between qualifications and labour market opportunities is not automatic. Graduates may hold qualifications in fields linked to demand, but still require work experience, professional registration, practical skills, digital skills, workplace exposure or employer-matching support to transition into sustainable employment.



### KEY TAKEAWAY

There is strong potential to connect graduate supply with national and sector priorities, but stronger bridge mechanisms are needed—such as work experience, skills development, employer linkages and targeted support—to convert qualifications into real labour market opportunities.



## 2.3 – SCARCE AND CRITICAL SKILLS ALIGNMENT

|  <b>FIELD</b>                                  |  <b>SCARCE/CRITICAL SKILLS RELEVANCE</b> |  <b>IMPLICATION</b>                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>Education</b>                              | Some specialisations may be in demand; others may be oversupplied.                                                        | ▶ Need to better understand specific qualifications and specialisations.                                                         |
|  <b>Finance, Accounting and Economics</b>      | Relevant where graduates have professional, technical or analytical competencies.                                         | ▶ May require additional exposure to accounting systems, compliance processes and data analysis.                                 |
|  <b>Agriculture and Environmental Sciences</b> | Relevant to provincial priorities (rural development, agro-processing, green economy).                                    | ▶ Link graduates to sector-specific initiatives in extension, environmental services and LED.                                    |
|  <b>ICT</b>                                  | Strategically important; digital skills increasingly required across sectors.                                             | ▶ Consider targeted outreach to increase ICT graduate registration; offer short digital skills programmes for non-ICT graduates. |
|  <b>Engineering and Technical</b>            | Important for infrastructure development and technical roles.                                                             | ▶ Investigate why supply is low in the database.                                                                                 |



### INSIGHT

The database shows both alignment and mismatch when viewed against scarce and critical skills priorities. The presence of graduates in fields such as Finance, Agriculture, Environmental Sciences and ICT suggests that the database contains graduates relevant to priority skills areas. However, the relatively small share of ICT, Engineering and Technical graduates suggests that the database may not yet fully capture the supply of graduates in some high-demand technical and digital fields.



### KEY TAKEAWAY

Strengthening data depth in ICT, Engineering and Technical fields, while linking graduates to targeted exposures, practical skills and sector initiatives, will improve alignment with scarce and critical skills priorities.