

# SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SURVEY OF RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTAL DEVELOPMENT 2017/18

## KEY SECTOR RESULTS AND TRENDS



Government plays a central role as both a funder and a performer of research in South Africa. In 2017/18, government funded 46.7% of R&D performed in South Africa, equivalent to R18.082 billion. The major beneficiaries of government R&D funding in 2017/18 were higher education institutions and science councils. In line with national priorities, government expenditure on R&D was largely concentrated within the medical and health sciences, social sciences, and agricultural sciences.

## FACT SHEET NO. 22

# THE BIG PICTURE



THE VALUE OF  
**SOUTH AFRICA'S GROSS  
DOMESTIC PRODUCT  
(GDP)** IN 2017/18



**R 4 653.579  
BILLION**

THE SHARE OF **GDP  
SPENT ON R&D**



**0.83%**

SOUTH AFRICA'S  
**ANNUAL R&D  
SPEND INCREASED  
FROM:**

**R 21.041  
BILLION**  
IN 2008/09

**R 38.725  
BILLION**  
IN 2017/18

**GOVERNMENT  
INVESTMENT IN  
R&D MORE THAN  
DOUBLED FROM:**



**R 1.140  
BILLION**  
IN 2008/09

TO:

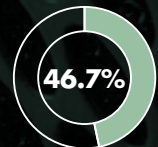


**R 2.326  
BILLION**  
IN 2017/18

## GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR R&D 2017/18



IN 2017/18, **GOVERNMENT FUNDED 46.7%**  
OF ALL **R&D PERFORMED IN SOUTH AFRICA.**  
**GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN THE LARGEST FUNDER**  
**(45.7%)** OF R&D SINCE 2007/08



THE **TWO SECTORS**  
WITH THE **LARGEST  
SHARE OF GOVERNMENT  
FUNDING FOR R&D**  
IN 2017/18 WERE:



**HIGHER  
EDUCATION**



**SCIENCE  
COUNCILS**

# R&D SPENDING PATTERNS IN 2017/18



MORE THAN **TWO THIRDS** (76.9%) OF TOTAL **GOVERNMENT R&D SPENDING** WAS TARGETED WITHIN JUST **THREE RESEARCH FIELDS**:



MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES  
**29.0%**



SOCIAL SCIENCES  
**25.4%**



AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES  
**22.5%**

## GOVERNMENT R&D SPENDING SPLIT BY PROVINCE IN 2017/18:

LIMPOPO **3.7%**

GAUTENG **41.9%**

NORTH-WEST **2.6%**

NORTHERN CAPE **4.1%**

WESTERN CAPE **18.7%**



MPUMALANGA **4.5%**

KWA ZULU NATAL **8.9%**

FREE STATE **3.5%**

EASTERN CAPE **12.1%**

# R&D PERSONNEL IN 2017/18



THE TOTAL **R&D WORKFORCE** IN THE **GOVERNMENT SECTOR** WAS MADE UP BY:

**RESEARCHERS (55.2%)**



SUPPORTED BY **TECHNICIANS (17.1%)**



AND OTHER **R&D PERSONNEL (27.7%)**



# BEHIND THE NUMBERS

The annual South African National Survey of Research and Experimental Development (R&D Survey) is conducted by the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII) at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), on behalf of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). R&D statistics are collected in terms of the Statistics Act No. 6 of 1999, and are quality assured by Statistics South Africa. Data collected through the Survey, and its historic data series, helps to inform decision-makers on investment planning, policy making, advocacy, and research in South Africa. Data also adds to benchmarking and performance comparisons with our international counterparts.

Access previous survey reports: <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/departments/CeSTii/reports-cestii>

Data and analysis for this publication was prepared by Anele Slater and Nhlanhla Malaza in February 2020.

## CONTACT US

Dr Glenda Kruss (Executive Head)	021 466 8086	<a href="mailto:gkruss@hsrc.ac.za">gkruss@hsrc.ac.za</a>
Dr Neo Moloŋja (Survey Lead)	021 466 7818	<a href="mailto:nmoloŋja@hsrc.ac.za">nmoloŋja@hsrc.ac.za</a>
Mario Clayford (Sector Lead)	021 466 7829	<a href="mailto:mclayford@hsrc.ac.za">mclayford@hsrc.ac.za</a>

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