

2015 School Realities

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In 2015, there were 12 814 473 learners in ordinary public and independent schools (hereinafter collectively referred to as ordinary schools) in South Africa, who attended 25 691 schools and were served by 416 093 educators (see Tables 2 and 3). These data are from the survey conducted on the 10th school day. Approximately 99.2% 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 2015.

Table 1: List of abbreviations

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

Table 2: Number of learners, educators and schools in the ordinary school sector, by province, in 2015

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	1 894 682	61 147	5 527	58 715	3 109	200	1 953 397	15.2	64 256	15.4	5 727	22.3
Free State	666 024	22 632	1 260	16 680	1 029	72	682 704	5.3	23 661	5.7	1 332	5.2
Gauteng	1 998 640	61 597	2 080	263 679	17 757	700	2 262 319	17.7	79 354	19.1	2 780	10.8
KwaZulu-Natal	2 811 418	81 638	5 899	70 100	4 855	238	2 881 518	22.5	86 493	20.8	6 137	23.9
Limpopo	1 694 884	53 310	3 893	58 850	2 620	152	1 753 734	13.7	55 930	13.4	4 045	15.7
Mpumalanga	1 052 207	33 461	1 744	27 073	1 692	118	1 079 280	8.4	35 153	8.4	1 862	7.2
Northern Cape	286 509	8 826	552	3 630	336	29	290 139	2.3	9 162	2.2	581	2.3
North West	797 438	24 116	1 490	16 435	1 010	54	813 873	6.4	25 126	6.0	1 544	6.0
Western Cape	1 046 477	32 886	1 460	51 032	4 072	223	1 097 509	8.6	36 958	8.9	1 683	6.6
South Africa	12 248 279	379 613	23 905	566 194	36 480	1 786	12 814 473	100	416 093	100	25 691	100

Table 2 shows the number of ordinary public and independent schools, learners and educators there were in 2015. 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 700 followed by KwaZulu-Natal with 238 schools.

Table 3: Number of learners, educators and schools in the ordinary school sector, by province, from 2013 to 2015

Province	Learners			Educators			Schools		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
Eastern Cape	1 938 078	1 946 885	1 953 397	66 007	64 258	64 256	5 733	5 732	5 727
Free State	664 508	672 290	682 704	24 475	24 552	23 661	1 396	1 376	1 332
Gauteng	2 129 526	2 191 475	2 262 319	74 823	77 265	79 354	2 649	2 721	2 780
KwaZulu-Natal	2 866 570	2 901 697	2 881 518	96 057	95 560	86 493	6 156	6 151	6 137
Limpopo	1 714 832	1 720 585	1 753 734	57 108	57 256	55 930	4 067	4 076	4 045
Mpumalanga	1 052 807	1 057 788	1 079 280	34 936	35 000	35 153	1 885	1 867	1 862
Northern Cape	282 631	289 004	290 139	8 972	9 182	9 162	573	577	581
North West	788 261	800 316	813 873	26 194	26 086	25 126	1 606	1 570	1 544
Western Cape	1 052 435	1 075 396	1 097 509	36 451	35 931	36 958	1 655	1 671	1 683
South Africa	12 489 648	12 655 436	12 814 473	425 023	425 090	416 093	25 720	25 741	25 691

Sources:

2013: As published in Education Statistics in South Africa 2013.

2014: As published in School Realities 2014

From the figures reflected in Table 3 it can be deduced that, from 2013 to 2015, the number of learners increased by 2.8% nationally, while the number of educators and schools decreased by 2.1% and 0.1% respectively. KwaZulu-Natal was the only province that experienced a drop in learner, educator and school numbers.

Table 4: Number of learners in ordinary schools, by province, sector, gender and grade, in 2015

Province	Sector	Gender	Pre-Grade R Phase	GET Band												Total (GET Band)	
				Foundation Phase					Intermediate Phase				Senior Phase				
			Pre-Gr. R	Gr. R	Gr. 1	Gr. 2	Gr. 3	Total	Gr. 4	Gr. 5	Gr. 6	Total	Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 9	Total	
Eastern Cape	Independent	Female	750	2 127	2 986	2 719	2 677	10 509	2 753	2 394	2 098	7 245	1 909	1 707	1 698	5 314	23 068
		Total	1 478	4 296	6 039	5 551	5 604	21 490	5 405	4 600	4 101	14 106	3 701	3 470	3 384	10 555	46 151
	Public	Female	1 613	64 994	89 987	84 764	81 065	320 810	78 261	71 820	67 113	217 194	65 314	63 802	64 852	193 968	731 972
		Total	3 064	133 937	192 666	179 575	170 438	676 616	165 741	148 179	137 289	451 209	134 868	131 978	130 798	397 644	1 525 469
	Both	Female	2 363	67 121	92 973	87 483	83 742	331 319	81 014	74 214	69 211	224 439	67 223	65 509	66 550	199 282	755 040
		Male	2 179	71 112	105 732	97 643	92 300	366 787	90 132	78 565	72 179	240 876	71 346	69 939	67 632	208 917	816 580
		Total	4 542	138 233	198 705	185 126	176 042	698 106	171 146	152 779	141 390	465 315	138 569	135 448	134 182	408 199	1 571 620
Free State	Independent	Female	265	473	861	822	711	2 867	678	614	544	1 836	563	549	604	1 716	6 419
		Total	552	1 005	1 802	1 669	1 454	5 930	1 421	1 281	1 096	3 798	1 150	1 120	1 164	3 434	13 162
	Public	Female	464	17 640	30 825	29 280	28 324	106 069	29 381	25 989	23 729	79 099	24 127	23 838	26 064	74 029	259 197
		Total	842	35 590	64 772	60 922	58 372	219 656	61 638	52 827	48 124	162 589	48 905	48 080	50 996	147 981	530 226
	Both	Female	729	18 113	31 686	30 102	29 035	108 936	30 059	26 603	24 273	80 935	24 690	24 387	26 668	75 745	265 616
		Male	665	18 482	34 888	32 489	30 791	116 650	33 000	27 505	24 947	85 452	25 365	24 813	25 492	75 670	277 772
		Total	1 394	36 595	66 574	62 591	59 826	225 586	63 059	54 108	49 220	166 387	50 055	49 200	52 160	151 415	543 388
Gauteng	Independent	Female	4 796	8 048	14 207	12 753	11 599	46 607	10 593	9 515	8 398	28 506	8 003	9 476	9 198	26 677	101 790
		Total	9 626	15 781	28 369	25 522	23 239	92 911	21 149	18 800	16 646	56 595	15 912	18 474	17 465	51 851	201 357
	Public	Female	2 624	49 242	96 831	91 480	87 621	325 174	84 427	79 429	73 108	236 964	71 291	73 489	72 146	216 926	779 064
		Total	5 304	98 544	201 501	187 419	177 625	665 089	173 064	158 805	145 749	477 618	140 803	148 174	142 927	431 904	1 574 611
	Both	Female	7 420	57 290	111 038	104 233	99 220	371 781	95 020	88 944	81 506	265 470	79 294	82 965	81 344	243 603	880 854
		Male	7 510	57 035	118 832	108 708	101 644	386 219	99 193	88 661	80 889	268 743	77 421	83 683	79 048	240 152	895 114
		Total	14 930	114 325	229 870	212 941	200 864	758 000	194 213	177 605	162 395	534 213	156 715	166 648	160 392	483 755	1 775 968
KwaZulu-Natal	Independent	Female	1 462	2 233	3 144	2 980	2 687	11 044	2 616	2 275	2 156	7 047	2 073	2 740	2 576	7 389	25 480
		Total	2 897	4 507	6 298	5 814	5 326	21 945	5 036	4 477	4 212	13 725	3 953	5 093	4 858	13 904	49 574
	Public	Female	1 762	89 557	124 229	116 278	112 910	442 974	109 698	103 471	94 434	307 603	93 323	99 058	103 377	295 758	1 046 335
		Total	3 547	180 567	262 565	241 372	234 555	919 059	228 166	210 253	192 553	630 972	190 997	207 172	210 120	608 289	2 158 320
	Both	Female	3 224	91 790	127 373	119 258	115 597	454 018	112 314	105 746	96 590	314 650	95 396	101 798	105 953	303 147	1 071 815
		Male	3 220	93 284	141 490	127 928	124 284	486 986	120 888	108 984	100 175	330 047	99 554	110 467	109 025	319 046	1 136 079
		Total	6 444	185 074	268 863	247 186	239 881	941 004	233 202	214 730	196 765	644 697	194 950	212 265	214 978	622 193	2 207 894
Limpopo	Independent	Female	435	2 084	3 011	2 778	2 601	10 474	2 380	2 095	1 844	6 319	1 831	2 010	2 204	6 045	22 838
		Total	882	4 073	5 981	5 636	5 107	20 797	4 746	4 216	3 747	12 709	3 704	3 947	4 336	11 987	45 493
	Public	Female	186	58 829	70 493	68 152	66 112	263 586	63 979	57 528	52 064	173 571	51 740	54 567	66 279	172 586	609 743
		Total	401	118 307	147 575	142 110	136 774	544 766	133 401	117 532	107 232	358 165	106 653	113 783	138 985	359 421	1 262 352
	Both	Female	621	60 913	73 504	70 930	68 713	274 060	66 359	59 623	53 908	179 890	53 571	56 577	68 483	178 631	632 581
		Male	662	61 467	80 052	76 816	73 168	291 503	71 788	62 125	57 071	190 984	56 786	61 153	74 838	192 777	675 264
		Total	1 283	122 380	153 556	147 746	141 881	565 563	138 147	121 748	110 979	370 874	110 357	117 730	143 321	371 408	1 307 845
Mpumalanga	Independent	Female	277	905	1523	1452	1252	5 132	1130	988	868	2 986	791	700	753	2 244	10 362
		Total	576	1801	3151	2950	2575	10 477	2335	1994	1662	5 991	1569	1418	1537	4 524	20 992
	Public	Female	670	29150	47840	45055	42947	164 992	41800	38786	35279	115 865	36257	40349	40196	116 802	397 659
		Total	1332	58779	101676	94544	89701	344700	87982	79481	72250	239713	74852	84138	80008	238998	823411
	Both	Female	947	30 055	49 363	46 507	44 199	170 124	42 930	39 774	36 147	118 851	37 048	41 049	40 949	119 046	408 021
		Male	961	30 525	55 464	50 987	48 077	185 053	47 387	41 701	37 765	126 853	39 373	44 507	40 596	124 476	436 382
		Total	1 908	60 580	104 827	97 494	92 276	355 177	90 317	81 475	73 912	245 704	76 421	85 556	81 545	243 522	844 403
Northern Cape	Independent	Female	146	144	153	153	128	578	99	74	71	244	66	171	187	424	1 246
		Total	287	272	336	300	268	1 176	191	166	141	498	143	286	300	729	2 403
	Public	Female	320	9 204	13 885	12 617	12 187	47 893	12 335	11 357	11 071	34 763	10 846	11 257	10 987	33 090	115 746
		Total	619	18 561	29 127	26 179	24 998	98 865	26 096	23 410	22 086	71 592	22 444	22 483	21 247	66 174	236 631
	Both	Female	466	9 348	14 038	12 770	12 315	48 471	12 434	11 431	11 142	35 007	10 912	11 428	11 174	33 514	116 992
		Male	440	9 485	15 425	13 709	12 951	51 570	13 853	12 145	11 085	37 083	11 675	11 341	10 373	33 389	122 042
		Total	906	18 833	29 463	26 479	25 266	100 041	26 287	23 576	22 227	72 090	22 587	22 769	21 547	66 903	239 034
North West	Independent	Female	147	640	941	838	792	3 211	704	654	574	1 932	531	538	496	1 565	6 708
		Total	280	1 239	1 909	1 737	1 538	6 423	1 448	1 326	1 128	3 902	1 055	1 116	999	3 170	13 495
	Public	Female	213	24 443	37 643	36 505	34 325	132 916	34 566	31 689	29 197	95 452	27 609	30 090	29 523	87 222	315 590
		Total	432	49 497	78 585	76 176	70 889	275 147	72 093	64 074	59 283	195 450	55 476	62 032	58 599	176 107	646 704
	Both	Female	360	25 083	38 584	37 343	35 117	136 127	35 270	32 343	29 771	97 384	28 140	30 628	30 019	88 787	322 298
		Male	352	25 653	41 910	40 570	37 310	145 443	38 271	33 057	30 640	101 968	28 391	32 520	29 579	90 490	337 901
		Total	712	50 736	80 494	77 913	72 427	281 570	73 541	65 400	60 411	199 352	56 531	63 148	59 598	179 277	660 199
Western Cape	Independent	Female	923	1 818	2 446	2 340	2 124	8 728	1 928	1 780	1 691	5 399	1 624	1 868	1 748	5 240	19 367
		Total	1 589	3 602	4 863	4 671	4 247	17 383	3 895	3 533	3 380	10 808	3 257	3 591	3 504	10 352	38 543
	Public	Female	585	30 946	51 725	49 943	46 900	179 514	45 620	42 190	40 011	127 821	38 271	38 751	42 288	119 310	426 645

Table 4: Number of learners in ordinary schools, by province, sector, gender and grade, in 2015 (concluded)

Province	Sector	Gender	FET Band				Other 1)	Total Primary (Gr. 1-7)	Total Secondary (Gr. 8-12)	Total (Gr. 1-12)	Grand Total
			Gr. 10	Gr. 11	Gr. 12	Total					
Eastern Cape	Independent	Female	1 700	1 935	2 336	5 971	37	17 536	9 376	26 912	29 826
		Total	3 328	3 587	4 068	10 983	103	35 001	17 837	52 838	58 715
	Public	Female	79 453	69 463	46 756	195 672	107	538 324	324 326	862 650	929 364
		Total	154 774	125 871	85 254	365 899	250	1 128 756	628 675	1 757 431	1 894 682
	Both	Female	81 153	71 398	49 092	201 643	144	555 860	333 702	889 562	959 190
		Male	76 949	58 060	40 230	175 239	209	607 897	312 810	920 707	994 207
		Total	158 102	129 458	89 322	376 882	353	1 163 757	646 512	1 810 269	1 953 397
Free State	Independent	Female	541	573	488	1 602	11	4 793	2 755	7 548	8 297
		Total	1 042	1 043	862	2 947	19	9 873	5 231	15 104	16 680
	Public	Female	29 811	22 103	18 690	70 604	22	191 655	120 506	312 161	330 287
		Total	59 613	40 596	34 683	134 892	64	395 560	233 968	629 528	666 024
	Both	Female	30 352	22 676	19 178	72 206	33	196 448	123 261	319 709	338 584
		Male	30 303	18 963	16 367	65 633	50	208 985	115 938	324 923	344 120
		Total	60 655	41 639	35 545	137 839	83	405 433	239 199	644 632	682 704
Gauteng	Independent	Female	9 228	9 302	8 779	27 309	207	75 068	45 983	121 051	134 102
		Total	17 968	17 565	16 701	52 234	462	149 637	88 173	237 810	263 679
	Public	Female	85 172	73 911	57 111	216 194	1 702	584 187	361 829	946 016	999 584
		Total	170 844	138 859	104 137	413 840	4 885	1 184 966	704 941	1 889 907	1 998 640
	Both	Female	94 400	83 213	65 890	243 503	1 909	659 255	407 812	1 067 067	1 133 686
		Male	94 412	73 211	54 948	222 571	3 438	675 348	385 302	1 060 650	1 128 633
		Total	188 812	156 424	120 838	466 074	5 347	1 334 603	793 114	2 127 717	2 262 319
KwaZulu-Natal	Independent	Female	2 611	2 642	4 010	9 263	246	17 931	14 579	32 510	36 451
		Total	4 886	5 183	7 161	17 230	399	35 116	27 181	62 297	70 100
	Public	Female	123 693	122 287	89 435	335 415	40	754 343	537 850	1 292 193	1 383 552
		Total	248 347	233 055	168 014	649 416	135	1 560 461	1 066 708	2 627 169	2 811 418
	Both	Female	126 304	124 929	93 445	344 678	286	772 274	552 429	1 324 703	1 420 003
		Male	126 929	113 309	81 730	321 968	248	823 303	541 460	1 364 763	1 461 515
		Total	253 233	238 238	175 175	666 646	534	1 595 577	1 093 889	2 689 466	2 881 518
Limpopo	Independent	Female	2 146	2 202	2 354	6 702	0	16 540	10 916	27 456	29 975
		Total	4 242	4 086	4 147	12 475	0	33 137	20 758	53 895	58 850
	Public	Female	90 701	77 772	55 563	224 036	0	430 068	344 882	774 950	833 965
		Total	187 001	144 026	101 104	432 131	0	891 277	684 899	1 576 176	1 694 884
	Both	Female	92 847	79 974	57 917	230 738	0	446 608	355 798	802 406	863 940
		Male	98 396	68 138	47 334	213 868	0	477 806	349 859	827 665	889 794
		Total	191 243	148 112	105 251	444 606	0	924 414	705 657	1 630 071	1 753 734
Mpumalanga	Independent	Female	735	800	1 219	2 754	0	8 004	4 207	12 211	13 393
		Total	1 524	1 733	2 248	5 505	0	16 236	8 460	24 696	27 073
	Public	Female	48063	43970	29860	121 893	106	287 964	202 438	490 402	520 328
		Total	93095	80171	53901	227167	297	600486	391313	991799	1 052 207
	Both	Female	48 798	44 770	31 079	124 647	106	295 968	206 645	502 613	533 721
		Male	45 821	37 134	25 070	108 025	191	320 754	193 128	513 882	545 559
		Total	94 619	81 904	56 149	232 672	297	616 722	399 773	1 016 495	1 079 280
Northern Cape	Independent	Female	191	210	159	560	12	744	918	1 662	1 964
		Total	328	333	261	922	18	1 545	1 508	3 053	3 630
	Public	Female	10 395	8 966	6 567	25 928	2	84 298	48 172	132 470	141 996
		Total	20 180	16 840	12 237	49 257	2	174 340	92 987	267 327	286 509
	Both	Female	10 586	9 176	6 726	26 488	14	85 042	49 090	134 132	143 960
		Male	9 922	7 997	5 772	23 691	6	90 843	45 405	136 248	146 179
		Total	20 508	17 173	12 498	50 179	20	175 885	94 495	270 380	290 139
North West	Independent	Female	501	464	409	1 374	12	5 034	2 408	7 442	8 241
		Total	1 012	877	742	2 631	29	10 141	4 746	14 887	16 435
	Public	Female	34 529	25 754	18 318	78 601	30	231 534	138 214	369 748	394 434
		Total	68 464	48 103	33 650	150 217	85	476 576	270 848	747 424	797 438
	Both	Female	35 030	26 218	18 727	79 975	42	236 568	140 622	377 190	402 675
		Male	34 446	22 762	15 665	72 873	72	250 149	134 972	385 121	411 198
		Total	69 476	48 980	34 392	152 848	114	486 717	275 594	762 311	813 873
Western Cape	Independent	Female	1 821	1 822	1 856	5 499	39	13 933	9 115	23 048	25 828
		Total	3 528	3 605	3 646	10 779	121	27 846	17 874	45 720	51 032
	Public	Female	38 755	35 599	31 206	105 560	485	314 660	186 599	501 259	533 275
		Total	72 428	63 450	54 414	190 292	1 198	637 156	344 988	982 144	1 046 477
	Both	Female	40 576	37 421	33 062	111 059	524	328 593	195 714	524 307	559 103
		Male	35 380	29 634	24 998	90 012	795	336 409	167 148	503 557	538 406
		Total	75 956	67 055	58 060	201 071	1 319	665 002	362 862	1 027 864	1 097 509
South Africa	Independent	Female	19 474	19 950	21 610	61 034	564	159 583	100 257	259 840	288 077
		Male	18 384	18 062	18 226	54 672	587	158 949	91 511	250 460	278 117
		Total	37 858	38 012	39 836	115 706	1 151	318 532	191 768	510 300	566 194
	Public	Female	540 572	479 825	353 506	1 373 903	2 494	3 417 033	2 264 816	5 681 849	6 066 785
		Male	534 174	411 146	293 888	1 239 208	4 422	3 632 545	2 154 511	5 787 056	6 181 494
		Total	1 074 746	890 971	647 394	2 613 111	6 916	7 049 578	4 419 327	11 468 905	12 248 279
	Both	Female	560 046	499 775	375 116	1 434 937	3 058	3 576 616	2 365 073	5 941 689	6 354 862
		Male	552 558	429 208	312 114	1 293 880	5 009	3 791 494	2 246 022	6 037 516	6 459 611
		Total	1 112 604	928 983	687 230	2 728 817	8 067	7 368 110	4 611 095	11 979 205	12 814 473

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 2015

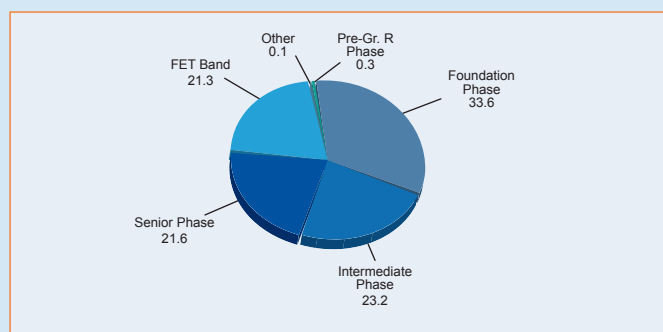


Figure 1 reveals that the highest proportion of learners in ordinary schools nationally was located in the foundation phase (33.6%) followed by the intermediate phase (23.2%) and the senior phase with 21.6%.

Figure 2: Percentage distribution of female learners in ordinary schools, by grade, in 2015

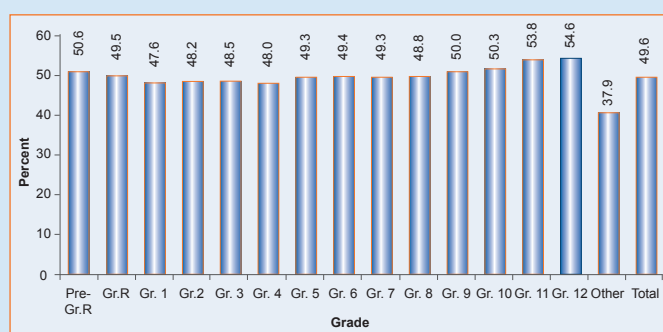


Figure 2 shows that, in the schooling system, there were more male than female (49.6%) learners. The lowest percentage of female learners in ordinary schools nationally was in Grades 1 (47.6%) and the highest percentage was in Grades 11 and 12 (53.8 and 54.6% respectively).

Figure 3: Percentage distribution of learners in ordinary schools, by grade, in 2015

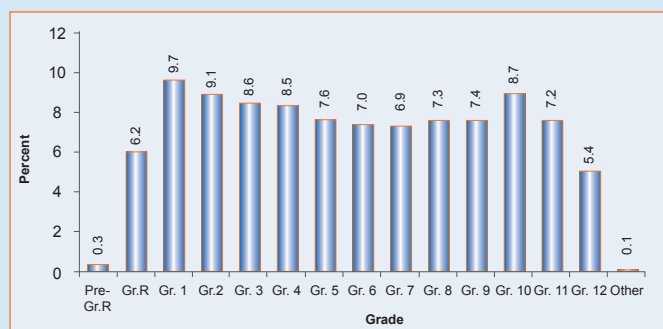


Figure 3 indicates that enrolment is generally very high in Grade 1 (9.7%) and declines as learners move to higher grades within the schooling system with 5.4% in Grade 12.

Table 5 reflects the following indicators:

(a) When counting all educators, the LER for ordinary public schools nationally was 32.3, while, when counting only state-paid educators in these schools, the LER increased to 34.8.

(b) The LSR for ordinary public schools nationally was 512, with six provinces (Free State, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, the Northern Cape, North West and the Western Cape) higher than the national average.

(c) The ESR for ordinary public schools nationally was 15.9, with five provinces (the 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 2015

Province	LER		LSR	ESR
	State-paid and SGB-paid Educators	State-paid Educators ¹⁾		
Eastern Cape	31.0	33.4	343	11.1
Free State	29.4	32.0	529	18.0
Gauteng	32.4	36.1	961	29.6
KwaZulu-Natal	34.4	36.5	477	13.8
Limpopo	31.8	32.7	435	13.7
Mpumalanga	31.4	33.0	603	19.2
Northern Cape	32.5	34.5	519	16.0
North West	33.1	35.3	535	16.2
Western Cape	31.8	37.6	717	22.5
South Africa	32.3	34.8	512	15.9

1) Underlying data not shown in the publication

Figure 4: Frequency distribution of learners in ordinary PUBLIC schools in 2015

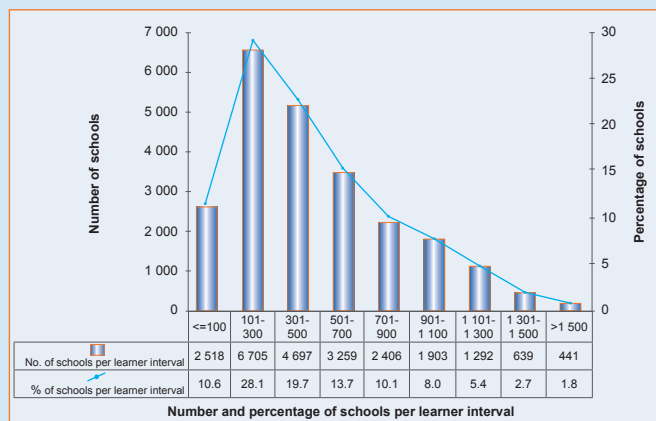


Figure 4, a histogram, shows that the highest number of ordinary public schools nationally (6 705, or 28.1%) was in the 101 to 300 learner interval. Furthermore, there were 2 518 schools (10.6%) and 441 schools (1.8%) in, respectively, the 100 and below learner interval and the above 1 500 learner interval.

Figure 5: Frequency distribution of LER in ordinary PUBLIC schools in 2015

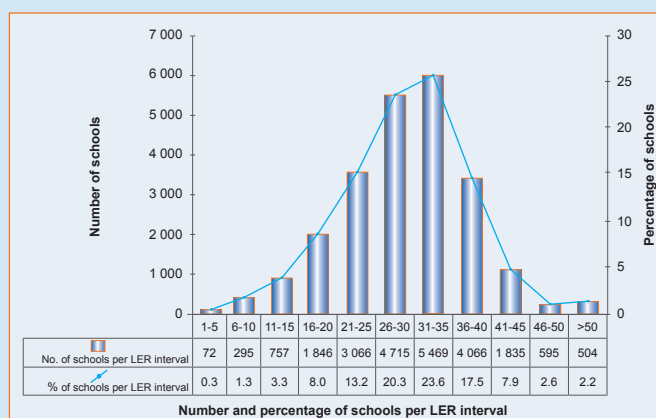


Figure 5, a histogram, reflects that the highest number of ordinary public schools nationally (5 469, or 23.6%) was in the 31 to 35 LER interval. Furthermore, there were 72 schools (0.3%) and 504 schools (2.2%) in, respectively, the one to five LER interval and the above 50 LER interval.