

## **THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN THE SERVICES SECTOR – LONG-TERM VIEW**

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### ***Abstract***

#### **Introduction**

As part of the planning for skills development for the service sector, the Services SETA commissioned a research on the future of jobs in the sector in light of the rapid advancements in technology and the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

#### **Aim of the study**

The purpose of this project is to identify occupations that may become obsolete in the next ten years and new ones that might emerge. The study seeks to understand the key drivers of change for the South African services sector; the future emerging jobs in the South African services sector; the future endangered jobs in the South African services sector, and the status of skills provisioning in the services sector.

#### **Research methodology**

A mixed methods approach was used including expert engagement, scenario development workshops with business owners and associations across services industries to identify plausible futures to map out the implications of social, economic, technological, environmental and political trends on future jobs and skills. The report also presents findings from a digital survey that was conducted with 300 youth aged between 18 and 30 to garner their views about the future world of work, jobs and skills. The study was conducted between October 2017 and March 2019.

#### **Key findings**

Findings from this research indicate that the following occupations are likely to be adversely affected by technology:

- Cleaning and laundry services
- Marketing services
- Postal services
- Business consulting services
- Project management services
- Real estate services

In the case of menial labour occupations, the impact is severe at the local elementary occupational level. However, in the case of complex occupations, the impact is felt mostly at management, professional and technical occupational categories.

#### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The impact of technology on the future of jobs in South Africa varies from subsector to subsector and occupational categories. Less menial and complex occupations are likely to be severely impacted

upon by technology. The upper-echelons of occupational levels are more likely to be affected by technology.

A key recommendation is that the Services SETA should foster closer collaboration with and between employers, universities of technology and TVET colleges to better understand future skills needs and devise timely interventions in the form of curriculum designs and training programmes.