

Boost for digital skills training

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The National Assembly has passed the iKamva National e-Skills Institute (iNeSI) Bill.



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The House on Tuesday unanimously agreed to give the Bill, which is expected to be a catalyst towards addressing youth unemployment, its stamp of approval.

This Bill seeks to promote the use of information, communication and technology. It also establishes the iKamva National e-Skills Institute and sets out its objects and functions.

The iKamva National e-Skills Institute (iNeSI) Bill seeks to integrate three e-skills development-related components - the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (Nemisa), the e-Skills Institute (e-Si) and the Institute for Space and Software Applications (ISSA).

The Bill is intended to strengthen Nemisa by bringing in a component responsible for the development of e-skills in the department. This would be a specialised institution which collaborates with higher education institutions. It would be based on partnerships, and would build on the current CoLab network.

The accounting authority of iNeSi would be the Board, and the Bill provides for the procedures for the appointment of Board members and the top executives.

Minister of Communications Stella Ndabeni–Abrahams said now that the e-Skills Institute Bill has been passed, there is a glimmer of hope for jobs for young people, specifically in the ICT spaces.

“This pioneering Bill responds directly to efforts by the South African government to ensure that youth are employable and equipped with digital skills for the fourth industrial revolution.

“The institute will act as a national catalytic collaborator and change agent for the development of digital skills and organisational capacity in the country. The digital skills capacity development initiatives will cover the total spectrum, from basic to high-end expertise that will build an inclusive economy and a capable developmental state,” said the Minister.

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Ndabeni–Abrahams said it is essential to train young South Africans, particularly in digital skills, to ensure the economic development of the country.

This will help avoid the brain drain of strategic skills.

“We need to ask ourselves honest questions about how will South Africa harness the fourth industrial revolution for youth employment? This e-Skill Bill seeks to address exactly that question. Digital skills have great potential in unlocking economic opportunities for youth” said Ndabeni- Abrahams.

The Bill will now move to the National Council of Provinces.

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