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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 64**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 10/2/2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 1 OF 2022**

**Ms C V King (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(a) What are the reasons for the slow spending by his department which resulted in R85 million declared unspent funds due to vacant posts not being filled and (b) how will this impact the filling of posts in technical and vocational education and training colleges, given that R35 million unspent due to vacancies, and Community Education and Training colleges had R50 million unspent on vacancies?

**NW68E**

**REPLY:**

The projected unspent amount of R85 million on the compensation of employees’ budget relates only to the posts vacated as a result of natural attrition during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years within the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges. Natural attrition increased by 2% during the periods mentioned above, mainly due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and resignations, contract expiry and death, at 4.1% and 6.1% respectively. The vacancy rate in 2019/20 was 9.2% and 19% in 2020/21, an increase of 10% in 2020/21. The processes of recruitment and selection were inadvertently affected in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the national state of disaster and the lockdown leading to the cumulative effect on the 2021/22 budget. In addition, the Post Provisioning Norms (PPN) for the TVET Colleges could not be fully implemented in 2021/22 as a result of none or late submission of pertinent information by colleges. This resulted in delays in finalising verification processes, as well as transfer of staff to PERSAL. In the 2021/22 financial year, only 24 of the 50 colleges were able to process the PPN with the remaining 26 colleges to be processed from 1 April 2022.

With respect to the Community Education and Training Colleges, projected unspent budget of R50 million, it is due to Persal systemic issues, as the National Treasury could not process the adjustments programmatically, which led to the department adopting a manual phased in approach in effecting salary adjustments, starting in May and completing in September 2021. It should be noted that standardisation entailed a manual process of conversion of payments of salaries from stipends to standardized notches inclusive of benefits such as pension, medical,13th cheque and housing allowances. Whilst CET lecturers were paid the once of gratuity and 1.5% adjustments as per the PSCBC Resolution 1 of 2021, lecturers were paid pro-rated amounts and not the full gratuities as per the directive from the Department of Public Service and Administration, which also led to paying a lesser amount than it was planned for. The standardisation processes have now mostly been undertaken with mop ups now being done to ensure full implementation by 31 March 2022.

Finally, it has to be noted that from September to November 2021 there was a moratorium on the filling of posts for both TVET, CET and Head Office due to transition management.