

# Press Release

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SOUTH AFRICAN  
INSTITUTE OF  
RACE RELATIONS

South Africa's Leading Research and Policy Organisation

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## **Only 15% of public schools have laboratories**

The proportion of schools with laboratories and stocked laboratories declined greatly between 2006 and 2011, according to the *South Africa Survey 2010/2011*, published by the South African Institute of Race Relations.

Despite the fact that the number of schools in South Africa only declined by less than a percentage point between 2006 and 2011, the proportion of schools with laboratories shrunk by 35%. The proportion of schools with stocked laboratories dropped by 50%.

The proportion of schools with a laboratory stood at 23% in 2006, and declined to 15% in 2011. The proportion of schools with a stocked laboratory fell from 10% to 5%.

The data was sourced from the Department of Basic Education.

All provinces witnessed a decline in both the proportion of schools with laboratories and the proportion of schools with stocked laboratories.

The province that registered the biggest drop in the proportion of schools with laboratories was Gauteng, where they declined by 47% from 76% to 40%. The proportion of schools there with stocked laboratories fell by 67% from 42% to 14%.

Gauteng nevertheless still had the highest proportion of schools with laboratories in 2011.

The provinces with the lowest proportions of schools with laboratories were Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, with 6% and 9% respectively. Only 2% of schools in each province had stocked laboratories.

The minister of basic education, Angie Motshekga, has repeatedly stressed the importance of improving the pass rate and the quality of physical science teaching. Delivering her 2011 matric results speech, Ms Motshekga outlined the department's commitment to the National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education and emphasised the importance of teacher development and training.

'It is important to ensure that science teachers are sufficiently trained and competent in their subjects, but it is equally important that they have the means to teach and this requires access to stocked laboratories', said Jonathan Snyman, an Institute researcher.

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