

Press Release



SOUTH AFRICAN
INSTITUTE OF
RACE RELATIONS

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South Africa's democracy is slipping

South Africa's performance in key areas of democracy is slipping, according to the latest *South Africa Survey*, recently published by the South African Institute of Race Relations last month.

The Institute assessed various international indexes, comparing countries' level of democracy between 2008 and 2011.

South Africa achieved better scores in the areas of political stability, good citizenship, and liberation of the poor according to three different indexes — *The Economist's* Democracy Index, The World Bank's Governance Indicator Report, and the Institute's Rainbow Index.

Most notable is the decline in key areas such as the control of corruption, civil liberties, and the ability of government to provide quality public services

The Economist's Democracy Index decreased South Africa's overall score from 7.91 in 2008 to 7.79 out of a possible 10 in 2010. The index was calculated by analysing 60 indicators grouped into five categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of governments, political participation, and political culture.

According to the latest World Bank Governance Indicator Report, South Africa scored lower than its previous score in 2008 in four out of six categories. These categories were voice and accountability, control of corruption, regulatory quality, and government effectiveness. South Africa recorded improved scores in political stability and the rule of law.

The Rainbow Index, developed by the Institute to track South Africa's performance on ten social, economic, and political criteria, awarded lower scores in eight categories, including democratic governance, rule of law, individual rights and responsibilities, vigilant media and civil society, racial goodwill, effective government, scope for free enterprise, and growth-focused policies. The biggest drop among these rights was individual rights and responsibilities from 65% to 59%.

A researcher at the Institute, Ms Georgina Alexander, said, 'The falling scores can be attributed to issues such as transparency, freedom of the Media, and accountability of public officials, as well as corruption. Proposed legislation such as the Protection of State Information Bill passed by the National Assembly may adversely affect South Africa's democracy rankings in the future.'

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