

BORN FREE BUT STILL IN CHAINS

SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST POST-APARTHEID GENERATION



IRR

South African Institute of Race Relations

The power of ideas

BORN FREE BUT STILL IN CHAINS:

SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST POST-APARTHEID GENERATION

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CONTENTS

SYNOPSIS	1
HIGHLIGHTS	2
I: SETTING THE SCENE	3
Introduction	3
The wider context	4
II: THROUGH THE STATISTICS	5
Demographics	5
Table 1: Population by race and age, 2014	5
Table 2: Births and deaths, 2002–14	6
Table 3: Life expectancy in years at birth by sex, 2002–14	6
Chart 1: Human Development Index, South Africa, 1980–2013	7
Chart 2: Infant and under-five mortality rate, 2002–14	7
Family life	7
Table 4: Children with/without fathers by race, 2012	7
Table 5: Orphans by race, 2012	8
Chart 3: Children living without any parent by race, 2012	8
Table 6: Children living in skip generation households by race, 2012	8
Table 7: Children’s living arrangements, 2012	8
Employment	9
Table 8: Employment and unemployment trends, 1994–2014	9
Table 9: Unemployment numbers and rates by age, race, and sex, 2014 (official definition)	10
Table 10: Unemployment numbers and rates by age, race, and sex, 2014 (expanded definition)	11
Table 11: Discouraged workseekers by race, 2001–14	12
Table 12: Employment and unemployment by race and age 15–24 years, 2014	12
Table 13: Voters’ choice of issues to be addressed in the next five years	12
Table 14: Most important issues by age group	13
Table 15: Most important issues by race	13
Table 16: Most important issues by political affiliation	13
Education	13
Table 17: Employment and unemployment by highest level of education, 2014	13
Table 18: Completion rates of all first-time entering students, 2006	14
Table 19: NEET rate of youth aged 15–24 years, 2013	14
Table 20: Population aged between 0 and 4 attending/not attending an early childhood development (ECD) centre, by race, 2013	14
Table 21: Throughput, 2011–13	14
Table 22: Population attending an educational institution by race and age, 2013	14
Table 23: Higher education participation rates by race, 2002 and 2012	16
Entrepreneurship	16
Health	17
Chart 4: Diarrhoea incidence among under-fives, 2001–12	18

Table 24: Number and proportion of people HIV-positive, 2002–14	18
Table 25: Incidence of TB per 100 000 people, 2012	18
Table 26: Exposure to antiretroviral treatment among individuals living with HIV by age, 0–24 years	19
Living conditions	19
Table 27: Household types and facilities, 1996 and 2013 (proportions)	19
Table 28: Cellular numbers and rates per 100 people, 2000–12	19
Table 29: Household Internet access by source and race, 2011 (proportions)	20
Crime and security	20
Table 30: Households that feel safe walking alone in their area when it is dark by race and gender of household head, 2012	20
Table 31: Prison population by age, March 2014	20
Table 32: International murder numbers and rates per 100 000 people, 2000 and 2012	21
Table 33: Selected contact crimes committed against adult females, adult males, and children, 2013/14	21
Political participation	22
Table 34: All voters by age, 2014	22
Chart 5: Age profile of ANC and DA supporters	23
Table 35: Party support by age group	23
Chart 6: Protest attendance by education level	23
III: ANALYSIS	24
Education	24
The labour market	25
Youth unemployment	26
Entrepreneurship	26
Social services	27
Black economic empowerment (BEE)	28
Political participation	28
IV PROPOSALS	30
Youth policy	30
Table 36: Registered non-profit organisations by sector, 2012/13	31
Local government	32
Growth	32
Crime	32
Education	33
Labour law	33
Racial preferencing	34
Self-help	34

Note: References to the *Survey* in this report are to the annual *South Africa Survey* published by the South African Institute of Race Relations.

References to *Fast Facts* are to the monthly bulletin published by the Institute.

SYNOPSIS

Half of South Africa's population is now made up of children, teenagers, and young adults born after 1990, the year in which Nelson Mandela was released from prison. These 27 million 'born frees' are seen by some as a 'post-racial generation' less likely to be governed by racial thinking than their parents were. The unemployed among them are frequently described as a 'ticking timebomb', while the participation of militant youths in disruptive and violent protest is also sometimes seen as the harbinger of some sort of 'Arab Spring' in South Africa.

This study attempts to address some of these issues. But before doing so it presents a wealth of statistical information about this generation of South Africans, broken down by race wherever possible. Many black born frees live in middle-class households: all of the higher living standards categories bar the very top one are now dominated by blacks. Many black children attend excellent schools: most of the pupils in the best state schools and in independent schools are now black. Infant mortality rates are dropping and life expectancy is rising.

There is another side to the picture, however. The youth desk in the Presidency says the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among South African youth is a major health concern. Another problem is the poor quality of the great majority of state schools. The youth desk indeed says that the skills pipeline is 'riddled with obstacles that undermine equitable access to opportunities in the labour market'. Small wonder, then, that unemployment rates among South African youth are extraordinarily high not only by global standards but also by those of sub-Saharan Africa.

Post-apartheid South Africa of course offers born frees of voting age (and everyone else) full franchise rights. The national and provincial elections last year were the first opportunity born frees had to exercise the vote. The next opportunity is in the nationwide municipal elections next year. Yet there are clear signs of alienation from the democratic political system. That system has achieved substantial successes in the provision of housing, water, electricity, and child support grants for poorer families. However, it has failed to provide the great majority of young people with decent schooling, vocational training, access to the labour market, or entrepreneurial incentives. These factors may help to explain why so much politics in South Africa takes place not via the formal political process but on the streets in the form of what are sometimes called 'service delivery' protests.

The study will discuss ways in which some of the challenges facing born frees can be dealt with. We agree with the view in the official National Development Plan that urgent measures are needed to address high youth unemployment. We also agree with the view of the youth desk in the Presidency that high unemployment and inability to participate economically cause young people to feel excluded. Accordingly, we will look at what the Government proposes for dealing with these problems. However, this paper will also put forward proposals of its own for dealing with unemployment and some of the other causes of alienation and frustration. Unless they are dealt with, politics may well continue to manifest itself more in disruption and violence than through formal structures.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Born frees (persons born in/or after 1990) number 27 million and constitute half the country's population
- Having lost one or both of their parents, some 3.24 million of the country's 18.57 million children are orphans
- Only 40% of boys, and 49% of girls, born this year can expect to survive to their 65th birthday
- Of the 1.09 million born frees who need antiretroviral treatment, 25% are receiving it
- More than 61% of children receive child support grants from the State
- A third of children aged between 15 and 19 live in households where no one is employed
- Unemployment among male born frees of working age (including discouraged workers) is running at 67%, and among their female equivalents at 75%
- South Africa accounts for 0.77% of the world's population but 1.9% of its youth unemployment
- A third of African toddlers attend early childhood development centres, whereas nearly half of white toddlers do
- Although Africans now account for more than two thirds of university students, only 16% of Africans between the ages of 20 and 24 are enrolled at university
- Only 38% of students admitted to university are likely to obtain their three or four-year degrees within five years. Some 51% are unlikely to graduate at all
- Born frees between the ages of 15 and 24 are running 74 000 micro-businesses
- People between the ages of 14 and 25 account for 29% of the country's prison population
- Some 45 000 born frees are in prison at any one time
- Only 31% of 18 and 19 year olds eligible to vote in the 2014 election actually registered to vote
- Born frees account for 49% of support for the Economic Freedom Fighters, against 30% of African National Congress support and 14% of Democratic Alliance support
- The youth desk in the Presidency says young people feel politically excluded because of high unemployment and their ability to participate economically
- The deputy minister in the Presidency responsible for youth wants the private sector to reserve 50% of all posts for persons between the ages of 15 and 35

I: SETTING THE SCENE

Introduction

'Born frees' are generally viewed as children and youths born in the post-apartheid era, that is, after the handover of power by the National Party (NP) to the African National Congress (ANC) in 1994. This study has, however, widened the definition to include everyone born in or after 1990, the year in which the NP government under FW de Klerk released Nelson Mandela and other prisoners and lifted the bans on the ANC and other political organisations. There are various reasons for using a definition that includes not only the 0 to 19 age group but also the 20 to 24 age group. Most of those in the latter category are too young to remember very much about the apartheid system, which began to disintegrate before 1990 and many of whose key laws, among them the pass laws, had already been repealed before they were born.

Another key element of apartheid was the industrial colour bar, which reserved skilled and many semi-skilled jobs for whites, and in some cases also for the coloured and Indian/Asian minorities. This began to break down from the early 1970s, so that by 1990 it was commonplace for Africans to be employed in large numbers in jobs previously barred to them [John Kane-Berman: *South Africa's Silent Revolution*, South African Institute of Race Relations and Southern Book Publishers, Johannesburg and Halfway House, 1990].

Much writing about born frees looks at them mainly as a political category: people more likely than their parents to see their future outside racially defined boundaries. One study described them as 'post-racial' [Abel Sithole: *The post-1994 South African Generation – Born Free and Post-Racial*, December 2014]. Some people also argue that born frees will be less susceptible to the influence of the ANC. This study will deal with these issues and with the broader question of political participation. However, it will also provide social and economic data about born frees – to the best of our knowledge, the first study to do so. Although the link is not always clear, social and economic circumstances help to determine political behaviour.

The great majority of born frees are Africans, but the study will also include data about the sections of the population classified by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) as white, coloured, or Indian/Asian. This will enable comparisons to be made. However, our inclusion of these others also reflects our view that whites too were freed from apartheid in 1994. Unlike many of their parents and grandparents, white born frees are not subject to military conscription.

Periods of continuous compulsory military service for whites were extended from a few months in the early 1960s to two years from 1978. This was mainly a response to the launch in 1961 of insurgency campaigns by the ANC and its allies in Umkhonto we Sizwe and the South African Communist Party, as well as by the Pan-Africanist Congress and its insurgency wing. Some of these campaigns involved incursions from neighbouring states, into which the South African Defence Force (SADF) launched both preventive and punitive raids.

Insurgency within South Africa continued right up until the handover of power in 1994. Among many of those sent to the Soviet Union and various African countries for training as insurgents were schoolchildren who had participated in the upheavals in Soweto in 1976, in which some 700 people, almost all of them Africans, were killed. Although stability was restored within a year or two, the ANC and its allies in the 1980s launched a 'people's war' campaign to make South Africa ungovernable under white rule and to establish political hegemony over the black population [Anthea Jeffery: *People's War – New Light on The Struggle for South Africa*, Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg and Cape Town, 2009]. Hundreds of thousands of youngsters participated in this campaign, which included coercion to enforce consumer boycotts and worker stayaways and was also characterised by conflict between various black political organisations and with the security forces [John Kane-Berman: *Political Violence in South Africa*, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1993]. As many as 23 139 people died in this conflict, in which many of the parents and grandparents of the current generation

of born frees participated. Although most born frees escaped political violence themselves, they have not escaped its legacy of lawlessness and criminality [1996/97 *Survey* p600].

Once the handover of power had taken place in 1994, violent conflict subsided. It still occurs both within and between political organisations, but born frees of all races are largely free of it. Their counterparts in other countries which have undergone political transitions – including, most recently, Egypt and Libya – have often been less fortunate. The major difficulties faced by South African born frees are not that they lack political rights but that they suffer from poor education and high unemployment. This is clear not only from statistical data, but also from opinion surveys. Low levels of motivation may also be a factor.

Born frees are of course free of the segregationist laws which imposed apartheid throughout the country's education system (and elsewhere). Like other aspects of apartheid, these laws also began to break down prior to 1994. Universities which were once prohibited from admitting black students without a permit for each one now have large numbers of black students. Africans now account for more than two thirds of university students. The white proportion has dropped to less than 20%. The majority of pupils in multi-racial private or independent schools are now black – although the vast majority of public schools are still exclusively black.

The wider context

The advent of democracy in 1994 had economic as well as political implications. The economy grew at an average annual rate of almost 6% in the 1960s, but that rate halved to some 3% during the 1970s, and halved again to around one and a half percent in the 1980s. The rapid growth of the 1960s caused the surplus of white skills to dry up. It was this development that forced the relaxations in the industrial colour bar referred to above.

At the same time, however, political and social instability increased as opposition to apartheid intensified, while South Africa was subject to growing international economic pressure. The resulting slowdown in economic growth meant that real gross domestic product (GDP) per head declined from its peak year in 1981 and did not bottom out until 1993. After that it began to climb back up again, reaching its 1981 level again only in 2006 – a quarter of a century later [2014/2015 *Survey* pp87–90]. Since the handover of power to the ANC, economic growth has averaged around 3%. Unlike many of their parents, born frees were thus born into a recovering economy.

Many born frees have also benefited from the rising living standards of the households to which they belong. The proportion of South African households in the lowest category of living standards measures (LSM 1) has dropped from 10.5% in 2001 to 1% in 2013. African households now account for 31% of households in the top category (LSM 10), against only 5% in 2004 [2014/2015 *Survey* pp318–319]. More and more households have piped water inside their dwelling, and are able to use electricity for lighting, cooking, and heating [2014/2015 *Survey* p620]. Cellphone access in South Africa is now running at 135 phones for every hundred people, the same as Switzerland. The Government's affirmative action policies – in terms of 'employment equity' and 'black economic empowerment' laws – have also benefited born frees living in households with parents who have benefited from these policies.

Finally, more and more born frees are born into the middle class. However, like other social and economic change, the growth of the black middle class had started before the advent of democracy. There is little agreement in South Africa as to how the middle class should be defined, and entering into a debate on this is beyond the scope of this paper. However, using LSMs as a crude measure, blacks in the broad sense (Africans, coloured people, and Indians/Asians) now significantly outnumber whites in all the higher LSM categories except the top one (LSM 10). Sometimes described as 'black diamonds', they are seen as a lucrative source of income for the retail sector in particular [*Sunday Times* 28 April 2013]. Blacks now account for a third of all top managers, against only 8% in 1996 [2014/2015 *Survey* p248].

Although the middle class has grown, so has unemployment. The proportion of the working-age population that is actually employed has dropped from 46% in 2001 to 43% in 2014.

Among 35 emerging markets, South African males have the second lowest labour force participation rate [2014/2015 Survey pp216–218]. Unemployment has risen from 3.67 million in 1994 to 8.33 million in 2014, or from 32% to 36%. These figures include ‘discouraged’ workers, who are unemployed people available to work but not taking active steps to look for jobs. The number of discouraged workers of all races has increased by 40% in the past 14 years. The increase would include not only some of the parents and grandparents of born frees, but also born frees themselves eligible to enter the workforce as they turn 15.

So, although very large numbers of born frees grow up in households richer than their parents did, for others high and rising unemployment is the dominating reality. Two thirds of all the unemployed have been jobless for more than a year. The result is a mix of economic and political alienation which some commentators regard as a potential threat to stability. The extent of that alienation, and what could be done about it, is what this paper seeks to explore.

II: THROUGH THE STATISTICS

This part of the report presents key social, economic, and political data in order to give as complete a picture of born frees as possible. Wherever available, statistics peculiar to born frees are given. Where these are not available, we give statistics for youth or for the population as a whole. In some cases youth statistics are quoted for comparative purposes. Statistics published by Statistics South Africa define youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 34 inclusive. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), however, classifies them as persons aged between 15 and 24. Unless otherwise stated, this study uses the South African definition.

Demographics

Almost 27 million people in South Africa are under the age of 25, and were therefore born in or after 1990. This means that slightly more than half of the total population of 54 million can be called born frees (**table 1**). Their number is increasing by some 1.21 million a year, which is about double the number of deaths each year of people of all ages (**table 2**). Some 85% of born frees are Africans (**table 1**).

The number of born frees is much larger than the number of people classified by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) as youths. These are people between the ages of 15 and 34 inclusive, of whom there are 19.5 million, constituting 36% of the population [Statistics South Africa: *National and Provincial Labour Market – Youth*, Pretoria, 2014].

Table 1: Population by race and age, 2014

Age group	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Total
Born frees not of working age					
0–4	4 936 601	420 171	99 256	263 301	5 719 329
5–9	4 541 523	428 867	96 953	269 367	5 336 710
10–14	4 303 892	444 983	93 863	280 988	5 123 726
Sub-total	13 782 016	1 214 021	270 072	813 656	16 179 765
Born frees of working age					
15–19	4 357 984	451 117	101 609	306 851	5 217 560
20–24	4 417 106	427 547	109 668	312 797	5 267 117
Sub-total	8 775 090	878 644	211 277	619 648	10 484 677

AIDS, partly because of the government’s tardiness in confronting the problem, has had a major impact not only on the health of millions of people but also on the demography of the country. Official figures show that

Table 1: Population by race and age, 2014 (continued)

Age group	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Total
Others of working age					
25–29	4 157 465	385 298	118 704	293 064	4 954 531
30–34	3 312 894	369 065	123 323	285 000	4 090 282
35–39	2 724 316	378 601	114 524	285 777	3 503 217
40–44	2 356 708	361 452	100 605	303 057	3 121 822
45–49	2 017 512	299 183	90 233	346 543	2 753 470
50–54	1 700 413	256 919	79 319	341 080	2 377 731
55–59	1 392 387	201 062	68 130	332 811	1 994 390
60–64	1 070 988	145 678	56 887	296 625	1 570 178
Sub-total	18 732 683	2 397 258	751 725	2 483 957	24 365 621
Over working age					
65–69	825 550	85 773	36 761	228 381	1 176 466
70–74	578 011	55 224	24 721	173 307	831 263
75–79	363 395	36 102	15 466	115 914	530 877
80+	276 964	24 506	11 855	119 957	433 281
Sub-total	2 043 920	201 605	88 803	637 559	2 971 887
Total	43 333 709	4 771 548	1 341 877	4 554 820	54 001 953
Proportion of total population	80.24%	8.84%	2.48%	8.43%	100.00%

Source: Stats SA, *Mid-year population estimates 2014*, Statistical release P0302, 31 July 2014, Table 10, p9

Table 2: Births and deaths, 2002–14

Year	Births	Deaths	AIDS-related deaths	Percentage of deaths AIDS-related
2002	1 111 897	631 383	275 444	43.6
2003	1 117 024	667 902	313 477	46.9
2004	1 120 172	697 473	344 141	49.3
2005	1 122 148	716 083	363 910	50.8
2006	1 125 755	694 227	343 194	49.4
2007	1 132 500	647 827	297 659	45.9
2008	1 141 468	617 202	257 504	41.7
2009	1 152 755	590 322	228 051	38.6
2010	1 163 629	578 953	213 864	36.9
2011	1 173 164	580 460	211 839	36.5
2012	1 184 867	575 546	203 293	35.3
2013	1 196 395	565 310	189 376	33.5
2014	1 207 711	551 389	171 733	31.1
Total	14 949 485	8 114 077	3 413 485	42.1

Source: Stats SA, *Mid-year population estimates, 2014*, Statistical release, P0302, 31 July 2014, Table 5, p6

Table 3: Life-expectancy in years at birth by sex, 2002–14

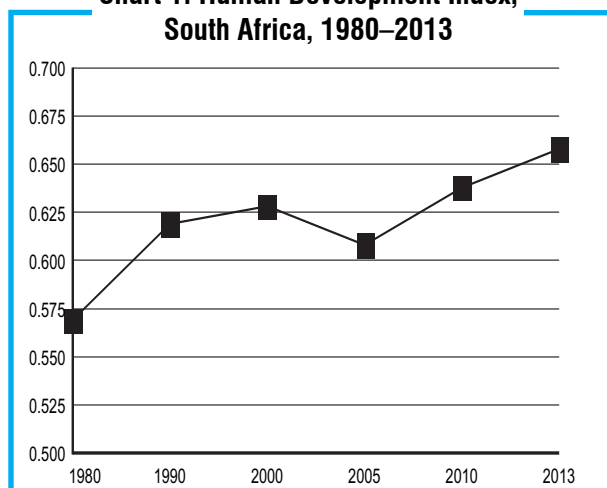
Sex	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Change 2002–14
Male	51.1	50.5	50.2	50.2	51.0	52.7	53.8	55.1	56.1	56.6	57.3	58.2	59.1	15.7%
Female	55.7	54.8	54.1	53.9	54.8	56.6	58.1	59.4	60.3	60.6	61.3	62.1	63.1	13.3%
Total	53.4	52.7	52.2	52.1	53.0	54.7	56.0	57.3	58.2	58.7	59.3	60.2	61.2	14.6%

Source: Stats SA, *Mid-year population estimates 2014*, Statistical release P0302, 31 July 2014, Table 5, p6

AIDS has killed 3.41 million South Africans in the last 13 years alone. Its impact in the form of lowered life expectancy at birth was the main reason for the decline in South Africa's score on the human development index after the year 2000, a downward trend not reversed until 2005 (**chart 1**). Very few countries saw their scores actually decline like this. Life expectancy, which had been rising among all races, dropped after 1990 – among Africans from 60 to 55 [2002/03 Survey p12]. It is now rising again: a baby boy born last year has a life expectancy of 59 years and a girl one of 63 years (**table 3**).

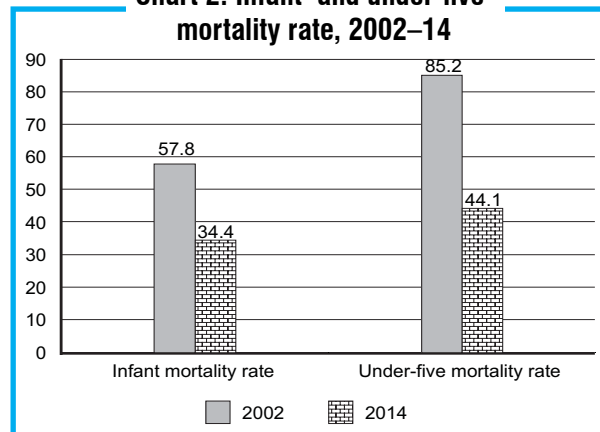
Despite these improvements, only 40% of boys born in 2012 can expect to survive to the age of 65. Even by African standards this is a low figure: Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland are among the countries much worse than we are, but those with higher proportions of boys who can expect to survive to 65 include Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia. The proportion of girls born in South Africa in 2012 who can expect to survive to the age of 65 is 49%. We are about in the same league in that respect as Malawi, but worse off than countries that include Egypt, Libya, Namibia, and even Zimbabwe [2014/2015 Survey p53].

Chart 1: Human Development Index, South Africa, 1980–2013



Source: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2014*, Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience, 24 July 2014, Table 2, pp164–167

Chart 2: Infant^a and under-five^b mortality rate, 2002–14



Source: Stats SA, *Mid-year population estimates 2014*, Statistical release P0302, 31 July 2014, Table 5, p6

- a Number of deaths of infants under one year of age, per 1 000 live births.
- b Number of children who die by the age of five, per 1 000 live births.

Trends in the infant mortality rate are difficult to measure, because few statistics from the same source are available over a sufficiently long period. According to some sources the infant mortality rate dropped from 51 deaths of infants under the age of one year per thousand live births in 1984 to 41 in 1994 but had then risen to 59 by 2002 [2002/03 *Survey* p294]. The most recent data from Stats SA shows that the rate has dropped from 58 in 2002 to 34 in 2014. Over the same period, the under-five mortality rate has dropped from 85 to 44 (**chart 2**). The eventual roll-out of medication to combat AIDS is probably the single most important reason for the reversal of the earlier worsening trends.

Family life

Thanks mainly to AIDS, many born frees are orphans. Of the 18.57 million people in the country officially classified as children because they are below the age of 18, some 3.24 million are orphans, having lost either their father or their mother or both their parents. Almost 18% of all children are thus classified in official statistics as orphans of one kind or another (**table 5**). Slightly more than a third of children are living with both their parents (**table 7**), while almost a quarter are living with neither parent (**chart 3**). Children whose fathers are alive but absent from the household are a common phenomenon – especially among African and coloured children. Africans also have a far higher proportion of deceased fathers than anyone else (**table 4**).

Some 1.45 million children – almost 8% – are living in ‘skip generation’ households (**table 7**). These are households made up of two non-consecutive generations: children may be living with grandparents or great aunts or uncles, but without their own parents. Such households are more prevalent among Africans than among the other population groups. Despite the fact that family breakdown among Africans is widespread, as many as 1.35 million African children live in households where other family members take care of them (**table 6**). Altogether 92 000 born frees live in child-headed households,

Table 4: Children with/without fathers by race, 2012

Race	Situation of father	2012
African	Deceased father	16.4%
	Absent (living) father	51.2%
	Father present	32.4%
Coloured	Deceased father	6.8%
	Absent (living) father	35.2%
	Father present	58.0%
Indian/Asian	Deceased father	4.4%
	Absent (living) father	14.6%
	Father present	81.0%
White	Deceased father	1.9%
	Absent (living) father	16.9%
	Father present	81.2%
Total	Deceased father	14.6%
	Absent (living) father	47.2%
	Father present	38.2%

Source: Stats SA, *Social profile of vulnerable groups in South Africa, 2002–2012*, Report No 03-19-00, December 2013, Table 2.2, p6; Table 2.4, p7

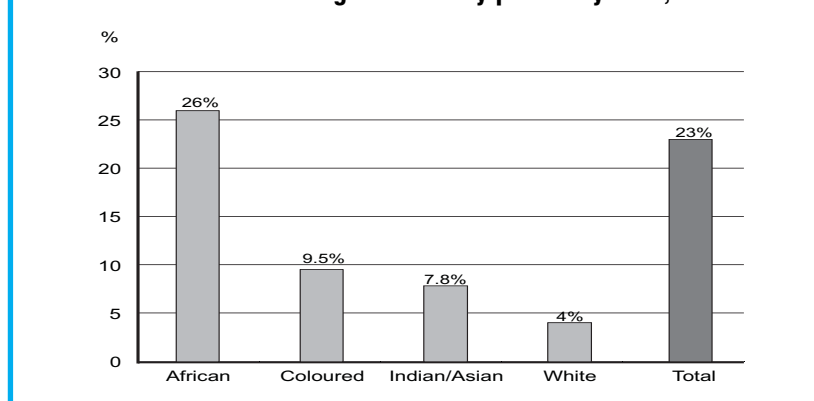
Table 5: Orphans^a by race, 2012

Race	Maternal orphans ^b		Paternal orphans ^c		Double orphans ^d	
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion
African	550 224	3.6%	1 803 512	11.8%	703 064	4.6%
Coloured	22 008	1.4%	91 176	5.8%	15 720	1.0%
Indian/Asian	2 728	0.8%	12 617	3.7%	2 387	0.7%
White	8 032	0.8%	19 076	1.9%	0	0.0%
Total	582 432	3.2%	1 929 306	10.6%	728 040	4.0%

Source: Stats SA, *Social profile of vulnerable groups in South Africa, 2002–2012*, Report No 03-19-00, December 2013, Table 2.2, p6

- a The proportion of all children in each race group who are orphans. For example, 3.6% of all African children are maternal orphans, 11.8% are paternal orphans, and 4.6% are double orphans. The total number of orphans of all types is 3 239 778.
- b Children who have lost their mother only.
- c Children who have lost their father only. Children who have unknown paternal identities are recorded as paternal orphans.
- d Children who have lost both their parents.

Chart 3: Children living without any parent by race, 2012



Source: Stats SA, *Social profile of vulnerable groups in South Africa, 2002–2012*, Report No 03-19-00, December 2013, Table 2.4, p7

Table 6: Children^a living in skip generation^b households by race, 2012

Race	Number ^c	Proportion
African	1 344 980	8.6%
Coloured	48 942	3.1%
Indian/Asian	17 720	5.3%
White	27 081	2.7%
Total	1 448 772	7.8%

Source: Stats SA, *Social profile of vulnerable groups in South Africa, 2002–2012*, Report No 03-19-00, December 2013, Figure 2.1, p5, Figure 2.5, p10

- a A child is a person aged below 18 years.
- b The table above shows the number and proportion of children in each population group who live in skip generation households. For example, 1 344 980 or 8.6% of African children live in skip generation households. Similarly, 1 448 772 or 7.8% of all children in South Africa live in skip generation households.
- c IRR calculations.

Table 7: Children's living arrangements, 2012

Living arrangement	Number ^d	Proportion
With mother only	7 206 712	38.8%
With father only	631 516	3.4%
With both parents	6 463 752	34.8%
In skip-generation households ^a	1 448 772	7.8%
In child-headed households ^b	92 870	0.5%
Other ^c	2 730 378	14.7%
Total	18 574 000	100.0%

Source: Stats SA, *Social profile of vulnerable groups in South Africa, 2002–2012*, Report No 03-19-00, December 2013, Table 2.4, p7; Table 2.5, p8; Figure 2.5, p10

- a Skip generation households are those which have two non-consecutive generations living in a household. In other words, these figures indicate the number of children living with their grandparents or great aunts/uncles, but without their own parents.
- b Oldest resident is younger than 18 years.
- c Other refers to all other children, and includes those living in care homes, with foster parents, and with relatives other than their biological parents, grandparents, or great aunts/uncles.
- d IRR calculations.

defined as households whose oldest member is below the age of 18 years (**table 7**).

Of the 18.57 million children in the country, 11.30 million or almost 61% receive means-tested child support grants from the State of R320 per child per month. According to the National Development Plan (NDP) adopted by the ANC and the Cabinet in 2012, there are approximately 2.1 million children in the country who are eligible for the grant but not receiving it [2014/2015 Survey p595]. (For the child to be eligible, the caregiver must earn less than R3 200 if single and less than double that if married.)

Social grants have helped reduce the proportion of the African population living in poverty from 49% in 1996 to 42% in 2012. However, the number of Africans living in poverty has risen from 15.99 million to 17.45 million. So although the middle class has grown, the number of African households living

in poverty has grown too. This is true of coloured and Indian/Asian households as well, but not of white ones [2014/2015 Survey pp320–321]. One third of children between the ages of 15 and 19 live in households in which no one is employed [Statistics South Africa: *National and Provincial Labour Market – Youth*, Pretoria, 2014].

Employment

Some years ago a study commissioned by the Government found that if South Africa had a rate of employment similar to those of countries in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and East Asia at similar levels of development, six million more people in this country would be working. ‘They would be predominantly African, women, young, and with no post-matric education’ [Fast Facts December 2008]. Little progress has been made since then. Quite apart from its human consequences, joblessness on this scale represents a colossal loss in economic output.

In the 20 years since 1994, the number of people in employment in both the formal and the informal sector has increased by 89%. However, unemployment has increased by almost 160% (table 8). On the strict definition, national unemployment now stands at almost 26% (table 9). This means that South Africa and Greece currently have similar unemployment rates – except that the South African rate follows five years of economic growth, whereas the Greek rate follows six years of recession [The Economist 17 January 2015 pp28, 80]. On the expanded definition of unemployment, which includes ‘discouraged’ workers, national unemployment in South Africa is running at 36% (table 10).

Unemployment rates are higher among younger people, higher among women, and higher among Africans. On the strict definition, unemployment among African male born frees of working age (15 to 24) is now running at 53%, and among their female equivalents at 61%. Altogether 1.13 million African born frees of both sexes are jobless on this definition. Unemployment rates among 15 to 24 year olds of other races are lower: the overall rate among whites, who generally have higher levels of education, is the lowest at 17% (table 9).

Although the strict definition of unemployment is now regarded as the official one, many labour market analysts believe that it underestimates the extent of unemployment because it excludes ‘discouraged’ workers. These are jobless people who want work but have given up looking for it because there are no jobs available in their area or which require their skills, or because they’ve given up hope of finding a job. On the expanded definition, the rate among African male born frees is 67% and among their female equivalents, 75% (table 10).

The number of Africans classified as discouraged workers has risen by 55% from 1.47 million in 2001 to 2.27 million in 2014 (table 11). Looking at the unemployed of all ages, almost 40% are people

Table 8: Employment and unemployment trends, 1994–2014

Year	Employment	Unemployment	
		Official definition ^a	Expanded definition ^b
1994	7 971 000	1 988 000	3 672 000
1995	8 069 000	1 644 000	3 321 000
1996	7 590 000	2 019 000	4 197 000
1997	7 548 000	2 238 000	4 551 000
1998	9 390 000	3 163 000	5 634 000
1999	10 369 000	3 158 000	5 882 000
2000	11 880 000	4 333 000	6 553 000
2001	12 494 000	4 081 000	6 609 000
2002	11 995 000	4 603 000	7 490 000
2003	11 666 000	4 843 000	7 968 000
2004	11 823 000	4 231 000	7 871 000
2005	12 503 000	3 993 000	7 673 000
2006	13 237 000	3 984 000	7 474 000
2007	13 236 000	4 119 000	7 504 000
2008	14 584 000	4 267 000	6 109 000
2009	14 357 000	4 341 000	6 678 000
2010	13 809 000	4 622 000	7 509 000
2011	13 922 000	4 782 000	7 921 000
2012	14 330 000	4 721 000	7 922 000
2013	14 692 000	4 972 000	8 289 000
2014	15 094 000	5 154 000	8 332 000
1994–2014	89.4%	159.3%	126.9%

Source: Stats SA, *Stats in brief*, 2004, 2004, p67; *Labour Force Survey Historical Revision March Series 2001–2007*, Statistical release P0210, 28 August 2008; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Historical revisions of the QLFS 2008 to 2013*, Statistical release P0211.3, 11 February 2014; *Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 2, 2014*, Statistical release P0211, 29 July 2014; email communication, 29 August 2014

- a The official definition of unemployment includes people who have actively looked for work, were available for work and who were not looking for work but were starting a job or business at a definite date in the future.
- b The expanded definition of unemployment measures anybody without a job who wanted to work and was available to take up employment in the reference period, regardless of whether they actively looked for a job in the four weeks prior to the reference week.

who have lost or left their jobs, but another 40% are new entrants to the labour market – in other words those who have never worked before [2014/2015 Survey p261]. Born frees unable to find their first jobs are likely to account for a significant number of these.

If we take African born frees of working age, for each one who has a job 1.29 are jobless on the official definition and 2.38 jobless on the expanded definition. Among coloured born frees the ratio is more or less one to one on the strict definition and 1.23 to one on the expanded definition. Among Indian/Asian and white born frees it is the other way round: there are more people with jobs than without (**table 12**).

Unemployment therefore appears to be the single characteristic that African born frees have most in common. The same applies to coloured born frees. Unemployment may also be the single most important

Table 9: Unemployment numbers and rates by age, race, and sex, 2014 (official definition)

	15–24 years	25–34 years	35–44 years	45–54 years	55–64 years	Total
Numbers						
African						
Male	582 000	900 000	463 000	233 000	50 000	2 227 000
Female	544 000	861 000	515 000	185 000	42 000	2 148 000
Total	1 126 000	1 761 000	978 000	418 000	92 000	4 375 000
Coloured						
Male	95 000	94 000	45 000	32 000	13 000	279 000
Female	101 000	86 000	51 000	21 000	4 000	264 000
Total	196 000	181 000	96 000	53 000	17 000	543 000
Indian/Asian						
Male	10 000	11 000	13 000	8 000	1 000	43 000
Female	9 000	9 000	3 000	2 000	1 000	24 000
Total	19 000	20 000	16 000	10 000	3 000	67 000
White						
Male	17 000	26 000	22 000	22 000	2 000	89 000
Female	20 000	26 000	23 000	11 000	1 000	80 000
Total	37 000	52 000	44 000	33 000	4 000	170 000
South Africa						
Male	704 000	1 031 000	541 000	295 000	66 000	2 638 000
Female	674 000	983 000	592 000	218 000	49 000	2 516 000
TOTAL	1 378 000	2 014 000	1 134 000	513 000	115 000	5 154 000
Rates						
African						
Male	52.8%	29.3%	18.9%	18.0%	10.1%	26.5%
Female	60.6%	36.2%	24.6%	15.1%	9.4%	30.5%
Total	56.3%	32.3%	21.6%	16.6%	9.8%	28.3%
Coloured						
Male	46.7%	29.0%	13.9%	15.1%	14.7%	24.2%
Female	55.3%	29.5%	18.3%	11.5%	7.5%	26.6%
Total	50.8%	29.3%	15.9%	13.4%	11.9%	25.3%
Indian/Asian						
Male	28.0%	9.8%	12.2%	11.5%	3.3%	12.1%
Female	32.0%	12.9%	5.7%	4.6%	10.9%	12.1%
Total	29.7%	11.0%	10.0%	9.2%	5.3%	12.1%
White						
Male	15.2%	9.4%	7.5%	7.3%	1.1%	7.5%
Female	19.5%	12.0%	10.7%	4.3%	1.1%	8.8%
Total	17.2%	10.6%	8.9%	6.0%	1.1%	8.1%
South Africa						
Male	48.4%	27.3%	17.2%	15.6%	8.0%	23.8%
Female	55.7%	33.2%	22.5%	12.9%	7.6%	27.5%
TOTAL	51.8%	29.9%	19.6%	14.4%	7.8%	25.5%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 10 November 2014

characteristic setting African and coloured born frees apart from whites and Indians/Asians. Rising unemployment may also help to explain why income inequality among Africans and coloured people has risen since 1996 by 3.8% and 6.1% respectively, while it has narrowed by 16.7% among whites

and by 17.3% among Indians/Asians [2014/2015 Survey p296]. (The headings above some of the columns in this table in the Survey have been incorrectly transposed.)

South African youngsters account for a high proportion of global youth unemployment. According to estimates by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) cited by the youth desk in the Presidency in a *Draft National Youth Policy 2014–2019* document published in January 2015, global unemployment of people between the ages of 15 and 24 is running at 73.4 million [*Draft National Youth Policy 2014 to 2019*, Pretoria, 12 January 2015, p3]. This means that youth unemployment in South Africa, using the narrower ILO definition, amounts to 1.38 million and accounts for 1.9% of the global total, whereas the country's total population accounts for only 0.77% of the global total.

Now running at 52%, unemployment of persons between the

Table 10: Unemployment numbers and rates by age, race, and sex, 2014 (expanded definition)

	15–24 years	25–34 years	35–44 years	45–54 years	55–64 years	Total
Numbers						
African						
Male	1 048 000	1 366 000	675 000	362 000	110 000	3 561 000
Female	1 030 000	1 440 000	845 000	372 000	100 000	3 788 000
Total	2 078 000	2 806 000	1 520 000	735 000	210 000	7 349 000
Coloured						
Male	115 000	114 000	56 000	38 000	19 000	342 000
Female	120 000	107 000	61 000	30 000	9 000	326 000
Total	235 000	221 000	117 000	67 000	28 000	668 000
Indian/Asian						
Male	16 000	18 000	14 000	13 000	1 000	62 000
Female	13 000	13 000	8 000	7 000	1 000	42 000
Total	29 000	31 000	22 000	19 000	3 000	104 000
White						
Male	20 000	30 000	22 000	26 000	6 000	104 000
Female	29 000	28 000	27 000	16 000	6 000	107 000
Total	49 000	58 000	50 000	42 000	12 000	211 000
South Africa						
Male	1 199 000	1 529 000	768 000	438 000	136 000	4 069 000
Female	1 192 000	1 588 000	941 000	425 000	117 000	4 263 000
TOTAL	2 391 000	3 116 000	1 709 000	863 000	252 000	8 332 000
Rates						
African						
Male	66.8%	38.7%	25.4%	25.4%	19.9%	36.6%
Female	74.5%	48.6%	34.9%	26.3%	19.8%	43.6%
Total	70.4%	43.2%	29.9%	25.9%	19.8%	39.2%
Coloured						
Male	51.5%	33.1%	16.9%	17.3%	20.2%	28.2%
Female	59.5%	34.1%	20.9%	15.7%	14.7%	30.9%
Total	55.3%	33.6%	18.8%	16.5%	18.0%	29.4%
Indian/Asian						
Male	38.7%	15.1%	13.5%	17.0%	3.3%	16.7%
Female	41.1%	17.1%	13.7%	17.4%	12.3%	19.4%
Total	39.7%	15.9%	13.6%	17.1%	7.8%	17.7%
White						
Male	17.5%	10.9%	7.7%	8.2%	2.6%	8.6%
Female	26.1%	12.8%	12.8%	6.5%	4.3%	11.4%
Total	21.7%	11.7%	9.9%	5.8%	3.3%	9.8%
South Africa						
Male	61.5%	35.7%	22.7%	21.6%	15.1%	32.5%
Female	69.0%	44.5%	31.5%	22.5%	16.2%	39.1%
TOTAL	65.1%	39.7%	26.8%	22.0%	15.6%	35.6%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 10 November 2014

ages of 15 and 24 in South Africa is also high by sub-Saharan African standards. According to the ILO, the rate for sub-Saharan Africa is 11.8% [International Labour Organisation: *World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2015*, Geneva, 2015, pp21, 54]. This means that unemployment in the born

free category in South Africa is more than four times as high as the rate for the sub-continent.

It is therefore hardly surprising that for at least 15 years now, unemployment has continued to overshadow whatever other concerns South Africans have. A national survey conducted for the Institute by a social and market research firm in 2000 showed that 55% of people regarded unemployment as the single most important problem not resolved since 1994. Other concerns in decreasing order of importance were crime and violence (48%), housing (31%), lack of water and sanitation (19%), education (17%), and health and AIDS (15%) [*Fast Facts* September 2001]. A survey of people who voted in the election in May 2014 showed that a similar proportion (55%) thought that unemployment was by far the most important issue for the new government to address in the next five years (table 13). Among born frees between the ages of 18 and 24, some 61% cited unemployment as the most important issue to be addressed. All other issues paled into insignificance, irrespective of age-group, race, or party-political affiliation (tables 14–16).

Unemployment insurance in South Africa operates on a contributory system, the employer and the employee each paying 1% of salary into a statutory unemployment insurance fund. Those losing their jobs are able to draw on the fund for a maximum of six months. But people who have never had jobs are

Table 11: Discouraged^a workseekers by race, 2001–14

	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Total ^b
2001	1 468 000	150 000	19 000	88 000	1 725 000
2002	1 758 000	112 000	28 000	60 000	1 958 000
2003	1 897 000	100 000	13 000	56 000	2 067 000
2004	2 073 000	142 000	22 000	48 000	2 285 000
2005	2 122 000	119 000	22 000	60 000	2 324 000
2006	2 162 000	161 000	51 000	72 000	2 445 000
2007	2 256 000	170 000	28 000	56 000	2 511 000
2008	1 041 000	44 000	4 000	11 000	1 101 000
2009	1 459 000	48 000	14 000	15 000	1 536 000
2010	1 818 000	91 000	14 000	36 000	1 960 000
2011	2 054 000	125 000	13 000	21 000	2 214 000
2012	2 247 000	83 000	9 000	21 000	2 360 000
2013	2 287 000	90 000	15 000	32 000	2 425 000
2014	2 272 000	90 000	27 000	31 000	2 419 000
2001–14	54.8%	-40.0%	42.1%	-64.8%	40.2%

Source: 2013 Survey, p279; Stats SA, email communication, 14 November 2014

- a A discouraged workseeker is a person who was not employed during the reference week of the survey, wanted to work, was available to work or start a business but did not take active steps to find work during the last four weeks, provided that the main reason given for not seeking work was any of the following: no jobs available in the area, unable to find work requiring his/her skills, lost hope of finding any kind of work.
- b Figures should add up horizontally but may not, owing to rounding.

Table 12: Employment and unemployment by race and age 15–24, 2014

	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White
Employed	874 000	190 000	44 000	176 000
Unemployment (official definition)	1 126 000	196 000	19 000	37 000
Unemployed (expanded definition)	2 078 000	235 000	29 000	49 000
Ratio ^a (unemployment official definition to employment)	1.29 to 1	1.03 to 1	0.43 to 1	0.21 to 1
Ratio ^a (unemployment expanded definition to employment)	2.38 to 1	1.23 to 1	0.65 to 1	0.28 to 1

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 10 November 2014

- a IRR calculations

Table 13: Voters' choice of issues to be addressed in the next five years

	Issues mentioned ^a	Issues most important for the Government to address
Unemployment/job creation/too few jobs	90%	55%
Crime/ criminal activity	60%	8%
Poverty	59%	9%
Corruption, government officials not honest	53%	9%
Development/industrial/providing infrastructure, water, electricity, roads, housing	47%	10%
Education/educational standards/equality in education	38%	3%
Health/hospitals/clinics	30%	1%
HIV/AIDS	26%	1%
Land/landlessness/land claims	21%	1%
Brain drain/losing trained or skilled people	13%	1%
Other	1%	2%

Source: Stats SA, email communication, 10 November 2014

- a Issues to be addressed in the next 5 years – the choice of voters.

unable to draw upon it at all. Since child support grants are available only below the age of 19, born frees who do not find jobs will have no source of earned income after that age. This is a bleak prospect with social and political as well as economic consequences.

Table 14: Most important issues by age group

<i>Issues mentioned</i>	<i>Age group</i>			
	18–24	25–34	35–49	50+
Unemployment/job creation/too few jobs	61%	57%	58%	48%
Development/industrial/providing infrastructure, water, electricity, roads, housing	8%	12%	9%	9%
Poverty	5%	9%	8%	12%
Corruption, government officials not honest	8%	7%	9%	12%
Crime/criminal activity	7%	8%	7%	11%
Education	7%	–	–	–

Source: Ipsos South Africa, www.ipsos.co.za, accessed 28 July 2014

Table 15: Most important issues by race

<i>Issues mentioned</i>	<i>African</i>	<i>Coloured</i>	<i>Indian/</i>	
			<i>Asian</i>	<i>White</i>
Unemployment/job creation/too few jobs	60%	54%	36%	32%
Development/industrial/providing infrastructure, water, electricity, roads, housing	11%	5%	–	6%
Poverty	10%	6%	5%	6%
Corruption, government officials not honest	7%	8%	20%	22%
Crime/criminal activity	5%	18%	26%	20%
Education	–	6%	6%	7%
Health/ Hospitals/clinics	–	–	–	5%

Source: Ipsos South Africa, www.ipsos.co.za, accessed 28 July 2014

Table 16: Most important issues by political affiliation

<i>Issues mentioned</i>	<i>Political Party</i>		
	ANC	DA	EFF
Unemployment/job creation/too few jobs	61%	41%	53%
Development/industrial/providing infrastructure, water, electricity, roads, housing	11%	5%	16%
Poverty	11%	6%	5%
Corruption, government officials not honest	6%	18%	13%
Crime/ criminal activity	5%	18%	6%
Education	*	6%	*

Source: Ipsos South Africa, www.ipsos.co.za, accessed 28 July 2014

Education

Levels of education have a material impact on job prospects. Only about a third of people who have started but not completed their secondary schooling are able to get jobs, a proportion which rises to half in respect of those who have completed secondary schooling and three quarters for those with tertiary education (table 17).

Table 17: Employment and unemployment by highest level of education, 2014

<i>Highest level of education</i>	<i>Number employed</i>	<i>Absorption rate^a by highest level of education</i>	<i>Number unemployed</i>	<i>Unemployment rate</i>
No schooling	365 000	31.1%	79 000	17.8%
Less than primary completed	1 100 000	35.6%	325 000	22.8%
Primary completed	621 000	35.0%	222 000	26.3%
Secondary not completed	4 927 000	32.0%	2 405 000	32.8%
Secondary completed	4 842 000	50.4%	1 713 000	26.1%
Tertiary	3 055 000	77.5%	390 000	11.3%
Other	184 000	53.3%	20 000	9.8%
Total	15 094 000	42.7%	5 154 000	25.5%

Source: Stats SA, Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 2, 2014, Statistical release P0211, 29 July 2014, pp44–45

a Proportion of each education category that is employed.

Table 18: Completion rates^a of all first-time entering students, 2006

Qualification	Graduated within 5 years	Estimated proportion that will never graduate
3-year degrees	38%	52%
4-year degrees	37%	50%
All 3- and 4-year degrees	38%	51%
3-year diplomas	30%	62%
All 3- and 4-year qualifications	35%	55%

Source: Council on Higher Education (CHE), A proposal for undergraduate curriculum reform in South Africa: The case for a flexible curriculum structure, August 2013, p45

- a This refers to a longitudinal study that measures the percentage of a given cohort intake that graduates.

Table 19: NEET^a rate^b of youth aged 15–24 years, 2013

Sex	Proportion
Male	29.7%
Female	36.1%
Total	3 400 000

Source: Stats SA, Quarterly Labour Force Survey: Quarter 2, 2013, Statistical release P0211, 30 July 2013, pxvi; IRR calculations

- a Not in employment, education, or training.
- b Statistics South Africa determines the NEET rate by adding the number of unemployed youth to the number of youth not in the labour force and then subtracting the number of unemployed youth and youth not in the labour force who are in education or training. This figure is then divided by the total number of youth.

Table 20: Population aged between 0 and 4 attending/not attending an early childhood development (ECD) centre^a, by race, 2013

	Numbers				Total ^b
	African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	
Attending	1 420 000	111 000	34 000	130 000	1 695 000
Not attending	2 962 000	299 000	65 000	113 000	3 438 000
Total^b	4 382 000	410 000	99 000	243 000	5 133 000
	Proportions ^c				Total ^b
	African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	
Attending	32.4%	27.1%	34.3%	48.7%	33.0%
Not attending	67.6%	72.9%	65.7%	42.3%	67.0%
Total^b	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Stats SA, General Household Survey 2012, Statistical release P0318, 22 August 2013, p82

- a This includes day-care centres, creches, playgroups, nursery schools, and pre-primary schools.
- b Totals include those who did not specify whether or not they attend an ECD centre.
- c This indicates that of all African children between 0 and 4 years of age, 32.4% attend ECD centres, and so on.

Table 22: Population attending an educational institution by race and age, 2013

Age group	African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Total
5–6	90.1%	78.7%	92.7%	80.4%	85.5%
7–15	98.8%	96.9%	100.0%	99.0%	98.6%
16–20	72.6%	54.4%	57.3%	73.0%	64.3%
21–25	16.7%	6.9%	11.6%	26.0%	15.3%
26+	2.5%	1.8%	2.2%	1.9%	2.4%
Total	35.8%	28.2%	23.6%	22.2%	27.5%

Source: Stats SA, General Household Survey 2013, Statistical release P0318, 18 June 2014, Table 3.1, pp87–88; IRR calculations

Table 21: Throughput, 2011–13

The grade 10 class of 2011	Number	Proportion
Grade 10 enrolment 2011	1 094 189	100.0%
Matric candidates 2013	562 112	51.4%
Matric passes 2013	439 779	40.2%
Bachelor's passes 2013	171 755	15.7%
Maths passes 2013	142 666	13.0%

Source: 2002/2003 Survey, p255; 2001/2002 Survey, p260; Department of Basic Education (DBE), School realities 2011, September 2011, Table 4, p3; 2013 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examination Technical Report, January 2013, p14; Table 6, p61; Table 22, p71

School attendance levels during the compulsory years – ages 7 to 15 – are almost 100% (table 22). They are lower in both the earlier and the later years. Only about a third of African children between the ages of 0 and 4 years attend an early childhood development centre, whereas the proportion among white children is nearly 50% (table 20). Attendance by all races at an educational institution drops to only 64% between the ages of 16 and 20 and drops again to only 15% for those aged between 21 and 25 (table 22). It is no surprise then that there are 3.42 million born frees between the ages of 15 and 24 who are not in employment, education, or training (NEET) – and who are therefore sometimes referred to as NEETs (table 19).

A report by Stats SA said the unemployment rate among Africans with tertiary education had more than doubled from 8% to 19%. 'Not many would have predicted such an outcome for the post-apartheid period when access to the labour market, at least for those with skills, should have been easier after so many decades of racial exclusion. The trend raises serious questions about the quality and/or appropriateness of tertiary education' [Statistics South Africa, *Youth Employment, Unemployment, Skills and Economic Growth, 1994 to 2014*, p12].

The problems in fact start long before students start tertiary education. Literacy and numeracy scores in grade 3 are barely above 50% [2014/2015 *Survey* p437]. The most recent government assessment showed that grade 9 pupils scored an average of only 11% in maths – a performance which the basic education minister, Angie Motshekga, described as a 'death trap' on the road to matric [Business Day 15 December 2014]. Of those who enrol in grade 10 with a view to writing their final school-leaving exam, the National Senior Certificate, two years later, half fail to do so, while only 16% obtain passes good enough to get them into university for degree purposes (**table 21**). Of those who are admitted to university, only 38% obtain 3- or 4-year degrees within five years, and 51% are not expected to graduate at all (**table 18**).

A study for the Presidency published in 2008 found that 88% of African state schools were poor performers. 'The Achilles Heel of the South African education and training system,' it said, 'is the inability of the majority of primary schools to provide adequate reading, writing, and arithmetic skills to some 80% of the country's learners. The inadequate preparation of primary school learners, in turn, is the direct cause of the poor progress of students in high schools, further education and training colleges, and the higher educational sector' [Nick Taylor et al: *Changes in Education Since 1994*, February 2008]. According to the youth desk in the Presidency, improved rates of participation in schooling are offset by poor quality at all levels of the system. Moreover, 'the pipeline for skills is riddled with obstacles that undermine equitable access to opportunities in the labour market' [Draft *National Youth Policy*, p19].

One consequence of the poor performance of most state schools, particularly schools in former black townships, is that more and more African children are being sent to the good state schools in formerly white suburbia, or to private or independent schools, all of which charge fees. These include traditional church and other schools, but also a growing number of schools run for profit, two of them by listed companies. More and more schools in the independent sector are aiming at poorer pupils, and in some cases they are charging lower fees than some of the better public schools. Most pupils in these schools are now black, and many of them receive excellent education. The beneficiaries are not only middle-class children, but also poorer children awarded bursaries [John Kane-Berman, *Levelling the Educational Playing Field*, IRR, September 2014].

The number of children in private/independent schools has doubled in the past decade, suggesting not only that more and more parents can afford such schools, but also that they have written off underperforming township schools. According to Stats SA, some 2.2 million children – 15% of school enrolment – travel more than an hour each way between home and school each day. This shows the cost and inconvenience to which African parents will put themselves to enable their children to escape dysfunctional township schools. Rather than have their children commute, some middle-class parents have bought houses in suburbs closer to suburban schools.

The number of Africans enrolled in the country's universities has more than doubled since 1995 [2014/2015 *Survey* p499], but only 16% of Africans between the ages of 20 and 24 are so enrolled (against 55% in the case of whites) (**table 23**). The Government wishes to push university enrolment up from 950 000 to 1.6 million by 2030. However, it is also keen to increase enrolment in technical and vocational colleges from 800 000 at present to 2.5 million by that same year, even though two thirds of the graduates of these colleges are currently unable to find jobs. The Government further plans also to establish new community colleges and to enrol a million students in them by 2030 [The *New Age* 17 January 2014]. The minister of higher education and training, Blade Nzimande, says the future of the country lies in these further education and training colleges, but he has admitted that

they are 'not effective' and that their 'output quality is poor'. A spokesman for one of the country's largest employment agencies has described them as 'a shambles' [*Business Report* 10 January 2014].

In addition, the Government wishes to expand artisan and other forms of workplace training. Shortly after coming to power, the ANC established 25 (now reduced to 21) sector education and training authorities (Setas) funded by levies on employer payrolls and designed to provide sector-specific training. Stats SA says there are no accurate records of how many people have benefited from the Setas, but that the African population in particular 'is not being well served by the skills development system in its current form'. According to the then governor of the South African Reserve Bank, Gill Marcus, 'the record of the Setas has been patchy at best, so there is no overall coherent focus on skills training' [*The New Age* 22 April 2013].

Dr Nzimande says South Africa is producing only 13 000 artisans a year, a number which the NDP wants to push to 30 000 by 2030. The fate of artisan training is one of the bitterest of all South African ironies. The whole system of on-the-job apprenticeship training was very largely denied to Africans until the end of 1981, when the first 491 Africans were registered as apprentices. Thirty-five years later, little progress has been made with training. Indeed, according to Dr Nzimande, artisan development through apprenticeship training has 'disappeared', so that the average age of artisans in South Africa is now 60. Dr Nzimande says he does not wish to delve into the reasons for the disappearance of the apprenticeship system. Ms Marcus, however, said that the pre-1990 system, 'though by no means perfect, was abandoned without an adequate replacement being put in place' [*The New Age* 22 April 2013, 6 November 2014]. So, just as the apprenticeship system was being opened up to Africans, the new Government shut it down.

There is only one conclusion: the great majority of the country's born frees are being poorly served by the country's entire education and training system. The exceptions are children in independent schools, those in the 20% of government schools that work, and those in the better university courses.

Table 23: Higher education participation rates^a by race, 2002 and 2012

Race	20–24 year olds in the country		Students enrolled in higher education		Participation rate	
	2002	2012	2002	2012	2002	2012
African	3 594 000	4 128 451	399 915	662 123	11.1%	16.0%
Coloured	358 000	412 243	38 329	58 692	10.7%	14.2%
Indian/Asian	96 000	110 337	47 706	52 296	49.7%	47.4%
White	283 000	315 660	179 380	172 654	63.4%	54.7%
Total^b	4 333 000	4 966 691	667 182	953 373	15.4%	19.2%

Source: Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2002*, 15 December 2003, p2; *Census 2011: Census in Brief*, 30 October 2012; *Mid-year population estimates 2013 — Country projection by population group, sex and age (2002–2013)*, beta2.statssa.gov.za, accessed 22 July 2014; Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), www.dhet.gov.za, *Table 2.12 for all institutions to 2nd order cesm*, accessed 22 July 2014

- a The proportion of people aged between 20 and 24 that are enrolled in higher education.
- b Total includes unspecified population groups.

Entrepreneurship

Some born frees unable to find jobs set up small businesses. A survey by Stats SA found that there were 1.5 million informal businesses in South Africa in 2013, of which 69% had been established by unemployed people who had no alternative source of income. Nearly 90% of these informal businesses were run by Africans. Altogether 74 000 were run by people between the ages of 15 and 24 – in other words, by born frees. Stats SA described these businesses as 'largely survivalist in nature'. Most of these micro-entrepreneurs appeared to be hawkers and food sellers, with much smaller numbers involved in community services, manufacturing, finance and transport. More than half these informal businesses had turnovers of R1 500 a month or less. Nearly three quarters of those running them had education levels below grade 12 [*Statistics South Africa: Survey of Employers and the Self-Employed, 2013*, Pretoria, August 2014, p25].

A total of 74 000 survivalist enterprises among 15 to 24-year-olds is minuscule in relation to the

number of them that are unemployed. Youthfulness itself may be one of the reasons, but the fact that such enterprises among 25 to 34 year olds number 384 000 suggests another reason: children up to the age of 18 are entitled to child support grants, so that there is less incentive for them either to seek work or to set up survivalist enterprises.

However, South Africa has low levels of entrepreneurship in general. According to the 2012 report of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, only 35% of South Africans discern entrepreneurial opportunities, against an average of 70% in various other sub-Saharan countries. Although entrepreneurship is seen by South Africans as a good career choice, entrepreneurial intentions to start new businesses are exhibited by only 12%, against a regional average of 53%. The monitor comments that entrepreneurship rates in sub-Saharan Africa tend to be high – with the exceptions of South Africa and Namibia. ‘Relatively few people are starting businesses in South Africa and even fewer are sustaining them,’ it reports [Global Entrepreneurship Monitor: 2012 Global Report, pp20, 22, 23, 27].

There is evidence that foreigners play an important role in the small-scale retail sector in black townships. Typically they set up spaza shops, which are small tuck shops in a room of a house or garage, or even in a shipping container. According to Thami Mazwai, who runs a company specialising in enterprise development, foreigners are the dominant players in township businesses and in rural areas and local blacks come out a poor second. However, notes Mr Mazwai, ‘we then end up attacking these foreigners in waves of xenophobia, when the reality is that the foreigners, not dependent on the Government, give it their all while our entrepreneurs virtually rest on their laurels, complaining about the Government or big business’ [Business Day 19 February 2014].

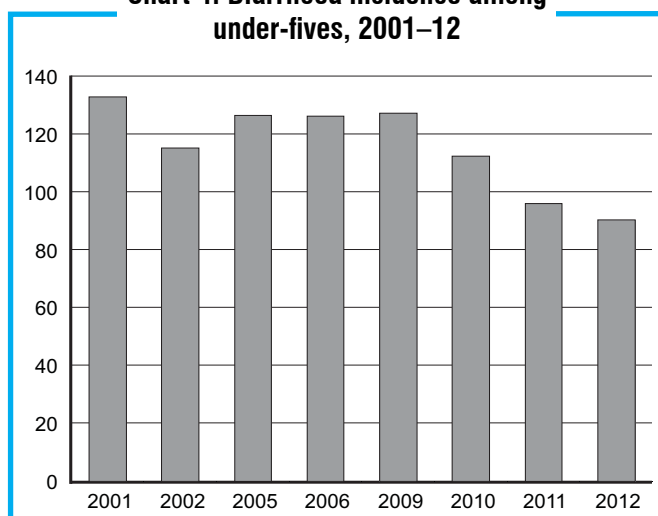
One study of Diepsloot, north of Johannesburg, showed that foreign nationals made up 19% of the local population but accounted for 48% of 2 509 survivalist businesses there [Business Day 31 October 2014]. Anecdotal evidence from various parts of the country suggests that Diepsloot is not an isolated case.

There have also been numerous reports over the last few years of violent attacks on foreign traders in different parts of the country, the victims including Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Chinese, Somalis, Ethiopians, Zimbabweans, Malawians, Mozambicans, and other foreign Africans [City Press 5 August 2012, 26 October 2014; The Times 11 January 2013, 22 January 2015; The Star 17 July 2014; The Citizen 15 August, 18 July 2014; Business Day 5 September 2014]. Last year a study in a township in Cape Town found that the ownership of spaza shops had shifted almost completely into foreign hands, especially those of Somalis. Foreign shopkeepers tended to club together for group purchasing that enabled them to undercut prices charged by local shopkeepers [Business Day 28 January 2014]. For the same reason, large numbers of shops in Soweto are now run by foreigners. In January 2015 some 120 spaza shops owned or run by foreigners in Soweto and neighbouring townships were looted after a Somali shopowner shot dead a 14-year-old boy who had tried to rob his shop. Newspaper reports described ‘rampaging youngsters plundering shops at will’, while the police stood by or sometimes joined in the looting, some of it carried out by young children. Foreigners were accused of not giving jobs to local youths. Altogether six people were reported to have died in the violence, in Soweto and elsewhere. Six Somali shopowners were reported to have been killed in Polokwane in the Limpopo province at the same time [Various press reports, 22 to 26 January 2015].

Health

This study has already made reference to declining infant and under-five mortality rates and rising life expectancy. Other health indicators also show improvements. The incidence of diarrhoea among under fives has dropped from 133 per thousand in 2001 to 90 in 2012 (**chart 4**). Severe malnutrition among under fives has also dropped, from 13 per thousand children to 4.4 per thousand [2014/2015 Survey p569]. On the other hand, the tuberculosis (TB) prevalence rate in South Africa, which is closely linked to the incidence of AIDS, has risen from 475 per 100 000 people in 1990 to 857 per

Chart 4: Diarrhoea incidence among under-fives, 2001–12



Source: Stats SA, *Social profile of vulnerable groups in South Africa, 2002–2012*, Report No 03-19-00, December 2013, Table 2.4, p7

Table 24: Number and proportion of people HIV-positive, 2002–14

Year	People HIV-positive (millions)	Proportion of the total population
2002	4.09	9.0%
2003	4.20	9.1%
2004	4.29	9.2%
2005	4.38	9.3%
2006	4.48	9.4%
2007	4.61	9.5%
2008	4.75	9.7%
2009	4.88	9.8%
2010	5.02	9.9%
2011	5.14	10.0%
2012	5.26	10.1%
2013	5.38	10.1%
2014	5.51	10.2%

Source: Stats SA, *Mid-year population estimates 2014*, Statistical release P0302, July 2014

Table 25: Incidence of TB per 100 000 people, 2012

Selected countries		Emerging markets		Selected African countries	
Country		Country		Country	
Algeria	89	Argentina	25	Algeria	89
Australia	7	Bahrain	20	Angola	316
Botswana	408	Brazil	46	Botswana	408
Brazil	46	Bulgaria	32	Burundi	130
Chile	16	Chile	16	Cameroon	238
China	73	China	73	Central African Republic	367
Egypt	17	Colombia	33	Congo (DRC)	327
Estonia	23	Czech Republic	5	Congo (Republic)	381
Germany	6	Egypt	17	Côte d'Ivoire	172
Ghana	72	Estonia	23	Egypt	17
Hungary	18	Hungary	18	Eritrea	93
India	176	India	176	Ethiopia	247
Indonesia	185	Indonesia	185	Ghana	72
Ireland	9	Jordan	6	Kenya	272
Israel	8	Kuwait	26	Lesotho	630
Italy	7	Latvia	53	Liberia	304
Japan	19	Lithuania	66	Libya	40
Kazakhstan	137	Malaysia	80	Madagascar	234
Mexico	23	Mauritius	21	Malawi	163
Mozambique	552	Mexico	23	Mauritius	21
Nigeria	108	Morocco	103	Morocco	103
Pakistan	231	Oman	13	Mozambique	552
Philippines	265	Pakistan	231	Namibia	655
Poland	21	Peru	95	Nigeria	108
Russia	91	Philippines	265	Rwanda	86
Saudi Arabia	15	Poland	21	Senegal	137
Singapore	50	Qatar	41	Somalia	286
South Africa	1 003	Romania	94	South Africa	1 003
Spain	14	Russia	91	Sudan	114
Sweden	7	Slovakia	7	Swaziland	1 349
Switzerland	6	South Africa	1 003	Tanzania	165
Turkey	22	Sri Lanka	66	Tunisia	31
Uganda	179	Thailand	119	Uganda	179
United Kingdom	15	Turkey	22	Zambia	427
United States	4	United Arab Emirates	2	Zimbabwe	562

Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators 2014*, April 2014

100 000 in 2012 [2014/2015 Survey p572]. South Africa's incidence of TB is among the very highest on the African continent (**table 25**). TB is the leading cause of death among Africans and coloured people [2014/2015 Survey p561].

How many born frees have died of AIDS cannot be known. As indicated earlier, the total number of AIDS-related deaths of South Africans of all ages in the last 13 years alone is 3.4 million. According to Stats SA's most recent mid-year population estimates, published in July 2014, some 5.51 million people – or about one in 10 – are HIV-positive (**table 24**). This is lower than the figure of 6.42 million given in a 2012 study published by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in April 2014. But the HSRC study found that 1.09 million people of born-free age (0–24) were living with HIV. Of these, just under 25% were receiving antiretroviral treatment (**table 26**). Treatment levels are higher among older people,

higher among non-Africans, higher in formal than in informal dwellings, and higher in urban than in rural areas.

A quarter of all new HIV infections occur in young females aged between 15 and 24. Although this is a much higher infection rate than among males of the same age, the HIV infection rate among young women in that age group has dropped from 5.3% in 2002–2005 to 2.1% in 2005–2012 [Human Sciences Research Council, *South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, and Behaviour Survey 2012*, April 2014]. After a very steep rise from less than 1% in 1990, the prevalence rate among pregnant women attending public antenatal clinics has stabilised at around 30% [2014/2015 Survey p579].

According to the youth desk in the Presidency, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among South African youth 'has become a major health concern'. Among 15 to 24 year olds, the prevalence rate is 8.5% [Draft National Youth Policy, p22].

Table 26: Exposure to antiretroviral treatment among individuals living with HIV by age, 0–24 years

Age group	Estimated number of people living with HIV	Estimated number of people on ART	Proportion of people living with HIV on ART ^a
0–14 years	369 000	166 000	44.9%
15–24 years	720 000	103 000	14.3%

Source: Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), *South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence and Behaviour Survey, 2012*, Date of release: 1 Apr 2014

a Antiretroviral therapy.

Living conditions

Table 27: Household types and facilities, 1996 and 2013 (proportions)

	1996	2013
Formal ^a	64.0%	77.7%
Informal ^b	16.0%	13.6%
Traditional	18.2%	7.8%
Other ^c	1.9%	0.9%
Access to piped water ^d	79.8%	89.9%
Access to piped water in dwelling	43.9%	45.3%
Access to piped water on site/in yard	16.5%	26.8%
Access to flush or chemical lavatories ^e only	50.3%	62.9%
Use of electricity for lighting	57.6%	88.9%
Use of electricity for cooking	47.1%	78.4%
Use of electricity for heating	44.5%	36.0%

Source: IRR calculations from data provided by Stats SA.

- a Formal refers to house/brick structure on separate stand or yard, flat in block of flats, town/cluster/semi-detached house, a room/house/dwelling in backyard, dwelling on a shared property, or a room/flatlet on a property or a larger dwelling/servants' quarters/granny flat.
- b Informal refers to dwelling/shack in backyard and not in backyard.
- c This includes caravan/tent, hostels and compounds, units in retirement village, and other unspecified dwellings.
- d This includes piped water in dwelling, on-site/yard, or on a communal tap/access point outside yard.
- e This includes in dwelling, on-site, and off-site access; also includes flush lavatories connected to a sewage system and those with septic tanks.

Table 28: Cellular numbers and rates per 100 people, 2000–12

	Actual numbers	Cellular phones per 100 people
2000	8 339 000	18.6
2002	13 702 000	29.8
2004	20 839 000	44.1
2006	39 662 000	82.1
2008	45 000 000	91.2
2010	50 372 000	100.5
2012	68 394 000	134.8
2000–12	720%	625%

Source: International Telecommunications Union, Time series by country (2000–2012), www.itu.int, accessed June 2013

Although the number of 'formal' – essentially 'brick and mortar' – dwellings has more than doubled from 5.79 million in 1996 to 11.74 million in 2013, the number of 'informal' dwellings remains high. This means that some two million households live in the backyards of formal houses or in shack settlements, of which there are some 2 700 in the country [2014/2015 Survey pp620, 634]. The Government has repeatedly said it wishes to upgrade or eliminate such settlements, but rapid urbanisation, budget constraints, poverty, and

inefficiencies at local government level have prevented this. A policy change may be in the offing in that the relevant minister now says that people under the age of 40 will not get free housing from her as long as she lives. As already noted, millions of born frees have nevertheless benefited from the provision of modern housing to their parents or other family members, as well as from accompanying

Table 29: Household Internet access by source and race, 2011 (proportions)^a

Source	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Other	Total
From home	4%	9%	23%	38%	13%	9%
From cellphone	16%	17%	20%	14%	18%	16%
At workplace	3%	5%	12%	15%	5%	5%
Elsewhere	6%	4%	4%	3%	5%	6%
No access	71%	64%	42%	30%	58%	65%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Stats SA, 2011 Census in brief, 2012, p102

a IRR calculations

services such as piped water, modern sanitation, and electrification (table 27).

Other indications of improved living conditions include the increase in access to television sets from 60% of adults in 2005 to 92% in 2013 [2014/2015 Survey p666], and the rise in cellular phone subscriptions from 19 per hundred people in 2000 to 135 in 2012 (table 28). Almost 96% of African households now have access to cellular telephones [2014/2015 Survey p678]. Internet

usage has increased from 5.4 per hundred people to 41 over that same period [2014/2015 Survey p686], although 71% of African households still have no access to the Internet (table 29).

Despite the substantial improvements in living conditions, localised protests against poor service delivery are a common phenomenon, as we shall see below.

Crime and security

Born frees are born into one of the world's most violent societies not at war. They are both perpetrators and victims. People between the ages of 14 and 25 account for 29% of the country's prison population, so that 45 000 born frees are in prison at any one time (table 31). According to the NDP, homicides in South Africa are generally committed by males between the ages of 16 and 30. The rate of homicide of women by intimate partners is six times the global average. South Africa,

says the NDP, faces 'an unprecedented burden of morbidity and mortality from violence and injury' [Fast Facts July 2013]. According to Stats SA, fewer than a quarter of male household heads feel safe walking out at night, and only 13% of female household heads feel that it is safe to go out after dark (table 30).

The police say almost 6 000 serious crimes are reported daily. South Africa's murder rate is higher than that of most other countries listed in a UN study on

Table 30: Households that feel safe walking alone in their area when it is dark by race and gender of household head, 2012

Race	Male	Female
African	22%	14%
Coloured	30%	13%
Indian/Asian	33%	6%
White	29%	9%
Total	23%	13%

Source: Stats SA, Victims of Crime Survey 2012, 27 September 2012, p13

Table 31: Prison population by age, March 2014

Age	Sentenced	Unsentenced	Total	Proportion of total prison population	Prison population per 100 000 of the population in each age bracket ^a
Between 14 and 25 years old	27 045	18 227	45 272	29%	431
Over 25 years old	83 367	26 009	109 376	71%	400
Total	110 412	44 236	154 648	100%	286

Source: Judicial Inspectorate of Correctional Services, 2013/14 Annual Report, October 2014, pp39–40

a Based on 2014 mid-year population estimates from Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). Owing to Stats SA's age classifications, the IRR could only capture the 15 to 24 year old age bracket. Thus the prison population rate for the 14 to 25 years age group in the table is a rough estimate.

b IRR calculations.

Table 32: International murder^a numbers and rates per 100 000 people, 2000 and 2012

Country	Number	Rate
Australia	254	1.1
Bahamas	111	29.8
Colombia	14 670	30.8
Costa Rica	407	8.5
Czech Republic	105	1.0
Dominican Republic	2 268	22.1
Denmark	47	0.8
El Salvador	2 594	41.2
France	743	1.2
Germany	662	0.8
Honduras	7 172	90.4
Hungary	132	1.3
India	43 355	3.5
Indonesia	1 456	0.6
Ireland	54	1.2
Israel	134	1.8
Italy	530	0.9
Jamaica	1 087	39.3
Kazakhstan	1 263	7.8
Latvia	97	4.7
Malawi	279	1.8
Mexico	26 037	21.5
Morocco	704	2.2
Namibia	388	17.2
Panama	654	17.2
Pakistan	13 846	7.7
Philippines	8 484	8.8
Portugal	114	1.1
Romania	378	1.7
South Africa	16 259	31.0
Spain	364	0.8
Switzerland	46	0.6
United Kingdom ^b	653	1.0
United States	14 827	4.7
Uruguay	267	7.9

← Source: United Nations, *Global Study on Homicide 2013*, September 2014

- a Experts usually discourage the use of international crime statistics to rank countries in terms of safety. This is because, they argue, countries use different legal definitions for crime categories, countries have different crime-reporting rates, and efficiency of recording crime varies throughout the world. However, murder is regarded as a reasonably reliable benchmark to compare safety and security levels among countries. This is because there is relative consistency in its legal definition and because it is one of the most widely reported crimes.
- b This refers to England and Wales only. It excludes Northern Ireland and Scotland. The information for the UK is only up to 2011, the latest available.

Table 33: Selected contact crimes committed against adult females, adult males, and children^a, 2013/14

Crime category	Adult females	Adult males	Children	Total for categories
	Numbers			
Murder	2 354	13 868	846	17 068
Attempted murder	2 651	13 590	869	17 110
Sexual offences	29 261	10 607	22 781	62 649
Serious assault	54 621	118 922	9 630	183 173
Common assault	80 672	75 381	11 104	167 157
Total	169 559	232 368	45 230	447 157
Crime category	Proportions			Total
	Adult females	Adult males	Children	
Murder	14%	81%	5%	100%
Attempted murder	15%	79%	5%	100%
Sexual offences	47%	17%	36%	100%
Serious assault	30%	65%	5%	100%
Common assault	48%	45%	7%	100%
Total	38%	52%	10%	100%

Source: SAPS, *Annual Report 2013/14*, October 2014, p165

- a People under the age of 18.

homicide. At 31 per 100 000 in 2012, it compared especially unfavourably with the rate of 4.7 in the United States (**table 32**). Most victims of sexual offences are adult females, but 36% of the victims of such offences are children below the age of 18 (**table 33**). Many sex crimes may occur in their own homes. Serious ‘contact’ crimes against children under 18 average 123 a day. But children are also among the victims of burglaries of their family’s homes (which average 714 incidents a day). They are also among the people traumatised by armed robbery, which averages 327 incidents a day, including the hijacking of vehicles in which they may be passengers [2014/2015 Survey p707].

High crime rates force more and more households and businesses to spend on private security: the number of policeman has risen by 39% since 1997, but the number of private security officers by 322%, with the result that they now outnumber policeman by more than three to one. The number of registered private security businesses has almost doubled since 1997 to more than 8 000 [2014/2015 Survey pp790–791].

Political participation

South Africans are eligible to vote when they turn 18. Almost two million people aged 18 or 19 were entitled to vote in the national and provincial elections held in May 2014. However, only 31% of this group actually registered to vote. One of the reasons may be that political parties did not make sufficient effort to arrange for born frees to register. But the low registration rate also suggests ignorance, indifference, or alienation. Since much larger proportions of people in higher age categories registered, the 18–19 segment of those registered amounted to only 2.4% of the total. Among 20 to 29 year olds (which includes many born frees) the proportion registered was 60%, while among 30 to 39 year olds it was 90% (table 34).

Table 34: All voters by age, 2014

Age group	Eligible ^a	Proportion eligible by age group ^b	Registered ^c			Proportion eligible registered ^d	Proportion registered by age group ^e
			Female	Male	Total		
18–19f	1 926 127	6%	323 651	273 860	597 511	31%	2.4%
20–29	9 481 294	30%	3 068 539	2 632 093	5 700 632	60%	22.5%
30–39	6 895 947	22%	3 224 907	2 954 210	6 179 117	90%	24.4%
40–49	5 301 005	17%	2 693 580	2 316 729	5 010 309	95%	19.8%
50–59	3 867 469	12%	2 117 684	1 686 949	3 804 633	98%	15.0%
60–69	2 255 911	7%	1 307 695	965 612	2 273 307	101% ^h	9.0%
70–79	1 172 634	4%	738 426	417 664	1 156 090	99%	4.6%
80+g	533 647	2%	419 768	159 150	578 918	108%	2.3%
Total	31 434 034	100%	13 894 250	11 406 267	25 300 517	80%	100.0%

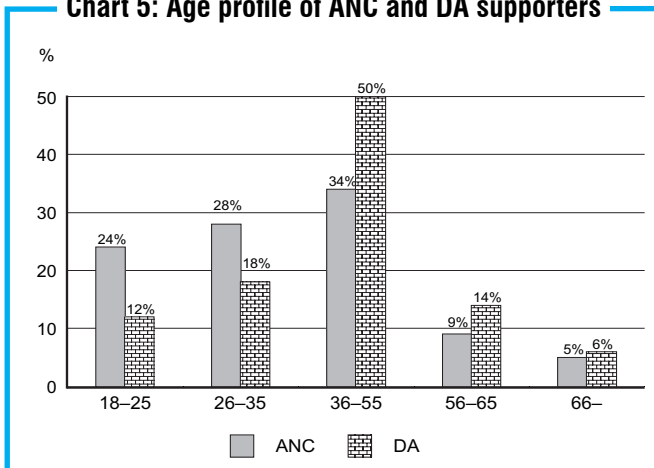
Source: IEC, www.elections.org.za, accessed 9 June 2014; Stats SA, *General Household Survey 2013*, Statistical release P0318, accessed 9 July 2014, Table 1.2, p72; IEC, *Voter registration statistics*, accessed 16 July 2014; IEC telephone communication on 22 July 2014

- a To be eligible to vote, a person must be 18 years of age or older (figures as at November 2013).
- b These figures show the proportion of all eligible voters each age group represents. For example, 2% of all eligible voters are aged 80 or older.
- c As at 15 July 2014.
- d These proportions show what proportion of people in each age group are registered. Therefore, 31% of all people aged between 18 and 19 are registered. A possible reason for the low registration figures for the 18–19 age group could be that they came of age in between national elections and have not yet felt it necessary to register.
- e These figures represent the proportion of registered voters each age group accounts for. For example, 2.4% of all registered voters are 18–19 year-olds.
- f IRR calculations. The number of people in the 16–17 age group was obtained from the 2011 Census. The growth rates for 2012 and 2013 from the mid-year population estimates were then used to calculate the number of 18–19 year-olds in 2013.
- g There are more people aged 80 and above who are registered to vote than are currently alive in South Africa. Registration figures were obtained from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The IEC was contacted and replied that the figure of 578 918 registered voters over the 80+ age group was verified against the National Population Register and is correct. The eligible voter statistics were obtained from Statistics South Africa's *Mid-year population estimates 2013*. A possible reason could be that people are not reporting deaths of people in this age category to continue to collect the deceased's pension.
- h When the IEC was contacted, its explanation for the higher registration figures in some age groups was that the registered population may be made up of people who are permanent residents with ID books, but who are not South African citizens. They are therefore not included in the eligible voting population, but can register, which is why the registration figures may be inflated.

Citing a voter participation survey conducted towards the end of 2013, the youth desk in the Presidency said that young people felt excluded because of high unemployment and their inability to participate economically. Only 11% of the general population was satisfied with the Government's job creation effort, while only 19% were satisfied with the Government's performance in crime reduction. The proportion of people concerned about corruption had risen from 9% in 2003 to 25% in 2013. Those concerned about service delivery had risen from 12% to 24% over the same period.

Trust in the political system continued to exhibit year-on-year decline. Trust in national government had fallen from 61% in 2009 to 44% in 2013. Only 44% trusted provincial government, and only 34% local government [*Draft National Youth Policy*, pp25–26]. Unveiling the Draft National Youth Policy in January 2015, Buti Manamela, deputy minister in the Presidency responsible for youth development and also national secretary of the Young Communist League, said lack of trust in politicians and their parties was the reason why born frees did not vote in large numbers in the 2014 election [*City Press* 18 January 2015].

Chart 5: Age profile of ANC and DA supporters



Source: Afrobarometer, Party identification in South Africa: Profiles of the ANC and the DA, December 2012, Figure 3, p4

Table 35: Party support by age group^a

Age group	ANC	DA	EFF
0-17	4%	1%	5%
18-24	26%	13%	44%
25-34	24%	17%	29%
35-49	23%	34%	20%
50-59	11%	19%	N/A
60+	12%	16%	2%
Total support	100%	100%	100%

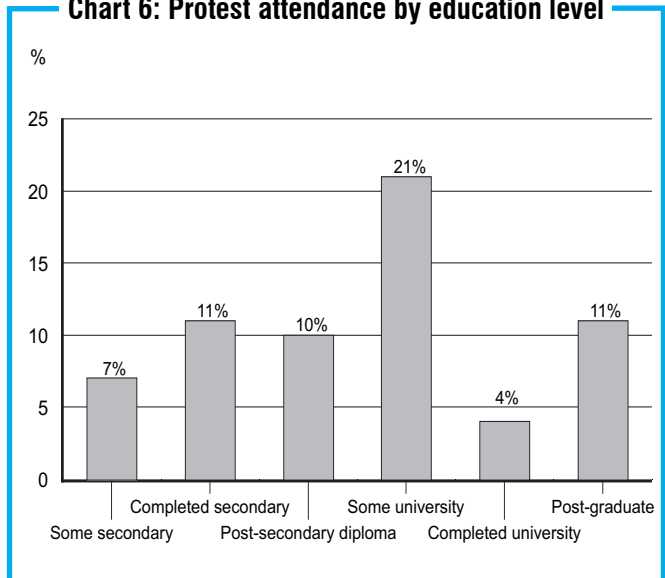
Source: Ipsos South Africa, www.ipsos.co.za, accessed 8 January 2015

a The percentages relate to the overall composition of party support, so 4% of the ANC's support would be aged 17.

Age also appears to affect political allegiances. A 2012 survey, before the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) launched themselves as a party, showed that 24% of the ANC's support came from the 18 to 25 age group, against 12% of the DA's support (**chart 5**). An opinion poll the following year showed that born frees accounted for 49% of the total support enjoyed by the EFF, as against 30% of ANC support and 14% of DA support (**table 35**).

Voting of course is not the only form of political participation. In the last 10 years at least 45 people have died in localised protests, usually referred to as 'service delivery' protests. In the last three years the number of protests that turn violent has almost doubled from an average of 2.7 a day to more than five a day. Violence usually takes the form of throwing stones and petrol bombs, arson, and barricading roads with rocks and burning tyres. Given that more than three million born frees are not in employment, education, or training, it is a reasonable assumption that they play a large part in many of these protests. An Afrobarometer survey in 2012 suggested that the segment of the population with the greatest propensity to attend protests was people with some university education but who had not completed it (**chart 6**).

Chart 6: Protest attendance by education level



Source: Afrobarometer, Protest and political participation in South Africa: Time, trends and characteristics of protesters, May 2012, Figure 4, p4

Mr Manamela said that although communities claimed that the protests were about water, electricity and housing, 'at the centre of most is the issue of the youth not having jobs' [*City Press* 18 January 2015]. An EFF spokesman said the party had organised some of the recent protests in Mpumalanga because the municipality wasn't doing enough to pressurise the private sector into employing local people [*City Press* 25 January 2015]. However, corruption and nepotism in the awarding of tenders are often cited in the Press as a major grievance as well. Members of local councils are sometimes the targets of violent attack [*IRR: The 80/20 Report – Local Government in 80 Indicators after 20 years of Democracy*, IRR, Johannesburg, 2014].

What we think we are seeing in the data is a relationship between economic exclusion and political alienation. The 'born free' generation, primarily for reasons of poor education and limited labour

market access, are a highly frustrated generation. That frustration may be driving a crisis of confidence in democratic institutions as well as explaining low voter registration figures and growing numbers of street protests. The analysis and proposals that follow in this paper seek to better understand that relationship and propose means by which greater economic participation can help to drive effective forms of political participation and vice versa.

III: ANALYSIS

Despite the end of apartheid, most African born frees face formidable challenges. The statistics cited above point to a high degree of alienation from the economic mainstream. Though many born frees receive child support grants financed by taxation, the majority of born frees do not contribute to the economy through employment or even self-employment. Despite numerous promises from the Government to tackle both unemployment and impediments to self-employment, little has been done. Nor has the Government tackled the failures of the country's schooling system. Most born frees therefore lack the skills most employers require. Economic alienation helps to explain alienation from the political mainstream, and the frequency of participation in disruptive and sometimes violent street protest. This section of the paper will look at some of these issues in more detail as a prelude to some of the policy proposals to be put forward in the final section.

Education

The failings of the country's largely poor public schooling system are now widely acknowledged in government, business, and the academic community. Various efforts are being made by the private sector to help the Government fix at least some of the poor schools. But there is no sign of willingness on the part of the Government to tackle one of the major problems, which is the hostility of the militant South African Democratic Teachers Union to the far-reaching reform that is essential. Some suggestions as to what might be done will be made in the final part of this paper. In the meantime, more and more black parents will continue sending their children to the growing number of independent schools. We are thus likely to see continuing class differentiation between born frees of all races with good schooling and tertiary education, and those, mainly African, left to the mercies of poor state schools.

If anything, technical and vocational education is in an even worse state. Although the Government plans to expand the college sector in relation to universities, the state-run further education and training colleges have poor reputations. The same is true of the sector education and training authorities (Setas).

Given the fact that the average age of artisans in South Africa is 60 and that the country is severely short of them, artisan training should represent an important opportunity for born frees. Unfortunately, there is little sign that the present costly and bureaucratic system run by the Setas will change to provide those opportunities. There may also be a reluctance among many born frees to take advantage of such opportunities, even if they existed.

The great majority of born frees emerge from the country's education system without the skills that the economy requires. According to Adcorp, a leading employment agency, South Africa simultaneously has an acute skill shortage and 344 000 unemployed people with degrees, diplomas, or certificates. However, although people with tertiary qualifications have better employment prospects than anyone else, many of them are not suitable to fill the estimated 470 000 vacancies in the private sector for management and professional positions [*AdCorp Employment Index* January 2014].

The economy is generating skilled jobs faster than unskilled jobs, and the proportion of whites with skilled jobs has risen from 42% to 61%. But among Africans it has risen from 15% to only 18%. This suggests, in the words of Gavin Keeton, an economist at Rhodes University, that 'the only age

category that has not benefited from increased access to skilled jobs is young black people aged 25 to 34' [*Business Day* 29 September 2014]. In that age group, according to the statistician general, Pali Lehohla, 'blacks have regressed in terms of skills' [*Business Day* 16 September 2014]. The economy, in short, is becoming more skill intensive but blacks are not able to keep pace.

The labour market

South Africa's labour market is highly regulated, although there is little agreement as to what, if anything, should be done about this. Regulation and restriction have created opportunities for placement agencies – widely known as labour brokers – to help employers to circumvent them. Brokers claim to have played a major role in introducing young people to their first jobs. Trade unions wish to see a complete ban on labour broking as temporary workers hired via placement agencies are generally difficult to organise. Although it has recently tightened up the law regulating temporary employment, the Government has so far resisted a complete ban.

Unions have also long campaigned for both 'decent wages' and a 'living wage'. In response, the Government is now considering the introduction of a national minimum wage. This would not be new in principle so much as an extension of the power already enjoyed by the minister of labour to lay down minimum wages in labour-intensive sectors, such as domestic service, agriculture, and the retail trade, which are difficult for unions to organise.

In sectors where both unions and employers are organised, they usually establish joint bargaining councils to negotiate about minimum wages and other working conditions. Agreements reached in these councils are then generally gazetted by the minister as legally binding on all employers and employees in the particular industry, including those not party to the councils. The minister's powers to extend agreements to non-parties are designed to prevent them from undercutting minimum wages. Smaller businesses have long complained that the practice of extending bargaining council agreements operates to their detriment as it forces them to pay more than they can afford, especially to young first-time workers. It also limits competition, especially from small businesses. Several court challenges to the extension system are currently in progress.

Extension of ministerial minimum wage powers and perpetuation of the bargaining council extension system are both likely to operate to the detriment of born frees entering the labour market for the first time. Some born frees may benefit from a youth employment tax incentive introduced by the Government at the beginning of 2014 despite union opposition. Employers taking on people between the ages of 18 and 29 at wages of between R2 000 and R6 000 a month will benefit from reductions in the payroll tax they must pay on behalf of these workers. So far 29 000 employers have claimed this tax benefit in respect of 270 000 workers [*Business Day* 15 January 2015]. Against this, Adcorp argues that labour brokers and other agencies have introduced 5.4 million people 'into the world of work since 2000' while more than one million people are deployed to work by these agencies every day [*Fast Facts* July 2013].

At the same time, there is evidence that Africans from elsewhere sometimes have better chances in South Africa's labour market than local people. After a strike in the agricultural sector in the Western Cape at the end of 2012, farmers in that province, as well as in Limpopo and Mpumalanga, submitted 6 487 applications to employ foreign labourers. Representatives of organised agriculture said that foreign labourers were better trained and more productive. Farmers legally compelled to pay higher minimum wages preferred paying it to 'much more efficient workers who will work doubly hard' and 'did not have [this] strike mentality' [*The New Age* 11 March 2013]. Deputy minister Buti Manamela indeed claims that many South Africans don't want certain jobs because they are for 'foreign people' [*City Press* 18 January 2015].

Ivor Blumenthal, a business consultant, says that many South African black professionals have a 'pervasive sense of entitlement and expectation that seems often to neutralise the work ethic

and productivity levels required for companies in South Africa to remain competitive'. As a result, many employers prefer to engage Zimbabweans, Malawians, Nigerians, Congolese, and Ghanaians rather than young South Africans. Dr Blumenthal says that young people need to understand the requirement to show passion, dedication, and commitment to hard work instead of a history of ladder-climbing and job-hopping [*The Star Workplace* 26 November 2014].

Youth unemployment

Referring to the large youth component of the total population, the NDP says it could be 'dangerous' if this cohort were alienated from mainstream society and decent prospects. If youths failed to get jobs by the age of 24 [National Planning Commission: *National Development Plan 2030*, 2011, p85] they were unlikely ever to get formal employment. Employment rates for young people were 'declining', while the number of youths in the cities was growing rapidly. The NDP also warns that 'expanding opportunities for higher education without a concomitant increase in employment opportunities can be hazardous. High unemployment among educated youth can lead to political upheaval and violence'. Unemployed young people felt that the odds were stacked against them, so urgent measures were needed to address high youth unemployment [*Fast Facts* July 2013].

The NDP also argued that South Africa currently had a highly favourable age distribution profile – enough people of working age to support the non-working population, old as well as young. The challenge was to convert this into a 'demographic dividend'. If this could be done South Africa could build a stronger economy, eliminate poverty, and reduce inequality before the population became too old and the dependency ratio too great. Reaping the dividend would be possible only if the working-age population could be put to work.

Although the ANC and the Cabinet have endorsed the NDP, the only measure that has been adopted is the youth employment tax incentive. However, its impact may be nullified by tighter restrictions on the labour market coming into operation this year.

Entrepreneurship

Red tape may be one of the reasons for South Africa's poor performance in small-scale entrepreneurship shown in the figures above. Although the Government has been promising for almost 20 years to investigate the regulatory burden of which small business frequently complains, little has been done to lighten that burden. Low levels of education may be another part of the reason for the country's poor entrepreneurial performance. Other explanations have been put forward by a number of black entrepreneurs who succeeded in business despite all the apartheid restrictions under which they suffered.

Herman Mashaba, who is now chairman of the Free Market Foundation, wrote that when the apartheid yoke was lifted he thought that 'blacks would be setting up their businesses all over the place'. However, the spirit of entrepreneurship had died. Strict labour laws had played their part in reducing the growth of small businesses [*The Star* 27 February 2013].

Others have suggested that a 'culture of entitlement' may also be a reason. 'Black economic empowerment (BEE) is not working in the context of creating mass entrepreneurship,' says Richard Maponya. One of its 'unintended consequences' is that 'our youth are veering towards a culture of entitlement' [*Business Report* 22 April 2014]. Thami Mazwai, to whom reference has already been made, says much the same as Mr Maponya. BEE has 'inculcated a culture of entitlement, which is now a major constraint [upon] entrepreneurship in the black community' [*Business Day* 19 February 2014].

Joe Hlongwane, another self-made millionaire despite apartheid restrictions, said the reason more black people had not emulated his success was that 'after 1994 they felt they were entitled to success

and didn't have to work for it' [*Sunday Times* 13 October 2013]. Sam Motsuenyane, yet another prominent entrepreneur, said a culture of 'expectation' that the Government will 'do this and that for them' was the reason why more blacks had not succeeded in business [*Sunday Times* 30 October 2011].

Another *Business Day* columnist, Trudi Makhaya, wrote that 'for all the nostalgia we feel for the self-made Maponyas and Mashabas of times past, the main game in town for black enterprise has been black economic empowerment', which to date 'has amounted to not much more than rent seeking' [*Business Day* 22 July 2014]. Njabulo Ndebele, a prominent academic, wrote that 'affirmative action' meant 'an abandonment of the will to struggle'. Free people, he added, 'do not scream for affirmative action, they build civilisations' [*Sunday Times* 13 April 2014].

Social services

Among the socio-economic rights guaranteed by the Constitution as adopted in its final form in 1996 are the rights of access to adequate housing, health care services, sufficient food and water, social security, and basic education. Children are entitled to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services, and social services.

The NDP, to which both the ANC and the Cabinet are committed, says that with the long-term goal of nearly full employment in mind, 'short-term action should be steered towards universal and inclusive systems of social protection'. These, it argues, are a constitutional right to which South Africa will have to commit 'significant resources'. 'Minimum social protection below which no one should fall' includes social rights and transfers in cash and kind that provide a minimum income, along with essential basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation, health care, and education' [*Fast Facts* July 2013].

Social services, including education, housing, and health care now account for 58% of the consolidated national and provincial budgets [2014/2015 *Survey* p183]. With lower rates of growth, rising unemployment, a rising interest burden, and a swelling public sector wage bill, the State's ability to keep on fulfilling its promises of free housing, education, water, electricity, and other services may be in jeopardy.

In October 2014 the minister of human settlements, Lindiwe Sisulu, said government policy was to provide free housing only to the indigent and those older than 60. The intention in giving free houses was to right the wrongs of the past. Young people below the age of 40 'had lost nothing to apartheid' and 'none of you are ever going to get a house free from me' [*The New Age* 22 October 2014]. Her comment was described as having caused shock and outrage. But it was welcomed by Mr Mazwai, who said that 'young men will once more know that they, and not the Government, have a duty to provide for their families' [*Business Day* 5 November 2014]. *Business Day*, however, pointed out in an editorial that housing was a basic right and that the ANC now needed to be candid with voters that it 'simply does not have the resources to make good on this right in every case, all the time' [*Business Day* 5 November 2014].

President Zuma said that 'in no country in the world will you see a government give people houses free of charge because they are poor'. Foreigners flocked to South Africa to open shops and thrive and make things and send money to their people, but South Africans waited for the Government [*The Citizen* 20 October 2014]. A senior journalist, Mondli Makhanya, pointed out that weaning South Africans from the culture that 'Pretoria will always provide' would take bold leadership, not the kind of leadership that sent mixed messages. During the election campaign the Zumas and Sisulus had boasted about the 'good story to tell' and all the wonderful things they had done for 'the people', but now they were 'condescendingly telling South Africans to get off their butts'. This was a case of 'right message, wrong tone, wrong messengers' [*City Press* 26 October 2014].

Black economic empowerment (BEE)

According to an informed estimate which is now several years old, the value of black economic empowerment (BEE) deals has risen to some R600 billion [Anthea Jeffery: *BEE – Helping or Hurting?*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2014, p158]. Most of this has been paid by shareholders in companies that have taken on BEE partners. Many would argue that BEE has helped to protect the capitalist system by helping to turn a politically well-connected black elite into wealthy businessmen and women. But BEE has failed to generate jobs, while the rise of populist parties such as the EFF suggests that the capitalist system is likely to come under increasing attack. To the extent that corporate expenditure has been devoted to financing BEE deals rather than net new investment, part of the price of BEE has been paid by born frees who might otherwise have found employment.

Political participation

Unlike most of their parents, born frees enjoy not only full franchise rights but also freedom of speech, assembly, and association, and all the other political and civic rights essential to make democracy work. They also have opportunities to participate in political institutions. With access to social media and the Internet, they have avenues of communication of which previous generations could not even dream.

Given the demise of apartheid, there is a tendency sometimes to see born frees as likely to adopt political loyalties that differ from those of their parents. However, born frees are not born into an ideological vacuum.

For the majority of voters, the ANC, as the leading party of liberation, has the most attractive message of all. Part of this message is that the job of liberating South Africa from 'colonialism of a special type' is not yet complete. Politicians, journalists, and public figures frequently claim that blacks are still suffering from the legacy of apartheid and that any failure to progress economically is the fault of continued white racist/colonialist domination of the economy. The ANC's reaffirmation at the beginning of this year of the Freedom Charter, a policy document adopted in 1955, is no doubt partly designed to help mobilise support around history, struggle, and ideology. Last year President Jacob Zuma said the term 'born frees' was an insult to youth and that they knew there was a struggle and an organisation that fought for freedom [Undated TNS press release]. Persistent portrayal of blacks as victims helps to consolidate the ANC's political support, while also serving as the rationale for affirmative action policies.

Governments often use state schooling systems for indoctrination. Like its predecessor, the present Government in South Africa seeks to use state-controlled radio and television for the same purpose: although South Africa has vigorous and popular independent stations, high proportions of adults listen to the state-controlled SABC radio and watch SABC television [2014/2015 *Survey* pp667–669).

In an Afrobarometer working paper published in 2011, Robert Mattes of the University of Cape Town said that although born frees confronted a world totally different from that of their parents, the post-apartheid generation was less committed to democracy. 'Whatever advantages might accrue from the new political experiences of political freedom and a regular, peaceful electoral process, are diminished by frustrating encounters with the political process, victimisation by corrupt officials, and enduring levels of unemployment and poverty.' Many faced the 'same if not greater levels of unemployment, poverty, inequality, and hopelessness as their parents'. A small minority had escaped to previously white schools, but most toiled away in increasingly dysfunctional schools. The youngest generation also confronted other limits to their life chances in the form of escalating violent crime and HIV infection [Robert Mattes: the 'Born Frees' – *The Prospects for Generational Change in Post-apartheid South Africa* Afrobarometer working paper No. 131, April 2011]. Little of the statistical information given earlier in the present paper contradicts Professor Mattes's bleak assessment.

As noted earlier in this paper, voters of all races, age groups, and political loyalties regard unemployment as the single most important issue that the Government must address in the next five years. Poverty is generally much lower down the list of issues to be addressed, while inequality barely features. Although there is much attention in the Media to South Africa's relatively high levels of inequality, voters are clearly much more concerned with jobs. High unemployment among youth is now almost ritualistically described as a 'ticking timebomb'. However, few of the proposals in the NDP or the Draft National Youth Policy are likely to do much to reduce high unemployment among youth or anyone else. The question then becomes: what can or will born frees do about their situation?

Change of political allegiance is of course one option for born frees as for anyone else. The survey quoted earlier in this paper showed that support for the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is strongest among born frees. Its populist policies – such as encouraging land invasions and nationalisation – may attract more support from this segment of the population, provided that the EFF devotes sufficient energy to registering its supporters as voters for the municipal elections next year.

More than 9 000 seats on local councils will be in contestation in these elections. As we saw earlier in this report, however, government at local level is the least trusted. This is not surprising. A report published by the National Treasury towards the end of last year found that 86 of the country's 278 municipalities were in financial distress, and that another 34 needed close monitoring as they were 'almost financially distressed'. The treasury said that national government had made substantial amounts of money available for capacity building at local level, but there was little indication that such funds and expenditure had resulted in increased capacity and performance. Municipalities were 'top heavy' with politicians, as opposed to skilled officials. Political interference in administrative decision-making processes compromised municipal finances and also impeded revenue collection [*Business Day* 10, 11 December 2014]. Local government had underspent its 2013/2014 capital budget by 24%. Debt owed to municipalities by households, business and government had increased from R43 billion in 2010 to R94 billion in 2014 [*Business Report* 7 October 2014, *Business Day* 3 November 2014].

Pravin Gordhan, minister of cooperative governance and traditional affairs, said that there were many instances in local government where skills did not measure up to requirements, a problem compounded by widespread corruption among public officials and the businesses they colluded with [*The New Age* 19 September 2014]. Mr Gordhan, a former finance minister, said local councillors were viewed as a 'corrupt lot' [*Business Day* 6 October 2014]. These problems are not new. Trevor Manuel, also a former finance minister, said in September last year that local government was more important than ever, but that it was falling apart [*Cape Argus* 30 September 2014].

Given these problems it is hardly surprising that public engagement with local government often takes the form of the street protest referred to above. However, whereas in 1976 there was clear evidence of an ideological thrust behind student protests, along with (belated and limited) attempts to impose organisational coherence upon them, there is as yet no sign that this is happening today.

Although these protests have led some commentators to suggest that an 'Arab Spring' is in the offing for South Africa, this country had its 'Arab Spring' in the form of the nationwide upheavals that followed the shootings in Soweto in June 1976. What began as a protest against language policy in schools rapidly turned into a spontaneous nationwide revolt against the entire apartheid system, led by schoolchildren infused with the spirit of 'black consciousness' inspired by Steve Biko [John Kane-Berman: *Soweto – Black Revolt, White Reaction*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1978]. Stability was brutally restored by the government of John Vorster, but from 1983 onwards the country experienced organised insurrection in the form of the 'people's war' inspired by the ANC and its allies in Umkhonto we Sizwe, the South African Communist Party, the Congress of South African Trade unions (Cosatu), and the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Whereas revolt in the 1970s and 1980s was against the apartheid government, today's protests are not against the ANC. They are rather inspired by demands that the ANC fulfil all its promises of providing houses and other social amenities: hence their usual depiction as 'service delivery' protests.

Paradoxically, these protests are as much a reflection of success in service delivery as of failure: when people see their neighbours benefiting they become more impatient for their own turn to come. Although many of the protests are also inspired by anger at corruption in local government, there is as yet little sign that this is turning to anger against the ANC.

However, this may begin to change if the Government continues to suggest that born frees are no longer entitled to free housing and tells them, in Jacob Zuma's words, to 'stand up and do things for themselves' in this and other fields. The EFF would be able to exploit this. The Government would also face the challenge of dampening down expectations that it has itself created. Whether it would be willing to do this in the face of municipal elections next year seems doubtful, however. It should also be remembered that Mr Zuma is not actually saying anything new. The idea that people should learn to work rather than 'live on handouts' was voiced ten years ago by the then finance minister, Mr Manuel.

The younger profile of EFF support shown in table 35 may be partly accounted for by the appeal of populist policies, such as nationalisation and land invasions. Because such policies will damage the economy, they are likely to hurt rather than help born frees. The DA, which supported the youth employment tax incentive when it was introduced by the ANC, favours introducing a youth wage subsidy. From the ANC itself, there is little on offer to benefit born frees. Nor is there much on offer from the statutory forum in which labour market policy is discussed, the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac), in which organised labour, the larger employer organisations, and government are represented, along with a few 'community organisations'. What will benefit born frees is the kinds of policies put forward in the final section of this report, including fundamental reform of the country's education system and removing barriers impeding access to the labour market. In the absence of such reform we anticipate that the extent of 'born free' political alienation will continue to grow, driving a deeper loss of confidence in South Africa's democratic institutions.

IV: PROPOSALS

What policies and strategies can secure confidence in democratic institutions? A recent paper by the Institute for Futures Research at the University of Stellenbosch suggested that born frees were still 'trapped' by the legacy of apartheid [Abel Sithole: *The post-1994 South African Generation – Born Free and Post-Racial*, December 2014]. The damage done by apartheid has been chronicled in great detail in hundreds of publications by the Institute dating back to the 1930s. However, all the data and the analysis presented in the present paper combine to show that born frees are now trapped much more by other factors: low economic growth, high crime, poor education, few opportunities for skills training, labour law which raises barriers to entry into the labour market, and racial preferencing legislation which may be designed to give them a leg up but which often operates in practice as a leg-iron. Social and economic alienation no doubt feeds through into alienation from a political system already suffering from a crisis of credibility. All of these issues need to be addressed. They need to be addressed in the first place because they are all serious problems in themselves. However, they also need to be addressed in order to neutralise threats that continued economic exclusion may in due course present to the rule of law, stability, and democratic institutions.

The final section of this paper will put forward proposals as to how some of these issues may be addressed, but only after evaluating the Draft National Youth Policy put forward by the youth desk in the Presidency on 12 January 2015.

Youth policy

The Draft National Youth Policy seeks to 'place the economy on a labour-absorbing growth path' and to 'support youth absorption into employment'. Its proposals include improved public employment schemes, a 'national drive of job fairs', and the creation of internship opportunities in government

departments, state-owned companies, and municipalities. State-owned companies would also have to ensure that procurement policies favoured young people.

A ‘mass youth enterprise creation programme’ is also proposed, along with ‘national roadshows’ to provide information to young people on opportunities available for enterprise development. Young people in rural areas should be provided with extension officers and farming implements to help them grow labour-intensive products. Various proposals to improve the country’s education system are also made. Among these is that out-of-school youth should be provided with ‘second chances’ to complete education to enable them to compete in the labour market. There should also be a ‘conversation around what competencies/skills should be acquired by learners in order to prepare for the world of work’.

As far as ‘active citizenry’ is concerned, the draft policy proposes ‘visible campaigns to encourage young people to belong to charitable organisations and actively participate in acts of solidarity’. Also, ‘government, business, and non-profit organisations should make it possible for young people to move into authentic and meaningful leadership roles’.

There are plenty of opportunities for active citizenry. South Africa possesses a multitude of non-profit organisations (NPOs), of whom more than 100 000 are officially registered (**table 36**). They cover a wide variety of activities, from social services to political advocacy, and offer opportunities for engagement to born frees and others. Some may offer paid employment, but many rely heavily on voluntary work.

As far as employment in the private sector is concerned, the Draft National Youth Policy document says that ‘large companies should be engaged to set clear commitment in terms of opening the workplace for young people who require internships, apprenticeship, and work-integrated learning opportunities’ [*Draft National Youth Policy*, pp29–50]. Launching the document, Mr Manamela said that the private sector would not be ‘immune to an uprising’ or think it would only ‘target government’. He added, ‘We have to create a legal obligation in order to compel private companies to play ball’. This included convincing them that reserving 50% of all posts for people aged between 18 and 35 would defuse the ‘ticking timebomb’ that threatened the nation’s political, economic, and social stability [*City Press* 18 January 2015].

The document is perhaps most interesting for what it omits to say. The NDP envisaged that 90% of all jobs to be created to bring unemployment down to 6% by 2030 would have to be created in small and expanding firms in the private sector. By contrast, the draft youth policy relies heavily on the State. It also ignores the NDP’s argument that large numbers of workseekers in South Africa cannot enter the labour market because it ‘locks out new entrants’ [*Fast Facts* July 2013]. Some evidence of the extent to which new entrants are locked out can be gauged from the fact that South Africa has a labour force participation rate of only 57.3%, whereas that of sub-Saharan Africa is 70.9%, according to the ILO.

Although the NDP itself can be faulted for the inadequacy of its own proposals, it does at least acknowledge that it is ‘critical to urgently introduce active labour market policies to initiate massive absorption of young people and women into economic activity’ in the private sector. Moreover, referring to born frees unable to get jobs by the age of 24, the NDP said alienation of this cohort

Table 36: Registered non-profit organisations by sector, 2012/13

Sector	Number	Proportion
Business and professional associations, unions	662	0.6%
Culture and recreation	5 570	5.4%
Development and housing	20 964	20.5%
Education and research	8 039	7.9%
Environment	1 228	1.2%
Health	10 582	10.3%
International	65	0.1%
Law, advocacy, and politics	2 229	2.2%
Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion	1 089	1.1%
Religion	11 791	11.5%
Social services	40 078	39.2%
Total	102 297	100.0%

Source: Department of Social Development (DSD), *State of South African Registered Non-profit Organisations issued in terms of the Non-profit Organisations Act of 1997*, May 2013

from mainstream society and decent prospects would be 'dangerous'. Coming on top of the growing number of violent township protests, the recent involvement of youth in widespread looting of foreigners' spaza shops in Soweto suggests that alienation may be on the increase, and that it is spilling over into criminality.

Local government

Local government has no powers over education or employment policy. However, the numerous problems confronting it provide an opportunity for the mobilisation of born frees and others in the forthcoming municipal election. Opportunities exist here for all parties. Some of the local councillors elected on ANC tickets have in the past tried to deal with corruption, only to be whipped into line by senior party officials, among them President Jacob Zuma [IRR: *The 80/20 Report – Local Government in 80 Indicators After 20 Years of Democracy*, IRR, Johannesburg 2014, p26). They could try again, mobilising support among born frees and other youths within the ANC. Opposition parties could also mobilise support for necessary reform of local government. This would mean addressing its key deficiencies. Appointments should thus be made on merit, not race. Nor should technical and other officials be appointed according to political allegiance. Corruption and nepotism must be rooted out. Another essential reform is that local councils and councillors should be made accountable to local electorates rather than to party headquarters.

Growth

Without much higher rates of economic growth, the prospects for born frees are bleak. No amount of social transfers to lessen the impact of poverty or tax-incentivised job-creation schemes are substitutes for growth. Detailed proposals on what needs to be done to accelerate the country's average 3% growth rate are beyond the scope of this paper. That it needs to be higher can hardly be gainsaid, however. Declines in unemployment between 2004 and 2006 coincided with an average economic growth rate of slightly more than 5% during those years [2013 *Survey* p231, pp265–269]. Although the NDP believes that overall unemployment can be reduced to 6% by 2030 with an annual average growth rate of 5.4%, President Thabo Mbeki suggested some years ago that the country should aim at a growth rate closer to 8% [2010/2011 *Survey* p106].

Among other things, faster growth necessitates raising investment from its current level of 20% of GDP to 30%. It further necessitates a shift in government priorities from redistribution to growth and the creation of a policy environment which unleashes instead of stifles the energies of the private sector. Comprehensive deregulation, not least slashing the red tape that stifles small business, would have to be part of any reform aimed at stimulating higher rates of economic growth. So would a smaller and immensely more efficient public sector.

Crime

As shown above, wealthier people and businesses seek to protect themselves from crime by employing private security companies. Poorer communities are unable to do this: in many cases they simply apprehend suspected criminals and beat or burn them to death for suspected offences ranging from rape to theft of a cellphone. Gang warfare is now endemic in various communities on the East Rand and in the Western Cape. Higher rates of growth and more jobs would probably lessen the temptations of born frees to enter upon lives of crime. Born frees could also organise themselves into vigilante groups to patrol neighbourhoods and streets to protect citizens from crime. They would have to be careful not to infringe the law themselves, of course.

Both the prosecution service and the police need radical overhaul. Both need to be freed of political control and staffed with professionals appointed on merit rather than for reasons of race. Again,

detailed proposals are beyond the scope of this paper. But the decentralisation of policing to local level, including making local police chiefs accountable to local communities, is probably essential.

Education

In the name of equality, the Government may be tempted to level down in the schooling system. This should be resisted. The growing independent school movement should be encouraged. Nor should the Government do anything to impede successful suburban government schools, the key to whose success is the extensive involvement of parents and other members of committed school governing bodies. The Government should rather concentrate all its efforts on improving dysfunctional government schools. There is no great secret about successful schools: they are run by principals who have the powers of a chief executive to hire and fire staff, and who are accountable to independent governing bodies which are in turn accountable to parents. Bringing this about will mean a surrender by the State of bureaucratic control. It will also probably mean a showdown with the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu). Sadtu has succeeded in creating a system in which schools are run in the interests of teachers rather than of pupils. Empowering school principals to hire and fire teachers is key to changing this.

Unlike ordinary schooling, technical and vocational education needs to be much more closely aligned with the requirements of employers. Accordingly, the present system needs to be redesigned in conjunction with the private sector. Reform probably means abolishing the costly and bureaucratic sector education and training authorities (Setas). Apprenticeship training should be reinstated on the old model, with appropriate adjustments to cater for technological change. The classroom component of apprenticeship training, previously technical colleges, should be privatised to the maximum extent possible. Colleges remaining under state ownership should be run by independent boards.

Independent governing bodies – whether school boards or university councils – are critical to the success of education. The most successful parts of South African education are independent schools, suburban government schools with strong governing bodies, and universities. Relaxing the grip of the State on other parts of the education system is an essential component of fixing those other parts.

Labour law

It will take time to fix the defects in South African education so that millions more reap the benefits now available to a minority. This will enable more people to obtain the skills that the increasingly capital-intensive economy requires. Most born frees already on the labour market cannot wait for that. The barriers that keep especially unskilled born frees out of that market need to be lifted, which can be done simply by enacting the relevant legislation.

More and more people are coming to recognise the deficiencies of South Africa's labour law. Strikes that frequently turn violent, wages set above market levels, and procedural difficulties in dismissing workers are some of the main problems. These are major disincentives to hiring workers, including born frees.

Combating violent strikes necessitates making secret strike ballots compulsory so that union officials or minority groups of workers cannot impose strikes on others. It also necessitates much more effective policing and prosecution of unionists or workers who use violence to enforce strikes [2014/2015 *Survey* p415]. It further necessitates bringing civil actions against unions for damage to property caused during strikes.

All workers should have the right to seek and enter upon lawful employment free of interventions by third parties, especially interventions in the form of minimum wages which may price them out of

the labour market. Such interventions may sometimes be well-intentioned, but on other occasions they are designed to eliminate competition, especially competition from smaller businesses. In the context of the extraordinarily high rates of unemployment among South African born frees – 67% for males and 75% for females – such interventions are especially inappropriate. Imposing minimum wages on them undermines their prospects of ever finding a job, which means that many of them are condemned to a lifetime of unemployment.

Accordingly, the power of the minister of labour to impose minimum wages should be removed. It is also necessary to remove the power of bargaining councils to extend minimum wages to employers and workers who are not members of the councils. There may be no objection when employers and unions reach agreement between themselves. However, to impose their bilateral agreements on others violates the rights of others to contract freely. It is also undemocratic. Unions wishing to bring additional workers within the scope of agreements they sign should seek to enrol additional workers as members rather than rely on ministerial fiat.

The legal provisions which make dismissals so bureaucratic and so costly a procedure, especially for small employers, should be relaxed. And private employment agencies should be encouraged, not hindered, in placing workers in jobs.

Racial preferencing

All racial legislation should be repealed and racial preferencing policies abandoned. They impose costs on the economy which reduce its growth rate and therefore its capacity to absorb unemployed born frees. They also impose social costs in terms of poor policing and dysfunctional local government. But the main objection to them is that they reinforce a sense of victimhood and entitlement. This can hardly be avoided when all black 'born frees' are automatically classified as 'previously disadvantaged' and therefore eligible for racial preferencing. Fortunately, however, this policy is now coming under increasing attack from various politicians and commentators, as we have seen above. If this critique gathers momentum, born frees are likely to benefit.

Self-help

Born frees able to obtain decent schooling and subsequent education with employable skills will have a scarcity value in an economy constrained by skill shortages. But only a minority are likely to benefit. The great majority of born frees therefore need to find other ways of bringing about their own economic emancipation. This means their efforts at political participation need to be more effective in exerting countervailing pressure on the forces maintaining current policies that perpetuate poor schooling and industrial training, restrict access to the labour market, and impede entrepreneurship.

Lobbying within political parties, capturing control of the country's wasteful youth organisations, getting their views reflected in mainstream media, exploiting the power of social media, and mobilising support among think tanks are among the ways this can be done. Critically important is developing the capacity to more effectively argue against wrong-headed policy and to promote effective long-term social and economic policies to address failings in labour markets and the education system. This is a battle of ideas in which born frees need to engage, along with organisations willing to support them. The field is wide open, its only occupant at the moment being the Economic Freedom Fighters (although they may be joined in due course by a new socialist party arising from within the trade union movement). Critically, 'born frees' have to develop the capacity to drive these processes themselves through the skilled exploitation of democratic institutions.

29 April 2015