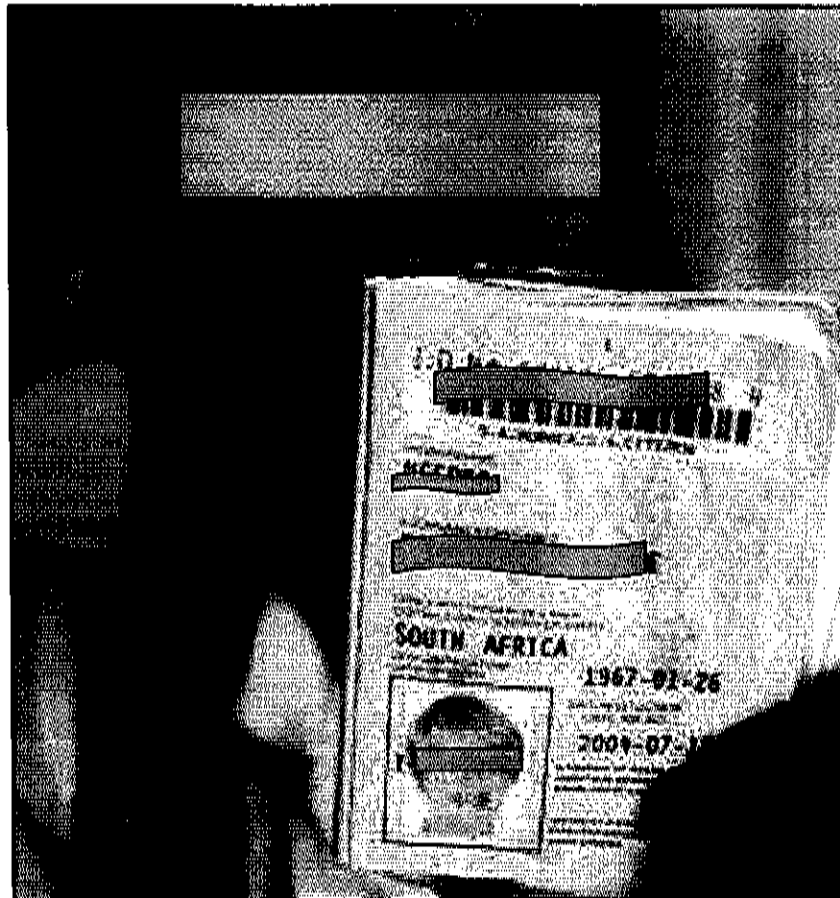


# Citizen Registration Survey

## Department of Home Affairs



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**Human Sciences Research Council**

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## **Executive summary**

The Department of Home Affairs commissioned the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to conduct a national representative study on identity documentation, registration of birth, death and marriage among South Africans of 16 years and older.

## **Objectives of the study**

The main objectives of this survey were:

- To estimate the extent and number of unregistered South African citizens;
- To determine the location of unregistered citizens;
- To determine reasons why citizens are not registered;
- To obtain information regarding citizens access to Home Affairs services and offices; and
- To determine awareness and knowledge of birth and other registration procedures.

Subsidiary aims included:

- To estimate the number of blue book and reference book holders;
- To estimate the number of citizens that have more than one identity document and the reasons for this;
- To explore reasons for uncollected IDs; and
- To understand determinants of possible negative perceptions towards Home Affairs.

The survey aims to assist in identifying areas where high levels of undocumented citizens are prevalent. As such, the findings assist in reviewing the Department's office locations on the basis of demographics as well as socio-historical South African realities. This will also inform some key strategies of the Department of Home Affairs' Strategic Plan 2004/5 2006/7, namely to improve access to services through reviewing the geographic location of the Department's offices and the reprioritisation in terms of population dynamics and other determined criteria.

## **Sample and realisation**

The survey has been conducted among approximately 7000 residents. The sample consists of 720 enumerator areas (EA), which have been selected with Probability Proportional to Size from an adjusted 2001 census database. Rural areas were over-sampled in order to secure a good representation of remote and probably more problematic areas. The realisation figure for this study is very high at 92%. Non-response was mostly due to the fact that the contact person refused (3%) or no one was found at home (3%).

## **Key findings**

This study suggests the total number of people aged 16 and older without a bar coded ID amounts to about 1.75 million, which is 6% of the population. Furthermore, half of those without a bar coded ID, did apply for one.

As one would expect, possession of a bar coded ID was least likely among younger people. The study suggests that one-third among sixteen years old and somewhat less than half among 17 years old possess an ID. Perhaps more worrying is that, only about three quarters among eighteen to nineteen years old have an ID, whilst having been eligible for an ID for two or three years.

Other important factors in bar coded ID possession are one's living standard and level of education. The higher one's living standard and educational level, the more likely is he or she to have a bar coded ID.

In addition, more advanced data analysis revealed that possession of the proper ID was relatively less likely in the Western Cape and among white South Africans.

The more in depth focus group interviews among people who did not possess a bar coded ID suggested that loss of one's ID was the main reason for not having an ID. Furthermore, partly in line with the survey findings, accessibility of the HA offices and related to this transport costs, lengthy application procedures, lack of information on the application procedure and supporting documentation, multiple document requirements, costs of ID applications, lengthy waiting periods, no after-hour service, and uncooperative Home Affairs officers were mentioned as the major obstacles for applying and obtaining an ID.

The main reasons given by the survey respondents for not applying or re-applying were that they did not have the proper supporting documentation, lack of time, and lack of money.

Among the sixteen years and older, about 16% said they had no birth certificate and 1% did not know whether they had one. Almost all people without a birth registration are black.

Birth registrations seem to be less common in KwaZulu-Natal, North West, and Mpumalanga than in the other provinces. Lower levels of birth registration among the older people were most pronounced in the tribal and formal rural areas, whereas birth registration among the youth was relatively low in urban informal areas, especially in Gauteng.

As with IDs, those without birth registration are generally less well off and less well educated.

Most people without a birth certificate said, "their parents just never got one for them". The other main reason was that people did not feel a need for a certificate (6%).

Awareness and knowledge of registration were relatively well spread. However, about ten to twenty percent did not know or was uncertain about where to register. This lack of knowledge was generally higher among the youth who is generally less exposed and experienced in registration and ID procedures.

Efficacy, or beliefs about the easiness of obtaining an ID or registering birth or death, was weakest with regard to registering death. Overall, people in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape reported most difficulty. The geographical differences were unrelated to education level.

People who require information on IDs or registration matters tend to visit the offices of Home Affairs. This was only weakly related to the distance between one's home and the office. Half of the respondents said that the nearest office is more than 10 KM away. This was mainly related to the non-urban areas. According to the respondents this was on average further away than a clinic, post office, hospital, police station, municipal office, taxi rank, or a bus station.

Exposure to information about how to apply for IDs and birth certificates on the radio / tv / brochures in the past 3 months was quite high with more than one fifth to one fourth saying they had been exposed to radio messages on these matters. Understanding of these messages differed somewhat according to the medium and area, but was generally high. Interestingly, messages in isiZulu appeared to be least well understood.

Dissatisfaction with Home Affairs service was highest with regard to queues at the offices with just over half expressing dissatisfaction with the length of queues. About one third was dissatisfied with the level of corruption among officials.

Interestingly, perceived corruption was highest among wealthier people in urban areas, who at the same time seem least likely to have been a victim of corruption. Corruption seems to affect mostly people living in informal urban areas. In addition, experiences with corruption seem to be most frequent in KwaZulu-Natal.

## **Suggestions**

Taking into consideration demographic differences as well as varying beliefs and perceptions, interventions aimed at improving the rate of people with valid IDs and registrations of birth and death should focus on:

1. The awareness of the need for registration, and
2. The easiness of getting an ID and registrations.

Improving the public's awareness and knowledge should target mainly youth and people without matric (grade 12).

Furthermore, interventions aimed at improving the rate of people with bar coded IDs should target:

- People in the lower Living Standard categories (the poor)
- Western Cape
- Whites

Birth registration interventions should focus on:

- Residents of KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Mpumalanga
- Those in the lower Living Standard categories (the poor)
- Blacks

In addition to these practical suggestions for interventions aimed at improving registration and possession of valid IDs based on this customer survey, the Department of Home Affairs could use the survey data for future monitoring birth and death registration and IDs in particular. However, in order to efficiently monitor its services, surveys and other methods should be designed for and embedded in a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework of the Department. The information presented in this report might provide input into for such a framework.