

Press Release

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South African Institute of Race Relations
The power of ideas

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Social protests on the rise in South Africa

There has been a 96% increase in social protests in South Africa since 2010, according to the Institute of Race Relations (IRR).

During 2013/2014 there were 11 668 peaceful crowd-related incidents, 1 907 unrest-related incidents, and 1 691 incidents of public violence (SAPS 2013/14 annual report). These incidents included major service delivery protests, industrial action, demarcation issues, and conflict between political parties.

“The trend for major service delivery protests shows that there is a greater rate of occurrence in areas with high levels of fruitless and wasteful government expenditure. Municipal IQ data showed that of the 176 major service delivery protests in 2014, 21% of these occurred in Gauteng and 18% each in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. These provinces, specifically the Eastern Cape and Gauteng, had high levels of fruitless and wasteful expenditure, with avoidable costs of R768 million and R508 million respectively, according to the Auditor General’s 2012/2013 Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) report,” said Gabriela Mackay, an IRR research analyst.

She added: “However, it should be noted that multiple factors play a role in service delivery protests as the Western Cape has the lowest level of fruitless and wasteful expenditure (R1 million), but 14% of major service delivery protests occurred in the province.”

Watch Gabriela Mackay and Mienke Steytler discuss social protests in South Africa [here](#).

Ends.
