

FreeFACTS

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Radio and TV still important mediums of communication in SA

The news that the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is struggling should be concerning to all of us. The organization is battling to pay salaries and an attempt to begin retrenchments has been postponed thanks to what was effectively a staff revolt.

However, the failure of the SABC should worry all of us. In a country like South Africa a public broadcaster is an important entity which provides entertainment and information to people living in far-flung areas (although there is a debate to be had about the government misusing the public broadcaster to spread propaganda).

The flailing and failing SABC should also concern South Africans for another reason, as it shows how poorly the government runs commercial enterprises, with the SABC being the latest in a long line of government companies which are failing. Also concerning, is that the government, despite all the evidence available to it, continues to believe that it should be running commercial enterprises.

This edition of *FreeFACTS* looks at the reach of broadcast media in South Africa, and includes some information on newspapers and magazines.

The proportion of South Africans with access to a television or a radio is remarkably high. Perhaps surprisingly, according to data from 2018, more South Africans had access to a television (over 90%) than a radio (just below 90%). For many of these people the only radio or television stations they access will be ones provided by the SABC.

The SABC is an important organization but it needs to stand on its own two feet, it cannot continue to rely on government bailouts or expect streaming services such as Netflix to collect license fees on its behalf (as has been suggested).

The way people receive information is changing rapidly and the SABC must move with the times if it is to remain relevant and sustainable. However, our government has shown that it is far more likely to continue to use discredited ideas from the past, rather than be innovative and fit for the 21st century. The SABC is unlikely to be an exception.

— **Marius Roodt**

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The IRR is an advocacy group that fights for your right to make decisions about your life, family and business, free from unnecessary government, political, and bureaucratic interference. FreeFACTS publishes evidence that communities are better off when individuals are free to make decisions about how they want to live, be educated, work, access healthcare, think, speak, own property, and protect their communities. If you agree with the issues we stand for, welcome to the team. There are millions of people just like you who are tired of South African politicians, activists, and commentators attempting to rein in your freedom to decide. Take control and make sure your voice is heard by becoming a friend of the IRR.

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Communication

Use of media by type, 2018		
Media accessed ^a	Number ^b	Proportion
Radio	34 800 000	88.1%
Television	37 300 000	94.4%
Newspaper	15 800 000	40.0%
Magazine	7 300 000	18.5%
Total adults (aged 15+)	39 500 000	100.0%

Source: SAARF, www.saarf.co.za, accessed 9 March 2016; BRC, Establishment Survey: Demographic and Media Consumption Trends, ES Wave 1 Launch Presentation (Jul-Dec 2016), pp32 and 39; Establishment Survey: March/April 2018 release, April 2018, pp 21-44

a For newspapers and magazines, the figures represent the number of titles accessed by adults. The same number of reading adults, therefore, might be reading more than one publication. This means that there might be far fewer reading adults than the table suggests.

b People aged 15 and above (count: 39 500 000).

BROADCASTING

Adults with access to radio and television, 2005-18			
Year	Number of adults ^a	Radio access ^b	Television access ^b
2005	30 655 696	81.4%	60.3%
2006	30 903 002	81.7%	61.5%
2007	31 109 074	79.4%	61.3%
2008	31 305 016	79.7%	66.9%
2009	32 498 063	79.9%	67.0%
2010	34 019 661	80.1%	72.4%
2011	34 933 809	91.4%	88.5%
2012	34 935 454	92.6%	91.5%
2013	37 214 317	83.0%	91.7%
2014	37 664 536	83.0%	91.8%
2015	38 258 907	82.9%	92.2%
2016	38 800 000	83.0%	93.0%
2018	40 100 000	88.0%	96.0%
2005-18	30.8%	8.1%	59.2%

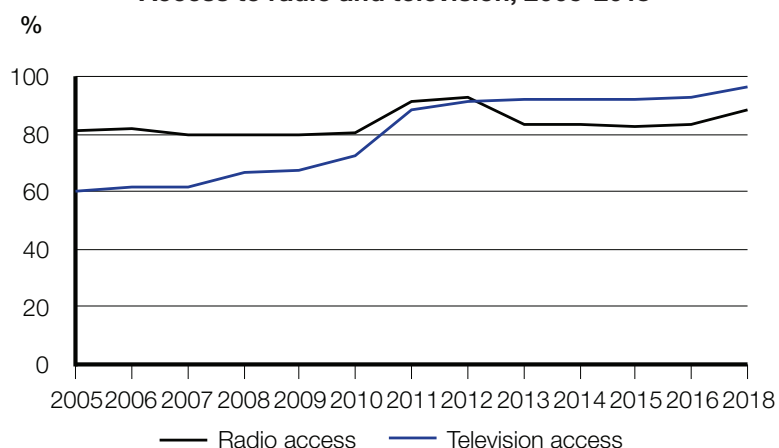
Source: Eighty20, All Media and Products Survey (AMPS): Overwhelming and under-mined reasons to love AMPS data, May 2012, p13; AMPS 2013B (January-December 2013), 8 April 2014; AMPS 2014 (July 2013-June 2014), accessed 6 March 2015; AMPS 2015 Individual (June 2014-June 2015), accessed 23 February 2016; Broadcast Research Council of South Africa (BRC), www.brcsa.org.za, RAM 2016 (January-September 2016), accessed 8 March 2017; Establishment Survey: Demographic and Media Consumption Trends, ES Wave 1 Launch Presentation (Jul-Dec 2016), March 2017, pp 31 and 38; The Establishment Survey: March 2019 release, March 2019, p33

a People aged 15 and above.

b Respondents were asked if they had listened to radio or watched television in any seven-day period.

Communication

Access to radio and television, 2005-2018



Adults^a with access to radio and television by province, 2018

Province	Radio access		Television access	
	Number	Proportion of total adults ^b	Number	Proportion of total adults ^b
Eastern Cape	4 100 000	12.0%	4 300 000	12.0%
Free State	1 900 000	5.0%	2 000 000	5.0%
Gauteng	8 800 000	25.0%	9 700 000	26.0%
KwaZulu-Natal	6 800 000	20.0%	7 100 000	19.0%
Limpopo	3 600 000	10.0%	3 600 000	10.0%
Mpumalanga	2 600 000	7.0%	2 700 000	7.0%
North West	2 300 000	6.0%	2 500 000	7.0%
Northern Cape	700 000	2.0%	800 000	2.0%
Western Cape	4 100 000	12.0%	4 700 000	13.0%
South Africa	34 800 000	88.0%	37 300 000	95.0%

Source: BRC, www.brcsa.org.za, *Establishment Survey-Demographic and Media Consumption Trends, ES Wave 1 Launch Presentation (Jul-Dec 2016)*, pp34 and 41; *Establishment Survey: March/April release, April 2018*, pp21 and 28

a People aged 15 and above.

b IRR calculations.

Communication

Top ten radio stations by average listenership, 2018

Radio station ^a	Main studio ^b	Number ^c	Proportion ^d
Ukhozi FM (Zulu)	Durban, KwaZulu-Natal	7 575 000	18.9%
Umhlobo Wenene FM (Xhosa)	Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape	5 357 000	13.4%
Metro FM	Johannesburg, Gauteng	4 260 000	10.6%
Lesedi FM (Sotho)	Bloemfontein, Free State	3 134 000	7.8%
Thobela FM (Pedi)	Polokwane, Limpopo	2 750 000	6.9%
Motsweding FM (Tswana)	Mmabatho, North West	2 407 000	6.0%
Gagasi FM	Durban, KwaZulu-Natal	1 608 000	4.0%
Radio Sonder Grense (Afrikaans)	Johannesburg, Gauteng	1 275 000	3.2%
Ligwalagwala FM (Swati)	Nelspruit, Mpumalanga	1 137 000	2.8%
Ikwekwezi FM (Ndebele)	Pretoria, Gauteng	1 103 000	2.8%

Source: BRC, www.brcsa.org.za, *BRC RAM Radio Listening (Jan-Dec 2018)*, accessed 11 March 2019; Establishment Survey: March 2019 release, March 2019, p11

- a Listed radio stations broadcast in English unless otherwise stated in brackets.
- b Applies largely to stations with a wider reach (such as those of the SABC). Other stations, such as those within specific communities, usually have one studio.
- c Refers to adults (people aged 15 and above). The listenership numbers are estimates and denote respondents who replied 'I listened to this station in the past seven days'.
- d IRR calculations.

Radio listeners^a by race, 2018

Race	Number ^b	Proportion of total
Black	27 840 000	80.0%
Coloured	3 132 000	9.0%
Indian/Asian	1 044 000	3.0%
White	3 132 000	9.0%
Total adults (aged 15+)	34 800 000	100.0%

Source: BRC, www.brcsa.org.za, *Establishment Survey: March/April release*, April 2018, p19

- a Adult radio listeners per seven-day period between March and April 2018. For example during that period, an average of 80% (27 840 000) of people aged 15 and above who listened to radio were black.
- b IRR calculations.

Radio listeners^a by age, 2018

Age group	Number ^b	Proportion
15-24	8 004 000	23.0%
25-34	9 744 000	28.0%
35-49	9 048 000	26.0%
50+	8 004 000	23.0%
Total adults (aged 15+)	34 800 000	100.0%

Source: BRC, www.brcsa.org.za, *Establishment Survey: March/April release*, April 2018, p19

- a Adult radio listeners per seven-day period between March and April 2018. For example, during that period, an average of 23% (8 004 000) of people aged 15 and above who listened to radio were in the 15 to 24 age group.
- b IRR calculations.

Communication

Radio listeners^{ab} by average monthly household income, 2016-18

Average income R	Jul16- Jun17	Jan-Dec17	Jul17-Jun18	Jan-Dec18
0	—	—	—	1.0%
1-1 999	9.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%
2 000-3 999	24.0%	22.0%	20.0%	18.0%
4 000-4 999	10.0%	10.0%	9.0%	9.0%
5 000-9 999	27.0%	28.0%	29.0%	29.0%
10 000-19 999	18.0%	19.0%	20.0%	20.0%
20 000-39 999	9.0%	10.0%	10.0%	11.0%
40 000-59 999	2.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
60 000+	1.0%	1.0%	2.0%	2.0%

Source: BRC, www.brcsa.org.za, *The Establishment Survey: March 2019 release*, March 2019, p39

a Listeners per seven-day period. For example, 18% of people aged 15 and above with an average income of between R2 000 and R 3 999 listened to the radio between January and December 2018.

b Past 7 day radio listeners.

Television

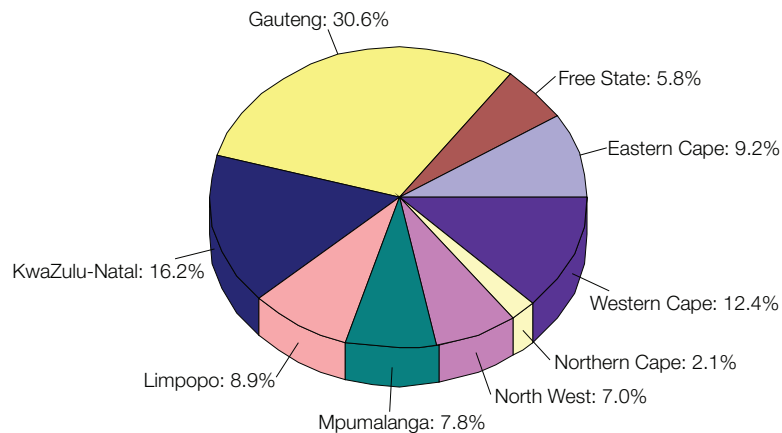
Television sets owned by province, 2018

Province	Number	Proportion of total ^a	People per television set
Eastern Cape	1 258 000	9.2%	5.2
Free State	790 000	5.8%	3.7
Gauteng	4 164 000	30.6%	3.5
KwaZulu-Natal	2 203 000	16.2%	5.2
Limpopo	1 206 000	8.9%	4.8
Mpumalanga	1 068 000	7.8%	4.2
North West	948 000	7.0%	4.2
Northern Cape	279 000	2.1%	4.4
Western Cape	1 690 000	12.4%	3.9
South Africa	13 606 000	100.0%	4.2

Source: Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), *General Household Survey 2018*, Statistical release P0318, 28 May 2019, Table 17.1, p184; *Mid-year population estimates 2018*, Statistical release P0302, 23 July 2018, Table 2, p2

a IRR calculations.

Proportion of total television sets by province, 2018



Communication

Viewing reach ^a , 2016-18				
Period	Jul 16-June 17	Jan-Dec 17	Jul 17-Jun 18	Jan-Dec 18
Yesterday	90.0%	91.0%	92.0%	93.0%
In the last week	94.0%	94.0%	95.0%	96.0%
In the last month	95.0%	96.0%	96.0%	97.0%
In the last 3 months	96.0%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%
In the last 6 months	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%	98.0%
In the last 12 months	97.0%	97.0%	98.0%	98.0%

Source: BRC, www.brcsa.org.za, *The Establishment Survey: March 2019 release*, March 2019, p43

a Viewers per seven-day period. For example, 96% of people aged 15 and above watched television between January and December 2018.

Television viewers ^{ab} by average monthly household income, 2016-18				
Average income R	Jul16-Jun17	Jan-Dec17	Jul17-Jun18	Jan-Dec18
0	—	—	—	2.0%
1-1 999	9.0%	7.0%	8.0%	7.0%
2 000-3 999	24.0%	21.0%	19.0%	17.0%
4 000-4 999	10.0%	10.0%	9.0%	9.0%
5 000-9 999	27.0%	29.0%	29.0%	29.0%
10 000-19 999	18.0%	19.0%	20.0%	21.0%
20 000-39 999	9.0%	10.0%	10.0%	11.0%
40 000-59 999	2.0%	2.0%	3.0%	3.0%
60 000+	1.0%	1.0%	2.0%	2.0%

Source: BRC, www.brcsa.org.za, *The Establishment Survey: March 2019 release*, March 2019, p45

a Viewers per seven-day period. For example adult television, 29% of people aged 15 and above with an average income of between R5 000 and R 9 999 watched television between January and December 2018.

b Past 7 day television viewers.