



Institute for Justice and Reconciliation  
Cape Town, South Africa  
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## News release

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### Public confidence in President Zuma declines significantly

On 7 May 2014, the African National Congress (ANC) won its fifth consecutive national election since South Africa's transition to universal suffrage in 1994. President Jacob Zuma, the party's president, was subsequently elected for his second term in office by members of the National Assembly. Although the ANC's 2014 victory confirmed the party's electoral dominance, their share of the vote declined from 66% in 2009 to 62% (Electoral Commission of South Africa, 2015). The latest public opinion data from the Afrobarometer surveys indicates that President Zuma has lost significant citizen support since 2011.

Public disapproval of the president's performance is currently at its highest level since the initial survey was conducted in 2000, along with perceptions of corruption in the Presidency. Furthermore, South Africans' trust in President Zuma almost halved in the past four years, with a majority reporting that they believe that he routinely ignores both the legislature and judiciary.

These results indicate that while a majority of South Africans continue to support the ANC, a great deal of work needs to be done to restore confidence in its leader.

For more information, please see Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 65 (available at [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)).

### Key findings

- Public distrust of the president (66%), disapproval of the president's performance (62%), and perceived corruption in this Office (46%) are all at their highest levels since 2000.
- All three measures have increased significantly since 2011: by 29 percentage points for public distrust, 27 points for negative performance ratings and 12 points for perceived corruption in the Presidency.
- Perceptions that the president ignores the law and Parliament more than doubled between 2011 and 2015 to almost six in 10 South Africans (59% and 57%, respectively).

### Afrobarometer

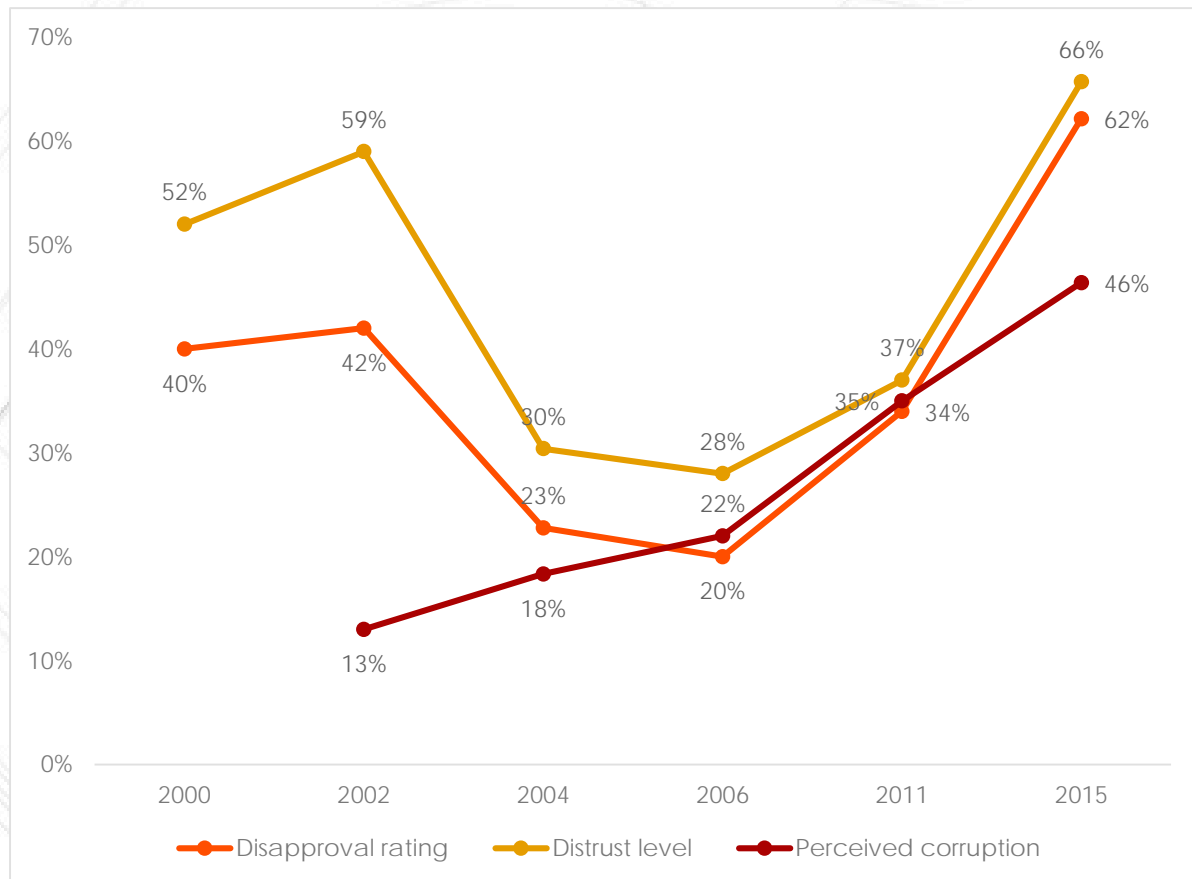
Afrobarometer is an African-led, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Five rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2013, and Round 6 surveys are currently under way (2014-2015). Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples of between 1,200 and 2,400 respondents.

The Afrobarometer team in South Africa, led by Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and Plus 94 Research interviewed 2,400 adult South Africans in August and September 2015. A

sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/-2% at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys have been conducted in South Africa in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2011.

**Charts**

**Figure 1: Negative evaluations of the president | South Africa | 2000-2015<sup>1</sup>**

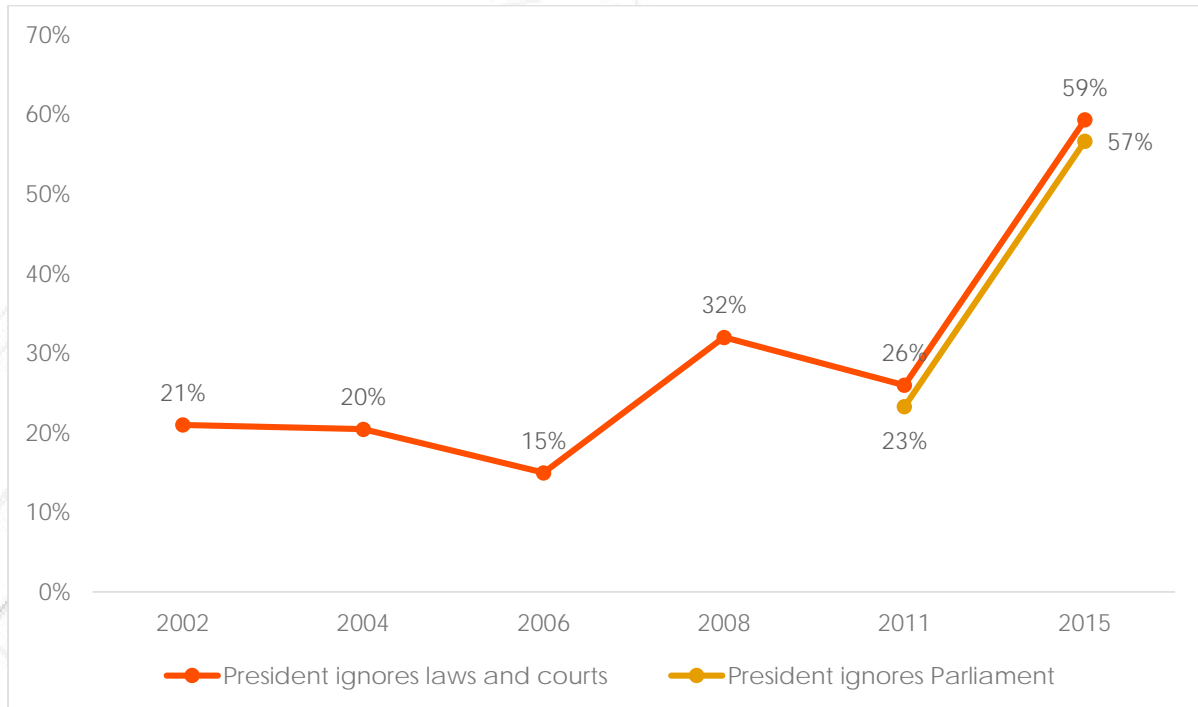


**Respondents were asked:**

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past twelve months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? President \_\_\_\_\_. (% "strongly disapprove"/"disapprove.")
2. How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The President (% "not at all"/"just a little").
3. How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The President and Officials in his Office. (% "all of them"/ "most of them").

<sup>1</sup> NB: The 2008 survey data has been omitted because it specifically refers to former President Kgalema Motlanthe, who had only been in office for a few weeks when fieldwork took place.

Figure 2: President's disregard for the law | South Africa | 2015<sup>2</sup>



**Respondents were asked:** *In your opinion, how often, in this country:*

1. Does the President ignore the courts and laws of this country?
2. Does the President ignore parliament and just do what he wants? (% "always"/"often").

**For more information, please contact:**

Rorisang Lekalake, Afrobarometer assistant project manager for Southern Africa  
 Email: [rlekalake@afrobarometer.org](mailto:rlekalake@afrobarometer.org)  
 Telephone: 021 202 4071

Sibusiso Nkomo, Afrobarometer communications coordinator for Southern Africa  
 Email: [snkomo@afrobarometer.org](mailto:snkomo@afrobarometer.org)

Visit us online at:  
[www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)

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<sup>2</sup> The 2002, 2004 and 2006 surveys' question text was: "In this country, how often: Does the President ignore the constitution?"