



**THE SA
RECONCILIATION BAROMETER**
-TRACKING SOCIO-POLITICAL TRENDS-

**SIXTH ROUND REPORT:
THE SA RECONCILIATION BAROMETER SURVEY**

November 2006

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1. Introduction

The South African Reconciliation Barometer (SARB) Survey is an annual survey-based project, which measures responses of the South African public to socio-political and economic change, with particular emphasis of their impact on national reconciliation. First introduced in 2003, the SARB was developed in response to a growing need within the institute to find a quantitative measurement instrument that could guide it in the development of programmes that are relevant and in line with citizen demands at each stage of the country's socio-political development. Moreover, it was also envisaged that in the future it may assist the institute in the identification of longer-term patterns or trends in the country's transformation from a divided- to a more inclusive society. In the absence of any annual national survey with these specific objectives, the SARB was crafted in cooperation with a team of leading national and international social scientists and survey experts.

Now in its fourth year of existence, the project has managed to capture a substantive body of social data on public sentiments regarding change and how this impacts on relations between citizens from different social and cultural backgrounds. Over the years the Institute has continued to sharpen the survey's utility as a measurement instrument, which in turn has enabled it to strengthen its analytical capacity as far as these subject matters are concerned. Its focus, however, remains on the measurement of the key indicators that relate to the SARB's original six reconciliation hypotheses regarding race relations, human security, historical confrontation, dialogue, political culture, and cross-cutting political partnerships, which were identified in the pilot study for this project. Despite the addition of these new measurements, the longitudinal value of the survey has not been jeopardised in any way. The majority of the original statements and questions of the first and subsequent surveys have been retained in order to establish benchmarks against which future research could benefit.

The pages below contain some of the principal findings of the sixth round of SARB Survey. As the years pass, we gain new understanding of the different variables and the complexity of their different permutations that impact on how South Africans make sense of change and how they respond to it. Although our primary mode of reporting in this document will be to convey findings in terms of responses by the various racial groups, this should by no means be regarded as our primary means of analysis. We recognise the impact that other important variables such as socio-economic status, age, and gender might have on each of the responses to the survey measurements and will in some cases report these. Unfortunately, the need for brevity precludes us from providing an in-depth analysis of each. Readers of this report are, nevertheless, invited to contact the Institute, should any further questions regarding its content arise.

2. Approach

We are under no illusion of the limitations that the quantitative measurement of a concept, such as reconciliation, poses. Gibson¹, for example, notes that a general theory of reconciliation would be hard to come by as it refers to a “syndrome of attitudes”, rather than a discrete value. This suggests great complexity in the development of an understanding of the concept, as well as in the development of indicators with which we hope to measure it. Even if the first should be achieved with relative ease, which is rarely the case, the second will evoke further debate on the principal attributes of the concept to be measured. Inevitably it requires the sacrifice of some dimensions in trade-offs to achieve maximum measurability. The biggest danger of this process is, therefore, reductionism of the kind that strips the “reconciliation” concept of its most important attributes.

Under the heading, “Unpacking Reconciliation”, below (See Page 8) we list a number of key hypotheses that may offer some explanatory value in terms of what we regard as key elements or requirements for national reconciliation in South Africa. While it should be recognised that they are far from perfect in explaining the entire scope of relationships between South Africans, these hypotheses do represent a useful starting point from which to explore those aspects of the national reconciliation process that may be quantifiable.

Although six rounds of the survey have been completed, the report accounts only for public attitudes and opinion of four years (the survey was conducted twice in 2003 and 2004). When interpreting the findings below this fact should be taken into consideration, as it would be inadvisable at this early stage to come to any conclusions about longer-term trends and patterns. What the report does provide is a fascinating insight into public opinion over the past four years, which should be read together with the unfolding of the particular political and socio-economic context during this period.

3. Survey Design

Analysis in this document is based on the results of six national surveys, which were conducted since 2003. The majority of questions and statements in the latest questionnaire have appeared repeatedly since the first round of the survey in April 2003.

Since its inception Markinor, one of the country’s most reputed market research companies, has conducted the SARB Survey on behalf of the Institute, by means of an attachment to its M-Bus Survey (an omnibus survey conducted on a nationally representative sample of South Africans, which is primarily aimed at measuring socio-political trends). In addition to the questions developed specifically for the SARB Survey, the Institute also obtained rights to use key questions and statements that are contained in the original M-Bus Survey.

The standard sample size of this national syndicate survey is 3 500 South Africans, aged 16 years and older, and it covers both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. The results of the survey can, therefore, be projected onto the South African population as a mirror image of trends in attitudes and perceptions amongst adult South Africans in general. Geographical area was factored into this process, and distinct sampling procedures were employed for metro areas and non-metro areas.

All settlements with a population that exceeds 250 000 had been categorised as metro areas. These included: Johannesburg, Tshwane, the Vaal Triangle, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Metro, eThekweni Metro, Buffalo City and Pietermaritzburg. Multistage area-probability sampling was used in these areas. The sampling included all persons of 16 years and older, living in multimember households. Enumeration areas were drawn from the 2001 Population Census and sampling points were allocated to sub-places in each of the metros. Within each of the sub-places a street was randomly selected using the Geographical Information System (GIS) and four to six houses were then selected using a random walk procedure.

Non-metropolitan areas were divided into the five following sub-categories:

Cities: 100 000 – 249 999

Large towns: 40 000 – 99 999

Small towns: 8 000 – 39 999

Villages: 500 – 7 999

Rural: Fewer than 500 inhabitants

Multistage probability sampling was also employed in non-metropolitan areas, with all citizens of 16 years and older being targeted. Enumeration areas (EAs) were drawn from the 2001 Population Census and sampling points were allocated to sub-places in each of South Africa's nine provinces, based on community size. Within each of the sub-places a street was randomly selected using GIS and four to six houses were then selected using a random walk procedure. In areas where there were no streets in the selected EAs, interviewers were required to count the number of dwellings and work out a skip, based on the number of interviews and the size of the EA and then select every nth dwelling.

All survey results are weighted back to the population figures. This is done to address sample skews that might affect the proper representation within the universe. Data are weighted back to the population. Weighting of the M-Bus was based on the adjusted universe from the All Media Products Survey (AMPS) 2005 data. Person weights were calculated. The variables that were used in the weighting matrix are metro-, gender- and age group for the Metro M-bus. The weighting matrix for the Non-Metro M-Bus is community

size, age group, gender, and province. Markinor indicated that its expected margin of error is estimated at 1.66% under the worst possible scenario.

4. Conceptual Clarity of Reconciliation

4.1. Meanings of Reconciliation

One of the most common distinctions in thought around the topic of reconciliation in South Africa is the distinction between *non-racial* and *multi-cultural* understandings of the concept. Hamber and Van der Merwe² note that the “non-racial ideology essentially defines reconciliation as dissolving the racial identities arising from the policies of the past.” They contend that within this model “people with racist attitudes (particularly whites) are seen to largely carry the blame for past divisions and conflicts. They are urged to acknowledge their past so that they can become part of a new society.” Theoretically this model of reconciliation requires the disbanding of pre-apartheid identities and the reconstruction of new, non-racial ones.

The multi-cultural- or ‘inter-communal’ approach, as Hamber and Van der Merwe³ refers to it, views social differences as predetermined by the existence of distinct communities with their unique cultures and histories. In this context reconciliation should be understood as a process of bridging past divides through dialogue, co-operation and co-existence. While it does not require the adoption of a new identity, it does seek to promote tolerance and the celebration of our national diversity.

A third approach is the *human rights model*. Gerwel⁴, a proponent of this paradigm, argues that reconciliation requires “the institutionalisation of consensus seeking”, which requires that social interaction must be governed by the rule of law to prevent the atrocities of the past from being repeated. It involves the creation of the so-called ‘minimally decent society’, where normative and legal boundaries control interaction and create the space for peaceful coexistence. This model should not be misunderstood for being prescriptive; it merely defines the boundaries of conduct that can be tolerated where several interest groups have to co-exist. It places particular emphasis on

While reconciliation in the human rights paradigm moves from the macro to the micro level of society, the *religious model* focuses on an approach that speaks about concentric circles of reconciliation, working from the individual to the societal level. Notions of truth and forgiveness are undeniably central to this model. Based on the religious imperative for perpetrators to confess their trespasses, it requires of victims to forgive those that have oppressed or abused them. It is envisaged that this should take root within local communities from where it should branch out into the broader society.

Ubuntu is another paradigm, which asserts that all community members share a common humanity.⁵ While there is some overlap between the religious and *ubuntu* paradigms, a great deal of emphasis in *ubuntu*, is placed on the inter-connectedness of individuals. The re-integration of perpetrators into the community is seen as an act that restores the entire community to peace.

In some ways the *developmental paradigm* of reconciliation is diametrically opposed to the more subjective approach to reconciliation promoted by the *ubuntu* and the religious models for reconciliation. This paradigm advocates the remedying of historically induced inequalities, whilst simultaneously advocating a strategy of cooperation for the social and economic development of the nation. This model sees the subjective restoration or reconciliation of relationships as following naturally (or, at minimum, more easily) from a restitution process. It requires an acknowledgment of past injustice and the willingness to redress current injustice that has its roots in the past.

The last approach, the *transformation model* is quite distinct from developmental paradigm and is potentially the most ambitious and far-reaching of those mentioned in this sections. Advocates of this interpretation assert that reconciliation requires structural and systemic adjustments, which include institutionalising a new post-apartheid value system and political culture, as well as wide-ranging reparations to address inequality in terms of access and control of resources. This model advocates that reconciliation cannot “develop in a sustainable way if structural injustices in the political, legal and economic domains remain”.⁶ As such, this model prescribes that it is impossible to change the relationships in a post-conflict society if the material, structural and evaluative conditions under which these relationships were created remain unchanged.⁷

5. Unpacking Reconciliation

As has been noted above, there is no simple way of measuring reconciliation. As a result the *SA Reconciliation Barometer (SARB)* research operates at two levels, the theoretical and empirical. The theoretical question of how the reconciliation process is unfolding will be inferred on the basis of the empirical evidence contained in the data that has been gathered in the surveys. In order to measure South Africa’s progress along the path of reconciliation, this intangible concept was unpacked in six hypotheses, each with its own critical indicators. The SARB Survey monitors fluctuations in these indicators.

Table 1 depicts a tabular conceptual overview of the hypotheses and their critical indicators. It is hypothesized that when the indicators strengthen or improve, reconciliation is likely to be advanced. The process of distilling a number of key indicators for reconciliation is a tricky undertaking. In this instance the decisions were based on a consultative process with numerous researchers, social theorists and

practitioners working in the field; an extensive literature review; and analysis of the results of a 2002 exploratory national survey. Some elements of each of the previously discussed definitions were included. The conceptual logic of the inclusion of each of the individual indicators will be expanded upon in the relevant sections of the report.

Table 1: Conceptual Overview of Reconciliation Indicators

Hypotheses	Indicators
Human Security: If citizens do not feel threatened, they are more likely to be reconciled with each other and the larger system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical Security ▪ Expanded Economic Security⁸ ▪ Cultural Security
Political Culture: If citizens view the Institutions, Structures and Values of the new system as legitimate and accountable, reconciliation is more likely to progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Justifiability of Extra-legal Action ▪ Legitimacy of Leadership ▪ Legitimacy of Parliament ▪ Respect for the Rule of Law
Cross-cutting Political Relationships: If citizens are able to form working political relationships that cross divisions, reconciliation is more likely to advance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commitment to National Unity ▪ Commitment to multi-racial Political Parties
Dialogue: If citizens are committed to deep dialogue, reconciliation is more likely to be advanced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commitment to more dialogue
Historical Confrontation: If citizens are able to confront and address issues from the past, they are more likely to be able to move forward and be reconciled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acknowledgement of Injustice of Apartheid ▪ Forgiveness ▪ Reduced levels of Vengeance
Race Relations: If citizens of different races hold fewer negative perceptions of each other, they are more likely to form workable relationships that will advance reconciliation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cross-racial Contact ▪ Cross-racial Perceptions ▪ Cross-racial Social Distance

The first two rounds of the survey in 2003 contained questions and statements that measured responses to indicators of each hypothesis, but placed particular emphasis on those that relate to race relations, historical confrontation, dialogue, and cross-cutting political partnerships. The two rounds that were conducted in April and November 2004 featured a number of new statements and questions relating to economic security, which were aimed at strengthening the measurement of the human security hypothesis. In 2005 it was decided that the survey would henceforth be conducted only once a year. This decision was based on the little degree of variation between surveys that were conducted within the same year. The 2005 round saw further additions to sharpen the analysis of human security indicators. A first step was also taken to add depth to the measurement of indicators that deal with the political culture hypothesis, particularly as it relates to leadership legitimacy and public confidence in the country's democratic institutions. Whereas prior surveys focused exclusively on the institution of parliament as an example of a democratic institution, this

survey also included questions and statements that gauged public sentiment regarding the judiciary. As far as leadership legitimacy is concerned, previous surveys only measured public sentiment towards national government. The 2005 round also added provincial- and local government to incorporate all spheres of governance. In 2006 a significant set of new institutions were added to further strengthen the measurement of indicators relating to confidence in institutions. The most recent round of the survey includes a list of eleven institutions that covers the executive, legislative and judicial arms of government and are seen to have an important role to play in the country's reconciliation process. Despite these and other additions, the largest portion of the survey continues to be taken up by questions and statements that featured in the original questionnaire of the first round of the survey, thus retaining the longitudinal value of the project.

The sections below contain some of the most significant findings regarding our core hypotheses and their indicators.

6. Human Security

The concept of "human security" was first used in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report, which argued that "the concept of security must change – from an exclusive stress on national security to a much greater stress on people's security; from security through armaments to security through human development; [and] from territorial security to food-, employment- and environmental security".⁹ It went on to argue that future conflict could only be averted by "faster economic development, greater social justice and more people's participation".¹⁰ The Commission on Human Security's *Human Security Now* Report further elaborates on the concept by noting that it involves the creation of "political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks for survival, livelihood and dignity."¹¹

Much research still need to be devoted to the exact relationship between reconciliation on the one hand and human security on the other, but it can reasonably be hypothesised that a threat to human security would be counterproductive for reconciliation in divided societies, as it retards the capacity of societies to integrate in a sustainable manner. People who perceive their short- or long- term survival, dignity or livelihood to be threatened, are more likely to be distrustful of others and will hence retreat into their group for security. Kraybill, for example, notes that post-conflict societies need a socially and physically safe environment for people, whether they are a beneficiary, victim, perpetrator or otherwise, to redefine themselves and their future path, before they are ready to attempt to reconcile with others.¹² His point has particular relevance in South Africa where issues of insecurity, be they physical, developmental, or economical, take on a racial character, with one group typically being perceived as the victim and the other as the perpetrator.

6.1. Physical Threat

The impact of South Africa's high crime levels and the brutal nature thereof goes beyond the material loss or physical scars of victims. The fact that virtually everybody knows somebody that has had a harrowing experience, creates the fear of being next in line, and consequently also an inherent cautiousness towards interaction with fellow human beings. Given our historical division and the fact that the unknown is often the biggest source of fear, distrust frequently manifests itself in the way that we perceive racial groups other than our own. This is an impediment to the openness that is required for the meaningful engagement that is required in a divided society such as ours. An IJR manual entitled *Learning to Live Together*, highlights elaborates on this point and identifies at least five ways in which crime can obstruct national reconciliation efforts. According to the manual, it "undermines public trust in nation-building; it creates more victims and more trauma; it reinforces apartheid segregation and socio-economic inequality; it entrenches racial prejudice and it undermines social stability and tolerance".¹³ Simpson elaborates on this and suggests that violent crime in South Africa has become a "new vehicle for re-racialising and physically and emotionally re-dividing the 'new' South Africa".¹⁴

South Africa's latest official crime statistics for the year April 2005 to March 2006 were released in September this year. The figures presented a mixed picture and pointed to important gains in the fight against some crimes, but the incidences of others provided cause for concern. On the positive side, recorded statistics for the twenty-one most serious crimes has dropped by 9%.¹⁵ These include amongst others murder, attempted murder, assault with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm and robbery with aggravating circumstances. But this average statistic also obscures some of the more worrying aspects that emanated from the latest figures. This includes the fact that although reported rapes have decreased by 0,3% over the past year, it is still 1,2% higher than all reported incidences five years ago (the Eastern Cape registered a shocking increase of 21% over the past year alone). Robbery with aggravating circumstances is still 2,6% higher than five years ago, cash in transit heists increased by 60,9% over the same period, while drug related crime increased by 80,9%. Probably one of the most serious, but underreported, findings has been the massive increase in the neglect and ill-treatment of children by 82,3% since 2001.

How have crime levels over the past year impacted on the public's sense of physical security? Since 2003 the survey has been asking respondents to comment on their assessment of the prospects for their personal safety over the next two years (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Personal Safety (by race)

*How do you think the personal safety of people like you will change in the next two years?
(Percentage improvement national and by race)*

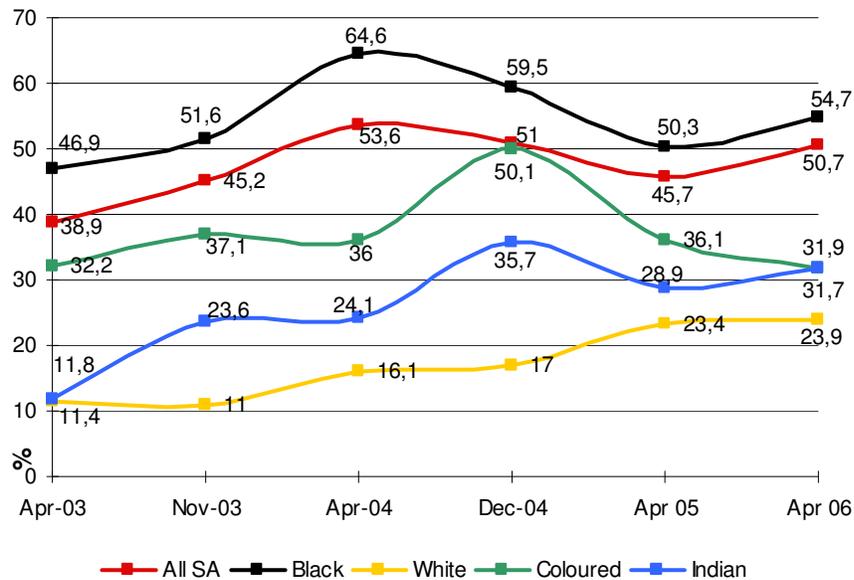
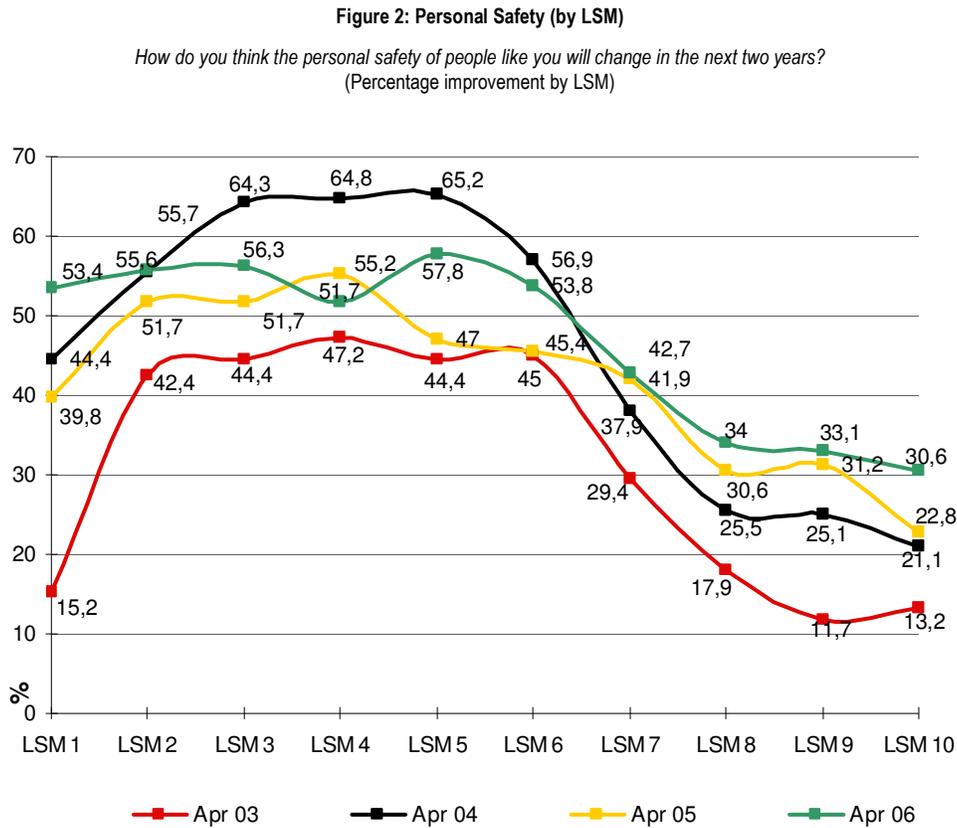


Figure 1 shows that 50,1% of respondents indicated that they expect an improvement in their personal safety conditions over the next two years. It, furthermore, indicates how all the racial groups, with the exception of coloured respondents, have shown increases in their sense of physical security over the past year, but also since the first round of the survey. Since April 2003 the growth in confidence of black Africans, whites, and Indians have increased with 7,8%, 12,5% and 20,1% respectively. This is positive news as these sentiments may already be based on actual experience, which suggests lower levels of perceived threat. As noted, coloured responses have gone in the opposite direction. From a highest confidence level of 51% in December 2004, this group's response has dropped by almost 20% over the past year and a half to 31,7%. This figure is also lower than the first measurement of 32,2% in April 2003. This survey is not in a position to identify the particular causes of such sentiment amongst coloured respondents, but it can be argued that actual exposure may provide clues in this regard. The Western Cape, where this group constitutes a numerical majority, have recorded 59 murders per 100 000 over the past year.¹⁶ This is the highest total for any of the nine provinces. The provincial rape statistic of 132 per 100 000 is also the second highest nationally after that of the Northern Cape, which has recorded a figure of 150 per 100 000.

It would, however, be a mistake to view perspectives on physical safety and security purely through a racial lens. The growing divide between the new black middle class – or black diamonds as advertisers fondly refer to them – and poor black Africans, suggests that an investigation into the extent of insecurity would be

incomplete without analysis from a class perspective. Material prosperity does serve as a buffer against other forms of insecurity and therefore might have an impact on how members of the public respond to this statement. Figure 2 provides a breakdown to the same statement in terms of living standards measurement (LSM) categories.¹



The results conveyed in Figure 2 show that the highest levels of negativity towards an improvement in physical safety reside amongst the most affluent sections of the population in LSM's 8-10, while the most optimists are to be found between LSM's 2-6. This runs contrary to our expectation that the more affluent sections of the population would experience a greater sense of physical security. Does it, therefore, imply that a class analysis of this variable offer greater explanatory value than one that runs along racial lines. On closer examination, it appears not to be the case. Given the country's skewed income distribution patterns,

¹ The Living Standards Measurement (LSM) is a wealth measure based on standard of living rather than income. The South African Advertising Research Foundation developed this measure, which segments the South African population into ten living standards categories of which 10 is the highest and 1 the lowest. Most commonly used for advertising purposes, it uses criteria such as ownership and urbanisation to categorise South Africans in terms of their relative affluence.

white respondents are over-represented in categories 9 and 10, and constitute 50.2% and 73.6% of these respective categories. In category 8 its representation of 30% is also disproportionate to its share of the population. The strong negative sentiment among white respondents as a group, therefore, also finds strong bearing in these categories. Conversely, the representation of black African respondents in categories 1-7 has contributed to the much stronger positive sentiment in these sections of the population. This point is very vividly illustrated by a comparison of the mean scores for all groups in each of the LSM categories. The mean responses of white respondents in the higher LSM categories are located in much closer proximity to the overall mean for each of the categories. The white LSM 10 mean of 2,91 (out of a possible 5) is, for example, much closer to the overall mean score of 3,06 for this category than the black African mean score of 3,98. The opposite is the case in the lower income categories, where the black African mean more closely approximates that of the overall mean in these groups. The overall mean for LSM 4, for instance, is 3,93, while the black African and white means amount to 3,98 and 2,96 respectively.

6.2. Economic Threat

The South African economy remains as segregated as the society itself. The big divide between rich and poor remains and, despite a growing black middle class, inequality is still largely defined by the country's historical racial categories. Whites, in percentage terms, continue to be the most affluent group, followed by Indians and coloured South Africans, while a significant section of black Africans continue to lag far behind other groups in terms of their material prosperity. Given the historically skewed distribution of income and resources over more than three centuries, it is inevitable that in many instances public perception of current distribution patterns will be influenced by subjective group perspectives. This can be argued to be the case, because, as Gibson has found, South Africans derive significant psychic benefits from group membership.¹⁷ This suggests that many South Africans, who define themselves primarily in terms of racial identities, may tend to view benefit to one group as being detrimental to the other. Such conflict has played itself out in the debate around affirmative action with many whites claiming that previously disadvantaged groups are promoted at their expense. But it also manifests itself, sometimes, even more intensely, between different marginalised communities, as has been the case around the housing shortage in the Western Cape. Such conflicts are exacerbated in times of slower growth or economic contraction. To avert this, sustained levels of high growth is required, with the added proviso that it is distributed equitably amongst the populace.

6.2.1. Economic Security

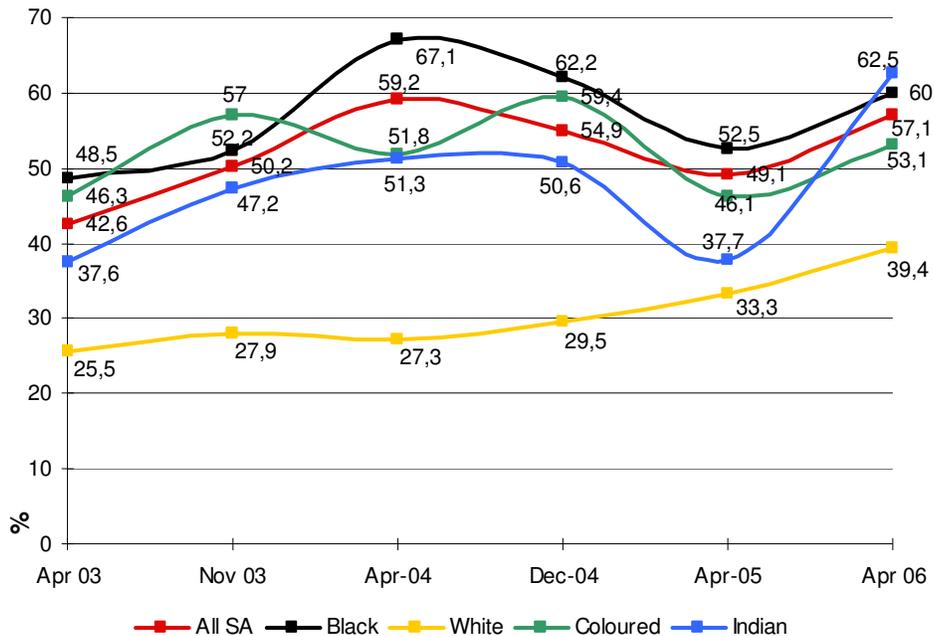
The South African economy has been following an upward trajectory since 1999, but displayed robust growth, in particular, over the past three years. While GDP growth has not attained the magical 6% figure

yet, it reached its highest level in more than a decade with 4,9% in 2005. The resultant windfall in taxes has in turn provided more freedom for government to accelerate its spending on physical infrastructure and social grants. To what extent has this had an impact on personal economic conditions of respondents? While some on left of the political spectrum may argue that not enough has been done to narrow these gaps, others who find them closer to the centre have contended that convincing proof exists for significant headway has been made in this regard. According to the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) All Media and Products (AMPS) Survey 2005¹⁸, there have been significant upward shifts within the country's LSM categories between 1994 and 2005. The least affluent categories of LSM's 1 and 2 have shrunk by 19% over this period, while LSM's 3 – 5, 6-7 and 8-10 have increased by 6%, 10% and 3% respectively. This expansion in the middle class bodes well for national reconciliation prospects, for reasons that will be indicated in subsequent sections of this report.

This apparent improvement in the fortunes of many South Africans, particularly those who have moved up from the lowest categories, should therefore theoretically translate in a positive outlook amongst citizens about the personal economic prospects for the future. Is this the case? Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they believe their personal economic fortunes would increase over the next two years.

Figure 3: Economic Situation (by race)

*How do you think the economic situation of people like you will change during the next two years?
Percentage Improvement by race)*



The SARB Survey sixth round results confirm our expectation that individual optimism over personal economic prospects would have increased. The responses in Figure 3 show that 57,1% of South Africans do envisage an improvement in their own economic conditions in the next 24 months. Significantly, this figure is almost 15% higher than was the case during the first round of the survey. Further good news is the fact that this feature has also been visible in the responses of all racial groups that have been surveyed. This means that all groups are experiencing an increasing sense of economic security, which in the longer term may imply a lower potential for inter-group competition for economic resources. Indian respondents were the most upbeat about their economic prospects, with 62,5% stating expected improvements in their personal economic fortunes. This represents a jump of almost 25% since the previous round of the survey that was conducted in April 2005. Black African, coloured and white respondents registered more humble, albeit meaningful increases during the same period.

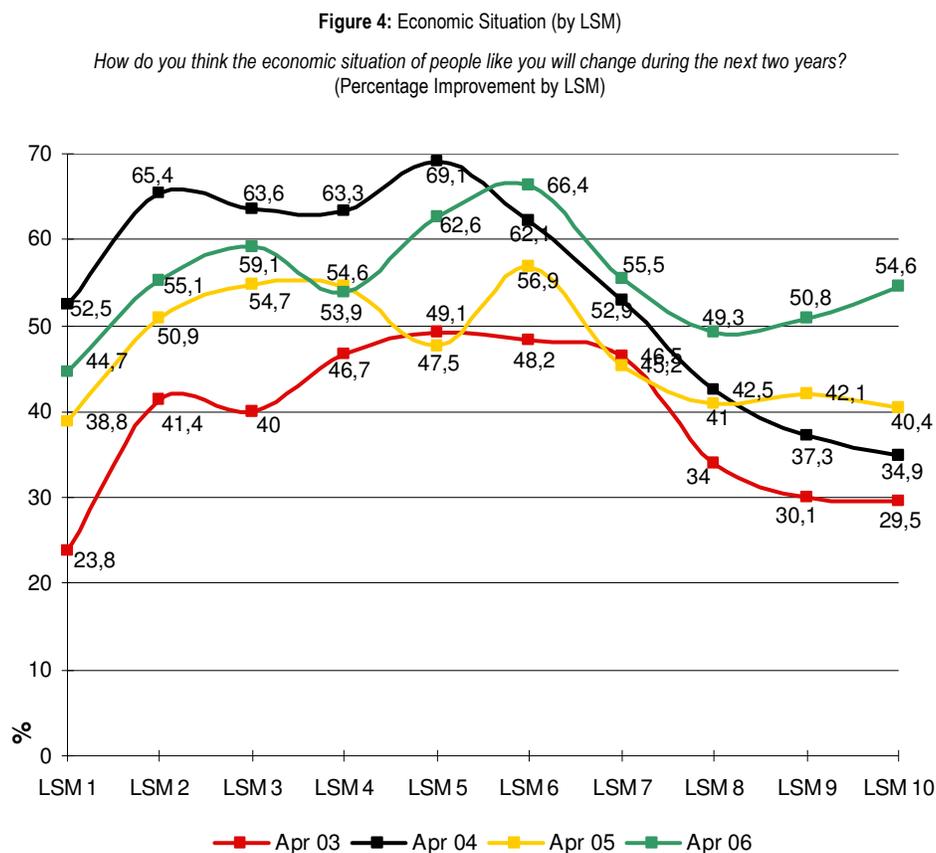


Figure 4 shows how this optimism is also reflected in responses to the same question in terms of living standard measurement categories. All LSM categories in the 2006 survey (see green line) have recorded higher confidence levels than during the first round of the survey (see red line). In all the surveys to date,

most optimism has resided within the lower-middle and middle LSM categories, while the most pessimism was to be found in the higher categories 7-10. It should, nevertheless be noted that confidence levels amongst the most affluent group LSM has increased by 25% over the measured period. These positive responses, particularly those within the middle categories, seem to concur with the AMPS findings regarding the upward movement in South African LSM categories.

This positive sentiment has also found tangible bearing in the personal financial situation of respondents. While poverty levels increased rapidly during the nineties, Van der Berg et al¹⁹ (also using AMPS data for 2000 – 2004) comes to the conclusion that the material conditions of a considerable percentage of poor South Africans have indeed improved since the advent of the new millennium. This they attribute to faster economic growth, better labour market prospects, and the rapid expansion in the provision of social grants. This translated into a 30% increase in the per capita real income of the poorest two population quintiles.²⁰ They pay particular attention to the impact of grants and indicate how the lowest income decile's mean per capita income has increased by 235,9% between 2000 and 2004.

While Van der Berg and his co-authors argue that social grants have made a significant dent in poverty levels, they caution that it is “nearing the limits of its poverty alleviation capacity”.²¹ In other words, should the number of social grant dependents continue to grow unabatedly, it may mean that at some point the state will have to scale down its level support, which in turn may lead to a more intensive struggle for resources. Unfortunately these struggles have in the past taken on racial under- and sometimes overtones. To relieve this burden on government and to defuse potential friction between communities, more jobs need to be created.

6.2.2. Job Security

While there has been a gradual decline in the official unemployment statistics in recent years (the current level, recorded in March 2006, was 25,6%), it has been far from enough.²² Although it has often been mistakenly asserted that the economy has failed to create jobs, it is true that its rate of job creation failed to match or surpass the annual growth in entrants to the job market. Between 1995 and 2004 the economy has managed to create an average of 220 000 new jobs per year, while an estimated 400 000 people enter the job market annually.²³ This meant that a large section of the South African population had to rely on forms of income other than employment, which created dependence on grants and, in some instances, crime to sustain livelihood. It is against this background that the recently announced statistics, which indicated that 544 000 jobs have been created over the 12 months to March 2006, have been met with such excitement.²⁴ This comes in the wake of last year's equally positive figure of 515 000, which suggests that, provided the continuation of prevailing economic circumstances, a significant dent can be made in the country's

unacceptably high unemployment statistics. Landman, for example, calculates that, should such favourable circumstances prevail, government may be able to come very close to its target of halving employment by 2014.²⁵

To establish whether these positive developments have filtered through to the average citizen, the survey has asked respondents to indicate how they rate their chances to find a job, compared to 12 months ago. This question was asked to all respondents, regardless of their employment status, in order establish the level of confidence they have in current conditions to look for- and find a new job, should circumstances demand it.

Figure 5: Finding a Job (by race)
What are the chances of you finding a job compared to that of 12 months ago?
 (Percentage improvement by race)

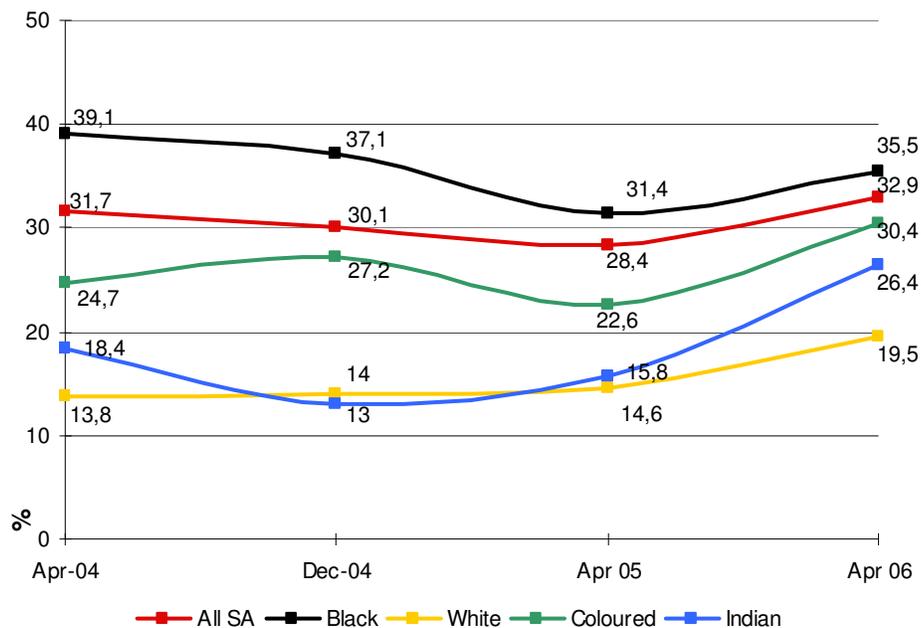
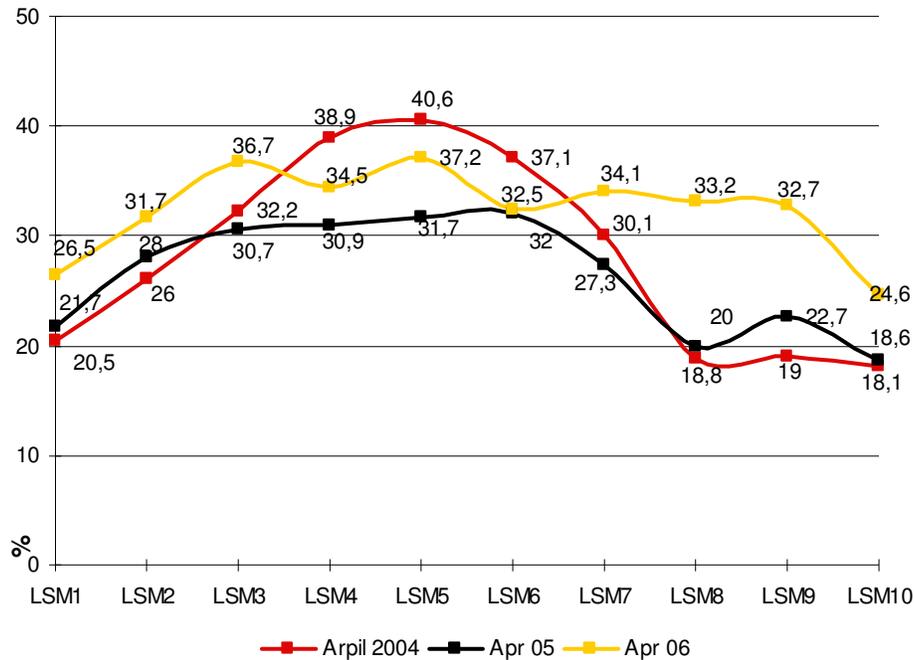


Figure 5 points to an incremental growth in confidence about employment prospects amongst the South African public. All racial groups have shown increases from previous surveys and all, except black Africans, have recorded their highest positive response to date. Optimistic responses by the latter group (35,5%), who also have the highest unemployment rate, remain the highest for any of the racial groups. Ironically, this stands in contrast to the most negative group, white respondents, of whom only 19,5% were positive about their chances of finding a job, should they need to do so.

Figure 6: Finding a job (by LSM)

What are the chances of you finding a job compare to that of 12 months ago?
(Percentage improvement by LSM)



When viewed from a socio-economic perspective, as depicted in Figure 6, it is evident how optimism about employment opportunities has grown within each of the living standards categories over the past year. Most noticeable here are the significant increases in LSM's 8-10, but those between 1 and 3 also deserve mention. The increase in optimism on both sides of the social spectrum is a positive development, but especially so within the less affluent categories where most friction in competition for an income may arise. While responses for the categories 4-6, just above them, have declined somewhat since the first round of the survey, they remain amongst the highest in all of the LSM categories. This general upward movement will not be enough to stem the tide of deep dissatisfaction that millions of South Africans have with the inaccessibility of the South African job market. It is, nevertheless, movement in the right direction and, if sustained, it will help to form a buffer against unrealistic expectations. However, for this sentiment to remain, the economy has to continue to provide visible proof of its ability to create new jobs.

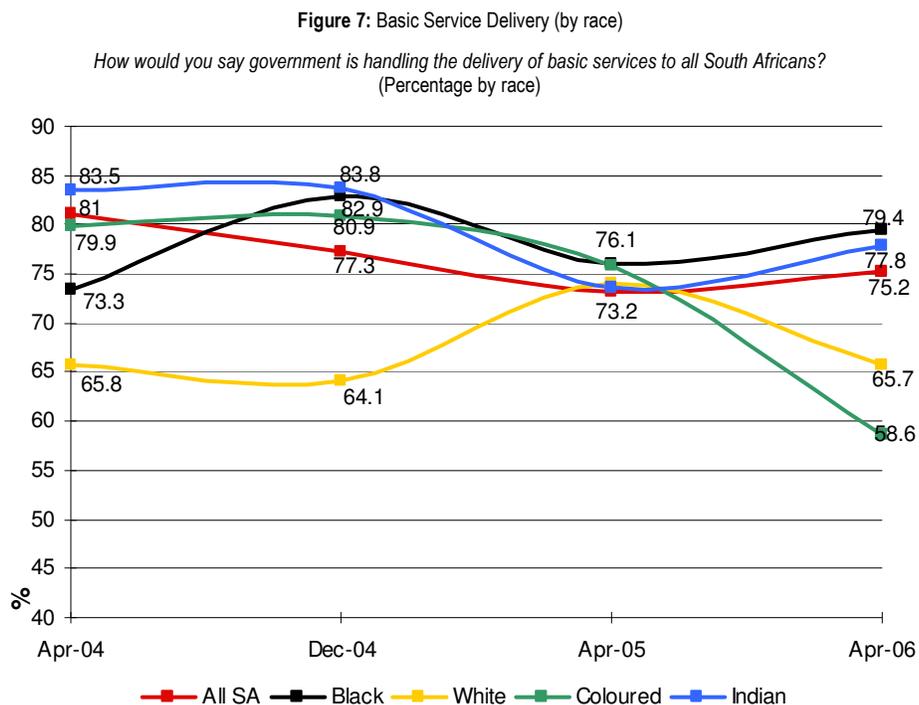
6.2.3. Government Service Delivery

In the sphere of social justice, citizens look towards the state for four primary deliverables. These are: the fair and transparent governance; the opportunity to prosper; delivery of essential services; and the provision

of social welfare to the most vulnerable in society. Its legitimacy, and therefore the extent to which it will enjoy moral authority to enforce its policies, will hinge on the state's capacity to deliver within reasonable expectations on each of these deliverables.

The South African state has to maintain a fine balancing act between these expectations. Its sophisticated economic and financial infrastructure requires a fair and predictable regulatory environment, which in turn, allows citizens and investors to use their initiative to prosper. Yet, apartheid's inherited inequalities have placed an enormous burden on it to deliver services and provide social grants to alleviate poverty. Such measures are not optional. In their absence desperate citizens may resort to their forceful - and often illegal - measures to restore material imbalances. Given the very visible racial nature of income distribution patterns in South Africa, such friction may translate into conflict between the country's constitutive groups.

The SARB Survey has prompted respondents over the past three years to provide feedback on their opinions regarding government service delivery. As far as the provision of social welfare is concerned, government continues to receive exceptional ratings. The average national agreement that it is doing a good job in this regard has risen over the past two years from 83,8% to 85,2%. Amongst the poorest section of the population in LSM1, who are most dependent on state welfare, 90,4% have indicated their approval of government attempts to improve their quality of life. This is also almost 2% higher than the measurement two years ago in April 2004.



Despite relatively high ratings in the most recent round of the survey, approval for government's delivery of basic services has, however, declined over the past two years. Figure 7 shows that whereas 81% of respondents gave government the thumbs-up for the delivery of basic services in April 2004, the corresponding figure for April 2006 was 75,2%. The black African section of the population was the only group that registered an increase from 73,3% to 79,4% during this period, while white responses at 65,7% in April 2006 remained fairly stable and dropped by a mere 0,1% from 65,8%. Positive responses amongst Indians declined by just under 6% from 83,5% to 77,8%. But the most worrying decline between April 2004 and April 2006 occurred amongst coloured respondents. During the first measurement two years ago 79,9% of respondents in this group indicated that they were happy with the extent to which government has been delivering basic services. This year the corresponding figure was 58,6%; a 21,3% decrease. This finding should be read against the background of socio-political developments in the Western Cape over the past two years. During this period simmering tensions between lower-income groups within the black African and coloured communities, entered the sphere of public debate after an insulting remark about coloured people by the personal assistant of former mayor, Nomaindia Mfeketo, Blackman Ngoro. Although fired shortly thereafter, Ngoro's remarks had a polarizing effect on relations between coloured and black Africans that also spilt over in other spheres, most notably of which the ANC's provincial leadership election at the end of 2005.

Figure 8: Basic Service Delivery (by LSM)

*How would you say government is handling the delivery of basic services to all South Africans?
(Percentage by LSM)*

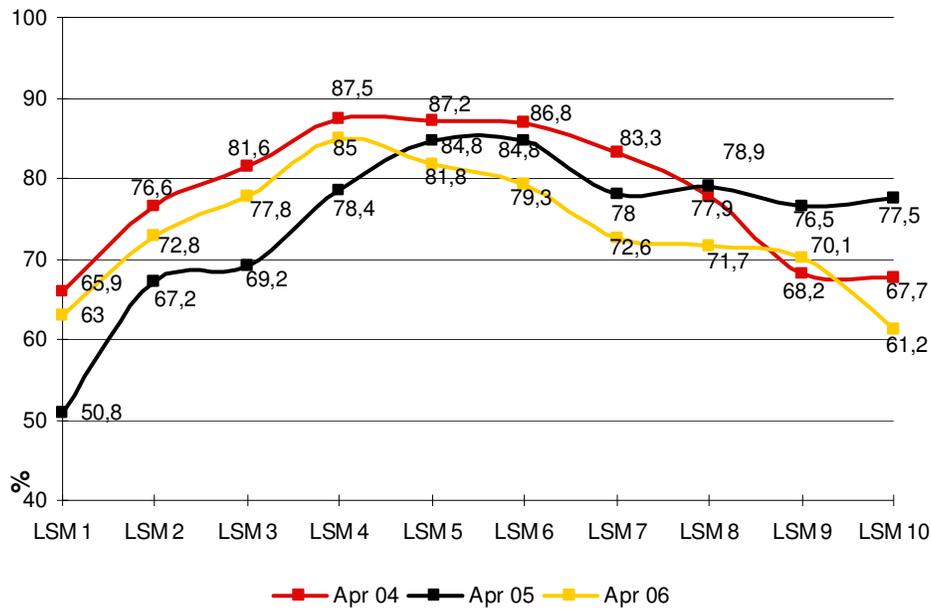


Figure 8 provides responses to the same question in terms of living standards measurements. The predominant feature of this graph is that the 2006 figures for each of the LSM categories, with the exception of LSM9, are lower than those recorded during the first measurement in 2004. Yet, LSMs 1-4, which are mainly occupied by black Africans, show considerable improvements in their ratings for government service delivery on the previous round of the survey. This also corresponds to the growth in approval amongst the black African group (see above in Figure 7) in comparison to the April 2005 round of the survey. The downward slope for responses in the higher categories is, however, significantly steeper than in prior surveys. The most visible slump occurs between LSM5 and LSM 8. Not coincidentally 57% of coloured respondents fall within these LSM categories.

6.3. Cultural Threat

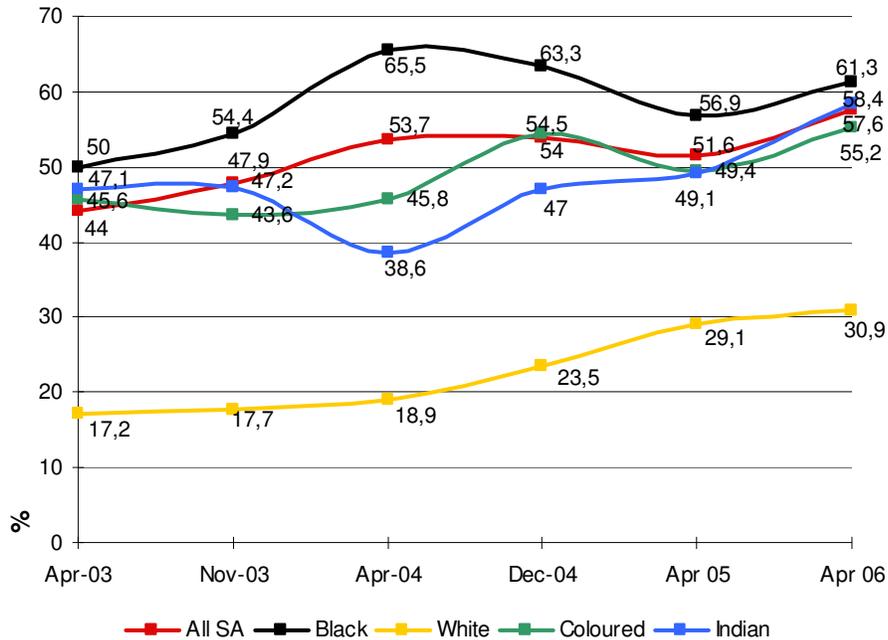
In their groundbreaking work on tolerance, "Overcoming Intolerance in South Africa: Experiments in Democratic Persuasion"²⁶, Gibson and Gouws showed that cultural, and specifically language and religious identities, are key determinants of how South Africans view themselves.

Against this background we have asked respondents in consecutive SARB surveys about the conditions under which they practice their religion or speak their mother tongue. This has been done, firstly, by asking respondents to indicate the extent to which they expect respect for their language and religion to increase over the next year. Secondly, they have been asked- to state whether they feel that government support for their particular group will increase in the coming year. Both questions have been aimed at establishing possible feelings of marginalisation from either the broader society or from government in particular.

Figure 9 presents responses to the first of the two measurements regarding expected changes in respect from groups other than that of the respondent. These findings tell a positive tale. Over the past three years the expected levels of respect have increased for all racial groups and, therefore, also for the sample as a whole. This means that perceived future threat from other cultural or religious groups have declined within each of the different racial groups. Positive expectations amongst black African respondents have increased by 11,3% since April 2003, while the corresponding figures for coloured and Indian respondents increased by 9,4% and 11,3% respectively. White optimism remains low at 30,9%, but the increase of 13,7% amongst this group since 2003 is nevertheless significant.

Figure 9: Respect for religion and language (by race)

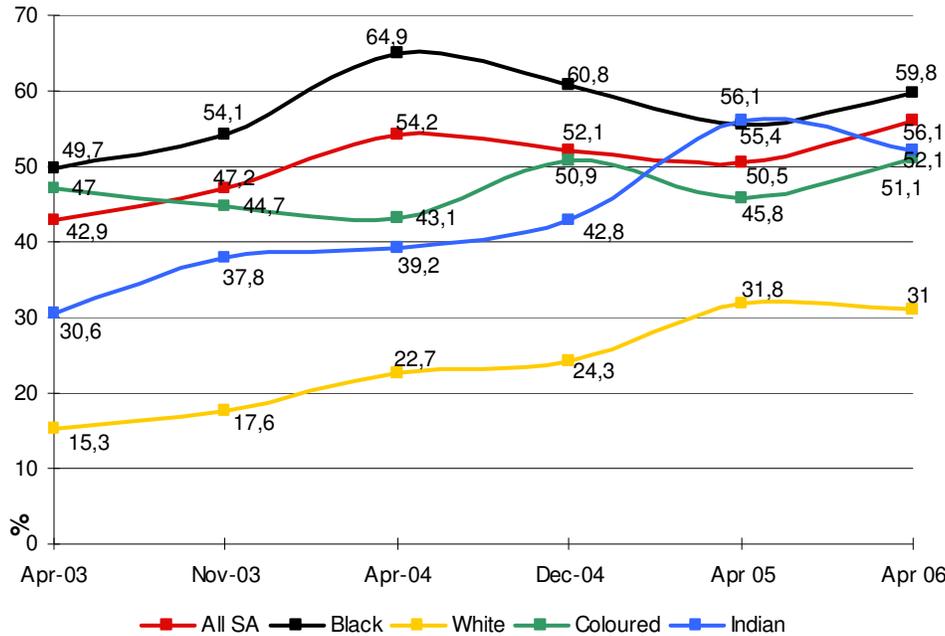
In the next twelve months, do you think other people's respect for your religious or language group will improve?
(Percentage agreement by race)



Responses regarding expected government support for particular language and religious groups, which are presented in Figure 10, largely mirror that of the findings presented in the previous graph. Compared to two years ago, 13,2% more respondents feel that they can expect increased government support for their specific group in the year to come. This increase is also visible amongst each of the different racial groups, with the exception of Indian respondents that showed a slight decrease of 4% between the previous and most recent rounds of the survey. Black Africans, with a 59,8% affirmative response in the most recent survey, remain the most likely to indicate confidence in government's commitment to the strengthening and protection of the cultural and religious values that they hold dear. Although this is about 5% lower than their highest level of optimism that was recorded two years ago in the April 2004 round, it is still 10% higher than in April 2003 during the first round of the survey. White respondents, of whom only 31% is optimistic about greater support from government for their language and religion, remain the biggest sceptics. Their optimism level of 31% is nonetheless significant, as it amounts to a doubling in optimism since the first round of the survey where only 15,3% responded in the same way. These findings should be viewed in a positive light, as increased confidence in government's ability to treat all groups fairly will reduce the likelihood of it being perceived as a source of racial or cultural patronage.

Figure 10: Government Support for different religion & language (by race)

Will government support for different language and religious groups to practice their language or religion improve?
(Percentage agreement by race)



The role of symbolism in the creation of a South African national identity is one of the relatively unexplored areas of the South African democratic transition. National symbols tell us something about the interpretation of a nation's past, but also about its expectations of the future. Anthems, flags, monuments, and place names are but a few symbolic expressions of what a nation values and aspire to. Because their function is to unify, they should preferably represent values that the majority of citizens share and cherish. In multicultural societies the creation of such symbolism requires utmost sensitivity and time. In most instances it will take generations before it is completely internalised by all groups.

In the apartheid state almost all expressions of nationhood were pervaded by the Afrikaner nationalist symbolism. In the post-1994 years new symbols were needed to reflect the inclusivity of the new nation. This was, and still is, a difficult task. Given the divisive nature of the apartheid ideology, an inclusive South African culture or identity did not precede democratisation and could, therefore, not simply replace symbols of the previous regime. New symbols had to be created, but the bigger challenge was to make those national symbols, which preceded the democratic era representative of the values and histories of all its peoples. In this regard the changing of town and city names, such as the renaming of Pretoria to Tshwane, was probably the most controversial. Inevitably many, both for and against such instances of geographical renaming, saw it as an instrument of cultural dominance. The SARB Survey has prompted respondents about this issue of name changes in the two most recent rounds of the survey. The rationale for many of

these recent name changes has been that geographical names should be representative of the original cultures that inhabited a particular area. Respondents were, therefore, asked to indicate whether they agree that town and city names should be reflective of the cultures that first inhabited it.

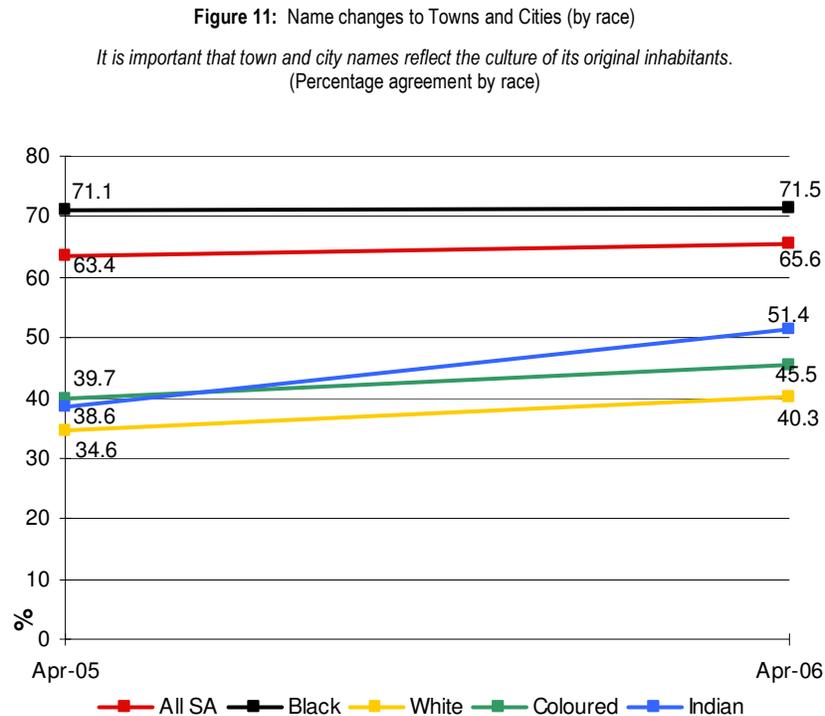


Figure 11 shows that almost two thirds of South Africans (65,6%0) agree that place names should be representative of the culture of those who originally inhabited that area. This is just more than two percent higher than at the time of its first measurement in the April 2005 round of the survey. Black African respondents, with a 71,5% level of agreement, remain most supportive of the idea, followed by Indians (51,4%), coloureds (45,5%) and whites (40,3%) in this order. All racial groups have shown increases on the previous round, with Indian responses showing the most notable incline of almost 13%. White and coloured respondents have both recorded increases of just under 5%, while the overall response for black Africans showed a marginal increase of 0,4%.

The exact motivation for responses to the above statement need to be fleshed out in surveys to come, as both positive and negative replies may offer different interpretations. Agreement may, for example, be based on a particular respondent's belief that his/her ancestors were the original inhabitants of the area where they reside. Respondents from other groups may have the same belief about that particular area in question and, therefore, agreement on the statement is not automatically a positive result for reconciliation. Disagreement, on the other hand, may not be based on cultural considerations, but rather on its economic implications.

7. Political Culture

The term 'political culture' denotes a set of assumptions, orientations and relations towards the systems that govern the macro- and micro aspects of political life. Almond and Verba, the authors of "The Civic Culture", one of the most authoritative works on the subject, further qualifies this by arguing that it not only to the "political system and its various parts", but also to attitudes pertaining to "the role of the self in the system".²⁷

Why this focus, and how does it relate to the broader reconciliation process? Our basic point of departure is that a culture of human rights and the general acceptance of democratic principles are minimal requirements for a successful reconciliation process. Given this country's protracted history of oppression, it would be naïve to assume that the mere existence of new democratic institutions and accompanying laws and regulations would instantaneously entrench this culture. These attributes are not cultivated overnight. They ought to be rooted in common respect for, and commitment to, the values of a truly just democratic society. In this report we reflect on three important aspects of political culture, namely leadership legitimacy, institutional legitimacy, and respect for the rule of law.

7.1. Leader Legitimacy

Leadership that is trusted and accepted by the majority of citizens is a crucial precondition for reconciliation in transitional societies. In the absence of a fully functional and united civil sphere in the immediate aftermath of a fundamental transition, it is up to the political leadership to give credence to the new rules of social interaction and political conduct that have not yet been entrenched. Administrative skill, legislative capacity, and commitment to democratic principles are obvious qualities that citizens require from their leaders, but in such societies political office also demands moral authority that supersedes historical schisms. Ideally in these contexts leadership should prioritise the national good above the entertainment of sectoral power struggles or patronage in the distribution of resources. Each citizen, regardless of political or cultural background, should feel that government cares about his or her plight.

Is this possible in South Africa where leadership decisions about economic redistribution or the levelling of the political playing field is often interpreted through a racial lens? But the question of leadership concern for the citizenry need not only be asked in racial terms. As events in recent years have shown, leadership style may also give rise to a perception of aloofness that can drive a wedge between a political elite and its grassroots followers. The survey instrument included two items designed to measure the perceived trustworthiness and attentiveness of political leaders. The first offered respondents the opportunity to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: "The people who run the country are not really concerned with what happens to people like me".

Figure 12: Leaders not concerned with me (by race)

The people who run the country are not really concerned with what happens to people like me
(Percentage agreement by race)²⁸

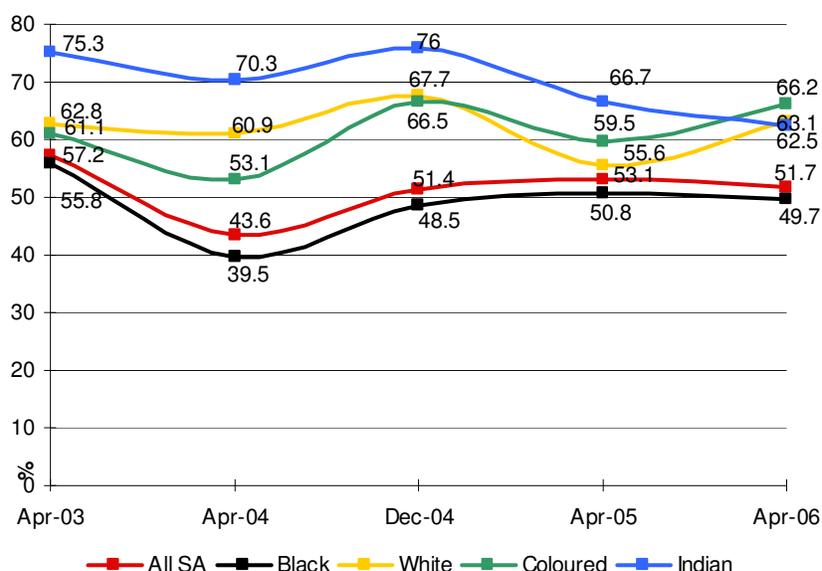


Figure 12 shows that just more than half of South Africans are of the opinion that those in charge of the country's affairs do not care about people like them. This is slightly down on the level of agreement in the previous round of the survey, which stood at 53,1%, and also 5,3% lower than the first measurement four years ago. Agreement amongst black African and Indians have shown small declines on the previous round of 1,1% and 4,2% respectively, while those of white and coloured respondents have increased by 7,5% and 6,7% respectively. There is very little difference in opinion between younger and older South Africans on this issue.²⁹ Amongst the youth 51,5% indicated their agreement and among older South Africans the corresponding figure was 51,9%. Larger differences were visible when responses were disaggregated into LSM categories. The lowest level of agreement was recorded amongst the most destitute in LSM 1 with 45%, while most agreement resides in LSM7 with 69,4%.

This statement has appeared five times in the survey since its inception in April 2004. In all the rounds, with the exception of April 2004, responses in agreement were above 50% on the national level. Against the background of strong positive sentiment towards government delivery, particularly to the poor, it can indeed be asked why the majority of South Africans nevertheless believe that government is not concerned about their plight.

A large part of the answer may be found in how the state relates to citizens, rather than what or in which quantities it provides its services.³⁰ Many observers have noted in recent years how an increasingly technocratic state struggles to communicate with stakeholders on the same technical level that it operates.

Often this has limited those who engage in public participation processes to well-resourced lobbying groups, consultants, and experts who are often far removed from the lived reality of most South Africans. Those who are not heard feel excluded and when they complain they are in many instances treated in a patronising way, and sometimes even with contempt. The past twelve months have been replete with examples. The young Kabelo Thibedi was sentenced to five years imprisonment for holding Home Affairs officials hostage after months of frustrating attempts to obtain an identity document. In Khutsong violence erupted after the Department for Provincial and Local Government disregarded the outcome of a public participation process and recommendations from the Municipal Demarcation Council against the municipality's incorporation into the North West Province. In one of the more crude examples, the Minister for Safety and Security told those who 'whinge' about crime to leave the country. Instances such as the above are being perceived by many as insensitive to the lived experience of the vast majority of South Africans.

7.2. Institutional Legitimacy

In modern democracies public institutions can impossibly deliver on all citizen demands. Trade-offs have to be made between a myriad of interests that are being represented by business, trade unions, civil society organisations, and those who approach and interact with the state in their individual capacity. It is the function of these institutions to mediate, aggregate and channel public input in decision-making processes in such a way that most citizens feel that their interests are being protected most of the time. This requires systems and procedural frameworks that encourage fair and transparent decision-making, and compels the 'losers' in public processes and disputes to abide by institutional decisions.

The legitimacy that is extended to such systems and frameworks are of particular importance in states with a protracted history of conflict and national division. Of essence here to the reconciliation process are those structures of the democratic system that are instrumental in the mediation of conflict, as well as those critical for establishing and entrenching a culture of human rights. Of course, citizens should be vigilant in their appraisal of the state, but a distinction should be made between constructive criticism and a lack of intrinsic support for-, and commitment to the democratic institutions, procedures and values they espouse. An absence of these critical requirements has ramifications for whether citizens can be considered "reconciled with the newly implemented democratic system".³¹

In previous rounds of the survey we have measured public confidence in parliament, the most central and symbolic institution of the South African democracy. In this year's survey we have extended this measurement to a number of other institutions, both public and private, that are critical for a healthy democracy and, in addition, have a significant role to play in the national reconciliation process.

Table 2: Confidence in Institutions*Please indicate how much confidence you have in each of the following institutions*

	None at all	Not much	Quite a lot	A great deal	Don't know
Presidency	4.3%	17.4%	37.5%	25.9%	1.3%
National Government	4.8%	20.7%	40.1%	33.0%	1.4%
Provincial Government	6.8%	25.9%	39.5%	26.0%	1.9%
Local Government	15.0%	32.7%	32.0%	18.3%	2.0%
Parliament	6.5%	21.9%	39.8%	29.6%	2.3%
Big Companies	6.5%	22.0%	39.4%	26.0%	6.2%
Political Parties	13.2%	35.2%	32.9%	14.6%	4.0%
Print Media	6.6%	21.7%	43.4%	21.0%	7.2%
Broadcast Media	5.1%	16.2%	45.2%	28.9%	4.6%
SA Human Rights Commission	5.2%	18.2%	41.0%	25.6%	9.9%
Religious Institutions	6.6%	19.3%	41.3%	28.5%	4.2%
Constitutional Court	6.3%	20.3%	41.6%	24.0%	7.8%
Legal System in General	8.2%	22.8%	41.1%	20.0%	7.8%

Table 2 shows that all of the listed institutions, with the exception of political parties and local government, enjoy high levels of confidence amongst the South African public. This is a healthy sign for our democracy and suggests that the vast majority of South Africans trust these institutions to act in their best interest. Although the fostering of legitimacy is a longer-term process that requires sustained confidence over a protracted period, the high confidence levels that have been registered in this round of the survey bodes well for the future.

The graph shows that levels of confidence in the three spheres of government vary. National government, with 73,1%, has elicited the highest positive rating of the three, followed by provincial government with 65,5%, and local government trailing much further behind with 50,3%. The finding with regard to the latter category does not come as a surprise. Local government has in recent years become synonymous with corruption, maladministration, wasteful expenditure, and exuberant remuneration packages that were not linked to performance. Large-scale protest against poor municipal service delivery in the run-up to the 2006 Local Government Elections, drew attention to the extent of public disillusionment with this sphere of government. It is critical that the image of this most visible and tangible sphere of democracy be changed through accelerated delivery and meaningful public participation.

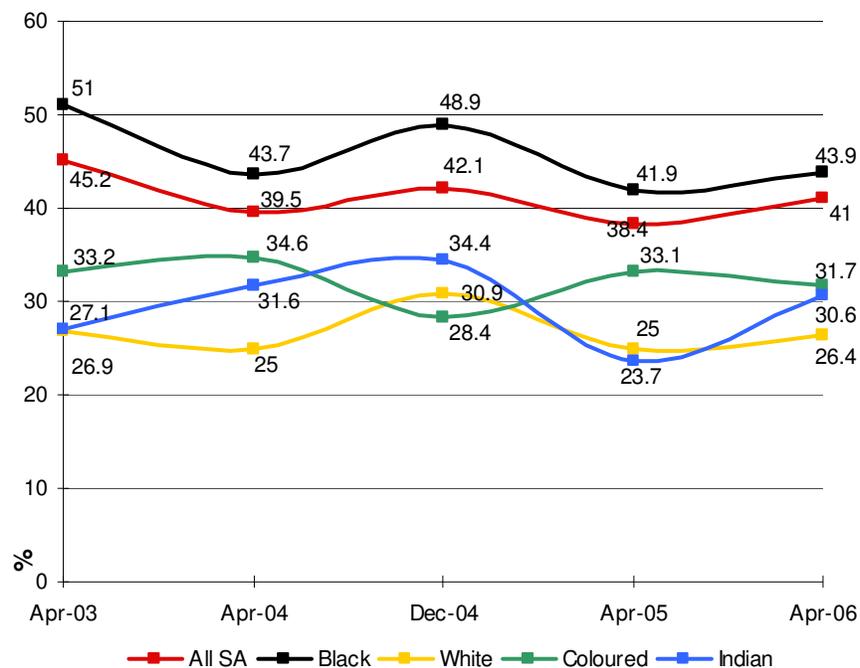
Interestingly, two non-political institutions have been ranked by South Africans amongst the top three most trusted institutions. The broadcast media with 74,1% was ranked first, while religious institutions with 69,8%, ranked third after the national government. This finding highlights the fact that democratic stability does not only hinge on governments or their bureaucracies, but also on the existence of a free media and social groupings that can serve as a potential counterweight to state power. It is somewhat disappointing that the

legal system with 61,1% has not registered a higher level of confidence. This result should, however, be read against the background of the considerable burden that high crime levels have placed on it.

Despite the controversy around the Travelgate Scandal that continues to tarnish its image and charges by observes that it is a toothless, Parliament still elicits a significant amount of confidence from the general public. Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they either have a “great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in the South African Parliament. Interestingly this level of trust is about six per cent higher than the 63,4% that was extended to the Presidency. In recent years it has often been argued that the political significance of the latter has increased to the detriment of parliament. It can, however, not be established clearly whether the responses for the Presidency reflect confidence in the institution or the actual person of the president. In the case of parliament, however, the evidence at our disposal appears to suggest that our measurement does reflect sentiment towards the institution, rather than the political groupings that inhabit it. This is borne out in the finding that less than half of South Africans, or 47,5%, indicated that they trust political parties that are represented in parliament.

Figure 13: Relevance of Parliament (by race)

If the South African Parliament started making a lot of decisions that most people disagree with, it might be better to do away with Parliament altogether.
(Percentage agreement by race)



Despite the relatively high level of confidence in the institution of parliament, Figure 13 shows that there is no room for complacency. In the latest round of the survey 41% of respondents have indicated that under

circumstances where parliament makes unpopular decisions, it might be better to do away with it. Affirmative responses are highest amongst black African respondents with 43,9% and lowest amongst white participants in the survey with 26,4%. The responses of all groups, with the exception of Indians, are nevertheless lower than those that were recorded in the first round of the survey in April 2003. This survey was conducted prior to the verdict of the Travelgate court cases, which found several members guilty of an inappropriate use of parliamentary travel vouchers. Most members received fines and suspended sentences and have also appeared before a parliamentary disciplinary committee. It does, however, seem unlikely that they would be asked to vacate their seats, despite the fact that they have brought the institution of parliament in disrepute. This does unfortunately not send out a positive signal about parliamentary ethics and the standards that we set for our public representatives. It would be interesting to see in future rounds of the survey how this affair has impacted on public opinion, in a case where lawmakers turned out to become the lawbreakers.

7.3. The Rule of Law

December 2006 will mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the final draft of the South African Constitution. This is, arguably, one of the greatest achievements of the post-apartheid political order as it confirmed the entrenchment of the rule of law and ensured the equality of all citizens, regardless of their status in society. The new constitutional state distinguished itself from the previous political dispensation in that all legislative, executive, and private interaction, could be tested against the values and rights espoused in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights contained in it. As such, it serves as a document that gives expression to our common aspirations as a united country and thus has the potential to unify South Africans around a common set of principles. While its binding power cannot be regarded as being synonymous with national reconciliation, it does constitute an important building block in the endeavour to create a reconciled nation. Against this background it is critical that the principle of the rule of law become entrenched in all levels of society.

Given the South African state's protracted history of human rights abuse, often sanctioned by the apartheid judiciary, this process of building social trust and acceptance of judicial supremacy will not be an easy task. The legal system has for many years functioned on the basis of customs and principles that were foreign to most South Africans and hence it had to be transformed to become representative not only of indigenous customs and cultures, but also of South Africans who cherish these values. Secondly, the heavy burden placed on the judiciary by the country's high crime levels have had a detrimental effect on its ability to administrate justice, which in turn has had an impact on the public's perception of its ability to safeguard citizens against criminal activity. A third issue, judicial independence, has been highlighted by the introduction of four pieces of legislation relating to judicial administration in late 2005. Essentially the debate

that ensued in the wake of the tabling of this legislation dealt with the demarcation or separation of powers. It is of great importance that consensus be reached about this issue at this early stage in our democracy. Confusion about this may lead to a perception of executive interference in the administration of justice, and hence, a disregard for the rule of law.

The SARB Survey has developed a number of measurements to establish the general public's the level of commitment towards the principle of the rule of law. The first of these has been aimed at gauging the extent to which citizens value the principle of law abidance, by asking them whether they would circumvent the law, without actually breaking it, if given the opportunity.

Figure 14: Getting around the Law (by race)

It is alright to get around the law, as long as you don't actually break it.
(Percentage agreement by race)

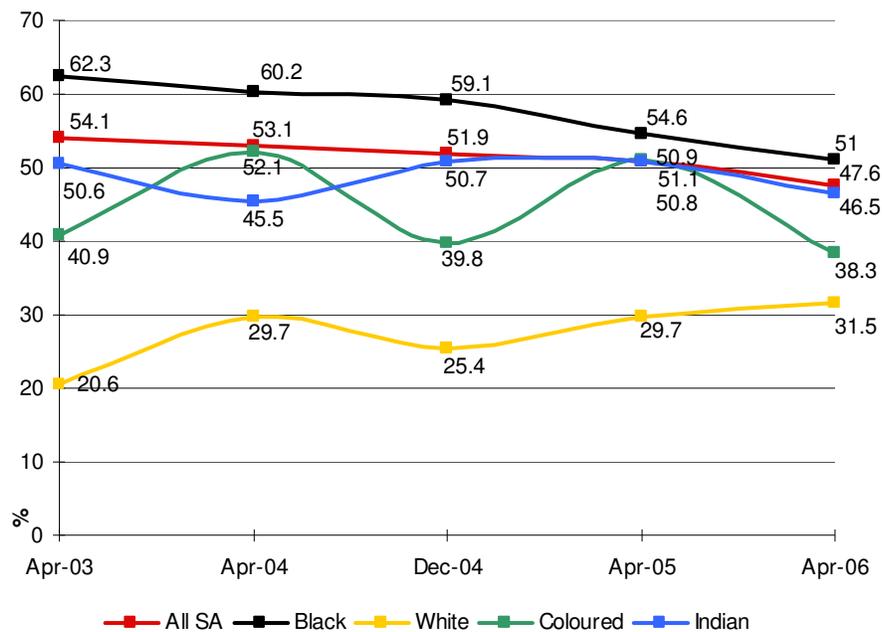


Figure 14 shows that 47,6% of South Africans are prepared to defeat the objectives of a law, without actually breaking it. This is a significant percentage of the population, but it should be noted that in the most recent round of the survey this figure dropped below the 50% mark for the first time since its first appearance in the survey in April 2003. Albeit incremental, it appears as if agreement on this question is showing a downward tendency, which is good news. In comparison to measurements in the first round of the survey, all racial groups, with the exception of white respondents, have shown a decline in their approval for such practices. Black African respondents, with 51% are still the most likely to concur with this statement, but such agreement has declined by over 11% just over the past four years. The decreases for

Indian and coloured responses were more moderate, but has shown significant fluctuations between the first and most recent rounds of the survey. The decline in agreement amongst coloured respondents between the first and most recent surveys has, for example, been 12,8%. This was preceded by an 11,3% increase the year before. Although white respondents are still the least likely to agree to the notion of circumventing the law, this grouping has shown the biggest incline over the past four years from 20,6% to 31,5%. The most striking feature of this graph is, however, that the responses of all groups are increasingly moving closer towards the national average, which suggests a growing convergence in opinion - even if it is in this case public sentiment towards an unconstructive practice.

The South African Constitution, as noted above, specifies the values and aspirations that guide the interpretation of what we, as a country, understand a just society to be. It extends rights and obligations to citizens, but most importantly, it guarantees equal treatment in its adjudication of how these rights and obligations should find bearing in our daily lives. Given the plurality of this society, it is inevitable that the equality extended by the Constitution might at times lead to friction when the exercising of one right is perceived to be infringing upon the rights of others. A court ruling in terms of the constitution will, therefore, often result in a dispute situation where there are clear “winners” and “losers”. One of the litmus tests for the acceptance of the principle of the rule of law would be the extent to which the “losers” are able to respect and abide to arbitration in terms of the Constitution.

For the past two years the SARB Survey has prompted respondents to indicate their agreement with the statement that: “The rulings of South African courts should be in accordance with the SA Constitution, even if it contradicts the will of the people.” This statement measures commitment to the principle of the rule of law in a scenario where Constitutional principles and freedoms clash with the popular will or accepted norms of the majority of South Africans. A recent example of this is the Constitutional Court’s ruling that instructed parliament to extend the legislative interpretation of the concept of marriage to same sex unions. Although widely welcomed by gay and lesbian groups, the adoption of the legislation was met with strong resistance from across the political spectrum.

Figure 15: The Constitution

The rulings of South Africa courts should be in accordance with the Constitution, even if it contradicts the will of the people
(Percentage agreement by population group by race – April 2005)

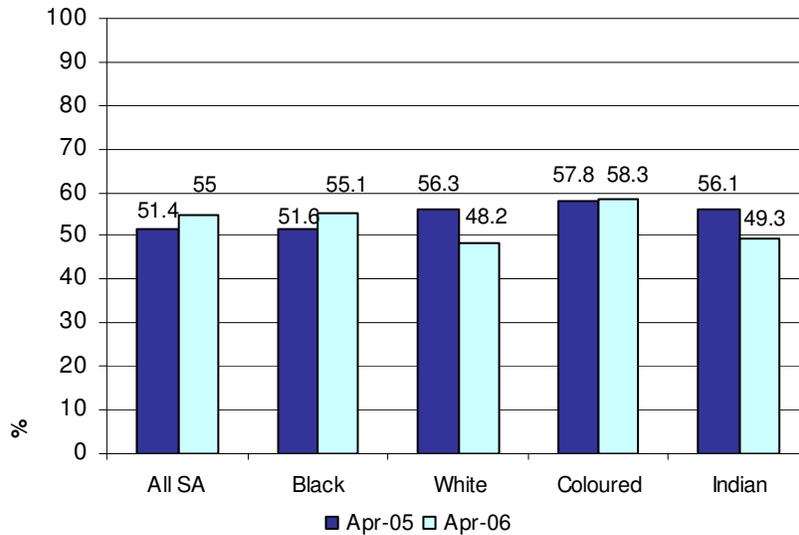


Figure 15 shows that 55% of South Africans agree that constitutional considerations should rule supreme in instances where findings of this country's courts contradict the will of most citizens. Coloured South Africans with a positive response of 58,3% were the most likely to agree with this statement, followed by black African respondents with 55,1%, Indian respondents with 49,3% and lastly white respondents with 48,2%. This is an encouraging finding, suggesting that the majority of South Africans understand the imperative for an intrinsic-, as opposed to an instrumental interpretation of the value of a constitution and the rule of law in general. Equally encouraging is the fact that this is an increase of 3,6% on last year's level of agreement of 51,4%. This finding also ties in with a decline over the past four years in the percentage of South Africans who agreed with a statement, which suggests that it is not necessary to obey the laws of a government that the respondent did not vote for. During April 2003 the level of agreement with this statement stood at 27,6% and decreased to 23% in the most recent round in April 2006.

8. Cross-cutting Political Relationships

South African responses to socio-political issues has for centuries been compartmentalised in rigidly-defined racial categories. Today South Africans continue to be informed by countless conscious and subconscious cost/benefit calculations that are based on such racial criteria. While the country's cultural diversity is one of its biggest assets, such historical differences continue to sustain feelings of suspicion and mutual threat. The need to constantly appease and allay fears is not only a significant constraint on the efficiency of the state, it is also provides a very weak foundation for any attempt at national reconciliation.

Giliomee and Schlemmer proposes that cross-cutting-, instead of superimposed social relationships, is essential in countries, such as South Africa, which had a prolonged history of division.³² These relationships

should be premised on shared issues, rather than ethnic or cultural affiliation. By their very nature such relations hold the potential for the formation of a more fluid political society that can address issues that transcend racial, religious, class and linguistic boundaries.³³ They challenge South Africans to view salient social issues from a different perspective. One of this project's points of departure is, therefore, that an increase in these cross-cutting relationships would provide the circumstances that are conducive to national reconciliation.

This survey has since its inception been investigating national unity and racially-mixed political parties as tentative indicators of the existence of cross-cutting social relationships.

8.1. National Unity

It is still unclear what a united South African nation would look like and what about its character would unite its people. The country continues to find itself in the early stages of adjustment to the realities of freedom and equality, and it may still take years, even decades, before we will be able to put our finger on those common qualities, values, principles, and conventions that may answer this question. Yet, although it cannot be artificially created, it would also be unwise to believe that it can be left to develop organically. Accepting the fact that there may at this stage be very little consensus about what the concept exactly entails, it remains important that its virtue in terms of national reconciliation is recognized. Respondents have, therefore, been asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with a statement suggesting the importance of the creation of one united and inclusive South African nation.

Figure 16: One United South Africa (by race)

*It is desirable to create one united South African nation out of all the different groups who live in this country.
(Percentage in agreement by race)*

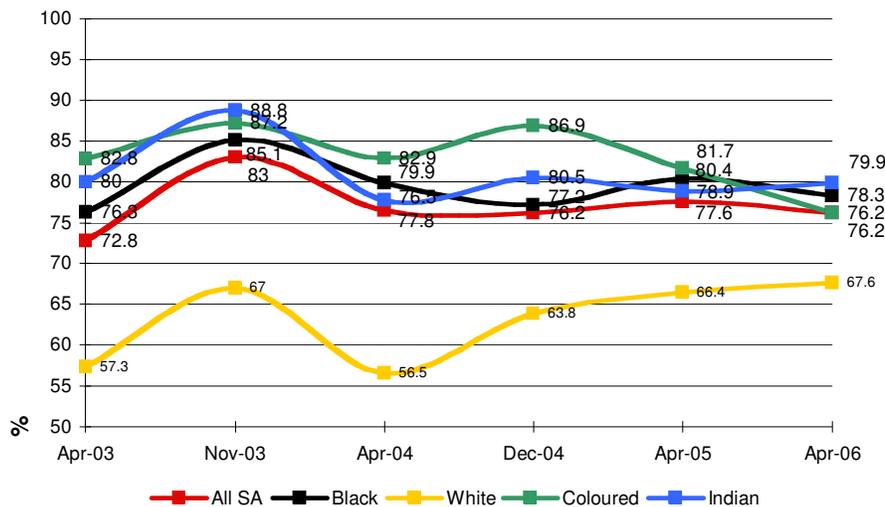


Figure 16 indicates that respondents have consistently shown high levels of approval for the idea of a united South African nation since the first round of the survey in April 2003. At 76,2% the national level of approval in the most recent round of the survey is just over 1% lower than that of a year before. Over the past four years this figure has fluctuated between the lower seventies and lower eighties, but has stabilised in the four most recent rounds between 75% and 80%. Indian respondents, with a 79,9% rate of approval, were the most likely to agree with this statement, followed by black Africans, with 78,3%, and coloured respondents with 76,2%. While white respondents showed the lowest level of agreement at 67,7%, it is significant to note that this is just over 10% higher than four years ago. Here again a picture of convergence between the sentiments of the different racial groups seem to be taking shape.

8.2. Racially mixed Political Parties

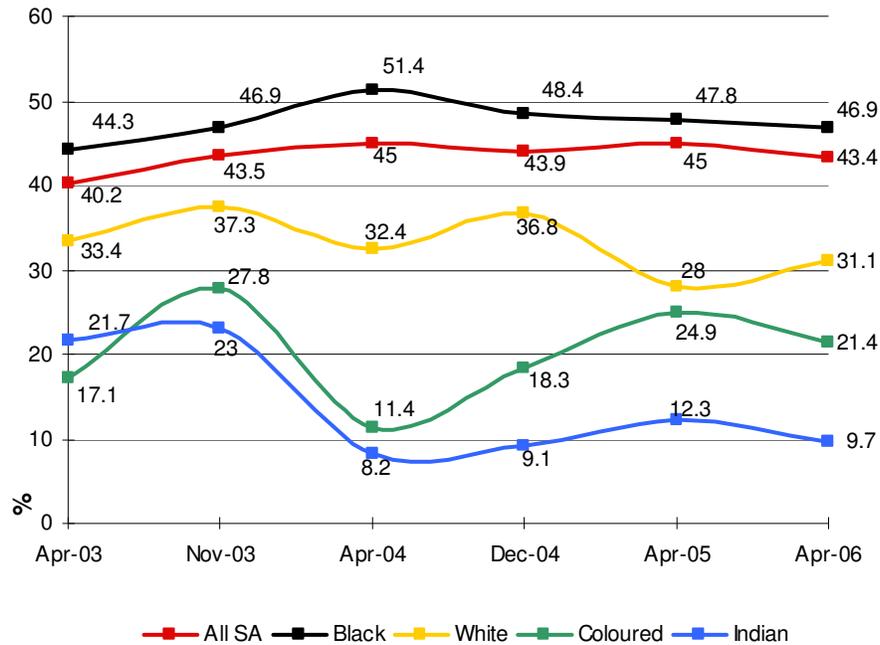
The level of integration of political parties is another significant indicator of the extent to which cross-cutting political relationships have been formed. Because political parties represent the aggregated interests of like-minded citizens in a political system, it can reasonably be assumed that the individual's selection criteria for membership or support should be informed by the party's stance on particular issues. Much has been written about the nature of voting behaviour of different racial groups in South African elections. Some attribute election outcomes to the strong role that racial allegiance plays in many sectors of society. Others dismiss this notion of a racial census and insist that South African voters are mature enough and able to base their vote on rational choice.³⁴

For the past four years the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* has gauged the extent to which South Africans are open to the idea of belonging to multiracial political parties. In consecutive surveys respondents have been prompted to indicate their agreement with the following statement: "I could never imagine being part of a political party, made up mainly of people from another population group". The objective of this statement is to establish the extent to which citizens prioritise racial allegiance above issue-driven politics to achieve social ends. Disagreement, on the other hand, points to confidence in the capacity of the system to resolve issues, based purely on their merit.

In April 2006, 43,4% of South Africans indicated that they would not consider joining a political party that is not made up of a majority of people coming from a group other than their own (See Figure 17). Black Africans with 46,9% were most likely to respond in this way, followed by whites with 31,1%, coloureds with 21,4% and finally Indians with 9,7%. These figures have remained fairly constant since the first round, with the exception of Indian responses that have dropped by 13% from 21,7% to 9,7%

Figure 17: Member of Political Party of other Race (by race)

*I could never imagine being part of a political party made up mainly of people of another race.*³⁵
 (Percentage in agreement by race)



9. Dialogue

Reconciliation between deeply divided communities is inconceivable without meaningful dialogue about historical differences. Especially when such division was legally entrenched for a protracted period and had the added dimension of being discriminatory, as has been the case in South Africa, it is necessary to talk frankly about how we interpret our past and what we hope for in the future. Restitution, and eventually reconciliation, can after all, only occur when suffering has been communicated and a common understanding has been developed of what needs to be done. Hence Erik Doxtader argues that reconciliation requires more than a superficial willingness to belong to a diverse political constituency, it should extend beyond discussion and beyond individuals and groups who are gathering and “expressing their views, and then leaving their respective claims to hang in the air”.³⁶ Such interaction should ideally become entrenched in public discourse, which in turn, should inform our actions relating to broader programmes for national reconciliation. It is of essence that it reaches beyond social and political elites to a broader spread of the South African population.

It is very difficult to quantify the extent to which inter-racial dialogue occurs, and even less so whether it is meaningful. The survey has, however, enquired about public opinion on the appropriateness of encouraging more profound forms of inter-group dialogue between people of different racial, cultural, religious or language backgrounds, by means of using two very influential institutions: organised religion and the broadcast media. As indicated in the section on public confidence in institutions, both rank highly in terms of the trust that is extended to them by the general populace. The broadcast media, amongst the institutions measured in this survey, comes out as the most trusted institution, with religious institutions in third place.

While the South African readership of newspapers and news-orientated magazines is restricted by lower literacy rates than in the developed world, the reach of the country's broadcast media is significant. With broadcasts in all of the eleven official languages, it has the capacity to be a powerful tool in the service of national reconciliation. The SARB Survey has prompted South Africans to indicate their degree of agreement with the statement that government should require of the broadcast media to allocate more time to programming that promotes and reflects on issues of social transformation and nation-building.

Figure 18: More Participation in Radio and TV (by race)

The government should require Radio and TV stations to have more shows where South Africans can talk to each other about things like transformation and nation-building
(Percentage in agreement by race)

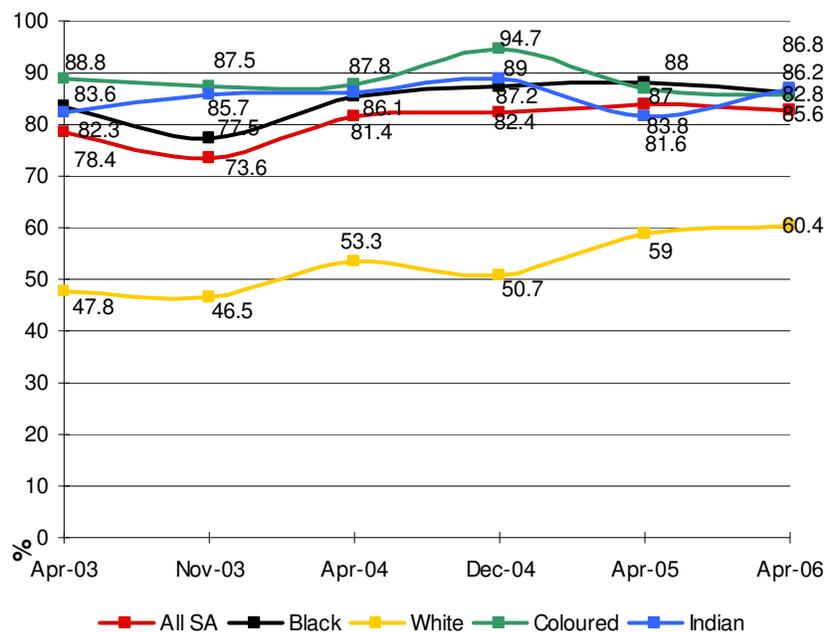


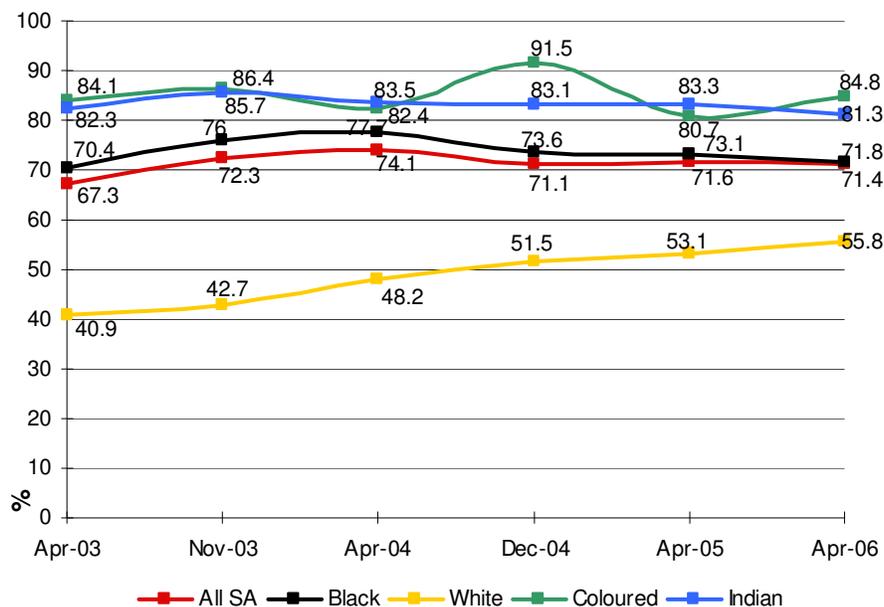
Figure 18 conveys the April 2006 SARB finding that 82,8% of South Africans approve of the idea that government should encourage the broadcast media to provide more airtime that is devoted to issues of national reconciliation. This is 4,2% higher than the corresponding figure that was recorded in the first

round of the survey, but 1% down on the 83,8% that was attained a year ago in April 2005. As is evident in this graph, the responses of black African, coloured and Indian South Africans were in close proximity to each other in this, but also in previous rounds of the survey. Their response patterns for the past four years also closely resemble each other. Approval for this statement was lowest amongst white respondents. The biggest positive change in responses since the first round of the survey has, however, occurred amongst this grouping, which has shown an increase in agreement from 47,8% in April 2003 to 60,4% in the most recent round.

Religion plays a central role in the lives of the majority of South Africans. According to the *South Africa Survey 2002/2003*, 87% of South Africans have some form of religious affiliation.³⁷ 70% of respondents also indicated in a 2001 Human Sciences Research Council survey that they attend a religious service at least once a month.³⁸ These figures underline the pervasive influence of religion in our society the country. Such institutions are, therefore, ideally placed as agents for social change and in this instance, national reconciliation.

Figure 19: Role of churches to promote reconciliation

Different churches or religious organizations should start holding some services together so that different South Africans can get to know one another better
(Percentage in agreement by race)



Strong support for this proposition has remained consistent since the first round of the SARB Survey. As Figure 19 indicates 71,4% of the national sample have indicated their agreement with the nation that religious organisations should take the lead in uniting South Africans. Coloured respondents with 84,8% and

Indian respondents with 81,3% showed the highest levels of agreement with the statement. They were followed by black African respondents with 71,8%, and Whites with 55,8% were the least likely to agree. As has been the case in the previous graph that pertained to the role of the broadcast media, Figure 19 shows that the biggest growth in positive sentiment about the role of the church has also been amongst this group. While positive responses in April 2003 amounted to 40,9%, the corresponding figure for the most recent round was 55,8%.

10. Historical Confrontation

South Africa's present is inextricably linked to its past. This past has been brutal, discriminatory, and showed little regard for human dignity. The scars that it left are still present with us today and hence no assessment of national reconciliation would be complete without an investigation of the degree to which this nation has been able to confront its past. This year we commemorated the first sitting of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission ten years ago in East London. The Commission represented the most ambitious attempt of post-apartheid South Africa to come to terms with its tragic past. What distinguished it from other such attempts was the fact that it not only placed emphasis on the unearthing of truth about atrocities, it also believed, and strongly promoted, the idea of truth as the critical building block for national reconciliation. At a conference, hosted in April 2006 by IJR, to reflect on the ten years since that first sitting of the TRC, many participants expressed the sentiment that although the Commission has provided an important catalyst for the discovery of truth and promotion of reconciliation, it fell short of addressing the expectations of many who participated in it. It was also suggested that much of the process that has been started by the TRC has lost its momentum in the years that followed its work.

The SARB has prompted South Africans to respond to a number of statements that relate to the way in which they acknowledge and deal with their past; the scope that there is for forgiveness; the need for vengeance; and lastly, the extent to which there is a desire to move forward beyond a past that may hold them hostage.

10.1. Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement of injustice and more specifically, acknowledgement of having perpetrated injustice, either actively or by default is a first essential step in any reconciliation process.³⁹ Without the acknowledgement of a victim's suffering, there is very little room for forgiveness, and even less so for restitution. Because of apartheid's systemic nature, acknowledgement within the South African context should not only relate to deeds of the past, but also to its continuing impact on the present. Most difficult for the beneficiaries of the system is the acknowledgement that their privilege was built on, and protected by,

brutality that caused extreme hardship for millions. It can be argued that true reconciliation can only occur when this acknowledgement has taken place and the full extent of this reality has been grasped.

In 1976, in the wake of the Soweto protests, the United Nations declared apartheid a crime against humanity.⁴⁰ To measure the extent to which South Africans recognise the true nature of the apartheid system, we have asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with this statement that apartheid was indeed a crime against humanity. A second statement that has been put to respondents to measure their impression of the nature of the apartheid state, was the proposition that the state committed horrific atrocities against those who fought against apartheid.

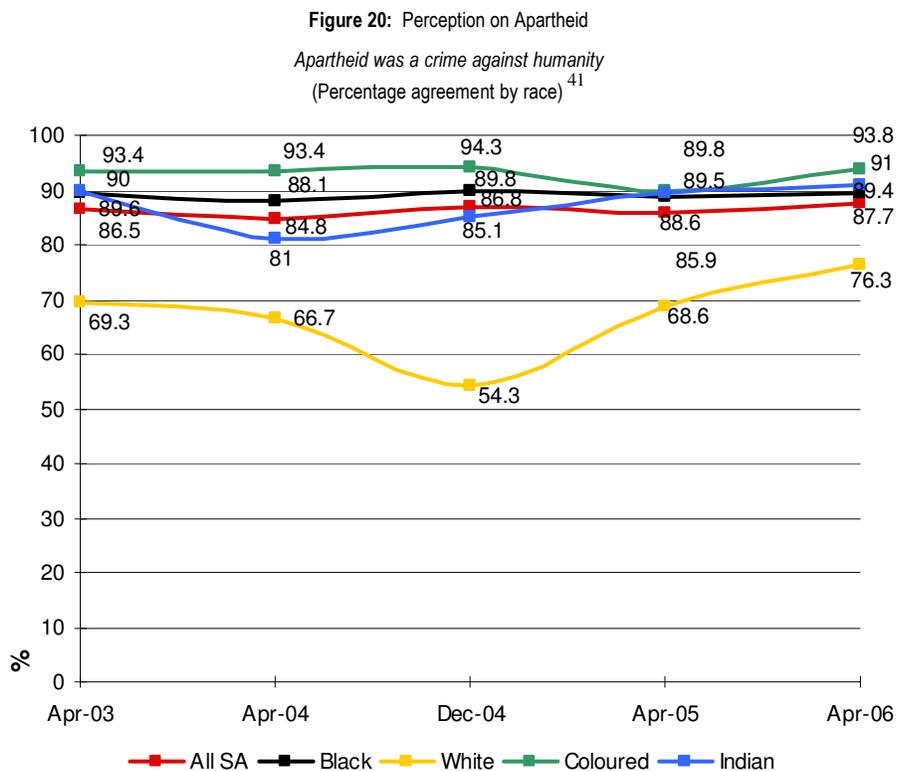
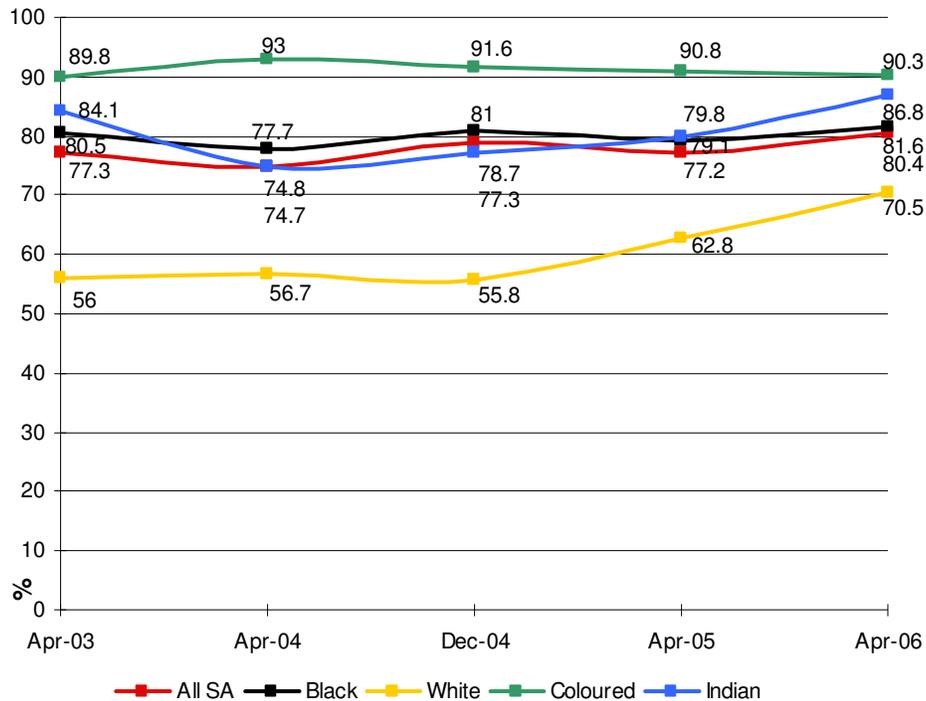


Figure 21: Atrocities Committed by the apartheid regime

In the past the state committed horrific atrocities against those struggling against apartheid.
 (Percentage agreement by race)⁴²



An overwhelming majority of 87,7% of South Africans concur with the view that apartheid did indeed constitute a crime against humanity (see Figure 20). Coloured respondents, with 93,8%, showed the highest level of agreement, followed by Indian respondents with 91%, and black African respondents with 89,4%. Although white respondents were the least likely to concur, their 76,3% level of agreement remains significant and is also their highest level of agreement since the first measurement in April 2003.

The responses conveyed in Figure 21 largely mirrors that of Figure 20. Just over 80% of respondents indicated their agreement with the statement that the South African state did indeed commit atrocities against those who fought the apartheid regime. Again agreement is highest amongst coloured respondents followed by Indians, black Africans and whites in this order. The most significant result here must be the high level of agreement amongst white citizens. In the most recent round 70,6% of white were convinced about the brutality of the apartheid regime, which is just more than 14% higher than the first measurement in April 2003.

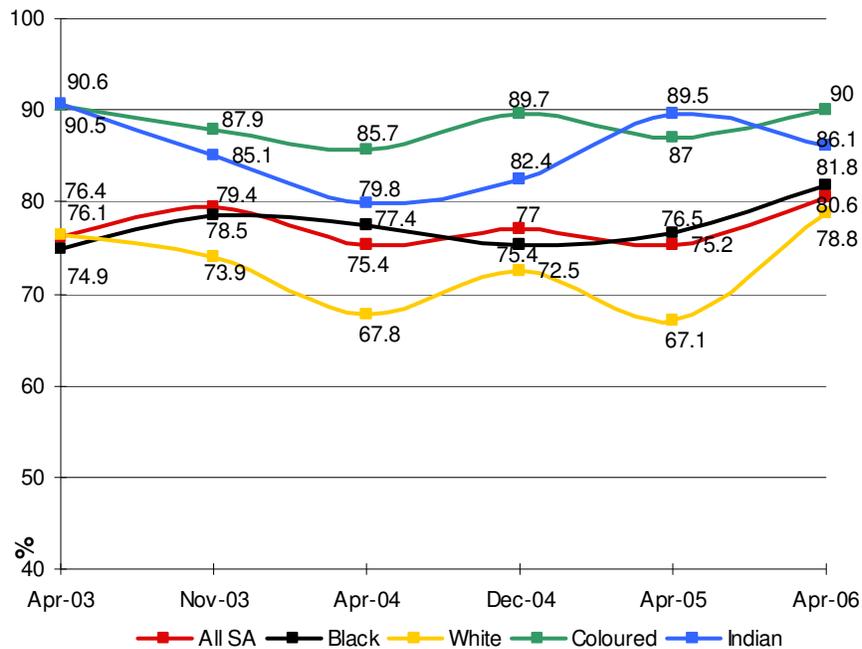
10.2. Forgetting the past

Often over the past decade calls were made, particularly by white South Africans, to forgive and forget the country's apartheid past. As has been indicated in the section on acknowledgement above, this very simplistic approach that sweeps matters under the carpet can only be detrimental to any longer-term prospect for reconciliation. At the same time it is important to maintain a fine balance between dealing with the past and being held hostage to it. South Africans should concern themselves with the healing of memories at this juncture, but it is also important to look forward and work towards the kind of society that they aspire to. It would most certainly not make sense to use South Africa's apartheid past as a benchmark to measure current and future progress.

To establish the extent to which South Africans desire to move forward, regardless of the past, the survey has asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: "I want to forget about the past and move on with my life". The results are reflected in Figure 22 below.

Figure 22: Move on with life

I am trying to forget the past and move on with my life.
(Percentage in agreement by race)



During the sixth round of the SARB 80.6% of South Africans indicated that they would prefer to forget about the past and move on with their lives (See Figure 22). Coloured respondents showed the highest level of agreement with 90%, followed by Indian respondents with 86,1%. Black Africans have recorded their

highest affirmative response on this issue since the survey's inception with 81,8%. Although lowest amongst all of the surveyed groups, the 78,8% recorded amongst white respondents remains a significant result.

The result might puzzle the observer at first. Why would those groups that have been marginalised under apartheid and continue to suffer under its legacy today show the most eagerness to forget the past? Seen within the context of affirmative action, employment equity, and broad-based black economic empowerment, and all other measures aimed at restoring the economic imbalances caused by apartheid, one would typically expect white respondents to show the highest level of agreement. When interpreting these results, we should be cognisant of the fact that interpretations of what we associate with the past may vary between population groups. While black African, coloured, and Indian respondents may to some extent associate the past with political oppression, the majority's lived experience of material hardship may be its strongest association. An affirmative response from these categories, may point to a need to break with a past, characterised by poverty, but not necessarily with the memories related to their oppression. Responses by white South Africans, on the other hand, may have been motivated by other reasons. Thus, amongst many white South Africans, a feeling of being trapped by their historical privilege could, therefore, have arisen.

10.3. Forgiving the past

The willingness of black South Africans to forgive those who had inflicted discriminatory policies upon them is a more specific measure to gauge whether previously disadvantaged groups are ready to move beyond the psychological scars of apartheid. This goes further than the previous measure, which depends on the respondent's conceptualization of what the 'past' constitutes. Willingness to forgive is here based on the victim's subjective experience of apartheid.

Figure 23: Forgiveness

I am trying to forgive those who hurt me during apartheid
(Percentage in agreement by race)

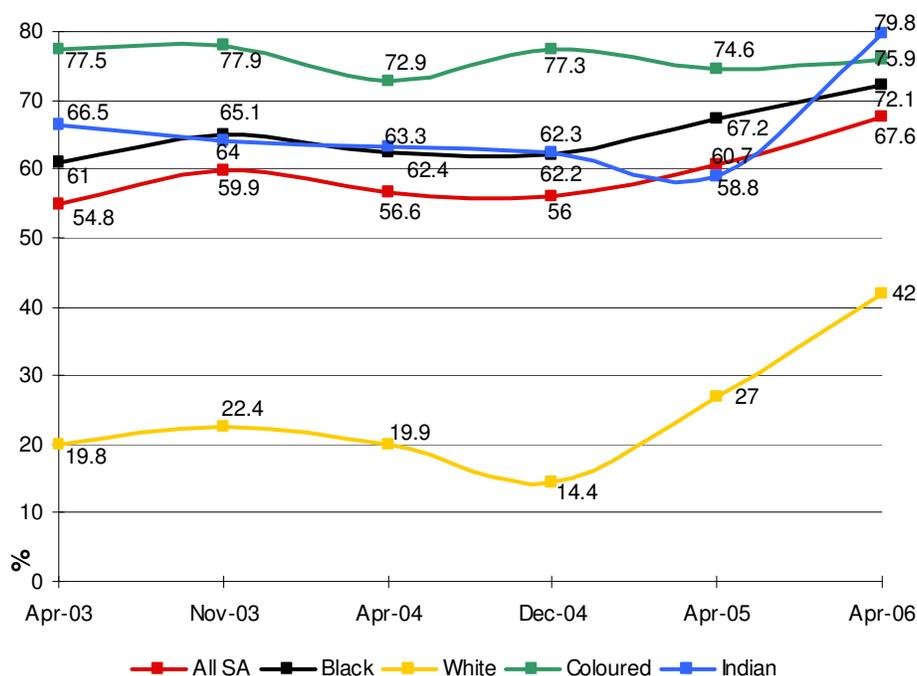


Figure 23 shows that 72,1% of black African respondents have concurred in the April 2006 round of the survey with the statement that they are trying to forgive those that hurt them during apartheid. This is just over 11% higher than the first round of the survey four years ago. The positive responses amongst Indians also increased over the same period with over 13%, while that of coloured respondents dropped slightly by 1,6%.

10.4. Vengeance

The most basic responsibility of any state is to protect its citizens and to punish those that bring harm to others. In its very essence apartheid, therefore, amounted to the South African state's betrayal of the majority of its citizens. Instead of offering protection, it marginalised and persecuted black South Africans, who had little or no recourse to justice. In fact, the South African state refused to recognise the citizenship of the majority of those born within its borders. One of the primary responsibilities of the post-apartheid state was, therefore, to restore the trust of historically disadvantaged South Africans in the rule of law. It had to convince citizens that the democratic state could deal with issue of past injustice and that some form of restitution could be offered to those who suffered severe loss in the struggle against apartheid. If the state could not manage to do it in an orderly fashion, the danger did exist that aggrieved citizens would seek justice in an extra-legal context.

Government's response was the creation of the TRC. One of the most controversial aspects of the Commission had been its provision to extend amnesty to those who made full disclosure regarding their participation in acts of gross human violations. Few perpetrators came forward to apply for amnesty and amongst those who did, few were judged to have given full disclosure of their acts. This left the impression amongst many victims that justice was not done. Despite an announcement earlier this year by the National Directorate of Public Prosecutions that it is ready to pursue cases against some members of the apartheid security apparatus, the vast majority of alleged perpetrators, who did not receive amnesty or did not apply in the first place, have not been brought to book.

Given this context, it is important to ask whether South Africans have got enough confidence in the rule of law to insure true and meaningful justice to all South Africans. Such a belief is critical for the healing of memories and ultimately also national reconciliation. If this is not the case, citizens may under certain circumstances employ illegal measures to obtain what they believe is just or owed to them. This will inevitably lead to racial polarisation. For this reason the SARB Survey has over the past three years tried to monitor public sentiment regarding the demand for retribution, even if it means using extra-legal avenues. Figure 24 presents a statement about the need for perpetrators of apartheid to be punished by any means possible.

Figure 24: Punishment of people who abused others during apartheid.

*People who abused others during apartheid must be punished, even if it means going against the decisions of the courts.
(Percentage in agreement by race)*

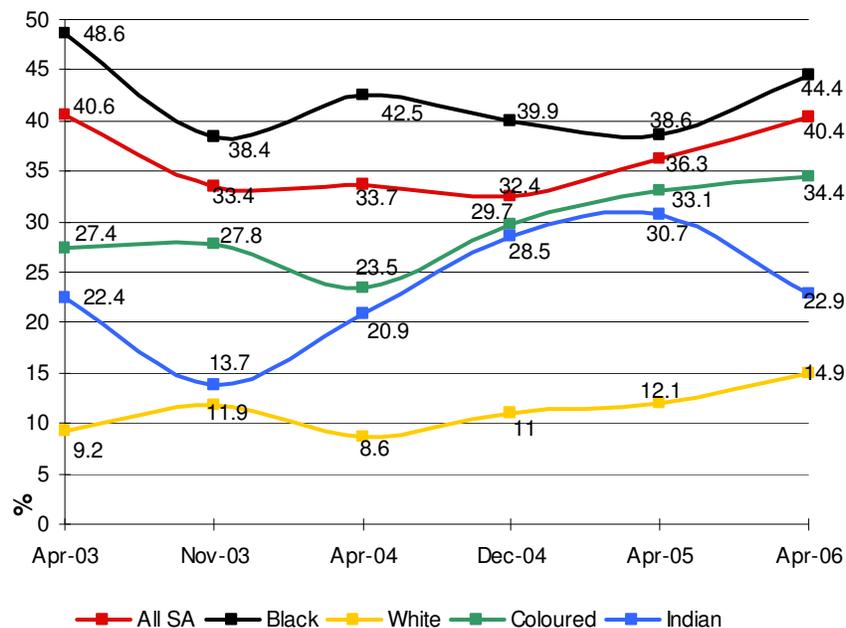


Figure 24 shows that 40,4% of South Africans believe that apartheid perpetrators should be punished, even if it means resorting to extra-legal methods. This is the second highest level of agreement that has been recorded for this measurement since the inception of this survey and is 8% higher than the lowest measurement to date in December 2004. This is not a positive finding and implies that many aggrieved victims of apartheid will consider taking unlawful steps to effect what they regard as justice. Neither does it reflect well on the South African judicial system and law enforcement agencies that have been under fire in recent months for not being able to containing rising levels of crime.

11. Racial Reconciliation

There are a number of minimum requirements for meaningful dialogue to take place between South Africa's population groups. Such dialogue, and the will to engage, cannot be forced or created artificially – a mutual commitment to the principle of reconciliation must exist. This recognition and an environment of trust and a belief in the *bona fides* of the parties involved have to precede the first spoken word. Many an intra-communal reconciliation initiative has failed since 1994 in the absence of these critical elements. Arguably, such environments can only develop naturally in a context where there is sufficient informal interaction between groups that can reduce the development of negative stereotypes. For this reason the report uses a number of social distance-, stereo-type-, and social contact indicators, to explain variability in attitudes towards national reconciliation. It is our contention that low levels of trust and understanding, based on stereotypical views of the other, do impact on people's capacity to build meaningful social- and economic relationships. In their absence, tolerance and consensus may be more difficult to achieve.

11.1. Cross-racial Contact

The first measurement that we have used as a baseline indicator of contact between citizens was to ask respondents about their frequency of conversations with South Africans of racial groups other than their own. This may include any kind of communication, ranging from quibbling about a price with a street vendor to conducting intense business negotiations. The objective here has merely been to establish the extent to which people from different population groups are being exposed to one another in their daily routines.

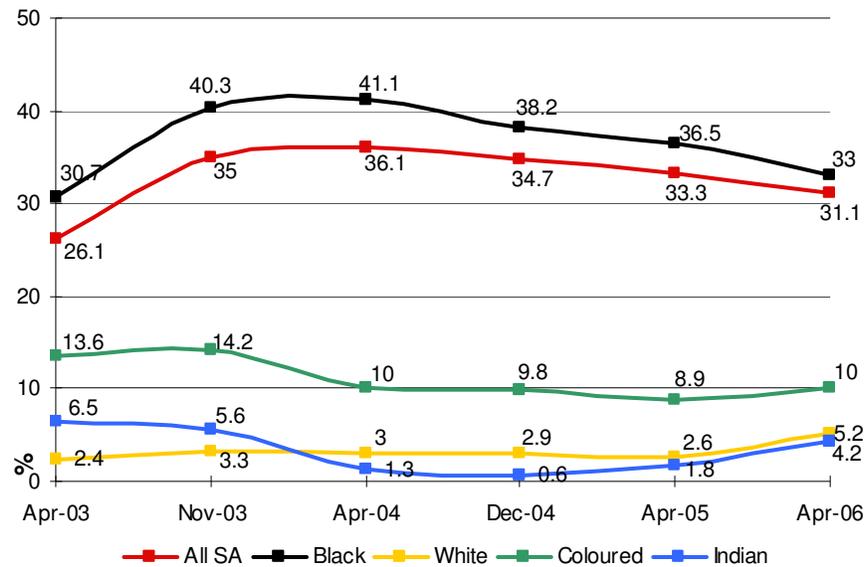
With the second measurement we tried to establish the extent to which informal communication takes place outside formal routines that occur within public and work spaces. In this instance respondents have been asked about the frequency with which they communicate with other groups at their own homes or in the homes of friends.

In the section below we will firstly compare the two measurements and then proceed to look at the second in more depth, as it is more likely to provide an environment that is conducive for meaningful dialogue.

The findings reflected in Figure 25 convey that in April 2006 31,1% of South Africans never talked to somebody from a group other than their own on an average day. This is 5% lower than the highest recorded score of 36,1% for this measurement two years ago in April 2004, but still 5% higher than the first measurement in of 26,1% in April 2003. As can be expected the levels of those respondents indicating no social contact is significantly higher than those reporting no formal interaction. In the most recent round more than half of South Africans, or 56%, indicated that they never communicate informally with people from other groups on an average day. This in an unfortunate increase of just over 10% over the past four years, which does not bode well for an improved mutual understanding of South Africa's constitutive racial groups.

Figure 25: Talking to other Groups

On a typical day during the week, whether at work or otherwise, how often do you talk to (GROUP) people? and When socialising in your own home or the homes of friends, how often do you talk to (GROUP) people?
 (National percentages that said "never" by race)²



² "Group" in these instances refer to groups other than that of the respondent

Figure 26: Socialising with Other Group

*When socialising in your own home or the homes of friends, how often do you talk to (GROUP) people?
(Percentage who said "never" by race)³*

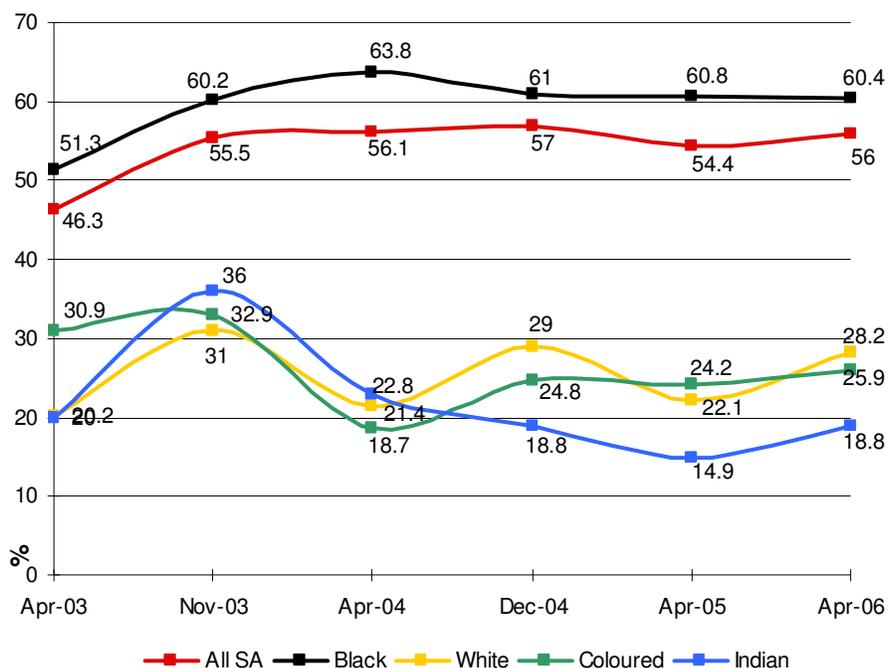


Figure 26 provides a racial breakdown of responses on the question relating to social interaction between groups. The most striking feature of this graph remains the low percentages within minority groups have indicated no contact with other groups on an average day. This figure for Indians is 18,8%, for coloureds 25,9% and for white respondents 28,2%. This stands in stark contrast with the 60,4% of black respondents who indicated that this is the case.

Table 3: Talking to Other Groups

*When socialising in your own home or the homes of friends, how often do you talk to (GROUP) people⁴³
(Percentage who said "never" by race in April 2006)*

	Youth	Other SA
White	25.8%	27.3%
Black	64.3%	62.6%
Coloured	23.1%	29.2%
Indian	18.7%	22.5%

A comparison of age groups within the different racial groups does not show much difference between the responses of younger and older respondents (See Table 3).⁴⁴ In all groups, with the exception of black African respondents, younger respondents were less likely to indicate no interaction with other groups. As

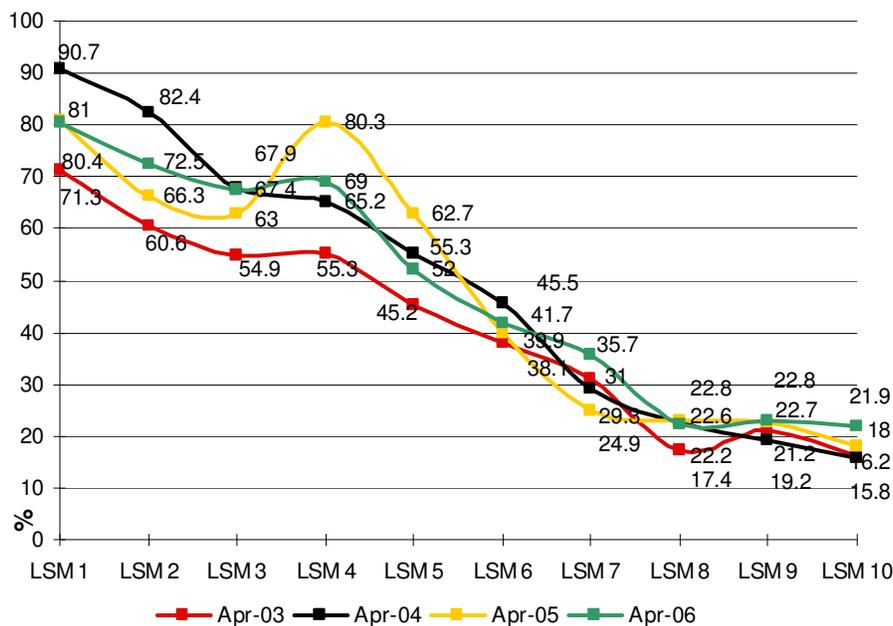
³ Group in these instances refer to groups other than that of the respondent.

noted these differences were not significantly big and the largest of these, just over 6%, was recorded between younger and older generations of the coloured community.

Figure 27 conveys responses with regard to informal socialization in terms of LSM categories. This graph, arguably, provides the most informative picture of the dynamics that inform social interaction between South Africans. It suggests that there is a strong relationship between the frequency of interaction and a respondent's level of affluence. Those in the most affluent categories have recorded the lowest percentage of people who have no social interaction with people from other groups on an average day. Those in the most destitute category of LSM 1, on the other hand, have consistently recorded the highest response for people who have no interaction with other groups. The response patterns for each of the four years closely resemble each other.

Figure 27: Socialising with People of Other Groups

*When socialising in your own home or the homes of friends, how often do you talk to (GROUP) people?⁴
(Percentage in favour of more frequent contact by LSM category)*



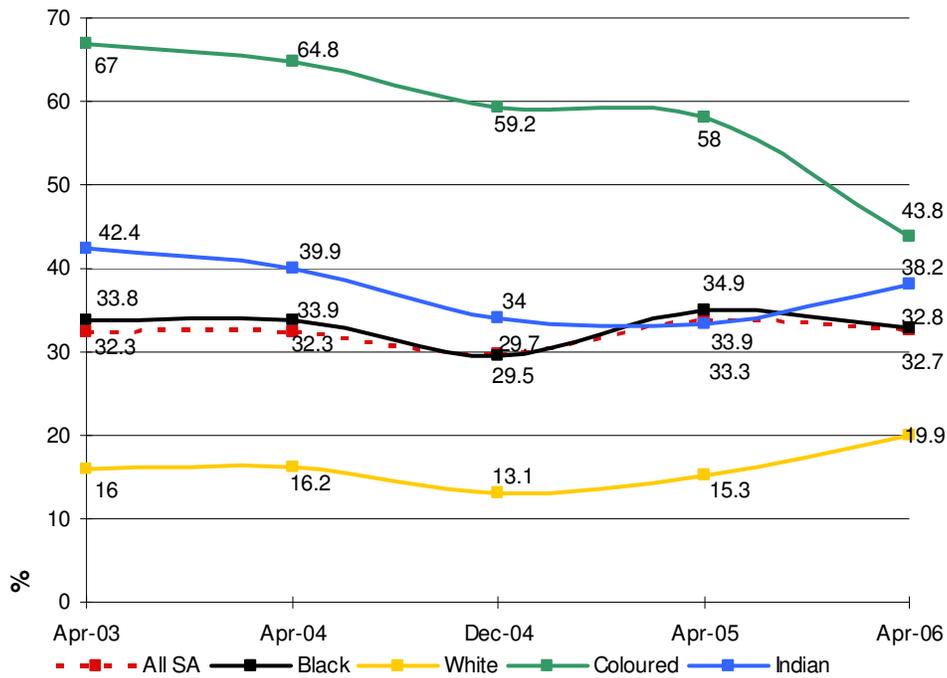
Given the relatively low levels of interaction between South Africans it can be asked whether there is a desire to increase the frequency of interaction between different groups. The SARB Survey has prompted respondents to indicate their opinion about the desired levels of contact between different groups. Figure 31

⁴ Group in these instances refer to groups other than that of the respondent.

reports on the percentage of respondents who have indicated that they would like to communicate more with people from groups other than their own.

Figure 28: Willingness to talk to people of other groups

*If you had a choice, would you want to talk to people of another race group
(Percentage in favour of more frequent contact by race)*



Just less than a third of respondents have indicated that they would like to increase their frequency of conversations with groups other than their own. Figure 28 shows that the national response on this issue has remained fairly consistent since the first round of the survey. White respondents, with 19,9%, are the least likely to want to increase their levels of communication with other groups, followed by black Africans with 32,7% and Indian respondents with 38,2%. As in previous rounds of the survey, coloured South Africans continue to be the one group most in favour of increased levels of inter-racial contact. The most striking feature of this graph is, however, the dramatic decline in this figure amongst coloured respondents since the first round of the survey four years ago. Whereas 67% of this group wanted higher levels of interaction in April 2003, this figure has declined by 25,2% to 43,8%. Just between the two most recent surveys the drop amounted to 14,2%.

Figure 29: Willingness to Talk to Other group (by LSM)

*If you had a choice, would you want to talk to people of another race group
(Percentage in favour of more frequent contact by LSM group).*

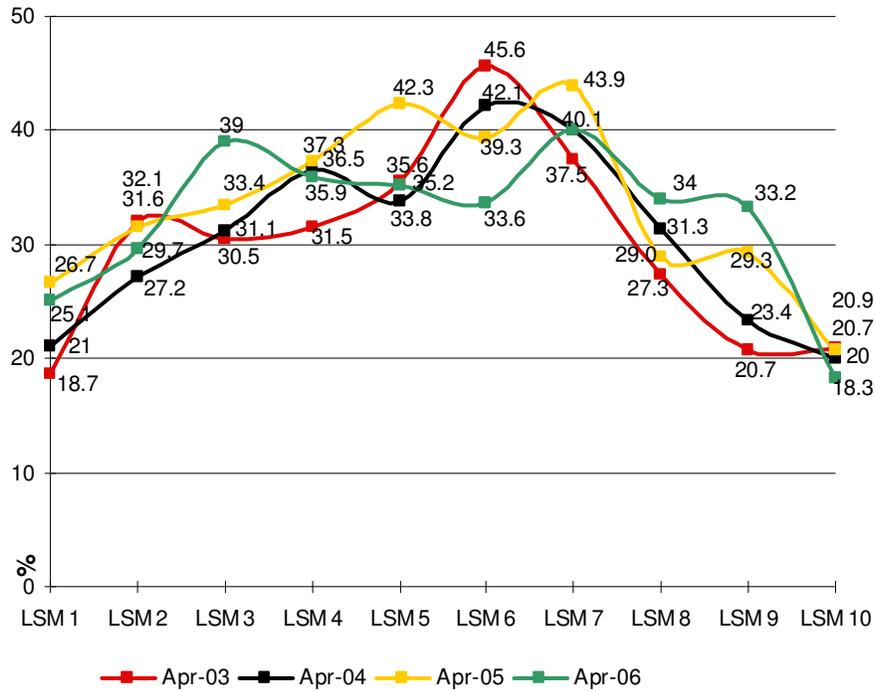


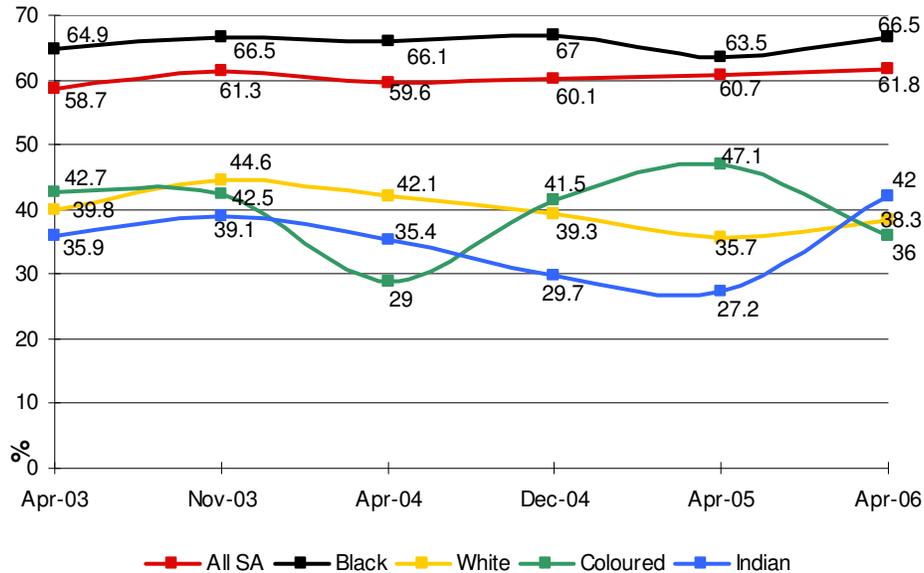
Figure 29 indicates clearly which social groups showed the highest level of desire for increased interaction. In consecutive rounds agreement on the need for increased communication was located between LSM's 4-7, while those least likely to agree could be found in the highest and lowest social categories. It, therefore, appears as if class difference is indeed a significant impediment to national reconciliation and unity. This suggests that the expansion of the South African middle class is not only an economic imperative, but it is also a significant determinant of social relations between people from different backgrounds.

11.2. Cross-racial Preconceptions

In the section above it has been established that informal interaction amongst South Africans remains infrequent and largely limited to the higher income categories. The survey furthermore found that the desire to increase cross-racial contact and communication remains low. This parallel, as opposed to integrated, coexistence provides a context within which the fear of the unknown thrives, and in turn creates a breeding ground for negative stereotypes. To measure the extent of perceived understanding of the "other", the SARB Survey has asked respondents to rate their knowledge of the customs and ways of groups other than their own.

Figure 30: Understanding Customs

I find it difficult to understand the customs and ways of (GROUP) people.
(Percentage agreement by race)



A very large proportion of South Africans have difficulty in understanding people belonging to groups other than their own. Figure 30 shows that 61,8% of South Africans agreed with the statement that it is difficult to understand the customs and ways of South Africans from other racial groups. Although this is the highest figure measured to date, there has been very little variance in levels of agreement since the first round of the survey in which 58,7% was recorded. Black African and white responses increased slightly with 3% and 2,6% respectively, while Indian responses showed a more substantial incline of 14,8%. Coloured respondents were the only to record a decline in their responses, which amounted to a significant decrease of 11,1%.

As in previous surveys, it is however important to note that responses to this statement reflect the respondent's perceived knowledge of other groups, which may be far removed from the actual reality. It may indeed be based on negative stereotypes that can further reinforce divisions between the country's different population groups. As a measurement to establish the extent to which negative perceptions of other groups exist, respondents have been asked to give their views on a statement, which purports that groups other than that of the respondent are untrustworthy.

Figure 31: Untrustworthy People
 (GROUP) people are untrustworthy.
 (Percentage agreement by race)

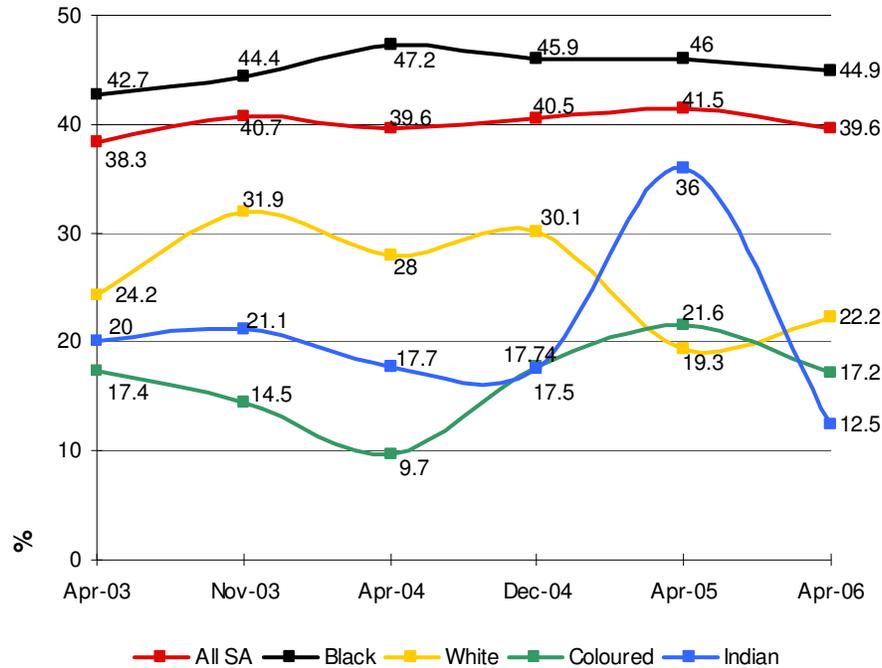


Figure 33 shows that almost 40% of South Africans believe that people from groups other than their own are untrustworthy. This figure, which has remained fairly stable and fluctuated within a 3% band between 38% and 41% over the past four years, is indicative of the considerable challenge that still lay ahead in breaking down prejudice amongst the citizens of this country. For trust to grow informal inter-racial socialisation has to occur, yet the indicators suggest that the progress we are making in this regard is slow. A breakdown of responses in terms of racial categories shows that black Africans, with 44,9%, are most sceptic of the trustworthiness of South Africans from other groups. This is also the case for 22,2% of white respondents, 17,2% of coloured respondents, and 12,5% of Indian respondents.

11.3. Cross-racial social distance

One of the most tangible indicators of normalized race relations, and to a large extent also national reconciliation, is the extent to which people from different groups are willing to share their personal space. The survey has used three different statements to measure different facets of interaction at this level. The first was to gauge opinion around integrated neighbourhoods, the second about multi-racial schools, and the third to test the acceptability of mixed marriages.

In previous rounds of the survey respondents have been asked to indicate the extent to which they approve of each in as far as they relate to groups other than their own. A response by a coloured respondent, for example, would therefore have related to the desirability of each of these forms of integration as they applied to integration with all of the remaining three groups (whites, Indians, black Africans) combined. While this measurement gave us a general indication about certain groups' desire to attain higher levels of social integration, it could not provide more information about the nature of relations between particular groups themselves. Such an analysis is necessary, because apartheid's racial hierarchy did not only govern relations between whites and the oppressed, but also amongst oppressed communities themselves. Moreover, the geographical concentration of certain groups in particular areas also suggest that different levels of exposure to the various groups would not have had an impact on the way in which they relate to each other. The size of the distance may, however, not necessarily be a clear predictor of the direction of such relations. Sometimes close proximity may facilitate better understanding, but in others it may heighten the levels of competition for political influence or access to resources.

Reporting on the desirability of the three levels of integration will be done differently in this document. Because the method of measurement has changed, the results of this round can, therefore, not be compared to that of previous years. In the most recent round of the survey we have asked respondents to indicate a group, other than their own, with whom they can least associate. Respondents were then asked to provide their responses as they relate to this selected group (See Table 4). This has been done, because the true test for successful integration would be the extent to which citizens tolerate the sharing of their private and semi-private spheres with least-associated groups.

Table 4: Association with other Groups

Which group, other than your own, do you find most difficult to associate with?

	Black Africans	Indian	White	Coloured
Black Africans	-	32.3%	54.7%	45.1%
Indian	32.3%	-	22.5%	26.4%
White	53.8%	31.7%	-	20.2%
Coloured	10.8%	8.3%	12.0%	-
None	3.0%	27.7%	10.8%	8.3%

(Read Table 4 vertically. Columns represent respondent's group; rows represent level of association with other groups.)

Given a history of protracted oppression, it is not surprising that more than half of black Africans (53,8%) find it most difficult to associate with white South Africans. Significantly, however, coloured and Indian South Africans, who also bore the brunt of apartheid's policies, do not share the view. Majorities in both groups regard black Africans as being the most difficult to associate with. For coloured respondents this figure is 45,1% and for Indians 32,3%. More than half of sampled whites (54,7%) agree that black Africans are the most difficult to associate with. Amongst those who stated that they do not find it difficult to associate with

any of the other groups, Indians, with 27,7%, were the most likely to respond in this fashion, followed by coloureds with 10,8%, whites with 8,3% and black Africans with 3%.

While the legacy of apartheid may still play a significant role in the way in which the country's constitutive groups regard each other, it appears as if this may not be the only or decisive consideration. Although only 0,6% more Indians regard black Africans as being more difficult to associate with than whites, the difference within the coloured grouping is much more apparent. Interestingly, amongst respondents in this group, white South Africans feature as the group that they find the easiest to associate with. This may suggest that geographic proximity and language considerations also play important roles in the way that different groups relate to each other.

Table 5: Disapproval of three forms of social integration.⁵

	Integrated Schools ⁶	Shared neighbourhoods ⁷	Inter-racial Marriage ⁸
Black	13.4%	29.0%	30.1%
White	12.5%	21.4%	58.1%
Coloured	4.4%	22.8%	21.6%
Indian	5.2%	29.6%	44.3%

The results of the different social distance measurements, as reflected in Table 5, show that there are different degrees in which integration with least-associated groups is tolerated. The lowest level of resistance occurs in relation to the most distant form of integration, namely the schools which the children of respondents or their friends attend. Intolerance increases at the next level of integration where respondents live in neighbourhoods where they are in a minority in relation to the least-associated group. Respondents are most reticent in their approval for marriages across racial lines, which is also the most intimate of the three degrees of integration. This is the case for all groups, with the exception of coloured respondents who showed slightly more approval for marriage with their least-associated group than for the integration of their neighbourhoods.

Albeit low in comparative terms, black African respondents, with 13,4%, have shown the highest level of disapproval for the idea that their children should sit next to their least-associated group in schools. They are followed by white South Africans with 12,5%, Indians with 5,2%, and coloured respondents with 4,2%. Indian and black African respondents were most cautious about being a minority in a neighbourhood where their least-associated group is in majority. The disapproval ratings for these groups were 29,6% and 29,0%

⁵ Disapproval refers specifically to integration with that group, which each of the different racial groups find most difficult to associate with. For black Africans this group is white South Africans. For white-, coloured-, and Indian South Africans, this group is black Africans.

⁶ Please indicate your level of approval if a child from the least-associated group sit next to your child or the child of family member in school.

⁷ Please indicate your level of approval for living in a neighbourhood where half of your neighbours come from the least-associated group.

⁸ Please indicate your level of approval for the idea of a close relative marrying somebody from the least-associated group

respectively. They were followed by white respondents with 21,4% and coloured respondents with 22,8%. With a disapproval rating of 58,1%, white South Africans were least inclined to support the marriage of a relative with somebody from their least-associated group. Forty-four per cent of Indians disapproved of this, while black Africans and coloured respondents recorded 30,1% and 21,6% respectively.

12. Reconciliation in South Africa

2006 marked the tenth anniversary of the first sitting of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Although we have to acknowledge today that it had many shortcomings, the Commission did manage to lift the veil on the true nature of oppression under apartheid, as well as those instances of human rights abuse that was committed in the name of freedom. No South African could ever again say, "I did not know".

At its outset the Commission cautioned against unrealisable expectations. While its mandate was to find truth about human rights abuse and to promote reconciliation, it was never envisaged that the TRC would ever be able to cover the scope of what was required under this mandate. During the first few years of its existence most public interest fell on the Commission's mandate to unearth truth, and towards its closure attention shifted towards the amnesty hearings of alleged perpetrators of human rights abuse. While the TRC's public proceedings provided some opportunity to mend relationships, stronger emphasis was placed on the Commission's quest for truth than on its other mandate, the promotion of national reconciliation. This was understandable, since the founding rationale of the TRC was that truth should precede reconciliation. Without acknowledgement forgiveness was not possible. The Commission's final report, which was handed over to President Mbeki in 2003, contained a number of proposals to facilitate national healing and reconciliation.

What impact have these proposals had on our society? Have they been able to address the obstacles that our long history of social division has placed between us, and has it provided sufficient impetus for the normalisation of relationships between South Africa's constitutive population groups? For the past three years the SARB has been tracking the progress that has been made in this regard. Essentially it attempts to measure these impacts in a quantitative fashion and to translate the findings into the practical implication that they have for unity and a general sense of national cohesiveness.

In our report on the previous round of this survey, which was conducted in April and May 2005, we have noted that a growing convergence is becoming apparent in public opinion and sentiment regarding a number of indicators. Given the large majority that is constituted by the black African section of the our population, the national averages in responses to our surveys up to now have been largely influenced by the opinions of this section of the population. While this was still by and large the case in the previous round of

the survey, it has become noticeable how this has been changing in regard of the measurement of certain indicators. In some cases responses by the black African majority have been moved closer to that of minority groups, but in most instances where a narrowing in opinion between groups occurred, the converse was the case. This was particularly evident in responses from white citizens, while within other minority groups was of a more gradual nature.

This phenomenon has also been evident in this round of the survey. While white respondents, by a large margin, still remain the most sceptical on most reconciliation indicators, the growth in their optimism and acknowledgement of historical injustice has remained consistent. Their support for an inclusive united nation has, for example, increased by 10% over the past four years; their positive expectations for the livelihood of their families over the next 12 months, increased by almost 15% since the first measurement two years ago; and positive expectations for the future of their children improved by 20% since the first measurement also two years ago. Similar levels of optimism have been detected regarding perceptions around physical and economic security. This is a significant development, which needs to be sustained also in years to come.

This, the sixth round of the survey, has as in previous years, based its research on responses to different indicators that measured public opinion on IJR's key hypotheses on national reconciliation. These pertain to human security, political culture, cross-cutting political relationships, dialogue, historical confrontation, and race relations.

Human Security

As far as the question of human security is concerned, it has been hypothesised that the absence of scarcity and threat will provide a conducive environment for national reconciliation, because it lowers the potential for inter-group competition for resources and protection. A number of indicators were used to measure the different facets that are encompassed by the concept of human security. These included physical security, economic security, cultural threat, and the ability of government to deliver critical services.

On a national scale, all groups reported increases in optimism about each of these aspects of security, with the exception of evaluations for government's ability to deliver basic services, when compared to the first round of the survey four years ago. Positive evaluations for government basic service delivery have been declining gradually since the first round of the survey from 81% in April 2003 to 75,2% in April 2006. Notwithstanding this decline, such an evaluation remains the envy of many governments.

It has furthermore been encouraging to notice that in regard of most measurements, all groups recorded increases either in their experience of, or confidence in, improved future prospects for a safe and secure environment. As in previous years black Africans have shown the highest rating for their current experience

of a safe environment, as well as their future expectations thereof. While white respondents remain most cautious, significant growth in optimism was recorded amongst this group over the past four years. These increases were most notable in their evaluations of physical security, economic prospects and cultural security significant. Indian respondents, who also been more cautious in their appraisal of human security indicators since April 2003, have also shown noteworthy increases in optimism, particularly so in as far as economic security is concerned, where it has surpassed black African levels of optimism. Coloured responses do, however, not provide such a clear-cut picture. While increased levels of optimism have been recorded for certain measurements, confidence in improved prospects has declined quite steeply in as far as the physical security of this group is concerned. Whereas coloured optimism in improved prospects for physical security stood at 50,1% in December 2004, it stood 31,7% in the most recent round. Also in as far as their evaluation of government's basic service delivery is concerned, a significant decline from 80,9% to 58,6% occurred during the same period.

Analysis on the same indicators in terms of LSM categories suggests that most optimism resides in the middle- and lower-middle LSM categories. Interestingly, in questions that gauged sentiment regarding future prospects as they relate to economic and financial matters, these categories appeared to be the most upbeat. When, however, it came to actual experience of prosperity, those in the more affluent LSM groups were more likely to register positive sentiment.

Political Culture

A shared political culture that enjoys legitimacy amongst the majority of citizens provides a context that is conducive to the fostering of national reconciliation. Leadership legitimacy, institutional legitimacy and acceptance of the principle of the rule of law have been used as indicators that were used to measure the second hypothesis regarding political culture.

Leadership legitimacy in transitional societies is of pivotal importance, as it is often up to the political leadership of such countries to entrench the new principles and values that young democracies aspire to. By virtue of their leadership position, those that run the state must set the appropriate example with ethical conduct that is beyond reproach. Moreover, they have to do this in a way that does not expose them to suspicion of racial or cultural patronage.

Our political discourse over the past year and a half has been dominated by the leadership succession debate within the ANC. At the centre of this succession battle stand the two main protagonists President Thabo Mbeki and his former deputy, Jacob Zuma. All indications are that the source of the ferocity with which this political battle is fought can be found in the ANC government's leadership style since Mbeki

ascended to power. He has on several occasions been criticised for his distant leadership style and that under his reign parliament, the most visible symbol of people's participation has been weakened at the expense of the increased power that has been accumulated in the Office of the President. Observers and analysts alike have cautioned against this for several years now, because in a young democracy such as ours it is important for the sake of democratic stability that elected leaders are, for reasons mentioned above, at least seen to be in touch with the hopes and aspirations of ordinary citizens. While the ANC has relied strongly on the social capital of its legacy over twelve years, it will not be able to do so indefinitely and therefore it remains crucial for the party to maintain its links with ordinary South Africans. Mbeki's perceived aloofness appears to have created resentment amongst the party's grassroots supporters, who found their champion in Jacob Zuma, seen to be more accessible than Mbeki. The integrity of the latter has however been drawn into question in recent court cases against him. Irrespective of the outcomes of these cases, his admission to his own lack of judgement and his silence on the ethnic undertones employed by his supporters, could arguably raise questions about his ability to run a country. In the course of this, unacknowledged battle both leaders have thus displayed weaknesses in their armoury, and it can rightly be asked whether this silent war did not have a detrimental impact on the party's overall ability to govern.

Against this background the SARB's finding that 51,7% of South Africans feel that "those who run the country" do not care about people like them does not come as a surprise. In fact, since the first round of this survey, this figure has only dropped below the 50% mark once at a time when political parties were conducting their campaigns in the in April 2004 for the third democratic national election. A breakdown of responses to this same question in terms of LSM categories show that the lowest levels of agreement with the statement, 45%, reside within the most destitute LSM1, while the highest rating of 69,4% is to be found in LSM7. These findings may appear curious in the context of strong positive evaluation for government's ability to deliver basic services. This, we have contended, may possibly indicate that citizens did not only pay attention to what has been delivered, but also how it has been delivered. We have shown that over the past year there have been a number of instances , which reflected negatively on the state's perceived compassion towards its citizens.

In its measurement of institutional legitimacy the survey has expanded the scope of institutions that have been evaluated beyond the national parliament. The selection criteria of the "new institutions" were based on their particular importance to the reconciliation process in terms of their ability to institutionalise values and mediate conflict. All listed institutions, with the exception of political parties and local government, have recorded high levels of confidence amongst the South African public. This is a healthy sign for our democracy and suggests that the vast majority of South Africans trust these institutions to act in their best interest.

Levels of confidence in the three spheres of government have varied. National government with 73,1% has elicited the highest positive rating of the three, followed by provincial government with 65,5%, and local government trailing much further behind with 50,3%. Despite the controversy around the Travelgate Scandal that continues to tarnish its image and charges by observers that it is a toothless, Parliament still elicits a significant amount of confidence from the general public. Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they either have a “great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in the South African Parliament. Interestingly, two non-political institutions have been ranked amongst the top three most trusted institutions by South Africans. The broadcast media with 74,1% was ranked first and religious institutions with 69,8%, ranked third after the national government. This finding highlights the fact that democratic stability does not only hinge on governments or their bureaucracies, but also on the existence of a free media and social groupings that can potentially serve as a counterweight to state power.

Two measurements were taken to establish South Africans’ adherence to the rule of law. For the first measurement, which gauged the willingness of respondents circumvent, rather than break the law, 47,6% of South Africans indicated that they were prepared to do so. This is a significant percentage of the population, but it should be noted that in the most recent round of the survey this figure dropped below the 50% mark for the first time since its first appearance in April 2003. Albeit incremental, it appears as if agreement on this question is showing a downward tendency, which is good news. With the second measure we tried to establish whether respondents would accept the rulings of South African courts, even if they contradict the will of the majority of citizens. Fifty-five per cent of South Africans agree that constitutional considerations should rule supreme in instances where findings of this country’s courts contradict the will of most citizens. Coloured South Africans with a positive response of 58,3% were the most likely to agree with this statement, followed by black African respondents with 55,1%, Indian respondents with 49,3% and lastly white respondents with 48,2%. This is an encouraging finding, suggesting that the majority of South Africans understand the imperative for an intrinsic-, as opposed to an instrumental understanding of the value of a constitution and the rule of law in general.

Cross-cutting Political Relationships

It has been proposed that cross-cutting- and shared relationships, rather than those superimposed by ethnic or cultural affiliation, should characterise the political life of a society that aspires to some form of national reconciliation. This, we concede, is easier said than done in our historical context, yet it is critical that important decisions that have to be taken in this early phase of democratic development enjoy as broad a consensus as possible. Such relations hold the potential for the formation of a more fluid political society that can address issues that transcend racial, religious, class and linguistic boundaries. In this document we

have reported on the findings of two measurements that serve as indicators of the receptiveness of South Africans for such relationships.

The first of these dealt with the question of national unity. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement: "It is desirable to create one united South African nation out of all the different groups who live in this country." Seventy six per cent of the national sample indicated in this year's round of the survey that they were in agreement with this statement. This is just more than 3% higher than the 72,8% that was recorded during the first round of the survey. Indian respondents were the most likely to agree with this statement, followed by black Africans and then coloured respondents. While white respondents recorded the lowest level of agreement at 67,7%, it is significant to note that this is just over 10% higher than four years ago. As is the case in a number of other measurements, white responses are gradually moving closer to that of the national average.

While the exact content and character of this unity remains is still in the making, which requires further social dialogue at all levels between the country's constitutive groups, the willingness to forge such a unity is in itself a very positive finding.

Because political parties represent the aggregated interests of like-minded citizens in a political system, it can reasonably be assumed that the individual's selection criteria for membership or support should be informed by the party's stance on particular issues. Given the fact that political participation in formal politics was based on racial criteria, our second indicator for cross-cutting political relationships relate to the question whether respondents will be willing to join political parties where their racial group is not in a majority.

In April 2006 a significant proportion of South Africans, or 43,4%, agreed with the statement that: "I could never imagine being part of a political party made up mainly of people of another race." This figure is slightly higher than the 40,2% that was recorded in the first round of the SARB. In this round Black Africans with 46,9% were most likely to agree with the statement, followed by whites with 31,1%, coloureds with 21,4% and finally Indians with 9,7%. Although those who agree with this statement does not constitute a majority, it is still interesting to note that race will remain an important consideration whenever South Africans go to the polls to vote.

Dialogue

We have argued that restitution, and ultimately reconciliation, can only occur when suffering has been communicated and a common understanding has been developed of what needs to be done to compensate for it. This requires meaningful public dialogue that should inform our actions relating to broader

programmes for national reconciliation. It is of essence that such discourse should reach beyond social and political elites and become entrenched in all spheres of society.

Successive rounds of the SARB have enquired about public opinion on the appropriateness of encouraging more profound forms of inter-group dialogue between people of different racial, cultural, religious or language backgrounds. Given the high levels of confidence, also displayed during this round of the survey, in organised religion and the broadcast media, we have asked respondents to indicate their extent of agreement with the appropriateness of employing these institutions in the cause of national reconciliation.

During the most recent round of the survey 82,8% of South Africans approved of the idea that government should encourage the broadcast media to provide more airtime, devoted to issues of national reconciliation. This is 4,2% higher than the corresponding figure that was recorded in the first round of the survey, but 1% down on the 83,8% that was attained a year ago in April 2005. The responses of black African, coloured and Indian South Africans clustered closely around this national average, while the percentage of positive responses amongst white respondents trailed further behind. The biggest positive change in responses since the first round of the survey has, however, occurred amongst this grouping, which has shown an increase in agreement from 47,8% in April 2003 to 60,4% in this most recent round.

The pervasive influence of religion in our society makes it one of the most influential social agents in South Africa. They are, therefore, ideally placed to promote social change, and in this instance, national reconciliation. Respondents were, therefore, asked to show their level of agreement with the following statement: "Different churches or religious organisations should start holding services together so that different South Africans can get to know one another better." As in previous rounds of the survey, this proposition continued to elicit strong support. Just over 71% of the national sample indicated their agreement with the notion that religious organisations should take the lead in uniting South Africans.

Historical Confrontation

The inhumane character of the political dispensation that preceded democratic rule makes any engagement with the topic of reconciliation that ignores our history inconceivable. As noted, our present, but also our future, is inextricably linked to our past – this had been one of the founding premises of the TRC. The SARB has over the past four years investigated a number of facets of reconciliation that relate to this past. These included statements pertaining to the way in which South Africans acknowledge and deal with their past; the scope that there is for forgiveness; the need for vengeance; and lastly, the extent to which there is a desire to move forward beyond our divided past.

It has been noted that acknowledgement of injustice and being party to the perpetration thereof, either actively or by default, is a first essential step in any reconciliation process. Without the acknowledgement of suffering that was caused under previous South African political dispensations, there is very little room for forgiveness, and even less so for restitution.

The results of the most recent round of the survey showed that an overwhelming majority of 87,7% of South Africans concurs with the view that apartheid did indeed constitute a crime against humanity. Although the responses of the formerly oppressed groups clustered closely together around the national average, agreement amongst white respondents were somewhat lower at 76,3%. This level of agreement, however, constitutes the highest level of agreement within the group since the first measurement in April 2003. Equally significant has been white agreement of 70,6% with a statement that atrocities were committed against those that were struggling for liberation under apartheid. This figure is 14% higher than of the first measurement in April 2003.

The argument is often made that the incantation of our past in various contexts is counterproductive to reconciliation, because of the many interpretations that exist of our history. When this amounts to sweeping unresolved matters under the carpet, it can only be detrimental to our society. The question is where we should the balance should be found between constructive engagement with- and imprisonment by our past. While the survey results do not provide any conclusive answers on this matter, it has prompted respondents to indicate their agreement with a statement that: "I want to forget the past and just get on with my life."

During the sixth round of the SARB 80.6% of South Africans indicated that they would prefer to forget about the past and move on with their lives. Coloured respondents showed the highest level of agreement with 90%, followed by Indian respondents with 86,1%. Black Africans have recorded their highest affirmative response on this issue since the survey's inception with 81,8%. Although lowest amongst all of the surveyed groups, the 78,8% recorded amongst white respondents remains a significant result.

As has been noted earlier in this report, an interpretation of these findings should be done with an understanding that what we might associate with the past might vary between population groups. While black African, coloured, and Indian respondents may to some extent associate the past with political oppression, the majority's lived experience of material hardship may be its strongest association. An affirmative response from these categories, may point to a desire to break with the material aspects, such as poverty, that they associate with their oppression. White responses, on the other hand, may have been motivated by a feeling of being trapped by the implications that their historical privilege in a democratic state.

Forgiveness can only occur when the perpetrators or accomplices to injustice acknowledge the injustice that has been done to victims. This has to be kept in mind when one attempts to measure the extent to which forgiveness in the post-apartheid state is possible. Against this background it makes more sense to ask those affected by apartheid about their willingness to forgive under conditions that warrant them to do so. For this reason respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with a statement that they are trying to forgive those that hurt them during apartheid. Close to 68% of South Africans indicated that they are trying to do so. This feeling was strongest amongst coloured respondents, followed by Indians and then black Africans.

As far as vengeance for apartheid crimes is concerned, 40,4% of South Africans indicated that apartheid perpetrators should be punished, even if it means resorting to extra-legal methods. This is the second highest level of agreement that has been recorded for this measurement since the inception of this survey and is 8% higher than the lowest measurement to date in December 2004. This is not a positive finding. It implies amongst other things that a large segment of the population feel that the state may not be able to deal with apartheid injustice itself. The potential consequence of this widely-held sentiment, the resorting to illegal action, is not beneficial when trying to consolidate social stability in the wake of protracted period of instability.

Racial Reconciliation

The findings of this most recent round of the survey once again underline the fact that there is still considerable work to be done in the removal of the obstacles to reconciliation between people from divergent backgrounds, who have very different understandings of this country's history. Probably the most fundamental of these is the lack of informal social contact between individuals from different racial groups twelve years after the demise of the apartheid state. While it would be incorrect to equate racial integration with reconciliation, the former is the foundation upon which the discourse about the latter should be built.

During the months of April and May of this year when the survey was conducted, 56 per cent of respondents indicated that they never interact informally with people from other population groups, either at their home or the homes of friends. A further 16 per cent indicated that they rarely do so, while 31 per cent said that they make no inter-racial contact, be it formal or informal, at all. Asked whether they see the need for more communication with groups other than their own, just a third of the sample responded in the affirmative. A further 42 per cent felt that current levels of interaction are sufficient. These findings thus seem to suggest that within an existing context of infrequent social interaction, there is little desire amongst a large section of the South African population to move beyond their existing same-race social circles. While this statistic does not suggest a principled rejection of informal contact or the broader social integration of our society, it does

point to a low degree of receptiveness to these social interactions. Within this context the fostering of a sense of national cohesion becomes more challenging.

In a democratic state such as ours, social contact cannot be enforced artificially upon citizens. However, such a state can – and arguably should in transitional societies – create the necessary environment that is conducive to such interaction. Formal state-led initiatives play a critical role in the promotion of national reconciliation, yet there are limits to the efficacy of formal, politically driven action.

It is within the protected confines of homes or other private spaces where trust is most likely to grow and prejudice is easiest to dismantle. In the absence of competition and threat that often pervades work and other public environments, conversation about daily life is more likely to elicit uninhibited discussion about how our experiences relate to our past, present and future. The survey suggests that not enough of this interaction is taking place.

What then stands in the way of more social interaction between South Africans? One of the answers may lie in the survey's finding that 40 per cent of respondents do not trust people of other racial groups. This sentiment was strongest amongst black African respondents, of whom 45 per cent agreed, followed by whites with 22 per cent, coloured South Africans with 17% and Indian respondents with 13%. But this distrust is arguably only a symptom of the bigger problem. In this round of the survey, respondents were also prompted to indicate what they regard as the most divisive aspect of life that separates South Africans from different backgrounds. According to 30 per cent, the single largest group, income inequality posed the greatest challenge to the creation of a more unified society. Race only features 10 percentage points lower down on this list, at 20 per cent.

The significance of income inequality appears to be corroborated when responses for social interaction is broken down into living standards measurement (LSM) categories. On the LSM scale of 1 to 10, with 1 representing the most destitute South Africans and 10 representing the most affluent, there is a clear indication that inter-racial socialisation correlates strongly with affluence. Eighty per cent of respondents in LSM1 indicated that they never socialise with people of other races. This percentage declines stepwise with each increase in LSM category, until the most affluent LSM category 10, where only 22% indicated no informal contact with groups other than their own. Given the fact that most racial interaction at this stage occurs within the predominantly middle income 'first economy', this finding strengthens the case for the expansion of the South African middle class. The robust growth that the country has experienced in recent years, therefore also has the potential to be a catalyst for the normalisation of our society, provided that new wealth is distributed equitably. Not only does growth have a strong economic imperative, our research also shows that it is vital to provide a stable platform from which South Africans can engage with each other.

In our report on the previous round of this survey, which was conducted in April and May 2005, we have noted that a growing convergence is becoming apparent in terms of public opinion and sentiment that relate to the different indicators that have been used for the purposes of this survey. Given the large majority that is constituted by the black African section of the our population, the national averages in responses has been largely influenced by the opinions of this section of the population. While this was still by and large the case in the previous round of the survey, it has become noticeable that in regard of certain measurement

ENDNOTES

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- ⁴¹ This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey.
- ⁴² This question was not asked in the November 2003 round of the *SA Reconciliation Barometer* survey.
- ⁴³ "Group" in these instances refer to groups other than that of the respondent.
- ⁴⁴ See Endnote 32