

# Approval of President Mbeki remains high in 2005

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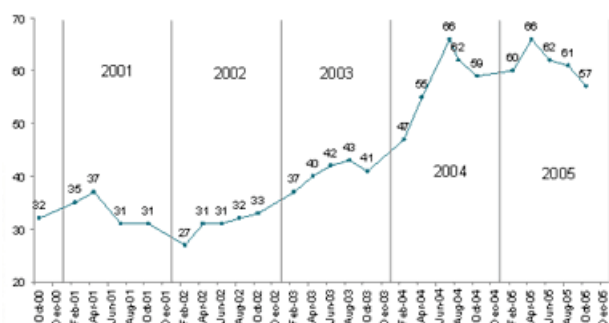
RS, South Africa's leading insights company, has conducted a series of surveys since 2000 that ascertain whether people feel the President is doing a good job.

These surveys are conducted amongst a sample of 2 000 SA adults from the seven major metropolitan areas of South Africa, interviewing them face-to-face in their homes, with a margin of error of under 2.5%.

## How does the President fare?

For three years - from 2000 to 2001 - the President's approval rating lay generally in the low 30s. But from February 2003, the percentage of people who feel that President Mbeki is doing a good job as President began to rise. By the end of 2003, it was in the low 40s. 2004 saw a remarkable rise with the Ten Years of Democracy celebrations and the successful second democratic elections. 2005 has scaled new heights for the President, during which his approval score averaged 61%, up three points from his 2004 average of 58%.

SA Adults in metro areas – Approval rating of President Mbeki (% of people who feel the President is doing a good job)



In non-metro areas, his approval rating rises even further - to 67% (April/August 2005), compared with 68% in August 2004 and 46% in August 2003. His overall average for the whole country is 65%.

All in all, this is a remarkable and sustained performance in a controversy-ridden year.

## How consistent is the rating?

| %              | February 2005 | April 2005 | June 2005 | August 2005 | October 2005 | Ave 2005 | All-time low    | All-time high   |
|----------------|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Total metro SA | 60            | 66         | 62        | 61          | 57           | 61       | 27              | 66              |
| Blacks         | 75            | 80         | 73        | 72          | 70           | 74       | 35 <sup>a</sup> | 81 <sup>b</sup> |
| Whites         | 31            | 35         | 38        | 47          | 32           | 37       | 9 <sup>c</sup>  | 47 <sup>d</sup> |
| Coloureds      | 40            | 41         | 43        | 38          | 40           | 40       | 17 <sup>e</sup> | 55 <sup>f</sup> |
| Indians/Asians | 40            | 62         | 52        | 40          | 39           | 47       | 11 <sup>g</sup> | 62 <sup>h</sup> |

<sup>a</sup> Feb 2002      <sup>b</sup> July/Aug 2004

<sup>c</sup> Feb 2002/Oct 2002      <sup>d</sup> July 2004

<sup>e</sup> Feb 2001

<sup>f</sup> April 2001

<sup>g</sup> Aug 2005

<sup>h</sup> April 2005

The scores for metro blacks and whites are fairly consistent throughout 2005, although both groups at some point either gave a new all-time high or equaled a previous high; the coloured sample was very consistent but well down on the 55% all-time high achieved in July 2004. The Indian/Asian sample showed higher volatility, and although April recorded a new high, this has since dropped considerably. A consistent 12% of people give a don't know response, this being highest amongst whites at 25% on average.

At year's end (late October), in the black metro sample, younger people were more negative (65% approval compared with the overall average for blacks of 70%). The President's approval rating was fairly consistent across all language groups:

- Zulu speakers - 67% (Zulu speakers in KwaZulu-Natal - 58%)
- Sotho speakers - 71%
- Tswana speakers - 69%
- Xhosa speakers - 74%

Analysis by city amongst blacks reveals that KwaZulu-Natal shows the poorest ratings, but when one looks at all population groups, Cape Town records the lowest results:

- Johannesburg and environs: blacks - 74%, total - 65%
- Pretoria: blacks - 64%, total - 55%
- Durban: blacks - 59%, total - 51%
- Cape Town: blacks - 69%, total - 41%
- Port Elizabeth/East London: blacks - 79%, total 63%
- Bloemfontein: blacks - 60%, total - 63%

If one adds non-metro areas, his approval ratings are -

- Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Free State - 79%
- North West - 75%
- Limpopo - 74%
- Gauteng - 66%
- Western Cape - 54%
- Mpumalanga - 51%
- KwaZulu-Natal - 49%

## Comparing these results with those for President Mandela in 1998

| %              | Mbeki<br>Ave<br>2005 | All-<br>time<br>low | All-<br>time<br>high |  | Mandela<br>1998 |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--|-----------------|
| Total metro SA | 61                   | 27                  | 66                   |  | 55              |
| Blacks         | 74                   | 35                  | 81                   |  | 72              |
| Whites         | 37                   | 9                   | 47                   |  | 28              |
| Coloureds      | 40                   | 17                  | 55                   |  | 29              |
| Indians/Asians | 47                   | 11                  | 62                   |  | 21              |

1998 represents the last full calendar year of President Nelson period in office. President Mbeki's results for 2005 show an almost identical rating amongst blacks, and a better rating amongst all other race groups. This comparison must be made with caution, however, as SA has had the benefit of a longer period of stability that had President Mandela in 1998.

## Summary

The President's ratings have remained high throughout the controversy-ridden year of 2005 with only a relatively modest drop towards the end of the year.

<sup>1</sup> The Blueprint for Brand Growth. An evidence-based framework that defines the future of marketing 15 May 2024

<sup>2</sup> South Africa shines in the global 2024 Kantar Creative Effectiveness Awards 25 Apr 2024

<sup>3</sup> Creative trends 2024: Crafting effective digital ads 1 Feb 2024

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