

## **Architect Africa News Network (online)**

Fact-checked: Pres Cyril Ramaphosa's first-ever State of the Nation Address

New South Africa President Cyril Ramaphosa was afforded calm and plenty of cheers as he delivered his first state of the nation address. Did he seize the moment? Africa Check wasted little time in putting his claims under the microscope. "The matric pass rate increased from 60.6 percent in 2009 to 75.1 percent last year." In 2009, minister of basic education, Angie Motshekga, announced that South Africa's matric pass rate was 60.6%. The most recent pass rate, from 2017, was 75.1%. – Kate Wilkinson

GUIDE: Assessing South Africa's schooling system

"The Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative programme continues to deliver modern facilities to schools in rural and underprivileged urban areas across the country, with at least 187 schools being complete to date.

The department of basic education replaces unsafe and "inappropriate" school structures under the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (Asidi) programme which started in 2011.

The most recent data from the department shows that 187 schools have been completed under the programme. It has fallen far behind its targets, however.

In 2011, the programme identified 496 schools that were considered "inappropriate structures" and needed to be replaced by March 2014. These included schools built from mud.

The first 50 schools were meant to be replaced in 2011/12, followed by 100 schools in 2012/13 and 346 schools in 2013/14.

Ramaphosa promised that the programme "will complete all outstanding projects by the end of the next financial year", which would be 31 March 2019. – Kate Wilkinson

READ: Where are the receipts for 795 schools Zuma says SA government built?

"Our state employs one million public servants."

Between 2001/02 and 2011/12, employment in South Africa's national and provincial departments grew rapidly. It peaked at 1.33 million full-time equivalent positions in 2012/13, data from the 2017 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement showed. The figures are given as "full-time equivalents" to

account for part-time positions, the head of Wits University's School of Economic and Business Sciences, Prof Jannie Rossouw, told Africa Check.

Since then, public service employment has levelled out, Rossouw added. For the 2016/17 financial year, it stood at 1,304,600.

Financial year Full-time equivalent public servants

2006-07 1,128,909

2007-08 1,139,005

2008-09 1,210,782

2009-10 1,246,680

2010-11 1,275,125

2011-12 1,311,136

2012-13 1,326,120

2013-14 1,319,567

2014-15 1,313,209

2015-16 1,310,729

2016-17 1,304,600

The medium policy statement notes that employees from the Community Work Programme and the Expanded Public Works Programme are not included in the figures, as "they are not part of the public service". – Anim van Wyk

"Poverty levels rose in 2015"

South Africa has three official poverty lines: the food poverty line (R441 per person per month in 2015 prices), the lower-bound poverty line (R647) and the upper-bound poverty line (R992).

In 2006, 66.6% of South Africa's population were living in poverty (under the upper-bound poverty line). This fell to 62.1% in 2009 and dropped further to 53.2% in 2011.

This decreasing trend ended in 2015, when the proportion of people living in poverty increased to 55.5%. – Kate Wilkinson

READ: FACTSHEET: South Africa's official poverty number

"Since the start of the current parliament, our public employment programmes have created more than 3.2 million work opportunities."

Data from the Expanded Public Works Programme show that between the 2014/2015 financial year to 30 September 2017 (the latest data provided by the department of public works) 3,216,382 work opportunities have been created.

Period Number of work opportunities

1 April – 30 September 2017 591,614

2016/2017 779,245

2015/2016 741,540

2014/2015 1,103,983

Total 3,216,382

Work opportunities are not permanent jobs, though, and only last a few months in most instances. The department also has a rider that “the same individual can be employed on different projects and each period of employment will be counted as a work opportunity”.

So while more than 3.2 million work opportunities were created, this does not mean that a similar number of people benefited from the programme. – Gopolang Makou

“Today we have nearly a million children in early childhood development facilities.”

Early childhood development centres provide a “programme with an early learning and development focus for children from birth until the year before they enter Grade R/formal school”. There were 968,853 children accessing early childhood development services as of September 2017, according to the department of basic education. – Kate Wilkinson

“More than 17 million social grants are paid each month”

In December 2017, some 17,347,263 social grants were paid out according to the most recent data from South Africa Social Security Agency’s (SASSA).

By far most of these were child support grants, accounting for 12,197,673.

Grant type Number

Old age grant 3,380,904

War veteran’s grant 125

Disability grant 1,065,536

Grant in aid 184,696

Care dependency grant 146,666

Foster child grant 371,643

Child support grant 12,197,673

Total 17,347,263

The agency's data shows that more than 17 million grants were made in each month of 2017. – Gopolang Makou

READ: FACTSHEET: Social grants in South Africa – separating myth from reality

“Government's free basic services programme currently supports more than 3.5 million indigent households.”

Statistics South Africa released its latest non-financial census of municipalities in May 2017. It showed that in 2016, a total of 3,564,866 households received some form of support from government's free basic services programme.

Province Indigent households identified by the municipalities (2016)

Western Cape 386,695

Eastern Cape 769,176

Northern Cape 80,166

Free State 143,115

KwaZulu-Natal 757,405

North West 185,399

Gauteng 697,234

Mpumalanga 168,190

Limpopo 377,486

South Africa 3,564,866

This is an increase of 16%, or 584,346 households, compared to the 2,980,520 households who received this support in 2015. – Gopolang Makou

“Mining fatalities rose in 2017”

“We are extremely concerned about the rise in mining fatalities last year,” Ramaphosa said, adding that “one mining fatality is one too many”.

Data from the department of mineral resources shows that mining fatalities had been decreasing since 2004, when they stood at 246. By 2016, they had dropped to 73. However, the trend reversed in 2017, with preliminary figures showing 83 people died in the country’s mines. This Adv Paul Mardon, deputy general secretary for Occupational Health and Safety at trade union Solidarity, shared with Africa Check.

Year Mining fatalities

2004 246

2005 201

2006 200

2007 220

2008 171

2009 168

2010 127

2011 123

2012 112

2013 93

2014 84

2015 77

2016 73

2017 83\*

Source: Chamber of Mines

And the negative trend seems to continue, Mardon explained, as 12 miners have already died this year, compared to 10 in the same period in 2017.

“Both mines and miners are taking short-cuts and working faster to chase production targets at the expense of safety,” he said. “Unions, mining houses and government need to start working together instead of doing their own things.” – Anim van Wyk

“Agriculture made the largest contribution... to the improved growth of our economy in the second and third quarters of 2017.”

The economic growth of a country can be measured in different ways, according to Statistics South Africa. The most commonly used measure is real gross domestic product (GDP). This is the “total value of goods and services that are produced in an economy in a certain time period”. The figures are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation and allow for comparison over time.

### ##2nd quarter 2017

The largest positive contributor to economic growth in the second quarter of 2017 was the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry. During that period, it contributed 0.7 of a percentage point to GDP growth (at constant 2010 prices, seasonally adjusted and annualised).

Statistics South Africa noted that “the industry’s increase was mainly as a result of increases in the production of field crops and horticultural products”.

The second biggest contributor was finance, real estate and business services (half a percentage point), followed by the mining and quarrying industry (0.3 of a percentage point).

### ##3rd quarter 2017

The agriculture, forestry and fishing industry was again the largest contributor to economic growth, contributing 0.9 of a percentage point.

Both the mining and quarrying industry and the manufacturing industry contributed 0.5 of a percentage point to GDP growth respectively. – Kate Wilkinson

We’re busy fact-checking other claims from President Cyril Ramaphosa’s State of the Nation Address. Please keep checking back for updates.

The post Fact-checked: Pres Cyril Ramaphosa’s first-ever State of the Nation Address appeared first on Africa Check.