



Press Release



Embargoed until 00h01
22 March 2009

Inspire Engage Create
18 March 2009

Editorial contact: TNS Research Surveys
Neil Higgs, Director: Innovation and Development
Telephone: 011-778-7500 or 082-376-6312
e-mail: Neil.Higgs@tns-global.co.za

Approval of President Motlanthe - people are more divided but he loses ground

TNS Research Surveys, South Africa's leading marketing and social insights company, has conducted a series of surveys since 2000 that ascertain whether people feel the President is doing a good job as President of South Africa. 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%. The latest reading was taken in February 2009.

The "don't know" response drops, and both approval and disapproval rises

This is the second reading for President Kgalema Motlanthe. People were asked if they thought that President Kgalema Motlanthe is doing a good job as President of South Africa. The overall level of approval was 41%, up from 36% in November 2008, with 31% saying "no" (up from 24% in November) and 28% giving a "don't know" response, down from the very high level 40% of November 2008 whilst people waited to make up their minds.

This means that, whereas the President's net positive rating (the percentage approving minus the percentage disapproving) was 12 in November, this has dropped to 10 as the fence-sitters begin to make up their minds. It seems that the nay-sayers are growing at a slightly faster rate than those who are positive towards the President.

As is common in the political landscape, there are major differences by race:

%s	Total metro areas		Blacks		Whites		Coloureds		Indians/Asians	
	Nov	Feb	Nov	Feb	Nov	Feb	Nov	Feb	Nov	Feb
Approve	36	41	47	54	13	15	20	23	26	22
Disapprove	24	31	16	19	42	56	34	43	30	49
Don't know	40	28	37	27	45	29	46	34	43	30
Net positives	12	10	31	35	-29	-41	-14	-20	-4	-27

Whilst the "don't know" response has dropped, it is still relatively high. To give some context, during most of former President Mbeki's term, this response level was between 10% and 14%.

President Mbeki's highest approval rating was 66% and he ended his term on 34%.

From the net positive row in the table above, it is clear that the President has lost considerable ground amongst all race groups (the net positive score has moved to greater negative value) except for blacks for whom there was a small increase.

Across all race groups, males are more positive about the President (45% approve) than are females (38% approve) who also have higher "don't know" response levels at 31% than males (25%). The net positive score for males is 15% whilst it is just 9% for females. There are no differences in response across the different age groups, whilst the lower levels of approval amongst the more wealthy are correlated with the race findings already noted above. The most positive people are those whose home language is isiZulu (61% approve, 15% disapprove and 24% say "don't know", giving a net positive score of 46). The net positive scores amongst other black language groups lie between 27 and 31%.

MORE...



Results by area

There are considerable differences by area:

- Gauteng - 47% (41% in November)
 - Johannesburg and environs - 50% (44% in November)
 - Johannesburg excluding Soweto - 53% (42% in November)
 - Soweto - 55% (48% in November) (highest with East Rand)
 - East Rand - 57% (49% in November) (highest with Soweto)
 - West Rand - 30% (38% in November)
 - Vaal Triangle and South Rand - 34% (38% in November)
 - Pretoria - 33% (29% in November)
- Cape Town - 19% (18% in November) (lowest)
- Durban - 46% (41% in November)
- Eastern Cape - 42% (26% in November)
 - Port Elizabeth - 49% (29% in November)
 - East London - 29% (20% in November)
- Bloemfontein - 43% (48% in November)

Net positive	
Feb	Nov
19	19
24	22
30	15
28	35
33	27
-8	20
4	19
-1	5
-27	-17
23	23
9	-3
21	-1
-7	-9
10	38

The major reversal in the President’s approval levels has come on the West Rand with significant drops also in Cape Town, the Vaal Triangle and South Rand, and Bloemfontein. Gains occur in Johannesburg excluding Soweto and Port Elizabeth.

Our take-out

After an initial period of relatively high levels of uncertainty about the new President, people have begun to make up their minds and, whilst levels of approval have risen, levels of disapproval have risen at a slightly faster pace. The President has primarily lost ground in all race groups except blacks where a small improvement is evident. However, levels of uncertainty are still at higher-than-normal levels.

Technical note

The studies were conducted amongst a sample of 2 000 adults (1260 blacks, 385 whites, 240 coloureds and 115 Indians/Asians) in the seven major metropolitan areas: they have a margin of error of under 2.5% for the results found for the total sample. The studies were conducted by TNS Research Surveys (Pty) Ltd as part of their ongoing research into current social and political issues and were funded by TNS Research Surveys. For more details, please contact Neil Higgs on 011-778-7500 or 082-376-6312. www.tnsresearchsurveys.co.za

About TNS

TNS is a global market information and insight group.

Its strategic goal is to be recognised as the global leader in delivering value-added information and insights that help its clients make more effective business decisions.

TNS delivers innovative thinking and excellent service across a network of 80 countries. Working in partnership with clients, TNS provides high-quality information, analysis and insight that improves understanding of consumer behaviour.

TNS is the world’s leading provider of customised services, combining sector knowledge with expertise in the areas of Product Development & Innovation, Brand & Communications, Stakeholder Management, Retail & Shopper and Customer Intelligence. TNS is a major supplier of consumer panel, media intelligence and audience measurement services.

TNS is the sixth sense of business™.

www.tnsglobal.com

The Kantar Group

The Kantar Group is one of the world’s largest research, insight and consultancy networks. By uniting the diverse talents of more than 20 specialist companies - including the recently-acquired TNS - the group aims to become the pre-eminent provider of compelling and actionable insights for the global business community. Its 26,500 employees work across 80 countries and across the whole spectrum of research and consultancy disciplines, enabling the group to offer clients business insights at each and every point of the consumer cycle. The group’s services are employed by over half of the Fortune Top 500 companies. The Kantar Group is a wholly-owned subsidiary of WPP Group plc. For further information, please visit www.kantargrouptns.com

ENDS