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ATTENTION: THE NEWS EDITOR

## No progress on corruption?

Eighty-three percent of metro adults feel that corruption has become a way of life in South Africa whilst 85% feel that there is corruption in senior levels of Government. These figures were released today by TNS South Africa, South Africa's leading marketing and social insights company. They arise from a study of 2 000 adults in South Africa's seven major metropolitan areas in late October/early November 2011. The study has a margin of error of less than 2½% for these overall results. Only 11% and 8% respectively disagreed with these perceptions; 6% and 8% respectively gave a "don't know" response. Hence, the overwhelming majority of people feel that corruption is endemic in South Africa.

What is notable and deeply concerning is that these figures are largely unchanged since 2005. TNS found that in both 2005 and 2008, almost identical results were obtained.

With such high numbers, there are very few notable differences across the various demographic groups: black males at 79% and 83% respectively had the lowest responses to the two questions posed but these figures are still very high. What is also of concern is that these are held perceptions equally by young people as well as older people, suggesting that they are becoming completely entrenched – this is "business as normal". Also, worryingly, residents of Pretoria – closest to the seat of power – have amongst the highest responses at 92% and 91%, with Durban next at 88% and 94% respectively. The Pretoria figures show a significant increase since 2008 when they were in the 80s or lower.

		%	
		Corruption has become a way of life in SA	There is corruption in senior levels of Government
Gauteng		81	82
	Johannesburg and environs	78	80
	Johannesburg excl Soweto	81	89
	East Rand	73	76
	West Rand	87	79
	Soweto	84	92
	Vaal Triangle/South Rand	68	60
	Pretoria	92	91
Cape Town		87	87
Durban		88	94
Eastern Cape		83	78
	Port Elizabeth	83	81
	East London	84	71
Bloemfontein		80	90

## Where does corruption fit in the grand scheme of things?

In early September, TNS undertook another study amongst 2 000 metro adults and asked what South Africa's most pressing issues were. The results fell into three tiers, with corruption in the top tier. Again, this was true for all race groups and across all demographic groups.

The fact that crime is also in this top tier suggests that South Africa is perceived by metro adults to be a relatively lawless place. Poverty and unemployment is also in the top tier whilst social and well-being issues such as HIV and AIDS, housing and service delivery are in a second tier.

**MORE...**



In a study of 2 000 metro adults undertaken in January 2011, 8% of people admitted to giving bribes to avoid a fine or a traffic ticket whilst a 2005 study showed that 85% of metro dwellers believed that “many police officers take bribes”.

People’s perceptions as to South Africa’s biggest problems

		%	Blacks	Whites	Coloureds	Indians/Asians
1	South Africa’s biggest problem is poverty & unemployment	91	93	83	93	95
2	South Africa’s biggest problem is crime	89	88	88	87	98
3	South Africa’s biggest problem is corruption	85	86	84	81	90
4	South Africa’s biggest problem is HIV and AIDS	78	83	57	78	83
5	South Africa’s biggest problem is a lack of housing delivery	70	75	48	75	82
6	South Africa’s biggest problem is a lack of service delivery	70	73	59	69	83
7	South Africa’s biggest problem is climate change	41	42	33	40	48

**Our take out**

That corruption is a major problem in South Africa, including senior levels of Government, and has become endemic is now a well entrenched perception that has been unchanged for over six years. That these perceptions have not shown any shift is a major concern. It suggests that, where there has been success in rooting out corruption in either the public or private sectors (it takes two to tango), perhaps these success stories should be more widely publicised. It also suggests that efforts to attack this scourge need to be re-doubled and that, where officials are suspended on corruption allegations, these investigations need to be speeded up so that people can see the consequences of engaging in corruption.

**Technical note**

All the studies were conducted amongst 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 use probability sampling techniques and are fully representative of the major metropolitan areas. The studies were conducted by TNS South Africa as part of their ongoing research into current social and political issues and were funded by TNS. For more details, please contact Neil Higgs on 011-778-7500 or 082-376-6312. [www.tnsresearchsurveys.co.za](http://www.tnsresearchsurveys.co.za)

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TNS advises clients on specific growth strategies around new market entry, innovation, brand switching and stakeholder management, based on long-established expertise and market-leading solutions. With a presence in over 80 countries, TNS has more conversations with the world’s consumers than anyone else and understands individual human behaviours and attitudes across every cultural, economic and political region of the world.

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