



Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
Cape Town, South Africa
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News release

Majority of South Africans believe President Zuma is ignoring Parliament and the law

While President Jacob Zuma's approval ratings have declined significantly (by 28 percentage points), a majority of South Africans say he acts with impunity towards Parliament and the law.

South Africans are also of the opinion that there should be limitations on presidential power including strict term limits and accounting to parliament for government expenditure.

For more information, see Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 66 at www.afrobarometer.org.

Key findings

- South Africans support limitations on presidential power: More than three-quarters support term limits (78%).
- They believe that Parliament, not the president, should make laws (76%), and six in 10 (62%) say that the president should have to account to Parliament for government expenditures.
- Despite strong support for the notion that the president should be subject to the law (77%), a majority believe that President Zuma "often" or "always" ignores laws (59%) and Parliament (57%).

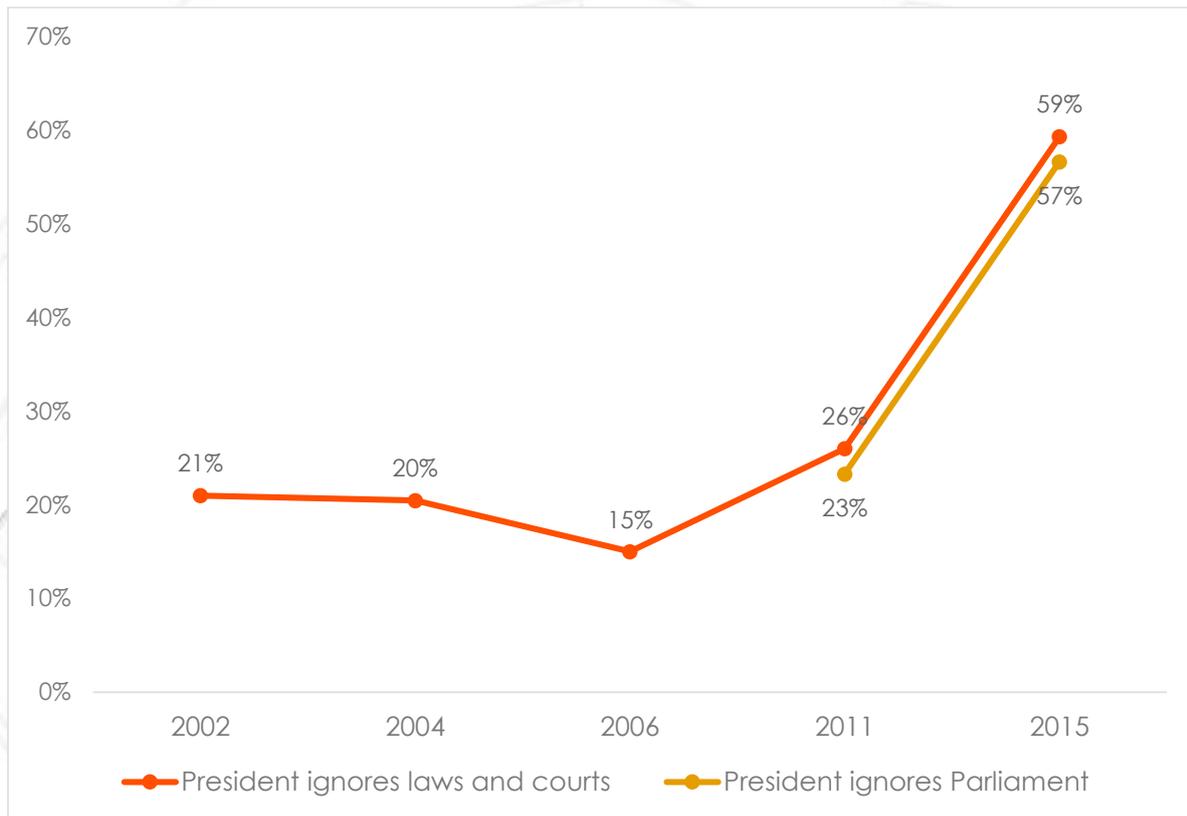
Afrobarometer

Afrobarometer is an African-led, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Five rounds of surveys were conducted between 1999 and 2013, and Round 6 surveys are currently under way (2014-2015). Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples of between 1,200 and 2,400 respondents.

The Afrobarometer team in South Africa, led by Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and Plus 94 Research interviewed 2,400 adult South Africans in August and September 2015. A sample of this size yields results with a margin of error of +/-2% at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys have been conducted in South Africa in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2011.

Charts

Figure 1: Perceptions of presidential respect for Parliament and the law
 | South Africa | 2000-2015

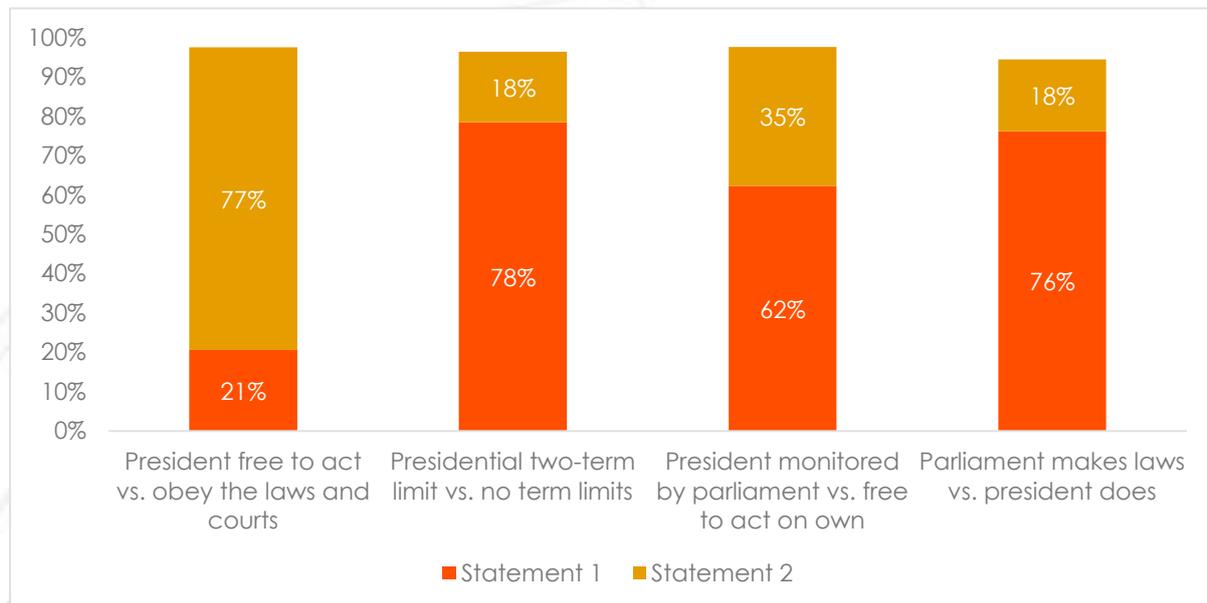


Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how often, in this country:*

1. Does the president ignore the courts and laws of this country?¹
2. Does the president ignore Parliament and just do what he wants?
 (% who say “always” or “often”)

¹ In 2002, 2004, and 2006, survey respondents were asked: “In this country, how often does the president ignore the constitution?”

Figure 2: Support for restrictions to presidential powers | South Africa | 2015



Respondents were asked:

- Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.
 Statement 1: Since the President was elected to lead the country, he should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong.
 Statement 2: The President must always obey the laws and the courts, even if he thinks they are wrong.
- Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.
 Statement 1: The Constitution should limit the president to serving a maximum of two terms in office.
 Statement 2: There should be no constitutional limit on how long the president can serve.
- Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.
 Statement 1: Parliament should ensure that the President explains to it on a regular basis how his government spends taxpayers' money.
 Statement 2: The President should be able to devote his full attention to developing the country rather than wasting time justifying his actions.
- Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.
 Statement 1: Members of Parliament represent the people; therefore they should make laws for this country, even if the President does not agree.
 Statement 2: Since the President represents all of us, he should pass laws without worrying about what Parliament thinks.

For more information, please contact:

Rorisang Lekalake, Afrobarometer assistant project manager for Southern Africa

Email: rlekalake@afrobarometer.org.

Telephone: 021 202 4071

Sibusiso Nkomo, Afrobarometer communications coordinator for Southern Africa

Email: snkomo@afrobarometer.org.

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