

MEDIA RELEASE

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FROM: COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

IEC REGISTERS MORE THAN 1.6 MILLION NEW VOTERS

The weekend voter registration drive was an overwhelming success with more than 3.6 million South Africans having visited more than 19,000 registration stations to either register for the first time, re-register or inspect their details on the voters' roll.

"The drive has far surpassed our expectations and the IEC is delighted to see the success of the weekend drive to register new voters, especially the youths, who represent a majority of the weekend registration activity at 77.9%.

We are proud to say that this was our most successful registration drive since 2000," said IEC Chairperson, Dr Brigalia Bam.

Inclement weather over large parts of the country may well have influenced turnout. Nevertheless the enthusiasm amongst people in the present vibrant political environment was such that the IEC received a record number of new registration applications.

A total of 1 648 189 new applications were received whilst a further 1 752 596 currently registered persons applied for registration in a new voting district following a change of address. A further 293 871 persons re-registered in the same voting district they were registered in before. The total number of recorded visits to the registration stations thus came to 3 694 656.

KwaZulu-Natal had the highest number of new registrations with 451 030 followed by Gauteng with 369 623 and the Eastern Cape with 193 444.

77.9% of all new registrations were in the youth category. There were 105 893 new registration applications from 16 to 17 year olds and 342 639 from 18 and 19 year olds.

In the 20 to 29 year age bracket 835 447 new registration applications were received. It is very pleasing that young people responded so positively to our registration campaign.

In terms of the gender split the present pattern of more women than men participating repeated itself. A total of 882 536 women applied for registration for the first time whilst only 765 653 men did so. It is only in the age bracket 40 to 49 years that male applications (51.18%) exceeded those of women (48.82%). On the whole male registrations thus remain lower than demographics indicate it should be and this remains an area of concern.

Before the registration weekend the voters' roll contained the names of 20 128 569 persons. As a result of the new applications over the weekend it has increased by 7.61% and this morning stands at 21 661 171 persons. The youth in the age group 18 to 29 before the registration weekend comprised 20.4% of all registered voters whilst they now account for 24.31% of registered voters.

Dr Bam said the IEC is pleased with the results of the registration weekend, but also recognise that there may be people who missed the opportunity to register. These people may do so on any weekday during normal office hours at their local office of the IEC in each of the municipalities. Persons who registered over the weekend or re-registered may already verify the correctness of their new applications by visiting the IEC website at www.elections.org.za or sending their identity number per SMS to 32810.

The voters' roll closes on the date on which the President proclaims the election date. The IEC shall arrange a second registration opportunity for all South Africans who wish to register as new voters and those who wish to confirm their voting status early in the new year.

Dr Bam thanked IEC staff and volunteers who registered voters and shared the message of the campaign and said that there is nothing more South African than registering to vote. She also thanked political parties, the media and South Africans, but especially our young people who came out in numbers to register.

“We hope that the drive helped answer voters’ questions, register new ones and make participation as simple as possible as we head into our general elections next year,” said Dr Bam.

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