

# A! POLICY NEWSLETTER

April 2023



South Africa has a long history of oppression and segregation under colonialism and apartheid, which resulted in a particular segment of the population being disempowered from exercising their rights as full citizens. Active civic participation and, in particular, widespread opposition to these unjust systems ultimately ushered in the advent of democracy in South Africa. On April 27, 1994, South Africa transitioned from an apartheid state to a democratic state, with all eligible voters irrespective of their race, cultural background, or economic status participating in the country's first free and fair democratic elections. South Africa became a constitutional democracy, with the constitution being at the heart of our safeguarding this democracy. Many sacrifices were made to achieve democracy in South Africa, and a lot is still required to protect and promote our democratic gains.

With under 30 years of democracy, South Africa is a relatively young democracy, yet the country has witnessed a declining trust and participation in democratic institutions and processes post the 1994 elections. There has been a low turnout in elections in South Africa, particularly among young people. Research also indicates that while South Africans aged 18-25 years share similar views of the role of citizens in a democracy as their elders, they are less likely to engage in political processes via conventional forms of non-electoral participation such as involvement in civic organisations and contact with elected leaders (Mattes & Richmond 2015). In light of this, it is important to create enabling conditions for the greater inclusion of South African youth in the country's decision-making processes and structures at various levels and across all sectors of society.

Youth participation entails meaningfully involving young people in the institutions and decisions that affect their lives. This essentially means that the youth ought to be intently engaged in decision-making structures and processes and participate on equal terms with other demographics in the affairs of their communities. Active civic participation empowers youth to positively contribute towards the development of their communities but, more importantly, to develop knowledge on citizenship and human rights and to promote positive civic action. Given their status in society, young people can play an important role in shaping the development of their local communities. Therefore, meaningful youth participation should be prioritised across various levels of society, especially at the local level, wherein citizen participation is arguably the most critical.





## 2024 Elections

The Electoral Commission (IEC) has launched a civic and democracy education campaign aimed at young citizens in tertiary institutions to grow youth participation in South Africa's electoral democracy.

This national campaign was launched in Human Rights Month, at Rhodes University in Makhanda, the oldest university in the Eastern Cape, with over 8 000 students.

The objective of the campaign, with the hashtag #YouthVoteMatters and which will be rolled out to tertiary institutions countrywide, is to:

- Educate youth citizens at tertiary institutions about their civic and democratic rights and responsibilities;
- Engage students' views about electoral democracy and the impact of participation thereof through debate;
- Empower the student electorate with information to participate meaningfully in democratic and electoral processes;
- Promote online voter registration to students;
- Conduct on-campus voter registration using the Voter Management Device at targeted campuses;
- Promote a culture of ongoing engagement and exchange of ideas within institutions of higher learning.

South Africans aged 16 years and older, who have a South African identity document (ID), smart ID card, or valid temporary ID, are encouraged to use the Electoral Commission's Voter Portal to register to vote for all future elections. Go to <https://registertovote.elections.org.za> to register – it's safe, quick and easy!

**For media queries: Please contact Kate Bapela at [082 600 6386](tel:0826006386)**

**For media interviews: Please email requests to [spokesperson@elections.org.za](mailto:spokesperson@elections.org.za)**

**You can also find the IEC on:**

**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/IECSouthAfrica](https://www.facebook.com/IECSouthAfrica)**

**Twitter: [@IECSouthAfrica](https://twitter.com/IECSouthAfrica)**





NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
OUR YOUTH. OUR FUTURE.

## NYDA Youth Month and Youth Day Plans

### In a Presentation to Parliament, the NYDA said:

“In our analysis and consultation with young people, the manner in which we commemorate Youth Day and Youth Month through rally’s is no longer relevant to young people.”

- Young people are responsive to opportunities which allow them to better their lives.
- This must be balanced with narrating the historical significance of June 16th.
- For Youth Day 2023 we are planning the largest career and opportunities expo for young people so that they may receive access to information and knowledge in an inclusive manner.
- Ideally, we would like the opportunity expo to incorporate Higher Education Institutions, Private and Public sector opportunities, and civil society organisations.
- We intend to use the Youth Day weekend to also offer opportunities to young creatives (artists, poets) a platform to showcase their work.
- There is also an opportunity to incorporate youth-owned enterprises as part of the delivery of food and beverage services for the opportunities expo.
- We intend to have masterclasses with sector experts throughout the weekend to expose young people to new industries and work.
- It is also an opportunity to showcase our work as the PYEI.
- At this stage we are awaiting a decision on the host Province and then we will start planning and have a more formal engagement with the coordinating committee”





## Updates on Legislation

### Electoral Amendment Bill

On 17 April, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the [Electoral Amendment Bill of 2022](#) into law. The new law provides for the amendment of the Electoral Act to allow independent candidates to contest provincial and national elections. It also prescribes the requirements that will have to be met for individuals who will want to contest national elections as of next year. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has welcomed the signing of the Electoral Amendment Bill and has vowed to deliver quality provincial and national elections. There has been criticism that the law is flawed, unconstitutional and will be legally challenged. They argue that it disadvantages independent candidates and brings into question whether the public participation process was inadequate and constitutional.

### Employment Equity Amendment Bill

On 12 April, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the [Employment Equity Amendment Bill of 2020](#) into law. The bill seeks to progress the transformation of South Africa's workforce by setting equity targets for economic sectors and geographical regions and requiring enterprises to develop transformation plans, with new measures to also promote workplace diversity and equality.

The bill provides clear definitions of discrimination and sets out what workers can do when facing such discrimination, including lodging grievances with the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, or the Labour Courts. The law requires employers with more than 50 employees to submit employment equity plans for their companies, spelling out how they will achieve these targets. Employers are then required to submit annual reports to the Department of Employment and Labour.



## Call for Comments

### National Youth Development Agency Amendment Bill

The Portfolio Committee on Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities invites you to submit written comments on the [National Youth Development Agency Amendment Bill \[B13-2022\]](#).

#### The Bill seeks to:

- amend the provisions relating to the objects of the Agency
- amend the functions of the Agency;
- amend provisions relating to reporting by the Agency;
- provide for organs of state to assist the Agency;
- provide for the governance responsibilities of the Board;
- provide for additional Board members;
- provide that a Board member may not be reappointed for more than two consecutive terms;
- provide that Board members must submit their financial disclosures;
- amend matters pertaining to the meetings of the Board; to amend the funding of the Agency
- authorise the Minister to make regulations; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

Comments can be emailed to Ms Neliswa Nobatana at [nydaambill@parliament.gov.za](mailto:nydaambill@parliament.gov.za) or online at <https://forms.gle/pkHnk8V8qDRWwvjK7> by no later than Tuesday, 6 June 2023 at 16:00.

In addition to written submissions, kindly indicate if you would like to make an oral submission

Enquiries can be directed to Ms Neliswa Nobatana on cell [083 709 8472](tel:0837098472)

## Update on key legislation in 2023?

2023 set to be a big legislative year and legislating will take up a significant chunk of the parliamentary programme. Please visit this [LINK](#) to read PMG's Blog on what to expect

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