



INCLUSIVE SOCIETY INSTITUTE

MEDIA RELEASE

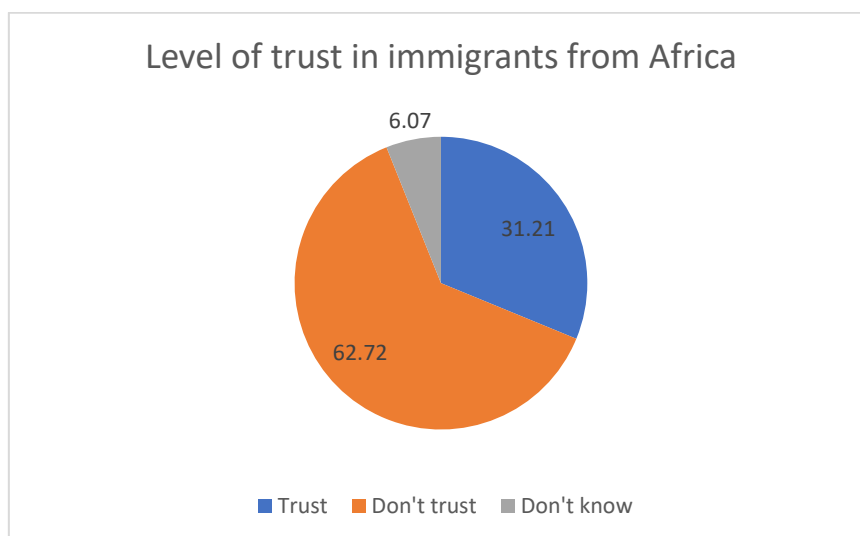
MISTRUST IN IMMIGRANTS REMAINS ALARMINGLY HIGH **Findings from the Inclusive Society Institute's *GovDem Poll***

As unemployment increases and the anti-immigrant narrative is heightened, mistrust between South Africans and immigrants from Africa has deepened in five of the country's provinces. Nationally, just under two-thirds of respondents indicated that they did not trust immigrants from Africa very much or at all.

In general, there is not enough trust in South Africa to sufficiently underpin social cohesion. But when it comes to the alarmingly high level of mistrust in immigrants from Africa, the country should tread carefully. The early signs of xenophobic instability show in the sporadic incidents of xenophobia in the country. The lack of trust runs across most dimensions, be it race, gender, age, education, income or political party. The poll shows that no progress has been made since the previous year in improving the relationship between South Africans and immigrants from Africa.

Immigrants from Africa

Overall, only 31,21 percent (previous poll: 31,23 percent) of respondents said they completely trusted or somewhat trusted immigrants from African countries, with only a slight differentiation between men and women respondents. 62,72 percent (previous poll: 62,62 percent) of the male and 62,37 percent (previous poll: 62,63 percent) of female respondents either did not trust immigrants very much or at all. 6,07 percent did not indicate either way.



Based on race

Mistrust in immigrants from Africa deepened amongst South Africans from the Indian and coloured communities. 79,82 percent (previous poll: 57,9 percent) of Indian respondents and 61,67 percent (previous poll: 54,87 percent) of coloured respondents indicated that they did not trust immigrants from Africa very much or at all. The poll suggests that the level of trust in immigrants from Africa remained more or less in line with the results from the previous poll. This was 60,29 percent (previous poll: 62,61 percent) and 62,57 percent (previous poll: 63,76 percent) of white and black respondents respectively.

Based on education

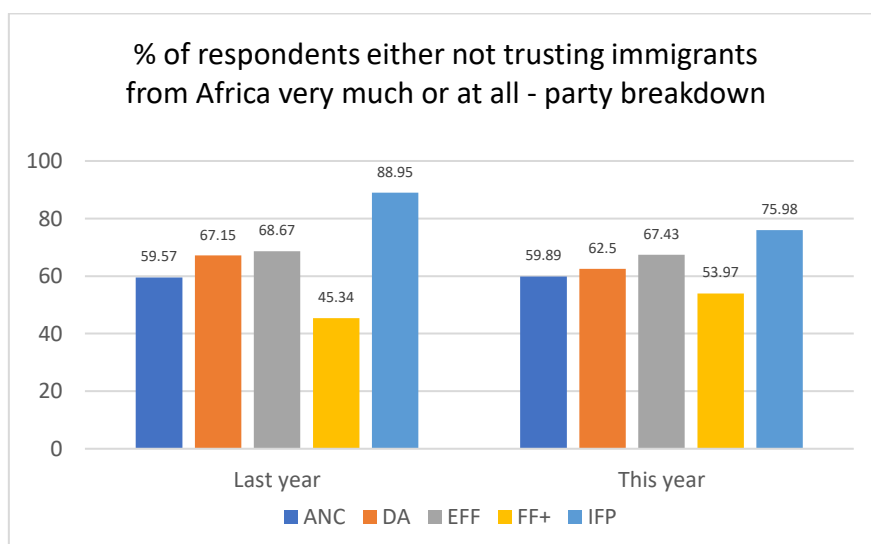
The survey results suggest, however, albeit on the margins, that the more educated South Africans are, the more they are willing to trust African immigrants. 65,81 percent (previous poll: 68,27 percent) of respondents with some high schooling either did not trust immigrants very much or at all. For those that had matric it improved to 61,66 percent (previous poll: 62,24 percent), and for those with higher education it was 61,18 percent (previous poll: 59,71 percent).

Based on age and earnings

There is little differentiation to be made based on age, with all age bands recording a distrust (not very much or no trust) in the lower 60 percent range. Similarly, earnings did not appear to make much of a difference in respondents' attitudes, although there was a slight reduction as people's earnings increased. The outlier was those with no earnings who were far more trusting of immigrants from Africa than those with earnings.

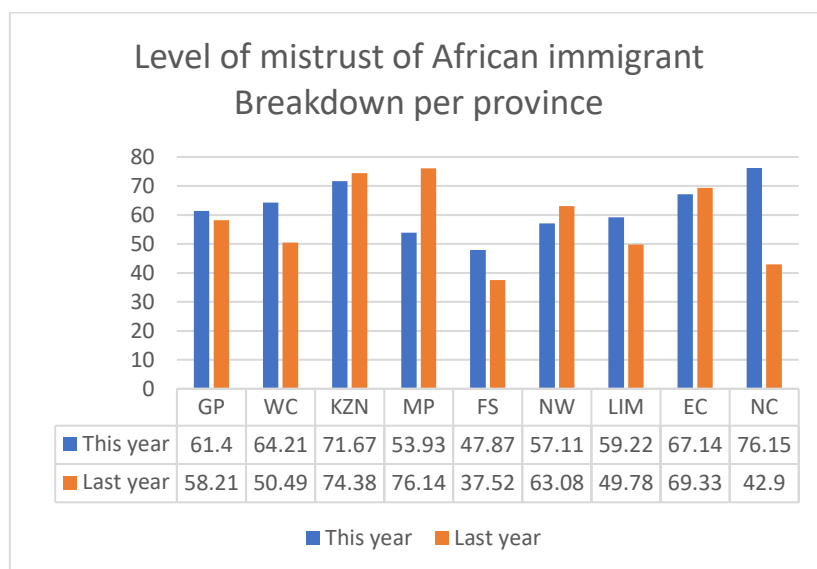
Based on political party support

Amongst supporters from the various political parties, respondents from the FF+ in this poll once again emerged as the most trusting (with 53,97 percent – previous poll: 45,34 percent - either not trusting very much or at all) and the IFP, whilst reducing, again the least trusting (75,98 percent – previous poll: 88,95 percent). Amongst the three largest parties, although still alarmingly high, the ANC was the most trusting, whilst the EFF was the least. 59,89 percent (previous poll: 59,57 percent) of ANC respondents, 62,5 percent (previous poll: 67,15 percent) DA respondents and 67,43 percent (previous poll: 68,67 percent) of EFF respondents either did not trust immigrants from Africa very much or at all.



Based on provinces

As was the case in the previous poll, in all but one province, the Free State, a majority of respondents indicated that they do not trust immigrants from Africa very much or at all. The Northern Cape reflected a dramatic decline in trust in immigrants from Africa when compared to their attitudes in the previous poll.



Conclusion

There is a disquieting low level of trust between South Africans in all demographic groups, be it race, gender, age, education, income, political party or province, and immigrants from Africa. This does not bode well for social cohesion and presents a socio-political risk within an environment which is prone to xenophobic confrontation.

The authorities would do well to heed these warning signs and to ensure that social interventions are undertaken to improve relationships between the local and immigrant communities. This should be particularly high on the KZN and Northern Cape agenda, although there are other provinces such as Gauteng, the Western Cape and Eastern Cape, where the levels of distrust are also disturbingly high.

It is in the interest of national stability that urgent attention be given to this predisposition of our society. For starters, the opportunistic negative political narrative needs to be reversed.

Note

The poll was undertaken by Ipsos on behalf of the Inclusive Society Institute.

Issued by: Inclusive Society Institute
Enquiries: Berenice Marks
Date: 2 May 2022
Contact: 081 352 6202