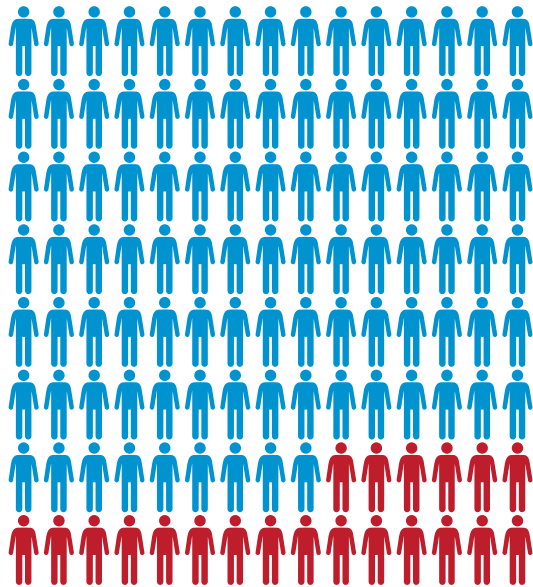


YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The data show young South Africans tend to participate more in civic or social activities than political activities. Helping a neighbour was the most common answer from survey respondents (79.1%), with being involved in a social group (67.4%) and being active in a religious activity (64.9). Respondents reported relatively low participation even in activities specifically aimed at youth involvement, such as activity in a youth movement, and being part of the student council.



Help a Neighbour

Political Party Activity

The Mellon Media and Citizenship Project is lead by Prof Anthea Garman and Prof Herman Wasserman of the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University. The data draws on a collaborative project between the following institutions: Rhodes University, the University of Cape Town, and Media Tenor which was funded through the South African Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development (SANPAD).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH PLEASE CONTACT:

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For the full report go to:

<http://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/digitalpublications/Sanpad%20Report%202013/#/0>

THIS ANALYSIS IS BASED ON FOUR SETS OF DATA

- SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES completed by 956 respondents, mostly between 15 and 30 years of age in four provinces: Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. (Baseline study funded by SANPAD)
- A CONTENT ANALYSIS of the kind of media coverage of the youth in both print and broadcast (television only) media in South Africa. A total of 8736 articles were analysed from South African print media between January 2011 and July 2012. (Conducted by Media Tenor)
- FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS were conducted in three provinces in South Africa: Gauteng, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. In total 14 focus group discussions were conducted with a total of 107 participants. (Facilitated by SANPAD and Mellon researchers)
- A POLICY ANALYSIS was conducted to provide an overview of youth policies in South Africa. The analysis focuses on whether general youth policy and specifically media policy promote active youth participation in the public sphere. (Analysis by Prof Jane Duncan and Dr Vanessa Malila)

MELLON HUMANITIES FOCUS AREA

Media AND Citizenship

Between marginalisation and participation



A study of youth identity, the media and the public sphere in South Africa

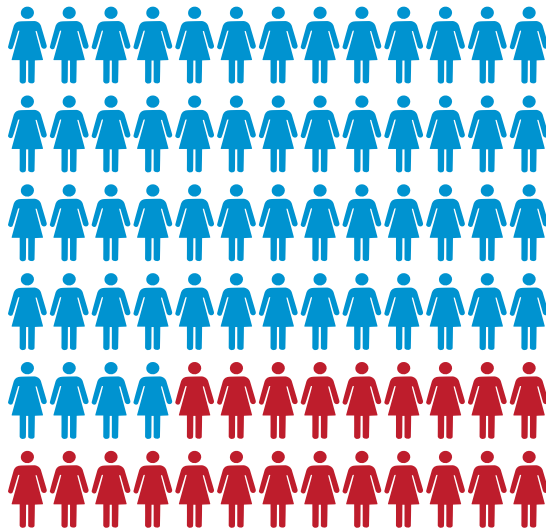
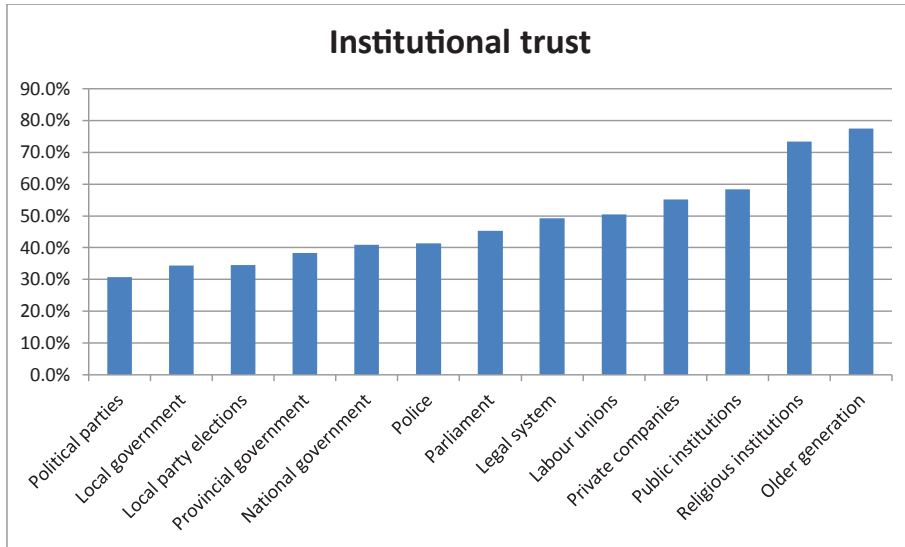
MAJOR FINDINGS



School of Journalism & Media Studies
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TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS

The results show significantly low levels of trust in all three levels of government with trust in local government showing the lowest level. Only 34.4% respondents say they trust local government a great deal or quite a lot. Close to four out of ten (38.3%) respondents say they trust provincial government quite a lot or a great deal and 40.9% of respondents say they trust national government a great deal or quite a lot.



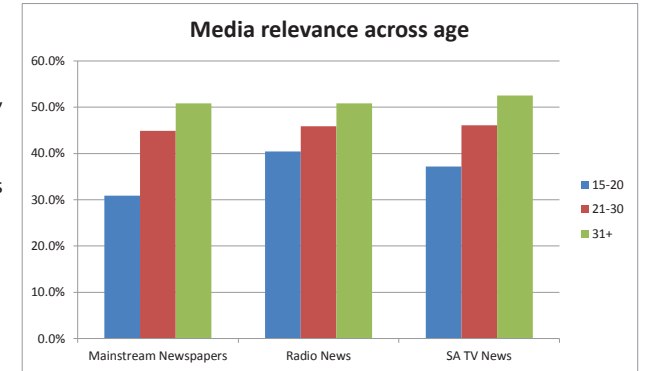
Young people in South Africa are generally uninterested and mistrustful of political institutions and political parties. This includes low levels of trust in the legal system, the police, and in parliament. Only 30.7% of respondents say they trust political parties either a great deal or quite a lot. Most young South Africans note the older generation as an institution they trust most (77.4%).

Trust an older person

Trust a political party

TRUST IN MEDIA

Compared to levels of trust in political institutions, levels of trust in the media are significantly high amongst South African youth: TV news (79.5%), radio news (78.3%) and newspapers (71.9%). Almost six out of ten respondents say they trust magazines and social media (59.2% and 57.7% respectively).



The top three media most relevant to respondents are radio (37.7%), social media (34.1%), and Google or other search engines (33.8%). This is significantly different (except for radio) to usage figures for the media that show TV, radio, and SMS as the three top media regularly used by young people. This may indicate that while young South Africans regularly use certain media, they find the information they receive on those platforms as less than relevant to their lives. The generally negative perceptions about the news media raised by focus group participants correspond with the survey results. Focus group participants raised two issues in particular: the first was that negativity in the news media is unappealing to them and secondly, that they find the news media irrelevant because it does not help them to make sense of specific contexts.

