South Africa's Constitution was the result of remarkably detailed and inclusive negotiations – difficult but determined – that were carried out with an acute awareness of the injustices of the country's non-democratic past.

Following the general election in April 2009, a new administration, under the leadership of President Jacob Zuma, took over. This saw a number of changes being introduced. These included:

- The Department of Minerals and Energy was split into two separate departments of mineral resources and of energy, each with a minister.
- The Department of Education was split into separate ministries, one for Basic Education and the other for Higher Education and Training.
- The Department of Housing was renamed the Department of Human Settlements to take on a more holistic focus.
- A new Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs was created.
- The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry became the Department of Water Affairs.
- A new Economic Development Department was established to focus on economic policy-making.
- A new Department of Tourism was created.
- The Department of Agriculture became the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
- The Department of Local and Provincial Government became the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.
- A new ministry was created for Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities.

The Constitution
The Constitution is the supreme law of the country. No other law or government action may supersede its provisions.

By May 2009, female representation in the National Assembly totalled 45%, putting South Africa third when it comes to international women in Parliament. The country is on course to achieve the Southern African Development Community target of 50% women in political decision-making by 2015.

The Preamble to the Constitution states that its aims are to:
- heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights
- improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person
- lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law
- build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.
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Government

Government consists of national, provincial and local spheres. The powers of the legislature, executive and courts are separate.

Parliament

Parliament consists of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). Parliamentary sittings are open to the public. Several measures have been implemented to make Parliament more accessible and accountable. The National Assembly consists of no fewer than 350 and no more than 400 members, elected through a system of proportional representation for a five-year term. It elects the President and scrutinises the Executive.

National Council of Provinces

The NCOP consists of 54 permanent members and 36 special delegates, and aims to represent provincial interests in the national sphere of government.

The Presidency

The President is the head of state and leads the Cabinet. He or she is elected by the National Assembly from among its members, and leads the country in the interest of national unity, in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

There are two ministers in The Presidency, one responsible for the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the other for Monitoring and Evaluation as well as Administration.

The Presidency, February 2010
President: Jacob Zuma
Deputy President: Kgalema Motlanthe

The Deputy President

The President appoints the Deputy President from among the members of the National Assembly.

Cabinet

Cabinet consists of the President, as head of the Cabinet, the Deputy President and ministers. The President appoints the Deputy President and ministers, assigns their powers and functions and may dismiss them. No more than two ministers may be appointed from outside the National Assembly.

Provincial government

Each of the nine provinces has its own legislature of 30 to 80 members. They elect the Premier who heads the Executive Council.

Provinces may have legislative and executive powers concurrently with the national sphere, over, among other things:

- agriculture
- education at all levels, except university and university of technology education
- environment and nature conservation
- health, housing and welfare
- language policy
- police services, public transport, traffic regulation and vehicle licensing.

Provinces are also responsible for promoting trade, investment and tourism.

Local government

Local governments are not merely instruments of service delivery, but are expected to act as key agents for economic development.

Cabinet ministers and deputy ministers, as at February 2010		
Portfolio	**Minister**	**Deputy Minister**
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	Tina Joemat-Pettersson	Dr Pieter Mulder
Arts and Culture	Lulu Xingwana	Paul Mashatile
Basic Education	Angie Motshekga	Enver Surty
Communications	Siphiwe Nyanda	Dina Pule
Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs	Sicelo Shiceka	Yunus Carrim
Correctional Services	Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula	Hlengiwe Mkhize
Defence and Military Veterans	Dr Lindiwe Sisulu	Thabang Makwetla
Economic Development	Ebrahim Patel	Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde
Energy	Dipuo Peters	-
Finance	Pravin Gordhan	Nhlanhla Nene
Health	Dr Aaron Motsoaledi	Dr Molefi Sefularo
Higher Education and Training	Dr Blade Nzimande	-
Home Affairs	Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma	Malusi Gigaba
Human Settlements	Tokyo Sexwale	Zoliswa Kota-Fredericks
International Relations and Cooperation	Maite Nkoana-Mashabane	1. Ebrahim Ebrahim 2. Sue van der Merwe
Justice and Constitutional Development	Jeff Radebe	Andries Nel
Labour	Membathisi Mdladlana	-
Mineral Resources	Susan Shabangu	-
Police	Nathi Mthethwa	Fikile Mbalula
Public Enterprises	Barbara Hogan	Enoch Godongwana
Public Service and Administration	Richard Baloyi	Roy Padayachie
Public Works	Geoff Doidge	Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu

In December 2009, Cabinet approved a turnaround strategy for local government. This will ensure that local government has the correct management, administrative and technical skills.

Cabinet ministers and deputy ministers, as at February 2010		
Portfolio	**Minister**	**Deputy Minister**
Rural Development and Land Reform	Gugile Nkwinti	Dr Joe Phaahla
Science and Technology	Naledi Pandor	Derek Hanekom
Social Development	Edna Molewa	Bathabile Dlamini
Sport and Recreation	Rev Makhenkesi Stofile	Gert Oosthuizen
State Security	Dr Siyabonga Cwele	
The Presidency National Planning Commission	Trevor Manuel	-
The Presidency Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Administration	Collins Chabane	-
Tourism	Marthinus van Schalkwyk	Thozile Xasa
Trade and Industry	Dr Rob Davies	Thandi Tobias-Pokolo Bongi Maria Ntuli
Transport	Sibusiso Ndebele	Jeremy Cronin
Water and Environmental Affairs	Buyelwa Sonjica	Rejoice Mabudafhasi
Women, Youth, Children and Persons with Disabilities	Noluthando Mayende-Sibiya	-

In 2010, the local government equitable share received a further R6,7 billion to support municipalities to cushion poor households for the rising cost of electricity and water. An additional R2,5 billion goes to the Municipal Infrastructure Grant. Total allocations to municipalities rise from R55 billion in 2009/10 to R78 billion in 2012/13.

Municipalities

There are 283 municipalities focused on growing local economies and providing infrastructure and services. The Constitution provides for three categories of municipalities:
• metropolitan municipalities
• local municipalities
• district areas or municipalities.
South Africa has nine metropolitan municipalities, namely:

Premiers, as at February 2010	
Province	**Premier**
Eastern Cape	Noxolo Kiviet
Free State	Sekgobelo Magashule
Gauteng	Nomvula Mokonyane
KwaZulu-Natal	Dr Zweli Mkhize
Limpopo	Cassel Mathale
Mpumalanga	David Mabuza
Northern Cape	Hazel Jenkins
North West	Maureen Modiselle
Western Cape	Helen Zille

- Buffalo City (East London)
- City of Cape Town
- Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (East Rand)
- City of eThekwini (Durban)
- City of Johannesburg
- Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein)
- Msunduzi Municipality (Pietermaritzburg)
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality (Port Elizabeth)
- City of Tshwane (Pretoria).

Municipalities enjoy significant powers to corporatise their services. Legislation provides for them to report on their performance, and for residents to compare this performance with that of other municipalities.

Traditional leadership

Chapter 11 of the Constitution states that the institution, status and roles of traditional leadership, according to customary law, are recognised, subject to the Constitution. Government remains committed to strengthening the institution of traditional leadership and appreciates the role it plays in society.

The reconfiguration of the Department of Provincial and Local Government into the Department of Cooperative Governance and

Traditional Affairs signifies the importance that is placed on the role and place of traditional leaders in the lives of people, especially in rural areas. Government regards traditional leaders as partners in the implementation of its programmes.

Communicating with the people

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) is primarily responsible for facilitating communication between government and citizens. A high premium is placed on communication that emphasises direct dialogue, especially with people in disadvantaged areas.

The GCIS is responsible for maintaining government's website *(www.gov.za)*, which includes both an information portal for general information about government and a services portal that is a source of information about all the services offered by national government.

The GCIS leads or is involved in various communication partnerships and joint processes, including:

• An intersectoral programme to set up the Thusong Service Centres (formerly multipurpose community centres), providing information about accessing government services, as well as some government services at the centres themselves. In October 2009, 139 Thusong service centres were in place and more centres were being established. A strategy for setting up one centre in each of the country's municipalities by 2014 has been approved.

• The process towards the transformation of the advertising and marketing industry.

• The Public Participation Programme of direct interaction between government and the public.

The GCIS publishes, among other things, the *South African Yearbook,* the *Pocket Guide to South Africa* and *Vuk'uzenzele.*

The following entities report to the GCIS:

• the International Marketing Council (IMC)

• the Media Development and Diversity Agency.

The Presidential Hotline was activated in September 2009. The hotline is a platform that enables citizens to escalate their queries and suggestions to the President's Office. The public liaison contact details are: telephone: 17737, fax: 086 681 0987 and e-mail: *president@po.gov.za.* The service is toll-free.

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International Marketing Council

The IMC of South Africa was established in 2000 as a public-private partnership aimed at creating a positive, united image for South Africa to give the country a strategic advantage in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

The IMC's threefold mission is to:

• articulate a brand for South Africa, which positions the country to attract tourism, trade and investment, as well as realise international relations objectives
• establish an integrated approach within government and the private sector towards the international marketing of South Africa
• build national support for Brand South Africa.

The Public Service

Government believes that the Public Service exists to create a better life for all. Community development workers (CDWs) are part of government's drive to ensure that service delivery reaches poor and marginalised communities. The CDWs are community-based resource persons who collaborate with other community workers to help fellow community members to obtain information and resources from government departments. The aim of CDWs is to facilitate community participation in government initiatives. The CDW programme is one of the primary public-sector reform interventions to enhance development and the implementation of the Batho Pele ("People First") principles, especially access to services.

The CDWs are pivotal in bringing government closer to the people, and in ensuring that community members become directly involved in the delivery of state services. The CDWs have primarily helped citizens to gain access to social services and have

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> The toll-free, 24-hour National Public Service Anti-Corruption Hotline facility (0800 701 701) was established for the reporting of fraud and corruption.

increasingly provided support to citizens in taking up economic opportunities.

The Batho Pele policy promotes integrated and seamless service delivery.

Various projects are being delivered through Batho Pele. These include:

- modernising government, for example, through the Centre for Public Service Innovation
- creating new service-delivery mechanisms such as Thusong Service Centres and one-stop centres
- the Government Information Technology Officers' Council to alert government when and how to intervene to improve service delivery
- active auditing of national and provincial departments' anti-corruption capabilities by the Public Service Commission.

Home affairs

The Department of Home Affairs has a network of offices in all provinces. Where the establishment of fixed offices is not warranted, mobile offices or units service such areas regularly.

The Population Register is being reproduced, and an associated document-management system will be developed and rolled out gradually. This will consist of a large database, an online document-storage system, and a query interface for the retrieval and viewing of electronically stored documentation. The system

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> The establishment of the Client Service Centre means that people no longer have to go to a Home Affairs office just to check on the status of their application.
>
> The centre also benefits those who have to travel long distances to reach an office, those who cannot afford to travel and those who cannot leave work during the day to visit the Department of Home Affairs. The Client Service Centre's toll-free number is 0800 60 11 90.

will reduce processing time for each business transaction, while enhancing information integrity.

Permanent residence

The department is responsible for admitting people suitable for immigration, such as skilled workers who are in short supply locally.

Applications are particularly encouraged from industrialists and other entrepreneurs who wish to relocate their existing concerns or establish new concerns in South Africa.

Those wishing to enter the country as work seekers or for study purposes must have the relevant permit, which is issued outside the country.

Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

The IEC is a permanent body created by the Constitution to promote and safeguard democracy in South Africa. Although publicly funded and accountable to Parliament, the commission is independent of government. Its immediate task is the impartial management of free and fair elections at all levels of government.

A general election took place on 22 April 2009. Voter turnout in all but one province was above 70%. Twenty-six parties contested the election for the National Assembly and 11 parties contested the ballot for the National Assembly and for all nine provincial legislatures.

Parties nominated 9 289 candidates for the national and provincial election, 61,6 % of them male and 38,4% female. Of the 23,18 million people registered to vote, 17,6 million voted (77,3%).

Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (Palama)

Palama (Sesotho for "ascend") was opened in August 2008. The academy, which evolved from the South African Management Development Institute, aims to achieve a massive increase in training courses for managers in the Public Service by involving public- and private-sector educational and training institutions in an expanded training programme.

Seats in the National Assembly, following the election in April 2009	
African National Congress	264
Democratic Alliance	67
Congress of the People	30
Inkatha Freedom Party	18
Independent Democrats	4
Freedom Front Plus	4
United Democratic Party	4
African Christian Democratic Party	3
United Christian Democratic Party	2
African People's Convention	1
Azanian People's Liberation Organisation	1
Minority Front	1
Pan Africanist Congress	1

The academy facilitates and coordinates the programmes by monitoring and ensuring quality assurance of the training delivered by participating educational and training institutions.

The academy is part of the Batho Pele initiative, which aims to get public servants to be service-oriented, strive for excellence in service delivery and commit to continuous service-delivery improvement.