

Press Release



SOUTH AFRICAN
INSTITUTE OF
RACE RELATIONS

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South Africa's road death to murder ratio a global anomaly

South Africa is the only country in the world whose murder rate exceeds its road accident fatality rate, according to the *South Africa Survey*, released by the South African Institute of Race Relations last month.

The murder and road fatality rates for 2010/11 were 32 and 28 per 100 000 people respectively, according to the data sourced from the South African Police Service and the Road Traffic Corporation.

'International data shows that the rate of road deaths is always much higher than the murder rate throughout the world. Road fatality rates ranged from three times the murder rate in the United States to ten times the murder rate in Poland,' said Mr Kerwin Lebone of the Institute's research department.

Only Limpopo and Mpumalanga came close to matching the international norm — they recorded road fatality rates twice their murder rates.

'That our murder rate exceeds killings on the roads does not mean that road fatalities are low — only that our high murder rate is even higher than our high road fatality rate. South Africa in fact has the worst road accident death and the second worst murder figures when compared to 31 countries for road fatalities and over 190 countries for murder,' said Mr Lebone.

South Africa's murder rate has come down by over 50% in the 17 years since 1994, and dropped by almost 7% last year, the *Survey* shows.

'Declining murder figures show that the country is making progress in the fight against violent crime. However, international comparisons of murders and road deaths show that nobody in the police force or anywhere else has reason to be complacent,' said Mr Lebone.

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