



democratically engaged, active and responsible

the General Intelligence Laws Amendment Bill

Public participation

7 December 2023 — 15 February 2024

- non-partisan
- not-for-profit platform
- facilitates public participation
- assists the government at all levels
 - informing
 - facilitating
 - reporting
 - collating data
 - matrix summaries
 - feedback
- assists NGOs



- over **250** completed campaigns in six years
- over 4 million individual submissions delivered
- over 1.2 million subscribers
- nationwide participation
- local, provincial, municipal participation campaigns and surveys
- full digital online and mobile platform
 - over 1 million page views a month
 - over 6 million emails delivered a month
 - over 250,000 social media followers





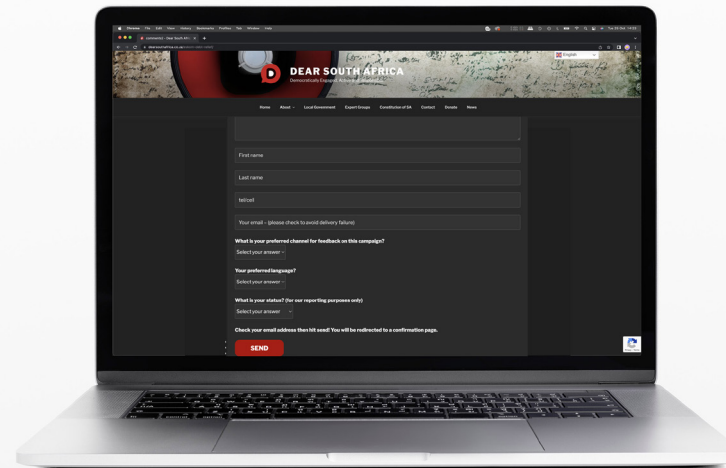
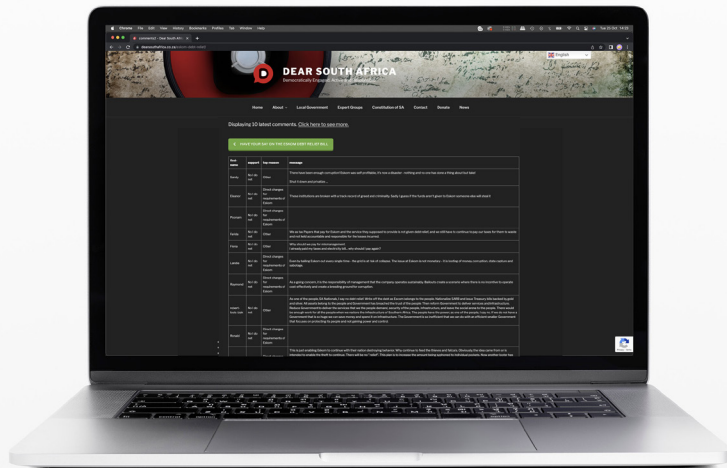
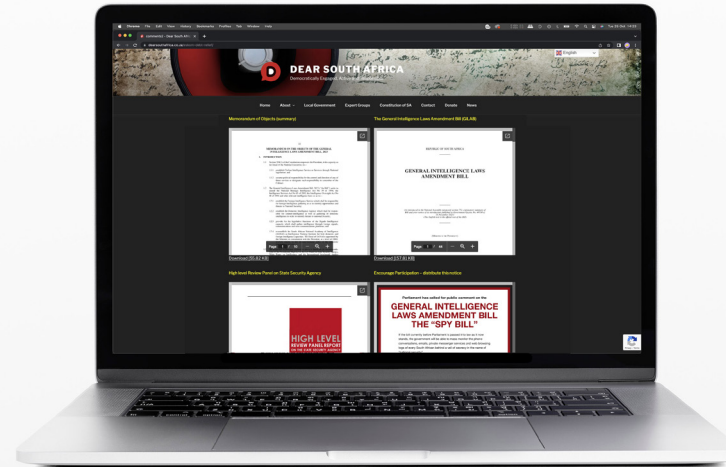
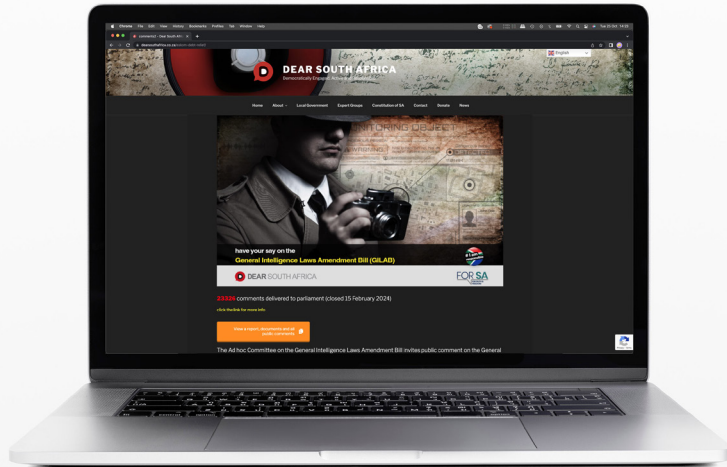
DearSouthAfrica.co.za hosted a participation campaign on a mobile and online platform to facilitate, educate and encourage public participation and comment to shape this Bill.

<https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>

The following was presented on the digital platform:

- 1 - the published related documents as downloadable PDFs
- 2 - a live view of public comments (with a counter and breakdown reflecting number of participants)
- 3 - video and written summaries
- 4 - links to relevant media articles and information
- 5 - policy-related questions based on clauses/chapters of the Bill (presented as multiple choice)
- 6 - a comment facility to for participants to have a say.
- 7 - a schedule of provincial public hearings
- 8 – video recordings of provincial hearings
- 9 – video recordings of Committee meetings

GILAB participation campaign

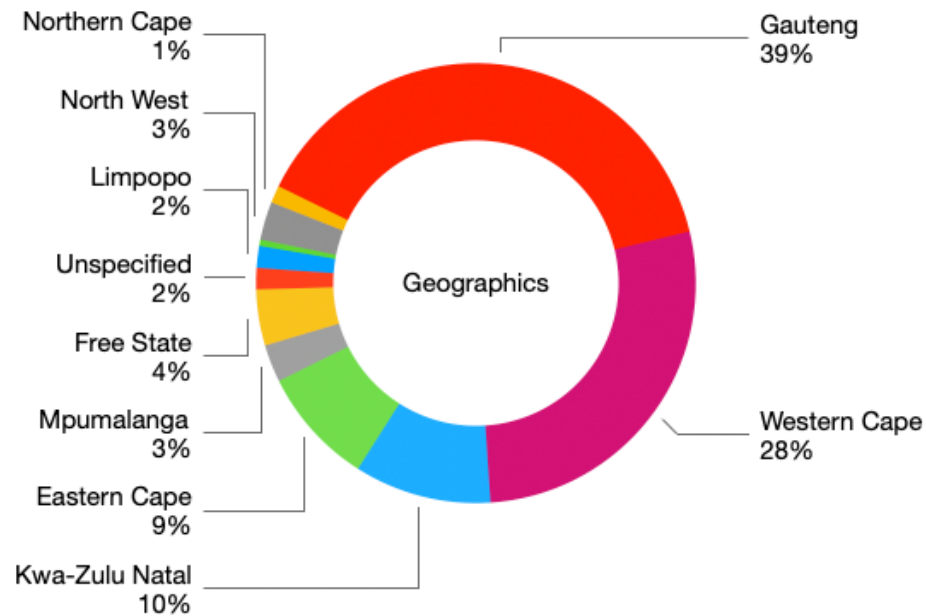


- Each public entry was individually delivered to the Ad hoc Committee. DearSouthAfrica.co.za also captured all public submissions – which have been used to produce this report.
- To accurately reflect public comment, campaigns are unbiased and hold no partisan opinion or agenda. Raw captured data is available as an Excel file.
- A total of **23,326** comments were received and delivered by the set closing of 15 February 2024 (included in the Excel file). This report reflects the entries received by the closing date.



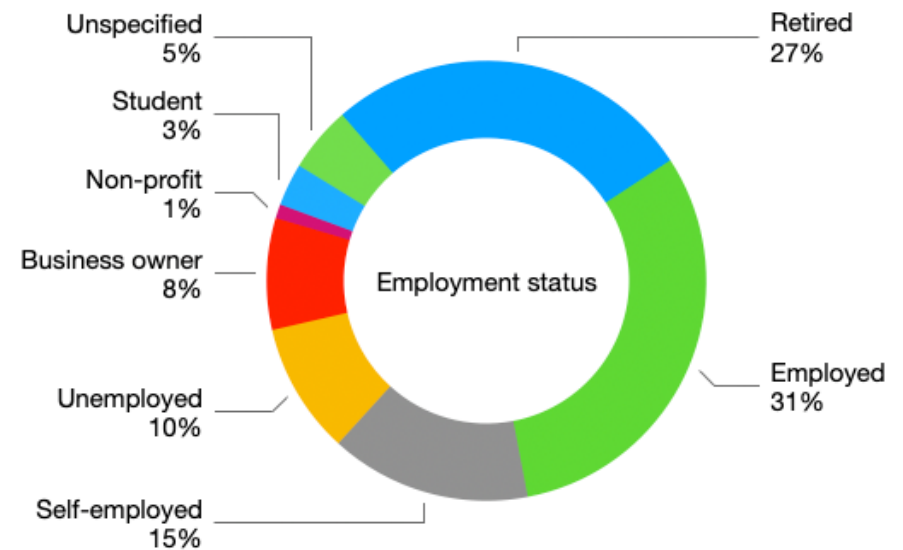
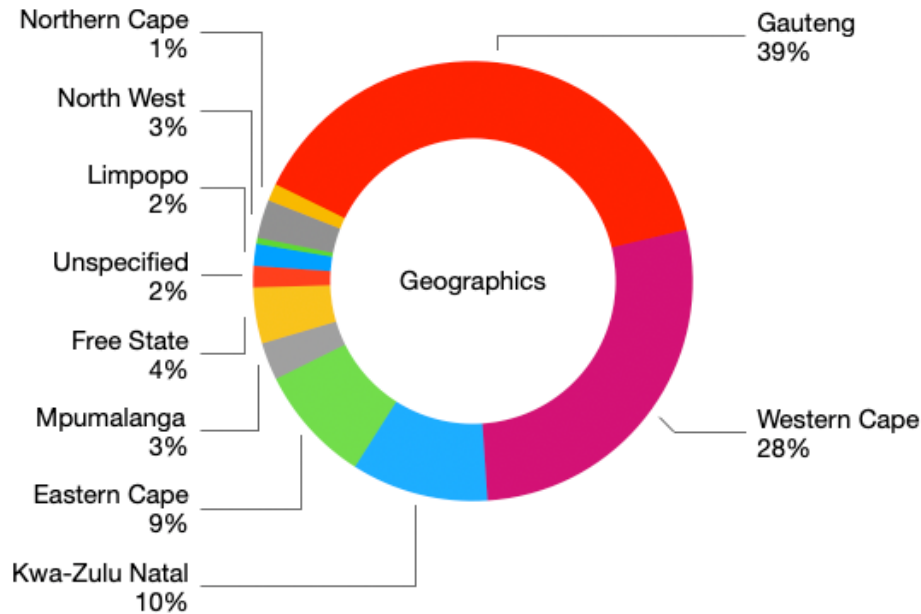
● Geo-location

Comments originated from all provinces with the greatest input arising from Gauteng, followed by Western Cape and KZN. Participation demographics can be further broken down into comment options (yes, no, not fully), employment status, top reason, municipality, city or town, language, and more.



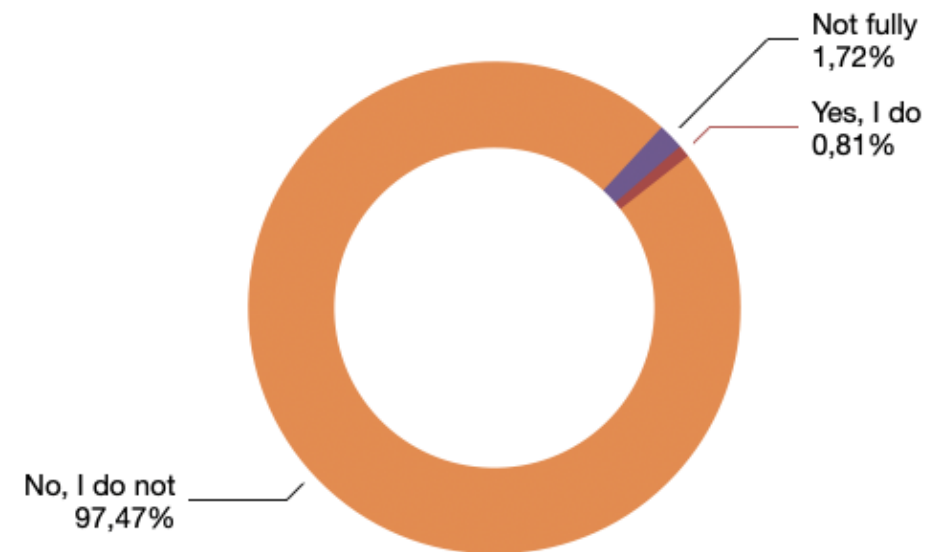
● Geo-location

Comments originated from all provinces with the greatest input arising from Gauteng, followed by Western Cape and KZN. Participation demographics can be further broken down into comment options (yes, no, not fully), employment status, top reason, municipality, city or town, language, and more.

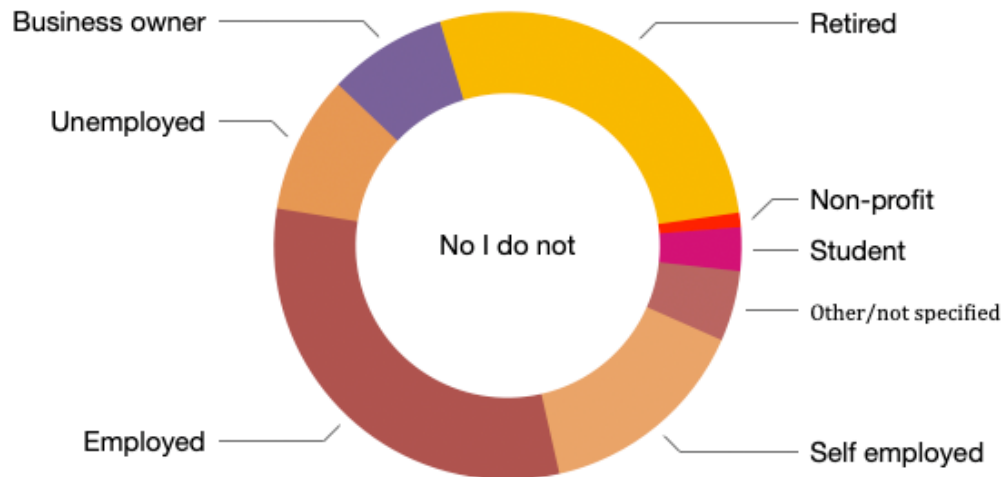


- 1. Do you support the General Intelligence Laws Amendment (Spy) Bill?

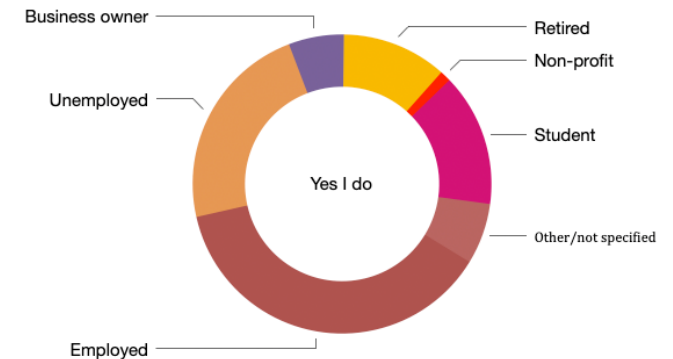
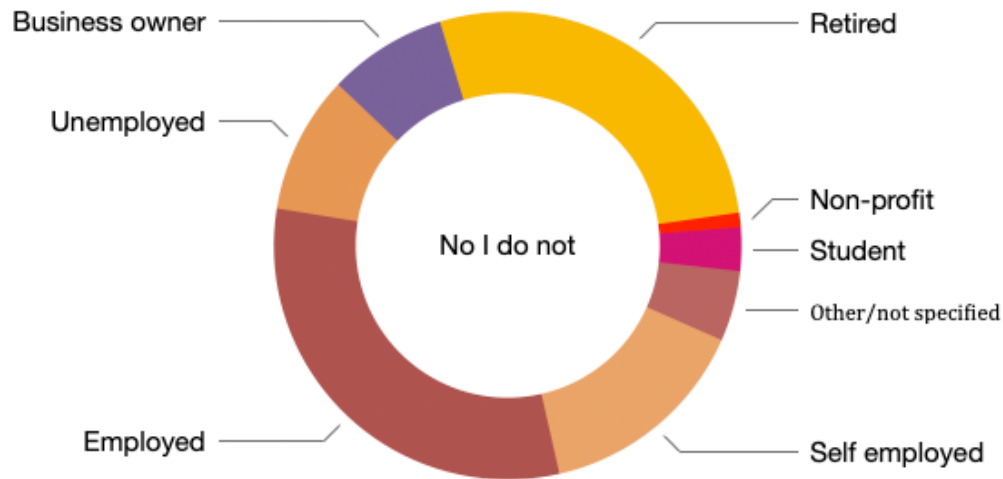
Yes, I do	[189 selected]	0.81
No, I do not	[22,736 selected]	97.47
Not fully	[401 selected]	1.72



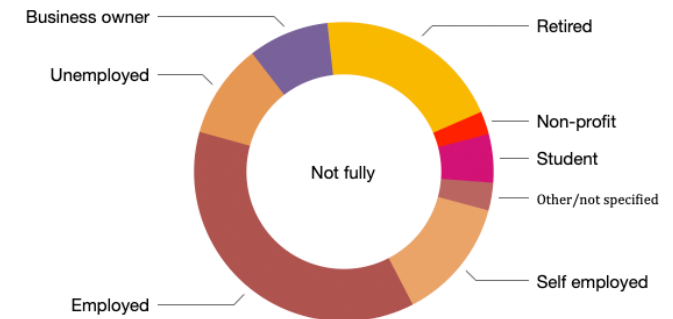
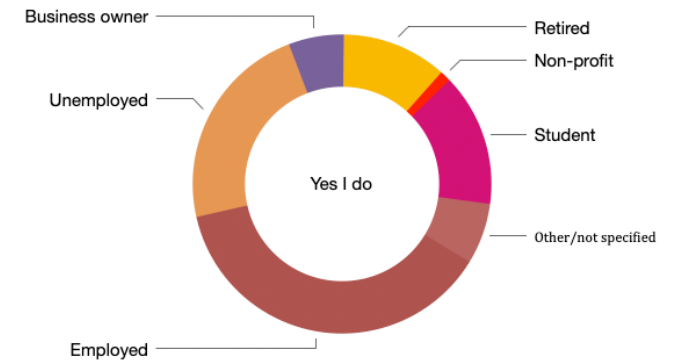
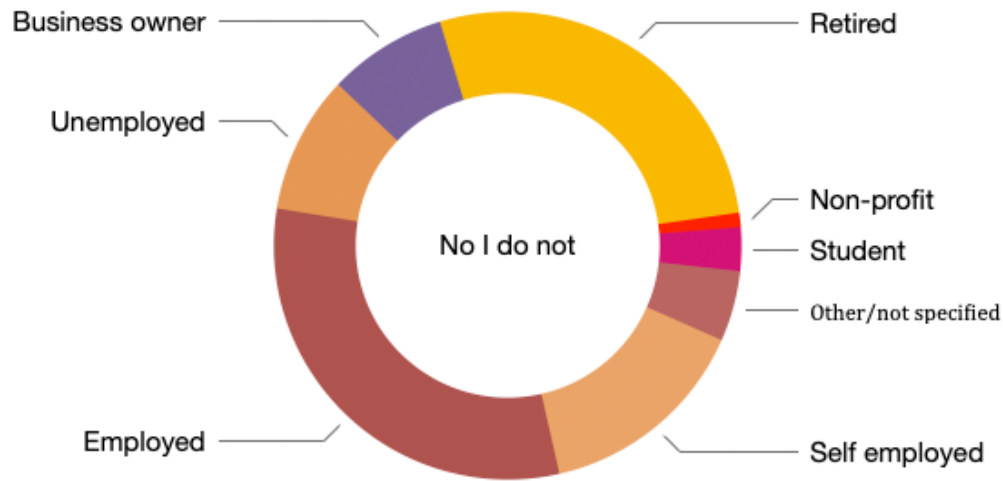
- Selection by employment status



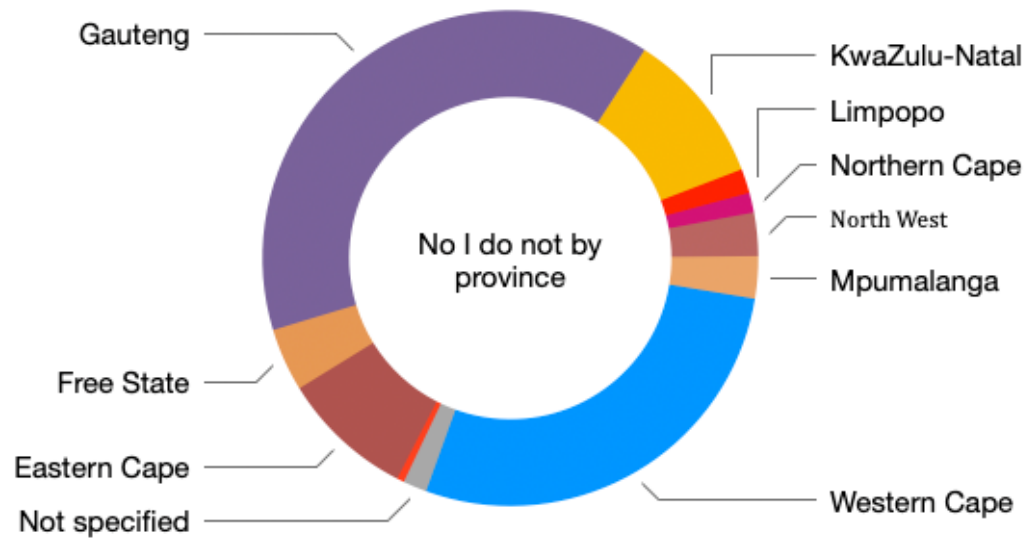
● Selection by employment status



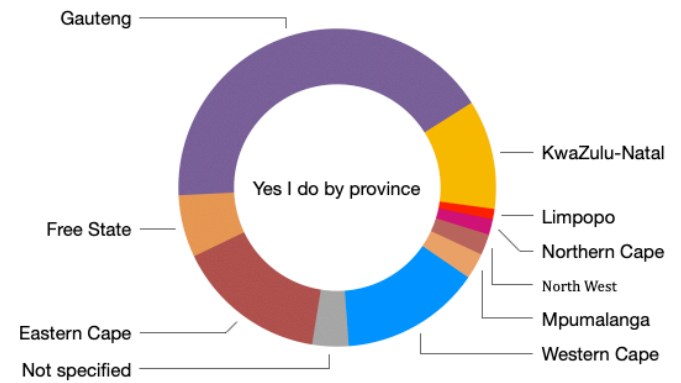
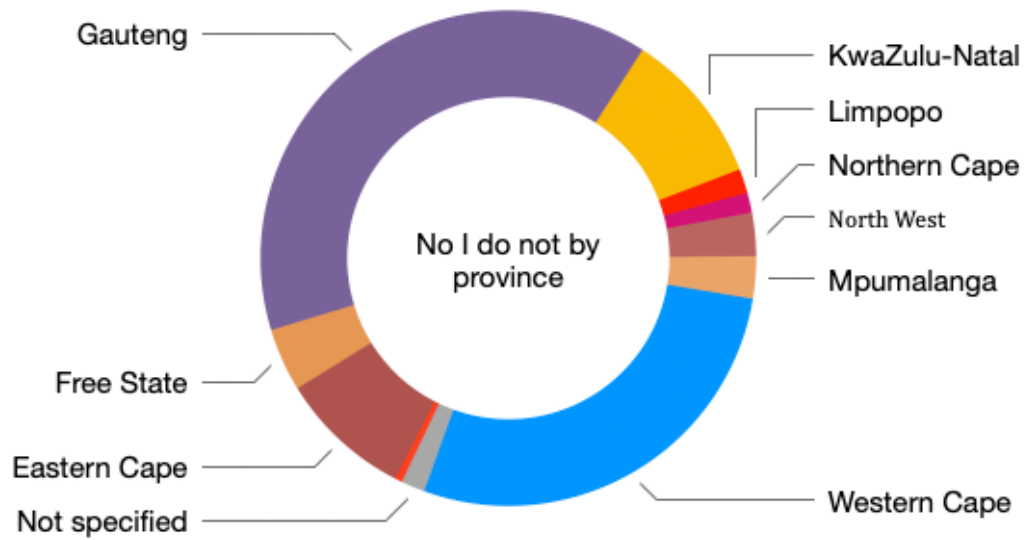
● Selection by employment status



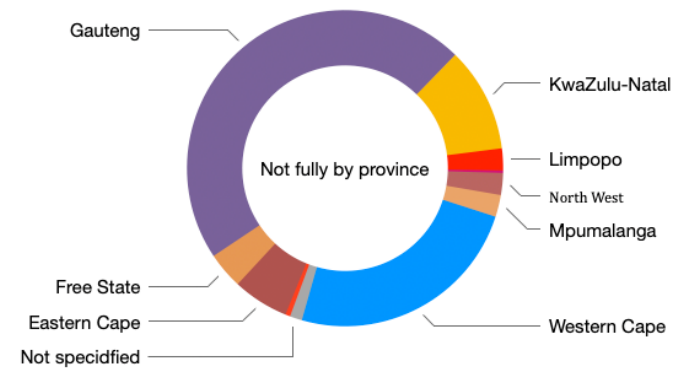
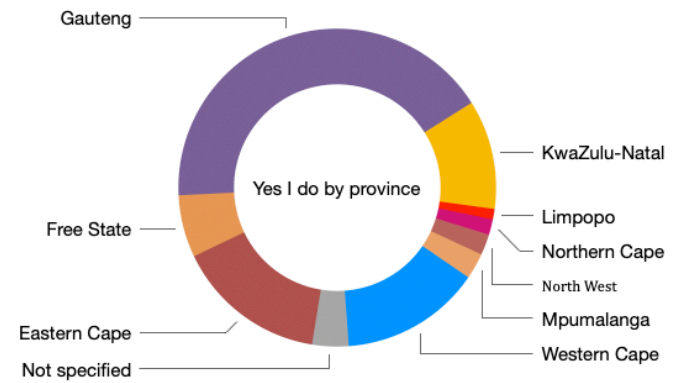
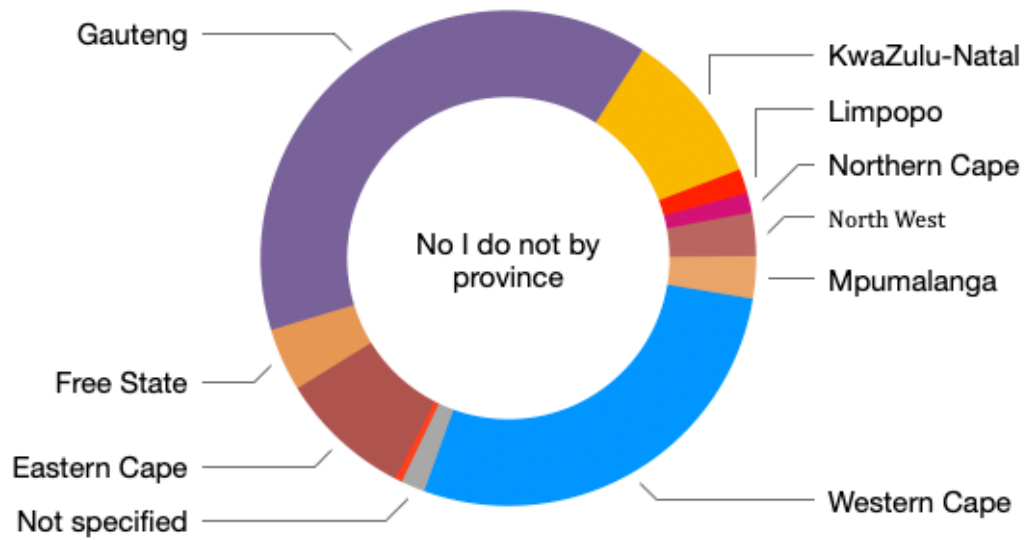
- Selection by province








● Selection by province

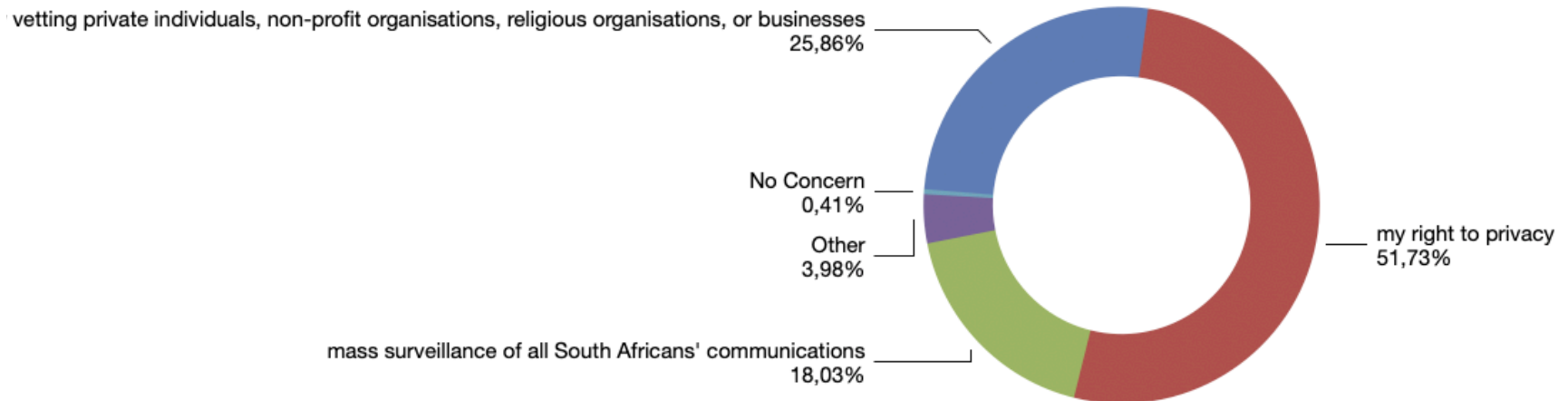


● Selection by province



● 2. What is your top reason?

	"Vetting"	[6,031 selected]	25.86%
	My right to privacy	[12,066 selected]	51.73%
	Mass surveillance of all South Africans' communications	[4,205 selected]	18.03%
	Other	[928 selected]	3.98%
	No Concern	[96 selected]	0.41%



- Top reason by Employment Status

Self-Employed	My right to privacy	1,789
Employed	My right to privacy	3,773
Retired	My right to privacy	3,145
Business Owner	My right to privacy	935
Non-Profit	State Security Vetting	115
Student	My right to privacy	367
Unemployed	My right to privacy	1,307
Unspecified	My right to privacy	661



● HOWEVER

High level data and statistics do not reveal the full picture — and can be misleading.

- Comment by comment analysis
- Broad category analysis



● **Word cloud** — most frequently used words

Filtered words:

Government, Bill, all, state,
South, any, ANC, more, Africa,
want, like, being, need, just,
only, away, every, used, even,
other, way, one, support, about,
another, without, own, over, take,
under, because, current, act,
already, use, proposed, much,
stop, allow, die, legislation, etc,
allowed, many,

Word Frequency

privacy	3,931	surveillance	842
right	3,404	constitution	806
freedom	1,911	speech	804
rights	1,836	private	800
people	1,672	individuals	734
country	1,589	democracy	719
citizens	1,506	abuse	693
power	1,110	corruption	654
security	1,060	corrupt	639
control	1,022	religious	609
against	968		
spy	939		
law	897		



In response to question 1 “Do you support the General Intelligence Laws Amendment (Spy) Bill?”

Of the 189 “Yes, I do” comments

- advocate for stringent vetting measures, particularly regarding individuals and organizations involved in churches, ministries, NGOs, and NPOs.
- cite rising crime rates and security concerns as compelling reasons to support increased surveillance measures.
- emphasize the importance of ensuring that surveillance activities are not politically motivated and that constitutional rights remain protected.



In response to question 2 (top reason)

- **from participants who said “Yes I do” support the Bill**

Government has a responsibility to protect SA citizens from nefarious intentions by anyone that wants access to SA citizens. The spy bill is government being responsible as required by the constitution. *Mmapula – self-employed* **State security vetting**

I support it due to crime rate like killings, rapes, drugs, cash in transit, corruption, illegal immigrants that's escalating in South Africa. I am support it to try protect my loved ones. *Ayanda – business owner* **My right to privacy**

After all we need some sort of control management / legislations in all levels for the country to move forward. *Carol – self-employed* **Mass surveillance**

I support full surveillance as long as the information obtained will not be used for political reasons. *Mpapatsi – unemployed* **Mass surveillance**

Please note these are partial comments for presentation purposes only. The full, unabridged comments are in the accompanying report and within the spreadsheet. All documents are available on the platform at this link <https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>



In response to question 1 “Do you support the General Intelligence Laws Amendment (Spy) Bill?”

Of the 401 “Not Fully” comments

- help combat organized crime if properly executed
- concerns about broad definitions and the potential for abuse
- apprehensions regarding the government’s capacity to effectively manage surveillance infrastructure and ensure proper oversight
- safeguarding civil liberties and privacy rights
- need for independent oversight, judicial approval for surveillance warrants, and accountability measures to prevent abuse of power
- balancing security measures with respect for constitutional rights and democratic values



In response to question 2 (top reason)

- **from participants who selected “Not fully” support the Bill**

There is definitely a need for some sort of surveillance to combat crime - but this Bill needs to be carefully considered and worded to ensure that it protects it's citizens without allowing freedom of speech. It is concerning that it is going to be rushed through Parliament!

Paula – employed **State security vetting**

I feel security surveillance is very important to all. Not only for national security but also for meeting corruption. From the other side too much surveillance is heading for disaster. -USSR for example. Our country is not going to be destroyed by another nation but from within by corruption. Perhaps it is not such a bad thing to be able to use communication and individual surveillance to help stop this. *Angus – self-employed* **My right to privacy**

Please note these are partial comments for presentation purposes only. The full, unabridged comments are in the accompanying report and within the spreadsheet. All documents are available on the platform at this link <https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>



In response to question 2 (top reason)

- from participants who selected “Not fully” support the Bill

I can see the importance of such a bill, however there MUST be safeguards against abuse. This could be that each investigation has to be approved by a judge. Also the person being investigated needs to be informed of the intention, or at least say a week after the investigation begins, for example. The bill in its current form is simply too open to abuse and irresponsible use. *Jan – retired* **Mass surveillance**

My biggest concern is not the warranted checking of potential threats. Governments do that all the time and that's fine, BUT, there has to be a good reason and a judge has to issue a warrant for such a check based on probable cause, not just circumstantial reasons. The way it is currently phrased, will remove this requirement and will throw the gates open to just casually peruse people's private messages and calls for anything from basic political opposition to genuine threats. *Marius – employed* **Other**

Please note these are partial comments for presentation purposes only. The full, unabridged comments are in the accompanying report and within the spreadsheet. All documents are available on the platform at this link <https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>



In response to question 1 “Do you support the General Intelligence Laws Amendment (Spy) Bill?”

Of the 22,736 “No I do not” comments

- concerns centering around the potential infringement of basic rights and freedoms
- threat to the hard-won democratic principles that South Africa has embraced since the end of apartheid
- the erosion of privacy rights
- the bill lacks adequate safeguards against abuse and fails to establish clear criteria for surveillance
- an overreach of government power reminiscent of past oppressive regimes
- antithetical to democratic values and a threat to freedom of religion and expression
- potential to undermine the democratic fabric of South African society



In response to question 2 (top reason)

- **from participants who said “No I do not” support the Bill**

The rights that were so passionately fought for are slowly but steadily being eroded in the government's quest to silence constructive and well earned/deserved criticism. It is IMPERATIVE, for the good of the nation, that this continued attack on the populace's rights, free speech etc etc is brought to an end. This bill is yet another attack..

John – self-employed **State security vetting**

This law was not thought up by our Parliament. It originates from international tendencies and influences towards totalitarianism. Where citizens are increasingly surveilled under the cover of “safety and security”. But the true objective and misuse of surveillance, control over citizens and to quiet dissent and voices that differ from power of the day.

Parliament, please, use your independent mind. Do not subject your citizens to this type of oppression. You have been under oppression. Do not do the same to your own people.

Henk – business owner **My right to privacy**

Please note these are partial comments for presentation purposes only. The full, unabridged comments are in the accompanying report and within the spreadsheet. All documents are available on the platform at this link <https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>



In response to question 2 (top reason)

- **from participants who said “No I do not” support the Bill**

The proposals are similar to what the Apartheid government used pre 1994 and should be rejected on those grounds alone. This is an invasion of privacy and should not be allowed except for justifiable reasons in each individual case and not as a blanket authority. The record of the existing governing bodies is currently seriously flawed and there will continue to be inappropriate and illegal use of this law if passed. It is scary.

Stuart – retired **Mass surveillance**

I say other, as they have far too much power already and this is just another step in returning to the fascist NP past - where one and all were suppressed continuously by the government and their controlling organisation (police in all their disguises, soldiers, undercover etc.etc.) *Carl – self-employed* **Other**

Please note these are partial comments for presentation purposes only. The full, unabridged comments are in the accompanying report and within the spreadsheet. All documents are available on the platform at this link <https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>



In response to question 2 (top reason)

- **from participants who said “No I do not” support the Bill**

This bill destroys everything democracy stands for. It is an invasion of privacy, equality, freedom of religion and gives unlimited blanket power to government that may abuse it at any stage for any reason they see fit. Any voice for change will be silenced. There are still so many rights that must be fought for. This bill will only create an autocratic government and will give free reign to those in power who wish to abuse the system for their own agendas. *Tania – student* **Other**

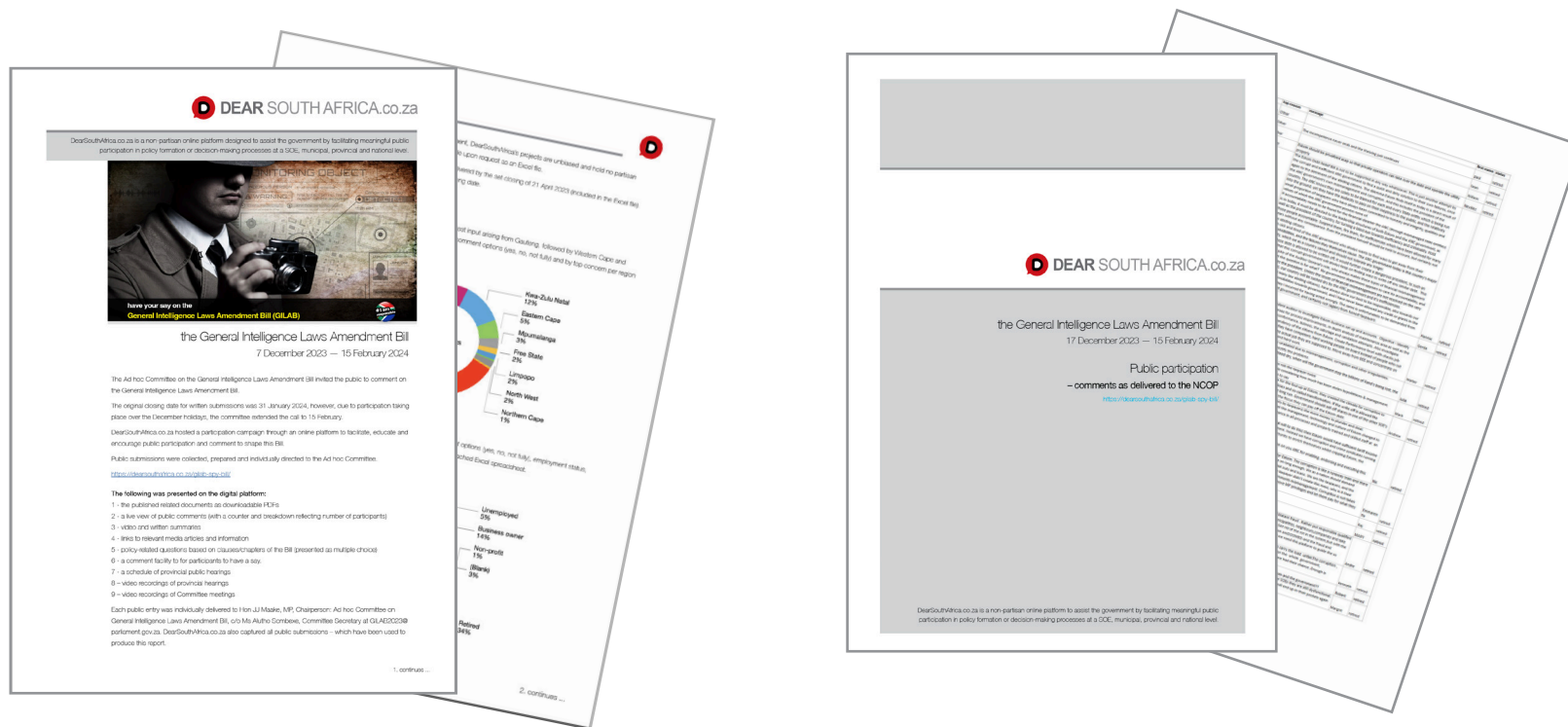
Does the ANC realise that the GILAB will be used against themselves? President Ramaphosa is “rooting out corruption” and will most likely use this Bill to spy on internal employees, Committee members, Ministers and ANC Members of Parliament. Perhaps that is a good thing. *Norm – self-employed* **Other**

Please note these are partial comments for presentation purposes only. The full, unabridged comments are in the accompanying report and within the spreadsheet. All documents are available on the platform at this link <https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>



● **Comments and suggestions from all categories**

Available in the full report and PDF of all 23,326 public submissions — attached to this presentation and available at <https://dearsouthafrica.co.za/gilab-spy-bill/>



● Conclusion

1. An overwhelming objection to the GILAB.
2. Concerns over mismanagement, abuse of powers, transparency and corruption.
3. Suggestions include a withdrawal of the GILAB, use of existing intelligence legislation.
4. Severe concerns over abuse and overreach by government agencies, leading to a degradation of Democracy.
5. Massive negative psychological impact on citizens – a return to an oppressive regime.





democratically engaged, active and responsible

Thank you

dearsouthafrica.co.za

rob.hutchinson@dearsouthafrica.co.za