

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO. 1276

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 26 APRIL 2018**

## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 13 OF 2018

**1276. Mr M Waters (DA) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(1) With regard to the presentation by the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) to the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs on 27 February 2017, what steps are being taken to ensure that the average number of registered voters at voting stations in (a) Gauteng and (b) the Western Cape is reduced from 2 295 and 1 933 registered voters per voting station respectively to the national average of 1 164 registered voters per voting station;

(2) what are the reasons that the most rural province in the country, Northern Cape, has an average of 875 registered voters per voting station, while the Eastern Cape and Limpopo have 710 and 821 registered voters per voting station respectively;

(3) on what date will the IEC ensure provinces have roughly the same amount of registered voters in each voting district instead of the 323% variance between Gauteng and the Eastern Cape? NW1376E

**REPLY:**

The question was referred to the Electoral Commission which responded as follows:

1. In order to ameliorate long queues and waiting times at voting stations on voting day, the Electoral Commission has introduced the concept of voting centres since 2009. Voting centres are operated on the basis of establishing multiple sub-stations within a voting station. In 2016, this enabled the average number of 2296 and 1934 voters in Gauteng and the Western Cape voting stations respectively, to decrease to 1613 and 1474 respectively. We currently have 2599 voting centres, which in turn provides for 6263 substations. The table below takes into account the number of sub-stations in the calculation of the average number of voters per voting stations. In the context of limited venues consisting of requisite amenities and high population density, the concept of the voting centres is the preferred method of operation.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROVINCE** | **LGE 2016 Reg Voters** | **LGE 2016 Voting Districts** | **LGE 2016 Average reg voters per voting district** | **LGE 2016 voting centres** | **Voting Centre sub-stations** | **LGE 2016 Average reg voters per voting station/sub-station** |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| EC | 3,337,532 | 4,699 | 710 | 103 | 215 | 694 |
| FS | 1,470,999 | 1,531 | 961 | 225 | 472 | 827 |
| GT | 6,234,822 | 2,716 | 2,296 | 610 | 1760 | 1613 |
| KZN | 5,411,237 | 4,792 | 1,129 | 764 | 1757 | 935 |
| LIM | 2,556,128 | 3,111 | 822 | 150 | 317 | 780 |
| MPL | 1,919,216 | 1,744 | 1,100 | 184 | 469 | 946 |
| NW | 1,715,460 | 1,723 | 996 | 171 | 359 | 898 |
| NC | 621,310 | 710 | 875 | 20 | 48 | 842 |
| WC | 3,066,649 | 1,586 | 1,934 | 372 | 866 | 1474 |
| **National** | **26,333,353** | **22,612** | **1,165** | **2,599** | **6263** | **1002** |

1. Northern Cape Province has the lowest population size with sparsely distributed human settlements. This influences the availability of facilities serving as voting stations. On the hand, Limpopo and Eastern Cape provinces are comprised of former homeland areas which characterized by village type settlements and which are supported by some type of public infrastructure such as schools, traditional authorities offices which can be used as voting stations. This leads to a lower average number of voters per voting station.
2. The different spatial characteristics of the country, different population densities and distributions, inward migration into urban centres and the uneven spread of public amenities serving as voting stations makes this proposition unrealistic. There are on-going efforts to address these differences including voting centres which enhance voter access to electoral process without destabilising the voters roll which has a geographic basis in its compilation.