

About the Institution

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), a constitutional entity, is mandated to run the process for free and fair elections in South Africa. The accounting authority comprises the five Commissioners who serve as the governing body. The IEC reports to the National Parliament.¹ Expenditure, which totalled R2.86bn in 2024/25, balloons in an election year – in 2026, when local elections will be held, the IEC has been allocated a budget of R4.2bn.²

Flag Status

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
								
Improper appointments	Co-opting key functions	Climate of fear or favour	Corrupt awards	Financial malpractice	Obstructing accountability	Manipulating perceptions	Private gain	Shadow network

ISS Analysis

- ACTis has raised one flag for the IEC and placed one under monitoring.
 - The IEC demonstrates good governance. Few issues of maladministration or corruption have been publicly detected, and the recent appointment process for three commissioners was efficient.
 - In the run-up to the 2026 local elections, key areas to monitor include any new senior and professional appointments at the IEC and the procurement of services related to voting logistics and security.
 - It is concerning that the IEC has avoided addressing the historical issue of the Public
- Protector's findings against Chairperson Mosotho Moepya.

 - The arrest of a sitting Deputy Chairperson is also a major concern. However, the charges are unrelated to the IEC, the courts are handling the matter, and the Deputy Chairperson's term ended in November 2025.
 - Despite the risk that the former Deputy Chairperson's arrest and the 2014 findings against Moepya may cause reputational damage and loss of public trust, this does not appear to have happened as these matters attracted little public attention in 2025 and 2026.



Flag raised



Flag lowered



Under monitoring

Findings

Flag #1

Improper Appointments



The flag is raised because historical findings against the administrative head remain unaddressed.

- Former Commissioner and Deputy Chairperson Nomsa Masuku was arrested in June 2024 on fraud, theft and money-laundering charges totalling R1.2m.³ These charges relate to her time as Head of Corporate Social Investment at Standard Bank from 2006 to 2013. She allegedly awarded scholarships to her friends and family and deposited funds into her personal account. Her case is currently proceeding through the courts.⁴ Masuku was not reappointed when her term expired on 4 November 2025.⁵
- A transparent and timely process was conducted to shortlist and interview candidates to fill three Commissioner vacancies following the expiration of the terms of Moepya, Masuku and Judge Dhaya Pillay on 4 November 2025.⁶ An independent panel, chaired by the Chief Justice and comprising representatives from the Human Rights Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality and the Public Protector, conducted interviews with suitable applicants and submitted a shortlist of eight candidates to the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs. The Portfolio Committee reportedly prioritised continuity, leadership and technical competence when considering the candidates and voted to recommend Moepya, Judge Pillay and Titi Pitso to President Cyril Ramaphosa for appointment.⁷
- The Portfolio Committee voted to recommend Moepya's re-appointment as Chairperson of the IEC in November 2025 despite findings against him by the Public Protector in 2014.⁸ Portfolio Committee members pointed to the IEC's strong record of overseeing successful and complex elections, the need for continuity ahead of the 2026 local elections, and the institution's clean audits as favouring Moepya's re-appointment.⁹ This was despite the Public Protector finding that when Moepya was CEO of the IEC in 2014, he had failed to hand over key evidence during the Public Protector's investigation into procurement irregularities involving former CEO and Chairperson Pansy Tlakula.¹⁰ The Public Protector recommended that the IEC take disciplinary action against Moepya, but none was taken. Moepya was also found to have irregularly allowed institutional funds to cover Tlakula's personal legal costs, without authorisation from the Commissioners.¹¹ Tlakula was found guilty of misconduct in the Electoral Court and resigned.¹²



Flag raised



Flag lowered



Under monitoring

Flag #3

Climate of Fear or Favour



The flag is being monitored for signs of problems with the institutional culture.

- The IEC currently has a 39% vacancy rate for professionally skilled employees – this high level of professional vacancies has been a problem for over five years, stemming from difficulties attracting professionals. The IEC also currently has a 9% vacancy rate for skilled employees, and a 16% vacancy rate for senior management.¹³



Flag raised



Flag lowered



Under monitoring

Recommended Actions

	DUTY BEARER	ACTION(S)	ASSOCIATED FLAGS
1.	Public Protector	Clarify whether prior adverse findings, ethical breaches or unresolved accountability concerns related to appointments at the IEC exist and issue remedial action where warranted.	Flag #1: Improper Appointments



Flag raised



Flag lowered



Under monitoring

The 9 Flags

Flag #1

Improper Appointments

Improper appointments, dismissals or failure to remove individuals in senior positions may be used to drive a corrupt agenda.

Flag #2

Co-opting Key Functions

Informal control may be established over critical functions within the institution to abuse them.

Flag #3

Climate of Fear or Favour

The working culture favours loyalty over duty; alignment with a corrupt agenda is rewarded, and resistance is punished.

Flag #4

Corrupt Awards

Contracts, licences, partnerships, loans and/or investments may be awarded irregularly and repeatedly benefit the same actors.

Flag #5

Financial Malpractice

The institution's financial management practices may be abused to advance a corrupt agenda.

Flag #6

Obstructing Accountability

The institution's internal operations might be deliberately obscured to hide potential misconduct.

Flag #7

Manipulating Perceptions

A public narrative that frames misconduct as innocence may be promoted.

Flag #8

Private Gain

Illicit gains may be distributed to benefit the same actors.

Flag #9

Shadow Network

The same public and private actors may collude to gain control over an institution's assets and functions, benefiting repeatedly.

About ACTis

What is ACTis?

The Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System is an initiative of the Anti-Corruption and Accountability Project at the Institute for Security Studies. It provides analysis on corruption and state capture in South Africa, to inform early intervention and enforcement. It utilises a system of indicators and an AI-driven data-collection and analysis tool, validated by human experts. It identifies risks within individual government institutions and produces actionable recommendations to address them, with a view to disrupting patterns of state capture and corruption.

Findings are shared directly with government and other duty-bearers, civil society organisations, the media and the public, empowering authorities to intervene, strengthening accountability, and enabling citizens activism.

Links to ACTis Information:

Further project information may be found at the following links:

[Terms and Definitions](#)

[Project Methodology and Analytical Framework](#)

[About the Anti-Corruption and Accountability project](#)

[About the Institute for Security Studies](#)

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Flag raised



Flag lowered



Under monitoring

References

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- ² SABC News, IEC receives additional R1.1bn ahead of 2026 local elections, 13 May 2026, <https://iol.co.za/news/politics/2025-12-13-water-and-sanitation-minister-reveals-shocking-r37-million-in-unapproved-payments-to-water-board-members/>.
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- ⁹ TimesLive, Controversial former chief electoral officer Mosotho Moepya recommended for vacancy on IEC, 28 August 2018, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2018-08-28-controversial-former-chief-electoral-officer-mosotho-moepya-recommended-for-vacancy-on-iec/>; Mail & Guardian, Treasury report slams IEC deal and confirms Madonsela's findings, 18 March 2014, <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-03-18-treasury-report-slams-iec-deal-confirms-madonselas-findings/>.
- ¹⁰ Public Protector of South Africa, Inappropriate Moves, August 2013, [https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/wp-content/uploads/migrated/REPORT%20NO%2013%20of%202013%202014%20\(3\).pdf](https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/wp-content/uploads/migrated/REPORT%20NO%2013%20of%202013%202014%20(3).pdf).
- ¹¹ News24, IEC pay back the money, 29 April 2015, <https://www.news24.com/iec-pay-back-the-money-20150429>.
- ¹² The Electoral Court of South Africa is a specialised judicial body established by the Electoral Commission Act of 1996 to oversee electoral disputes, the IEC and the conduct of elections.
- ¹³ Independent Electoral Commission, Annual Report 2019/20, <https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Library-Annual-Reports-IEC>, p. 140; Independent Electoral Commission, Annual Report 2020/21, <https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Library-Annual-Reports-IEC>, p. 94; Independent Electoral Commission, Annual Report 2024/25, <https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Library-Annual-Reports-IEC>, p. 92.



Flag raised



Flag lowered



Under monitoring