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Title: Bay has highest murder rate, with illegal guns and gangs fuelling killings in SA

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Bay has highest murder rate, with illegal guns and gangs fuelling killings in SA

Rorisang Kgosana

Nine metropolitan municipalities in the four major provinces have been red-flagged as the top contributors to murder and violent crime.

Nelson Mandela Bay, with 80 murders per 100,000 people, has the highest murder rate.

SA Cities Network researcher Siphalele Ngobese said there was a similar trend in the City of Cape Town.

"These places have similar drivers in that they experience high gang activities in neighbourhoods.

"There are a lot of illicit firearms and gang activities in the area," she said.

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and other policing

experts, during a seminar yesterday, said only four of the nine provinces contributed to the high murder rate.

"Murder is not increasing dramatically across SA but in specific parts of the country," ISS policing expert David Bruce said.

"The increase is primarily driven by increases in murder in the four provinces: KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Gauteng."

Forty-five people out of 100,000 were killed in the country each year, Bruce said.

However, Ngobese said, the metropolitan municipalities were the largest contributors to the national murder statistics.

"Metropolitan governments grow twice as fast as other

cities and towns.

"Cities are economic centres and experience high rates of crime and violence.

"The nine urban municipalities we studied are home to about 40% of the national population, but contribute 50% to murders," she said.

These metros also contribute 39% to sexual offences, 48% to robberies, 73% to car hijackings, 74% to vehicle theft and 62% to aggravated robberies.

The murder trends show that men are mostly the victims of such crimes, with 60% of murdered victims being men aged from 20 to 39.

Bruce said that, overall, adult males were 81.5% of the murder victims in the

2022/2023 financial year.

Just more than 4% of murder victims were children, with the majority being teenagers aged between 15 and 19.

"Child murders differentiate strongly between the killing of young infants and of preteens.

"The number of ... children increases substantially in the age bracket of puberty ...

"What is striking is that within that age category, the high concentration was in the Western Cape and apparently related to gang activity," he said.

The SA Police Service (SAPS) is struggling to keep up with organised crime and sophisticated crime networks across the country, and the increasing circulation of illegal firearms. — TimesLIVE

