

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

**QUESTION FOR ORAL REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER 157 [CO545E]**

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**Ms MP Themba (ANC-Mpumalanga) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

- (1) Whether (a) government departments and (b) entities in all spheres of government use census results as a basis to inform decision-making; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) Whether any measures are in place to (a) monitor and (b) ensure that census results are used in this regard; if not, (i) why not and (ii) what are the department's plans; if so, what are the relevant details?

CO545E

**REPLY**

- (1) Census data is used extensively across all three spheres of government to inform the planning of government programmes and decisions on the allocation of resources.

The Presidency is busy aligning all strategic plans of government at the national and provincial spheres to the National Development Plan (NDP). The Census results, as well as other data produced by Statistics SA, are a major aspect of what informs the NDP.

National Treasury has, amongst others, used data from the 2011 Census to update the formulas used to determine the allocation of the equitable shares to both provinces and municipalities as well as some of the largest conditional grants (e.g. Municipal Infrastructure Grant). Census data is used to determine these allocations as it provides an objective way of measuring the needs of different provinces and municipalities – for example it gives an indication of number of school aged children in a province or number of households that need free basic services in a municipality. Funding is therefore targeted where the need for services is. Updating the data used with the results of the 2011 Census means that more money is redirected to provinces and municipalities that have been growing faster so that they will have the resources they need to build schools and clinics and provide basic services to their growing populations.

Census data is also used to inform policy in government. For example, we are reviewing the structure of the infrastructure conditional grants for municipalities based in part on what a comparison of the backlogs in the 2001 and 2011 censuses tell us about where we have made good progress in reducing backlogs in access to services and where that progress has been too slow.

Provinces and municipalities also use Census data to plan their services. As the Census is the only survey to produce data that is accurate at municipal level and ward level, it is used extensively in the planning and budgeting of provinces and municipalities. Municipalities use Census data in the compilation of their Integrated Development Plans, and provinces use the data to inform their strategic plans.

- (2) Census data is used in a wide range of government planning documents that are regulated and monitored extensively. Departments, provinces and municipalities are required to use the most recent credible data to inform these plans. This includes Census data as well as other data produced by Statistics South Africa and other data produced by government departments and other agencies.

The monitoring of departmental performance with respect to the targets contained in the NDP is done by the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME).

Following the release of the 2011 Census results provinces and municipalities have been advised to use the data from the Census in their planning and budgeting through forums such as the annual benchmarking exercise conducted with provincial treasuries and through MFMA budget circulars issued by National Treasury to advise municipalities on their budgeting.

Statistics South Africa have also made it easier for municipalities to access and use Census data by releasing a number of products that package data in ready-to-use formats. For example their website now includes compilations of summary statistics for each municipality from the Census.