

A Decent Standard of Living in South Africa costs R7,911, new study finds

The [Decent Standard of Living Measure](#), first piloted in 2006, has determined that South Africans across a spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds viewed 21 socially perceived necessities (SPNs) as a benchmark for a decent standard of living.



Dr Nqobile Zulu, research manager at the Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (SPII).

The survey was conducted telephonically among a representative sample in five South African provinces over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was based on an established measurement model comprising [50 key attributes](#) relating to personal belongings, access to community-based services, activities and relationships with family and friends. These SPNs range from a free-standing home which is strong enough to withstand the weather to access to a cellphone and supermarket in their local neighbourhood.

The cost of these 34 SPNs is R7,911 for each person, according to research partners Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (SPII), Labour Research Service (LRS) and Southern African Social Policy Research Insights (Saspri).



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Dr Nqobile Zulu, research manager at the SPII, commented: “South Africa is a deeply unequal society with half of its population living below the poverty line. Yet, despite these inequalities and high levels of poverty, most South Africans are clear on what the bare minimum is to achieve a decent life.”

Zulu said they hope that the results of the study will be used to inform policy formulation in the fight against poverty.

[Click here](#) for the full list of 34 socially perceived necessities.

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