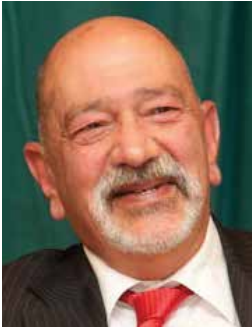


# Social Inclusion



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*The idea of 'social inclusion' is a relatively new one in the policy terrain. To some extent, it has supplanted earlier concepts of social cohesion and social capital. Current thinking around society has moved on considerably since Mrs. Thatcher's notorious dismissal of 'society'.*

In South Africa the term has gained currency because of concern about growing inequalities which, at times, seem to overwhelm any considerations of what it means to be a South African.

This edition of *Focus* explores many of the facets around social inclusion. It explores the concept, it views the idea of social inclusion through the prism of our Constitution, and it reviews some of the economic considerations which are a necessary part of any debate around society, more generally, and social inclusion, in particular. We also consider the problem of education and social inclusion before we review religion and LGBTI rights and social inclusion. Finally, we consider a political case study.

**Willem Meyer** begins our discussion with the problem of social antinomies, particularly those relating to Freedom and Equality. He emphasizes the importance of human qualities which will help us to live with antinomies in our society.

**Michael Cardo's** systematic exposition of social inclusion and policy making in South Africa provides us with an important and central overview. He also examines the problem of Redress, and he cautions against strengthening the role of the state in the economy.

**Amy Meyer** attempts a deconstruction of the concept within the context of our Constitution and she, too, is concerned with the problem of Freedom and Equality.

**Nicoli Natrass** reflects on her time as a Labor Commissioner, and uses the example of the clothing industry to highlight the controversial relationship between minimum wages and successful businesses. She argues that abandoning labor intensive production in favor of high wages will impact on economic growth and employment in South Africa.

**John Luiz** examines the importance of social compacts which are necessary for inclusive development in emerging economies. These compacts can legitimise the political and economic parameters of future development.

**Charles Simkins** looks at the failure of South Africa's education system at its different levels. The unhappy conclusion is that South Africa's education system stunts certain communities and prevents their integration into the technical or professional world.

**Anthony Egan**, using Lotter's recent book on *Poverty, Ethics and Justice*, examines the ways in which poverty excludes people from society. He reflects on whether or not religion has the capacity to reduce the ways in which poverty excludes people or, indeed, whether it leads to a form of exclusion itself.

**Cameron Modisane** reveals what it is like to be a black homosexual in South Africa and, notwithstanding South Africa's very inclusive Constitution, he calls for the need to redress the exclusion of the LGBTI community.

**Daniel de Kadt** analyses the current political dynamics in South Africa in order to assess reasons behind current and future voting patterns and party loyalty. He contrasts political 'insiders', who benefit from political structures and policies, and 'outsiders', who are unaffected or negatively affected by these structures and policies.

We conclude with book reviews by Anne Mc Lennan and Salim Latib, Nicoli Natrass, Stephen Chan and Milton Shain.

