

DIGITAL BUZZ

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS OF THE

#LGE2026



Compiled by
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Sere**



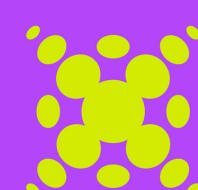
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In line with Moxii Africa's weekly social media analysis, this week's focus remains on South African political parties, the week's trending topic generating 48 168 mentions in the seven-day period. The keywords used coincide with last week's keywords. Monitoring is conducted using Meltwater across LinkedIn, X, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Bluesky, Threads, YouTube.

Insights and Trends framing the week

- ▶ The conversation this week was dominated by anti-ANC and anti-EFF sentiment with posts framing the ANC as responsible for unemployment, corruption and service delivery failures.
- ▶ Figures and candidates linked with the EFF are polarising with both enthusiastic support and criticism over their ideologies and governing ability.
- ▶ Action SA and the Freedom Front Plus also emerged as frequently promoted alternatives for the two parties.
- ▶ Immigration and xenophobia remained central political flashpoints with high-engagement posts debating the impact of undocumented migration jobs and township economies.
- ▶ Other posts reject violence against foreigners and emphasize African solidarity especially through Ramaphosa's comments in his address at the 46th SADC Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government in Durban.
- ▶ Economic strife and public service failures drove anger online with unemployment, delayed NSFAS payments and ESKOM reform among the most cited grievances especially among the youth in major cities.
- ▶ Public attention also rewards stories of achievement and civic pride with a story about Limpopo learners representing Africa at a science competition in China generated a strong positive engagement and praise



About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE) –working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via [PAdRe](#), and holding candidates accountable.

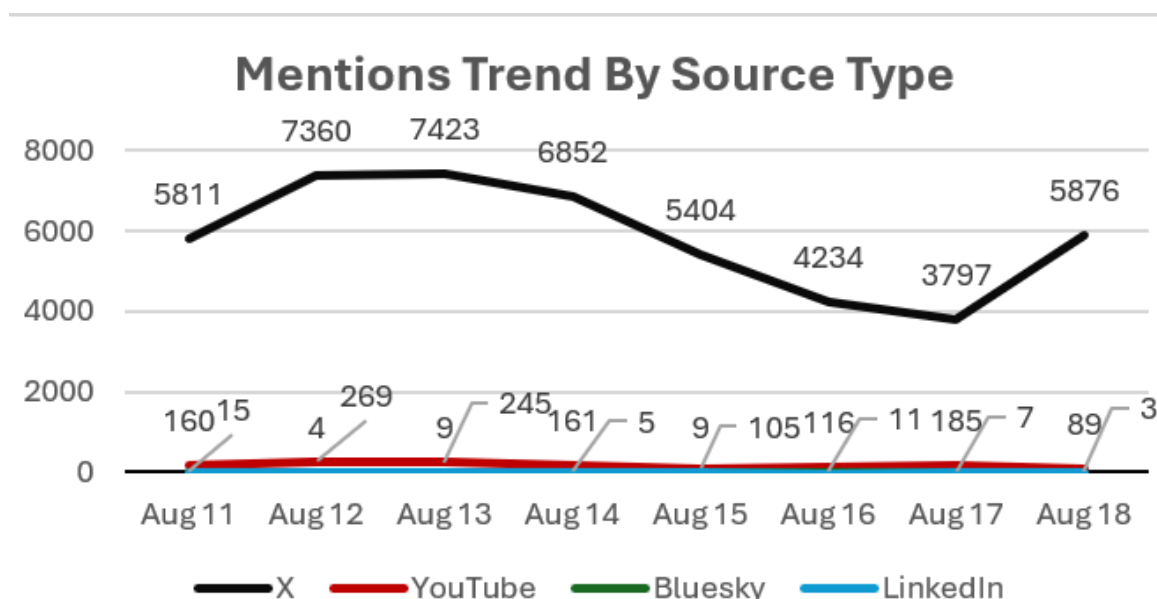
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Overview: X dominated online discourse between 13 and 18 August, driven primarily by event-linked engagement.

Peak Activity: Volume peaked at 7,423 mentions on 13 August, driven by viral video commentary and elevated anti-ANC and anti-EFF sentiments.

Weekend Decline: Mentions dipped to 4,234 on 16 August, reflecting typical weekend lulls and a quieter news cycle.

Rebound: Activity recovered on 17–18 August, fuelled by heightened interest in President Cyril Ramaphosa's address at the 46th Ordinary SADC Summit.

Top Keywords and entities- What people are talking about



The most talked-about topics this week centre on the ANC (22.9K mentions) and the EFF (13.2K mentions), reflected by the prominent presence of their leaders Cyril Ramaphosa and Julius Malema in the word cloud. Beyond party politics, SADC, Eskom, and NSFAS dominate the conversation, pointing to deeper public frustration around energy reform, student funding failures, and Ramaphosa's recent remarks at the 46th SADC Ordinary Summit, which sparked significant backlash over his stance on foreign nationals. The appearance of #drtlaleng4mayor signals active candidate campaigning in Johannesburg, while Action SA, the DA, and MKP feature alongside hashtags like #voteEFF and #voteANC2026, confirming that voter mobilisation is already well underway across party lines. Geographic mentions of Johannesburg, Durban, Tshwane, and Cape Town, together with the #lge2026 hashtag, suggest this mobilisation is playing out at a local government level ahead of the 2026 elections.

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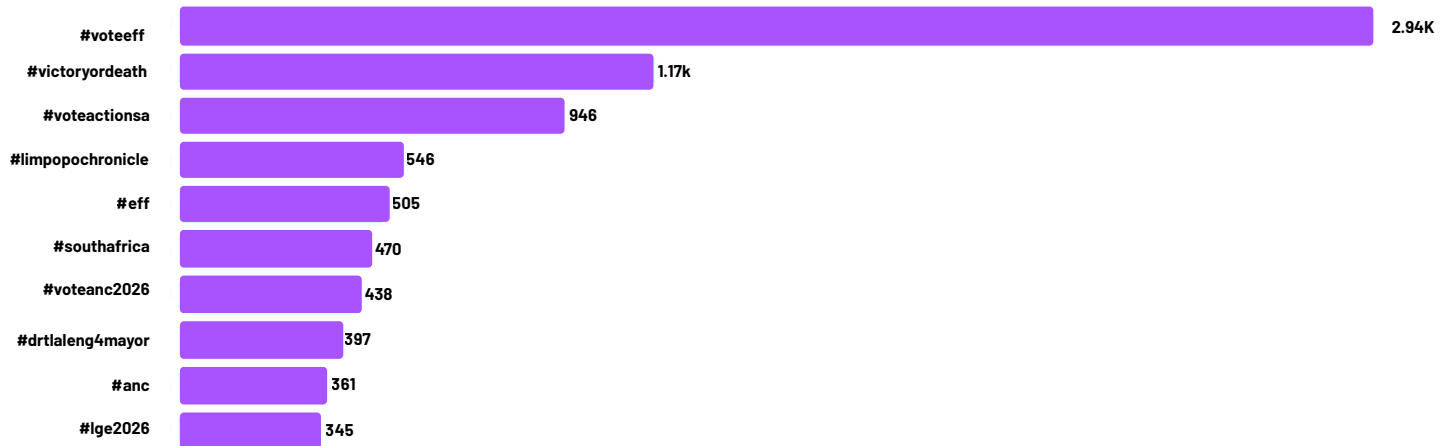
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Top 10 hashtags



Top 10 Authors by Engagement, views and Reach

Accounts	Mentions	Estimated Views	Engagement	Reach
1  Economic Freedom Fighters	30	520K	7.44K	71.2m
2  The Patriot za	2	77.7K	7.18K	548
3  Herman Mashaba	24	673K	7K	19.1m
4  History ZAR	19	132K	4.96K	2.66m
5  Slaughter.	43	171K	4.59K	2.14m
6  Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng	7	161K	4.32K	1.03m
7  Richard Spoor	1	69.9K	4.29K	73.7K
8  Michael Beaumont	9	234K	4.12K	164K
9  IG:Joy-Zelda	5	294K	3.91K	332K
10  Dr Mike Mikia Ramothwala	2	50.4K	3.66K	63.2K

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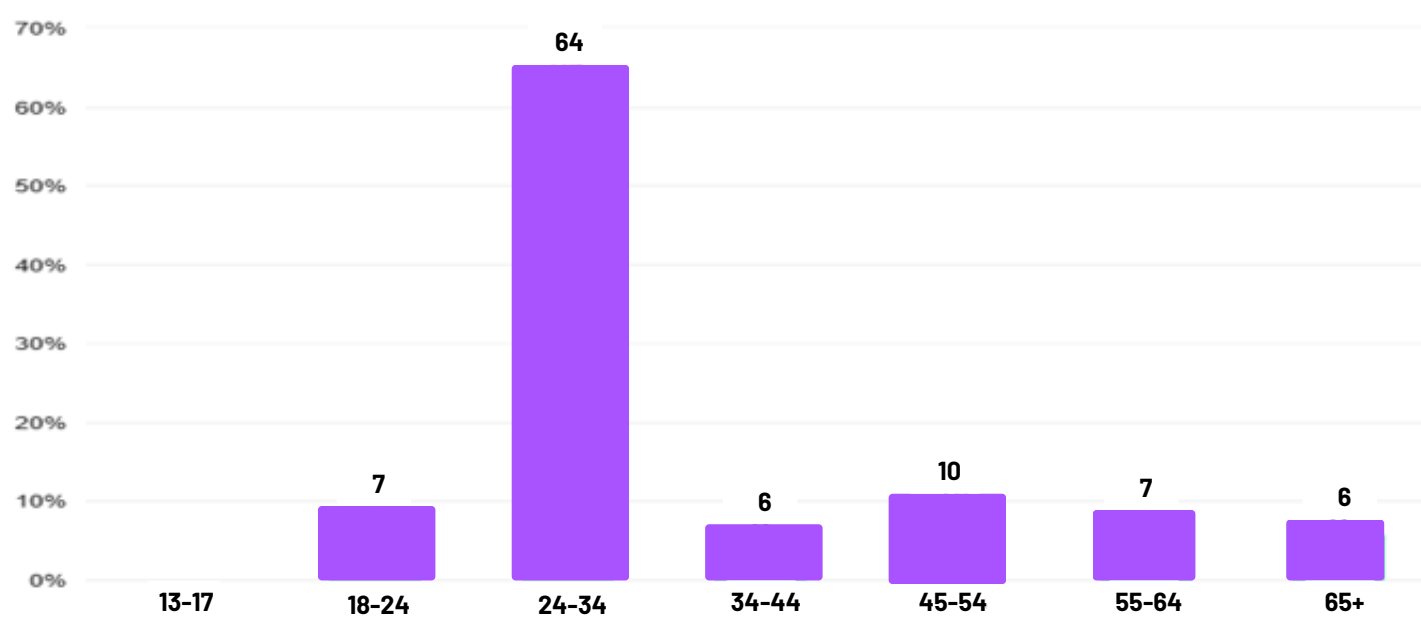
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This ranking of the **top 10 authors by engagement, reach, and views** suggests that a small number of influential accounts are shaping much of the online discourse. High-profile political figures and parties (like the **EFF** and **Herman Mashaba**) generate significant visibility and reach, while smaller accounts (such as **The Patriot za** or individual commentators) achieve strong engagement relative to their size, showing that niche voices can still spark impactful conversations. Overall, the data highlights how both established political actors and independent commentators contribute to the dynamics of online debate, with reach and engagement not always proportional to the number of mentions.

Age Breakdown of Authors



The age breakdown demonstrates a breakdown by age ranges inferred from author bios. The age breakdown reveals that the **25-34 age group** dominates the conversation, accounting for **64%** of all engagement surpassing every other demographic by a significant margin. This is consistent with what we know about X's user base in South Africa, where young adults are the most active political commentators online. It also confirms that most of the youth is politically aware of the issues that affect them and are present in the elections conversation.

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Conclusion

Week two of monitoring confirms that the online political conversation ahead of the 2026 Local Government Elections is growing both in volume and intensity. This implies that the digital public space has become a hub where party loyalty, identity and accountability are being actively debated driven largely by the 25-34 age group emphasising the contribution of the youth in political decision making and the conversation at large.

The dominant narratives this week reveal that voters are connecting local government directly to national failures and poor service delivery. Ramaphosa's address and statements about foreign nationals at the 46th SADC Ordinary Summit added a regional dimension to an already volatile conversation further polarising sentiment at a critical moment in the campaign cycle. Meanwhile, the sustained visibility of Julius Malema and the EFF confirms that the party remains one of the most polarising and closely watched forces in the online election conversation and the party to watch when it comes to the conversation surrounding Afrophobia.

As voter registration approaches and the formal campaign period begins, these conversations will only intensify. The weeks ahead will be telling not just in terms of volume but also whether citizens will make the right decision on election day.



For any questions, comments, or clarifications, please contact Moxii Africa
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