WEEK 10

DIGITAL BUZZ

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS OF THE #LGE2026



Compiled by
Keamogetswe Sere

Edited by
Ntombifuthi Kubeka

Designed by
Kgothatso Baatile Mohale

www.moxiiafrica.org

Introduction

For Moxii Africa, monitoring social media conversations during elections is critical because online platforms have become a key space where political information is shared, debated, and consumed. Social media not only reflects public opinion but also influences voter perceptions, political narratives, and the spread of information. By tracking these conversations, we can identify the issues shaping public discourse, assess how political actors engage with citizens, and highlight whose voices are being heard or overlooked. This monitoring also helps us evaluate the visibility of underrepresented groups and the quality of information available to voters. Ultimately, it provides valuable insight into the information environment that influences democratic participation and voter decision-making.

The tenth edition of Moxii Africa's social media election monitoring series continues to come at a pivotal moment in the electoral calendar. At this stage, online conversation is less a running commentary than a view of what voters are weighing before they decide. Campaign promises, claims about candidates, and arguments over the electoral process are competing for attention while many people are still making up their minds. Each vote cast on the 4th of November will help determine who runs the municipalities people live in, from the water in their taps to the roads outside their homes and the result will shape local government for the next five years.

As in previous editions, monitoring is conducted using Meltwater platform using the same keyword set covering Afrophobia and related mobilizations, service delivery and the South African elections more broadly. Keeping the keywords consistent allows trends to be compared reliably from week to week.

Insights and Trends framing this week

- Immigration and asylum policy dominated public concern for a second consecutive week. Posts alleged official complicity, administrative failures and pressure on jobs and services linked to undocumented migration.
- Discussions increasingly reflect political contestation with parties assigning responsibility for migration management while electoral authorities continue efforts to counter misinformation around voter eligibility and participation.
- Anti-migrant sentiment remains prominent across platforms, although counternarratives warning against xenophobia and the targeting of foreign nationals continue to emerge.

- Election engagement became more polarized and anti-incumbent, with multiple posts predicting ANC decline for demanding its removal. This contrasted sharply with ANC campaign messaging and leadership claims of endurance.
- Opposition parties continue to leverage service delivery, governance and accountability concerns to mobilize support, particularly in local government-focused campaigning.
- Allegations of electoral misconduct, unfair advantages and political funding disputes continue to fuel contestation and mistrust between rival political groupings.
- Government performance came under scrutiny across sectors with criticism targeting perceived failures in public safety, service delivery, healthcare, employment and accountability under national leadership.
- High profile political figures continue to attract scrutiny. Gayton McKenzie's sports portfolio drew repeated criticism over delayed VAR, facilities and Formula One commitments, despite a forthcoming VAR announcement.
- Cost of living concerns remain present in the conversation, although mitigation measures and government interventions receive comparatively less engagement than criticism of governance failures.
- Land reform remains a recurring policy theme, particularly around expanding ownership opportunities and supporting emerging black farmers.
- The government presented state-land transfers and title deeds for black farmers as a route to expanding commercial agriculture and the Presidency highlighted blended finance through the Land Bank for emerging and commercial farmers.

What people were talking about

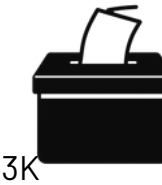


About Moxii Africa's Election Work

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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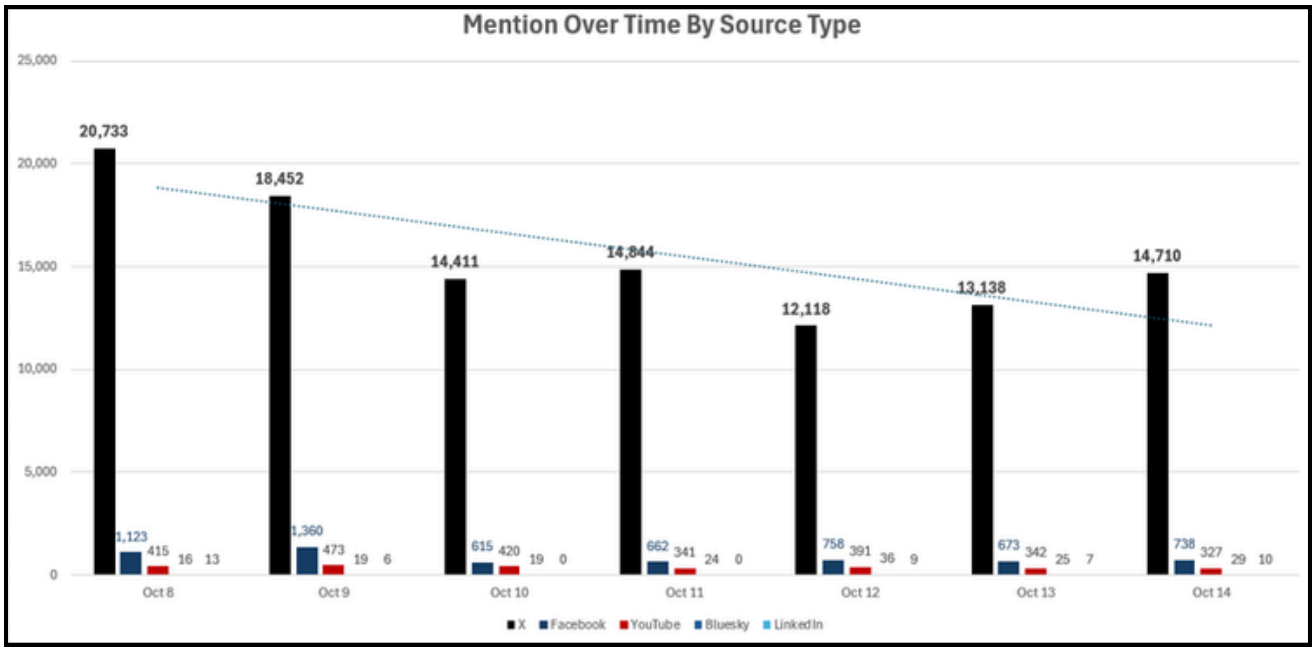
Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.



- **T**he ANC remained the most discussed political party in the dataset with 53.3K mentions which is an increase from 40.8K mentions from last week, reinforcing its position as the primary focus of both election campaigning and public criticism.
- Posts urged voters to remove the ANC and linked its rule to declining devices, unemployment and corruption.
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- ANC campaign messaging attempted to counter these narratives by emphasizing community engagement, service delivery improvements, welfare programmes, door-to-door and church-based campaigning in Mpumalanga.
- Local contests were framed around municipal performance with ANC representatives blaming DA-led coalitions for Nelson Mandela Bay's decline and analysts flagging coalition instability as a risk.
- EFF-linked hashtags such as ***#iamvotingeff***, ***#victoryordeath*** and ***#voteeff2026lge*** again outnumbered ANC-branded ones such as ***#letsbuildbettercommunities*** and ***#anc.***
- Immigration increasingly because a political liability for the party, with critics accusing the ANC-led government of failing to manage migration, border security and asylum processes.
- **Concourt** (2.58K mentions) and **Constitutional Court (**2.03K mentions) became highly visible following ongoing disputes surrounding asylum law implementation and election administration.
- The asylum ruling transformed into a political blame contest, with ANC and DA figures disputing responsibility for the implementation of the asylum directive within the Government of National Unity.
- The ruling became a claim contest within the GNU with ANC figures including Nomvula Mokonyane attributing the disruption to DA Home Affairs Minister Leon Schreiber and commentators arguing both parties share responsibilities.
- Home affairs later withdrew its implementation directive, citing operational and public safety concerns. Officials and institutions, including the IEC, repeatedly clarified that asylum access does not automatically grant citizenship, refugee status and voting rights, highlighting the extent of misinformation surrounding the issue.
- Protests in Durban and Soweto reportedly escalated into arson, looting, arrests and military deployment and Deputy President Mashatile called for calm.
- The Constitutional Court also featured in discussions regarding the ANC's challenge over candidate-list submissions, raising broader debates about electoral procedures, political participation and administrative fairness.
- Herman Mashaba and ActionSA were criticised for foreigner-focused campaigning despite a reported polling decline in Johannesburg and the IFP reinforced a hard-line position.

- **Jacinta Ngobese-Zuma** and **March and March** drew 1.75K mentions with demands for deportations, tighter borders and citizen-reserved trading opportunities.
- The keywords **government contracts** and **News24** gained prominence following reporting relating to government contracts linked to Jacinta and associates.
- The resulting debates generated significant discussion around media credibility, political bias, accountability, journalism standards and government procurement oversight.
- Supporters accused News24 of bias and filed a complaint with the Press Ombud while others deafened scrutiny of tender awards. Commentary also referenced threats against a News24 journalist.
- Election administration featured through the ANC's Constitutional court case over 181 candidates excluded in 6 municipalities after the electronic final submission step was not completed with the IEC arguing that deadlines are essential to equal treatment.

Mentions by Source Type



- **Overview:** X continues to remain the dominant platform for election related conversations throughout the reporting period, generating more than 12 000 mentions daily and peaking 20 733 mentions on 8th of October. Facebook consistently ranked second, producing between 615 and 1 360 mentions per day while YouTube, Bluesky and LinkedIn contributed comparatively low volumes. Overall, conversations volumes trended downward from the high recorded on 8th October before recovering slightly on 14 October, indicating that a major event drove exceptional engagement at the beginning before attention gradually shifted toward routine election campaigning and electoral preparations.

- **Peak Activity:** The reporting period opened with the week's highest volume on X with 20 733 on the 8th of October before declining to 18 452 on the 9th of October and 14 411 on the 10th of October. Even though mentions remained elevated this week, conversations did not return to the observed levels on the 8th of October.
- **Peak Drivers:** Our findings suggest that 8 October marked a significant turning point in online election-related discussions. This surge in activity was driven by the convergence of several high-profile developments that captured widespread public attention. Chief among these was the asylum and Constitutional Court controversy, which elevated the conversation from an online debate to a national political and public-order issue with direct implications for the electoral process.

The Constitutional Court ruling became a central electoral issue with parties and activists disputing who is accountable for implementing asylum procedures. The ANC, DA, ActionSA and activist groups all used immigration as a campaign issue. Campaigning also intensified across parties with immigration governance failures coalition instability and service delivery all in play.

Post Peak Decline: Volume on X decreased from the peak to a low 12 118 on 12 October, and Facebook more than halved to 615 by 10 October. The decline appears to have been driven by the gradual de-escalation of the immigration-related controversy that dominated the discussion this week. As the immediate crisis subsided, conversation shifted away from protest activity and misinformation toward more routine election-related discussions including campaign events, coalition negotiations, and voter mobilizations. Government initiatives aimed at countering misinformation and encouraging lawful civic participation also contributed to a less confrontational online environment.

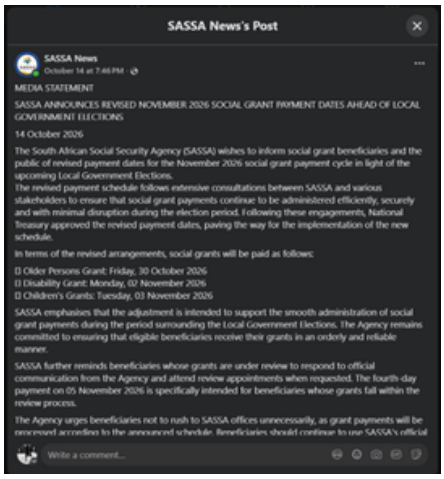
Top 10 Authors

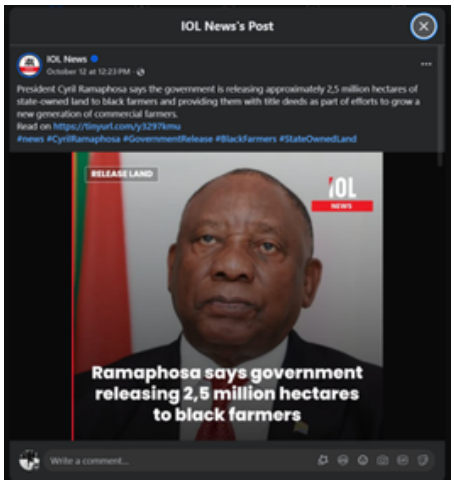
Accounts		Mentions	Estimated Views	Engagement	Reach
1	Comment on Herman Mas...	17	249K	28.6K	3.56m
2	Comment on IOL News	17	527K	24.6K	7.53m
3	Comment on The News Vi...	39	282K	23.8K	4.03m
4	Briefly - South African News	19	2.8m	23.3K	40m
5	Comment on MyANC	318	5.02m	21.8K	71.7m
6	Max	17	180K	19.3K	208K
7	Comment on SABC News	955	5.01m	15.5K	71.6m
8	Comment on Economic Fr...	110	5.73m	15.4K	81.8m
9	Micky Jnr African Football ...	4	115K	13.8K	1.65m
10	Nana_Ndz	4	86K	12.7K	13.3K

- Facebook took 8 of the 10 places this week even though it carried only about 5% of mentions. 6 of those eight are comment sections on pages rather than the page's own posts so the table shows how audiences respond to parties and media outlets as much as what those pages publish.
- Comments on Herman Mashaba's Facebook page ranked first. His own account was in the top 10 in several earlier weeks, so his page remains a focal point, now through audience comments.
- The comments centred on ActionSA's stance on immigration and putting South Africans first, community engagement on illegal immigration, asylum seekers and local services and the party's campaign to form the government and fix Johannesburg.
- Comments on the EFF page and on MyANC also ranked in the top 10. This suggests party pages across the board are drawing heavy audience interaction as polling day nears.
- News Outlet pages were a major venue for the discussions. Comments on SABC News recorded 955 mentions, the most of any entry in the table, while comments on IOL News and the Briefly News page both ranked in the top 4.

Top 5 Most Engaged Content











Click on the image to see the actual post

Call to action for the public and platforms

As the local government elections draw closer, online conversations are increasingly being shaped by debates around immigration, governance, service delivery and electoral integrity, with this week's discussions highlighting growing political polarization, persistent anti-migrant sentiment, heightened scrutiny of government performance and continued contestation over election administration. The prominence of immigration and asylum-related issues, alongside concerns about misinformation and public trust, suggests these themes are likely to remain central in the digital conversation as parties intensify campaigning and voters make their final decisions. As election day approaches, the public is encouraged to verify information before sharing it, rely on credible and official sources, and engage respectfully online, while social media platforms should continue strengthening efforts to counter misinformation, promote authoritative election information and ensure that harmful or xenophobic content does not undermine democratic participation and social cohesion.

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Stay ahead of the LGE26 narrative with Dexter, Moxii Africa's media monitoring platform that captures live and near-live election trends across print, broadcast, and digital news. Discover who gets heard, what drives headlines, and how media quality shapes public understanding in real time.

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CONTACT US

For any questions, comments, or clarifications, please contact Moxii Africa Formerly Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) from Media Monitoring Africa on (011) 788 1278 or email:keamos@mma.org.za