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"Metropolitan Government in South Africa"

This paper analyses the evolution of metropolitan government in South Africa. Since 1995, South Africa has gone from having no metropolitan government, to a two-tier, and now to a single-tier metropolitan system. The ruling African National Congress prefers single-tier metropolitan authorities as a means to, inter alia, promote redistribution of resources and services, promote strategic land-use planning and facilitate economic and social development. Our major thrust is an examination of the process that led to the introduction of six metropolitan governments, and the theoretical debates that underpinned this decision. We also analyse new types of executive systems, forms of public participation, development and service delivery. After a preliminary analysis of the performance of the new metropolitan governments, we argue that structural reform, territorial changes, development local government and new forms of service delivery have seriously overburdened local government in the short term and have detracted from service delivery.