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South Africa's embrace of the social economy.

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Abstract

In this Masters Research Report I explore how South Africa, in reaction to the global economic crisis's impact on national unemployment statistics, has embraced the social economy. As this is a recent undertaking of the state, this research covers the timeline of events pertinent to what I determine to be the tipping point of the social economy in South Africa between 2009-2011. Based on documentary analysis and in-depth interviews with key actors determined to be 'experts' in the field, this research attempts to gain an understanding of how the concept of the social economy and its organizations of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise are being transposed onto the South African landscape, specifically in the Gauteng province. By examining the trend of the social economy and how it is being conceptualized in the country, this research aims to understand the implications for the future of South Africa's socioeconomic development path.