

# CHANGING VOTING PATTERNS?

*Ebrahim Fakir & Waseem Holland  
Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA)*

## ABSTRACT

Following the 2011 local government elections, most analysts seem to suggest that there is a shift away from the predominantly African party towards the traditionally white but non-racialising opposition. It is said that this pattern of results marks the onset of a trans-racial politics. This article examines this hypothesis. It does this by analysing voter turn-out and its implications on the African National Congress (ANC) and voting pattern for the Democratic Alliance (DA) within traditionally African communities. The intention in this exercise is to determine the level of African support that the DA received in the 2011 local government elections and compare this to the level of support it received in the 2006 local government elections from African voters. The variance between the two is indicative of whether or not the DA is indeed growing support among African voters. In this article the question of whether voting patterns are changing is answered.

## INTRODUCTION

The results of the 2011 local government elections yielded contrasting fortunes for two of South Africa's largest political parties. Support for the governing African National Congress (ANC) dipped, while the official opposition, and the second largest party (trailing by a long way both the ANC's membership numbers as well as electoral support) the Democratic Alliance (DA), experienced modest increases in support. Consequent analysis suggested a shift away from the predominantly African governing party towards the traditionally white but non-racialising opposition with the contention that the implications of this pattern of results marked the onset of a trans-racial politics, shifting hitherto patterns of "identity voting".<sup>1</sup>

---

1 "Social identity can provide an important motivation for vote choice emphasizing the importance of one type of social identity or another for explaining why citizens cast the ballots that they do. The social categories commonly thought to be important for voter choice include class, religious, linguistic, ethnic, and partisan groups. Different contributions emphasize the importance of different social categories and there is often recognition that in some political environments multiple categories appear to influence individual voting decisions. Nonetheless, there is considerable consensus about the importance of social identities generally and (in South Africa the primacy of racial identity in particu-

This article probes the validity of the aforementioned claim. Attention falls specifically on two issues: general voter turn-out and its impact on party support, and voting patterns for the DA within traditionally African communities. The aim is to determine the level of African support the DA received in the 2011 local government elections, and compare this to the level of support the DA received in the 2006 local government elections from African voters. The variance between the two will be indicative of whether or not the DA is indeed growing support among African voters.

## METHODOLOGICAL AND CONTEXTUAL ASPECTS

A detailed breakdown of data per metropolitan municipality, and then by province detailing comparative data from local government elections for the years 2000, 2006 and 2011 for easy comparability is provided. The data is broken down on the basis of voter turnout, overall percentage party support in terms of vote share per party, and the number of councils controlled by party per province. It is vital to present the data on councils controlled per party per province since an increase or decrease in vote share by a party does not imply, nor necessarily translate into, a loss of political governance control of a council. While the article intends to show trends in party support, at the same time it is not its intention to de-emphasise the issue of political control, since that is, after all, what determines the overall governance trajectory.

By way of contextualisation, it is worth stating at the outset that these elections were only the third elections after the reconfiguration of the local government system in 2000. In many ways therefore, the local government system still has residual transitional elements, with new regulations, laws and system changes in tendering and procurement, professionalisation of staff, and simultaneous societal and system transformation taking place. This has an impact on the overall evolution of political governance in the state and the manner in which citizens' political attitudes are being shaped and reshaped over time.

Because of widespread speculation about changing political attitudes, particu-

---

lar) in shaping voter behaviour" – in "Dickson, Eric and Kenneth Scheve. 2006. "Social Identity, Political Speech, and Electoral Competition." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 18 (1): 5-39.

**See also:** a. Friedman, S. 2005. "A vote for some: South Africa's ten years of democracy." In *Electoral Politics in South Africa*, eds. Jessica Piombo and Lia Nijzink. New York: Palgrave, pp. 3-22

b. Ferree, K E. 2006, Explaining South Africa's racial census. *Southern Political Science Association*, 68(4):803-815.

c. Hoeane, T. 2010. Durable or terminal? Racial and ethnic explanations of the 2009 elections, *Journal of African Elections* 9 (2):142-155.

d. Ramutsindela, M. *Identity and voting trends in South Africa*, Pretoria. Human Rights Commission Press: 47-62.

larly that the DA managed to capture a larger share of African voters, the article presents party support data for a selected number of the most important township areas where black African voters are concentrated and where spatial and residential demographic profiles by race have not changed significantly. The significance of the conclusion regarding the DA making inroads into the African vote relates to the effect that this penetration has on the ANC's voter base. If the contention is proved to be true, it ultimately would mean that the DA has been able to achieve what essentially amounts to a poaching of traditional ANC voters. The data that was generated, however, demonstrates some gains for the DA, though very modest increases in support for the DA in each of these areas (in any case starting from a very low base). Following this discussion the article then presents a contextual sociological and political narrative analysis of the election results and their possible and likely implications. Voter turnout and percentage results by parties are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Voter turnout and percentage results by party: province and metropolitan council**

Variable	Province/Metro	2000	2006	2011
Voter turnout %	Western Cape	58.19	51.79	64.37
	Cape Town	No data	49.81	64.66
	Gauteng	43.23	42.48	55.77
	Johannesburg	39.33	40.43	54.95
	Tshwane	41.17	45.54	55.32
	Ekurhuleni	44.99	42.95	56.28
	KZN	46.67	50.57	61.53
	Ethekwini	No data	44.18	59.30
	Eastern Cape	55.96	56.06	58.16
	Nelson Mandela Bay	No data	56.13	64.65
	Buffalo City	57.86	52.39	56.51
	Limpopo	42.46	47.24	50.05
	North West	44.79	45.63	53.47
	Northern Cape	57.61	53.51	63.36
	Mpumalanga	44.77	46.35	55.80
	Free-state	49.09	47.24	55.22
	Manguang	50.69	44.89	54.81

Vote share per party %	Province/Metro	Party	%	Party	%	Party	%
	Western Cape	ANC	50.72	ANC	40.17	ANC	34.07
DA		40.95	DA	39.39	DA	57.08	
ACDP		2.74	ACDP	10.68	COPE	1.94	
Cape Town	ANC	38.50	ANC	38.57	ANC	32.8	
	DA	53.50	DA	42.87	DA	60.92	
	ACDP	4.0	ID	10.95	COPE	1.1	
Gauteng	ANC	60.85	ANC	62.50	ANC	60.21	
	DA	30.82	DA	26.35	DA	33.04	
	IFP	2.20	IFP	1.99	COPE	1.80	
Johannesburg	ANC	58.99	ANC	62.32	ANC	58.56	
	DA	33.64	DA	27.01	DA	34.62	
	IFP	3.69			COPE	1.15	
Tshwane	ANC	56.58	ANC	56.44	ANC	55.32	
	DA	35.53	DA	30.62	DA	38.65	
	ACDP	1.97			COPE	0.9	
Ekurhuleni	ANC	56.57	ANC	61.34	ANC	61.63	
	DA	31.43	DA	25.80	DA	30.29	
					COPE	0.8	
KZN	ANC	32.98	ANC	46.67	ANC	56.57	
	DA	13.48	DA	8.37	DA	10.57	
	IFP	50.94	IFP	38.43	IFP	17.33	
					NFP	11.06	
Ethekwini	ANC	47.50	ANC	57.64	ANC	61.07	
	DA	26.50	DA	16.47	DA	21.02	
	IFP	17.50	IFP	11.21	IFP	4.13	
Eastern Cape	ANC	74.49	ANC	81.75	ANC	73.44	
	DA	10.46	DA	7.63	DA	14.26	
					COPE	4.17	

Vote share per party %	Nelson Mandela Bay	No Data Available		ANC	66.53	ANC	51.91
				DA	24.39	DA	40.13
				UDM	0.88	COPE	4.95
Buffalo City		ANC	80.97	ANC	81.44	ANC	70.01
		DA	13.47	DA	12.15	DA	20.48
		PAC	2.62	PAC	3.12	COPE	2.86
						PAC	1.89
Limpopo		No data available		ANC	83.98	ANC	81.63
				DA	5.49	DA	6.65
						COPE	3.88
North West		ANC	72.24	ANC	76.6	ANC	74.99
		DA	10.51	DA	8.66	DA	16.14
		UCDP	12.63	UCDP	6.91	COPE	2.87
						UCDP	1.73
Northern Cape		ANC	64.92	ANC	69.90	ANC	63.57
		DA	29.88	DA	13.98	DA	22.27
		UCDP	2.77	UCDP	1.99	COPE	11.91
Mpumalanga		ANC	80.62	ANC	80.57	ANC	78.90
		DA	12.95	DA	10.44	DA	13.81
		PAC	1.88	PAC	2.25	PAC	0.67
						COPE	1.15
Free State		ANC	72.10	ANC	76.61	ANC	71.74
		DA	17.83	DA	12.52	DA	19.74
		PAC	3.08	PAC	2.37	COPE	3.62
Mangaung		ANC	70.04	ANC	71.99	ANC	66.27
		DA	20.71	DA	14.14	DA	27.11
						COPE	3.16

Source: Compiled from data from the Electoral Commission of South Africa

Councils	Western Cape	ANC	9	ANC	23	ANC	2
		DA	22	DA	6	DA	20
						Hung council	2
	Cape Town						
	Gauteng	ANC	14	ANC	11	ANC	11
		DA	1	DA	1	DA	1
	Johannesburg						
	Tshwane						
	Ekurhuleni						
	KZN	ANC	15	ANC	25	ANC	48
		IFC	40	IFP	28	DA	1
						IFP	9
						NFP	1
	Ethekwini						
	Eastern Cape	ANC	38	ANC	40	ANC	44
		DA	3	DA	1	DA	1
	Nelson Mandela Bay						
	Buffalo City						
	Limpopo	ANC	25	ANC	25	ANC	30
				DA	No data		
	North West	ANC	20	ANC	21	ANC	23
	Northern Cape	ANC	27	ANC	31	ANC	32
		DA	7	DA	1	Hung councils	1
	Mpumalanga	ANC	22	ANC	19	ANC	21
		DA	No data				
Free State	ANC	20	ANC	21	ANC	24	
	DA	1					
Mangaung							

The general trend across all provinces and most metro's is that there was an increase in voter turnout percentages in relation to the segment of the registered voter population. The increase in voter turnout and increase in DA support observed in the provinces is somewhat magnified in the metropolitan areas, where voter turnout was slightly higher and DA support increased slightly more in comparison with the provinces. The increase in voter turnout and DA support is in general larger in the metro than in the province in which the particular metro is located (e.g. from the 2006 local government elections to these 2011 local government elections, in eThekweni the voter turnout percentage has increased by approximately 14% where voter turnout percentage in KZN overall increased by approximately 11%, DA support in eThekweni by approximately 5% and in KZN by approximately 2%).

The data describing the percentage of vote share garnered by the DA from 2000 to 2011 indicates that the support they received in the 2011 elections is an increase from the low levels of 2006. However, this increase is only approximately 2% higher than the support in 2006. These 2011 elections seem to be more of a recovery for the DA from a poor performance in the 2006 local government elections rather than an indication of a great gain in. Much of the DA's success in this election is attributable to it getting its voters, who previously may have been more complacent, to turn out.

In much the same way that increased voter turnout has signalled an increase in support for the DA, it has also resulted in a loss of support for the ANC. Caution must be exercised in simply attributing a direct causality between ANC losses and DA gains as if ANC losses translate into direct DA gains. As the data set presented below for support for the DA in African townships shows, this is not strictly speaking the case, though there is some evidence to support the claim that modest incremental increases in DA support is evident in township areas, though from a very low base and in very modest increments. We present here the data from selected township areas for the DA<sup>2</sup> (see method note and key to table of results in footnote below).

**Table 2: African township support for the DA**

<b>Mdantsane</b>	2006	All wards 1.92%	Specific 0.59%
	2011	All wards 4.34%	Specific 2.48%
	increase/decrease	2.42%	1.89%
<b>New Brighton</b>	2006	All wards 5.75%	Specific 0.34%
	2011	All wards 1.99%	Specific 2.3%
	increase/decrease	-3.76%	1.96%
<b>Alexandra</b>	2006	All wards 18.85%	Specific 3.79%
	2011	All wards 17.72%	Specific 7.49%
	increase/decrease	-1.13%	3.7%
<b>Soweto</b>	2006	All wards 4.31%	Specific- 2.54%
	2011	All wards 7.16%	Specific- 5.64%
	increase/decrease	2.85%	3.1%
<b>Kwamashu</b>	2006	All wards 5.48%	Specific 0.63%
	2011	All wards 6.77%	Specific 0.74%
	increase/decrease	1.29%	0.11%
<b>Gugulethu</b>	2006	All wards 11.39%	Specific 0.85%
	2011	All wards 20.50%	Specific 3.43%
	increase/decrease	9.11%	2.58%
<b>Khayelitsha</b>	2006	All wards 15.93 %	Specific 0.88%
	2011	All wards 15.93%	Specific 6.70%
	increase/decrease	0%	5.82%

2 **Method note:** The figures displayed in the tables indicate the average (adding the percentage for each unit and dividing the result of the addition by the number of units) of DA support in percentage. The average was calculated after receiving the results in percentage for each ward located in the particular township. It must be noted that ward demarcations do not coincide with township/suburb boundaries. Some wards fall across different spatial areas (townships/suburbs). Therefore, for the purposes of the research we have done two different calculations: 1) The average DA support in wards that cover the particular township exclusively and 2) The average DA support in wards that encompass the whole township, in some cases a ward covers areas that surround the particular town-

In recent times South African suburbs have become racially mixed. The areas that were previously reserved for the white population are no longer exclusively white. Since the identity of the voter is a secret, it is difficult to determine how a particular race is voting. The only way to analyse black voting patterns is to examine results from areas that were previously regarded as African townships. This is because, despite the fact that many areas have become racially mixed, black townships have remained largely racially homogenous. The areas whose voting results are indicated in the tables above remain areas populated only by African people. If there are other racial groups in these areas the number is negligible.

Generally, the results found in "All wards" display a higher percentage of support for the DA when compared to the results displayed in the "Specific" column. The surrounding suburb areas that are covered in "All wards" in certain instances are areas that traditionally supported the DA, e.g. in Alexandra there is a ward that includes a part of Sandton which is an area with high DA support. The results in "All wards" are therefore difficult to analyse because the voters in certain wards might not be black. The stark dichotomy that exists between the demographic make-up of Sandton and Alexandra, for instance, does not allow us to make a reasonable assumption on Black voting patterns. The results in the "Specific" column are much more useful. An examination of the results from 2006 and 2011, illustrates that there is an increase in support for the DA in general. The increase is not remarkable and is only slight. The only increases that are particularly noteworthy are those of Khayelitsha and Alexandra where the DA's increases are slightly greater (though still modest) than they are in other townships.

The increase in voter turnout has also seemed to result in an increase in support for the DA in general. The most visible example of this is in the Western Cape and in particular the Cape Town Metro municipality where voter turnout increased by more than 12% and the DA support increased by more than 17%. Despite the fact that one could presume that the DA absorbed the approximately 10% share of the votes that the Independent Democrats (ID) received in the 2006 due to the DA and ID merger, the DA still received higher percentages of votes on top of those that could have been received as a result of the merger.

Results in KZN, however, bucked the afore-mentioned trend. There, rather than benefit the DA, the notably high turn-out boosted the ANC's vote tally, which stood

ship and therefore the results may be slightly misleading as they include DA support from surrounding areas. For example, in the case of Alexandra this includes areas of Sandton (where DA support is strong) and Gugulethu (surrounded by the formerly coloured areas of Heideveld, and Mannenberg). Also, ward delimitations have changed in some instances between 2006 and 2011.

Key: "**All wards**" denotes the result gleaned from all wards located within the area's delimited boundaries as delimited by the Demarcation Board; in some cases wards include the township and other areas that surround the township. "Specific" refers to the results from wards that cover the township exclusively; no other areas are covered in the wards used to calculate this result.



as the exception in this regard. This was the rarity of the 2011 local elections. Elsewhere, the ANC's support dropped significantly. Though an exception in the 2011 local government elections, the KZN province's election results in the 2011 local government elections demonstrate a continuing trend from the 2009 national and provincial elections. ANC support has been dropping in all of the other eight provinces, while surging in KZN.

## **ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **Identity and voting behaviour**

There are several implications arising out of the results of the 2011 local government elections. The first about the decline of ANC support in eight out of South Africa's nine provinces, except for KZN which experienced a surge, raises serious questions about the nature of South Africa's evolving political culture, where, because the leader of a party comes from or traces his roots from a particular province (OR Tambo, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki from the Eastern Cape, Jacob Zuma from KZN), the fortunes of that party increase in that incumbent's home territory.

Without fetishising ethnicity and regionalism unduly (something the ANC has historically been very cautious to avoid), this trend does raise disturbing questions about an evolving political culture that mirrors the politicisation of ethnicity and regionalism as instruments of political capital that appear rooted in other parts of the African continent. This question arises from a place like KwaZulu-Natal as it is the only province in which the ANC increased its popular share of support in both the 2009 (national) and 2011 (local government) elections in a context in which under Jacob Zuma's leadership, the ANC has lost popular political support elsewhere in the country (as reflected in the percentage vote share in both the 2009 national elections and the 2011 local government elections). The question then is, whether, because Zuma hails from KwaZulu-Natal, the Zulu nationalist impulse is being transferred from the declining Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) to the ANC or is it being split between the ANC, some residual support for the IFP and the National Freedom Party (NFP), an offshoot of the IFP? Though the politicisation of ethnicity and regionalism has not been a generalised problem in South African politics thus far, it is an issue worth raising questions about, given the trend the evidence presented.

Secondly, there are a few speculative remarks that could be made regarding the fact that the voter turnout increased and the percentage of support for the DA has increased, while the ANC's support has remained largely the same. It appears as if the ANC's traditional support base has not altered its support towards other parties; even in the areas that experienced violent protests against ANC-led municipalities, support remained very similar with a slight increase in independent candidate sup-

port, for example, in a place like Balfour in Mpumalanga.

Evidently, the DA has made only slight inroads into the black vote – such as in Khayeletsha and Alexandra where the ANC's support has remained the same but the DA has been able to record an increase in the vote share, where they enjoyed almost none before. The decrease in the support for smaller parties, with DA support increasing and ANC support remaining relatively the same, means that either one of the two (ANC or DA) were able to win the support of this electorate thus consolidating the perception of a move towards an increasingly two-party dominant system. While smaller parties remain an important part of the political firmament, fetishisation of the plurality and diversity promoted by the use of a proportional representation electoral system cannot be sustained in the face of the low political and governance impact (oversight of the governing party, oversight of council functioning and operations) other parties have. Worse still, is the other parties' level of policy influence on a range of issues at local council level; especially pertinent is a lack of policy impact in shaping service delivery models and in integrated development planning and local economic development.

In the 2011 local government elections, the DA was able to win over the support of new voters (those who did not vote in 2006).

### **Why race still matters (but less) in South Africa**

In light of the ANC's previous dominance, is it noteworthy that the DA has increased its support somewhat? Is it remarkable that the ANC has lost what amounts to 5% of its support across the board? While the DA's support has increased by more than what the ANC has lost, this does not tell us that the DA has necessarily stolen ANC support. This is because there was a significant increase in voter turnout this election compared to the last local government elections in 2006.

Outside the issue revolving around the two major political parties, it must be noted that there was an increase in the support for independent candidates from the previous local government elections. The evidence shows that votes for independent candidates increased in these elections from roughly 1% in 2006 to 6.1% in 2011.

Ultimately, the 2011 local government elections did not reflect a marked shift in the dynamics of support for the DA and ANC. If there are shifts, these are minor and not enough for one to claim that the electoral landscape has been altered significantly. High voter turnout demonstrates several fairly self-evident things. There is clearly greater interest in Local Government from all sectors of society, including citizens, parties, media, the IEC and civil society. Greater emphasis has been placed by the media on the 2011 local government elections and the quality of media coverage added to the vibrancy of the elections. The upshot, however, is that the pressure inevitably is directed increasingly at government, and so even a government that may wish to do less will in fact be faced with an increased demand, some of which

will be channelled into the streets as protest, to do more, and it is likely that areas previously untouched by this phenomenon may not remain immune to it in the not too distant future. This is already in evidence, although this time protests immediately after the local government elections focused specifically on parties' (specifically the ANC's) PR councillor selection and perceptions that mayors have been imposed on communities rather than allowing local ANC branches to select them.

We should be cautious not to interpret these protests as a call for a direct election of mayors, but rather as internal party pressures for leadership selection within the ANC for candidates to hold top public office. The contagion effect of this has already taken root and political pressure on the ANC has mounted, which has left it in the difficult position of resolving an irresolvable contradiction with people being asked to hold political office, while communities and local party strongmen resist what are perceived to be "imposed leaders". This relates directly to the promises made by President Zuma to ANC members that where communities are unhappy with councillors, the ANC will ask them to vacate office. This promise could potentially bring about both a political and a governance crisis in local government.

Further, trends appear to suggest that political expression occurs on dual tracks, that is, political participation through formal processes as well as through direct action. It appears that political expression is mediated through an instrumental calculus made by citizens: that where participation through formal political processes has the potential to yield tangible benefits, formal participation will be pursued. Where participation in formal processes is not expected, or fails to yield any tangible direct benefits, then direct action through strikes and protests will be pursued. The frequency with which community protests have occurred across South Africa increased substantially over the years 2007 to 2010, before declining somewhat in frequency but increasing in violent intensity. Hirsh catalogued community protests extensively:

In 2007, the country saw an average of **8.73** protests occur in a given month. In 2008, that figure rose modestly, as an average **9.83** protests occurred per month. In 2009, however, the average number of protests that occurred ballooned to **19.18** a month, nearly doubling the figure from the previous year. Community protests remained a frequent occurrence throughout the first half of 2010 (January through to May)<sup>3</sup> [as an average of] **18.00** protests per month took place across the country. With the arrival of the FIFA World Cup in June, however, community protests fell dramatically and remained relatively subdued with only **6.14** protests per month for the remainder of the year. For 2010 as a whole, the average number of protest incidents decreased to **11.08** protests per month. Protests continued to decline during the first five months of 2011, with an average of **8.80** protests per month<sup>4</sup>.<sup>4</sup> While

---

3 Hirsh, J. 2010 *Community Protests in South Africa: trends, analysis and explanations*. Local Government Working Paper Series No.1.

4 Karamoko, J. 2011. *Community protests in South Africa: trends, analysis and explanations*. Local Government Working Paper Series No. 2.

there may have been a reduced frequency of community protests, an increasing proportion of protests have led to violence. "While only **36.86%** of protests taking place between February 2007 and March 2009 were violent, **53.00%** of protests taking place during or after April 2009 were violent. In the 3rd quarter of 2009, the 4th quarter of 2009 and the 1st quarter of 2010, **50.65 %**, **52.38%** and **64.06%** of the protests, respectively, were violent. Although the outbreak of community protests remains subdued in 2011, in only one month has the proportion of violent protests remained below 50%.<sup>5</sup>

That citizens will adopt a multiple approach to political participation bifurcated through modes of participation in formal decision-making processes while simultaneously engaging in direct action in order to maximise their own benefits or perceived community wellbeing, is a conclusion which could have been reached on an almost instinctive basis, which the evidence narrated thus far appears to support. The issue is nevertheless stated since the assumptive premise that is adopted is that of the standard rational choice, an instrumental view of the citizen as a rational actor pursuing what is in his/her own rational interests. Does this mean that racial or identity solidarities may decline, wither or re-form over time?

Racial solidarities appear strong, which bodes well for community/social cohesion within homogenised communities. This has serious implications, however, for building an across community non-racial solidarity project, and the election results appear to suggest a worrying trend of hardening of racialised political attitudes among poor black South Africans in townships and rural areas, with slightly more cosmopolitan political attitudes emerging among socially upwardly mobile black South Africans in some urban and suburban metropolitan areas. Simultaneously, new class solidarities are emergent, reflected in part within voting patterns and support for the DA from a small percentage of socially upwardly mobile black South Africans.

This raises the question for the longer term about what disincentives social mobility represents for the ANC's continued political hegemony? The perceived party support patterns demonstrate a possible lapse into quite hard and serious racial polarisation. Historical antecedents, with respect to racialised identities and social polarisation, may find continuities with social identities shaped by Apartheid if current voting patterns persist, a response to which may be increased patronage and pork barrel politics as well as the emergence of a more strident populism from the Governing Party.

Though there is the emergence of a floating vote, a consequence of emergent cosmopolitan political attitudes indicating the move towards a small number of more rational choice/instrumental voters, who may support a party other than the ANC, this is restricted to the black managerial and occupational class. Those dependent on entrepreneurial skill and business through procurement are more

---

<sup>5</sup> Hirsh, J. 2010. *Community Protests in South Africa: trends, analysis and explanations*. Local Government Working Paper Series No.1.

conservative and are likely to remain ANC supporters. There is also some evidence, as the data suggests, of an emergent and very small sector of society pursuing emergent cosmopolitan identities, which seem to be prevalent in the metropolitan areas only. Class continuities persist; there is a coincidence between inequality, poverty and identity. A likely loyal ANC voter, who takes to the streets but also stays away at local elections when dissatisfied, seems to be a prevalent prototype.

## CONCLUSIONS

This article has attempted to demonstrate that there are small and incremental changes taking place in the political attitudes of South Africans to political parties at local level. Higher levels of voter turnout, apart from conferring greater legitimacy on the political system, appear to have benefitted the DA.

There is an increase in percentage terms with regard to voter turnout among the registered voter population. This indicates that there may be an increase in the interest generated by the local government elections and by extension the local government and service delivery system. The data, however, only demonstrates the percentage of voters that turned out from among the segment of registered voters, rather than the overall eligible voter population. It would have been more telling and interesting if we were able to determine whether there was an increase in voter registration vis-à-vis the entire population of eligible voters. Turnout figures as percentage of the total eligible voting population may have provided a more accurate indicator of interest levels and greater indicator of the credibility and legitimacy as measured through participation rates in the local government elections.

In terms of the overall findings of our research, we make the contention that the ANC's dominance of the electoral landscape was slightly weakened in 2011 following a slight loss of support in the 2009 national and provincial elections. The ANC's dominance of the local government elections reached its pinnacle in 2006, increasing its support from the 2000 elections. The results of the 2011 elections suggests that support for the ANC appears to have reverted to levels similar to those which it received in 2000.

In general, it appears that an increase in the voter turnout translated to an increase in DA support. The DA was able to increase its support percentage from 2006 to 2011. The 2011 percentage support the DA garnered is, however, not much of an increase from the levels of support that it enjoyed during the 2000 elections. The 2011 elections were therefore more of a recovery for the DA than an unprecedented upsurge. The data may be misleading in that it could lead one to conclude that the loss of support for the ANC from 2006 to 2011 and the increase in support for the DA from 2006 to 2011 means that the DA was able to poach some of the ANC's supporters. This is not strictly speaking true since there was a general increase in voter turnout and the DA was more likely to gain support from

first-time voters and previously apathetic voters who may have stayed away. Further evidence of this is illustrated by the data relating to DA support in black townships, where modest increases in support ranged from a maximum of 5.82% in Khayelitsha to a minimum of 0.11% in Kwa-Mwashu with an average of 2.7%.

The DA was perhaps able to increase support from an embryonic black professional class as well as seemingly increase its support of the upper and middle class strata across racial cleavages. Data relating to party-support in the provinces and metros demonstrates that along with increases in voter turnout, there was also an increase in DA support. This increase in voter turnout as well as increase in DA support is magnified in the metropolitan areas of the respective provinces within which they are located. The data could therefore be interpreted as showing that if the voter turnout increased in a province and the DA increased its support in a province and DA support magnified in the metropolitan areas located in that province, the magnification of DA support does indicate a greater support among wealthier segments of the South African electorate, since the class demographic of metropolitan areas differs substantially from other parts of the country and municipalities in the provinces. The data also appears to suggest that a greater number of middle and upper middle-class citizens turned out to vote as compared to 2006, and that many of these citizens voted for the DA, signalling the emergence of greater cosmopolitan political attitudes, at least in metropolitan areas, which are incrementally shifting away from racialised identity voting.

## REFERENCES

- Dickson, E & Scheve, K. 2006. Social identity, political speech, and electoral competition. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 18 (1):5–39.
- Ferree, K.E. 2006. Explaining South Africa's racial census. *Southern Political Science Association* 68(4):803-815.
- Friedman, S. 2005. A vote for some: South Africa's ten years of democracy. In J. Piombo and L. Nijzink (eds). *Electoral Politics in South Africa*. New York: Palgrave:3-22.
- Hirsh, J. 2010. Community protests in South Africa: trends, analysis and explanations. *Local Government Working Paper Series No.1*, Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape.
- Hoeane, T. 2010. Durable or terminal? Racial and ethnic explanations of the 2009 elections. *Journal of African Elections* 9 (2):142-155.
- Karamoko, J. 2011. Community protests in South Africa: trends, analysis and explanations. *Local Government Working Paper Series No.2*, Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape.
- Ramutsindela, M. 2002. Identity and voting trends in South Africa. In Human Sciences Research Council. *Public Attitudes in Contemporary South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press:47-62.