

# Ipsos survey: Political party support six months ahead of the election

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The ruling party is currently less popular with eligible voters than in November 2008.<sup>1</sup>

Ipsos South Africa undertakes a *Pulse of the People*™ study every six months and keeps close tabs on the opinions of voters. A randomly selected sample of South Africans of voting age (18+) were asked which party they would support if there were an election the next day. Respondents then filled in their own choices on a "ballot paper" - making this a secret vote. Looking at the results from the November 2008 poll (about six months before the 2009 election) and the results from the November 2013 poll (about six months before the 2014 election) it is clear that the overall support of the ANC fell with ten percentage points i.e. the party shed almost a fifth, 19%, of its overall support - from 63% in November 2008 to 53% in November 2013.

However, from the table overleaf it is clear that most of this loss occurred during the last year from November 2012 to November 2013. Political uncertainty, leadership issues, the aftermath of the Marikana shootings, the issues about Nkandla, service delivery protests, the forming of new political parties and a host of other reasons could have contributed to this important finding.

Some of the new political parties (EFF and AGANG) benefited from the support moving away from the ANC, but the single largest group (7%) who did not choose a specific party in November 2013, indicated that they would not vote. A further 6% refused to answer and 5% did not know which party they will choose.

It is also important to keep in mind that this latest poll was undertaken before the death of ex-president Nelson Mandela and that the next poll planned for early 2014 will yield more contemporary results.

This poll cannot be seen as predictive of the election later this year as political opinions change.

## **Party support amongst ALL adults 18+**

<b><u>POLITICAL PARTY</u></b>	<b><u>SUPPORT NOV 2008</u></b>	<b><u>SUPPORT NOV 2012</u></b>	<b><u>SUPPORT NOV 2013</u></b>
	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>
ANC	63	61	53
DA	13 <sup>3</sup>	17	18
EFF	-	-	4
ACDP	1	1	1
AGANG	-	-	1
COPE	-	2	1
IFP	3	1	1
Other parties	7	1	2
Will not vote	2	-	7
Refuse to answer	3	-	6

Don't know	8	17	5
Not registered to vote	-	-	1

\*Only parties with measured support of more than 0,5% in Nov 2013 are included in this table.

## Interest in politics and elections

However, just looking at the views of ALL ADULTS (as above) might skew the picture.

All of those who are *eligible* to vote are not going to turn out to vote later this year. In fact, only two out of every ten adults (20%) are *very* interested in politics and elections, with a further 43% who indicated that they are *somewhat* interested.<sup>4</sup> But, more than a third (35%) of South African adults older than 18 said that they are *not interested* in politics and elections - the challenge (for all political parties) will be to turn this voter apathy around and get this group to register and to vote.

Currently around 77% (25,589 million) of South Africans *eligible* to vote indicated that they are *registered* to vote. (This registration figure compares well to the official IEC figure of registered voters - and we need to take into account that a further registration weekend is planned for February this year. South Africans who are living overseas can also register as voters until 7 February.)

## Turnout scenarios

It thus becomes imperative to look at the influence of possible voter turnout on party support. At Ipsos we use questions on registration, likelihood to vote and desire to vote to develop an *index of possible voter turnout*.

Results are available for three possible voter turnout scenarios:

- Low voter turnout
- Moderate voter turnout
- High voter turnout

Please note that for this analysis only the figures from the November 2013 *Pulse of the People™* were taken into account:

## Party support within different turnout scenarios

<u>POLITICAL PARTY</u>	<u>LOW VOTER TURNOUT</u> %	<u>MODERATE VOTER</u> <u>TURNOUT</u> %	<u>HIGH VOTER TURNOUT</u> <u>2013</u> %
ANC	65	64	56
DA	19	19	18
EFF	4	4	4
ACDP	1	1	1
AGANG	1	1	1
COPE	1	1	1
IFP	2	2	1
Other parties	1	2	3
Will not vote	-	-	7

Refuse to answer	4	4	5
Don't know	2	2	3

\*Only parties with measured support of more than 0,5% in Nov 2013 are included in this table.

From this analysis it is clear that a lower voter turnout will be to the benefit of the ANC, but even in the low voter turnout scenario 4% did not want to give an answer to this question and 2% indicated that although they definitely will vote in 2014, they do not (yet) know which party they will support.

In the high voter turnout scenario some of the 7% who said that they will not vote volunteered reasons for their choice. The following was mentioned:

- Poor service delivery
- Political parties don't meet the country's needs
- Political parties don't bring change
- "We are suffering"

### The provincial scenarios

Up to now, we have looked at the results for a possible national election - but the table overleaf analyses the results given to the question regarding the *provincial ballot*, again taking the three possible turnout scenarios into account.

It reflects the overall results, thus not by individual province.

This analysis indicates that voters intend, to a much greater degree than in previous elections, to split their votes - i.e. vote for different parties on the national and provincial ballots. It is also clear that a number of the smaller parties stand to fare much better (overall) on the provincial ballot than on the national ballot, supporting the view that a number of parties are more regional, rather than national in nature.

### Overall Provincial party support within different scenarios

<u>POLITICAL PARTY</u>	<u>LOW VOTER TURNOUT</u> <u>%</u>	<u>MEDIUM VOTER</u> <u>TURNOUT</u> <u>%</u>	<u>HIGH VOTER TURNOUT</u> <u>2013</u> <u>%</u>
ANC	56	55	48
DA	18	18	17
EFF	5	5	5
ACDP	1	1	1
AGANG	2	2	2
COPE	2	2	2
IFP	2	3	2
FF+	1	1	1
Other parties	3	3	3
Will not vote	2	2	9
Refuse to answer	5	5	6

Don't know	3	3	4
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\*Only parties with measured support of more than 0,5% in Nov 2013 are included in this table.

## Technical detail:

A total of 3564 personal face-to-face interviews were conducted with randomly selected adult South Africans. The interviews were done in the homes and home languages of respondents. Trained quantitative fieldworkers from all population groups were responsible for the interviewing, which took place from 22 October to 21 November 2013. This methodology ensured that the results are representative of the views of the universe and that findings can be weighted and projected to the universe - i.e. South Africans 18 years and older.

Interviews were done using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) and all results were collated and analysed in an aggregate format to protect the identity and confidentiality of respondents.

All sample surveys are subject to a margin of error, determined by sample size, sampling methodology and response rate. The sample error for the sample as a whole at a 95% confidence level is a maximum of 1,67%. When analysing the results for smaller parties in particular on an individual party basis the margin of error will be higher.

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<sup>1</sup>About six months ahead of the previous national election in 2009.

<sup>2</sup>The question wording is: "If there were national elections tomorrow, which political party or organisation would you vote for? Please indicate your choice of party on a national level as well as on a provincial level."

<sup>3</sup>This is made up of 11% support for the DA and 2% support for the Independent Democrats.

<sup>4</sup>2% said they "Don't Know".

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