

IPSOS SOUTH AFRICA, JOHANNESBURG: 27 OCTOBER 2021

A third of South Africans will decide the outcome of the local government elections

Currently 42,6 million¹ South Africans are eligible to vote, of these 26,2 million² (61,6%) are registered to vote.

If we expect a countrywide medium voter turnout in the local government elections, about 14,6 million will draw their crosses on Monday. This figure represents only 34,3% of the total population eligible to vote.

Voter apathy will thus be a feature of this election, as it was in the last few elections. This is one of the most important findings of a recent pre-election study conducted by Ipsos, on behalf of [eNCA](#). The study was undertaken between 9 and 14 October 2021 and made use of a CATI methodology (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing).

Naturally, it will only be possible to do this calculation accurately after all the votes have been tallied and counted on Monday night and Tuesday morning, therefore we developed some possible turnout scenario's (based on responses provided to several questions in the study).

According to the algorithm, a low voter turnout will mean that only 30% of registered voters turn out to vote, for a medium turnout 56% of registered voters need to vote and for a high voter turnout 83% of registered voters will turn out to vote.

Looking at previous turnout results, both the low voter turnout and the high voter turnout scenarios look less possible, and the medium voter turnout scenario seems to be the most probable.

Profile of voters in the medium voter turnout scenario

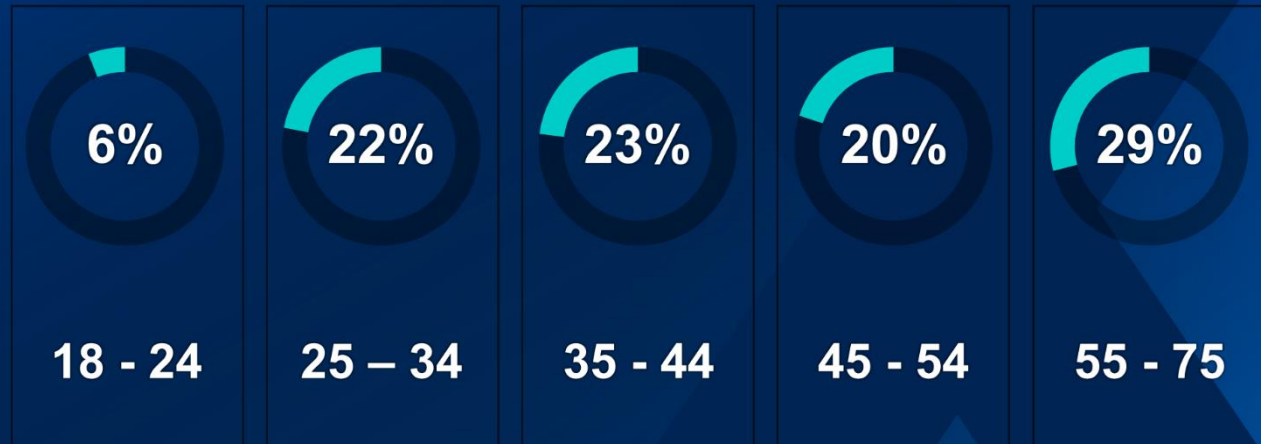
If about 56% of registered voters turn out to vote on Monday, women will be in the majority (53%) and 47% of voters will be men.

Young people will form a small proportion of the voters at the polls (6%), while other age groups will be more visible in the queues.

¹ StatsSA Mid-Year Estimates, 2020.

² IEC registration figures.

AGE PROFILE OF VOTERS IN THE MEDIUM VOTER TURNOUT SCENARIO

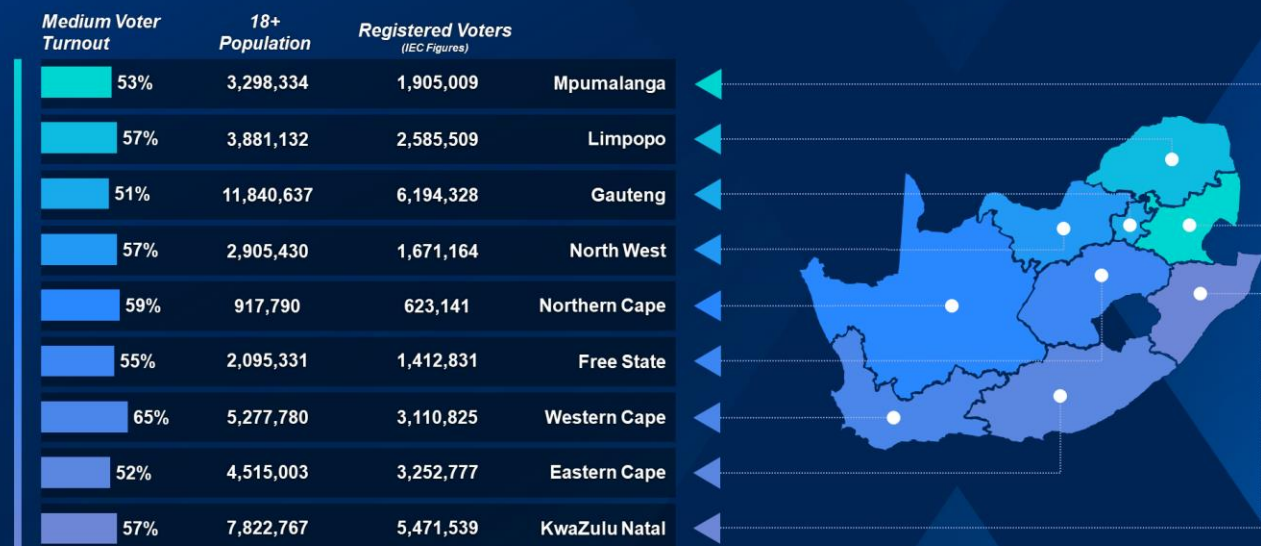


Local Government Elections 2021

Source: eNCA / Ipsos Snap Poll – Wave 1

It is also a given that the turnout in all provinces won't be the same:

TURNOUT IN ALL PROVINCES WON'T BE THE SAME



Local Government Elections 2021

Source: eNCA / Ipsos Snap Poll – Wave 1

These results show that registered voters in the Western Cape are the most eager to vote, with two-thirds of them falling into the medium voter turnout category. The Western Cape is followed by the more rural provinces of the Northern Cape, Limpopo, NorthWest and then the densely populated

province of KwaZulu-Natal. Registered voters in the most populous province in the country, Gauteng, are also the most reluctant to vote and only 51% of them fall into the medium voter turnout category.

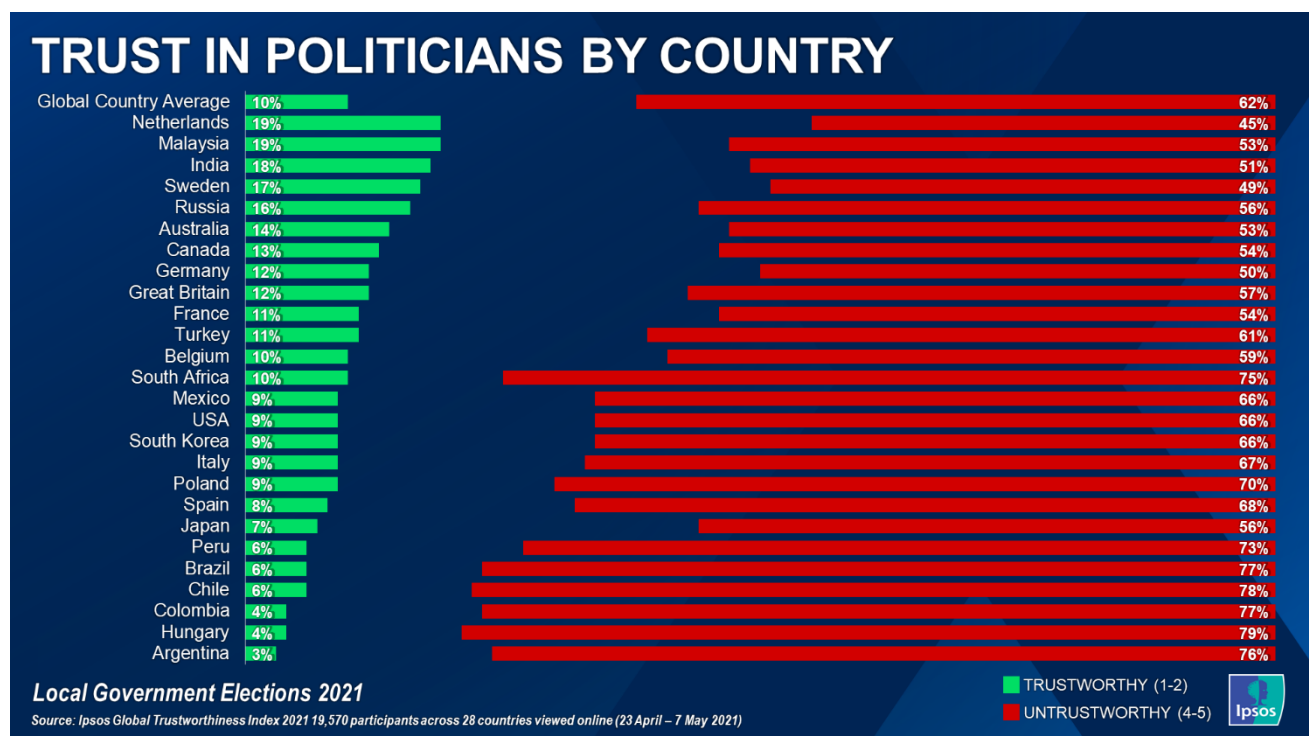
Turnout will be lower in the most contested metro's

In keeping with this result of voter apathy in Gauteng, the turnout in the most contested metropolitan areas in this province, namely Tshwane and Johannesburg will only be at 50% in the medium voter turnout scenario.

But, in the other “contested” metropolitan area, Nelson Mandela Bay, it is expected that the turnout will only be 45% - even lower than in Tshwane and Johannesburg!

In a previous pre-election Ipsos study, voters have indicated that they do not trust politics or politicians or that they feel that their vote means nothing, as nothing changes after an election.

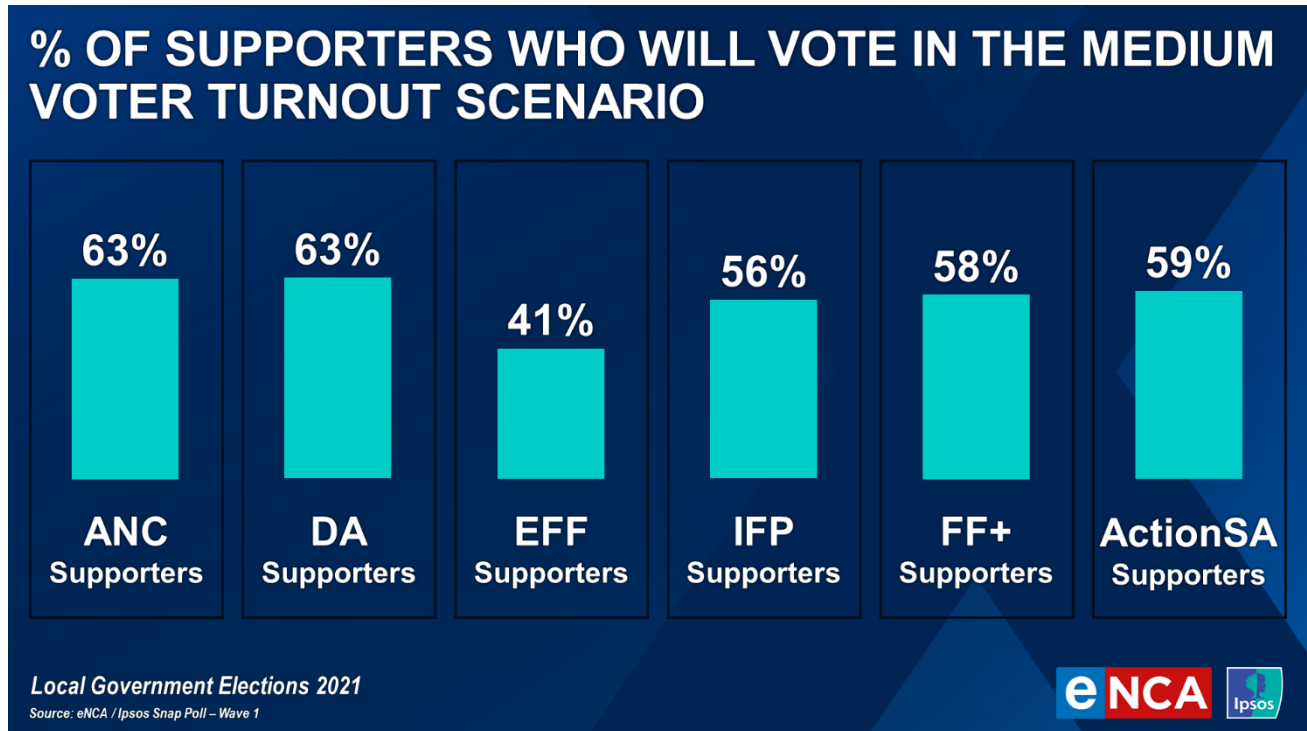
These feelings are rather strong amongst South Africans – as is clear from the below result that has been taken from a recent international Ipsos study. Although South Africa is not at the bottom of the list, only 10% of South Africans indicated that they thought that politicians were trustworthy. (Populations all over the world have a rather dim view of the trustworthiness of politicians.)



Some parties will be more successful in mobilising supporters

However, in this atmosphere of reluctance and mistrust the party or parties who can mobilise their supporters to turn up at the polls on 1 November will do relatively well.

From the results of the eNCA study it is clear that some political parties will be more successful than others to inspire their supporters to go and vote. (These results still refer to the medium voter turnout scenario).



Technical detail

- A total of 1,346 CATI (Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviews) with South Africans, 18+, who are registered to vote were conducted from 9-14 October 2021. The Margin of Error (depending on sample size, response rate and sampling methodology used) on this sample is between 1.16 and 2.57 percentage points on a 95% confidence level.
 - The incidence of mobile phones in South Africa is 96% and includes people from all backgrounds and in all provinces – also in deep rural areas. This universe was used as the basis of a RDD (Random Digit Dialling) methodology to achieve the widest countryside spread possible.
 - A total of 3,576 phone calls were made to achieve this sample, as many people are not registered to vote – although they might be eligible to vote.

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- eNCA's Local Government Elections news content includes interviews with candidates, political party debates, up-to-the minute elections results and reactions and interesting insights, statistics and statements from the latest eNCA IPSOS research study. Watch eNCA's unmissable Local Government Elections coverage on DStv channel 403 or on <https://www.enca.com/2021-municipal-elections>

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