

A Vote of Confidence

Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016



Report Prepared for

The Electoral Commission (IEC)

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Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations.....	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Executive Summary	vii
1. Introduction and Background.....	1
1.1. Elections in South Africa.....	1
1.2. The role of the Electoral Commission.....	2
1.3. The General Elections Standards and Process	4
1.4. The pre-election phase and processes.....	5
1.5. The Election Day and Voting Process.....	6
1.6. The post-election phases and processes.....	6
1.7. Survey objectives.....	7
1.7.1. Primary objective.....	7
1.7.2. Secondary objectives	7
2. Research Methodology.....	8
2.1. The Research Universe	8
2.2. Sampling	8
2.3. Mode of data collection	10
2.4. Questionnaires	11
2.5. Fieldworker conduct and protocol	12
2.6. Quality control	12
2.7. Translations of research instruments.....	12
2.8. Fieldwork Training	13
2.9. Quality control mechanisms	14
2.10. Data management	14
2.11. Description of the sample of voters and observers	14
3. Voter Interview Results	16
3.1. General Voting Experience	16
3.1.1. Time taken to reach voting station.....	16
3.1.2. Queuing to vote.....	19
3.1.3. Accessibility of voting stations to persons with disabilities and the elderly	24
3.1.4. Satisfaction with voting station signage and instructions	27
3.1.5. Perceived ease of voting procedures inside voting stations	29
3.1.6. Perceived safety and security of voting stations	31
3.2. Timing of decision on political party of choice.....	33
3.3. Perceived secrecy of the vote.....	37
3.4. Political coercion and intimidation.....	40
3.4.1. Reported incidence of coercion	41
3.4.2. Sources of coercion	45
3.4.3. Electoral effect of coercion	49
3.5. Political party tolerance.....	53
3.6. Views on electoral freeness and fairness.....	56
3.6.1. Freeness of the election	56
3.6.2. Fairness of the election	59
3.7. The Electoral Commission's Performance and Conduct.....	62
3.7.1. Voter Trust in the Electoral Commission	62
3.7.2. Evaluations of Electoral Officials	64
3.7.3. Consideration of Voting Procedure for Voters with Special Needs	71
3.7.4. New Procedures to Validate Voter Addresses	76
3.8. Voter Education	77
3.8.1. Level of Information Voters had about Voting Procedures	78
3.8.2. Effectiveness of the Electoral Commission's Voter Education Campaign	79
3.8.3. Usefulness of Information Sources.....	82
3.9. Perceived accuracy of vote counting.....	92
4. Election Observer Interview Results.....	95
4.1. Profile of Election Observers	95
4.2. Characteristics of voting stations	96

4.2.1.	Access to the Voting Station	97
4.2.2.	Facilities Available at Voting Stations.....	100
4.3.	Consideration of voting procedure for persons with special needs	102
4.4.	Disturbances at voting stations.....	104
4.4.1.	Disturbances Inside and Outside the Voting Station	105
4.4.2.	Political Activities Inside the Voting Station.....	106
4.5.	Election Commission Performance.....	108
4.5.1.	General satisfaction with the election organisation by the Election Commission	108
4.5.2.	Views on specific aspects of the conduct of Election Commission officials	110
4.5.3.	Satisfaction with aspects of the voting station experience	111
4.6.	Final Assessment of the Elections.....	113
5.	Conclusions and recommendations	116
6.	References	127
	Appendix 1: IEC Election Satisfaction Survey 2016 Voter Questionnaire	129
	Appendix 2: IEC Election Satisfaction Survey 2016 Observer Questionnaire.....	132
	Appendix Tables	136

List of Tables

Table 1: Frequency of sampled voting stations, voters and election observers by province.....	9
Table 2 Descriptive statistics of demographic variables for voters (valid percentage)	15
Table 3: Time taken to get to voting station (row percent and mean score).....	18
Table 4: Length of time in queue before voting (row percent and mean score)	22
Table 5: Satisfaction with the signage and instructions at the voting stations (row percentage and mean)	28
Table 6: Perceived ease of voting procedure (row percent and mean score)	30
Table 7: Satisfaction with the safety and security at the voting stations (row percentage and mean) .	33
Table 8: Satisfaction with secrecy of the vote (row percent and mean score)	39
Table 9 Experience of political coercion by socio-demographic attributes of voters (row percent, total %)	43
Table 10: Person(s) responsible for political coercion for those reporting such an experience in 2016, by socio-demographic attributes of voters (percentage of all voters and those reporting coercion)	48
Table 11: Perceived political party tolerance, 2016 (row percent and mean score).....	55
Table 12: Perceived freeness of the 2016 Election (row percent and mean score)	58
Table 13: Perceived fairness of the 2016 Municipal Election (row percent and mean score)	61
Table 14: Satisfaction with Personal Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations by Selected Subgroup	67
Table 15: Satisfaction with Professional Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations by Selected Subgroup	70
Table 16: Considering the needs of people with special needs (mean score, 0-100 scale)	74
Table 17: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Media Information Sources in Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale)	86
Table 18: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Commission Information Sources in Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale)	91

List of Figures

Figure 1: Distribution of the 300 selected voting stations	8
Figure 2: A graphical illustration of how fieldworkers were trained step by step.	13
Figure 3: Time taken to get to voting station, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percent)	16
Figure 4: Changes in the time taken to get to voting station by subgroup, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (minutes)	19
Figure 5: Length of time spent queuing before voting, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percent).....	20
Figure 6: Average time for queuing per province and geographical location , 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016	21
Figure 7: Changes in the length of time spent queuing before voting, by subgroup, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (minutes)	23
Figure 8: Accessibility of voting stations to persons with disabilities and the elderly, 20011, 2014 and 2016	25
Figure 9: Accessibility of voting stations to people with special needs, 2011, 2014 and 2016(scaled mean scores)	26
Figure 10: Satisfaction with voting station signage and instructions, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percent) 27	
Figure 11: Perceived ease of voting procedures inside voting stations, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%).....	29
Figure 12: Timing of decision on political party of choice, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percentage)	34
Figure 13: Timing of decision on political party of choice, by voter characteristics 2011-2016 (mean score, 0-100 scale).....	36
Figure 14: Satisfaction with the secrecy of the vote, 2009, 2011 and 2014 (%).....	38
Figure 15: Experience of political coercion, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (per cent)	41
Figure 16: Source of experienced of political coercion, 2009-2016 (percentage of voters who experienced coercion).....	46
Figure 17: Impact of coercion on electoral choice (percentage of voters who experienced coercion).50	

Figure 18: Percentage reporting that coercion resulted in a change of decision over which political party to vote for, by socio-demographic attributes of voters (percentage of all voters)	51
Figure 19: Perceived political party tolerance, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%)	53
Figure 20: Perceived freeness of the election, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%).....	57
Figure 21: Perceived fairness of the election, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%).....	60
Figure 22: Levels of Voters' Trust in the Electoral Commission by Selected Subgroups, 2016.....	63
Figure 23: Satisfaction with the Quality of Service Provided by Electoral Officials to Voters (mean score, 0-100 scale).....	65
Figure 24: Satisfaction with Personal Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations, 2014 2016	66
Figure 25: Satisfaction with Professional Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations, 2014 2016	69
Figure 26: Consideration of Voting Procedures for the Elderly, Women, and Women with Babies	72
Figure 27: Consideration of Voting Procedures for People with Disabilities, the Blind and the Partially-Sighted	73
Figure 28: Special Needs Index by Selected Subgroups, 2014 and 2016	75
Figure 29: Levels of Voters' Level of Satisfaction with Verifying Addresses by Selected Subgroups, 2016	77
Figure 30: Level of Information Voters had about Voting Procedures by Selected Subgroups	79
Figure 31: Satisfaction with the IEC voter education campaign, 2009 2011, 2014, 2016 (%)	80
Figure 32: Satisfaction with the Electoral Commission Voter Education Campaign by Selected Subgroups.....	81
Figure 33: Accessibility to Different Information Sources in Providing Voter education, 2014 and 2016	83
Figure 34: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Media Information Sources in Providing Voter Education, 2014 and 2016	84
Figure 35: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Commission Information Sources in Providing Voter Education, 2014 and 2016	85
Figure 36: Perceived Usefulness of Social Media on Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale).....	88
Figure 37: Perceived Usefulness of Electoral Commission's Communication Campaign on Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale).....	89
Figure 38: Accuracy of vote counting, 2016 (scaled mean scores per subgroup).....	93
Figure 39: Perceived Accessibility of the Voting Station.....	97
Figure 40: Voting Station Signage, 2014 and 2016 (%)	98
Figure 41: Accessibility of Voting Stations for Persons with Special Needs.....	99
Figure 42: Voting Station Facilities	100
Figure 43: Security Personnel on Duty at the Voting at the Time of Visit, 2014 and 2016 (%)	101
Figure 44: Consideration of Voting Station for those with Disabilities	103
Figure 45: Consideration of Voting Station for Women and People with Children	104
Figure 46: Disturbances Observed Inside and Outside the Voting Station	106
Figure 47: Number of political party posters inside voting stations.....	107
Figure 48: Political party activities inside the voting station	108
Figure 49: Observer satisfaction with Election Commission's Election management	109
Figure 50: Specific views of the voters on the personal conduct of the Election officials.....	110
Figure 51: Specific views of the voters on the professional conduct of the Election officials	111
Figure 52: Satisfaction with material aspects of the voting station	112
Figure 53: Satisfaction with secrecy and safety aspects of the voting station.....	113
Figure 54: Political party agents allowed to observe electoral processes	114
Figure 55: Observer evaluations of the freeness and fairness of election procedures.....	115

Acronyms and abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
DGSD	Democracy Governance and Service Delivery
EA	Enumerator Areas
EC	Eastern Cape
ESS	Election Satisfaction Survey
FS	Free State
GP	Gauteng Province
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ID	Identity Document
IEC	Electoral Commission of South Africa
IEC VPS	IEC Voter Participation Survey
IEC VSI	IEC Voter Satisfaction Index
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LP	Limpopo
LSM	Living Standard Measurement
MP	Mpumalanga
NC	Northern Cape
NW	North West
PDA	Personal Digital Assistant
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
SAARF	South African Advertising Research Foundation
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SAL	Small Area Layer
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TOR	Terms of Reference
VAP	Voting Age Population
VEI	Voting Experience Index
VII	Voting Irregularities Index
WC	Western Cape

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

On 3rd of August 2016 the fifth local government election in contemporary South Africa took place and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) was commissioned by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to conduct a survey on the day. The intention of this survey, called the Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS), was to establish the opinions and perceptions of voters and election observers on Election Day. The ultimate aim of the study was to determine if the electoral process during the 2016 local government elections were free and fair. A further aim of the study was to assess the operational efficiency of the IEC in managing the 2016 local government elections.

The study was conducted among two groups of respondents, namely (i) South Africans who voted in the 2016 Elections and (ii) local and international elections observers. The target population for the voter component of the study was registered voters aged 18 years and older. The study also comprised of local and international election observers visiting the selected voting stations on Election Day.

METHODOLOGY

The sample design included stratification and multi-stage sampling procedures. The sampling of the voting station was done proportional to the IEC's distribution of registered voters, and considered province, geotype and the size of a voting station. This sample design was implemented to ensure that a nationally representative sample of voting stations was selected and that the results of the survey could be properly weighted to the population of legible voters in the country. At the actual voting stations, fieldworkers used random sampling to select voters to ensure a fair representation in terms of gender, race, age, and disability status.

A sample of 300 voting stations countrywide was selected. The distribution of these voting stations and the resultant number of interviews at and in the vicinity of the voting stations was proportional to the IEC's distribution of registered voters. At each voting station, 50 voters were interviewed during the course of the day. These were divided into four time slots to ensure a fair spread of interviews over different times of the day, when different dynamics might have been in operation.

A. VOTER SATISFACTION RESULTS

GENERAL VOTING EXPERIENCE

Voters were asked to estimate the **time it took to travel to their respective voting stations**. Just under two-thirds of voters (64%) estimated it took 15 minutes or less to travel to their

voting station, 23% took between 16-30 minutes, 8% between 31-60 minutes, and 3% took longer than an hour. The average time taken by voters to reach their voting station was 16 minutes but varied significantly by province, geographical location and population group. It took voters in the Western Cape an average of 10 minutes to travel to their voting station while in KwaZulu-Natal it took 21 minutes. In respect of geographic type, we find that voters in rural areas report a significantly longer time to get to their voting stations (20 minutes) than those based in formal and informal urban areas (14 minutes). In terms of population group differences, black African voters took longer to reach their voting stations (18 minutes) than other population groups (13 minutes).

From an electoral management point of view, **queuing time for voters** is a key operational issue and critical to the success of any election. During the 2016 election demonstrable improvements were noticed in terms of queuing times. In 2016 almost three quarters (72%) of all voters stated that they waited less than 15 minutes to vote-this signifies a huge improvement from 2014 when significantly fewer voters (66%) claimed to have waited for less than 15 minutes. In addition, the mean queuing time in 2016 was 17 minutes, significantly lower than the 25 minutes in 2014, the 23 minutes in 2011 and the 34 minutes in 2011. This is a laudable accomplishment for the IEC and testimony to careful logistical planning. Also, in 2016, only 1 percent of voters reported waiting more than 2 hours in queues-a significant reduction the 6% in 2014.

Although queuing times had been reduced universally, it is worth signalling certain accomplishments, specifically in Gauteng and informal urban settlements. In 2014 the mean queuing time in Gauteng was 39 minutes and in 2016 this was reduced to 21 minutes. During the 2014 elections voters voting in informal urban settlements had to queue for an average of 41 minutes, in the 2016 this was reduced to 20 minutes. In addition, in 2014, 27% of voters in informal settlements reported that they stood in a queue for one hour or longer. In 2016, only 8% stated that they had to wait for longer than an hour. This is an enormous achievement by the Electoral Commission and testimony to thorough planning and interventions.

Overall, 84% of the voters found the **voting stations** were very or somewhat **accessible to persons with disabilities and the elderly**, while 10% did not. These results are very similar to previous surveys but it is noted that the proportion of voters stating that voting stations are “very assessable” to the elderly and disabled had significantly decreased in 2016. This is also observed in the national mean accessibility score which was lower in 2016 (81.2), compared to the 2014 (83.4) and the 2011 (83.1). This shows that voters were somewhat less impressed with the accessibility of voting stations to the elderly and persons with disabilities during the 2016 local government elections. Comparing the 2014 and 2016 survey results it is clear that only Indian voters felt that voting stations had improved in terms of accessibility to persons with disabilities and the elderly since the previous election.

Among all other subgroups the ratings remained the same but in most cases decreased. The highest decrease was found in North West (-6.3); Free State (-6); amongst the Coloured population (-5.2) and in the Northern Cape (-4.9). These scores are significant and indicate that this is an issue might have been somewhat neglected during the 2016 local government election.

An overwhelming majority (96%) were satisfied with the **signage and instructions at voting stations** (63% very satisfied; 33% fairly satisfied) with a mere one percent voicing dissatisfaction. When comparing these findings to previous surveys, the picture is relatively similar on aggregate but subtle differences are noted between the years. For instance, the proportion of voters *very satisfied* with signage and instructions had gradually decreased since 2011 with an accompanying increase in the proportion stating they are satisfied. These results suggest that although voters are generally pleased with the manner in which the IEC is handling signage and instructions, there is a gradual decline in the overall levels of satisfaction. In order to ensure that there is not further slippage in levels of approval, the IEC will need to strive to ensure that there is consistently high visibility of signage that indicates the location of the voting station and where voters need to go to cast their vote once inside the perimeter of the voting station.

A vast majority (98%) found the **voting procedures inside the voting station** easy to understand (63% very easy; 35% fairly easy). The same question was posed to voters in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections and although we find a broadly similar pattern of results across the three elections, the share indicating that the voting procedures were “very easy” has steadily been declining since 2009.

When the ease of the voting process was disaggregated by key demographic variables, it was evident that voters from the Northern Cape found the voting process the easiest, significantly more so than voters in Gauteng who found the process more difficult. In terms of geography, age, gender, disability status, race and no statistical differences were found between the groups. Some educational gradient was noted in that people with no schooling found the process less easy than other groups but statistically this group only differed significantly from those with a Grade 8-11 qualification.

TIMING OF DECISION ON POLITICAL PARTY OF CHOICE

Voters were asked to indicate when they finally decided whom to vote for in the elections. The vast majority (68%) of voters in the 2016 elections made their decision more than a month ago with a considerably smaller share deciding upon their voting preference on Election Day (8%) or during the week beforehand (10%). Relative to the prior elections, there has been a modest decline in the share reporting that they made their decision months prior to Election Day and a small increase in the share reporting they made their choice nearer to Election Day. However, despite this slight decline, the majority of South

Africans remain loyalists that make decisions about party choice well before the actual election day.

PERCEIVED SECRECY OF VOTE

A majority (95%) of voters expressed satisfaction with the secrecy of their vote (64% very satisfied; 31% fairly satisfied), with only one per cent voicing any form of discontent. Compared to the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, there appears to have been a decline in the share indicating that they were “very satisfied”, which fell from 81% in 2009 to 73% in 2014 and to 64% in 2016. While still broadly positive, this is an indicator that needs to be carefully monitored. The results suggest that in future elections electoral management efforts will need to continue to ensure that measures to preserve the secrecy of the vote are effectively implemented at voting stations and during counting processes, and that voters are provided with basic information about the steps taken to ensure ballot secrecy.

The lowest proportion of voters very satisfied with the secrecy of their votes was found in Mpumalanga (59%), Gauteng (61%), Eastern Cape and Free State (64% respectively). The highest proportions of voters very satisfied with the secrecy of their votes were found in the Northern Cape (71%) and Limpopo (70%). Equally high proportions of satisfaction were found for men and women and for persons with or without disabilities. A smaller percentage of voters in the rural areas (63%) stated that they were very satisfied that their vote was secret in comparison with voters in informal urban areas (67%). Indian voters were much more confident in the secrecy of their vote than other population groups, specifically the black African group who were the most sceptical.

POLITICAL COERCION

It is highly important to investigate evidence of coercion and intimidation. In order to ascertain how prevalent intimidation was in the recent 2016 elections, fieldworkers in the ESS survey asked voters if they had experienced coercion. In response, 91% of the voting public reported that no one tried to force them to vote for a certain political party. The remaining 9% declared that they had experienced coercion relating to their party of choice (7% prior to arriving at their voting station and 2% while waiting in a queue to vote). In KwaZulu-Natal the share that experienced political coercion increased from 3% in 2009 to 8% in 2011, to 11% in 2014 and to 14% in 2016. The incidence of reported coercion also emerged as relatively higher for voters in rural areas in 2016 when compared to 2009 (rising from 4% in 2009 to 11% in 2016). Among Coloured and White voters reported coercion (6% and 5% respectively) was relatively lower than that observed among African voters (10%) and Indian voters (14%). Levels of cohesion among Indian voters, white voters and Black African voters have also increased significantly since 2009.

Focusing explicitly on those that did mention some form of coercion, the most commonly mentioned sources of this coercion were political parties (45%) and family members or friends (32%). Somewhat alarming however is the finding that Election officials, as the source of coercion, has increased to 11% in 2016-while this has always remained under 5% during previous elections. This finding needs to be taken under serious consideration by the Electoral Commission

POLITICAL PARTY TOLERANCE

Political tolerance between contesting political parties and their supporters represents a fundamental component of electoral and indeed liberal democracy and is instrumental in ensuring free and fair elections. More than three-fifths (61%) of voters believed that political parties were very tolerant of one another during the 2016 election campaigns. A further 21 per cent reported that parties were somewhat tolerant of each other, while 11 per cent observed that there was not a prevailing culture of tolerance. These results are highly consistent with the views expressed by voters in the 2014 and 2011 election surveys.

Voters in the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape were most likely to believe that political parties were tolerant of one another during campaigning (mean scores of 81 and 84 respectively), which was significantly higher than the rating offered by voters in all other provinces. Conversely, those in the North West and the Gauteng were significantly less likely than voters in almost all other provinces to perceive parties as having demonstrated political tolerance during the campaigning for the elections (mean scores of 70 and 72 respectively). Voters in urban formal areas tended to provide more positive evaluations of party tolerance (mean=78) than their counterparts in both informal urban areas and rural settlements (mean =74 and 76 respectively). Indian voters were more favourable in their perceptions of party tolerance than all Black African and white voters. Voters aged 18-24 years (M=74) and 25-34 years (M=76) offered more critical evaluations than those aged 35-44 years (M= 78) and those aged 45-59 years (M=80). These are notable findings, since concerns about the behaviour exhibited by political parties in an electoral context might have the undesirable effect of fostering political disillusionment. Young voters are critical for future electoral turnout, and previous work on election participation has shown that political disillusionment is a salient factor underlying electoral abstention.

ELECTORAL FREEDOM AND FAIRNESS

An overwhelming majority of voters in the 2016 municipal elections (91%) felt that the election procedures were free, with a further four per cent saying they were free with only minor problems. A mere two per cent suggested that the elections were not free, with an equivalent share voicing uncertainty in their response. A high degree in consistency is evident when comparing the 2016 results using this measure to those reported in both the 2014 and 2011 election surveys. The percentage stating that the election procedures were

unconditionally free ranged from a low of 89% among voters in Free States to a high of 96% in the case of Northern Cape voters. Even though the results tend to be concentrated, with most voters evaluating the election procedures as free, there are some differences at these upper margins. Voters with disabilities were marginally less favourable in their opinion about the freeness of election procedures, for example, than voters without disabilities. Interestingly, there were no age differences in the shares stating that the elections were entirely, partially or not free.

Apart from the freeness question, the survey included an item pertaining to the perceived fairness of electoral procedures. Again we find a near universal consensus among voters, with 93 per cent declaring that the election procedures were free, with a further three per cent saying they were fair apart from minor problems. Only two per cent reported that the elections were not fair, while an equivalent share were undecided. Examining trends in perceived fairness across the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, we find that the results are almost identical in the pattern of responses. This reaffirms that voters categorically believe that the elections were fair as well as free, which is further evidence of successful electoral management by the Election Commission.

At a disaggregate level, the percentage reporting that the election was unequivocally fair ranged in a narrow band between 91 and 95 per cent across all the different socio-demographic variables that were examined. Either weak or no significant differences were apparent in the mean fairness score based on educational attainment, age, sex, and time of voting. There were, however, significant differences based on province, with voters in KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State on average slightly less convinced of the fairness of the election relative to voters in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng. In addition, rural voters had marginally lower fairness scores than those in formal urban areas and informal settlements. White voters had a lower average fairness score than other voters, while disabled voters reported lower scores relative to able-bodied voters. In these instances where significant scores were detected, it is important to bear in mind that they are differences between fairness ratings at an exceptionally high level.

THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION'S PERFORMANCE AND CONDUCT

Overall Trust in the Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission was either strongly trusted or trusted by about nine-tenths (91%) of the voting population. Comparing general public trust and voter trust in this institution, we can observe that the average voter is more trust of the Commission. We can conclude that participation in municipal elections significantly improves an individual trust in the Electoral Commission. Reviewing voters' trust in the Electoral Commission by subgroup, there was very little variation deviations between different demographic subgroups in South Africa. The following groups were found to have the lowest levels of voters' trust in the

Commission: White voters, Coloured voters, voters in the sixty years and above age cohort, and those voters with no schooling.

Evaluations of Electoral Officials

To acquire a general understanding of how voters appraised the performance and conduct of the Electoral Commission officials at their voting station, respondents were asked, “How satisfied are you with the quality of service that the IEC officials provided to voters. An estimated 96% of voters stated that they were generally satisfied with the quality of services provided by officials. The following provincial voters were found to have the lowest levels of general satisfaction with officials: Gauteng, Western Cape and Mpumalanga. What is somewhat surprising, voters in Gauteng had moderately higher satisfaction with officials during the 2011 municipal elections than what was seen in the 2016 municipal elections. The same decline in general satisfaction with officials was observed in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga.

Voters were asked to consider the extent to which they thought that the Electoral Commission officials at their voting station had good personal characteristics or traits. These traits were: (i) friendly; (ii) cooperative; (iii) patient; (iv) helpful; and (v) considerate. It would appear that voters, on average, were less likely to appraise election officials as friendly, patient and helpful during the 2016 municipal elections when compared with voters in the 2014 national elections. Older voters tended to rate election officials more positively on the five traits than their younger counterparts. In addition, voters from the country’s White and Indian population groups were more likely to be favourable to officials on these issues when compared to voters from the Black African and Coloured population groups. In an encouraging observation, voters with disabilities were favourable in their description of officials’ personal traits than the national average.

Voters were requested to reflect on the extent to which they believed that the Electoral Commission officials at their voting station had good professional proficient qualities or traits. These qualities were: (i) honesty; (ii) knowledgeable about elections; (iii) an interested in their jobs; (iv) impartiality; and (v) professionalism. Most voters defined the election officials at their voting station as honest, knowledge, attentive, and professional. It would appear that voters, on average, were less likely to assess election officials as impartial in the 2016 municipal elections when contrasted with voters in the 2014 national elections. During the 2016 elections, three-fifths of voters designated officials as impartial to a great extent, 23% as impartial to some extent and 12% as biased. The voters in following provinces described the officials in their stations as the most partial: Mpumalanga, the North West and the Eastern Cape.

Consideration of Voting Procedure for Voters with Special Needs

During the course of the ESS, voters were asked to consider the extent to which they thought that voting procedures at the voting station took into account the needs of the certain vulnerable groups. These groups were: (i) the elderly; (ii) persons with disabilities; (iii) the partially-sighted; (iv) the blind; (v) women; and (vi) women with babies. Reviewing these responses it is apparent that most believed that the Electoral Commission staff had addressed the special needs of vulnerable groups. It would appear that there has been little change in how voters rate the way the country's voting procedures has taken these vulnerable groups into account. These reported opinions are similar in nature to the opinions expressed by voters in the 2011 municipal elections. However, due to minor changes to the way questions were asked to the respondents, we should be careful about a direct comparison between what observed in 2011 and 2016.

A low level of variations in voters' opinion on the consideration of voting procedures for people with special needs was observed. Unexpectedly women were not found to be more concerned about the special needs of pregnant women and women with babies when compared with men. When asked about how voting procedures affected the disabled and the blind and partially sighted, dissimilarities between voters without disabilities and voters with disabilities were marginal. Black African voters were found to be more satisfied than other population groups when asked about how the Electoral Commission's voting procedures considered the needs of vulnerable groups. Evaluations on this issue were lower in the Western Cape and the Free State than what was observed in any of the other nine provinces.

New Procedures to Validate Voter Addresses

Fieldworkers asked voters to rate their level of satisfaction with the procedures to check and update the home addresses of voters at voting stations. This will help us understand voters' attitudes towards a part of this country's election process. About nine-tenths (92%) of the voting population were either very satisfied or satisfied with the procedures to check and update the home addresses of voters at their voting station. The following groups were found to have highest levels of voters' satisfaction: Indian, resident voters of urban informal areas (M=88) and voters with an incomplete secondary education. Interestingly, a pairwise correlation test showed that there was a positive correlation between satisfaction with the Commission on verifying addresses and trust in the Commission.

VOTER EDUCATION

Level of Information Voters had about Voting Procedures

Voters partaking in ESS 2016 were requested to answer the following question: "Do you think you had enough information about the voting procedures (including registration, location of voting station) before this election?" Roughly a fifth (18%) of all voters had either far too little or too little information about the voting procedures. Approximately three-

fifths (61%) of the voting population had enough information and the remainder (20%) had either too much or far too much information. The following groups were found to possess the lowest levels of information: tertiary-educated voters, voters in the age 35-44 cohort as well as voters in urban informal areas. The lowest evaluation of the level of information was amongst the nine provinces were in the Western Cape and Mpumalanga. The voters in following provinces reported the highest average level of information: Free State, North West and the Northern Cape.

Effectiveness of the Electoral Commission's Voter Education Campaign

Voters participating in ESS 2016 were asked the following question by our fieldworkers: "How effective was the IEC's voter education campaign for these elections?" Nearly two-thirds (63%) of voters believed that the Commission's voter education campaigns were very effective, with an approximately two-sevenths (27%) indicating that it was somewhat effective, and less than twentieth (3%) stating that it was ineffective. Indian voters had a higher effectiveness evaluation than Black African voters and Coloured voters had very similar evaluations. White voters had a lower assessment of the effectiveness of the campaign than other population groups in 2016. Younger and older voters were equally happy with the Commission's voter education campaign. The voters in following provinces gave the campaign's efficacy its highest evaluation: Limpopo and the Eastern Cape.

Usefulness of Information Sources

The 2016 voter education campaign focused on twelve information platforms: (i) Newspapers, (ii) Political parties, (iii) Civil society organisations, (iv) Electoral Commission website, (v) social media, (vi) Formal and informal workshops, (vii) Pamphlets, (viii) Electoral Commission communication campaign, (ix) Television, (x) Radio, (xi) Posters/billboards, and (xii) Voter-awareness booklets. It is evident that certain sources of information have relatively low levels of voter access. During the 2016 municipal elections, more than a quarter (23%) lacked access to social media and approximately two-sevenths (28%) had no access to the Electoral Commission's website. Multimedia civic and democracy education via newspapers, television and radio (94%, 98% and 98% respectively) were considered by the voting population as very useful sources of information about voting.

Of voters with access to social media, less than four-sevenths (55%) thought that this information platform was very useful as an information source while about two-sevenths (29%) thought it was somewhat useful. A surprisingly a large portion (16%) of voters with access to social media described this platform as not useful as a source of information. Voter education via the Electoral Commission's pamphlets, booklets and workshops (90%, 87% and 83% respectively) were regard by the voting population as very useful as sources of information. Posters and billboards also received broadly positive evaluations. Political parties received positive evaluations as an information source with two-thirds (66%) describing political parties as very useful and roughly a quarter (27%) as useful. The Electoral

Commission's communication campaign was rated as very useful by 58% of voters and somewhat useful by 32% of voters.

Subgroups Evaluations of Information Sources

Low levels of subgroup variations in voters' appraisals of the usefulness of television, newspaper, posters, political parties and radio were noted. Groups who appraised newspapers as very useful were Indian (M=84) voters, tertiary-educated voters and Coloured voters. Older groups and less educated groups had relatively low evaluations of the newspaper and poster or billboards. Younger voters were found to view political parties as more useful as sources of information when compared to older voters. This pattern of responses was not observed during the 2014 national elections. Younger and better-educated voters were found to be more likely to view Commission's website as useful when compared to their older and less educated counterparts. Those aged 18-24 years and 25-34 years regarded booklets moderately more approvingly than those aged 60 and above.

Significant subgroups group differences were noted on voters' evaluations of social media as a useful source of information. The voters in following provinces gave social media efficacy its highest evaluation: Free State, North West and Limpopo. Undereducated and older and voters were found to be less likely to view social media as useful when compared to their better educated and younger counterparts. Considerable subgroup differences were noted for voters' evaluation of the usefulness of the Electoral Commission's communication campaign. Black African and Indian voters were found to be moderately more positive than other population groups, particularly White voters. Pensionable age (60+ years) voters were less positive towards the usefulness of the communication campaign than other age groups. When voters are queried about the usefulness of civil society organisations, it was clear that specific subgroups found such organisations efficacious. The population group who regarded civil society organisations as useful, on average, were Indian voters and the population group who saw such organisation as the least useful, on average, were White voters.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Based on an assessment of voter interviews collected on Election Day, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) found that the voting public is overwhelmingly confident that the 2016 Municipal Elections were both free and fair, and provide an exceptionally favourable evaluation of the management performance of the Electoral Commission (IEC) and the conduct of officials at voting stations.

B. ELECTION OBSERVER RESULTS

PROFILE OF ELECTION OBSERVERS

A total of 215 Election Observers were interviewed on Election Day. More than half (50.1%) of interviewed observers visited urban formal areas and about a tenth (11%) urban informal areas, a far lower share (38%) visited rural areas. The vast majority of those interviewed were South African. There were also observers from Canada, Germany, Brazil and France that participated in the observer survey. A large proportion of the observers interviewed said that they participated in observing the 2014 National Elections (34.9%, N = 75), less participated in the 2009 National Elections (18.6%, N = 40), and slightly more in the 2004 National Elections (22.8%, N = 49).

CHARACTERISTICS OF VOTING STATIONS

According to election observers, most voting stations were situated within a permanent structure such within schools (64%), halls (17%) and churches (10%). A smaller proportion (5%) of voting stations was located in non-permanent structures such as tents. The observer survey found that observers indicated that most of the voting stations (88%) had seats to rest or sit. Observers also reported that the voting stations had working toilets nearby (96%) although a far lower share had access to drinking water for people (79%). More than half of the observers (59%) felt that the voting stations had facilities for the disabled.

Most observers (67%) were 'very satisfied' with the safety and security of the voting station. Somewhat smaller proportions of the observers were very satisfied with the availability of voting material and equipment (60%) and the neatness and cleanliness of the voting station (56%). In terms of accessibility of the voting station for people with special needs the survey found that observers felt that the voting station is fairly accessible to all almost designated groups. Only a minority of the observers interviewed (47% and 35% respectively) thought that the voting station was fairly accessible for the blind or partially sighted.

CONSIDERATION OF VOTING PROCEDURES FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A majority (60%) of observers interviewed thought that the needs of elderly people had been taken into account at the voting station to a great extent. A lower share (54%) felt that needs of persons with disabilities had been taken into account to a great extent. Observers were also asked if voting stations considered the needs of the partially sighted, blind, women and women with babies. More than half (51%) of observers interviewed thought that voting procedures in South Africa considered the needs of the blind or the partially sighted to at least a great extent. In contrast, more than half of all observers also indicated that the voting station considered the needs of women and women.

DISTURBANCES AT VOTING STATIONS

Overall, observers reported no disturbances occurring outside their voting station (85%) or inside the voting station (86%). Most of the observers (67%) also stated that there were no

political party posters displayed inside the voting station. Of those who reported any disturbances outside the voting station, the most common complaint related to political campaign outside the voting stations. Some observers claimed that political party supporters were trying to pressure voters to alter their electoral choice.

OBSERVING ELECTORAL PROCESSES

Observers generally agreed (62%) that in most cases party agents were allowed to observe the electoral processes within the boundary of the voting station all of the time. Political party agents, who had permission from the Election Commission, were allowed inside voting stations. Most observers (80.5%) of the sampled observers reported seeing more than one political party agent inside the voting station to observe the electoral processes.

ELECTORAL FREENESS AND FAIRNESS

Observers were asked if they thought election procedures at the specific voting station were free and fair. A large proportion of observers (91%) reported that the elections were free. In addition the majority of the election observers perceived election procedures to be fair (94%). Of those who responded “yes, with minor complications” or “not at all” and gave reasons for doing so, the reasons given included political parties campaigning to waiting voters. Other observers reported broken scanners, the length of the queues, and inappropriate arrangements made for voter secrecy.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION PERFORMANCE

In order to gauge their evaluation of the officials employed by the Electoral Commission at the voting station, the HSRC research team instructed fieldworkers to ask observers whether they are satisfied with the way the election was organized by the Commission. The majority of the observers indicated that they were satisfied (93%). The high level of satisfaction observed can perhaps be attributed to the high level of quality observers ascribed to the performance of Election Commission officials. At least 80 % of observers rated officials as being very friendly (89%), cooperative (89%), patient (85%), helpful (90%), knowledgeable about election processes (81%) and interested in their jobs (81%).

SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF THE VOTING STATION EXPERIENCE

Electoral observers present at the voting stations on Election Day were concerned with the quality of the voting procedures. Fieldworkers asked observers about their level of satisfaction with these procedures. The majority of observers were very satisfied with the quality of service that the electoral officials provided to the voters (63%), the secrecy of the votes (73%) and safe handling of ballots and ballot boxes (63%). In terms of the electoral staff, observers were generally very happy with electoral staff. The lowest rating that given to the electoral staff was on the issue of impartiality with only 63% of observers saying that the staff was impartial.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Based on the assessment of election observer interviews, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) found that there was overwhelming confirmation by observers that the 2016 Municipal Elections were both free and fair, and that the Electoral Commission performed exceedingly well in the implementation and management of the fifth National and Provincial Elections in the country.

1. Introduction and Background

South Africa has been a democracy for 22 years, since the first democratic elections were held in April 1994. However, the country continues to face challenges militating against optimal municipal services delivery to citizens and a range of other social and economic challenges. Most of the challenges emanate from the country's history of unequal development. Though the South African government has made significant gains with regards to creating a more equal society, divides and challenges are still rife. Challenges include unemployment, poverty, crime and inequality. In addition to this, South Africans generally identify service delivery as a top priority. Service delivery is an essential function of government. Adequate, good quality and affordable service delivery is also a condition for the good image of government.

In South Africa like elsewhere around the world, local governments are formed as an extension of the central government in order to improve service delivery. According to Kroukamp (2001:25) local government is the "hands and the feet" of reconstruction and development in South Africa. Vatala (2005:225) describes municipalities as the focus points for service delivery, economic development, tourism and infrastructure development, safety and security, job creation, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability.

The 2016 Municipal Elections among other is therefore an important yardstick to assess whether the South African government is addressing the needs of its citizens and the poor in particular. Citizens opinion about the performance of government are therefore vital if South Africa's government want to be seen as responsive and concern about the well-being of those who live in it. The Electoral Commission has a key role to play in administering the elections and as such providing a voice to ordinary citizen. Moreover, elections are viewed as vital for any functioning democracy. Furthermore, having competitive, free and fair elections¹ is viewed as the "lifeblood"² of a democracy as it permits that various ideologies and views are represented. This allows for citizens views to be represented, as the system allows for citizens to participate in the electoral system through voting, which is upheld by the rule of law.³

1.1. Elections in South Africa

In South Africa multiple political parties have the freedom and space to register to contest and campaign in an election, as the country is a constitutional democracy. This is due to

¹ Diamond and Morlino (2005) view competitive elections as elections which occur regularly, and which is free and fair. This allows for inclusiveness where all parties can campaign freely and have the opportunity to garner support. Furthermore, Bratton and Mattes (2001) highlight the importance of regular, free and fair elections in that it accords legitimacy to the state as this is the body which citizens support.

² Gunther and Mughan (2000) view is as an extremely essential component for a functioning democracy.

³ See Diamond and Morlino (2005) on the rule of law.

South Africa following a Westminster system of Proportional Representation at a national and provincial level, which is ingrained in the constitution being the highest rule of law in the country. In addition, Proportional Representation largely allows for the representation of multiple parties which is considered essential for a country such as South Africa due to its history of colonialism and apartheid. Elections are held every 5 years, and national and provincial elections occur on the same day, whereas municipal elections occur separately. The model adopted for the first democratic election in April 1994 which still exists today, ensures that all views of the electorate can be represented, as elections are based on “universal adult suffrage” where each voter can select a political party of their choice. The electorate nominates a party at a national and provincial level and not a specific candidate. Political parties draft party lists which contains 400 names of members (as national parliament has 400 seats), and based on support secured, members are then sent as representatives, and become members of parliament. The amount of votes a party obtains is in direct proportion to the amount of seats a party obtains in the National Assembly, which is the legislative branch of the country. In South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) is the dominant party as they have maintained a majority of votes since the 1994 elections. In addition to this, South Africans also elect parties at a provincial level. Provincial legislature is the upper house and contains 90 seats that equate 10 seats for each province. Based on Chapter 6, Act 104 of the Constitution, the legislative authority of a province is vested in its provincial legislature.

Lastly, Municipal Elections also serve an imperative role in South Africa’s landscape as it brings democracy closer to the people. This is achieved through a “hybrid” electoral system. As a result, electoral representation is through a mixed member system of both proportional representation (voting for a party on one ballot) and direct representation (voting on a different ballot to directly elect their ward councillor, who can be an independent candidate). This introduces an additional element of accountability where a ward councillor becomes directly accountable to their people/ward/constituency. Overall, based on this civic participation through voting across levels, voters afford certain legitimacy to their representatives. As a result, views from the electorate and public opinion data on the actual voting process remains imperative. It provides needed insights into voter experiences of how free and fair the election process to be. Ultimately, this is the aim of this report.

1.2. The role of the Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission plays a pertinent role in ensuring elections occur every five years as per the constitution. Their administration is not limited to Election Day, but they are involved in the pre-election and post-election phases and processes, which will be discussed in greater depth in the next section of this introduction. As already indicated, the onus of the Electoral Commission is to oversee elections across all levels of government.

According to Chapter 9, article 190 of the South African Constitution (1996:96), the Electoral Commission is to fulfil the following functions:

(1) The Electoral Commission must—

- (a) manage elections of national, provincial and municipal legislative bodies in accordance with national legislation;
- (b) ensure that those elections are free and fair; and
- (c) declare the results of those elections within a period that must be prescribed by national legislation and that is as short as reasonably possible.

(2) The Electoral Commission has the additional powers and functions prescribed by national legislation.

In addition to the above, the Electoral Commission Act of 1996 further unpacks the powers, duties and functions of the election management body as:

- Promoting conditions conducive to free and fair elections.
- Compiling the voters' roll.
- Registering political parties.
- Establishing and maintaining liaison with and coordination of political parties.
- Promoting voter education.
- Reviewing and making recommendations about electoral legislation.
- Declaring the results of national, provincial and municipal elections within seven days of an election.
- Adjudicating disputes that may arise from the organisation, administration and conduct of elections.

The Electoral Commission view themselves as an essential body in strengthening constitutional democracy. This is achieved by complying with the above roles and mandates. The independent body has a budget of 1.5bn over the period 2014-2017, and an important focus was to increase civic participation through voting by educating the electorate. The Commission places a great focus on increasing voter registration and turn out by investing in civic education and outreach programmes to encourage citizens to register and ultimately vote (Electoral Commission presentation to Parliament, PMG 2014). Furthermore, the Electoral Commission has its own vision and strategic plan and hope by 2018 “to be a pre-eminent leader in electoral democracy, and at an internal level, it aimed to strengthen governance, institutional excellence, professionalism and business processes...” (ibid).

In order to meet their targets, the Electoral Commission follows a specific framework of monitoring, as well as conducts research on voter experiences in order to declare elections as free and fair. Such research has in the past occurred in the form of exit polls. An example of this is the Human Science Council (HSRC) Elections Satisfaction Survey (ESS) which has been conducted for the 2009 national and provincial elections, the 2011 local government elections, the 2014 national and provincial elections, as well as the recent August 2016 local

government elections. Ultimately, the Electoral Commission declares South African elections as free and fair, through monitoring and research to ensure that the process is legitimate. In all, the aim of this report is to present voter and observer experiences of the 2016 Municipal Elections.

1.3. The General Elections Standards and Process

Bratton and Mattes (2001) highlights that regular, free and fair election is crucial for a flourishing and consolidated democracy. This is essential as it affords legitimacy to the election process as well, as political parties and leaders who come out victorious. As a result, general procedures and standards are codified to achieve exactly this. Different processes and bodies assist in the preparation, oversight and monitoring of elections in order to ensure that it is indeed free and fair. However, these procedures are not empirical which quantifies the notion of “free and fair”, instead it evaluates the notion of “free and fair” on a range of indicators to provide insights into how well the processes were executed. Although scholars cannot agree on a single definition for what constitutes free and fair elections, there are specific criteria to be met in order to declare an election as free and fair. The South African Constitution (1996:3) is premised on “Universal adult suffrage, a national common voter’s roll, regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness.” This is closely tied to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948; 2015), which further includes the secrecy of the vote as an imperative principle.

Furthermore, the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of South Africa assures citizens political freedoms which include: “freedom to form a political party, the right to free, fair and periodic elections and the right to stand for public office.” In addition to this, voters should not experience any intimidation, should not be coerced into voting or not voting for a particular party or candidate, and their vote should remain a secret. Also no person is to destroy or tamper with ballot boxes as a means to sabotage the process. As a result, the Electoral Commission is the most important body who assists in having the criteria of free and fair elections met, by managing and monitoring the entire election process. They administered the country’s first democratic election in 1994, but only became a permanent and independent institution in 1998. Chapter 9 of the Constitution has a particular mandate for the election management body which will be discussed in the next section. The role of the Electoral Commission ensures that citizens can exercise their hard sought for democratic right to vote. This is generally ensured by strict processes such as guaranteeing that voting stations open and close on time, that it is accessible to all voters, that representatives and monitors are trained and behave in a professional manner, and lastly that the counting process is transparent and reliable. The overall process will be discussed in further detail in the sections which follow, although it will present an overview of the processes as opposed to an extensive discussion.

1.4. The pre-election phase and processes

Elections are not a one day only affair and lots of groundwork and preparation occurs both before and after any election day. The onus of ensuring everything runs smoothly greatly falls on the Electoral Commission. Before elections, they have to administer and deal with voter registration; party registration; civic education in the form of voter education and information; the electoral campaigns and the media coverage of the electoral process.

The Electoral Commission conducts targeted voter registration campaigns to encourage voter registration. This happens well in advance as voter registration and compiling the voters roll is an on-going process, which occurs during office hours at municipal electoral offices. However, it should be noted that the voter registration period temporarily closed during the period of the announcement of the election date, until the completion of the entire voting process (EISA, 2004; 2009). In addition the Electoral Act states that all parties who wish to contest an election needs to register, provide a list of their candidates, pay the registration fee, have voters support, provide a constitution as well as proof that it has published in the government gazette for the public's attention. In addition, these registered parties form part of the Party Liaison Committee which acts as a channel of communication flow between political parties and the Electoral Commission (ibid). The Commission also has a responsibility to educate voters as per the Electoral Act, and targeted registration campaigns are one such way to do this. In addition, they utilise the media as a medium to reach the electorate as well as utilise their social capital as their networks to assist with voter education and dissemination.

Although not directly linked to the Electoral Commission, political parties have the obligation of educating their voters which is usually done through party campaigns and launching a manifest. Parties usually take a specific ideological stance, and they present issues and solutions which they think are most pertinent to the country or community. All parties should be allowed to campaign freely and without any form of intimidation in order to reach voters.

In order to ensure elections are free and fair, as well as transparent, the electorate needs to be updated on proceedings as well as election campaigns, which are done via media coverage. This is ensured through the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) which regulates the election broadcasting. Basically parties are given "air time" which introduces political parties to the electorate.

As aforementioned, no voter may be coerced into voting or not voting for a particular party, and election campaigns and party representatives are essential in this. Political parties have a particular code of conduct to abide by as stated by the Electoral Act. Party representatives

have the responsibility of being tolerant of one another, and they should not illicit violence in anyway.

1.5. The Election Day and Voting Process

On the actual Election Day there are various tasks and checklists in place. These includes ensuring the voting process works and runs smoothly; checking voting stations and having capable voting staff, party agents, security and election observers present. One such process is the special voting process which is extended under the Electoral Act to those physically disable, pregnant or inform voters, election staff, those out of the country on government service, and those out of country for business, studies or vacation. However, for local elections, anybody who cannot be at their voting station on Election Day, is granted a special vote which usually takes place a day or two prior to the official election day. If a voter is away from their voting station on those particular days, they unfortunately forfeit their vote (IEC 2016).

Another important aspect on Election Day is ensuring the voting stations open on time. This is achieved by professional electoral staff as well as election observers. They contribute to the process running smooth and efficiently. Furthermore, they troubleshoot any issues which arise which include the late delivery of ballot papers which affects the time a station opens, as well as managing the voter's roll and trouble-shooting issues when voter's names do not appear or are different. In addition, a mission of the Electoral Commission in consultation with Party Liaison Committees is to increase the amount of voting stations to make it as accessible as possible. In turn, it is in hope to increase voter turnout.

Lastly, sufficient election staff, security (including police officers) and observers are appointed, and assist with administering and monitoring the election process and day. Observers include ambassadors and foreign missions, and individuals from organisations. In addition, party agents and representatives are also welcomed at polling stations. This ensures that the voting process runs smoothly, as well as ensures that elections are free and fair as they also play a "watchdog" role by checking that all involved fulfil their role and adhere to code of conduct or job description.

1.6. The post-election phases and processes

The primary aim of the post-election phase is to present final election results, and to ensure that the process was in fact free, fair and transparent. In order to do this, the counting process starts immediately after the closing of the voting station, unless it is a mobile unit or if there is any threat to the process in being declared free and fair. Official staff becomes counting officers, with the presiding officer from the Electoral Commission becoming the head counting officer (EISA 2004; 2009). The counting process takes a while and can

continue over days. It also undergoes an auditing process by private firms where results are reviewed before being sent to the provincial results centres/offices. Having results centres ensures that everybody can be updated on the counting proceedings and it also creates a dimension of transparency in the process. Lastly, once all votes are counted, final results are transmitted and a formal announcement of results is made by the Electoral Commission.

1.7. Survey objectives

1.7.1. Primary objective

The primary overall objective of this study was to inform and guide the Commission in its plans, policies and practices in order to assist the Commission to implement its mandate optimally.

1.7.2. Secondary objectives

The specific objective of the Election Satisfaction Survey 2016 was to determine opinions and perceptions of both voters and election observers regarding the freeness and fairness of the electoral process. A further aim of the study was to assess the operational efficiency of the Electoral Commission in managing the 2016 municipal elections.

2. Research Methodology

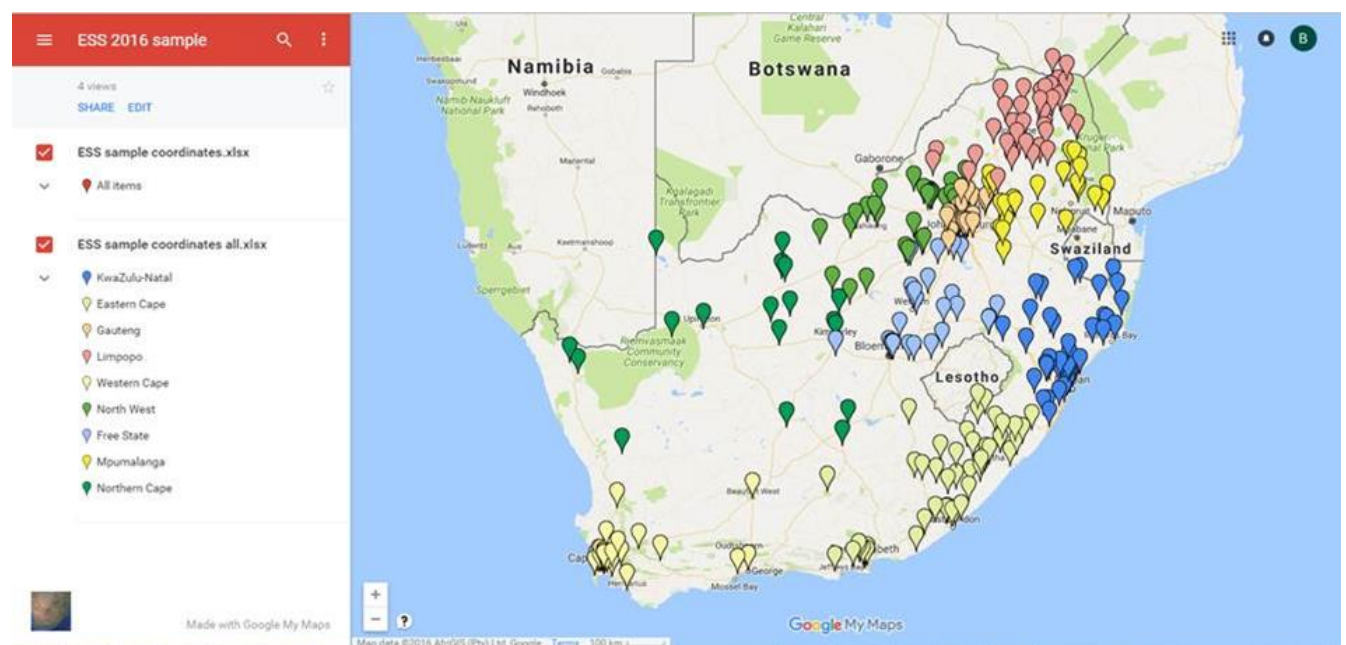
2.1. The Research Universe

The study was conducted among two groups of respondents, namely (i) South Africans who voted in the 2016 Local Government Elections and (ii) local and international election observers. The target population for the voter component of the study was individuals aged 18 years and older who were registered to vote in the 2016 Elections. The target population for the election observers were local and international election observers visiting the selected voting stations on Election Day.

2.2. Sampling

The sample design comprised stratification and multi-stage sampling procedures. The sampling of the voting station was done proportional to the IEC's distribution of registered voters, and considered province, geotype and the size of a voting station. This sample design was implemented to ensure that a nationally representative sample of voting stations was selected and that the results of the survey could be properly weighted to the population of legible voters in the country. At the actual voting stations, fieldworkers used random sampling to select voters to ensure a fair representation in terms of gender, race, age, and disability status.

Figure 1: Distribution of the 300 selected voting stations



Three hundred voting stations were selected countrywide and the distribution of these voting stations was proportional to the IEC's distribution of voting stations and registered voters per voting station. Only in the cases of Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, the two

provinces where almost half of South African registered voters were based, was the numbers of voting stations sampled below proportion. Conversely, the number of voting stations in the Northern Cape was over-sampled in order to generate sufficient interviews in that province to facilitate meaningful analysis. Table 1 provides the distribution of voting stations per province and the number of voters interviewed.

Table 1: Frequency of sampled voting stations, voters and election observers by province

Province	Voting Stations		Voter interviews			Election Observer Interviews (N)
	Sampled	Realised	Expected sample	Realised sample	Realisation Rate (%)	Realised
Western Cape	31	31	1,550	1,486	95.9	25
Eastern Cape	47	47	2,350	1,783	75.9	41
Northern Cape	20	20	1,000	934	93.4	18
Free State	26	26	1,300	1,070	82.3	23
KwaZulu-Natal	49	49	2,450	1,879	76.7	38
North West	28	28	1,400	1,192	85.1	28
Gauteng	39	39	1,950	1,802	92.4	40
Mpumalanga	24	24	1,200	1,046	87.2	24
Limpopo	36	36	1,800	1,709	94.9	40
Total	300	300	15,000	12,901	86.0	277

In terms of the number of voting stations, a 100% realisation rate was achieved. All 300 selected voting stations were therefore visited on Election Day. The number of voters interviewed was 12 901 from the expected 15,000 which represented 86% response rate. In terms of election observers, a total of 277 interviews were conducted.

At each voting station, the interviewer was instructed to interview 50 voters during the course of the day. Interviews were divided into four time slots: 07:00 - 10:30; 10:31 – 14:00; 14:01 – 17:30 and the remainder between 17:31 and closing time (21:00). This was done to ensure a spread of interviews throughout Election Day, since it was imagined that different dynamics might be at play depending on the time of day.

As was the case with previous election satisfaction surveys, few voting stations were actually visited by election observers. During training interviewers were therefore instructed to interview all observers that might visit their assigned voting station. Despite having trained the fieldworkers on the issue of identifying observers, many fieldworkers interviewed party agents in the process. This report therefore includes interviews with party agents as part of the observer data.

2.3. Mode of data collection

Since the Electoral Commission was keen to release the survey results together with the official election results (which took place 3 days after the election) the HSRC deemed electronic data collection as the most appropriate for this project. The HSRC appointed AfricaScope and Mobenzi Researcher to assist with this phase of the project. The AfricaScope and Mobenzi system allowed real-time capture of completed voter and observer questionnaires onto a database, allowing the entire dataset to be validated, cleaned and transferred to the HSRC two days after the elections. The system therefore allowed the responses to be stored real-time in a central database.



The mobile phones used for the project were all Android mobile handsets namely MTN STEPPA devices, Samsung Galaxy Fame devices and AG Chacer devices. These phones had RICA registered SIM cards, SDE cards and had Mobenzi Researcher software installed. For each of the SIM cards, 100Mb data bundles were available that was sufficient for the capture and transfer of completed questionnaires to the central database. The service provider who provided the PDAs tested all PDAs beforehand to ensure that the SIMs worked correctly.

The PDA's also had Rescue software installed which allowed interface with the PDA remotely via the GSM cellular network to fix any problems being experienced by the PDA or software. The team also monitored data bundles. The software Hide It Pro was installed on the PDA's. This prevented the interviewers from accessing any functions, application or widgets on the phone other than the navigational GPS function, the Mobenzi Researcher and Rescue software. Chargers were also given to the interviewers. The PDA's were able to work for a 12 hour period but intermittent charging was required. In some instances the interviewers ask preceding officers to charge the phones at the voting stations during breaks. In order to make provision for breakage or loss of phones, each interviewer was given a spread sheet with all questions from the questionnaires. In the event of any technical glitch or difficulty, interviewers were instructed to complete interviews on the spreadsheet.

Once the devices were handed out the instruction for proper use included:

- *Never change settings*
- *Never change the SIM card*
- *Don't take out the battery*
- *Ensure the data and time is correct*
- *Don't download other applications, ringtones, images etc.*

- *Don't try and use applications on the cellphone*
- *Don't try and use it for personal messaging*
- *Keep the battery fully charged*
- *Don't swap or share your device with colleagues –unless instructed*
- *Don't leave handsets lying around for family and friends to play with*
- *Report loss or theft immediately*
- *Take care of the device*

2.4. Questionnaires

Guided by the IEC, two questionnaires were developed – namely, a voter questionnaire and an election observer questionnaire (See Appendices). Except for minor changes, both questionnaires closely resembled the 2009, 2011 and 2014 Election Satisfaction Survey questionnaires. This was intentional since one of the objectives of this study was to compare results with previous election satisfaction surveys.

The voter questionnaire contained information that dealt with the following issues:

- *Biographical data relating to the respondent;*
- *Time spent getting to the voting station and queuing to vote;*
- *Considerations of the voting stations for people with special needs;*
- *Clarity of the instructions and processes to be followed inside the voting station;*
- *Ease of voting procedures inside the voting station;*
- *Duration of the time it took to decide whom to vote for;*
- *Perceived secrecy of the vote;*
- *Political coercion;*
- *Political party tolerance;*
- *Perception of whether poll was free and fair;*
- *IEC performance and conduct;*
- *Voter education;*
- *Trust in the Electoral Commission;*
- *Confidence in accuracy of counting process; and*
- *Satisfaction on the checking and updating of home addresses.*



The observer questionnaire dealt with the following issues:

- *Profile of the election observers;*
- *Voting station signage;*
- *Perceived ease of locating voting stations;*
- *Voting station security;*
- *Considerations of the voting stations and procedures for people with special needs;*
- *Disturbances in and outside the voting station;*
- *Display of party posters inside voting stations;*
- *Political party activities and agents inside the voting station;*
- *Perception of whether poll was free and fair;*

- *IEC performance;*
- *Media presence.*

The two questionnaires were programmed into the Mobenzi Researcher consol. Once uploaded, questions could be easily added and edited. The design of the form in Mobenzi Researcher were completed in consultation with HSRC researchers. Mobenzi Researcher allowed all forms of skip patterns to be included. Further programming were done to ensure that the responses provided by interviewers were legitimate-thus ensuring the highest quality. Questions were programmed to include a variety of forms including a single or multiple select; Text ; Numeric or formatted responses.

2.5. Fieldworker conduct and protocol

Upon arrival at the voting station, interviewers introduced themselves to the presiding officer and informed them of the survey, the objectives and the survey protocols that were to be followed. A letter, explaining the election satisfaction survey, was also presented to the presiding officer. The presiding officer was requested to assist the interviewer with selecting an appropriate place to sit to conduct the interviews –preferably close to where voters emerge from the voting station after casting their votes while ensuring privacy of responses. If for any reason, the presiding officer or any other official refused to allow the interviewers to conduct the survey, the interviewers were instructed to conduct the interviews outside the voting station. The presiding officer was then asked to contact the IEC (the phone number was on the information letter) and iron out any miscommunication or misunderstandings.

2.6. Quality control

Each of the 300 selected voting stations was visited by a fieldworker on Election Day. Fieldworkers were instructed to be at the voting station at 07:00. Provincial sub-supervisors were appointed to assist fieldworkers to get the voting stations on time. Nine supervisors, one per province, were responsible for the overall operations in the provinces. HSRC researchers visited selected voting stations in each province randomly during the Election Day to verify that surveys were taking place in the prescribed manner. Also, a team of HSRC researchers and technicians from Mobenzi and Africascope were available on Election Day to ensure that fieldworkers were at the correct voting stations and conducting interviews. A list of interviews, sorted by voting station were received by 10 am the morning of Election Day and follow up phone calls were made to all the voting stations where interviews had not yet been uploaded onto the consol.

2.7. Translations of research instruments

Even though one of the selection criteria for interviewers was that they had to be multilingual, it was important for consistency and reliability to translate the research

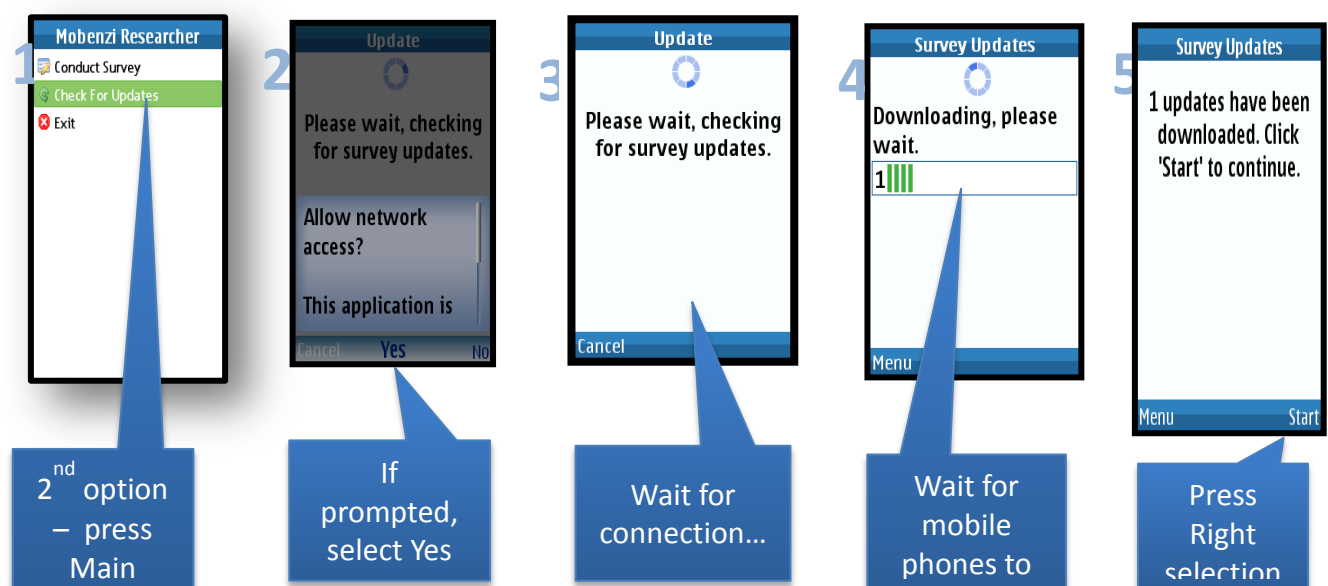
instrument into different languages. The research instrument was translated into six of the official languages namely Tsonga, Venda, Zulu, Afrikaans, Tswana, and Xhosa. This was done to ensure that the meaning of questions was retained and consistent across all languages. Fieldworkers were encouraged to conduct the survey in the language of choice of the respondent.

2.8. Fieldwork Training

All interviewers, sub-supervisors and supervisors attended a one day training session prior to Election Day. Training sessions were held in Gauteng, Cape Town, Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, Umtata, Bloemfontein and Kimberley. During training everyone received a training manual as well as hard copies of the questionnaires. Training covered a wide range of issues, including the purpose of the project, sampling and interviewing techniques, the content of the questionnaires, guidelines and suggestions on how to handle questions that were particularly difficult, sensitive or unclear, and ethical issues such as informed consent and confidentiality. Training manuals were provided. Interviewers were also issued with name tags, bibs and permission letters which they had to submit to the presiding officers on Election Day.

A big part of the training concentrated on training the fieldworks to use the mobile phones. This part of the training was done step by step and illustrated very graphically during the training session. A training manual with step by step instructions as well as trouble shooting sections were handed to each fieldworker.

Figure 2: A graphical illustration of how fieldworkers were trained step by step.



2.9. Quality control mechanisms

To ensure that the information collected was of the highest quality, the HSRC embarked on intensive training sessions with all supervisors and the fieldworkers before they were dispatched to the various voting stations. Researchers also visited the selected areas and worked with the fieldworkers for a period of time to ensure that they adhered to ethical research practices and randomly selected the respondent. The researchers also checked the procedures followed in administering the research instruments. Throughout the data capture AfricaScope and HSRC staff also monitored the responses and any peculiarities were brought to the attention of the supervisors. For example, if not enough interviews were being done within a particular time period, the HSRC could investigate. This also ensured that any mobile phones not functioning correctly could be immediately checked.

2.10. Data management

A second phase of quality control was done when the completed data sets were received. The data was cleaned to ensure that no duplicates were received, mobile phone were checked against voting stations to ensure that the mobile phone data was received from the correct voting stations. After this exercise, a cleaned dataset was send to the statistician who weighted the data to the target population (South Africans 18 years and older who are registered voters). This task was completed and enables the researchers to provide projections from the sample to the total population at the identified level of reporting. A similar data cleaning exercise was undertaken for the observer data. The observer dataset was however not weighted. These datasets were then analysed and inferences drawn from the results which are contained in this report.

2.11. Description of the sample of voters and observers

In order to contextualise findings, the profile of voters and observers are described in the table below. Weighted as well as unweighted numbers are portrayed.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics of demographic variables for voters (valid percentage)

	N	%	Weighted N	Weighted %
South Africa	12901	100	26327270	100
Province				
Western Cape	1486	11.5	3066649	11.6
Eastern Cape	1783	13.8	3331449	12.7
Northern Cape	934	7.2	621310	2.4
Free State	1070	8.3	1470999	5.6
KwaZulu-Natal	1879	14.6	5411237	20.6
North West	1192	9.2	1715460	6.5
Gauteng	1802	14	6234822	23.7
Mpumalanga	1046	8.1	1919216	7.3
Limpopo	1709	13.2	2556128	9.7
Geographic location				
Urban formal	8100	62.8	21763401	62.8
Urban informal	1119	8.7	3005956	8.7
Rural	3682	28.5	9892857	28.5
Total	12901	100	34662213	100
Age group				
18-24 years	1930	15.0	4035467	15.3
25-34 years	3392	26.3	6957129	26.4
35-44 years	2642	20.5	5396631	20.5
45-59 years	2973	23.0	5905005	22.4
60+years	1757	13.6	3474786	13.2
System missing	207	1.6	25769017	2.1
Population group				
Black African	9352	72.5	18862125	71.6
Coloured	1738	13.5	2921027	11.1
Indian	303	2.3	808025	3.1
White	1248	9.7	3013907	11.4
Other	15	0.1	35478	0.1
(Don't know)	12	0.1	36488	0.1
(Refused)	233	1.8	650220	2.5
Gender				
Male	5773	44.7	11642581	44.2
Female	6752	52.3	13793706	52.4
(Refused)	243	1.9	641317	2.4
Disability status				
Persons with disabilities	941	7.3	2092133	7.9
Persons without disabilities	11365	88.1	22724182	86.3
(Refused)	73	0.6	164628	0.6
Total	12379	96	24980943	94.9
System missing	522	4	1346327	5.1
Educational status				
No Schooling	855	6.6	1745293	6.6
Primary	1342	10.4	2481525	9.4
Grade 8-11	3035	23.5	5671065	21.5
Matric/Grade 12	4415	34.2	9007622	34.2
Post-Matric	2433	18.9	5397313	20.5
(Don't know)	58	0.4	109214	0.4
(Refused)	241	1.9	568911	2.2
Total	12379	96	24980943	94.9
System missing	522	4	1346327	5.1

3. Voter Interview Results

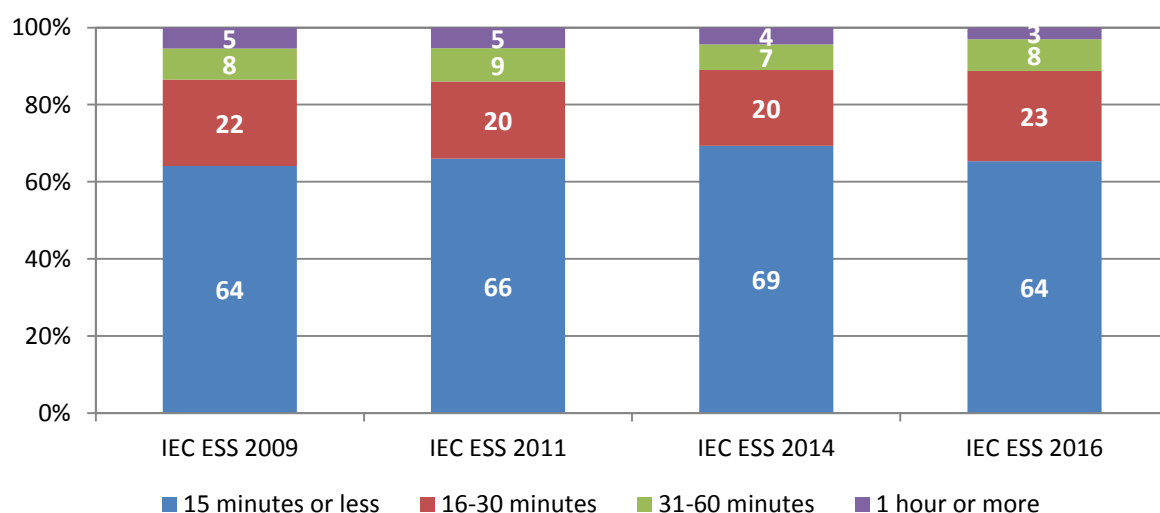
3.1. General Voting Experience

Voters were asked a range of questions designed to provide a general sense of key components of the electoral experience on Election Day 2016. These focused on six main aspects, namely (i) the travel time required to reach the voting station (ii) the time spent queuing to vote (iii) the perceived accessibility of the voting station to persons with disabilities or the elderly, (iv) views on IEC signage and instructions at the voting stations, (v) the perceived ease of voting procedures and (vi) the safety and security at the voting station. This section will explore these issues in depth by examining national results, socio-demographic differences that may underlie these, as well as trends relative to the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections.

3.1.1. Time taken to reach voting station

The first question posed to voters pertained to travel time and voters were asked how long it took them to travel to their respective voting stations. In response, the majority (just under two thirds -64%) indicated it took less than 15 minutes to reach the voting station, with about a quarter (23%) taking between 16-30 minutes, 8% taking between 31-60 minutes and 3% taking longer than an hour. Compared to the 2014 national and provincial elections and the 2011 local government election, a slight increase in the time taken to reach the voting station was noted (Figure 3). The percentage saying it took them less than 15 minutes decreased from 69% in 2014 to 64% in 2016.

Figure 3: Time taken to get to voting station, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percent)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

In order to compare the time it took voters to get to the voting station by subgroups, mean scores were created. The mean scores were calculated by taking the midpoint of each category, thus converting it into an average time in minutes. The category “up to 15 minutes” was converted to 7.5 minutes, category “16-30 minutes” was converted to 22.5 minutes, “31-60 minutes” was converted into 52.5 minutes and “over an hour” was converted to 61 minutes. Based on these calculations, the average time taken by voters to reach their voting station was 16 minutes in 2016, which is an improvement on the 17 minute average evident in the 2009 and 2011 elections but on average one minute longer than the average recorded in 2014 (15 minutes).

The row percentages and mean scores based on the time to reach the voting station measure are presented for various socio-demographic attributes of voters in Table 3 below. Provincially, voters in the Western Cape were most inclined to report that took less to 15 minutes to get to the voting station (86% fell into this category), while those in KwaZulu-Natal and North West had the lowest shares in this category (51% and 57% respectively). In terms of the average time taken to get to the voting station, this ranged from 10 minutes in the Western Cape to 21 minutes in KwaZulu-Natal. Significance testing in the form of Oneway ANOVA post-hoc Scheffe tests was performed on the data. The results reveal that the average time to reach one’s voting station was significantly lower for voters in the Western Cape compared to all other provinces except Northern Cape. The mean time taken to get to the voting station was significantly longer for voters in KwaZulu Natal, North West, Eastern Cape, and Free State when compared to other provinces. In respect of geographic type, we find that voters in rural areas report a significantly longer time to get to their voting stations than those based in formal and informal urban areas. More specifically, those in urban settings took on average 14 minutes to reach their voting stations compared to 20 minutes for those in rural environments.

When comparing the different age groups, no significant differences between the age groups were noted in terms of the time it took to get to the voting station. In terms of population group differences, black African voters took longer to reach their voting stations than other population groups while no significant differences were noted between the other population groups. On average, it took Indian, Coloured and White voters 13 minutes to travel to the voting stations and black African voters 18 minutes. More than three fifths (60%) of all voters, regardless of population group, took less than 15 minutes to reach their voting stations.

Table 3: Time taken to get to voting station (row percent and mean score)

	Up to 15 minutes	16-30 minutes	31-60 minutes	Over 1 hour	Total	Mean
South Africa	65	24	8	3	100	16.4
Province						
Western Cape	86	12	1	1	100	10.0
Eastern Cape	60	25	10	4	100	18.3
Northern Cape	79	17	3	1	100	12.0
Free State	60	25	9	4	100	17.7
KwaZulu-Natal	51	29	14	4	100	20.6
North West	57	25	10	7	100	19.7
Gauteng	72	21	5	2	100	14.0
Mpumalanga	64	27	6	2	100	15.5
Limpopo	61	26	9	3	100	17.2
Geographic location						
Urban formal	70	21	6	2	100	14.6
Urban informal	75	17	5	3	100	13.8
Rural	52	30	12	5	100	19.9
Age						
18-24	65	23	8	3	100	16.2
25-34	64	25	9	3	100	16.6
35-49	62	25	9	3	100	17.0
49-64	66	22	7	4	100	16.1
65+	67	23	7	3	100	15.7
Population group						
Black African	60	26	9	4	100	17.8
Coloured	80	16	4	1	100	12.0
Indian	75	16	5	3	100	14.1
White	77	17	5	1	100	12.7
Gender						
Male	64	24	8	3	100	16.3
Female	65	23	8	3	100	16.5
Disability status						
Persons w/ disabilities	60	27	9	4	100	17.8
Persons w/o disabilities	65	24	8	3	100	16.1
Education						
No Schooling	58	24	10	7	100	19.7
Primary	60	26	8	4	100	17.6
Grade 8-11	64	25	8	3	100	16.2
Matric/Grade 12	66	24	7	3	100	15.7
Post-Matric	68	22	8	2	100	15.5

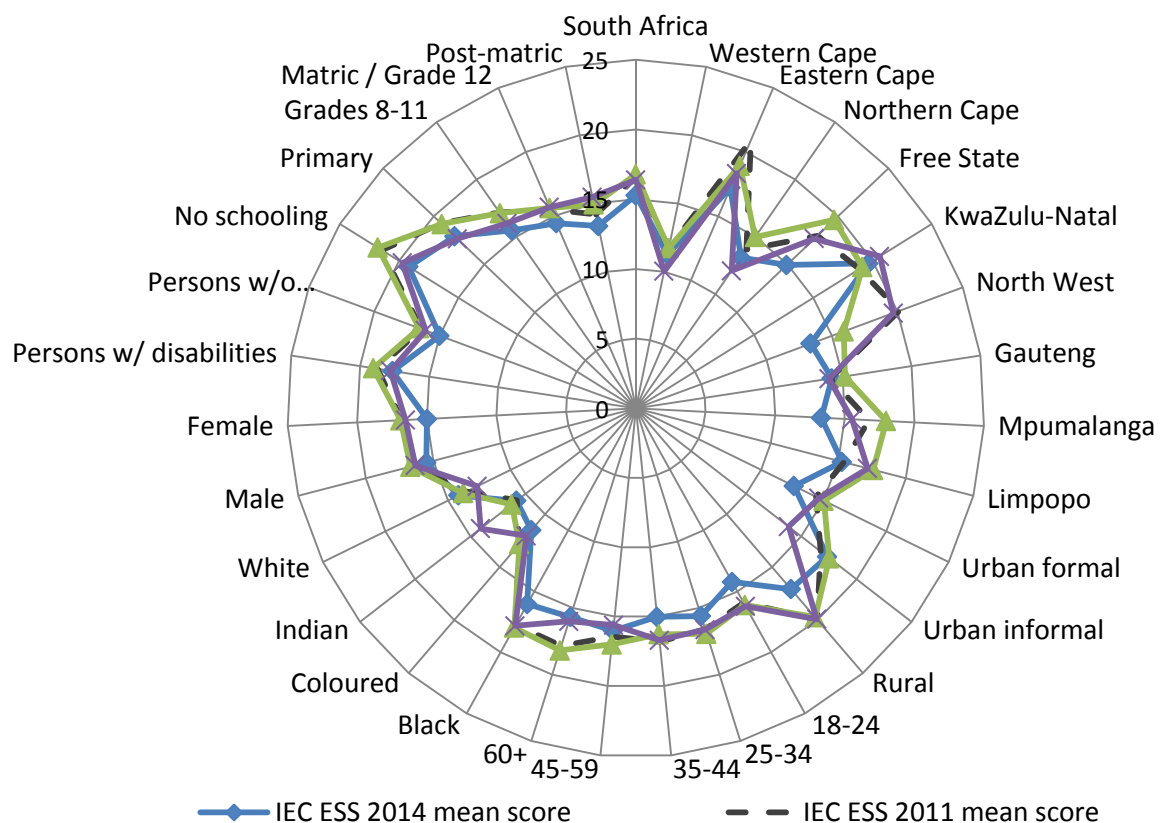
Source: HSRC (2016) Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

No significant differences were found between male and female voters with regard to the time it took them to get to the voting stations. Persons with disabilities took on average a few minutes longer than able-bodied voters to reach their voting stations (16 minutes versus 18 minutes). In spite of this statistically significant difference, a considerable share of persons with disabilities (60%) was able to reach the voting station within 15 minutes. Finally, there is a distinct educational gradient underlying the reported times. Those with no formal schooling were significantly more likely to have longer travel times to their voting stations than those with a higher educational attainment. On average, voters with no schooling took 20 minutes to arrive at their voting station in contrast to the 16 minutes it took those with a Grade 8 or higher level of education. This is likely to reflect the spatial

patterning of poverty and inequality in the country and the associated ease of accessing voting stations.

In Figure 4, the mean reported travelling time to arrive at voting stations on Election Day is presented across a range of voter attributes using the 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 rounds of surveying. This effectively allows for a closer examination of patterns of consistency and change over the last three successive elections in the country.

Figure 4: Changes in the time taken to get to voting station by subgroup, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (minutes)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

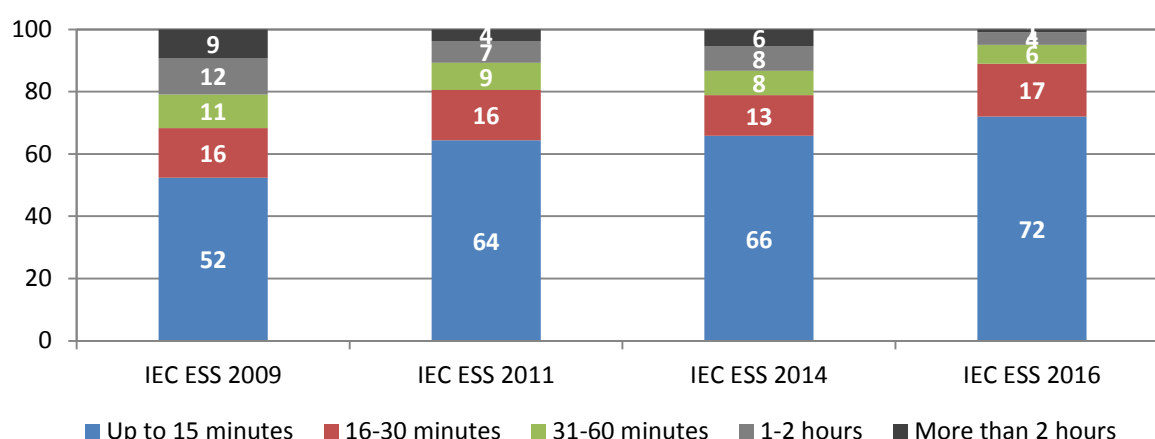
The results convey a remarkable degree of consistency across the four rounds of election survey. In most instances, the change between 2014 and 2016 is on average one to two minutes. The most notable exceptions are in the case of voters in the North West for whom there was a six minute increase in travelling time over the interval. For people living in informal settlements there was a four minute improvement in travelling time.

3.1.2. Queuing to vote

In addition to asking about the travelling time to the voting stations, voters were also asked to indicate the length of time they spent queuing prior to voting. Five categorised options were presented to voters, namely “up to 15 minutes”, “16-30 minutes”, “31-60 minutes”, “1

- 2 hours” and “more than 2 hours”. In 2016, almost three quarters (72%) of voters who voted in the elections queued for less than a quarter of an hour, with 17% queuing between 16-30 minutes, 6% taking between 31-60 minutes, 4% waiting for between one and two hours, and 1% waiting in excess of two hours. Given the time series data, it is possible to compare results to those from the 2009, 2011 and 2014 IEC Election Satisfaction Surveys (Figure 9). Between the 2014 and 2016 elections there was a demonstrable improvement in queuing time, with the percentage saying that they waited less than 15 minutes increasing from 66% to 72%. These gains between 2014 and 2016 are extremely encouraging from an electoral management perspective, since reducing queuing time is often cited by the electorate as an area where they feel improvements are warranted and would further encourage electoral participation (cf. IEC Voter Participation Survey 2013/14). The achievement and progress becomes even more noticeable if it is compared to the 2009 Election when barely more than half (52%) of voters reported waiting times of less than 15 minutes. Also, in 2016 only 1 per cent of voters reported waiting more than 2 hours in queues-a huge improvement from the 6% in 2014.

Figure 5: Length of time spent queuing before voting, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percent)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

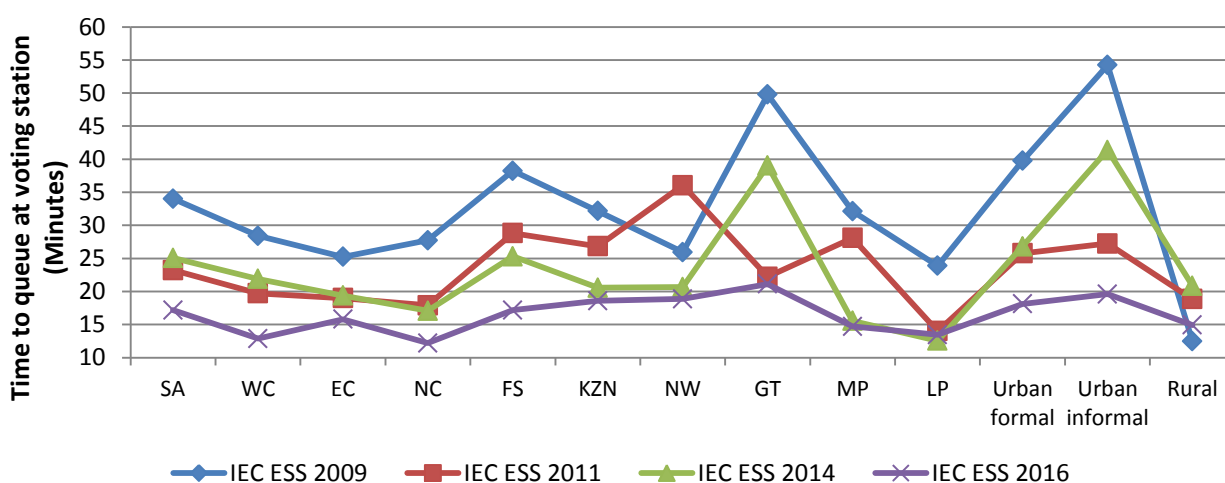
Again the categorical queuing time variable was converted so that mean queuing times could be examined. This transformation was done by using the midpoint of each category. Therefore “Up to 15 minutes” was recoded to 7.5 minutes; “16-30 minutes” to 22.5 minutes; “31-60 minutes” to 52.5 minutes, “1-2 hours” to 90 minutes; and “more than 2 hours” as 121 minutes. The mean queuing time in 2009 was 34 minutes, in 2011 it was 23 minutes, in 2014 it was 25 minutes and in 2016 it had dropped to 17 minutes.

In Table 4, socio-demographic differences in voter queuing time based on the 2016 survey are presented. At a provincial level, the highest share of voters reporting that they queued for under 15 minutes before casting their vote was reported in the Northern Cape (84%), and on average Northern Cape voters queued for 12 minutes. In contrast, less than two thirds (64%) of Gauteng-based voters indicated that the queued for less than 15 minutes,

with a mean queuing time of 21 minutes. Although the average queuing time is still the highest in Gauteng it presents a huge improvement from 2014 when the average queuing time in this province as 39 minutes. This is a highly commendable and significant improvement. On average queuing time for the Northern Cape, Western Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape are the lowest -but no statistical differences are noted between these provinces. Although the queuing time in Gauteng is the highest, it is not significantly higher than KwaZulu Natal, North West and Free State.

In terms of geographic type, more than seven in ten voters (74%) in rural areas took less than 16 minutes to queue before voting, with an average of 15 minutes. In urban areas, people generally had to queue a bit longer before voting, most especially voters in informal urban settlements. On average, people in informal urban areas had to queue for 20 minutes before voting. This is a huge improvement from the last election when voters in informal urban settlements had to wait an average of 41 minutes. During the last election, 15% of voters in informal settlements reported that they stood in a queue for longer than two hours, with another 12% waiting for between one and two hours. In 2016, only 8% stated that they had to wait for longer than an hour. This is a huge achievement by the Electoral Commission and a testimony to good planning and implementation of spacing of voting stations.

Figure 6: Average time for queuing per province and geographical location , 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

In accordance with the provisions of the IEC for special needs groups at voting stations, the 2014 ESS shows that those aged 60 years and older report lower queuing times than younger age cohorts. Although this is not statistically significant between the groups, it does suggest that the arrangements for elderly voters to move to the front of queues are being implemented to a certain extent. In terms of gender, no significant difference in the mean time spent by male and female voters in queuing to vote was evident, with both waiting on average for 17 minutes. Perhaps surprising is the fact that voters with disabilities did not

spend less time queuing than able-bodied voters. This is something that the Electoral Commission should consider monitoring more closely in forthcoming elections.

Table 4: Length of time in queue before voting (row percent and mean score)

	Up to 15 minutes	16-30 minutes	31-60 minutes	1-2 hours	More than 2 hours	Total	Mean
South Africa	72	17	6	3	1	100	17
Province							
Western Cape	81	14	2	1	1	100	13
Eastern Cape	78	13	4	2	2	100	16
Northern Cape	84	11	3	1	1	100	12
Free State	70	16	7	3	2	100	17
KwaZulu-Natal	68	19	6	4	2	100	19
North West	69	15	10	4	1	100	19
Gauteng	64	18	10	6	1	100	21
Mpumalanga	73	21	4	2	1	100	15
Limpopo	78	16	4	2	1	100	13
Geographical location							
Urban formal	70	16	8	4	1	100	18
Urban informal	72	14	5	4	4	100	20
Rural	74	18	5	2	1	100	15
Age group							
18-24	71	16	7	3	2	100	18
25-34	71	17	7	4	1	100	18
35-49	71	17	6	3	1	100	17
49-64	73	16	6	4	1	100	17
65+	76	14	5	3	1	100	16
Race							
Black African	70	18	6	4	2	100	18
Coloured	79	13	4	2	1	100	14
Indian	77	11	5	5	1	100	17
White	72	15	9	3	0	100	17
Sex							
Male	71	17	6	4	1	100	17
Female	72	16	7	3	1	100	17
Disability Status							
Yes	69	20	7	4	1	100	17
No	72	16	6	3	1	100	17
Educational level							
No Schooling	63	18	6	6	6	100	25
Primary	78	13	5	3	1	100	15
Grade 8-11	76	15	5	3	1	100	16
Matric/Grade 12	71	18	7	3	1	100	17
Post-Matric	70	17	7	4	1	100	18
Time of Voting							
07h00-10h30	70	18	7	4	1	100	17
10h31-14h00	67	18	8	5	1	100	19
14h01-17h30	74	16	5	3	2	100	16
17h31-Close	79	13	4	2	1	100	14

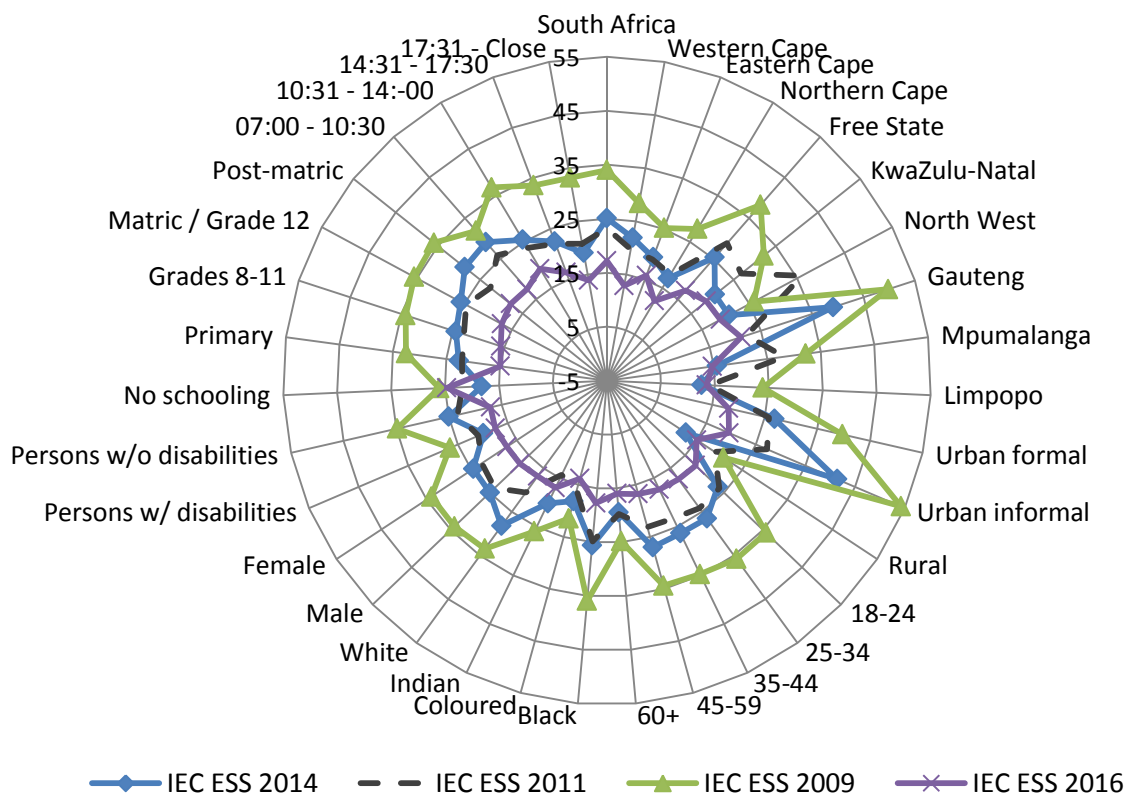
Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

In terms of other class based differences, on average, coloured voters tended to report shorter queuing times than black African, white and Indian voters. Among black African voters, 2% also still reported queuing for more than two hours. In terms of educational attainment, an educational gradient was noticeable –although not strictly linear. More specifically, people with no formal schooling queued much longer than people with some form of schooling. Also, people with no schooling were six times more likely than people

with and education to queue for more than two hours. This is likely to reflect, at least to some degree, the rural/urban difference in the length of time spent queuing before voting.

As could be expected, the time slot when voters cast their ballot also influenced the average length of time spent queuing. Those who went to vote in the period shortly after their voting station opened (between 07.00 and 10.30am) were likely to spend 17 minutes queuing to vote. As the day progressed, queuing times increased between 10.31 and 14.00 and then fell steadily, to the extent that the average queuing time was 14 minutes after 17.31pm.

Figure 7: Changes in the length of time spent queuing before voting, by subgroup, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (minutes)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

In order to provide a more nuanced depiction of changes in reported queuing time at voting stations, Figure 7 presents mean scores based on a range of voter characteristics for each of the last three elections in 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016. Compared to travelling time to voting stations, the average time spent in queues before voting has changed appreciably between 2009 and 2014, with discernible improvements for voters across the socio-economic divide. In most instances, the largest gains were made between the 2009 and 2011 elections, but the 2016 elections also typified large gains in reducing queuing times.

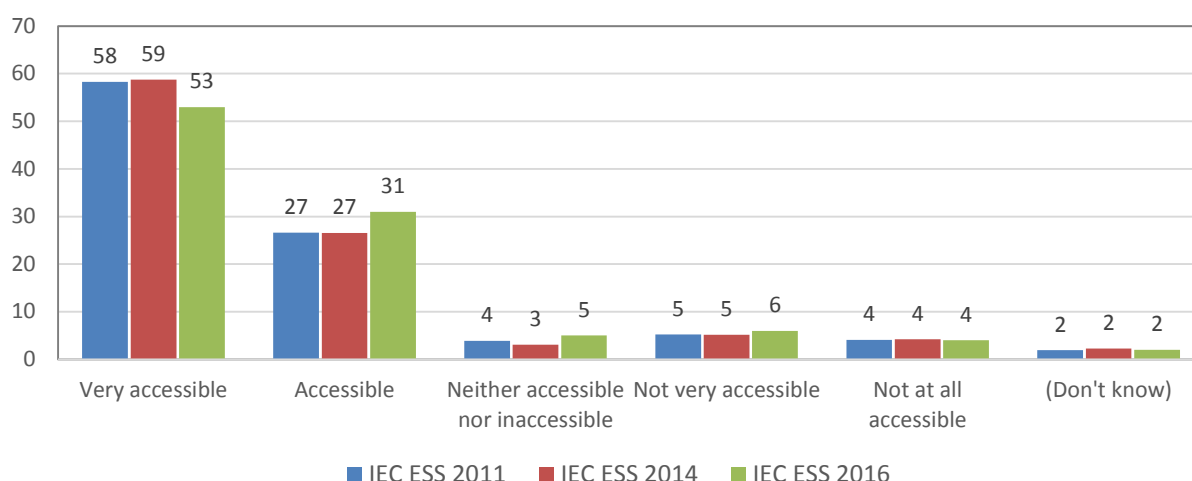
The greatest improvements are evident in Gauteng and this is worth a special mention. In 2014 the average queuing time in Gauteng was 39 minutes and this was reduced to 21 minutes in 2016 – thus reducing queuing time by 18 minutes. This is a huge achievement and something that the Electoral Commission should be applauded about. The average queuing time for voters in the Western Cape was reduced by 9 minutes and in the Free State by 8 minutes. Another huge improvement was queuing time for voters voting in informal urban settlements. In 2014 the average queuing time in informal settlements was 41 minutes- in 2016 this was reduced to 20 minutes. Again this signifies a huge improvement- no doubt as a result of planned interventions in terms of the location and numbers of voting stations. At the other extreme, voting times had increased for people who have not formal schooling (an increase of 6 minutes), voters in rural areas (2 minutes) and voters in Limpopo (1 minute).

3.1.3. Accessibility of voting stations to persons with disabilities and the elderly

Voters were asked how accessible they felt voting stations were to persons with disabilities or the elderly, with responses captured on a five-point scale ranging from “very accessible” (coded as 1) to “not at all accessible” (coded as 5). In 2016, just more than half (53%) said that the voting stations were very accessible to persons with disabilities and the elderly, and a further 31% said that the voting stations were accessible. In six per cent of cases, voters felt the voting stations were not very accessible, while four per cent rated them as not accessible at all to voters with special needs. The rest (5%) were undecided or uncertain about the issue. Compared to previous surveys a lower percentage of voters in 2016 reported voting stations as “very accessible” to the elderly and disabled but higher proportions also indicating that it was accessible (when compared to 2011 and 2014). The decrease in people stating that the voting stations are very accessible to the elderly and disabled is significant and needs to be addressed by the Electoral Commission. Direct comparison with the results from the 2009 survey cannot be undertaken as the question was coded differently.

In order to establish whether perceptions of accessibility of voting stations to persons with disabilities and the elderly varied by subgroup, mean accessibility scores were compared. For interpretive ease, the response options for the scale were reversed so that larger scores signified a more positive view on disabled access, and then transformed into a 0-100 scale, with 0 representing “not at all accessible” and 100 “very accessible”. The national mean accessibility score in the 2016 survey was 81.2, compared to the 2014 survey score of 83.4 and the 2011 score of 83.1. This shows that voters were generally less impressed with the accessibility of voting stations to the elderly and persons with disabilities during the 2016 local government elections.

Figure 8: Accessibility of voting stations to persons with disabilities and the elderly, 2011, 2014 and 2016



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

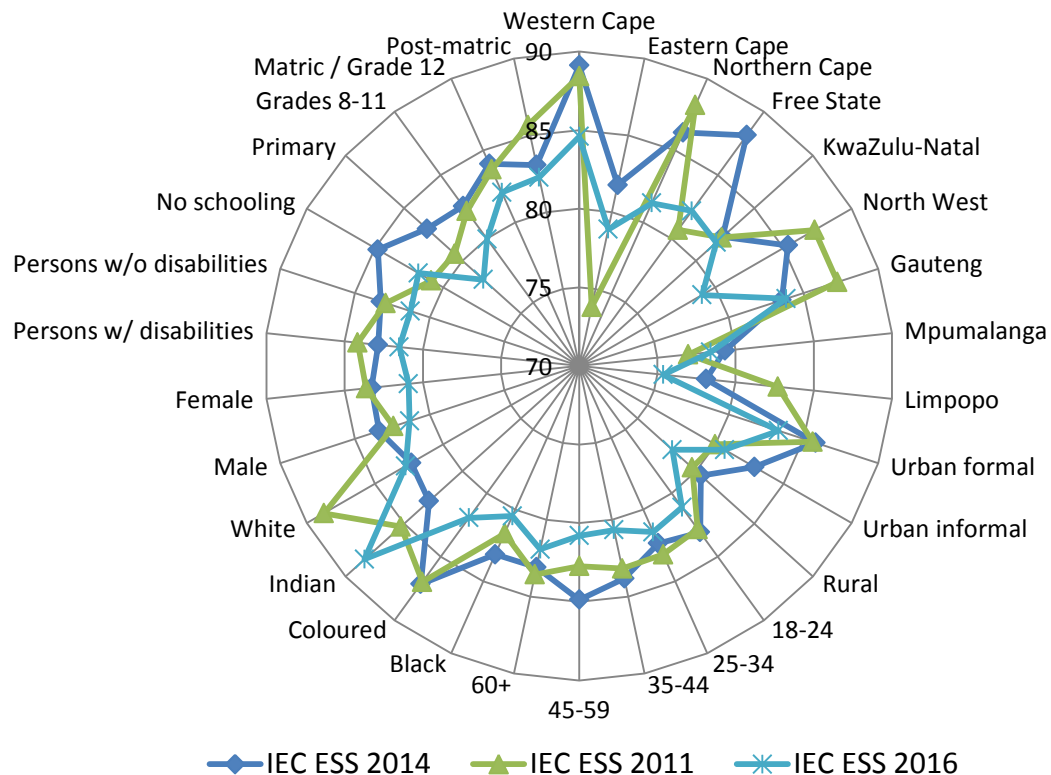
It is evident from Figure 9 that Indian voters, voters in the Western Cape, Gauteng were most satisfied with the accessibility of voting stations to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Conversely, voters in Limpopo, in rural areas, voters with a primary school education, and voters in Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and North West were least impressed. Statistical tests reveal that the ratings offered by voters in Limpopo were significantly below KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Gauteng and Western Cape.

Positive evaluations of the level of accessibility of voting stations to persons with disabilities or the elderly were offered mostly by voters in urban formal areas. The difference between urban formal and urban informal voters on this issue was not statistically significant but the differences between rural and urban dwellers were statistically significant, indicating that rural voters were less convinced than urban voters that voting stations offered access to persons with disabilities and the elderly.

No discernible differences in viewpoint were evident on the basis of age or gender. With respect to population group differences, Indian voters were significantly more likely to believe that the voting stations were accessible to special needs groups than black African voters. However, no significant differences were found between black African, Coloured and White voters with regards to this issue- suggesting that these population groups had similar views on this issue. In terms of changes in evaluation since the 2014 survey, the most notable difference is the lower accessibility rating provided by coloured (-5.2) and African voters (-2.7). No significant differences were present in respect of disability status or educational attainment. The absence of statistically significant differences on the basis on age or disability status is noteworthy since it demonstrates that special needs groups tend

to voice similar confidence in the efforts of the IEC in ensuring that voting stations suitably accommodate their needs.

Figure 9: Accessibility of voting stations to people with special needs, 2011, 2014 and 2016(scaled mean scores)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Comparing the 2014 and 2016 survey results, the largest improvements in mean accessibility scores were evident among Indian voters (5.5) together with a marginal increase among White voters of 0.4 and 0.3 in Gauteng. However, an alarming finding is that among all other subgroups the rating of voting stations for accessibility of the elderly and disabled had either stayed the same but in the majority of cases showed a decrease. The highest decrease was found in North West (-6.3); Free State (-6); amongst the Coloured population (-5.2) and in the Northern Cape (-4.9). These scores are significant and indicate that voters feel that voting stations have become less assessable over time to the elderly and persons with disabilities. This is something the Electoral Commission should improve on.

3.1.4. Satisfaction with voting station signage and instructions

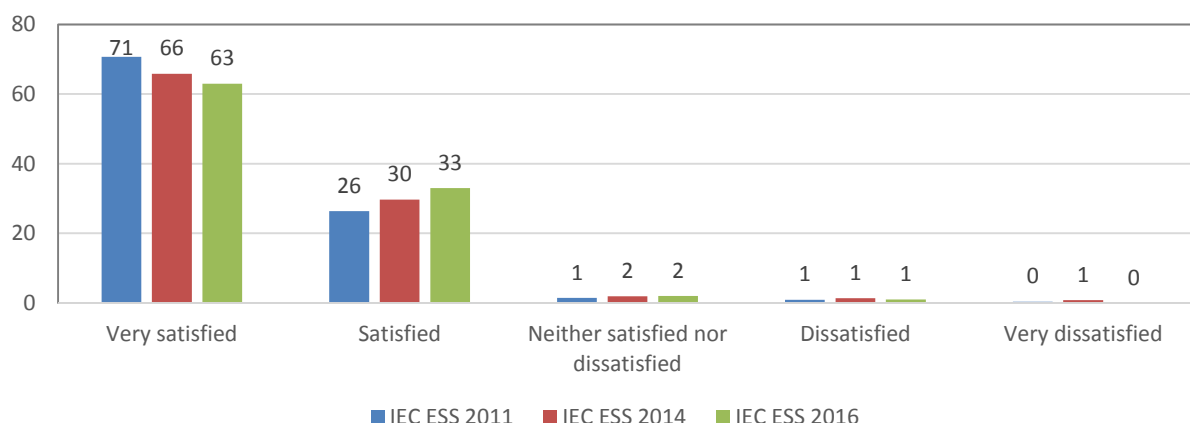


At each voting station the IEC is expected to ensure that there is appropriate signage and instructions indicating where voters are supposed to go to cast their ballot and what the process entails on Election Day. In order to determine satisfaction with the signage and instructions at voting stations, voters were asked to indicate on a five point scale, ranging from “very satisfied” to “very dissatisfied”, how they felt about the instructions and signage. This question

was included in both the 2011, 2014 and 2016 Election Satisfaction Surveys, but not in the 2009 survey. As can be seen from

Figure 10 below, around two thirds (63%) of voters in the 2016 local government elections were very satisfied with the signage and instructions, with an additional third reporting that they were somewhat satisfied. A mere two percent were neutral and an even lower share (1%) voiced dissatisfaction regarding signage and instructions at their voting station.

Figure 10: Satisfaction with voting station signage and instructions, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percent)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Comparing these findings with those from the 2014 survey, the picture is relatively similar on aggregate but subtle differences are noted between the years. For instance, the proportion of voters very satisfied with signage and instructions had gradually decreased since 2011 with an accompanying increase in the proportion stating they are satisfied. The proportions stating they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied have however remained unchanged. The difference between the years therefore seems to be between the proportions being “very satisfied” and “satisfied”. These results suggest that although voters are generally pleased with the manner in which the IEC is handling signage and instructions, there is a gradual decline in the levels of satisfaction. In future elections, in order to ensure that there is not further slippage in levels of approval, the IEC will need to strive to ensure

that there is consistently high visibility of signage that indicates the location of the voting station and where voters need to go to cast their vote once inside the perimeter of the voting station.

Table 5: Satisfaction with the signage and instructions at the voting stations (row percentage and mean)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither nor	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	(Don't know)	Mean
South Africa	63	33	2	1	0	0	89.3
Western Cape	65	32	2	1	0	0	90.2
Eastern Cape	64	33	2	1	0	0	89.8
Northern Cape	70	25	3	1	0	0	91.1
Free State	63	32	2	2	1	0	88.9
KwaZulu-Natal	60	34	3	2	0	0	88.0
North West	63	32	3	1	0	0	89.4
Gauteng	60	35	2	1	1	0	88.8
Mpumalanga	60	37	2	1	0	0	89.0
Limpopo	69	28	1	1	0	0	91.2
Urban formal	64	33	2	1	0	0	89.7
Urban informal	64	31	3	1	0	0	89.6
Rural	60	35	2	2	0	0	88.5
18-24	62	33	3	2	1	0	88.5
25-34	63	33	2	1	0	0	89.4
35-49	61	35	2	1	0	0	88.7
49-64	65	32	3	1	0	0	90.1
65+	63	33	2	1	0	0	89.4
Black African	62	33	2	1	0	0	89.1
Coloured	63	34	2	1	0	0	89.7
Indian	67	31	1	1	0	0	91.2
White	63	33	2	1	0	0	89.6
Male	63	34	2	1	0	0	89.4
Female	63	33	2	1	0	0	89.2
Yes	61	35	3	1	0	0	89.1
No	64	33	2	1	0	0	89.5
No Schooling	57	39	2	1	0	0	88.3
Primary	62	33	3	1	0	0	88.9
Grade 8-11	66	30	2	1	0	0	90.2
Matric/Grade 12	63	34	2	2	0	0	89.3
Post-Matric	64	31	3	1	0	0	89.5
07h00-10h30	68	28	2	1	0	0	90.6
10h31-14h00	62	34	2	2	0	0	89.0
14h01-17h30	59	37	2	1	0	0	88.4
17h31-Close	62	34	2	1	1	0	89.2

Source: HSRC (2016) IEC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

While the national distribution of results is highly skewed towards the positive end of the satisfaction scale, it is nonetheless important to examine whether subtle variations exist in this aspect of the electoral experience. To this end, Table 5 provides cross-tabulations on

the satisfaction scale based on the socio-demographic characteristics of voters. In addition, mean satisfaction scores are provided, using a reversed scale that was transformed into a 0-100 score, so that higher scores representing greater satisfaction ratings. In generating the mean scores, “don’t know” responses were treated as missing data.

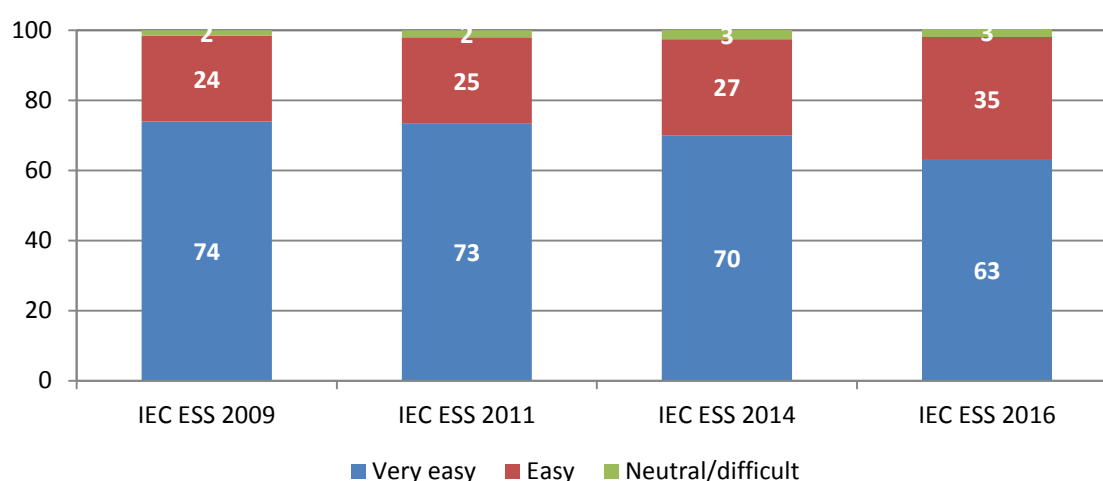
At a provincial level, the only significant difference found was between Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, with voters from KwaZulu-Natal being significantly less satisfied with signage and instruction than people from Limpopo. As for geographic type, those in formal urban areas were significantly more positive in their evaluations of signage and information than those in rural areas.

Interestingly, no significant differences were found on the issue of signage and information between age groups, gender, race and level of schooling. Modest differences in satisfaction were evident based on time of voting, with those voting in the initial hours of the opening of voting stations (07.00-10.30am) somewhat more satisfied with signage and information than those who presented to vote in the afternoon sessions (after 14.30pm).

3.1.5. Perceived ease of voting procedures inside voting stations

One critical element of the voting process is ensuring that the actual procedures that voters need to follow once entering the voting station is straightforward, efficient and understandable. In order to establish this, voters were therefore asked to assess the level of ease or difficulty of voting procedures on Election Day 2016, with response options coded using a five-point scale ranging from “very easy” to “very difficult”.

Figure 11: Perceived ease of voting procedures inside voting stations, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

When examining the results (Figure 11) two things become apparent, namely (i) virtually all voters in 2016 found the process either easy or very easy and (ii) that the proportion that found the process very easy had systematically declined since 2009. In 2016 less than two thirds (63%) thought that the voting procedures inside the voting station was “very easy” compared to 74% in 2009. Around a third (35%) of voters in 2016 characterising the process as “easy”. No voters stated that the procedures inside the voting station were “very difficult” with only 1% stating it was “difficult”, while one per cent were neutral.

Table 6: Perceived ease of voting procedure (row percent and mean score)

	Very easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	(Don't know)	Mean
South Africa	62	35	2	1	0	0	89.6
Province							
Western Cape	62	34	3	1	0	0	89.4
Eastern Cape	61	36	2	1	0	0	89.3
Northern Cape	77	20	2	0	0	0	93.5
Free State	63	32	4	1	0	0	89.0
KwaZulu-Natal	61	36	2	1	0	0	89.5
North West	68	29	2	1	0	0	90.9
Gauteng	58	39	2	0	0	0	88.5
Mpumalanga	59	38	3	1	0	0	88.8
Limpopo	70	28	1	1	0	0	91.9
Geographic location							
Urban formal	62	35	2	1	0	0	89.5
Urban informal	66	29	4	1	0	0	90.0
Rural	62	36	2	1	0	0	89.6
Age group							
18-24	61	36	2	1	0	0	89.1
25-34	63	35	2	0	0	0	90.0
35-49	61	36	3	1	0	0	89.1
49-64	64	33	2	1	0	0	89.9
65+	62	35	3	1	0	0	89.3
Race							
Black African	61	36	2	1	0	0	89.4
Coloured	64	32	3	0	0	0	89.9
Indian	61	36	3	0	1	0	89.0
White	64	34	2	0	0	0	90.4
Sex							
Male	62	34	2	1	0	0	89.7
Female	62	35	2	1	0	0	89.5
Disability status							
Persons with disabilities	58	38	3	1	0	0	88.3
Persons without disabilities	63	34	2	1	0	0	89.9
Education level							
No Schooling	53	43	3	1	0	0	87.0
Primary	63	34	2	1	0	0	89.8
Grade 8-11	66	31	2	1	0	0	90.6
Matric/Grade 12	62	35	2	1	0	0	89.6
Post-Matric	63	34	2	1	0	0	90.0

Source: HSRC (2016) Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

In order to understand responses to this question in a more nuanced way, the question about the perceived ease of voting procedures inside the voting station was disaggregated

by key demographic variables and the results are portrayed in the table below. For the analysis a mean score was calculated. The response options were recoded to represent an easy to difficult score ranging from 1 = “very difficult”; 2 = “difficult”; 3 = “neither/nor”; 4 = “easy” and 5 = “very easy”. “Don’t know” options were coded as missing data. The score was then converted to a 0-100 scale. Therefore, the higher the mean score, the easier the procedures were perceived to be.

When the ease of the voting process was disaggregated by key demographic variables, it was evident that voters from the Northern Cape found the voting process the easiest, significantly more so than voters in Gauteng who found the process more difficult.

In terms of geography, age, race, gender and disability status no statistical differences were found between the groups. Some educational gradient was noted in that people with no schooling found the process less easy than other groups but statistically this group only differed significantly from those with a Grade 8-11 qualification.

3.1.6. Perceived safety and security of voting stations

One of the core rights as a voter is the right to vote safely (Electoral Commission, 2016). To this end, the Electoral Commission ensures as part of its electoral management operations that comprehensive security arrangements are in place in order to provide a safe environment for voting. Safety and security was a particular concern in the lead-up to the 2016 Municipal Elections. As indicated by Vice-Chairperson Terry Tselane during his speech at the announcement of the 2016 results, ‘we went into these elections anxious and concerned about pockets of instability and violence that were experienced in certain parts of our country. Security forces provided enormous support ... not only during registration but also during voting’. In a statement released in late June 2016, the Electoral Commission expressed ‘grave concern’ over levels of violent protest and intimidation during the electoral campaign activities. Various areas were identified as potential hotspots, which included among others Vuwani in Limpopo, Emfuleni and Midvaal in Gauteng, as well as Umzimkhulu in KwaZulu-Natal. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) CrimeHub identified 99 incidents of election-related violence, including politically-motivated killings and intimidation of candidates, between January and mid-July 2016. These had a strong spatial concentration in KwaZulu-Natal (Lancaster, 2016). The 2016 Voter Participation Survey, a representative study undertaken by the HSRC on behalf of the Electoral Commission in late 2015, also showed higher than anticipated public acceptance of electoral violence directed at voting stations as the means of registering municipal discontent. Ultimately, the election proceeded without major incidents of violence, with only sporadic incidents of unrest and community being reported.

To provide an indication about whether voters were content or not with the security arrangements at voting stations, respondents were asked the following: 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the safety and security provided at the voting station?'. Responses were captured using a standard five-point satisfaction scale, ranging from strongly satisfied to strongly dissatisfied. This is a newly developed question that was not included in previous rounds of the Election Satisfaction Survey series. Overall, 95 percent of voters expressed satisfaction (64% 'very satisfied' and 31% 'fairly satisfied') with the safety and security that was provided at their voting stations. Of the remaining five percent, slightly over two percent were either neutral or dissatisfied. A low level of non-response or uncertainty is present, with less than half a percent (0.32%) saying there were unsure or refused to provide an answer. This is a convincingly positive assessment of the security operations in place at voting stations on the 3rd August. It is nonetheless important to further determine whether this position holds true across different segments of the voting population and based on certain characteristics relating to the voting station.

From Table 7, it is apparent that the national response in terms of perceived safety and security generally holds true at a disaggregate level. Across the range of attributes examined, the percentage of voters reporting that they were very or fairly satisfied with the safety and security at their voting stations ranged between 90 and 98 percent. The table also presents mean satisfaction scores, based on a reversed scale that was subsequently transformed into a 0-100 score for ease of interpretation, with 0 representing 'very dissatisfied' and 100 'very satisfied'. The mean satisfaction scores also display a limited range, varying between a score of 87 and 93, which reaffirms the view that the voting public were contented with this aspect of their electoral experience.

There are however statistically significant differences in the mean satisfaction scores among different groups of voters. For instance, voters in the Western Cape, Limpopo and Northern Cape were more satisfied on average than those in other provinces, while rural voters were less satisfied than urban voters. Black African voters also reported lower average satisfaction scores than coloured, Indian and white voters, while young voters under 35 years were less satisfied in general than those aged 45-59 years. There is even a significant difference based on the time of voting, with those voting between 14.30 and 17.30pm reporting lower satisfaction scores than those in the early to mid-morning (7.00-10.30am) and evening (17.30 to close). Despite such findings, it should be emphasised that these observed patterns of difference are at a high margin. This implies that these significant differences refer to subtle variations in the share reporting they are 'very' versus 'fairly' satisfied, rather than differences between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The concerns that the Electoral Commission harboured about potential incidents of violence at voting stations on Election Day did not materialise, and the voting public were ultimately largely favourable in their appraisal of logistics in terms of providing a safe voting environment.

Table 7: Satisfaction with the safety and security at the voting stations (row percentage and mean)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither nor	Dis-satisfied	Very dissatisfied	(Don't know)	Total % satisfied	Mean score
South Africa	64	31	2	2	1	0	95	89
Province	***							
Western Cape	67	29	3	1	0	0	96	91
Eastern Cape	64	32	2	2	1	0	95	89
Northern Cape	71	27	1	0	0	1	98	92
Free State	64	26	5	4	0	0	90	87
KwaZulu-Natal	66	28	2	2	2	0	94	89
North West	64	29	3	2	1	0	94	89
Gauteng	61	34	3	1	1	0	95	89
Mpumalanga	59	37	2	2	0	0	96	88
Limpopo	70	28	1	1	0	0	97	91
Geographic location	***							
Urban formal	65	31	2	1	0	0	96	90
Informal urban settlement	67	28	3	1	0	0	95	90
Rural, trad. authority areas	63	30	2	3	2	0	93	88
Age	***							
18-24 years	64	30	3	2	1	0	94	88
25-34 years	62	33	2	2	1	0	95	89
35-44 years	65	31	2	2	1	0	95	89
45-59 years	67	29	2	1	0	0	96	90
65+	65	30	3	1	1	0	94	89
Race	***							
Black African	63	32	2	2	1	0	95	89
Coloured	67	30	2	1	0	0	97	91
Indian	72	25	2	0	0	1	98	93
White	67	28	3	1	0	0	95	90
Sex	n.s.							
Male	65	30	2	2	1	0	95	89
Female	64	31	2	1	1	0	95	89
Disability status	n.s.							
Persons without disabilities	65	30	2	2	1	0	95	89
Persons with disabilities	63	33	2	1	1	0	95	89
Education level	*							
No school	58	38	2	1	1	0	95	88
Primary	66	29	2	1	2	0	95	89
Grades 8-11	65	30	2	1	1	0	95	90
Matric or equivalent	64	31	2	2	1	0	95	89
Tertiary	66	28	3	2	1	0	95	90
Time of voting	***							
07:00 - 10:30	69	26	2	2	1	0	95	90
10:31 - 14:00	65	30	2	2	1	0	95	89
14:31 - 17:30	60	35	2	2	1	0	95	88
17:31 - Close	64	32	2	1	0	0	96	90

Source: HSRC (2016) IEC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

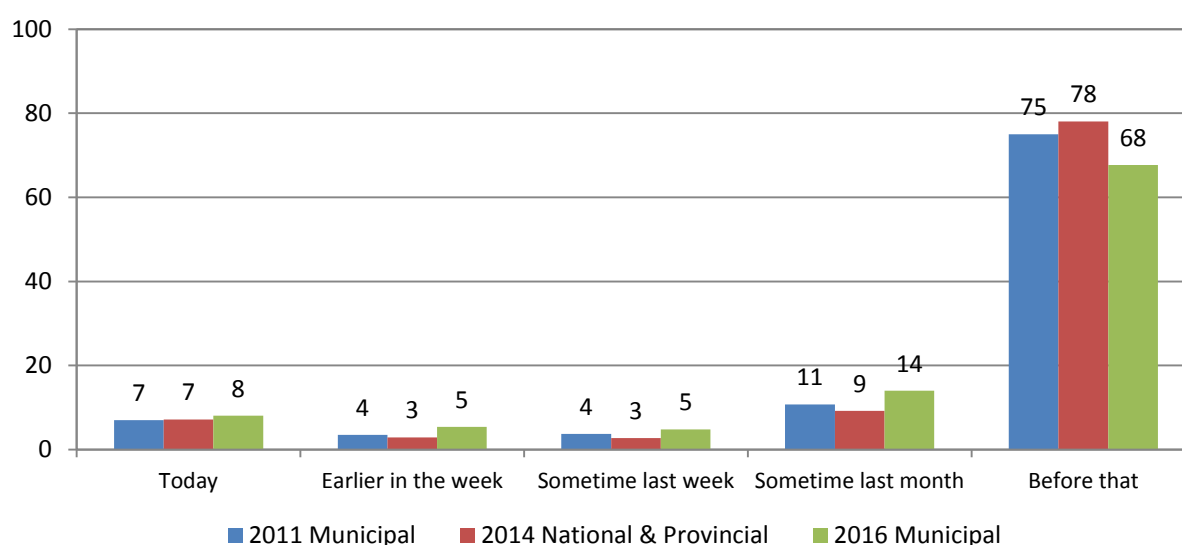
Note: Figures shaded in green indicate satisfaction levels above the national average. Statistically significant differences were determined by means of Oneway ANOVA testing, with * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ and n.s. denoting 'not significant'.

3.2. Timing of decision on political party of choice

In order to provide an indication of the ease or difficulty of electoral choice in the 2016 Municipal Elections, voters were asked to indicate when they finally decided whom to vote for in the elections. This measure allows one to examine the extent to which voters had a

clear party choice in mind well before Election Day or alternatively whether they tended to display ambivalence in the electoral lead-up. It is, by extension, a proxy for loyalist tendencies versus weak political party attachment among the electorate. The response options provided to survey participants in response to the question were: “today”, “earlier this week”, “sometime last week”, “sometime last month” or “before that”. Decisions about party choice were mostly made months prior to Election Day (68%), with a considerably smaller share deciding upon their voting preference on Election Day (8%) or during the week beforehand (10%) (Figure 12). A broadly similar finding was observed for the 2011 municipal elections and 2014 national and provincial elections. Relative to these two prior elections, there has been a modest, statistically significant decline in the share reporting that they made their decision months prior to Election Day, and a small increase in the share saying that they made their voting choice nearer to Election Day. These findings and the broad comparability over three successive elections suggests that a majority of South African voters are likely to be loyalists that made a firm decision about party choice well ahead of the elections and the campaigning period. This interpretation is corroborated by the findings of the 2015 Voter Participation Survey, which found that voters who believed that their political party of choice had failed to live up to their electoral promises, would be inclined to give the party another chance in subsequent elections.

Figure 12: Timing of decision on political party of choice, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (percentage)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2011, 2014, 2016.

Note: ‘Don’t know’ responses, which accounted for less than 1%, were omitted.

Given the electoral results, these ESS findings may strike one as anomalous, since there were distinct electoral changes in certain wards, especially in specific metropolitan areas. However, it is possible that this may reflect the fact that the 2016 Municipal Elections involved competition among ‘strong’ party supporters, which refers to those that have a deep party attachment. Those with ‘lean or weak’ party attachment may have a higher

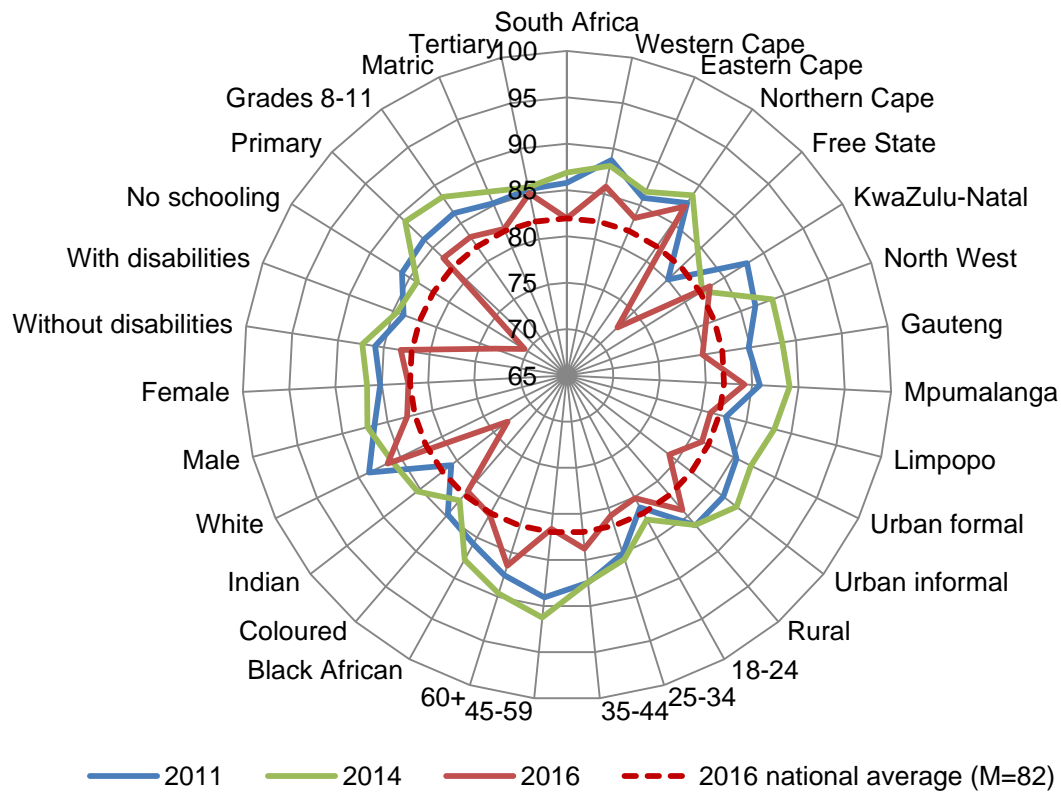
propensity to abstain, so rather than switching party allegiance in the face of indecision, they instead opted not to cast their vote. The share of strong and lean/weak party supporters is also likely to vary between political parties. This ultimately means that the strength of party identification as well as the politics of abstention could have had a bearing on electoral results.

In order to examine subgroup differences in the timing of political choice, the set of coded responses were converted into a 0-100 scale, with 0 = “Today”; 25 = “Earlier in the week”; 50 = “Sometime last week”; 75 = “Sometime last month”; and 100 = “Before that”. Based on this new scaling, a low score indicates that the voter decided on or close to Election Day, while a high score signifies that the person decided at least one month prior to the elections. In Figure 13, the mean scores based on the scale are presented across a range of voter attributes for the 2011, 2014 and 2016 election surveys. In 2016, the mean scores ranged between 70 and 87, with a national average of 82. This is slightly lower than in both 2011 and 2014. In these election years, the patterns were broadly comparable across subgroups, but there are more distinct differences between these elections and the 2016 Municipal Election. Larger than average drops in mean score are evident among those with no formal schooling, persons with disabilities, Indian voters, those aged 45-49 years, those in the Free State, Gauteng and North West, and those located in informal urban settlements. The declining mean scores suggest that for voters with these characteristics, there has emerged growing difficulty or uncertainty regarding preferred party choice. Conversely, there has been relatively little change in mean scores among those in KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, Western Cape and Eastern Cape, those based in rural areas, for white and coloured voters, among the tertiary educated, and among the youngest and oldest voters (those aged 18-24 years and 60+ years).

Focusing in more depth on the 2016 results, we find that there are statistically significant differences in the timing of electoral choice on the basis of the province and type of area in which voters reside, their age, race and disability status, as well as their level of education. Gender-based differences were not evident. Provincially, voters in the Free State reported a significantly lower mean score ($M=70$) than all those in all other provinces. In Limpopo and North West, voters were also more inclined to have made up their minds who to vote for nearer to Election Day than voters in the Northern Cape, where more than three-quarters (77%) had decided which party to vote for months beforehand. During the 2011 municipal elections a similar pattern was evident, with voters in the Free State were found to more uncertain than voters in other provinces, whereas in 2014 voters in KwaZulu-Natal had the lowest scores, followed by voters in the Free State. Apart from provincial variation, there are also significant differences according to the type of area voters live in. Rural voters on average tended to decide on their party of choice before those in formal urban areas, with those located in informal urban settlements exhibiting slightly higher levels of uncertainty. Again, it needs to be stressed that these differences, while statistically significant, are fairly

modest in nature. Approximately two-thirds of voters in all three types of geographic location made their decision months beforehand. In 2014, rural voters were similarly more certain about whom to vote for, though in 2011 there were no differences based on type of residential area.

Figure 13: Timing of decision on political party of choice, by voter characteristics 2011-2016 (mean score, 0-100 scale)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2011, 2014, 2016.

Age appears to matter for the timing of voting decisions, with younger citizens tending to make their choices later than older cohorts. In particular, 18-24 year-olds consistently had lower mean scores relative to older age groups in the 2016, 2014 and 2011 elections (M= 80, 83 and 81 respectively). There has been a more discernible swing over the 2011 to 2016 period among those aged 45-59 years, which are the 1976 generation. For this cohort, there has since 2014 been a decline in the share stating that they made their electoral choice months prior to casting their ballot, with a concurrent upswing in the share saying they eventually made their minds up closer to Election Day. In previous rounds of the Election Satisfaction Survey, we found that Indian voters were much more likely than the other race groups to leave the decision about who to vote for to the shortly before or on the day of the elections. This certainly was the case in the 2011 Municipal Elections, though in the 2014 National and Provincial Elections, Indian voters were comparatively more certain about their voting choices and reported higher mean scores in this context. The 2016 results are similar

to those found in 2011, though the level of indecisiveness among this segment of the electorate appears to have increased. The share of Indian voters reporting that they had determined which party to vote for months prior to the election fell fifteen percentage points relative to 2011 (68% vs. 53%) and 26 percentage points relative to 2014 (79% vs. 53%). White voters have tended to exhibit marginally higher mean scores in each of the last three elections, with little fluctuation, implying that they demonstrate greater certainty over party choice. Black African and coloured voters display slight declines in certainty over the 2011 to 2016 period. Persons with disabilities are also experience slightly more uncertainty over their electoral preferences than persons without disabilities, which is again a recurrent finding across the last three elections. The difference between persons with and without disabilities has also grown since 2014, due to an expansion in the share of persons with disabilities that made their decision on Election Day or the week beforehand (rising from 12% in 2011 and 11% in 2014 to 23% in 2016) while it remained virtually unchanged for persons without disabilities. As for education, in 2011 statistically significant differences in the timing of electoral choice were not found between educational attainment groups, but there was an educational gradient present in both 2014 and 2016. Most notably, those with no formal schooling showed greater uncertainty in their political preferences. Again, the most discernible change for these voters has occurred since 2014, with the share saying that they only finally decided whom to vote for on Election Day rising from 9 to 21 percent between 2014 and 2016 (the comparable figure for 2011 was 6%), while the share reporting that they decided months earlier fell from 72 to 58 percent. These results indicate that there are signs of growing difficulty in deciding about the preferred party to govern one's ward among the poor and vulnerable, as indicated by the greater indecision among those in informal urban settlements, those without formal education, persons with disabilities, and provinces with high unemployment rates such as the Free State.

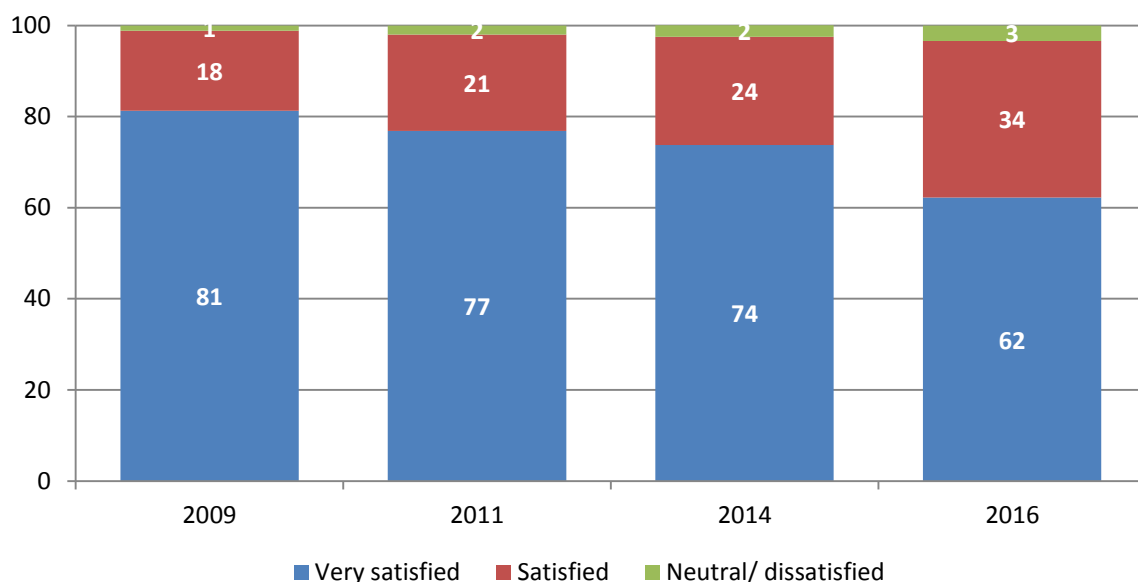
3.3. Perceived secrecy of the vote

From an international perspective, the secrecy of the ballot is typically regarded as an essential mechanism for safeguarding voters from concerns over coercion or intimidation in election contexts. In the 2016 Municipal Elections, slightly over three-fifths (62%) of voters were 'very satisfied' that their vote was secret, with just more over a third (34%) saying they were 'satisfied' (Figure 14). Of the remaining voters, less than one percent (0.8%) was dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, while 3% offered neutral responses. On aggregate, the survey therefore finds that 97 percent of voters expressed satisfaction with the secrecy of their vote, which is a resounding endorsement of electoral management operations. Comparing these findings to the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, it is apparent that there has been a distinct decline in the share noting that they were "very satisfied". Between 2009 and 2011 as well as 2011 to 2014, this fall was progressive but generally modest (3-4 percentage points). However, between 2014 and 2016 the share that was 'very satisfied' declined a further 12 percentage points (from 74% to 62%), translating overall into a 19

percentage point fall between 2009 and 2016. This change in the percentage that were ‘very satisfied’ with the secrecy of their vote was accompanied by an increase that were ‘satisfied’, rather than a swing towards discontentment. The results thus remain broadly positive, though the growing evidence of change in this indicator will require careful monitoring in future.

To facilitate mean score comparisons across different voter attributes, the five point satisfaction with vote secrecy measure was reversed and then transformed into a 0-100 scale, with 0 representing ‘very dissatisfied’ and 100 ‘very satisfied’. For analytical purposes, ‘don’t know’ responses (which accounted for less than 1% of responses) were treated as missing data. In Table 8, cross-tabulations and mean scores are presented based on the socio-demographic characteristics of voters in the 2016 elections. The mean score nationally was 89 in 2016, with a 95% confidence interval ranging between 88 and 90, and the mean scores across the different voter attributes ranged fairly narrowly between 88 and 92.

Figure 14: Satisfaction with the secrecy of the vote, 2009, 2011 and 2014 (%)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014, 2016.

Note: Due to the small percentages involved, the “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”, “dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied” response options were group together into a single category for presentation purposes.

Provincially, the lowest shares reporting that they were ‘very satisfied’ were found among voters in Mpumalanga and Gauteng (both 58%), while the highest proportions were evident in the Northern Cape (72%), Limpopo (71%) and North West (69%). Significance testing based on the mean satisfaction scores demonstrates that voters in Mpumalanga, Free State and Gauteng were less contented with the perceived secrecy of their vote relative to voters in the Northern Cape, Limpopo and North West. Furthermore, voters in KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Western Cape were on average less convinced of the secrecy of their vote than those in Northern Cape and Limpopo. As for type of geographic area, a slightly lower

proportion of voters in formal urban areas (60%) were ‘very satisfied’ with the secrecy of their vote than in informal urban settlements (65%) and rural areas (64%). While these differences proved to be statistically significant (based on mean scores), it is important to consider that more than 95 percent of voters were satisfied in total across these different types of area.

Table 8: Satisfaction with secrecy of the vote (row percent and mean score)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither nor	Dis-satisfied	Very dissatisfied	(Don't know)	Total % satisfied	Mean score
South Africa	62	34	3	1	0	0	96	89
Province								***
Western Cape	60	36	3	0	0	0	96	89
Eastern Cape	61	36	2	0	0	0	98	90
Northern Cape	72	25	1	0	1	1	97	92
Free State	61	31	5	1	1	1	93	88
KwaZulu-Natal	62	35	2	1	0	0	97	90
North West	69	27	2	1	0	0	96	91
Gauteng	58	38	3	1	0	1	96	89
Mpumalanga	58	36	5	0	0	0	94	88
Limpopo	71	27	1	1	0	0	98	92
Geographic location								***
Urban formal	60	35	3	1	0	0	96	89
Informal urban settlement	65	31	3	1	0	0	96	90
Rural areas	64	34	2	1	0	0	97	90
Age								n.s.
18-24 years	61	36	2	1	0	1	97	89
25-34 years	62	35	3	1	0	0	96	89
35-44 years	61	35	3	1	0	0	96	89
45-59 years	65	32	3	1	0	0	96	90
65+	62	34	3	0	0	0	96	89
Race								n.s.
Black African	62	34	2	1	0	0	97	90
Coloured	59	37	3	0	0	0	96	89
Indian	59	38	2	0	0	0	97	89
White	62	32	5	0	0	0	95	89
Sex								**
Male	63	33	2	0	0	1	96	90
Female	61	35	3	1	0	0	96	89
Disability status								**
Persons without disabilities	63	34	2	0	0	0	97	90
Persons with disabilities	59	36	4	0	0	0	95	88
Education level								***
No school	54	43	2	0	0	0	97	88
Primary	66	32	2	0	0	0	97	91
Grades 8-11	64	33	2	1	0	0	97	90
Matric or equivalent	61	35	3	1	0	0	97	89
Tertiary	63	32	3	1	0	0	96	90
Time of voting								***
07:00 - 10:30	68	29	2	1	0	0	97	91
10:31 - 14:00	62	34	3	1	0	0	96	90
14:31 - 17:30	58	38	3	0	0	0	96	88
17:31 - Close	59	37	3	1	0	0	96	89

Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

Note: Figures shaded in green indicate satisfaction levels above the national average. Statistically significant differences were determined by means of Oneway ANOVA testing, with * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ and n.s. denoting ‘not significant’.

While there are no significant observable differences in the views of voters based on their age or race, there are minor differences in terms of the gender, disability status, and educational attainment of voters. Specifically, female voters were less satisfied than male voters with the secrecy of their vote, while voters with disabilities were less contented than able-bodied voters. As for education, those with no formal schooling had significantly lower satisfaction levels than those with higher levels of education, while there was no significant difference among the other categories. A certain amount of caution does need to be exercised in interpreting these bio-demographic patterns underlying perceived secrecy of the vote, since in many instances the scope of difference is less than five percentage points (as in the instances of the gender and disability status of voters). From a situational perspective, the time of voting appears to exert a bearing on positions regarding vote secrecy. Voters that cast their ballot in the first few hours after the voting station opened (07.00 – 10.30am) presented a significantly higher mean satisfaction score than those voting later in the day. This pattern is found in each of the four elections between 2009 and 2016.

There has been a significant election-on-election decline in perceived secrecy of the vote between 2009 and 2016, even though this is occurring at high levels of satisfaction. In addition, if one looks at change across the sociodemographic and contextual attributes examined across the four successive elections, it becomes apparent that the fall in satisfaction levels is fairly broad-based across the voting public. With few exceptions, the 2016 mean satisfaction scores are significantly lower than in 2009, 2011 and 2014. These results suggest that in future election operations, electoral management efforts will need to continue to afford particular priority to ensuring that suitable measures to preserve the secrecy of the vote are effectively and consistently implemented at voting stations throughout Election Day and during counting processes, and that voters are provided with basic information about the steps taken to ensure ballot secrecy.

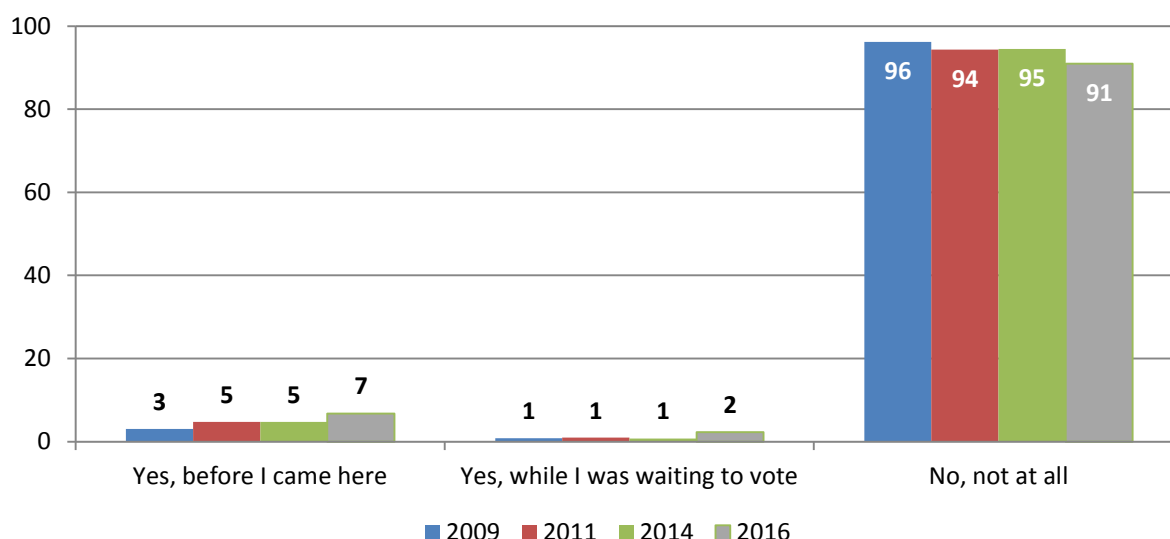
3.4. Political coercion and intimidation

Electoral commissions are always highly concerned about whether or not the elections of which they are overseeing are free of coercion and intimidation. Given the history of the national elections on African continent in the past three decades, issues of coercion on electoral choice have become particularly sensitive. Evidence of such coercion can delegitimise the election results both in the eyes of the domestic general public as well as the international community. As a result it is highly important to investigate evidence of coercion and intimidation.

3.4.1. Reported incidence of coercion

In order to estimate how prevalent intimidation was in the 2016 municipal elections, voters were asked the following question: ‘Did anyone try to force you to vote for a certain political party?’ Three possible response options were offered to participants, namely ‘yes, before I came here [to the voting station]’, ‘yes, while I was waiting to vote’, and ‘no, not at all’. The same question was also included in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 Election Satisfaction Surveys, enabling trends in coercion to also be examined. From Figure 15, it is firstly apparent that reported experiences of coercion and intimidation were fairly circumscribed in the context of the 2016 election, with 91 percent of voters stating that no individual or group had attempted to force them to vote for a certain political party. The remaining nine percent declared that they had experienced coercion relating to their party of choice (7% prior to arriving at their voting station, and 2% while standing in a queue to vote).

Figure 15: Experience of political coercion, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (per cent)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014, 2016.

The second principal observation to be made relating to the bar graph is that, from a comparative point of view, the general pattern remains true for each of the last four consecutive elections that have been held in country, and irrespective of whether they are national and provincial elections or municipal elections. Only small minority shares of voters encounter political coercion, and when it does arise it tends to occur before voters go to cast their ballots at their voting stations. It is important however to draw attention to the subtle changes in coercion patterns over the 2009 to 2016 interval. The share of voters stating that coercion has not taken place has shown marginal but statistically significant decline, with the 2016 figure lower than in the three previous elections. There has been an associated rise in reported coercion, which is occurring predominantly in the lead-up to the elections rather than at voting stations. The share stating that they had experienced

intimidation prior to approaching their voting stations to cast their ballot increased from 3% in 2009 to 7% in 2016. By contrast, the share reporting intimidation at the voting station was 1% in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, rising to 2% in 2016. This distinction is noteworthy from an electoral management perspective, since coercion and intimidation at voting stations can be immediately responded to by the Electoral Commission through electoral staff, whereas coercion happening prior to elections speaks more to political culture and the nature of election campaigning in the country. This is more difficult to tackle in practice, and requires ongoing engagement with political parties and voter education among the public.

Given the strategic importance of coercion to free and fair elections, it is imperative that a better understanding of the characteristics of the 9% of voters that reported political coercion in 2016, and whether the patterns are relatively consistent or discrepant over time. In Table 9, the 2016 results are disaggregated across a variety of voter characteristics, and the total share reporting that they experienced of some form of coercion (whether at the voting station or beforehand) on electoral choice is additionally presented for the four elections between 2009 and 2016.

Provincially, the provinces that reported above-average levels of reported coercion were KwaZulu-Natal (14% of voters), Limpopo (14%) and the Free State (11%). Reported coercion among voters in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo was significantly higher than in all other provinces apart from the Free State, while reported coercion among Free State voters was significantly above that in the Northern Cape, Western Cape and Eastern Cape. In these three provinces, the reported coercion occurred mainly before the voters went to their voting stations to cast their ballot. In terms of changes between elections, in KwaZulu-Natal, there has been a significant incremental escalation with each successive election, rising from 3% in 2009 to 14% in 2016. In the Free State, the figures have fluctuated, but the indications are that reported coercion in this province appears higher in the context of municipal elections than in national and provincial elections. The same trend appears to apply to Limpopo (and in North West), with a particularly distinct surge in reported coercion in the 2016 election. In the Western Cape, reported coercion is higher than in previous elections, while in Gauteng reported coercion in 2014 and 2016 is slightly above than in the two preceding elections. Reported coercion appears not to have fundamentally altered much in the instances of the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga.

Table 9 Experience of political coercion by socio-demographic attributes of voters (row percent, total %)

	Yes, before I came here	Yes, while I was waiting to vote	No, not at all	Total	Total coercion (%)			
					2016	2014	2011	2009
South Africa	7	2	91	100	9	5	6	4
Province					***	***	***	***
Western Cape	5	1	94	100	6	3	3	3
Eastern Cape	4	2	94	100	6	4	4	6
Northern Cape	5	0	95	100	5	6	3	5
Free State	8	3	89	100	11	4	9	5
KwaZulu-Natal	12	3	86	100	14	11	8	3
North West	6	2	92	100	8	5	8	4
Gauteng	5	2	93	100	7	6	5	3
Mpumalanga	4	3	93	100	7	6	5	3
Limpopo	11	4	86	100	14	3	6	4
Geographic location					***	***	***	n.s.
Urban formal	6	2	92	100	8	4	4	4
Informal urban settlement	5	3	92	100	8	8	12	4
Rural areas	9	2	89	100	11	6	7	4
Age					n.s.	***	***	*
18-24 years	7	2	91	100	9	8	7	5
25-34 years	7	2	91	100	9	5	6	4
35-44 years	6	3	91	100	9	6	6	3
45-59 years	6	2	92	100	8	4	5	3
65+	6	2	92	100	8	3	5	4
Race					***	***	***	***
Black African	7	2	90	100	10	6	6	4
Coloured	4	2	94	100	6	4	5	5
Indian	9	5	86	100	14	5	5	2
White	3	2	95	100	5	3	3	1
Sex					n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Male	7	2	92	100	8	6	6	4
Female	6	3	91	100	9	5	6	4
Disability status					***	***	n.s.	***
Persons without disabilities	6	2	92	100	8	5	6	4
Persons with disabilities	14	4	82	100	18	8	6	6
Education level					***	n.s.	***	n.s.
No school	10	4	86	100	14	6	7	5
Primary	7	2	91	100	9	5	6	4
Grades 8-11	6	2	92	100	8	5	6	3
Matric or equivalent	7	2	91	100	9	6	6	4
Tertiary	5	2	93	100	7	6	4	4
Time of voting					n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	*
07:00 - 10:30	6	2	92	100	8	5	5	5
10:31 - 14:00	7	2	91	100	9	5	6	4
14:31 - 17:30	7	2	91	100	9	6	6	3
17:31 - Close	8	2	90	100	10	6	6	3

Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: Figures shaded in green indicate levels above the national average. Statistically significant differences were determined by Oneway ANOVA testing, with * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$ and n.s. denoting 'not significant'.

The incidence of reported coercion in 2016 was highest in rural areas (11%), which is likely to reflect the aforementioned patterns in KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Free State, and represents almost double the level evident in the 2014 survey among rural voters. There have been changes over time in the relative ranking of reported coercion by type of geographic area. In 2009 there were no statistically significant differences between voters based on the type of place they resided in. In the 2011, 2014 and 2016 elections, reported coercion was significantly lower in formal urban areas than in informal settlements and rural

areas. The main difference between 2016 and the 2011 and 2014 elections is that the highest reported incidence of coercion in the former case is in rural areas, while in the latter cases it is in informal urban settlements. Looking at changes over time within geographic areas, we find that there has been a demonstrable increase in reported coercion in 2016 in both formal urban and rural areas (4 to 8% and 6 to 11% respectively), while in informal settlements the incidence has remained unchanged relative to 2014 (both 8%). The implication of this dynamic is that reported coercion in 2016 is the highest it has been in four consecutive elections in formal urban and rural areas.

There was no significant age-based variation in reported coercion in the 2016 municipal elections, though this was not uniformly the case in previous elections. While in 2009 subgroup variation is nominal, in both the 2011 and 2014 elections, young voters aged 18-24 years were more likely to report coercion than older voters. The reason why the age gradient has fallen away in 2016 is that reported coercion among 18-24 year-old voters remained fairly static in relation to 2014 levels, while it increased for all older age groups.

With regard to population group differences, Indian and black African voters in 2016 reported higher than average coercion (14% and 10% respectively), and the level of reported coercion among these voters was significantly higher than for coloured and white voters. In the 2011 and 2014 elections, black African voters also exhibited significant higher reported coercion than white voters, though coercion among Indian voters was not different from other race groups. Reported coercion in the 2009 election was significantly lower among white voters compared to black, coloured and Indian voters. With regard to trends over time within population groups, black African voters were more likely to report coercion in 2016 than in the preceding three elections, while for Indian voters the 2016 election brought a particularly sharp rise in reported coercion compared to the earlier elections. Among white voters, reported coercion in the 2016 elections was significantly above recorded levels in the 2009 and 2011 elections, though for coloured voters there is no statistically significant pattern over the four elections. There is also no statistical difference in the reported experience of coercion to vote for a specific political party in any of the four elections based on the gender of voters. In the 2016 elections, voters with disabilities were appreciably more likely to report coercion than voters without disabilities (18% versus 8%), with this most occurring prior to going to the voting station to vote. In all of the four elections apart from 2011, voter with disabilities were more inclined to report coercion. What is particularly interesting is that the incidence of reported coercion among voters with disabilities in 2009, 2011 and 2014 is not statistically significant, though the 2016 level is significantly higher than all three previous elections. This suggests that voters with disabilities were more prone to coercion in 2016 than in previous elections. Approximately 80 percent of the reported coercion among voters with disabilities in the 2016 election occurred in four provinces, namely Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and Gauteng.

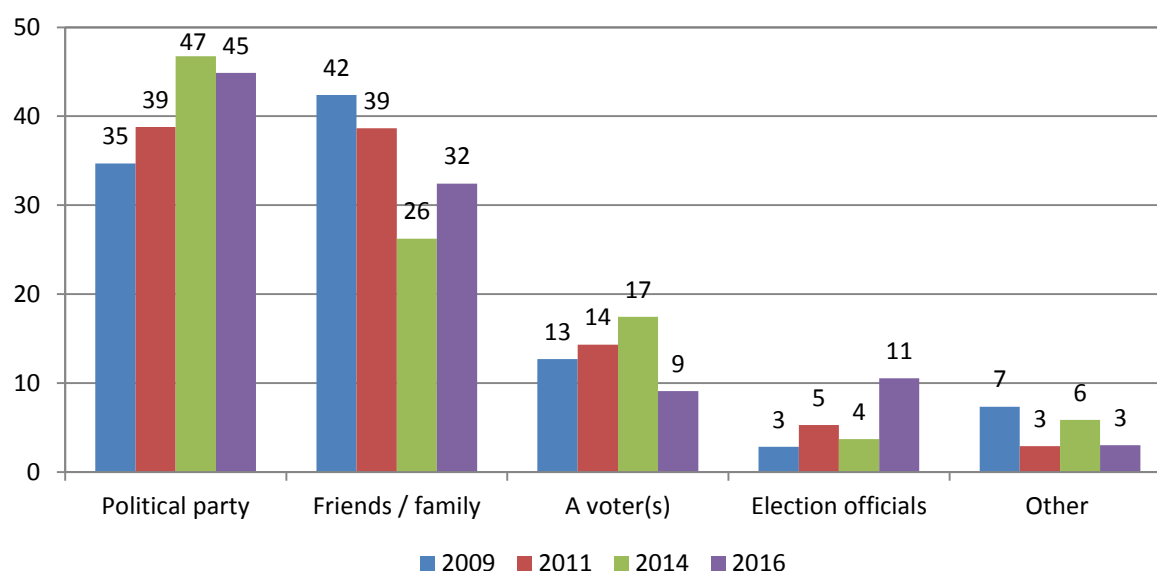
As for education, those with no formal schooling had higher levels of reported coercion than those with higher educational attainment (14% vs. 7-9%). The educational gradient has varied over time, with no significant differences observed in the 2014 election and only very weak significance in the 2009 election. In the 2011 municipal election, there were significant education differences, with those with a tertiary education less likely to report coercion than those with a matric qualification, incomplete secondary schooling, or no formal schooling. This would seem to suggest that coercion among the less educated tends to occur in the context of municipal elections compared to national and provincial elections, though this assertion would need to be further tested as future rounds of data become available. Looking within educational categories, it is apparent that coercion was significantly higher in 2016 relative to earlier elections for most. The only exception is among tertiary educated voters, for whom reported coercion was equivalent to 2014 levels, but these levels were nonetheless higher than in the two earlier elections. Based on the data, there is little evidence to suggest that the time of voting on Election Day matters for reported coercion, with no statistically significant differences evident in the 2011, 2014 and 2016 elections and only weak significance in 2009. This makes sense when one considers that most of the reported coercion is taking place before voters go to their voting stations to vote.

3.4.2. Sources of coercion

Voters that indicated that they had experienced coercion were subsequently asked ‘who tried to force you?’ The following precoded sources of coercion were provided to respondents: ‘political party’, ‘election officials’, ‘a voter(s)’, ‘friends or family’ or some ‘other’ source. As shown in Figure 16, the most commonly mentioned sources of this coercion in the 2016 municipal election were political parties (45%) and family members or friends (32%), and to a lesser extent other voters (9%) and election officials (11%). Several trends over the four elections between 2009 and 2016 are worth drawing attention to. Reported coercion by family and friends was significantly lower in the 2014 and 2016 elections relative to the 2009 elections. Parallel to this, reported coercion perpetrated by political parties has assumed greater importance over the period, with the 2014 and 2016 results significantly higher than in 2009. While there are no significant differences in the share reporting coercion by other voters in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, the reported coercion by voters in 2016 is significantly lower in the 2016 elections than in the 2011 and 2014 elections. The converse is true for reported coercion by electoral staff, with the 2016 levels emerging as significantly higher than in the three preceding elections (11% vs. 3-5%). These are notable findings, as the growing influence of political parties and electoral officials in reported coercion is something that needs to be carefully considered and responded to through future rounds of electoral training and by means of engagement with political parties.

In order to determine whether there are distinct underlying patterns to the sources of reported coercion in the 2016 Municipal Elections, Table 10 examines each of the different sources by different voters attributes. The results are presented in two ways. Firstly, we present the share of those reporting coercion that mentioned each of the different sources. Secondly, in order to give a realistic perspective on the extent of the voting public affected by reported coercion from the different sources, the share of *all* voters mentioning that they experienced coercion from a specific source is presented. The latter was achieved by constructing four sources of coercion variables, with each variable representing the share of the voting population that had experienced coercion from political parties, electoral officials, voters and family or friends in 2016.

Figure 16: Source of experienced of political coercion, 2009-2016 (percentage of voters who experienced coercion)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: Those who reported not experienced coercion relating to their party of choice are excluded.

Provincially, of voters that reported irregularities, higher than average shares indicated that this was perpetrated by political parties in the Northern Cape (66%), Limpopo (58%), the Eastern Cape (47%) and Gauteng (46%). The only instances where the predominant source of reported coercion was not attributed to a political party were in Mpumalanga, North West and the Western Cape. In these provinces, the main source of reported coercion was family or friends. The reporting of coercion by election officials was considerably higher than average in Limpopo (17% of those reporting coercion) and Free State (17%), while undue influence by other voters was more commonly mentioned in Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. In rural and formal urban areas, reported coercion by political parties was most common, though in informal settlements the main source was from family members or friends. Rural voters were more likely than those in formal urban areas and informal

settlements to mention that electoral staff had coerced them to vote for a particular party, which the converse was true in relation to pressure imposed by other voters.

Young voters (18-24 and 25-34 years) as well as those of pensionable age were most likely to report electoral coercion from political parties, while those aged 35-44 years were proportionately more inclined to report pressure from family and friends than from a party (40% vs. 34%). Those younger than 25 years also had higher than average reported coercion from their social networks. Older voters tended to be moderately more likely to report coercion by electoral staff relative to younger voters. Among coloured voters that reported coercion, three-fifths (61%) attributed this to political parties. Black African and Indian voters still mainly reported party influence though the shares the relative influences of political parties and family or friends are more balanced. White voters that indicated they had experienced coercion referring primarily to the pressure by family and friends with political parties playing a subsidiary role. Black African and Indian voters were found to have experienced more pressure from electoral staff and other voters. There do appear to be modest gender differences in sources of reported coercion, with women reporting moderately more intimidation from political parties and less from family and friends compared to men. Persons with disabilities reporting coercion had lower levels of social network and other voter pressure on their electoral choice compared to persons without disabilities that reported coercion. As for educational differences, political party pressure was consistently reported as the foremost source of coercion, though there is subtle variation in the relative share citing this source. Those with formal no schooling were most likely to refer to political parties as the source of coercion (57%), while for the other education levels, there was a more even balance between political parties and social networks. The gap between these two sources was narrowest in the case of those with matric, due to larger than average shares mentioning coercion from electoral staff and other voters.

When looking at the shares of *all* voters reporting coercion from different sources (the right half of Table 10), rather than just those that mentioned coercion, we find certain differences in message. It is important to convey that the share of all voters reporting coercion from different sources represent fairly small shares in most instances for voters with different characteristics. In the case of coercion by political parties, this ranged from a low of 1.4 percent of voters in the Western Cape to a high of 8.2 percent among voters in Limpopo, while reported coercion by family or friends varied between 1.1 and 4.7 percent across the different voter attributes. The share reporting coercion by electoral officials was not present in the case Mpumalanga voters, with a high of 2.7 percent among voters in Limpopo and voters with disabilities. Lastly, reported coercion by other voters accounted for between 1.1 and 4.7 percent of cases across the different voter subgroups.

Table 10: Person(s) responsible for political coercion for those reporting such an experience in 2016, by socio-demographic attributes of voters (percentage of all voters and those reporting coercion)

	Percentage of those reporting coercion				Percentage of <i>all</i> voters			
	Political party	Election officials	Voter	Friends / family	Political party	Election officials	Voter	Friends / family
South Africa	45	11	9	32	3.6	0.9	0.7	2.6
Province								
Western Cape	31	12	17	40	1.4	0.5	0.8	1.8
Eastern Cape	47	11	16	24	2.4	0.6	0.8	1.2
Northern Cape	66	2	6	23	3.3	0.1	0.3	1.2
Free State	37	17	9	28	3.3	1.6	0.8	2.6
KwaZulu-Natal	44	9	12	35	5.6	1.1	1.5	4.5
North West	36	3	9	45	2.5	0.2	0.6	3.1
Gauteng	46	10	4	34	2.5	0.5	0.2	1.9
Mpumalanga	35	0	1	57	2.4	0	0.1	3.9
Limpopo	58	19	6	16	8.2	2.7	0.8	2.3
Geographic location								
Urban formal	45	9	10	34	3	0.6	0.7	2.3
Informal urban settlement	26	8	19	39	1.8	0.6	1.3	2.7
Rural areas	49	13	6	30	5.2	1.3	0.7	3.1
Age								
18-24 years	48	6	10	34	3.9	0.5	0.8	2.7
25-34 years	51	8	7	30	4.3	0.7	0.6	2.5
35-44 years	34	13	11	40	2.8	1	0.9	3.3
45-59 years	45	11	10	30	3.2	0.8	0.7	2.1
65+	50	16	11	23	3.6	1.2	0.8	1.7
Race								
Black African	43	11	10	33	3.8	0.9	0.9	2.9
Coloured	61	11	5	18	3.6	0.6	0.3	1.1
Indian	42	15	10	33	4.2	1.5	0.9	3.2
White	31	5	8	56	1.4	0.2	0.4	2.6
Sex								
Male	42	10	8	36	3.2	0.8	0.6	2.8
Female	47	10	9	32	3.7	0.8	0.7	2.5
Disability status								
Persons without disabilities	45	8	10	35	3.2	0.5	0.7	2.5
Persons with disabilities	44	17	3	28	7.2	2.7	0.5	4.7
Education level								
No school	57	7	3	28	7.3	0.9	0.4	3.6
Primary	42	5	13	37	3.7	0.4	1.1	3.3
Grades 8-11	47	8	8	34	3.3	0.6	0.6	2.3
Matric or equivalent	41	12	11	33	3.1	1	0.9	2.5
Tertiary	48	5	9	37	3.1	0.3	0.6	2.4

Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

Note: Figures shaded in green indicate satisfaction levels above the national average. Statistically significant differences were determined by means of Oneway ANOVA testing, with * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ and n.s. denoting 'not significant'. A high value indicates a high share of a particular group who reported experiencing coercion relating to their party of choice from a certain source (i.e. political party; election officials; voter(s); and friends/family).

Given that the statistics are presented as a share of all voters in specific subgroups as opposed to the share of those that actually reported coercion, the distributional shares more accurately represent the voting public. As such it is important to compare the interpretation of results when presented in the two different manners, and flag consistencies and dissimilarities. Higher than average shares of voters in both KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo report the occurrence of coercion from virtually all sources. In fact, alleged coercion by political parties and electoral staff in Limpopo was highest relative to all the

voter attributes examined. In addition, voters in the Free State have above average levels of reported coercion by electoral officials and voters, those in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape displayed a higher tendency than average to report pressure from their social networks, while those in the North West and Mpumalanga were more greatly predisposed than average to report pressure from their social networks. In the case of type of geographic location, the patterns remain similar to those presented exclusively for only those reporting coercion, with a greater share of rural voters reporting coercion by political parties, electoral staff and social networks than in urban areas and informal settlements. Those in informal settlements were inclined to report coercion by family and friends as well as other voters.

A similar picture also emerges in relation to reported coercion by age group, with young voters and pensioners more likely to experience pressure by political parties, while those aged 35-44 years showing a greater likelihood of pressure from social networks, voters and electoral staff. A larger proportion of black African and Indian voters reported coercion from all four sources than coloured and white voters. Female voters were again more likely to cite coercion from political parties, whereas men were more likely to mention the influence of family and friends. The case of disability status is particularly noteworthy, as the interpretation differs depending on whether one looks at the responses of only those experiencing reported coercion or alternatively the share of all voters with and without disabilities that refer to coercion from the various sources. As described earlier, when one only looks at those reporting coercion, the share citing party pressure is virtually equivalent for voters irrespective of whether they have a disability or not, and voters with disabilities were more likely to mention coercion by electoral staff and able-bodied voters to coercion by other voters and social networks. However, when one switches to examine the share of *all* disabled persons reporting coercion from different sources, it becomes apparent that they are more likely than persons without disabilities to report pressure from political parties, family and friends, as well as election officials. Lastly, those with primary or no formal schooling show a higher propensity on average for coercion by political parties and family and friends compared to those with higher levels of education.

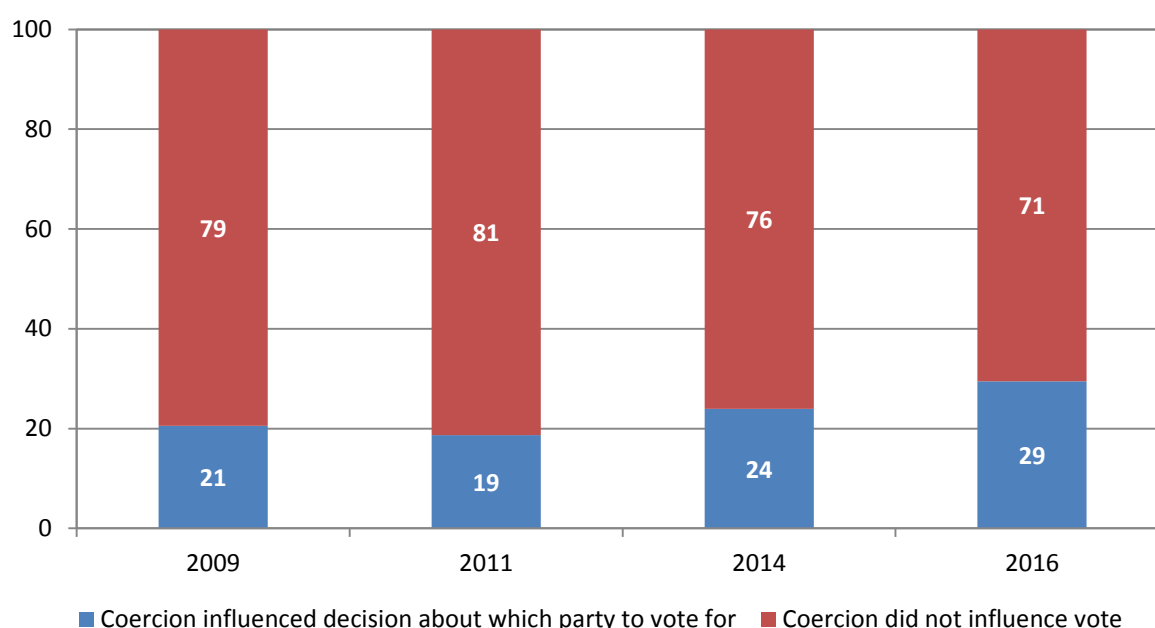
3.4.3. Electoral effect of coercion

Apart from enquiring about source of coercion for those reporting such experiences, the Election Satisfaction Survey also asked the following: 'did you change your decision on which party to vote for as a result of this force?', with simple dichotomous 'yes' and 'no' options provided in response. The answers provided to this question by voters that had experienced intimidation or coercion are presented Figure 17 for the four elections conducted between 2009 and 2016. Of those mentioning that they personally experienced some form of coercion in the 2016 Municipal Elections, slightly under a third (29%) reported

that this encounter prompted them to alter their voting decision. From a comparative viewpoint, this is significantly higher than in both the 2009 and 2011 elections, though the difference between 2014 and 2016 is not statistically significant.

In order to better understand which groups were most likely to change their electoral choice based on reported coercion, subgroup analysis on this question was conducted. To order to accurately portray the impact this is likely to have had on the electorate as a whole and for specific groups of voters, a variable was constructed representing the share of the voting population that had changed their electoral choice based on the reported experience of coercion. Based on this measure, it is estimated that 2.5 percent of all voters said that they actually changed their voting decision based on some form of coercion. Therefore, the results of the 2016 Municipal Elections were only nominally affected by intimidation or coercion. It does nonetheless need to be stated that this figure of 2.5 percent is significantly higher than that reported in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections (0.7%, 1.0% and 1.3% respectively).

Figure 17: Impact of coercion on electoral choice (percentage of voters who experienced coercion)



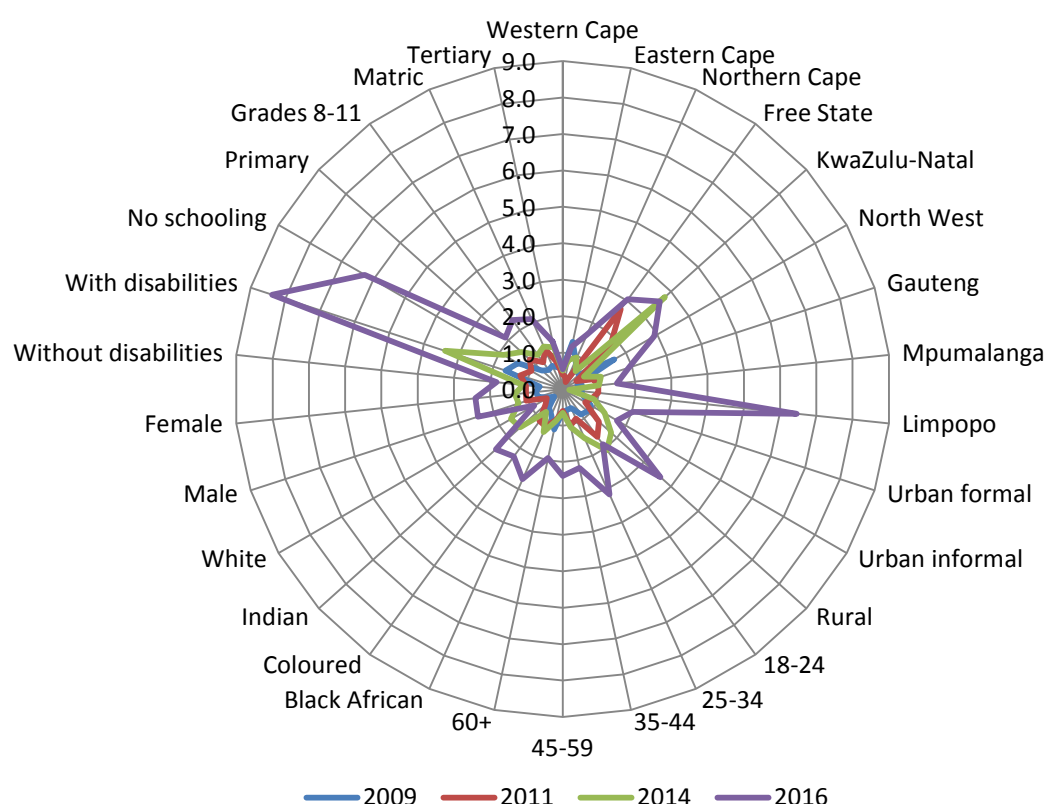
Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: Those who reported not experienced coercion relating to their party of choice are excluded.

Provincially, the level of coercion the resulted in a changed vote ranged from 0.5% in the Western Cape to 6.5% in Limpopo. The Limpopo result is statistically greater than in the other eight provinces. The level of changed electoral choice in response to reported coercion was also higher in KwaZulu-Natal than in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape, and in Free State relative to the Western Cape. With regard to levels of coercion-induced change

in electoral choice over time within provinces, the survey series reveals that in five provinces the 2016 incidence represents a significant rise compared to earlier elections. These are Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, North West and Gauteng.⁴ Limpopo is the most notable example of change, with the share of voters saying they altered their vote based on coercion rising from one percent or less in 2009, 2001 and 2014 to 6,5 percent in 2016. No significant changes in the level of coercion-induced electoral change over the four elections between 2009 and 2016 were evident in the cases of the Western Cape, Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape.

Figure 18: Percentage reporting that coercion resulted in a change of decision over which political party to vote for, by socio-demographic attributes of voters (percentage of all voters)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: See Appendix Table 1 for the actual values presented in this figure.

⁴ Apart from sharing a common statistically significant increase in the levels of this reported electoral behaviour over time, there are variations in the specific nature of these provincial trends. For instance, In Limpopo, the 2016 incidence is higher than all other election years. In KwaZulu-Natal, the 2014 and 2016 levels exceed that recorded in the 2009 and 2011 elections, while in Gauteng the 2016 levels are not different from 2014 but are higher than in 2009 and 2011. The Free State shows distinct differences based on whether the context is municipal or national and provincial elections. Reported change in electoral choice due to coercion is significantly higher in the case of municipal elections (2011 and 2016) than national and provincial elections (2009 and 2014). In North West province, the incidence in 2016 exceeds that of the 2014 and 2011 elections.

With respect to type of geographic area, in 2016 the level of coercion-related effect on electoral choice was significantly higher among rural voters (3.6%) than among voters in both formal urban areas (2.0%) and informal settlements (1.7%). The difference between rural and formal urban areas is also common to the 2011 and 2014 elections. How has the electoral behaviour changed over time among voters in these areas? For voters in formal urban areas, the 2016 incidence exceeds that reported in the three previous elections. A similar pattern can be observed for rural areas, with the 2016 results higher than in the other elections, and the 2014 incidence also exceeding that of 2009 and 2011. By contrast, there is no statistically significant variance in levels or reported behaviour change in informal urban settlements.

In 2016, there was a weak relationship between age and coercion-induced changes to choice. Although there was also no age effect underlying such electoral behaviour in 2009, in both the 2011 and 2014 elections, voters younger than 25 years were more likely than older cohorts⁵ to have experienced coercion that provoked them to alter the party they voted for. Between 2014 and 2016, there has been a tangible upswing in this form of behaviour in all cohorts excepting those younger than 25 years, which explains the absence of the same age effect in the 2016 election. Among those aged 25-34 years, 35-44 years and 45-59 years, the rise in behaviour change due to coercion is such that the extent of this behaviour is higher for these groups of voters than in the last three elections.

There were not statistically significant racial differences in a coercion effect on party choices in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, though in the 2016 election black African voters reported an incidence of this behaviour that was three times higher than among white voters (2.7% vs. 0.9%). Among black African voters, the 2016 incidence of coercion-affected electoral choice was significantly higher than in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, while for coloured voters the 2016 results were higher than in the 2011 electoral context. White voters had a higher level in 2014 than in 2009 and 2011, though the 2016 incidence is not significantly different from the other election years. There has not been a notable change in such electoral behaviour among Indian voters between 2009 and 2016. There are no gender differences in coercion-induced changes in electoral choice in any of the four elections between 2009 and 2016. For male and female voters alike, coercion-induced changes to choices in 2016 were significantly higher than in all three other elections considered, and the 2014 figures also were higher than in 2009. Voters with disabilities more commonly reported such experiences than able-bodied voters in the 2009, 2011 and 2016 elections. While there has been a distinct increase over the four elections for both voters with and without disabilities, the scale of change is more appreciable in the case of the voters with disabilities, rising from 1.7% in 2009 to 8.4% in 2016 (the comparable figures are 0.6% and 1.8% for able-bodied voters). In terms of education, there were no differences in levels of

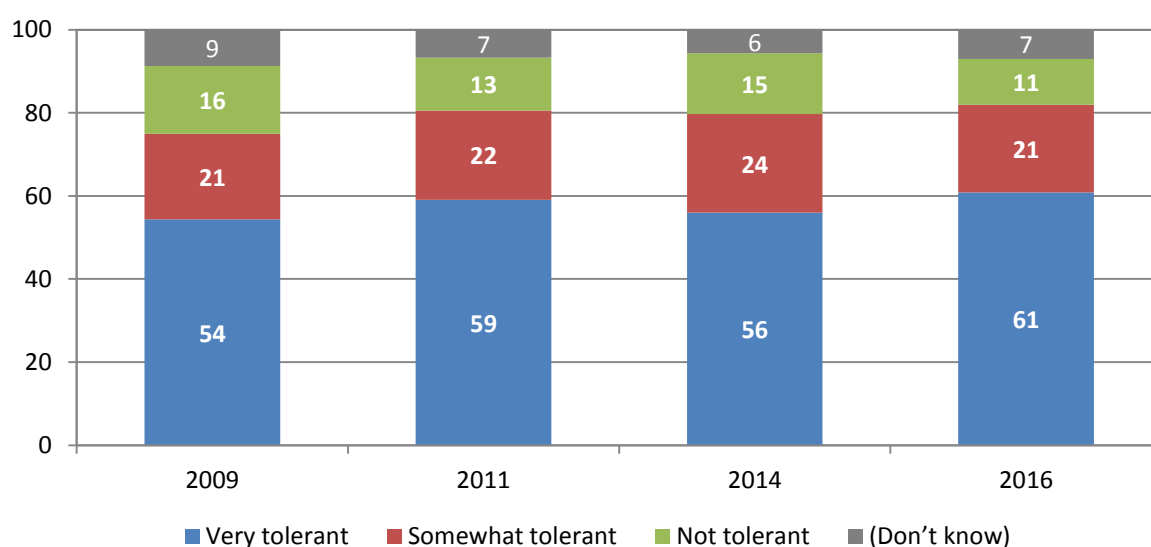
⁵ Specifically, more likely than 45-59 year-olds in the 2011 election, and more likely than both 45-59 year-olds as well as those of pensionable age in the 2014 elections.

coercion-induced voting behaviour in 2009, 2011 and 2014, though in 2016 those with no formal schooling were more likely than others to report such actions. Over the last four elections, there has been a statistically significant upswing in these electoral choices for all education levels apart from the tertiary educated, though the size of this increment fluctuates broadly across voters. The largest rise has occurred for uneducated voters, increasing from 1.4% in 2009 to 6.3% in 2016.

3.5. Political party tolerance

Political tolerance between contesting political parties and their supporters represents a fundamental component of electoral and indeed liberal democracy and is instrumental in ensuring free and fair elections. From a civil liberties and constitutional perspective, it is seen as crucial that political parties and their leaders demonstrate and communicate a robust commitment to tolerance of opposing political perspectives and peaceful campaigning, as well as swiftly respond to instances of political intolerance by party affiliates. The campaigning period in the lead-up to the 2016 Municipal Elections was characterised by incidents of political violence, including cases of murder, attempted murder, arson, public violence and damage to property. How does the voting public regard the 2016 campaigning period, and how does this assessment differ or approximate that recorded in previous elections?

Figure 19: Perceived political party tolerance, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: The “don’t know” category represents a combination of the “uncertain” and “don’t know” responses in the original question coding scheme.

To gauge the views of voters in relation to the perceived level of tolerance during the electoral campaigning process, they were asked the following question: “To what extent do

you think that political parties were tolerant of one another during campaigns for these elections". In response, more than half (61%) of voters believed that political parties were very tolerant of one another during the 2014 election campaigns (Figure 19). A further fifth (21%) reported that parties were somewhat tolerant of each other, while 11 per cent observed that there was not a prevailing culture of tolerance. Close to a tenth (7%) were uncertain how to respond. These results are broadly consistent with the views expressed by voters in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 election surveys, though there are subtle changes that have occurred over time. In particular, the share of the voting public that stated that the campaigning period was generally 'very tolerant' has increased (from 54% in 2009 to 61% in 2016), with a corresponding decrease in the share characterising the campaigning processes as 'not tolerant' at all (from 16% in 2009 to 11% in 2016). In 2016, the shares reporting 'very tolerant' and 'not tolerant' were significantly different from all three previous elections. The other observation of note is that perceived political party tolerance appears to be higher in the context of municipal elections than in national and provincial elections. Therefore, in spite of the politically-related violence that occurred ahead of the 2016 elections, this does not appear to have dampened the evaluations provided by voters in terms of their view of the campaigning period on aggregate.

The responses to the political party tolerance question were reversed and transformed into a 0-100 score, with 0 referring to "not tolerant" and 100 "very tolerant". "Don't know" and "uncertain" responses were excluded from analysis. The mean tolerance score among the voting population was 72 (Table 11), which suggests that voters felt tended to feel that political parties were tolerant of each other during campaigning for these elections. ANOVA post hoc Scheffe tests showed that voters in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal were most likely to believe that political parties were tolerant of one another during campaigning (mean scores of 84, 81 and 79 respectively), which was significantly higher than the rating offered by voters in most other provinces. At the other end of the scale, voters in the North West, Gauteng, Limpopo and the Northern Cape were significantly less likely than average to perceive parties as having demonstrated political tolerance during the campaigning for the elections (mean scores ranging from 70 and 74). Stated otherwise, 90 per cent of respondents in both the Western Cape and Eastern Cape found political parties to be either tolerant or very tolerant of one another, while only 69 per cent of respondents in the North West perceived parties as tolerant. Voters in formal urban and rural areas tended to provide more positive evaluations of party tolerance (M=78 and 76 respectively) than their counterparts in informal urban settlements (M=74). This is due to a greater tendency to describe the campaigning period as politically intolerant among residents in informal settlements (15% vs. 10-12%).

Indian voters were more favourable in their perceptions of party tolerance (M=84) than all black African and white voters (M=77 and 74), while coloured voters were also more positive than white voters. Male voters offered marginally higher tolerance ratings than

female voters. Those with a primary or matric-level education scored lower on the party tolerance scale (M=75 and 76) than those with no formal schooling (M=81). No significant difference is evident based on disability status and time of voting. Voters aged 18-24 years offered more critical evaluations than those aged 35-44 years and 45-59 years. Similarly, those aged 25-34 years reported lower tolerance scores on average than those aged 45-59 years. These are important findings, since concerns about the behaviour exhibited by political parties in an electoral context might have the undesirable effect of continuing to foster political disillusionment among the country's youth. As recent Voter Participation Surveys conducted by the HSRC on behalf of the Electoral Commission have consistently demonstrated, young voters are critical for future electoral turnout, while political disillusionment acts as a salient factor underlying electoral abstention.

Table 11: Perceived political party tolerance, 2016 (row percent and mean score)

	Very tolerant	Somewhat tolerant	Not tolerant	(Don't know)	Total	Mean score (0-100)
South Africa	61	21	11	7	100	77
Province						
Western Cape	64	26	5	5	100	81
Eastern Cape	71	19	6	4	100	84
Northern Cape	58	21	14	7	100	74
Free State	60	19	13	7	100	75
KwaZulu-Natal	62	21	9	8	100	79
North West	53	16	18	13	100	70
Gauteng	56	22	15	7	100	72
Mpumalanga	60	27	8	5	100	77
Limpopo	58	16	16	10	100	73
Geographic location						
Urban formal	61	22	10	7	100	78
Informal urban settlement	59	19	15	7	100	74
Rural	61	20	12	7	100	76
Age						
18-24 years	58	22	13	7	100	74
25-34 years	60	21	12	7	100	76
35-44 years	62	21	11	6	100	78
45-49 years	64	20	9	8	100	80
60+ years	57	25	10	8	100	76
Race						
Black African	62	20	12	7	100	77
Coloured	61	27	6	5	100	79
Indian	70	20	5	5	100	84
White	55	25	11	9	100	75
Sex						
Male	62	21	10	7	100	78
Female	60	21	12	7	100	76
Disability status						
Persons w/ disabilities	61	21	11	7	100	77
Persons w/o disabilities	62	19	10	9	100	79
Education level						
No schooling	67	15	10	7	100	81
Primary	58	23	12	7	100	75
Grade 8-11	63	21	10	5	100	78
Matric / Grade 12	60	22	12	7	100	76
Post-Matric	62	20	11	8	100	78
(Range of values):	53-71%	15-27%	5-18%	4-13%	...	70-84%

Source: HSRC (2016) Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

3.6. Views on electoral freeness and fairness

The delivery of free and fair elections represents a central element of the Electoral Commission's mandate, as stipulated in Section 190 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and Section 5 of the Electoral Commission Act of 1996, and also forms the basis of the election management body's vision and mission statement. Recognising this, one of the core objectives behind the Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) series has been to determine whether the voting public deems each specific municipal and national and provincial election as being intrinsically free and fair in character. The survey questionnaire therefore includes direct questions that explicitly ask the randomly chosen, representative sample of voters to state whether they deem the election to be entirely, partially, or by no means free and fair. Allowance was made for respondents to express uncertainty (i.e. by means of a 'do not know' category). The results to these questions, together with the pattern of results from other items embedded in the survey, are used as a direct input into the final declaration of the election. Not only is this a democratic, inclusive means of ascertaining the quality of a particular election process, but it is also instrumental in establishing whether or not the Electoral Commission has successfully fulfilled its constitutional mandate. This section presents the voter evaluations of the freeness and fairness of the 2016 elections, compares these findings to those from the previous three elections that have been held since 2009.

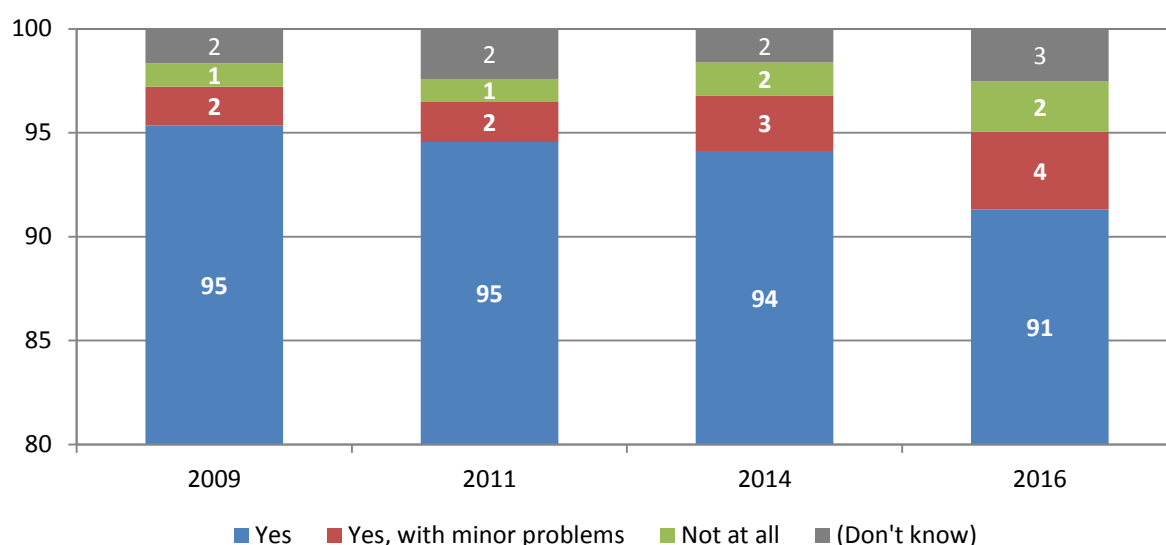
3.6.1. Freeness of the election

Based on the 2016 survey results, an overwhelming majority of voters in the municipal elections (91%) felt that the election procedures were free, with a further four per cent saying they were free with only minor problems (Figure 20). Only two per cent suggested that the elections were not free, with three per cent voicing uncertainty in their response. This is a resolutely positive result, with 95 per cent of voters expressing the view that the election procedures were entirely or mostly free. Comparing the 2016 results to those reported in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, it is nonetheless apparent that there has been a modest decline in ratings. The share rating the elections as complete free is significantly lower than in these three prior elections (91% vs. 94-95%), and there has been a corresponding small increase in the shares reporting that the election was 'free with minor problems' (an increase of 1.1% relative to 2014), 'not free at all' (+0.8%), or that they were 'uncertain' (+0.9%).

Although there have been small percentage point decreases in the share reporting the election was unequivocally free with each successive election since 2009, the change between 2014 and 2016 represents the first instance where the drop is large enough to be statistically significant. Both the 'free with minor problems' and 'not free at all' categories

have exhibited nominal but significant increases in the 2014 and 2016 elections. Uncertainty tends to fluctuate slightly election-on-election, with slightly higher levels in the context of municipal relative to national and provincial elections. Taken together, this suggests that despite a generally sanguine appraisal by voters participating in the 2016 elections, there is evidence to suggest that the high degree of consistency present between the 2009 through 2014 elections is beginning to diminish. This will need to be carefully monitored in future elections.

Figure 20: Perceived freeness of the election, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: For ease of presentation, the axis has been truncated, showing the top part of the distribution in response to the question on electoral freeness.

To allow for an examination in sub-group differences underlying the freeness question, the voter responses were firstly converted into a set of four dichotomous variables, representing each of the categories from 'yes' to 'don't know'. Secondly, the four-point scale was reversed and transformed into a 0-100 score, where 0 refers to "not free at all" and 100 to "unconditionally free". "Don't know" responses were excluded from analysis. One-way ANOVA tests were performed on this variable set in order to determine whether there are any significant differences in evaluations among voters with different characteristics. In Table 12, both cross-tabulations and mean freeness scores are presented based on the 2016 survey data. From the results in the table, it is immediately apparent that there is a broad-based belief among voters irrespective of their socio-demographic attributes that the 2016 national and provincial elections were free. The percentage stating that the election procedures were *unconditionally* free ranged from a low of 89 per cent among voters in the Free State and Indian voters to a high of 97 per cent in the case of Northern Cape voters.

Table 12: Perceived freeness of the 2016 Election (row percent and mean score)

	Yes	Yes, with minor problems	Not at all	(Don't know)	Total	Mean score (0-100)
South Africa	91	4	2	3	100	96
Province	***	***	**	***		n.s.
Western Cape	90	3	3	4	100	95
Eastern Cape	94	3	2	1	100	96
Northern Cape	96	2	1	1	100	98
Free State	89	4	2	4	100	95
KwaZulu-Natal	90	3	3	4	100	95
North West	92	4	2	2	100	96
Gauteng	91	5	2	2	100	95
Mpumalanga	92	2	4	2	100	95
Limpopo	94	3	2	1	100	96
Geographic location	n.s.	*	n.s.	n.s.		n.s.
Urban formal	91	4	2	3	100	96
Informal urban settlement	92	5	2	2	100	96
Rural	92	3	3	3	100	96
Age	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	**		n.s.
18-24 years	91	3	2	4	100	96
25-34 years	91	4	2	3	100	96
35-44 years	91	4	3	2	100	95
45-49 years	92	4	2	2	100	96
60+ years	93	3	2	2	100	96
Race	*	*	***	***		*
Black	92	3	3	2	100	95
Coloured	92	3	2	3	100	96
Indian	89	6	3	2	100	94
White	90	5	1	5	100	97
Sex	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.		n.s.
Male	91	4	2	3	100	96
Female	92	3	2	2	100	96
Disability status	**	n.s.	**	*		**
Persons w/o disabilities	92	3	2	2	100	96
Persons with disabilities	89	4	4	3	100	94
Education level	**	***	*	***		n.s.
No schooling	90	2	3	6	100	96
Primary	93	3	3	1	100	96
Grade 8-11	92	3	3	2	100	96
Matric / Grade 12	91	4	2	2	100	95
Post-Matric	92	4	2	2	100	96
Time of voting	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	***		n.s.
07:00 - 10:30	92	4	2	2	100	96
10:31 - 14:00	91	3	3	2	100	95
14:31 - 17:30	92	4	2	2	100	96
17:31 - Close	90	4	2	4	100	96

Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

Note: Figures shaded in green indicate satisfaction levels above the national average. Statistically significant differences were determined by means of Oneway ANOVA testing, with * p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001 and n.s. denoting 'not significant'.

Even though the results tend to be concentrated, with most voters evaluating the election procedures as free, ANOVA post hoc Scheffe tests reveal some statistically significant differences at these upper margins. In the Northern Cape, voters were more likely than those in the Free State, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng to rate the election as unconditionally free (96 vs 89-91). This difference is due to higher shares of voters in Gauteng saying the elections were free but with minor problems, and those in the Free State, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal voicing higher levels of uncertainty. There is no

significant provincial difference in the shares of voters across saying the elections was ‘not at all free’. In addition, there is not a distinct pattern of variation based on type of geographic area voters reside (and vote) in. The only significant difference was that those in informal settlements were more inclined than rural voters to say the election was free with minor problems, but the difference is a nominal one (4% vs 5%).

In respect of age group differences, those aged 18-24 years provided slightly higher levels of uncertainty than those aged 35-44 years in response to the freeness question. There were no age differences in the shares stating that the elections were entirely, partially or not free. As for population group variance, a larger proportion of black African than white voters regarded the election as ‘not at all free’ (3% vs 1%), while white voters expressed greater uncertainty than black African and coloured voter (5% vs 2%). Voters with disabilities were less likely than able-bodied voters to regard the election as unconditionally free (89% vs 92%) and were also more inclined to view the election as not free as all (4% vs 2%). There were no significant gender differences in responses among voters in 2016, and only very weak differences based on educational attainment and time of voting. With respect to the overall freeness index, there is limited evidence of variations based on voter attributes. There were weak, statistically significant population group differences, while voters with disabilities had lower scores on average than able-bodied voters.

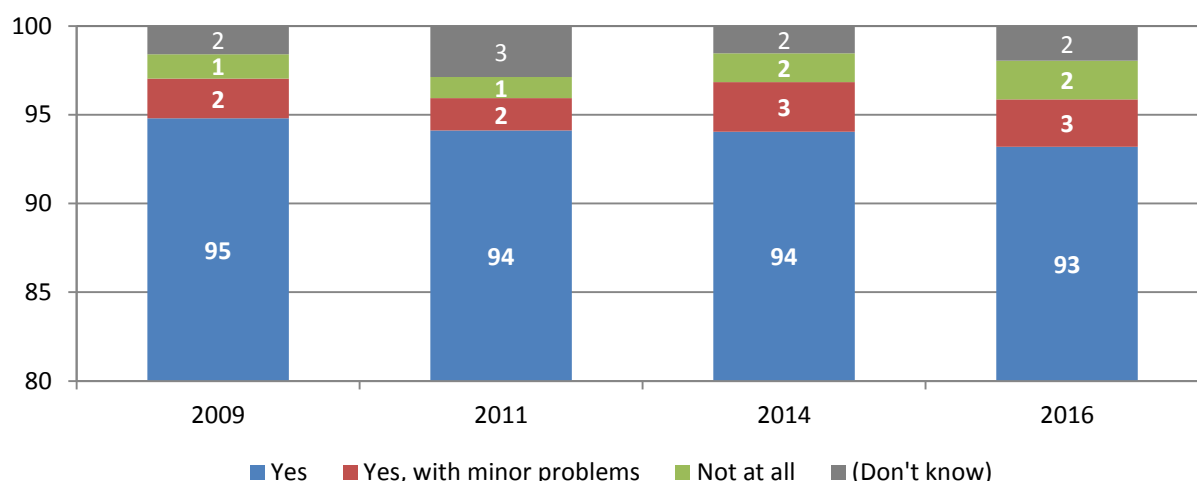
3.6.2. Fairness of the election

In addition to the freeness question, the survey included an equivalent item pertaining to the perceived fairness of electoral procedures. Again we find a near universal consensus among voters, with 93 per cent declaring that the election procedures were free, and a further three per cent saying they were fair apart from minor problems (Figure 21). Only two per cent reported that the elections were not at all fair, while an equivalent share were undecided. Examining trends in perceived fairness across the 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 elections, we find that the results are almost identical in the pattern of responses. One-way ANOVA tests do reveal that the marginal changes in 2016 are significantly different from the previous elections, though this does not detract from the principal message that voters emphatically believe that the elections were fair as well as free, which is evidence of successful electoral management by the Commission.

The responses to the fairness question were again reversed and transformed into a 0-100 score, where 0 referred to “not free at all” and 100 to “unconditionally fair”. “Don’t know” responses were excluded from analysis. The mean fairness score among the voting population was 96 in the 2016 election (Table 13), compared to 97 in both the 2009 and 2014 elections and 98 in 2011. This indicates that voters were almost unanimous in their belief that the elections were fair. Significance testing on these national patterns does nonetheless confirm that the previously identified minor decline is statistically significant in

both the 2014 and 2016 elections, though at this stage this is not a pattern of concern from an election integrity perspective, given the small scale of change to what are very high levels of contentment in the fairness of the 2016 and other recent elections.

Figure 21: Perceived fairness of the election, 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016 (%)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: For ease of presentation, the axis has been truncated, showing the top part of the distribution in response to the question on electoral freeness.

At a disaggregate level, the percentage reporting that the 2016 election was unequivocally fair ranged in a narrow band between 91 and 95 per cent across all the different socio-demographic variables that were examined (Table 13). Furthermore, the view that the election was fair but with minor problems varied between two and four per cent across the voter attributes, with it was only regarded as not being fair by between one and four per cent. Uncertainty about whether the election was indeed fair or not fluctuated in a similar range (1 - 5 %) for different groups of voters. ANOVA post hoc Scheffe tests revealed that there were no significant differences in the mean fairness score based on sex and time of voting, and fairly weak variation based on age and race. There were, however, significant differences based on province, with voters in KwaZulu-Natal on average slightly less convinced of the fairness of the election relative to voters in the Gauteng and the Western Cape. This is due primarily to a marginally lower tendency among voters in KwaZulu-Natal than voters in other provinces to say the election was entirely fair, and a slightly greater propensity to respond that the elections were not at all fair. In addition, voters in informal settlements had marginally lower fairness scores than those in formal urban and rural areas.

Voters with disabilities higher reported average fairness scores relative to able-bodied voters, a situation which reflects slightly higher shares of the former evaluating the elections as partially fair or not fair at all. The tertiary educated were more likely than voters with no formal schooling to rate the election as unequivocally fair, due to the uneducated opting more commonly for 'don't know' responses. Those with a tertiary education were also less

likely to regard the election as unfair than those with an incomplete secondary or matric-level education. In the instances where significant scores were detected, it is important to reemphasize that they are differences between fairness ratings at an exceptionally high level. Across all the different subgroups that are examined in Table 13, the mean fairness score (presented in the final column of the table) ranges between a low of 95 in the case of KwaZulu-Natal to a high of 98 in the case of white voters.

Table 13: Perceived fairness of the 2016 Municipal Election (row percent and mean score)

	Yes	Yes, with minor problems	Not at all	(Don't know)	Total	Mean score (0-100)
South Africa	93	3	2	2	100	96
Province	***	n.s.	***	***		***
Western Cape	93	2	2	3	100	97
Eastern Cape	95	3	2	1	100	97
Northern Cape	94	3	2	1	100	97
Free State	91	3	2	4	100	96
KwaZulu-Natal	91	3	4	3	100	95
North West	92	4	2	3	100	96
Gauteng	95	3	1	1	100	97
Mpumalanga	94	2	3	2	100	97
Limpopo	94	3	2	1	100	96
Geographic location	**	***	**	n.s.		**
Urban formal	93	3	2	2	100	97
Informal urban settlement	91	4	3	2	100	95
Rural	94	2	3	2	100	96
Age	*	**	n.s.	***		**
18-24 years	94	2	2	2	100	97
25-34 years	92	3	2	3	100	96
35-44 years	93	3	3	1	100	96
45-49 years	93	3	2	2	100	97
60+ years	94	2	2	2	100	97
Race	n.s.	n.s.	***	n.s.		**
Black	93	2	2	2	100	96
Coloured	93	3	2	2	100	96
Indian	93	4	1	2	100	97
White	94	3	1	2	100	98
Sex	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	*		n.s.
Male	93	3	2	2	100	97
Female	94	3	2	2	100	96
Disability status	**	**	*	n.s.		**
Persons w/o disabilities	94	2	2	2	100	97
Persons with disabilities	91	4	3	2	100	95
Education level	**	n.s.	***	***		***
No schooling	91	2	2	5	100	97
Primary	94	3	2	2	100	97
Grade 8-11	93	2	3	1	100	96
Matric / Grade 12	93	3	2	2	100	96
Post-Matric	95	2	1	2	100	98
Time of voting	n.s.	*	*	n.s.		n.s.
07:00 - 10:30	93	3	3	2	100	96
10:31 - 14:00	94	2	2	2	100	96
14:31 - 17:30	93	3	2	2	100	96
17:31 - Close	93	3	2	3	100	97

Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

Note: Figures shaded in green indicate satisfaction levels above the national average. Statistically significant differences were determined by means of Oneway ANOVA testing, with * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ and n.s. denoting 'not significant'.

3.7. The Electoral Commission's Performance and Conduct

Millions of South Africans headed to the polls on the 3rd of August 2016 in what is currently regarded as a crucial election in our nation's history. The Electoral Commission set up 22,600 voting stations across the country, an increase from just over 20,000 in 2011. An inter-ministerial committee was launched to complete all final touches ahead of the municipal elections. The Commission is bound by a South African High Court ruling to guarantee that its register collects satisfactory information to locate voters within the correct district. The registration of voter addresses is one of the main challenges confronting both the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the Commission. Using public opinion from the Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016, we can better understand voters' evaluations of the Electoral Commission's performance and conduct during the 2016 municipal elections. Data from the ESS 2016 on this issue will be presented in this section.

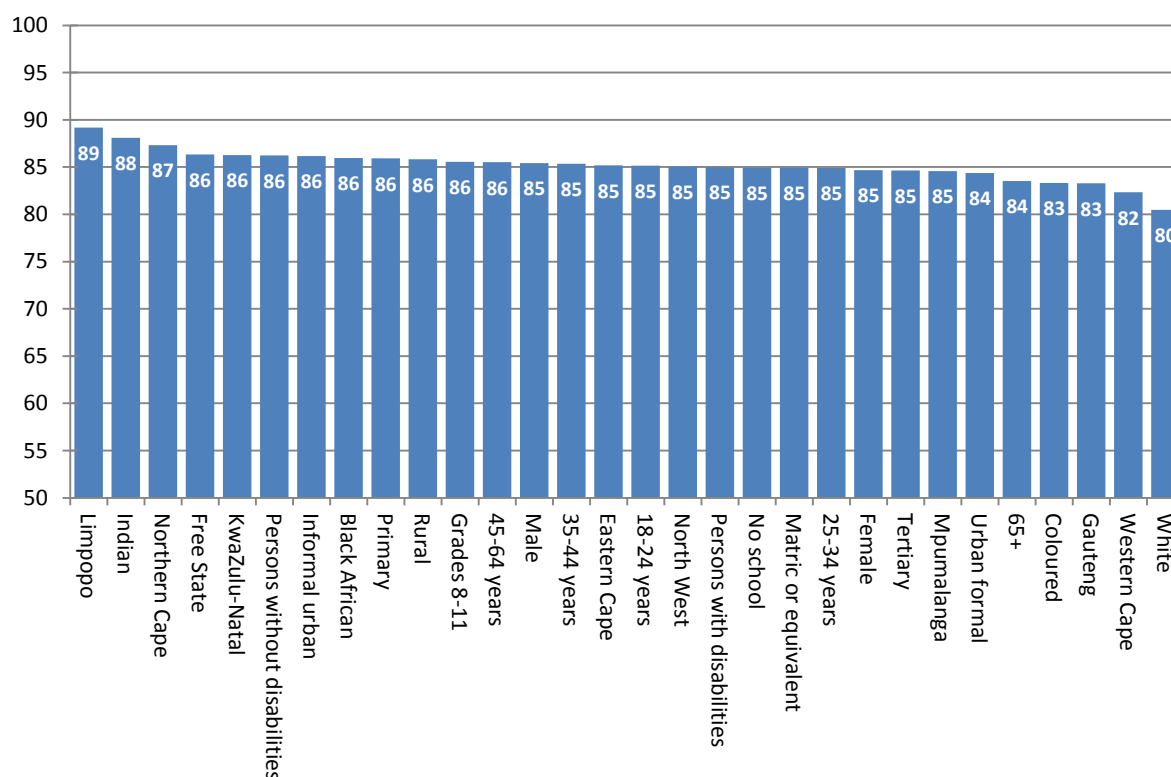
3.7.1. Voter Trust in the Electoral Commission

There has been mounting interest in citizens' trust in democratic institutions in North America and Western Europe over recent decades (Putnam 2002; Dalton 2004; Norris 2011). This has been prompted by empirical evidence which shows that there has been a broad-spectrum decline in trust in politicians, political parties and central democratic institutions (such as national parliaments) in the last few years. This has elevated policymaker apprehensions about democratic legitimacy and its effects on public participation in democratic elections especially in relation to elections for municipalities. Previous public opinion research, prepared by this research team, has shown that a similar decline in citizens' trust has occurred in South Africa. This suggests that it is necessary to look at voters' trust of Electoral Commission in South Africa. In the ESS 2016, fieldworkers asked voters to rate their level of trust in the Commission. This will help us understand voters' attitudes towards one of our most important democratic institutions.

The Electoral Commission was either strongly trusted or trusted by about nine-tenths (91%) of the voting population. We can compare this level of trust with that felt by the general adult population between 2003 and 2015. A year before the 2004 national elections, approximately three-fifths (63%) of the general population strongly trusted or trusted the Electoral Commission. In 2015, a year after the 2014 national elections, two-thirds strongly trusted or trusted the Commission. Comparing general public trust and voter trust, we can observe that the average voter is more likely to trust the Commission. This result could indicate that participation in municipal elections significantly improves an individual trust in the Electoral Commission. This suggests that individual experiences of voting procedures and voting stations improve individual evaluations of the Commission. In order to gain a better insight into voters' trust in the Electoral Commission, a 0-100 score was created. A

higher value on this score represents a high level of trust in the Commission, the mean scores of this indicator was portrayed by selected subgroups in Figure 22.

Figure 22: Levels of Voters' Trust in the Electoral Commission by Selected Subgroups, 2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

Reviewing voters' trust in the Electoral Commission by subgroup, there was very little variation between different demographic subgroups in the voting population. The following groups were found to have the lowest levels of voters' trust in the Commission: White voters (M=80), Coloured voters (M=83), voters in the 65+ age cohort, and those voters with no schooling (both M=84). Again, if we compare the attitudes of the general public's trust in the Commission, we noted significant similarities to these observed results. Racial minorities were noted to have lower levels of trust in the Commission even if we use ordered logistic regression to control for economic status, labour market status and geographic location. Unfortunately, we do not have a comprehensive measure of financial status in the ESS 2016. If we look at attitudes amongst the general public, however, we note that financial status is negatively associated with trust in the Electoral Commission even controlling for age, population group and geographic type. This may explain some of the variation we observed in Figure 22.

3.7.2. Evaluations of Electoral Officials

Electoral Commission Vice Chairperson Terry Tselane has said that the 2016 municipal elections were the most difficult South Africa has ever experienced. In preparation for the 2016 elections, the Electoral Commission employed a sizeable number of officials. The Commission, for example, increased its staff from 50 to 17 000 in the Western Cape Province for the voting period. The staff had been in training for two months before the elections and the Commission officials and police had been daily meetings. Western Cape Provincial Electoral Officer Courtney Sampson warned on the 29th of July 2016 that after the municipals election, there would be unhappy people. He elaborated, saying that “[w]hen I say we are going to do our best, I’m afraid we are going to disappoint a lot of people. There are only 914 seats available for 7 869 candidates”. Using data from the ESS 2016, we can improve our knowledge of voters’ evaluations of the Electoral Commission’s officials during the 2016 municipal elections. Data on this issue will be presented in this subsection.

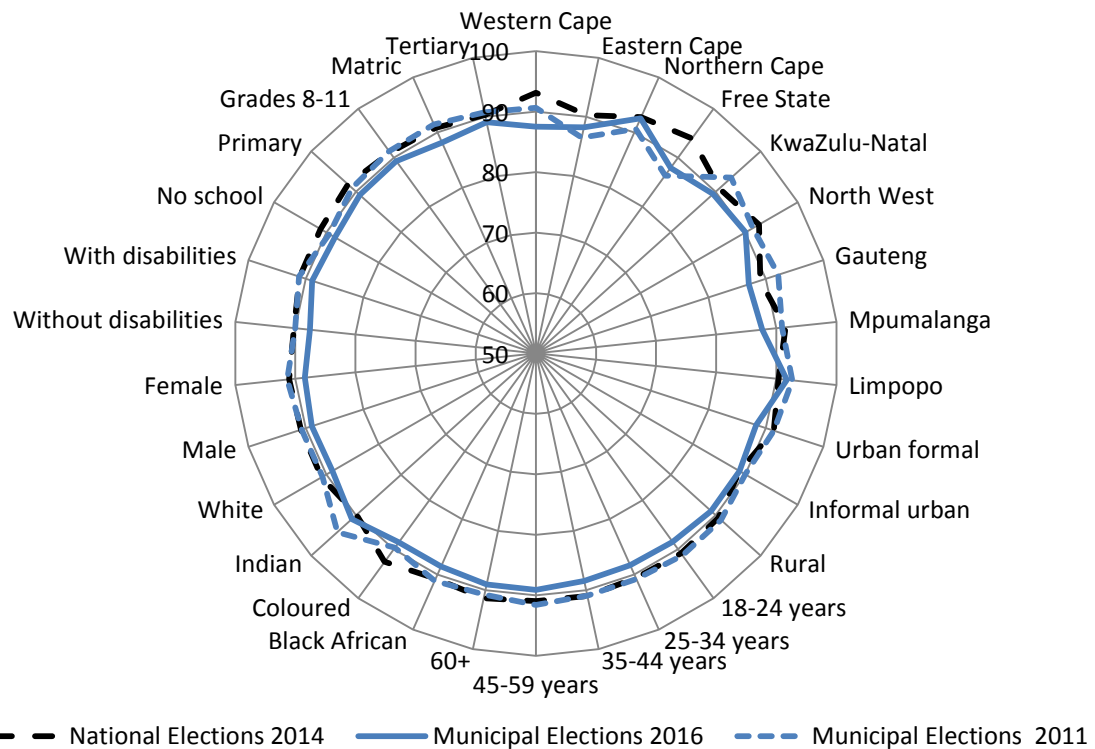
3.7.2.1 General Evaluations of Electoral Officials

To acquire a general understanding of how voters appraised the performance and conduct of the Electoral Commission officials at their voting station, respondents were asked, “How satisfied are you with the quality of service that the IEC officials provided to voters?” Responses were captured on a five-point satisfaction scale, ranging from “very satisfied” to “very dissatisfied”. An estimated 96% of voters stated that they were generally satisfied with the quality of services provided by officials. Only 2% of the voting public expressed a neutral position and 1% was dissatisfied with officials. This was similar to what was observed during the 2014 national elections. But, perhaps interesting, the distribution of satisfaction has changed between the two elections. During the 2016 municipal elections, about three-fifths (60%) of voters were very satisfied and roughly one-third (37%) were somewhat satisfied. Compared to what was observed during the 2014 national elections, more voters were very satisfied in that national election –this suggests a moderate decline in voters’ assessments of the services provided by their election officials.

In order to obtain greater insight into voters’ appraisals of the Electoral Commission officials at their voting station, a 0-100 score was produced based on a discussion of the question discussed above. A higher value on this score represents a high satisfied with the services provided by electoral officials, the mean scores of this indicator was portrayed by selected subgroups in Figure 23. The figure presents data for the 2016 municipal elections, 2014 national elections as well as the 2011 municipal elections. Reviewing voters’ satisfaction in the Electoral Commission officials by subgroup, there were few observed dissimilarities between the different selected subgroups presented in the figure. Likewise what we can detect relatively little difference between the periods of time that are showcased. In general

Figure 23 shows that satisfaction with Electoral Commission officials is widespread across the socio-demographic spectrum in South Africa. The Commission should be heartened by this result which suggests that existing training and hiring procedures are operating efficaciously.

Figure 23: Satisfaction with the Quality of Service Provided by Electoral Officials to Voters (mean score, 0-100 scale)



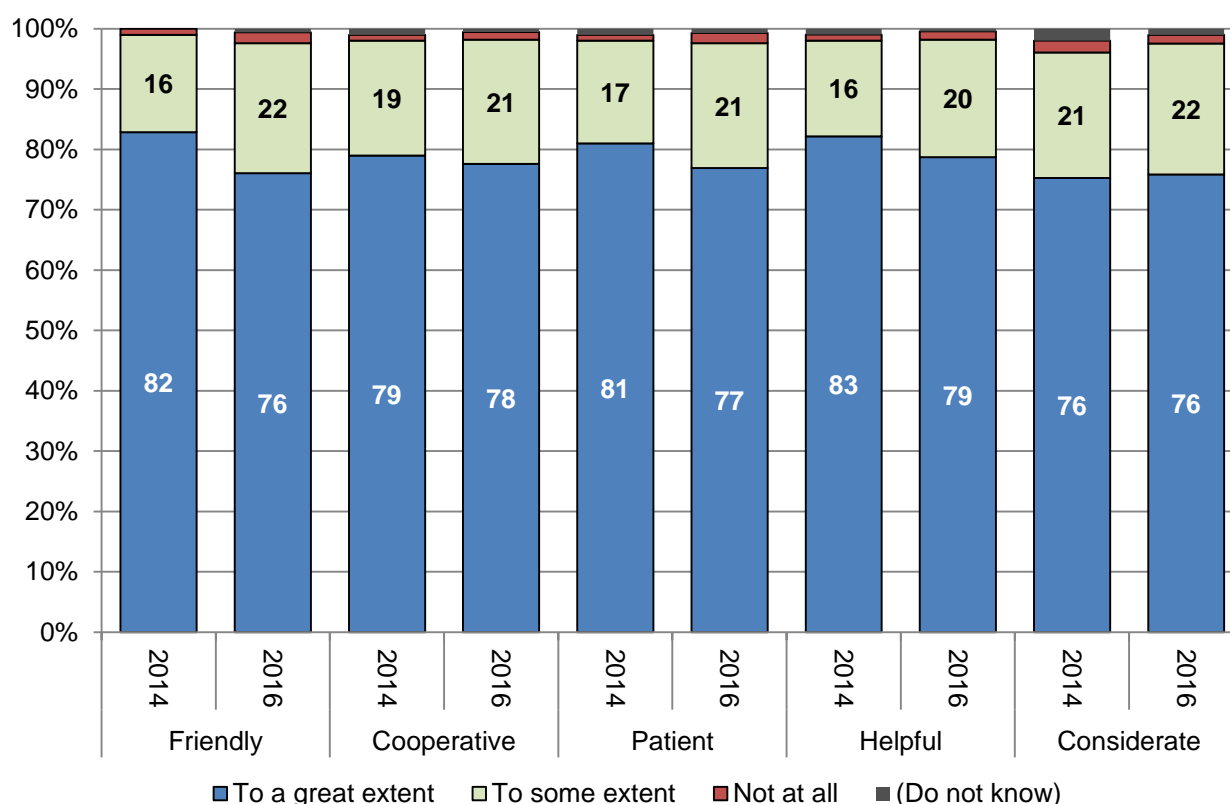
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2011, 2014; 2016

A few interesting variations in voters' evaluations of their officials can be noted in Figure 23. The following provincial voters were found to have the lowest levels of general satisfaction with officials: Gauteng (M=87), Western Cape and Mpumalanga (both M=88). Voters in Gauteng had moderately higher satisfaction with officials during the 2011 municipal elections than what was seen in the 2016 municipal elections. A similar decline in general satisfaction with officials was also observed in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. There was a mild improvement in general satisfaction amongst in the following provinces: Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and the Free State. Perhaps unexpectedly, we can observe a slight decline in overall approval of election officials amongst voters in the 18-24 and 25-34 age cohorts between the 2011 and the 2016 municipal elections. However, the observed level of variation is so slight that it is difficult to discern a concrete message from this noted deviation.

3.7.2.2 Voters' Appraisals of Electoral Officials' Personal Characteristics

When answering the ESS 2016 survey, voters were asked to consider the extent to which they thought that the Electoral Commission officials at their voting station had good personal characteristics or traits. These traits were: (i) friendly; (ii) cooperative; (iii) patient; (iv) helpful; and (v) considerate. Responses to these questions are portrayed in Figure 24 for the 2014 national elections as well as the 2016 municipal elections. Studying these responses it is obvious that most voters thought that the Electoral Commission staff had respectable personal characteristics or traits. Most voters described the election officials at their voting station as friendly, cooperative, patient, helpful, and considerate. This result confirms the findings discussed in section 3.7.2.1 and reflects favourably on the organisational skills of the Electoral Commission. A pairwise correlation test revealed that the five variables displayed in Figure 24 are correlated with one other –none of the correlations produced by this test were below 0.55.

Figure 24: Satisfaction with Personal Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations, 2014 2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

It would appear that there has been little change in how voters rate the electoral officials within the period of time under discussion. There was, however, a limited level of variation within this period. It would appear that voters, on average, were less likely to appraise election officials as friendly, patient and helpful during the 2016 municipal elections when compared with voters in the 2014 national elections. During the 2016 elections, roughly

three-quarters (76%) of voters described officials as friendly to a great extent compared to 82% during the 2014 elections. In the 2016 elections, approximately six-eighths (77%) of voters classified officials as patient to a great extent compared to 81% during the 2014 elections. For the 2016 elections, almost four-fifths (79%) of voters categorised officials as helpful to a great extent compared to 83% in the 2014 elections.

To establish a proportional scale to understand how voters' evaluations of election officials on these five personal traits, it is crucial to generate distinct individual indicators. These indicators were calculated to gauge the extent to which voters thought that officials rated on one of these five personal traits. The response categories were recoded to represent scores ranging from 2="To a great extent", 1="To some extent", and 0="Not at all". Those who said that they didn't know how to answer or were uncertain were coded as missing. These indicators were transformed to a 0-100 scale. A high score indicates that officials have the relevant personal trait to a beneficial extent. The formation of these scores allows subgroup analysis to be effectively accomplished in relation to the voting station's human element. Mean scores are presented in Table 14.

Table 14: Satisfaction with Personal Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations by Selected Subgroup

	Friendly		Cooperative		Patient		Helpful		Considerate	
	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.
South Africa	89	0.26	89	0.28	89	0.28	90	0.25	88	0.26
Age Group										
18-24 years	88	0.67	89	0.64	88	0.66	89	0.63	87	0.67
25-34 years	88	0.48	89	0.48	88	0.49	89	0.51	88	0.52
35-44 years	88	0.50	89	0.48	88	0.51	90	0.48	88	0.50
49-64 years	89	0.59	90	0.82	89	0.83	91	0.55	90	0.55
65+	91	0.70	91	0.72	91	0.75	91	0.73	91	0.72
Population Group										
Black African	88	0.29	89	0.28	88	0.30	89	0.28	88	0.29
Coloured	89	0.71	89	1.25	88	1.23	90	0.84	89	0.87
Indian	91	1.29	91	1.26	91	1.27	90	1.36	89	1.39
White	90	0.98	92	0.94	91	0.97	91	0.97	90	0.97
Gender										
Male	89	0.36	90	0.35	89	0.36	91	0.34	89	0.35
Female	88	0.37	89	0.42	88	0.43	89	0.37	88	0.38
Disability Status										
Without disabilities	88	1.08	85	1.69	85	1.70	87	1.35	86	1.33
With disabilities	89	0.26	90	0.25	89	0.26	90	0.25	89	0.26
Educational Attainment										
No school	88	1.05	87	1.09	87	1.11	86	1.38	84	1.33
Primary	91	0.71	90	1.41	90	1.40	92	0.69	90	0.74
Grades 8-11	89	0.49	89	0.48	89	0.48	91	0.45	90	0.46
Matric or equivalent	87	0.44	89	0.42	88	0.43	89	0.41	88	0.41
Tertiary	90	0.59	91	0.58	90	0.61	91	0.58	89	0.61

Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

Notes 1: A high value indicates a high level of appraisal of electoral officials' specific trait. 2: Figures shaded in green indicate agreement levels above the national average while figures in red represent satisfaction levels below the national average.

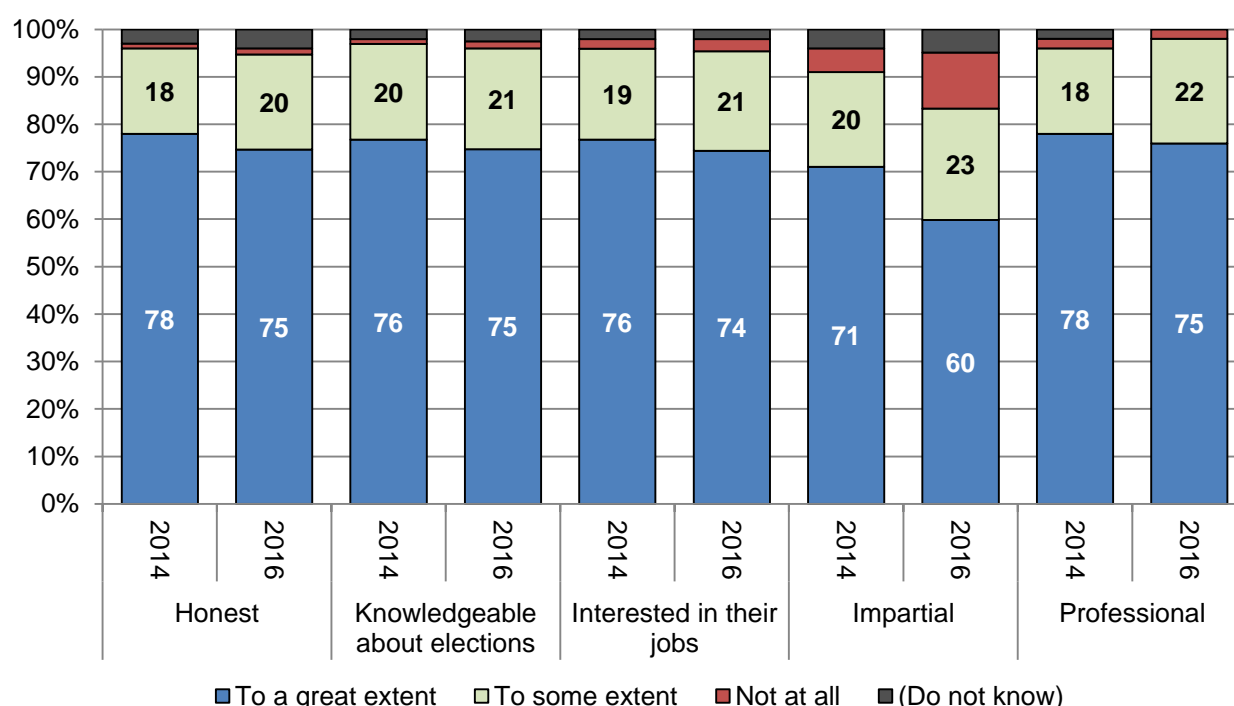
Considerable deviations between the different demographic subgroups on the diverse indicators showcased in Table 14 did not emerge. As can be seen from the table, when asked about election officials and their personal qualities, dissimilarities between voters were slight. Older voters tended to rate election officials more positively on the five traits than their younger counterparts. In addition, voters from the country's White and Indian population groups were more likely to be favourable to officials on these issues when compared to voters from the Black African and Coloured population groups. In an encouraging observation, voters with disabilities were more favourable in their description of officials' personal traits than the national average. This finding suggests these vulnerable voters are being treated with the respect and courtesy by officials at the voting station.

3.7.2.3 Voters' Appraisals of Electoral Officials' Professional Characteristics

When completing the ESS 2016 survey, voters were requested to reflect on the extent to which they believed that the Electoral Commission officials at their voting station had good professional proficient qualities or traits. These qualities were: (i) honesty; (ii) knowledgeable about elections; (iii) an interested in their jobs; (iv) impartiality; and (v) professionalism. Responses to these questions are shown in Figure 25 for the 2016 municipal elections as well as the 2014 national elections. Examining these responses it is clear that nearly every voter thought that the Electoral Commission staff had proper professional proficient qualities. Most voters defined the election officials at their voting station as honest, knowledge, attentive, impartial and professional. This outcome strengthens the conclusions presented in section 3.7.2.1 and exhibits the good judgement of the Electoral Commission in the management of their human resources.

If we compared voters' attitudes on this issue between the 2016 and the 2014 elections, it would be evident that there have been a few changes in how voters evaluate the electoral officials at their voting station. It would appear that voters, on average, were less likely to assess election officials as impartial in the 2016 municipal elections when contrasted with voters in the 2014 national elections. During the 2016 elections, three-fifths of voters designated officials as impartial to a great extent, 23% as impartial to some extent and 12% as biased. In the 2014 national elections approximately five-sevenths (71%) of voters ranked officials as impartial to a great extent while 20% thought of them as impartial to some extent and 5% as partial. This is a disquieting result and should be disconcerting to the Electoral Commission. A pairwise correlation test found, somewhat unexpectedly, that our impartiality variable was only weakly correlated with the other four variables in Figure 24.

Figure 25: Satisfaction with Professional Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations, 2014-2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

To ascertain an informative scale to understand how voters' evaluations of election officials on these five professional qualities, it is essential to generate distinct individual indicators. These indicators are intended to measure the extent to which voters thought that officials rated on one of these five professional qualities. The response categories were recoded to signify scores ranging from 2="To a great extent", 1="To some extent", and 0="Not at all". Those respondents who held that they didn't know how to answer or were uncertain were coded as missing. These indicators were changed to a 0-100 scale. A high score indicates that officials have the relevant professional quality to a good extent. The creation of these scores allows subgroup analysis to be capably achieved in regards to the voting station's human resources. Mean scores are presented in Table 15.

Substantial differences among the different demographic subgroups on the five distinct indicators displayed in Table 15 were not apparent. When requested to answer questions about the professionalism of election officials and their proficiency traits, variations between voter subgroups were minor. In a discouraging development, voters with disabilities were more unflattering in their report of officials' proficiency than the national average. This finding suggests that this subset of voters is being treated with less professionalism that this vulnerable group deserve. Voters from the White and Indian racial minorities were more likely to describe election officials as honest when compared to voters from the Black African majority. In contrast to younger voters, older voters were more likely to rate officials as professional, knowledgeable and interested. On the other hand, this level

of dissimilarity was so slender that it is challenging to determine a tangible takeaway on this observed variation.

As mentioned above, an unanticipated number of voters rated the officials working at their voting station as biased during the 2016 municipal elections. On when asked this question, relatively few variations were noted between the following groups: age group, gender and disability status. It is interesting to note that Coloured (M=80) and Indian (M=85) voters were more likely to have higher scores on this indicators than White voters (M=78) or Black African voters (M=75). These population group differences held even we use multivariate regression to account for geographic location and other socio-demographic characteristics. If we look at Table 15, it would suggest that tertiary-educated voters were more likely to see the officials at their voting stations as impartial when compared with other educational attainment groups. Our multivariate analysis also showed that education was negatively associated with seeing electoral officials as impartial.

Table 15: Satisfaction with Professional Aspects of the Performance of Electoral Commission Officials at Voting Stations by Selected Subgroup

	Honest		Knowledgeable about elections		Interested in their jobs		Impartial		Professional	
	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.
South Africa	89	0.28	89	0.26	88	0.28	76	0.40	88	0.26
Age Group										
18-24 years	89	0.63	88	0.68	87	0.68	75	0.98	87	0.69
25-34 years	89	0.47	89	0.47	87	0.55	76	0.71	87	0.49
35-44 years	89	0.49	88	0.46	87	0.53	75	0.81	88	0.49
49-64 years	89	0.87	89	0.66	88	0.65	79	0.88	89	0.59
65+	91	0.73	90	0.77	90	0.82	76	1.24	90	0.74
Population Group										
Black African	89	0.29	89	0.30	88	0.30	75	0.44	88	0.30
Coloured	88	1.22	88	0.72	86	1.00	80	1.09	89	0.71
Indian	90	1.34	89	1.46	89	1.50	85	1.82	88	1.44
White	90	0.97	89	0.77	87	1.06	78	1.72	88	0.97
Gender										
Male	89	0.37	89	0.38	88	0.39	76	0.55	88	0.37
Female	88	0.42	88	0.35	87	0.41	76	0.58	88	0.37
Disability Status										
Without disabilities	87	1.71	86	1.17	85	1.37	75	1.75	87	1.10
With disabilities	89	0.26	89	0.26	88	0.28	76	0.41	88	0.27
Educational Attainment										
No school	87	1.07	87	1.08	85	1.42	75	1.46	87	1.05
Primary	89	1.39	91	0.73	90	0.75	76	1.36	89	0.79
Grades 8-11	89	0.48	89	0.50	87	0.52	76	0.74	89	0.49
Matric or equivalent	88	0.44	87	0.45	88	0.43	75	0.62	87	0.43
Tertiary	91	0.59	90	0.51	88	0.69	78	1.05	89	0.62

Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

Notes 1: A high value indicates a high level of appraisal of electoral officials' specific trait. 2: Figures shaded in green indicate agreement levels above the national average while figures in red represent satisfaction levels below the national average.

The voters in following provinces described the officials in their stations as the most partial: Mpumalanga (M=67), the North West (M=72) and the Eastern Cape (M=73). In terms of geographic location, evaluations of election officials as impartial was marginally lower, on average, in rural areas (M=74) than in urban formal areas (M=75) and urban informal areas (M=79). The multivariate analysis revealed that living in a rural area was negatively correlated with thinking that electoral officials are impartial. In terms of the South African Constitution, Chapter 9 institutions like the Electoral Commission are “independent, and subject only to the constitution and the law; they must be impartial and exercise their powers and perform their functions without fear, favour or prejudice”. However, as we have observed here, many voters perceive a certain bias in the conduct of officials in the station where they voted. This is a disquieting discovery and should be the subject of further study and investigation.

3.7.3. Consideration of Voting Procedure for Voters with Special Needs

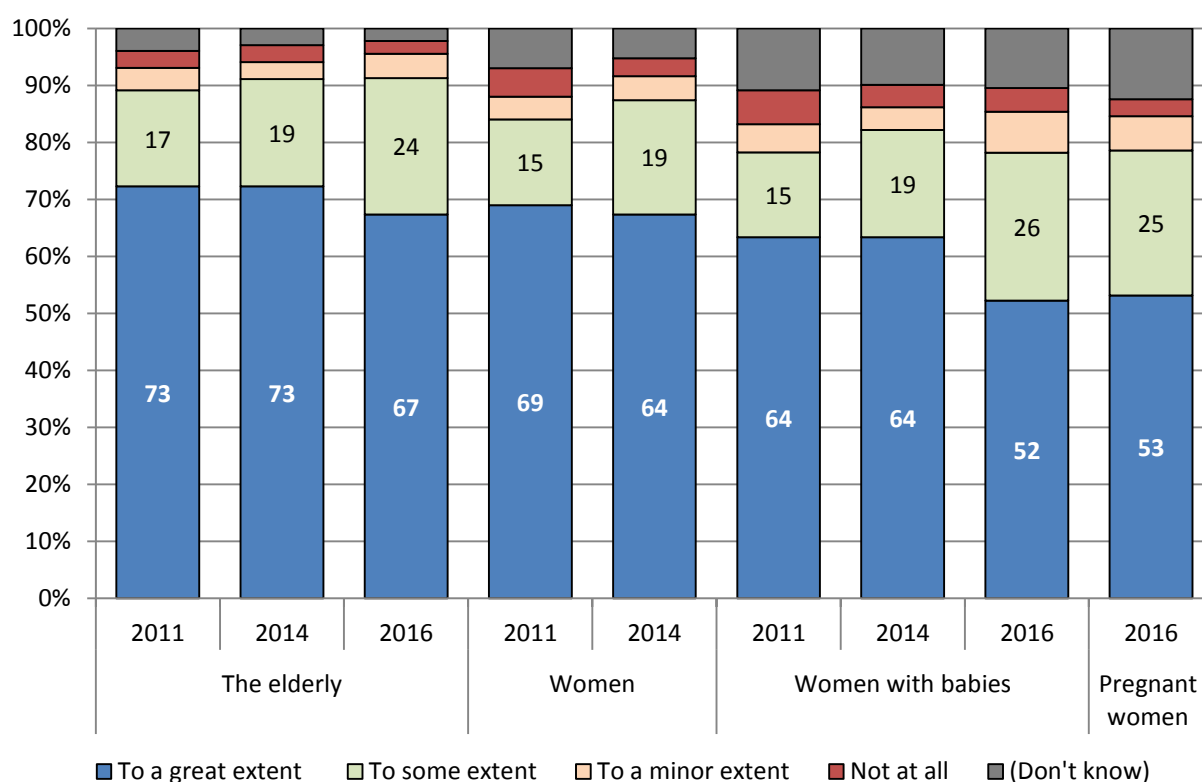
It is vital for every eligible registered voter to be able to cast their vote in the municipal elections. This fundamental democratic right should not be denied to the infirm and disabled. In other words, physical infirmity should not prevent an individual from helping to decide who runs their community and their ward. The Electoral Commission has worked with a variety of different groups to help vulnerable groups vote. The Commission together with the South African National Council for the Blind advanced a voting aid, the Universal Ballot Template, to help voters with disabilities and special needs to have a free and secret vote during elections for example. For the disabled, a home visit is also available for registered voters who are incapable of getting to their voting station on 3rd of August 2016. Using public opinion from the ESS 2016, we can better grasp voters’ evaluations of the Electoral Commission’s performance on this issue. This data will be presented in this subsection.

3.7.3.1 General Evaluations of Special Needs Considerations

During the course of the ESS 2016, voters were asked to consider the extent to which they thought that voting procedures at the voting station took into account the needs of the certain vulnerable groups. These groups were: (i) the elderly; (ii) persons with disabilities; (iii) the partially-sighted; (iv) the blind; (v) women; and (vi) women with babies. Responses to these questions are depicted in Figure 26 and Figure 27 for the 2011, 2014 and 2016 elections. Reviewing these responses it is apparent that most believed that the Electoral Commission staff had addressed the special needs of vulnerable groups. It would appear that there has been little change in how voters rate the way the country’s voting procedures has taken these vulnerable groups into account. A pairwise correlation test showed that the six indicators outlined here are correlated with one other –none of the observed correlations produced by this test were below 0.45.

Approximately two-thirds (67%) of the voting population thought that the voting procedures considered the needs of the elderly to a great extent (Figure 26). Almost a quarter (24%) believed that voting procedures considered the needs of the elderly to some extent, with less than a tenth (6%) declaring that the Commission considered the needs to a minor extent or not at all. This represents a decline in voters' positive attitudes since 2011 municipal elections. Nearly a twentieth (4%) of voters did not know if the voting procedures took into consideration the special needs of the elderly. Around half (53%) of the voting population were confident that the needs of pregnant women were addressed by the Electoral Commission to a great extent. A large minority (25%) of voter considered that the pregnant women were only being addressed to some extent. Similar numbers of the voting population were concerned about the needs of women with babies during the 2016 municipal government election. This change represents a deterioration in voters' approval of how the Commission considered the needs of women with babies since 2011 municipal elections.

Figure 26: Consideration of Voting Procedures for the Elderly, Women, and Women with Babies

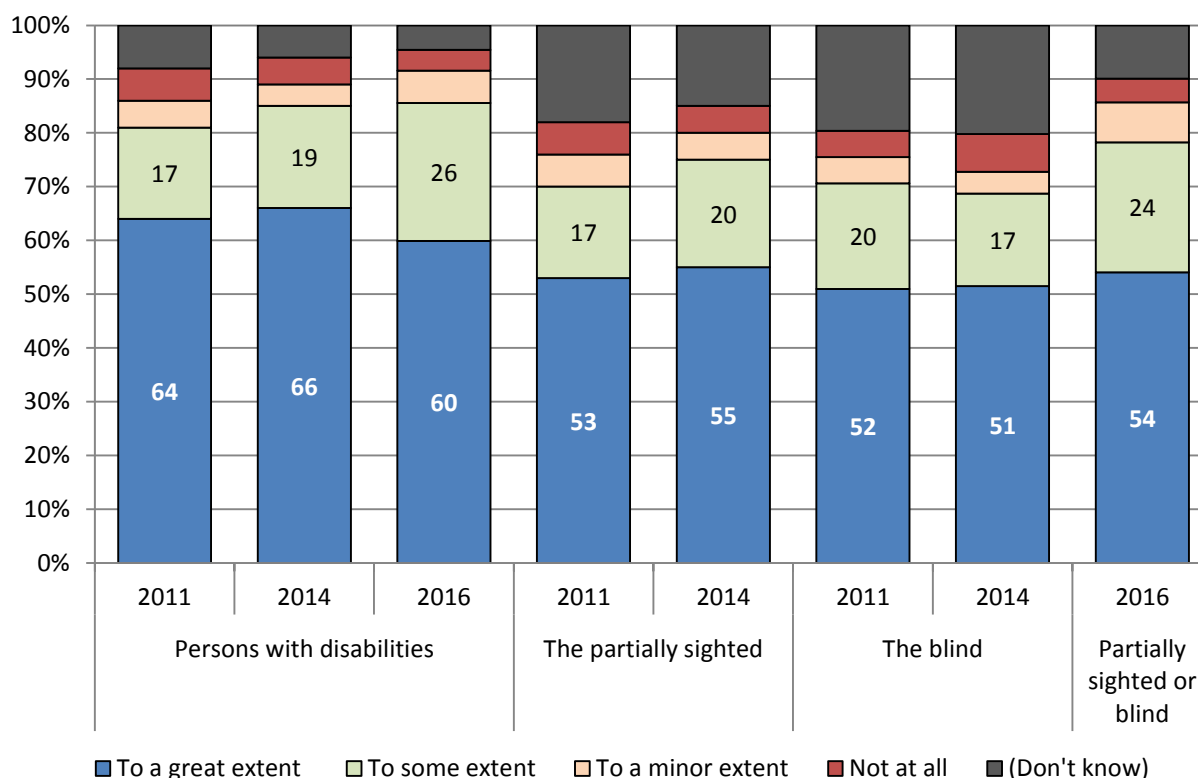


Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2011, 2014; 2016

Let us consider how voters felt about how the way that the Electoral Commission's voting procedures considered their needs of people with disabilities (Figure 27). More than three-fifths of the voting population believed that the needs of persons with disabilities were considered to a great extent by the Electoral Commission. A significant portion of the voting population (32%) thought that voting procedures only took into consideration to some

extent or to a minor extent. This is a troubling finding and should be upsetting to the Electoral Commission. Only about half (54%) of voters felt that the special needs of partially sighted or blind people were being addressed to a great extent. A small minority (24%) believed that the needs of this group were being addressed to a minor extent. These reported opinions are similar in nature to the opinions expressed by voters in the 2011 municipal elections. Similar portions of the voting population were troubled about the needs of the blind and the partially sighted during the 2011 and 2014 elections.

Figure 27: Consideration of Voting Procedures for People with Disabilities, the Blind and the Partially-Sighted



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2011, 2014; 2016

3.7.3.2 Subgroup Analysis of Appraisals of Special Needs Considerations

In order to establish a comparative scale to understand how voters' evaluations of how the Electoral Commission's voting procedures considered the needs of vulnerable groups, it is necessary to create discernible individual indicators. These indicators were designed to calculate the extent to which voters thought that the needs of the various special needs groups were considered. The response categories were recoded to represent scores ranging from 1 = "not at all"; 2 = "to a minor extent"; 3 = "to some extent"; 4 = "to a great extent". "Don't know" options were coded as missing data. These indicators were converted to a 0-100 scale. A high score, therefore, indicated that the needs of the groups were being considered, and the creation of these scores allows subgroup analysis to be successfully completed in relation to this issue. Mean scores are presented in Table 16.

Notable variations were observed between population groups. Black African voters were found to be more satisfied than other population groups when asked about how the Electoral Commission's voting procedures considered the needs of vulnerable groups (Table 16). White voters were, in contrast to other population groups, more pessimistic about the effect of voting procedures on vulnerable groups. This is similar to what was observed during the 2014 national election when racial differences were noted, with racial minorities being more dissatisfied with the voting procedures for people with special needs. Perhaps unexpectedly we did not observe any distinct differences on our different indicators between age cohorts. Relevant low levels of variations were observed on our indicators between educational attainment groups. However, using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests, we found that those margin differences that can be observed are statistically significant.

Table 16: Considering the needs of people with special needs (mean score, 0-100 scale)

	Elderly		Persons with disabilities		Blind and partially sighted		Pregnant Women		Women with babies	
	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.
South Africa	87	0.26	84	0.27	82	0.34	83	0.28	81	0.30
Age Group										
18-24 years	87	0.60	84	0.68	81	0.76	82	0.74	79	0.83
25-34 years	88	0.56	85	0.53	83	0.55	83	0.54	82	0.56
35-44 years	88	0.43	84	0.49	82	0.61	84	0.49	82	0.53
49-64 years	87	0.62	84	0.68	82	1.06	83	0.69	82	0.73
65+	89	0.68	85	0.81	84	0.87	84	0.87	82	0.96
Population Group										
Black African	88	0.27	85	0.30	83	0.38	84	0.32	82	0.34
Coloured	84	1.16	82	0.97	77	1.15	79	1.07	77	1.09
Indian	90	1.15	85	1.34	86	1.47	85	1.36	85	1.40
White	86	0.87	82	0.98	80	1.30	84	0.86	82	0.92
Gender										
Male	88	0.35	84	0.40	82	0.55	83	0.41	82	0.44
Female	87	0.37	84	0.38	82	0.44	83	0.39	81	0.42
Disability Status										
Without disabilities	87	1.46	85	1.14	85	1.11	85	1.16	81	1.35
With disabilities	88	0.25	84	0.28	82	0.36	83	0.29	82	0.31
Educational Attainment										
No school	87	1.52	85	1.05	86	0.96	85	1.02	79	1.27
Primary	87	0.87	84	1.01	82	1.08	81	1.12	81	1.16
Grades 8-11	88	0.49	85	0.55	82	0.60	83	0.59	81	0.62
Matric or equivalent	88	0.38	85	0.42	82	0.64	83	0.44	82	0.47
Tertiary	87	0.58	83	0.67	82	0.80	85	0.61	83	0.65

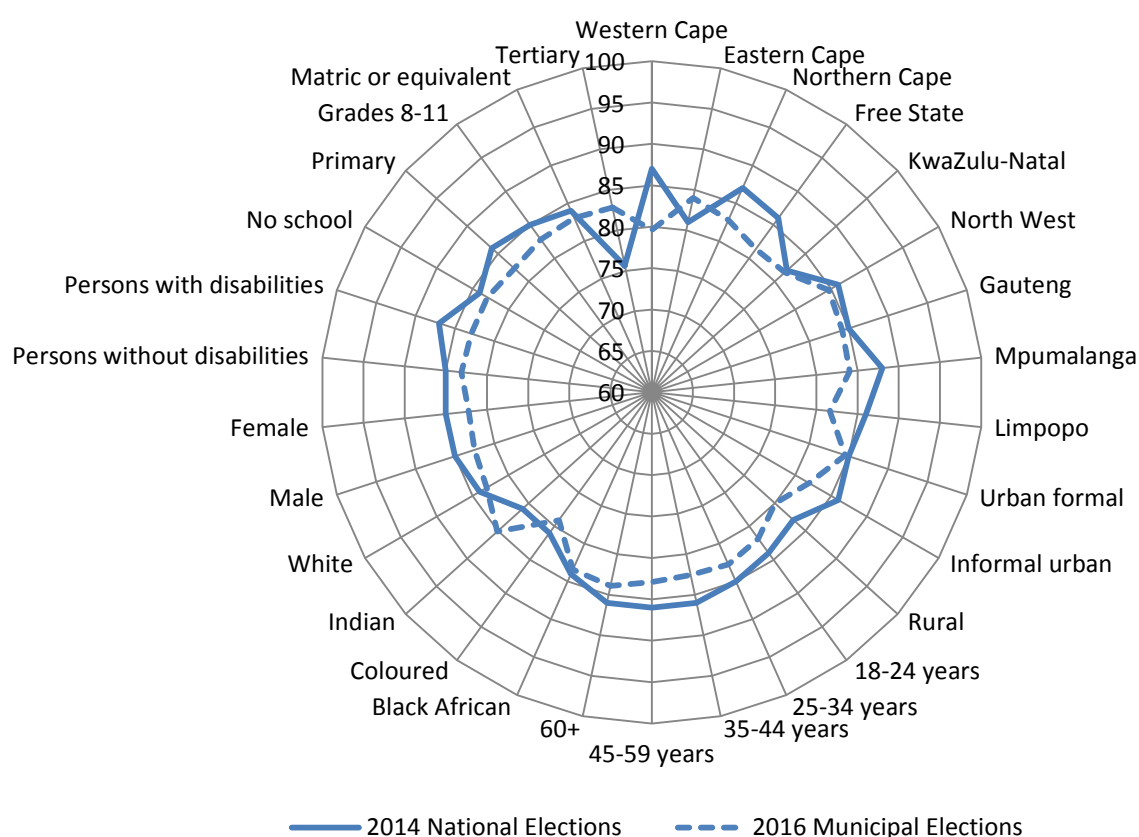
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

Notes 1: A high value indicates a high level of appraisal of electoral officials' specific trait. 2: Figures shaded in green indicate agreement levels above the national average while figures in red represent satisfaction levels below the national average.

As can be perceived from the table, considerable deviations between different demographic subgroups in South Africa were not observed. When asked about how voting procedures

affected the disabled and the blind and partially sighted, dissimilarities between voters without disabilities and voters with disabilities were marginal. Interestingly, this stands in contrast to what was seen during the 2011 municipal elections when voters with disabilities (M=83) were more inclined than able-bodied persons (M=86) to believe that the electoral procedures had not considered the needs of the disabled. Low levels of variations in voters' opinion on the consideration of voting procedures for people with special needs were observed between genders. Unexpectedly women were not found to be more concerned about the special needs of pregnant women and women with babies when compared with men.

Figure 28: Special Needs Index by Selected Subgroups, 2014 and 2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

The five indicators depicted in Table 16 are combined to produce a collective additive index labelled the Special Needs Index ranged 0-100. A high score indicated that the needs of vulnerable groups were being met. The mean results are portrayed in Figure 28. As can be observed, a degree of variation in mean index scores was noted by geographic location. Voters in rural areas thought that the needs of the vulnerable groups were less well addressed when compared to other areas, particularly urban formal areas. This geographic variation may help explain variations between provinces in the country. The Special Needs Index mean score for Western Cape residences was, for instance, the lowest (M=80) mean

score out of all nine provinces. Interestingly, residences of the Free State (M=81) also had a comparatively low mean score on the index.

If the Special Needs Index developed for this report is compared across selected subgroups between 2011 municipal elections and 2014 national elections, it is apparent there is a strong degree of comparability between the three elections. However, due to minor changes to the way questions were asked to the respondents, we should be careful in our interpretation of such direct comparisons. Evaluations of the Electoral Commission's voting procedures were higher amongst voters in the Free State and the Western Cape in 2014 than in 2016. Tertiary-educated voters were more sceptical about the consideration of vulnerable groups in the 2014 national elections than during the 2016 municipal elections. Perhaps what was most surprisingly when trying to compare evaluations in 2011 and 2016, we can note that White voters were marginally more pessimistic in 2016 than in 2011. This latter finding should be concerning for the Electoral Commission and their treatment of vulnerable groups.

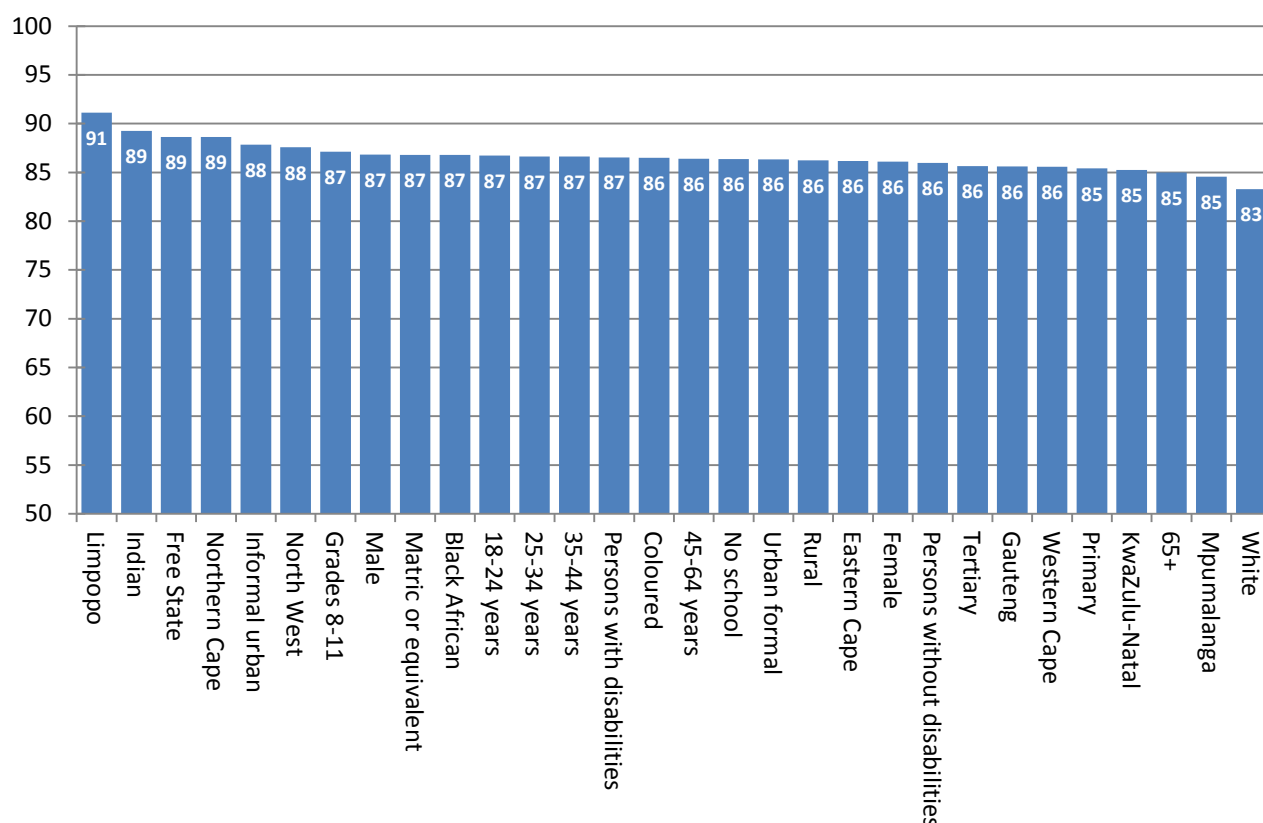
3.7.4. New Procedures to Validate Voter Addresses

The Constitution and the Electoral Act (No. 73 of 1998) necessitates that each registered voter has to vote in the specific district and ward where that person is an ordinary resident. The Constitutional Court ruled on 14th June 2016 that the Electoral Commission had failed to abide by the Act because it had failed to compile a voters' roll with valid addresses. The Constitutional Court ruled the 2016 municipal election in South Africa could go ahead but required the Commission to update the registry. Currently, the Commission is endeavouring to verify the details of millions of South Africans whose addresses were missing from the voters' roll. The Commission has argued that it will probably take years to appropriately verify addresses. In the ESS 2016, fieldworkers asked voters to rate their level of satisfaction with the procedures to check and update the home addresses of voters at voting stations. This will help us understand voters' attitudes towards a part of this country's election process.

About nine-tenths (92%) of the voting population were either very satisfied or satisfied with the procedures to check and update the home addresses of voters at their voting station. In order to obtain a healthier understanding of voters' evaluations of the Electoral Commission's performance on this issue, a 0-100 score was created. A higher value on this score represents a high level of satisfaction with the Commission on verifying addresses, the mean scores of this indicator was portrayed by selected subgroups in Figure 29. Reviewing mean scores in this figure, it would appear that levels of satisfaction varied little between different demographic subgroups presented here. The following groups were found to have highest levels of voters' satisfaction: Indian (M=89), resident voters of urban informal areas

(M=88) and voters with an incomplete secondary education (M=87). Interestingly, a pairwise correlation test showed that there was a positive correlation between satisfaction with the Commission on verifying addresses and trust in the Commission. The size of the correlation (0.387) was not as large, however, as may have been imagined.

Figure 29: Levels of Voters' Level of Satisfaction with Verifying Addresses by Selected Subgroups, 2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

3.8. Voter Education

As set out in Section 5 of the Electoral Commission Act (No. 51 of 1996), voter education is one of the primary functions of the Electoral Commission. Building on this mandate, the Commission has adopted the following as one of its seven key strategic objectives: "To plan and implement strategies to educate, inform and coordinate programme delivery of civic and democracy education to civil society through partnerships, research and knowledge management on a continuous basis". In preparations for a national or municipal election, the Electoral Commission undertakes vigorous and efficacious voter education campaigns. Given the solemnity of this responsibility, it is necessary to evaluate how well educated the average voter is regarding voting procedures and other relevant information. Based on our previous work with the Electoral Commission, we discerned that it was necessary to assess public attitudes to the voter education campaigns and programmes that were carried out by

the Commission. The following section will present data on such attitudes to illuminate important issues related to voter education in South Africa.

3.8.1. Level of Information Voters had about Voting Procedures

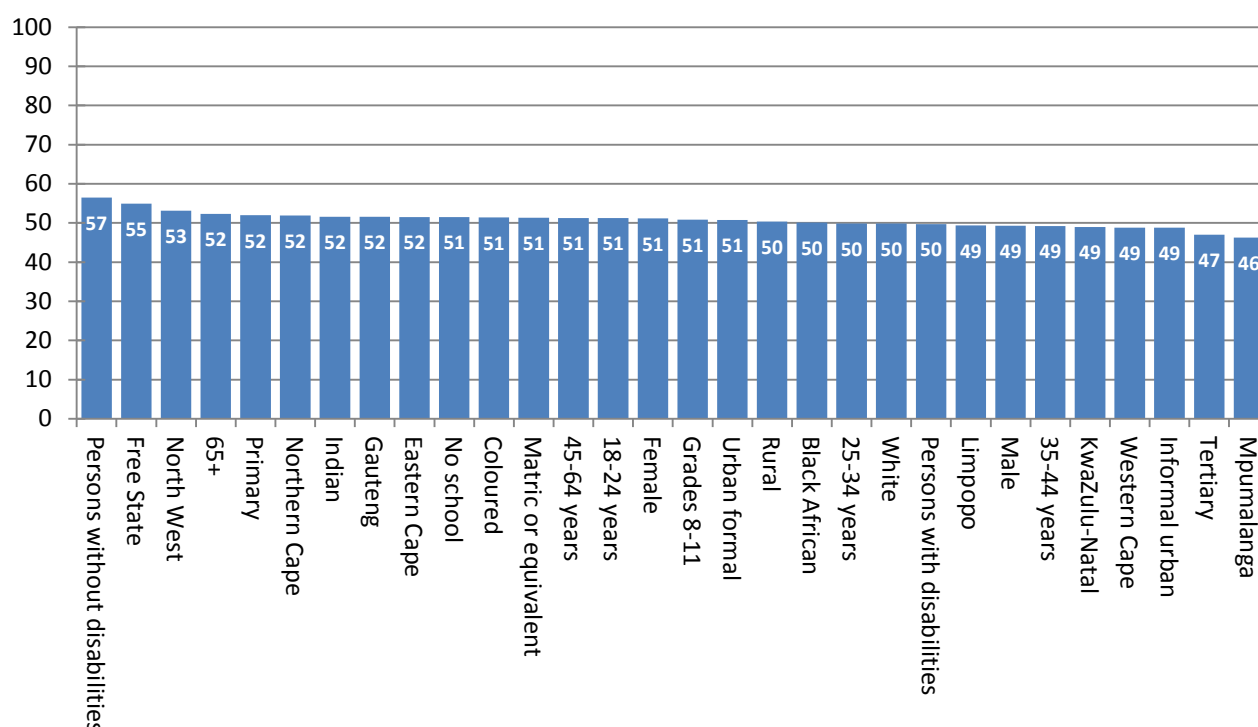
Voters partaking in the ESS 2016 were requested to answer the following question: “Do you think you had enough information about the voting procedures (including registration, location of voting station) before this election?” with the response options being “far too little”, “too little”, “enough”, “too much”, and “far too much”. Comprehending voters’ responses to this question will permit us to improve our comprehension of the Commission’s voter education efforts as it regards the 2016 municipal elections. Roughly a fifth (18%) of all voters had either far too little or too little information about the voting procedures. Approximately three-fifths (61%) of the voting population had enough information and the remainder (20%) had either too much or far too much information. This result suggests the majority of voters had a good level of information about voting procedures in South Africa and the Electoral Commission should be pleased with this result.

When asked about the level of information in late 2015, a public opinion survey conducted by SASAS found similar evaluations as those discussed above amongst registered voters. Amongst non-registered voters, roughly three-fifths (62%) of this group said that they had either too little or far too little information. This suggests that there are significant differences in how registered and non-registered voters answer this question. It is essential to grasp which voter subgroups judge their level of information positively and which judge their level of information to be lacking. To obtain this understanding, a level of information indicator was generated. Responses to the question analysed above were reversed and transformed into a 0-100 score, where 100 refers to the highest possible information rating and 0 the lowest. Those who said ‘don’t know’ in regards to this question was coded as missing in this analysis. The mean scores of this indicator were depicted by selected subgroups in Figure 30.

As can be seen in the figure, there are comparatively little variations in evaluations of voters’ information about voting procedures. Nevertheless, certain discrepancies in mean indicator scores were recorded amongst specific groups. The following groups were found to possess the lowest levels of information: tertiary-educated voters (M=47), voters in the age 35-44 cohort as well as voters in urban informal areas (both M=49). The voters in following provinces reported the highest average level of information: Free State (M=55), North West (M=53) and the Northern Cape (M=52). The lowest mean information scores amongst the nine provinces were in the Western Cape and Mpumalanga (both M=46). Perhaps surprisingly, voters with disabilities had a much higher score than any other group

in Figure 30. This finding suggests that this subset of voters is being provided with the relevant information they need to help them vote in the most proficient manner.

Figure 30: Level of Information Voters had about Voting Procedures by Selected Subgroups

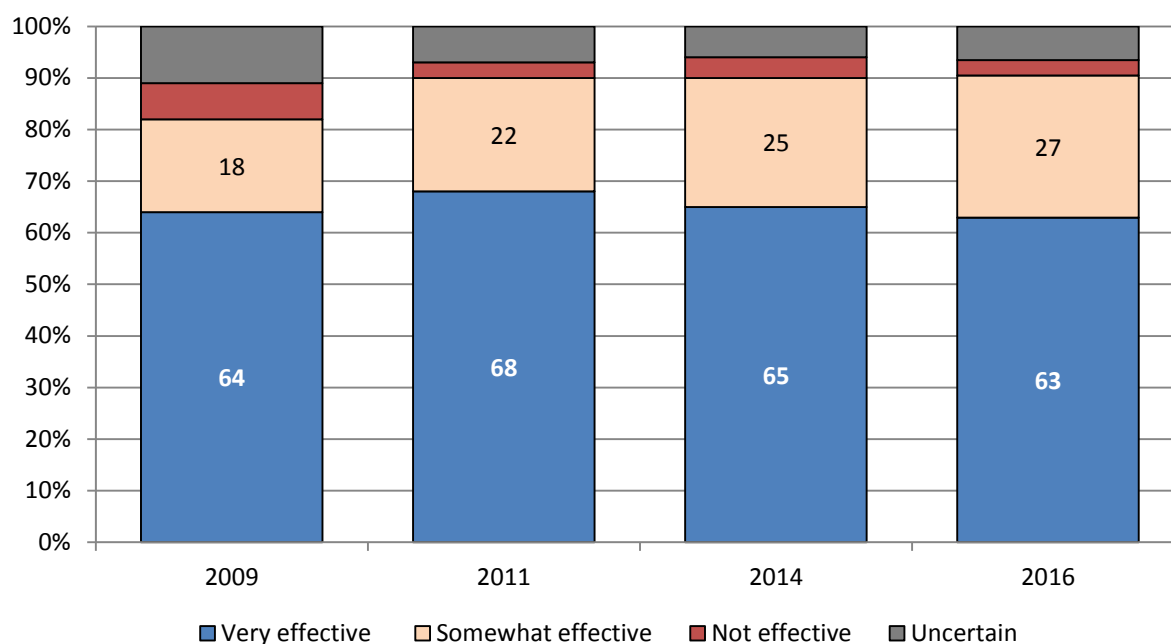


Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

3.8.2. Effectiveness of the Electoral Commission's Voter Education Campaigns

Voters participating in the ESS 2016 were asked the following question by our fieldworkers: "How effective was the IEC's voter education campaign for these elections?" with the response options being "very effective". Understanding voters' responses to this question will allow us to better understand the success of the Commission's voter education efforts in relation to the 2016 municipal elections. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of voters believed that the Commission's voter education campaigns were very effective, with an approximately two-sevenths (27%) indicating that it was somewhat effective, and less than twentieth (3%) stating that it was ineffective (Figure 31). The remaining one-fifteenth (7%) were either uncertain or hesitant of how to respond to this question. Similar attitudes were expressed in 2009 although a moderately larger share of the voting population identified the 2014 elections as effective when compared to 2016. However, the difference is so small that it shouldn't be concerning to the Electoral Commission.

Figure 31: Satisfaction with the IEC voter education campaign, 2009 2011, 2014, 2016 (%)



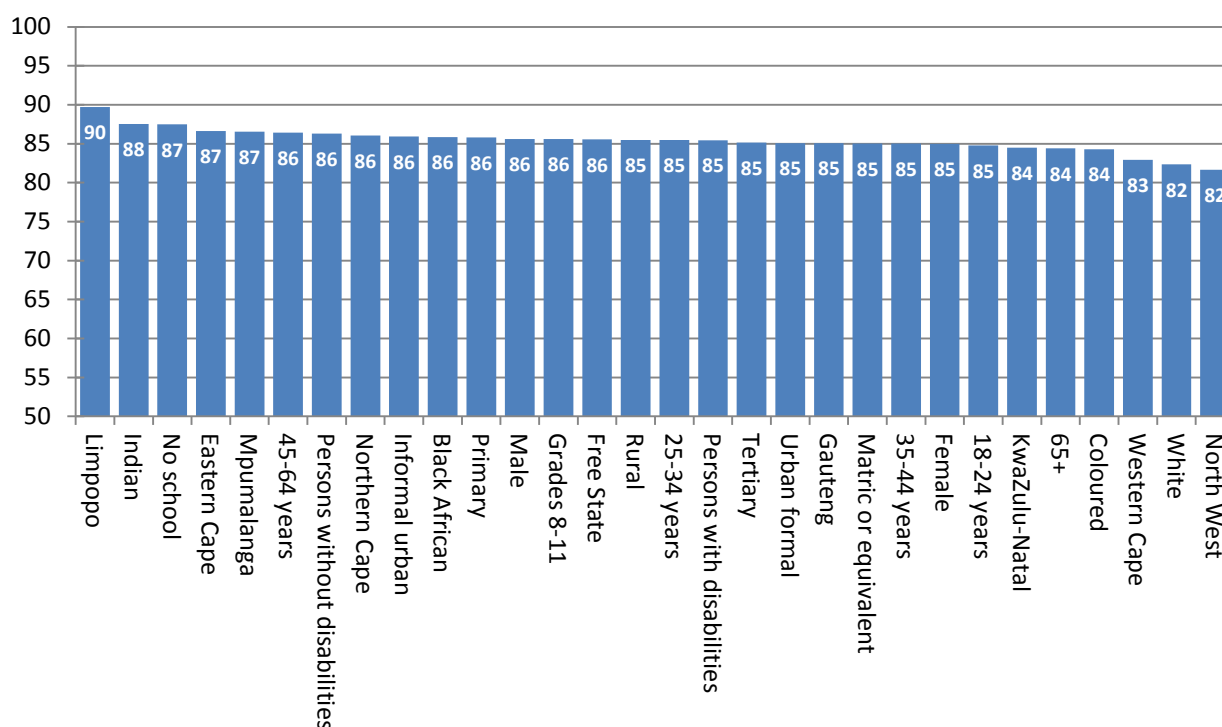
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014, 2016

It is necessary to better understand which subgroups have the most positive evaluations of the Commission's voter education effectiveness. To gain this better understanding, a voter education efficacy indicator was created. Responses to the question analysed above were reversed and transformed into a 0-100 score, where 100 refers to the highest possible effectiveness rating and 0 the lowest. Uncertain responses were excluded from analysis. The mean scores of this indicator were depicted by selected subgroups in Figure 32. As can be observed in the figure, there are relatively little variations in opinion on the voter campaign by demographic subgroups. However, certain disparities were noted between selected subgroups. A remarkable divergence between the results of the 2011 and the 2016 municipal elections was observed for the racial subgroups. In 2011 population group differentials were present when Black African voters had a higher mean effectiveness score (M=86) than the scores of Indian (M=81) and Coloured (M=78) voters. However, during the 2016 municipal elections, Indian (M=88) voters had a higher effectiveness score than the Black African voters (M=86) and Coloured voters (M=84) had very similar scores. White voters (M=82) had a lower mean score on this indicator than other population groups in 2016.

There were no statically significant age effects observed in Figure 32 and these findings were not dissimilar from what was observed when voters were asked similar in the 2014 and 2011 elections. In other words, younger and older voters were equally happy with the Commission's voter education campaign. The voters in following provinces gave the campaign's efficacy its highest evaluation: Limpopo (M=90) and the Eastern Cape (M=87). In the case of the Eastern Cape, this represents a statistically significant increase in voters' evaluation of voter education campaign's efficiency from what was observed during the

2014 national election. Thinking about the 2011 municipal elections, we can note some interesting geographic differences between different provincial voters. Comparing Western Cape voters' evaluation in 2011 (M= 76) and 2016 (M=83), voters' evaluation of the Commission's education campaign saw a significant increase. A noted decline was identified amongst voters in KwaZulu-Natal between 2011 (M=90) and 2016 (M=84). Comparatively little variation was noted amongst voters in Mpumalanga, the Eastern Cape and Limpopo between the 2016 and the 2011 municipal elections.

Figure 32: Satisfaction with the Electoral Commission Voter Education Campaign by Selected Subgroups



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

As has been mentioned earlier, the vast majority of voters (98%) said that the Electoral Commission's voter education campaign was effective. For that small minority that said the Commission's campaign was ineffective, a follow-up question was asked of respondents: "If not effective, how do you think the IEC can improve it's voter education campaign?" This was an open-ended question that allowed respondents to give any answer that they would prefer. The inclusion of such a question is advantageous because it allows respondents to raise issues that may not have been captured by the closed-ended questions in the ESS 2016. This question permitted a respondent to give a full, meaningful answer using their own knowledge. Some of the responses given were somewhat partisan in their content with one respondent boldly stating: "they [the Election Commission] should stop hiring ANC members". Others called for employment and service delivery –not the responsibilities of the Commission. Most respondents, however, were more constructive. Of these constructive respondents most called for more training for electoral officials, more

informative advertising and more door-to-door information campaigns. The response that was most frequently heard was for the Commission to meet with and visit communities.

3.8.3. Usefulness of Information Sources

The Electoral Commission embarked on a wide-ranging voter education campaign that focused especially on the youth. On the 2nd of August 2016, the National Youth Development Agency CEO Khathu Ramukumba has said that “[t]he right to vote is a powerful tool that young people can use to advance socio-economic emancipation and inclusion on policy for youth development within local government”. Voter education campaigning is a mechanism to improve public electoral participation and can be considered a cornerstone of constitutional democracy. The 2016 campaign was an initiative of the South African Legislature in partnership with the Commission to reach as many adults as possible ahead of the 2016 municipal elections. The campaign focused on twelve information platforms: (i) Newspapers, (ii) Political parties, (iii) Civil society organisations, (iv) Electoral Commission website, (v) social media, (vi) Formal and informal workshops, (vii) Pamphlets, (viii) Electoral Commission communication campaign, (ix) Television, (x) Radio, (xi) Posters/billboards, and (xii) Voter-awareness booklets. The following section will discuss voters’ evaluations of these information sources as platforms to provide voter education.

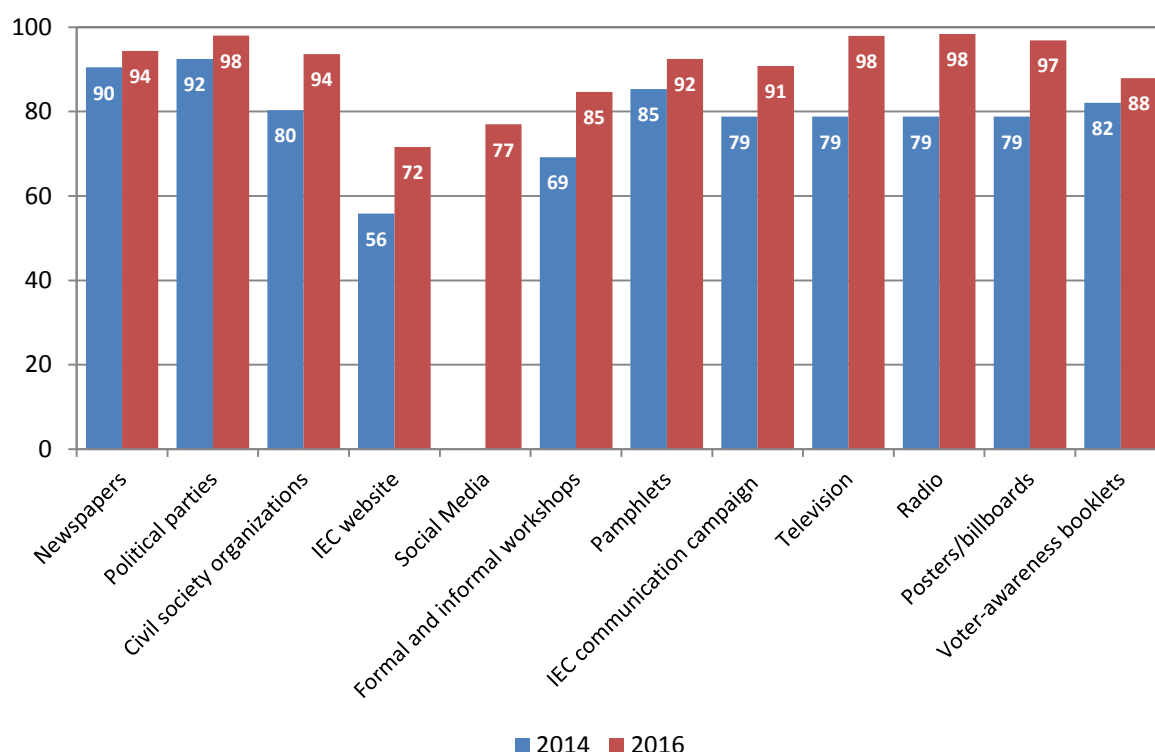
3.8.3.1 General Assessments of Different Information Sources

To satisfactorily comprehend the efficiency of the Electoral Commission voter education campaign it is important to grasp which information platforms South Africans have access to. As discussed above, there are twelve different information platforms under consideration here. Voters’ self-reported access to these different information sources are depicted in Figure 33. It is evident that certain sources of information have relatively low levels of voter access. Most South Africans had, unsurprisingly, access to conventional sources of media such as radio and TV –in both cases over nineteen-twentieths of voters reported access. High access was also reported for voter-awareness posters, booklets and pamphlets. In a positive development for the Electoral Commission, access to these platforms seems to have increased between the 2014 national elections and the 2016 municipal elections.

As we may have been anticipated, more than one-fifth of voters lacked access to the online platforms. During the 2016 municipal elections, more than a quarter (23%) lacked access to social media and approximately two-sevenths (28%) had no access to the Electoral Commission’s website. In a remarkable change, there was a significant improvement in the share of voters who said that they had access to the Electoral Commission’s website. As already indicated, voters were asked to indicate the extent to which they found the twelve different information sources useful in providing info on voting. The response options were “very useful”, “somewhat useful” or “not useful”. Those were said they didn’t know or

didn't have access were coded as missing. National level responses on the perceived usefulness of certain media information sources are presented in Figure 34.

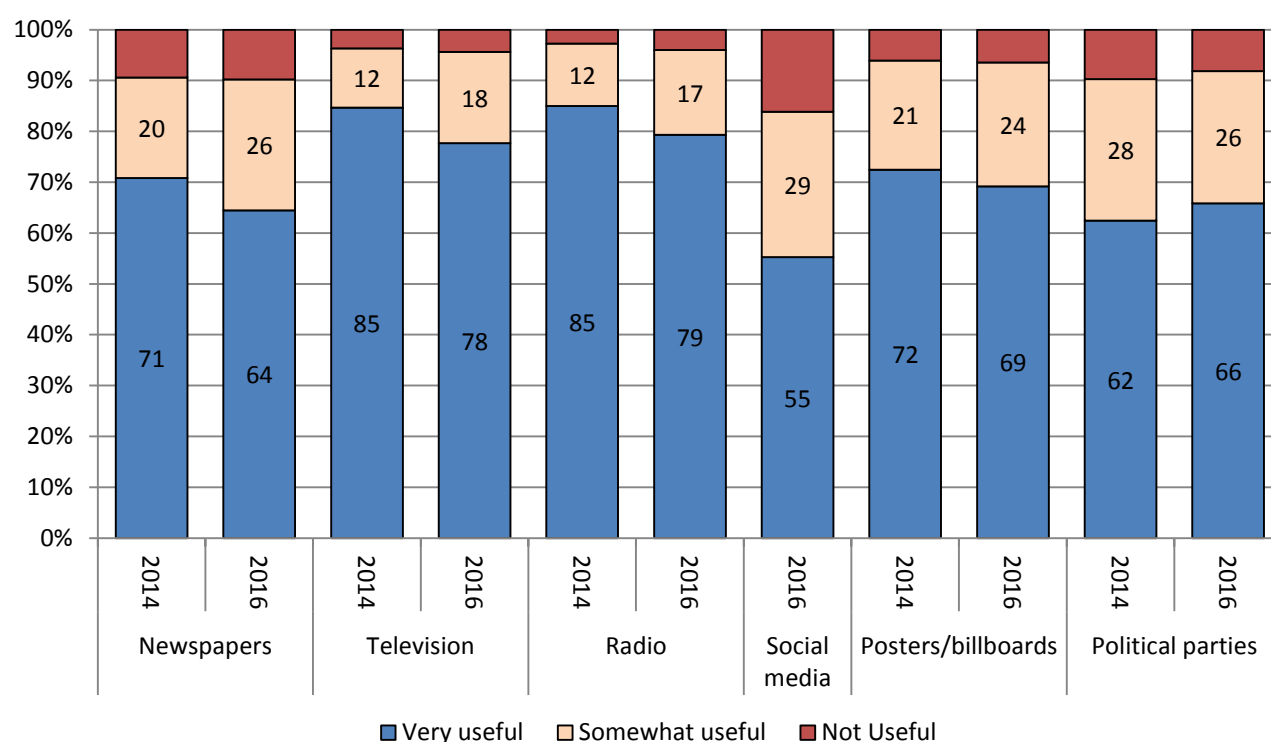
Figure 33: Accessibility to Different Information Sources in Providing Voter education, 2014 and 2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

Multimedia civic and democracy education via newspapers, television and radio (94%, 98% and 98% respectively) were considered by the voting population as very useful sources of information about voting. Significant differences were noted amongst voters between the 2014 national elections and 2016 municipal elections. It was apparent that people thought these media sources were more useful during the 2014 elections when compared with the 2016 elections. The Commission has been active on these platforms but has also been expanding its presence on social media. The Commission asked Vuthela Music to write and produce the song for the 2016 Municipal Elections. Designed to encourage participation in 2016 elections, the song was entitled “Sishona Khona” and was aimed at the youth of South Africa. Interestingly, of voters with access to social media, less than four-sevenths (55%) thought that this information platform was very useful as an information source while about two-sevenths (29%) thought it was somewhat useful. A surprisingly a large portion (16%) of voters with access to social media described this platform as not useful as a source of information.

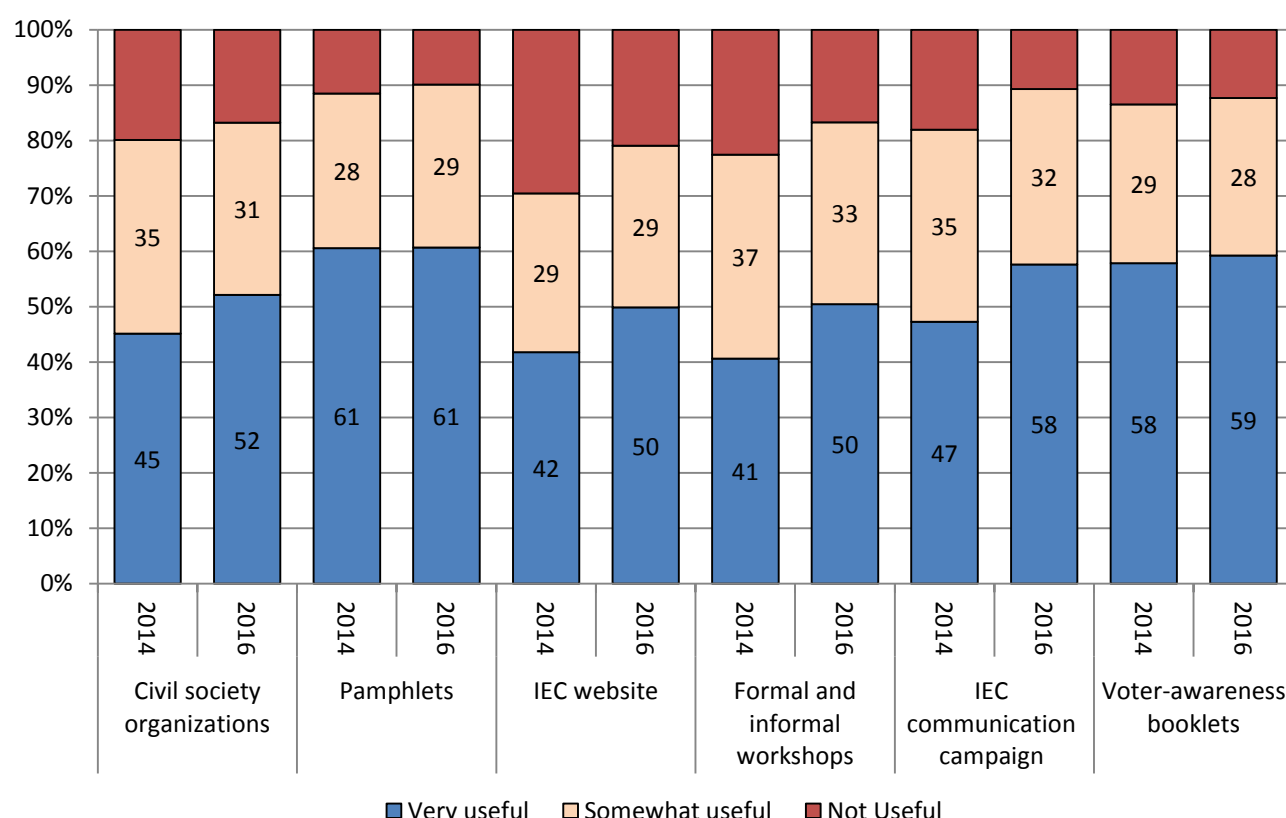
Figure 34: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Media Information Sources in Providing Voter Education, 2014 and 2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

Posters and billboards also received broadly positive evaluations as can be observed in Figure 34. Only small minorities cited these sources as ‘not useful’. Observable changes were seen amongst voters between the 2014 national elections and 2016 municipal elections when asked about posters and billboards. Political parties received positive evaluations as an information source with two-thirds (66%) describing political parties as very useful and roughly a quarter (27%) as useful. The remainder (7%) said that such organisations were not useful. Similar results were observed during the 2014 national elections. For its 2016 voter education campaign, the African National Congress asked South African celebrities in music and television to mobilise young people to vote. Celebrities like Khanyi Mbau, Kelly Khumalo, Nhlanhla Nciza, Criselda Dudumashe, Jimmy Tau and Mike Mangena have campaigned for the ruling party in this regard.

Figure 35: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Commission Information Sources in Providing Voter Education, 2014 and 2016



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

Voter education via the Electoral Commission's pamphlets, booklets and workshops (90%, 87% and 83% respectively) were regarded by the voting population as very useful as sources of information (Figure 35). Between the 2014 national elections and 2016 municipal elections, no significant differences were noted amongst voters' perceptions on pamphlets and booklets. On the other hand, there was a significant improvement in voters' evaluations of Commission's formal and informal workshops. During the 2014 national elections, almost a quarter (23%) of voters thought that such workshops were not useful compared to just 15% during the 2016 municipal elections. The Electoral Commission's communication campaign, in general, received largely positive appraisals as can be seen in Figure 35. The communication campaign was rated as very useful by 58% of voters and somewhat useful by 32% of voters. A small minority (11%) of voters described the campaign as useless for obtaining information on voting. Voters' evaluations were slightly more positive during the 2014 national elections when compared to what was observed in 2016 municipal elections.

3.8.3.2 Subgroups Evaluations of Certain Media Information Sources

To establish a comparative scale to understand how voters' evaluations of how the different information sources, it is necessary to create discernible individual indicators. Here we are focusing on the following media sources: television, radio, newspapers, posters or billboards and political parties. These indicators were designed to calculate the extent to which voters

thought that the needs of the various platforms were useful sources of information. The response categories were recoded to represent scores ranging from 0 = “not useful”; 1 = “somewhat useful”; 2 = “very useful”. Those who said that the source was “not applicable” options were coded as ‘0’ to show the reach of the information sources. These indicators were converted to a 0-100 scale. A high score, therefore, indicated that the information source was considered useful. The creation of these scores allowed subgroup analysis to be efficaciously finalised in relation to information sources. Mean scores for the five variables under discussion are displayed in Table 17.

Table 17: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Media Information Sources in Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale)

	Television		Radio		Newspapers		Posters/billboards		Political parties	
	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.
South Africa	86	0.33	87	0.30	74	0.41	83	0.39	78	0.36
Age Group										
18-24 years	86	0.79	88	0.72	72	1.06	84	0.95	79	0.88
25-34 years	87	0.61	88	0.59	76	0.74	85	0.70	80	0.66
35-44 years	86	0.57	87	0.53	75	0.71	84	0.65	80	0.63
49-64 years	85	0.80	87	0.73	73	1.04	81	0.96	77	0.94
65+	80	1.27	84	1.15	64	1.48	72	1.58	72	1.32
Population Group										
Black African	86	0.37	88	0.33	73	0.46	83	0.44	79	0.40
Coloured	88	0.93	86	0.96	76	1.25	87	0.98	77	1.18
Indian	89	1.74	87	1.71	84	1.98	88	1.84	87	1.74
White	79	1.19	79	1.75	69	1.38	76	1.37	72	1.33
Gender										
Male	86	0.47	87	0.44	75	0.58	84	0.54	79	0.53
Female	85	0.46	87	0.42	72	0.58	82	0.55	78	0.50
Disability Status										
Without disabilities	81	1.62	84	1.50	76	1.70	77	1.92	77	1.65
With disabilities	86	0.32	88	0.30	73	0.42	84	0.38	79	0.37
Educational Attainment										
No school	74	1.88	80	1.77	62	1.91	68	2.13	70	1.79
Primary	83	1.16	88	0.92	65	1.73	77	1.57	75	1.36
Grades 8-11	87	0.63	89	0.52	74	0.79	84	0.78	79	0.69
Matric or equivalent	87	0.49	87	0.48	76	0.62	85	0.54	79	0.56
Tertiary	88	0.66	88	0.65	77	0.89	86	0.77	80	0.78

Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

Notes 1: A high value indicates a high level of agreed that an information source is useful. 2: Figures shaded in green indicate agreement levels above the national average while figures in red represent satisfaction levels below the national average.

Low levels of variations in voters’ appraisals of the usefulness of television and radio were noted in Table 17. When asked about the usefulness of television, it was apparent that certain groups found this platform particularly useful. Groups who rated television as very useful were Indian voters (M=89), tertiary-educated voters and Coloured voters (both M=88). These groups also rated radio as more useful than other groups. As can be discerned from Table 17, there were considerable deviations between different demographic subgroups in South Africa on the newspaper and poster or billboard indicators. When voters

are questioned about the usefulness of newspapers, it was clear that certain groups saw this platform as especially useful. Groups who appraised newspapers as very useful were Indian (M=84) voters, tertiary-educated voters (M=77) and Coloured voters (M=76). These population groups also appraised posters or billboards as more useful than other groups. Older groups and less educated groups had relatively low mean scores on the newspaper and poster or billboard indicators.

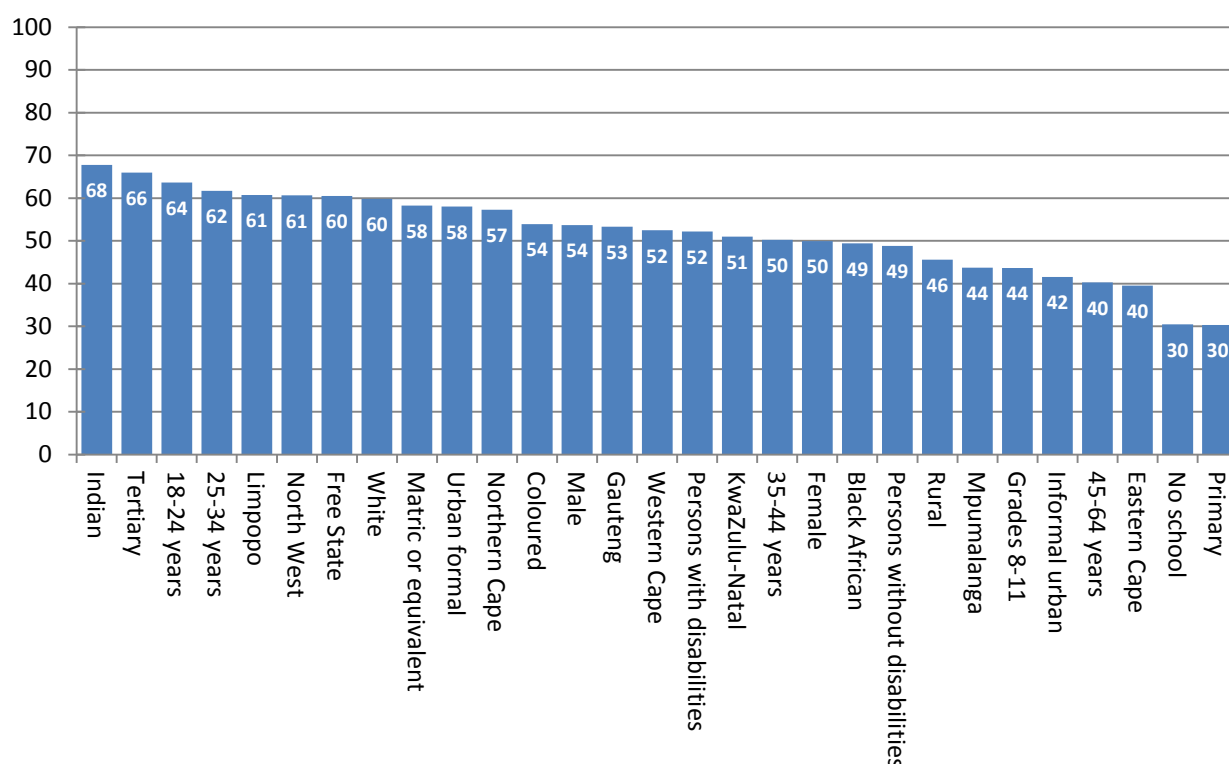
Moderately different usefulness evaluations were noted by different population groups when voters were asked about the usefulness of political parties on providing information. As can be seen from Table 17, Indian voters (M=87) were more greatly predisposed towards believing in political parties as effective election-related information sources than all other population groups. This represents an interesting change from what observed during the 2014 national elections when Indian voters felt that political parties were less effective than Black African voters. During the 2011 municipal elections, the assessments of Indian voters on this issue were higher than what was observed in 2014. Remarkably, during the 2014 national elections, voters with a better education tended to view political parties as more effective than those with lower levels of education. This relationship was not observed in Table 17. Younger voters were found to view political parties as more useful as sources of information when compared to older voters. Interestingly, this pattern of responses was not observed during the 2014 national elections.

In his book, Putnam (2002) contends that political participation is deteriorating in North America as a result of a reduction in civic engagement. He went on to argue that this had negative consequences for the fitness of representative democracy in that part of the world. Recent research suggests that in North America, civic interaction via the Internet may be replacing some of this civic engagement although there has been a dispute over the nature of that effect (see, for example, Vitak et al. 2011; Bennett 2012). The role of social media in providing voter information is, therefore, a disputed one and an issue that is much debated in North America. In South Africa, social media may be playing a significant role in providing voter education. Bohler-Muller and van der Merwe (2011) have argued that social media tools have the potential to bring about political change in Sub-Saharan Africa as these tools increase citizens' opportunities for political participation.

In Figure 34 it was apparent that there a considerable number of voters who viewed social media as a useful source of information. The response categories of the social media question were recoded to represent scores ranging from 0 = "not useful"; 1 = "somewhat useful"; 2 = "very useful". Those who said that the social media was "not applicable" as an option were coded as '0' to show the reach of the information sources. These indicators were converted to a 0-100 scale. The mean scores of the social media indicator were depicted by selected subgroups in Figure 36. As can be observed, there was a significant degree of variation in perceived usefulness of social media between the different subgroups

showcased in the figure. This may be related to differences in accessibility of the social media between different groups in the country.

Figure 36: Perceived Usefulness of Social Media on Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale)



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

The voters in following provinces gave social media efficacy its highest evaluation: Free State (M=60), North West and Limpopo (both M=61). In contrast, the following provinces gave social media efficiency its lowest assessment: Eastern Cape (M=40) and Mpumalanga (M=44). The observed provincial differences noted here suggest remarkable dissimilarities in how voters in different provinces use social media. As may have been anticipated, urban voters were found to have considerably different views of the efficacy of social media than rural voters. Unsurprisingly, robust age and educational attainment effects were observed in the figure when looking at voters' perceived usefulness of social media. Undereducated and older voters were found to be less likely to view social media as useful when compared to their better educated and younger counterparts. Variances on this indicator by population group can be explained by these patterns.

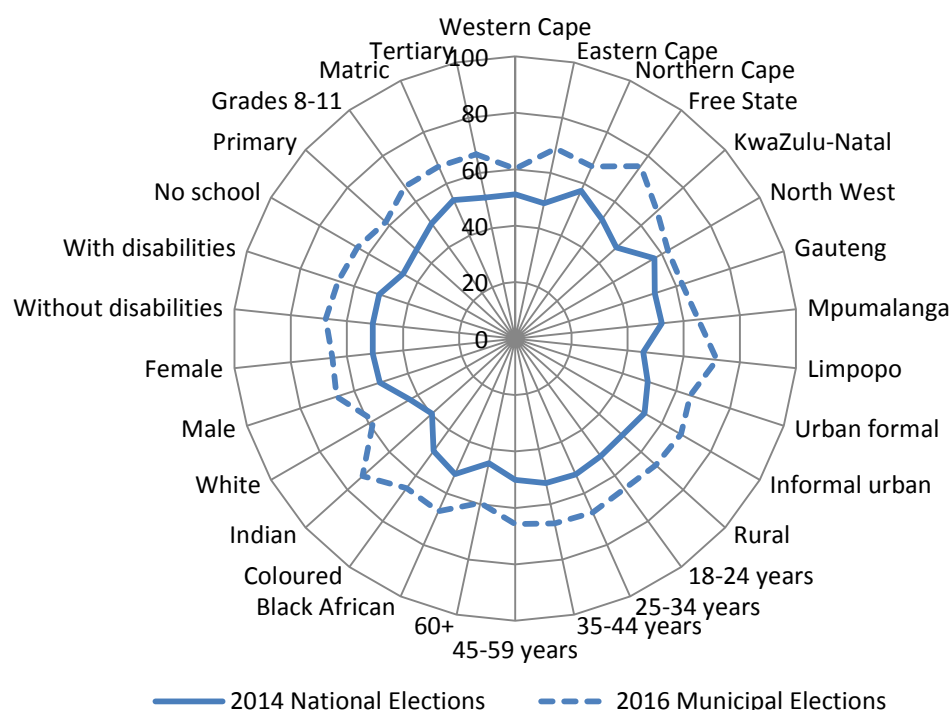
3.8.3.3 Understanding Evaluations of the Electoral Commission's Communication Campaign

The Electoral Commission launched a communication campaign for the 2016 municipal elections. The campaign was launched on 14th January 2016 and included a special focus on the youth. The Commission was responding to trends observed during the 2014 national elections when the participation of 18 and 19 year-old voters was at 33% of that group's

total population. The aim of this campaign was to encourage voter turnout, reduce spoilt ballots, and expedite empowerment of the electorate. The campaign included a multiple of different platforms and strategies, the employment of fieldworkers to complete community-level voter education, arranging provincial conferences and dialogue meetings. A vital part of this successful voter education endeavour was well-designed educational material as a means of safeguarding voters for elections. Here we look at voters' evaluations of the Commission's communication campaign as a useful source of information.

The response categories of the campaign question were recoded to represent scores ranging from 0 = "not useful"; 1 = "somewhat useful"; 2 = "very useful". Those who said that the campaign was "not applicable" as an option were coded as '0' to show the reach of the information sources. These indicators were converted to a 0-100 scale. The mean scores of the communication campaign indicator were depicted by selected subgroups in Figure 37 during both the 2014 national elections and 2016 municipal elections. An interesting level of variation was noted between the different subgroups depicted in the figure. Comparing mean scores between the two points in time, it is apparent voters are more positive about the communication campaign during the 2016 elections than during the 2014 elections.

Figure 37: Perceived Usefulness of Electoral Commission's Communication Campaign on Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale)



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

During the 2014 national elections, the strongest support for the communication campaign was among voters in the Western Cape (M=63) and the Northern Cape (M=57). In these provinces, evaluations on this source were somewhat more favourable during both the 2011

and 2016 municipal elections. Voters in the Free State (M=75), the Eastern Cape (M=69) and Limpopo (M=72) reported considerably higher evaluations of the campaign during the last national elections than during the last municipal elections. Voters in informal urban settlements had highest usefulness scores in respect of the communication campaign (M=68), with the average score for this group exceeding those (if only marginally) formal urban (M=65) voters. Comparing what was observed in the 2014 national elections, voters in urban areas had much lower appraisals of the campaign's usefulness as information sources.

Significant population group differences were noted on voters' evaluations of the Electoral Commission. Black African (M=67) and Indian voters (M=73) were found to be moderately more positive than other population groups, particularly White (M=58) voters. The attitudes of Indian voters had changed dramatically since the 2014 national elections and the Commission should be pleased with the appraisal of this racial minority with their communication campaign. Pensionable age (60+ years) voters were less positive (M=60) towards the usefulness of the communication campaign than other age groups. The same was observed during the 2014 national elections but the age cohort differences were more extensive during that election. In the last national elections, we observed an educational attainment gradient on usefulness on this issue. However, this gradient was not observed for the 2016 municipal elections.

3.8.3.4 Subgroups Evaluations of Certain Commission Information Sources

The following media sources are discussed in this subsection: civil society, pamphlets, Electoral Commission website, formal and informal workshops and voter awareness booklets. These platforms were an instrumental part of the Commission's attempt to register over 1.1 million new voters for the 2016 municipal elections. Questions on these five sources were asked in the ESS 2016 as has already been outlined in subsection 3.8.3.1. The response categories of the information source question were recoded to represent scores ranging from 0 = "not useful"; 1 = "somewhat useful"; 2 = "very useful". Those who said that the campaign was "not applicable" as an option were coded as '0' to show the reach of the information sources. These indicators were converted to a 0-100 scale. The mean scores of the communication campaign indicator were depicted by selected subgroups in Table 18. Low levels of variations between selected subgroups were noted in the table.

When voters are queried about the usefulness of civil society organisations, it was clear that specific subgroups found such organisations efficacious. The population group who regarded civil society organisations as useful, on average, were Indian voters (M=72) and the population group who saw such organisation as the least useful, on average, were White voters (M=54). Much greater levels of variations in evaluations on the usefulness were observed on the pamphlet indicators. Intriguingly, voters with incomplete or complete (both

M=73) secondary education saw pamphlets as more useful when compared to voters in other educational attainment groups. Age cohort differences were also observed when looking at perceived usefulness of pamphlets. When contrasted with older voters, younger voters were found to assess pamphlets as more useful as sources of information. The population group who thought of pamphlets as the least useful, on average, were White voters (M=62) and the population group who saw such organisation as the most useful, on average, were Indian voters (M=79).

Table 18: Perceived Usefulness of Certain Commission Information Sources in Providing Voter Education (mean score, 0-100 scale)

	Civil society organisations		Pamphlets		IEC website		Formal and informal workshops		Voter-awareness booklets	
	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.	M	Std. Err.
South Africa	65	0.51	71	0.46	48	0.57	57	0.52	65	0.50
Age Group										
18-24 years	63	1.28	71	1.14	49	1.43	58	1.35	66	1.25
25-34 years	67	0.88	73	0.83	54	1.00	60	0.94	68	0.90
35-44 years	65	0.95	72	0.80	48	1.00	58	0.87	66	0.85
49-64 years	65	1.30	71	1.19	44	1.66	56	1.46	62	1.37
65+	61	1.57	62	1.63	34	1.65	48	1.65	55	1.61
Population Group										
Black African	67	0.53	71	0.51	46	0.62	58	0.57	66	0.55
Coloured	60	1.90	76	1.39	52	2.15	55	2.04	68	1.79
Indian	72	2.61	79	2.41	64	2.78	72	2.66	81	2.32
White	54	1.98	62	1.60	51	2.00	48	1.66	53	1.66
Gender										
Male	66	0.71	71	0.66	50	0.81	59	0.75	67	0.71
Female	64	0.73	71	0.64	46	0.82	55	0.74	63	0.71
Disability Status										
Without disabilities	68	2.17	72	2.06	53	2.85	62	2.47	69	2.29
With disabilities	65	0.51	71	0.46	48	0.56	57	0.52	65	0.50
Educational Attainment										
No school	64	2.07	60	2.15	43	2.32	51	2.19	58	2.41
Primary	64	1.94	66	1.89	37	2.84	54	2.25	58	2.14
Grades 8-11	64	0.91	73	0.82	43	1.02	57	0.96	67	0.92
Matric or equivalent	66	0.76	73	0.70	50	0.86	59	0.81	67	0.77
Tertiary	64	1.30	72	1.04	57	1.37	58	1.19	65	1.13

Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016

Notes 1: A high value indicates a high level of agreed that the information source is useful. 2: Figures shaded in green indicate agreement levels above the national average while figures in red represent satisfaction levels below the national average.

Younger voters were found to view formal and informal workshops as more useful as sources of information when compared to older voters. Interestingly, this pattern of responses was not observed during the 2014 national elections. Different usefulness evaluations were noted by different population groups when voters were asked about the usefulness of workshops on providing information. As can be seen from Table 18, Indian voters were more greatly predisposed towards believing in workshops as effective election-

related information sources (M=72) than all other population groups. This represents an interesting change from what observed during the 2014 national elections when Indian voters felt that workshops were less effective than Black African voters. A similar pattern was observed during the 2011 municipal elections although the assessments of Indian voters on this issue were higher during those elections. Remarkably, during the 2014 national elections, voters with a better education tended to view formal and informal workshops as more effective than those with lower levels of education. This relationship was also observed in Table 18.

The Electoral Commission generated for the 2016 municipal elections an illustrated booklet that was translated and disseminated in 35 different versions. These included, in all 11 official languages: (i) a standard A5 version, (ii) a large-print A4 version for the visually-impaired, and (iii) a plain language version for those with low literacy. Additionally, a Braille and audio version were produced to advance the extent of the voter education messages to individuals with disabilities. There were only very minor differences in the usefulness evaluations for voter awareness booklets of male and female voters. Voters with disabilities had a marginally lower mean score than persons without disabilities during the 2016 municipal elections. Those aged 18-24 years and 25-34 years regarded booklets moderately more approvingly (M=66 and M=68 respectively) than those aged 60 and above (M=55). Similar results were observed when similar questions were asked during the 2014 national elections.

The Electoral Commission's public website (www.elections.org.za) is a wide-ranging channel through which the Commission can communicate with voters. The website provides critical information on when, where and how to both register and vote. The website has built-in functionality that permitted an individual to check on the voters' roll to determine whether that individual was registered and acquire details on their voting station. During the 2014 national elections, our team found that was a strong age and educational attainment effects when looking at voters' perceived usefulness of this website. Younger and better-educated voters were found to be more likely to view Commission's website as useful when compared to their older and less educated counterparts. As can be observed in Table 18, these patterns are also apparent during the 2016 municipal elections. Population group differences seen in the table on this indicator may be explained by these observed patterns. Beguilingly, the patterns observed on this indicator can be compared to the data presented in Figure 36 on the efficacy of social media.

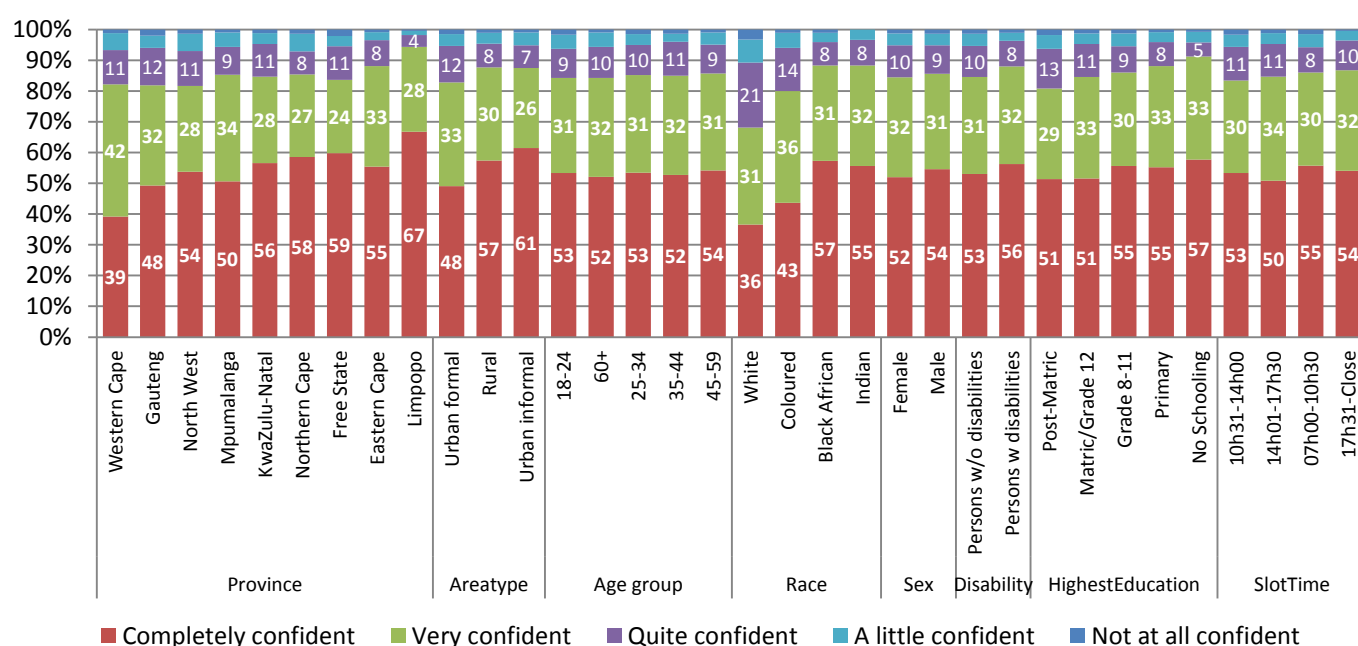
3.9. Perceived accuracy of vote counting

The survey also assessed voters' confidence in the accuracy of the counting of votes. Voters were asked: 'How confident are you that your vote will be accurately counted?'. Responses

were captured using a five point scale ranging from ‘completely confident’, ‘very confident’, ‘quite confident’, ‘a little confident’ and ‘not at all confident’. This measure was included to provide a sense of how the adult public views the performance of the Electoral Commission in delivering a free and fair electoral result. On average, more than half (53%) of South African voters were completely confident that the votes would be accurately counted with a further 31% very confident. A tenth were quite confident with the rest being a little confident (4%). Only 1% was not confident at all.

In order to establish patterns of difference underlying perceptions on the accuracy of the counting and reporting of votes, the five-point accuracy scale was reversed and transformed into a 0-100 index, with 0 representing that the counting and reporting of results was ‘not at all confident’ and 100 ‘completely confident’. Results of the subgroup analysis are displayed in Figure 38 and show significant variations on the index between subgroups. The mean confidence score was 82.9 out of a possible 100-signalling high confidence scores.

Figure 38: Accuracy of vote counting, 2016 (scaled mean scores per subgroup)



Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2016.

Perceptions of vote counting seem to be driven by socio-cultural and socio-economic attributes. Those that were least inclined to believe that vote counting would be accurate were White voters, voters residing in the Western Cape, Coloured voters and voters from Gauteng. Voters with a post matric qualification and voters living in urban formal areas were also much more likely to be sceptical about vote counting. The minority White group, typically economically privileged with higher education levels but often depicted as politically marginalised, were therefore least confident of the vote counting process.

Interestingly, voters in Limpopo had the highest index score-thus trusting the vote counting and reporting process most of all reported socio-demographic subgroups. Furthermore, and very encouraging, was the finding that some of the most vulnerable socio-economic groups namely those without any formal education or residing in informal areas had the highest regard for the vote counting and reporting process. This in itself is reassuring and testimony of a true democracy where democratic ideals in the form of Free and Fair elections are believed to be delivered even to the most vulnerable in society. Indian voters and Black voters as well as voters residing in the Eastern Cape were also more confident that vote counting are generally more accurate.

4. Election Observer Interview Results

The presence of election observers at voting stations on an Election Day has become conventional in many countries. Observers serve an important purpose, assessing voting procedures and the general freeness and fairness of elections. Election observers are trained to examine the conditions of voting station facilities as well as the incidence of irregularities, disruptions and complaints. Election observers are taught not to lean towards subjective evaluation and are instead urged to make their observations in honest, fair and accurate manner. Observers offer a degree of trusted impartiality to the electoral process and can provide fair and credible evaluations of the way the election processes are managed. Given the important role they occupy during any major elections, the research team felt it was necessary to gather the opinions of election observers during the 2016 municipal elections.

For 2016 municipal elections, our fieldworkers were asked to interview election observers at the voting station they were posted to. Observers were asked about, amongst other things, aspects of the voting station experience, the accessibility of voting stations, the incidence of disturbances, the freeness and fairness of the electoral process and the conduct of electoral officials. Election observers interviewed in the satisfaction survey provided valuable perspectives and assessments of the elections. Fieldworkers interviewed observers from a variety of different organisations and in total 215 were interviewed for this study. Moreover, fieldworkers themselves gathered data on the facilities of the voting stations in which they were based. Observer data gathered for the Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) is presented in this part of the report. Where possible the results gathered for the 2016 municipal elections are compared to those gathered for the 2014 national elections.

4.1. Profile of Election Observers

The following section will outline the characteristics of the election observers interviewed for this study. The demographic and organisational profile of these interviews will be sketched here. More than half (50.1%, N=141) of the observers were interviewed at voting stations located in formal urban areas, while more than one-tenth (11.2%, N=31) in informal urban settlements and 37.9% (N= 105) rural areas. There were more male (58.6% or N=126) than female (41.4% or N=89) observers. As regards the educational qualification of the observers, the largest proportion of observers had a post-matric qualification (44.7% or N=96) or a matric / grade 12 qualification (39.1% or N=96). Fieldworkers visited a total of 277 voting stations were visited on Election Day. The largest number of voting stations that the fieldworkers visited were in Eastern Cape (N=41), Gauteng and Limpopo (both N=40). In contrast, the Northern Cape (N=18) and Free State with (N=23) had the lowest number of voting stations.

The majority of observers interviewed (N=177) were South African. There was at least one observer from each of the following African countries: Ghana, Morocco, Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania, Nigeria and Uganda. There were also observers from Canada, Germany, Brazil and France that participated in the observer survey. There was also one observer from the United Nations (UN). Three respondents did not indicate a country of origin. The survey also assessed respondents whether they have previously participated in observing elections. More than half (60.9%, N=131) of the observers indicated that they previously participated in observing elections. A large proportion of the observers interviewed said that they participated in observing the 2014 National Elections (34.9%, N = 75), less participated in the 2009 National Elections (18.6%, N = 40), and slightly more in the 2004 National Elections (22.8%, N = 49).

When asked whether the observer survey respondents observed previous municipal elections the results revealed that fewer respondents observed municipal elections compared to national elections. In the 2011 Municipal Elections about one-third (31.2%, N = 67) participated as an observer, while less (18.6%, N = 40) participated in the 2006 Municipal Elections. About one tenth (14.9%, N = 32) said they participated in the 1995 Municipal Elections. The observer survey also assessed in what type of building or structure the voting station was situated. The majority of voting stations were located within schools (63.5%). Voting stations were also situated in halls (17%), churches (10.1%) and temporary structures such as a tent (5.1%).

Media presence at voting stations acts as a mean to broadcast what is happening on the ground during elections. Voting stations selected for this project for the 2016 local elections did not receive much media attention. About 71.2% indicated no media presence, 17.2% reported that there was a media presence and 7.4% did not know. The presence of media personnel, including radio and television reporters, at the sampled voting stations, was more in evidence than what was observed during the 2014 municipal elections. Although no media presence was confirmed in almost three-fifths (62% or N=184) of observers, more than a quarter (26% or N=22) reported some kind of media presence.

4.2. Characteristics of voting stations

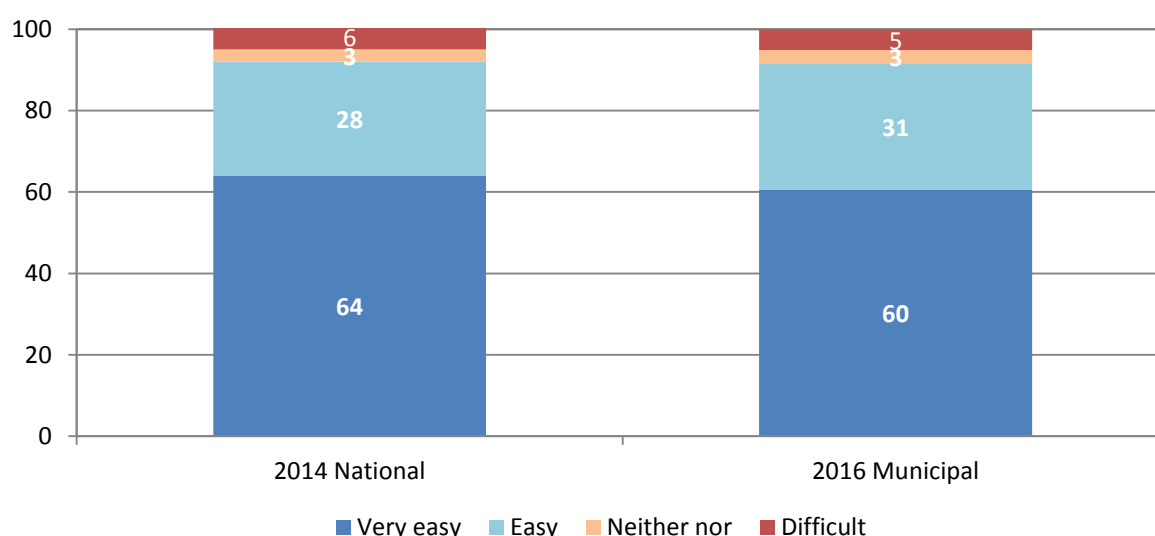
The Election Commission has a variety of responsibilities when establishing voting stations for national and municipal elections. As discussed elsewhere, some of these voting stations were in schools, in community halls and some (when no other venue was available) were in tents. In the section of the report, observers will be asked a variety of questions about the voting station where they were posted. In ESS 2016, interviewers first completed a set of questions about the availability of facilities at each voting station and what time the voting station opened on Election Day. Once the questions about the facilities were completed the

interviewers started with the observer survey. The interviewers also recorded the closing time of each voting station. The first part of this section will look at access to the voting station and whether observers judged the voting station accessible. The second part of this section will analyse the facilities (e.g. security, water, toilets) at the voting station. This approach will allow us to obtain an expert insight of any problems or difficulties that may have arisen due to the underlying characteristics of the voting station.

4.2.1. Access to the Voting Station

One of the criteria that observers were examining when studying the characteristics of the voting station they were observing was ease of access. Ease of access to voting stations is essential in that far distances can deter voters from heading to the polls. In South Africa, a citizen may only register and vote in the voting district in which they live. Consequently, their voting station must be easy to access and the Election Commission has delimited voting stations to minimise voter inconvenience. As a result, evaluating observers' assessment of ease of access is important. Observers were first requested to rank the ease or difficulty to locate their particular voting station. This was done on a five point Likert-scale ranging from "very easy" to "very difficult". Results are displayed in Figure 39 and our findings show that election observers in ESS 2016 were optimistic in their evaluations.

Figure 39: Perceived Accessibility of the Voting Station



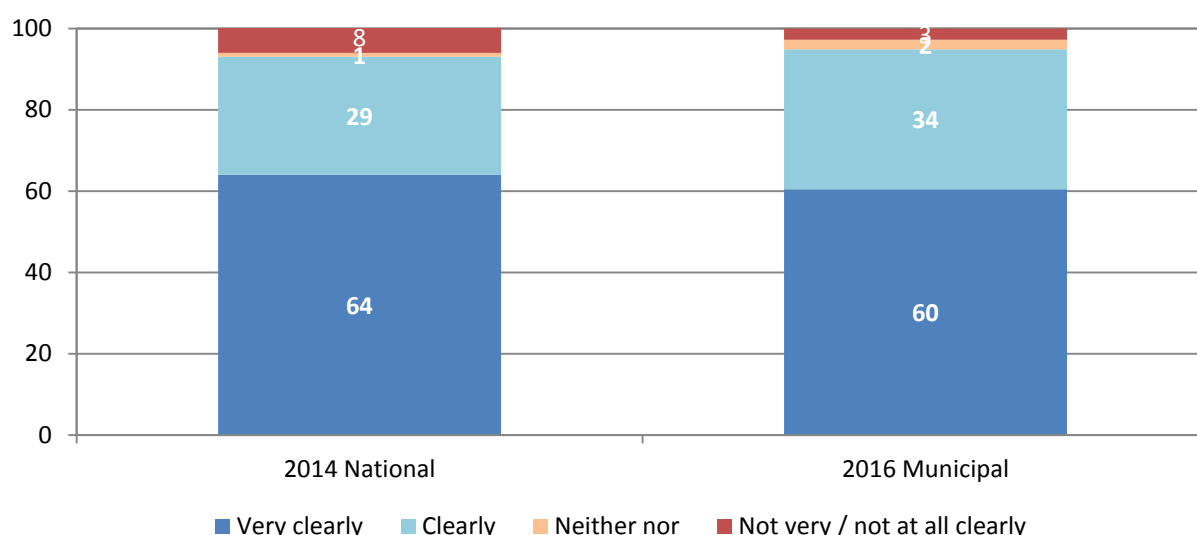
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

For the 2016 elections, a majority (60.5%, N 130) of observers indicated that the voting station was very easy to find or locate, with an additional 31.2% (N=67) indicating that the voting stations were easy to find. A small proportion of 3.3% (N=7) retained a neutral stance, while 1.4% (N=3) of observers indicated it was very difficult and difficult (3.7%, N=8) to locate voting stations. If we compare observer data from the 2014 national election and 2016 municipal election then we note that observers were marginally more positive about finding a voting station in our most recent municipal election. In ESS 2014, close to two-

thirds (64%, N=46) of the observers said the voting stations were very easy to find or locate, with a further 28% (N=20) indicating that they were easy to find. A small share (3%) offered neutral ratings, while 6% (N=4) indicated that it was difficult.

Staying with ease of access, we must acknowledge that in locating voting stations, signage has an important role as it affects accessibility. Consequently, observers in the ESS 2014 and the ESS 2016 were asked about the degree they felt the voting station was clearly marked, i.e. signage was clear at the voting station. These views were captured on a five-point scale ranging from “very clearly” marked to “not clearly at all”. Their responses for the both the 2014 national elections and the 2016 municipal elections are depicted in Figure 40. Our data for the 2016 municipal election indicates that the majority of observers (60.5%, N=130) felt that signage was clear which assists in accessibility. About 34.4% indicated that the signage was clear.

Figure 40: Voting Station Signage, 2014 and 2016 (%)



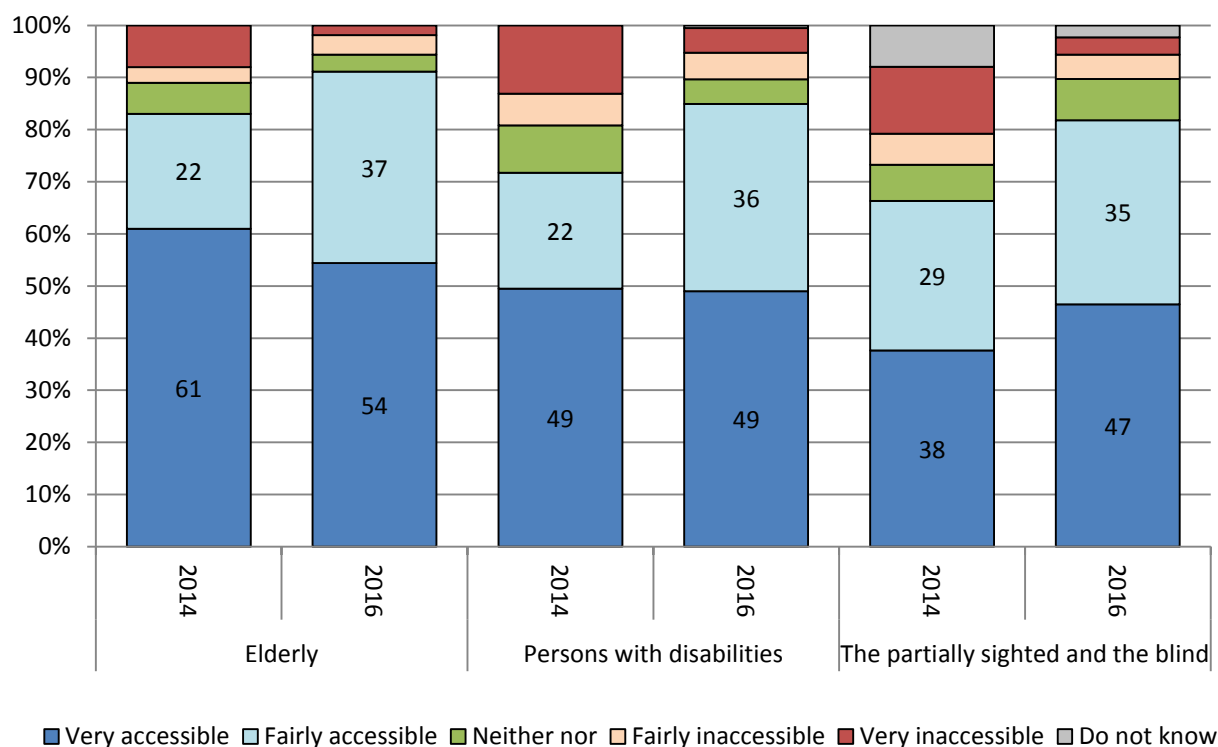
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

It is apparent that similar evaluations to overall voting station accessibility were offered in respect of signage during the 2014 national elections. During the last national elections, an overwhelming majority (93% or N=67) of observers then felt that the voting station they were visiting was either clearly or very clearly marked, of which 64% indicating that the voting stations were very clearly marked as such. Only one per cent was neutral in their opinion, while 4% rated the voting station as not very clearly marked and 6% rated the signage as “not very” or “not at all” clear. These results are quite positive and indicate the good work that the Election Commission has done in minimising voter inconvenience on this issue.

Some voters may find the voting station more difficult to access than other voters. The Election Commission has identified certain groups which would find it difficult to access a

voting station: (i) the elderly; (ii) the disabled and (iii) the partially sighted and blind. The Election Commission also strives to ensure that voting stations are accessible for designated special needs groups, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the blind and partially-sighted. In response to this priority, observers were asked whether the voting station was accessible to those groups identified by the Commission as requiring special attention. The findings are showcased in Figure 41 and the data presented in this figure indicates that the general assessments of reviewers were quite positive.

Figure 41: Accessibility of Voting Stations for Persons with Special Needs



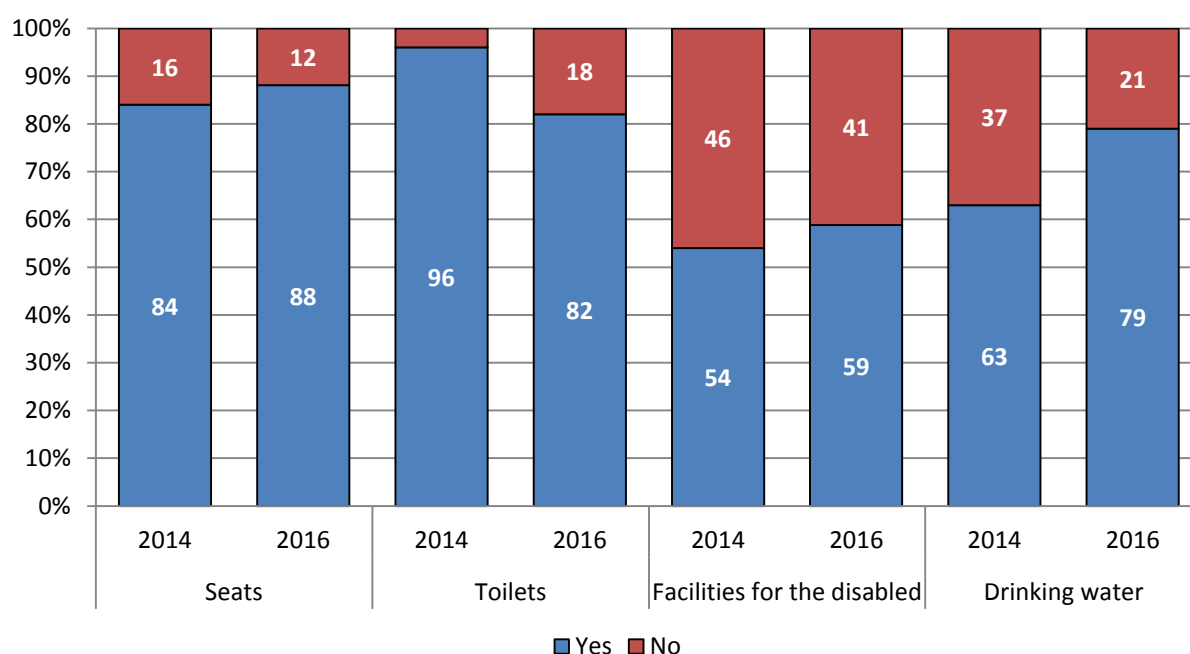
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

The results show that the majority of the observers (83%) felt that the voting station that they were visiting was fairly accessible or very accessible for the elderly (61% very accessible; 22% fairly accessible) during the 2014 national elections. Observers were less positive about access for the elderly for the 2016 municipal elections. During the 2014 national elections, relatively low ratings were reported in relation to accessibility for persons with disabilities (very accessible – 49%, N=33; fairly accessible – 22%, N=15). Similar evaluations of accessibility for persons with disabilities were observed in the ESS 2016 data. Observers were more positive in their assessment of the accessibility of the voting station for blind and partially-sighted in ESSS 2016 compared to the ESS 2014. The vast majority (82%) of observers reported that the voting stations were fairly or very inaccessible for the blind or partially blind in 2016. During the 2014 national elections, two-thirds of observers (67%) indicated that the voting station they visited was very or fairly accessible to the blind or partially sighted (38% very accessible; 29% fairly accessible).

4.2.2. Facilities Available at Voting Stations

The Election Commission leases the venues used as voting stations during elections, and the focus is on selecting locations and structures that are relatively stable and consistent. As such, approximately two-thirds of voting stations are based at schools, with community halls, places of worship, medical establishments, old age homes, sports clubs, hostels, libraries, and so on, playing subsidiary roles. The Commission takes into account the facilities available at different locations when considering venues for voting stations, and often seeks opportunities to enhance the facilities through strategic partnerships. Recognising this as a notable consideration for electoral preparations and Election Day experience, the observer questionnaire included questions relating to the availability of core facilities or resources at the voting stations. Specifically, observers were asked to indicate whether the voting stations they visited had: (i) seats or chairs to rest or sit on; (ii) working toilets in close proximity; (iii) available drinking water for voters and electoral staff; (iv) facilities for persons with disabilities, such as wheelchair access.

Figure 42: Voting Station Facilities



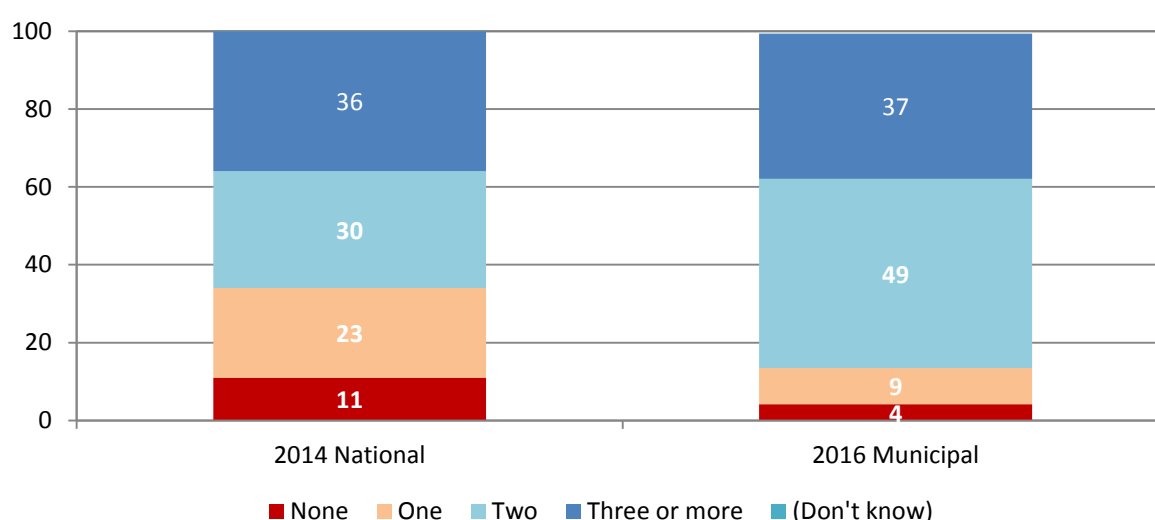
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

The ESS 2016 showed that large proportions of the observers indicated that there were seats (88.1%), toilets (96.4%) and drinking water (78.7%) available at or close to the voting station. Smaller proportions indicated that there were facilities for the disabled (58.8%). If we look at Figure 42, our results from the ESS 2016 can be contrasted to what can be seen when looking at our observer data for the ESS 2014. The results from that period indicate that the majority (84% or N=57) of the voting stations where observers were interviewed had seats to rest or sit on compared to less than a fifth (13.2% or N=9) that did not. An

equally large proportion of election observers reported that the voting stations had working toilets nearby (82% or N=54). A lower share of observers (63% or N=43) reported that the voting stations they visited had drinking water for people, and an even smaller proportion reported that the voting stations had facilities for persons with disabilities (54% or N=37).

During their preparations for the 2016 municipal elections, the Election Commission became somewhat concerned about the safety of voters during elections. The Commission, therefore, had to ensure that security was available at all voting stations because a lack of security can often place voters' safety at risk and increase their vulnerability. The Election Commission in this regard worked closely with the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to intervene in an emergency. To understand the success of the Commission in providing security, observers in the ESS 2016 were asked how many security personnel were on duty at the voting station at the time of the observer's visit to the voting station. Our results from the ESS 2016 data showed that most (86%) observers indicated that there was at least two or three security personnel at the voting station. Only 4% of observers said that there was no security personnel at the voting station and 9% reported that there was only one security person at their voting station.

Figure 43: Security Personnel on Duty at the Voting at the Time of Visit, 2014 and 2016 (%)



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

The results presented above can be compared with what observed during the 2014 national elections we can see that observers felt that there was more security present during that election (Figure 43). In 2014 almost all (89%) reported that the voting stations they were observing met the mandatory requirements for security provision, with 11% noting that no security officers appeared to be on duty. Of those who confirmed the presence of security, almost two-fifths (36% or N=26) of the observers reported that there were three or more security officers at the voting station, nearly a third (30% or N=22) reported that there were

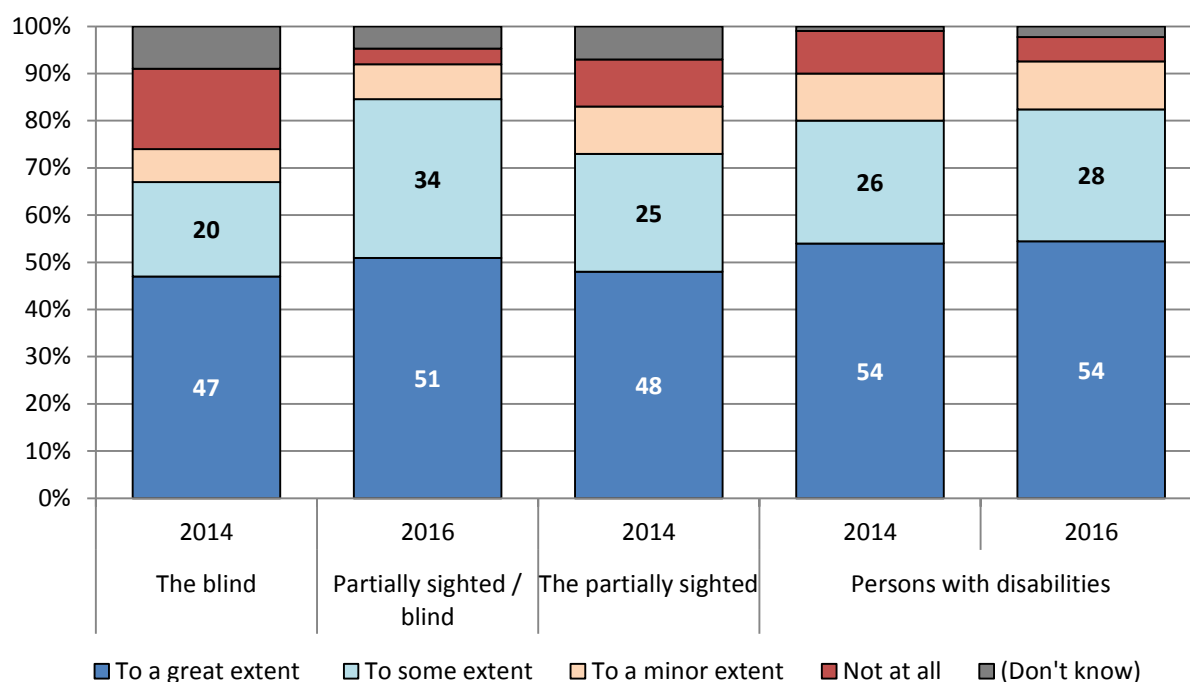
two security officers on duty, while more than a fifth (23% or N=17) indicated that there was only one officer at the voting station at the time of their visit.

4.3. Consideration of voting procedure for persons with special needs

A special emphasis is placed on considering and accommodating persons with special needs in the voting procedure. As discussed earlier in the report, the Election Commission is committed to the elimination of barriers to electoral participation of persons with disabilities and those with special needs. Institutionally, a Disability Task Team has been established within the Commission to advise on all matters pertaining to voters with disabilities and liaise regularly with organisations such as the South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB) and the Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA). Apart from issues of physical access to those with special needs, the Commission also has invested in improving aspects of the voting process for such voters. Earlier in the report, voters were asked about the Commission's provision for voters with special needs. In this section, we look at the attitudes of observers to gain a different perspective on this important matter.

In the ESS 2016, election observers were asked how well the voting procedures at the voting stations in practice considered special needs voters. This was achieved by employing a four scale response category of "to a great extent", "to some extent", "to a minor extent" and "not at all" assessing whether considerations were made for (i) the elderly, (ii) persons with disabilities, (iii) the partially sighted, (iv) the blind, (v) women, and (vi) women with babies. The ESS data for 2016 showed that the majority of election observers (50.7% indicated that the needs of the partially sighted or blind were considered to a "great extent". In addition, a large proportion (33.5%) said that considerations were made "to some extent". Much lower proportions reported that considerations were made to a "minor extent" (7.4%) and "not at all" (3.3%).

Figure 44: Consideration of Voting Station for those with Disabilities

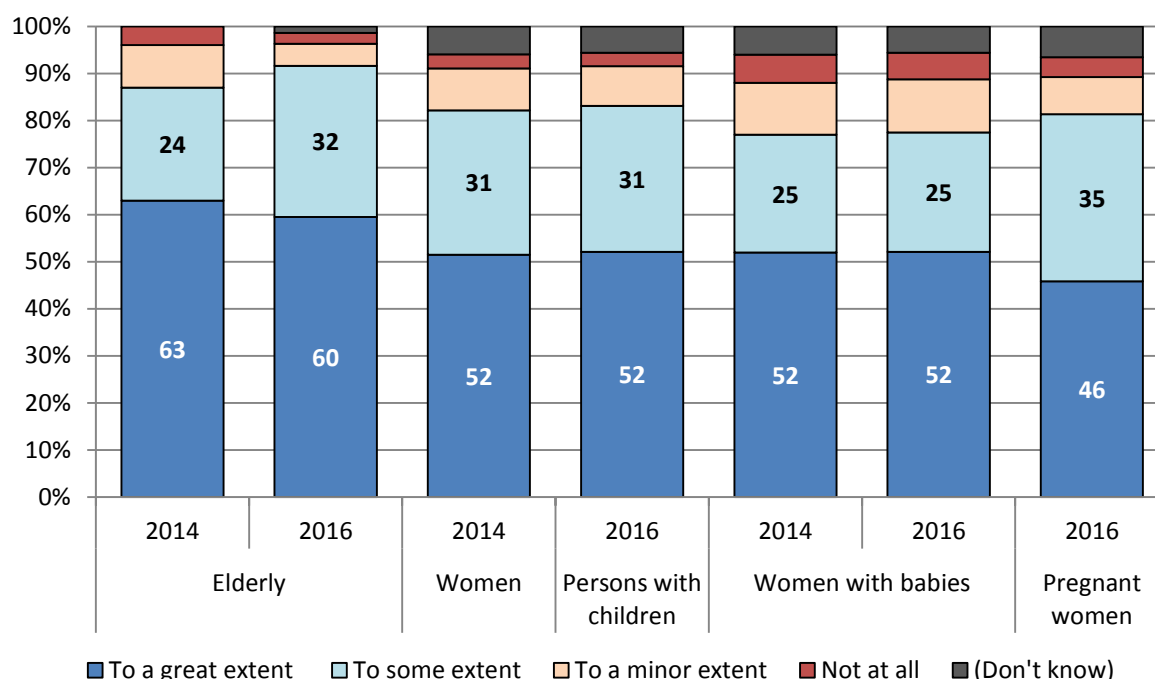


Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

Over half of the ESS 2016 observers (54.4%) said that the procedures considered the needs of those with disabilities respectively. Similar attitudes were observed in the ESS 2014 when observers were asked comparable questions. Interestingly, in ESS 2014, 9% of observers said that the procedures did not take into account the needs of persons with disabilities. In ESS 2016, only 5% of observers made this claim which indicates a level of progress for the Commission. When assessing whether the voting procedure considered the needs of pregnant women and persons with disabilities, election observers indicated they were mostly considered. Just under half of the observers (45.6%) in ESS 2016 said that the voting procedure considered the needs of pregnant women “to a great extent”.

As can be seen from Figure 45, 35.3% of ESS 2016 observers agreed that the voting procedure considered pregnant women “to some extent”, and 27.9% for persons with disabilities respectively. A small portion of observers indicated that the needs of pregnant women and the elderly (7.9% and 4.7%) were only considered “to a minor extent”. Very few of ESS 2016 observers indicated that this was “not at all the case” with 4.2% indicating it was the case for pregnant women and 2.3% for persons with disabilities. This can be compared to what observers had to say about the needs of women in general during the 2014 national elections. A small majority (52%) of ESS 2014 observers indicated that the voting station considered the needs of women to a great extent, while a quarter reported that the needs of these groups of voters were accounted for to some degree.

Figure 45: Consideration of Voting Station for Women and People with Children



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

When assessing whether the voting procedure considered women accompanied by children and those with babies, the majority of ESS 2016 observers indicated that this was the case. About 52.1% said that persons with children and those with babies were considered “to a great extent” (Figure 45). In addition, 31% reported to fieldworkers that persons with children and 25% of persons with babies were considered “to some extent”. Once again, much smaller proportions of ESS 2016 observers stated that this was not the case, where 8.5% indicated persons with children and 11.3% said persons with babies were considered “to a minor extent”. Lastly, a low proportion of observers thought the voting procedure did not “at all consider” the needs of persons with children (2.8%) and persons with babies (5.6%). Similar attitudes were observed for the 2014 national elections as can be observed in the figure above.

4.4. Disturbances at voting stations

The Election Commission took a series of precautions to prevent disturbances at voting stations during the 2016 municipal elections. There was a strong army and police presence in most Limpopo voting stations, for example. However, some voting stations in that province could not open on time after residents dug ditches across some roads and blocked them with rocks in an attempt to stop Election Commission officials from entering the vicinity. Other reported disturbances were less peaceful. In East London, for instance, police were forced fire rubber bullets and use teargas to break up a group of protesters who tried to burn down the Gcobani Community Hall voting station. Despite these incidents, the media generally reported the 2016 Municipal Elections to be largely quiet and peaceful. To

gain a greater insight into this, we can look at ESS 2016 election observer data on election disturbances in this subsection.

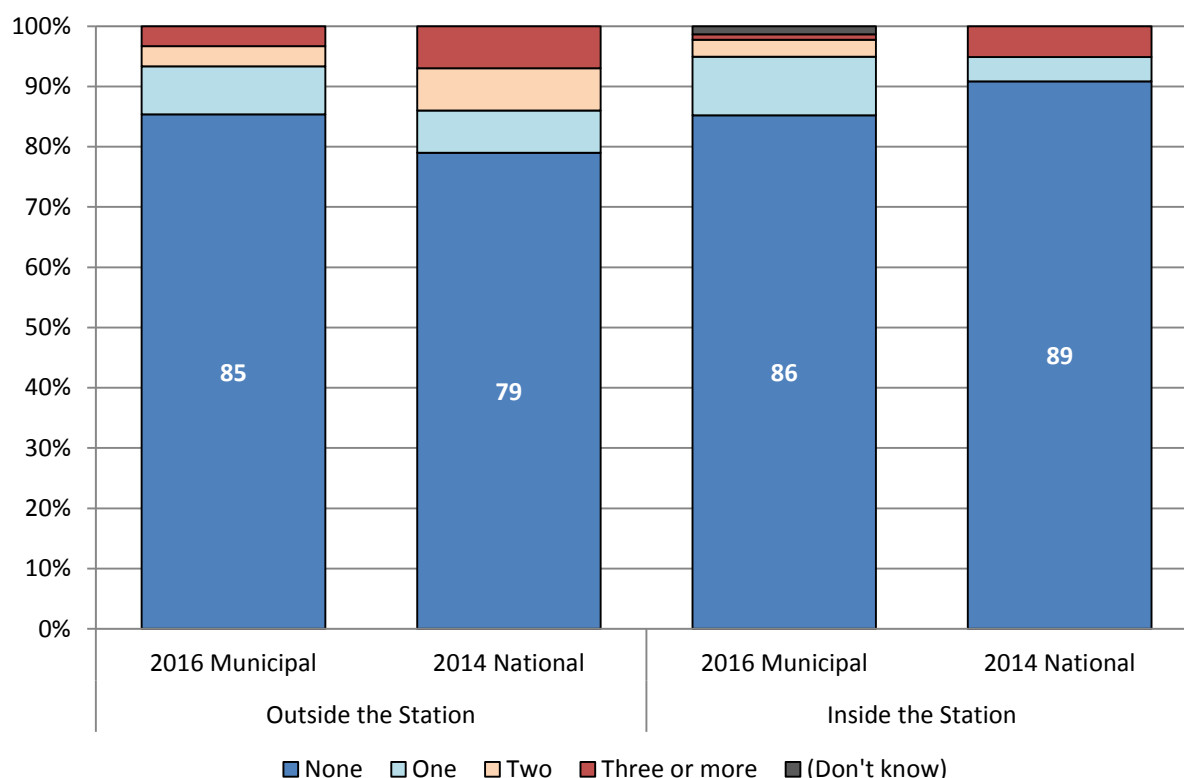
Election observers in the ESS 2016 were asked whether they had witnessed any disturbances outside and inside of voting stations. In addition, an explanation and description of the kind of disturbance were also evaluated. Types of disturbances were qualitative and ranged from political activity inside of voting stations to voter intimidation. The qualitative approach adopted will provide us with a greater understanding of underlying reasons and motivations for observed disturbances. This approach will also provide insights into the problem of election disturbances that will help the Commission develop criteria for future potential quantitative research on election disturbances. Consequently, this qualitative approach will allow a more illuminating perspective on election disturbances than the data that was drawn from voters. In the first part of the section, we report on disturbances that observers witnessed outside and inside the voting station where they were posted. In the second, we look at political activities reported by the observers inside the voting station.

4.4.1. Disturbances Inside and Outside the Voting Station

A large majority of ESS 2016 observers indicated that they had not (“none”) witnessed any disturbance outside (84.7%) and inside (85.6%) of voting stations. Much smaller incidences of disturbances were witnessed with regards to disturbances outside of voting stations, 7.9% reported witnessing “one”, and 3.3% reported “two” and 3.3% indicated witnessing three or more (Figure 46). The proportions for disturbances inside of voting stations are equally low. 9.8% reported witnessing “one”, 2.8% reported “two” and 0.9% reported witnessing “three or more”. This can be contrasted to what was observed during the 2014 national elections when a sizable majority of ESS 2014 observers (79% or N=57) confirmed that they did not observe any disturbances outside of the voting station. A large proportion of ESS 2014 observers (89% or N=65) also indicated that they did not observe any disturbances inside the voting station.

During the 2014 national elections, 7% reported that a single disturbance had occurred, 7% recorded two disturbances, while 7% claimed that three or more disturbances had been witnessed outside the voting station. A large proportion of the observers (89% or N=65) also indicated that they did not observe any disturbances inside the voting station. A further 4% of respondents claimed that they had witnessed one disturbance inside the voting station, while 5% reported that three or more disturbances had occurred. As can be seen from Figure 46, few disturbances were reported in 2016 when compared to 2014. When looking at the types of disturbances that were reported, it was similar for both outside and inside of voting stations. The primary ones which occurred outside and inside of voting stations were forms of fighting, political party activities, and voter complaints about queues and processes. However, these were marginal.

Figure 46: Disturbances Observed Inside and Outside the Voting Station



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

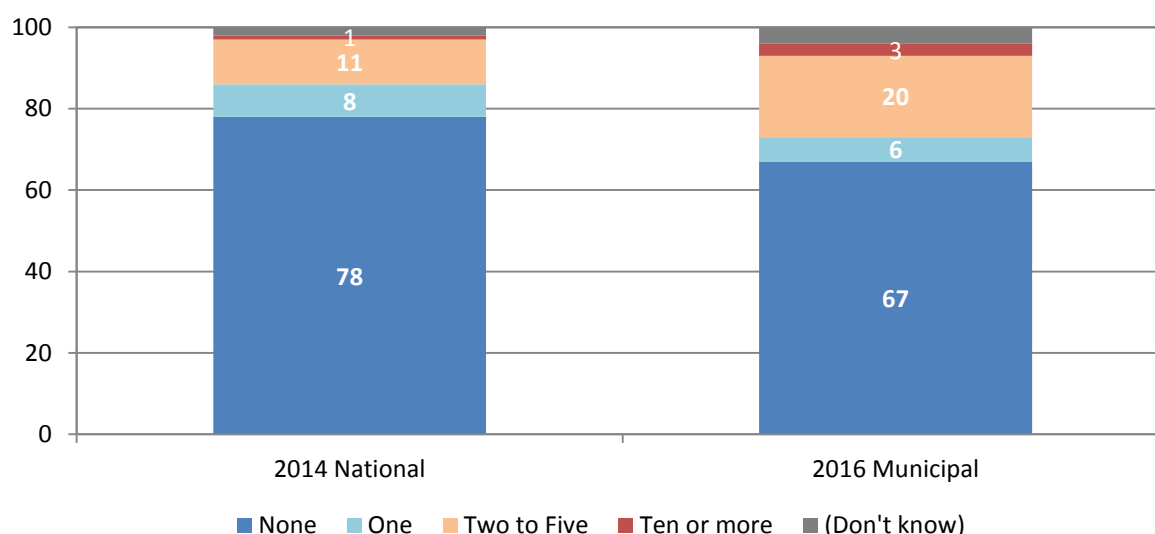
4.4.2. Political Activities Inside the Voting Station

Political campaigns are an important process in order to educate the electorate and help ensure that the voting process is free and fair. However, the display of party posters inside of the voting station is not permitted. The inside of voting stations is to be as neutral as possible, with only official branding from the Election Commission displayed. As a result, asking observers whether they witnessed any political party posters inside of voting stations is essential in a compliance and mandate aspect. A large majority (66.5%) of ESS observers said that they observed “none”, 5.6% claimed that they saw “one”, a surprising 19.5% indicated they observed “2-5” posters and 3.3% reported they observed 10 or more (Figure 47).

The results for ESS 2016 can be compared to what was observed for the 2014 national elections. During the national elections, an overwhelming majority of observers (78% or N=57) observed no political party posters displayed inside voting stations. Of the 21% who did see party posters displayed inside the voting station, 8% (N=6) saw only one poster displayed, slightly more than a tenth (11% or N=8) found 2-5 posters displayed. Just as the display of political party posters in the voting station are not permitted, so are party campaigns and activities in voting stations. As aforementioned in the introduction, political parties have a code of conduct to follow and this includes tolerance, no intimidation and no

coercion and political party activities inside of voting situations would contribute to violating this, and creating an environment which is not “free and fair”.

Figure 47: Number of political party posters inside voting stations

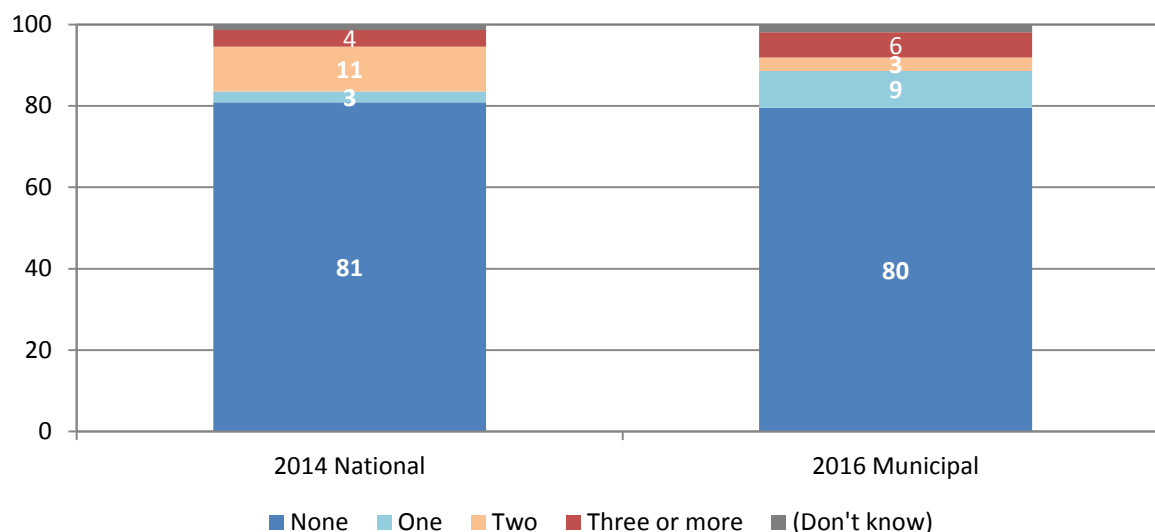


Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

During the 2016 municipal elections, observers were asked how many political party activities they observed inside of the voting station. This is essentially important as Election Commission officials are trained to identify and cease such activities. In this case, a political activity could have a wide variety of meanings and it was left up to the observers themselves to define an activity as political or not. The results indicate that such activity had occurred frequently and more often than not, indicating political parties not fully complying with their code of conduct. The vast majority (80%) of ESS 2016 observer indicated that witness “none” such political party activities inside of voting stations, 9% witnessed “one”, 3% witnessed two activities of this nature and 6% said that they observed three or more incidents of this type (Figure 48).

We can look at political activities that were observed by observers during the 2014 national election Results indicate that during 2014, election processes were well managed inside the voting stations, and political party activities inside the voting station were uncommon. A large proportion of observers (81% or N=59) stated that no political party activities took place inside voting stations. In those instances where observers noted that political activities had taken place inside the voting station, only 3% said it was an isolated incident, while relatively small shares of observers observed political party activities taking place inside the voting station “twice” or “three or more times” (11% [N=8] and 4.1% [N=3], respectively).

Figure 48: Political party activities inside the voting station



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

4.5. Election Commission Performance

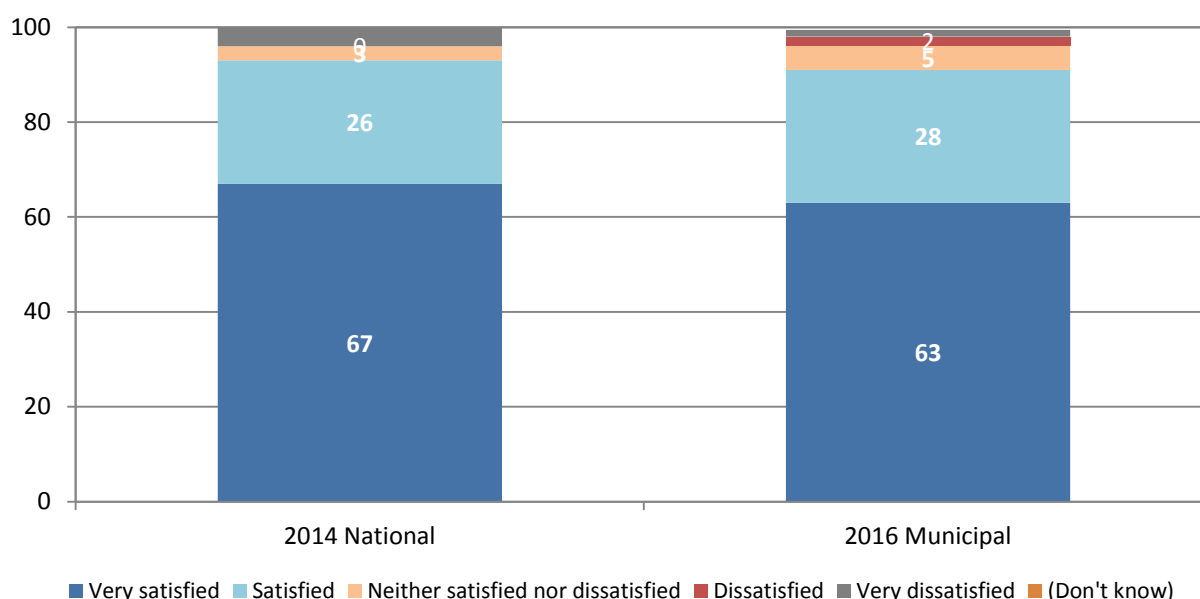
When millions of citizens went to cast their vote in the 2016 Municipal Elections, several protests erupted in small pockets within certain provinces. However, on the whole, the day's events were buoyed by the spirit of *Ubuntu* in voter queues as well as the peaceful enthusiasm of the overwhelming majority of voters. This enthusiasm was demonstrated earlier in our analysis of the voter data. In this part of the report, we look at attitudes towards the performance of the Election Commission and whether the observers interviewed for this study thought that the Commission had performed their job with the appropriate level of efficiency. In subsection 4.5.1 we will consider general evaluations of the Commission by the observers. In subsection 4.5.2 the research team will consider the observers' views on specific aspects of the conduct of Election Commission officials. Finally, in subsection 4.5.3, observers' satisfaction with aspects of the voting station experience will be evaluated.

4.5.1. General satisfaction with the election organisation by the Election Commission

The Election Commission play an essential part in ensuring the elections process run smoothly from the pre-election phase to the post-election phase as discussed in the introduction. Electoral Officials must not threaten or coerce to voters, misuse of state machinery or have an unbecoming attitude or demeanour. As a result, how they manage the process is vital to whether the election is considered transparent, free and fair by the observers. Therefore election observers were asked whether they were satisfied with the way the elections were organised by the Election Commission. There were five response categories around satisfaction which were "very satisfied", "satisfied", "neither satisfied nor

dissatisfied”, “dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied”. Their responses for the both the 2014 national elections and the 2016 municipal elections are displayed in Figure 49.

Figure 49: Observer satisfaction with Election Commission’s Election management



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

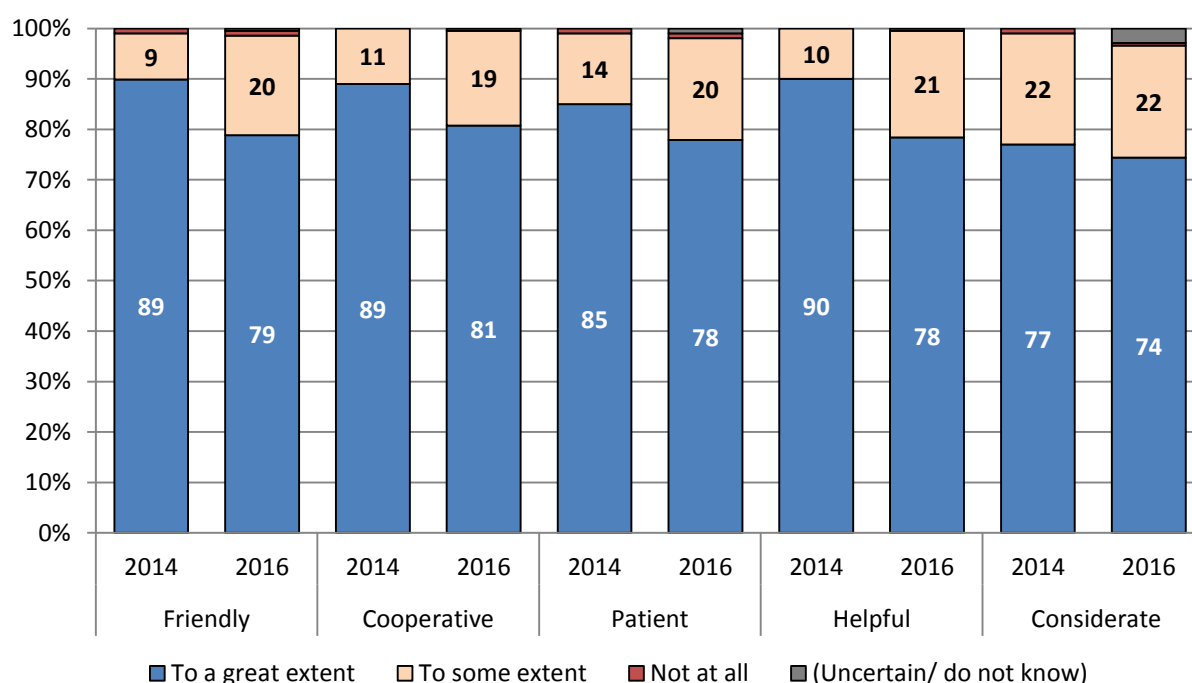
Results indicated that a large majority of ESS 2016 observers were satisfied with the way the Election Commission organised the 2016 local government elections. About three-fifths (63%) of observers were “very satisfied”, 28% were satisfied, 5.1% were neutral, and very low proportions were dissatisfied with 1.9% indicating they were dissatisfied and 1.4% indicating they are very dissatisfied. This can be compared to what we saw during the 2014 national elections. For that election, generally, the observers rated the electoral management efforts of the IEC very highly. As can be seen in the figure, the majority of the observers indicated that they were very satisfied (67% or N=49), with another quarter stating that they were somewhat satisfied (26% or N=19). Less than 5% registered and form for dissatisfaction (4% or N=3).

Election observers were asked whether they were aware of any voter logging a complaint about the voting stations. Large proportions of the observers indicated that there were “no” complaints about the voting station opening late (80.5%), discrimination (87.0%), Problematic / incorrect forms (87.4%) and broken facilities (81.4%). However, the observer survey revealed that about 28.4% of the participants’ complaint about long queues at the voting station compared to 63.7% that did not complain. The general consensus seems to be that the Commission had done a “commendable job” in conducting the 2016 municipal elections though there were few worrying incidents that needed to be avoided in future. It may be available to consider the conduct of the Election Commission officials and whether these officials performed their jobs effectively. The observers’ attitudes towards the conduct of Election Commission officials are discussed in subsection 4.5.2.

4.5.2. Views on specific aspects of the conduct of Election Commission officials

Election Commission staff is well-trained in order to ensure the Election Day runs smoothly. They have set mandates and a code of conduct to follow. As a result, the way Election Commission staff conducted themselves was evaluated. Election observers were asked about both behaviour and professionalism and for each indicator, the response categories were “to a great extent”, “to some extent” or “not at all”. The results were extremely positive as indicated below. In ESS 2016, observers rated Election Commission staff as “to a great extent” as professional (75%), impartial (63%), interested in their jobs (73%), considerate (74%), knowledgeable about the election processes (72%), patient (78%), honest (74%), helpful (78%), cooperative (81%) and friendly (79%).

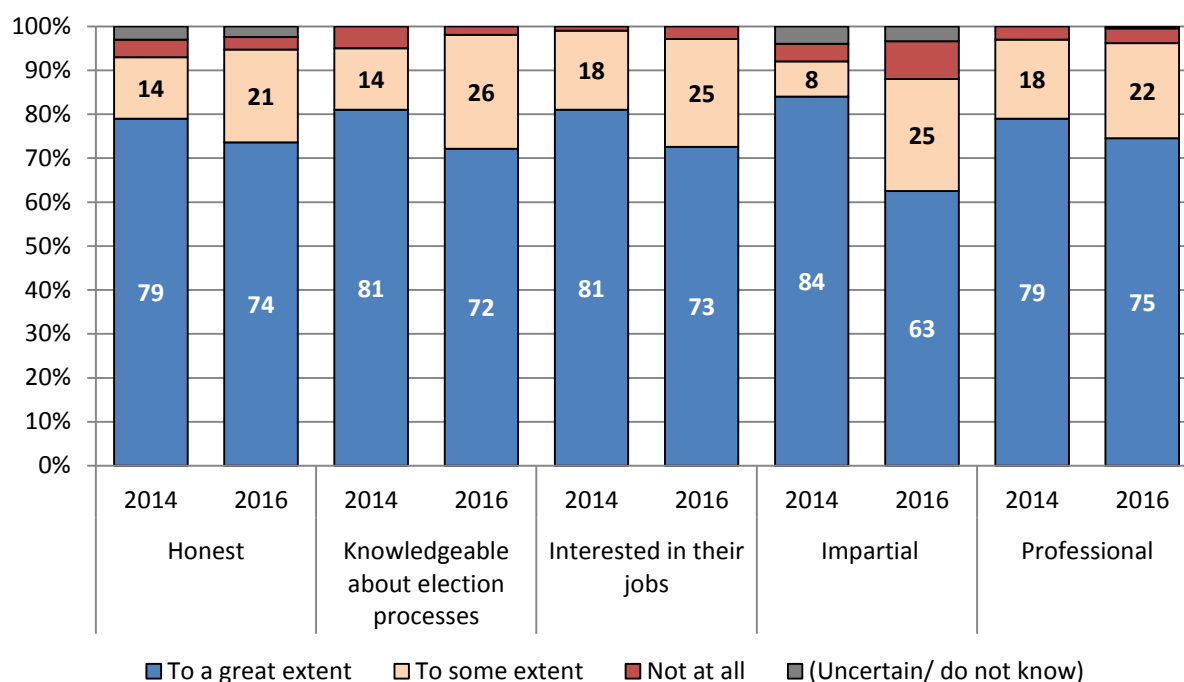
Figure 50: Specific views of the voters on the personal conduct of the Election officials



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

What was observed in ESS 2016 can be compared to what we saw in ESS 2014. Overall, during the 2014 national government elections, observers were very positive in their assessment of officials, thus corroborating the earlier evaluations of electoral staff offered by voters (Figure 50). Observers rated officials as being extremely helpful (90% or N=66), co-operative (89% or N=66), friendly (89% or N=66), patient (85% or N=63), impartial (84%, N=61), knowledgeable about election processes (81% or N=59), and interested in their jobs (81 or N=58). The observers that were interviewed provided slightly lower scores in relation to electoral staff being considerate, honest and professional. Nevertheless, in all cases, the percentage indicating that election staff demonstrated these traits to a great extent exceeded three-quarters of all observers.

Figure 51: Specific views of the voters on the professional conduct of the Election officials



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

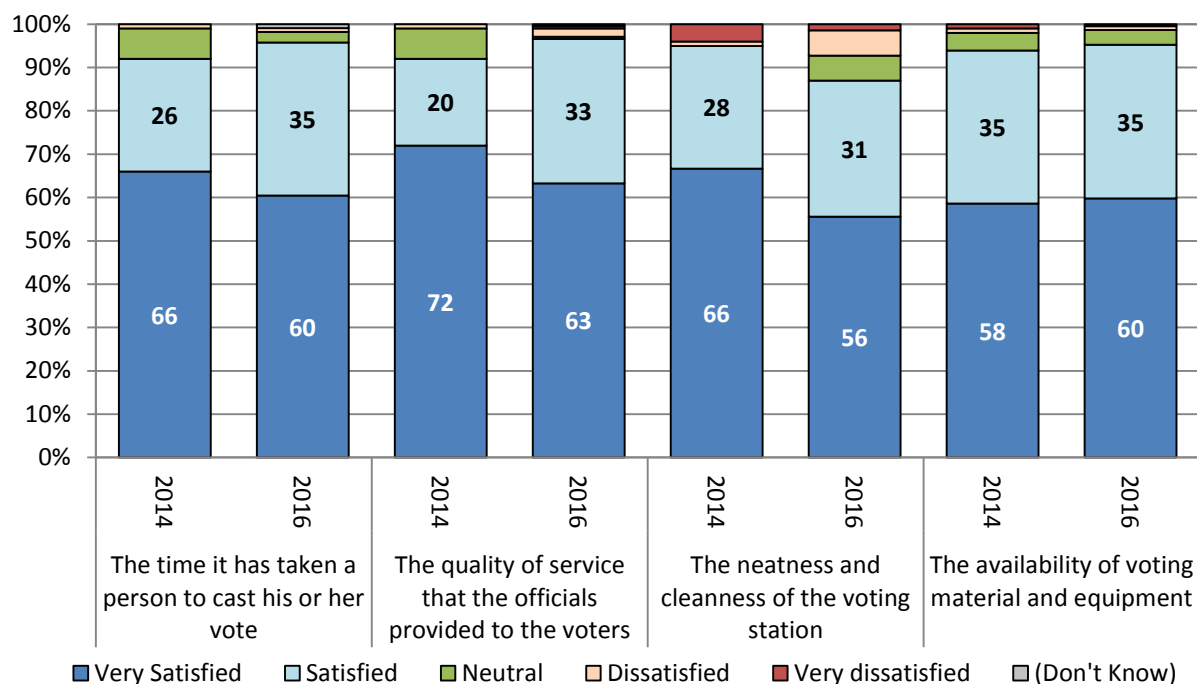
In general, observers in both the ESS 2014 and 2016 were largely positive about the conduct of election officials in South Africa. However, as can be observed in the figures presented in this section, the share of the observers who viewed the election officials as impartial was lower in the 2016 municipal elections as compared to the 2014 national elections. This suggests that there may be a problem with the impartiality of election officials in the 2016 municipal election. During the course of a municipal or national election, officials are expected to maintain a tradition of political impartiality. Nonetheless, the findings of this report seem to cast doubt on some of the officials working for the Commission. There needs to be a robust response to this problem by the Election Commission.

4.5.3. Satisfaction with aspects of the voting station experience

Election observers were evaluated on their satisfaction with nine aspects pertaining to the voting procedure at their particular voting station. The graph below clearly indicates that the majority of observers were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the manner certain procedures were executed. Responses to this question, for the both the 2014 national elections and the 2016 municipal elections are depicted in Figure 51. Evaluating those who were “very satisfied” and “satisfied” against criteria we see satisfaction for the safe handling of ballots and ballot boxes (66% and 30%), the supply of ballot boxes (69% and 26%), the space for voting and ensuring secrecy (68% and 27%), secrecy of the vote (73% and 23%), and the safety and security of voting stations (67% and 28%). However, a smaller proportion indicated the same, although it is still a large majority with regards to the availability of voting material and equipment (60% and 35%), neatness and cleanness of the voting station

(56% and 31%), quality of service by Election Commission to voters (63% and 33%) and the time it took to cast a vote (60% and 35%).

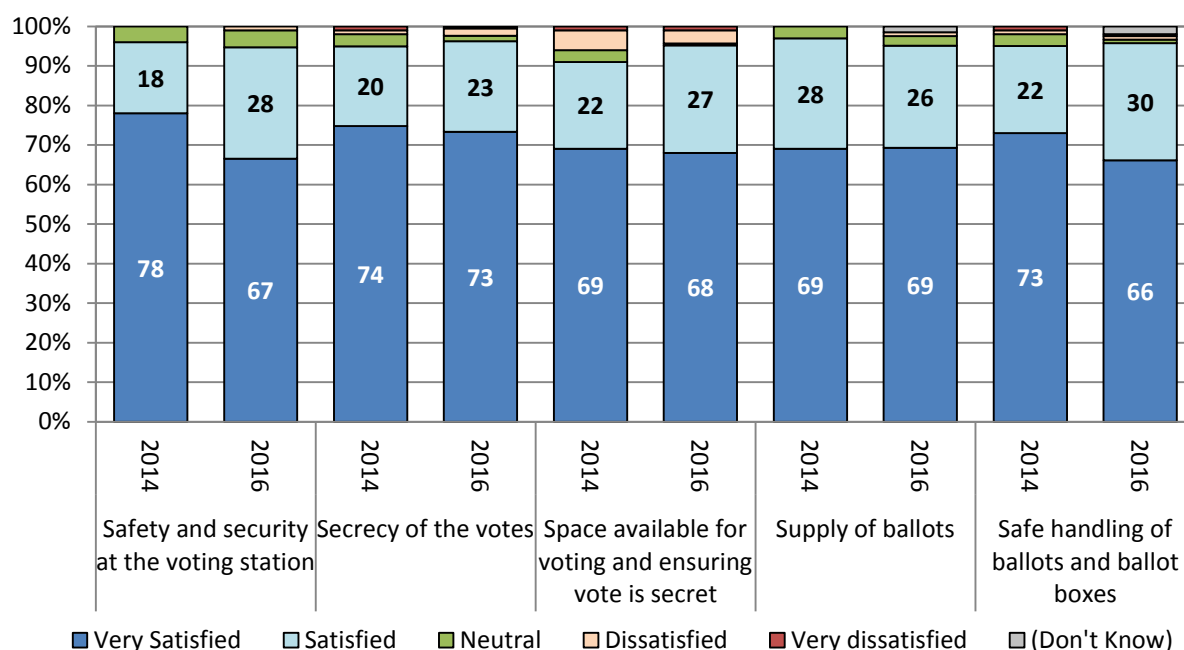
Figure 52: Satisfaction with material aspects of the voting station



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

We can compare what detected in ESS 2016 to what we saw in ESS 2014. It from what can be observed in our ESS 2014 data that the majority of observers in that period were very satisfied with the with the safety and security of the voting station (78% or N=58), secrecy of the votes (74% or N=55), safe handling of ballots and ballot boxes (73% or N=54) and the quality of service that the IEC officials provided to the voters (72% or N=53). On the other hand, smaller proportions were very satisfied with the availability of voting material and equipment (58% or N=43) and the neatness and cleanness of the voting station (66% or N=49). Despite these differences, if one combines the satisfied and very satisfied categories together, total satisfaction across the nine attributes ranges between 91 and 97%, which is an overwhelmingly positive appraisal of the voting stations and procedures.

Figure 53: Satisfaction with secrecy and safety aspects of the voting station



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

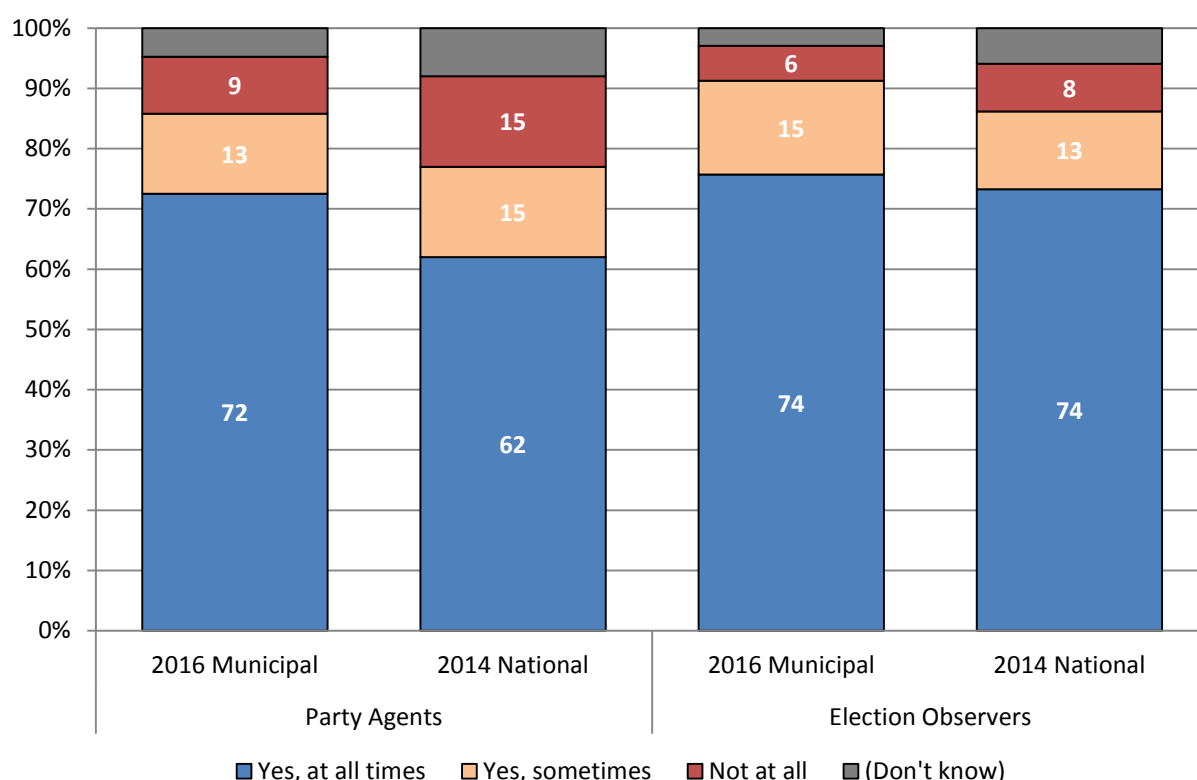
In general, observers in both the ESS 2014 and 2016 were largely confident about the experience of voters at voting stations in South Africa. One of the most interesting aspects of elections in South Africa is the desire of voters to take a 'selfie' of them casting their ballot. In the run-up to the 2016 municipal elections, Chief Electoral Officer Mosotho Moepya said that "[v]oters are reminded that it is prohibited to take a photograph or 'selfie' of their marked ballot paper". He said this prohibition was essential to protect the secrecy and integrity of their vote and the process. Voters were, however, encouraged to rather take a picture of their marked thumb to show they have voted and to post these on social media. ESS 2016 observers did not mention voters taking a 'selfie' while casting their ballot suggesting the Election Commission has been successful in getting this latest modern trend under control.

4.6. Final Assessment of the Elections

As aforementioned in the introduction, ensuring that elections are free and fair is an integral part of democracy. As a result, certain procedures and codes of conduct are followed. One way to ensure that elections were free and fair is to have official agents observe the election. Political party agents and observers are instrumental in making sure election processes are free and fair. For the 2016 municipal elections, 19.5% of the observer participants indicated that witness "none" such political party activities inside of voting stations, 7% witnessed "one", just under half witness 2-5 of such activity, 20.5% indicated observing 6-9 and 4.2% witnessed more than 10. They contribute to ensuring that the voting procedures are in fact transparent, free and fair. Election observers were asked

whether “party agents or observers were allowed to view all the relevant electoral processes with the boundary of the voting station”, and as with the previous question there were four response categories: “yes, at all times”, “yes sometimes”, “not at all” and “don’t know.” Responses to these questions are showcased in Figure 54.

Figure 54: Political party agents allowed to observe electoral processes



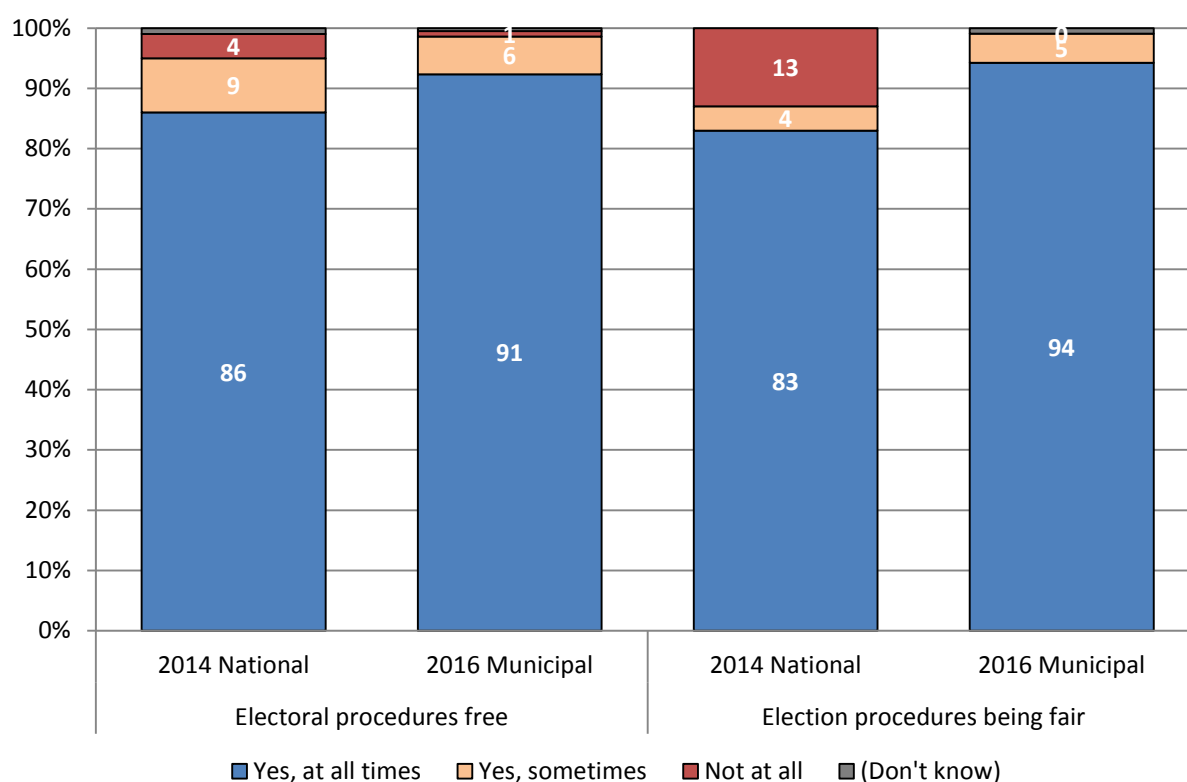
Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

The results depicted in Figure 54 indicated that a large majority of ESS 2016 observers witnessed that party agents were allowed to observe all the electoral processes. 71.2% of ESS 2016 observers interviewed said that they saw this “at all times”, 13% reported that they saw this “sometimes”, less than 10% indicated that party agents were “not at all” allowed to observe the electoral processes within the voting boundary, and only a small portion of 4.7% did not know. Compared to what was witnessed during the 2014 national elections by observers, the data reported for the 2016 municipal elections is more positive. The Election Commission should be pleased with this result which showcases the good work that the Commission is doing to ensure that municipal elections are free and fair.

Election observers were asked “do you think that the election procedure was free” and “do you think that the election procedures were fair”, and there were four response categories of “yes”, “yes, with minor problems”, “not at all” and “don’t know”. Figure 55 show that, in general, a large majority of election observers considered the election procedures to be both free and fair. For example, about 94% of observers thought the election procedure was fair and 91% thought it was free. A much smaller proportion thought that the election

procedure is free (6%) and fair (4.7%) with “minor problems”, less thought it was not free (0.9%) and fair (0.5%) “at all”. Given these results, it would seem necessary to congratulate the Commission as well as all electoral stakeholders on the orderly and peaceful municipal elections.

Figure 55: Observer evaluations of the freeness and fairness of election procedures



Source: Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) 2014; 2016

We can compare what was observed during the 2016 municipal elections with what was observed during the 2014 national elections. During that election, a sizable proportion of observers (86% or N=61) reported that the elections were unequivocally free. A further tenth of observers (9% or N=6) indicated that the election process was free except for minor problems, while a mere 4% rated the election as not free at all. The majority of election observers perceived election procedures to be fair (83% or N=57). A much smaller proportion of observers (4% or N=3) thought the election procedures were fair with minor problems, and slightly more than a tenth (13% or N=9) reported that the election procedures were not at all fair. During that election, the reasons given for stating that the procedures were not free or fair included: the lack of intimidation or violence; respect for voters; the absence of discrimination, racism and favouritism as well as the transparency of the electoral process.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

This report has presented the main analytical findings from the 2016 round of the Election Satisfaction Survey (ESS) series, which involved interviewing a representative sample of the voting public at a random selection of 300 voting stations countrywide. In addition, election observers that visited the sampled voting stations on Election Day were also interviewed to provide an indication of their views of the quality of the 2016 municipal election. The survey, which was undertaken by the Human Sciences Research Council on behalf of the Election Commission of South Africa, aimed to evaluate the overall perceived freeness and fairness of the electoral process and assess the operational efficiency of the Election Commission in managing the elections. The analysis has presented the views of voters on aggregate, examined the extent to which these have changed or remained constant relative to previous elections, and also disaggregated the results by a range of voter attributes in order to determine how unified voters are in their electoral experience and attitudes.

Credibility and transparency

5.1.1 Free and fair elections are not only a cornerstone of democracy, but they also represent the Electoral Commission's primary constitutional mandate. Preparing for and conducting elections involves a series of activities that span a number of years, hundreds of thousands of staff, many stakeholders, and addresses matters of an logistical, political and legislative nature. The task of election management bodies in ensuring that the electoral experience is both free and fair for the millions casting their ballot during the course of Election Day and special voting operations, that incidents are rapidly and effectively addressed, and that the vote counting process accurately reflects the will of the people, is truly an immense and challenging one. Results from the 2016 survey reveal that the voting public was overwhelmingly confident that the 2016 Municipal Elections were both free and fair (95% and 96% respectively), with problems being reported in only a minority of cases. This viewpoint is broad-based, with no statistically significant differences in perceived electoral freeness evident on the basis of the age, sex, disability status or educational level of voters. It is however worth mentioning that perceptions of fairness were moderately lower among voters in KwaZulu-Natal, informal settlements, as well as among those voters with disabilities or no formal education. Election observers were equally convinced that the elections were free and fair (97% and 99% respectively).

5.1.2 Compared to the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, it is nonetheless apparent that there has been a modest decline in the ratings provided by voters. This is more evident in relation to evaluations of electoral freeness than fairness. The share perceiving the elections as 'completely free' is significantly lower in 2016 than in the

three prior elections (91% vs. 94-95%). This represents the first the first instance where an observed decline in perceived fairness is large enough to be statistically significant. Both the 'free with minor problems' and 'not free at all' categories have exhibited nominal but significant increases in the 2014 and 2016 elections. In terms of electoral fairness, the pattern of responses is virtually identical across the four elections, though there is a marginal but again significant decline evident in 2016. Taken together, this suggests that despite a generally sanguine appraisal by voters participating in the 2016 elections, there is evidence to suggest that the high degree of consistency present between the 2009 through 2014 elections is beginning to diminish. Although this does not detract from the principal message that voters emphatically believe that the elections were fair as well as free, which is evidence of successful electoral management by the Commission, this will need to be carefully monitored in future elections.

5.1.3 An essential aspect in determining whether elections are free and fair is the absence or presence of **coercion and intimidation**. Nationally, 9% reported that they had experienced coercion to vote for a specific political party - 7% prior to arriving at their voting station and 2% while standing in a queue to vote. While this again can be regarded as a positive result from an electoral management perspective, is important to note that there has been a marginal but statistically significant rise in reported coercion in 2016 relative to the three prior elections. This change is occurring predominantly in the lead-up to the elections rather than at voting stations. The share stating that they had experienced intimidation prior to approaching their voting stations to cast their ballot rose from 3% in 2009 to 7% in 2016. By contrast, the share reporting intimidation at the voting station was 1% in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, rising to 2% in 2016. Reported coercion was highest among voters in KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and rural areas, people with disabilities, Indian voters, and those with no formal education. There was no difference based on age, sex or time of voting.

5.1.4 Of those having experienced coercion, the most commonly mentioned sources were political parties (45%) and family members or friends (32%), followed to a much lesser extent by election officials (11%) and other voters (9%). In terms of changes between elections, reported coercion by family and friends was significantly lower in the 2014 and 2016 elections relative to the 2009 elections, while reported coercion perpetrated by political parties has assumed greater importance over the period. Coercion by electoral staff, is significantly higher in 2016 than in the three preceding elections (11% vs. 3-5%), while there has been a decline in those mentioning other voters as a source of coercion. For those personally experiencing some form of coercion in the 2016 Municipal Elections, slightly under a third (29%) reported that this encounter prompted them to alter their voting decision. This equates to 2.5% of

all votes cast on Election Day. From a comparative viewpoint, this is significantly higher than in both the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections. This coercion-related electoral effect is more common among persons with disabilities, those with no formal schooling, as well as voters in KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and rural areas.

5.1.5 These findings on reported coercion in the context of the 2016 Municipal Election and how it has changed relative to previous elections are notable and warrant particular attention. The fact that coercion is occurring primarily prior to Election Day, has been growing at a faster rate than reported coercion at voting stations, and is increasingly being perpetrated by political parties presents a notable challenge to future elections. Coercion and intimidation at voting stations can be immediately responded to by the Electoral Commission through its electoral staff, though coercion happening prior to elections speaks more to political culture and the nature of election campaigning in the country. This means that the Electoral Commission will need to regularly communicate messages of tolerance to political parties and the general public in accordance with the values embedded in the Electoral Code of Conduct. The growing influence of political parties in reported coercion means that Party Liaison Committees (PLCs) at national, provincial and municipal levels will need to be effectively used as strategic institutional mechanisms to raise matters of coercion and promote a greater culture of tolerance ahead of future elections. The worrisome rise in reported coercion by election officials is a trend that needs to be taken seriously, and to some extent could be tackled through the content of the training of election staff. Particular attention should be devoted to staff scheduled to work in voting districts where coercion by election officials exceeded the national average, such as in KwaZulu-Natal or Limpopo. Given the relative high levels of changed electoral behaviour following reported coercion by electoral staff among disabled voters, special care should also be taken to train officials to be impartial with regards to people with disabilities and refrain from any attempts of coercion.

5.1.6 Political **tolerance by candidates, registered political parties and their supporters during the process of conducting election campaigns** represents a fundamental component of electoral and indeed liberal democracy and is instrumental in ensuring free and fair elections. Even though the campaigning period in the lead-up to the 2016 Municipal Elections was characterised by incidents of political violence, eight in every ten voters (82%) felt parties were 'very' or 'somewhat' tolerant of one another during campaigning period. These results are broadly consistent with the views expressed by voters in the 2009, 2011 and 2014 election surveys, though there are indications that voter evaluations have actually improved slightly. In 2016, the shares reporting 'very tolerant' and 'not tolerant' were significantly different from all three previous elections. It also appears that perceived political party tolerance appears to be higher in the context of municipal elections than in national and provincial

elections. Therefore, despite the politically-related violence that occurred ahead of the elections, this does not appear to have dampened the evaluations provided by voters in terms of their view of the campaigning period on aggregate. Voters in the North West, Gauteng, Limpopo the Northern Cape and in informal settlements were however significantly less likely than average to perceive parties as having demonstrated political tolerance during the campaigning for the elections. Young voters aged 18-24 years were also more inclined to express concern over political party conduct. Strategic use should again be made of Party Liaison Committees as a forum for discussing and addressing concerns about conduct in specific geographic locations. This could be supplemented by general voter education and communication activities directed at voters and party supporters.

Logistics and Infrastructure

5.1.7 For the 2016 local government elections the Electoral Commission established 22,662 voting stations countrywide - approximately 400 more voting stations than for the 2014 National and Provincial elections. This was done in order to continue improving access and reducing queuing times. The average time taken by **voters to reach their voting station** was 16 minutes but varied significantly by province, geographical location and population group. It took voters in the Western Cape an average of 10 minutes to travel to their voting station while in KwaZulu-Natal it took 21 minutes. In respect of geographic type, we find that voters in rural areas report a significantly longer time to get to their voting stations (20 minutes) than those based in formal and informal urban areas (14 minutes). In terms of population group differences, black African voters took longer to reach their voting stations (18 minutes) than other population groups (13 minutes). In the North West province, 7% of voters stated it took them more than an hour to get to the voting station. The Electoral Commission should in its planning for future elections consider additional voting stations in these areas in particular.

5.1.8 Traditionally, the most common complained lodged during elections related to long queues. From an electoral management point of view, **queuing time for voters** is a key operational issue and critical to the success of any election. During the 2016 election demonstrable improvements were noticed in terms of queuing times. In 2016 almost three quarters (72%) of all voters stated that they waited less than 15 minutes to vote-this signifies a huge improvement relative to 2014, when significantly fewer voters (66%) claimed to have waited for less than 15 minutes. In addition, the mean queuing time in 2016 was 17 minutes, significantly lower than the 25 minutes in 2014, the 23 minutes in 2011 and the 34 minutes in 2011. This is a laudable accomplishment for the Electoral Commission and testimony to careful logistical planning. Also, in 2016, only 1 percent of voters reported waiting more

than 2 hours in queues-a significant reduction the 6% in 2014. The biggest accomplishment in terms of queuing time was noted in informal settlements where queuing time was reduced from an average of 41 minutes in 2014 to 20 minutes in 2016. In addition, in 2014, 27% of voters in informal settlements reported that they stood in a queue for one hour or longer. In 2016, only 8% stated that they had to wait for longer than an hour. Another accomplishment was in Gauteng where the mean queuing time was reduced from 39 minutes in 2014 to 21 minutes in 2016. This is an enormous achievement by the Electoral Commission and testimony to thorough planning and interventions. Despite this achievement, residents from informal settlements and Gauteng still has the longest queuing times and further interventions needs to be made to ensure further improvements.

5.1.9 Voters were positive about the **accessibility of voting stations to persons with disabilities and the elderly**, with 84% declaring the voting stations as ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ accessible. Importantly, there were no significant age group differences and voters with disabilities did also not significantly differ from voters without disabilities, which reaffirms the favourable assessment. Although the results are very similar to previous surveys it is noted that the proportion of voters stating that voting stations are “very assessable” to the elderly and disabled had significantly decreased in 2016. This is also observed in the national mean accessibility score which was lower in 2016 (81.2), compared to the 2014 (83.4) and the 2011 (83.1). This shows that voters were somewhat less impressed with the accessibility of voting stations to the elderly and persons with disabilities during the 2016 local government elections. The highest decrease in satisfaction was found in North West the Free State, amongst the Coloured population and in the Northern Cape. These scores are significant and indicate that this is an issue might have been somewhat neglected during the 2016 local government election.

5.1.10 Election observers were asked to rate their level of **satisfaction with different facilities at voting stations**. While there was a broad consensus that voting stations offered seats or chairs to rest on as well as working toilets, less favourable rating was provided in relation to drinking water. This is something that the Electoral Commission can consider going forward.

5.1.11 Apart from ballot papers and security materials, an important aspect of election-related logistics planning is the ensuring that **instructions and signage** are transported, delivered and visibly displayed at voting stations. On aggregate, 96% of voters were very or somewhat satisfied with the instructions and signs at voting stations. For instance, the proportion of voters *very satisfied* with signage and instructions had gradually decreased since 2011 with an accompanying increase in

the proportion stating they are satisfied. These results suggest that although voters are generally pleased with the manner in which the Electoral Commission is handling signage and instructions, there is a gradual decline in the overall levels of satisfaction. While satisfaction with signage was marginally lower in Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and in rural areas, this does not diminish the overwhelmingly positive rating secured with respect to this aspect of the electoral logistics. However, in order to ensure that there is not further slippage in levels of approval, the Electoral Commission will need to strive to ensure that there is consistently high visibility of signage that indicates the location of the voting station and where voters need to go to cast their vote once inside the perimeter of the voting station

5.1.12 One of the core rights as a voter is the right to vote safely (Electoral Commission, 2016). To this end, the Electoral Commission ensures as part of its electoral management operations that comprehensive **security arrangements** are in place in order to provide a safe environment for voting. The South African Police Services, together with the South African National Defence Force, State Security Agency and other security-related institutions play an indispensable role in ensuring peaceful and free electoral environments at voting stations. Safety and security was a particular concern in the lead-up to the 2016 Municipal Elections, with various areas being designated as potential hotspots for violent protest action and intimidation. Ultimately, the election proceeded without major incidents of violence, with only sporadic incidents of unrest and community being reported. This is reflected in voter and observer assessments. Overall, 95% of voters expressed satisfaction (64% 'very satisfied' and 31% 'fairly satisfied') with the safety and security that was provided at their voting stations. Of the remaining five per cent, slightly over two per cent were either neutral or dissatisfied. This is a convincingly positive assessment of the security operations in place at voting stations on the 3rd August, and holds true across different segments of the voting population. The percentage of voters reporting that they were very or fairly satisfied with the safety and security at their voting stations ranged between 90 and 98 per cent depending on personal attributes. Of the election observers interviewed, 89% stated that security personnel were on duty at the time of visiting the voting stations, with two or more security staff being present at more than two thirds of the stations. This is an encouraging result that undoubtedly contributes towards the public view that the 2016 Municipal Elections were free and fair.

Electoral Processes

5.1.13 In terms of electoral processes, there was near universal agreement (98%) that the **voting procedures inside the voting station** – which include having your name checked on the voters' roll, having your ID stamped and thumb inked, being issued

ballot papers, going to the voting booth and placing the ballot in the ballot box - were 'very' or 'somewhat' easy to understand. This message varies little across groups of voters with different socio-economic characteristics and indication that the process of voting remains easy for people of different socio-economic characteristics.

5.1.14 The survey also **assessed voters' confidence in the accuracy** of the counting of votes. The mean score in terms of confidence in the accuracy of votes was 82.9 out of a possible 100-signalling high confidence scores. Perceptions around the accuracy of vote counting is largely driven by socio-political and socio-economic attributes. Voters from the minority White group, typically economically privileged with higher education levels, but depicted as politically marginalised, were the least confident of the vote counting process. If the Electoral Commission is concerned about this, messages pertaining to vote counting procedures and protocols can be designed to specially target this minority group.

5.1.15 Making **provision for voters with special needs in voting procedures** forms a prominent part of electoral operations in accordance with the organisation's core values. For instance, election officials were trained to allow disabled, pregnant, sick or elderly voters to move to the front of the queue at voting stations. Assisted voting was also permitted for voters with disabilities, which enabled them to select someone over 18 years (other than a political party agent) to aid them in the voting process. The 2014 National and Provincial elections also afforded registered voters who were unable to travel to their voting station due to physical infirmity, disability or pregnancy to apply for a home visit. These procedures, coupled with the use of the Braille ballot templates, signify the on-going priority attached to the participation of voters with special needs.

5.1.16 A considerable majority of voters recognised these efforts and acknowledged that voting procedures on Election Day considered to 'a great' or 'some' extent the needs of the elderly (91%), women with babies (78%), pregnant women (78%), persons with disabilities (86%), as well as the partially-sighted and the blind (78%). The lower levels of agreement reported in the cases of the blind and partially sighted are attributable to a relatively high level of voter uncertainty. A similar pattern of results is found from the election observer interviews, which signifies that initiatives to address the special needs of the blind and partially sighted should remain a notable focus for the Electoral Commission in preparation for the next elections.

5.1.17 The results indicate that voters with disabilities, women and the elderly were found to be quite positive in their assessment of how voting procedures accommodated their special needs. This is a clear indication of the success of the Election

Commission in providing for the needs of these groups. But the analysis also showed that further effort is required to better accommodate the voters with special needs in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, as well as for those living in rural areas. Voters in these geographic locations were least satisfied with the way the needs of these people were considered by the Election Commission.

5.1.18 Ensuring the **secrecy of the vote** is an integral component of the electoral process and ultimately the credibility of elections, and safeguards voters from concerns over coercion or intimidation. As such, votes are cast in voting booths where voters are alone to make their mark on ballot papers that are subsequently placed in sealed ballot boxes. In the 2016 Municipal Elections, slightly over three-fifths (62%) of voters were ‘very satisfied’ that their vote was secret, with just more over a third (34%) saying they were ‘satisfied’. Less than one per cent (0.8%) was dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, while 3% offered neutral responses. On aggregate, the survey therefore finds that 97% of voters expressed satisfaction with the secrecy of their vote, which is a convincing endorsement of this aspect of electoral management operations. However, comparing these findings to the 2009, 2011 and 2014 elections, it is apparent that there has been a distinct decline in the share noting that they were “very satisfied”. Between 2009 and 2011 as well as 2011 to 2014, this fall was progressive but generally modest (3-4 percentage points). However, between 2014 and 2016 the share that was ‘very satisfied’ declined a further 12 percentage points (from 74% to 62%), translating overall into a 19 percentage point fall between 2009 and 2016. This change in the percentage that were ‘very satisfied’ with the secrecy of their vote was accompanied by an increase that were ‘satisfied’, rather than a swing towards discontentment. The results thus remain broadly positive, though the growing evidence of change in this indicator will require careful monitoring in future. Future voter education messages could give additional attention to the various measures that the Electoral Commission takes to ensure the secrecy of the vote. Maintaining secrecy of the vote should also remain a high priority in the training of electoral staff.

Staff recruitment and training

5.1.19 The Electoral Commission appoints over 200,000 officials (presiding officers, deputy presiding officers and voting officers) from various sectors of society to manage election activities at voting stations and ensure the efficient operation of voting and counting procedures. Recognising the importance of properly skilled, competent and impartial electoral staff to the overall success of election activities at voting station level as well as nationally, considerable effort is placed by the Electoral Commission on recruitment and training procedures. Therefore, voter evaluations of the performance of election officials on Election Day are, to a considerable degree, a

reflection on the rigour of the recruitment process, the quality of the training approach and materials as well as the trainers themselves.

5.1.20 On aggregate, 96% of voters were ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ satisfied with the quality of **service rendered by election officials** on Election Day, which is a tremendous compliment to the systems established by the Electoral Commission as well as the dedication and commitment of electoral staff. The assessment of election officials by voters was lower than average but still overwhelmingly positive in Gauteng, the Western Cape, and voters with complete secondary education. Asked to rate ten specific aspects of the conduct of election officials at their voting station, voters again provided an exceedingly positive assessment of officials, regarding them foremost as extremely helpful, cooperative, and considerate. A significant decline was observed in the number of voters identifying officials as impartial. The voters in following provinces described the officials in their stations as the least impartial: Mpumalanga, the North West and the Eastern Cape. Future training programmes for election officials should place additional emphasis on impartiality and neutrality as a means of further improving perceptions of Electoral Commission performance. Across all the different voter attributes, the mean score for the ten components of the conduct of election officials was consistently the low or middling amongst young voters, so special consideration needs to be afforded to recruitment and training protocols when dealing with age cohort.

5.1.21 Following the June 2016 Constitutional Court ruling, the Commission is endeavouring to verify the details of millions of South Africans whose addresses were missing or incomplete on the voters’ roll. To this end, a **new procedure to check and update their home addresses of voters** was introduced at voting stations. The 2016 Election Satisfaction Survey included a question that asked voters to rate their level of satisfaction with this new procedure. In response, 92% of the voting public voiced satisfaction (54% ‘very satisfied’ and 38% ‘satisfied’). These satisfaction levels exhibited only minor variation based on the different voter characteristics that were examined. Interestingly, satisfaction with the procedure to verify addresses was positively correlated with overall trust in the Electoral Commission.

Civic Education and Communications

5.1.22 The promotion of voter education is one of the duties and functions of the Electoral Commission, as stipulated in the Electoral Commission Act of 1996, and is critical to ensuring that voters are aware of their civic rights and responsibilities and have sufficient knowledge and understanding of electoral processes in order to be able to make informed choices during elections. To ensure this objective is progressively

realised, it is accompanied by communication campaigns that aim to encourage South African citizens to register and participate in elections.

5.1.23 With regard to the **perceived effectiveness of the Electoral Commission's voter education efforts** in relation to the 2016 Municipal Elections, approximately two-thirds (63%) of voters believed that the Electoral Commission's voter education was 'very effective', 27% indicated it was 'somewhat effective', with nominal shares declaring it ineffective or professing uncertainty. The lowest effectiveness scores were reported among voters in the Western Cape and North West, Coloured and White voters, and those who age 65 years and older. Marginal differences emerged on the basis of sex and disability status, though no significant age effects were evident. The different socio-economic traits of these clusters of voters that provide lower than average voter education effectiveness ratings seem to suggest that a differentiated and targeted set of civic and democracy education interventions may be required in order to improve the reach and perceived value of the Electoral Commission's labours in this aspect of its operations.

5.1.24 In respect of evaluations of the **usefulness of different information sources in providing information about voting**, civic and democracy education via radio and television were considered by the voting public as the most useful information sources about voting, while posters and billboards, political parties, newspapers, and pamphlets also received broadly positive ratings. Moderately lower levels of usefulness were reported in relation to voter awareness booklets, civil society organisations, the Electoral Commission's communication campaign, and workshops. Sources based on information technology such as social media and the Electoral Commission website was found to be less useful than television, radio and newspapers. However, significantly more voters rated information technology more useful during the 2016 municipal elections than during the 2014 national elections.

5.1.25 Despite broad consistency across socio-demographic groups in terms of the relative ranking of radio and television as the most useful and internet-based sources the least useful, a complex pattern of results nonetheless emerges when the perceived usefulness of different information sources is examined in greater detail. Certain groups of voters also seem to generally offer more favourable assessments across all 12 information sources examined. Robust preferences and ratings are apparent on the basis of population group, age and, educational attainment. Social media, interestingly, was found to illicit high usefulness scores from younger and more educated voters. From a voter education and communications perspective, this is likely to be a reassuring finding in part, as the current approach embraces diversity and differential access to forms of communication, with multiple communications channels being actively utilised. Yet, it also means that continual monitoring of

preferences and educational requirements are needed to ensure that voter education and communication campaigns remain suitably adaptable and tailored to the changing composition and characteristics of the voting age public.

Overall confidence in the Electoral Commission

5.1.26 In the ESS 2016, voters were requested to rate their overall level of confidence in the Electoral Commission, taking everything into account. In response, 91% of the voting public indicated that they either strongly trusted or trusted the election management body. We can compare this level of trust with that expressed by the general adult population between 2003 and 2015. A year before the 2004 national elections, approximately three-fifths (63%) of the general population strongly trusted or trusted the Electoral Commission. In 2015, a year after the 2014 national elections, two-thirds strongly trusted or trusted the Commission. Comparing general public trust and voter trust, we can observe that the average voter is more likely to trust the Commission. This result may indicate that electoral participation significantly improves an individual's confidence in the Electoral Commission. Individual experiences of voting procedures and voting stations may improve individual evaluations of the Commission. Little variation in evaluation was evident across different demographic subgroups. Lower than average levels of trust in the Commission was reported by white and coloured voters, those of pensionable age, and those no formal schooling. Yet, even in these instances, levels of confidence generally remaining very high (between 84 and 93%).

5.1.27 In line with the findings across a range of areas of electoral performance, the voting public offers a resolutely favourable final assessment of the performance of the Electoral Commission. The real challenge for future elections is to try to encourage the age-eligible public to exercise their electoral preferences through the power of their ballot rather than through the politics of abstention, and continue to inspire young, first-time voters to turn out on Election Day and cast their vote. Well-tailored voter education initiatives can make a meaningful contribution towards achieving this, though one also needs to be cognisant that such dynamics are also contingent on broader political context and the nature of electoral choices available to the South African voter.

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Appendix 1: IEC Election Satisfaction Survey 2016 Voter Questionnaire



Election Satisfaction Survey 2016 - Voter Questionnaire -



Good (morning/afternoon/evening), I'm _____ and we are conducting a survey on behalf of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). This study deals with issues related to people's participation in the 2016 municipal elections. To obtain reliable scientific information we request that you answer the questions that follow as honestly as possible. Your opinion is important in this research study. In order to answer all the questions we will require 10 minutes of your time. The voting station as well as you has been selected randomly for the purpose of this survey. The fact that you have been chosen is thus quite coincidental. The information you give to us is required for research purposes only, and will be kept confidential by the HSRC. All information provided will not be used against you in any way whatsoever. You will not be identified by name or address in any of the reports we plan to write. The data will be stored in electronic form after being captured from the questionnaires. Finally, your participation in the study is voluntary. If you decide to terminate the interview at any point, you are free to do so.

INTERVIEW DETAILS

Voting Station

Type of area:

- 1 ☐ Urban formal
3 ☐ Rural formal
2 ☐ Urban informal
4 ☐ Traditional / tribal area

Province:

- 1 ☐ Western Cape
2 ☐ Eastern Cape
3 ☐ Northern Cape
4 ☐ Free State
5 ☐ KwaZulu-Natal
6 ☐ North West
7 ☐ Gauteng
8 ☐ Mpumalanga
9 ☐ Limpopo

Interview time

- 1 ☐ 07:00 – 10:30
3 ☐ 14:31 – 17:30
2 ☐ 10:31 – 14:00
4 ☐ 17:31 – Close

Name of interviewer:

Number of interviewer:

Interview outcome:

- 1 ☐ Completed questionnaire
2 ☐ Partially completed questionnaire
3 ☐ Respondent ineligible to vote
4 ☐ Respondent is physically/mentally not able to be interviewed
5 ☐ Interview refused by selected respondent
6 ☐ Interview refused by other person

RESPONDENT'S BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Sex of respondent: (Do not ask-infer)

- 1 ☐ Male
2 ☐ Female

Race of respondent: (Do not ask-infer)

- 1 ☐ Black
2 ☐ Coloured
3 ☐ Indian
4 ☐ White
5 ☐ Other

To which age group do you belong?:

- 01 ☐ 18-24 years
02 ☐ 25-29 years
03 ☐ 30-34 years
04 ☐ 35-39 years
05 ☐ 40-44 years
06 ☐ 45-49 years
07 ☐ 50-59 years
08 ☐ 60-64 years
09 ☐ 65-74 years
10 ☐ 75+ years

Do you have any disability?

- 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No

What is the highest level of education that you completed?

- 1 ☐ No schooling
2 ☐ Primary
3 ☐ Grade 8-11
4 ☐ Matric / Grade 12
5 ☐ Post-matric

1. How long did it take you to get to this voting station?

- 1 ☐ Up to 15 mins
2 ☐ 16-30 mins
3 ☐ 31-60 mins
4 ☐ Over 1 hour

2. How long did you queue before voting?

- 1 ☐ Up to 15 mins
2 ☐ 16-30 mins
3 ☐ 31-60 mins
4 ☐ 1-2 hours
5 ☐ More than 2 hours

3. How easily accessible was the voting station to persons with disabilities/elderly? (e.g. Ramp)

- 1 ☐ Very accessible
2 ☐ Accessible
3 ☐ Neither accessible nor inaccessible
4 ☐ Not very accessible
5 ☐ Not at all accessible
8 ☐ (Don't know)

4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the instructions and signs about where to go and what to do?

- 1 ☐ Very satisfied
2 ☐ Satisfied
3 ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4 ☐ Dissatisfied
5 ☐ Very dissatisfied
8 ☐ (Don't know)

5. Was the voting procedure inside the voting station easy or difficult to understand?

- 1 ☐ Very easy
2 ☐ Easy
3 ☐ Neither easy nor difficult
4 ☐ Difficult
5 ☐ Very difficult
8 ☐ (Don't know)

6. To what extent did the voting procedure at this voting station consider the needs of :

a. The elderly

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

b. Persons with disabilities

- 1 ☐ To a great extent 2 2
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

c. Partially sighted or blind

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

d. Pregnant women

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

e. Women with babies

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

7. When did you finally decide whom to vote for in this Municipal Election?

- 1 ☐ Today
2 ☐ Earlier in the week
3 ☐ Sometime last week
4 ☐ Sometime last month
5 ☐ Before that

8. Are you satisfied that your vote in this voting station was secret?

- 1 ☐ Very satisfied
2 ☐ Satisfied
3 ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4 ☐ Dissatisfied
5 ☐ Very dissatisfied
8 ☐ (Don't know)

9a. Did anyone try to force you to vote for a certain political party or independent candidate?

- 1 ☐ Yes, before I came here
2 ☐ Yes, while I was waiting to vote
3 ☐ No, not at all → **SKIP TO Q10**

9b. If yes, who tried to force you?

- 1 ☐ Political party/Independent candidate
2 ☐ Election officials
3 ☐ A voter(s)
4 ☐ Friends / family
5 ☐ Other (specify)

9c. Did you change your decision on which party to vote for as a result of this force?

- 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

10a. Do you think that the election procedures were free?

- 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ Yes, with minor problems
3 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

10b. Please explain your answer:

11a. Do you think that the election procedures were fair?

- 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ Yes, with minor problems
3 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

11b. Please explain your answer:

12. Do you think that political parties/independent candidates were tolerant of one another during campaigns for these elections?

- 1 ☐ Very tolerant
 2 ☐ Somewhat tolerant
 3 ☐ Not tolerant
 4 ☐ Uncertain
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

13. Are you satisfied with the quality of service that the IEC officials provided to voters?

- 1 ☐ Very satisfied
 2 ☐ Satisfied
 3 ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4 ☐ Dissatisfied
 5 ☐ Very dissatisfied
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

14. To what extent do you think the IEC officials at this voting station were...?:

		To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	(Don't know)
a.	Friendly	1	2	3	8
b.	Cooperative	1	2	3	8
c.	Patient	1	2	3	8
d.	Helpful	1	2	3	8
e.	Considerate	1	2	3	8
f.	Honest	1	2	3	8
g.	Knowledgeable about elections	1	2	3	8
h.	Interested in their jobs	1	2	3	8
i.	Impartial	1	2	3	8
j.	Professional	1	2	3	8

15. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the safety and security provided at the voting station?

- 1 ☐ Very satisfied
 2 ☐ Satisfied
 3 ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4 ☐ Dissatisfied
 5 ☐ Very dissatisfied
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

16a. How effective was the IEC's voter education campaign for these elections?

- 1 ☐ Very effective
 2 ☐ Somewhat effective
 3 ☐ Not effective
 4 ☐ Uncertain
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

16b. If not effective, how do you think the IEC can improve its voter education campaign?

17. Do you think you had enough information about the voting procedures (including registration, location of voting station) before this election?

- 1 ☐ Far too little
 2 ☐ Too little
 3 ☐ Enough
 4 ☐ Too much
 5 ☐ Far too much
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

18. How useful did you find the following in providing you with information and voter education?

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not Useful	(Not Applicable)
a. Newspapers	1	2	3	9
b. Political parties	1	2	3	9
c. Civil society organizations (e.g. churches, residents' associations etc.)	1	2	3	9
d. IEC website	1	2	3	9
e. Formal and informal workshops	1	2	3	9
f. Pamphlets	1	2	3	9
g. IEC communication campaign (e.g. IEC staff, fieldworkers)	1	2	3	9
h. TV	1	2	3	9
i. Radio	1	2	3	9
j. Posters/billboards	1	2	3	9
k. Voter-awareness booklets	1	2	3	9
l. Social media, such as twitter and Facebook	1	2	3	9

19. Taking all things into account, to what extent do you trust or distrust the Election Commission?

- 1 ☐ Strongly trust
 2 ☐ Trust
 3 ☐ Neither trust nor distrust
 4 ☐ Distrust
 5 ☐ Strongly distrust
 6 ☐ (Don't know)

20. How confident are you that your vote will be accurately counted?

- 1 ☐ Not at all confident
 2 ☐ A little confident
 3 ☐ Quite confident
 4 ☐ Very confident
 5 ☐ Completely confident
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

21. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the procedures to check and update the home addresses of voters at this voting station?

- 1 ☐ Very satisfied
 2 ☐ Satisfied
 3 ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4 ☐ Dissatisfied
 5 ☐ Very dissatisfied
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

Thank you for your co-operation

Appendix 2: IEC Election Satisfaction Survey 2016 Observer Questionnaire



Election Satisfaction Survey 2016 - Observer Questionnaire -



Good (morning/afternoon/evening), I'm _____ and we are conducting a survey for the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). This study deals with issues related to people's participation in the 2016 municipal elections. To obtain reliable scientific information we request that you answer the questions that follow as honestly as possible. Your opinion is important in this research study. In order to answer all the questions we will require 10 minutes of your time. The voting station as well as you have been selected randomly for the purpose of this survey. The fact that you have been chosen is thus quite coincidental. The information you give to us is required for research purposes only, and will be kept confidential by the HSRC. All information provided will not be used against you in any way whatsoever. You will not be identified by name or address in any of the reports we plan to write. The data will be stored in electronic form after being captured from the questionnaires. Finally, your participation in the study is voluntary. If you decide to terminate the interview at any point, you are free to do so.

INTERVIEW DETAILS

Voting Station

Name of interviewer:

Number of interviewer:

Type of area:

- 1 ☐ Urban formal 2 ☐ Urban informal
3 ☐ Rural formal 4 ☐ Traditional / tribal area

Province:

- 1 ☐ Western Cape 6 ☐ North West
2 ☐ Eastern Cape 7 ☐ Gauteng
3 ☐ Northern Cape 8 ☐ Mpumalanga
4 ☐ Free State 9 ☐ Limpopo
5 ☐ KwaZulu-Natal

Time of interview?

Time	H	H	M	M
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**At what time did the voting station open for voters?
(Fieldworker observation)**

Time	H	H	M	M	(Don't know)	8
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**At what time did the voting station close for voters?
(Fieldworker observation)**

Time	H	H	M	M	(Don't know)	8
------	---	---	---	---	--------------	---

Did radio/ television or other media reporters visit the voting station?

- 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 8 ☐ (Don't know)

ELECTION OBSERVER'S DETAILS

Which body or institution are you representing?

Have you ever participated in any election observation in South Africa before?

- 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

If yes, which year(s)?

(National) (Municipal)

- 1 ☐ 1994 2 ☐ 1995/1996
3 ☐ 1999 4 ☐ 2000
5 ☐ 2004 6 ☐ 2006
7 ☐ 2009 8 ☐ 2011
9 ☐ 2014

Country of origin:

Sex of observer:

- 1 ☐ Male 2 ☐ Female

What is the highest level of education that you completed?

- 1 ☐ No schooling
2 ☐ Primary
3 ☐ Grade 8-11
4 ☐ Matric / Grade 12
5 ☐ Post-matric

1. How easy or difficult was the voting station to find or locate?

- 1 ☐ Very easy
2 ☐ Easy
3 ☐ Neither nor
4 ☐ Difficult
5 ☐ Very difficult
8 ☐ (Don't know)

2. How clearly was the voting station marked as a voting station?

- 1 ☐ Very clearly
2 ☐ Clearly
3 ☐ Neither nor
4 ☐ Not very clearly
5 ☐ Not clearly at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

3. In what type of building or structure is the voting station situated?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> School | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Clinic |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Church | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> A building on a farm |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Hall | 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Tent |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

4. How accessible is the voting station for ... (e.g. ramp)?

a. The elderly

- 1 ☐ Very accessible
2 ☐ Fairly accessible
3 ☐ Neither nor
4 ☐ Fairly inaccessible
5 ☐ Very inaccessible
8 ☐ (Don't know)

b. Persons with disabilities

- 1 ☐ Very accessible
2 ☐ Fairly accessible
3 ☐ Neither nor
4 ☐ Fairly inaccessible
5 ☐ Very inaccessible
8 ☐ (Don't know)

c. Blind and partially sighted

- 1 ☐ Very accessible
2 ☐ Fairly accessible
3 ☐ Neither nor
4 ☐ Fairly inaccessible
5 ☐ Very inaccessible
8 ☐ (Don't know)

5. To what extent did the voting procedure at this voting station consider the needs of:

a. The elderly

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

b. Persons with disabilities

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

c. Partially sighted and blind

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

d. Pregnant women

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

e. Persons accompanied by children f. Women with babies

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

- 1 ☐ To a great extent
2 ☐ To some extent
3 ☐ To a minor extent
4 ☐ Not at all
8 ☐ (Don't know)

6. Were there any security personnel on duty at the voting station at the time of your visit?

- 1 ☐ None
2 ☐ One
3 ☐ Two
4 ☐ Three or more
8 ☐ (Don't know)

7(a) How many disturbances did you observe outside this voting station today?

- 1 ☐ None
2 ☐ One
3 ☐ Two
4 ☐ Three or more
8 ☐ (Don't know)

7(b) If yes, briefly describe the nature of the disturbance(s):

8. How many disturbances did you observe inside this voting station today?

- 1 ☐ None
2 ☐ One
3 ☐ Two
4 ☐ Three or more
8 ☐ (Don't know)

8(b) If yes, briefly describe the nature of the disturbance(s):

9. How many political party posters were displayed INSIDE the voting area?

- 1 ☐ None
2 ☐ One
3 ☐ 2-5
4 ☐ 6-9
5 ☐ 10 or more
8 ☐ (Don't know)

10. How many political party agents did you see inside the voting station?

- 1 ☐ None
2 ☐ One
3 ☐ 2-5
4 ☐ 6-9
5 ☐ 10 or more
8 ☐ (Don't know)

11. Were party agents allowed to observe all the relevant electoral processes within the boundary of the voting station?

- 1 ☐ Yes, at all times
 2 ☐ Yes, sometimes
 3 ☐ Not at all
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

12. Were the observers allowed to observe all the relevant electoral processes within the boundary of the voting station?

- 1 ☐ Yes, at all times
 2 ☐ Yes, sometimes
 3 ☐ Not at all
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

13 (a) How many times did you see political party activities inside the voting station today?

- 1 ☐ None
 2 ☐ Once
 3 ☐ Twice
 4 ☐ Three or more times
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

13 (b) If yes, describe briefly the nature of these activities:

14 (a) Do you think that the election procedures were free?

- 1 ☐ Yes
 2 ☐ Yes, with minor problems
 3 ☐ Not at all
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

14 (b) Explain your answer:

15 (a) Do you think that the election procedures were fair?

- 1 ☐ Yes
 2 ☐ Yes, with minor problems
 3 ☐ Not at all
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

15 (b) Explain your answer:

16. Are you satisfied with the way these elections were organised by the IEC?

- 1 ☐ Very satisfied
 2 ☐ Satisfied
 3 ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4 ☐ Dissatisfied
 5 ☐ Very dissatisfied
 8 ☐ (Don't know)

17. To what extent do you think the IEC officials at this voting station were...?:

		To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	(Uncertain / do not know)
a.	Friendly	1	2	3	4
b.	Cooperative	1	2	3	4
c.	Patient	1	2	3	4
d.	Helpful	1	2	3	4
e.	Considerate	1	2	3	4
f.	Honest	1	2	3	4
g.	Knowledgeable about election processes	1	2	3	4
h.	Interested in their jobs	1	2	3	4
i.	Impartial	1	2	3	4
j.	Professional	1	2	3	4

18. Overall, how satisfied were you with each of the following:

	Very Satisfied	Satis- fied	Neither / nor	Dis- satisfied	Very dis- satisfied
a. The time it has taken a person to cast his or her vote.	1	2	3	4	5
b. The quality of service that the IEC officials provided to the voters.	1	2	3	4	5
c. The neatness and cleanness of the voting station	1	2	3	4	5
d. The availability of voting material and equipment	1	2	3	4	5
e. Safety and security at the voting station	1	2	3	4	5
f. Secrecy of the votes	1	2	3	4	5
g. Space available for voting and ensuring vote is secret	1	2	3	4	5
h. Supply of ballots	1	2	3	4	5
i. Safe handling of ballots and ballot boxes	1	2	3	4	5

19. Please indicate whether any voter or group of voters lodged a complaint or expressed dissatisfaction about the following at the voting station?

	Yes	No	(Uncertain/ Don't know)	(Not Applicable)
a. Poor service by IEC officials	1	2	3	4
b. Long queues	1	2	3	4
c. Complaint(s) that the voting station opened late	1	2	3	4
d. Complaint(s) about discrimination	1	2	3	4
e. Complaint about incorrect or problematic forms and ballot papers	1	2	3	4
f. Complaint (s) of poor/broken facilities	1	2	3	4
g. Other (specify)	1	2	3	4

20. Did this voting station have the following?

	Yes	No	(Uncertain/ Don't know)	(Not Applicable)
a. Seats / chairs to rest or sit on	1	2	3	4
b. Working toilets nearby	1	2	3	4
c. Drinking water for people	1	2	3	4
d. Facilities for persons with disabilities(e.g. wheelchair access)	1	2	3	4

Thank you for your co-operation

Appendix Tables

Appendix Table 1: Percentage reporting that coercion resulted in a change of decision over which political party to vote for, by socio-demographic attributes of voters (percentage of all voters)

	2009	2011	2014	2016	Changes over time	Nature of significant changes over time
South Africa	0.7	1.0	1.3	2.5	***	2016 > rest; 2014 > 2009
Province	***	***	***	***		
Western Cape	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	n.s.	...
Eastern Cape	1.3	0.4	0.8	1.2	**	2009>2011
Northern Cape	0.9	0.2	0.9	1.6	n.s.	...
Free State	0.6	2.7	0.6	3.0	***	2016, 2011 > 2009, 2014
KwaZulu-Natal	0.6	1.8	3.8	3.6	***	2016, 2014 > 2009, 2011
North West	1.6	0.4	0.7	2.9	***	2016 > 2011, 2014
Gauteng	0.4	0.9	1.1	1.9	***	2016 > 2009, 2011
Mpumalanga	0.6	1.0	1.0	1.5	n.s.	...
Limpopo	0.5	1.0	0.2	6.5	***	2016 > rest
Geographic location	n.s.	*	***	***		
Urban formal	0.6	0.8	0.9	2.0	***	2016 > rest
Informal urban settlement	0.9	0.7	1.3	1.7	n.s.	...
Rural, trad. authority areas	0.9	1.3	1.8	3.6	***	2016 > 2014 > 2001, 2009
Age	n.s.	**	***	*		
18-24 years	0.9	1.6	2.1	1.9	**	2014 > 2009
25-34 years	0.6	0.9	1.5	3.2	***	2016 > rest; 2014 > 2009
35-44 years	0.6	1.0	1.1	2.2	***	2016 > rest
45-59 years	0.6	0.6	0.6	2.4	***	2016 > rest
65+	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.9	*	2016 > 2011
Race	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	***		
Black African	0.8	1.1	1.3	2.7	***	2016 > rest; 2014 > 2009
Coloured	0.6	1.1	0.8	2.3	***	2016 > 2011
Indian	0.3	0.6	1.6	2.5	*	No differences significant
White	0.5	0.5	1.6	0.9	**	2014 > 2011, 2009
Sex	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.		
Male	0.7	1.0	1.3	2.4	***	2016 > rest; 2014 > 2009
Female	0.7	1.0	1.3	2.4	***	2016 > rest; 2014 > 2009
Disability status	***	n.s.	***	***		
Persons without disabilities	0.6	1.0	1.1	1.8	***	2016 > 2014, 2011 > 2009
Persons with disabilities	1.7	1.2	3.4	8.4	***	2016 > rest; 2014 > 2011
Education level	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	***		
No school	1.4	1.0	1.9	6.3	***	2016 > rest
Primary	0.8	1.2	1.5	2.1	**	2016 > 2009
Grades 8-11	0.6	0.9	1.2	2.3	***	2016 > rest
Matric or equivalent	0.7	1.2	1.3	2.1	***	2016 > rest
Tertiary	0.6	0.8	1.2	1.3	***	No differences significant

Source: HSRC Election Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2016.

Note: Figures shaded in green indicate satisfaction levels above the national average. Statistically significant differences were determined by means of Oneway ANOVA testing, with * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ and n.s. denoting 'not significant'. This table corresponds to the values presented in Figure 18.