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Ibhunga Lophando Ngenzulu-Lwazi Kantu

HSRC Human Sciences Research Council

IEC SOUTH AFRICA

IEC Voter Participation Survey 2010/11: An Overview of Results

LOVE YOUR SOUTH AFRICA
2011 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Election House, Centurion

14 April 2011

Presentation Outline

Broad Aims

- To **inform and guide the Commission** in its plans, policies and practices in order to assist the Commission **to implement its mandate optimally.**

- **To evaluate voting behaviour** in South Africa.

- To assess the **perceptions of voters** on the **performance of municipal government** as it impacts on voter participation.

- To determine people's **interest** in, and **perceptions** of, the forthcoming **local government elections**.

- To examine the electoral and political involvement of specific groups such as **women, youth and persons with disabilities**.

- To evaluate **public opinion of the IEC** and measure people's **trust** in the Commission.

Research Methodology

- ## National Survey
  - 500 Enumerated Areas (EAs) were randomly selected
  - 7 Households were selected from each EA
  - Respondents aged 16 and older were selected from these households
  - Face-to-face interviews were conducted in the language of the respondents' choice
 - 3214 realised interviews were conducted across South Africa

- ## Focus Group Discussions
  - A total of 9 focus group discussions were conducted across South Africa
  - Groups comprised specific targeted categories of participants

Focus Group Details

Group Description	N	Location
People with special needs:		
FG1: Black youth (18-24 years old)	10	Johannesburg
FG2: White English/Afrikaans youth (18-24 years old)	10	Pretoria
FG3: Coloured/White Afrikaans aged 65 years or older	10	Cape Town
FG4: Black isiXhosa aged 65 years or older	10	Cape Town
FG5: Persons with disabilities, Afrikaans	10	Bloemfontein
FG6: Persons with disabilities, Setswana	10	Rustenburg
Leaders:		
FG7: Local government officials	10	Durban
FG8: Community leaders	10	Polokwane
FG9: Traditional leaders	10	Durban

Enumerator areas (EAs) from the 2001 Census formed the primary sampling unit (PSU)
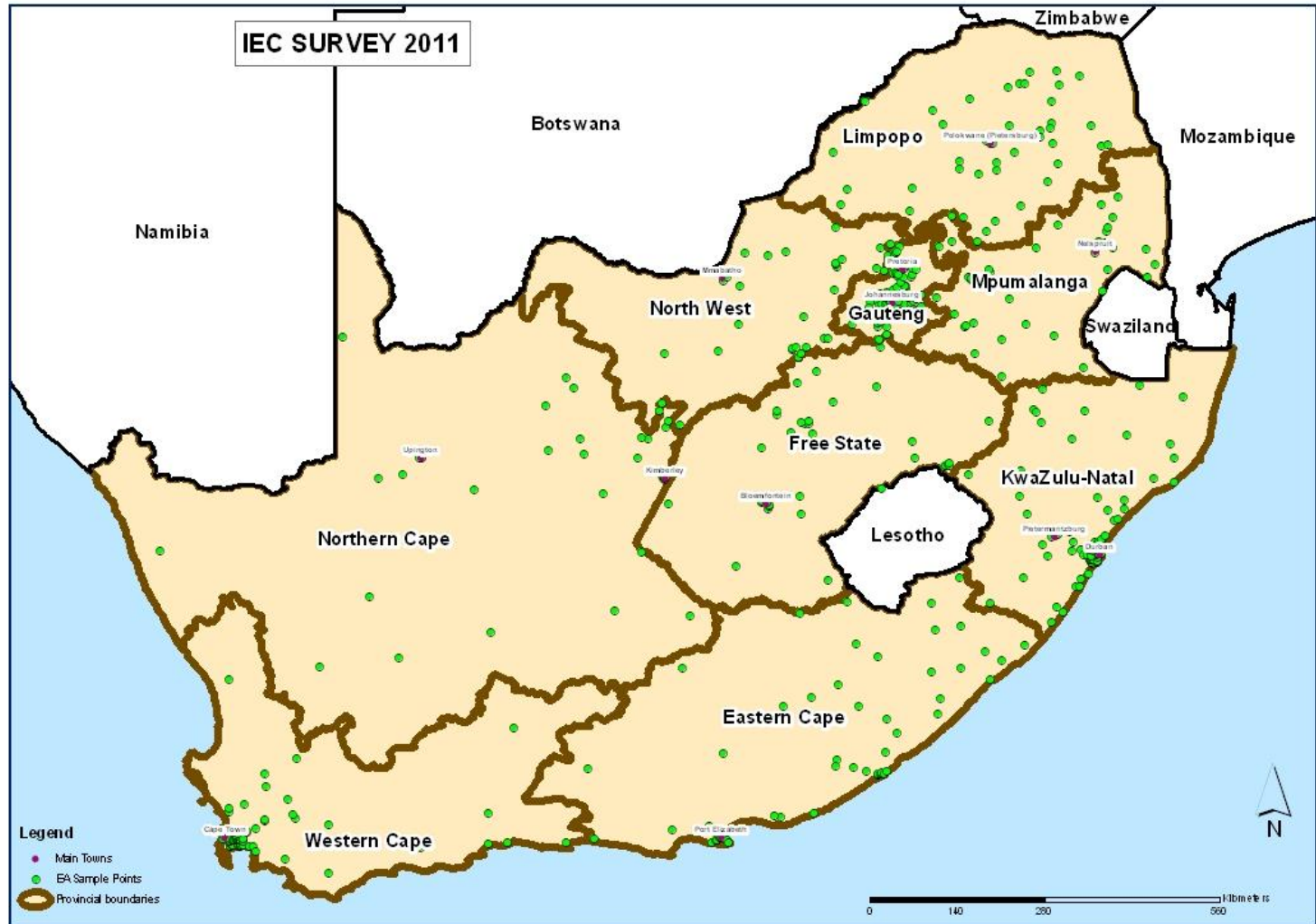
A graphical representation of 500 selected Enumeration Areas.

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Key Findings

Key Findings

Views on Democracy and Governance

- Satisfaction with democracy declined slightly over the past decade, with nearly equivalent shares satisfied and dissatisfied in 2010.

- Low levels of trust in core political institutions with higher levels of trust in religious bodies, the SABC and the IEC.

- Political interest increased slightly from 2004 but levels remain low (42%).

- 58% express awareness of local governance structures such as ward committees, with greater awareness among poorer citizens.

Key Findings

Views on Municipal Performance

- High dissatisfaction expressed with municipal performance (45%). Public evaluations of performance in relation to *Batho Pele* principles influences overall municipal ratings.

- Analysis shows that satisfaction with municipal performance impacts positively on voting behaviour.

Voter Registration

- Overwhelming satisfaction with the registration process (98% found it easy; 58% took 10 minutes or less).

- Political disillusionment is the primary reason given (74%) for not intending to register.

Key Findings

Voting Attitudes

- Previous participation and interest in politics, as well as satisfaction with political leadership, responsiveness and efficacy are all factors that positively impact the intention to vote.

- Political disinterest and disillusionment is the primary reason given (65%) for not intending to vote.

- Party loyalty rather than abstention remains the dominant electoral response to political parties not delivering effectively on their mandate.

Key Findings

Most Recent Voting Experience

- Extreme high levels (over 90%) of satisfaction expressed with all aspects of the voting process, IEC officials and voting stations.

Voting Irregularities

- Very few voters (13%) thought irregularities had occurred during the 2006 local government elections.

- The majority (86%) have never personally experienced any form of irregularity, including intimidation or interference by party officials, among others.

Voting and Special Groups

- General agreement that the needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly are being taken into account in electoral procedures.

Key Findings

Public Profile of the Electoral Commission

- Most voters hold the IEC in high esteem for its efficiency and professionalism. Trust in the IEC increased 19% from 1999 and 2010.

- High awareness of the IEC (86%) but amount of knowledge about the IEC remains limited (56% have little knowledge, 17% have no knowledge).

- Similarly low levels of knowledge about voting processes (47% too little/far too little information).

- Television and radio remain the preferred sources for information.

Key Findings

Voter Education

- Greater awareness of voter education programmes (58%) than actual involvement in programmes (35%).

- Very high satisfaction with content of education programmes (96%) and with the channels used (84%).

Focus Group Results

- Qualitative results from the Focus Group discussions generally confirm the findings of the quantitative survey.
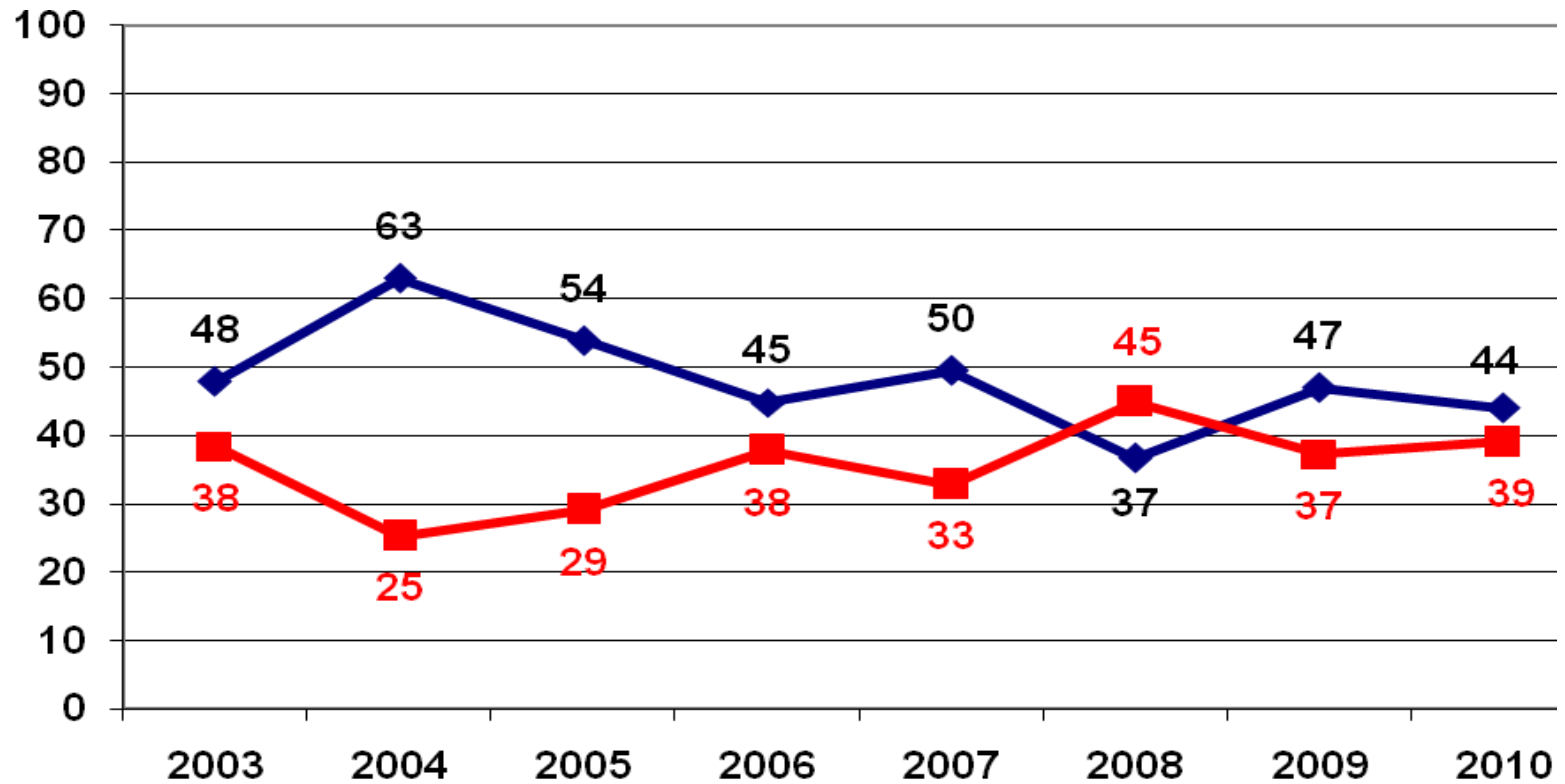
Views on Democracy and Governance

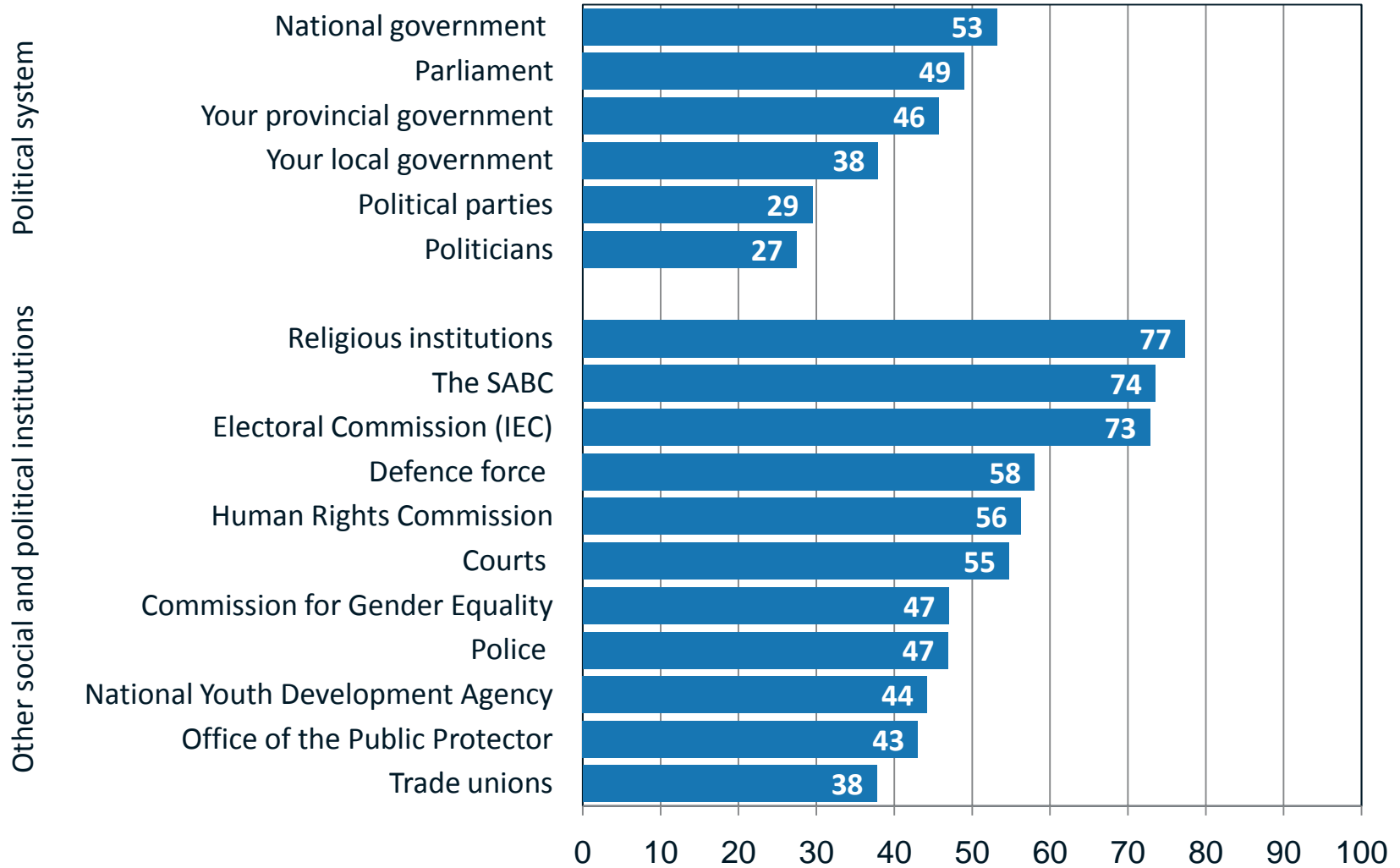# Satisfaction with Democracy 2003-2010 (%)

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy is working in South Africa?
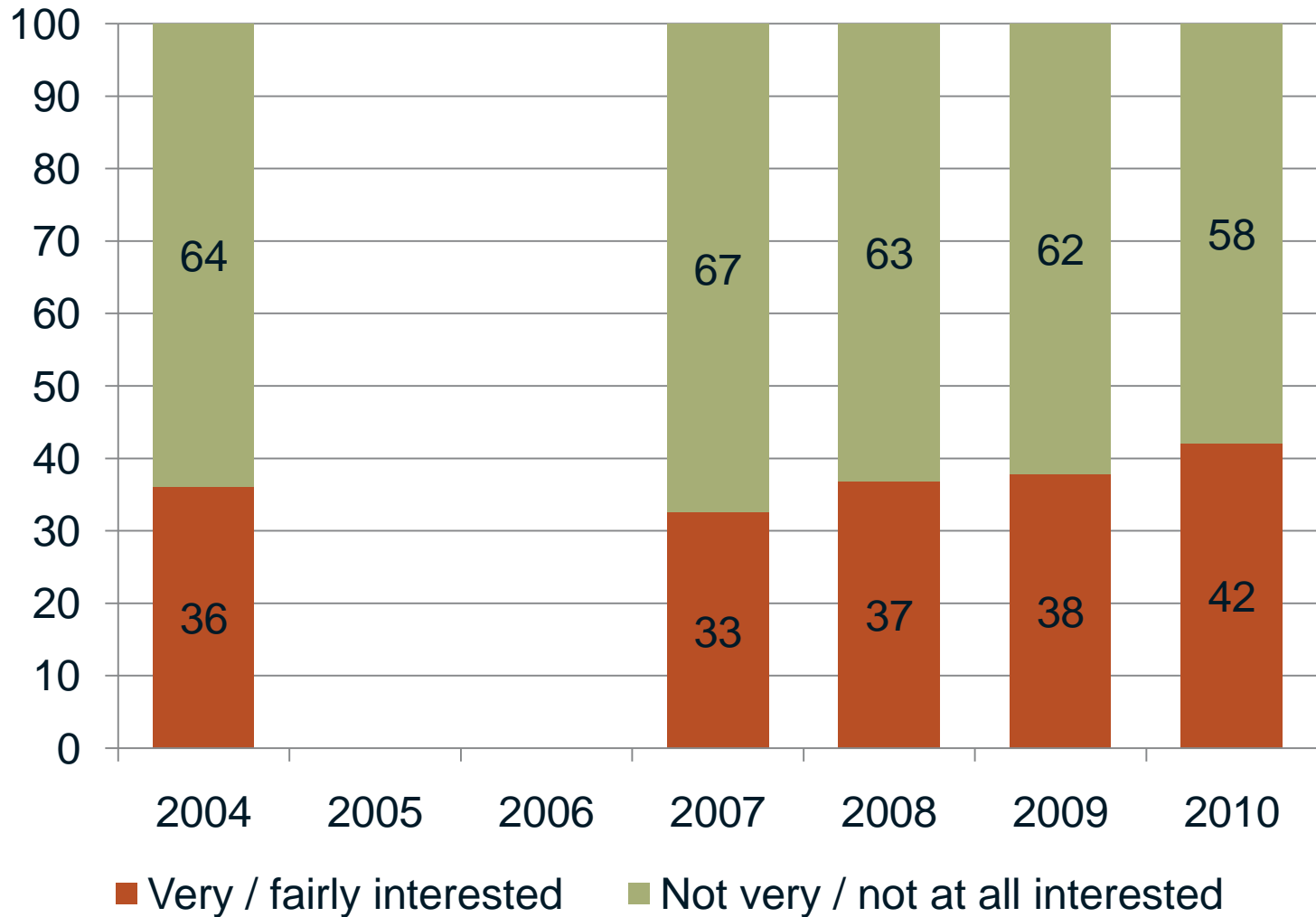

Satisfied: 48 (2003), 63 (2004), 54 (2005), 45 (2006), 50 (2007), 37 (2008), 47 (2009), 44 (2010)

Dissatisfied: 38 (2003), 25 (2004), 29 (2005), 38 (2006), 33 (2007), 45 (2008), 37 (2009), 39 (2010)

◆ Satisfied   ■ Dissatisfied

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Trust in Institutions 2010 (%)

Political system

Institution	Value
National government	53
Parliament	49
Your provincial government	46
Your local government	38
Political parties	29
Politicians	27

Other social and political institutions

Institution	Value
Religious institutions	77
The SABC	74
Electoral Commission (IEC)	73
Defence force	58
Human Rights Commission	56
Courts	55
Commission for Gender Equality	47
Police	47
National Youth Development Agency	44
Office of the Public Protector	43
Trade unions	38

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Institutional Trust

Percent that trust / strongly trust the following institutions

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Mean
Churches	82	81	74	81	84	81	81	82	82	83	84	77	81
SABC	…	…	…	…	75	73	71	72	…	73	73	74	73
The IEC	…	54	49	63	63	69	65	68	…	67	72	73	64
Nat. government	47	60	43	52	57	69	64	59	52	52	61	53	56
Defence force	48	…	45	49	62	56	59	49	…	56	64	58	55
Parliament	…	…	…	…	57	65	59	55	46	48	56	49	54
Courts	42	45	37	45	50	58	56	52	49	50	57	55	50
The police	42	47	39	40	42	46	45	39	39	40	41	47	42
Your local gov	37	48	32	38	45	55	48	44	34	38	40	38	41
Political parties	30	39	29	27	…	…	42	37	27	29	34	29	33

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Note: green shaded cells represent a year-on-year improvement, while orange shaded cells represent a year-on-year decline. A '…' indicates no data

Political Interest 2004-2010 (%)

Political interest by age (2010)

Youth apathy? – confronting images of the young and the restless

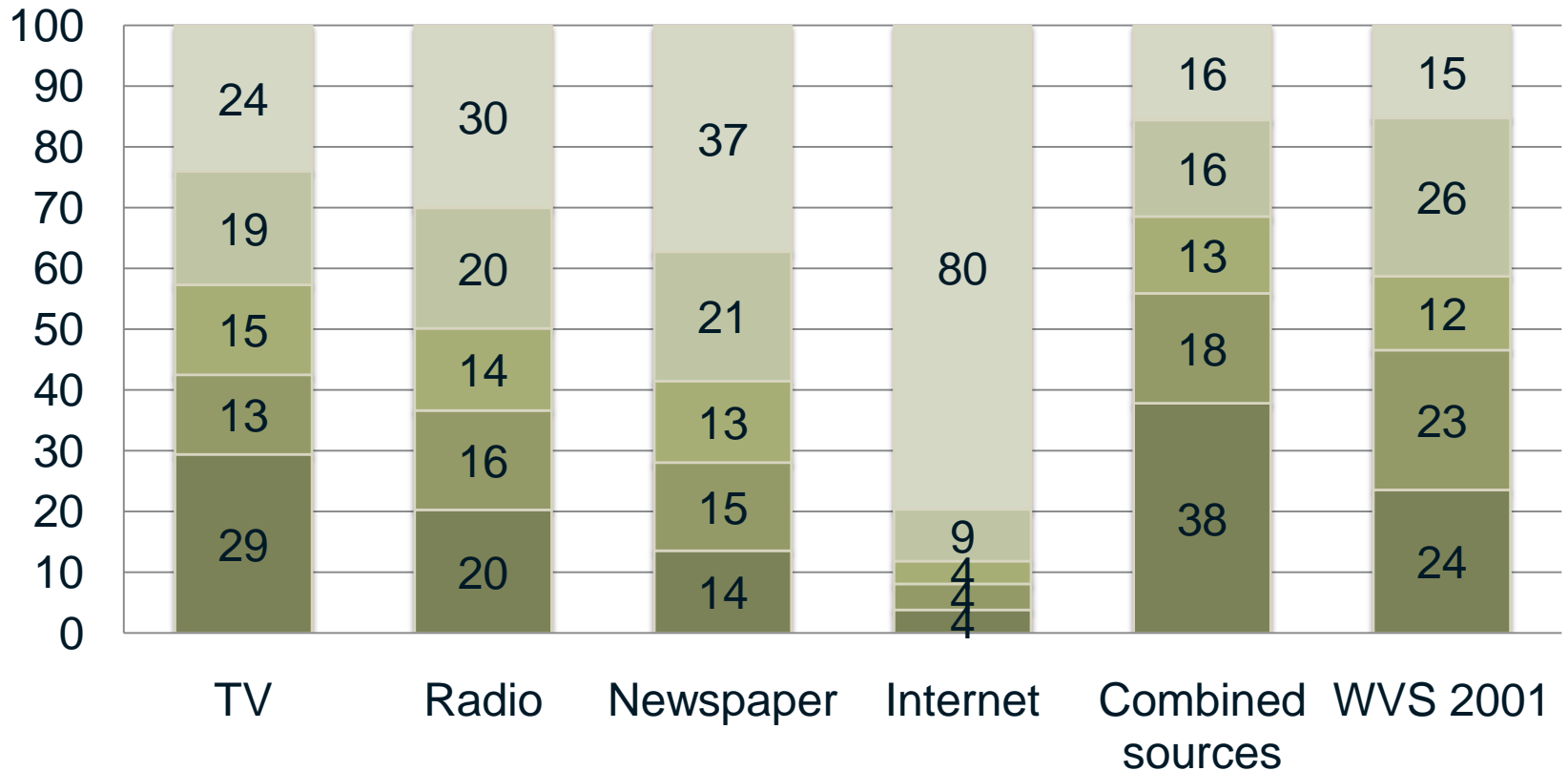| Age group	Very/fairly interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested
16-24	40	27	31
25-34	40	31	28
35-44	45	28	26
45-54	46	24	29
55-64	43	27	28
65+	35	34	31
South Africa	42	28	29
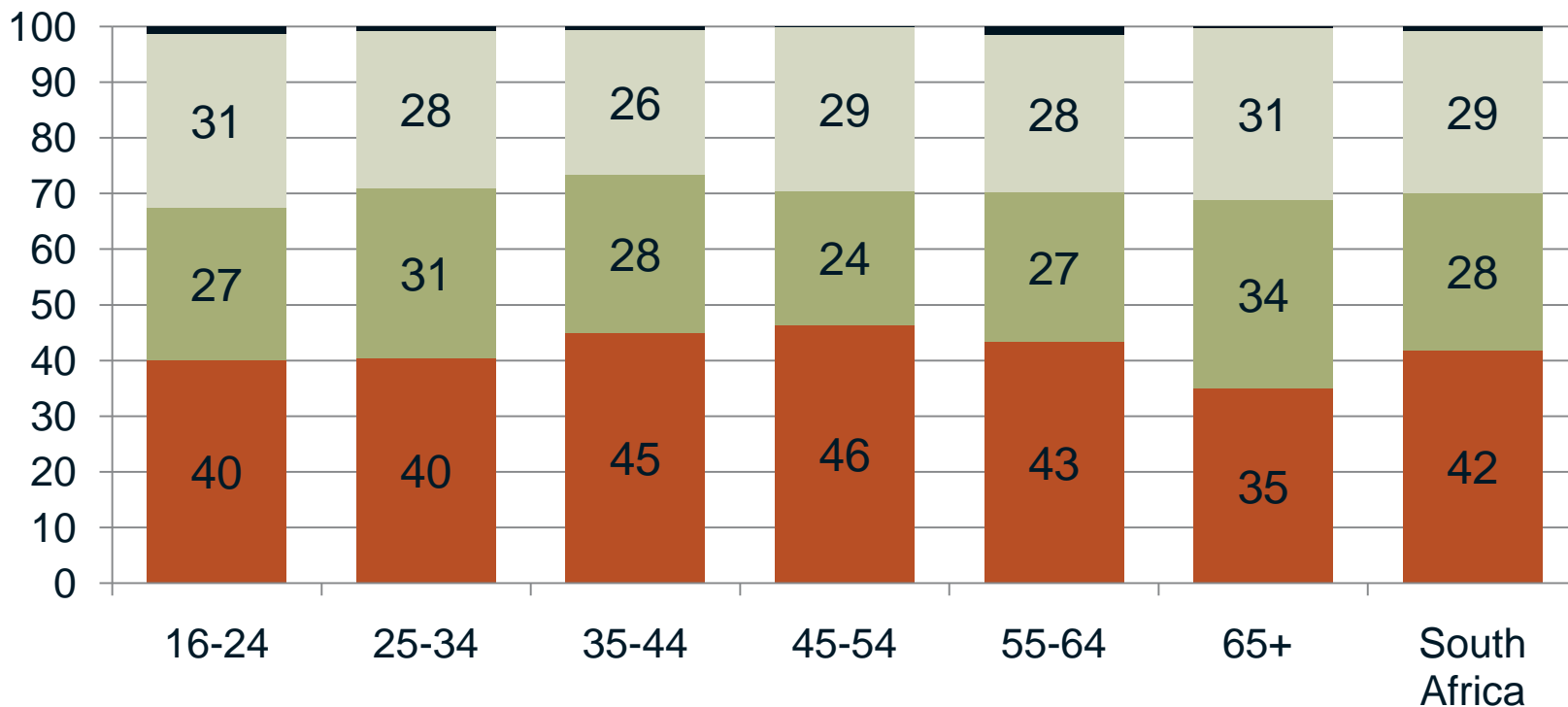
Legend: ■ Very/fairly interested ■ Not very interested ■ Not at all interested ■ Can't choose

None of the observed differences between age groups are statistically significant

Following politics in the media (2010)

Legend:
- Every day
- 3-4 days a week
- Once or twice a week
- Less often
- Never

Category	TV	Radio	Newspaper	Internet	Combined sources	WVS 2001
Never	24	30	37	80	16	15
Less often	19	20	21	9	16	26
Once or twice a week	15	14	13	4	13	12
3-4 days a week	13	16	15	4	18	23
Every day	29	20	14	4	38	24

Local government awareness (%)

	Aware of ward committee in neighbourhood	Aware of ward councillor in neighbourhood	Seen or heard on radio notices calling for meetings by ward candidate
Yes	58	59	34
No	20	28	52
Do not know	14	7	4
Never heard of a ward committee / councillor / candidate	8	6	10
Total	100	100	100

- **An association appears to exist between local government awareness and the intention to vote.**

Local government awareness by respondent characteristics

4-point scale, where:
0=low knowledge;
3=high knowledge

Scale values: 0.00, 0.20, 0.40, 0.60, 0.80, 1.00, 1.20, 1.40, 1.60, 1.80, 2.00

Axes: 16-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years, 65+ years, Black, Coloured, Indian, White, Persons w/o disabilites, Persons w/ disabilities, No schooling, Primary, Grades 8-11, Matric, Tertiary, Low LSM, Medium LSM, High LSM, WC, EC, NC, FS, KZN, NW, GP, MP, LP, Urban formal, Urban informal, Rural informal
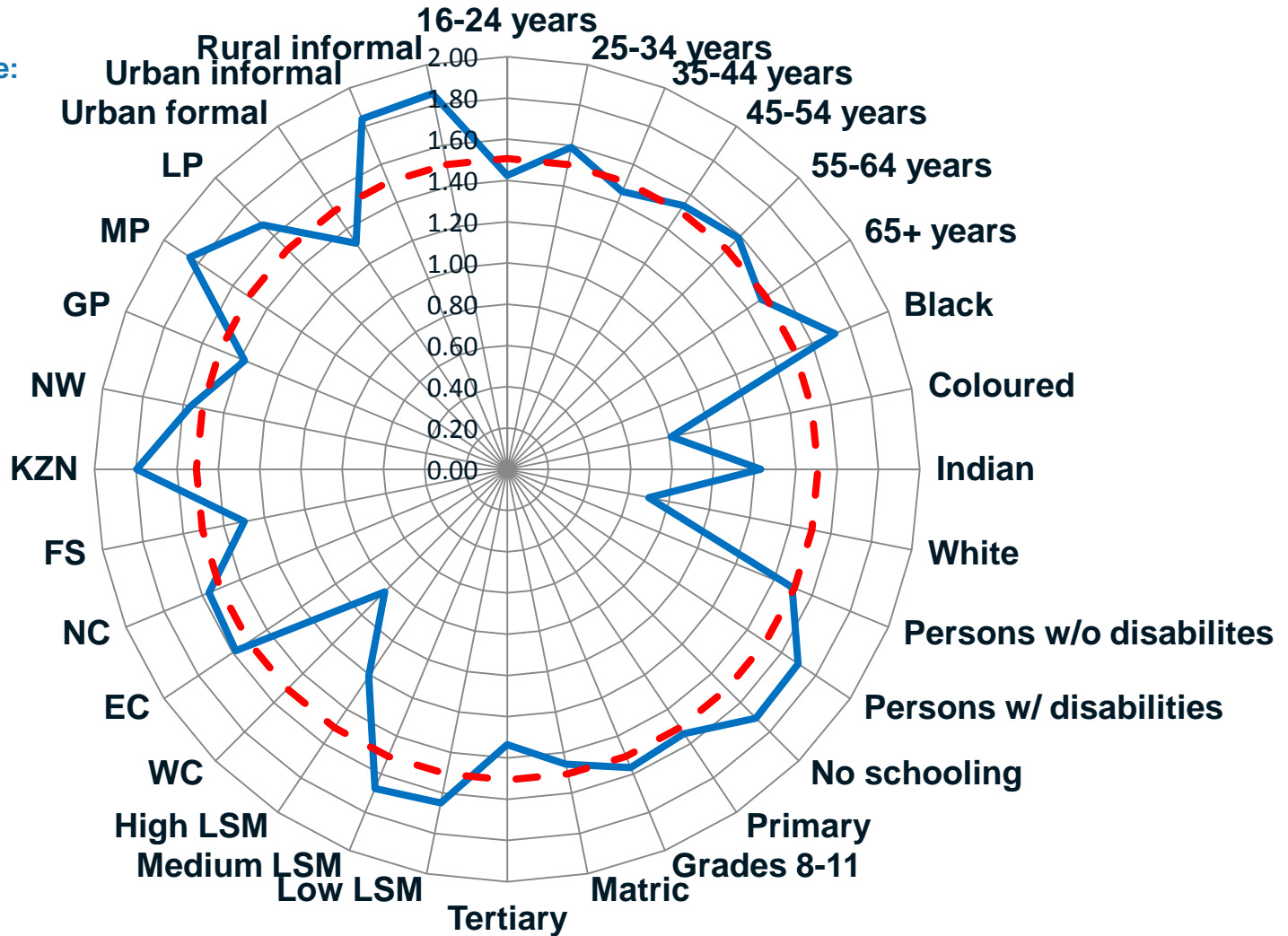
—— Mean local government awareness   – – South African average (M=1.51)

Views on
Municipal Performance

Satisfaction with current municipal performance (%)

Dissatisfied, 45%

Satisfied, 39%

Neither nor, 16%
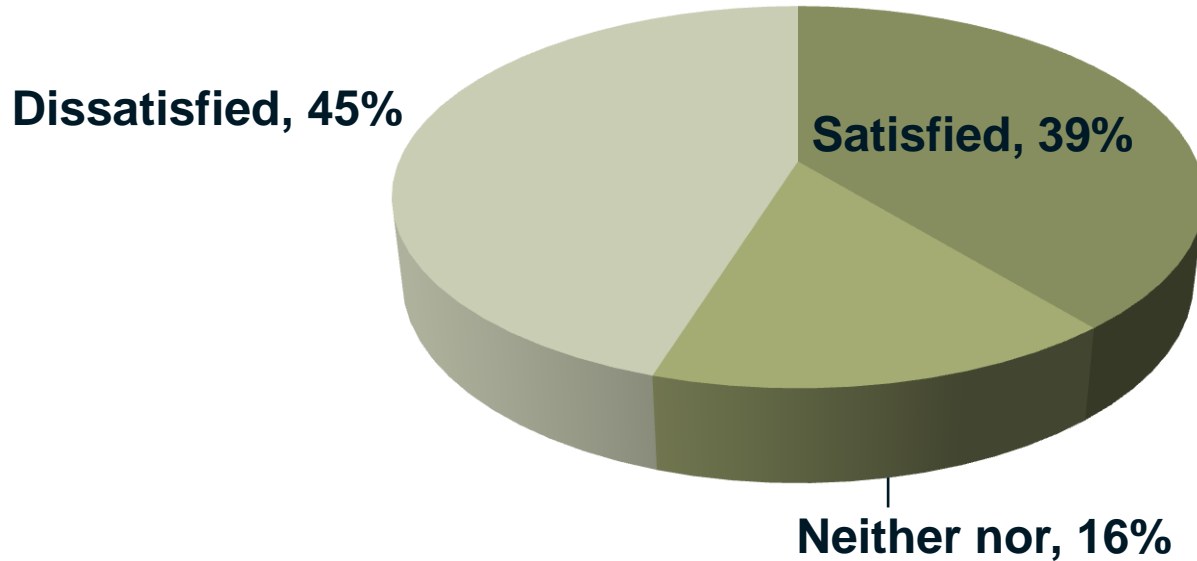
- Disconcerting figures raise a number of fundamental questions ahead of 2011 municipal elections.

- Regression analysis shows that satisfaction with municipal performance impacts positively on voting behaviour.

Satisfaction with municipal performance by respondent characteristics (%)

Socio-economic disadvantage clearly matters for municipal discontent
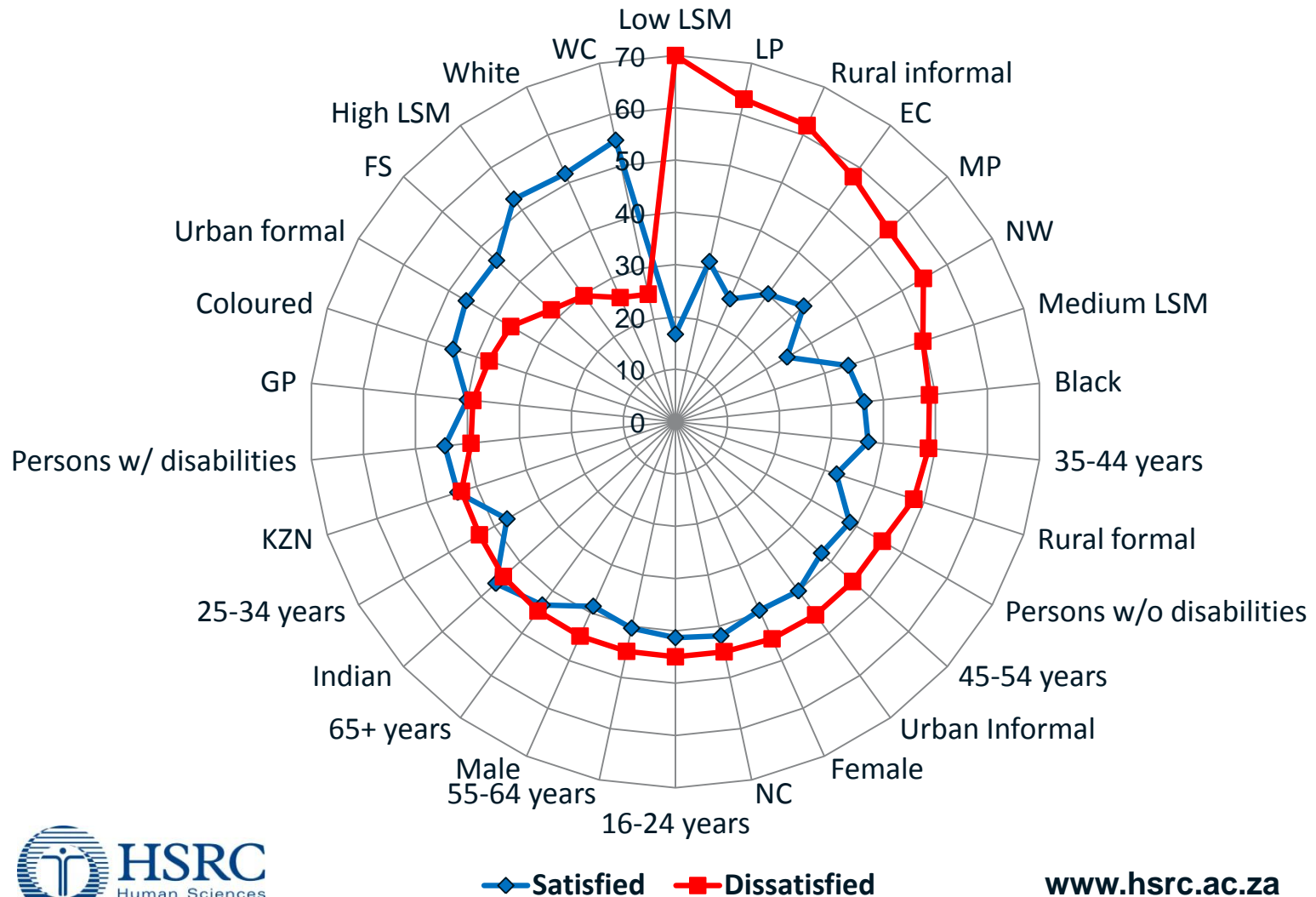
Service Delivery

Percent satisfied with the way that the local government is handling the following matters

- **Batho Pele ("People First") Index** (Roberts, Hemson, Buccus):
  - hoped will provide at least some idea of the correlates of such municipal discontent.
- A set of **eight attitudinal statements** developed to assess public sentiment on degree to which the principles are being implemented by municipalities.
- **Domains** transformed into 0-100 score
- **Composite Batho Pele Index** constructed, also using 0-100 scale.

BP1 - Consultation

BP2 - Setting service standards

BP3 - Increasing access

BP4 - Courtesy

BP5 - Providing information

BP6 - Openness & transparency

BP7 - Redress

BP8 - Value for money

Overall Batho Pele Index (BPI) Scores

Evaluating components of municipal performance: Overall BPI score and sub-domain scores

0-100 scale, where:
0=lowest score;
100=highest score

Category	Score
Batho Pele Index score	36
BP4 - Courtesy	46
BP2 - Setting service standards	45
BP3 - Increasing access	45
BP5 - providing information	42
BP6 - Openness & transparency	41
BP7b - Redress (problem fixed)	40
BP8 - Value for money	40
BP7a - Redress (rapid response)	39
BP1 - Consultation	37
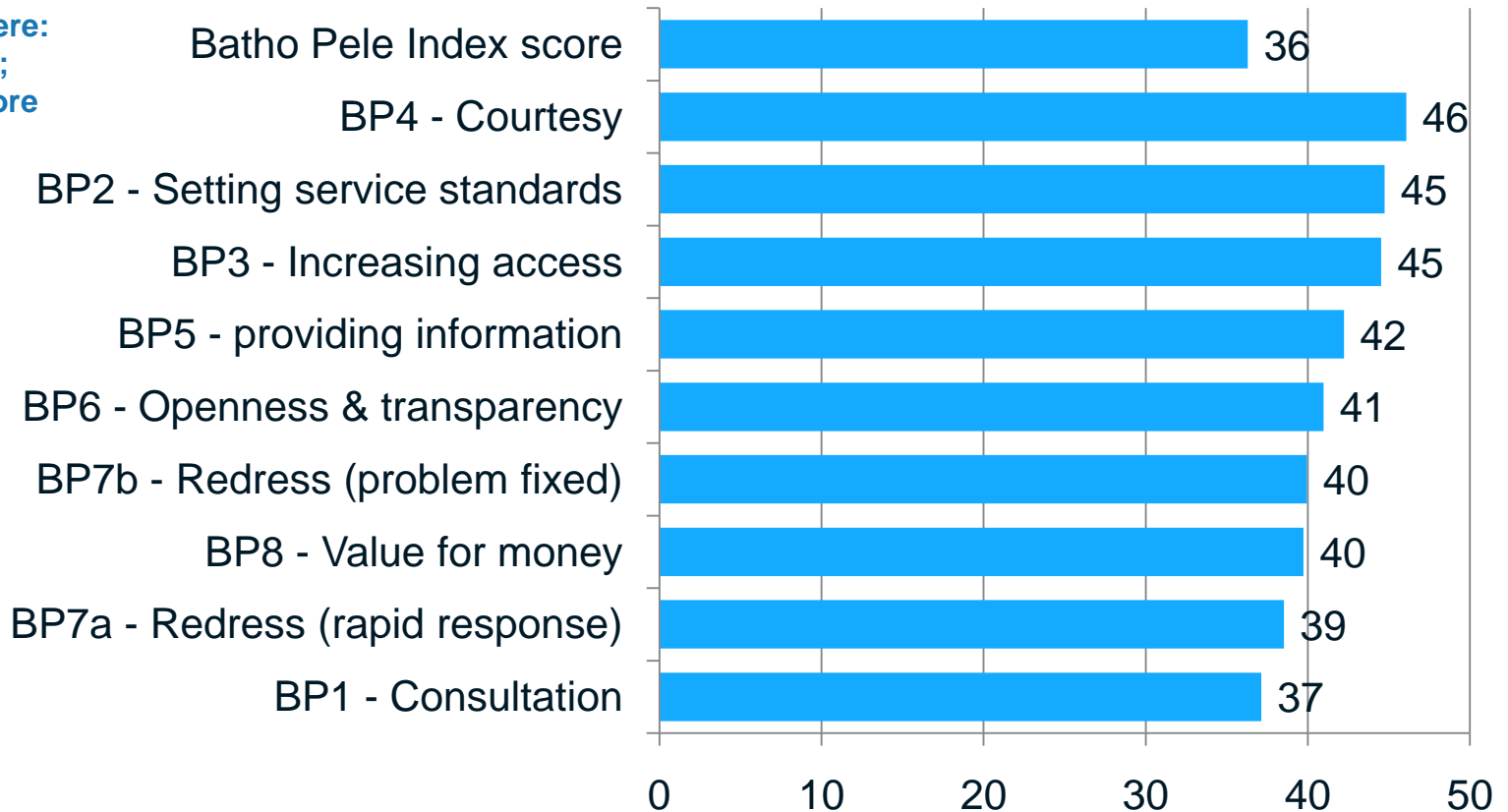
Batho Pele Index Scores by Municipal Rating

- There is a strong relationship between Batho Pele Index scores and overall satisfaction with municipal performance.

  - **Multivariate analysis** confirms this by showing that the Batho Pele Index is a significant predictor of municipal performance

- Therefore, if public evaluations of municipalities are to improve, municipalities need to improve their performance in relation to the Batho Pele principles.

Voter Registration

Voter Registration

Voting age population (18 years and older)	2008/09 Survey	2010/11 Survey
In possession of a legitimate bar-coded ID	98%	97%
Registered as a voter	73%	80%
Of those not registered:		
• Intend to register soon	76%	70%

- In the 2010 survey, young people aged 18-24 make up the lowest share of registered voters (51%), but also the highest share that intend to register (75%).

  - Emphasis on youth participation in elections is right strategy

  - Promote registration from age 16

Percentage of people registered to vote by respondent characteristics
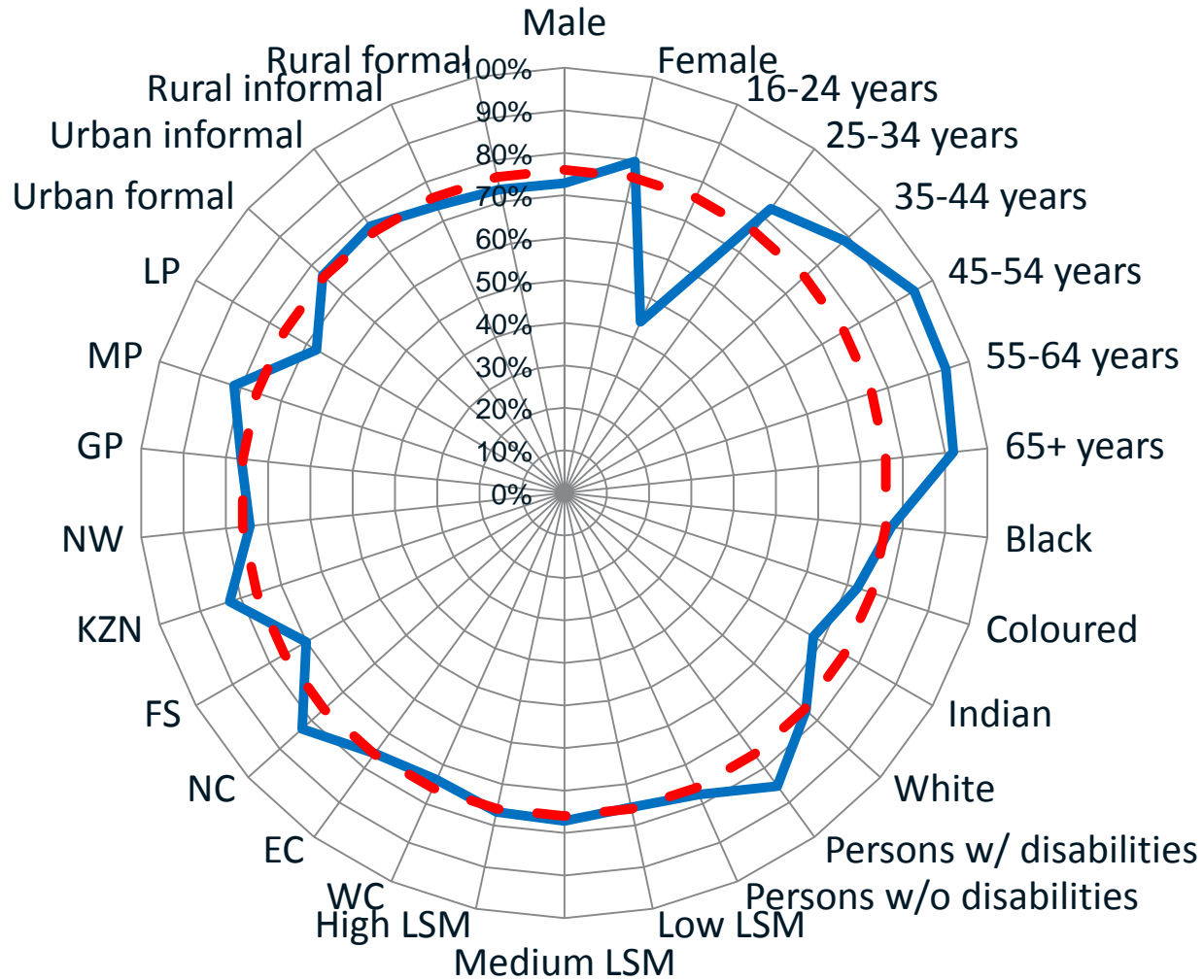
Registered — — — South African average (M=76%)

Reasons for not registering to vote

	Reasons for not wanting to register for the 2011 local government elections (Percent)
Administrative barriers	**3**
Don't know where to register	0
Don't know how to register	0
Facilities to register inaccessible	3
Disillusionment	**74**
Not interested in voting	59
Not interested in any of the existing political parties	15
Intimidation	**4**
Political intimidation	3
High crime rate in my area	1
Individual barriers	**7**
Have not yet got around to it	5
Religious reasons	2
Other	**10**
Total	**100**
Base N	*244*

The registration process
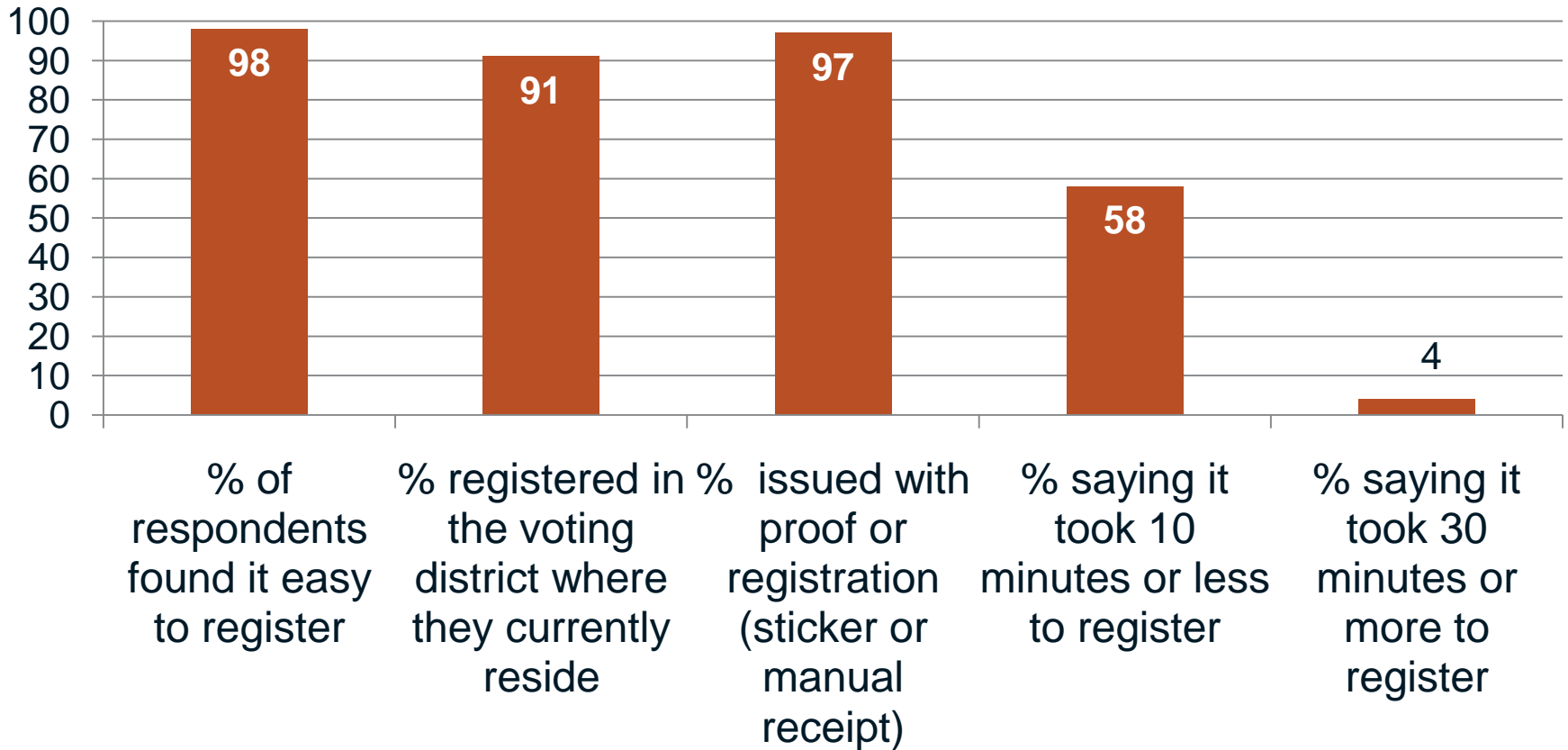
98	% of respondents found it easy to register
91	% registered in the voting district where they currently reside
97	% issued with proof or registration (sticker or manual receipt)
58	% saying it took 10 minutes or less to register
4	% saying it took 30 minutes or more to register

Voting Attitudes

Interest in national and local government elections (%)

	Very interested	Slightly interested	Not interested	Not interested at all	Total
National elections	29	49	13	9	100
Local government elections	25	49	16	11	100

Note: Due to rounding off, row percentages may not add up to exactly 100 percent.

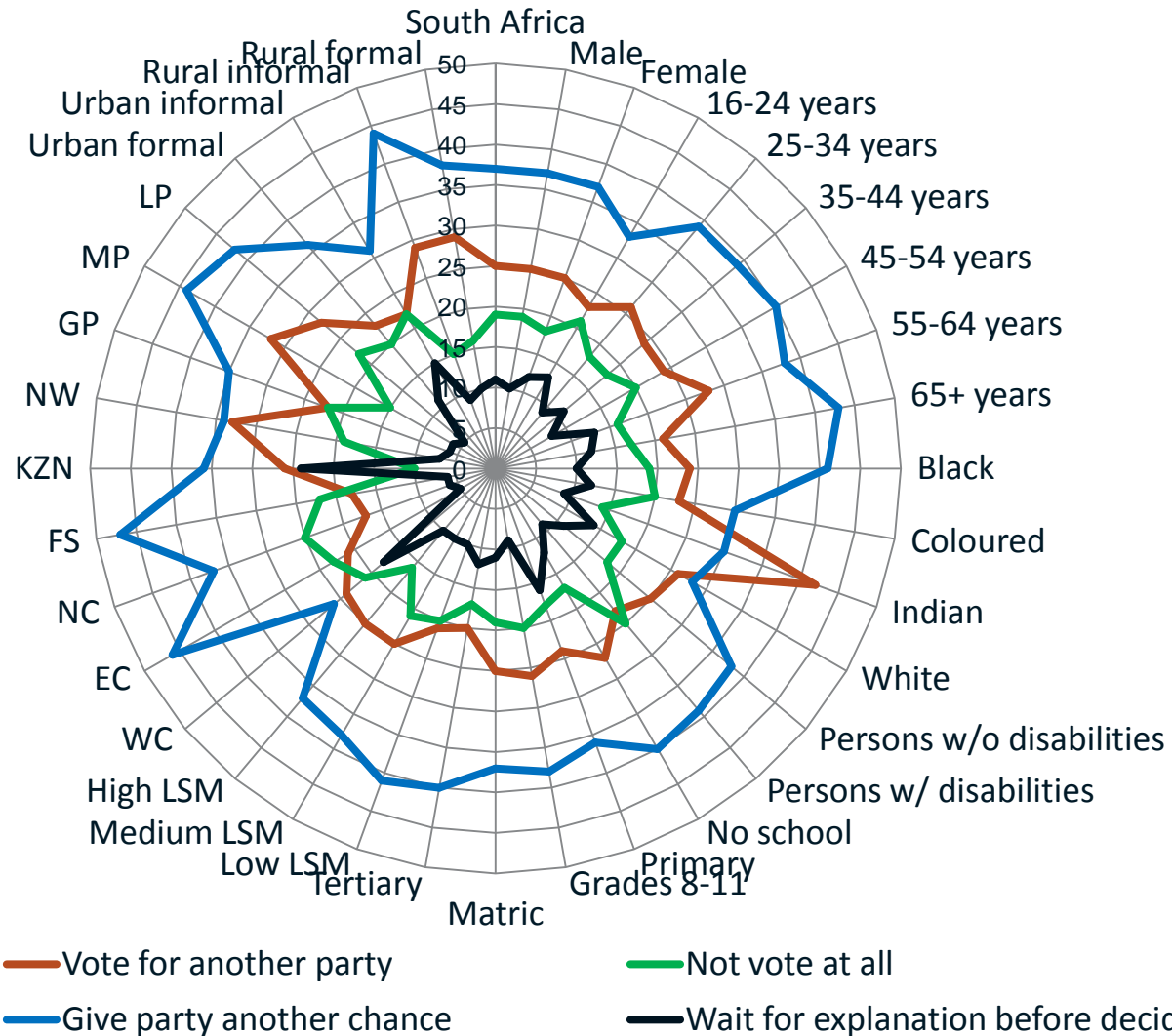# Does it make a difference which party wins the national or local elections? (%)
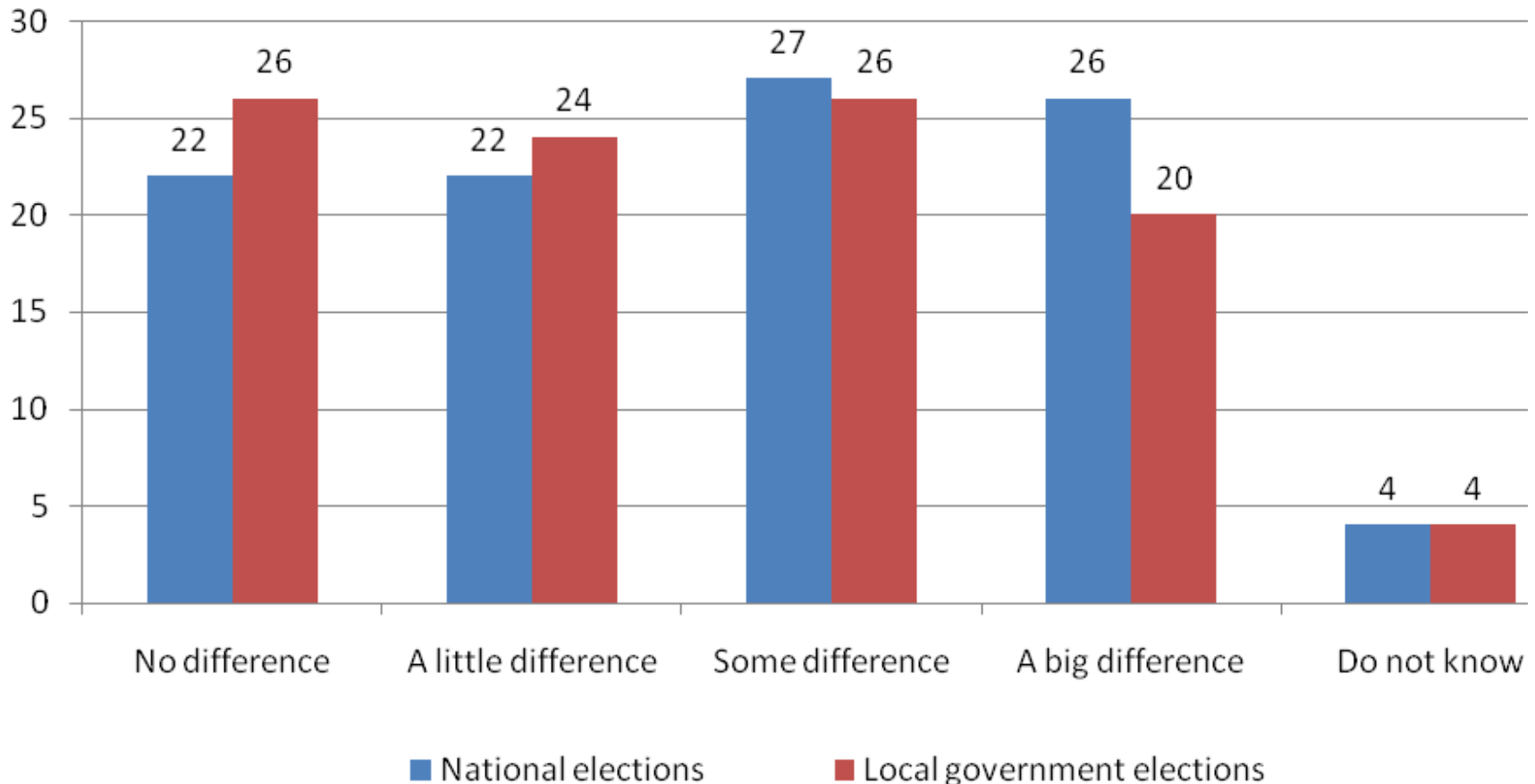
Note: Due to rounding off, row percentages may not add up to exactly 100 percent.

"If the party you voted for did not meet your expectations, the next time there is an election would you…?"
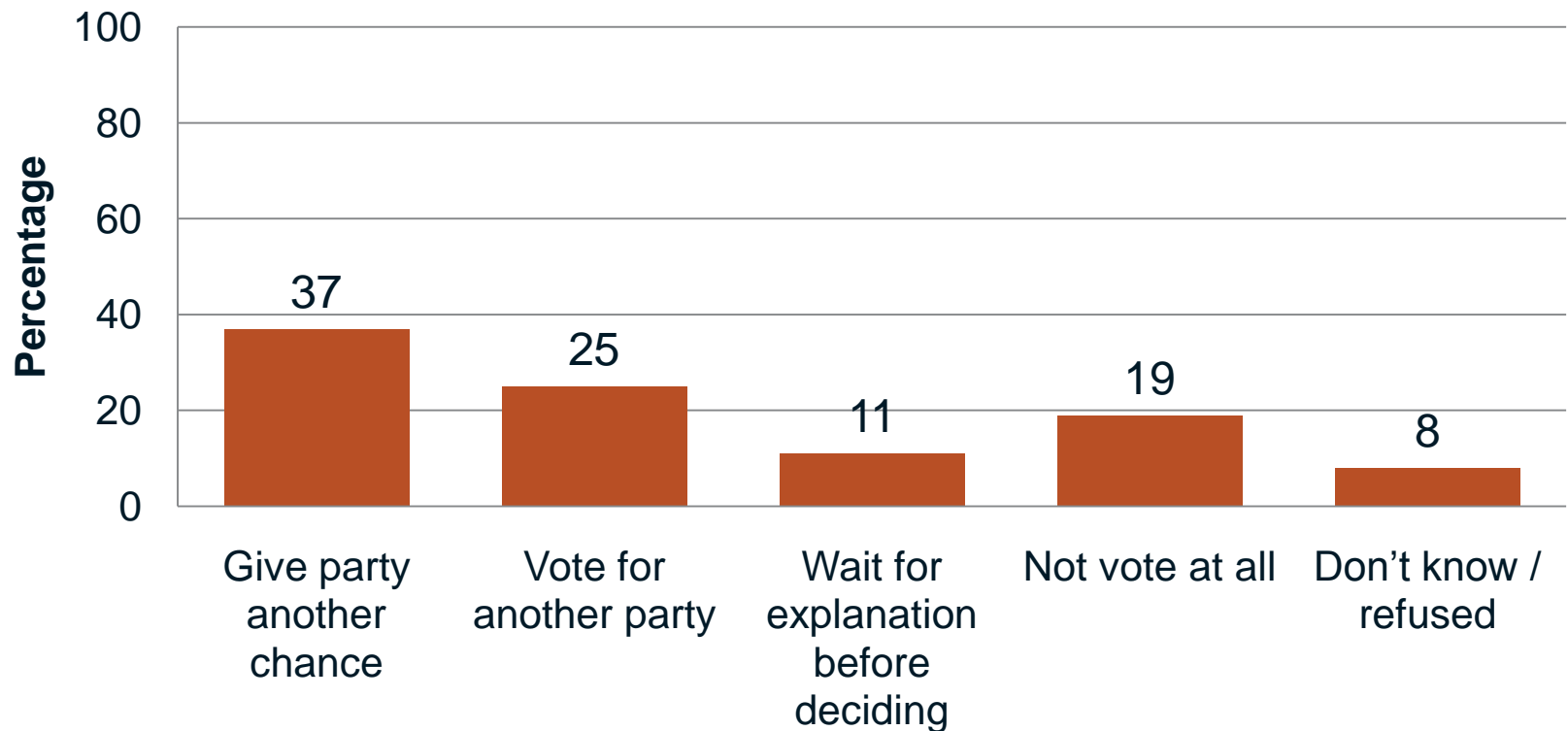
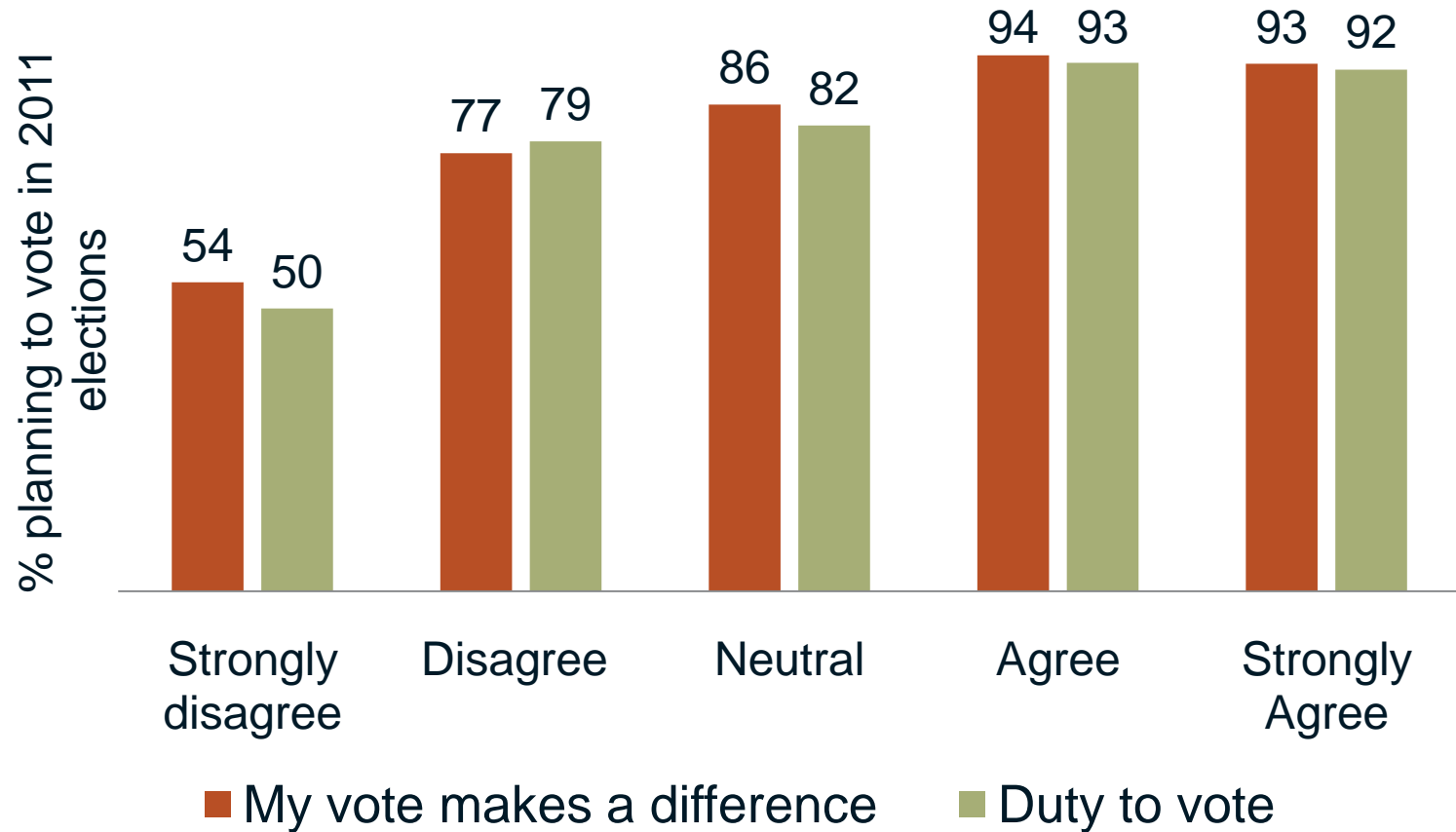# Responses to unfulfilled expectations by respondent characteristics (%)

— Vote for another party   — Not vote at all
— Give party another chance   — Wait for explanation before deciding

Intention to Vote (% of voting age population)
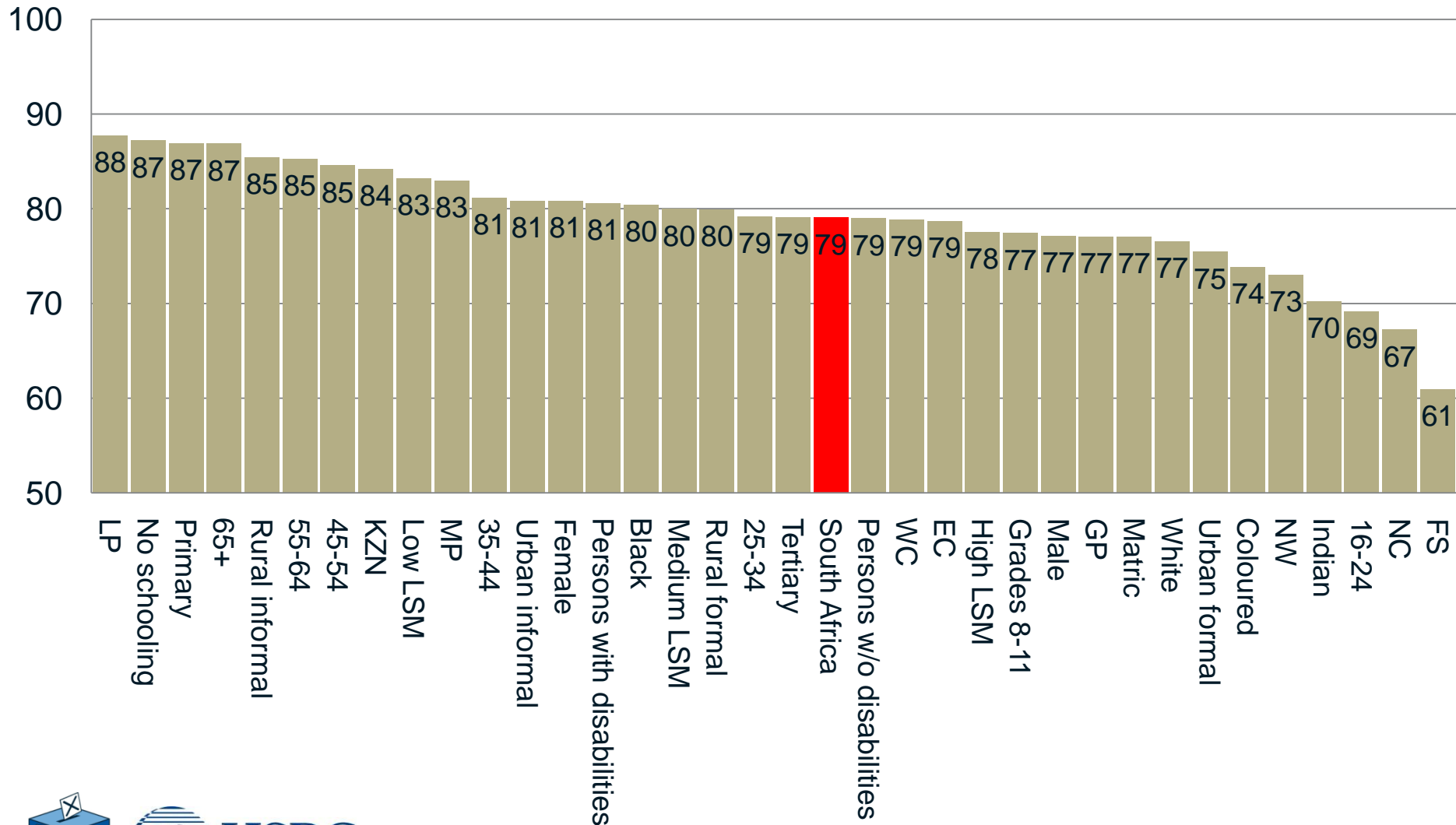
Reasons why I would not vote if there was a municipal election tomorrow

	Percent
Administrative barriers	**17**
Not registered	10
Do not possess necessary documents to register	5
Polling station too far away	1
Very long queues	1
Lack of transport	0
No assistance is given to persons with disabilities	0
Do not know where to vote	0
Disinterest and disillusionment	**65**
Not interested	37
My vote would not make a difference	11
Disillusioned with politics	8
Not interested in any of the existing political parties	7
Too much effort required	1
Only one party could win	0
Intimidation	**2**
My employer would not allow me to vote	2
My spouse or partner would not allow me	0
Fear of intimidation or violence	0
Individual barriers	**2**
Health reasons or sick	1
I am away from home	1
I do not know how to read and write	0
Other	**14**
Total	**100**
Base N	*548*

Role of Political Efficacy and Civic Duty for Voting Intention

% planning to vote in 2011 elections

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My vote makes a difference	54	77	86	94	93
Duty to vote	50	79	82	93	92

■ My vote makes a difference   ■ Duty to vote

Those who agree or strongly agree that their vote makes a difference or that it is their duty to vote are much more likely to declare an intention to vote than those who disagree.

Voting Preferences

Election day

- 34% prefer elections on a **normal working day**, 36% prefer election day to be declared a **public holiday**, 26% prefer a weekend.

Minimum voting age

- 63% is in favour of retaining the **minimum voting age at 18 years**, 25% believe it should be lowered to 16, 8% argue for raising the eligibility criterion.

Electronic voting

- 59% express **confidence in IEC's ability** to implement electronic voting, 16% answered do not know.

- 56% believe **e-voting is a good thing** for South Africa, 14% do not know.

- 47% think e-voting may introduce more **electoral fraud**, 17% do not know.

Percent reporting 'do not know' to electronic voting questions
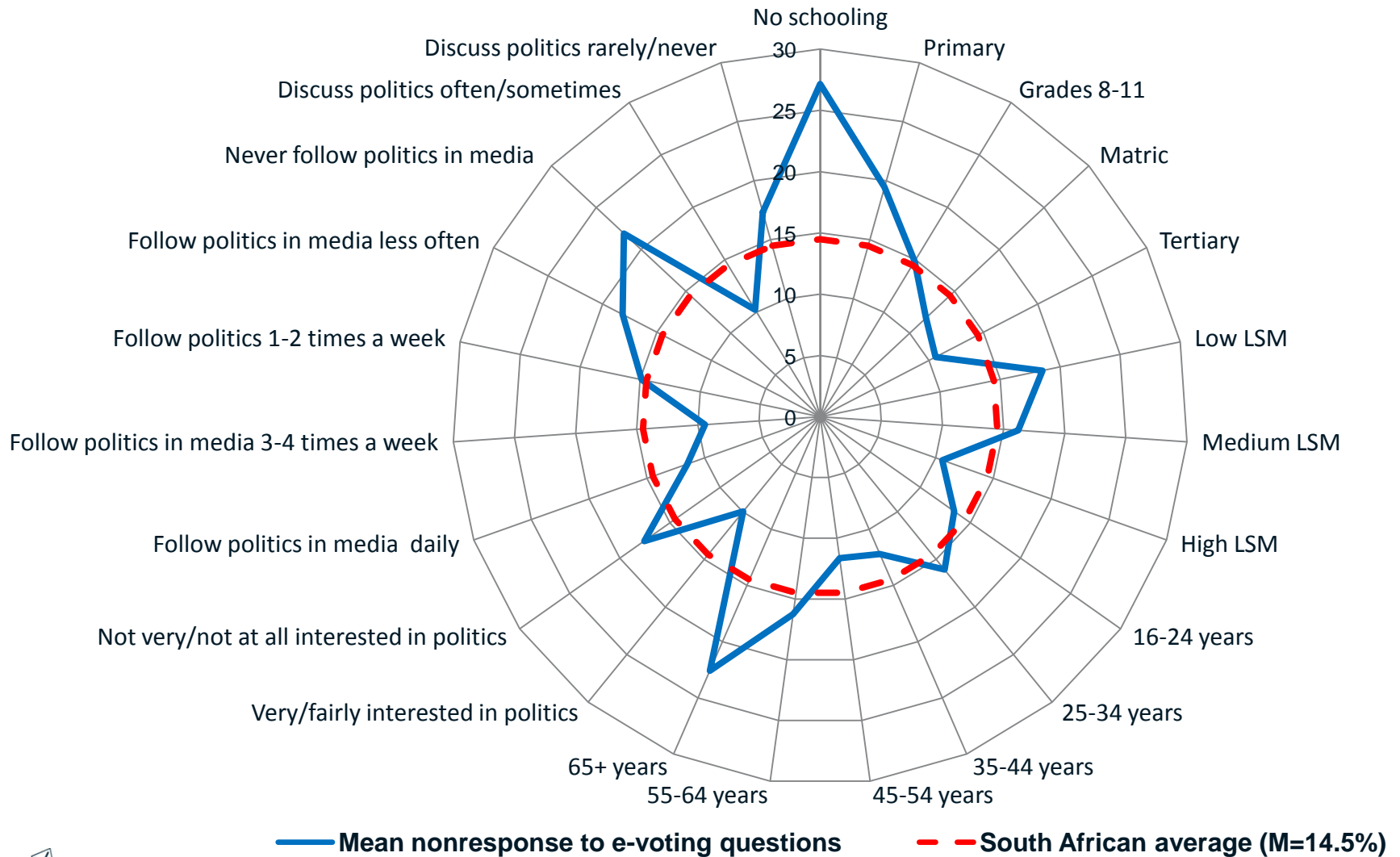
Mean nonresponse to e-voting questions — South African average (M=14.5%)

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Most Recent Voting Experience

# General satisfaction with the most recent voting experience (row %)

How satisfied/ dissatisfied were you with:	Very / fairly satisfied	Neither nor	Very / fairly dissatisfied	Don't know	Mean score (1-5)
Secrecy of your vote	90	7	1	1	4.30
The instructions and signage	88	8	3	1	4.16
The money it cost you to get to the voting station	82	10	5	2	4.08
The time to get to the voting station	90	3	7	0	4.06
The time it took to vote	83	8	9	0	3.97
Conduct of pol. party agents outside the voting station	77	12	7	3	3.91
The time it took standing in queues	71	12	16	1	3.72

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Satisfaction with IEC officials (row %)

Satisfaction/ dissatisfaction with IEC in terms of:	Very / fairly satisfied	Neither nor	Very / fairly dissatisfied	Don't know	Mean (1-5)
Helpfulness	93	5	2	1	4.29
Language used	92	4	3	1	4.26
Friendliness	92	5	3	0	4.25
Professionalism	90	7	2	1	4.24
Official IEC identification of voting staff	91	5	2	2	4.23
Efficiency	92	6	1	1	4.22
Impartiality	86	11	2	1	4.14
Punctuality	87	9	3	1	4.15
Electoral training guide	82	8	3	8	4.13
Conflict resolution	78	10	4	8	4.07
Absence of irregularities	76	13	5	6	4.05

Satisfaction with IEC officials by respondent characteristics

5-point scale, where:
1=very dissatisfied;
5=very satisfied
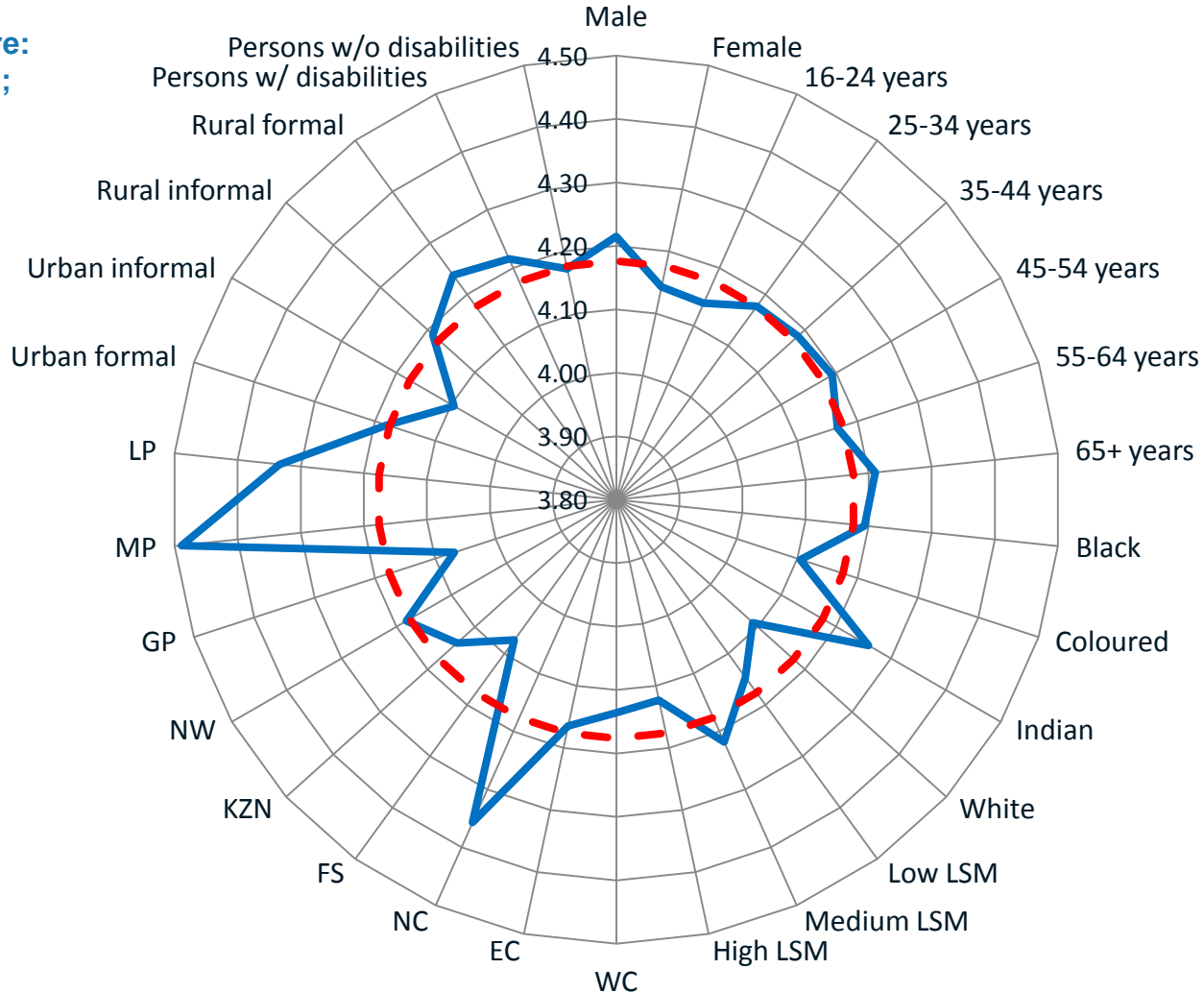
Mean satisfaction with IEC officials — South African average (M=4.18)

Satisfaction with the voting station (row %)

Satisfaction/ dissatisfaction with:	Very or fairly satisfied	Neither nor	Very or fairly dissatisfied	Don't know	Mean (1-5)
Secrecy of your vote	92	5	1	0	4.37
Access to voting stations	95	2	2	0	4.30
Neatness and cleanness	92	5	2	0	4.28
Providing for the elderly	88	5	5	2	4.26
Availability of materials & equipment	93	5	2	0	4.25
Availability of facilities	92	5	2	0	4.24
Safety and security at the voting station	89	7	4	0	4.23
Providing for disabled people	85	7	5	3	4.22
Conduct of observers	85	9	2	4	4.12
Conduct of party agents	84	8	5	2	4.07

Voting Irregularities

Perceptions about the occurrence of voting irregularities (%)
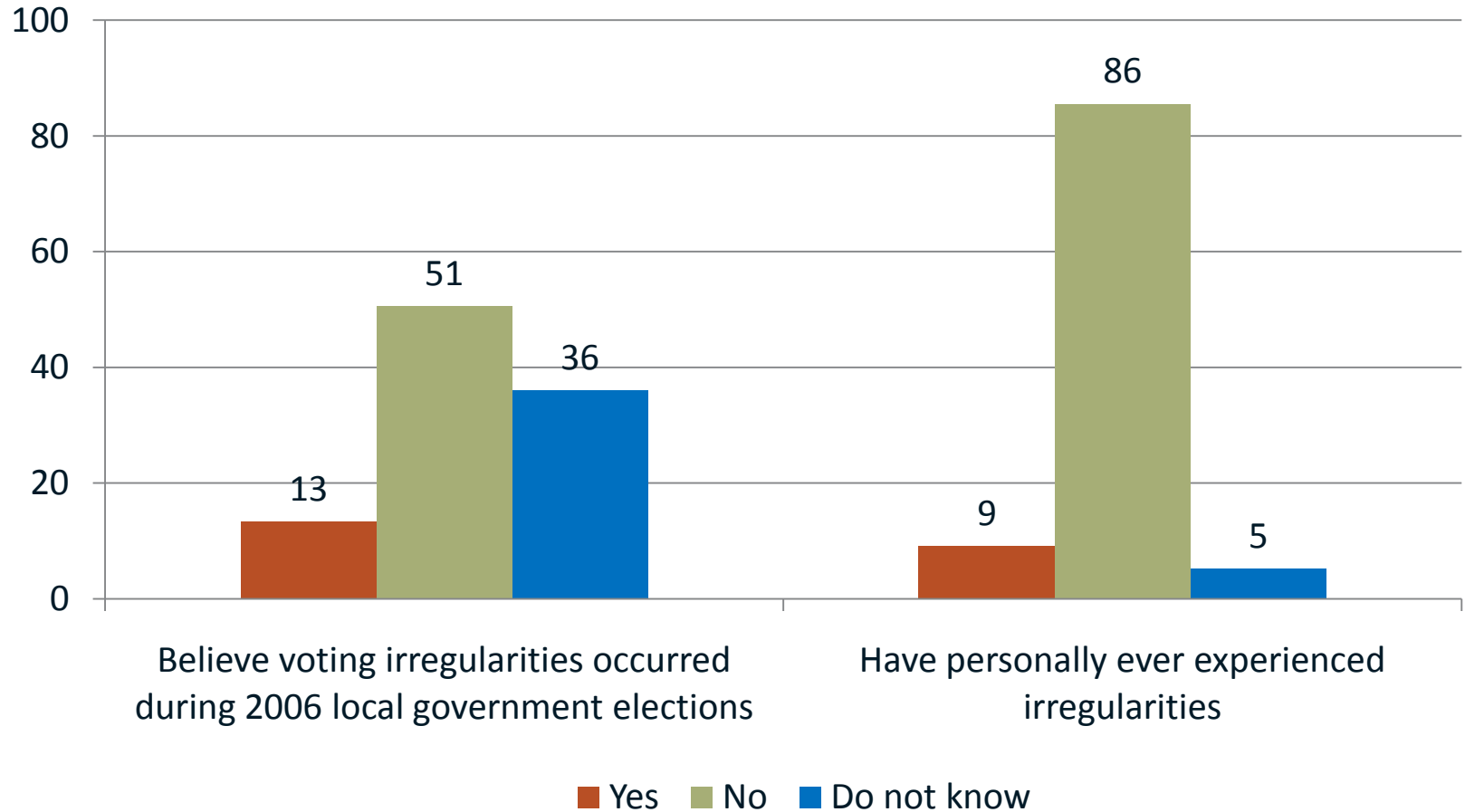
Experiences of specific voting irregularities during the 2006 local government elections (row % and mean)

	Very often	Some-times	Rarely	Not at all	Don't know	Mean (1-5)
Intimidation	3	9	11	76	1	1.38
Interference of party officials / agents	2	6	12	78	1	1.32
Lack of space in a voting station to ensure that my vote is secret	4	5	10	81	1	1.31
Someone turned away by an election official	2	6	9	77	6	1.29
Opening of voting station late	2	3	8	83	4	1.21
Closing of voting station early	2	4	6	84	5	1.19
Opening of ballot boxes before voting stations closed	1	3	7	83	6	1.18

(1904<Base N>1910)

Occurrence of voting irregularities by respondent characteristics

5-point scale, where:
1=not at all;
5=very often
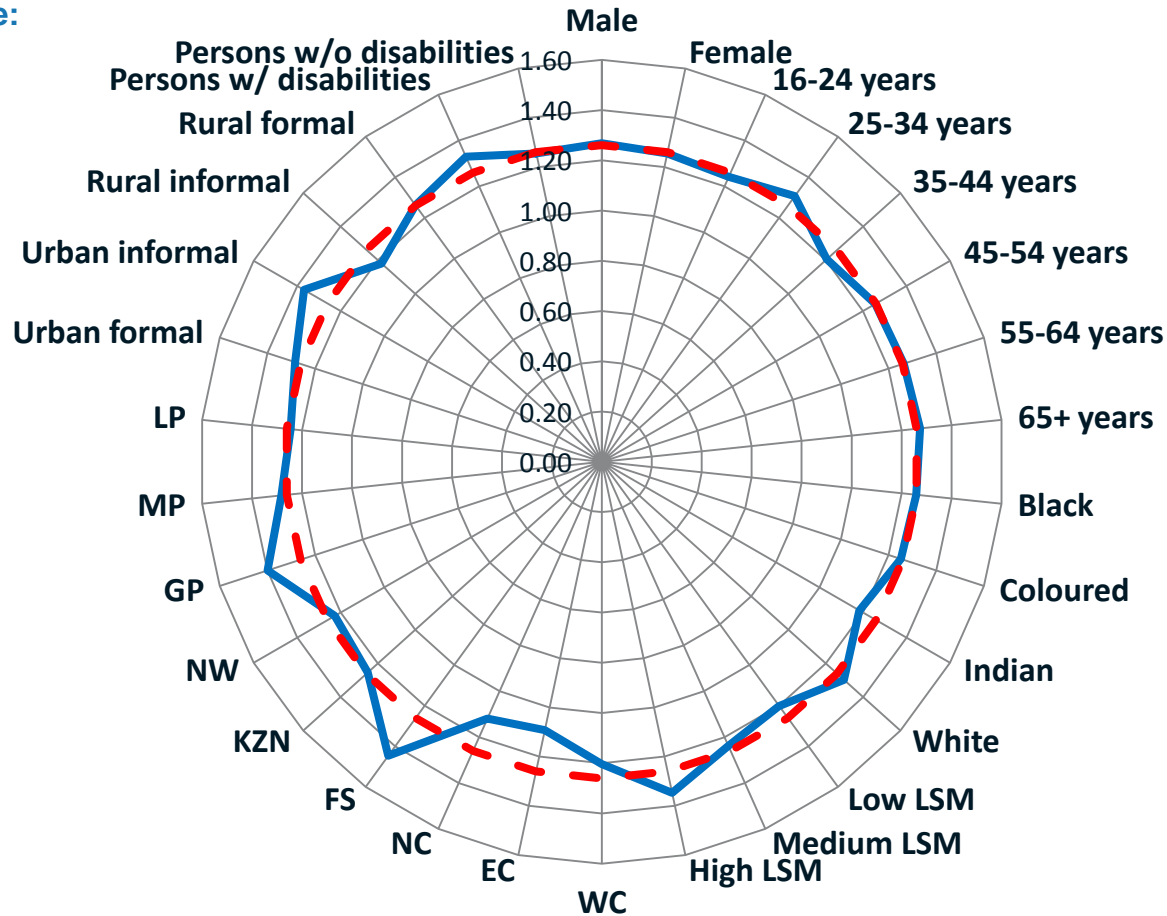
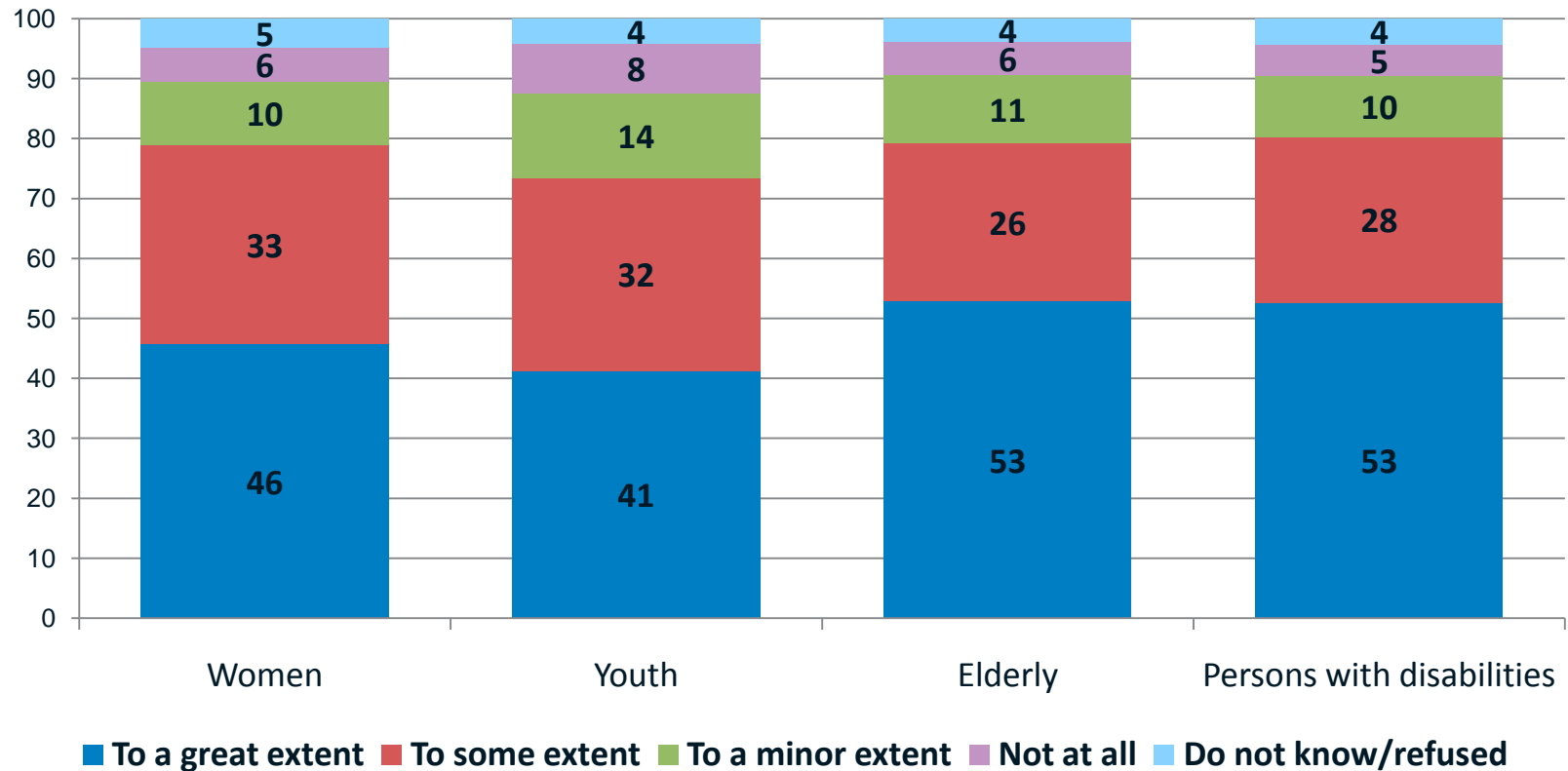Mean occurrence of voting irregularities — South African average (M=1.26)

Voting and Special Groups

Voting and special groups

Perceived consideration of the needs of special groups in electoral procedures and processes (%)

Note: Due to rounding off, column percentages may not add up to exactly 100 percent.

Public Profile of Electoral Commission

Knowledge of the IEC (%)

Heard of Electoral Commission (%)

- Not heard of IEC, 12%
- Don't know, 2%
- Heard of IEC, 86%

Amount of knowledge of IEC (%)

- A great deal 5%
- Don't know, 2%
- Nothing, 17%
- A lot, 20%
- A little, 56%
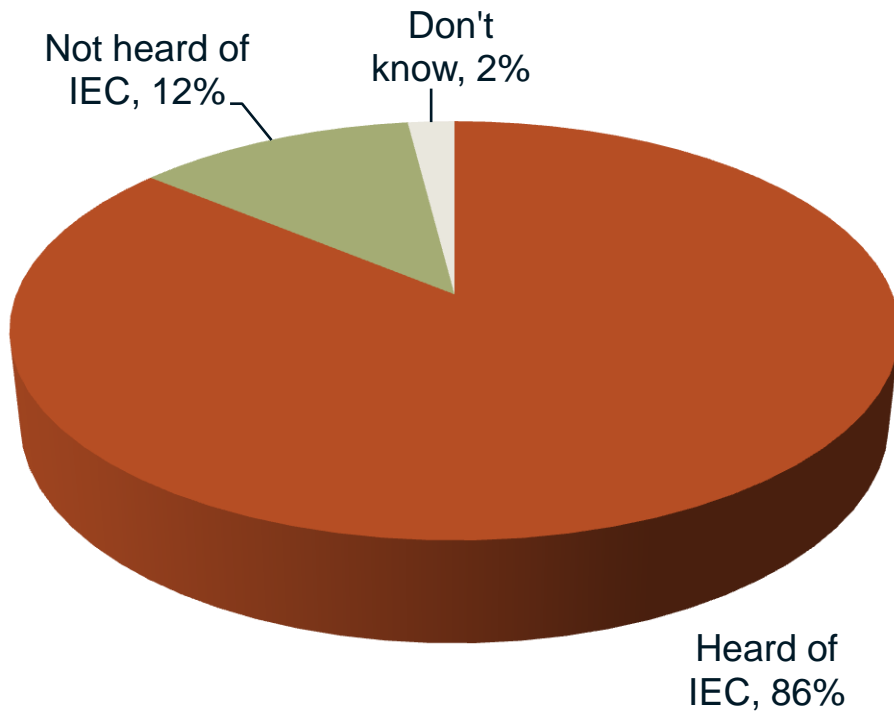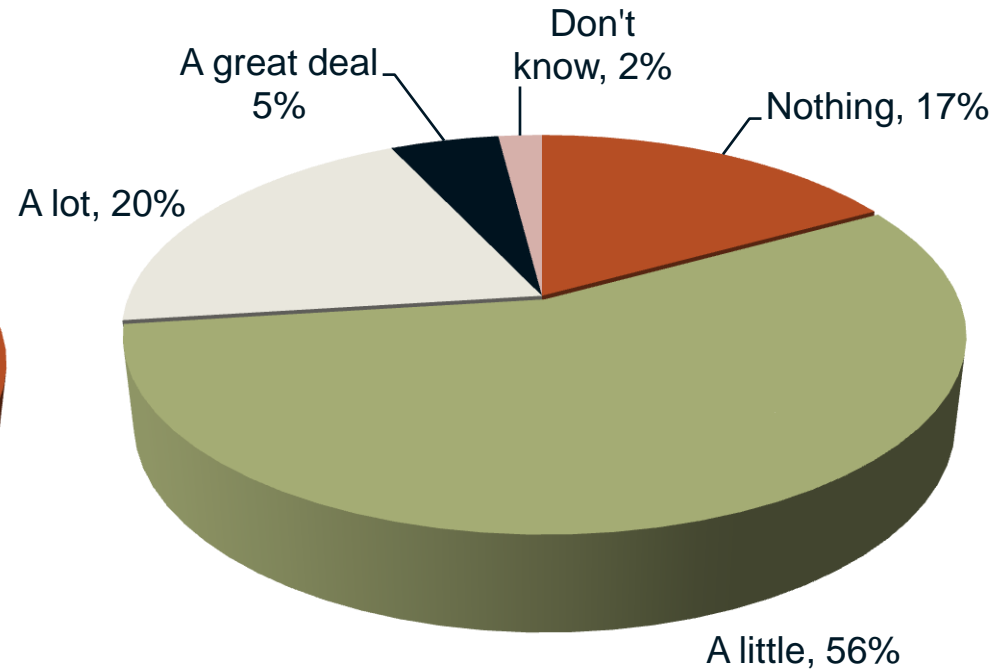
# Sources of information on the IEC and the voting process

- **How is information on the IEC accessed?**

  - 75% via television

  - 60% via radio

  - 47% from newspapers and 45% from posters

  - 27% through personal contacts

  - 10-15% through IEC voter education officials, rallies and schools

- **A similar pattern appears for information about voting**

- 57% named television as the preferred source of information, 15% radio, 7% newspapers and posters

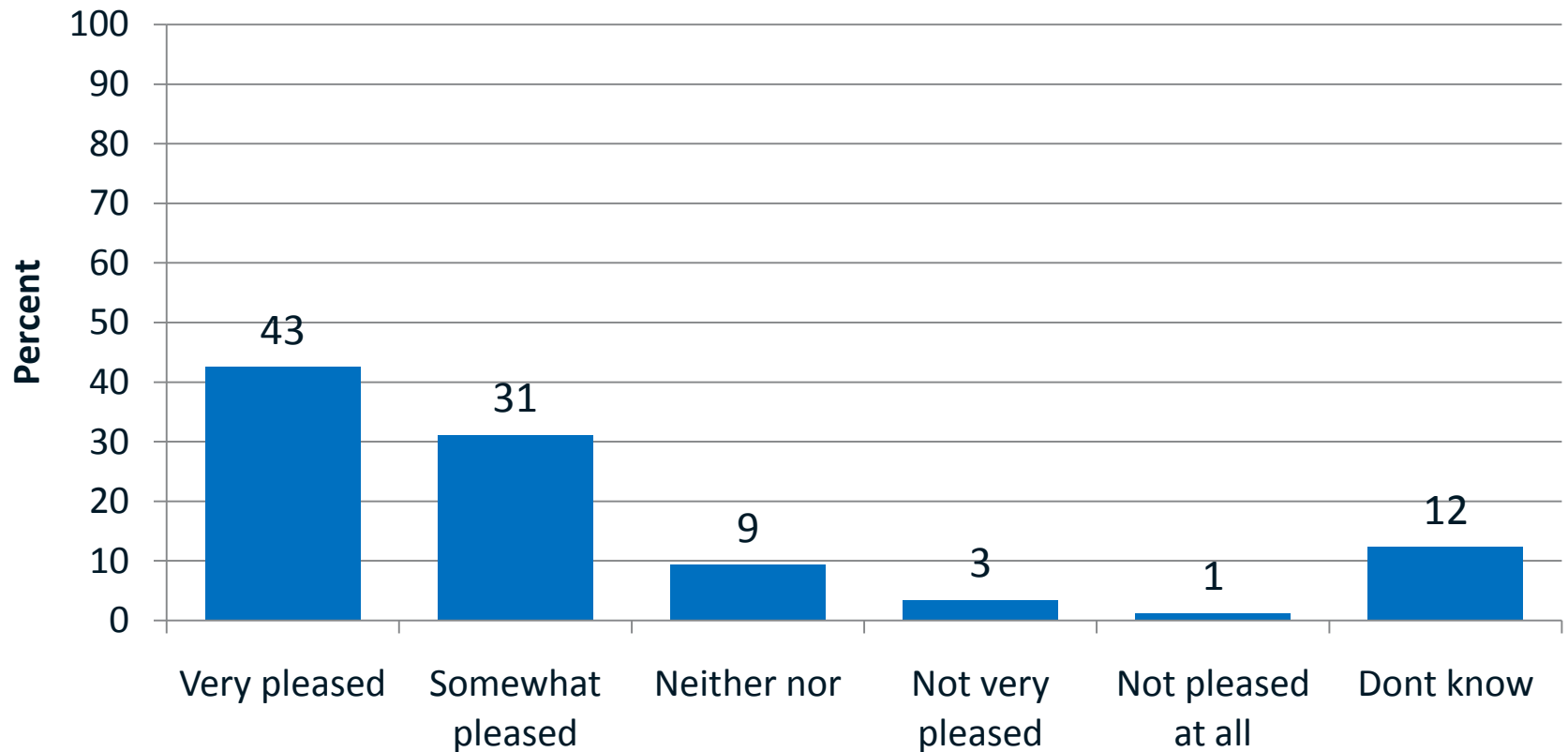# Demand for information on IEC provided services (%)
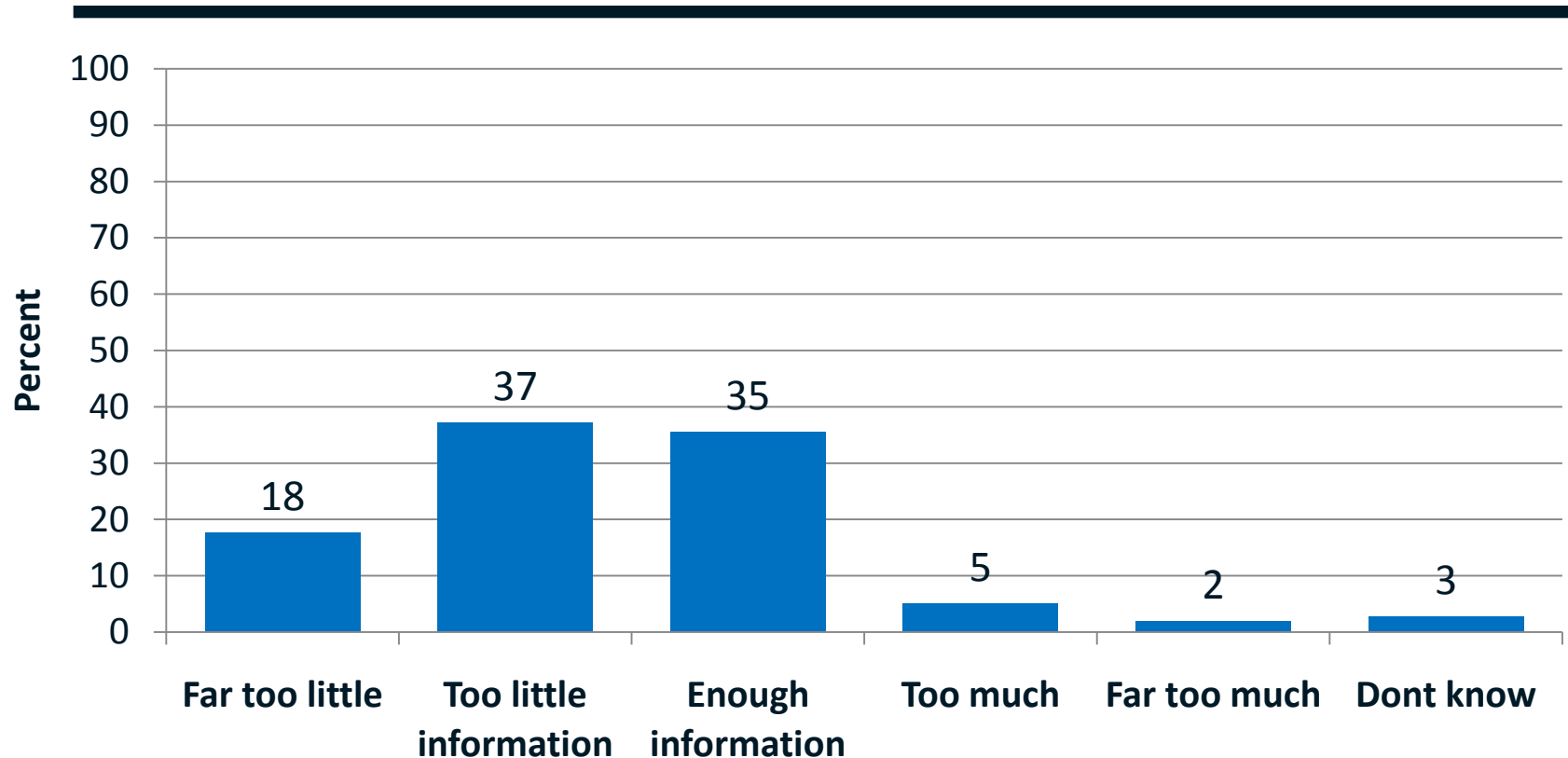
More than half (55%) of the adult population express the desire to receive more information on IEC provided services.

Level of information about how to vote (%)
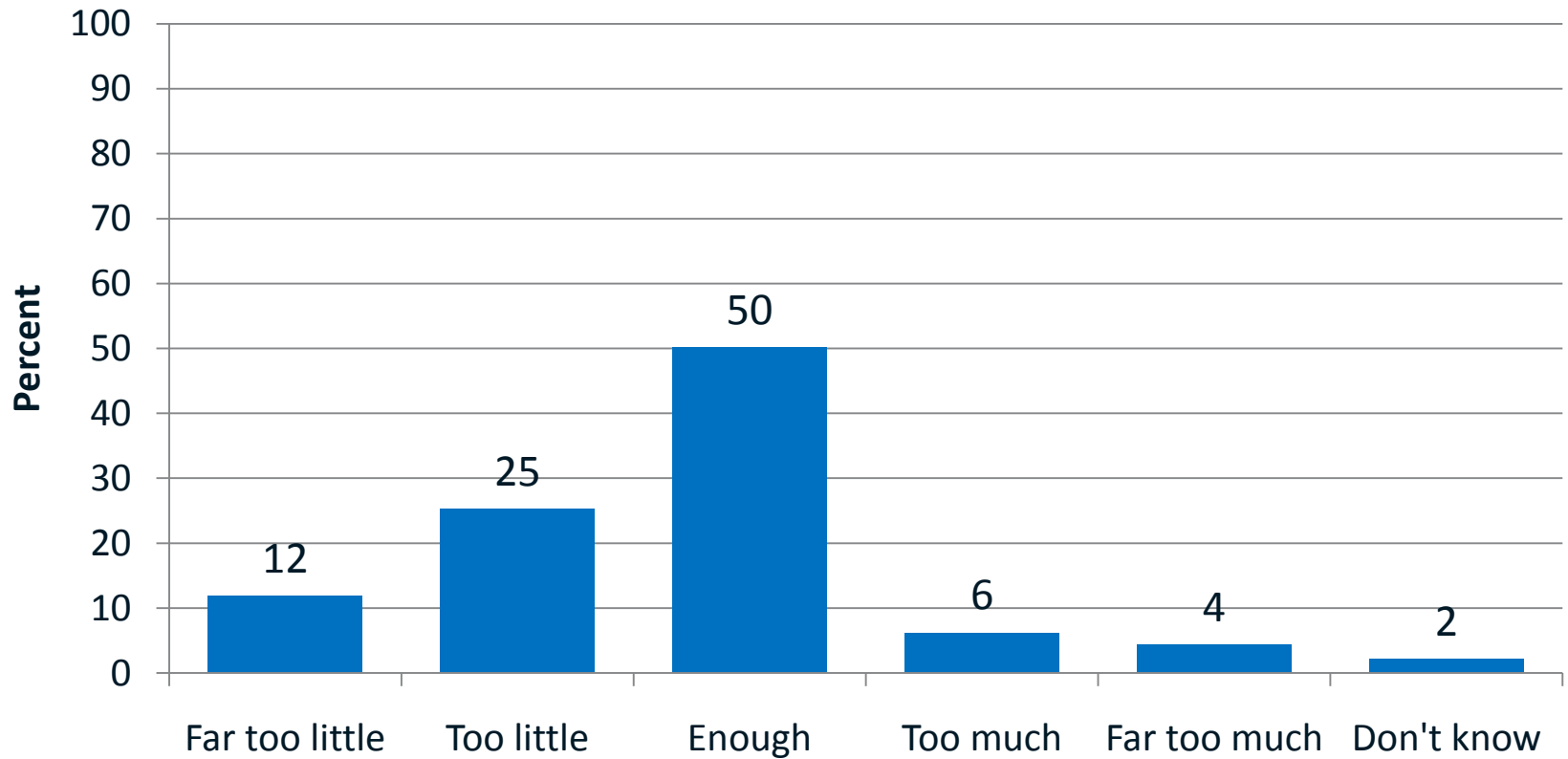
Note: Due to rounding off, row percentages may not add up to exactly 100 percent.

Satisfaction with IEC performance during previous elections (%)

Note: Due to rounding off, row percentages may not add up to exactly 100 percent.

Suggested areas of improvement for those displeased with IEC's past performance (row %)

	Percent of cases	Unweighted N
Friendliness	32	48
Helpfulness	28	41
Ensuring absence of irregularities	26	39
Professionalism	25	34
Efficiency	20	34
Punctuality	14	24
Impartiality	11	22
Conflict resolution mechanisms at polling stations	11	20
Other	9	13
Total	175	275

Perception on whether the IEC dealt with the following issues adequately (row %)

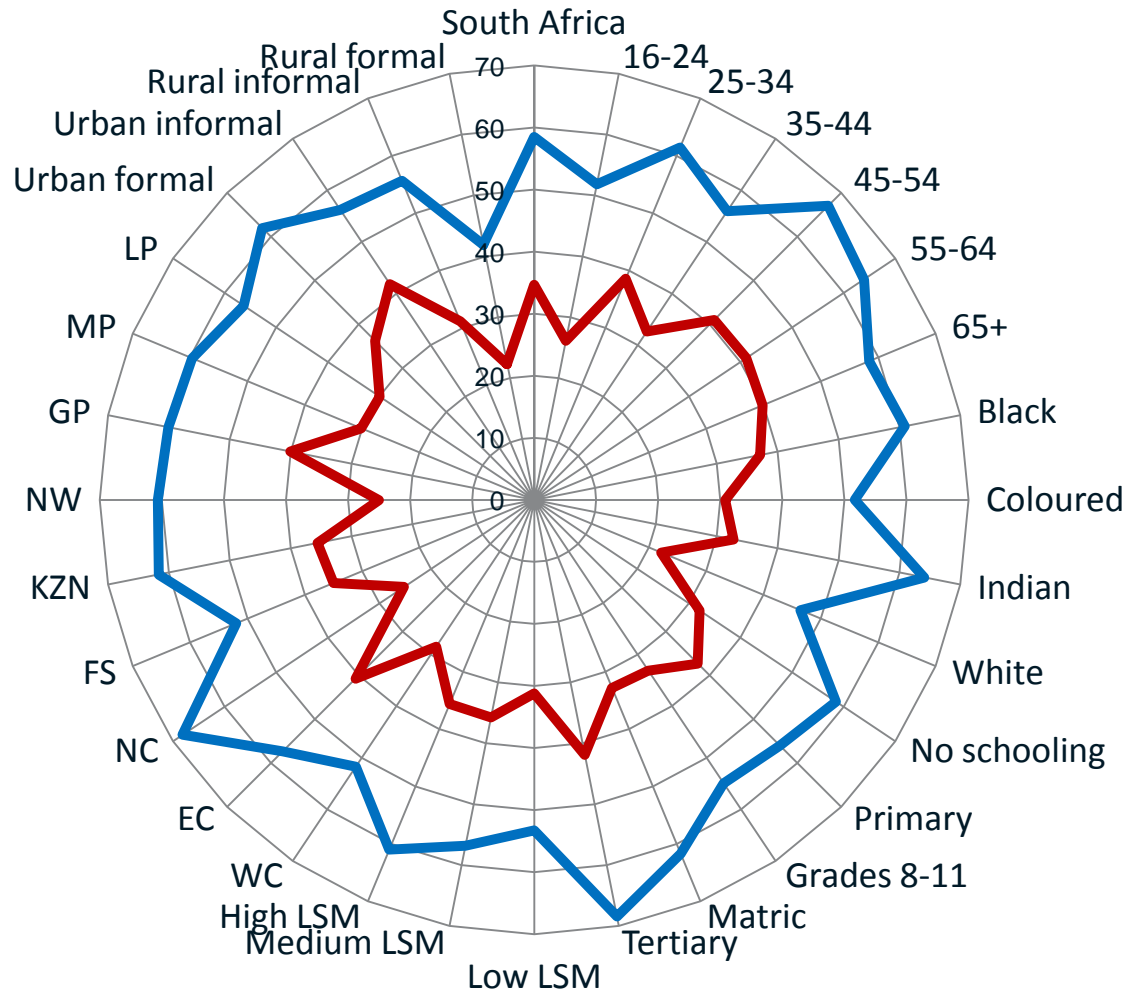|	Agree	Neither nor	Disagree	Do not know	Total	Mean (0-100)
Training for electoral officials	78	7	3	12	100	77
Safety and security within the voting station	84	6	2	8	100	80
Communication by the IEC and its officials	76	10	4	10	100	77
Voting irregularities	60	15	9	16	100	69
Fraud and/or unethical practices among officials and voters	57	14	12	17	100	68

Voter Education

Knowledge of IEC voter education campaigns or programmes and reported receipt of information from this source (%)

Legend:
- **Know IEC voter education campaigns/programmes** (blue line)
- **Received IEC voter education information** (red line)

Radar chart axes (clockwise from top): South Africa, 16-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65+, Black, Coloured, Indian, White, No schooling, Primary, Grades 8-11, Matric, Tertiary, Low LSM, Medium LSM, High LSM, WC, EC, NC, FS, KZN, NW, GP, MP, LP, Urban formal, Urban informal, Rural informal, Rural formal

Radial scale: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70

Satisfaction with aspects of IEC voter education campaigns or programmes (row % and mean)

	Very or fairly satisfied	Neither nor	Very or fairly dissatisfied	Do not know	Total	Mean (0-100 scale)
Content	95	3	1	1	100	82
Communication style	91	5	3	1	100	80
Language used	91	5	4	0	100	81
Presentation style	91	6	2	1	100	79
Materials used	94	3	2	1	100	81
Channels used	84	8	4	4	100	77
Media used	89	4	5	2	100	79

Focus Group Results

Focus Group Results

- Focus Group discussions generally **confirm** findings from the quantitative survey analysis.

- Focus group participants expressed **discontent with municipal performance** in relation to voting, and broad cynicism regarding the **benefits of voting.**

- Most people reported that they had previously participated in **smooth, easy, free and fair elections** facilitated by efficient and polite IEC officials.

Focus Group Results

- The **three most important issues** to emerge from the focus group discussions are:

  - The **IEC is respected and held in high esteem** for its efficiency and professionalism by most voters.

  - **Young people** are most in need of information and encouragement about elections and voting.

  - The **pervasive level of cynicism** and mistrust of politicians, their motives and their general failure to keep the promises are potentially the greatest disincentives to people to participate in the local government elections.

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Conclusion

Conclusions

- The **most critical components** impacting the **intention to vote** are:

    - the belief in the power of one's vote in determining electoral and other political decisions;

    - a conviction that the political system is responsive to change through individual or collective action;

    - whether one is interested in politics or not, whether one feels it is their civic or moral obligation to vote; and

    - a personal history of casting one's vote in democratic South Africa.

Conclusions

- These findings have immediate relevance for voter education initiatives.

- Need to promote messages about the power of voting in making a difference, the importance of exercising one's right to vote.

- Need to strengthen programmes aimed at instilling a culture of voting by getting young South Africans interested in, discussing and following political events.

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IEC Voter Participation Survey

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