

Scenari

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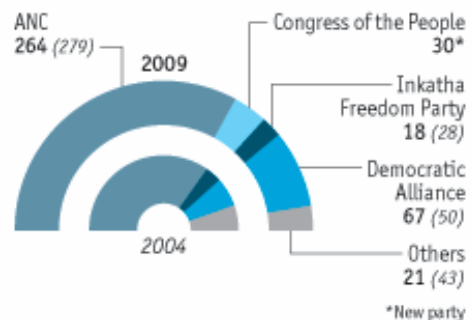
Opposition parties are emerging. The Democratic Alliance support has steadily grown over the years and the party increased its control over the Western Cape province where it is now the ruling party. The Congress of People, a newly formed party, gained successful results in the latest election, becoming an alternative at a national level. The smaller parties appear to be disappearing. They should now reconsider which role, if any, will play in the future.

There have been enough changes to the political landscape to ensure that the results of the next elections will be based on the performance of Zuma and the ANC over the next five years. The first few months will be critical in order to see the direction chosen by ANC. The appointment of Zuma's cabinet will give the first indication as to the possible direction that Zuma will take.

South Africa Elections 22 April 2009

The ANC comfortably won the 2009 elections, attracting 65,9% of the vote. This result is fairly consistent with prior years (63% - 1994; 66% - 1999; 70% - 2004). As a result, Jacob Zuma will be appointed as the next President of South Africa. The ANC failed to secure a two thirds majority, which was achieved in 2004. This figure is important, as holding a two thirds majority gives the ruling party the power to change the constitution. Although the ANC has never exercised this power.

ANC grip on parliament (seats in 2009 vs. 2004)

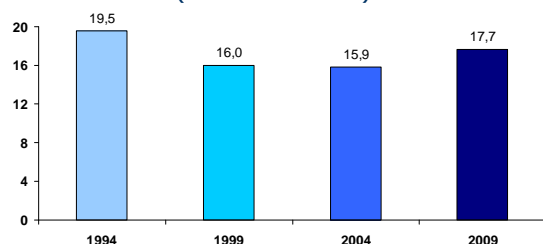


Source: South Africa Independent Electoral Commission and the Economist

The ANC had a land slide victory. With the increased number of voters, the party attracted more votes than ever before. However, there was a 4% drop in the percentage of their support. Furthermore, with the exception of Kwazulu Natal (KZN), the ANC lost percentage support in every province. (68% - 64% Gauteng; 79% - 69% Eastern Cape; 45% - 32% Western Cape; 89% - 85% Limpopo; 86% - 86% Mpumalanga; 81% - 73% North West; 82% - 73% Free State; 69% - 61% Northern Cape). The gain in ANC support in KZN was sizeable (47% - 63%). KZN is the second largest province, so this gain in votes is telling.

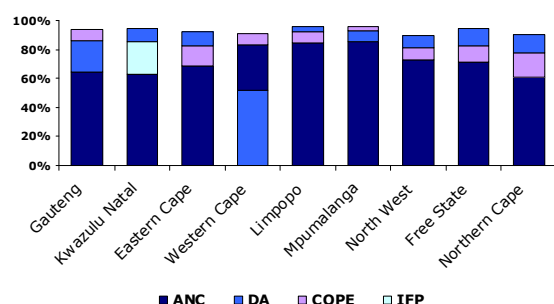
KZN is a predominantly Zulu region.¹ Unlike Zuma's predecessors who are both Xhosa, Zuma is a Zulu and was therefore able to attract a large number of Zulu voters who had previously supported the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

Voter turnout increases (million of voters)



Source: South Africa Independent Electoral Commission

ANC loses only in Western Cape (election results by province, %)



Source: South Africa Independent Electoral Commission

Political parties missed the chance to highlight a plan of action. The ANC together with all the other political parties failed during the election campaign to highlight their plan of action should they win. The ANC made the same promises they have made for 15 years – more jobs, less crime, better education, improved housing and healthcare, working together etc. with no clear indication as to how they intend doing this and how they intend addressing their failures. Zuma has received significant support from the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South Afri-

¹ Zulu (23%), Xhosa (18%), Sotho (16%) represent the main ethnic groups in South Africa.

can Trade Unions (COSATU) who will be hoping for some "pay back" through political placements and some shifting in economic policies. In certain areas, there is definitely a need for change, however, altering of monetary and fiscal policies could cause problems for the country. Therefore, we are entering into a period of uncertainty as no-one quite knows what to expect. The appointment of Zuma's cabinet will give the first indication as to the possible direction that Zuma will take.

The Democratic Alliance (DA), a growing opposition. In 2004 the ANC were the largest party within the Western Cape, attracting 45% of the vote. However the DA was able to form a coalition government with their 27% vote and thanks to the support of other opposition parties. The ANC appointed the premier, but the mayor of Cape Town was Helen Zille of the DA. These elections have seen the DA gain control of the province through a large increase in their support from 27% to 51%. The DA, run by Helen Zille, has entrenched themselves as the official opposition at a national level. Their support has steadily grown over the years (2% - 1994; 10% - 1999; 12% - 2004; 17% - 2009). With the exception of Limpopo they have increased their support in all the provinces (21% - 22% Gauteng; 8% - 9% Kwazulu Natal; 7% - 10% Eastern Cape; 27% - 51% Western Cape; 7% - 7% Limpopo; 5% - 8% North West; 8% - 12% Free State; 11% - 13% Northern Cape). They have gained significant support in their strong hold, the Western Cape, where they are now the ruling party.

Despite a successful performance, DA faces mounting challenges. Should the DA be able to make a success of the Western Cape, and should other provinces fail to improve, voters will start to consider the DA as an alternative. After the 2004 elections and ignoring the Western Cape, the DA was the official opposition in 5 provinces, namely

Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Free State and Northern Cape. This however has reduced in 2009, with them now only being the official opposition in 2 provinces, namely Gauteng and Mpumalanga. The DA has been successful in attracting the minority groups, in particular the coloured vote and the white vote. They have however struggled to attract many black voters. There is a risk that they will be perceived as a regional party, or a minority party, which could prejudice their ability to grow beyond their current level. Their challenge is to be a good opposition party at a national level, do good government in the Western Cape and to start attracting black voters.

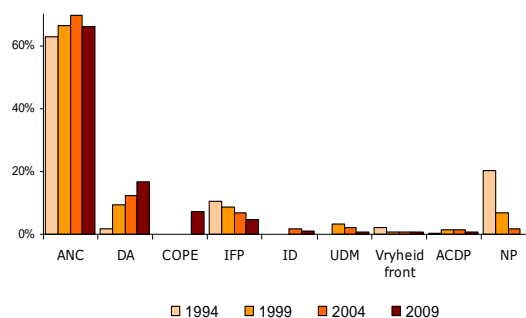
The Congress of the People (COPE) as a new alternative. COPE is a newly formed party, having been established in the latter part of 2008. COPE is a break-away party from the ANC and is largely made up of Mbeki sympathisers. COPE came from nowhere to attracting 7% of the national vote. They are also now the official opposition in 5 provinces, namely Eastern Cape, Limpopo, North West, Free State and Northern Cape. COPE and many commentators expected a better showing. The establishment of COPE scared the ANC who subsequently took their electoral campaign very seriously, spending significantly more than on any previous campaign and running a campaign where they were very visible on the streets. Considering the infancy of the organization, possibly the expectations of COPE were unrealistic. The percentage gives them a number of seats in government and places them as the official opposition in a number of provinces. COPE has been given the opportunity to play a significant role in the future, it remains up to them to take advantage of this situation. They need to clearly define their beliefs and create a clear set of policies. They need to ensure that they dissociate themselves from the Mbeki legacy and they need to ensure that they stand for more than just being disgrun-

tled ex- ANC members. They would have attracted support from black voters, particularly middle class voters who no longer see the ANC and Zuma as representing them and some white voters who see the DA as regional and possibly too conservative.

A weak performance of the smaller parties.

A critical trend of the 2009 elections is the poor showing of the small parties. The biggest loser was the IFP. From their peak in 1994 with 10% of the vote, they have steadily declined to their current level below 5%. In their strong hold (KZN) they have lost support from 36% (2004) to 22% (2009). In 1994 in KZN they gained 1.8 million votes versus the ANC's 1.2 million. Their future as a political party is in doubt. Outside of the top three (ANC, DA and COPE) the smaller parties have steadily declined: 1994 – 34%; 1999 – 21%; 2004 – 15%; 2009 – 8%. Many people are now seeing this as a maturing of South Africa's young democracy. There has been a shift away from one dominant party and numerous smaller parties, many of them regional or ethnic in support, to three parties, all of them national and with the ability to attract wider support. This may be the first movement towards a political environment where politics is based on policy and service delivery and no longer based on support for a liberation movement or support for an ethnic party based on ones background.

A shift toward a mature political system?
(election results by major political party, %)



Source: South Africa Independent Electoral Commission



Top parties strengthen their roles on South African political stage. Against the background of the dynamics building up to the 2009 elections, the ANC did remarkably well. However, the results showed a reduction in ANC support, a loss of their two thirds majority, a loss of their majority position in the Western Cape and a further decline of support in another 7 provinces. This was countered by still a strong majority, 65%, and an extremely good performance in KZN. The ANC and Zuma have clearly earned the mandate given by South Africans to run the country for the next 5 years. The DA have performed well, increasing their status as the official opposition and having gained control of the Western Cape, giving them the opportunity to prove to the rest of South Africa what they can do. COPE, the new party has gained a foot in the door to South African politics with their 7% vote and official opposition status in 5 provinces. They have created the foundations for establishing themselves as a player of the future. The smaller parties appear to be disappearing. These parties will have to decide what role, if any, they will play in the future. What seems apparent is that South African politics will become a tussle between three stronger players in a more consolidated environment.

Despite the positive election results, a challenging future ahead. The next few months will be critical in order to see the direction chosen by Zuma's ANC. Although there are some concerns there is also much to look forward to. The ANC and the country have been negatively affected by the ANC in fighting and the Zuma / Mbeki clash. Having a caretaker President for over 6 months has not been ideal and Mbeki and the ANC failed to perform during the last term of office. Zuma has much to prove and seems to have a better grasp of what needs to be addressed. The election results reflect enough trends to ensure that the ANC will not be complacent. Zuma and the ANC have been given the mandate to

run the country, but the signs are there that South Africans expect them to deliver and there have been enough changes to the political landscape to ensure that the results of the next elections will be based on the performance of Zuma and the ANC over the next five years.



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