

African Union



**AFRICAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION TO THE
29 MAY 2024 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

FINAL REPORT



JUNE 2024

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
ACHPR-PW	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa Protocol
ACT	African Congress for Transformation
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ANC	African National Congress
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUEOM	African Union Election Observation Mission
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DA	Democratic Alliance
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
EFF	ECONOMIC FREEDOM FRONT
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
EMBs	Election Management Bodies
FF+	Freedom Front Plus
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
JCPS	Justice, Crime Prevention and Security
KZN	kwaZulu Natal
MK	uMkhonto we Sizwe
MMA	Media Monitoring Africa
NATSJOINTS	National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure
NCC	National Coordination Centre
NEC	National Executive Committee
NPC	New Nation Movement
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAM	Pre-election Assessment Mission
PLC	Party Liaison Committees
PPFA	Political Party Funding Act
PPLO	Political Parties Liaison Office
PWDs	People with Disabilities
NROC	National Results Operations Centre
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SANEF	South African National Editors' Forum
SAPs	South African Police Service
SSA	State Security Agency
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
VMDs	Voter Management Devices
WEMP	Women's Election Mechanism for Peace

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Mission expresses appreciation to the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) for extending an invitation to the African Union (AU) to observe its 2024 General Elections through the African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM), a clear demonstration of willingness to open its electoral processes to continental and international assessment. The AUEOM was equally grateful for the support it received from electoral stakeholders and citizens which contributed to the success of its observation activities.

The AUEOM wishes to express gratitude to H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, former President of the Republic of Kenya for his leadership of the Mission. The Mission also wishes to extend its appreciation to Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, for his supportive role to the AUEOM.

The AUEOM further directs its gratitude to all the observers and the technical support/core team whose contribution made the Mission successful.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 29 May 2024, South Africa held General Elections to elect members of the National Assembly and Provincial legislatures. As part of its commitment to promoting democratic consolidation in South Africa, the AUEOM was deployed from 21 May to 3 June 2024. The AUEOM assessed the elections' compliance with national, regional, and international standards for democratic elections and to demonstrate the AU's support for South Africa's democratic processes.

The AUEOM assessed the South African Elections based on regional, continental, and international normative and legal instruments for democratic elections,¹ with South Africa's legal framework as a critical reference for the Mission's activities.

Findings

Based on its assessment, the following are the main findings of the AUEOM:

- The 2024 General Elections, the seventh since the end of apartheid in 1994, took place amidst a renewed enthusiasm among South Africans to strengthen their democratic gains. These elections were competitive due to the emergence of new political parties and were marked by a tense political environment, punctuated by a number of court cases. Despite the aforementioned, the 2024 elections were conducted peacefully, demonstrating the resilience of South Africa's democracy.
- The AUEOM noted significant amendments to the electoral law, including the inclusion of independent candidates for 200 regional seats in the National Assembly, the introduction of a third ballot, and reduced endorsement signature requirements for new political parties. Section 24A was also amended to allow voters to cast ballots outside their registered voting districts with prior notification to the IEC. The AUEOM noted that South Africa's legal framework supports gender equality in national policies, legal provisions, and adherence to regional and global instruments. Despite that, there is no specific legislation mandating women's representation and gender equity in politics.
- The South African laws protect the independence of the IEC from executive control and influences of its functions and also set the tenure of office for the Commissioners. The AUEOM noted that, in addition to state funding for its activities and administrative expenses, the IEC has devised innovative ways that allow private companies to fund the Commission's activities. With regard to the management of the elections, the AUEOM concluded that the IEC demonstrated commitment to accountability and adherence to constitutional principles. This boosted stakeholder confidence in the IEC.
- In spite of the above, the polling on 29 May revealed deficits across the voting centres, including malfunctioning Voter Management Devices (VMD), voters

¹ The 2000 Constitutive Act of the African Union, the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the 2002 OAU/AU Declaration on Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, the 2002 AU Guidelines for Election Observation and Monitoring Mission, the African Peer Review Mechanism, the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the 2005 Declaration of Principles on International Election Observation.

queuing for long hours to cast their votes, and a lack of proper management of the counting procedure and systems.

- Voter registration by the IEC resulted in an increased number of prospective voters compared to 2019, with women constituting the majority. While voter registration is not compulsory in South Africa, the Mission is concerned by the high number of potential voters, estimated to be above 13,7 million², who did not register to vote.
- There were two special voting periods: one for South Africans in the diaspora from 17 to 19 May 2024, and the other for those living in South Africa but were scheduled to perform official duties on the poll day or for other reasons could vote at their voting station on election day. The special voting also included 'Home Visits' for the older and people who could not physically visit the voting centres because they were infirm, disabled or pregnant. This was conducted on 27 and 28 May 2024. The AUEOM commends the IEC for this democratic practice.
- Most political parties the AUEOM consulted with expressed dissatisfaction with regard to the high nomination fees required for participation in the 2024 Elections. In particular, the R750,000 for a party to contest all nine provinces and the National Assembly elections were deemed prohibitive for new emerging parties.
- There is lack of clarity in the legal framework regarding the campaign period especially when it should start and allowing campaigning around the voting centres, even on election day. The AUEOM also noted contradictions regarding Section 108 of the Electoral Act, which prohibits political activities within the boundaries of voting stations but allows parties to set up camps near and around voting stations. Despite this, the campaigns were peaceful, and issue based which could allow voters to make informed choices.
- Despite South Africa's cabinet achieving a 50/50 gender balance prior to the elections, women holding key cabinet positions since the country's democratic dispensation in 1994 and societal support for gender equality in political representation, women still face various obstacles such as patriarchy, harassment, and discrimination in political participation. The AUEOM witnessed efforts by women organisations and their partners to report incidents of violence through the Peace Rooms across the country, which were accessible to media and stakeholders, and observed conflict mediation measures nationwide.
- The prevailing press freedom in South Africa and the state broadcaster's efforts in providing equitable coverage to political parties are commendable. The Mission welcomed the collaborative efforts between independent media monitoring groups and the IEC in combating misinformation and disinformation around elections. However, the AUEOM noted weaker accountability mechanisms, such as the absence of a regulatory framework for data

² The VAP figures were supplied by STATS SA as projected to May 2024 - IEC Presentation on AUEOM Observers in May 2024.

protection and cybersecurity, facilitate fertile ground for instances of cyberbullying, usage of inflammatory language and incitement messages.

- The involvement of civil society groups in the 2024 elections went beyond mobilisation of voters to ensuring the integrity and inclusiveness of the electoral process. They also took part in educating voters about their rights and the importance of voting and contributed to increased voter registration by targeting underrepresented groups such as young people and marginalised communities.
- South Africa has robust electoral dispute resolution structures to handle cases and deliver judgments that aim to provide both restorative and retributive outcomes. The effectiveness of these structures is evident in the expeditious adjudication of numerous electoral cases during the 2024 electoral process.
- The AU's observers on election day reported a calm atmosphere at the voting centres and observed security presence in all voting centres visited. However, they also reported that the voting process was too slow, due to VMD malfunction, which resulted in long queues and long waiting times for the voters to get their turn to vote. In addition, some voters were turned away after waiting for several hours in queues because they visited the wrong voting centres. This notwithstanding, the atmosphere at the voting centres were peaceful, and voters who were in the queue at the closing time (9 pm) were allowed to vote.
- The post-election environment in South Africa was peaceful. Public and media discussions, including political analysis, focused on scenarios for coalition government, when it became apparent that no single party got a straight win to form a government. Even though some political party executive and individuals were not satisfied with aspects of the voting process, they followed the legal process lodging their complaints with the IEC and not embarking on any actions that could threaten peace in the country. The IEC received 579 complaints as of 1 June 2024, before the official announcement made on 2 June.
- The IEC announced the final results³ and seat allocation within seven days of election day⁴. In practice, election results usually become available within three days of election day. The AUEOM noted that the ruling ANC lost its majority for the first time since 1994 although it remained the biggest party, requiring it to form a coalition government. The support for the ANC dropped to levels lower than 58 percent in 2019 and 62 percent in 2014. The Democratic Alliance garnered approximately 21 percent of the vote. The MK Party secured 14.58 percent of the national vote, becoming the largest party in KZN, although it did not achieve an outright majority in the province. The EFF came in fourth place with just over 9 percent of the vote.

³ <https://results.elections.org.za/home/>

⁴ Section 57 of the Electoral Act

Recommendations

To promote election equality, transparency, efficiency, and public confidence in South Africa's electoral processes, the AUEOM proffers the following recommendations, among others:

1. Integrate gender equity legislation into the Electoral Act to enhance female representation, aligned with the Affirmative Action and Employment Equity Act.
2. Amend the Public Funding of Political Parties Act to include independent candidates and strengthen enforcement mechanisms for campaign finance regulations.
3. Review campaign regulations to establish clear time frames for campaigning, particularly concerning election day prohibitions.
4. Enhance legislation for independent candidates to ensure equitable vote weight with political parties in seat allocation.
5. Improve the reliability of Voter Management Devices (VMDs) to prevent delays and streamline voter verification.
6. Enhance logistics management to ensure timely delivery of essential election materials.
7. Increase the number of voting stations to accommodate the introduction of a third ballot and growing voter registration.
8. Reduce voting population per station based on best practices from other African countries.
9. Revise the recruitment process for polling staff to attract more qualified individuals, especially for managerial roles like Presiding Officer.
10. Embark on comprehensive training programs for all polling staff to ensure consistent application and adherence to procedure.

3. INTRODUCTION

On the 29 May 2024, South African held the seventh General Elections since the end of apartheid. In line with its mandate to promoted democratic consolidate with its Member States and at the invitation of the Government and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of South Africa to observe Elections, the African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) was deployed to the country from 21 May to 3 June 2024. The AUEOM was conducted under the leadership of H.E Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, former President of the Republic of Kenya, with support from Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security. The Mission included 65 African citizens from 26 African Union (AU) Member States⁵ from Election Management Bodies (EMBs), the Pan African Parliament, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), elections human rights, gender and media experts as well as and representatives of youth organisations.

As part of the mandate to promote, and strengthen democracy and good governance on the continent the AUEOM was guided by the relevant instruments including the 2000 Constitutive Act of the Union, the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections

⁵ Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, South Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

and Governance, the 2002 OAU/AU Declaration on Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, the 2002 AU Guidelines for Electoral Observation and Monitoring Mission, and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process. The Mission also evaluated elections in line with international and regional standards for democratic elections, such as the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the 2005 Declaration of Principles on International Election Observation, and South Africa's legal framework.

The objectives of the AUEOM were, among others, to (a) Assess the compliance of the 2023 electoral process in line with AU principles, normative frameworks and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections, as well as South Africa's national legal framework; (b) ascertain that the environment was peaceful for the conduct of democratic elections that will engender acceptance of the electoral outcomes; (c) assess the level of preparedness of the electoral commission and other electoral institutions; (d) offer recommendations for improvement of future elections, and (e) demonstrate the AU's solidarity and support for South Africa's democratic and electoral processes to ensure that the conduct of genuine elections will contribute to the consolidation of peace and stability, and promote inclusive development in the country.

To achieve the objectives of the Mission, prior to its deployment, the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) conducted a Pre-election Assessment Mission (PAM) in South Africa from 2 to 6 April 2024 to evaluate election preparations, in accordance with its commitment to strengthening democratic elections in Africa. A subsequent review of the political environment was carried out from 21 May to 28 May, leading up to the observation of the polling on 29 May 2024. Both the PAM and the AUEOM engaged several key stakeholders involved in the electoral process across all nine provinces of South Africa to gain comprehensive insights into the electoral landscape. These engagements included meetings with Commissioners and senior staff of the IEC, the UN Resident Coordinator, the Chief Justice, the Minister of Home Affairs, representatives of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (NATJOINTS), representatives from political parties such as the African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Alliance (DA), Blind SA, Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Additionally, the Mission met with citizen observer groups including the South African Council of Churches (SACC), the African Centre for Governance, the Women's Peace Monitors (WEMP), Heads of other Missions, the African Diplomatic Corp and academia, among others. The meetings held before, during and after Election Day enriched the Mission leadership's understanding of the background and context of the elections. Reports from the meetings also informed the Mission's strategy for preventive diplomacy, aimed at reducing tensions and promoting peaceful elections.

In addition, AUEOM held a three-day briefing from 24 to 26 May 2024 before deploying the 65 observers, organised into 26 teams, to cover all nine provinces of South Africa. The teams were tasked to observe and report on various aspects of the electoral process, including preparations, the legal framework, voting operations, and the immediate post-election period. Additionally, they directly observed key electoral processes, such as political party and candidate campaigns, the distribution of

election materials by the IEC, opening and voting procedures, closing and counting procedures, as well as the tabulation, transmission, and announcement of results.

This approach is in conformity to the AU Guidelines for Electoral Observation and Monitoring Missions, which emphasise the importance of comprehensive and direct observation of different stages of the electoral process. The AUEOM's deployment of teams to cover all provinces reflects a commitment to ensuring a broad and inclusive assessment of the electoral environment, considering the diverse regional dynamics and contexts within South Africa.

The AUEOM issued a preliminary statement⁶ with findings and conclusions which offered recommendations for immediate action by the stakeholders concerned. This report, therefore, presents the AUEOM's final and overall findings and assessment based on direct observations and consultations with electoral stakeholders. It provides an in-depth analysis of the Mission's findings covering the pre-election, voting days and post elections periods. The report also contains recommendations for improving future electoral processes in South Africa.

4. PRE-ELECTION OBSERVATIONS

4.1 Political Context of the Elections

The 2024 General Elections in South Africa, the seventh since the end of apartheid in 1994, occurred during a period marked by significant political, social, and economic challenges despite recording the lowest voter turnout⁷ since 1994. The elections highlighted South Africa's desire for a more responsive and accountable democracy. The AUEOM noted that the competitive nature of the elections was characterised by a tense political environment, further exacerbated by court cases and the emergence of new political parties.

The 2024 elections also took place against the backdrop of significant socioeconomic challenges in South Africa, with over 60 percent of its youth unemployed and many people in townships struggling with poverty and food insecurity.

President Zuma's endorsement of a new party, uMkhonto we Sizwe, and former ANC Secretary General Ace Magashule's formation of the African Congress for Transformation (ACT) after his expulsion reflected the deep-seated fragmentation within the ANC. These developments presented significant challenges to ruling ANC as it sought to consolidate support in the 2024 elections.

Despite the heated and tense pre-election political environment, the elections and the entire electoral process were considered peaceful. On 4 April 2024, over 50 political parties and independent candidates signed the Electoral Code of Conduct. This demonstrated a commitment by the majority of the political parties to peaceful elections, which contributed to a more conducive electoral environment in South Africa. The Code aimed to foster conditions that promote free and fair elections,

⁶ <https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/preliminary-statement-african-union-election-observation-mission-to-the-29-may-2024-general-elections-johannesburg-31-may-2024-preliminary-statement>.

⁷ <https://results.elections.org.za/home/>.

create a climate of tolerance, allow for free political campaigning, and encourage healthy public debate.

The AUEOM noted that South Africa's electoral history has been shaped by its complex past, and the 2024 elections marked an important milestone in the democratic process. While tensions and concerns were present in the pre-election period and during the election, the elections took place within a conducive environment.

4.2 Legal Framework

The 2024 Elections were governed by the South African Constitution of 1996, Electoral Act of 1998, the Electoral Commission Act of 1996, the Political Parties Funding Act (PPFA) of 2019, and the Electoral Amendment Act 1 of 2023

The South 1996 Constitution of 1996 upholds fundamental rights and liberties, which form the bedrock of a democratic framework. Section 190-191 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of an autonomous body, the Independent Electoral Commission, for the purpose of election management. Section 19 delineates political rights to ensure unfettered, equitable, and periodic elections. These entitlements encompass the liberty to engage in political party undertakings, enlist members for a political party, and advocate for a political party or cause. Furthermore, it safeguards the right to unrestricted, impartial, and periodic elections for any legislative body constituted under the Constitution. It bestows upon every adult citizen the right to universal suffrage, thereby bolstering the democratic tenets of the nation.

The administration of the South African elections is based on the Electoral Act of 1998, the Electoral Commission Act of 1996, the Political Parties Funding Act (PPFA) of 2019, and other relevant legislations. The 2024 elections marked the first implementation of the PPFA since its passing in 2019. This demonstrates South Africa's commitment to enhancing the integrity of its electoral process through legislative measures. The PPFA was first applied to the 2024 elections and aims to increase transparency in political funding by mandating the disclosure of private donations to political parties. The Act also limits the private financing a political party can receive to prevent undue influence from wealthy individuals or organisations and promote fair competition. In spite of that, the AUEOM noted disparities between the financial outlay evident at political rallies and the officially declared funding by political parties during the 2024 campaign period, indicating issues with the enforcement and compliance mechanisms of the Act. Since both reporting and disclosure are key elements to ensure transparency and accountability, this is a significant issue to be addressed in future elections. Furthermore, the PPFA only addresses the receipt of funds by political parties and does not include provisions for independent candidates, creating an imbalance in financial transparency requirements and potentially disadvantaging independent candidates.

The Electoral Act of 1998 was amended to align with the Constitutional Court's ruling on June 11, 2020, in the case of *New Nation Movement NPC & others v President of the Republic of South Africa & others*. The Court declared the Electoral Act of 1998 unconstitutional due to its provision that limited election to the National Assembly and Provincial Legislatures to membership of political parties. In response, the Electoral Amendment Act 1 of 2023 was made, bringing significant changes to the country's electoral system by allowing independent candidates to contest in the elections. In

practice, this allowed independent candidates to compete for the 200 regional seats alongside political parties in National Elections. The remaining 200 seats were compensatory, aiming to restore general proportionality for political parties. It is worth noting that while independent candidates could compete in multiple regions, they were restricted to securing a single seat as individuals. In contrast, political parties with a party list appeared on the ballot in each region, and their votes were allocated based on the party list. Independent candidates also appeared as independents on the same regional ballot paper.

The AUEOM noted several implications for independent candidates, including: a) competing against political parties within the same regional ballot but being limited to winning only one seat per region, regardless of the number of votes they receive. This can disadvantage independent candidates compared to political parties, which can accumulate excess votes for additional seats; and b) votes exceeding the number needed for an independent candidate to win a seat are forfeited. In contrast, political parties can benefit from these excess votes to secure more seats. This could discourage voters from supporting independents if they feel their votes might be "wasted."

While independent candidates could compete in multiple regions, they were restricted to securing a single individual seat. On the other hand, political parties with a party list appeared on the ballot in each region, and independent candidates also appeared as independents on the same regional ballot paper. Additionally, the amendment required new political parties to obtain 1,000 signatures, a significant reduction from the previous requirement of 63,000 signatures of registered voters. Conversely, established political parties were exempt from submitting any signatures to the IEC, further simplifying their participation in the electoral process.

The AUEOM also noted that introducing the third ballot had several significant implications, such as increased voter complexity as voters needed to understand and navigate three separate votes, which further complicated the voting process. Additionally, administering the third ballot required additional printing, distribution, and management resources, increasing the logistical burden on the IEC.

The AUEOM noted that Section 24A (S24A) of the Amendment allowed voters to cast ballots outside their registered voting district, but only if they notified the IEC between 15 March 2024 and midnight on Friday, 17 May 2024. This provision was aimed at accommodating individuals who are unavoidably outside their voting districts on polling day and ensuring their right to vote is upheld.

Overall, the AUEOM concludes that the legal framework for elections in South Africa provides a reasonable basis for the conduct of democratic elections and are in line with international and regional standards ratified by South Africa.⁸

4.3 Electoral System

South Africa's electoral system for national and provincial elections is primarily based on the party list proportional representation system. The AUEOM noted that the

⁸ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – South Africa signed & ratified in 1998; UN Convention on Political Rights of Women – South Africa signed in 1993; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – South Africa signed in 1993 and UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability – South Africa ratified in 2007.

proportional representation system has advantages and disadvantages.⁹ On one hand, it allows for all political interests, including those of smaller parties, to be represented in the legislature in proportion to the votes they receive during elections. Furthermore, it provides minimal accountability between voters and political parties since they do not directly elect their representatives.

The electoral system follows a five-year cycle, with national and provincial elections held simultaneously and municipal elections held two years later. Parliament has 400 seats, and each of the nine Provincial Legislatures has between 30 and 90 seats depending on the number of people who live in the province. At the National level, representation is based on the party-list proportional representation, in contrast to the regional and provincial level, where the Electoral Amendment Act, 1 of 2023, now provides for independent candidates not associated with political parties to contest in the elections.

The AUEOM applauds the Government of South Africa for considering its 2019 recommendation to implement an electoral system that promotes inclusivity by allowing independent candidates to participate in national and provincial elections. This is in line with section 19(3)(b) of the Constitution, which guarantees every citizen the right to stand for public office and, if elected, to hold such office. It also aligns with Article 38 of the ACDEG, which mandates states to promote peace, security, and stability by fostering participatory political systems with well-functioning and inclusive institutions.

The AUEOM noted stakeholders' concerns about the amendments to the Electoral Act and their impact on the design of the electoral system. One major concern was the increased complexity of the system due to the introduction of a third ballot, as well as stakeholders' limited understanding of the calculations and formulas used to convert votes into seats.

4.4 Election Management

Sections 190 and 191 of the South African Constitution establish the IEC as a permanent body tasked with the management of free and fair elections at all levels of government.¹⁰

In line with Chapter 2 of the Electoral Commission Act 51 of 1996 the IEC consists of five members, one of whom must be a judge approved by the National Assembly, composed of all represented parties. The IEC consists of three women and two men. This is noteworthy and significant in terms of gender representation within the Commission, with a woman serving as the Deputy Chairperson. In line with the broader efforts to promote gender diversity and representation, the IEC also made deliberate efforts to recruit and deploy more women as voting staff on election day. The independence of the IEC is explicitly guaranteed in both the Constitution and the Electoral Act, and it is accountable to the Constitution and the law.

⁹ https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/esd/esd02/esd02a/mobile_browsing/onePag.

¹⁰ The IEC is recognised as one of the state institutions supporting constitutional democracy under Chapter Nine of the Constitution. The structure and functioning of the IEC are further delineated in the Electoral Commission Act 51 of 1996. Commissioners are nominated through a public process that culminates in an appointment by the President of the Republic for a seven-year term and may be reappointed for one additional term.

The IEC has the responsibility for overseeing elections to the National Assembly, provincial legislatures, and municipal councils. Despite being publicly funded and accountable to parliament, the IEC operates independently of the government. The Commission is accountable to the National Assembly and must report on its activities and the performance of its functions at least once a year. The AUEOM observed that aside from state funding, the IEC also received support from corporate institutions. For example, Telkom supported 320 results-capturing sites, including ten result centres, utilising technologies such as Wi-Fi 6, Layer 3 networking, and high-speed fibre across infrastructure designed to facilitate smooth electoral processes and uphold the integrity of the electoral system.¹¹

In preparation for the 2024 National and Provincial Elections, a comprehensive election timetable was published, and all crucial electoral procedures were carried out in accordance with the specified deadlines. Despite a few logistical and technical glitches, which included the late delivery of election materials in some voting stations, malfunctioning of VMDs, late opening of polling stations and inefficient voter processing in some voting stations, the AUEOM noted that overall, the IEC demonstrated a commitment to the election timetable. They managed to undertake critical activities such as voter registration, procurement of election materials, recruitment and training of polling personnel, nomination of political parties and candidates, development of voting procedures manuals, printing of ballot papers, distribution of election materials to voting stations, and the facilitation of special voting, among other tasks. This observation reflects the Commission's unwavering dedication to conducting a well-organised electoral exercise.

Given the IEC's constitutional mandate and its role as a state institution supporting constitutional democracy, stakeholders, including political parties, CSOs, and the general public, placed importance on the IEC's ability to conduct credible elections. The independence of the IEC, as guaranteed in the Constitution and the Electoral Act, serves as a foundational element in fostering stakeholders' confidence. The Multi-Party Liaison Committees were highlighted as one of the best platforms that the IEC facilitated in a professional manner, with speedy resolution of disputes. Additionally, the IEC's record in effectively managing elections, upholding electoral laws, and addressing any electoral irregularities plays a significant role in shaping stakeholders' confidence in the Commission.

4.5 Voter Registration

Chapter 2 of the Electoral Act, sections 5-16, provides for the voter registration of eligible voters. Section 6 (1A) allows those who are 16 years or older to apply for registration, but if the application is successful, the applicant's name may only be placed on the voters' roll once the applicant reaches the age of 18 years which is the eligible voting age.

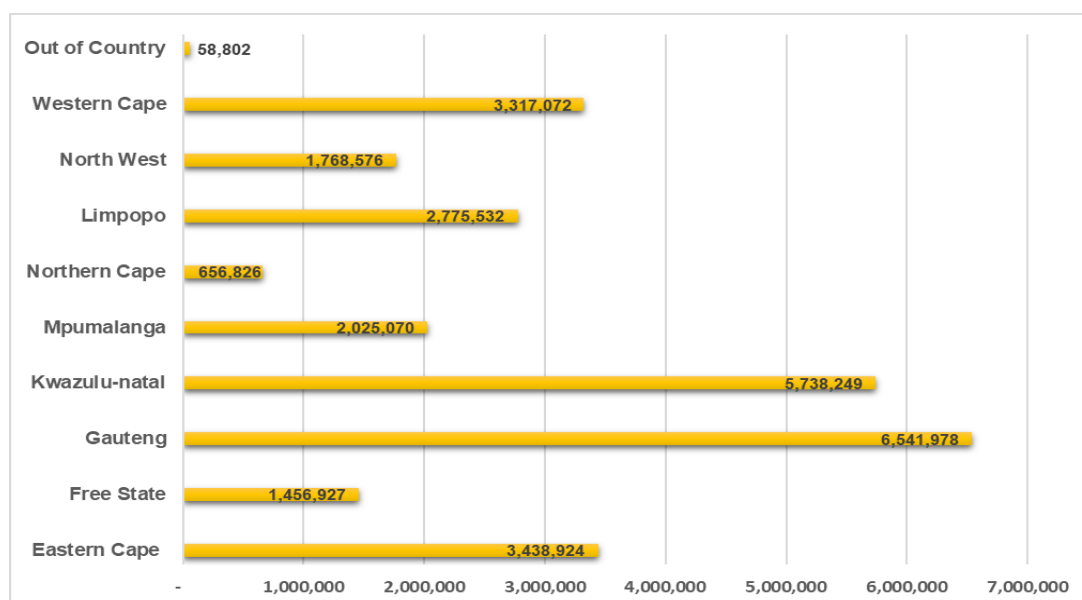
Voter registration for the 2024 NPEs was conducted on 18 and 19 November 2023 and on 3 and 4 February 2024. Registration for citizens living abroad also took place on 18 and 19 November 2023 and 24 to 26 January 2024. Further, the IEC conducted the registration of prisoners from 15 to 26 January 2024. However, the online registration platform remained open and was only closed following the gazetting of

¹¹ <https://www.engineerit.co.za/article/empowering-democracy-telkoms-crucial-role-2024-national-elections>

the election date on 23 February 2024. For the first time, the IEC introduced a continuous online voter registration platform. The online platform also allowed voters to inspect their information and receive regular updates. At least 3,5 million voters registered using the online platform and these included the youth, working class and the affluent community.

In the 2024 NPE, the IEC reported a total of 27,782,081 registered voters.¹² Of these, 55.25 percent (15,288,163) were females, while their male counterparts constituted 44.75 percent (12,384,101) of the registered voters. Additionally, approximately 42 percent of the registered voters fell within the 18 to 39-year-old age group. Notably, 564,172 voters were between 18 and 19 years old. This was an increase of 226 percent compared to the 169,024 voters under the same age group of 18-19 ahead of the previous elections. Regarding registration distribution per province, the Gauteng province had the highest number of registered voters, followed by the KwaZulu Natal (KZN), with the Northern Cape having the lowest number of registered voters.

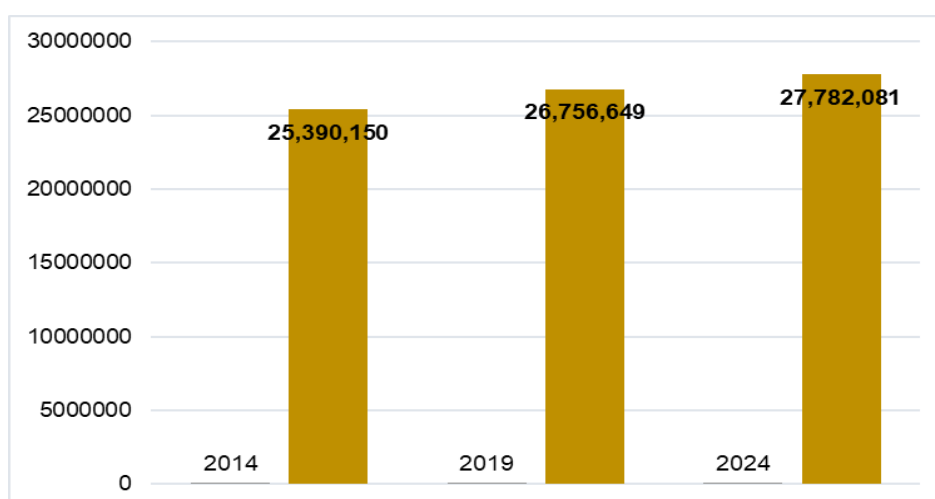
Fig 1: Voter Registration per Province



Source: <https://www.elections.org.za/pw/StatsData/Voter-Registration-Statistics>

In line with the Electoral Laws, the voters' roll was certified on 12 March 2024. The number of registered voters has steadily and slightly increased in the past two National and Provincial Elections (NPEs). The registered voters for the 2024 elections increased by 3.69 percent compared to the 2019 elections. There were 26,756,649 registered voters for the 2019 elections, which was also a slight increase of approximately 5.3 percent from the 25,390,150 in 2014.

¹² <https://www.elections.org.za/pw/StatsData/Voter-Registration-Statistics>.

Fig 2: Registered Voters - 2014-2024

Source: <https://www.elections.org.za/pw/StatsData/Voter-Registration-Statistics>

The above data reveals a consistent increase in the number of eligible but unregistered voters from 2014 to 2024. In 2014, approximately 6.4 million eligible voters were unregistered, a figure that rose to 9.1 million in 2019 and further escalated to approximately 13.7 million in 2024.¹³ The sustained rise in the number of unregistered voters over successive election cycles is a critical issue that warrants the attention of the IEC and the government. It underscores the importance of addressing barriers to voter registration, and concerns that these potential voters may have and produce strategies of ensuring that all eligible citizens have the opportunity to participate in the electoral process.

4.6 Civic and Voter Education

Section 86 of the Electoral Act 73 of 1998 provides for any juristic person to apply to the IEC in the prescribed manner for accreditation to provide voter education for an election. The IEC took measures to ensure effective participation and representation in the electoral process, particularly focusing on inclusivity and engagement with various segments of the population. For example, the IEC carried out several voter education initiatives on social media platforms, including on its website,¹⁴ door-to-door and outdoor campaigns, information educational and communication materials, and mainstream media (radio, television, newspapers), among others to disseminate voter education information. The IEC also collaborated with civil society, faith-based organisations, and business corporations, among others, to provide voter education. For example, the IEC involved the Blind SA and other organisations representing Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the design stages of voter education messaging to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

Stakeholders expressed concerns about insufficient voter education regarding the changes in the electoral system and Section 24(A) of the Electoral Amendment Act, which introduced a new rule that voters will only register and vote in one voting station

¹³ The last census was conducted in 2022 and figures for 2024 voting age population is based on the population projections by the [Stats SA](#).

The VAP figures were supplied by STATSSA as projected to May 2024 - IEC Presentation to AUEOM Observers May 2024.

¹⁴ <https://registertovote.elections.org.za/voter/section-24a/notitication/status>.

unless they had applied for special voting.¹⁵ However, while the IEC did not provide statistics of voters turned away, some media reports estimated that many voters across the country were turned away because they did not apply.¹⁶

4.7 Election Dispute Resolution Mechanisms

South Africa has robust electoral dispute resolution structures to handle cases and deliver judgments. Section 5(1) of the Electoral Commission Act of 1996, Act 51 provides for the establishment of the Political Parties Liaison Office (PPLO), and Section 2 provides for the establishment of the Electoral Court. While the Electoral Court was set up to settle disputes and infringements of the Electoral Code, the PPLO provides a platform and facilitates political parties' engagement with the IEC for the amicable resolution of electoral disputes.

In addition to the PPLO, there were 260 Peace Management Committees¹⁷ across the country, which were mandated to conduct peace education and serve as an early warning mechanism to alert the security agencies if threats were identified. The peace architecture, developed in line with the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism, deals with non-criminal cases and frees the state justice delivery institutions to handle criminal cases. The effectiveness of these structures was evident in the expeditious adjudication of numerous electoral cases during the 2024 electoral process. The AUEOM was informed that the IEC dealt with more than 17 election-related cases since the announcement of the election date, of which 14 of them were ruled in the IEC's favour. Other cases that were not criminal in nature, were handled at the PPLO. The cases included the challenge of the candidacy of former president Jacob Zuma and the choice of name and logo of the MK party. The Court ruled in favour of the MK party and was allowed to use both the name and the logo. While the Electoral Court's ruling cleared President Zuma to contest in the elections, the Constitutional Court, which is the highest court in South Africa, overturned the ruling on 20 May 2024, declaring the former president ineligible to contest.

The high number of court cases, the expeditious manner in which they were settled, and the acceptance of the parties to respect the court rulings are testament to a matured constitutional democracy in South Africa and respect for the rule of law.

Despite the high number of complaints on the polls, the AUEOM was confident of the judicial and mediation structures established and used to adjudicate earlier cases. The AUEOM commends both the courts and the parties for their trust in the legal system and encourages all stakeholders to continue using legal means to address any concerns and disputes that may arise.

4.8 Political Parties and Candidates' Nominations

The IEC, under the powers vested in it under the Electoral Act, 1998 (Act 73) makes specific regulations related to the management and administration of elections in South Africa. The IEC made Regulations Concerning the Submission of List of Candidates, Regulations 2004. The Regulations give directives in the manner and format in which the list must be submitted together with timelines. For example,

¹⁵ Section 24(A) of the Electoral Amendment Act provision is explained in detail under the Legal Framework section.

¹⁶ <https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/questions-raised-around-voters-educate-on-section24a/>.

¹⁷ <https://www.nscpeace.go.ke/work/national-peace-coordination>.

Regulations 2 (1a, i and ii) direct parties to where, and to whom the lists of candidates authenticated by the authorised representative of political parties be submitted.

Among the directives, the IEC requires political parties to submit written proof *“from the concerned party that the representative who signed such a list or lists of candidates is duly authorised by the party to sign the list or lists of candidates and to deal with matters connected therewith.”*¹⁸ Based on these Regulations, the IEC issued its notice calling the elections and opened the nomination of candidates on 23 February 2024. It subsequently set 8 March 2024 as the cut-off date for submission of the list of candidates. The final list of candidates contesting in the elections was published by the Commission on 10 April 2024, and certified candidates received their certificates of candidature on 12 April 2024.

According to the IEC’s 2024 elections calendar, the submission of the candidate lists marked the completion of the nomination process and paved the way for the printing of the ballot papers and finalisation of the Polling Procedures Manual. Over all, around 46 political parties submitted their list of candidates, together with 6 independent candidates also submitted their names to contest for the 200 Regional Assembly seats. The lists contained over 4,200 candidates who contested for the 200 Compensatory seats. The remaining 200 seats in the National Assembly were filled by candidates who contested in the Regional elections. Similarly, the provincial elections also recorded substantial numbers on the candidates list submitted to the IEC. As part of the requirements to submit the lists, political parties and candidates were expected to pay a deposit to support their applications. Section 27(2) of the Electoral Act, 1998, Act 73, mandates the IEC to set the amount to be deposited by political parties and candidates contesting in elections. For the 2024 elections, political parties that contested compensatory seats in the National Assembly and in all the nine regions were required to deposit R300,000; those who contested in Provincial Legislatures paid R50,000 for each of the provincial legislatures. Further, political parties that contested the compensatory seats in the National Assembly and in at least one region were required to deposit R225,000 and R25,000 for each additional region. Independent candidates were required to deposit R20,000 for each region they intended to contest and R15,000 for the election of a provincial legislature. According to the Regulations, parties and independent representatives that won a seat would get a refund of their deposits.

The AUEOM noted that while South Africa’s Constitution establishes democratic norms and practices that facilitate citizens participating in decision-making, there is a deficit in internal party democratic practices. South African voters are deprived of their right to choose their representatives. The process of compiling a candidates list for elections is limited to party executives and has no avenue for citizens’ views. Parties develop their own criteria to guide the selection of candidates. For example, The ANC looks for “dedicated cadres who possess the utmost capacity, qualification and experience”¹⁹ as a qualification to be on their candidates’ list. Apart from the fact the process to compile the candidates list side-lines citizens, the criteria do not consider minority interest, even with the ANC that instituted the “Zebra Policy” to include women.²⁰ This may explain why there are few women legislators in South Africa, even though women constitute 55.25 percent of the voters.

¹⁸ Regulations Concerning the Submission of Lists of Candidates, 2004 (Reg 2b).

¹⁹<https://www.anc1912.org.za/anc-updates-media-on-candidate-selection-process-for-national-and-provincial-government-elections-2024/>.

²⁰ A policy that ensures that females and males alternate equally, in terms of position on the party list.

The AUEOM noted the dissatisfaction from new political parties that the nomination fees were high. They complained that, for a political party to contest all 9 provinces and national assembly, they needed to pay a total of R750 000, which was exorbitant for the new political parties.

4.9 Electoral Campaigns

Electoral campaigns in South Africa is guided by the Electoral Act of 1998, Act 73 and regulated by the Electoral Code of Conduct. Section 99 of the Act mandates political parties and candidates to conform to specific behaviour that ensures free and fair elections. Political parties and candidates are also enjoined to subscribe to the Electoral Code of Conduct before they are allowed to contest in the elections and before being placed on a candidates list.²¹ The Act provides for some prohibitions of unwanted practices that have the potential to cause conflicts in the elections. For example, Section 92 provides for prohibitions concerning placards and billboards during elections, which states that “from the date on which an election is called to the date the result of the election is determined and declared, no person may deface or unlawfully remove any billboard, placard or poster published by a registered party or candidate.”

The Electoral Code of Conduct sets the conditions that are conducive to free and fair elections and that create a climate of tolerance, free political campaigning, and open public debate. The Code provides for strict adherence to guidelines for required campaign behaviour and sanctions those who flout the Regulations. The Code itemises eight rules to guide the conduct of parties and candidates. On violence, the rule encourages all electoral actors to speak against political violence and threats against other parties, the IEC, members of the public and the media. Rule two mandates candidates and political parties to officially inform authorities about their planned political marches and rallies and communicate their planned political events. By this, the IEC and the security authorities will be able to provide the needed security to avoid clashes where candidates and parties hold events in the same area. In addition, the Regulations list specific prohibited campaign conduct, which include using language that provokes violence, intimidation of candidates or voters, publishing false information about candidates and parties, destroying, removing or defacing posters of other parties,²² etc. For sanctions in default of any of the provisions, the Regulations provide that “Any person who breaches the Code is guilty of a criminal offence and can be fined or sent to prison for up to 10 years”. The 2024 South Africa elections were peaceful even though there were few recorded criminal acts, all related to break-ins at the IEC offices and tampering with election materials²³, including stealing of scanners, there were no incidents of attacks during the polls.

The Mission noted that combating corruption and improving service delivery, among other issues, were central to the political discourse and played a significant role in shaping the campaign landscape. Further, political parties and candidates also focused their campaign messages on fostering job opportunities, acknowledging the pivotal role of employment in enhancing citizens' well-being and the overall economic prosperity of the nation.

²¹ Electoral Act 1998, Act 73 (Section 99).

²² The Electoral Act of 1998, Act 73, Section 99 sub sections 1a and b.

²³<https://www.netwerk24.com/netwerk24/za/hermanus-times/nuus/five-arrested-for-break-in-at-iec-office-20240510-2>

4.10 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Participation of Women

South Africa is a signatory to international and regional²⁴ agreements aimed at eliminating discrimination against women, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (ACHPR-PW). The Constitution guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms to all individuals, regardless of sex. For instance, Section 9 of the Equality Clause of the Constitution explicitly prohibits discrimination based on gender, sex, pregnancy, and marital status. This clause ensures that women are treated equally under the law and are protected from any form of discrimination, while the Affirmative Action clause provides measures to advance individuals or groups disadvantaged by past discrimination, including women. Section 187 establishes the Commission for Gender Equality to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development, and attainment of gender equality. These provisions collectively ensure that women's rights are upheld and protected within the legal framework of South Africa, promoting gender equality and addressing issues related to discrimination, violence, and social and economic inequality. However, there is currently no separate legislation specifically addressing gender equality in political participation and representation.

Prior to the elections, South Africa's cabinet maintained a 50/50 gender balance. Since the country transitioned to democracy in 1994, women have held key cabinet positions as Ministers of Defence, Home Affairs, Health, International Relations, and the Deputy presidency. For example, four out of the five speakers of Parliament have been women. In addition, South Africa has seen female mayors in major, Pretoria, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, and Durban. Over the past 30 years, eight of the nine provinces have had female premiers on a permanent basis. Despite this, women remain significantly underrepresented in decision-making roles.

In the 2019 elections, women played a significant role, constituting 55 percent of registered voters. Women's representation in Parliament also increased to 46 percent of seats in the National Assembly and 36 percent in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP).

For the 2024 elections, women's participation, in general, remained robust, with women still making up 55 percent of registered voters (of the 27.7 million voters, 15 million are female). Data from the NEC shows that 58.14 percent of the candidates, or 8,658 individuals, were male, while 41.86 percent, or 6,234 individuals, were female. Regarding political parties, 15 parties had the female representation of 50 percent or above. Seven parties achieved 40 percent female representation, and an additional 14 parties had 30 percent female representation on their lists. Among the independent candidates, out of 11 individuals, only two women have made the shortlist. However, despite the high number of women voters, there was limited

²⁴ Other regional frameworks include the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development, which commits member States, including South Africa, to ensure gender parity in political representation. It sets a target of 50 percent representation of women in political and decision-making positions by 2030. South Africa, as a signatory, is obliged to implement these principles, ensuring women have equal opportunities to participate in political processes.

progress in achieving gender parity in political leadership. While the number of female candidates has increased, men still led the majority of political parties.

It is important to mention that the ANC has also been instrumental in promoting women's participation in politics and government, having implemented policies and programmes geared towards the empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equality. Opportunities abound for women to challenge patriarchal norms and stereotypes that have hindered their participation in politics in this election.

The IEC implemented several measures to promote gender equality, such as gender-sensitive voter registration drives, training for election officials on gender sensitivity and encouraging political parties to field more female candidates. In addition, the IEC also established a Gender Unit to address gender-related issues and promote women's participation in the electoral process. The participation of women in the 2024 elections was crucial in ensuring that women's voices were heard and that their interests are represented.

Youth Participation

In 2019, voter turnout among the youth was lower than other age groups, reflecting a broader global trend of political disengagement among younger demographics. Efforts to improve the lower youth participation included modernising voter registration processes and leveraging online platforms. The IEC's recent introduction of online voter registration and verification was a significant step aimed at simplifying the process for technologically proficient youths, making it easier for them to participate in the elections.

A survey by the Human Sciences Research Council commissioned by the IEC indicated that while there was increased awareness among young voters, there was a mixture of optimism and scepticism about the political process.

Comparatively, while the 2019 elections saw substantial voter education efforts, the 2024 elections were built on these foundations with more sophisticated digital outreach and broader inclusion strategies.

In addition, although the 2024 election witnessed a record voter registration, with a significant increase in youth participation, and with the IEC targeting the 18-39 age group, which constituted 42 percent of the voter roll, this surge in the statistics was assumed to be the result of focused efforts to address youth under-representation.

The AUEOM observed the positive contribution of the youth throughout the electoral process. Young people took active roles as voter educators, polling officials, observers and voters, among others. The IEC intensified efforts to engage young voters, launching targeted campaigns under the theme "Your Democracy, Own It". This initiative was aimed to resonate with young South Africans by highlighting their experiences and encouraging active participation.

Participation of People with Disabilities

Regarding accessibility for PwDs in the electoral process, the AUEOM observed that the Elections Law mandates the IEC to ensure that registration and voting centres/voting stations are accessible to PwDs. Efforts by the IEC to facilitate PwDs' participation were noted, particularly in collaboration with Blind SA during the 2024

South Africa elections. Blind SA played a crucial role in ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for visually impaired voters, distributing tactile ballot templates and actively participating in election observation.

To ensure accessibility, the IEC implemented creative measures such as producing braille and large print ballot papers, providing magnifying glasses, and offering audio and visual materials for voters with visual impairments. The AUEOM also noted that sign language interpreters were stationed at voting stations, and accessible voting stations were set up for people with mobility impairments. Training for election officials included awareness about the needs of voters with disabilities, and the need to create the appropriate environment to participate in the elections.

The AUEOM noted that while considerable progress had been made to include people with disabilities in South Africa's electoral processes, continuous improvements are necessary to effectively implement these measures and address the needs of all voters in the pre-election period and on election day. The AUEOM noted that the actions of the IEC demonstrated a positive commitment towards inclusive democratic process in South Africa.

4.11 The Media Environment

The legal framework²⁵ for media plurality during the 2024 elections was anchored in several of its key legislation and regulatory bodies, ensuring a diverse and balanced media landscape. During the elections, traditional media such as radio and television, played a significant role in informing and engaging the public. Television remains one of the most influential media platforms in South Africa, while Radio continues to be a crucial medium, particularly in rural areas where television and internet penetration may be poor. The AUEOM noted that the media played a pivotal role in ensuring a well-informed electorate and a transparent electoral process, including physical access, digital access, inclusivity for people with disabilities, linguistic diversity, and challenges related to misinformation. Political parties and the IEC facilitated media participation in the electoral process by through regular briefings.

The AUEOM observed the critical role of media monitoring in ensuring the integrity of South Africa's elections, particularly in combating disinformation and misinformation, which tend to proliferate during election campaigns. Despite the challenges posed by the spread of false information through social media, the IEC intensified its efforts to manage disinformation by collaborating with Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), a non-profit organisation dedicated to analysing media coverage of elections. Together, they worked on enhancing media channel management, creating engaging content, and responding promptly to crises such as allegations of voter fraud. These initiatives were part of the IEC's broader strategy to safeguard the integrity of the electoral process and hold accountable those responsible for spreading false information.

²⁵ These included among others, the South African Constitution which guarantees freedom of expression, including freedom of the press and other media. Section 16 specifically protects these rights, underpinning the legal basis for media plurality and the free flow of information. The Electoral Act provides guidelines for media conduct during elections, requiring fair and equitable coverage of all political parties and candidates. This Act, along with the Code of Conduct for Broadcasting Services, mandate media organisations to provide balanced and impartial election reporting.

Furthermore, the AUEOM noted the significance of the IEC's engagement with technology companies and media monitoring platforms to address the polarised online and offline environment fuelled by divisive sentiments like polarised political discourse. The IEC's collaboration with platforms like TikTok, Meta, and Google, along with local media monitoring platforms such as MMA, facilitated the monitoring and flagging of disinformation/misinformation by citizens. Moreover, a consortium of organisations committed to factual journalism, including fact-checking organisations like Africa Check and Snopes.com, as well as industry bodies like SANEF and the South African Press Council, joined forces to combat false information and ensure truthful reporting during the electoral period. These collaborative efforts aimed at upholding the principles of free and fair elections and promoting informed decision-making among voters were noted as commendable by the Mission.

The AUEOM noted that given South Africa's linguistic diversity, major broadcasters like the SABC provided news in multiple languages, including isiZulu, isiXhosa, Afrikaans, and others. This multilingual approach addressed language barriers, facilitating access to information for diverse communities. However, the spread of misinformation and disinformation, particularly on social media, posed significant challenges, with false information sometimes misleading the public and causing confusion.

Overall, the AUEOM noted that the quality and balance of reporting by the media during the 2024 elections were commendable for their objectivity and diversity of perspectives. Many media outlets strove for balanced reporting, featuring opinions and viewpoints from various political parties and experts. Extensive coverage of the elections ensured that citizens were well-informed about the electoral process and the different political choices available to them.

4.12 Elections Security

Ahead of the elections, security analysts and poll watchers of the South Africa 2024 elections projected heightened insecurity during rallies, public protests, and a high crime rate ahead of the 29 May elections, and an increased tension following the 20 May Constitutional Court ruling that barred former president Zuma's candidacy in the elections. Challenges of misinformation, disinformation and the use of hate/inciteful language were noted as major security threats by stakeholders, particularly in the increasingly polarised election environment. These combined challenges occasionally lead to social unrest, public protests, and riots. The AUEOM noted these existential security threats did not have much impact on the elections.

A joint elections security team was constituted and tasked to police the entire electoral process, covering the pre-election preparation activities (including voter registration and campaigning), the poll day, and the immediate post-election environment. Their main priority was to protect the integrity of the election process and ensure that voters could exercise their democratic rights without intimidation or threats. The 'National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (NATJOINTS)' led by the South African Police Service (SAPS), the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), and the State Security Agency (SSA), developed strategies to ensure a peaceful and secure electoral process. They conducted a national security assessment and did a pre-test of their election operational strategy to test their effectiveness.

Ahead of the election day, the NATJOINTS set up the 'National Coordination Centre (NCC)', and it was launched by the Ministers of Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) on 24 May 2024, five days before the polls. The NCC operated around the clock to monitor the situation in the country, identify threats, and coordinate a swift response. The NCC served as a crucial point of contact for information coordination and incident reporting. It was equipped with modern technology.

The NATJOINTS adopted several strategies to share election security information with the public. They organised press briefings and also used media platforms to communicate with the public on security around the elections. For example, there were two press briefings on 28 April 2024²⁶ and 19 May 2024²⁷. The main objectives of the press briefings were – to assure South Africans of their security and protection in the elections, protection of the IEC and election materials, and protection of public installations. They also used the platforms to warn troublemakers and remind them of the laws against crimes in South Africa. During the 19 May press briefing, the NATJOINTS urged citizens not to vandalise, deface, or remove posters of political parties, as this constituted an offence, and warned that anyone found tampering with these posters would be arrested.

The press briefings also highlighted the importance of combating fake news and disinformation, which could cause panic, confusion, and even incite violence. They urged the public to fact-check information before sharing it on social media platforms.

In terms of security incidents, the NATJOINTS recorded cases of break-ins at IEC offices in Gauteng, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal provinces resulting in the loss of some of the IEC scanners. Suspects were arrested and investigations were still ongoing at the time of finalising this report. Some of the suspects were remanded in police custody. These break-ins did not have any effect on the elections. The scanners that were stolen were retrieved by the police the next day.

4.13 Civil Society Participation

The AUEOM noted that CSOs provided voter education, promoting transparency, advocating for free and fair elections, and ensuring inclusive participation. Their participation was vibrant and diverse, with various organisations and movements actively engaged in democratic processes and advocating for social justice. Notable were the efforts of the South African Church Council (SACC) and the Women's Election Mechanism for Peace (WEMP), among others. Community-based and local organisations, such as community radio stations, women's groups, and youth organisations, also actively addressed specific community needs, and deployed observers to polling stations to ensure a free, fair, and transparent voting process.

The AUEOM also noted that CSOs provided crucial support to political parties, especially in the area of coalition governance, to stabilise the political landscape. CSOs engaged with political parties, pushing for policy commitments and holding them accountable for promises made. The role of civil society in the 2024 South Africa elections represented a marked increase in scale and intensity compared to the 2019

²⁶ <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/security-plan-place-upcoming-elections>.

²⁷ www.gov.za/news/media-statements/natjoints-state-readiness-upcoming-2024-elections-19-may-2024.

election. Their efforts focused on systemic issues like disinformation and broader political engagement beyond mere observation.

5. SPECIAL VOTING AND ELECTION DAY OBSERVATIONS

The AUEOM noted that the voting day was proclaimed as 29 May 2024 and for voting fixed from 0700 hrs to 2100 hrs, as stipulated in Section 36 (1) (a) & (b) of the Electoral Act 73 of 1998. However, there were different voting days for special voting involving South African living abroad and citizen based in South African but could not be available to vote on the 29 May 2024.

5.1 Special Voting

The AUEOM observed that the legal framework permits special voting for two categories of citizens: diaspora voters and those within the country who cannot vote in their registered districts on election day. This provision ensured the right to equal participation for all eligible voters, regardless of their location or situation. However, voters were required to pre-notify the IEC if they intended to vote at a station where they are not registered by 17 May 2024.

The AUEOM noted that special voting was conducted to accommodate voters unable to visit polling stations on the actual voting day, including those who are working, sick, elderly, disabled, or pregnant. Over 1.6 million people registered for special voting, with 937,144 voters casting their ballots. The special voting is crucial for inclusive democracy, ensuring all eligible voters can participate in the electoral process. The considerable number of participants underscores the importance of this provision.

The AUEOM did not observe the diaspora voting but was informed that registered citizens living outside South Africa were provided with the opportunity to cast their votes at the country's 111 missions across the world from 17 to 19 May 2024. Additionally, special voting took place inside South Africa on 27 and 28 May 2024 for citizens who had successfully applied to cast their votes through home visits or designated voting stations. The involvement of South African citizens abroad in the electoral process reflects a commitment by the government to ensuring the participation and representation of all eligible voters, regardless of their geographic location. The AUEOM observed the special voting at 83 voting stations across the country.

The AUEOM observed 83 special voting stations, 61 percent in urban areas and 39 percent in rural areas. All special voting (99 percent) occurred at designated voting stations, with the remainder through home visits. Observers were granted access to all these stations. The voting process was smooth, with 94 percent of stations having adequate election materials and 93 percent correctly following voting procedures. However, some issues were noted, such as insufficient independent access for persons with disabilities.

5.2 Mobile Voting

The AUEOM was informed that the IEC set up 32 mobile voting stations, with 10 in Eastern Cape, nine in KwaZulu-Natal, and 13 in Mpumalanga. While the Mission did not observe the mobile voting, it commends the IEC for establishing such voting stations that catered for voters living in sparsely populated and hard-to-reach areas.

This reflects the IEC's commitment to ensuring that voters in remote and less accessible areas can participate in the electoral process.

Any changes to these voting hours were to be at the discretion of the IEC. The IEC published the election timetable in line with the Electoral Act detailing all electoral activities²⁸ by specific dates and times.

The AUEOM observed that the number of voting staff at each station varied based on the number of registered voters in the district. Each station was mandated to be staffed by a Presiding Officer and voting officers, including various roles such as Deputy Presiding Officer, Queue Walker, Door Controller, Voters' Roll Officer/VMD Operator, Inker, Ballot Paper Issuer, and Ballot Box Monitor/Booth Controller.

The AUEOM noted the adherence to legal provisions outlined in the Electoral Act 73 of 1998 regarding eligibility to vote. Special voting provisions allowed registered voters who could not vote at their voting station on election day and would have applied in advance to vote on a predetermined day before election day either through home visits or at designated voting stations as per the election timetable.

IEC used diverse types of voting places, including permanent, temporary, mobile voting centres. Each station served as a facility for both voting and counting.

5.3 Election Day Observation: 29 May 2024

On Election Day, the AUEOM deployed 65 observers who visited 298 voting stations across all provinces of South Africa on 29 May 2024. Voters' commitment to exercising their right to vote was evident in the long queues observed at 75.4 percent (224) of the voting stations that the Mission visited. While the day was calm and peaceful, observers reported isolated incidents around some voting stations. These incidents were caused by long queues and slow vote processing, which could be attributed to the additional third ballot, VMDs' malfunctioning and late openings of some voting stations.

Opening and Voting

The opening of the polls was orderly, with the voting environment quiet and security personnel conducting themselves professionally. All authorised persons, including political parties and candidates' agents as well as observers, were present at and given access to all the voting stations visited by the AU observers. However, 43.5 percent of the observed voting stations (10 out of 23) did not open on time due to delays in the setup and the late arrival of essential materials like ballot boxes and voter registers. Voting procedures, such as finding voters on the voters roll manually or through VMDs, stamping and issuing ballots, and the actual marking and casting of ballots significantly slowed the process throughout the day. Additionally, high number of voters allocated to voting stations, slow processing by polling officials, merging of some voting stations, and long queues, particularly in the high-density

²⁸ These timetables were published in the Government Gazette. Key events in the timetable included the proclamation of the election, closing the voters' roll, releasing addresses of proposed voting stations for inspection, publishing the draft voters roll for inspection and possible objection, certifying and publishing the final voters' roll, setting deadlines for candidate list submissions and deposits, notifying parties and candidates of any non-compliance, publishing the parties contesting elections and candidate lists, inviting applications for special votes, publishing voting station and mobile voting station routes, allowing special votes at voting stations from 09:00 to 17:00, permitting special vote visits to voters' homes, and ensuring that voting takes place from 07:00 to 21:00 on Election Day.

townships, contributed to the frustration among voters waiting in long queues. Most voting stations processed voters after the official closing time and continued operations into the early hours of the following day. However, the Mission noted that there was an alternate measure to resort to the manual register for verification of voters following the VMDs' failures, and the IEC reassured the public that all voters in the queue by 2100 hrs would be processed. Of concern was the non-extension of time lost due to the late opening of some voting stations and this could have disenfranchised voters.

The Mission further noted that due to the introduction of the third ballot and the increased number of voters for the 2024 elections, exerted pressure on the voting process and election officials making it difficult to process voters during the stipulated time.

The ballot boxes were small and insufficient, and in some cases, they were poorly labelled or not marked at all. This made them less identifiable and could cause ballot paper misallocation by voters and delaying counting in some voting stations.

Political party campaign tents outside voting stations were observed, and it is the AUEOM's view that this could play a negative part in influencing voters in the polling stations. However, the ambience surrounding these tents was peaceful, with no incidents of party rivalries, although the tents were established close to one another.

The AUEOM observed that the effectiveness and competence of voting officials varied at different voting stations during opening, voting, closing, and counting. Observers assessed the competency of voting officials as anywhere between good and average, showing no improvement from the 2019 electoral process.

Several challenges were observed in effectively organising substations to minimise voters' waiting time. Most voting stations had an average of 1800 registered voters, and in some instances, substations were often consolidated into a single venue, resulting in all voters waiting in the same queue regardless of their assigned substation.

Despite the overcrowding observed in many voting stations visited, the secrecy of the vote was maintained through well-arranged voting booths and knowledgeable party agents. However, there were a few instances where secrecy might have been compromised. This occurred in voting station facilities that were small and had booths that were too close to where party and candidates' agents were seated.

The citizen election observers at all the voting stations visited by the Mission also demonstrated professionalism and knowledge of their roles, contributing citizens oversight of the voting process.

The availability of voting materials throughout the day was commendable despite their late arrival at some stations observed by the Mission. However, 17 out of 298 voting stations did not provide easy access to PwDs. In 12 percent of these stations, entrances were not levelled appropriately, with some stations located up or down stairs.

The AUEOM observed and received reports indicating that the indelible ink used during the process was easily removable, raising concerns about its effectiveness in

preventing fraud. However, the Mission did not observe or receive reports providing concrete evidence of multiple voting.

A significant percentage of polling officials were female and youth, reflecting their significant participation in administration of the elections. t

The Electoral Act identified two categories of voters who should be given assistance to vote such as voters who cannot read and write and voters with disabilities, including visual impairment. The AUEOM observed that priority was given to PwDs, the elderly, and expectant and nursing mothers. Assistance was provided to voters requiring help upon request, for example those who could neither read nor write or had visual impairment were assisted only by the Presiding Officer or deputy Presiding Officer or by a person or a companion of their choice according to the legislation.²⁹This reflected the mainstreaming of social inclusion in the process.

Party and candidate agents from most political parties were present in 60 percent of the voting stations visited, with at least six party agents inside the station at the time of the visit. The agents competently followed procedures and engaged the presiding officer for clarification when it was needed.

Additionally, an average of two international observers were present in 5 percent of the voting stations visited by the Mission, together with at least two citizen observers.

Closing and Counting

The AUEOM observed the closing of the polls and the counting exercise in 20 voting stations across the nine provinces. The AU observers reported that 85 percent of the visited voting stations closed on time. In 20 percent of the visited voting stations, queues were observed at closing time, particularly in stations with sub-stations. Despite this, all voters in the queues at closing time were permitted to vote, causing the counting operations to last until the morning of 30 May 2024. The presence of party and candidate agents, citizen and international observers was also noted at closing and counting time.

Voting stations visited followed counting procedures. The AUEOM also noted that reconciliation³⁰ procedures were followed although the procedures were not uniformly applied across the stations visited. It was observed that there was no reconciliation of ballots, therefore essential election materials were not sealed and packed properly, and in some cases presiding officers had to be reminded by party agents to count the special votes or to follow all the required procedures. The AU observers noted the presence of additional voting officials deployed by the IEC to aid in the counting. Despite the additional manpower, counting faced challenges, causing 25 percent of the visited voting locations to temporarily halt the process. In some instances, counting had not resumed by the time the AU observers left the station.

The counting activities took place in the presence of observers and party agents. Where counting was delayed, meddling by party agents and the management of special vote envelopes were cited as the primary factors. Due to the fact that the voting staff were unfamiliar with the counting processes and how to manage the

²⁹ Section 39 (1) of the Electoral Act 73 of 1998.

³⁰ The purpose of reconciliation is to record the number of ballots received against the number of ballots issued.

special vote collected on the 17th and 18th of May, party agents and citizen observers repeatedly intervened during the process, causing multiple interruptions.

In 55 percent of the voting stations visited candidate agents were given a copy of the results form. In 90 percent of the visited stations, the Presiding Officer announced the station's results after the counting process; however, 75 percent of these stations did not publicly publish copies of the results forms.

During the counting process, the AU teams observed two official complaints filed by party agents. All the complaints related to the processing of the special votes.

6. POST-ELECTION OBSERVATION

6.1 Tabulation and Tallying

Following the closure of voting, ballots were counted at each voting station, and the results for each station were promptly displayed outside the polling station. Subsequently, the presiding officers delivered result copies to the Municipal Electoral Office (MEO). The practice of conducting ballot counting at each voting station and promptly disclosing the results ensures visibility and accessibility to stakeholders and the public, thereby bolstering the integrity of the process. The diagram below shows the overview of the result process.

Fig 3: Overview of the Results Process



Source: IEC Presentation to AUEOM Observers and Head of Mission

The AUEOM witnessed the launch of the national Results Operations Centre (ROC) on 22 May ahead of the 2024 National and Provincial Elections at Gallagher Estate, Midrand. It served as the primary management hub for results operations and was a central hub for political parties, independent candidates, observers, the media, and other stakeholders to access real-time election results and receive updates from the IEC on key processes.

The IEC ensured that the results from each voting station underwent rigorous audit authentication before being posted by independent auditors. This significantly improved data management and accessibility, thereby enhancing the transparency of the electoral process and instilling confidence in the management of the elections, bolstering democracy in the country.

The rapid response system implemented by the IEC demonstrated its preparedness to swiftly address issues arising, thereby ensuring the smooth progress of the elections. For instance, during the tallying process, where the IEC informed the public during a regular press brief of at least 10 authorised window edits³¹. These edits provided opportunities to reconcile the results slip with the captured results. The IEC expressed satisfaction with the process, emphasising that the effects of opening edit windows would be reflected in the dashboard both retrospectively and going forward. Furthermore, the IEC authorised 24 recounts³², with the Chief Electoral Officer and party representatives involved in the recount process. Importantly, the IEC assured the public that these actions were undertaken impartially and without bias.

The IEC also granted observers, media representatives, and agents access to the national IEC ROC data centre. At the centre, results were publicly displayed on screens and announced promptly and comprehensively to the public as they were received. The IEC also conducted regular press briefings, during which it responded to inquiries from the media. Additionally, observers noted the presence of various stakeholders, including citizen and international observers, security officials, and party agents, at each tally centre observed, further enhancing the transparency and credibility of the electoral process.

The AUEOM noted that the IEC received a total of 579 objections³³ before finalising the election results. These objections³⁴ prompted the IEC to extend the deadline for objections to counting and capturing until 6 pm on 1 June 2024 from 31 May 2024. Objections can be directed to IEC in terms of Section 55 of the Electoral Act, and decisions of the IEC can be appealed at the Electoral Court. Additionally, the IEC engaged with the Party Liaison Committee (PLC) and agreed to consider objections that were filed late. The Mission commends this constructive approach, which allows political parties and independent candidates to voice their concerns. The IEC assured the public that none of these objections or recounts were substantial enough to change the final election outcome. The AUEOM also observed that the IEC assured the parties that every concern raised during the objection process would be carefully considered, and appropriate remedies, including specific recounts, would be ordered where necessary to ensure the integrity of the elections.

Overall, the AUEOM noted that the tallying and result aggregation process was open and transparent, in line with the expectations of the ACDEG and other international principles for democratic elections. The AUEOM commends the IEC's emphasis on accuracy and speedy delivery of results, even with an additional ballot, which demonstrates their commitment to maintaining a credible election.

³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GGJ2zYKjUY>.

³² Ibid.

³³ The 579 objections raised several key themes, including incomplete result processes, allegations of votes not reflecting, concerns about seat allocation criteria, issues related to the conduct of elections, and challenges impacting the training of electoral officials.

³⁴ <https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/iec-receives-579-objections>.

6.2 Voter Turnout

The AUEOM noted that despite the 27.7 million South Africans who registered to vote only 16.2 million voted, resulting in a voter turnout of 58.64 percent—the lowest in the country's 30-year democratic history since the end of apartheid. This decline in voter turnout has been evident in recent years, with 90 percent turnout in 1999 gradually decreasing to 66 percent in the 2019 election. The AUEOM also noted that there were over 212,000 spoiled ballots, which could have been caused by inadequate voter education, the introduction of the third ballot and excessively large ballot papers.

6.3 Declaration of Results

The IEC announced the final results³⁵ and seat allocation within seven days of election day.³⁶ The AUEOM noted that the ruling ANC lost its majority for the first time since 1994 although it remained the biggest party, requiring it to form a coalition government. The support for the ANC dropped to levels lower than 58 percent in 2019 and 62 percent in 2014. The DA garnered approximately 21 percent of the vote. The MK Party secured 14.58 percent of the national vote, becoming the largest party in KZN, although it did not achieve an outright majority in the province. The EFF came in fourth place with just over 9 percent of the vote. Despite the significant shift in the South African political landscape, the ANC accepted the election results and the will of the people without hesitation, marking the end of its long-standing political dominance. The duration of time between the declaration and acceptance of the result by the ruling party and most parties involved in the race was noteworthy, as an act that fostered a peaceful post-election future.

Fig 4: List of Parties that Won National Assembly Seats (Out of 400 seats)

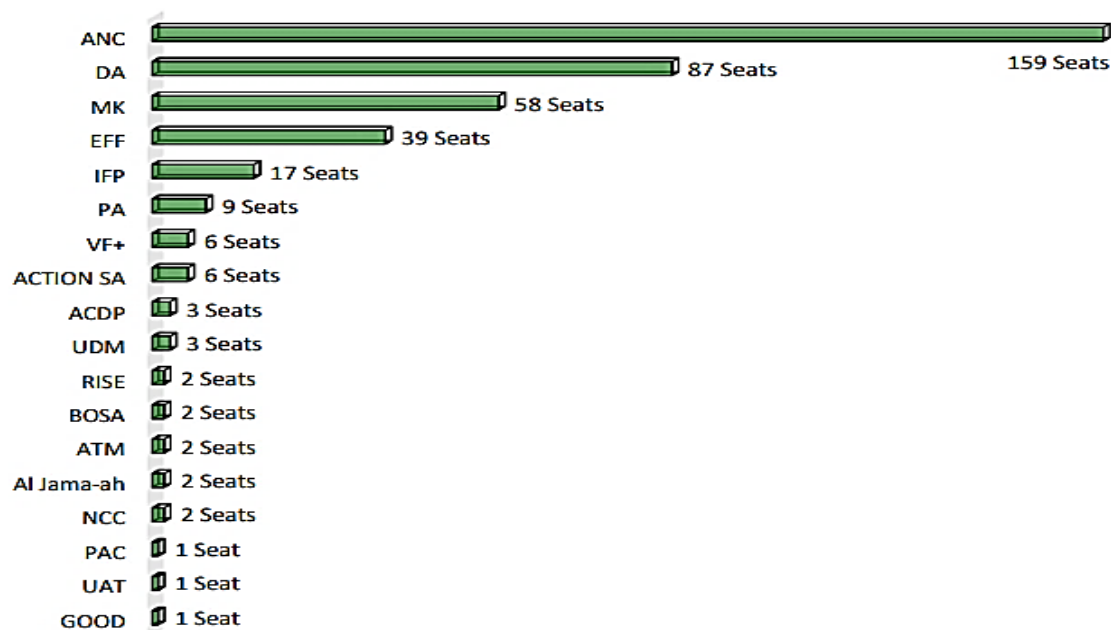
Party	Leader	Percentage	Seats	+/-
ANC	Cyril Ramaphosa	40.18	159	-71
DA	John Steenhuisen	21.81	87	+3
MK	Jacob Zuma	14.58	58	New
EFF	Julius Malema	9.52	39	-5
IFP	Velenkosini Hlabisa	3.85	17	+3
PA	Gayton McKenzie	2.06	9	+9
VF+	Pieter Groenewald	1.36	6	-4
Action SA	Herman Mashaba	1.20	6	New
ACDP	Kenneth Meshoe	0.60	3	-1
UDM	Bantu Holomisa	0.49	3	+1
RISE	Songezo Zibi	0.42	2	New
BOSA	Mmusi Maimane	0.41	2	New
ATM	Vuyolwethu Zungula	0.40	2	0
Al Jama-ah	Ganief Hendricks	0.24	2	+1
NCC	Fadiel Adams	0.23	2	New
PAC	Mzwanele Nyhontso	0.23	1	0
UAT	Wonder Mahlatsi	0.22	1	New
Good	Patricia de Lille	0.18	1	-1

Source : <https://results.elections.org.za/dashboards/npe/>

³⁵ <https://results.elections.org.za/home/>.

³⁶ Section 57 of the Electoral Act.

Fig 5: Graph of the Results



Source : AU Democracy and Elections Unit, based on the results above.

The AUEOM observed that the outcome of the 2024 elections has reshaped the political landscape, highlighting the imperative for political leaders to adeptly navigate these shifts and establish a government that authentically mirrors the citizens’ desires. The distribution of seats in Fig. 4 and 5 above is reflective of this. For example, in the National Assembly, the ANC commands 159 seats, followed by the DA with 87, the MK Party with 58, and the EFF with 39. Other parties, such as the IFP, the Patriotic Alliance (PA), and the Freedom Front Plus (VF Plus), secured significant representation.

For the first time in South African election history, independent candidates participated in both provincial and national elections, but their performance was lacklustre. Among the 11 independents who ran, the highest vote tally was approximately 12,000, followed by another with 3,000 votes. However, none of the independent candidates garnered enough votes to secure a seat in parliament. The Mission concluded that the poor showing of independent candidates could have been due to challenges in gaining traction compared to established parties due to limited resources, lack of name recognition, and strong party loyalties among South African voters. In addition, institutional barriers and a system biased toward party politics further disadvantaged independent candidates. Despite these challenges, the AUEOM commends their participation, which highlights the need for a more inclusive electoral system.

Following the completion of the polls on 29 May 2024, the IEC received a total of 579 complaints lodged by individual voters and political parties as of 1 June 2024. In spite of the complaints, the IEC declared the results on 2 June 2024. In its daily media briefing on 1 June, the IEC said it had categorised the complaints into five, but the complaints did not raise substantial issues that could affect the results. For example, one of the complainants said a voter said he/she voted for him, but in that specific

station, they cannot see the vote, and others also complained about the capacity of elections officials, among others.³⁷

7. BEST PRACTICES

Based on its observation of the entire electoral process, the AUEOM summarised the following findings as constituting best practices:

- a. The development and use of the Results Operating Centre (ROC) by the IEC exemplified a commitment to transparency and accountability. This setup not only enhanced the efficiency and reliability of the results management process but also boosted stakeholder confidence in the integrity of the result.
- b. The online voter registration platform provided an opportunity for voters with internet connectivity or SMS to register, check and update their voter information and receive regular election related updates.
- c. Signing of the Electoral Code of Conduct on 4 April 2024 by political parties and independent candidates reinforced their commitment to abide by the set of rules that are conducive to free and fair elections.
- d. The invitation to parties to audit the results management system as a mark of transparency contributing to the credibility of the elections.
- e. The continuous use by the IEC of the Party Liaison Committees (PLC) as a regular platform for engagement with political parties.
- f. Robust electoral dispute resolution structures and mechanisms to handle cases and quick delivery of judgments that aimed to provide both restorative and retributive outcomes. The effectiveness of these structures was evident in the expeditious adjudication of numerous electoral cases during the 2024 electoral process.
- g. A peaceful, accommodating, and issue-based campaign process contributed to reduced tensions and helped citizens make informed voting choices.
- h. Special voting, including home visits, prisoner and diaspora voting broadened voter participation and enhanced the democratic rights of citizens.

³⁷ IEC media briefing on 1 June 2024.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusion

The AUEOM concluded that the 2024 National and Provincial Elections in South Africa were professionally organised and conducted in an orderly, peaceful, and free atmosphere, allowing voters to express their democratic will and candidates to campaign freely. Overall, the 2024 South African elections were pivotal for the country's democratic future and regional political stability.

8.2 Recommendations

To promote election equality, transparency, efficiency, and public confidence in South Africa's electoral processes, the AUEOM proffers the following top 10 key recommendations:

- **The Government and Parliament should:** (a) In line with the Affirmative Action and Employer Equity Act (Act No. 55 of 1998), consider incorporating specific gender equity legislation in the Electoral Act to bolster female representation and implement measures for the integration of women in political parties throughout the electoral cycle to ensure compliance with constitutional, regional and international gender equality commitments; (b) review the PPFA's provisions to cover independent candidates, and improve enforcement mechanisms by empowering the IEC through enhanced resources and capacity to enforce the campaign finance regulations to improve the equality, transparency, and accountability of the elections; (c) review campaign regulations to set time frame for campaigning, especially Section 108 of the Electoral Act that provides for prohibitions on election day; (d) strengthen legislations on independent candidates to ensure equality of their votes with political parties, especially at the level of seat allocation. (e) review the Electoral Act, in line with best democratic practices, to create avenues for citizens to participate in the process of selecting their legislators. The practice where political parties impose candidates lists on citizens without their full participation does not conform to good democratic practices.
- **The Independent Electoral Commission should:** (a) Improve VMD reliability to prevent delays and ensure smooth verification of voters; (b) enhance logistics management to avoid late arrival of essential materials on election day in future elections; (c) given the introduction of a third ballot and the increasing number of registered voters, increase the number of voting stations to ensure efficient voter processing and to minimise delays, and consider setting a limit on the voting population per voting station following best practices in other Africa countries; (d) review the recruitment process of polling staff to bring in more qualified persons with a level of managerial capacity, at least for the Presiding Officer position; (e) design a Results Collation/Accounting Form to make it easier for Presiding Officers to provide specific details that respond to required ballot data and that create columns for political party agents to authenticate the final results; (f) conduct comprehensive training programme for all polling staff to ensure their coherent procedure implementation and avoid procedural errors; (g) in line with the principle of the right to an effective remedy as provided for in the African

Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG), Act. 17, consider adjudicating all complaints in a more expedient manner to increase public confidence in the process. Additionally, sufficient funding should be provided for training on electoral offenses and dispute resolution for the IEC and political parties, and (h) adopt a proactive communication pertaining to logistical challenges to allay stakeholders' fears and concerns.

- **Political Parties should:** Establish mechanisms and develop strategies to facilitate the inclusion of marginalised groups, including women and PWDs, in active politics by promoting them to hold leadership positions in parties and also as a priority on the candidate's list. This may include the “zigzag” listing of candidates, special quotas for women and PWDs, and mentorship programs, among others.

ANNEX : Deployment Map

