

Press Release

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South African Institute of Race Relations

The power of ideas

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DA increases share of eligible votes by 400%

The Democratic Alliance (DA) increased its share of eligible votes by 400%, from 2% in 1994 to 10% in 2009. The African National Congress (ANC) saw its share of eligible votes decrease by 28%, from 54% in 1994 to 39% in 2009. This is according to the latest *South Africa Survey*, published by the South African Institute of Race Relations (IRR) in Johannesburg recently.

The *Survey* is the annual yearbook on all social, economic, and political aspects of South Africa that the IRR has been publishing since 1946.

However, the ANC increased its proportion of votes cast by 5%, from 63% in 1994 to just fewer than 66% in 2009. The DA increased its proportion of votes cast by 750%, from just under 2% in 1994 to 17% in 2009.

To be eligible to vote, a person must be 18 years of age or older. When looking at the share of eligible votes a political party gets we examine the total number of votes it received as a proportion of all eligible voters. When looking at the proportion of votes cast, we look at how many votes, as a proportion of all votes cast, each party received.

The data was obtained from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

Georgina Alexander, a researcher at the IRR, said, 'The DA has done well in increasing its share of both the eligible votes and the actual votes cast. However, in 2009 some 41% of eligible voters did not vote. This is indicative of a large number of disillusioned and apathetic voters in South Africa. Capturing these votes will be a challenge for all political parties this year'.

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