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The Place of Independent Candidates in South Africa's Multi-party Democracy

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The Place of Independent Candidates in South Africa's Multi-Party Democracy

Chapter One: Introduction and Context

i. Introduction

Political parties in South Africa have consistently dominated politics in the country since its democratic dispensation began. Historically, there were competitive multiparty elections in white-ruled South Africa (1910-93), albeit (notoriously) for a national parliament elected mainly or (between the mid-1950s and mid-1980s) exclusively by a white minority electorate. Although it feared competitors in the 1950s and 1980s, the National Party was a *de facto* dominant party through much of the apartheid period, bolstered by the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, gerrymandering, state broadcasting, Afrikaner support and growing general white support. Elections at all levels of government were conducted exclusively under the first-past-the-post system.[1]

When South Africa officially became a democratic state, the inaugural elections of 1994 included multiple political parties contesting. Political parties have continued to be the centre of politics in the country under the new racially inclusive proportional system as they were under the previous racially exclusive FPTP system. This begs the question of what role independent candidates play in South African politics, if any. Moreover, is independent candidacy a relevant option for citizens in the country?

This study aims to assess the role of independent candidates and elected independents in South Africa's multiparty democracy. This research will attempt to answer the core question of 'What role do independent candidates and elected independents play in South Africa's multiparty democracy?' This question will be explored by focusing on the electoral performance of independents in local government, and on the role played by independents who have been elected. The focus is on local government because South Africa's current electoral system only permits independents to run and hold office at the local government level. The research will mainly draw from results of the local government elections in 2000, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021. It will further briefly analyse the provincial and national levels of government and

[1] Communication from Daryl Glaser, 2023.

elections to interrogate the possible impact that the *New Nations Movement*[2] court ruling in favour of allowing independents to stand nationally might have for the future of independent candidates in the country.

ii. Context and Background

This research is situated in the broader debate about electoral reform in South Africa since the dawn of inclusive democracy. Scholars have debated the extent to which SA's current electoral system allows for adequate accountability and citizen involvement. In recent times, the debate was reignited by a Constitutional Court (CC) judgement supporting independent candidates' integration into the national and provincial elections. It is worth mentioning briefly that South Africa's proportional representation (PR) system allow for independent candidates to contest local elections but not provincial and national (general) elections.

In the case of *New Nation Movement NPC and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others 2020 (6) SA 257 (CC) (11 June 2020)*[3], the applicants appealed a High Court decision to the Constitutional Court. The applicants argued that the Electoral Act 73 of 1998[4] was unconstitutional because it did not provide for adult citizens to contest elections to the national and provincial legislatures as independent candidates. The applicants stated that this unjustifiably limits the right to stand and hold (if elected) public office, as envisaged in section 19(3)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.[5] Furthermore, it was argued that there is infringement of the right to freedom of association conferred by section 18 of the Constitution. The Constitutional Court declared the Electoral Act unconstitutional insofar as "it requires that adult citizens may be elected to the National Assembly and Provincial Legislatures only through their membership of political parties." It held that the freedom of association is inextricably linked to section 19(3)(d) because this right is also about adult citizens not being coerced to be members of political parties to stand for, and hold, public office. The court hence suspended the operation of this judgement for 24 months (from 11 June 2020) "to afford Parliament an opportunity to remedy the defect giving arise to the unconstitutionality".

[2] *New Nation Movement NPC and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others 2020 (6) SA 257 (CC) (11 June 2020.*
[3] Hereafter referred to as '*New Nation Movement*'.
[4] Hereafter referred to as the 'Electoral Act'.
[5] Hereafter referred to as 'the Constitution'.

What this judgement practically meant is that Parliament must make the necessary legislative amendments to allow for independent candidates (who are not members of a political party) to stand and, if elected, hold office in the provincial and national legislatures by 11 June 2022. To date, Parliament has been granted two more extensions by the CC – the latest till 28 February 2023. This effectively means that the electoral system must be reformed to allow independent candidates to run in the 2024 general elections. While the role of the CC is to deal with cases that raise questions about the application and interpretation of the law; its scope does not extend to interrogating what the practical and political implications are. This poses the question of what impact this judgement will have on the country's democracy moving forward. To understand that impact, it is useful to investigate the performance of independent candidates in the local government elections where they had already been permitted to run and to interrogate the impact independents have had once elected.

iii. Research Questions

Core question:

What role do independent candidates and elected independent candidates play in South Africa's multi-party democracy?

Secondary questions:

1. Who are the independent candidates? What are their backgrounds? Do they have party links?
2. How often have independents stood for local government, and how often have they won? In addition to that, how often have they sought and won re-election?
3. Under what circumstances do independent candidates tend to do well or win?
4. Do independents remain independent?
5. Does it matter whether independents are elected or not? What is the evidence about the impact of elected independent councillors? Are they less corrupt or more successful with service delivery? Have they affected the balance of local power?

iv. Methodology

The research will be both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative research includes quantifying the electoral performance of independents. The study uses secondary data sourced from electoral results made available by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of South Africa. This data is included in the appendix and represented in tables that are in-text.

The qualitative research includes examining news media, secondary literature and other sources in order to enable an overall judgement of independents' performance mainly during elections and, to a lesser degree, in office. The qualitative research takes the form of thematic analysis, classifying information on independents including factors that affect the success or failure of independent candidates.

An interpretivist/inductive approach is applied using the information gathered. Based on the evidence gathered, the conclusion includes some informed speculation about the prospects of independents in national and provincial elections.

V. Literature Review

Literature on independent candidacy at the provincial and national elections in SA has been speculative. This is considering that independents have never been a part of the general elections. However, since the 2020 *New Nation Movement* judgement, reports and literature has started developing opinions on how independents could be assimilated into SA's provincial and national elections and legislatures. As such, literature has mainly focussed on comparative analyses from other countries.

Commentary on British politics suggests that independent candidates (along with small parties) widen political representation where the mainstream, larger parties have left a gap in representing diverse views and interests.[6] A gradual disconnection of citizens from major parties and their failures influences the growth of independents and stimulates the appetite of the voter for a political alternative. While their electoral performance is not competitive to larger parties, scholars suggest that independents and smaller parties benefit their cause through

[6] Copus, C., Clark, A., Reynaert, H., and K. Steyvers, 2009, "Minor Party and Independent Politics beyond the Mainstream: Fluctuating Fortunes but a Permanent Presence", Parliamentary Affairs, 62(1): p. 6, https://academic.oup.com/pa/article/62/1/4/1486753.

agenda-setting more than seeking office.[7] Their relevance is considered to be different from larger parties whose focus is on electoral performance. The relevance of independents is more evident when examining the mobilisation of public opinion, focussing on ignored issues, and attracting public or media attention.[8] Scholarship on United States (US) politics indicate that independents win less than 1% of the national vote on average.[9]

Independents are generally theorised according to their inferior electoral performance. Though their performance varies from country to country, at different levels of government, they remain on the periphery of politics. It is argued that the electoral system used, has an impact on the performance of independents. Independents are also affected by ballot access requirements and the calculation/allocation of seats. [10] Large districts and electoral thresholds decrease the electoral performance of independents and majority/plurality and open-list systems tend to increase their chances.[11]

Despite their inferior electoral performance, there has been a growing interest, and a rise in independent candidates in developing countries, like Uganda. [12] The general rise in non-party candidates has been attributed to rising antiparty sentiments, declining partisanship, poor intraparty democracy, and factionalism. In Uganda, independent members of parliament (IMPs) have increased from 38 in 2006-2011, to 43 in 2011-2016, and to 69 in 2016-2019.[13] Their relevance has highlighted mainly through legislative proposals, serving on parliamentary committees and providing minority opinions to committee decisions, and exercising executive oversight. [14]

In SA, a lot of literature has been mainly conducted after the 2020 judgement in attempt to provide recommendations for a new electoral system that caters for independents. However, very few scholars have conducted an analysis into independents at the local elections. This literature aims to bridge this gap and provide a statistical analysis of independents in local government and then draw inferences into the provincial and national levels of government.

[7] Copus, Clark, Reynaert, and Steyvers, 2009, p. 7.
[8] Ibid, p.8.
[9] Brancati, D., 2008, "Winning Alone: The Electoral Fate of Independent Candidates Worldwide", Chicago Journals, https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/epdf/10.1017/S0022381608080675, p.648.
[10] Ibid, 649.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Karyeija, G.K., 2019, "The Impact of Independent Members of Parliament in Multi-Party Democracies: The Case of Uganda", Sabinet African Journals, 2(2), https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC-1b111ec56c, p.60.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Karyeija, 2019, p. 66-67.

Further, this paper seeks to derive information on the performance of independents at the LGEs in order to inform subsequent views and policies on the place of independent candidates in SA's multi-party political landscape.

Chapter 2: Defining Key Concepts

Chapter 1 of the Constitution details the founding provisions of the country. Subsection 1(d) states that South Africa is a democratic state founded on, among other values, "Universal adult suffrage, a national common voters roll, regular elections and *a multi-party system of democratic government*, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness".[15] The emphasis on "a multi-party system of democratic government" highlights two key concepts used in the subject matter of this writing – 'multi-party' and 'democracy'. Therefore, it is prudent to begin by conceptualising these two concepts as they are pertinent for the purposes of this paper.

i. Defining 'democracy'

The term 'democracy' is well conceptualised in political studies and has narrow and broader definitions. To avoid definitional ambiguities and challenges, this paper endorses the narrow sense of the term. Accordingly, democracy is derived from the Greek words *demos* (people) and *kratos* (meaning power, or rule). Therefore, democracy means 'rule by the people'.[16] According to Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address in 1863, democracy can be further understood as 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people'. The legitimacy of the government stems from the people who confer their power to the government consensually by way of voting.[17] However, political theorists have critiqued that the questions about the legitimacy of 'the people' who consent to the government is left answered. While one recognises these debates, they will not be the subject of this paper. Hence it suffices to present 'the people' as constituting those deemed 'legitimate' or 'legal' according to the criteria regulated by the state.

[15] The Constitution.
[16] Heywood, A, 2013, "Politics" (Fourth Edition), Chapter 12: Parties and Party Systems, p.89, Palgrave Foundations: United Kingdom, https://archive.org/details/politics04edheyw/mode/2up.
[17] Nasstrom, S., 2007. "The Legitimacy of the People", *Political Theory*, 35(5): 627.

ii. Defining 'multi-party'

According to the Constitutional Court, a "multi-party democracy contemplates a political order in which it is permissible for different political groups to organise, promote their views through public debate and participate in free and fair elections."[18] A "multiparty system of democratic government clearly excludes a one-party state, or a system of government in which a limited number of parties are entitled to compete for office." This means that the correct interpretation of section 1(d) of the Constitution does not require a political party-based proportional representation system exclusively. Rather, it excludes the possibility of a one-party state in consideration of the historical context of the exclusionary apartheid regime. Hence, this does not exclude the participation of independent candidates in any elections as envisaged in section 1(d). "What this makes obligatory is allowing different political groups to organise and participate in elections, including fielding candidates". However, it does not dictate only those mentioned political groups must do so – that is, an exclusive multi-party representation.[19] Thus, the abovementioned interpretation of the term 'multi-party' is endorsed in this paper.

Therefore, one arrives at the definition of **'multi-party democracy' as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people in which different political groups and/or persons organise, promote their views through public debate, and participate in free and fair elections.**

iii. Defining Political Parties

According to the latest version of the Draft Electoral Amendment Bill[20], "independent candidate" refers to "a person contesting an election and who is not nominated on a list of a political party". This definition encapsulates the general explanation of an independent candidate, which is best understood in contrast to that of a political party. While the focus of this paper is on independent candidates, starting with comprehending political parties conceptually, brings a greater comparative understanding of what constitutes an independent

[18] New Nation Movement para 71.
[19] New Nation Movement para 72.
[20] Electoral Amendment Bill, Government Gazette No. 45716 OF 31 December 2021, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202203/electoral-amendment-bill.pdf. Hereafter referred to as 'the Bill'.

candidate in theory. Therefore, one must begin by answering the question of *What is a political party*?

A political party "is a group of people organised for the purpose of winning government power, and usually displays some measure of ideological cohesion".[21] Implicit in this definition is that a political party must involve a group of individuals who form an organisation of agreed political goals towards contesting and running government (if elected). Functions of political parties generally include representation of a constituency, collective goals on changes needed in society, agreed government policy on how these goals will be achieved, and the mobilisation of the electorate. [22]

The main characteristics that constitute a political party in the South African context can be summarised as follows. Firstly, more than one person within the organisation and its constitution. Secondly, a targeted or recognised constituency. Thirdly, collective campaigning and lobbying of votes from the electorate during elections. Fourthly, a designated hierarchy of political leadership within the organisation. Fifthly, specific to South Africa's general elections, a closed party list of candidates who will assume office should the political party be elected.

iv. Defining Independent Candidates

Independent candidates are generally understood as not being endorsed by or affiliated to a political party.[23] This means that independents are not tied to other candidates, like political party candidates, and cannot draw from party resources for campaigning, organisational and financial support. The term 'independent' candidate suggests "self-governing, self-regulating, freedom and open-mindedness".[24] Conjoined independence signifies a rejection of party politics that recognises the need for organisation and coherence inherent in representation. This sometimes comes at the expense of the term "independence".[25] A study of IMPs in Uganda identified the following main reasons for persons to run as IMPs. They had the constitutional right to do so; they believed their values/ideologies were not represented in an political party;

[21] Heywood, 2013, "Politics", Chapter 12, p.243.
[22] Heywood, 2013, "Politics", Chapter 12, p.243.
[23] Brancati, 2008, p. 648.
[24] Karyeila, 2019, p. 63.
[25] Copus, Clark, Reynaert, and Steyvers, 2009, p. 13-14.

representing a particular constituency; the notion of individual merit where the popularity of an independent is believed to surpass that of a party; and financial capability. [26]

According to the court judgement in *New Nation Movement*, one can deduce that an independent candidacy in SA is narrowly defined as an adult citizen contesting elections without being a member of a political party. In the SA context independents have only contested at local government level thus far, although independents will be permitted to contest the 2024 general (national and provincial) elections for the first time. Therefore, independent candidacy will be considered in the context of local government elections. In furthering the concept of independent candidacy, one has to contend with a crucial conceptual question, which is: *What are independent candidates 'independent' of that political parties are not, which then makes them 'independent'*?

To answer the abovementioned question, there are a couple of characteristics that differentiate independent candidates from political parties at local level. Firstly, an independent candidate contests/stands individually – not registered under the banner of a political party. Secondly, the independent candidate maintains full political autonomy and control, compared to a member of a political party who is influenced and guided by the constitution, vision, values and procedures of their political party – amongst other things. The Constitution Court noted that "*political party membership also comes with impediments that may be unacceptable to others. It may be too trammelling to those who are averse to control. It may be overly restrictive to the free spirited. It may be censoring to those who are loath to be straight-jacketed by predetermined party positions. In a sense, it just may – at times – detract from the element of self; the idea of a free self; one's idea of freedom*."[27]

Thirdly, independent candidacy does not have the partisanship that makes one ultimately answerable to the party, and hence makes one more directly answerable to their constituency.[28] Fourthly, Berkowitz (2011) distinguishes between small parties and independents by explaining that independents under the current dispensation are only eligible for the ward seats and not on the proportional representation (PR) list while parties are eligible for both PR and

[26] Ibid, p. 63.
[27] New Nation Movement para 49
[28] New Nation Movement para 53

ward seats in local government elections.[29] The reasons for this and how it affects the prospects of independent candidates will be explored further in this paper.

Chapter 3: Municipal/local government election results

It is important to begin with an explanation of South Africa's electoral system at local government. This will enable a deeper understanding of the election results and contextualize the performance of independent candidates within the municipal system.

South Africa's local sphere of government consists of municipalities. A municipality is a geographical area defined by the Municipal Demarcation Board. The Municipal Demarcation Board is the body responsible for the delimitation of wards in local and metropolitan municipalities. Each municipality has a Municipal Council that governs the municipal area. Duties include raising revenues, using funds to provide services, making policies, and by-laws. A Municipal Administration, headed by the Municipal Manager, conducts the operational work of the municipality to implement decisions formulated by the Council and deliver services to their respective constituencies.

There are three categories of municipalities; metropolitan (category A), district (category B), and local (category C).[30] There are a total of 278 municipalities; 8 Metropolitan, 44 District, and 226 Local as of the 2021 elections' database.[31] The Metropolitan Municipalities are the 8 bigger cities (by voter population) in the country which are broken into wards. The Metros are Johannesburg, Tshwane (Pretoria), eThekwini (Durban), Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Bay (Port Elizabeth), Mangaung (Bloemfontein), Buffalo City (East London), and Ekurhuleni (East Rand). Local Municipalities are areas located outside the Metros which are smaller, and each local municipality is also divided into wards. A ward is a geopolitical subdivision of a municipality which is the smallest grouping of constituencies at local level. Local municipalities are then grouped into one district thus forming the District Municipalities.

[29] Berkowitz, P., May 10, 2011, "The nascent rise of the independent ward councillor", Daily Maverick. https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2011-05-10-analysis-the-nascent-rise-of-the-independent-ward-councillor/ (Accessed: 10 June 2022).
[30] Section 155 of the Constitution.
[31] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, "2021 Municipal Elections Report", p.6, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Municipal-Election-Reports.

Approximately 4 to 6 neighbouring local municipalities are combined to form a District Council.

i. Formation of Municipal Councils

Municipal Councils are elected during the local government elections held every 5 years. To date, the country has successfully conducted five municipal elections between the years 2000 and 2021. South Africa uses a hybrid electoral system at local level which combines the proportional representation (PR) and first-past-the-post (FPTP) mechanisms. The FPTP, also referred to as the "winner-takes-all", is a system in which the candidate receiving the most votes in a ward becomes the sole representative of that ward, even if they do not win an absolute majority of votes within it. The proportional representation system provides that the percentage of votes won by a political party must be equal to the percentage of seats allocated in the Municipal Council. The candidates elected to occupy these seats is determined by the ranking of candidates on party lists. It is important to note that independent candidates are ineligible to contest for/receive PR seats as they are considered as single individuals. However, independents (competing with political party ward candidates) can gain seats through the first-past-the-post component of the electoral system.

Seats are allocated in accordance with these two systems. Half of ward candidates are determined using the FPTP method and make up half the seats in the Municipal Council. The proportional representation method accounts for the other half of the seats in Municipal Councils by political parties. This is calculated by using the percentage of votes received to first determine the overall percentage of seats a political party is entitled to. Once the number of seats has been established, seats already won by the political party ward candidates are subtracted from the total a party is entitled to. The difference provides the number of seats the party can fill from its party list in order to establish overall proportionality.[32] This completes the Councils in the local and metro municipalities.

To calculate the seats in district municipalities, 40% of seats are derived from the PR ballot votes and 60% from the Local Councils in that district municipal area. Voters receive a District Municipal ballot with names of political parties, and seats are allocated according to the

[32] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, "2000 Municipal Elections Report", p. 65, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Municipal-Election-Reports.

percentage of votes parties gained in the entire municipal district area. While voters in Metropolitan Municipalities receive two ballot papers (ward and PR vote), the Local Council voters utilize three ballot papers – a ward candidate, PR vote in the local council and PR vote in the district council.[33]

Elected Municipal Councils vote for a chairperson called the Speaker. The Speaker presides over municipal council meetings and applies the Rules of Order. In cases where no party secures an outright majority (more than 50% of votes), we refer to this as a hung municipality.[34] The Speaker of a Municipal Council is crucial in a hung council as he/she has a casting vote in terms of the Local Government when the number of votes are equal during Council proceedings.[35] Council members elect a (Executive) Mayor with wide executive powers, and a Deputy Major (in some municipalities). The Executive Mayor appoints other Council members (a maximum of 10 people) to assist him/her. A Council majority is required in certain decisions like the Budget and Municipal By-Laws, while other decisions are made by Mayoral Committee according to the mayor's delegation.

ii. Municipal Election Results

Table 1: Below is a table detailing the overall, national electoral results of independent candidates in all the local government elections during South Africa's democratic dispensation thus far. These are statistics by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of South Africa.[36]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESULTS NATIONALLY

	2000	**2006**	**2011**	**2016**	**2021**
Independent Ward Candidates	672	663	754	855	1549
Total Ward Candidates	13 925	23 691	30454	36 861	61 119
Seats Won by Independents	17	34	45	27	52
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	3754	3895	4277	4392	4468

[33] IEC, "2000 Municipal Elections Report".
[34] The Citizen, "Explainer: What is a hung council, and what does it mean for voters?", https://www.citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/elections/local-2021/explainer-what-is-a-hung-council-and-what-does-it-mean-for-voters/ (Accessed: 24 January 2023).
[35] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, "2006 Municipal Elections Report", p. 58, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Municipal-Election-Reports.
[36] Official website of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa: https://www.elections.org.za/content/default.aspx.

The results of the 2000 local government elections show 672 independents contesting. This translates to 4.82% of total ward candidates – the highest percentage achieved throughout all five (5) municipal elections covered in this analysis. There were only 17 of independent ward councillors (those who obtained enough ward votes to win a ward seat) which translates to 2.52% of those who contested. This also means that out of 3754 total wards, only 17 were won by independents, which translates to 0.45% of wards. These statistics indicate a very poor first showing at the polls. This would not be a surprise considering that it was during the early stages of the country's democracy, which was preoccupied by the prominence of liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC). The idea and system of elections was still at an infant stage.

The 2006 local government elections saw a decrease in the number of contesting independents to 663. This is in contrast with the substantial increase in the number of total ward candidates (including political parties) to 23 691. Thus, independent candidates only accounted for 2.79% of total ward candidates – a 2.03% decline. However, what is interesting is that the number of independents winning seats doubled to 34 from 2000. This means that 5.12% of independents ward candidates (i.e. those who contested election) become independent ward councillors, which is double the percentage during the previous elections. Notably, the number of total wards increased to 3895 and only 0.87% were won by independents (albeit an increase in the success rate from 2000).

Results from the 2011 local elections displayed an increase in the number of contesting independents to 754 candidates. However, this did not surpass the increase of political parties' ward candidates as the percentage of independent ward candidates of the total ward candidates decreased to 2.47% from the previous election. The number of independents who won seats increased to 45, which is 5.96% of those who contested and also the highest percentage of all five (5) local elections. Additionally, independent ward seats won acounted for 1.05% of the total wards seats. Despite the significant rise in the quantity of independents in the 2011 local election, it did not lead to major changes in voting support. They received 302 243 valid ward votes, which is 2.26% of total valid ward votes.[37] Independent candidates failed to make any inroads in the 201l local government elections.[38]

[37] https://www.politicsweb.co.za/news-and-analysis/2011-elections-national-results.

[38] 1. Africa, C., and van Rooyen, G., 2012, "Small parties and independents – from also-rans to kingmakers", in: Local Elections in South Africa: Parties, People, Politics, p. 201.

Moving on to the 2016 elections, where independent only won 27 ward seats – the first and only decline in all local government elections held to date. This means 3.15% of independents electoral candidates were successful in obtaining a seat. The amount of wards won by independents translated to only 0.61% of total wards. Although the number of independents contesting the election was higher than previous elections, this only represented 2.31% of total ward candidates, which is the lowest registered. Independents also received 341 030 valid ward votes, which is 2.28% of total valid ward votes.[39]

In the 2021 local government elections, the country saw an exponential rise in total ward candidates to 61 119 – a 39.68% increase. The highest number of independents contested (1549) and obtained seats (52). Independents won 1.16% of total ward seats, which is the highest percentage of all local elections. Additionally, 3.35% of independents who contested election actually won, which remains an underwhelming success rate. The percentage of total valid ward votes won by all independent candidates was 3.46% (406 135, valid ward votes).[40] However, independent candidates remained low at 2.53% of total ward candidates hence political party ward candidates continued to overwhelmingly dominate the polls.

A pattern that one can immediately recognise in the table is the consistent increase of independent candidates contesting elections. This excludes the anomaly of the 2006 elections. When analysing independents without comparisons to political parties over the election years, the growth of independents from 2011 to 2021 is large. More specifically when comparing the 855 independent ward candidates in 2016 to the 1549 candidates in 2021 – an increase of 81.16%. However, the number of independents contesting the election is significantly lower than that of political party ward candidates in all five local elections. Statistics above depict that independents ward candidates have never gone above 5% of the total ward candidates contesting in all the local election cycles. The percentage of successful independents of those who contest has never gone above 6%. Furthermore, the percentage of wards won by all independent councillors, collectively, has remained consistently low – recorded just above 1% across all local elections. These figures are even more underwhelming when one measures the individual percentages of each independent.

[39] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, "2016 Municipal Elections Report", p. 94, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Municipal-Election-Reports.
[40] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, "2021 Municipal Elections Report", p.105, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Municipal-Election-Reports.

As depicted in **Table 2** below, the rate of increase in the number of political party ward candidates is also higher than that of independent ward candidates throughout the election years. This arguably minimizes the impact of independent ward candidates during elections as political party ward candidates dominate the highly competitive electoral space.

Table 2: The table below depicts the percentage increase of independent and political party ward candidates from the 2000 to the 2021 local government elections.

Election Year	Independent Candidates (% increase)	Party Ward Candidates (% increase)
2000	672	13 253
2006	663 (-1. 33%)	23 028 (+73.75%)
2011	754 (+13.72%)	29 700 (+28.97%)
2016	855 (+13.39%)	36 006 (+21.23%)
2021	1549 (+81.16%)	59 570 (+65.44%)

Table 3 table attached displays the support of independent candidates in each of the nine (9) provinces during the local government elections.[41] The statistics on the table allow one to calculate the number of independent ward candidates compared to political party ward candidates from all five local government elections. In 2000, the highest percentage of independent ward candidates compared to political party ward candidates was 7.31% in the Eastern Cape – also the highest percentage of all elections. This means that the rest of the ward candidates were not independent candidates but were contesting as members of a political party/movement (92.69%). Second was the Western Cape, third was Northern Cape (5.8%), and fourth was North West (5.64%). Free State obtained 4.5% and Limpopo 4.66%. The bottom three provinces in this regard were Mpumalanga (4.12%), KwaZulu-Natal (3.66%), and Gauteng (3.26%).

In 2006, the province with highest percentage of independent ward candidates contesting compared to political party ward candidates was again the Eastern Cape with 4.9% compared to 95.1% political party ward candidates. This was followed by North West (4.38%), Free State (3.14%), Limpopo (2.89%), and Mpumalanga (2.75%). The worst ratios were found in KwaZulu-Natal (2.23%), Gauteng (1.77%), and Northern Cape (1.6%) at the end. During the 2011 local elections, Limpopo with a ratio of 4.74% to the 95.26% of party ward candidates.

[41] IEC, 2021 Municipal Elections Report, p.15.

This was followed by Eastern Cape (4.46%), Northern Cape (3.45%), and North West (2.39%). The other provinces went below 2% with Mpumalanga accounting for 1.97% of total ward candidates, KwaZulu-Natal with 1.87%, Free State (1.73%), Western Cape (1.67%), and Gauteng (1.34%).

The Northern Cape province recorded the highest percentage of independent ward candidates (3.83%) in the 2016 local elections. The Eastern Cape accounted for 3.74% of total ward candidates, followed by Free State (3.5%), and KwaZulu-Natal (3.12%). For the remaining provinces the following was recorded; North West with 2.64%, Limpopo with 1.9%, Mpumalanga with 1.44%, Western Cape with 1.23%, and lastly, Gauteng with only 1.16%. During the 2021 elections, Northern Cape was ranked first, having independents accounting for 4.13% of total ward candidates. Second was Free State with 3.71%, third was Eastern Cape with 3.64%. This was followed by North West (3.53%), Mpumalanga (3.51%), and Limpopo (3.21%). The last three provinces were KwaZulu-Natal (2.36%), Gauteng (1.42%), and Western Cape (1.07%).

When analysing the above statistics collectively, the Eastern Cape, Free State, and Northern Cape were obtained the best percentages of independent ward candidates in relation to the total number of ward candidates. Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape are the worst when considering that they were located in the bottom three most frequently. Be it as it may, the highest percentage of independent ward candidates of the total ward candidates is extremely low (7.31%). Thus, when compared the percentage of political party ward candidates of the total ward candidates, independents do not have the numbers to make a substantial impact at the local polls.

Looking at **Table 3** the province with the most independent candidates contesting between 2000 and 2021 is KwaZulu-Natal with 856 (it is accepted that this figure also includes independents who have been councillors in more than one election year, but this will be applied consistently). The Eastern Cape and Limpopo provinces follow with 836 and 654 candidates respectively. These provinces also have the most wards and contain the most independent ward councillors over this period. Eastern Cape and Limpopo top the list with 41 and 35 respectively, while KwaZulu-Natal is placed fourth with 33, which is only 1 less than third-placed Western Cape. The lowest performing independents are in the Free State and Northern Cape provinces. These provinces are in the bottom three with regards to the number of independent candidates who contested, won elections and had the least number of wards. Therefore, the above table

depicts that provinces with the most wards, have the most independent candidates contesting local elections, and thus the most independent ward councillors.

Table 3 further allows one to calculate the percentage of seats contested by independent candidates that independents won. In the 2000 election, KwaZulu-Natal recorded the highest percentage at 4%. The Limpopo (3.94%), Gauteng (2.7%), and Western Cape (2.17%) provinces followed in that order. The 2006 election provided an interesting analysis as several provinces registered greater success rates of independent candidates. In Limpopo, 10.66% of independents who contested won a seat. Moreover, the Northern Cape (8.33%), Mpumalanga (8.19%), and North-West (8.13%), all registered an 8%+ success rate of those independents who had contested. During the 2011 election, the North-West province occupied first place with 9.25% of independent contestants winning seats, while the Eastern Cape followed behind with a 7.27% success rate. Interestingly, four other provinces attained just above 6% including the Western Cape with 6.94%, Mpumalanga (6.52%), Free State (6.45%), and Limpopo with 6.39%.

The 2016 local election provided the highest registered provincial success percentage. In the Western Cape, 39.34% of independent candidates who contested for election succeeded in obtaining a seat – the greatest percentage throughout all local elections in all provinces to date. Second was North-West with 7.89%, followed by Northern Cape with 6.66% success. What is peculiar about the Western Cape is that after such an impressive show in these elections, the province did not even have one successful independent of the 85 who had contested in the subsequent 2021 elections. During these elections, the Eastern Cape had the highest percentage of independent ward winners of those who contested, which was 6.17%. Northern Cape independents registered a 5.55% win rate, while Mpumalanga and Limpopo followed with 4.61% and 4.32% respectively.

Continuing with the analysis from the data displayed on **Table 3**, one is able to calculate the percentage of wards won (of total wards) by independents in each of the nine provinces, and make comparisons. In the year 2000, the province with the highest percentage of wards won was Limpopo (0.68%), followed by Western Cape (0.60%), and KwaZulu-Natal (0.53%). Mpumalanga was fourth with a percentage of 0.49%, followed by Gauteng (0.44%), Eastern Cape (0.33%), and North West (0.30%). The Northern Cape and Free State provinces failed to win in any ward. The 2006 elections saw an overall improvement from the previous election percentages. The province with the highest win rate of the total wards was North West, which

won 1.91% of wards. Limpopo was second with 1.55%, followed by Mpumalanga (1.36%), and Free State (1%). The Western Cape registered 0.86%, Eastern Cape 0.62%, Northern Cape 0.57%, KwaZulu-Natal 0.25%, and 0.23% in Gauteng.

During the 2011 elections, the province recording the highest percentage of wards won by independents was Limpopo with 2.02% - becoming the first province to reach the 2% mark. The Eastern Cape came second with 1.67%, followed by North West (1.30%), and Western Cape (1.29%). The other provinces recorded below 1% - Mpumalanga (0.74%), KwaZulu-Natal (0.72%), Free State (0.63%), Northern Cape (0.51%), and Gauteng did not win any ward. Moving on to the 2016 elections, Western Cape won 5.97% of total wards – the highest percentage throughout all five electoral cycles. Both the Northern Cape and North West provinces were second, registering 1.47% each; followed by KwaZulu-Natal with 1.14%. Free State won 0.97% of total wards, followed by Eastern Cape (0.85%), Limpopo (0.53%), and Mpumalanga (0.25%). For the second consecutive election year, independent candidates in the Gauteng province failed to win any ward.

Lastly, during the 2021 local elections, the Eastern Cape recorded the highest win rate at 2.11%. This was followed by Limpopo (1.76%), Northern Cape (1.72%), Mpumalanga (1.5%), and KwaZulu-Natal (1.22%). The next provinces are North West (0.74%), Free State (0.62%), Gauteng (0.18%), and Western Cape (where independent candidates did not win any ward). The overall comparative assessment is that independents in Gauteng have the worst success rate and Limpopo has the best percentage of total wards won. A contributing characteristic here is the disparity concerning the number of wards in these two provinces. Limpopo had more wards than Gauteng in all, but one (2000), of the elections. This appears to influence the success rate of independents in these provinces. However, beyond this, there is no substantial indicators the are consistent enough to draw more conclusions.

Tables 4 to 8 (attached) list all the independent ward councillors from the 2000 to 2021 local government elections and details their respective municipalities. The local municipalities with the most independent ward councillors in the Eastern Cape are Port St Johns (5) and Mbhashe/Idutywa (5). In KwaZulu-Natal, eThekwini (Durban) is highest ranked with seven (7). Mpumalanga's Thembisile Hani municipality registered the most independent ward councillors in the province with four (4). The municipalities recording the most independent ward councillors in Limpopo are Greater Giyani and Thabazimbi with six (6) and four (4)

respectively. In the North-West, Mogwase municipality registered the highest independent ward councillors with six (6).[42]

Tables 4 to 8 further displays the percentage of total ward votes that independent ward councillors obtained in their respective wards ("% Support"). It also shows the percentages of the closest opposition candidates in each of the elections. The aim here is to ascertain cases whereby independents obtained an outright majority, where they did not obtain more than fifty percent of ward votes but still won, and where they benefited from split votes. This will shed light on the margins of victory that independents generally obtain and inform the degree of their competitiveness or dominance in each case that they won.

The first category in this instance is the number of independent candidates who won an outright majority in their respective wars and the percentages that they won by. That is, over fifty percent of ward votes in their respective wards. In the 2000 elections, eleven of the seventeen independently elected ward councillors had won by an outright majority, which translates to 64.7%. In 2006, twenty-one independents of thirty-four won by an outright majority and that is 46.66% of the independent ward councillors for this election year. During the 2011 elections, twenty-eight of forty-five independent councillors won by a majority, translating to 62.22%. In 2016, 37.03% of independent ward councillors had won by majority – ten out of twenty seven. In 2021, sixteen of fifty-two independents won with an outright majority, making it 30.76% of the independents who had won during this election. Overall, of all the cases where independents had won election, 49.14% of the instances were through an outright majority.

The second category shows the number of independent candidates which, although did not obtain more than fifty percent of total ward votes, still succeeded in winning the ward they had contested. This also includes those who benefitted from split votes. The 2000 election saw six independents win a ward without obtaining above fifty percent of ward votes, which translates to 35.3%. In 2006, there were thirteen independents falling into this category, which is 53.34%. During the 2011 election, this percentage was 37.78% as seventeen independents won wards with below fifty percent of votes. The 2016 election saw seventeen independent councillors (62.97%) win wards who still succeeded in winning the ward they contested without an outright majority. In 2021, the thirty-six independents who won election without an outright majority which translates to 69.24%. An overall analysis shows that 50.86% of independent ward

[42] See: **Tables 4 – 8** are statistics from the "Publications of the List of Elected Councillors" from the 2000 – 2021 Municipal Elections, as published by the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa in the Government Gazette.

councillors won without obtaining an outright majority (including those who won via a split vote).

The third, and last, category is that of independent councillors who benefited from spilt votes to some degree. In the 2000 local government elections, three of seventeen independent candidates won election via a split vote, making it 17.64%. During the 2006 elections these statistics was 32.35%, 24.44% in the 2011 elections, 51.85% during the 2016 elections, and 50% for the 2021 elections. Overall, 37.14% of independent ward councillors got elected through means of split vote amongst other candidates. These are one of the characteristics inherent in the "winner takes all" model.

The data from **Tables 4 to 8** has been used to formulate **Table 9**, which lists independent ward councillors who had won re-election as independents and those who were re-elected as political party ward/PR councillors after previously being independent councillors. It also shows the history of these re-elected independent ward councillors in order to ascertain their political profile. This further includes those who were ward councillors as members of political parties in the elections before or after their election as independent ward councillors. In total, sixty-one (61) independent ward councillors fit into these categories.

The aim of this exercise is to firstly, identify independents who managed to be re-elected as independents so as to understand how often they are re-elected. This allows one to assess the extent to which contesting election as an independent is or is not sustainable. Secondly, identifying the independent ward councillors who became political party ward councillors in subsequent elections sheds insight into whether independents are truly independent and remain independent. Thirdly, this section attempts to ascertain the political history and profile of independents in order to understand whether prior political experience (or lack thereof) aids the success or failures of independent candidates.

The first category is that of independents who were, at some stage, re-elected as independent ward councillors. In this regard, four independents were re-elected and can be considered the most successful independent candidates. The first was Moses Mmoisetsi Sepogwana, who was elected as an independent candidate three times. First in 2006, re-elected in 2011, and again in 2021. In all these occasions, Sepogwana was elected in the Thembisile Hani municipality in the Mpumalanga province. In 2006, Sepogwana received 54.03% of the ward votes in ward 23,

with an African National Congress (ANC) party ward candidate receiving 39.46%.[43] In 2011, the independent attained 61.66% support in ward 12, followed by the ANC obtained 34.17%.[44] In 2021, Sepogwana's ward votes amounted to 44.85% in the same ward, a marginal win considering that the ANC came second with 43.86%.[45]

The second was Toto Johannes Moeng, who was elected as an independent in 2006 and re-elected as an independent in 2011 – both in the Moses Kotane municipality of the North West province. During the 2006 election in the same ward, Moeng's support was at 59.30%[46] with the ANC receiving 37%.[47] In 2011, the independent attained 59.93% support in ward 29, and the ANC received 37.19%.[48] However, Moeng was elected in 2021 as a PR (first on the party list) councillor in the *Independent for Communities* formation.

The third person was Mcembelele Jeffrey Msakeni, who was elected in 2011 and 2021 as an independent ward councillor in the same municipality of King Sabata Dalindyebo, in the Eastern Cape. During the 2011 elections, Msakeni was elected in ward 24 with 48.83% of the ward votes.[49] The independent benefitted from a very split vote here as the United Democratic Movement (UDM) and ANC obtained 25.31%[50] and 24.05%[51] of the ward votes respectively. However, in 2016, this candidate was elected as a political party local ward councillor through membership of the ANC. In 2021, Msakeni returned to being an independent and received

[43] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/95/Detailed%20Results/MP/MP315/83105023_Ward.pdf.
[44] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/197/Downloadable%20Party%20Results/MP/MP315/83105012_Ward.xls.
[45] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/1091/Downloadable%20Party%20Results/MP/MP315/83105012_Ward.xls.
[46] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, results dashboard, https://results.elections.org.za/dashboards/lge/.
[47] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/95/Party%20Support/NW/NW375/63705029_7.xls.
[48] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/197/Downloadable%20Party%20Results/NW/NW375/63705029_Ward.xls.
[49] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/197/Downloadable%20Party%20Results/EC/EC157/21507024_Ward.xls.
[50] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/197/Party%20Results/EC/EC157_6.xls.
[51] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/197/Party%20Results/EC/EC157_7.xls.

53.55% ward votes in the same ward (number 24).[52] While the ANC followed with 37.81% of total ward votes.[53]

The fourth candidate was Tembinkosi Tshika who was elected and re-elected as an independent ward councillor in 2011 and 2016 respectively. In both instances, Tshika was elected in ward 14 of the Eastern Cape's Mbhashe municipality. This individual was not elected in any other local elections. In 2011, Tshika obtained 44.21% of the ward votes and benefitted from a split vote between the ANC (34.24%) and the Congress of the People (19%).[54] In 2016, the independent obtained 50.02% of total ward votes in the ward.[55] Tshika won ahead of the ANC that obtained 43.39% of ward votes.[56]

The second category is that of re-elected independents who had prior experience in being councillors through political party membership. This excludes the four independents elected in the year 2000 as there were no local elections prior to this in order to assess – hence 57 independents are considered for this category. According to **Table 9** above, thirty-seven (37) of the fifty-seven (57) independent ward councillors were previously elected as members of a political party. This means that close to 65% of re-elected independents had prior experience as councillors in a political party. What this suggests is that independent candidates benefit from having prior experience in politics, particularly within a political party setting.

The third category is that of re-elected independents who were elected as part of a political party in subsequent elections. When excluding those elected in 2021, as subsequent elections have not been held, a total of fifty-two (52) independents can be considered for this category. Of these 52 independents, thirty-eight (38) independents joined a political party in succeeding elections were elected. This means that over 70% of re-elected independent ward councillors opted to join a political party in subsequent local elections. Eleven (11) of these were re-elected more than once as part of political parties in subsequent elections. What this suggests is that independent candidates may not be as independent as one would be persuaded to believe in the

[52] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/1091/Party%20Results/EC/EC157_0.xls.
[53] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/1091/Party%20Results/EC/EC157_7.xls.
[54] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/197/Downloadable%20Party%20Results/EC/EC121/21201014_Ward.xls.
[55] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/402/Party%20Results/EC/EC121_0.xls.
[56] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/402/Party%20Results/EC/EC121_7.xls.

strictest understanding of 'independence'. Arguably, this also demonstrates a degree of democratic agility where independents exercise agency and independent candidacy is viewed as a viable mechanism for political progression.

Furthermore, it raises questions around their resilience to being co-opted or persuaded by political parties and their dominance. It also raises questions about the sustainability of independent candidacy as a political avenue in local elections. Considering that only four independent ward councillors were re-elected as independents, highlights the unsustainability and minimal role in local government elections and governance. Conversely, it can be viewed as an avenue for one to develop their political career and gain experience in the political field that yield subsequent political longevity, albeit outside of independent candidates in subsequent electoral cycles.

Chapter 4: The impact of independent councillors in local government

This section will explore firstly question whether independent candidates are truly independent, as the name would suggest. This will be linked to the case study findings on the impact of independent candidates in local government, or lack thereof.

i. Do independents remain independent?

Previously in this paper, it was deduced that an independent candidate is narrowly defined as an adult citizen contesting elections without being a member of a political party. Furthering this concept requires one to interrogate the crucial question of *What are independent candidates 'independent' of that political parties are not, which then makes them 'independent'*? It was identified that firstly, an independent candidate contests individually, as they are not registered under a political party or formation. Secondly, the independent candidate is understood to maintain full political autonomy and control, compared to a member of a political party ward candidate as they are influenced and guided by the constitution, vision, values and procedures of their political party – amongst other things. Thirdly, independent candidates are understood to be devoid of the partisanship that makes political party ward candidates ultimately

answerable to the party. Hence, a dominant narrative is that this makes independent candidates more directly answerable to their constituency.[57]

The previous section analysing the local government election results provided a point of departure to interrogate the question of whether independents remain independent. Statistics showed that 65% of re-elected independents had been previously elected as political party ward councillors. In addition to this, it was discovered that over 70% of re-elected independent ward councillors opted to join a political party in subsequent local elections, with eleven of these being re-elected more than once as part of political parties in subsequent elections. For example, Mcembelele Jeffrey Msakeni, was elected in 2011 and 2021 as an independent ward councillor in King Sabata Dalindyebo municipality (Eastern Cape). During the 2011 elections, Msakeni was elected in ward 24[58], however, in 2016, this candidate was elected as a political party local ward councillor through membership of the ANC. In 2021, Msakeni returned to being an independent in ward 24.[59]

This suggests that firstly, independent candidacy do not maintain full political autonomy and control as a majority of independent ward councillors end up being political party councillors in subsequent elections. Secondly, this tells us that independents are not completely devoid of the partisanship of political parties. They are generally successful having had prior association with political parties raises questions about the extent of the independence of independent candidates. Furthermore, it raises questions around their resilience to being co-opted or persuaded by political parties and their dominance. For example, Bukelani Zuma (an independent candidate in the uMsunduzi Municipality) formed a coalition with the ANC, which had 40 out of 81 seats in the municipality.[60] Zuma's coalition with the ANC allowed the political party to gain the majority in the Municipal Council. While these reports were not confirmed, the independent was quoted saying that he was open to working with any political party with sufficient numbers to govern.[61]

[57] New Nation Movement para 53
[58] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/197/Downloadable%20Party%20Results/EC/EC157/21507024_Ward.xls.
[59] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, elections results portal, https://results.elections.org.za/home/LGEPublicReports/1091/Party%20Results/EC/EC157_0.xls.
[60] Ndou, Clive, November 17, 2021, "Zuma's independent seat can save ANC in Msunduzi", *The Witness*, https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/pietermaritzburg/zumas-independent-seat-can-save-anc-in-msunduzi-20211116/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[61] Ndou, 2021, "Zuma's independent seat", *The Witness*.

The reality is that an independent, being only one individual represented in a Municipal Council, faces a mammoth task to remain independent because political parties dominate Councils in the country. Independents are at a higher risk of being co-opted in coalition politics, as less than half of independent candidates between the 2000 and 2021 local government elections won by an outright majority.[62] The 'independence' of independent candidates has direct implications on whether it matters if they are contesting or elected or not. When independence is questionable, the relevance, necessity, and impact of independent candidates in local government is challenged.

ii. Impact of independent candidates and councillors in local government

This sections looks at the impact of independent ward councillors in local government. It firstly looks at whether there is evidence of better governance in terms of improved service delivery and/or less corruption. Secondly, it looks at whether independent ward councillors have made an impact in terms of initiating new by-laws and policies or affected the balance of local power. One struggles to find information when searching for media coverage and scholarly contributions on independent candidates and independent ward councillors in the context of local government. However, the following independents appeared on internet searches that would suggest a considerable impact within their local communities.

In this regard, Vuyani Nesi presents an interesting case study analysis. Nesi was the ward 14 councillor in Makana municipality (Eastern Cape) as a member of the ANC after winning a by-election in 2020. However, Nesi contended that the party replaced him with a different candidate without following due procedures candidate nomination procedures via a Branch Executive Committee.[63] After public discontent, he then contested the subsequent 2021 local government elections as an independent candidate with the support of, and donations from, his community. Nesi won the ward with 40.45% of ward votes, surpassing the 29.72% obtained by the ANC candidate.[64] This case reflects a practical illustration of "a people-centred

[62] See: **Tables 4 – 8** are statistics from the "Publications of the List of Elected Councillors" from the 2000 – 2021 Municipal Elections, as published by the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa in the Government Gazette.

[63] Amner, Rod, November 04, 2021, "A people-powered victory in Alicedale", *Grocott's Mail*, https://grocotts.ru.ac.za/2021/11/04/a-people-powered-victory-in-alicedale/ (Date Accessed: 03 April 2023).
[64] See: **Table 4** in the Annexures.

victory"[65], whereby an independent candidate made a great impact at the polls owing to his direct links with the constituency.

However, Nesi rightfully hinted at possible challenges in delivering services to his constituents through resistance by larger political parties.[66] This is particularly the case when considering that the ANC obtained 49.54% of the PR votes.[67] When looking at the formation of the Makana municipality, one finds that the Executive Mayor and Speaker of the Council is from the ANC.[68] This would make it difficult for Nesi to make an impact in the Council with regards to initiating new by-laws or policies or affecting the balance of power. Moreover, residents in ward 14 continue to have issues around service delivery, in particular, road infrastructure. It was reported that students in the rural, farm areas struggled with accessing transportation to attend the nearest public schools which are 45 kilometres away.[69] Parents of the pupils reported that they had raised the issue with various government stakeholders, including Vuyani Nesi, but were not assisted. [70] Thus, although this is one case, it sheds light about the lack of evidence of improved service delivery under an independent candidate.

Dudley Maasdorp is an independent councillor elected during the 2021 local elections that is worth analysing. Maasdorp stands out because this independent councillor was elected as the Speaker of Kou-Kamma Municipal Council in the Eastern Cape province.[71] The independent received 41.27% of ward votes, having benefitted from a split vote between the ANC (28.63%) and DA (21.47%). One can argue that these dynamics played out in his favour towards being elected as the Speaker of Council. This suggests that independents can influence the balance of power in cases where the votes are split between two larger political parties. However, Dudley Maasdorp has previously been subject to reported corruption allegations.[72] The Sun (news outlet) reported that tenders for the school's feeding scheme were given to companies linked to members of the school's governing body. Dudley Maasdorp, a member of the school's

[65] Amner, 2021, "A people-powered victory in Alicedale", *Grocott's Mail*.
[66] Amner, 2021, "A people-powered victory in Alicedale", *Grocott's Mail*.
[67] Amner, 2021, "A people-powered victory in Alicedale", *Grocott's Mail*.
[68] Makana Municipality, Eastern Cape, http://www.makana.gov.za/council-2/.
[69] Hinyikiwile, Joy, August 05, 2022, "No transport, no school for learners stuck on farms", *Grocott's Mail*, https://www.pressreader.com/ (Date Accessed: 03 April 2023).
[70] Hinyikiwile, 2022, "No transport, no school for learners stuck on farms", *Grocott's Mail*.
[71] Kou-Kamma Local Municipality, Eastern Cape, councillors, https://www.koukammamunicipality.gov.za/kou-kamma-municipality-councillors/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[72] Bezuidenhout, Candice, August 02, 2016, "Food money reportedly in members' pockets", Die Son, https://www.son.co.za/dieson/nuus/ooskaap/kosgeld-glo-in-lede-se-sakke-20160802 (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).

governing body at the time of reporting, was director of two of these companies.[73] It is important to note that during this period, Maasdorp was also contesting the upcoming 2016 local government elections as an independent candidate. He subsequently lost the election.

Mthokozisi Simelane was elected as an independent ward councillor of Ward 17 in the Mkhondo Municipality of the Mpumalanga province during the 2021 local elections. Although he only obtained 35.97% of the Ward votes, he benefitted from a split vote between the ANC (27.68%) and another independent candidate (12.70%).[74] What is interesting about this independent is that he was elected as the mayor of Mkhondo Municipality, with the support of the EFF to topple the ANC.[75] Furthermore, the independent candidate benefited from ANC's factional battles as six ANC councillors voted with the opposition because of dissatisfaction with interviewing/nomination outcomes.[76] Simelane was also the first independent to become a mayor in South Africa.

However, despite the presence of an independent occupying the mayoral position, allegations of corruption or irregular expenditure still surfaced. Simelane was accused of using state funds to celebrate his birthday in 2022.[77] The mayor denied these claims, citing that the R700 000 were used for a 'strategic planning workshop', while the municipality owed Eskom over R340 million. On 25 January 2023, Simelane was ousted after a successful vote of no confidence against him.[78] This case depicts that independent candidacy does not guarantee good or better governance, neither does it make the public representatives less corrupt. In fact, one may even argue that there is more room for one to act autonomously, as is the characteristic of being elected as one individual. It can be suggested that political parties may well be more accountable because they are have two layers of accountability – the political party and its procedures, and the electorate, to which the political party is ultimately accountable.

[73] Bezuidenhout, 2016, "Food money reportedly in members' pockets", Die Son.
[74] See: **Table 4** of Annexure.
[75] Mkhwanazi, Siyabonga, November 23, 2021, "Independent candidate Mthokozisi Simelane elected mayor of Mkhondo, ANC ousted", *I.O.L*, https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/independent-candidate-mthokozisi-simelane-elected-mayor-of-mkhondo-anc-ousted-1a95a8ed-8fa6-46fe-b797-155ee51164ba (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[76] Sizwe sama Yende, "Toppled Mpumalanga mayor interdicts successor", *City Press*, https://www.news24.com/citypress/news/toppled-mpumalanga-mayor-interdicts-successor-20230213 (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[77] Chetty, Reeshni C., July 05, 2022, "Mayor Simelane slams claims he used state money to party in Durban", *The South African*, https://www.thesouthafrican.com/news/mayor-mkhondo-municipality-mthokozisi-simelane-slams-claims-he-used-state-funds-to-party-in-durban/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[78] Sizwe sama Yende, "Toppled Mpumalanga mayor interdicts successor", *City Press*.

Another independent who has managed to occupy a key position in a Municipal Council is Thomas Mpye. Mpye won Ward 2 in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality in Mpumalanga province with a majority of 52.76% of ward votes, [79] and was then elected as the Speaker of the Council.[80] However, despite being an independent Speaker, Mpye was accused by the EFF of being biased in favour of the ANC, as the ruling party of the Municipal Council.[81] Again, these allegations place doubts on the 'independence' of independent candidates and therefore, their impact on the balance of power. It would seem that independents are rather victims to being co-opted by larger political parties and are subjects to the balance of power not agents.

The limited impact of independent councillors is emphasised by the fact that three independents were elected into the Raymond Mhlaba Municipal Council during the 2021 local government elections. However, none of these independents were elected into any senior position in the Council, such as, Executive Mayor, Speaker, Chief Whip, or any strategic position, such as, Chief Financial Officer in the Budget and Treasury Department. The same can be said about the four independent ward councillors in Eastern Cape's iNgquza Hill Municipality, none of which obtained the important positions.[82] There is also no independent candidates being interviewed on television in the before, during and after elections. This depicts the minimal media coverage of independents, which negatively affects their electoral campaigning. The only attention being afforded to independent candidacy is in relation to the *New Nation Movement* court ruling and debates around the National Assembly's electoral amendment process.

Notwithstanding the above, one must recognise that the number of seats won and positions occupied is only one measurement of success in the strictest sense. The success of independents can perhaps be better measured through their degree of agenda-setting, campaigning or advocacy for specific political objectives and policies, opinion-forming, and articulating views of those who may have been ignored or marginalised by larger political parties.[83] Although independents have not affected the balance of power, they have potential to make an impact in

[79] See: **Table 4** of Annexure.
[80] Rheeder, Gerhard, October 21, 2022, "Motion of no confidence in mayor – EFF appeals special council adjournment", *Middelburg Observer*, https://www.citizen.co.za/middelburg-observer/news/2022/10/21/motion-of-no-confidence-in-mayor-eff-appeals-special-council-adjournment/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[81] Rheeder, 2022, "Motion of no confidence in mayor", *Middelburg Observer*.
[82] Ingquza Hill Local Municipality, Eastern Cape, *South African Government*, https://www.gov.za/about-government/contact-directory/ec-municipalities/ec-municipalities/qaukeni-local-municipality.
[83] Copus, Clark, and Reynaert, 2009, p. 11.

the abovementioned ways. However, there is no indication that such impact has been made, hence it remains potential.

Chapter 5: What influences the success of independent candidates in local elections?

This section aims to interrogate the circumstances that contribute to the success of independents in terms of their local electoral performance.

i. Electoral Alternative

It has been argued elsewhere that independents provide electoral alternatives. The expanding disconnection between larger parties and the electorate contributes to the growth and political activity of independents.[84] Further, independents can influence the behaviour of larger, more established parties, introduce new political ideologies, and force a re-evaluation of existing political culture amongst established parties.[85]

The public outcry for a political alternative to the ruling party has increased over the past decade in SA. This has been caused by poor service delivery, reported cases of corruption through the infamous *State Capture Inquiry*, and depreciating socio-economic conditions amongst other concerns. Thus, there is growing scepticism around the country's political and electoral system and the public's appetite for feasible political alternatives has increased. Electoral statistics show an increase in the number of registered independent candidates. Berkowitz (2011) suggests that the rise in the registration of independent candidates can be attributed to growing dissatisfaction with the ruling party's internal selection process and decreasing voting numbers.[86] According to Africa and van Rooyen[87], most independents stood for election in areas where there was dissatisfaction with the candidate selection processes of the African National Congress. During the 2016 general elections, the ANC expelled sixteen (16) councillors from the Maluti-a-Phofung municipality (Free State). Fifteen (15) of these councillors ran as independents in the subsequent by-elections and won 10 wards off the ANC.

[84] Copus, Clark, Reynaert and Steyvers, 2009, p.6.
[85] Copus, Clark, Reynaert and Steyvers, 2009, p.4.
[86] Berkowitz, 2011.
[87] Africa and van Rooyen, 2012, p.199.

This shows independents can pose some threat to established political parties, and suggests that independent candidates can be an alternative to political parties in local government.

The province that casted the most votes for independents in 2021 was Kwa-Zulu Natal with just under 100 000, Limpopo received 75 688 and Eastern Cape followed with 73 263 voters. These are the provinces with arguably the worst service delivery in the country and hence this makes a strong case for citizens viewing independents as potentially better in representing their interests and improving accountability. In the 2021 local government elections, independents received 1.75% of the votes (51 seats), compared to 27 seats won in 2016. What is also interesting is the increase in the support of smaller parties that have increased their seats to 619 in 2021 from 195 in 2016 (a 5.48% increase). Matwadia[88] proposes that this is a signal of an appetite for a new political alternative amongst South African citizens and the beginning of post-liberation politics.

Indeed, there are cases of independent candidates being viewed as feasible alternatives to political parties (particularly the ANC) because of poor service deliver. One such case during the 2021, local elections, in which Bhekizenzo Gigi won ward 14 from the ANC in the Mhlontlo Local Municipality. Residents were reported to have switched votes due to a failed water project which promised to improve access to water since 2013.[89] In another case, an independent candidate was elected after years of advocating for better access to water for his community, which culminated in a community-based clinic being established.[90] Moreover, Bukelani Zuma, who had been a councillor under the IFP for over 10 years was suspended by the political party leading up to the 2021 local elections. He then stood as an independent candidate for the 2021 local elections in ward 7 of Msunduzi Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal.[91]

[88] Matwadia, E., November 5, 2021, "Independent candidates in municipal elections gain momentum with 0.61% growth", *Daily Maverick*, https://mg.co.za/politics/2021-11-05-independent-candidates-in-municipal-elections-gain-momentum-with-0-61-growth/ (Accessed: 24 June 2022).
[89] Sizani, Mkhuseli, November 10, 2021, "Thirsty EC villagers desert ANC for fresh independent candidate Bhekizenzo Gigi", *Daily Maverick*, https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-11-10-thirsty-ec-villagers-desert-anc-for-fresh-independent-candidate-bhekizenzo-gigi/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[90] Steyn, Daniel, and Sizani, Mkhuseli, October 03, 2022, "This small, solar-powered clinic has greatly improved primary health care for Eastern Cape villagers",Ground Up, https://www.groundup.org.za/article/this-small-solar-powered-clinic-has-hugely-improved-primary-healthcare-for-rural-eastern-cape-villagers/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[91] Capa, Siyamthanda, September 28, 2021, "Suspended IFP councillor to run as independent candidate in municipal elections", *The Witness*, https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/kzn/suspended-ifp-councillor-to-run-as-independent-candidate-in-municipal-elections-20210928/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).

He subsequently won the election as community members trusted him because of the work he had done for the community both as an ordinary citizen and a councillor.[92]

Another characteristic that enhances the attraction of independent candidates to the electorate is the idea that independents are non-partisan. Flowing from this view is the belief that independents are free from political party lines that may not always be in the interests of the citizens. It is often argued that political party councillors act in the interests of the political party and are bound by the party's directive over that of the electorate.

ii. Experience in politics

Independent candidates with prior experience as ward councillors in local government have a significantly higher success rate in local elections. The findings from **Table 9** are pertinent to this understanding, as the table shows the history of these re-elected independent ward councillors. What the table showed was that fourty-one of the fifty-seven independent ward councillors were previously elected as members of a political party or as independents. This translates to over 70% of re-elected independents that had had prior political experience as councillors. What this suggests is that having prior experience in politics increases their chances of success. It highlights that majority of independent candidates who are successful in being re-elected have links to a political party. When looking at the rest of the independent candidates who were not re-elected at all, it means that 109 independents (an overall percentage of almost 65%) did not have any prior party links.

iii. Community involvement/service

Independent candidate generally do not have the financial muscle of larger, more established political parties. Hence, their visibility in, trust and support from constituencies stems from their involvement and service to the community. The case study of Vuyani Nesi (an independent councillor during the 2021 elections) depicted the importance of having strong, direct relations with one's local constituency. The community of ward 14 supported and donated towards Nesi's victory over the ANC, which is the largest political party in the country.

[92] Makhanya, Lethiwe, November 06, 2021, "Elections 2021: Residents in Vulindlela, Pietermaritzburg, trust independent councillor", *The Witness*, https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/pietermaritzburg/elections-2021-residents-in-vulindlela-pietermaritzburg-trust-independent-councillor-20211106/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).

Another interesting case study is that of Phumzile Msaro was elected as an independent ward councillor in ward 28 of Mbhashe Municipality (Eastern Cape) with 61.02% of ward votes. What is pertinent with this individual is that he is known has a community leader and activist in Xhora Mouth, and hence has a track-record of community service on his profile.[93] Msaro had been advocating for a clinic in his community since 2010 through a non-profit organization called *Bulungula Incubators*. His campaign efforts ensured that the clinic was placed in the Integrated Development Plan of the Mbhashe municipality, which allowed for a partnership with the Eastern Cape Department of Health. In 2012, Msaro partnered with the provincial government to establish *Bulungula Health Point*, a solar-powered, community-based clinic to allow the community better access to primary health services.[94]

Additionally, Sandile Njovane (a 2021 independent ward councillor in iNgquza Hill municipality, Eastern Cape), shows a track record of being involved as a recreational volunteer in his district municipality.[95] While Isolde Laesecke (Free State, Dihlabeng Local Municipality independent councillor) was heavily involved in the #SwartMaandag marches which aimed to raise awareness against farm murders in the area.[96] As cited previously, Bukelani Zuma won election as an independent councillor in uMsunduzi Municipality after being suspended by the IFP. Reports show that he had been a councillor under the IFP for over 10 years and had served the community since 2000, both as an ordinary citizen and a councillor of the IFP, hence why the community entrusted their vote to him.[97] Nkanukeni Philip Munyai is another example of an independent candidate who was elected in the Collins Chabane Municipality in Limpopo after being removed from the ANC's councillor candidate list. Reports after his victory shared that the community members praised him for his hard work, energy and general service to the

[93] Kamnqa, Siyabonga, February 14, 2023, "R27m needed to get Eastern Cape EMS plan off the ground", *Spotlight*, https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2023/02/14/r27m-needed-to-get-eastern-cape-ems-plan-off-the-ground/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[94] Steyn and Sizani, 2022, "This small, solar-powered clinic has greatly improved primary health care for Eastern Cape villagers", *Ground Up*.
[95] Eastern Cape Sport and Recreation Achievers Awards: Category Winners and Finalists, 2018, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwip-cujmJX-AhWFg1wKHYwZADsQFnoECBMQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fecas.co.za%2Fwp-content%2Fplugins%2Fdownload-attachments%2Fincludes%2Fdownload.php%3Fid%3D1534&usg=AOvVaw1XHEinPHLUD6OcqpIiU-uf.
[96] AfriForum, February 08, 2019, "Justice prevails for AfriForum branch chairperson after #SwartMaandag incident", https://afriforum.co.za/geregtigheid-seevier-vir-afriforum-takvoorsitter-na-swartmaandag-voorval-2/.
[97] Makhanya, 2021, "Elections 2021: Residents in Vulindlela", *The Witness*.

community.[98] These examples highlight the importance of playing an active role in one's community in order for an independent candidate to be visible, known in the community and achieve successes at the local polls.

Chapter 6: Challenges of independents at local government

This section aims to interrogate reasons for the failure of independents in terms of their poor electoral performance in local government and governance where they have been elected. There is broad consensus as to the challenges faced by independents when competing with political parties. This is evidenced by the poor electoral support for independent candidates in local government. As a point of departure, it is important to note that in all these electoral results, the independent candidates were considered as a collective. However, when one analyses and understands independent candidates in their own individual capacity, it then makes the statistics even more illuminating. This is especially when comparing an independent candidate with political parties. Thus, this poses a great challenge to the overall success of independent candidates.

i. Resources

One of the key areas of challenge faced by independents is limited financial resources and infrastructure.[99] Access to financial resources is arguably the most vital instrument to political success. Finances are key to the infrastructural existence of a political person/group, electoral campaigning efforts, and brand visibility in the public gaze, amongst other things. These resources are generated publically (through membership fees and contributions), and privately through various donors.

[98] Tshivhase, Rudzani, December 04, 2021, "Former ANC councillor turned independent celebrates winning a ward in Malamulele", *SABC News*, https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/former-anc-councillor-turned-independent-celebrates-winning-a-ward-in-malamulele/ (Date Accessed: 06 April 2023).
[99] Africa and van Rooyen , 2012, p.203.

In 2019, the Political Party Funding Act (PPFA)[100] was signed into South African law. The PPFA introduced strict regulations on the private funding of political parties that sets limits to the source, use, and size of funds donated to political parties.[101] According to the PPFA, parties are obligated to disclose cumulative donations received in cash and/or in kind from an entity if they exceed one hundred thousand Rands (R100 000). It also prohibits political parties from accepting donations above fifteen million Rands (R15, 000, 000), from government departments or state-owned entities, and foreign governments/agencies (except for training or policy development purposes).[102] The 2021/2022 financial year was the first year of implementation of the PPFA, as political parties began furnishing quarterly declarations. Declarations amounted to over thirty million rands (R 30 008 841.74) in the first quarter; over fifty six million rands (R 56 880 644.47) in the second quarter; over forty six million rands (R 46 036 589.97) in the third quarter[103]; and over twelve million rands (R 12 525 387.72) in the fourth quarter.[104] These declarations accounted for only eleven (11) political parties during the entire financial year, which emphasises the prominence of financial resources required in the political sphere.

When looking at the financial resources used by political parties, it becomes evident that independents are hindered by budget constraints.[105] Before an independent even becomes an electoral candidate, an election deposit of one thousand rands (R 1 000) is due to the IEC.[106] Once an individual is officially recognized as an independent candidate, financial resources are required for multiple things to initiate a successful campaign. These includes travelling to various parts of the ward in which one is contesting, depending on its geographical size; the brand visibility in one's ward (e.g. banners, merchandise, speakers etc.); and gathering a crowd

[100] Political Party Funding Act No. 63 of 2018, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201901/42188gon63politicalpartyfundingact6of2019.pdf.
[101] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, "Political Party Funding Act", https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Party-Funding/Private-Funding-Of-Political-Parties (Date accessed: 13 March 2023).
[102] PPFA, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201901/42188gon63politicalpartyfundingact6of2019.pdf.
[103] IEC, PPFA, Q3, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/News-And-Media/News-List/News/News-Article/Electoral-Commission-issues-Third-Quarter-Disclosure-Report-in-terms-of-the-Political-Party-Funding-Act-and-Regulations?a=AISDGvpz75ps1usOfX7oiq3Rh9rH6i1aeCRCnFVG1BI=.
[104] IEC, PPDA, Q4, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/News-And-Media/News-List/News/News-Article/Electoral-Commission-Issues-Party-Funding-Fourth-Quarter-Disclosure-Report?a=AISDGvpz75ps1usOfX7oijAFLF5aW0EyDAkFHoGCY54=.
[105] Berkowitz, 2011.
[106] IEC, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Parties-And-Candidates/Independent-Ward-Candidates.

to lobby support which usually includes the provision of refreshments. All of these aspects of effective campaigning require significant financial resources in order to be successful and independents do not possess the financial muscle of political parties.

This suggests that ordinary independent candidates are more likely to be successful in wards with smaller geographical areas, which may mean smaller constituencies. Thus, this limits their reach and success in terms of garnering large electoral support. Therefore, unless an independent candidate has the necessary financial backing, their chances of success remain slim.

ii. Inadequate Electoral Campaigning

Linked to the lack of financial resources are limitations on campaign efforts and difficulties in attracting positive media coverage.[107] The Electoral Code of Conduct found in the Electoral Act details certain public commitments that every registered candidate should make. Schedule 2 of the Act stipulates that candidates must publically endorse the universal right to publish and distribute election and campaign materials that includes advertisements and the erection of banners, placards, billboards and distribution of posters; canvassing support; recruiting party members; holding and travelling to attend public meetings. [108] These provisions are pertinent to electoral campaigning and highlight its importance to one's success.

There are three keys to successful electoral campaigning: financial resources, human resources, and visibility. It can be done physically or non-physically. Physical campaigning generally entails door-to-door visits whereby candidates interact citizens in their constituencies in order to gain their electoral support in upcoming elections. It also includes political rallies of large gatherings that are fully financed by prospective candidates. This mainly applies to political parties, specifically the larger formations who have financial muscle. Political parties also have larger memberships, which increases the pool of financial resources and the capacity of human resources to campaign more widely. Non-physical electoral campaigning usually takes the form of media coverage and visibility. There is large and sustained media coverage on prominent, established political parties with the largest support base and access to power.

[107] Africa and van Rooyen, 2012, p.204.
[108] Section 4(1)(a)(iii – viii), Schedule 2 (Section 99).

In the case of independent candidates, a lack of all three key instruments influences the failures of their electoral campaigning. Firstly, independent candidates lack the financial resources to compete with established political parties with large membership and donor support.

Secondly, independents lack the necessary human resources to campaign widely and reach larger constituencies. Independents are considered to be individuals who are not part of political formations, which makes it difficult to cover larger geographical areas (i.e. wards and municipalities). While they may garner the support of those they are closely associated with, it is difficult to envision independents acquiring large-scale agents to assist with their electoral campaigning. Of course, in cases where the independent candidate is popular in their local community for various reasons, they may gain significant support. However, this seems to very rare when considering the low success rate of independents in local government.

Thirdly, independents lack the necessary visibility in the larger voting public required for a successful electoral campaign.[109] Although, this is more relevant during provincial and national elections, the media remains important as they cover local government elections. One of the most important functions of the media during elections is informing the electorate about the candidates and parties contesting elections.[110] More emphasis on a particular news item on television increases the electorate's awareness and subsequent significance of it, which then influences action.[111]

The media consistently interviews and provides analysis on various political party candidates vying for the larger and pivotal local municipalities and metros. This media coverage opens the door for political party candidates to a larger public audience not only for that particular municipality, but also for other municipalities in which the candidates may be contesting across the country. For example, the Patriotic Alliance is one of the smallest parties nationally; however, it has received increasing media coverage for its work and controversies in the Karoo. This has increased its visibility nationally and has provided a strategic opportunity for the Patriotic Alliance to make inroads in other municipalities in subsequent elections.

[109] Berkowitz, 2011.
[110] Professor Tawana Kupe, "The Role of the Media in Elections: A Critical Reflection", University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, https://www.elections.org.za/content/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=1929.
[111] Adanlawo, E.F., and Reddy, M.M., 2020, "The role and effect of the mass media during electioneering", *Journal of African Films & Diaspora Studies*, 3(2), https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.31920/2516-2713/2020/3n2a4.

One struggles to find information when searching for media coverage on independent candidates and ward councillors. There is also no independent candidates being interviewed on television in the build up to elections. This depicts the minimal media coverage of independents, which negatively affects their electoral campaigning.

iii. The Electoral System

Literature indicates that the electoral system under which independents contest, has an impact on their success. The electoral strength of independents varies according to elements such as ballot access requirements, the manner in which seats are allocated and calculated, and the age of the electoral system.[112]

The electoral system of SA was explained in greater depth previously in this paper; however, a brief summary is necessary for the purposes of this section. The country uses a hybrid electoral system at local level combining proportional representation (the percentage of votes won by a political party being equal to the percentage of seats allocated) and first-past-the-post (the candidate receiving the most votes in a ward becomes the sole representative of that ward). Political parties contest seats through both systems, while independent candidates are ineligible to contest for/receive PR seats as they are considered as single individuals. Hence, independents gain seats through the first-past-the-post character of the electoral system.

The nature of the electoral system automatically places independent candidates at a disadvantage compared to political parties. Half of seats in the Municipal Councils are determined using the PR method, which means independents cannot be more impactful in the political sphere when compared to political parties who contest seats through both PR and FPTP methods. While one concedes that, this is inherent to the nature of independent candidacy; it does not discount the clear disadvantage. When the allocation of seats is calculated, political parties have the opportunity to obtain more seats through the PR votes. This is also the case with regards to the district municipalities where 40% of seats are derived from the PR ballot votes in that district municipal area. The allocation of seats is crucial to one's role in local municipalities because Municipal Council members also vote for key positions such as the Mayor and Speaker. Hence, the electoral system places substantial limitations on the success of independent ward candidates and councillors in local government.

[112] Brancati, 2008 p. 651.

iv. Local Profile and Experience

In the same way that the political profile and experience of an independent has influence on their success; the opposite is true. The findings from **Table 9** are pertinent to this understanding, as the table shows the history of these re-elected independent ward councillors. What the table showed was that fourty-one of the fifty-seven independent ward councillors were previously elected as members of a political party or as independents. This translates to over 70% of re-elected independents that had had prior political experience as councillors. What this suggests is that having prior experience in politics increases their chances of success.

v. Nationally Focused Political Space

Africa and van Rooyen argue that the nationally focused political space[113] influences the failures of independent candidates in the country. This is accurate when considering the rhetoric applied by political parties during local elections that foregrounds the general elections. Local elections are influenced by the preceding and pending provincial and national elections. Political parties use the preceding general election performances to inform their following local elections campaign. They also campaign for pending local elections by presenting these as part of a strategy for the succeeding general elections. However, independent candidates currently cannot engage in these nuances, which can influence negatively on their successes. While one recognizes that, the *New Nations Movement* ruling paves the way for independent candidacy in the next general elections. However, the chances of making an impact nationally are extremely slim considering the dismal impact in the local sphere.

vi. Sustainability

Sustainability in politics is key in getting the electorate to entrust their votes. When looking at the biggest political parties in the country, one appreciates their longevity, as these political formations have been sustainable over the past two decades or so. Independent candidacy does not offer the necessary sustainability for three main reasons. Firstly, independents are

[113] Africa and van Rooyen, 2012, p.204.

considered to be one individual and when this person can no longer fulfil their duties, there is no 'deputy' to fill the vacancy. The vacancy is filled via a by election which is open to another political parties or independents. This then raises question marks about the longevity of independents.

Secondly, independent candidacy is unsustainable because only four independents were re-elected as independent candidates. A possible reason for this is that independents do not have the partisanship or longstanding voter loyalty that greatly benefits political parties.

Lastly, the fact that independents have not taken part in provincial and national elections raises questions on the sustainability of independent candidates. Having participated only in the local elections thus far, independent candidates' political sustainability is negatively affected by a lack of presence or influence beyond this local sphere. Participation in the general elections is key as it is a door into the Parliament where one can influence legislative decisions directly. Independents have not had this opportunity and this leaves a gap between independents and the electorate in the period between the previous and next local election. This means that the electorate would then be voting for a political party during the general elections. Therefore, the sustainability of independent candidates becomes very difficult in this context.

Chapter 7: Prospects for Independent Candidates in SA's National and Provincial Elections

This section aims to provide an informed assessment of the prospects of independent candidates in the provincial and national government context of South African politics. The part of the section assesses the country's electoral reform debate in the context of the *New Nation Movement* court judgement and a timeline of events and efforts towards its implementation. It identifies the various recommendations of a suitable electoral system and other jurisdictions that are used as guidelines. This will be conclude with an analysis of the performance of independent candidates in these jurisdictions. The second part of this section interrogates the multiple narratives advanced by advocates in favour of independent candidacy in the national and provincial elections. These narratives will be dissected to test their validity, and provide a more accurate assessment of the potentials of independent candidacy in the country's future.

i. Electoral Reform in the Context of the *New Nation Movement* court judgement

The *New Nation Movement* court judgement has made electoral reform inevitable. Debates on electoral reform in South Africa can be traced back to the early post-apartheid period. The Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 200 of 1993[114] (Interim Constitution) prescribed a proportional representation system with the nine provinces as multimember constituencies for the 1994 general elections, with voters choosing between party lists in each constituency. Proportionality would be further enhanced by a top-up of member of parliament from regional and/or national party lists, based on parties' national voting share. However, the final Constitution made no provision for an electoral system beyond the 1999 general elections. Therefore, there was a need for a legislated electoral system for 2004 general elections. Thus, the Minister of Home Affairs appointed the Electoral Task Team on 20 March 2002, led by Van Zyl Slabbert, "to draft legislation for an electoral system for the next [2004] national and provincial elections… [according to] relevant provisions of the Constitution"[115].

The Electoral Task Team produced the final report on January 2003 after widespread consultations with political parties, media, NGOs, CSOs and academia, to name a few. The majority of the Electoral Task Team recommended an electoral system with multi-member constituencies electing 300 members of the National Assembly. There would be an estimated 69 multi-member constituencies with 3-7 representatives according to size and votes; voters would choose between local party lists in each constituency (The Electoral Task Team allowed that a ranked voting of individual candidates in the 69 constituencies might be introduced in the longer term but did not favour such a move immediately.) This would be combined with a compensatory closed national list producing 100 members for overall proportionality, thus making a total of 400 Parliament members.[116]

Fast-forward to 2020 succeeding the *New Nation Movement* judgement, various proposals were put forward on amendments recommended to give effect to independent candidacy in the country. Notably, the *Inclusive Society Institute* published a report by an expert panel on the

[114] Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 200 of 1993, https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-act-200-1993.
[115] Report of the Electoral Task Team, January 2003, p.1, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/electt1.pdf..
[116] Report of the Electoral Task Team, January 2003, p.21, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/electt1.pdf.

"Proposed Model for South Africa".[117] The identified strengths of the current system included the promotion of multi-party politics for the inclusion of as many political parties as possible. It also provides the possibility for minority parties to secure seats. Cited weaknesses included, that voters are presented by parties and not individuals, which arguably decreases the ability of voters to hold individual representatives accountable. The closed party list system limits voters from expressing preferences on candidates standing for election. Moreover, voters do not have direct influence on the selection of legislative representatives as they only vote for political parties.[118]

Chapter 3 of the *Inclusive Society Institute* report proposed a hybrid, constituency-based model with a compensatory proportional list to establish overall proportionality.[119] This will consist of 66 multi-member constituencies (MMCs) based on district and metropolitan boarders. Each MMC will have 3-7 members, with a compensatory PR list derived from combining all votes nationally. Parliament will still have 400 representatives, with 300 elected via the MMCs and 100 via the compensatory PR list. This will be applied at the provincial and national assemblies.[120] This system is argued to improve accountability as representatives do so in their local communities and voters will know who their local MPs will be. However, voting in MMCs would still be on the basis of closed party lists. Independents would have to compete with parties and would forfeit surplus votes (votes that would entitle a party to more than one seat) unless they are combined with other independents in independent lists.

The *Helen Suzman Foundation* also released a report on "National Assembly Electoral Reform".[121] The HSF proposed a mixed-member proportional system with 55 multi-member constituencies allocated 3 to 7 seats. There will be two ballot papers to choose a candidate in one's constituency and a party. Here, independent candidates can participate by standing for election in individual constituencies (where there would be a ranked preference voting system) and as party list members with associates. According to HSF, the first option is more suitable for independents with support in a constituency, and the second works best for those with a national base.

[117] Inclusive Society Institute, February 2021, "Proposed Electoral Model for South Africa: A response to the Constitutional Court judgement declaring the current electoral legislation unconstitutional", https://cisp.cachefly.net/assets/articles/attachments/84679_2021.02.24_electoral_reform_report.pdf.
[118] Inclusive Society Institute, 2021, "Proposed Electoral Model for South Africa", p.21.
[119] Inclusive Society Institute, 2021, "Proposed Electoral Model for South Africa", p.22.
[120] Inclusive Society Institute, 2021, "Proposed Electoral Model for South Africa", p.33.
[121] Helen Suzman Foundation, 2021, "National Assembly Electoral Reform" report, https://hsf.org.za/publications/special-publications/national-assembly-electoral-reform.pdf.

The task of giving effect to the *New Nation Movement* court judgement has been led by the Department of Home Affairs. A Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) was appointed by the Minister of Home Affairs on 19 February 2021, which compiled and delivered a report on June 2021 that present two options. First, multi-member constituency which simply adds independents into the existing electoral system, allowing independents to compete in the nine constituencies but not to obtain compensatory seats, with their surplus (above-quota) votes forfeited (minimalist approach). Second, a mixed member model with a combination of First-Past-The-Post (single-member constituencies where candidates compete for a plurality of votes) and closed party-list proportional representation system in a single national constituency, with the second national vote used to determine overall proportionality. Here independents could stand as individuals in local constituencies or with associates at national level. The Minister selected the first option and developed the *Draft Electoral Ammendment Bill*,[122] which was released to Parliament and distributed for public comment in 2022. However, one of the major issues regarding this proposed Bill is that it does not provide a process to replace independents should they pass on or resign. Multiple CSOs and NGOs consistently raised multiple other issues about the Bill throughout the course of its Parliamentary processes however it contained various issues.

The finalised Electoral Amendment Act[123] was signed into law on 17 April 2023 with many deficits left unresolved. For one, the electoral system was reformed minimally to simply add independent candidates at national and provincial levels. The National Assembly comprises of 400 seats, 200 seats allocated to nine multi-member regional constituencies and 200 seats allocated from a national top-up list. The election for both sets of seats is conducted on the basis of closed party list proportional representation (albeit with independents artificially inserted into the constituency elections).[124] Numerous civil society groups have advocated for a more constituency-based system that will assist in remedying this deficit. The second issue is that when an independent candidate receives votes above the quota, their remainder (extra) votes are wasted. Lastly, while political parties require 1000 signatures to contest election, independent candidates need 12 000 signatures.[125]

[122] Electoral Ammendment Bill: Draft, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/36267gen233.pdf.
[123] Electoral Amendment Act 1 of 2023, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202304/48432electoralamendmentact1of2023.pdf.
[124] Communication with Professor Daryl Glaser.
[125] Simelane, 2023, "The Electoral Amendment Bill".

These abovementioned issues create considerable barriers of entry for independents to contest provincial and national elections. As a result of these grievances, two constitutional challenges have been heard simultaneously against the new law in August 2023. In the first case, the One South Africa (OSA) Movement is challenging the required number of signatures (15% of total number of votes needed to obtain a seat in the Legislatures) for independents to contest, as stipulated by section 31(B) of the Act.[126] The second court challenge was brought by the Independent Candidate Association (ICA) concerning the 200 PR seats that independent candidates ineligible to contest. The ICA deems this unfair and unconstitutional. [127]

When analysing all the abovementioned recommendations for electoral reform post the *New Nation Movement* judgement, there are some positive but still many challenges for independents. One of the first positive recommendations put forward was making the electoral system more constituency-based. All the recommendations recognised the need to increase constituencies from 9 (provinces). Secondly, the recommendations would effectively give more power to the electorate to influence who receives as seat in the Legislatures. Thirdly, the FPTP character of the electoral system was maintained. Fourthly, these recommendations would allow independent candidates who already have political experience, a provincial/national support base, and deep pockets.

However, some of these recommendations would not improve the chances of independent candidates to gain seats compared to the local government elections. Firstly, although the recommended systems would be more constituency-based than the current provincial and national election system, these constituencies would still be very large geographically. Independent candidates would still struggle to make inroads during elections because of the lack of financial resources to campaign across larger geographical areas. Secondly, the electoral systems recommended all include, to various degrees, proportional representation. The nature of the electoral system would still automatically places independent candidates at a disadvantage compared to political parties as some seats in the Legislatures would be determined using the PR method. Thirdly, these recommendations still include PR closed lists, which would still limit the power of the electorate to directly decide who gets to be in

[126] Hawker, D., 2023, 21 August, "Newly passed Electoral Amendment Act set for ConCourt showdown over independent candidates", *Daily Maverick*, https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-08-21-newly-passed-electoral-amendment-act-set-for-concourt-showdown-over-independent-candidates/#:~:text=The%20Constitutional%20Court%20will%20soon,candidates%20in%20the%20National%20Assembly.

[127] Hawker, 2023, "Newly passed Electoral Amendment Act".

Parliament. Fourthly, some of these recommendations make reference to independents standing with associates at national level. While this would assist in bridging the gap caused by the PR system compensatory seats, it would raise theoretical questions as to what is and what qualifies an independent candidate. If one is joined by 'associates', this can no longer be considered an 'independent' candidate in the strictest sense of the word, but would resemble a political party. Lastly, when looking at independent candidates in all the other jurisdictions used as examples in these reports, independent candidates still perform poorly.

ii. Assessing Dominant Narratives

The literature review conducted prior to this research paper presented the multiple narratives on the prospects of independent candidacy against the backdrop of the *New Nation Movement* court ruling. The court ruling was received with extensive media coverage in the context of South Africa's political landscape in the near future. Early remarks on the preliminary research conducted prior to this research paper suggested that there is broad optimism with regards to the role of independent candidates following the court ruling. Scholars and advocates were hopeful of improved accountability. However, these claims were not substantiated with facts or were based on rhetoric. Using the research and findings of this paper, pertaining to the performance of independent candidates and councillors in the local context, this section aims to ascertain the extent to which these dominant narratives have factual and/or empirical backing.

Davis[128] documents that there is increasing representation by independents since 2016, which illustrates the potential of independent candidates. The issue here is that political parties are accountable to the party not voters, as the party selects its leaders. Yet, the analyses in this paper showed that independent candidates have reportedly involved in irregular expenditures, Davis further explains the work of One South Africa (OSA), led by Mmusi Maimane. OSA was established to endorse and assist independents to run for elections by providing political training and practical support. However, OSA does not provide funding. Davis quoting Sussman argues that to be successful as an independent, one needs to be well-resourced financially or well known or both. Youth advocates like Pearl Pillay hope that independent

[128] Davis, R., March 27, 2021, "The new face of South Africa's elections", *Daily Maverick*, https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-03-27-the-new-face-of-south-africas-elections/ (Accessed: 17 June 2022).

candidacy will offer an avenue for young people to be in public office.[129] However, there is no evidence that this may be the case.

Ndletyana[130] argued that the *New Nations Movement* court ruling increases choice and could bring apathetic voters back into elections and attract people from political parties. One would agree would this claim because some communities have shifted their votes to an independent from established political parties due to issues of service delivery, as in the case of Bhekizenzo Gigi in Mhlontlo Municipality. However, it can lead to "divisive campaigns based on personality" as individual primacy over parties can "weaken associational life built upon civic values". "So long as parties provided a fairly acceptable slate of candidates, voters did not mind much that they didn't elect them directly".[131] The impact of enabling independents is expanding the choice of contestants, which could combat declining voters. In the 2019 general elections, 74.6% (26, 756, 649) of the total voting age population registered, with 66% of this amount casting a vote compared to a 73.48% turn-out rate in 2014. Another possible impact is that parties presenting dishonourable/incompetent candidates onto their lists could be pushed to improve their selections.[132] However, independents are likely to find challenges because of poor organisational infrastructure, money, and inexperience.

Chetty[133] contends that parties kill political will. According to the CC's majority judgement, there is duress experienced by parliamentary representatives to vote in accordance with their party as failure may result in internal sanctions. This limits the free will of elected representatives to vote according to their conscience and, sometimes, the electorate. The minority judgement emphasises the issue that representatives are elected to parliament by political parties. When voters directly elect parliamentarians, they will be less obligated to follow party lines. Chetty[134] argues that this judgement explains the potential of increasing the accountability of representatives when elected directly by voters instead of political parties. The current closed party list electoral system makes it unclear how accountability can be enforced by the electorate and independent candidacy may offer such an opportunity. However,

[129] Davis, 2021, "The new face of South Africa's elections", *Daily Maverick*.
[130] Ndletyana, M., June 16, 2020, "Independent candidates will change the game", The Africa Report, https://www.theafricareport.com/29970/south-africa-independent-candidates-will-change-the-game/ (Accessed: 27 June 2022).
[131] Ndletyana, 2020, "Independent candidates will change the game".
[132] Ndletyana, 2020, "Independent candidates will change the game".
[133] Chetty, K., October 2, 2020, "Electoral Reform: Do Independent Candidates Strengthen the Institution of Parliament?", Helen Suzman Foundation, https://hsf.org.za/publications/hsf-briefs/electoral-reform-do-independent-candidates-strenghten-the-institution-of-parliament (Accessed: 29 June 2022).
[134] Chetty, 2020, "Electoral Reform".

one can argue that accountability can be better achieved through improved intra-party democracy. For example, reconfiguring the internal dynamics of political parties to allow more power for the electorate to choose who is elected into parliament. This would arguably be a more feasible approach towards improved accountability and increased citizen power as political parties dominate elections at all levels of government.

Numerous organisations in the country have been advocating for the positive impact independent candidacy can make to our democracy. Most notably, OSA movement, the Independent Candidates Association South Africa (ICA) and My Vote Counts (MVC). MVC is a non-profit organisation which has been doing work around the role of independent candidates in SA's democracy. It held a webinar around this topic with various speakers. The speakers mentioned that the conversation was necessary for inclusive and fair representation in terms of the people who represent and what ideas they represent. It also criticised current political leaders for inadequately representing the majority and the poor.[135] Hence, the argument is that independents can be an avenue for direct links between voters and parliamentarians, and provide a feasible political alternative to parties.

While independents have some prospects of developing into a new alternative to parties, considerable work needs to be done to gain the trust of voters to move outside of the norm of party politics that has dominated SA's democratic dispensation. Furthermore, this would require a substantial presence of independent members of parliament, which is highly unlikely considering the underwhelming presence of independent ward councillors. MVC recognise limitations such as no infrastructure, finances and support, and potential of being co-opted. Most importantly, independents already run at local government and have not been successful with problems identified in this sphere.[136]

The OSA movement aims to combat some of these limitations. One of its functions is to identify and support individuals nominated by their committees as capable to run in elections as independent candidates. Leading to and during the 2021 local government elections, OSA supported, trained, equipped, and campaigned for independents standing for ward councillors.[137] This has continued in 2022 where the organisation has launched a campaign for

[135] My Vote Counts, March 10, 2021, "The Role of Independent Candidates in South Africa's Multi-Party Democracy" (Webinar), https://myvotecounts.org.za/the-role-of-independent-candidates-in-south-africas-multi-party-democracy-2/.
[136] My Vote Counts, 2021 (Webinar).

the 2024 general elections. However, due to a poorly amended electoral system for the 2024 national and provincial elections, Maimane has established a political party named Build One South Africa (BOSA). This highlights the unfeasibility and unsustainability of independent candidacy at the provincial and national levels.

Conclusion

Political parties in South Africa have and continue to consistently dominated politics and government. This has been demonstrated by looking at the local government elections' statistics. This begs the question of whether independent candidates are relevant in South African politics. The findings contained in this paper would suggest not. This research was conducted in the backdrop of the New Nation Movement court ruling that supported independent candidates' integration into the national and provincial elections through electoral reform. As such, it assessed the role of independent candidates and elected independents in South Africa's multiparty democracy in attempt to answer the core question of 'What role do independent candidates and elected independents play in South Africa's multiparty democracy?' This question was explored through research framed in various thematic areas that aimed to answer the secondary research questions leading to the core research question.

What was found was that that 65% of re-elected independents had been previously elected as political party ward councillors. In addition to this, it was discovered that over 70% of re-elected independent ward councillors opted to join a political party in subsequent local elections, with eleven of these being re-elected more than once as part of political parties in subsequent elections. This showed that majority of independent candidates who are successful in being re-elected have prior or subsequent links to political parties.

It was also found that the number of independents contesting election is significantly lower than that of political party ward candidates in all five local elections. Statistics above depict that independents ward candidates have never gone above 5% of the total ward candidates contesting in all the local election cycles. The percentage of successful independents of those who contest has never gone above 6%. Furthermore, the percentage of wards won by all independent councillors, collectively, has remained consistently low – recorded just above 1% across all local elections. Furthermore, the rate of increase in the number of political party ward

candidates is also higher than that of independent ward candidates throughout the election years. This arguably minimizes the impact of independent ward candidates during elections as political party ward candidates dominate the highly competitive electoral space.

Independent candidates do not stand for local government election often enough to win many seats. The results of the 2000 local government elections show 689 independents contesting, which translated to 4.82% of total ward candidates – the highest percentage achieved throughout all five municipal elections covered in this analysis. In the 2011 local elections, the number of independents who won seats increased to 45, which is 5.96% of those who contested and the highest percentage of all five local elections. The highest number of independents who contested in an election was only 1549, and the highest number of ward seats won was 52. The highest percentage of total ward seats won by independents was 1.16% of total ward, and 3.35% of independents who contested election actual won, which remains an underwhelming success rate. All these statistics showed that independents do not contest elections enough and do not win enough seats to make an impact in the electoral and political landscape of the country.

There are certain circumstances under which independent candidates tend to do well or win. Drawing from the findings in this paper, one can deduce that independent candidates with some experience in politics, a record of community involvement and service, generally have a better chance at winning in their ward. In some cases, independent candidates are seen as feasible electoral alternative where there has been sustained, poor service delivery.

However, numbers matter in order to win more seats and make an impact in Municipal Councils. There are simply not enough independents contesting and the rate of their increase is disproportionate to that of political parties. Of all the cases where independents had won election, 49.14% of the instances were through an outright majority. Which means majority of independent councillors do not obtain majority wins at the polls. Independents are handicapped by a lack of financial resources, human resources, inadequate campaigning due to limited media visibility. Furthermore, the electoral system does not favour independent candidacy to the extent that they dominate political parties. In essence, the electoral system is skewed to favour political parties and does not value independent candidates for the potential value that they bring to SA's democratic project.

Dominant narratives on the potential success of independents in the context of provincial and national elections are overly optimistic. The electoral system reforms recommended would still not address the disadvantages even if applied. Thus, based on the evidence gathered,

independents standing for office in national and provincial are highly unlikely to make a positive difference.

Therefore, I concluded that independents play a very minimal role in the country's local government sphere, and will continue to do so even if they are integrated into the provincial and national electoral sphere. Rather than focussing on independent candidacy, one should focus on improving the political party structure and advocate for improved intra-political party democracy.

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Annexure A

Table 3 below displays the support of independent candidates in each of the nine (9) provinces of during the local government elections.[138]

		EASTERN CAPE			
	2000	**2006**	**2011**	**2016**	**2021**
Independent Ward Candidates	134	128	165	166	243
Total Ward Candidates	1831	2608	3693	4437	6675
Seats Won by Independents	2 (1,24%)	4 (1,26%)	12 (1,89%)	6 (1,51%)	15 (2,48%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	601	636	715	705	710
		FREE STATE			
	2000	**2006**	**2011**	**2016**	**2021**
Independent Ward Candidates	48	45	31	83	134
Total Ward Candidates	1065	1430	1784	2365	3605
Seats Won by Independents	0 (0,91%)	3 (1,4%)	2 (0,57%)	3 (1,7%)	2 (1,57%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	291	300	317	309	319
		GAUTENG			
	2000	**2006**	**2011**	**2016**	**2021**
Independent Ward Candidates	74	80	80	73	170
Total Ward Candidates	2266	4506	5970	6255	11 950
Seats Won by Independents	2 (0,82%)	1 (0,78%)	0 (0,64%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (0,7%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	446	423	508	529	529
		KWAZULU NATAL			
	2000	**2006**	**2011**	**2016**	**2021**
Independent Ward Candidates	100	108	107	207	334
Total Ward Candidates	2726	4827	5716	6624	14 096
Seats Won by Independents	4 (0,92%)	2 (1,17%)	6 (0,95%)	10 (2,23%)	11 (1,94%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	748	771	828	870	901

[138] IEC, 2021 Municipal Elections Report, p.15, https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Downloads/Documents-Municipal-Election-Reports.

LIMPOPO					
	2000	2006	2011	2016	2021
Independent Ward Candidates	76	75	172	100	231
Total Ward Candidates	1628	2593	3625	5256	7196
Seats Won by Independents	3 (1,42%)	8 (1,58%)	11 (2,86%)	3 (1,2%)	10 (3,37%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	437	513	543	566	568
MPUMALANGA					
	2000	2006	2011	2016	2021
Independent Ward Candidates	57	61	46	44	130
Total Ward Candidates	1382	2214	2332	3049	3699
Seats Won by Independents	2 (1,21%)	5 (2,07%)	3 (1,16%)	1 (0,66%)	6 (2,77%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	401	365	402	400	400
NORTHERN CAPE					
	2000	2006	2011	2016	2021
Independent Ward Candidates	25	12	27	45	72
Total Ward Candidates	431	748	781	1173	1743
Seats Won by Independents	0 (0,74%)	1 (0,72%)	1 (0,75%)	3 (1,44%)	4 (1,99%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	173	174	194	204	232
NORTH - WEST					
	2000	2006	2011	2016	2021
Independent Ward Candidates	66	86	54	76	150
Total Ward Candidates	1169	1962	2258	2869	4249
Seats Won by Independents	1 (1,66%)	7 (2,48%)	5 (1,35%)	6 (1,83%)	3 (2,14%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	327	365	383	407	403
WESTERN CAPE					
	2000	2006	2011	2016	2021
Independent Ward Candidates	92	67	72	61	85
Total Ward Candidates	1427	2803	4295	4947	7915
Seats Won by Independents	2 (1,11%)	3 (1.48%)	5 (0,57%)	24 (3,28%)	0 (0,52%)
Total Wards (FPTP seats)	330	348	387	402	406

Table 4: Independent Ward Councillors from the 2021 Local Government Elections[139]

			2021	Independent Councillors			
	Province	**Municipality**	**Ward**	**Name(s)**	**Surname**	**% Support**	**Oppositions (% support)**
1.	Eastern Cape	Makana	21004014	Vuyani	Nesi	40.45%	ANC (29.72%)
2.	Eastern Cape	Kou-Kamma	21009003	Dudley	Maasdorp	41.72%	ANC (28.63%); DA (21.47%)
3.	Eastern Cape	Mbhashe	21201028	Phumzile	Msaro	61.02%	ANC (15.39%)
4.	Eastern Cape	Amahlathi	21204007	Zamuxolo Emmanuel	Mfulana	50.83%	ANC (46.30%)
5.	Eastern Cape	Ngqushwa	21206011	Xolani	Magini	45.79%	ANC (42.37%)
6.	Eastern Cape	Raymond Mhlaba	21209007	Kwanele	Siduli	49.10%	ANC (45.6%)
7.	Eastern Cape	Raymond Mhlaba	21209012	Mthetheleli	Gqokro	47.12%	ANC (44.43%)
8.	Eastern Cape	Raymond Mhlaba	21209020	Zikhona Nandipha	Lento	54.85%	ANC (38.45%)
9.	Eastern Cape	Enoch Mgijima	21309007	Siyabulela Avela	Qwalela	48.55%	ANC (31.95%)
10.	Eastern Cape	Ngquza Hill	21503001	Mzoli	Tshabiso	64.07%	ANC (27.62%)
11.	Eastern Cape	Ngquza Hill	21503023	Lima	Kumalo	47.74%	ANC (40.09%)
12.	Eastern Cape	Ngquza Hill	21503024	Sandile	Njovane	53.63%	ANC (38.4%)
13.	Eastern Cape	Ngquza Hill	21503026	Mzuvukile	Mlandelwa	48.05%	ANC (45.50%)
14.	Eastern Cape	Mhlontlo	21506014	Bhekizenzo	Gigi	59.42%	ANC (32.48%)
15.	Eastern Cape	King Sabata Dalindyebo	21507024	Mcembelele Jefrey	Msakeni	53.55%	ANC (37.81%)
16.	Free State	Mohokare	41603004	Mojalefa Amstrong	Letele	51.54%	ANC (41.27%)
17.	Free State	Dihlabeng	41902010	Isolde	Laesecke	45.03%	DA (32.26%)
18.	Gauteng	Merafong City	74804004	Thabo	Malatjie	57.42%	ANC (24.54%)
19.	KwaZulu-Natal	Msunduzi	52205007	Bukelani Ephraim	Zuma	44.22%	ANC (30.35%)
20.	KwaZulu-Natal	Richmond	52207006	Sithembiso Leonard	Latha	51.24%	ANC (40.93%)
21.	KwaZulu-Natal	Inkosi Langalibalele	52307015	Sihle Ernest	Ngwenya	42.90%	IFP (26.47%)
22.	KwaZulu-Natal	uMsinga	52404015	Mphindiseni Mthandeni Simon	Myeza	33.28%	IFP (31.63%); ANC (29.95%)

[139] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, Notice 653 of 2021, "Publications of the List of Elected Councillors" (2021 Municipal Elections), 09 November 2021, Government Gazette No. 45447, https://www.gov.za/documents/electoral-commission-publication-list-elected-councillors-2021-10-nov-2021-0000.

23.	KwaZulu-Natal	Dannhauser	52504012	Mlungisi Sydney	Dhlamini	30.01%	ANC (27.54%); IFP (20.02%)
24.	KwaZulu-Natal	Jozini	52702002	Sibonelo Victor	Mathenjwa	46.89%	IFP (35.51%)
25.	KwaZulu-Natal	Jozini	52702020	Sthembiso	Dlamini	35.90%	IFP (34.93%); ANC (22.25%)
26.	KwaZulu-Natal	Mtubatuba	52705019	Bheki	Mdluli	43.01%	Independent (23.30%); IFP (15.26%)
27.	KwaZulu-Natal	Big Five Hlabisa	52706013	Jabulani Phathumuzi	Zungu	43.15%	IFP (26.11%); NFP (20.008%)
28.	KwaZulu-Natal	uMzimkhulu	54305004	Sibonile Protus	Mabuntane	54.80%	ANC (39.05%)
29.	KwaZulu-Natal	uBuhlebezwe	54304013	Mzawugatyiswa Stanford	Ngubo	47.70%	ANC (31.77%)
30.	Limpopo	Ephraim Mogale	94701004	Kgalabi William	Sebothoma	43.39%	ANC (38.23%)
31.	Limpopo	Ephraim Mogale	94701011	Sebatane Emmanuel	Mahubane	45.51%	ANC (40.31%)
32.	Limpopo	Makhuduthamaga	94703024	Mpshe Dan	Tsatsi	38.47%	ANC (35.63%); Independent (15.96%)
33.	Limpopo	Maruleng	93305006	Kgodiso Jamicah	Sekgobela	49.35%	ANC (41.81%)
34.	Limpopo	Maruleng	93305014	Taola Imas	Shai	45.49%	ANC (43.30%)
35.	Limpopo	Greater Giyani	93301006	Sizeka Mackson	Hlongwane	48.76%	ANC (47.87%)
36.	Limpopo	Greater Giyani	93301014	Soyaphi Mackson	Mhangwane	51.17%	ANC (39.39%)
37.	Limpopo	Greater Tzaneen	93303034	Moshohli Eric	Ralepelle	44.95%	ANC (21.49%)
38.	Limpopo	Collins Chabane	93405019	Nkanukeni Philip	Munyai	56.86%	ANC (37.75%)
39.	Limpopo	Lephalale	93602008	Matlotleng William	Langa	45.31%	ANC (42.78%)
40.	Mpumalanga	Mkhondo	83003014	Walter Henry	Vilakazi	45.30%	ANC (37.70%)
41.	Mpumalanga	Mkhondo	83003017	Mthokosizi Amadi	Simelane	35.97%	ANC (27.68%); Independent (12.70%)
42.	Mpumalanga	Steve Tshwete	83103002	Thomas Ramaitsane	Mpye	52.76%	ANC (35.11%)
43.	Mpumalanga	Thembisile Hani	83105012	Moses Mmoisetsi	Sepogwana	44.85%	ANC (43.86%)
44.	Mpumalanga	Thembisile Hani	83105016	Tenboy Buttitjie	Dube	46.20%	ANC (35.64%)
45.	Mpumalanga	Dr JS Moroka	83106012	Lucas Makafuri	Skhosana	68.06%	ANC (24.29%)
46.	North West	Rustenburg	63703033	Libe	Khoeli	39.48%	ANC (35.21%)
47.	North West	Kgetlengrivier	63704002	Wilhelmus Diederiks Fouche	Rocher	50.74%	ANC (30.94%)
48.	North West	Moses Kotane	63705029	Matsapa Phillista	Mabula	41.46%	ANC (35.99%)
49.	Northern Cape	Siyancuma	30708003	Velaphi Benjamin	Makabe	42.90%	ANC (42.35%)
50.	Northern Cape	Siyancuma	30708004	Willem Jouke	Van Bergen	39.31%	DA (34.24%); ANC (15.84%)
51.	Northern Cape	Ikheis	30804003	Paul	Vries	36.52%	ANC (32.28%); Ind. (11.63%); DA (11.40%)
52.	Northern Cape	Ikheis	30804004	Mervin	Malgas	42.63%	ANC (36.47%)

Table 5: Independent Ward Councillors from the 2016 Local Government Elections[140]

	2016 Independent Ward Councillors						
	Province	Municipality	Ward	Name(s)	Surname	% Support	Opposition (% support)
1.	Eastern Cape	Mbhashe	21201014	Tembinkosi	Tshika	50.02%	ANC (43.39%)
2.	Eastern Cape	Mbhashe	21201025	Nokanyo	Magatya	48.94%	ANC (35.40%)
3.	Eastern Cape	Great Kei	21203002	Zolani Mzwanele	Nzuzo	48.02%	ANC (47.11%)
4.	Eastern Cape	Elundini	21401014	Ntombizanele Gloria	Ntaopane	41.74%	ANC (40.95%)
5.	Eastern Cape	Mhlontlo	21506004	Sivuyile Sydney	Sopangisa	43.24%	ANC (35.21%)
6.	Eastern Cape	Mhlontlo	21506021	Mkhuseli Sakhiwo	Mathe	62.53%	ANC (32.33%)
7.	Free State	Matjhabeng	41804002	Sello Ernest	Tshabangu	58.88%	ANC (33.88%)
8.	Free State	Dihlabeng	41902012	Johannes Mbozela	Radebe	54%	ANC (37.56%)
9.	Free State	Dihlabeng	41902013	Thabo Johanne	Seekane	48.25%	ANC (41.99%)
10.	KwaZulu-Natal	Uphongolo	52602001	Funokwakhe France	Simelane	38.58%	ANC (33.44%); IFP (19.01%)
11.	KwaZulu-Natal	Jozini	52702015	Siphamandla Zimele	Mathenjwa	53.06%	IFP (23.71%)
12.	KwaZulu-Natal	KwaDukuza	52902002	Commie Melisizwe	Ntleko	40.01%	ANC (36.72%)
13.	KwaZulu-Natal	KwaDukuza	52902027	Micheal Mbusiso	Madlala	53%	ANC (37.99%)
14.	KwaZulu-Natal	Ubuhlebezwe	54304001	Bhekuyise Mduduzi	Khuboni	45.42%	ANC (43.63%)
15.	KwaZulu-Natal	Ubuhlebezwe	54304009	Nicholas Mphikiseni	Mdunge	62%	ANC (34.06%)
16.	KwaZulu-Natal	eThekwini (Durban)	59500004	Petros Hella	Nxumalo	65%	ANC (29.03%)
17.	KwaZulu-Natal	eThekwini (Durban)	59500012	Vusumuzi	Mbanjwa	49.05%	ANC (43.80%)
18.	KwaZulu-Natal	eThekwini (Durban)	59500103	Mthetheleli	Sibisi	34.44%	ANC (33.04%); DA (28.98%)
19.	KwaZulu-Natal	eThekwini (Durban)	59500107	Thandanani Njabulo	Mabanga	47.33%	ANC (43.72%)
20.	Limpopo	Ephraim Mogale	94701002	Simon Abie	Tema	53.67%	ANC (25.70%)
21.	Limpopo	Maruleng	93305013	Sefolwane Fistos	Mahlo	44.37%	ANC (32.02%)
22.	Limpopo	New Municipality	93405009	Vulani Norman	Mukhomi	71.13%	ANC (26.07%)
23.	Mpumalanga	Dr JS Moroka	83106031	Sekgorutlha Jonas	Ratladi	45.92%	ANC (36.20%)
24.	Northern Cape	Sol Plaatjie	30901027	Norman	Hammer	45.01%	ANC (38.27%)

[140] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, Notice 483 of 2016, "Publications of the List of Elected Councillors" (2016 Municipal Elections), 10 August 2016, Government Gazette No. 40198, https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201608/40198gen483.pdf.

25.	Northern Cape	Ubuntu	30701002	Paula Elizabeth	Jantjies	47.48%	ANC (30.22%)
26.	Northern Cape	Ubuntu	30701004	Krisjan James	Arens	43.54%	ANC (29.74%); DA (22.21%)
27.	Western Cape	Knysna	10408004	Velile	Waxa	49.27%	ANC (40.06%)

Table 6: Independent Ward Councillors from the 2011 Local Government Elections[141]

	2011 Independent Ward Councillors						
	Province	**Municipality**	**Ward**	**Name(s)**	**Surname**	**% Support**	**Opposition (% support)**
1.	Eastern Cape	Ndlambe (Port Alfred)	21005004	Zache	Ngxingo	45.91%	ANC (29.13%); DA (24.96%)
2.	Eastern Cape	Sundays River Valley (Kirkwood)	21006004	Ignatures	Manene	57.42%	ANC (35.89%)
3.	Eastern Cape	Mbhashe (Idutywa)	21201014	Tembinkosi	Tshika	44.22%	ANC (32.48%)
4.	Eastern Cape	Mbhashe (Idutywa)	21201020	Mantimfana Joe	Savu	60.18%	ANC (30.03%)
5.	Eastern Cape	Nkonkobe (Alice)	21207010	Pumlani	Sixolo	49.33%	ANC (42.50%)
6.	Eastern Cape	Tsolwana (Tarkastad)	21302005	Ivan Patrick	Van Heerden	48.24%	ANC (44.14%)
7.	Eastern Cape	Port St Johns	21504010	Mthuthuzeli	Veni	58.07%	ANC (38.42%)
8.	Eastern Cape	Port St Johns	21504014	Henry Zolani	Cube	51.96%	ANC (46.75%)
9.	Eastern Cape	Port St Johns	21504017	Elliot Zwelinzima	Mncwati	50.71%	ANC (48.34%)
10.	Eastern Cape	King Sabata Dalindyebo (Umtata)	21507024	Mcembelele Jeffrey	Msakeni	48.83%	UDM (25.31%); ANC (24.05%)
11.	Eastern Cape	Umzimvubu (Mount Ayliff)	24402011	Nobahle	Gogela	51.41%	ANC (42.30%)
12.	Eastern Cape	Ntlabankulu	24404007	Benedict Bulelani	Ntutuka	46.12%	ANC (43.56%)
13.	Free State	Kopanong (Trompsburg)	41602006	Phindile Decius	Basholo	62.05%	ANC (28.98%)
14.	Free State	Tokologo	41802002	Makole Micheal	Lentsa	43.73%	ANC (28.92%)
15.	KwaZulu-Natal	Umzumbe	52103002	Conrad Sihle	Ngwabe	48.32%	ANC (39.0%)
16.	KwaZulu-Natal	Richmond	52207003	Khulekani Edmund	Magubane	60.46%	ANC (32.33%)
17.	KwaZulu-Natal	uMhlathuze	52802013	Cyprian Sipho	Kweyama	45.26%	ANC (29.16%); IFP (23.24%)
18.	KwaZulu-Natal	uMhlathuze	52802015	Samuel Mandlenkosi	Nsibande	50.68%	ANC (32.03%)
19.	KwaZulu-Natal	Umzimkhulu	54305018	Jabulani Goodwill	Chiya	61.48%	ANC (37.53%)
20.	KwaZulu-Natal	eThekwini (Durban)	59500092	Bongani Emmanuel	Mpungose	41.82%	ANC (37.89%)
21.	Mpumalanga	Dipaleseng	83006004	Mafunda Lendu	Makhubu	68.95%	ANC (23.74%)
22.	Mpumalanga	Bushbuckridge	83205013	Majosi Moses	Chabangu	46.22%	ANC (34.10%)
23.	Mpumalanga	Thembisile Hani (KwaMhlanga)	83105012	Moses Mmoisetsi	Sepogwana	61.66%	ANC (34.17%)
24.	Limpopo	Greater Marble Hall	94701010	Maphake Egnecious	Morwaswi	50.33%	ANC (46.93%)

[141] Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, Notice 317 of 2011, "Publications of the List of Elected Councillors" (2011 Municipal Elections), 26 May 2011, Government Gazette No. 34327, https://www.gov.za/documents/electoral-commission-act-2011-general-elections-municipal-councils-elected-councillors.

25.	Limpopo	Greater Marble Hall	94701014	Mashango Samuel	Chauke	75.16%	ANC (20.43%)
26.	Limpopo	Greater Tubatse	94705020	Willies Pokies	Morena	45.65%	ANC (42.12%)
27.	Limpopo	Greater Tubatse	94705021	Mabatane Norman	Thobejane	68.86%	ANC (27.11%)
28.	Limpopo	Greater Giyani	93301006	Hlupheka Jonathan	Maganye	55.90%	ANC (42.45%)
29.	Limpopo	Greater Giyani	93301016	Gezani Eddy	Sithole	75.76%	ANC (20.99%)
30.	Limpopo	Greater Giyani	93301027	Petro Petrus	Mkhari	60.36%	ANC (36.14%)
31.	Limpopo	Makhando	93404005	Miringo Patrick	Mazibuko	46.32%	ANC (39.50%)
32.	Limpopo	Lepele-Nkumpi	93505029	Sefoloko Walter	Matjuda	52.30%	ANC (45.82%)
33.	Limpopo	Thabazimbi	93601003	Stephen Gabaetsiwi	Lerumo	75.74%	ANC (22.64%)
34.	Limpopo	Bela-Bela	93606008	Petrus Magasa	Aphane	50.55%	ANC (42.69%)
35.	North West	Rustenburg	63703025	Jacob Thabang	Banda	50.46%	ANC (42.77%)
36.	North West	Rustenburg	63703028	Reuben Pako	Molatlhegi	58.16%	ANC (38.25%)
37.	North West	Moses Kotane	63705027	Mosimanegape Thomson	Makgothi	50.20%	ANC (38.56%)
38.	North West	Moses Kotane	63705029	Toto Johannes	Moeng	59.93%	ANC (37.19%)
39.	North West	Greater Taung	63904004	Lekoko Wright	Mahura	71.79%	ANC (24.44%)
40.	Northern Cape	Emthanjeni (De Aar)	30703005	Gertrude	Jonas	66.75%	ANC (29.80%)
41.	Western Cape	Saldanha Bay	10104009	Sipho Jeremiah	Masina	49.05%	ANC (38.38%)
42.	Western Cape	Witzenberg	10202006	Karriem	Adams	33.21%	DA (22.52%); NPP (13.02%);
43.	Western Cape	Breede Valley	10205014	Ceraj	Ismail	51.28%	DA (29.97%)
44.	Western Cape	Cape Agulhas	10303002	Dirk	Jantjies	37.13%	ANC (28.08%); DA (26.02%)
45.	Western Cape	Knysna	10408008	Ntombizanele	Sopeki	33.29%	ANC (30.09%); DA (26.91%)

Table 7: Independent Ward Councillors from the 2006 Local Government Elections[142]

2006 Independent Ward Councillors							
	Province	Municipality	Ward	Name(s)	Surname	% Support	Opposition (% support)
1.	Eastern Cape	Emalahleni (Lady Frere)	21306013	MICHAEL FUMANEKILE	MTHANDEKI	48.82%	ANC (43.67%)
2.	Eastern Cape	Mbizana (Bizana)	21501007	WAWA ABEDNIGO	HLANGABEZO	63.19%	ANC (31.49%)
3.	Eastern Cape	Mbizana (Bizana)	21501015	ADDISON BONILE	MIYA	56.02%	ANC(41.69%)
4.	Eastern Cape	Port St Johns	21504015	MZOLELWA	HILIHILI	53.46%	ANC (41.24%)
5.	Free State	Naledi (Dewetsdorp)	41701002	NOQAWE SARAH	MOROE	47.97%	ANC (36.12%)
6.	Free State	Tswelopele (Hoopstad)	41803007	MOSHE MOSES	SNYER	43.06%	ANC (31.46%)
7.	Free State	Matjhabeng (Welkom)	41804006	SEPHIRI JAN	LIPHOKO	56.17%	ANC (41.28%)
8.	Gauteng	Johannesburg	79400047	MOSWANG JAPHTA	LEKGETHO	49.77%	ANC (43.76%)
9.	KwaZulu-Natal	eThekwini (Durban)	59200068	RAJAHRATHANUM	NAIDOO	29.60%	IFP (24.14%); ANC (17%); DA (13.8%)
10.	KwaZulu-Natal	Abaqulusi (Vryheid)	52603018	SETHEMBISO	MTSHALI	48.77%	IFP (26.73%)
11.	Mpumalanga	Bushbuckridge	83205020	PETRUS ALBERT	KHOZA	64.37%	ANC (29.83%)
12.	Mpumalanga	Bushbuckridge	83205024	MICHAEL PHILI	SHILANE	57.36%	ANC (31.15%)
13.	Limpopo	Makhuduthamaga (Ngwaritsi)	90302001	ABEL MATSUTLE	MATULUDI	55.21%	ANC (41.42%)
14.	Limpopo	Makhuduthamaga (Ngwaritsi)	90302006	NTSEKWANE ABEL	CHOMA	58.74%	ANC (38.44%)
15.	Limpopo	Greater Giyani	93301021	RISIMATI ROBERT	MABUNDZA	58.27%	ANC(39.24%)
16.	Limpopo	Greater Tzaneen	93303025	MAKHUSHANA BROWN	MASHELE	52.87%	ANC (43.7%)
17.	Limpopo	Polokwane (Pietersburg)	93504030	LESETJA SAMUEL	MAMABOLO	45.45%	ANC (44.85%)
18.	Limpopo	Thabazimbi	93601005	SEBAKISHE ISAAC	MANALA	38.20%	ANC (37.81%)
19.	Limpopo	Thabazimbi	93601009	MAMOKALA	PILANE	52.22%	ANC (45.33%)
20.	Limpopo	Thabazimbi	93601010	RAMEHLARE ADOLF	RAMOGALE	61.20%	ANC (35.44%)
21.	Mpumalanga	Thembisile (KwaMhlanga)	83105020	ROBERT MOSHE	MOEKWA	65.44%	ANC (38.69%)
22.	Mpumalanga	Thembisile (KwaMhlanga)	83105023	MOSES MMOISETSI	SEPOGWANA	54%	ANC (39.46%)
23.	Mpumalanga	Dr JS Moroka (Mdutjana)	83106010	MBONAKULU JOHANNES	MASOMBUKA	52.54%	ANC (41.23%)
24.	North West	Moretele (Temba)	63701015	MPOKI RICHARD	SOOMO	77.61%	ANC (19.27%)
25.	North West	Moses Kotane (Mogwase)	63705012	BENKI VALERY	MOATSHE	51.68%	ANC (44.32%)

[142] Statistics received from correspondence with the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa.

26.	North West	Moses Kotane (Mogwase)	63705029	TOTO JOHANNES	MOENG	59.30%	ANC (37%)
27.	North West	Mafikeng	63803026	BARENG CLARENCE	JABANA	68.54%	ANC (25.63%)
28.	North West	Ditsobotla (Lichtenburg)	63804012	SIGCAU STANNY	MNYAKAMA	48.33%	ANC(46.80%)
29.	North West	Mamusa (Schweizer-Reneke)	63903001	ARONE	MOTSWANA	47.15%	ANC (39.94%)
30.	North West	Greater Taung (Reivilo)	63904012	MPHO EDWARD	SKWEIT	63.67%	ANC (26.04%)
31.	Northern Cape	Sol Plaatjie (Kimberley)	30901022	JAHN	PIETERSEN	51.77%	ANC (27.02%)
32.	Western Cape	Saldanha Bay	10104001	MZWANDILE SIMON	BIKO	38.15%	ANC (30.17%)
33.	Western Cape	Saldanha Bay	10104004	JOHANNES JACOBUS	SWARTZ	40.71%	ANC (32.21%)
34.	Western Cape	Breede Valley (Worcester)	10205001	JOSEPH JOHANNES	JANUARIE	38%	ANC (36%); DA (20.37%)

Table 8: Independent Ward Councillors from the 2000 Local Government Elections[143]

2000 Independent Ward Councillors							
	Province	Municipality	Ward	Name(s)	Surname	% Support	Opposition (% support)
1.	Eastern Cape	Elundini (Mount Fletcher)	21401003	MICHAEL CINGANI	SAWULA	62.8%	Independent (23.13%)
2.	Eastern Cape	Port St Johns	21504005	JOSEPH THANDABANTU	QIKANI	39.90%	ANC (31.11%); UDM (28.97%)
3.	Gauteng	Midvaal (Meyerton)	74202006	SELLO DAVID	NYAKU	45.11%	ANC (23.87%); DA (20.58%)
4.	Gauteng	Pretoria (Tshwane)	76000010	SIMON	SEBULELA	58.10%	ANC (40.03%)
5.	KwaZulu-Natal	Durban	59200090	SUNDRAPRAKSHEN	NAIDOO	29.16%	Independent (25.60%); ANC (13.44%)
6.	KwaZulu-Natal	Ulundi	52606016	SINDISIWE	MLAMBO/Khumalo	66.87%	IFP (28.43%)
7.	KwaZulu-Natal	Nkandla	52806014	BONGANI EPHRAIM	MTSHALI	55.55%	IFP (44.44%)
8.	KwaZulu-Natal	Stanger	52902013	RABIWATH	SINGH	43.03%	ANC (30.03%)
9.	Mpumalanga	Greater Groblersdal	88305011	LESWENI JOSIA	MTSHWENI	72.07%	ANC (25.34%)
10.	Mpumalanga	Thembisile (KwaMhlanga)	83105016	MKHUZELWA JOHANNES	MAHLANGU	48.16%	ANC (46.15%)
11.	North West	Mankwe-Madikwe (Mogwase)	63705012	BOSMAN NOAH	RAMOKOKA	51.63%	ANC (41.97%)
12.	North West	Klerksdorp	64003018	GOBI HENRY	MOLEME	50.23%	ANC (46.38%)
13.	Limpopo	Musina (Messina)	93401005	CHRISTOFFEL BERNARDUS	SWANEPOEL	65.87%	ANC (34.13%)
14.	Limpopo	Louis Trichardt	93404021	SIPHO	MASUKA	50.11%	ANC (46.75%)
15.	Limpopo	Polokwane (Pietersburg)	93504033	MOHURE CHRISTOPHER	MACHETE	53.51%	ANC (45%)
16.	Western Cape	Saldanha Bay	10104001	THEMBEKILE RICHARD	MAJOLA	45.3%	ANC (33.23%)
17.	Western Cape	Knysna	10408006	BONILE KENNETH	JOYI	50.70%	ANC (38.34%)

[143] Statistics received from correspondence with the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa.

Table 9: Re-elected Independent Candidates

	NAME OF INDEPENDENT	2000	2006	2011	2016	2021
1	Joseph Thandabantu Qikani	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A	Democratic Alliance	N/A
2	Rabiwath Singh	Independent Candidate	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	N/A
3	Sello David Nyaku	Independent Candidate	N/A	N/A	Democratic Alliance	N/A
4	Sipho Masuka	Independent Candidate	Independent Democrats	N/A	N/A	African National Congress
5	Arone Motswana	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	African National Congress	N/A
6	Bareng Clarence Jabana	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	N/A	N/A	N/A
7	Jahn Pietersen	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	Congress of the People	N/A	African National Congress
8	Joseph Johannes Januarie	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A	N/A
9	Lesetja Samuel Mamabolo	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Makhushana Brown Mashele	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	Democratic Alliance	N/A
11	Mbonakulu Johannes Masombuka	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A	N/A
12	Michael Fumanekile Mthandeki	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	Democratic Alliance	Democratic Alliance
13	Michael Phili Shilane	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	African National Congress	N/A
14	Moses Mmoisetsi Sepogwana	N/A	Independent Candidate	Independent Candidate	N/A	Independent Candidate
15	Moshe Moses Snyer	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	Congress of the People	Democratic Alliance	Democratic Alliance
16	Petrus Albert Khoza	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	N/A	N/A	N/A
17	Ramehlare Adolf Ramogale	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	N/A	African National Congress	N/A
18	Sephiri Jan Liphoko	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	African National Congress	N/A
19	Sigcau Stanny Mnyakama	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A	N/A
20	Sthembiso Martin Edgar Mtshali	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	Inkatha Freedom Party	N/A
21	Toto Johannes Moeng	N/A	Independent Candidate	Independent Candidate	N/A	Independent for Communities
22	Wawa Abedingo Hlangabezo	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A	N/A
23	Dirk Janties	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate	Dienslewerings Party	Dienslewerings Party
24	Henry Zolani Cube	African National Congress	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	United Democratic Movement	N/A
25	Ismail Ceraj	Democratic Alliance	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	Bredevallei Onafhanklik	Breedavallei Onafhankuk
26	Karriem Adams	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	Democratic Alliance	Democratic Alliance
27	Nobahle Gogela	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	African National Congress

28	Reuben Pako Molatlhegi	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	Economic Freedom Fighters	Economic Freedom Fighters
29	Petrus Magasa Aphane	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A
30	Mafunda Lendu Makhubu	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A
31	Mantimfana Joe Savu	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	N/A
32	Mashango Samuel Chauke	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	N/A
33	Mcembelele Jeffrey Msakeni	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	Independent Candidate
34	Miringo Patrick Mazibuko	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate	Democratic Alliance	N/A
35	Mthuthuzeli Veni	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A
36	Petros Petrus Mkhari	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	Forum 4 Service Delivery
37	Phindile Decius Basholo	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	African National Congress	N/A
38	Stephen Gabaetsiwi Lerumo	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A	African National Congress
39	Tembinkosi Tshika	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	Independent Candidate	N/A
40	Commie Melisizwe Ntleko	N/A	N/A	Independent Alliance	Independent Candidate	Independent Alliance
41	Fonokwakhe France Simelane	N/A	N/A	Inkatha Freedom Party	Independent Candidate	N/A
42	Krisjan James Arens	N/A	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A
43	Michael Mbusiso Madlala	N/A	N/A	Independent Alliance	Independent Candidate	Independent Alliance
44	Petros Hella Nxumalo	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	African National Congress
45	Mkhuseli Sakhiwo Mathe	N/A	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A
46	Nokanyo Magatya	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	N/A
47	Nicholas Mphikiseni	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	N/A
48	Sivuyile Sydney Sopangisa	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	African National Congress
49	Sello Ernest Tshabangu	African National Congress	African National Congress (DC 40%)	African Democratic Change	Independent Candidate	African Democratic Change
50	Sekgorutlha Jonas Ratladi	African National Congress	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate	N/A
51	Velile Waxa	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	N/A
52	Zolani Mzwanele Nzuzo	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate	African National Congress
53	Bukelani Ephraim Zuma	Inkatha Freedom Party	Inkatha Freedom Party	N/A	Inkatha Freedom Party	Independent Candidate
54	Moshohli Eric Ralepelle	N/A	Alliance for Democracy & Prosperity	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate
55	Mphindiseni Mthandeni Simon Myeza	N/A	N/A	Inkatha Freedom Party	Inkatha Freedom Party	Independent Candidate
56	Mzawugatyiswa Stanford Ngubo	N/A	African National Congress	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate
57	Nkanukeni Munyai	N/A	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	Independent Candidate

58	Paul Vries	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate
59	Taola Ismas Shai	N/A	N/A	N/A	Civic Warriors of Maruleng	Independent Candidate
60	Thomas Ramaitsane Mpye	African National Congress	African National Congress	N/A	N/A	Independent Candidate
61	Zamuxolo Emmanuel Mfulana	N/A	N/A	African National Congress	N/A	Independent Candidate