

Survey of voters and non-voters in the 2021 Local Government Elections: Methodological Brief

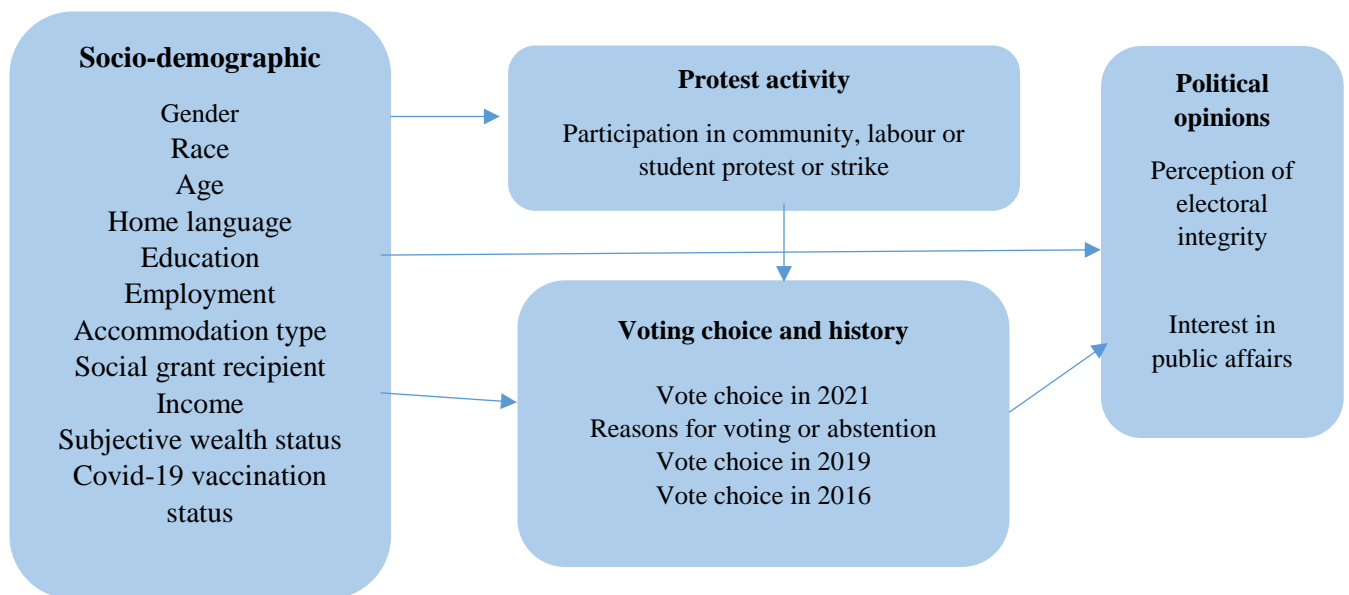
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Introduction

This methodological brief details the questionnaire design, sample design and weighting of the Centre for Social Change (CSC) survey of voters and non-voters in the 2021 Local Government Elections (LGE). The 2021 survey built upon previous exit polls that the CSC has conducted during previous elections from 2014 onwards.¹ Due to the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, we had to adapt our methodology to move away from in-person surveying to computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) This pivot brought considerable improvements as it allowed us both to build representative samples of the five municipalities in question and also enabled us to survey non-voters. The survey was fielded between 2 November 2021 and 16 November 2021.

Questionnaire design

Figure 1. Conceptual map of the CSC 2021 LGE survey



The questionnaire design was adapted from the previous surveys that had been fielded in the CSC exit polls. Conceptually, the survey questionnaire has been designed to examine the themes and relationships illustrated in the conceptual diagram below. Of particular interest to the CSC has been the relationship between voting and protest – the so-called ‘ballot and the brick’ thesis – and questions about protest history were included.² The final survey included 23 questions: 12

questions on socio-demographic variables; three questions on protest history; five on voting and two questions on political opinions.

Sample design

Table 1: Planned and achieved sample size by municipality, race and age

Municipality	Planned		Achieved	
	Total	Perc	Total	Perc
City of Cape Town	953	24	947	24
City of Johannesburg	1,081	28	1,104	28
City of Tshwane	740	19	741	19
Nelson Mandela Bay	339	9	325	8
eThekwini	787	20	788	20
	3900	100	3905	100

Race	Planned		Achieved	
	Total	Perc	Total	Perc
Black	2,120	54	2,253	58
Coloured	648	17	545	14
Indian	407	10	354	9
White	725	19	753	19
	3900	100	3905	100

Age	Planned		Achieved	
	Total	Perc	Total	Perc
Age18_34	1,415	36	1,389	36
Age35_49	1,174	30	1,227	31
Age50_64	804	21	873	22
Age65Over	507	13	416	11
	3900	100	3905	100

Ask Afrika were contracted by the CSC to undertake the research and were asked to design a sample that would be representative of five metropolitan municipalities: eThekwini, the City of Cape Town, the City of Johannesburg, the City of Tshwane, and Nelson Mandela Bay. As this was a local government election, we chose not to draw a nationally representative sample as there was a strong likelihood that voting decisions were more likely to be influenced by a range of local factors. Therefore the decision was made to restrict the focus to five metropolitan municipalities. We could not sample all of the metropolitan municipalities, due to resource constraints. The

municipalities selected were the ones that would have continuity with our past work and the ones that we anticipated would yield interesting insights into voting behaviour.

The sampling frame was designed by Ask Afrika and Dr Ariane Neethling in order to ensure that the data is representative of the registered voting age population and can thus be weighted. A stratified random sampling approach was employed and the strata were formed based on socioeconomic status, race, gender and age. The desired sample size was 3,900 people. In addition to drawing the sample for the five municipalities, within the City of Johannesburg sample we also asked Ask Afrika to sample two wards that have historically featured in our CSC exit polls. This enabled us, despite the conditions of the pandemic, to retain our longitudinal analysis of voting patterns within these wards. Table 1 shows the planned sample size by race, gender and age and the realised sample size. The final sample size was 3,905.

Weighting

The weights were calculated based on the registered voters. After weighting, the metros targeted represented the below figures:

Metro	Ward	Weighted Total
City of Cape Town		1 972 828
City of Johannesburg (excl. 2 Wards)		2 189 509
• 79800076		13 812
• 79800075		15 737
City of Johannesburg total		2 219 058
City of Tshwane		1 526 155
eThekweni		1 915 319
Nelson Mandela Bay		583 399

In terms of the two wards that fall within the City of Johannesburg, in the weighting design applied a set of weights specifically to these two wards, ensuring that the overall CoJ registered voter population counts up to the numbers published by the IEC (2 219 058). If these two wards are not included, the weighting for the COJ metro will count up to 2 189 509, which is not the official published number for this metro. However, these two wards can be used in isolation, as Ask Afrika has ensured in the weighting that their registered voter population counts up to the numbers published by the IEC.

¹ See Paret, M. 2016. 'Contested ANC Hegemony in the Urban Townships: Evidence from the 2014 South African Election', *African Affairs* 115 (460): 419-442; Runciman, Carin. 2016. 'The "Ballot and the Brick": Protest, Voting and Non-Voting in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 34 (4): 419-436.; Ryabchuk, A. 2017. 'Voter abstention in South African 2014 elections: beyond the apathy argument', *Transformation*, 92: 37-59; Paret, M. 2018. 'Beyond post-apartheid politics? Cleavages, protest and elections in South Africa', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 56 (3): 471-496; Paret, M and Runciman, C. 2019. *Who Votes? Preliminary Findings From An Exit Survey of Voters In The 2019 National Elections*. Johannesburg: Centre for Social Change.

² See Runciman, C. 2016. 'The "Ballot and the Brick": Protest, Voting And Non-Voting In Post-Apartheid South Africa' *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 34(4): 419-436; Runciman, C., Bekker, M. and Maggott, T. 2019. Voting Preferences Of Protesters And Non-Protestors In The South African Elections (2014 – 2019): Revisiting the 'Ballot And The Brick'. *Politikon* 46(4): 390-410.