

Press Release



**South African
Institute of
Race Relations**

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By-elections show ANC losing support

The last few years have seen the African National Congress (ANC) lose 38 wards in local government by-elections, while the Democratic Alliance (DA) gained 24, according to the latest *South Africa Survey*, published this week by the South African Institute of Race Relations in Johannesburg.

The Institute analysed data on by-elections from the Independent Electoral Commission.

Between the last local government elections in 2006, and up until August 2010, the ANC managed to hold 306 ward seats, gain 17, and lose 55, giving it an overall loss of 38 seats.

By contrast, the DA retained 61 seats, gained 29, and lost only five, resulting in an overall gain of 24 seats.

Independents were one of the other big winners. Over the period reviewed independents held on to two seats, gained 18, and lost three, a net gain of 15. A number of independents would have been members of the Congress of the People (Cope), who were running prior to the official formation of the party. Cope itself managed to win four ward seats.

The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) lost ten ward seats over the period. It held 47 seats, but lost 15, and gained five, a net loss of 10.

According to a researcher at the Institute, Marius Roodt, the analysis of the by-elections results showed that the ANC was likely to lose support in the local government elections scheduled for 2011. 'The ANC retained the majority of the seats that it held before, but the loss of 55 seats is significant,' Roodt said. 'Using these figures as a basis for analysis it is likely that the DA will retain control of Cape Town. Of the other five metropolitan municipalities the ANC is most vulnerable in Nelson Mandela Bay, which includes Port Elizabeth. It could also lose significant support in Johannesburg, and Tshwane, of which Pretoria is part,' he added. However, the ANC would still retain control of the overwhelming majority of municipalities in the country, he said.

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