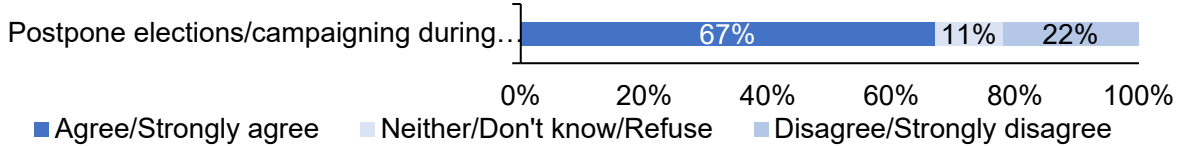




Figure 1: Limiting democratic rights during pandemic - 2021

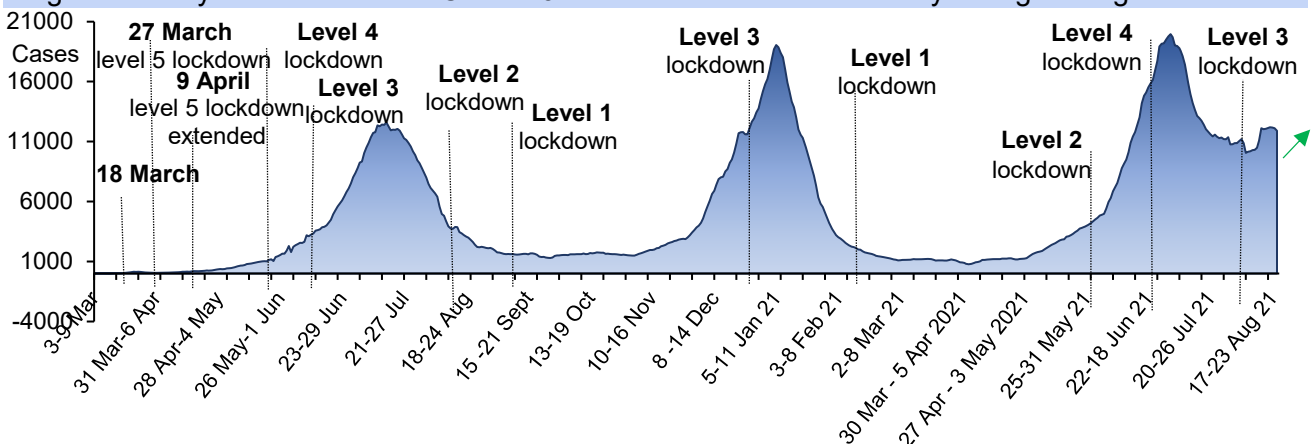


Source: Afrobarometer

Respondents were asked: When the country is facing a public health emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic, do you agree or disagree that it is justified for the government to temporarily limit democracy or democratic freedoms by ...: Postponing elections or limiting political campaigning?

- The municipal elections are potentially set for 27th October this year, already causing a shift in the MTBPS date traditionally at that time to early November instead. With the recent violent unrest in July, the country has been through a turbulent period, coming after the harsh year and a half of COVID-19, and SA's current third wave is showing a worrying, renewed increase.
- Indeed, while the fourth wave of COVID-19 infections in SA was expected to start as early as October this year, the recent sharp about turn in the previous decline in COVID-19 infections is very worrying, and with only 10million vaccines administered, there is a risk that holding the municipal election in October could contribute to higher infections and so deaths, and the IEC has sought to delay elections until February.
- A decision is expected by 31st August, and to date SA has only fully vaccinated 11.4% of its population. July's riots were followed by a lift in infections in KZN in particular, and there is no certainty that September will see a collapse in infections back down to around an average of 1 500 a day, meaning that October could start off on a relatively high base and vaccinations will unlikely be near the 30% mark even.
- Surveys have shown willingness to delay elections and electioneering in the pandemic, even amongst most members of political parties, despite what the parties' leadership themselves may have indicated. Afrobarometer shows a high two thirds of respondents feel elections should be delayed in the pandemic, with the survey taking place May to June (a 2.5% margin of error is noted).
- However, trust in political parties and in institutions has diminished since the 2000s of the Mbeki government of strong delivery, when unemployment fell to 21%, and Afrobarometer further finds that 67% would be willing to forego elections if a non-elected government could provide substantially better security and services, including housing and jobs. Such has been the result of state capture and corruption.

Figure 2: Daily case increase in Covid-19 cases in South Africa – 7 day rolling average



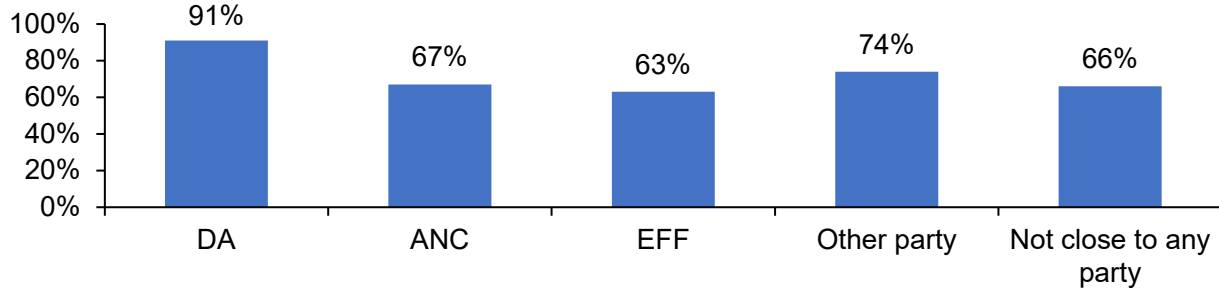
Source: National Department of Health



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Figure 3: Postpone elections or limit campaigning by political party preference - 2021



Source: Afrobarometer

Respondents were asked: When the country is facing a public health emergency like the COVID-19 pandemic, do you agree or disagree that it is justified for the government to temporarily limit democracy or democratic freedoms by taking the following measures: Postponing elections or limiting political campaigning? (% who "agree" or "strongly agree") Do you feel close to any particular political party? Which party is that?

- As the municipal elections approach, either in October or potentially February next year, more surveys will come in, but already the ANC had been showing some waning support, while smaller parties had seen some gains. But overall voter turnout has not been high. The dominance of the ANC and rise of the EFF over the past decade has seen a definite increased move towards populist policies, while the perceived outlook for the economy has deteriorated in many surveys over the 2010s decade.
- This comes though even under Ramaphosa's presidency with the recent announcement of a state pension fund and risk to private pensions, and pensions themselves, against a decade of looting of state funds and hollowing out of state institutions. This has driven the decline in various state institutions.

Figure 4: Trust in various institutions - 2021



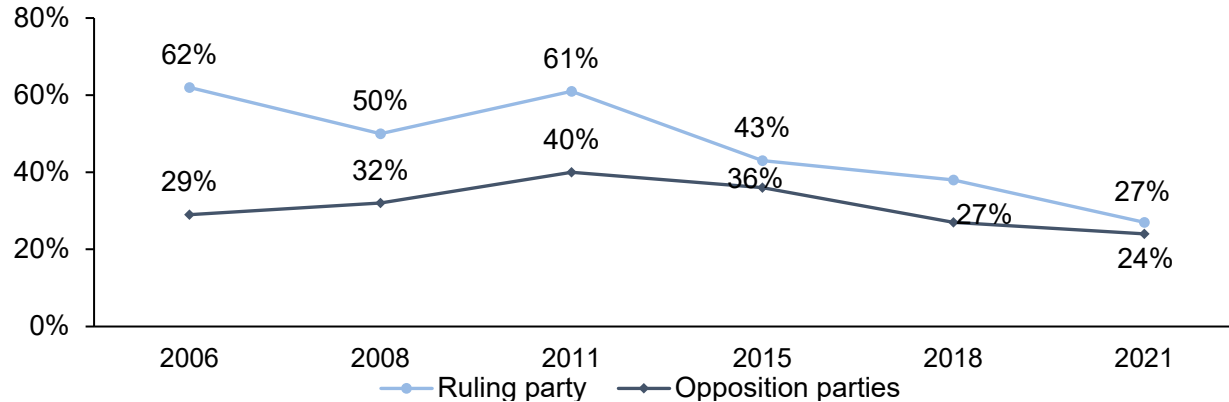
Source: Afrobarometer



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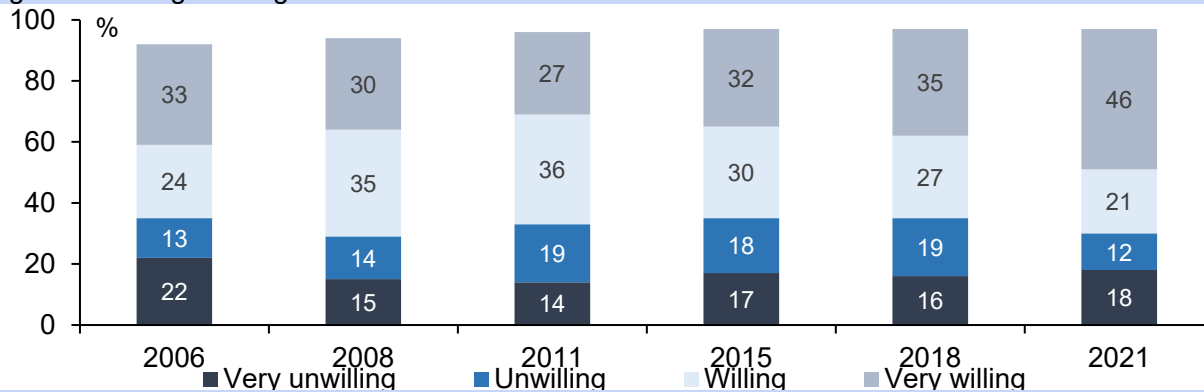
Figure 5: Trust in political parties – South Africa, 2006-2021



Source: Afrobarometer

- The recent unrest has shown less immediate impact on many economic indicators than may have been expected in July, with the violent riots occurring halfway through the month, but ignores the negative impact on fixed investment, investor sentiment and so the impetus for future growth. Falling trust in political parties and various state institutions indeed evidences the long-term trend in waning business confidence over the 2010s, and so the weakening growth of private sector investment, although the private sector still invests more than both government and the parastatals in infrastructure.
- Trust in parliament in particular has fallen over 50% in 2006 to under 30% in 2021, clearly showing that government policies, particularly amongst the young, are not aligned to that of many South Africans. The trust deficit is spread across both the rural and urban areas, and this is worrying as it also indicates the space for further social unrest.
- The riots also follow on from the arrest of ex-President Zuma, and are indicative of changes in the ANC as the Zuma/RET faction sees waning power. However, the high poverty and growing unemployment in SA speaks urgently to the need for structural reforms in SA which will have the result of boosting economic growth rapidly and not have the side effects of shutting down existing production, businesses and employment, while dramatically improved civil servant productivity and delivery of necessary services is critical, which includes getting councils and other government departments up to full operation.

Figure 6: Willing to forego elections - 2021

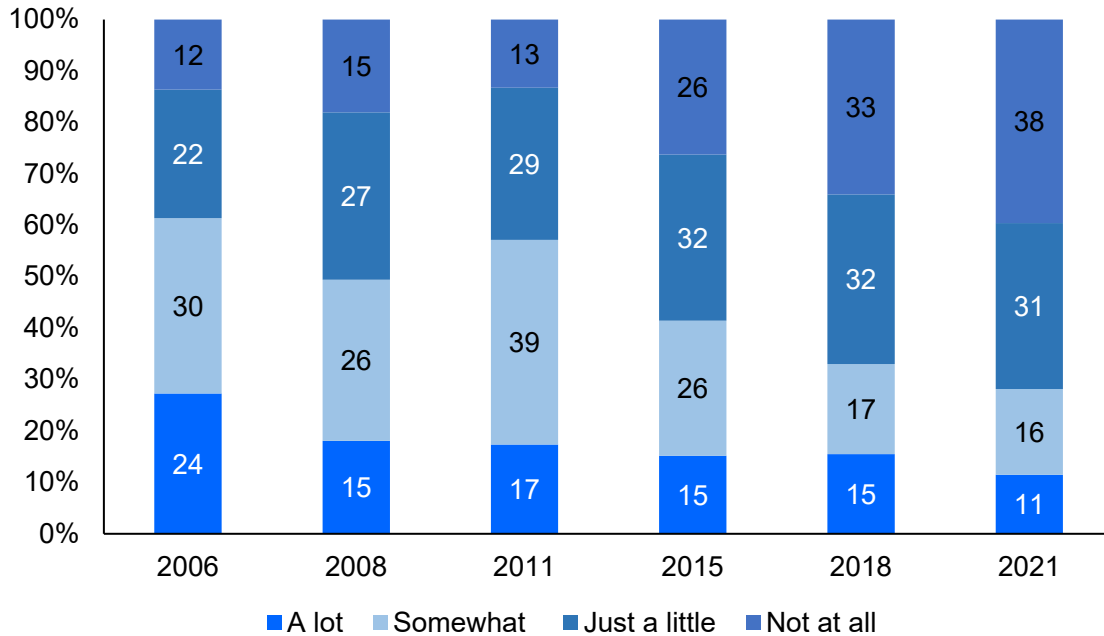


Source: Afrobarometer

Respondents were asked: If a non-elected government or leader could impose law and order, and deliver houses and jobs, how willing or unwilling would you be to give up regular elections and live under such a government?



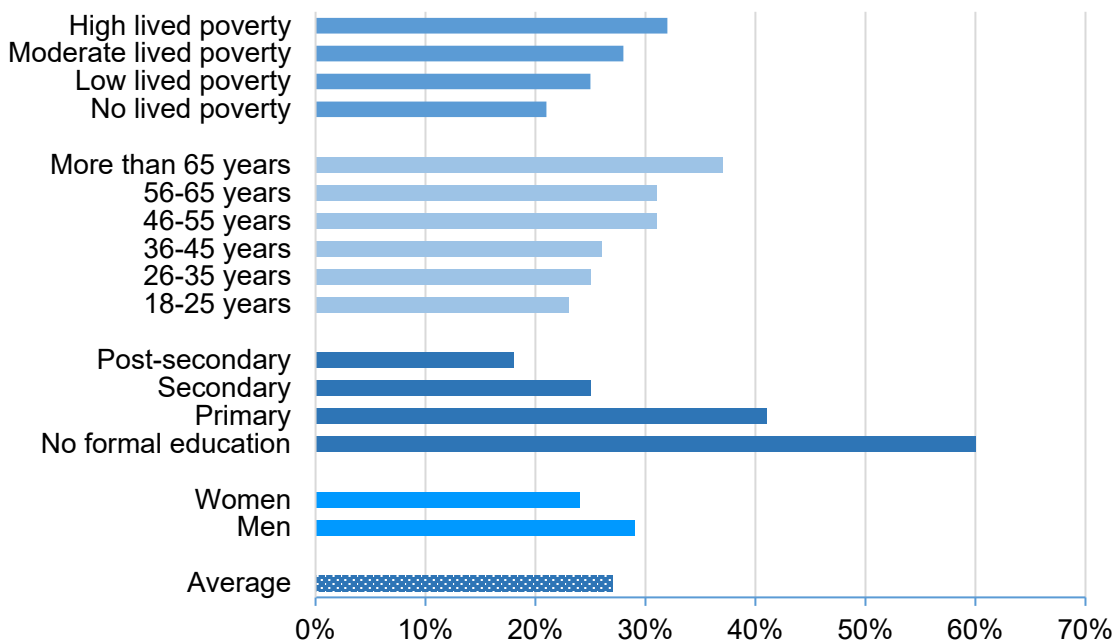
Figure 7: Trust in Parliament – 2006-21



Source: Afrobarometer

Respondents were asked: How much do you trust Parliament, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?

Figure 8: Trust in the ruling party by socio-demographic group - 2021



Source: Afrobarometer

Respondents were asked: How much do you trust the ruling party, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? (% who say "somewhat" or "a lot")

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