Extreme Inequality and the Structure of Political Cleavages in South Africa, 1994-2019

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Abstract

This paper draws on political attitudes surveys conducted at the time of general elections to study the interplay of social inequalities, changing social structures, and racial cleavages in South Africa since 1994. I analyze the link between voting behaviors and the main socioeconomic characteristics of voters, in particular income, education level, wealth, race, and their interactions. I document extreme socioeconomic political divides, which are strongly, though not entirely explained by South Africa's exceptional racial inequalities. The gradual decline of the dominant African National Congress since 1994 has been driven by the shift of the new Black middle class towards opposition parties. Growing abstention among the youth and the lower-educated has further eroded support for the ANC. I also put South Africa's cleavage politics in comparative perspective, focusing on how the transformation of dominant-party systems in new democracies plays a role in crystallizing new sociopolitical identities.

Introduction

A recent literature has used post-electoral surveys to study how the changing structure of political cleavages relates to income and wealth inequalities, and how these inequalities are represented by party systems in the long run (Piketty 2018; Berman 2018; Gethin, Martínez-Toledano and Piketty 2018). One of the objectives of these studies has been to construct comparable, historical measures of the structure of the vote by income, wealth, and other sociodemographic characteristics of voters. Such measures are arguably useful for scholars interested in the processes underlying the politicization of class divides and the political economy of inequality and redistribution in comparative perspective.

Following this new body of evidence, this paper draws on political attitudes surveys to study the changing relationships between party support, economic inequality, ethnicity, and race in democratic South Africa. The legacy of the apartheid regime has left a marking imprint on social identities, party politics, and access to economic opportunities. It has crystallized South Africa's party system on racial divides, opposing the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to the mainly White-based Democratic Alliance (DA) until today. Behind the stability of ANC dominance, however, long-run transformations of socio-political structures have opened new potentials for voter realignments. Rising inequalities in a stagnating economy have come with the emergence of a new Black middle class, yet leaving a large share of the population in a state of mass unemployment and poverty. Intra-party factionalism and government corruption have posed a threat to the ANC, with difficulties at containing latent ethnic, regional, and ideological tensions.

This paper attempts to study these new intersections by combining and harmonizing survey data on electoral behaviors since the first national election of 1994. What are the social and ideological coalitions underlying the stability but also the potential decline in ANC strength? How can these changing coalitions help us understand the persistence of extreme inequalities? And what can configurations of ethnicity, class, and political competition tell us about the

future of the South African party system? The study of political cleavages in South Africa provides unique insights into the relationships between democratization, colonial legacies, and deep inherited racial divides. It is to be compared to other ethnic-based one-party dominant systems, such as Malaysia or Indonesia (Gethin and Jenmana, forthcoming), but also to the Indian and Japanese cases of broad-based dominant parties (Banerjee, Gethin and Piketty 2018; Gethin forthcoming). All dominant parties have in common the need to constantly adapt to changing social structures by re-inventing new cross-class coalitions, with the risk of breaking apart and, in some cases, of creating new unsustainable tensions. Putting South Africa in comparative perspective can therefore be particularly useful to apprehend the future of the ANC and of democracy as a whole.

From Apartheid to Democracy

South Africa's contemporary party system cannot be understood without briefly contextualizing it in the long run of history.[2] The emergence of a modern South African state goes back to the turn of the twentieth century. Following the defeat of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State in the Second Boer War (1899-1902), the territory was united under British rule, with the Union of South Africa officially bringing together the Cape Colony, the Natal Colony, the Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony in 1910. South African White settlers were at the time divided into two main groups: Afrikaners, who were mostly descendants of Dutch and French immigrants of the 18th and 19th century, and the English-speaking communities who came from more recent waves of immigration following the colonization of Southern Africa by the British throughout the nineteenth century.

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[2] For the discussion presented in this section, see for instance Lieberman (2003); Marais (2011); Fauvelle-Aymar (2016). An interesting discussion of the link between racial segregation, inequality, and growth in South Africa throughout the twentieth century can be found in Feinstein (2005).

The unification of South Africa announced the beginning of a process of dispossessing Africans from civil rights, access to land, and political participation. At the same time, the new Union of South Africa implied the formation of a modern state exclusively restricted to the White population. To be sure, this outcome was not the result of a deterministic process. In the Cape, the Cape Qualified Franchise had since 1853 allowed all male citizens earning more than £25 to vote or to be elected in parliament, regardless of race. The participation of Blacks and Coloureds to the war on the side of the British had given hopes of a new order with enhanced political rights. The 1902 British-Afrikaner Treaty of Vereeniging yet marked a decisive moment towards a racial definition of citizenship by promoting a vision of White national unity. This unity was seen by legislators and political leaders as crucial to avoiding new armed conflicts between the Afrikaners and the British. It would also be soon envisioned as a solution to growing class cleavages within the White community (Lieberman 2003). Such cross-class alliances were to succeed in 1924, when the National Party founded by Afrikaner nationalists came to power in coalition with the Labour Party, who represented White working class interests and advocated for protective measures against competition from Black labor.

In 1913, the Natives Land Act delineated the land available for Black occupancy to 7 percent of the national territory. The 1927 Immorality Act made it illegal to have sexual intercourse across the color line. The Cape Qualified Franchise would be progressively amended in the 1930s as well, until all Black voters were finally excluded from political representation in 1960. The apartheid regime was the culmination of these policies aiming at restricting the movements of the Black population, as well as enforcing strict frontiers between the races. From 1948 onwards, following the election of the National Party, successive administrations extended the existing system through a series of legislative measures, such as the 1970 Homeland Citizens Act which complemented the Native Land Act of 1913 by creating "homelands" or "reserves" towards which thousands of Africans would be forcibly moved. It

would take years of internal resistance, growing international pressures, and eventually the end of the Cold War to bring about the end of racial segregation and democratization in 1994.

Political opposition to White domination had a long history. The African National Congress originated from the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) founded in 1912 by a small group of moderate middle-class Africans aiming at bringing together the African population. After years of low activity, it would only become a major organization in the 1950s and 1960s, organizing passive resistance acts in the spirit of Gandhi's Indian liberation movement. Disagreements within the ANC in the 1950s between moderate and Africanist views of resistance led to the creation of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), which advocated for a specifically African vision of the new nation, as compared to the ANC which sought to promote a South Africa for all the races. Mangosuthu Buthelezi, a former ANC Youth League member, would also open new space for internal divisions based on ethnicity by creating the Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement, which became the Inkatha Freedom Party in 1994, an organization exclusively based in KwaZulu-Natal and supported by traditional Zulu chiefs. Internal divisions within the PAC and the limited scope of the IFP however prevented these two organizations from becoming serious contenders to the domination of the opposition movement guided by the African National Congress. Just like the Indian National Congress had become the single dominant candidate for ruling independent India, the ANC of Nelson Mandela was by the mid-1990s the only serious organization with sufficient mass support to bring about the transition from apartheid to a new political regime.

South Africa's Party System since Democratization

The general elections of 1994 were the first multi-racial democratic elections in South Africa's history. The ANC won the election by a landslide, receiving 63 percent of popular votes as compared to 28 percent for the National Party of F. W. de Klerk. Since then, the ANC has won every general election by a substantial margin (see Figure 1). The share of voters supporting the ANC grew under the years of Thabo Mbeki, reaching 70 percent in

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2004. It has followed a declining trend since then, moving back to just above 60 percent for the second term of Jacob Zuma in 2014, and reaching a historically low level of 57.5 percent in 2019. While the last three elections have therefore shown slow signs of erosion in support for the government, the ANC remains by far the dominant party today. Its hegemony draws in part on its Tripartite Alliance with the powerful Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), which have not contested any democratic election separately from the ANC since democratization.

Opposition to the ANC since 1994 has remained weak and diverse. The main serious contenders to the ruling party have been parties bringing together the majority of White South Africans. These have included the National Party (NP) and its successor the New National Party (NNP), who represented the legacy of apartheid governments and lost significance at the end of the 1990s. They were replaced by the newly created Democratic Alliance (DA) in 2003, resulting from a merger between the more liberal Democratic Party and the NNP.[3] The DA has since then been the main opposition to the ANC in parliament and in local elections, especially in the Western and Eastern Cape where it has successfully conquered a number of localities. Ideologically, the DA can generally be considered as centrist, promoting a mixed economy combining increased social spending, fiscal sustainability and deregulation of the labor market. Together, the group of parties consisting in the NP, the NNP, and the DA have received between 15 percent and 20 percent of votes since 1994.

Other opposition parties have mainly consisted in regional parties or in splits from the ANC. In 1994, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) of Mangosuthu Buthelezi received 10.5 percent of popular votes, campaigning on a platform of Zulu localism and greater autonomy for

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[3] The merger between the NNP and the DP was aborted, but a number of members of the NNP remained in the organization, as did the new name of the party.

traditional African communities. It has received decreasing support in general elections since then, reaching only 3.3 percent of ballots in 2019. The Congress of the People (COPE) was founded following internal divisions between the factions of Jacob Zuma and those of Thabo Mbeki at the 52nd ANC national conference held at Polokwane in 2007. The conference revealed two forms of divisions within the African National Congress: a difference in economic policies, Zuma being generally more left-wing than Mbeki, and a difference in ethnic backgrounds which manifested latent divides between Xhosa-speaking (following Mbeki) and Zulu-speaking (following Zuma) constituencies. The conference led to the victory of Zuma and eventually to his election as president of South Africa. COPE ran against the ANC in 2009 but received only 7.4 percent of votes, and has become insignificant since then, joining the Democratic Alliance in a number of local elections.

The 2019 election was another turning point in South Africa's electoral history. Following allegations of corruption linking Zuma and his administration to the wealthy Gupta family, opposition parties and mass protests joined in accusing the government of "State capture". Dissension grew within the ANC too, and Zuma narrowly survived the eighth motion of no confidence brought against him in his presidency in August 2017. The 54th national conference of the African National Congress held in December 2017 finally put an end to Zuma's leadership of the ANC: Cyril Ramaphosa was elected the party's presidential candidate against Jacob Zuma's wife Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, with 52% of votes.

The Zuma crisis eroded popular support for the ANC and played a key role in the strengthening of a new far-left opposition to the ANC, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). The EFF was founded by the former African National Congress Youth League President Julius Malema, who was expelled from the ANC in 2013. It claims to follow Marxism-Leninism and proposes policies such as free healthcare, nationalization of key industries, expropriation of land and large increases in the minimum wage. Its ideology includes both radical left economic policies as well as Pan-Africanist elements aiming at promoting the Black majority. According to available evidence, its supporters are predominantly Black,

male, young, and urban.[4] The EFF reached a vote share of 6.3 percent in the 2014 general elections and grew to 10.8 percent in 2019, making in the third most important party in parliament after the Democratic Alliance at the time of writing.

Race and Inequality: Continuity and Change

The ruling African National Congress South Africa's has therefore faced two types of challenges in recent years: a traditional opposition inherited from the democratic transition in the form of the Democratic Alliance, and new forms of opposition coming from the right (COPE) or the left (EFF) of the political spectrum. Before pushing further the analysis, it is worth putting these changes into historical perspective by looking at the co-evolutions of race, inequality, and class since the end of apartheid.

South Africa has always been one of the most unequal countries in the world. According to estimates from Facundo Alvaredo and Anthony Atkinson, the top 1 percent of the population received 22 percent of the national income is 1914 (Alvaredo and Atkinson 2010). These inequalities at the top end of the distribution came with extreme income gaps between racial groups. At about the same period, in 1917, Africans' average incomes were estimated to be about ten times lower than that of Whites, while the average incomes of Coloureds and Asians reached some 22 percent of White living standards. This gap remained approximately constant over most of the twentieth century until the transition to democracy (Leibbrandt et al. 2010). In particular, non-Whites were systematically excluded from upper layers of society until the very end of the apartheid regime: between 1960 and the mid-1980s, the share of

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[4] See Citizen Surveys, "Citizen Surveys: How Many White EFF Supporters Exist, and 11 Other Stats" (Citizen Surveys, 2018), https://citizensurveys.net/citizen-surveys-how-many-white-eff-supporters-exist-and-11-other-stats/.

White South Africans in the top 1 percent of the distribution always exceeded 95 percent (Alvaredo and Atkinson 2010).

The particularly high levels of economic inequalities in South Africa, combined with their predominantly racial dimension, implied that the post-apartheid era came with a dual economy lacking any significant middle class. The end of institutionalized segregation in the middle of the 1990s did create new opportunities for previously marginalized groups. Yet, income or wealth inequalities did not decrease. Quite the contrary: a number of empirical studies have converged in documenting a rise in overall income disparities at least since 1993 (Bhorat and van der Westhuizen 2008; Leibbrandt et al. 2010; Wittenberg 2014). This rise has been driven by the top end of the distribution, with the top 1 percent and the top 0.1 percent benefiting from more pronounced increases in average incomes (Alvaredo and Atkinson 2010; Bassier and Woolard 2018). Available evidence does not suggest that wealth inequality has declined either: the top 10 percent of the wealth distribution has consistently held over 85 percent of aggregate household wealth since 1993, more than any known country around the world, and there are even signs of increasing concentration within top wealth groups (Chatterjee, Czajka and Gethin 2020).

Growing income and wealth disparities did come, however, with significant changes in the racial composition of middle- and upper-income groups. Average income gaps have significantly decreased, especially between Black and White South Africans. The rise in top income groups has correspondingly been driven by higher inequality *within* racial groups, and in particular within the African population (van der Berg and Louw 2003; Statistics South Africa 2017). Put differently, the post-apartheid era came with the co-optation of a new, more racially diverse elite while leaving the overall socioeconomic structure mostly unchanged. These changes should also not be exaggerated: according to survey data, the share of Blacks in the top 10 percent increased only from 25 percent in 1995 to 35 percent in 2008, while their share in the top 1 percent did not exceed 16 percent in 2008 (Morival 2011).

Sociologically, the changing shape of South African inequality implied a growing separation between the new non-White middle class and the rest of the population. Politically, it meant a potential for new divisions within the predominantly Black electorate of the ANC. A significant body of literature has attempted to define the new Black middle class in South Africa. Generally speaking, existing studies have found a significant and continuous increase in its overall size since 1993, despite significant divergences when it comes to defining the concept of "middle class" itself.[5] When it comes to political attitudes, however, studies have obtained much more contrasted results. García-Rivero, for instance, showed that affective closeness to the ANC in the 1990s gradually became stronger among Blacks whose standards of living were improving, opening the possibility of a realignment dividing voters with lower income levels and the new middle class, the latter being more supportive of the ruling party (García-Rivero 2006). Almost ten years later, Mattes (2015) found the exact opposite: Blacks with higher material welfare tend to value different types of government action – and in particular "higher-order goods" – and to identify less with the ANC than poorer Black individuals. That being said, both studies converged in documenting no concrete electoral consequence of these diverging social values: social class did not predict higher or lower support for the ruling party when it comes to actual voting patterns. This goes in line with evidence showing decreases in political participation and party identification with the ANC despite continuous success when it comes to competing in general elections (Butler 2009).

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[5] The rise of South Africa's middle class has been documented in various ways, using definitions such as absolute income levels, occupational categories, or economic security (see for instance García-Rivero, du Toit and Kotzé 2003; Southall 2004; Mattes 2015), even though the measurement of what is exactly a "middle class" remains highly problematic. Visagie and Posel (2013), for example, find that defining the middle class as the centre of the income distribution or as an absolute level of affluence changes radically the results obtained in terms of size and racial composition.

The Persistent Intersectionality of Racial and Social Divides

The previous discussion highlighted potential interactions between new political movements, persisting inequalities, and changing social structures since the transition to democracy. I now turn to the explicit study of the structure of political cleavages in South Africa by using political attitudes surveys from two main sources. The Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa (IDASA) conducted the first national election study in 1994, a few months after the election took place. In 1998 and 1999, IDASA surveyed again South African voters in a series of opinion polls prior to the 1999 election.[6] Since 2004, other post-electoral surveys have been conducted in the context of the Comparative National Elections Project (2004, 2009, 2014) and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (2014). However, due to limitations in the number of available socio-demographic variables and the sample sizes (less than 1,500 respondents), I choose to rather rely on the 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2017 South African Social Attitudes Surveys (SASAS) to cover the more recent elections.[7] This leaves us with a dataset covering all general elections since the end of apartheid and providing consistent information on voting patterns as well as on the main socio-demographic

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[6] To increase the reliability of estimates, I use the fourth wave of the 1998-1999 IDASA polls, which took place shortly before the election.

[7] The 2019 SASAS survey was unfortunately not yet available at the time of writing, and neither were other post-electoral surveys which could be used to cover the 2019 election, so I use the 2017 survey to get a rough sense of changes in electoral behaviors between 2014 and 2019. These results should be considered preliminary.

characteristics of voters.[8] In the following analysis, I choose to focus on the structure of the vote for the ANC and its evolution since 1994. Detailed figures on support for the Democratic Alliance and on the determinants of electoral turnout can be found in the extended appendix.[9]

Race has always been the primary determinant of political representation and inequality throughout the history of South Africa. The South African census, as well as the majority of household surveys, ask the population to self-categorize into five "population groups": Black/African, White/European, Coloured, Asian/Indian, and Other. In 2018, according to the political attitudes surveys used in this paper, Black South Africans formed about 74 percent of the South African voting age population, the remainder consisting of some 13 percent of Whites, 10 percent of Coloureds, 3 percent of Asians, and less than 1 percent of individuals self-identifying as other (see Table 1). Blacks broadly correspond to "African", "native" or "indigenous" ethnic groups, which include a large variety of languages and ethnic groups (see below). Asians are in majority the descendants of Indian indentured laborers brought in the

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[8] It is important to stress here that one limitation to the results presented below has to do with "desirability bias": respondents may tend to provide socially desirable responses and conceal their actual voting behaviors, especially if there are strong group pressures – which is particularly relevant to the South African case of exceptionally high racial polarization. For causal evidence of desirability bias in the context of the 2016 US presidential election, see Brownback and Novotny (2018). In the surveys used in this paper, the reported ANC vote share exceeds true election results by 5 to 10 percentage points in most years, which suggests that desirability bias may be an issue. Unfortunately, there is no information available to systematically correct for this bias, so I correct for over-reporting by reweighing uniformly respondents to match official elections results.

[9] See appendix Figures B1 to B18 for the DA / NP / NNP / Freedom Front Plus and Figures D1 to D11 for the determinants of abstention in general elections. The Freeedom Front Plus is a small right-wing national party promoting Afrikaner interests.

nineteenth century by British authorities to work on plantations. Coloureds are a very diverse group, which can be more or less defined as the residual of the three other categories. At this point, it is important to insist again on the historically and politically constructed nature of these categories, which are in large part inherited from the rigid classification that the apartheid regime attempted to force upon the South African population. As such, "population groups" are to be understood primarily in terms of self-assigned constructs rather than pre-existing categories.

Figure 2 decomposes the share of popular votes received by the ANC by population group. In line with our expectations, racial identification appears to be an exceptionally strong predictor of voting behaviors, with no major change since democratization. Between 1994 and 2019, more than 70 percent of Black/Africans have voted for the ANC in every general election, as compared to less than 10 percent of White South Africans. Support for the ruling party among Coloureds and Asians has remained in between, with fluctuations from election to election and no clear trend over time. Black South Africans have been the only population group voting in majority for the ANC.

The explanatory power of race as a predictor of ANC support is robust to the consideration of other sociodemographic characteristics correlated to population group. Figure 3 plots the difference between votes for the ANC among Africans and votes for the ANC among other population groups, before and after controlling for a range of individual characteristics. Africans have been more likely to vote for the ANC by 65 to 75 percentage points. This difference decreased slightly in 2004, mainly due to higher popular votes received from Coloured voters, but it increased back to comparable levels since then. Controlling for other available variables – income, education, province, gender, age, province, location, and employment status – does reduce slightly the racial bias. This is because independently from race, the ANC tends to receive slightly greater support among lower income groups, North-Western provinces such as Gauteng or Limpopo, and rural areas. However, the effect remains

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substantial after including controls. In other words, it is race itself, rather than the standards or living or territories associated to race, which drives party support in South Africa.

This highly polarized cleavage structure has remained extremely persistent in the past twenty years. It reflects the legacy of the transition from the apartheid regime to democracy, which shaped South Africa's party system on divisions inherited from a century of legal, institutional and ideological codifications of race. In spite of the ANC's claimed racial neutrality and willingness to represent citizens from all groups, it has remained in voters' mind the organization which fought for the rights of the Black population. The reasons behind continuing support for the ANC in a context of rising inequality, low growth and increasing corruption are complex to identify. Ferree outlines three potential frameworks for understanding the persistence of Black South Africans' electoral behaviors (Ferree 2006). In the expressive voting framework, individuals view their support for ethnically homogeneous parties as a collective, psychologically rewarding affirmation of their social identity. In the straight policy framework, voters rationally and independently choose the party which best represents their policy interests. In the informational framework, finally, voters are still driven by interests, but the presence of uncertainty implies that they use the ethnic characteristics of the candidate as a shortcut for ideological affiliation. The author provides evidence that the latter framework is most relevant when it comes to understanding voting patterns in South Africa. In particular, Blacks tend to believe that the ANC represents all population groups (invalidating the expressive voting framework), but that opposition parties (the DP or the NP) represent exclusively White South Africans. The exact opposite is true for White South Africans. This is consistent with the informational theory: voters tend to identify the party which they believe best represents the interests of their ethnic group, or rather, they tend to vote against the party they feel does not include theirs.

It is however important to note that these different motives should not be treated separately. To the extent that collective beliefs and ideology are shaped by social networks, the interactions between population groups – or rather their continuous social and spatial

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segregation – create the sociological foundations for policy and partisan identifications based on race. Accordingly, the party system itself, which limits contenders to mainly the ANC and the DA, reinforces voters' expectations and perceptions of the racial basis of party politics. That being said, the predominance of race should not prevent us from studying more closely other determinants of electoral behaviors. An overwhelming majority of Africans support the ANC, but there are still between 15 percent and 20 percent of them who do not, and this share has been rising since 2009 to reach close to 30 percent in 2019. Understanding the factors behind these changes can be of great interest for thinking about the future of South Africa's party system and the new social cleavages which it could represent.

Inequality, Identity, and the New Black Middle Class

As was highlighted above, race and social class were closely intertwined throughout the twentieth century, and still continue to be today. How do these two variables interact when it comes to voting behaviors? And do we observe changes in the link between class and party support when evening out the racial dimension of inequality? Instead of attempting to pre-define social class based on occupational groups or absolute income levels, I instead focus explicitly on specific income groups in what follows. In comparison to other existing studies, this has the advantage of making the analysis less dependent upon specific operationalizations of class, and more comparable over time.

Figure 4 shows the vote share received by the ANC across different income groups. For each year, the five first points rank the population into five quintiles, while the last point focuses more precisely on the top 10 percent earners of the South African adult population. Two facts clearly stand out. First, differences in support for the ANC between bottom and top income groups have remained extremely strong over the entire period: more than 70 percent of bottom 20 percent income earners have voted for the ruling party, as compared to less than 35 percent of voters belonging to the top decile. Such gaps are, in comparative perspective, by far the highest observed among all existing studies, both in old and new democracies, even in

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countries and time periods characterized by pronounced class cleavages such as Brazil (Gethin and Morgan 2018), postwar Western Europe (Piketty, Martínez-Toledano, and Gethin 2018), or contemporary Malaysia (Gethin and Jenmana forthcoming). Secondly, the link between income and ANC vote seems to have changed since 2009. During the 1994-2004 period, the first four quintiles – the bottom 80 percent of the population – had relatively similar levels of support for the ANC, between 70 percent and 80 percent, while the top 10 percent were a clearly separated group. In 2009, 2014, and 2019, by contrast, the income gradient has become much more linear: the bottom 20 percent of the population were more likely to vote for Zuma or Ramaphosa than the next 20 percent, who themselves were more likely to vote for these candidates than higher income groups.

Race and income are highly correlated in South Africa, but to what extent can income inequalities across population groups account for such differences? Figure 5 shows the gap in ANC support between bottom 50 percent earners and top 50 percent earners, before and after controlling for the independent effect of population group. The strong effect of income on vote choice appears to be almost entirely explained by differences in income levels between racial groups. The raw difference in ANC votes between the bottom 50 percent and other voters has always been very strong, fluctuating between 15 and 30 percentage points. After controlling for population group, however, this difference boils down to close to 0, and the inclusion of additional explanatory variables – age, gender, education, region, location, and employment status – does not affect trends or levels significantly. This drop is not surprising: because poor voters are overwhelmingly Black, and top incomes are in majority White, there is little space for income to have any independent effect on vote choice. Put differently, class cleavages in South Africa are in large part a by-product of racial cleavages: statistically speaking, it is because low-income groups are Black that they vote for the ANC, not because they are poor.

While the independent effect of income remains weak, Figure 5 does hint to underlying changes in party identifications. After controlling for all available socio-demographic

characteristics of voters, the bottom 50 percent show increasing support for the ANC as compared to the rest of the population: they were less likely to vote for the party by 5 percentage points in 1994, while they were more likely to do so by 3 percentage points in 2014. I show in the appendix that the same holds for wealth: conditionally on other variables, the bottom 50 percent of the wealth distribution are now more likely to vote for the ANC by 5 percentage points.[10]

In order to better capture these changes, let us look more precisely at the political attitudes of the African population. Figure 6 decomposes votes for the ANC by income group among Black voters. Across all groups, more than 60 percent of Black South Africans voted for the ANC in all elections, consistently with the overwhelming effect of race on electoral behaviors highlighted above. There have been significant changes, however. In 1994, richer Africans were slightly more likely to support the ANC – more than 85 percent of top 10 percent African earners as compared to 80 percent among the bottom quintile. Since then, ANC votes have remained remarkably stable among lower income groups: some 75 percent to 90 percent of Africans belonging to the first four quintiles have voted in favor of the ruling party. By contrast, there has been a continuous, significant decline in support for the ANC among top 10 percent Black voters, from 87 percent in 1994 to only 51 percent in 2019. While they are still a slim majority to back the government, this new Black middle class therefore seems to have been moving gradually towards opposition parties.

Figure 7 plots the difference in ANC vote shares among the top 10 percent of African voters and among the bottom 90 percent of African voters, before and after controlling for other socio-demographic variables. The gradual reversal of the income gradient is clearly visible: the top 10 percent used to be more supportive of the ANC by about 4 percentage points in

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[10] See appendix Figures A2 and A3.

1994; in 2019, they were less so by 25 percentage points. Accounting for the effects of other variables such as province, education or language affects slightly the levels of the coefficient, but the trend remains unchanged. In the appendix, I show that these changes are also visible when looking at top versus bottom income groups among Coloured and Asian voters. While low sample sizes prevent us from precisely identifying election-to-election changes, it is clear that more affluent voters within Coloured and Asian population groups have also become more likely to support opposition parties. These dynamics are strongly suggestive of a growing potential for a reconfiguration of political cleavages in South Africa: richer non-White South Africans, regardless of race, have increasingly moved towards the opposition, while the rest of the poorer, Black population have kept their support for the government broadly unchanged.

Coming back to the importance of the new middle class and to the sociological foundations of the Black vote in South Africa, how can we interpret these changes in light of diverging ideological visions, policy positions, and group identifications? Instead of singling out the importance of a specific group of voters *a priori*, looking at the link between income and political attitudes can help us understand the relative importance of these factors. This is done in Table 2, where the opinions of Black South Africans are decomposed by income group for a selected number of questions asked in the 2017 South African Social Attitudes Survey. Three main results can be identified. Firstly, there are significant differences in policy positions and proximity to the government across income groups. Low-income Blacks are more likely to consider HIV and unemployment as the most important problems of the country, while the top 10 percent tend to put greater value on crime and safety and other issues. These diverging priorities by social class, and in particular the gap between economic issues and other issues related to "higher-order" goods, are consistent with Mattes' findings, and is comparable to similar evidence from Brazil's 2018 election (Gethin and Morgan 2018). Similarly, poorer Africans are more in favor of redistribution of land to the Black population and they display higher levels of trust in the government. A second result is that the top 10 percent of the distribution clearly stands out as compared to the bottom 50 percent and the

middle 40 percent, who have on average closer positions on these different questions. Finally, the difference between the top decile and the rest of the Black voting population appears particularly pronounced when it comes to social ties with other population groups. Among low- and middle-income Blacks, 56 percent and 45 percent of respondents declare knowing no White person respectively, even as acquaintances, which speaks for the extreme degree of social and spatial segregations inherited from apartheid and still prevalent today. When looking at the top 10 percent of Black voters, this share drops to 38 percent.

Bringing together these various pieces of evidence, it does seem that a growing, independent social group is emerging from the upper layers of the Black population. This group remains small, roughly corresponding to the richest 10 percent of African earners, which may explain why the decline in ANC support in the last two elections has only been of minor significance. The new middle class tends to value more issues related to crime, safety, and education, and is less supportive of radical redistributive policies. Crucially, it is much more likely to have socialized with other population groups. Coming back to Ferree's evidence in favor of the information theory of ethnic voting, one may argue that the latter stands amongst the most important factors behind the shift of Black elites towards opposition parties. As new middle-class voters get to interact with voters from other backgrounds, and in particular those belonging to the White population, they become less and less likely to view opposition parties as exclusive to a single population group. This opens new potentials for realignment, in a context where the opposition is viewed as increasingly "credible" and where voters are more prone to consider the positions and profiles of competing candidates.

The Roles of Linguistic and Regional Ties

I conclude this paper by looking at another latent division within South African society: that of ethnicity and geography. While race has been at the heart of politics, population groups are by no means homogeneous. There is no dominant language or ethnic group within the Black electorate, which is more or less divided into speakers of Zulu (20 percent), Xhosa (16

percent), North and South Sotho (17 percent), Tswana (9 percent), and a number of other local languages according to the surveys used in this paper (see Table 1). According to the 2017 SASAS survey, about 60 percent of White voters speaks Afrikaans and 40 percent English, and the same more or less holds for Coloureds.[11] The large majority of Indians and Asians are native English speakers. Languages are correlated to geographical areas, though not perfectly: most Zulus live in the Eastern and Northern provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, while the Xhosa are more numerous in the Eastern and Western Cape. The White population is more concentrated in the Cape region; KwaZulu-Natal hosts a higher proportion of the Indian population. Therefore, race, geography, and language are related, but there are not synonymous. This opens the way to other forms of political conflicts cutting across traditional racial affiliations.

Figure 8 plots the vote shares received by the ANC by language between 1994 and 2014. Strong divisions across linguistic groups primarily illustrate the difference between the languages spoken by Blacks and those spoken by other population groups. Support for the ANC never exceeded 25 percent among Afrikaans- and English-speaking voters, while it was systematically higher than 60 percent among native speakers of Sotho, Tswana, and Xhosa. Zulus used to be in between these two extremes but gradually moved closer to the second group: about 65 percent of Zulu speakers voted for the ANC in 1994 as compared to 80 percent in 2014. This transformation directly mirrors the decline of the Inkatha Freedom Party, the only serious ethnic-based contender to the ANC within the Black population. The opposite trend is visible among Xhosa-speaking groups, who used to display the highest support for the ruling party (with 96 percent voting for Mandela in 1994) and were the least supportive of the ANC after Afrikaans and English speakers in 2014 (with 77 percent voting

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[11] See appendix Figures C1 to C10 for detailed information on the composition of the South African population and the relationships between race, regional locations, education, income, and language.

for Zuma). Results for the 2019 election show slightly different patterns, with significant declines in support among Tswana and Zulu speakers, which may be potentially linked to the shift from Zuma to Ramaphosa factions ruling the ANC.

Figures 9 and 10 show that these two long-run changes cannot be accounted for by differences in standards of living or by other individual characteristics of Zulu-speaking and Xhosa-speaking voters. After restricting the sample to Black voters, Zulus used to be less likely to vote for the ANC than other respondents by as much as 29 percentage points. In 2019, this difference had boiled to down to close to zero, both before and after controls. In parallel, native speakers of Xhosa were more likely to vote for the ANC by 15 percentage points in 1994, while they were less likely to do so by 7 seven percentage points in 2014. Support for the ANC among Xhosa speakers has come back to being significantly higher in 2019. In the appendix, I show that comparable trends are visible when looking at broad South African regions.[12]

Three interesting conclusions can be inferred from these figures. Firstly, while there are significant differences across languages, the ANC still has received massive support from all the ethno-linguistic groups of the African population. Even in 1994, at the height of the Inkatha Freedom Party's strength, the ANC received the majority of votes of Zulu speakers and of the KwaZulu-Natal region. Secondly, the evolution of linguistic identifications since

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[12] After controlling for differences in racial and economic composition of the population, residents of the Northern, Western and Eastern Cape used to be more likely to vote for the ANC by 10 percentage points in 1994 and are now biased against the ruling party by 5 percentage points. In KwaZulu-Natal, voters used to be less likely to vote for the ANC by 20 percentage points and this gap has come close to zero in 2014. The Cape region is the only region which did not vote in majority for the ANC in 2014, with popular votes for the ruling party reaching 48 percent.

democratization shows decreasing rather than increasing ethnic polarization. Zulu speakers used to be significantly biased against the ANC and have progressively converged towards other dominantly Black linguistic groups. Xhosa speakers used to be significantly more supportive of the ANC, while in 2014 they were only slightly less so. Thirdly, it is interesting to note that the reversal of the Zulu and Xhosa coincide, though not only, with shifts in the ethnic background of party leaders. ANC candidates in 1994 (Nelson Mandela), 1999 and 2004 (Thabo Mbeki) were from Xhosa backgrounds, while Jacob Zuma, elected in 2009 and 2014, is from Zulu background. Accordingly, a more sudden drop in Xhosa support for the ANC is visible between 2004 and 2009, from 93 percent to 83 percent, and a more sudden rise in Zulu votes from 72 percent to 80 percent; Xhosa support has risen again in 2019, consistently with the end of Zuma factions ruling the ANC. That being said, what remains remarkable is that the ANC has managed to broadly overcome Black ethno-linguistic diversity throughout the period and unite the large majority of all Black South Africans. Even if there is no guarantee that the ANC will remain undivided in the future, our results do not point to any consistent pattern towards a new party system primarily based on ethnic affiliations.

Conclusion

South Africa remains haunted by the shadow of institutionalized racial segregation. More than twenty-five years after the end of the apartheid regime, race continues to largely explain access to social mobility and economic opportunities. The compartmentalization of South African society has cultivated the persistence of electoral politics structured by racial affiliations. Blacks and Whites still mostly live in separate neighborhoods; they diverge hugely in their living standards; they only share extremely limited common experiences. The new Black middle class stands out as the exception. Its access to higher layers of society has come with new beliefs, common interactions with other population groups, and therefore greater diversity in political attitudes. Yet, its size remains limited and, in electoral terms, too small to trigger any substantial transformation of South Africa's party system.

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South Africa's one-party dominance differs significantly from other dominant-party systems found in old and new democracies. Dominant parties often rely on unstable coalitions representing a diversity of interests. In Japan, it was a unique association between business elites and poorer rural areas that kept the Liberal Democratic party in power (Gethin forthcoming). In India, it was the common narrative of a new secular nation, which joined together Brahmins, lower castes and Muslims under the Indian National Congress (Banerjee, Gethin and Piketty 2018). African National Congress leaders have equally been careful to insist on the non-racial foundation of their legitimacy, but in practice electoral politics and political attitudes have said otherwise. The strength of the ANC relies, paradoxically, on social experiences contextualized by race. Such experiences have reinforced voters' visions of political parties' racial exclusivism, at the same time as they have contributed to effectively enforce it. Greater social equality would be, given that context, a pre-condition for voter realignments, but whether such realignments would be primarily based upon social class, ethno-linguistic diversity or other ideological values remains an open question.

The lack of substantial transformation of South Africa's social structure may also explain why voters have been increasingly disillusioned with the democratic process: electoral turnout decreased from 87 percent in 1994 to a record low 66 percent in 2019. This drop in participation has come with rising political inequality: abstention has remained stable among university graduates, while it has been multiplied by three among the primary educated.[13] Surprisingly, opposition parties from across the political spectrum have therefore been incapable of mobilizing low-income, low-educated citizens. In fact, when focusing on the

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[13] See appendix Figure D5: estimates from available surveys suggest that abstention among primary educated voters has risen from 12 percent in 1994 to 37 percent in 2019. Turnout has also decreased much more rapidly among the Black population, from 85 percent in 1994 to a mere 53 percent in 2019 (see Figure D2).

Black electorate, available data suggests that both the Democratic Alliance and the Economic Freedom Fighters have only been able to attract urban, higher educated, wealthier voters.[14] The future transformation of South Africa's party system will crucially depend upon the ability of the African National Congress, or of new political organizations, to respond to the aspirations of the disenchanted poor.

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[14] See appendix Table A3 for the detailed structure of the vote for the DA and the EFF, both among the overall population and among Blacks over the 2014-2019 period. Results for the EFF should be interpreted with care given low sample sizes.

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Figure 1 - General election results in South Africa, 1994-2019
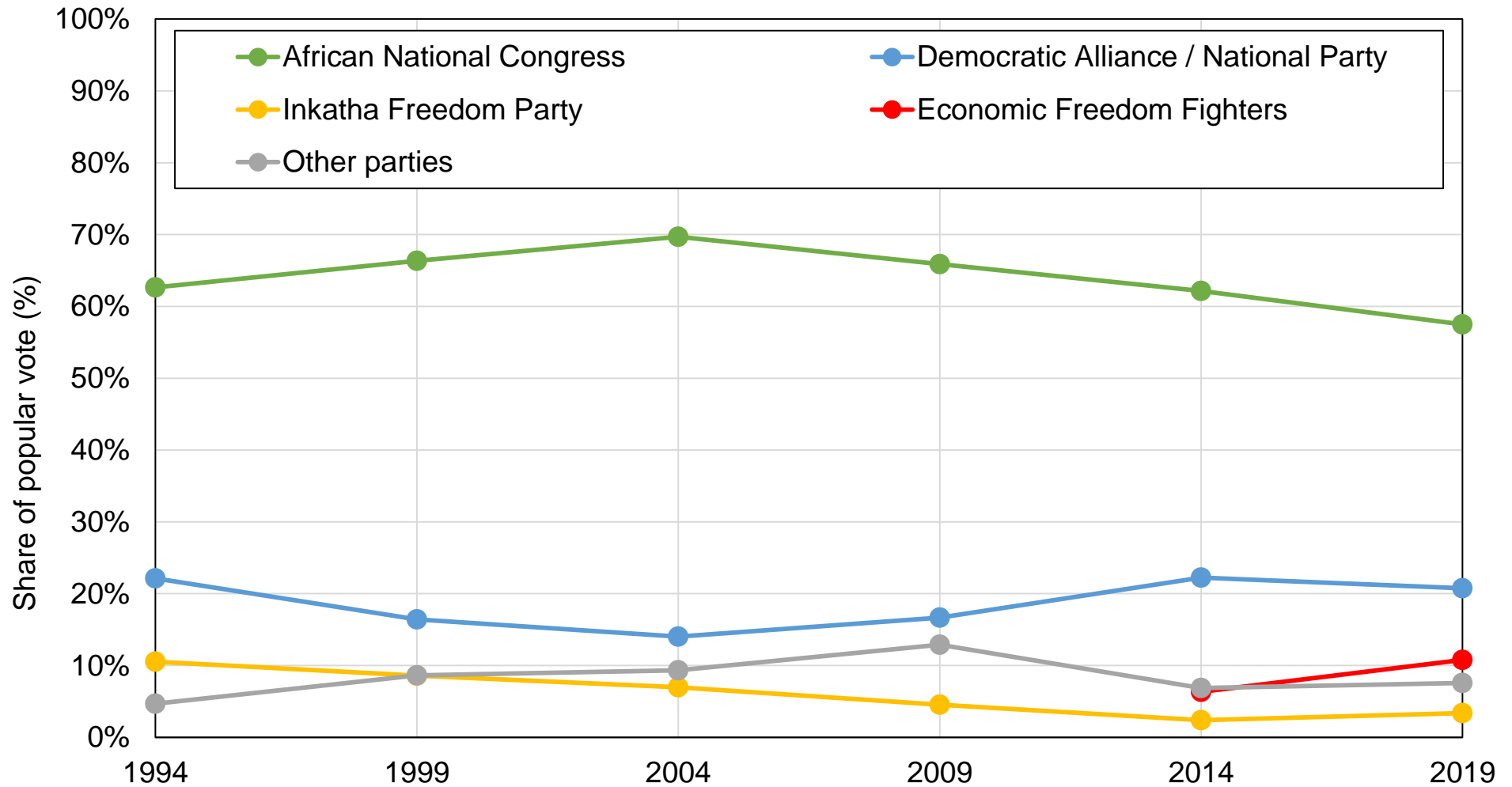
Source: author's computations using official election results.
Note: the figure shows the share of votes received by selected South African political parties in the general elections of 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019.

Figure 2 - Vote for the ANC by population group, 1994-2019
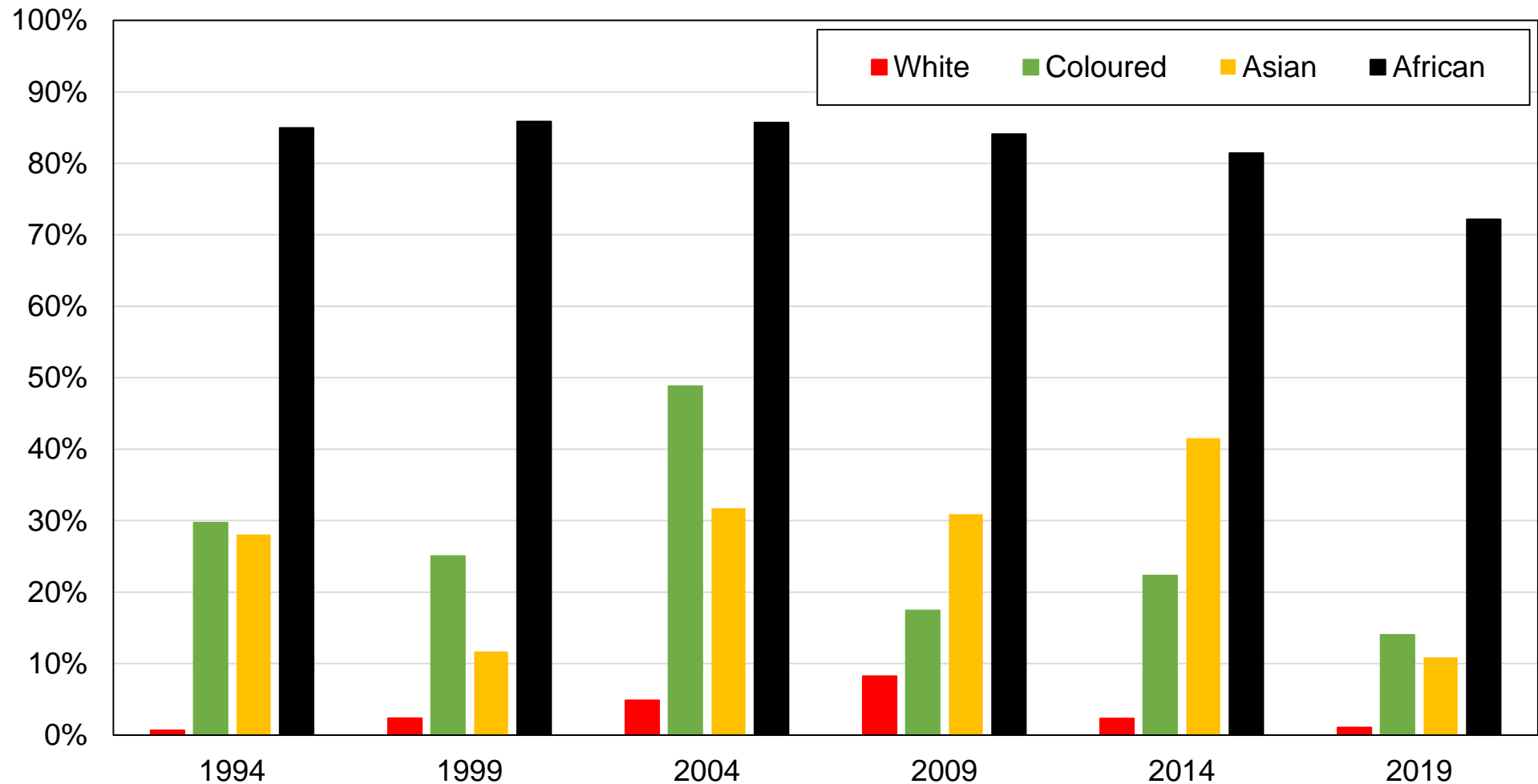
Legend: ■ White ■ Coloured ■ Asian ■ African

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of votes received by the African National Congress among voters belonging to different population groups between 1994 and 2014. The ANC has received more than 70% of votes among African voters, as compared to less than 10% of White votes in all years.

Figure 3 - Vote for the ANC among Africans, 1994-2019
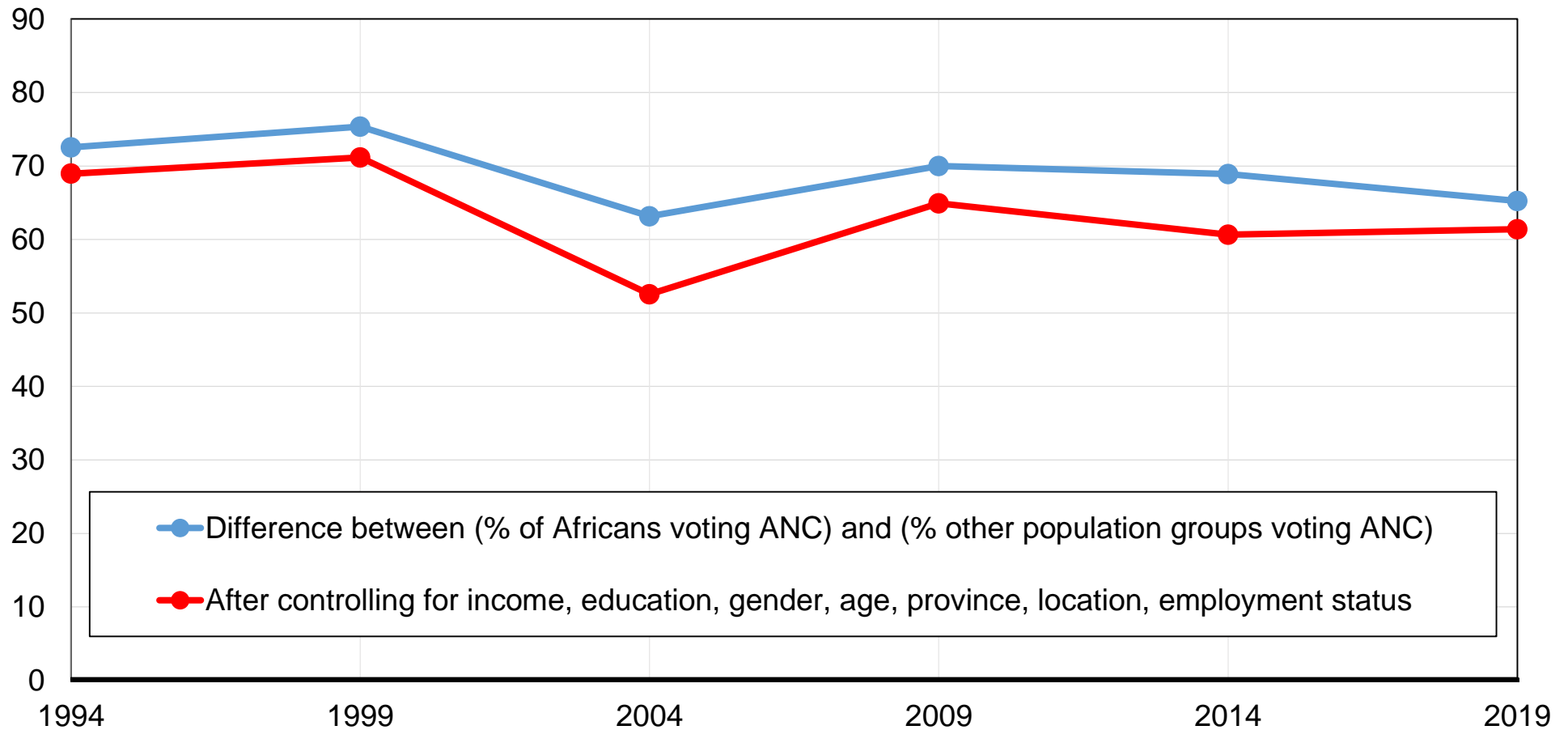
- **Difference between (% of Africans voting ANC) and (% other population groups voting ANC)**
- **After controlling for income, education, gender, age, province, location, employment status**

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of votes received by the African National Congress among Africans and the share of votes received by the ANC among other population groups between 1994 and 2014, before and after controlling for other variables. Africans have always been more likely to support the ANC than other population groups by at least 60 percentage points.
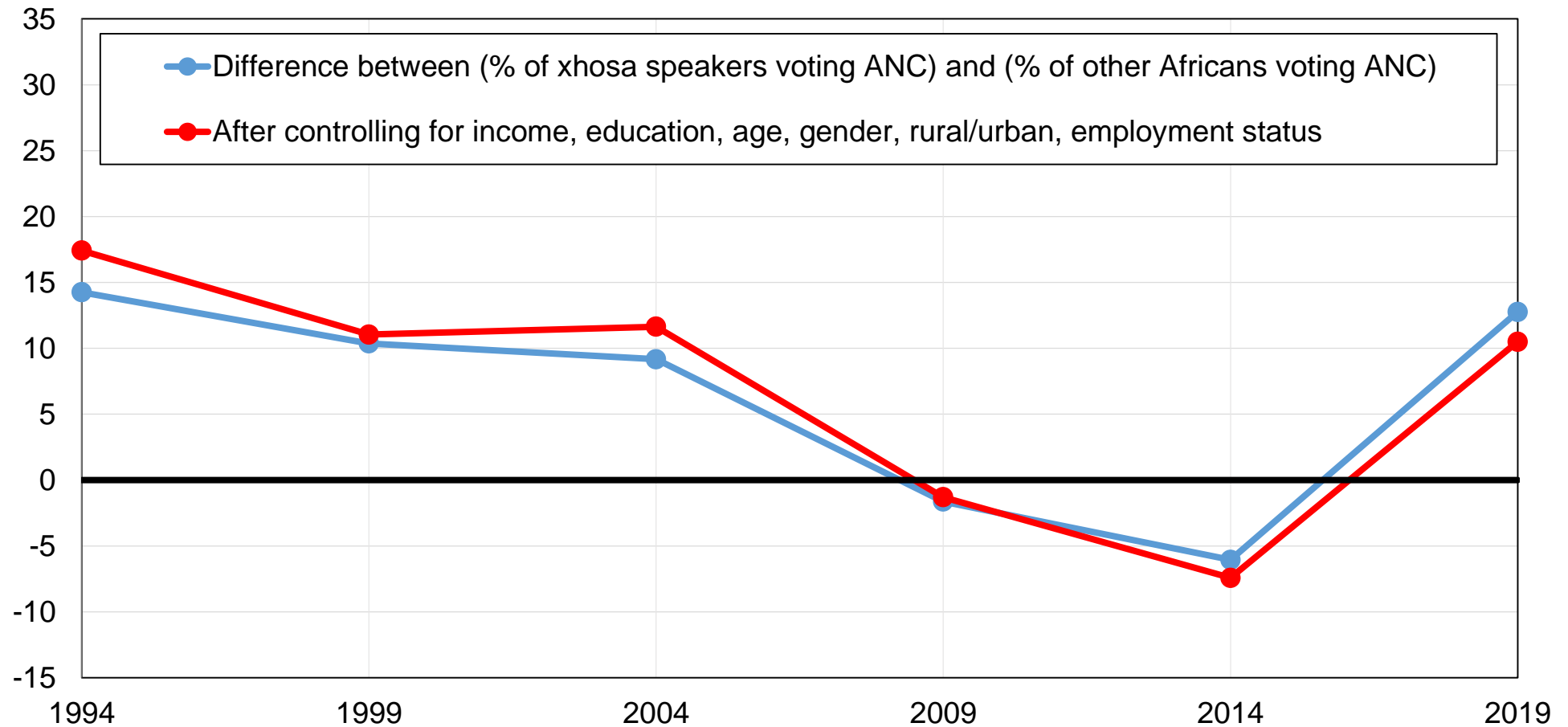
Figure 4 - Vote for the ANC by income group, 1994-2019
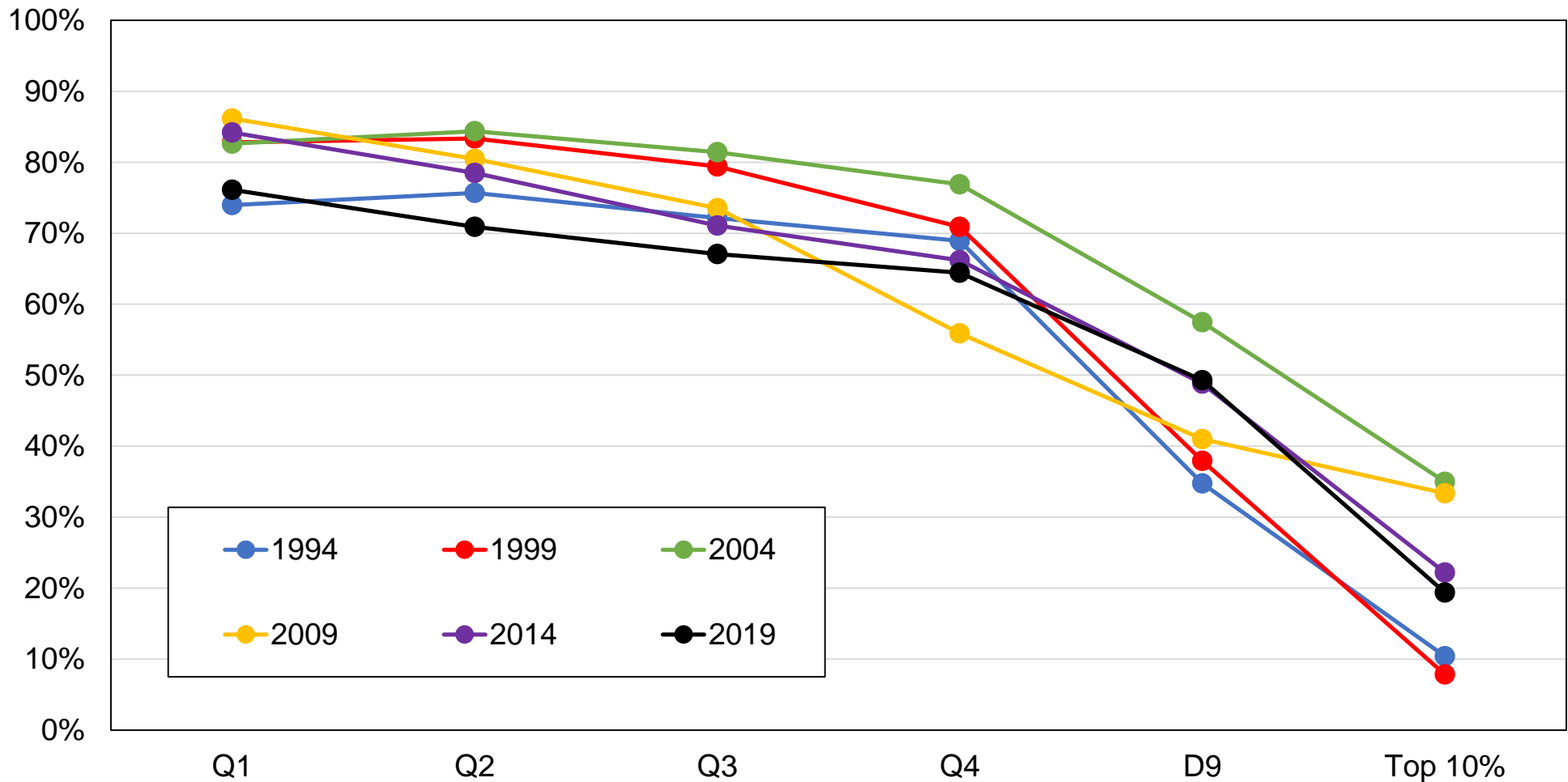
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the ANC in general elections by income quintile and among the ninth decile and the top 10% of earners. Between 70% and 85% of bottom 20% earners have supported the ANC in all years, as compared to between 5% and 35% of those belonging to the top 10%.

Figure 5 - Vote for the ANC among low-income voters, 1994-2019
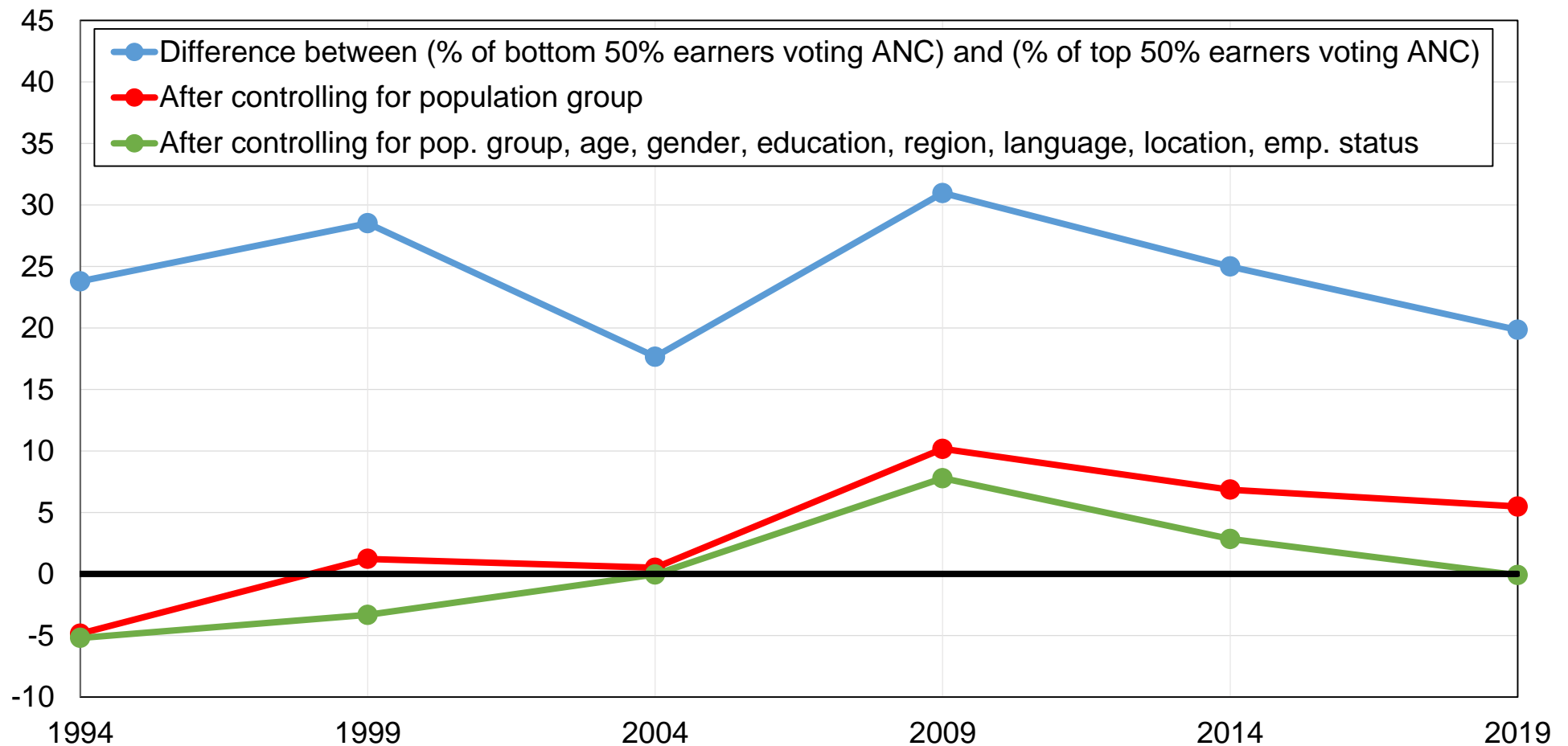
Legend:
- Difference between (% of bottom 50% earners voting ANC) and (% of top 50% earners voting ANC)
- After controlling for population group
- After controlling for pop. group, age, gender, education, region, language, location, emp. status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of bottom 50% earners voting ANC and the share of top 50% earners voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls. The bottom 50% have been more likely to support the ANC than other voters by 15-30 percentage points in all years. After controlling for population group, this difference is reduced to between -5 and 10 percentage points.

Figure 6 - Vote for ANC by income among Africans, 1994-2019
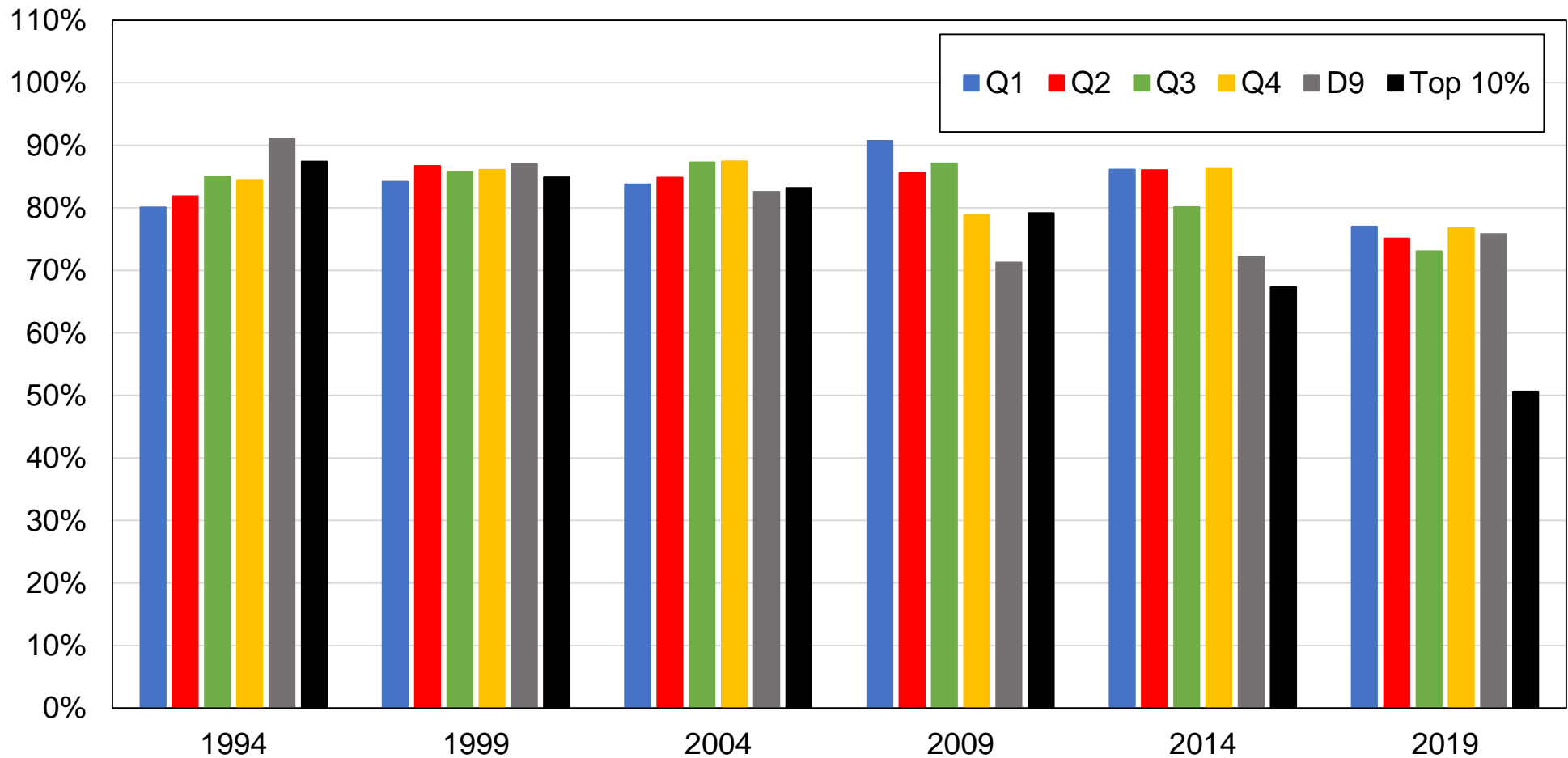
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of Africans supporting the ANC in general elections by income quintile and among the ninth decile and the top 10% of earners. Between 80% and 90% of bottom 20% African earners have supported the ANC in all years. The share of top 10% African voters supporting the ANC has decreased from 87% in 1994 to 67% in 2014.

Figure 7 - Vote for the ANC among top African income groups, 1994-2019
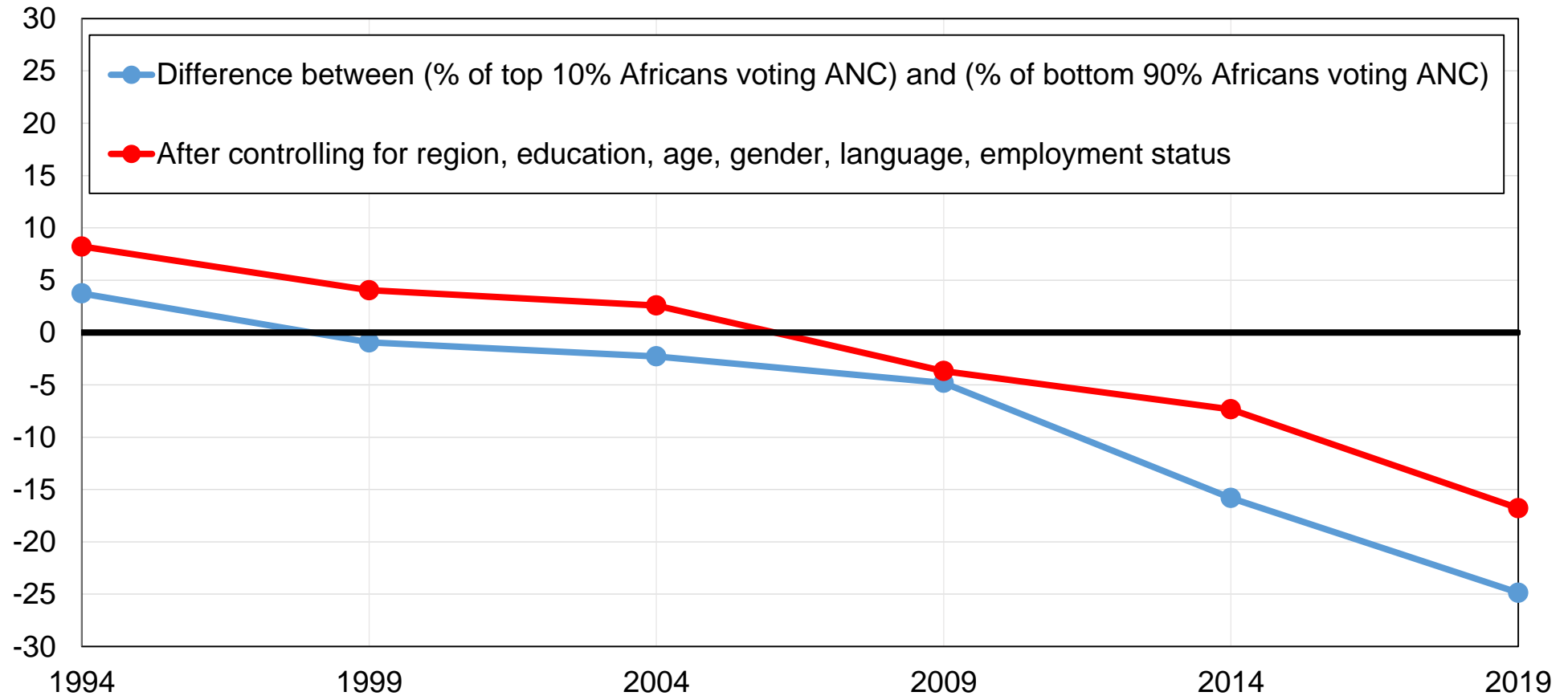
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% African voters voting ANC and the share of bottom 90% African voters voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls. The top 10% of African voters used to be more likely to support the ANC in 1994, while they were less likely to do so in 2019 by 25 percentage points.

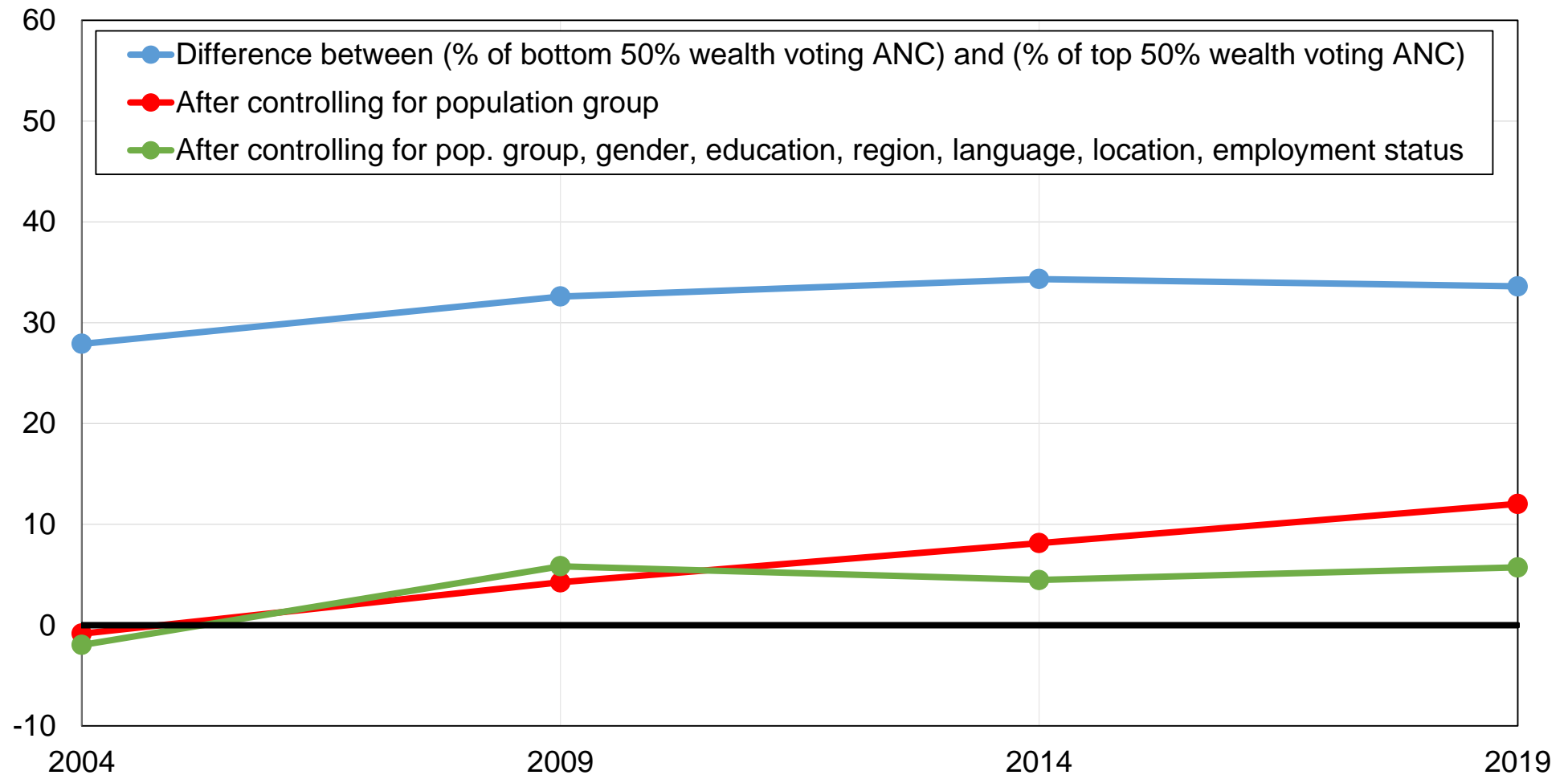# Figure 8 - Vote for the ANC by language, 1994-2019
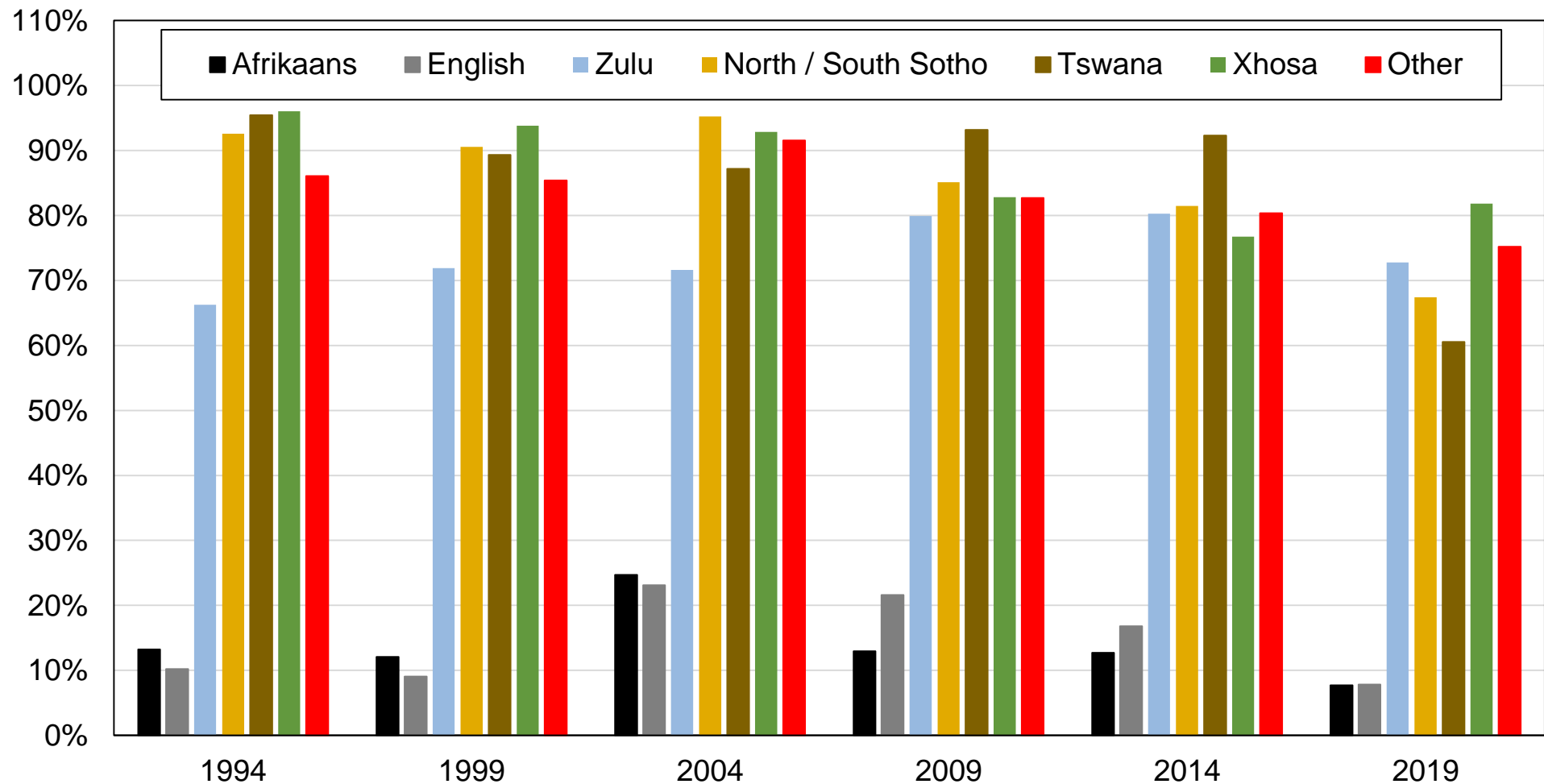
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the ANC in general elections depending on the first language spoken at home. Less than 25% of Afrikaans and English speakers supported the ANC in all years, compared to more than 60% of Sotho and Tswana speakers.

Figure 9 - Vote for the ANC among zulu speakers, 1994-2019
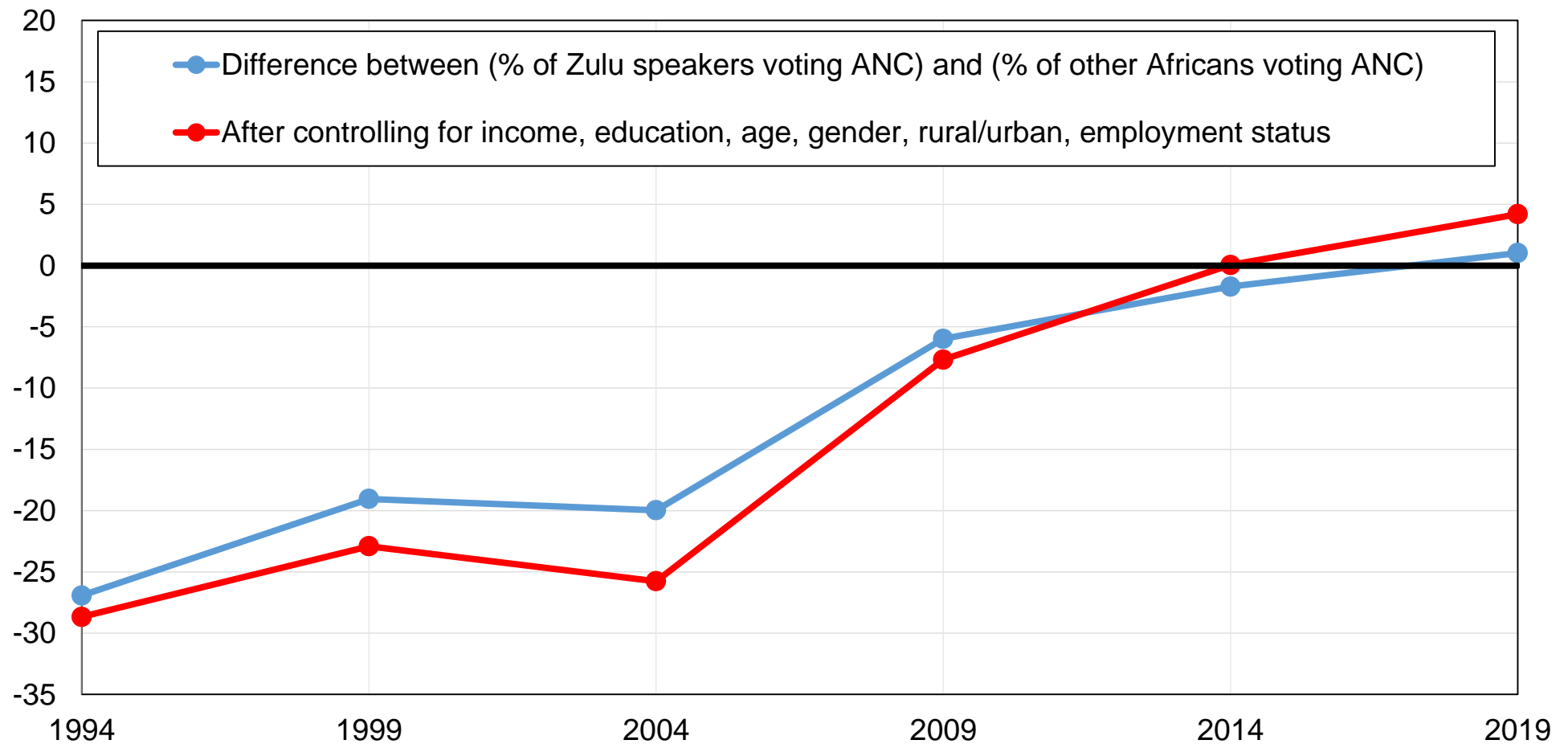
Difference between (% of Zulu speakers voting ANC) and (% of other Africans voting ANC)

After controlling for income, education, age, gender, rural/urban, employment status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of zulu-speaking African voters voting ANC and the share of other African voters voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls. Zulu speakers used to be less likely to vote for the ANC by 19 percentage points. This difference had come close to zero in 2014.

Figure 10 - Vote for the ANC among xhosa speakers, 1994-2019

Legend:
- Difference between (% of xhosa speakers voting ANC) and (% of other Africans voting ANC)
- After controlling for income, education, age, gender, rural/urban, employment status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of xhosa-speaking African voters voting ANC and the share of other African voters voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls. Xhosa speakers used to be more likely to vote for the ANC by 14 percentage points. They were less likely to do so by 6 percentage points in 2014.

| Table 1 - The structure of the South African voting age population, 1994-2019						
	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
Population groups						
Black/African	69%	71%	72%	72%	74%	76%
White/European	19%	17%	15%	14%	13%	11%
Coloured	10%	9%	10%	11%	10%	10%
Indian/Asian	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Languages						
Afrikaans	19%	18%	18%	18%	16%	14%
English	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%	10%
Zulu	23%	20%	24%	22%	20%	22%
Xhosa	14%	16%	14%	16%	16%	14%
North Sotho	7%	10%	9%	7%	9%	10%
South Sotho	8%	9%	8%	7%	8%	9%
Tswana	8%	9%	7%	8%	9%	9%
Other	9%	8%	10%	11%	12%	12%
Regions						
Eastern / Western / Northern Cape	31%	27%	27%	29%	27%	25%
Free State	6%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%
KwaZulu-Natal	22%	21%	21%	20%	18%	19%
Other regions	40%	45%	46%	45%	50%	51%

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.

Note: the table shows descriptive statistics for selected variables. In 2014, 74% of the voting age population considered itself to be Black, while 13% were White.

Table 2 - Political opinions of Black South Africans by income group, 2017

	Bottom 50%	Middle 40%	Top 10%
Most important issue: HIV/AIDS	14%	20%	12%
Most important issue: Unemployment	70%	67%	59%
Most important issue: Racism / Xenophobia	2%	1%	5%
Most important issue: Crime and Safety	7%	8%	16%
Most important issue: Other	7%	4%	8%
Agrees government should redistribute land to Blacks	81%	82%	73%
Trusts national governments	31%	30%	40%
Knows no white people, even as acquaintances	56%	45%	38%

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.

Note: the table decomposes the political opinions of Black South Africans by income group in 2017, according to the SASAS survey. 70% of poorest 50% Black South Africans believe that unemployment is the most important problem of South Africa, as compared to 59% of top 10% Black South African earners.

Figure A1 - Vote for the ANC among top Coloured / Asian income groups, 1994-2019
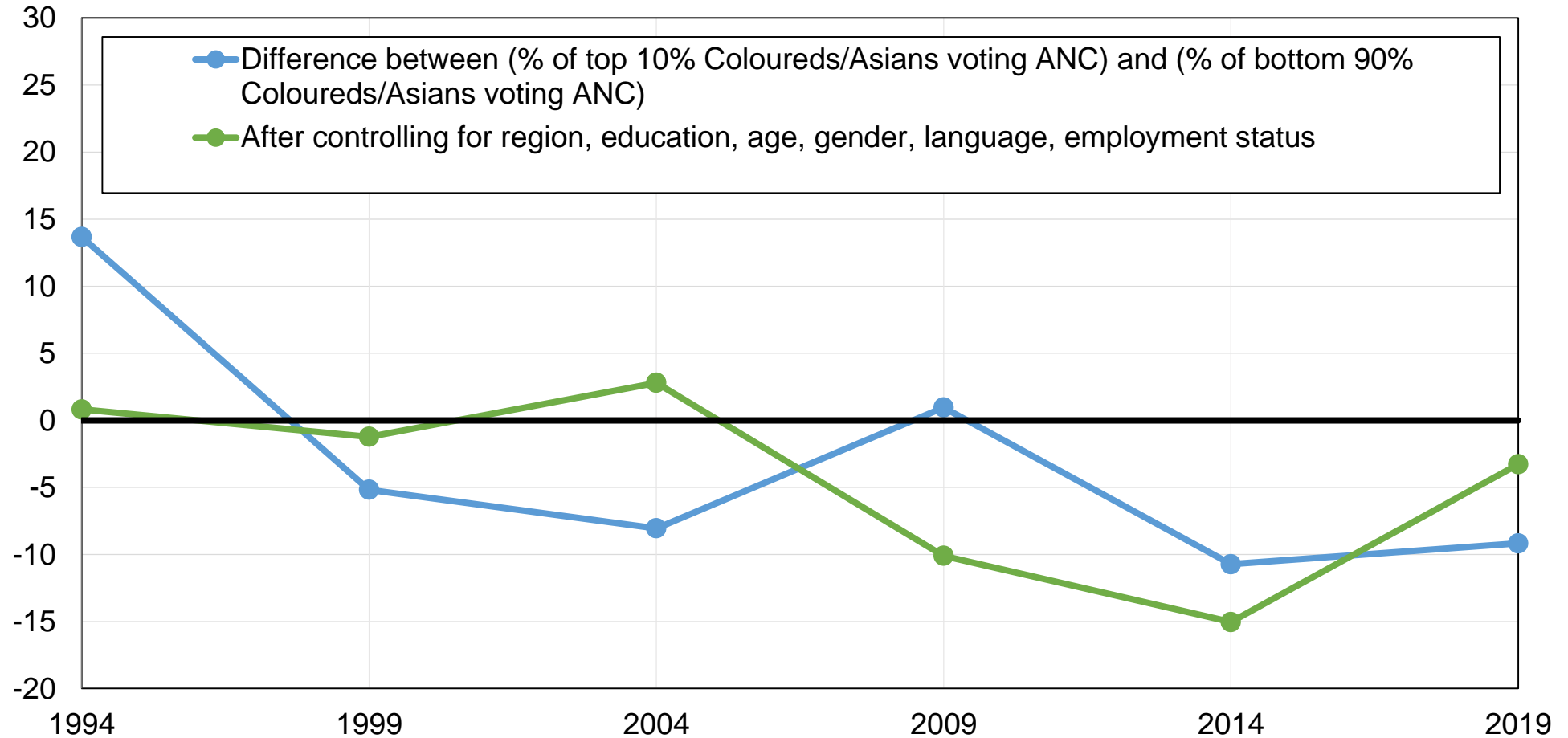
Legend:
- Difference between (% of top 10% Coloureds/Asians voting ANC) and (% of bottom 90% Coloureds/Asians voting ANC)
- After controlling for region, education, age, gender, language, employment status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of top 10% Coloured / Asian voters voting ANC and the share of bottom 90% Coloured / Asian voters voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls.

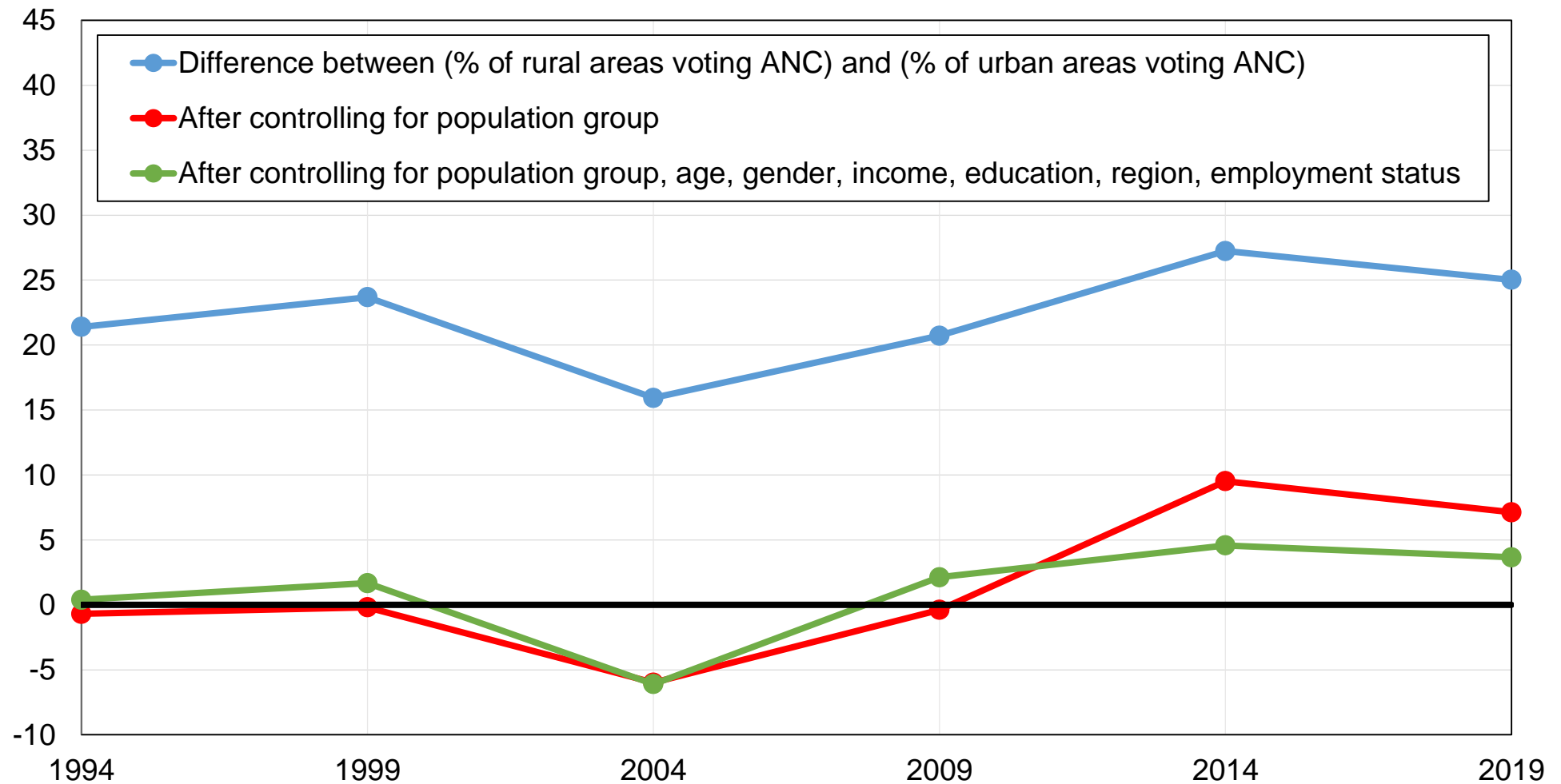# Figure A2 - Vote for ANC by wealth group, 2004-2019
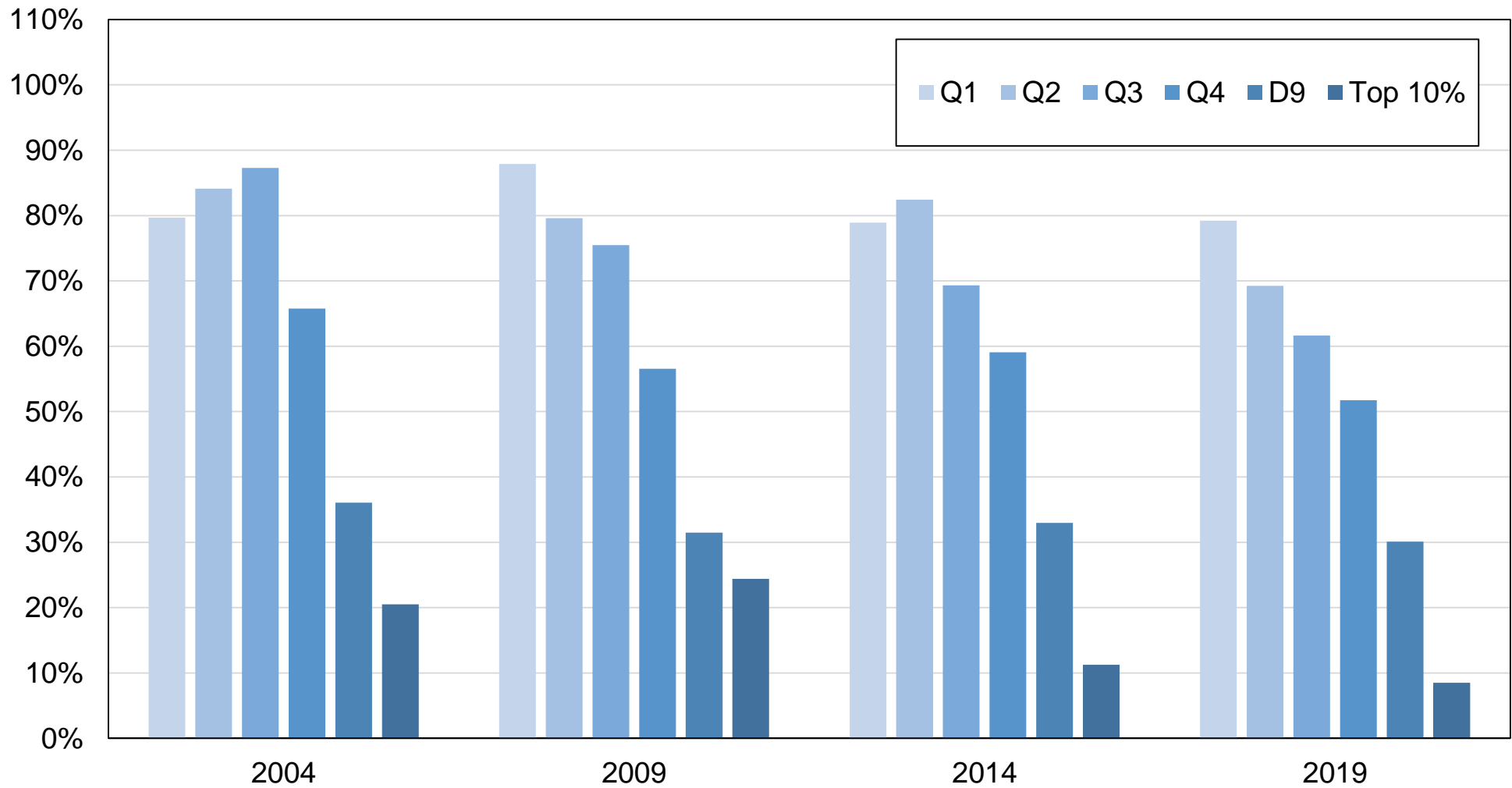
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the ANC in general elections by wealth quintile and among the ninth decile and the top 10% of wealth owners.

Figure A3 - Vote for the ANC among bottom wealth groups, 2004-2019

Legend:
- Difference between (% of bottom 50% wealth voting ANC) and (% of top 50% wealth voting ANC)
- After controlling for population group
- After controlling for pop. group, gender, education, region, language, location, employment status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of poorest 50% voters in terms of wealth voting ANC and the share of other voters voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls.

Figure A4 - Vote for the ANC by education level, 1994-2019
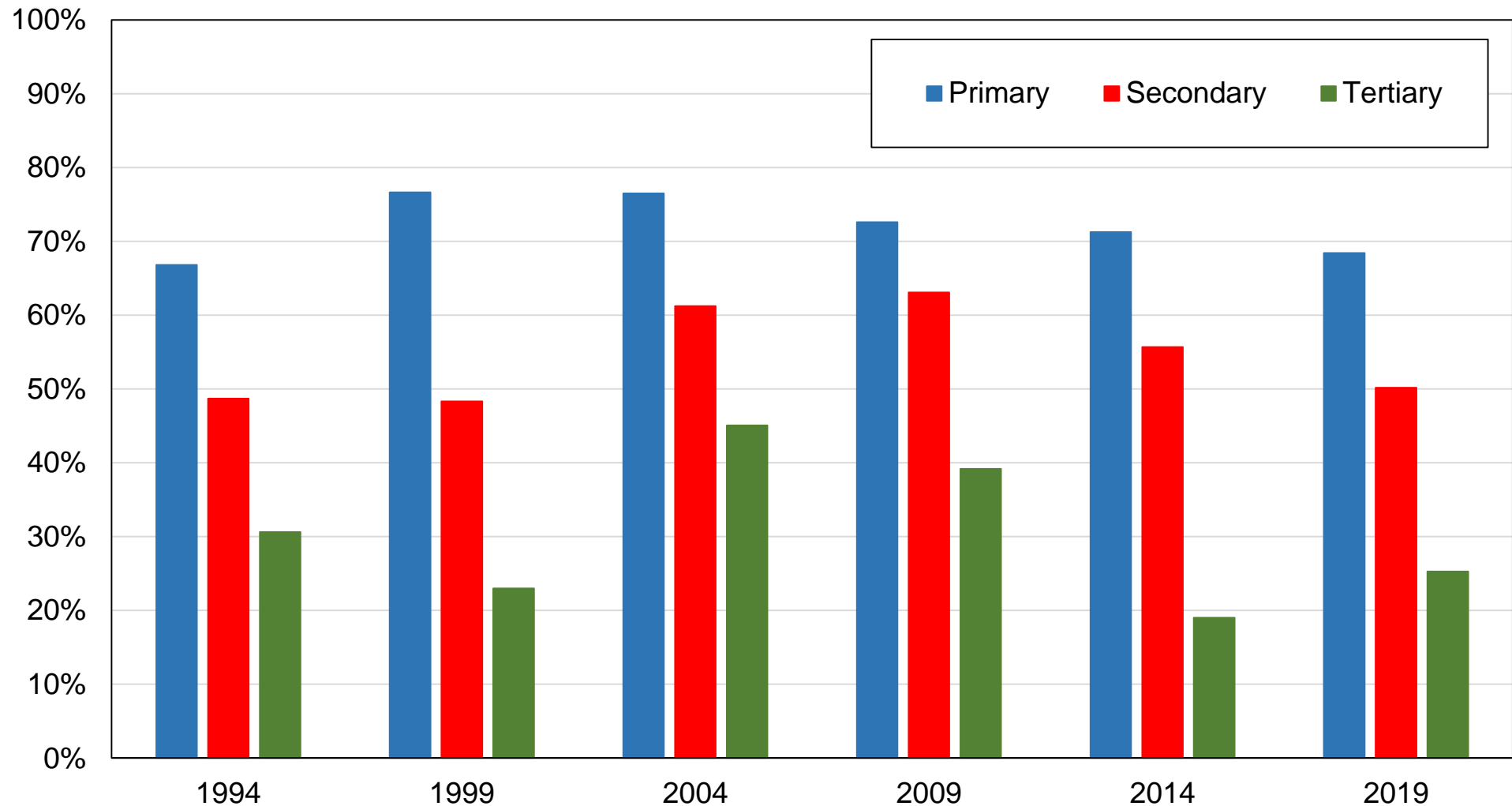
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the ANC in general elections by level of education. Primary education includes those with no education at all.

Figure A5 - Vote for the ANC among the primary educated, 1994-2019
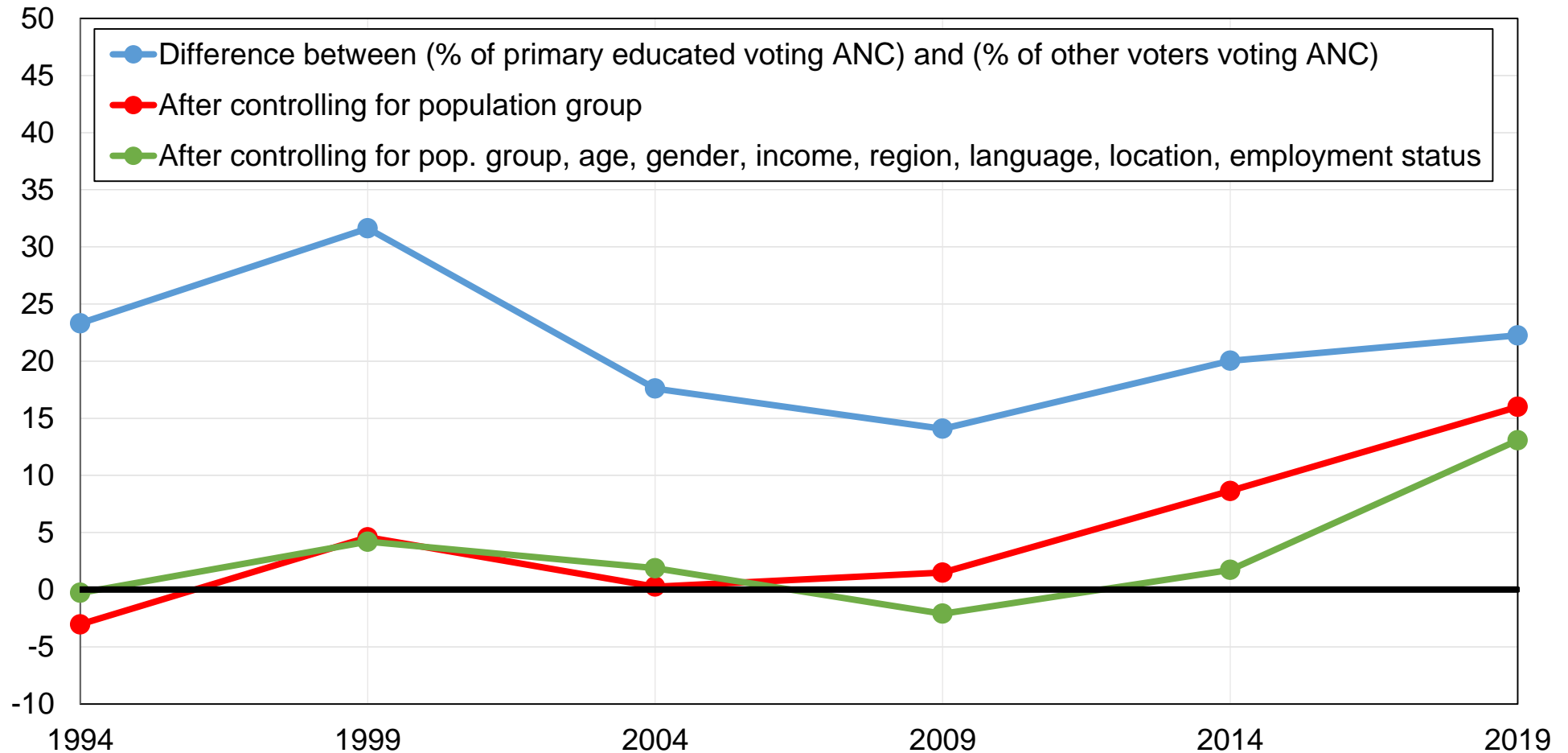
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of primary educated voters voting ANC and the share of secondary/tertiary educated voters voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls.

Figure A6 - Vote for the ANC by age group, 1994-2019
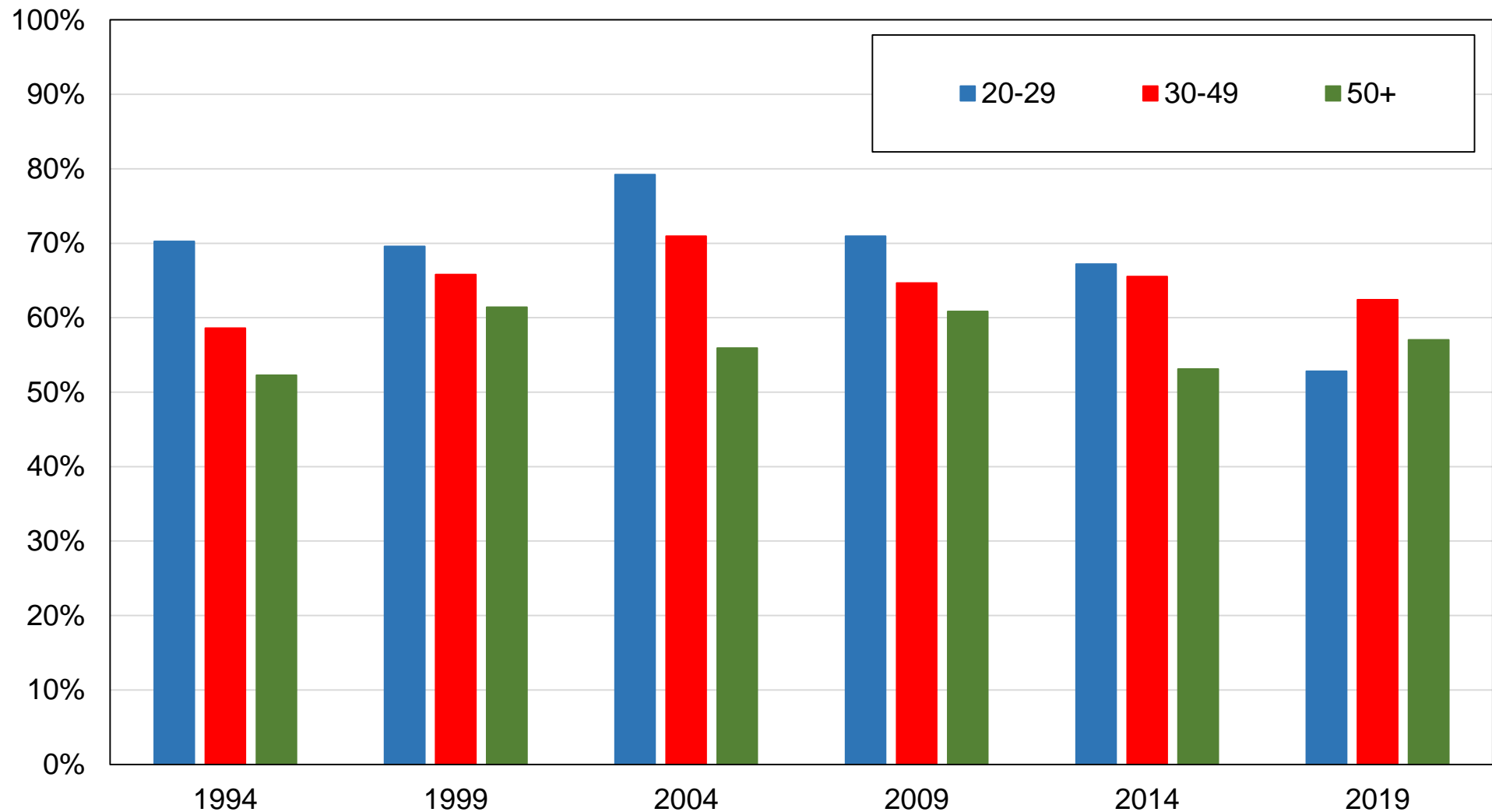
Figure A7 - Vote for the ANC by gender, 1994-2019
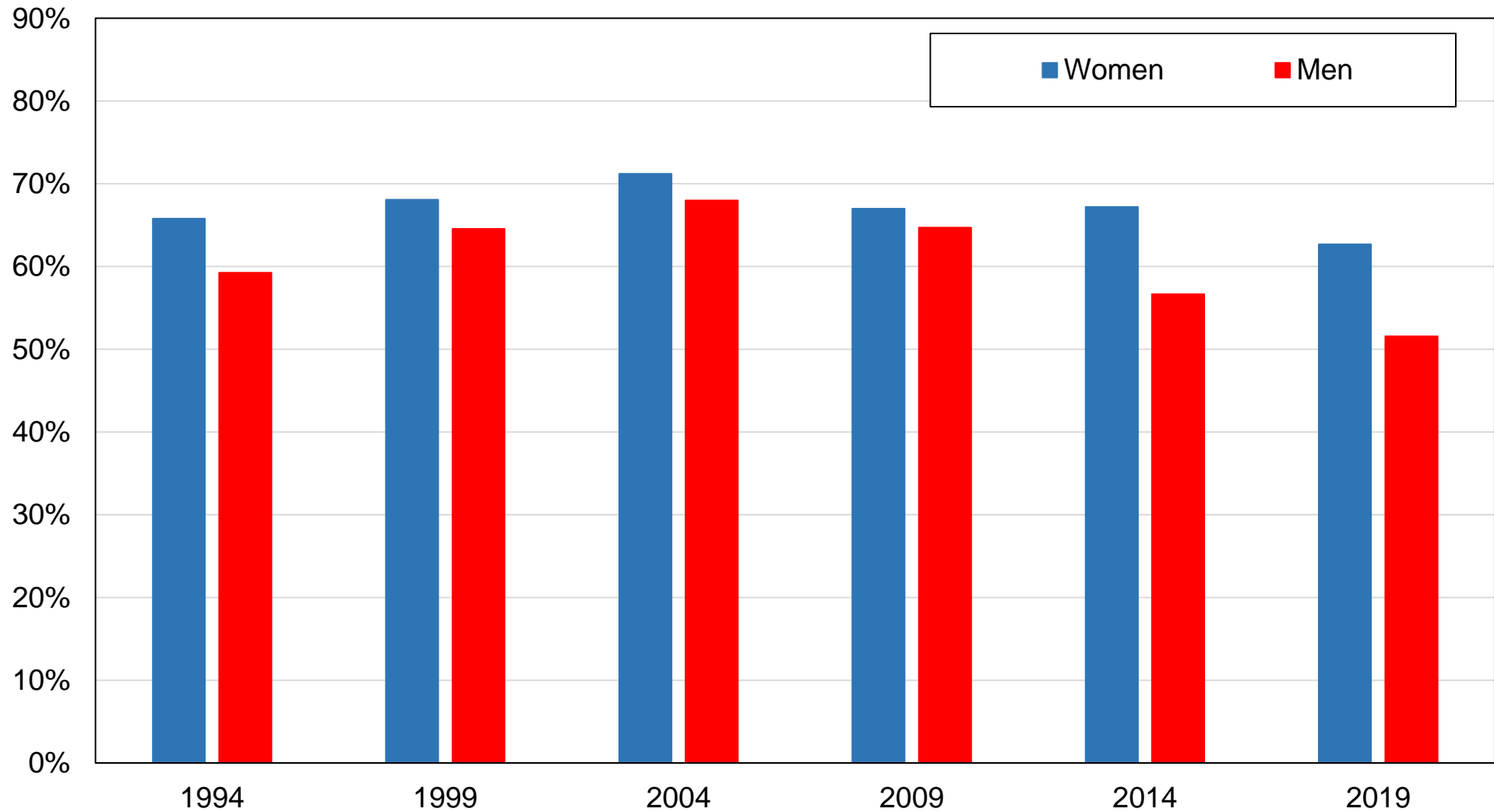
Legend: ■ Women ■ Men

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the ANC in general elections by gender.

Figure A8 - Vote for the ANC by religious affiliation, 1994-2019

Figure A9 - Vote for the ANC by region, 1994-2019
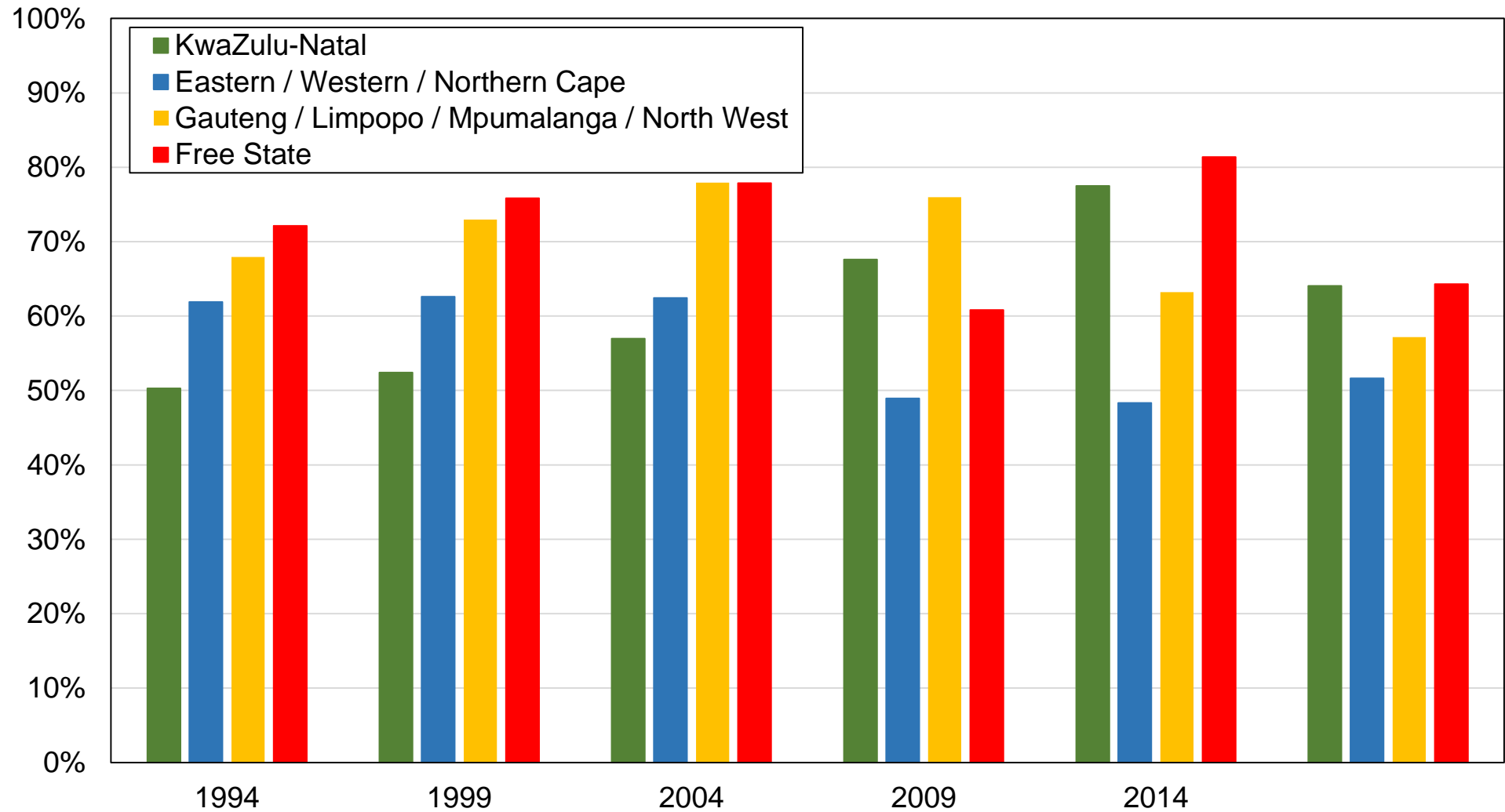
Legend:
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Eastern / Western / Northern Cape
- Gauteng / Limpopo / Mpumalanga / North West
- Free State

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the ANC in general elections by region.

Figure A10 - Vote for the ANC among KwaZulu-Natal province residents, 1994-2019
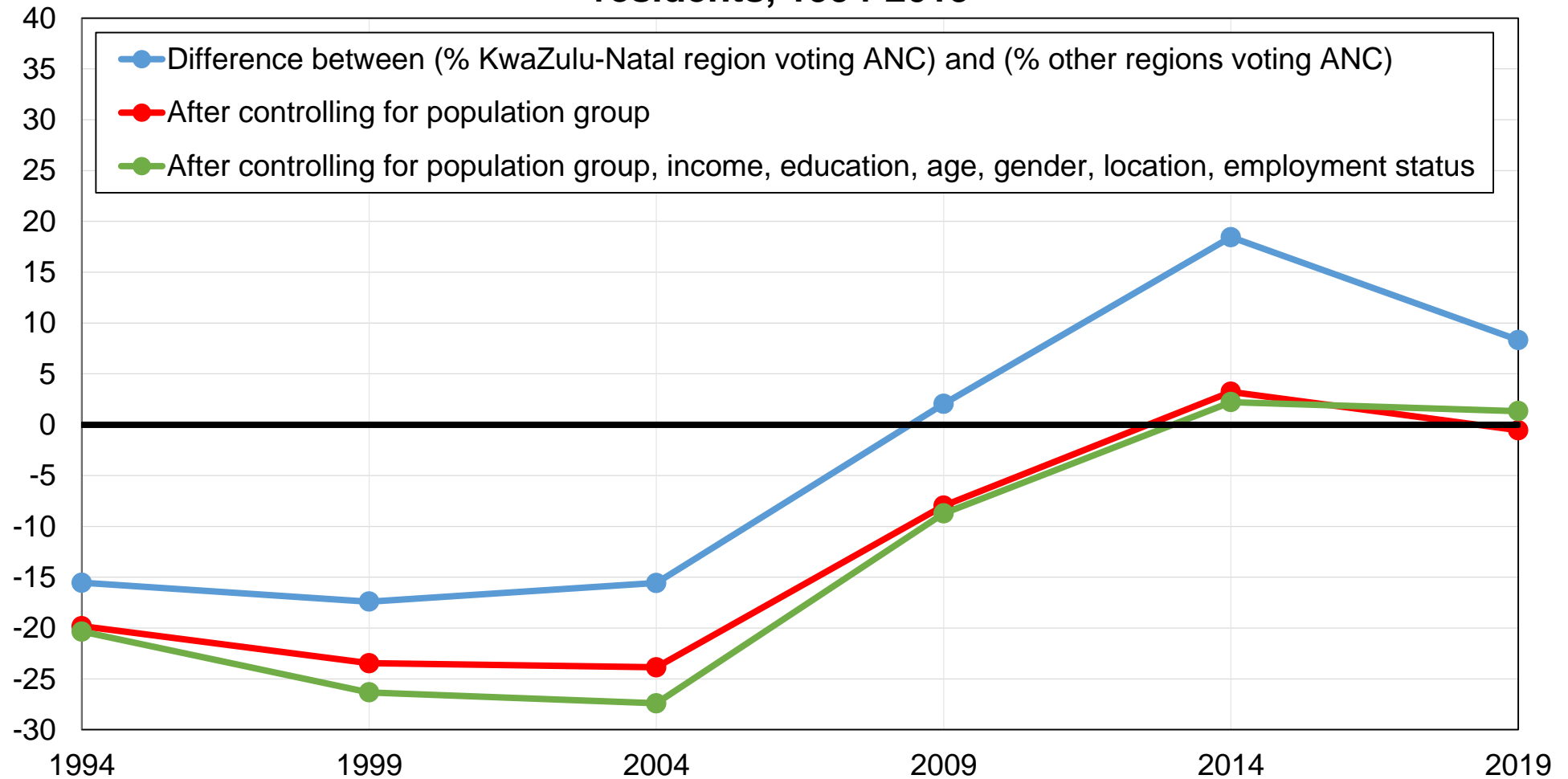
- Difference between (% KwaZulu-Natal region voting ANC) and (% other regions voting ANC)
- After controlling for population group
- After controlling for population group, income, education, age, gender, location, employment status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of voters living in KwaZulu-Natal voting ANC and the share of voters living in other regions voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls.

Figure A11 - Vote for the ANC among residents of the Cape region, 1994-2019
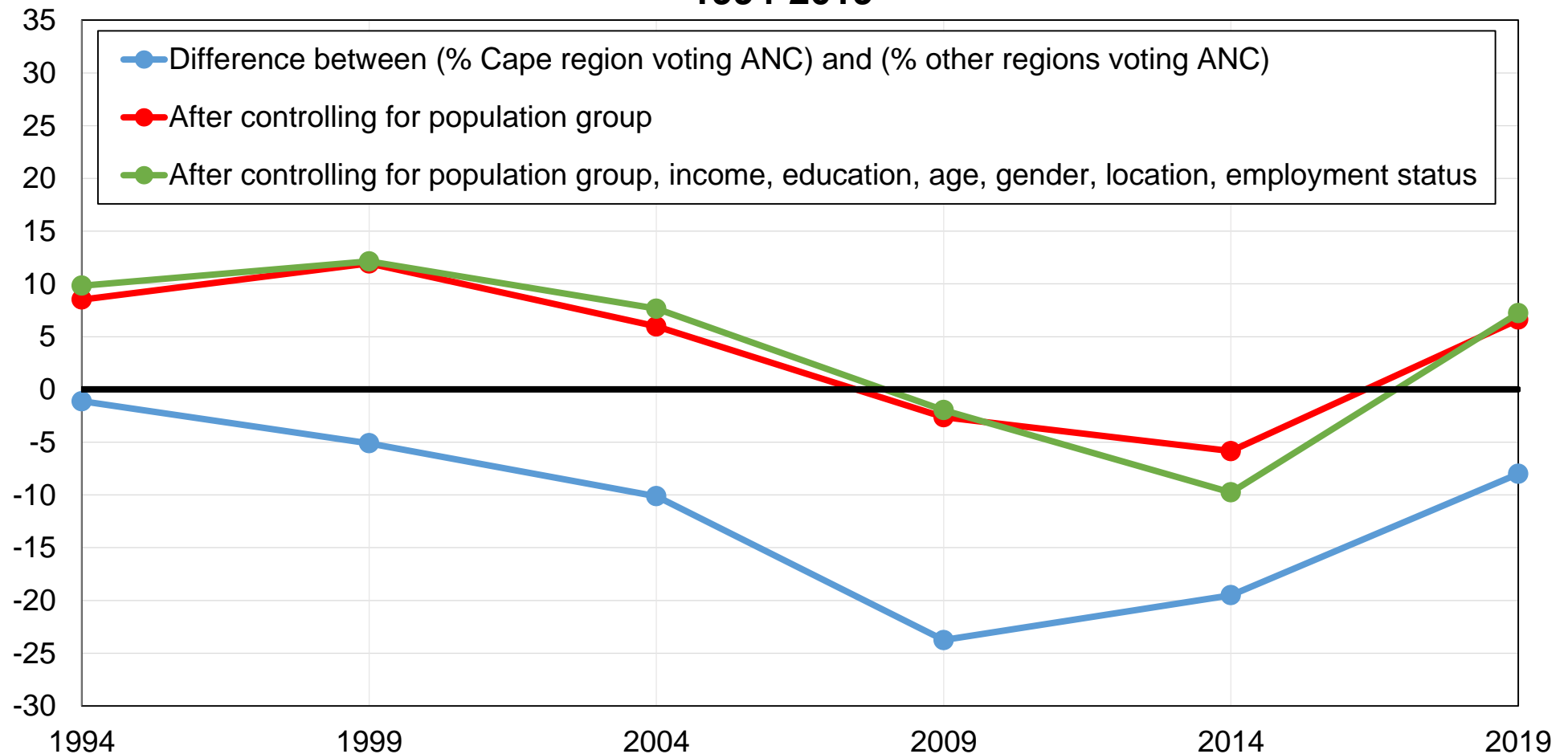
Legend:
- Difference between (% Cape region voting ANC) and (% other regions voting ANC)
- After controlling for population group
- After controlling for population group, income, education, age, gender, location, employment status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of voters living in the Eastern, Northern or Western Cape voting ANC and the share of voters living in other regions voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls.

Figure A12 - Vote for the ANC by location, 1994-2019
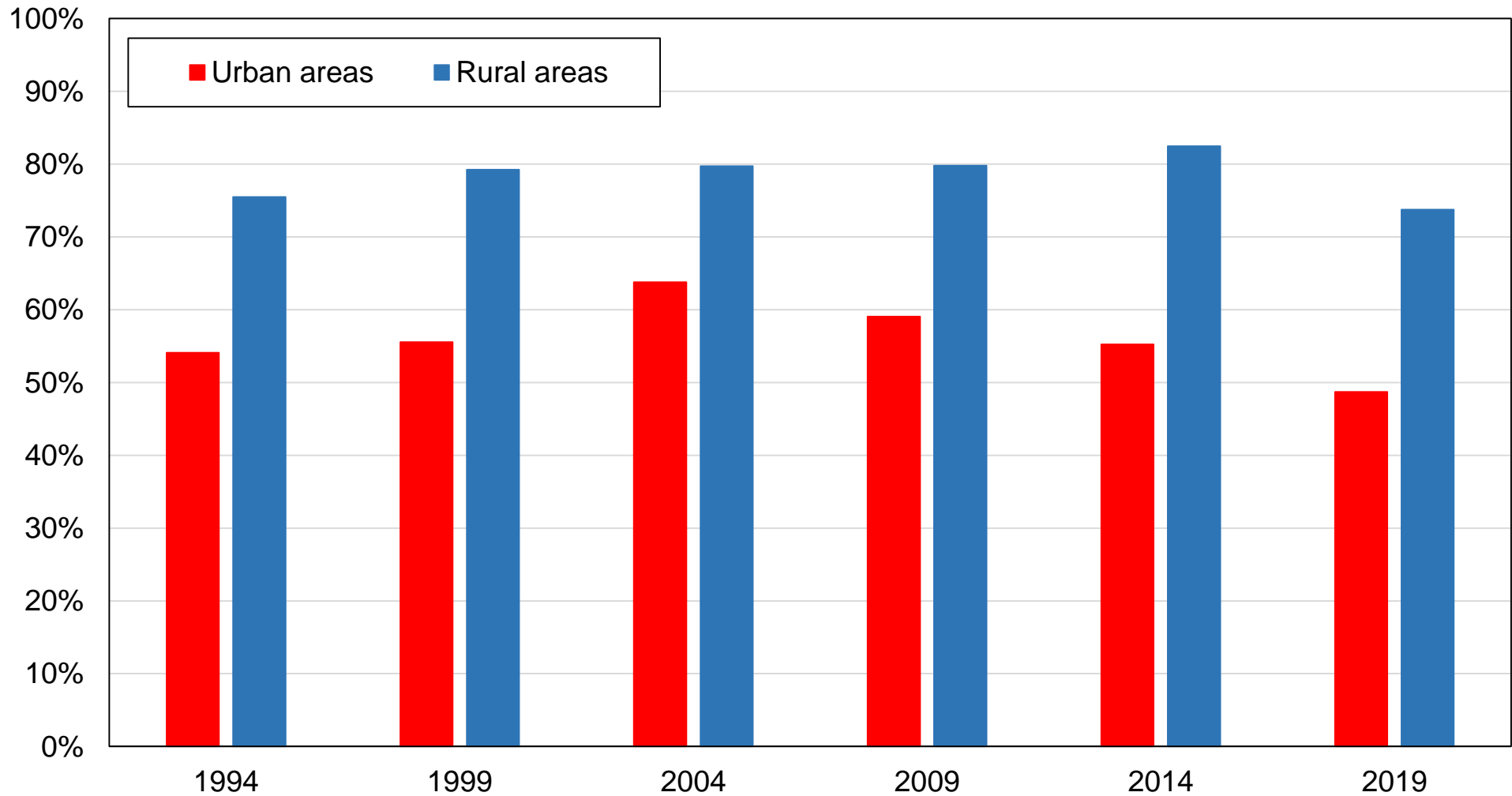
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters living in urban areas voting ANC and the share of voters living in rural areas voting ANC in general elections.

Figure A13 - Vote for the ANC among rural areas, 1994-2019

Legend:
- Difference between (% of rural areas voting ANC) and (% of urban areas voting ANC)
- After controlling for population group
- After controlling for population group, age, gender, income, education, region, employment status

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the difference between the share of voters living in rural areas voting ANC and the share of voters living in urban areas voting ANC in general elections, before and after controls.

	Table A1 - Survey data sources		
Year	Survey	Source	Sample size
1994	IDASA National Election Surve	Datafirst	2517
1999	IDASA Opinion 99	Datafirst	3384
2004	SASAS 2004	Datafirst	5583
2009	SASAS 2009	Datafirst	3305
2014	SASAS 2014	Datafirst	3124
2019	SASAS 2017	Datafirst	3173

Source: author's elaboration.

Note: the table shows the surveys used, the source from which these surveys can be obtained, and the sample size of each survey.

Table A2 - Complete descriptive statistics						
	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
Age: 20-40	44%	39%	44%	42%	41%	42%
Age: 40-60	39%	39%	34%	34%	34%	35%
Age: 60+	18%	22%	22%	24%	24%	23%
Education: Primary	82%	73%	63%	53%	55%	51%
Education: Secondary	13%	24%	32%	38%	40%	42%
Education: Tertiary	5%	4%	5%	8%	5%	8%
Language: Afrikaans	19%	18%	18%	18%	16%	14%
Language: English	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%	10%
Language: North Sotho	7%	10%	9%	7%	9%	10%
Language: Other	9%	8%	10%	11%	12%	12%
Language: South Sotho	8%	9%	8%	7%	8%	9%
Language: Tswana	8%	9%	7%	8%	9%	9%
Language: Xhosa	14%	16%	14%	16%	16%	14%
Language: Zulu	23%	20%	24%	22%	20%	22%
Population group: Black	69%	71%	72%	72%	74%	76%
Population group: White	19%	17%	15%	14%	13%	11%
Population group: Coloured	10%	9%	10%	11%	10%	10%
Population group: Indian	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Province: Cape	31%	27%	27%	29%	27%	25%
Province: Free State	6%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%
Province: Kwazulu-Natal	22%	21%	21%	20%	18%	19%
Province: Northern	40%	45%	46%	45%	50%	51%
Rural areas	39%	44%	34%	33%	25%	31%
Gender: Men	48%	48%	47%	48%	49%	49%

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.

Note: the table shows descriptive statistics for selected available variables. In 2014, 74% of the voting age population considered itself to be Black, while 13% were White.

	Democratic Alliance		Economic Freedom Fighters	
	All	Blacks	All	Blacks
Population group				
Black	10%		10%	
White	96%		1%	
Coloured	77%		2%	
Indian	70%		1%	
Education				
Primary	21%	6%	5%	6%
Secondary	33%	13%	12%	15%
Tertiary	63%	20%	9%	18%
Income				
Bottom 50%	13%	8%	8%	8%
Middle 40%	26%	10%	8%	7%
Top 10%	68%	15%	11%	25%
Location				
Urban	37%	11%	8%	11%
Rural	11%	7%	8%	9%
Region				
Cape	38%	5%	7%	10%
Free State	14%	8%	9%	10%
Kwazulu-Natal	21%	13%	4%	4%
Northern	28%	10%	10%	12%
Gender				
Woman	27%	10%	5%	6%
Man	31%	9%	11%	14%
Age				
20-30	22%	12%	16%	18%
30-50	26%	8%	5%	7%
50+	41%	7%	1%	2%
Language				
Afrikaans / English	85%	32%	1%	4%
Other	9%	8%	13%	13%
Xhosa	6%	6%	9%	9%
Zulu	13%	13%	5%	5%

Table A3 - Structure of the vote for opposition parties in South Africa, 2014-2019

Source: author's computations using South Africa political attitudes surveys.
Note: the table shows the share of votes received by the Democratic Alliance and the Economic Freedom Fighters among the overall population and among Blacks by selected individual characteristics, averaged over the 2014-2019 period.

Figure B1 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by population group
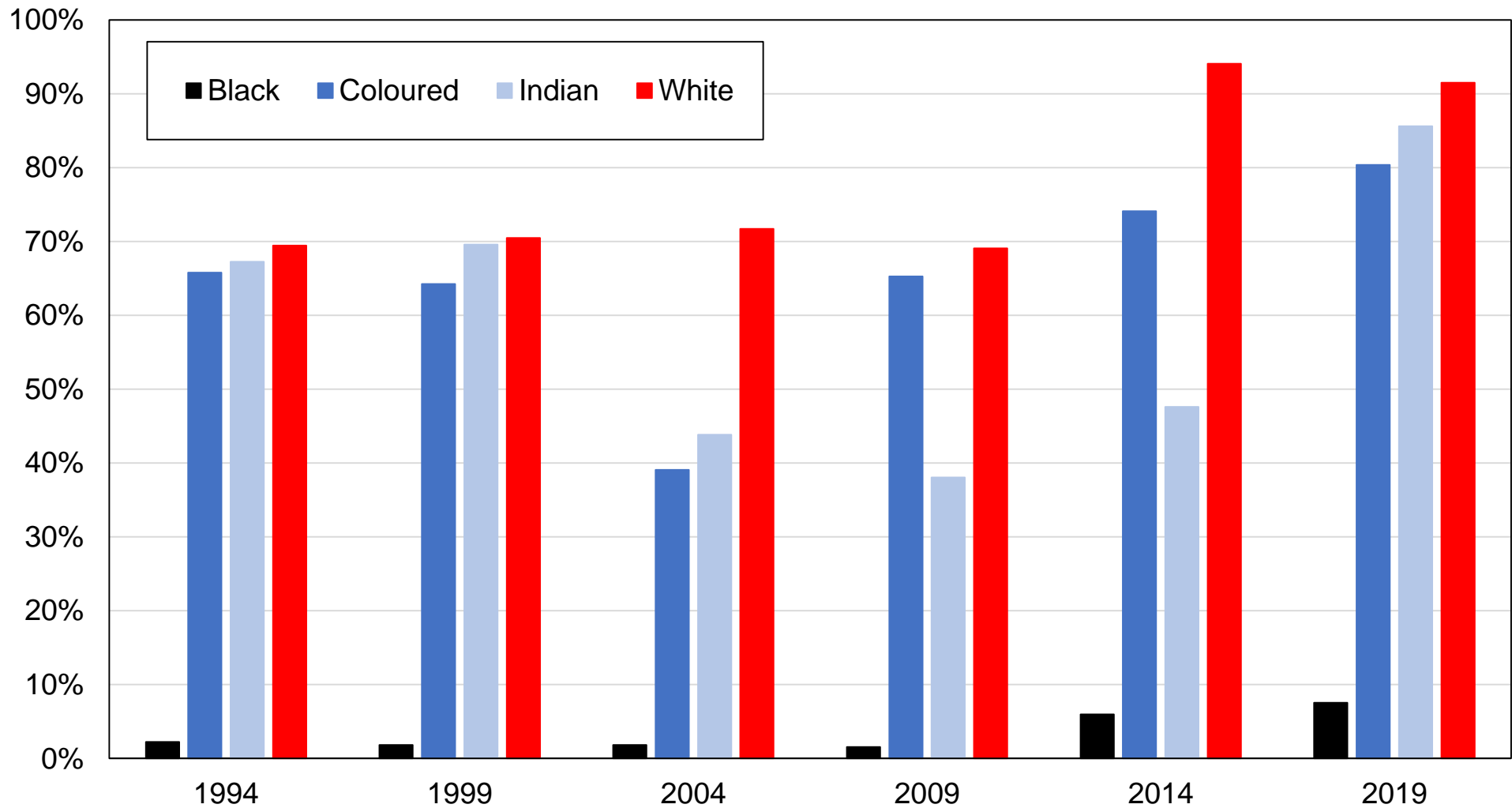
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by population group.
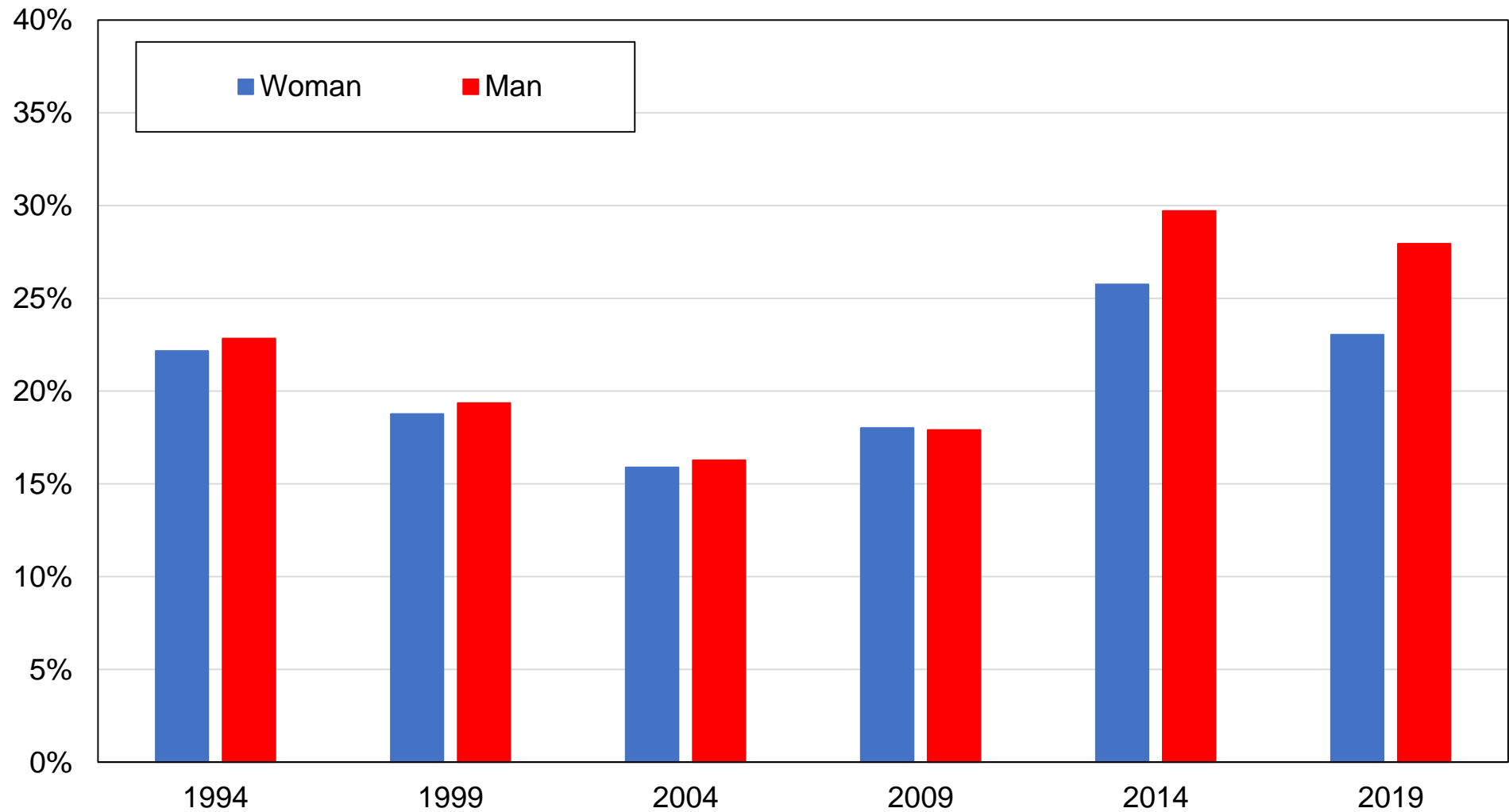
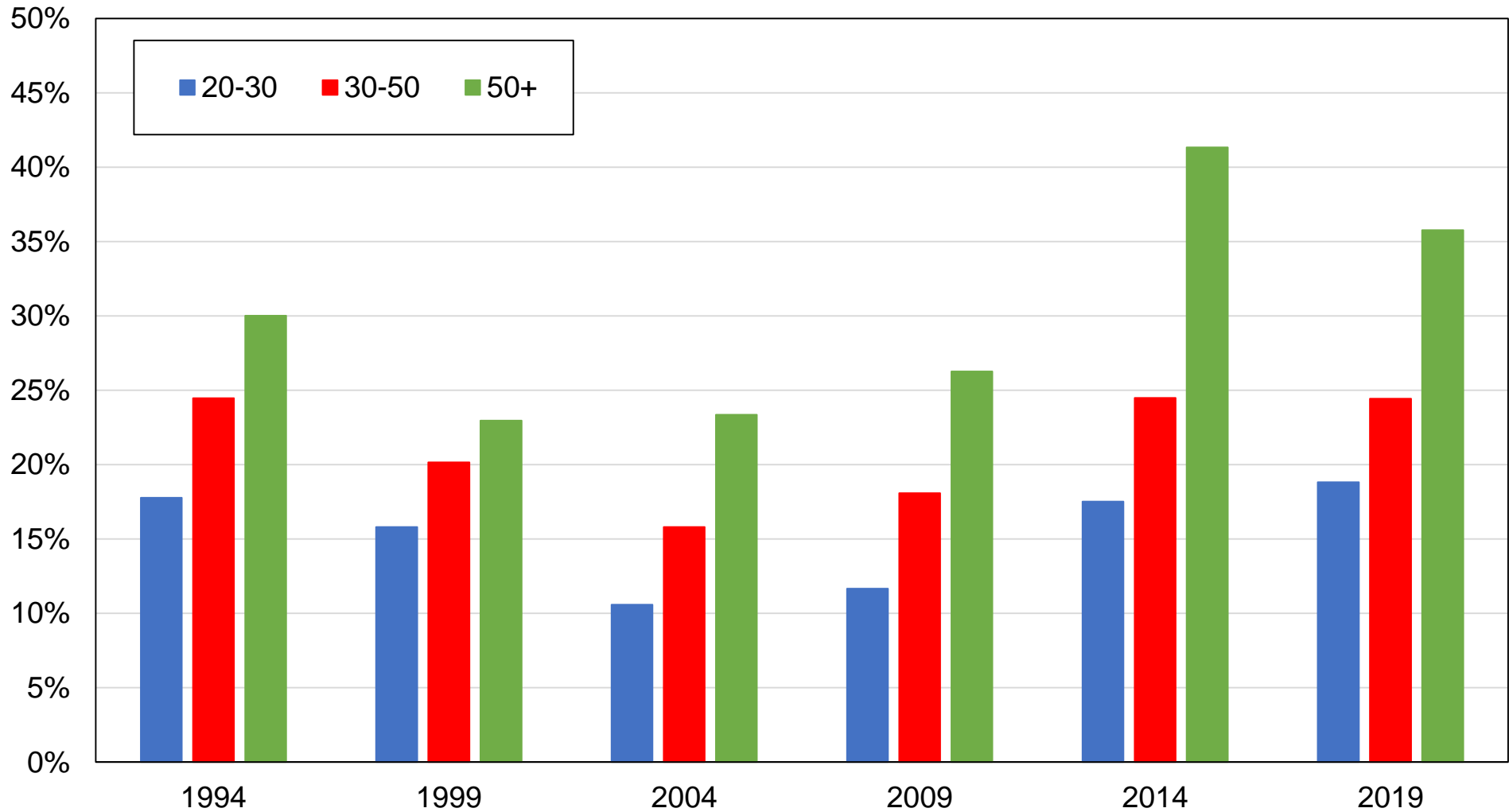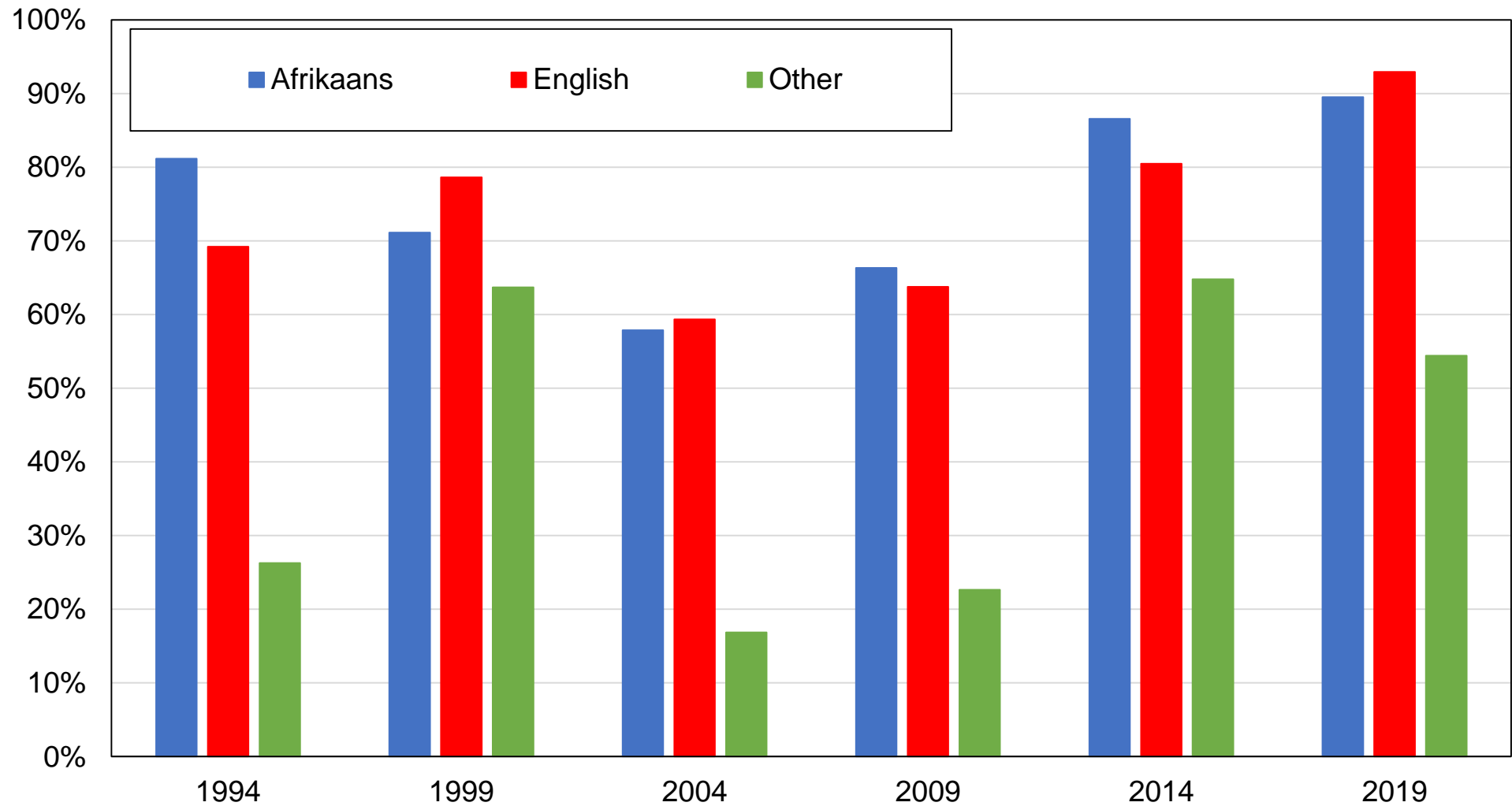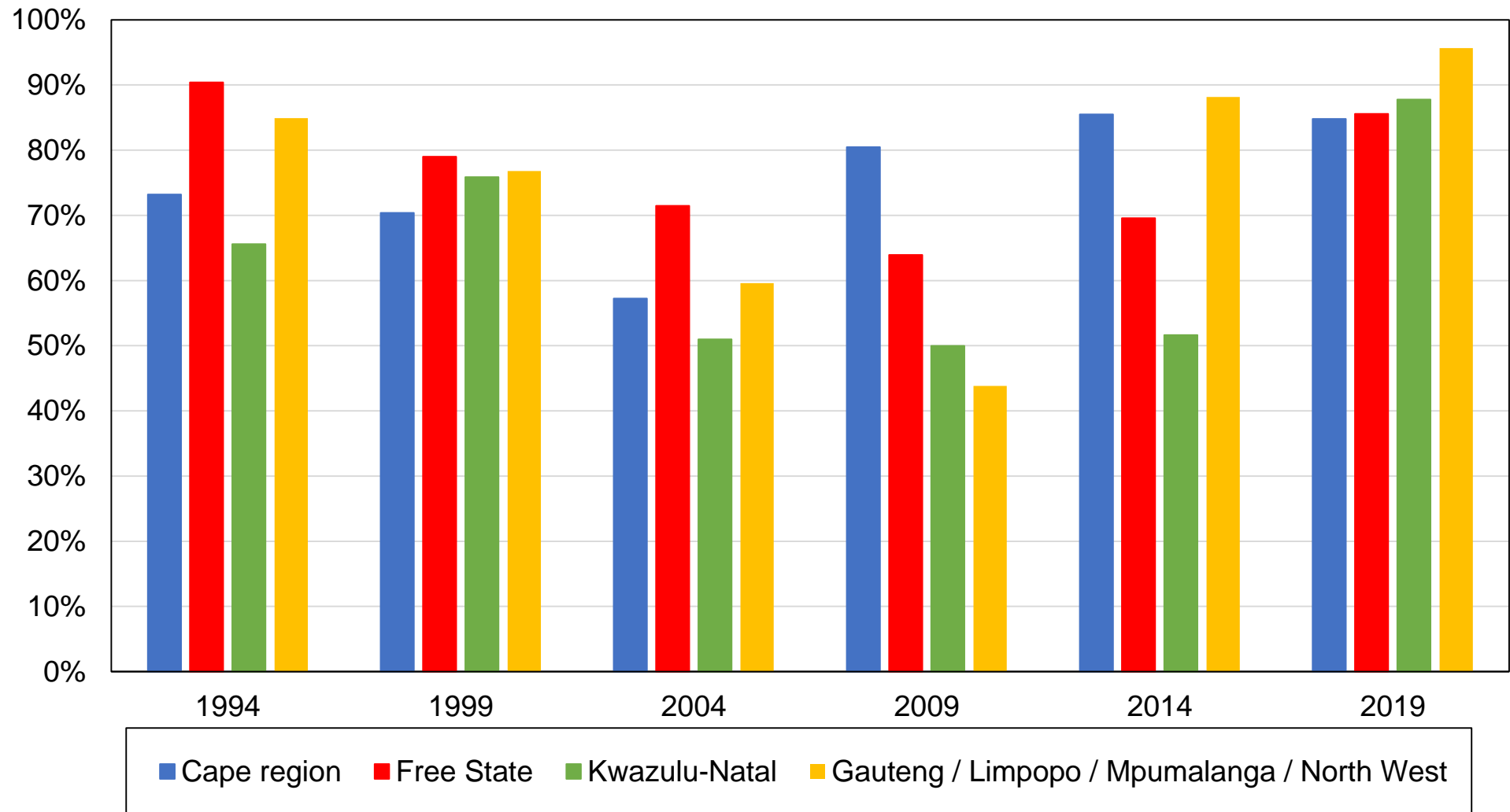# Figure B2 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by language
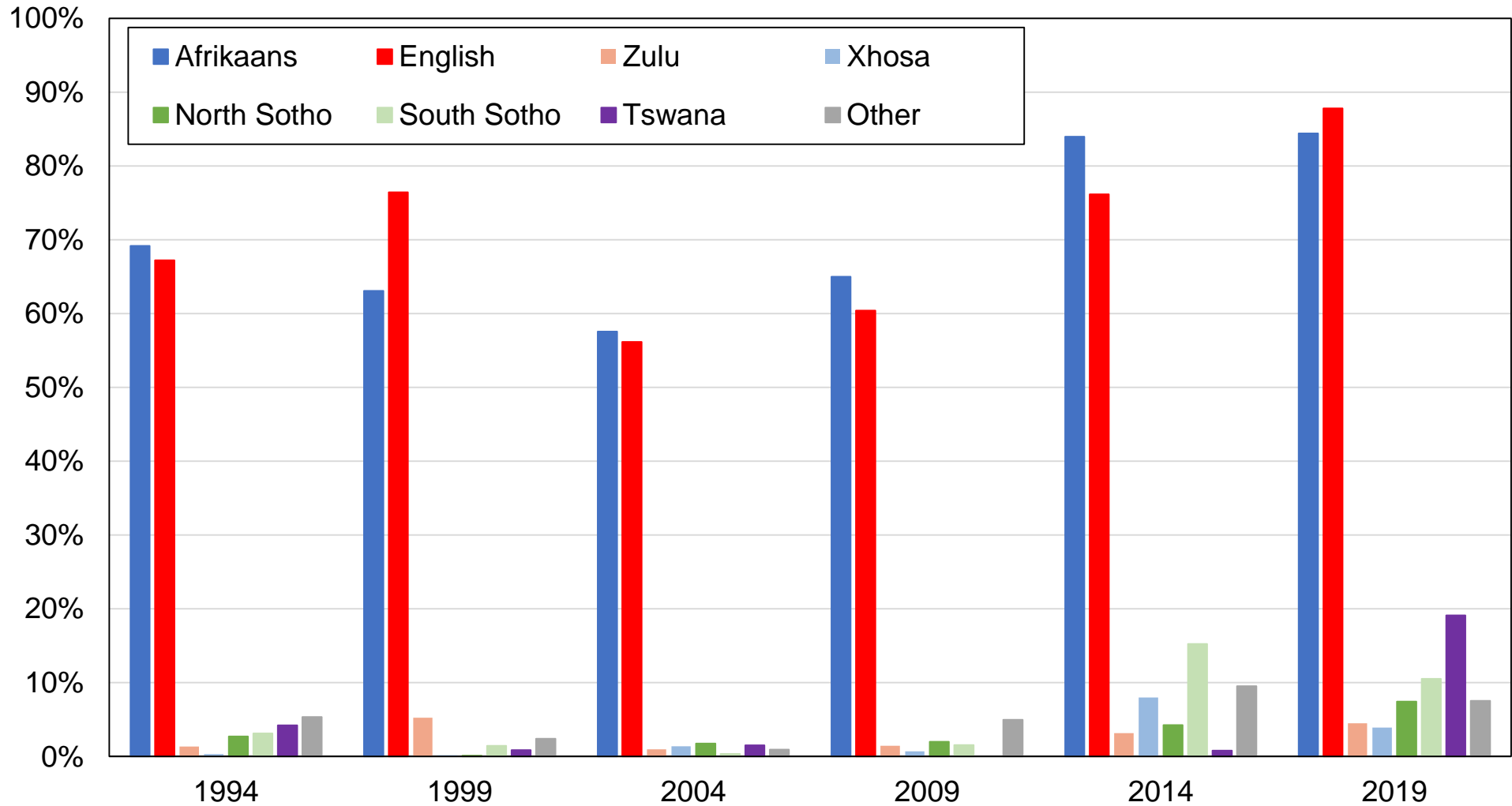
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by language most spoken at home.

Figure B3 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by region
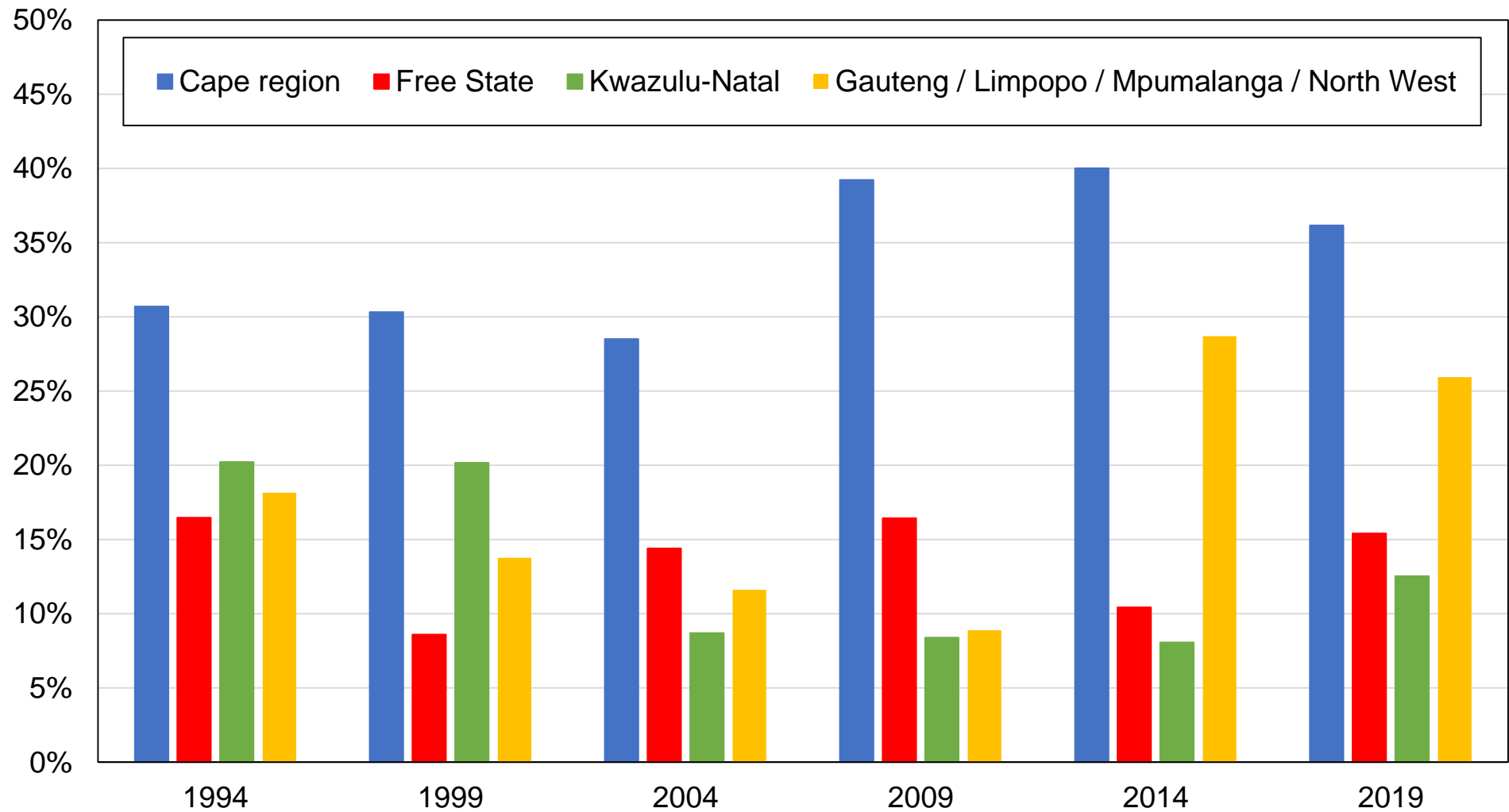
Legend: Cape region ■ | Free State ■ | Kwazulu-Natal ■ | Gauteng / Limpopo / Mpumalanga / North West ■

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by region.
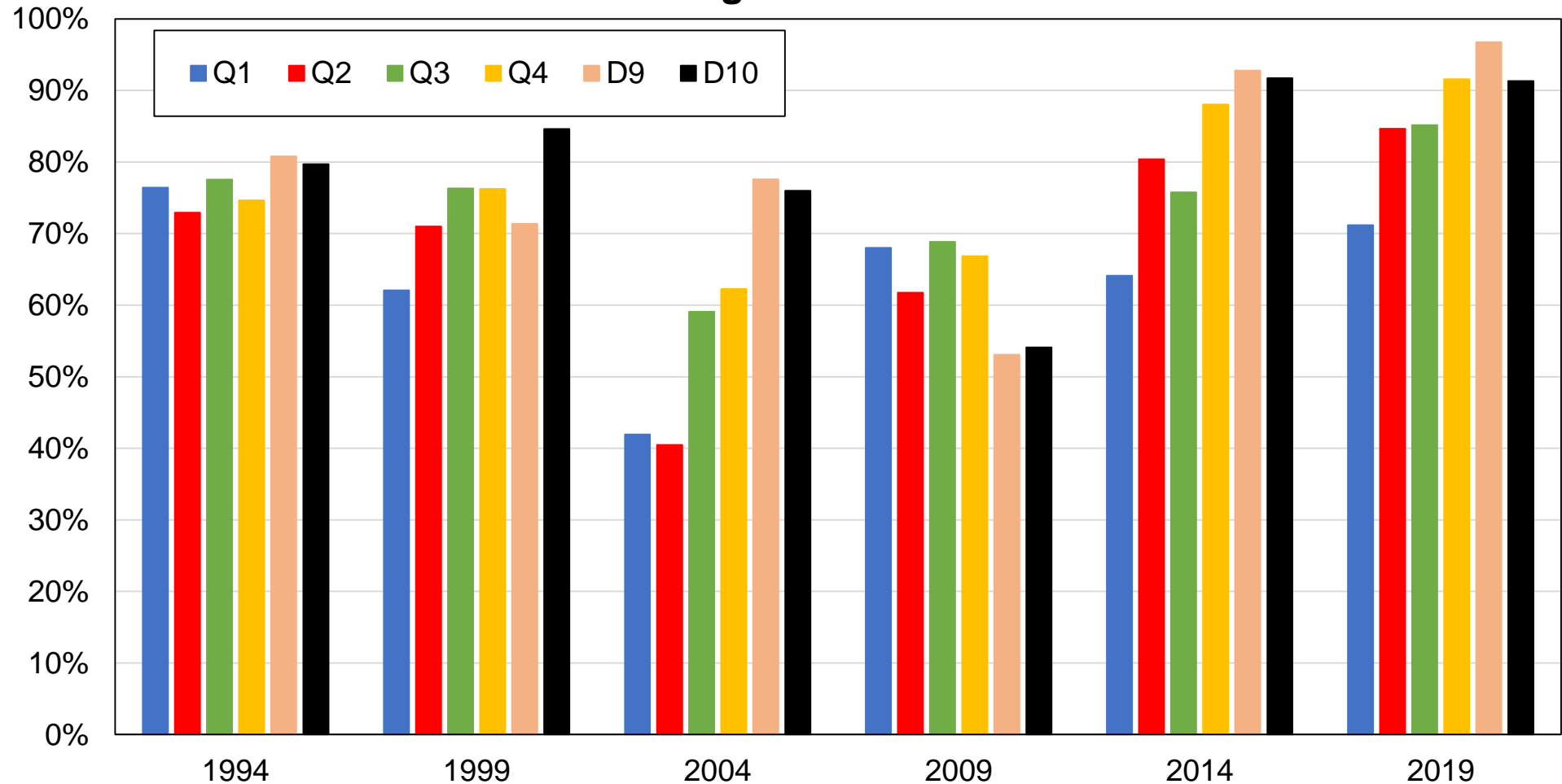
Figure B4 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by education level
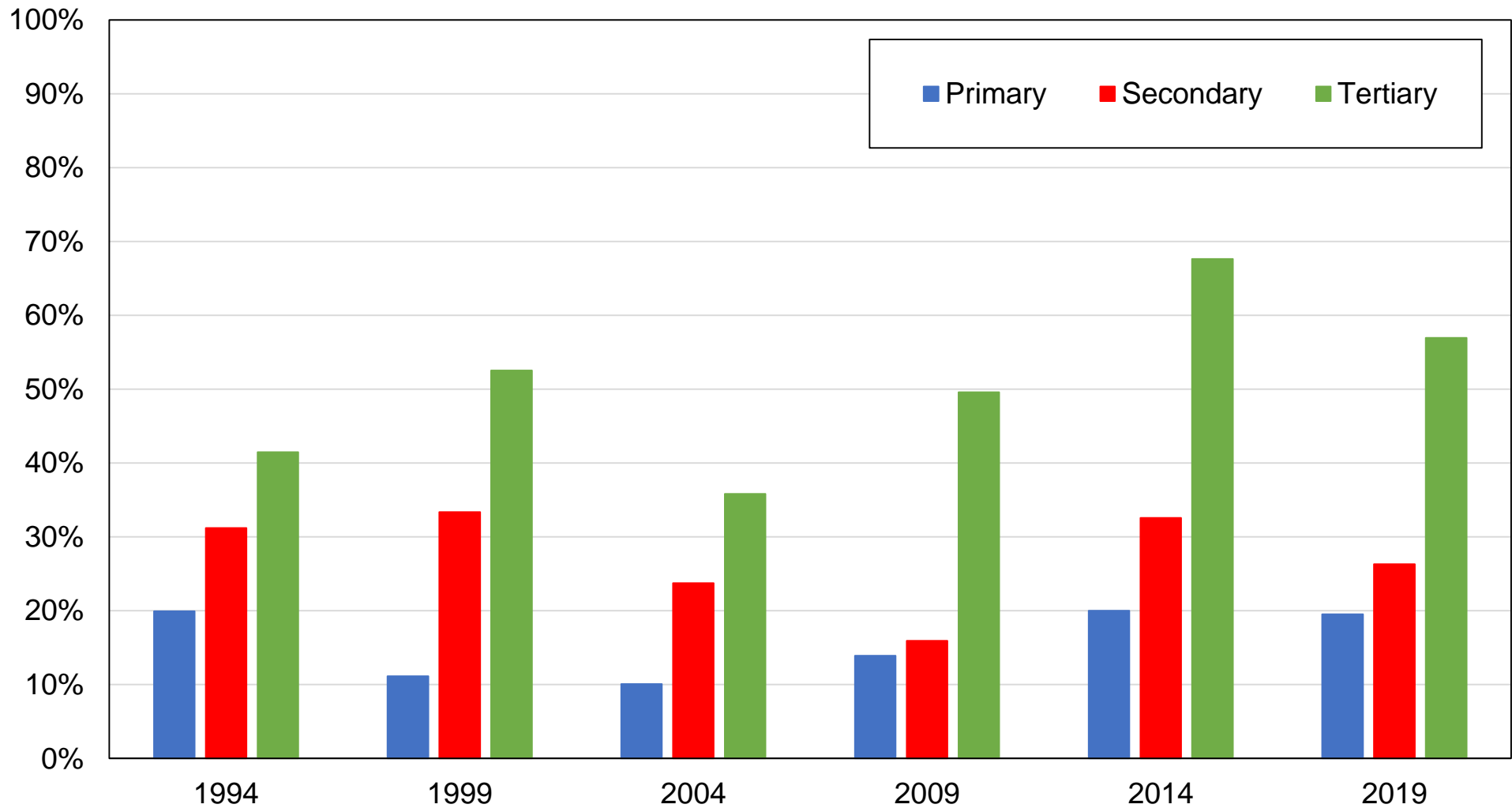
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by level of education. Primary education includes those with no education at all.

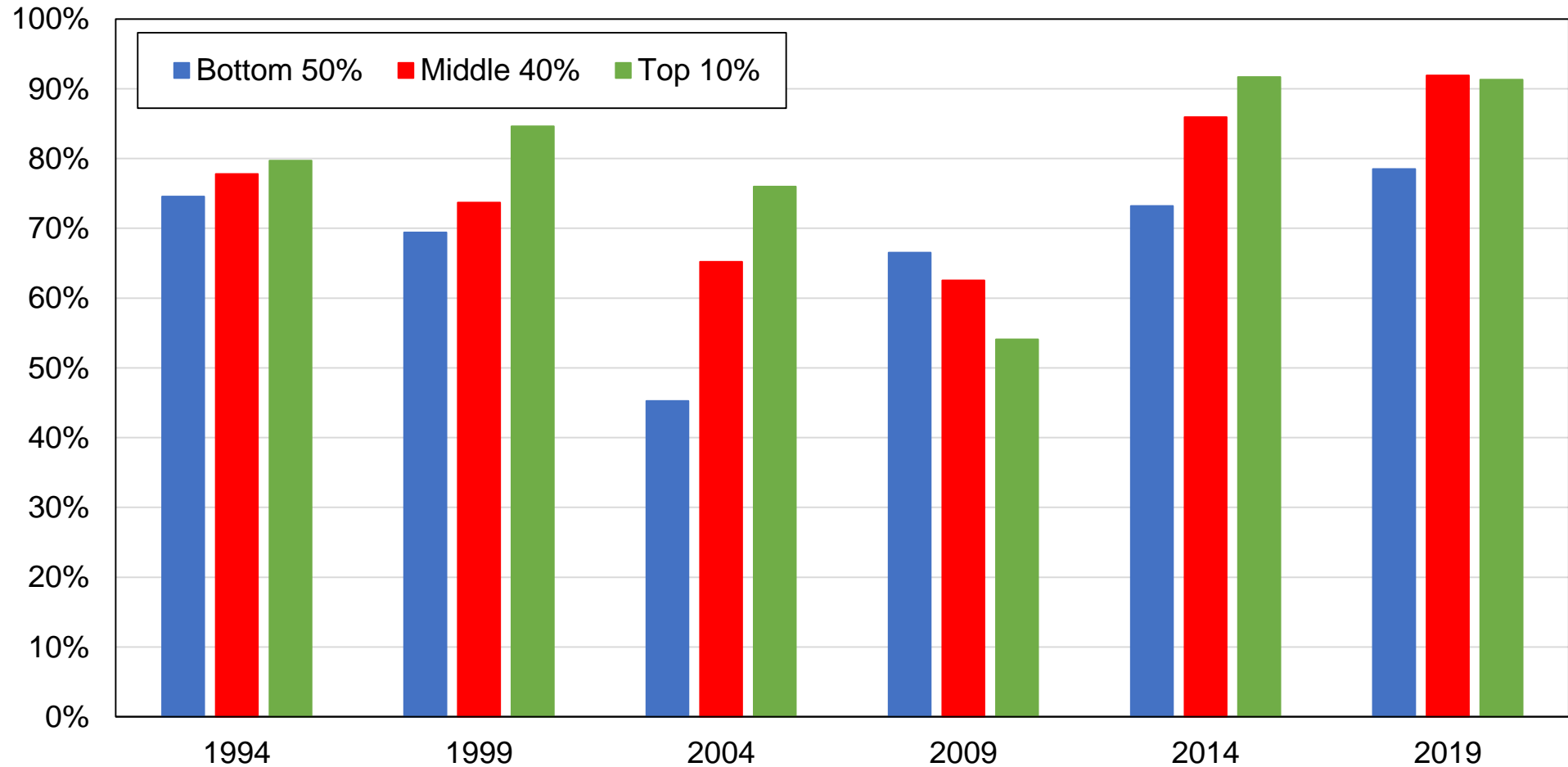# Figure B5 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by education group
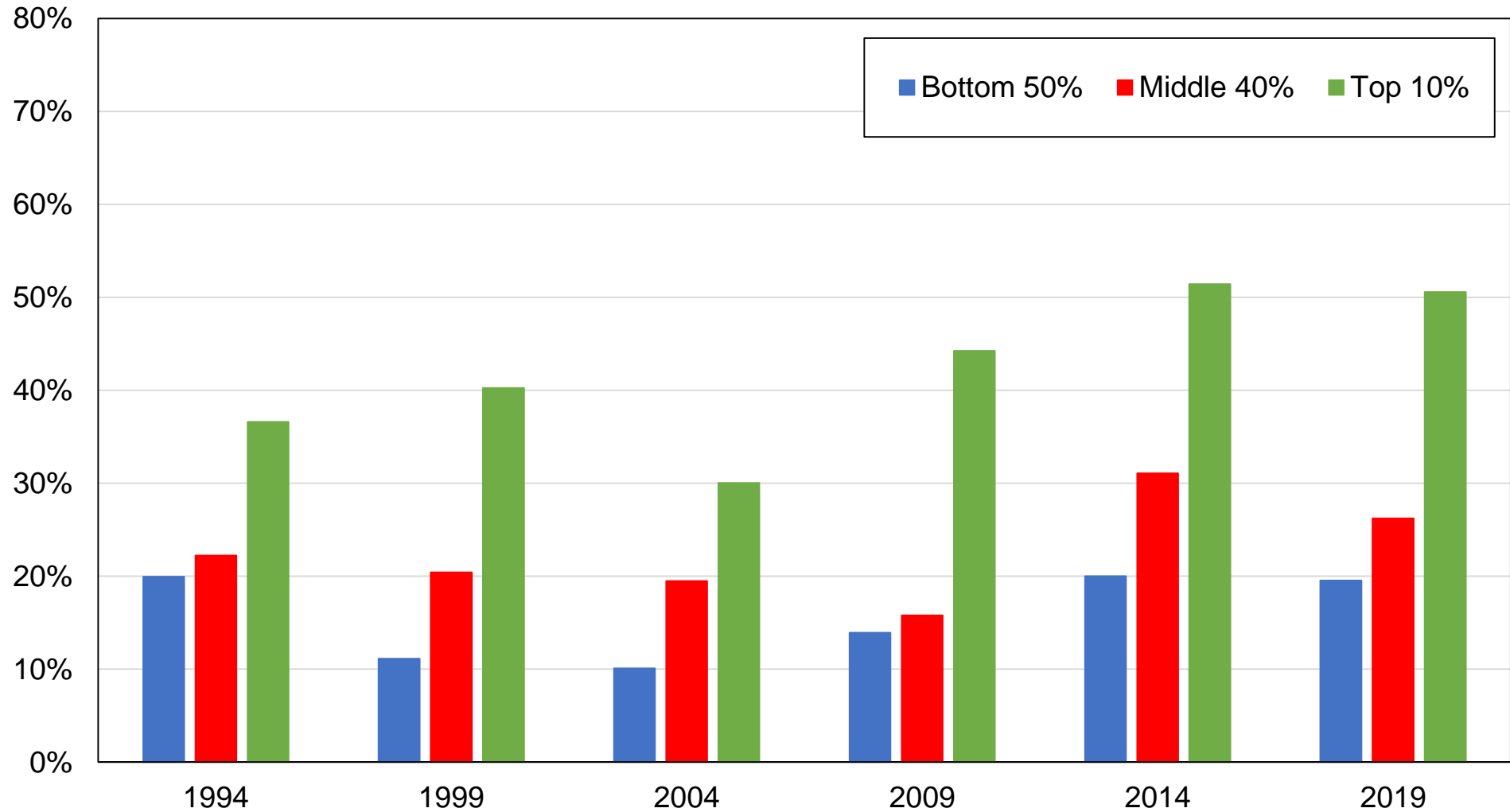
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by education rank.

Figure B6 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by income group
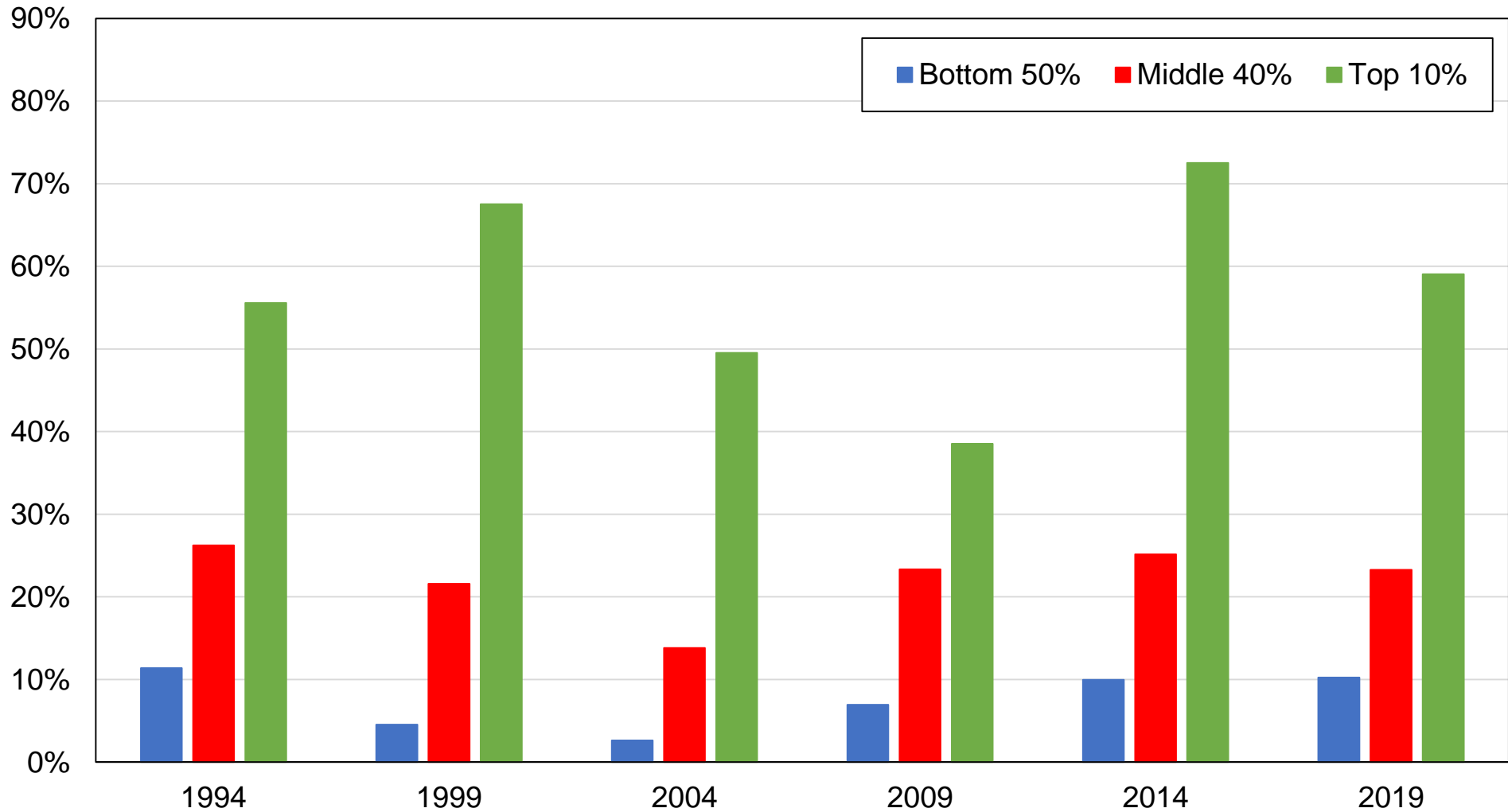
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by income group.
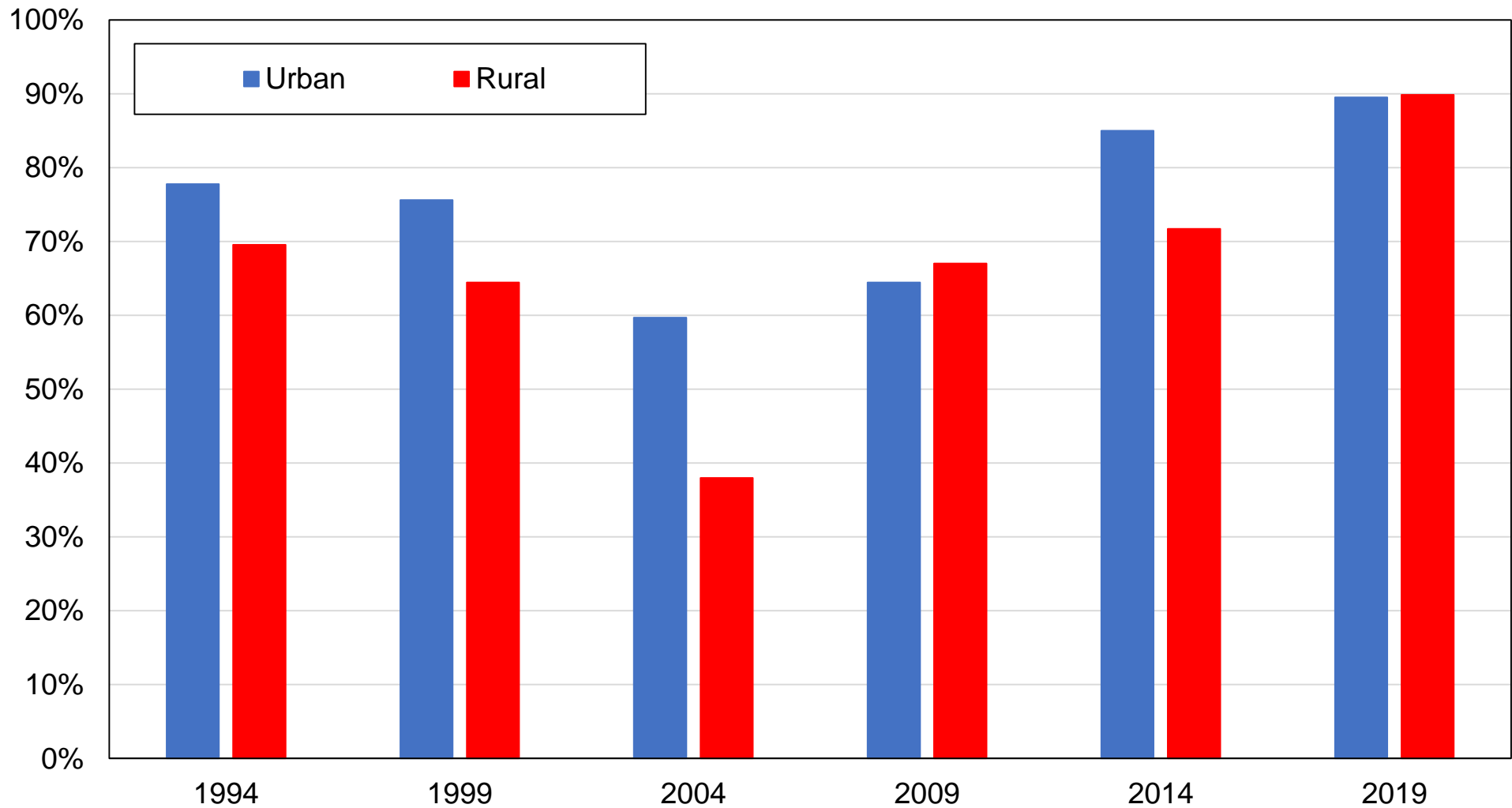
Figure B7 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by wealth group
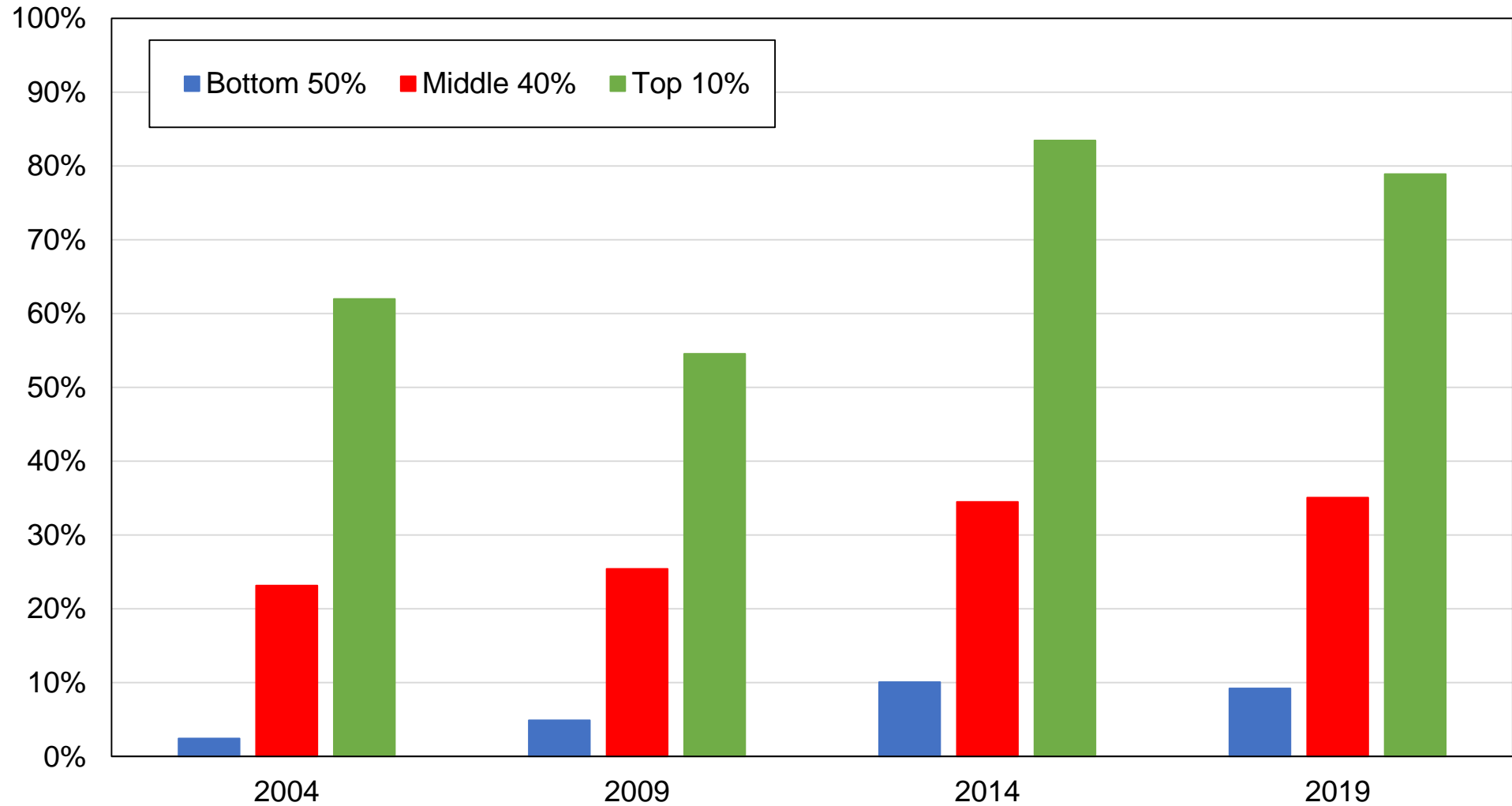
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by wealth group.
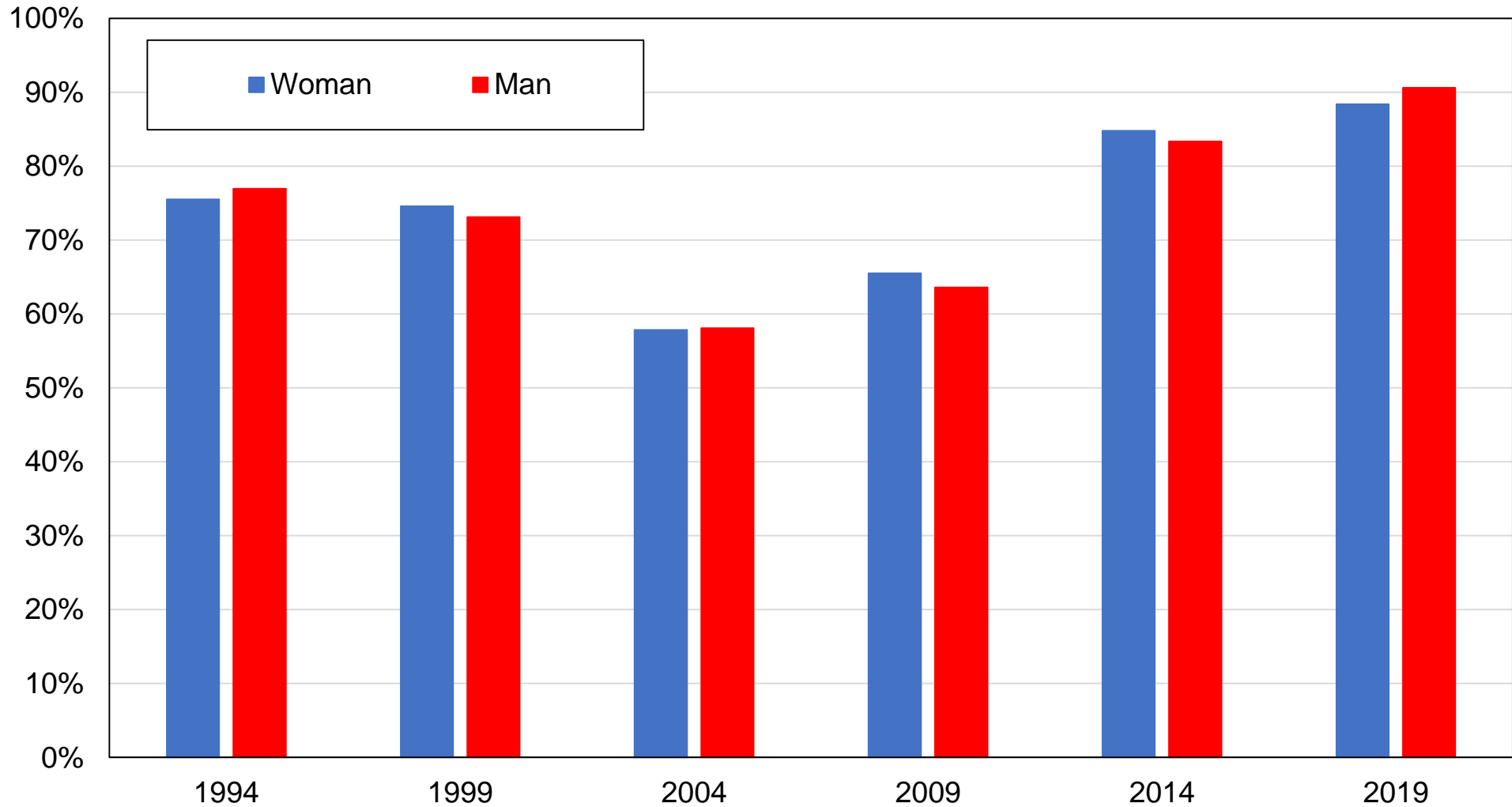
Figure B8 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by location
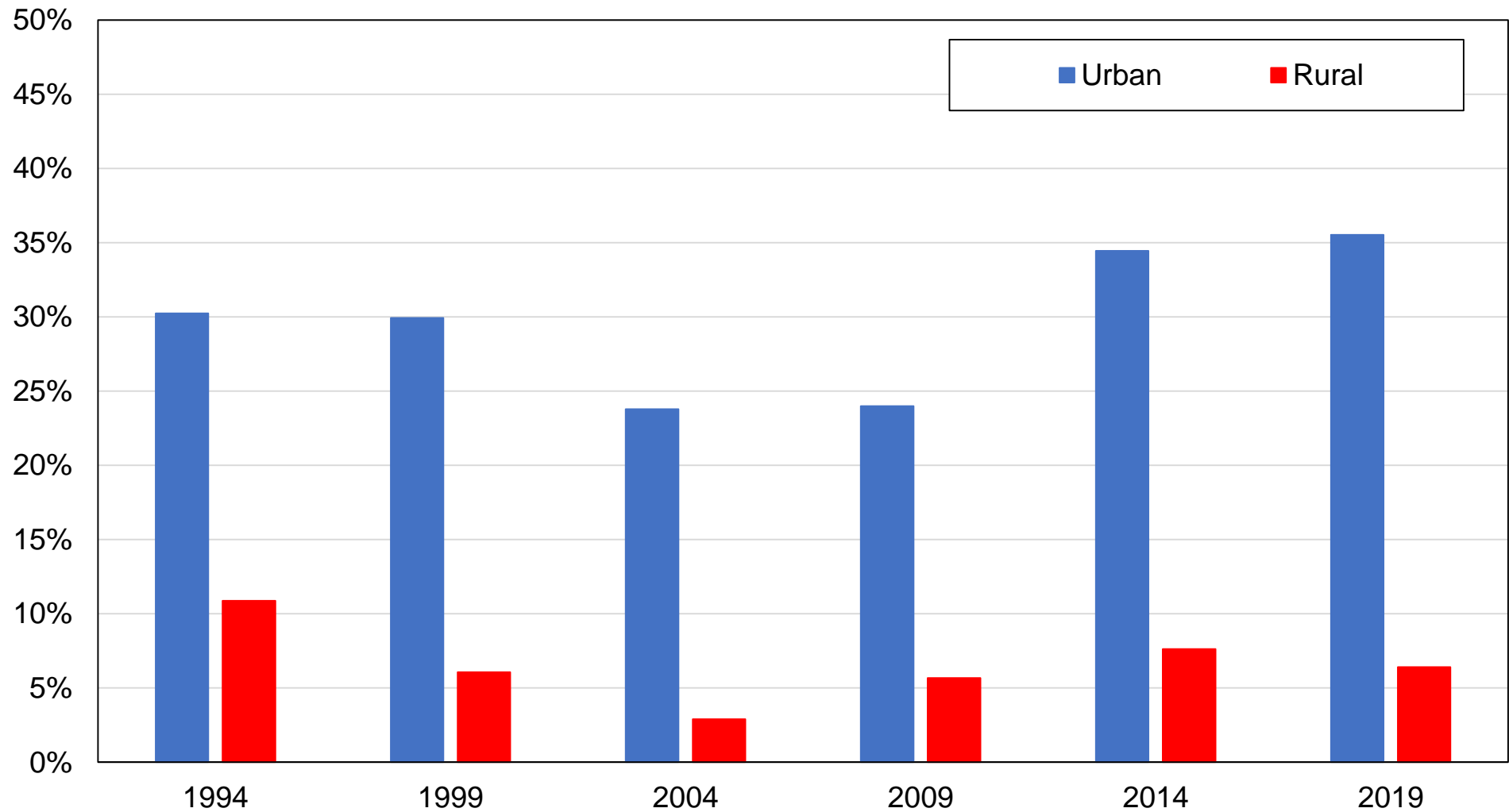
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by rural-urban location.

Figure B9 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by gender

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by gender.

Figure B10 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by age group

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by age group among non-Blacks.
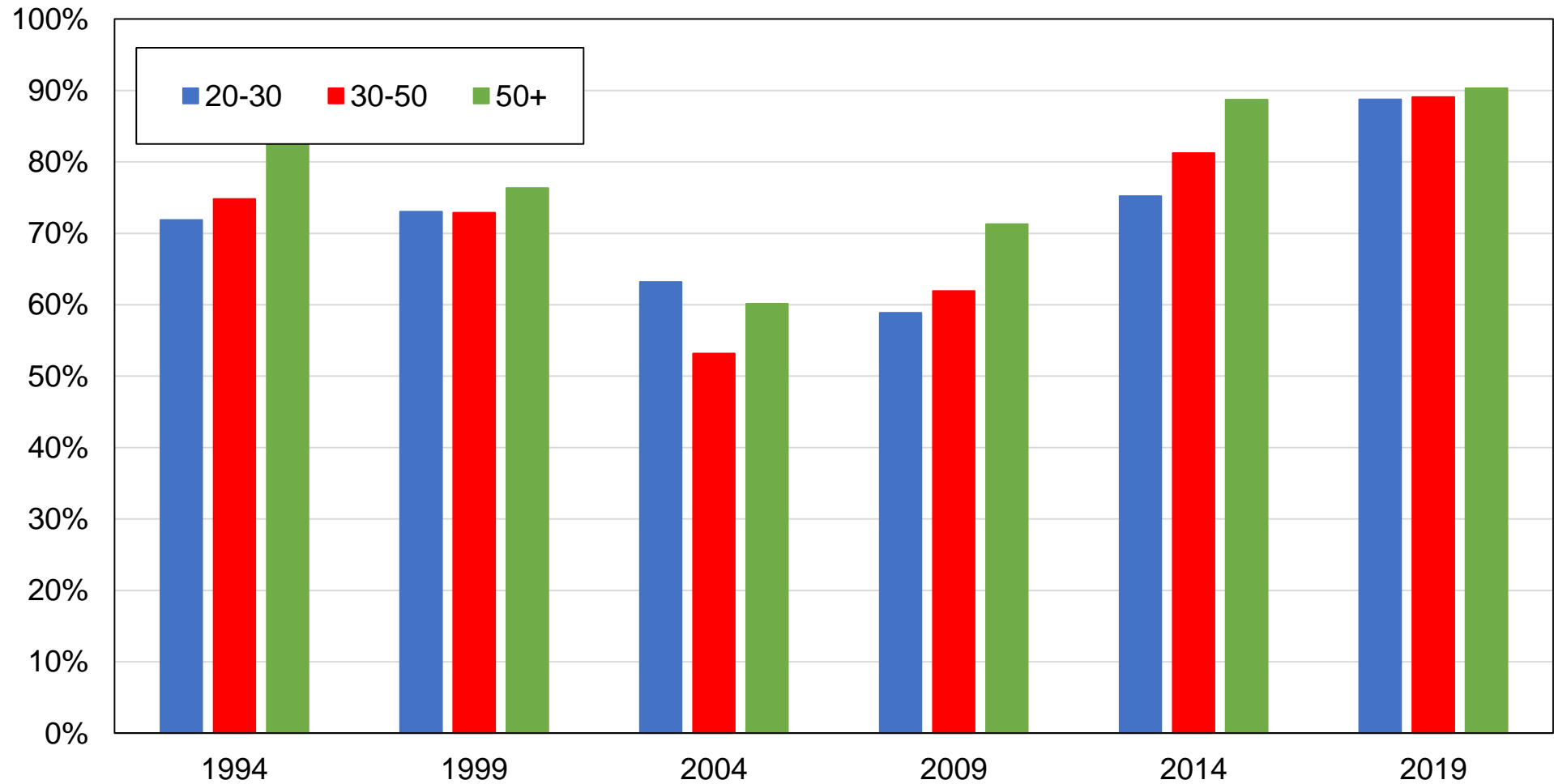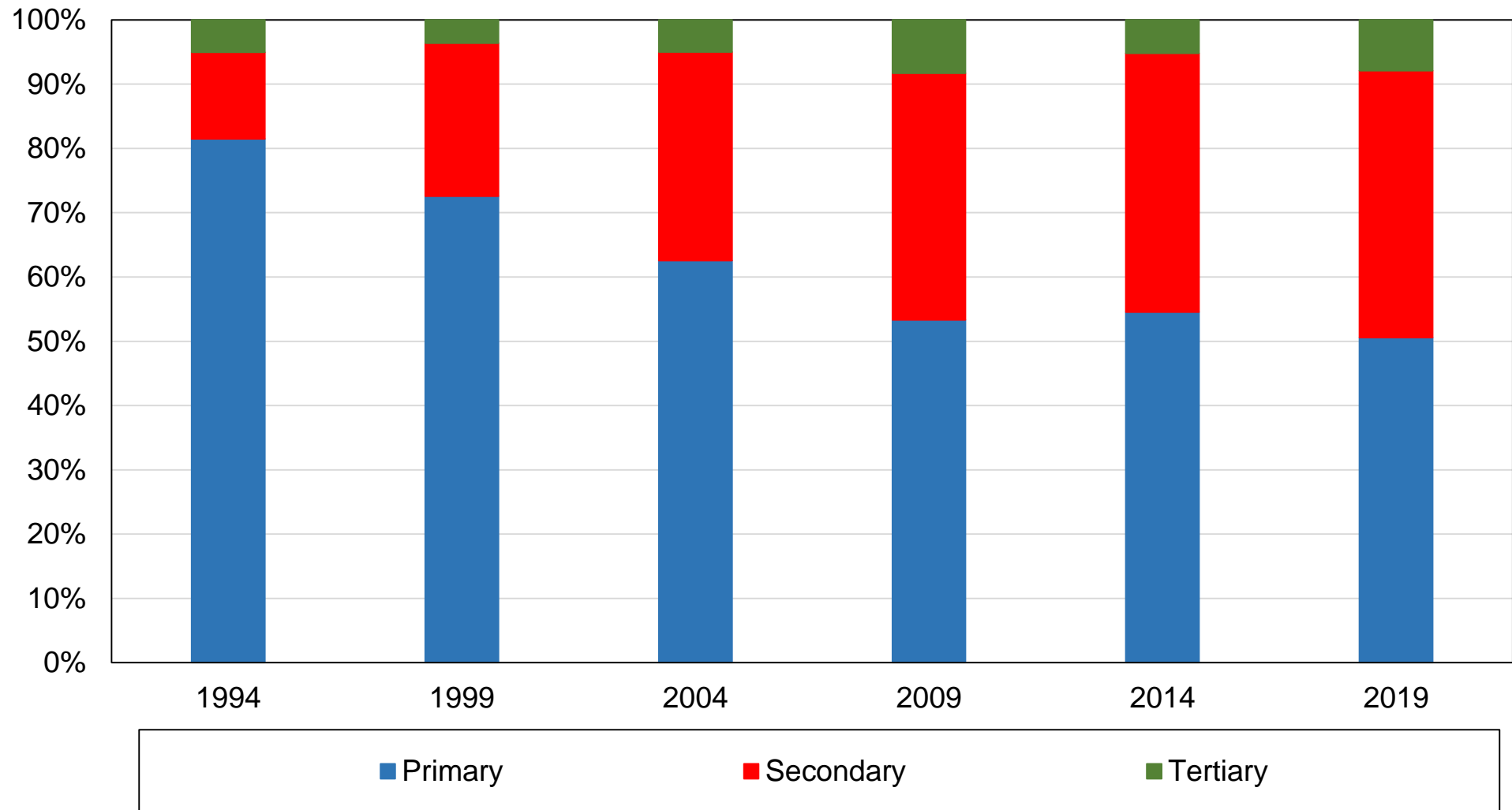
Figure B11 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by language among non-Blacks

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by language most spoken at home among non-Blacks.

Figure B12 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by region among non-Blacks

Legend: Cape region ■ Free State ■ Kwazulu-Natal ■ Gauteng / Limpopo / Mpumalanga / North West ■

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by region among non-Blacks.
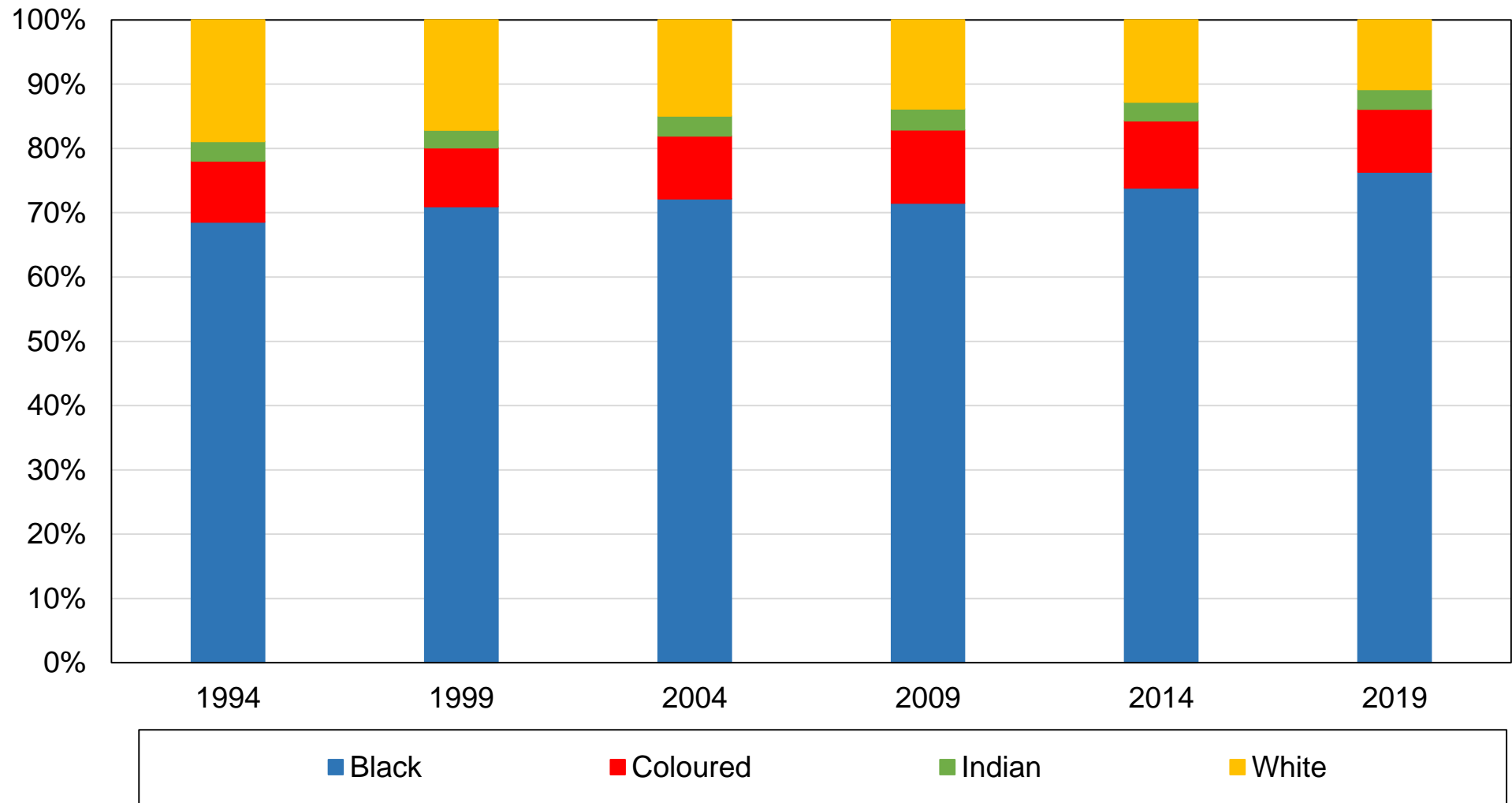
Figure B13 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by education among non-blacks
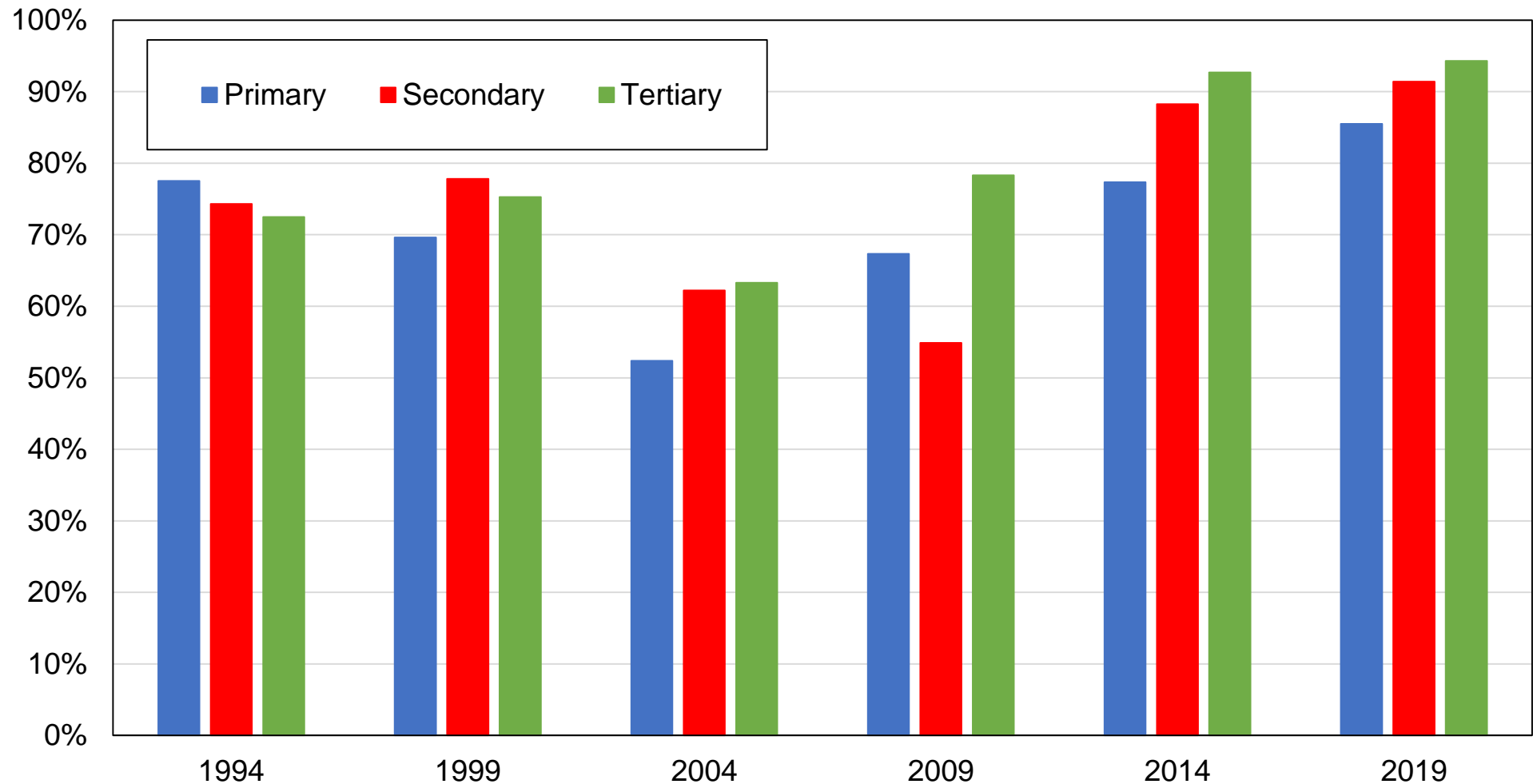
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by level of education among non-black voters. Primary education includes those with no education at all.

Figure B14 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by income quintile/decile among non-Blacks

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by income quintile and among the ningth decile and the top 10% of earners among non-Blacks.

Figure B15 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by income group among non-Blacks

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by income group among non-Blacks (individuals are ranked according to their income position in the non-Black population.

Figure B16 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by location among non-Blacks

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by rural-urban location among non-Blacks

Figure B17 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by gender among non-Blacks

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by gender among non-Blacks.

Figure B18 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by age group among non-Blacks

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by age group among non-Blacks.

Figure C1 - The distribution of education levels in South Africa

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of the South African electorate by education level.
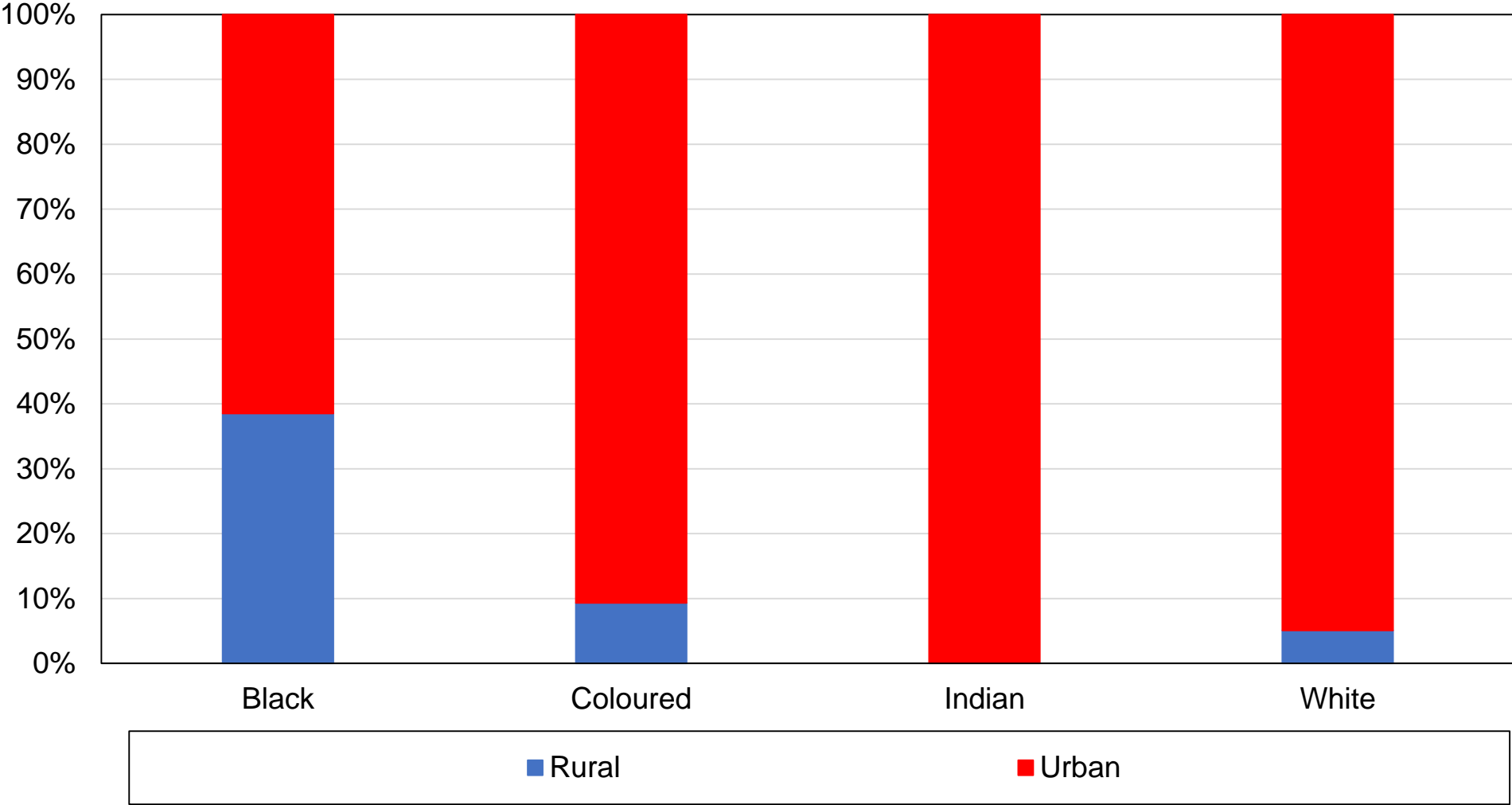
Figure C2 - The distribution of population groups in South Africa

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of the South African electorate by population group.
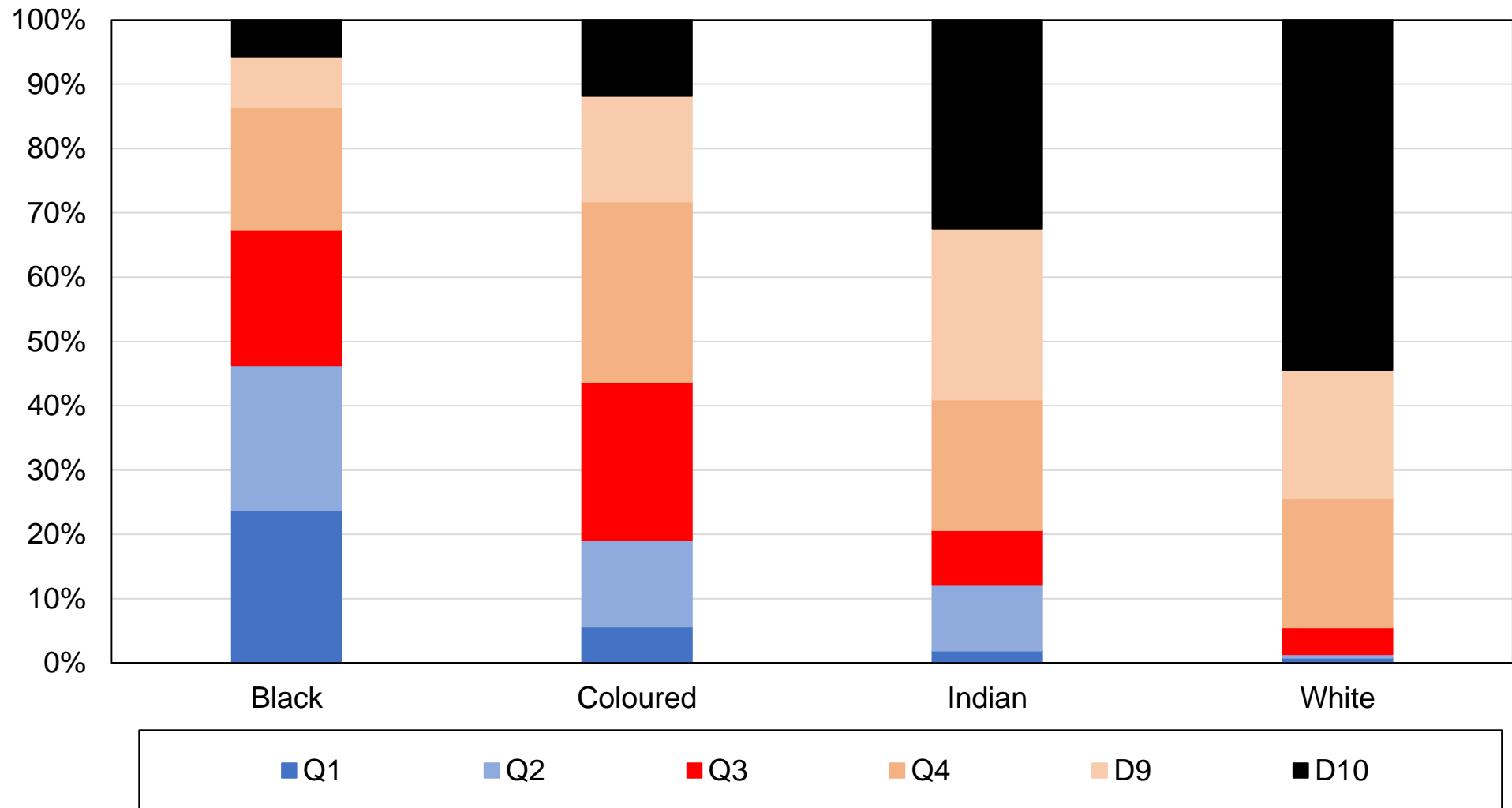
Figure C3 - The distribution of regions in South Africa
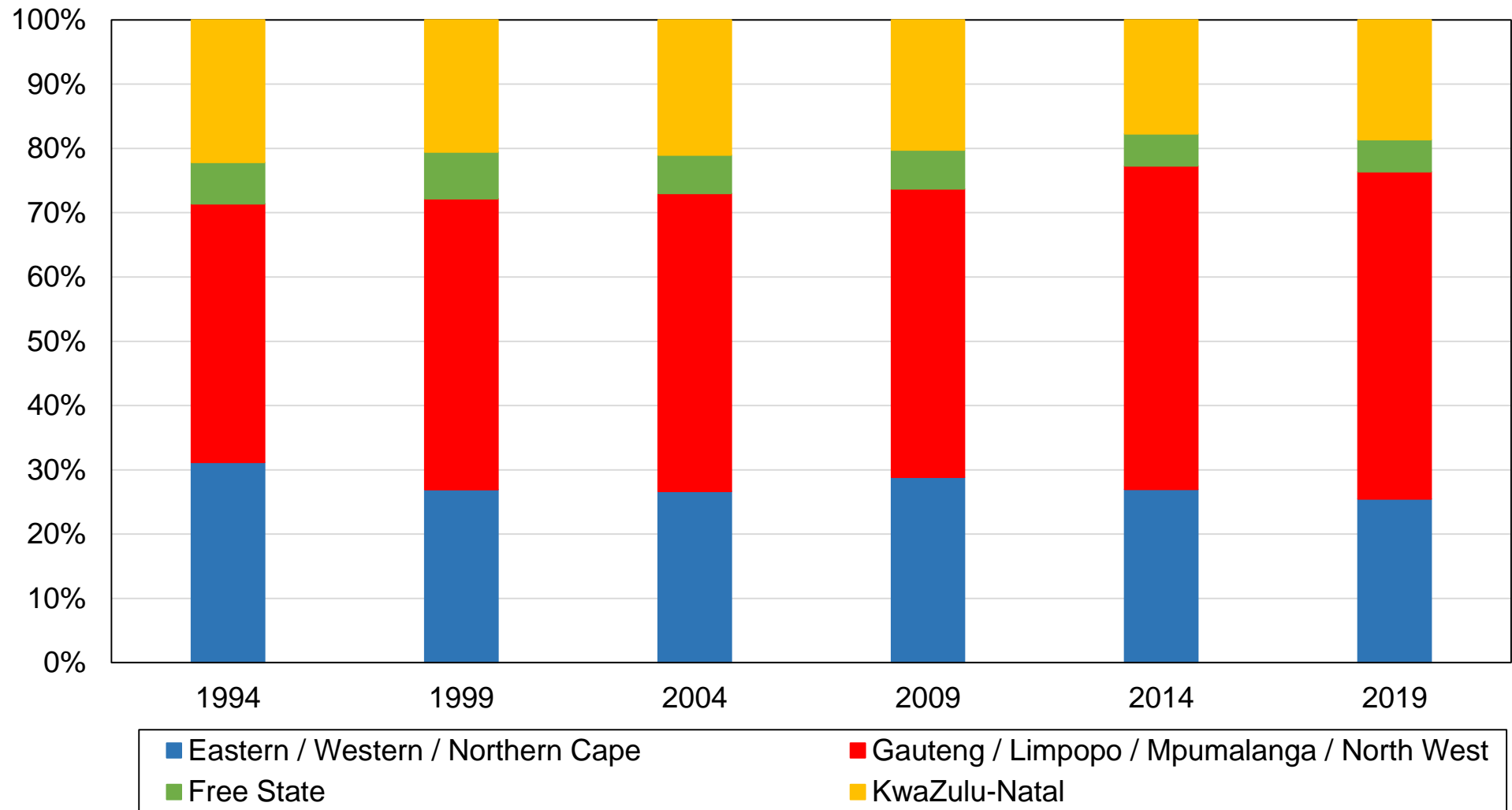
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of the South African electorate by region.

Figure C4 - The distribution of language in South Africa
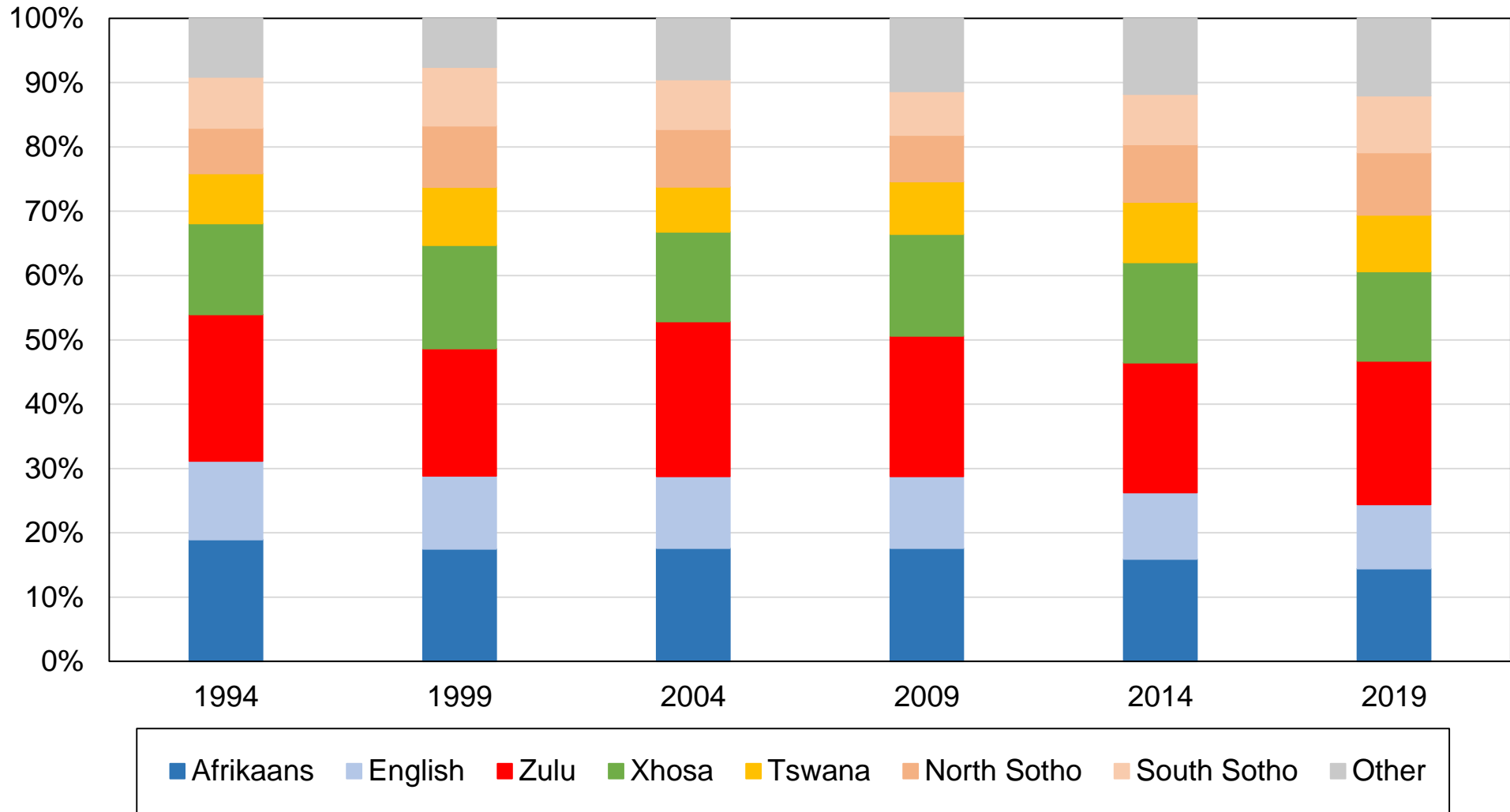
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of the South African electorate by main language spoken at home.

Figure C5 - Distribution of age by race, 2019
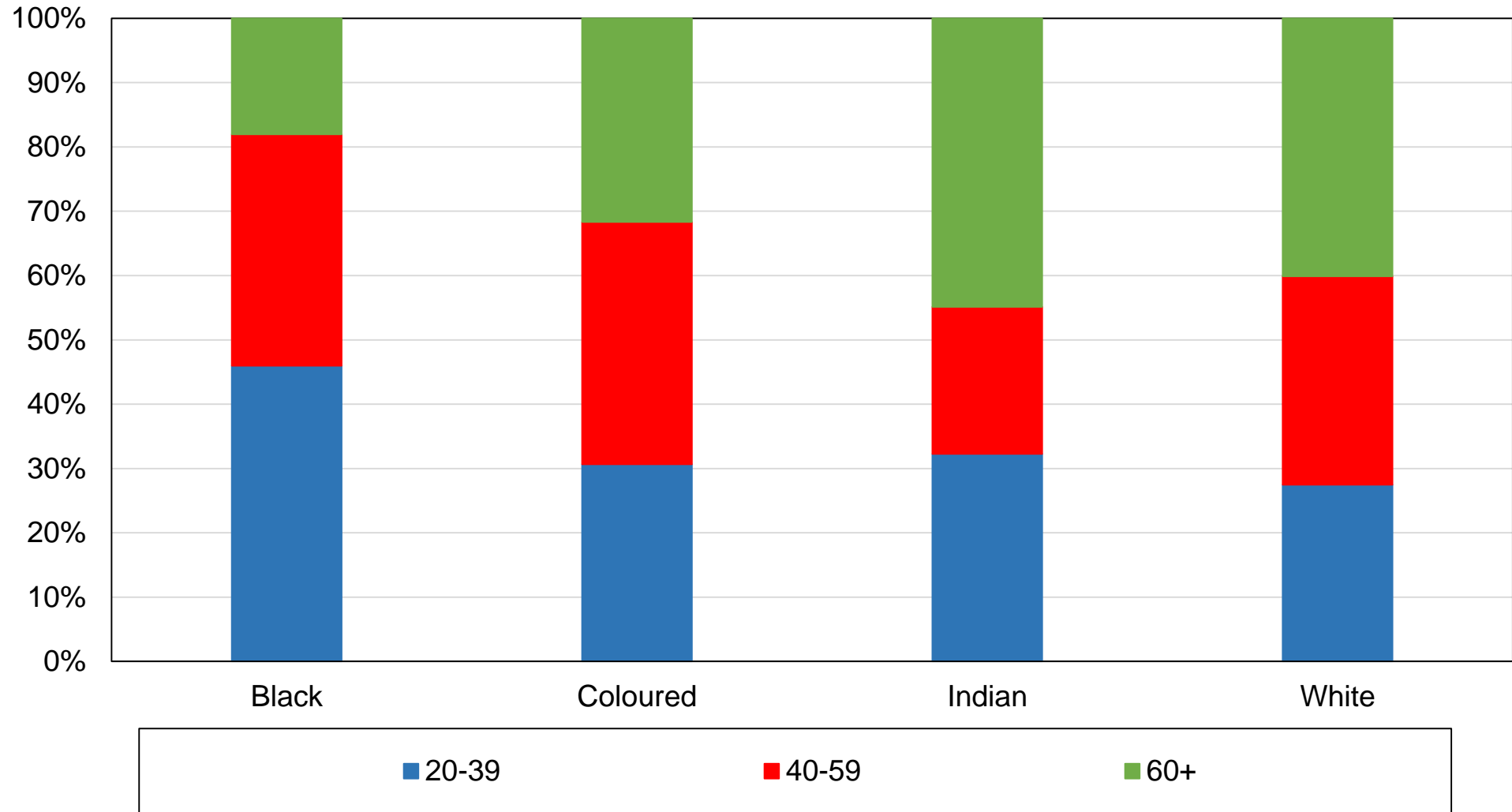
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
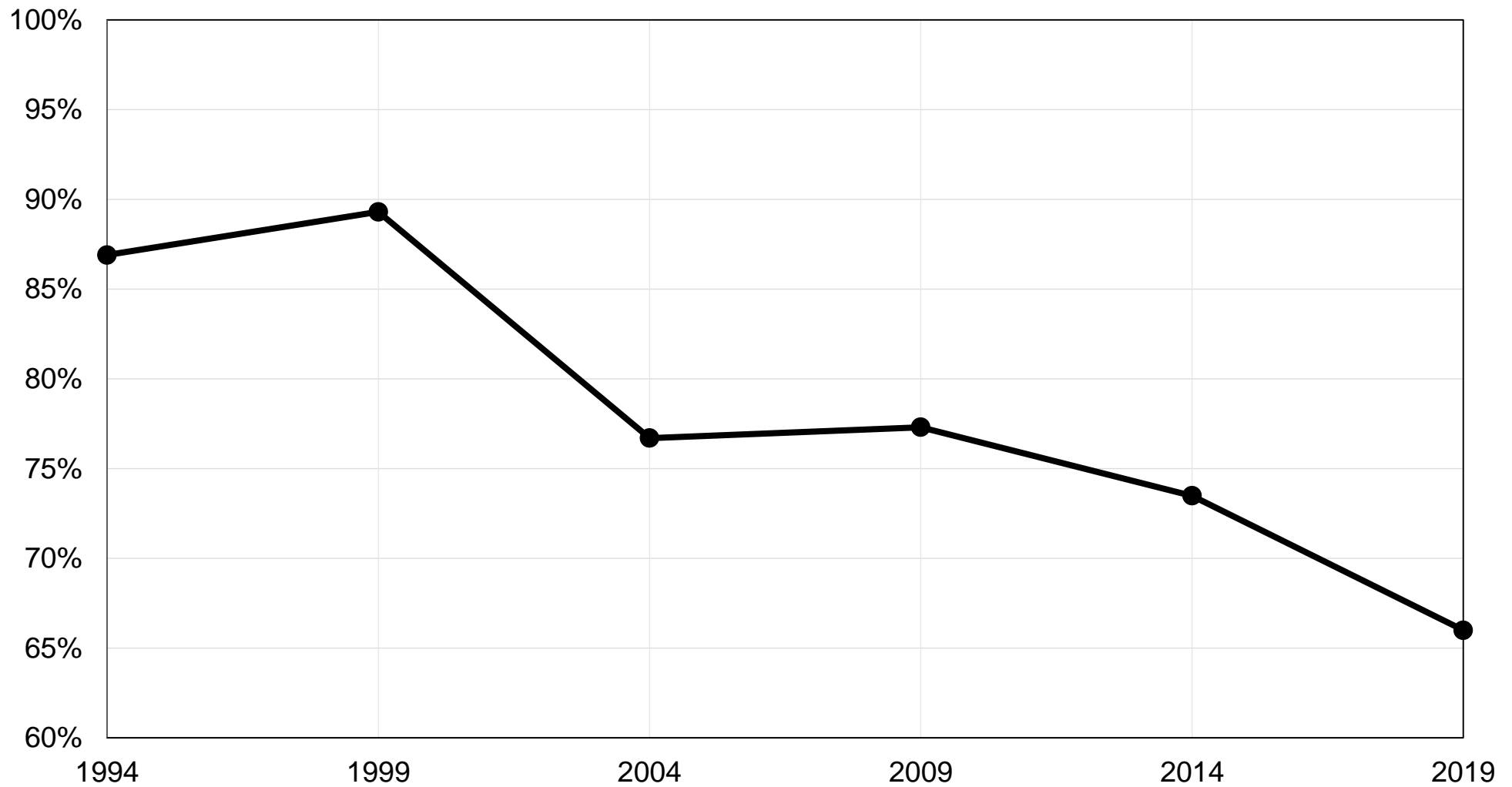**Note**: the figure shows the composition of South African population groups by age group.

Figure C6 - Distribution of education by race, 2019
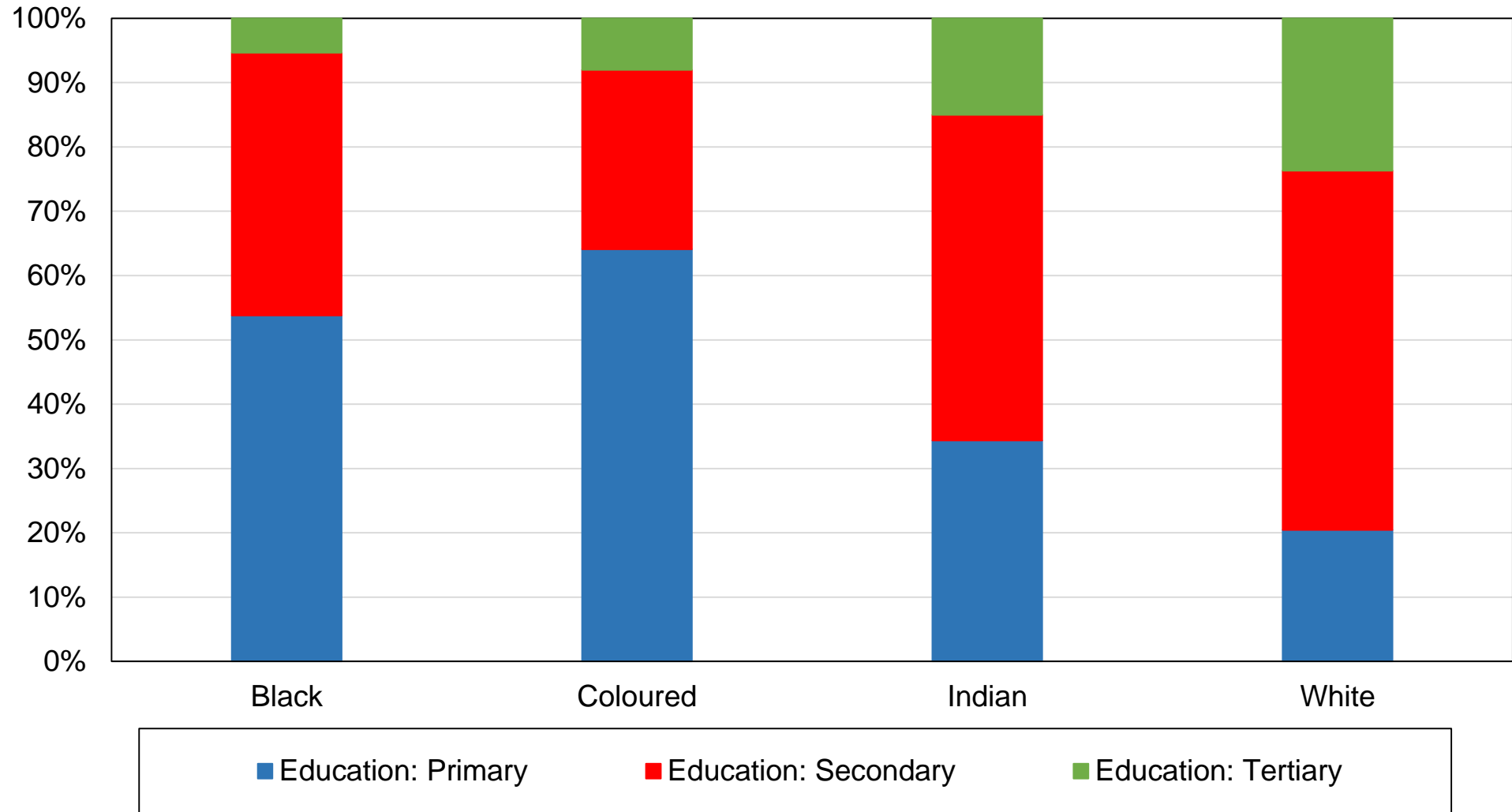
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
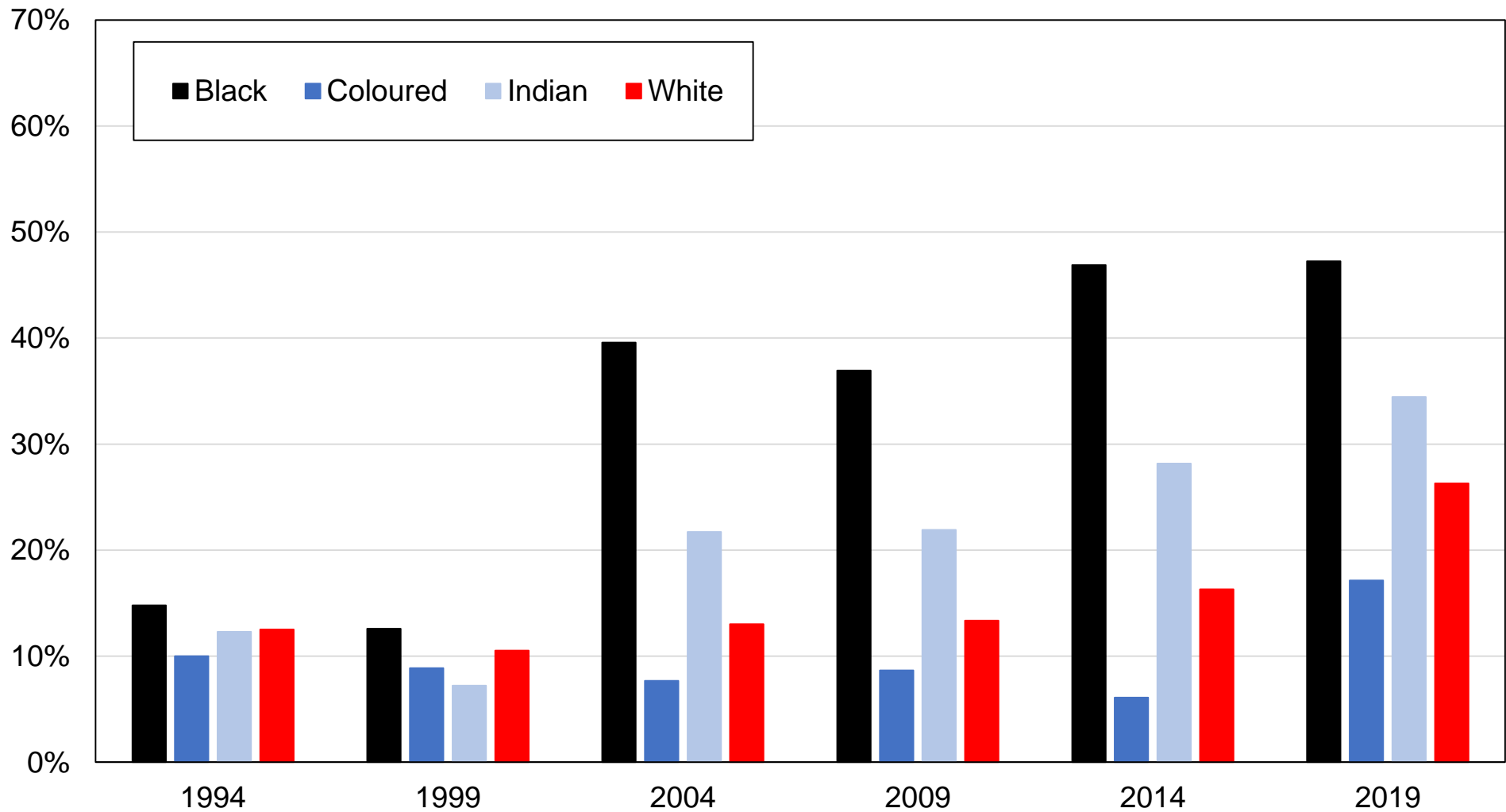**Note**: the figure shows the composition of South African population groups by education level.

Figure C7 - Distribution of language by race, 2019
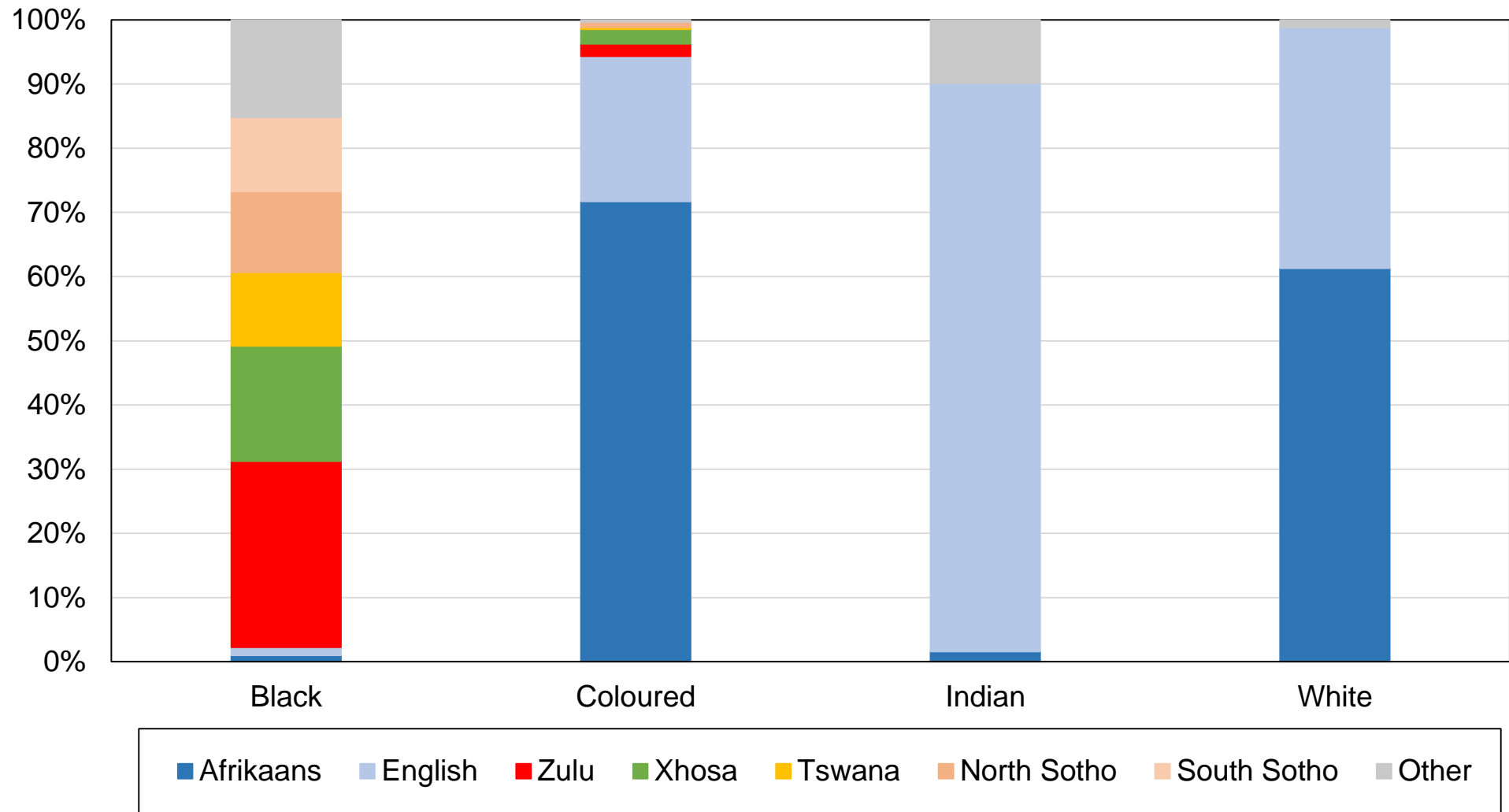
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of population groups by language most spoken at home.

Figure C8 - Distribution of rural-urban location by race, 2019

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of South African population groups rural-urban location.

Figure C9 - Distribution of regions of residence by race, 2019
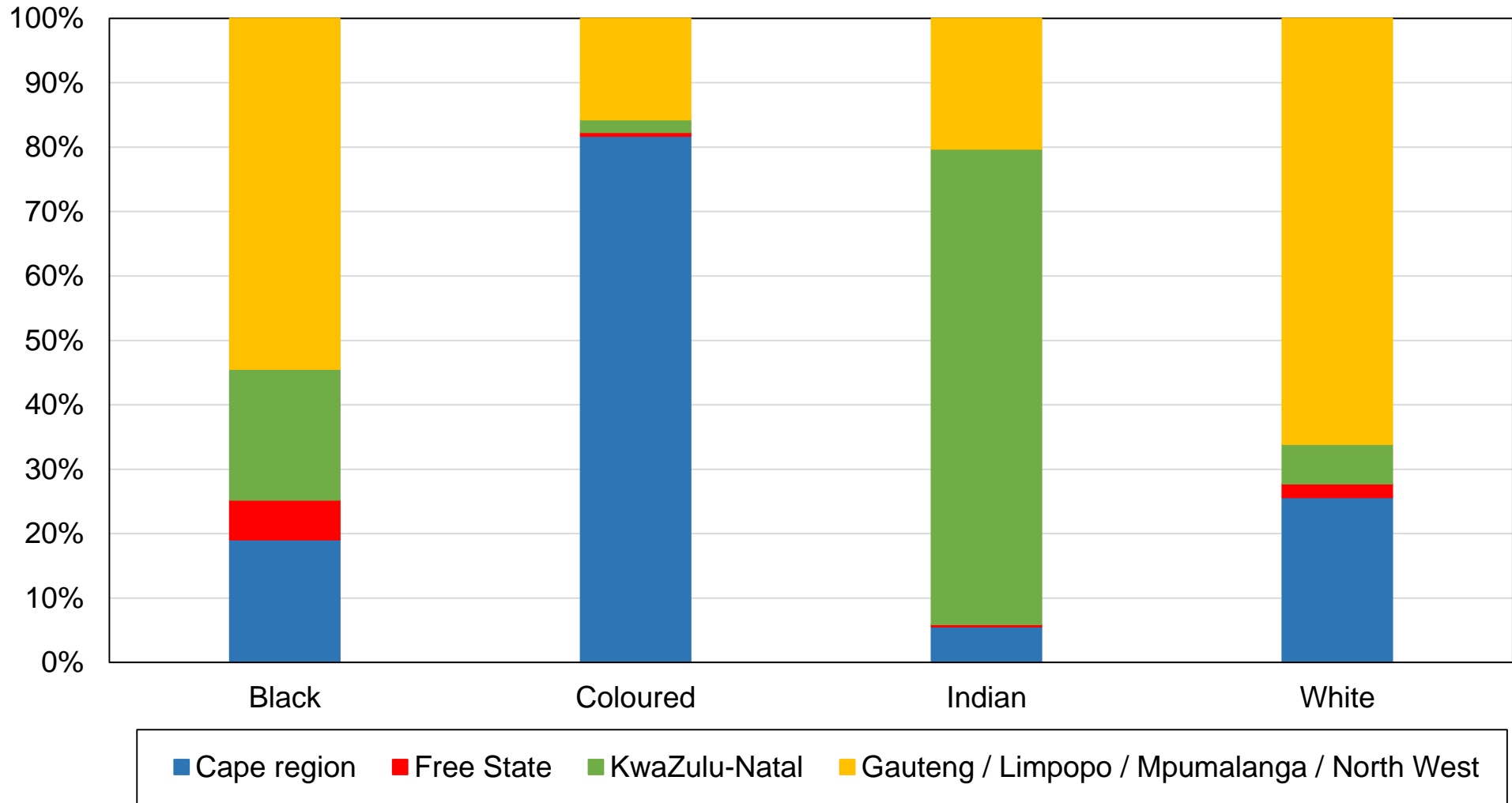
Legend:
- Cape region
- Free State
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Gauteng / Limpopo / Mpumalanga / North West

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of South African population groups by region of residence.

Figure C10 - Distribution of income quintiles / deciles by race, 2019

Legend: Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, D9, D10

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the composition of South African population groups by income quintile / decile.

Figure D1 - Electoral turnout in South Africa, 1994-2019

Source: author's elaboration using official election results.
Note: the figure shows the evolution of electoral turnout in South Africa.

Figure D1 - Abstention by population group

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
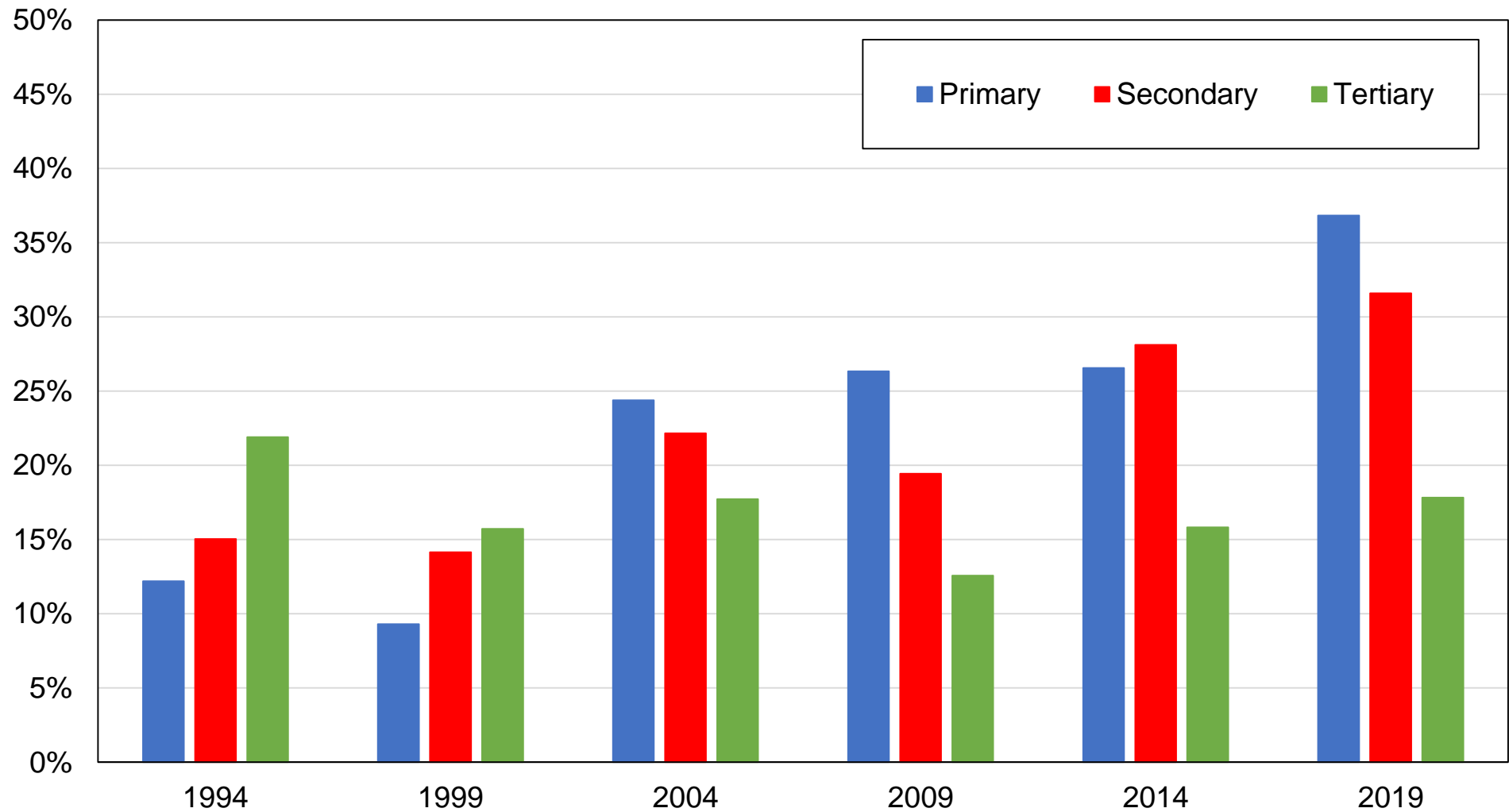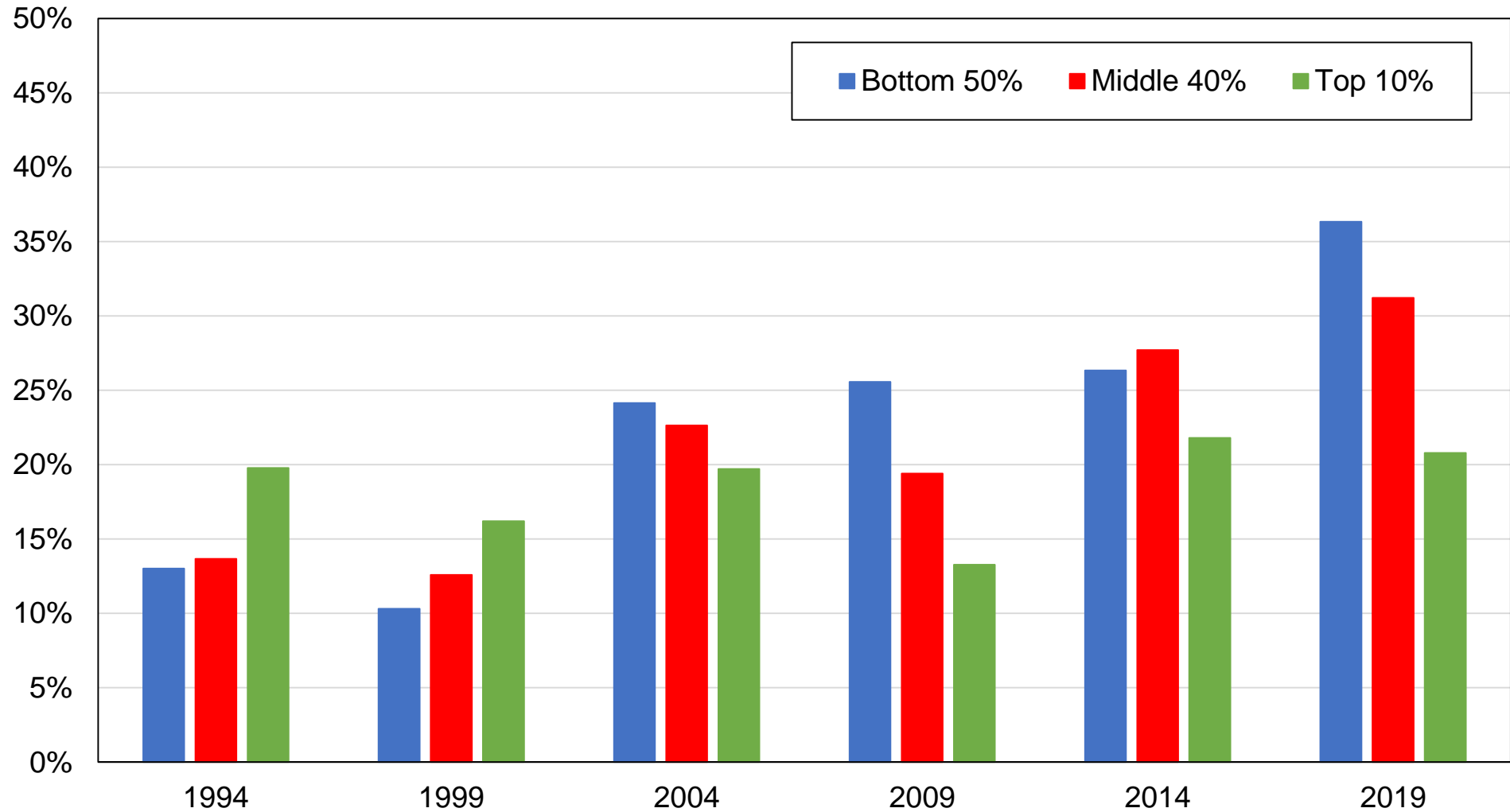**Note**: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining in general elections by population group.
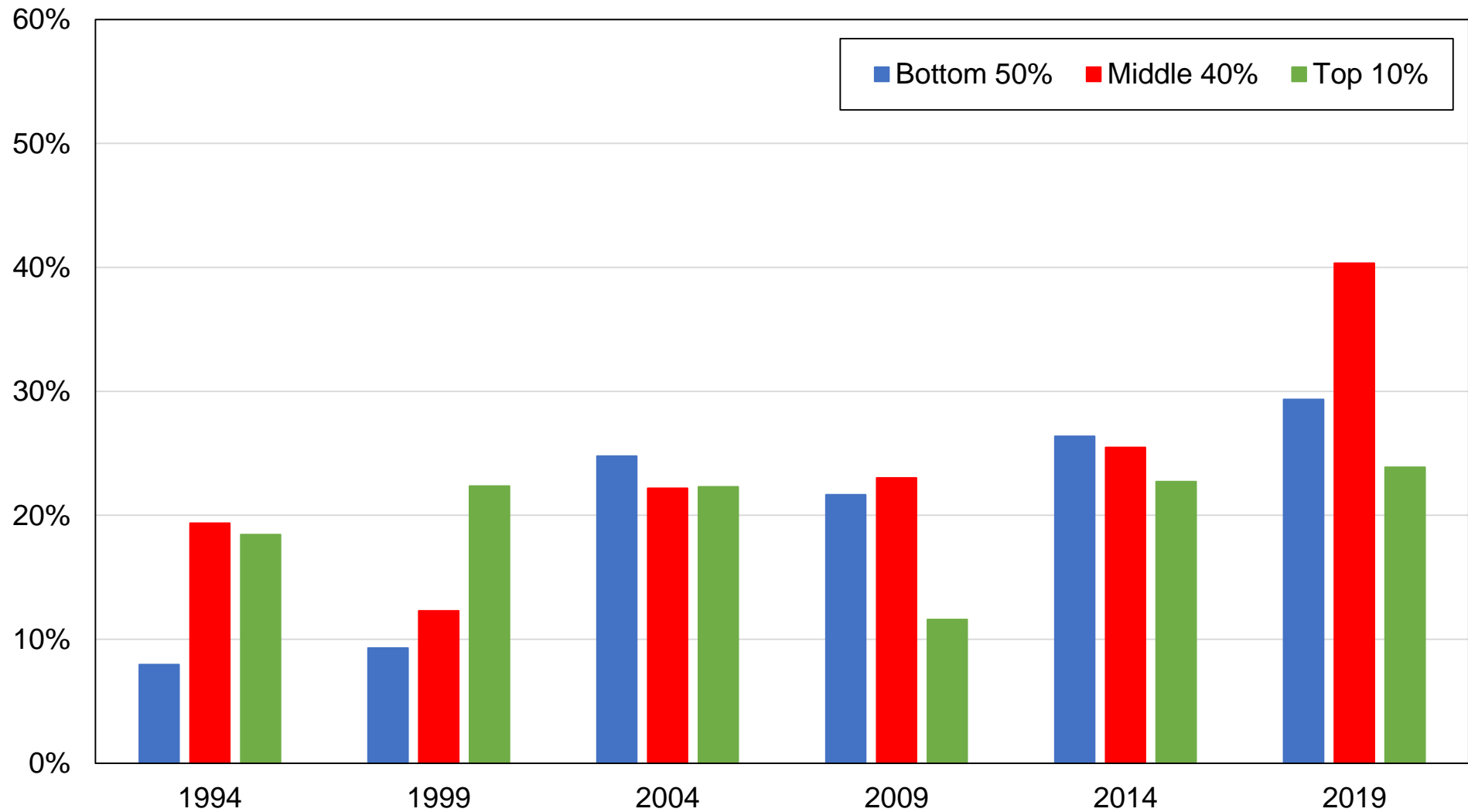
Figure D3 - Abstention by language
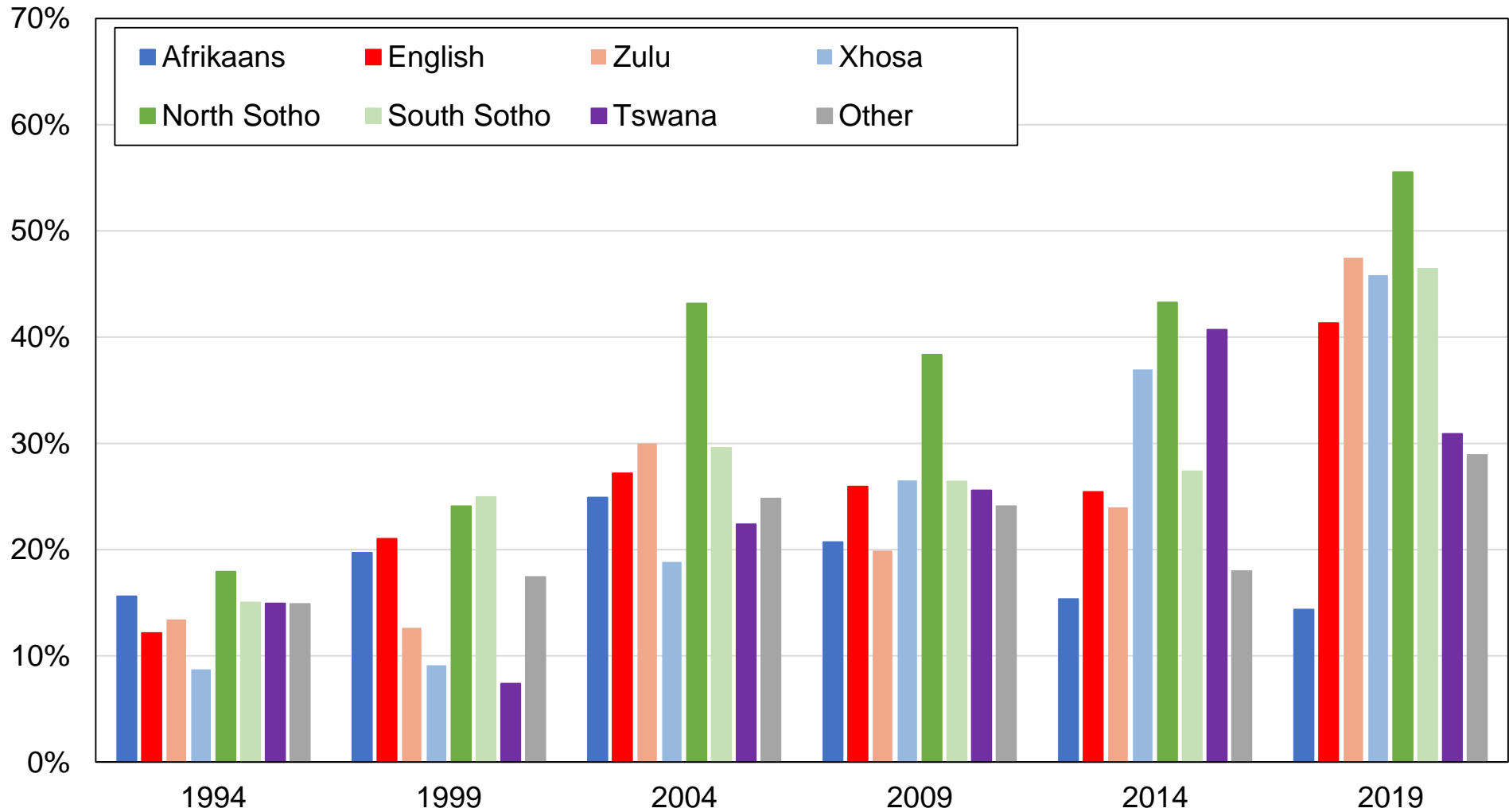
Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining in general elections by language most spoken at home.

Figure D4 - Abstention by region
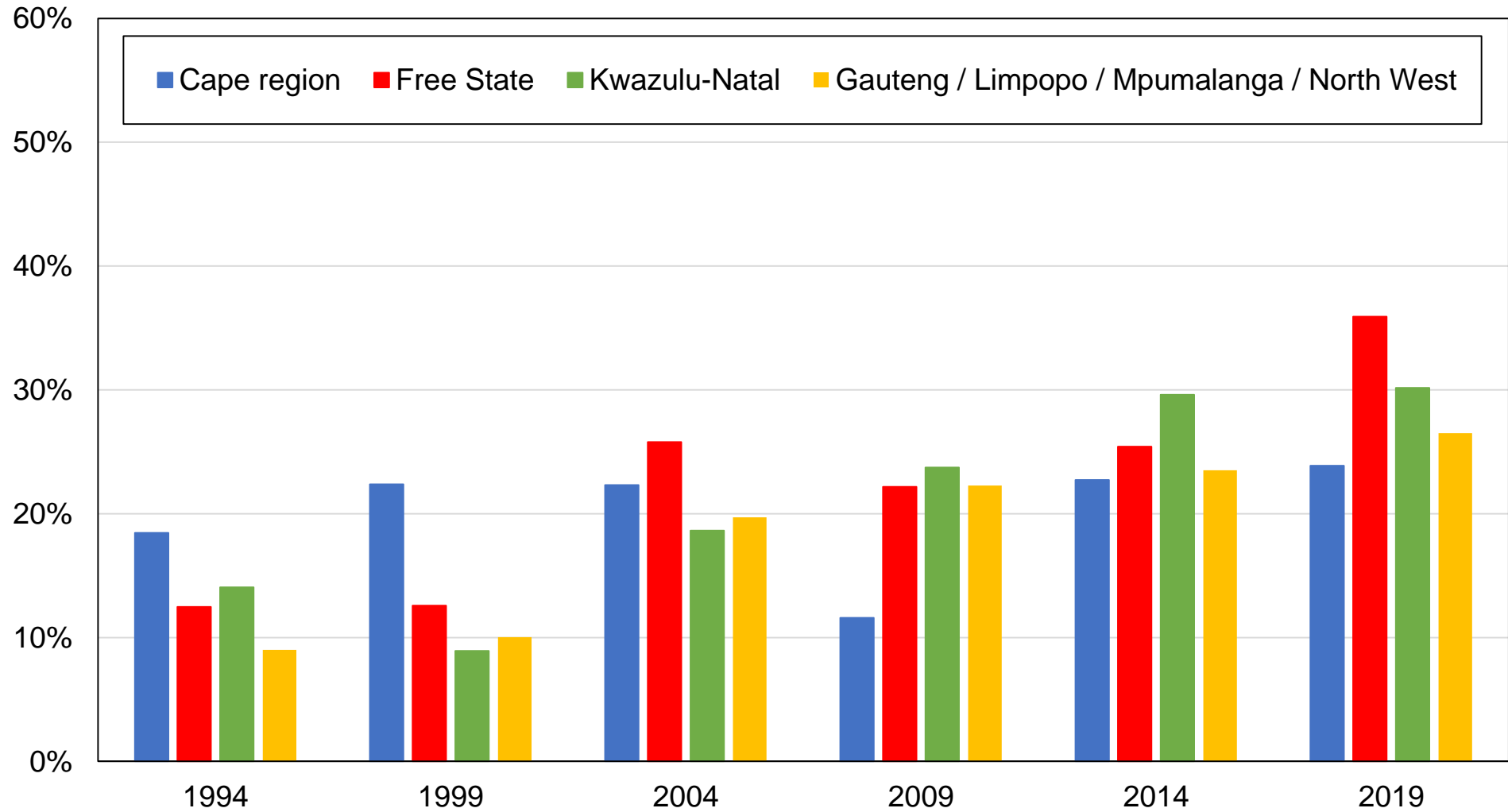
Legend: ■ Cape region ■ Free State ■ Kwazulu-Natal ■ Gauteng / Limpopo / Mpumalanga / North West

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining in general elections by region.

Figure D5 - Abstention by education level

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining by level of education. Primary education includes those with no education at all.

Figure D6 - Abstention by education group

Legend: Bottom 50% (blue) | Middle 40% (red) | Top 10% (green)

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters supporting the Democratic Party / National Party / New National Party in general elections by level of education. Primary education includes those with no education at all.
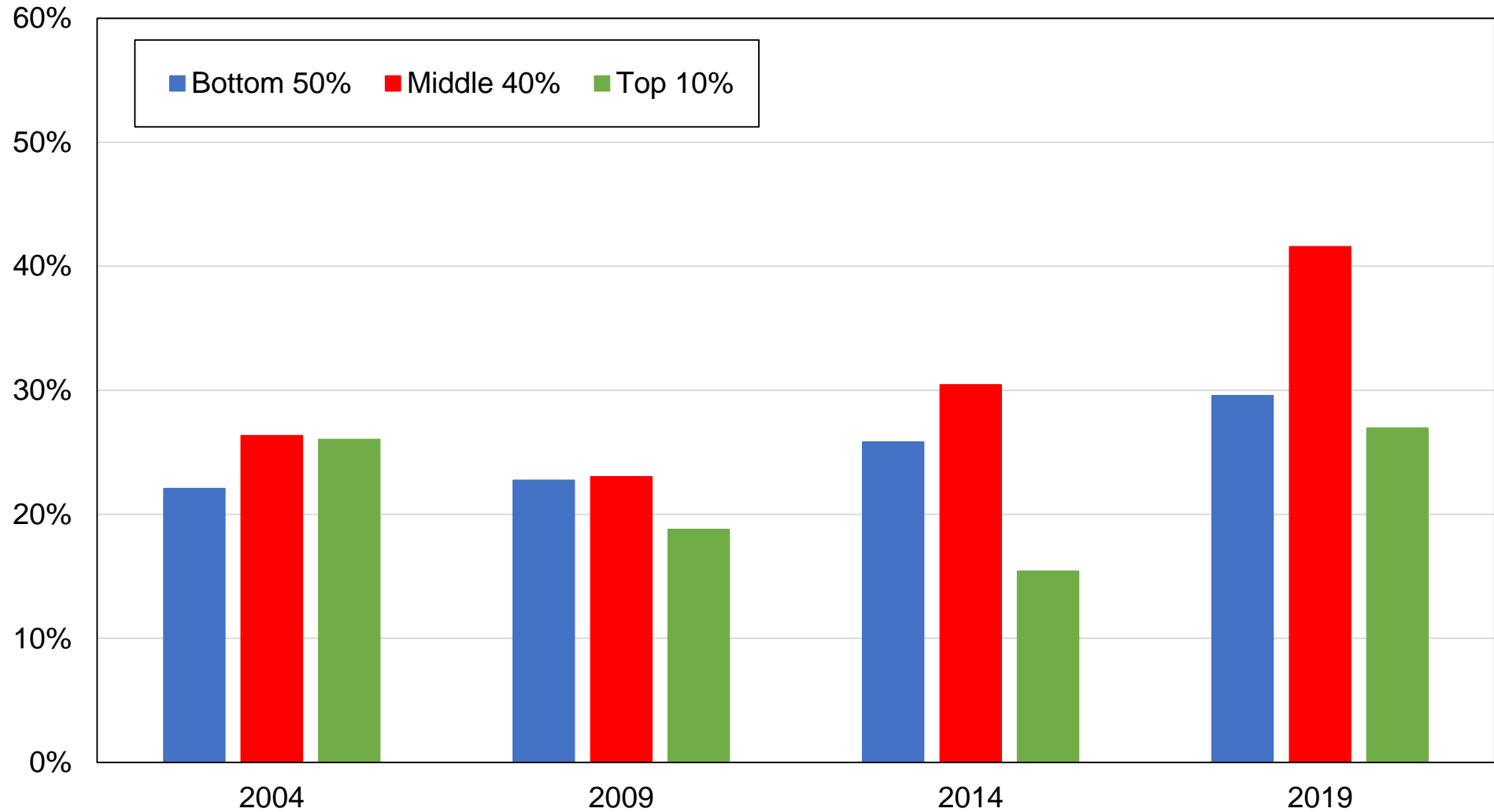
Figure D7 - Abstention by income group

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining in general elections by income group.
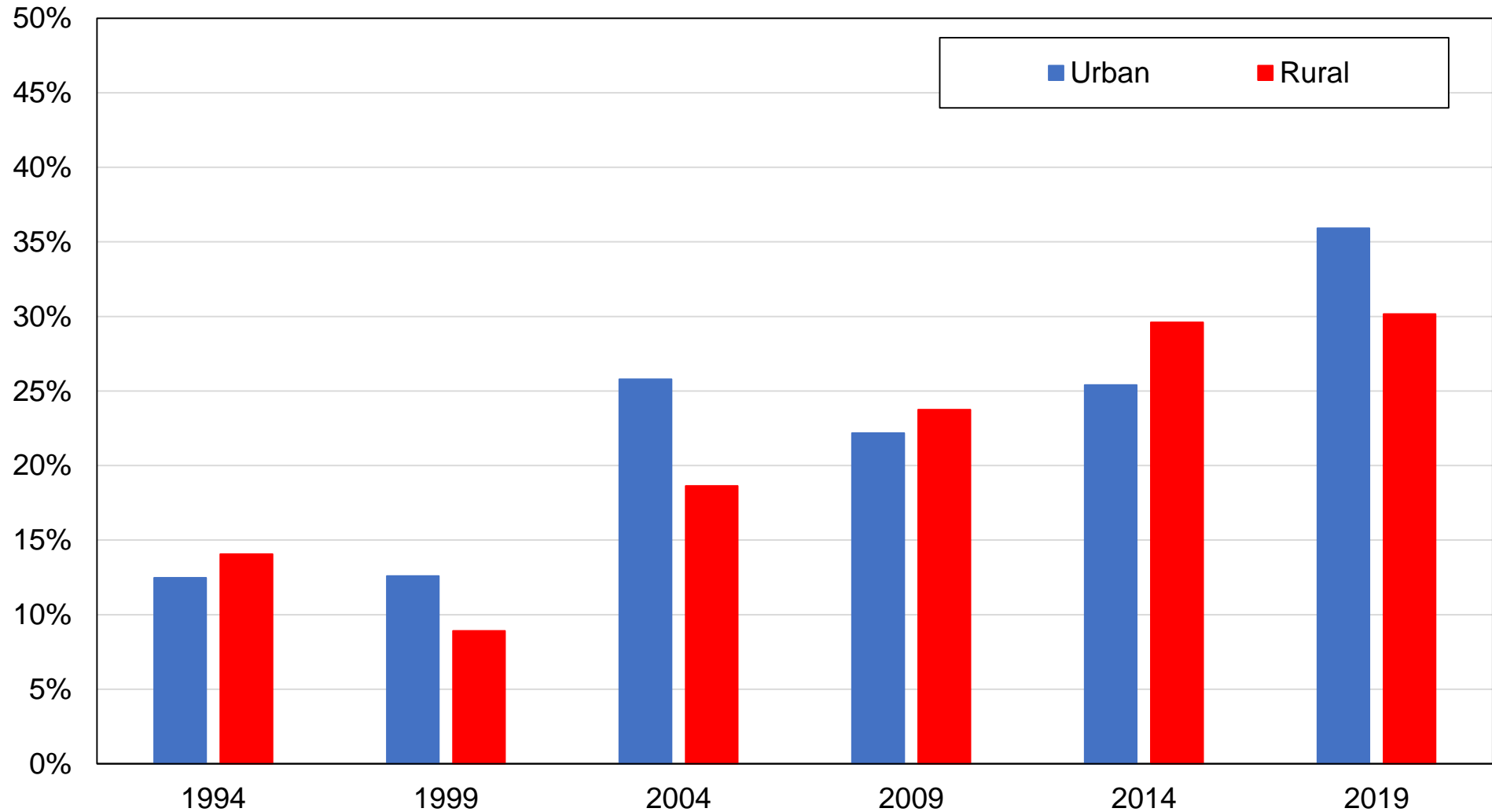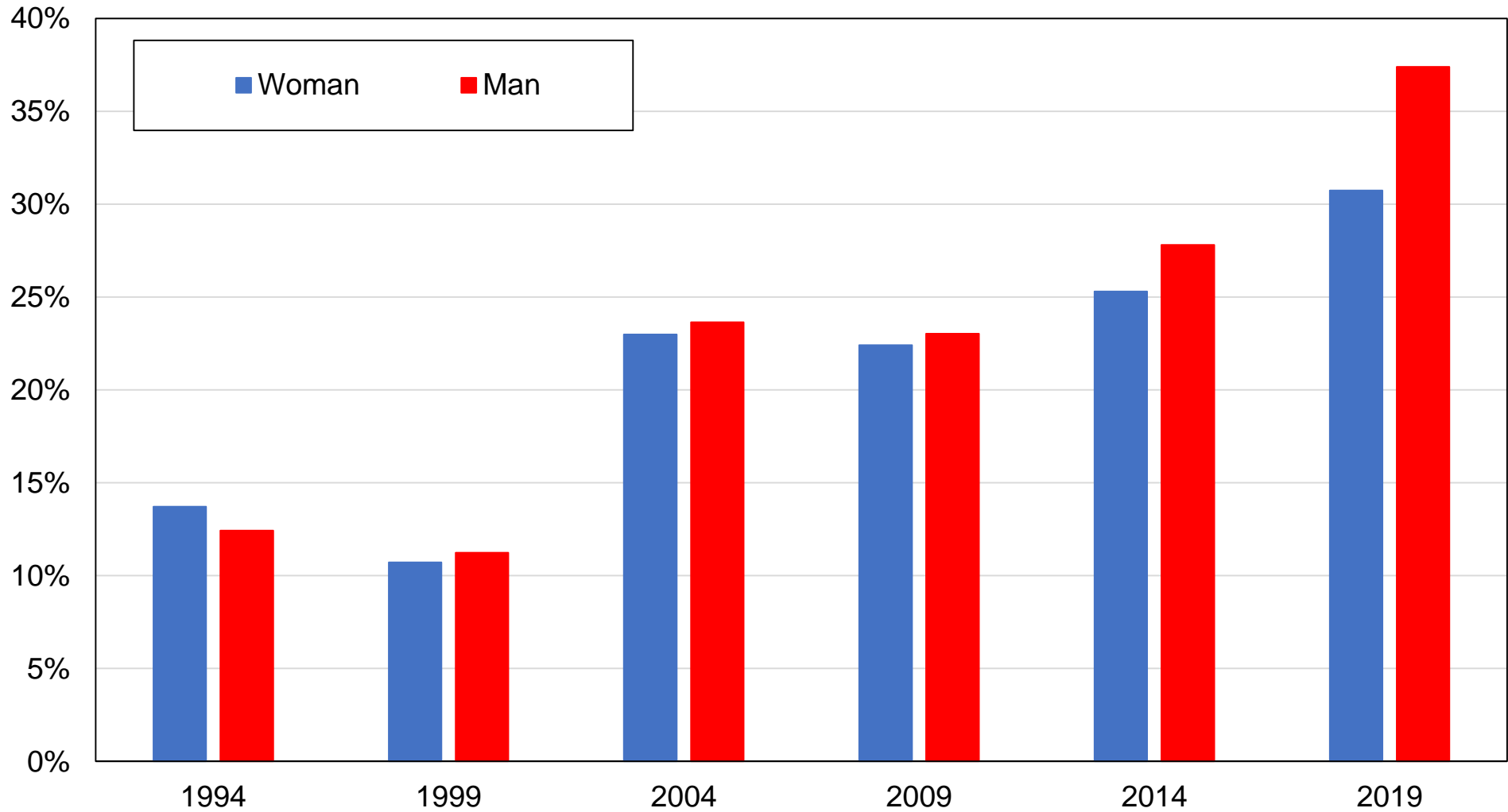
Figure D8 - Abstention by wealth group

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining in general elections by wealth group.

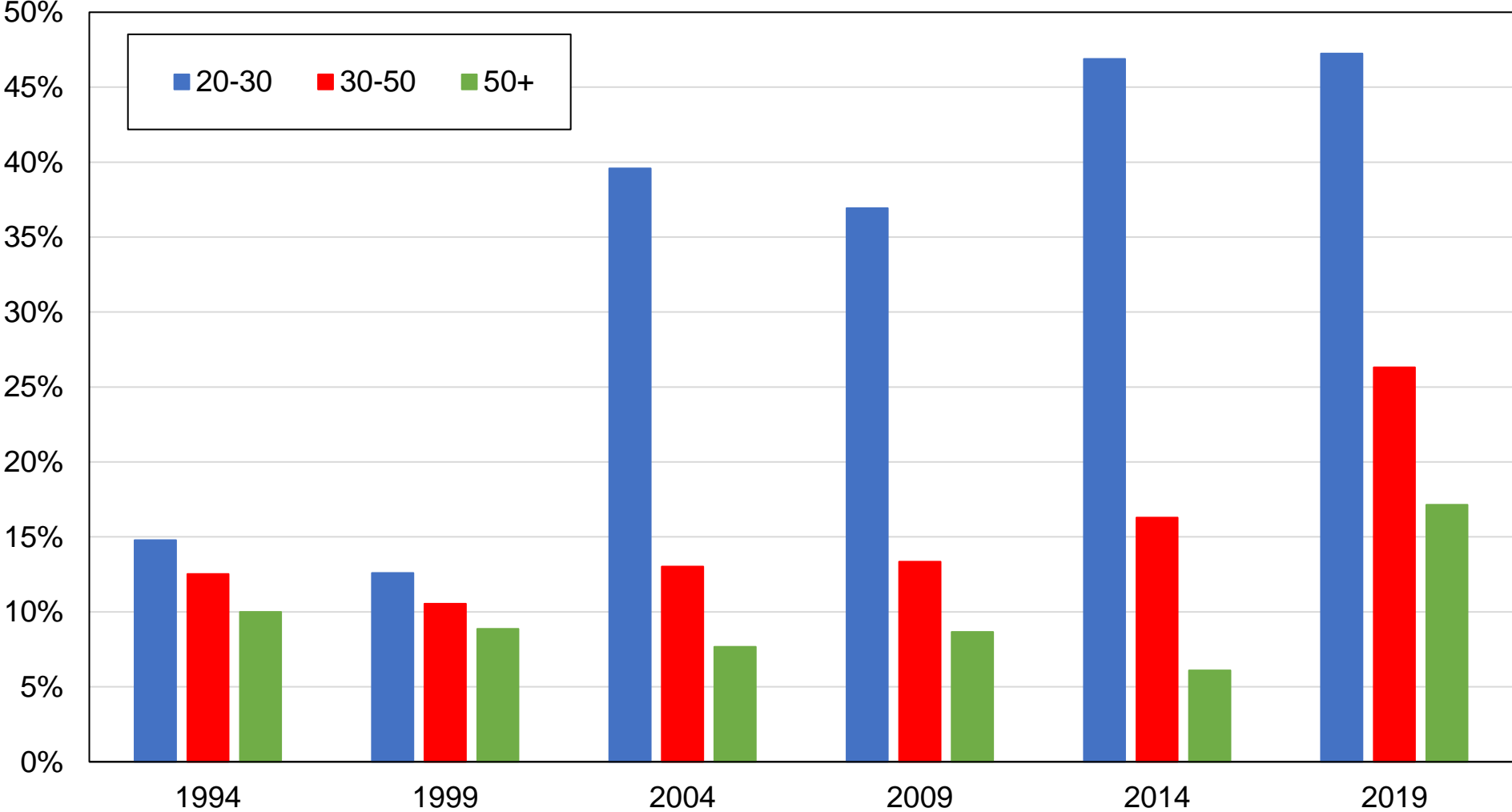# Figure D9 - Vote for DA / NP / NNP by location

Figure D10 - Abstention by gender

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining in general elections by gender.

Figure D11 - Abstention by age group

Legend: 20-30 (blue), 30-50 (red), 50+ (green)

Source: author's computations using South African political attitudes surveys.
Note: the figure shows the share of voters abstaining in general elections by age group.