



# Electoral and Political Reforms: Tradition versus Change

Findings from the Afrobarometer Round 6 Survey in  
Mauritius

# At a Glance

- **Representation based on Ethnicity and Religion**: Mauritians are divided on the question. A plurality (46%) believe that the current practice of ensuring representation in the National Assembly based on ethnic and religious consideration should be maintained
- **Introduction of Proportional Representation**: A slight majority (51%) of citizens are in favour of the introduction of PR to ensure fairer representation of parties in the National Assembly
- **Executive Powers to the Prime Minister v/s an Elected President**: Mauritians are divided on whether to retain the current system where the Prime Minister controls the Executive or whether an eventual elected President should be given more executive powers.

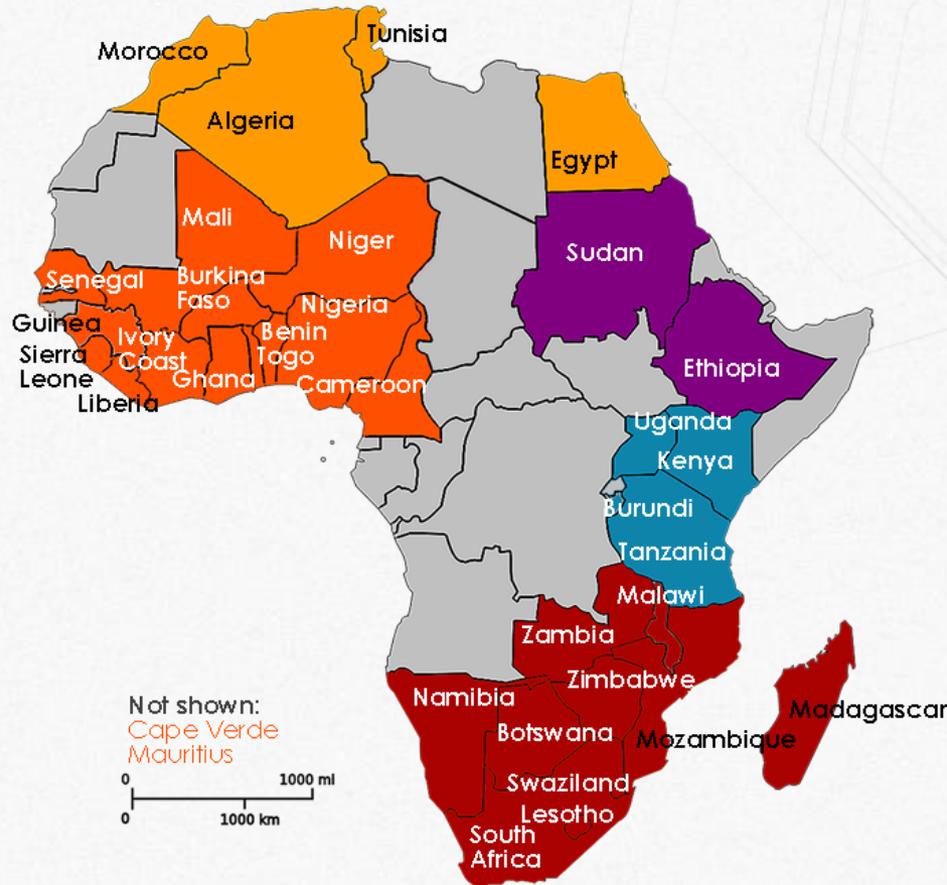
# What is Afrobarometer?

- An African-led, non-partisan survey research project that measures citizen attitudes on democracy and governance, the economy, civil society, and other topics.
- Started in 12 countries in 1999, expanded to 35 African countries in Round 5 (2011-2013).
- **Goal:** To give the public a voice in policymaking by providing high-quality public opinion data to policymakers, policy advocates, civil society organizations, academics, news media, donors and investors, and ordinary Africans.
- National Partners in each country conduct the survey. In **Mauritius**, Afrobarometer Round 6 survey was conducted by **StraConsult**.

# Where Afrobarometer works

Face-to-Face Interviews | 35 Countries

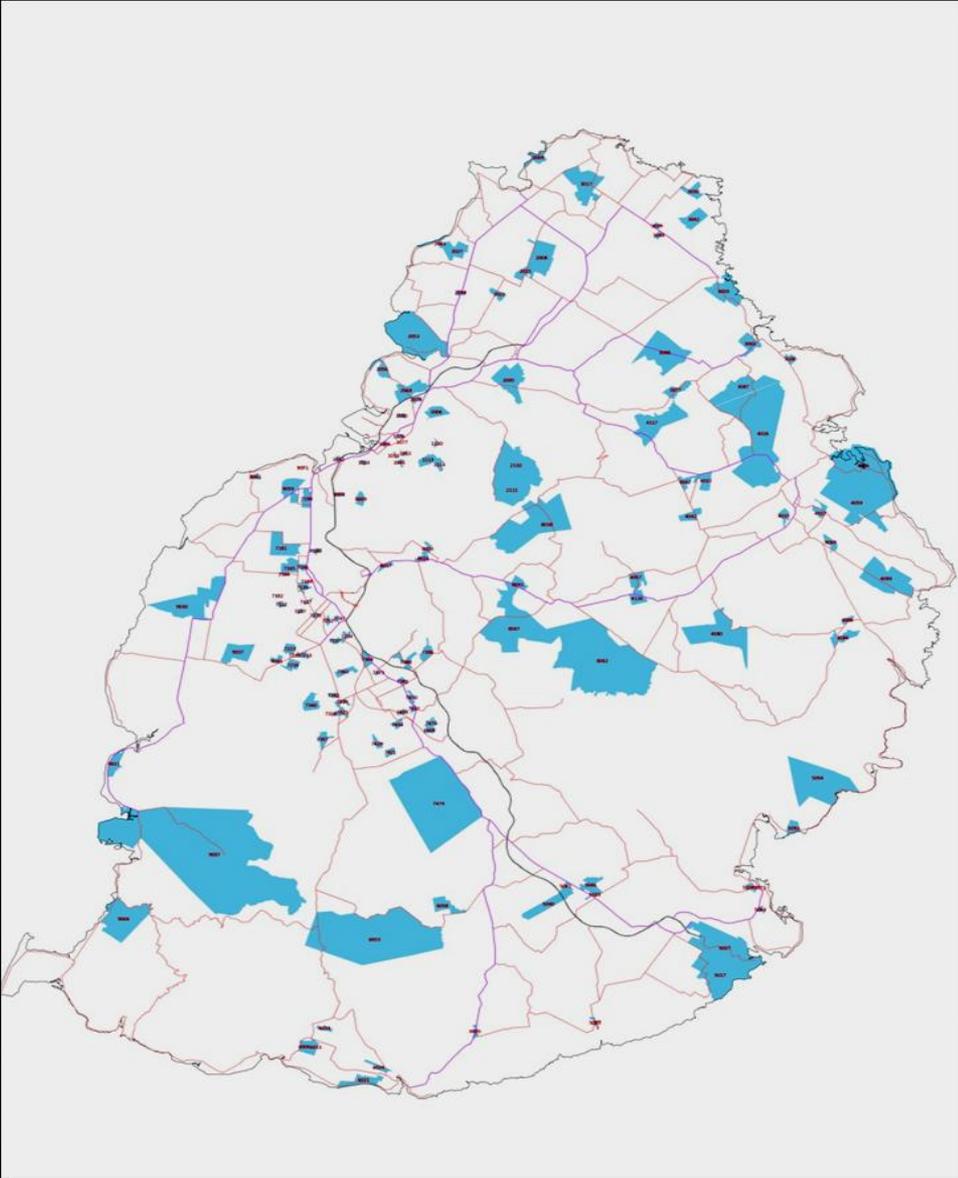
Surveys by state, region



# Methodology

- Nationally representative sample of adult citizens
  - ❑ All respondents are *randomly* selected.
  - ❑ Sample is distributed across **districts** and urban/rural areas in proportion to their share in the national population.
  - ❑ Every adult citizen has an *equal* chance of being selected.
- Face-to-face interviews In the language of the respondent's choice (**English, French** or **Creole**).
- Standard questionnaire allows comparisons across countries and over time.
- Sample size in **Mauritius** of **1200** adult citizens yields a margin of error of **+/-3%** at a 95% confidence level.
- Fieldwork for Round 6 in **Mauritius** was conducted between **27 June and 27 July 2014**.

# Enumerator Map



# Survey Demographics (1)



		Unweighted	Weighted
<b>Gender</b>			
	Male	50%	50%
	Female	50%	50%
<b>Location</b>			
	Urban	38%	41%
	Rural	62%	59%
<b>Education</b>			
	No formal education	1%	1%
	Primary	23%	22%
	Secondary	55%	56%
	Post-secondary	20%	21%

# Survey Demographics (2)



	Unweighted	Weighted
<b>District</b>		
Port Louis	9%	10%
Pamplemousses	10%	11%
Riviere du Rempart	8%	9%
Flacq	10%	11%
Grand Port	8%	9%
Savanne	5%	5%
Plaine Wilhems	28%	30%
Moka	6%	7%
Black River	6%	6%
Rodrigues	10%	3%



# FINDINGS



# REFORM OF ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATION

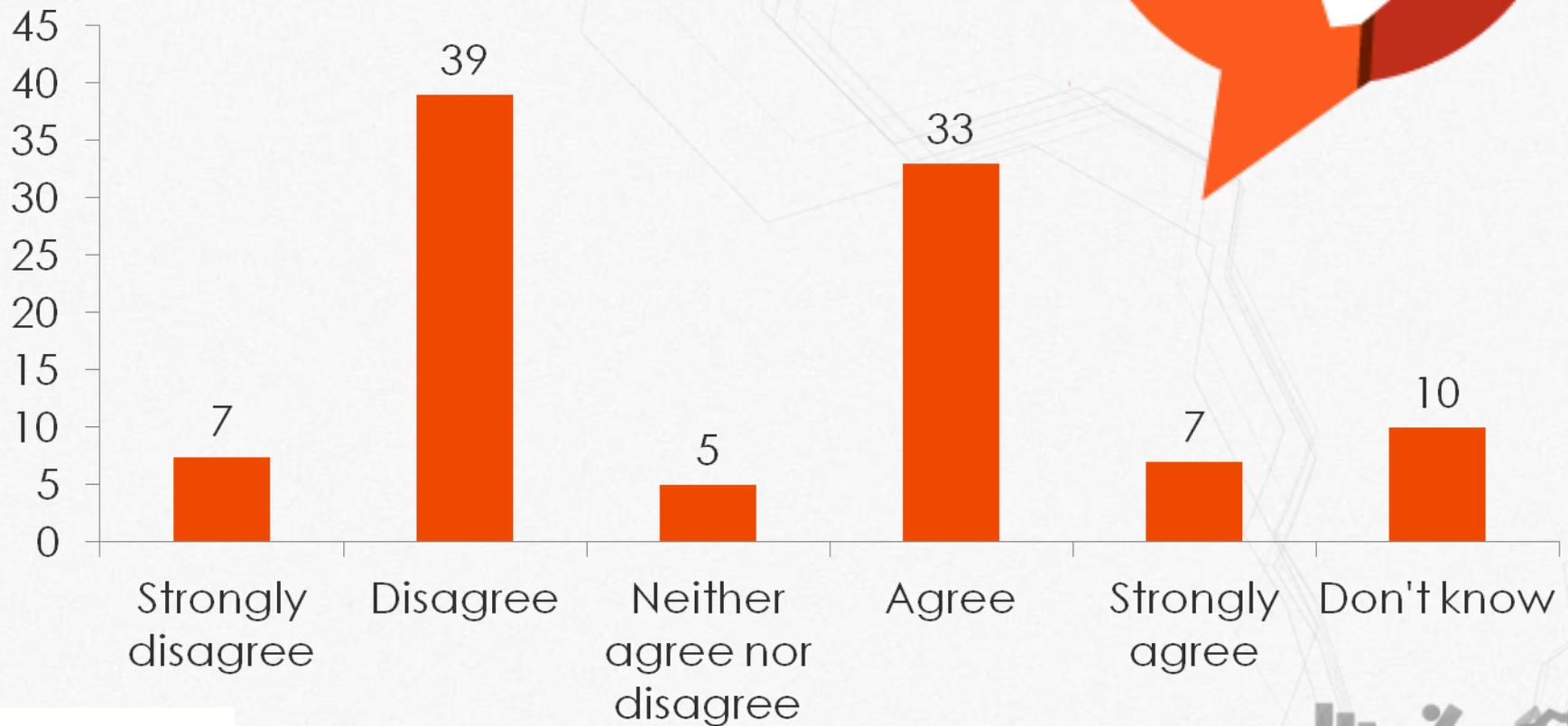
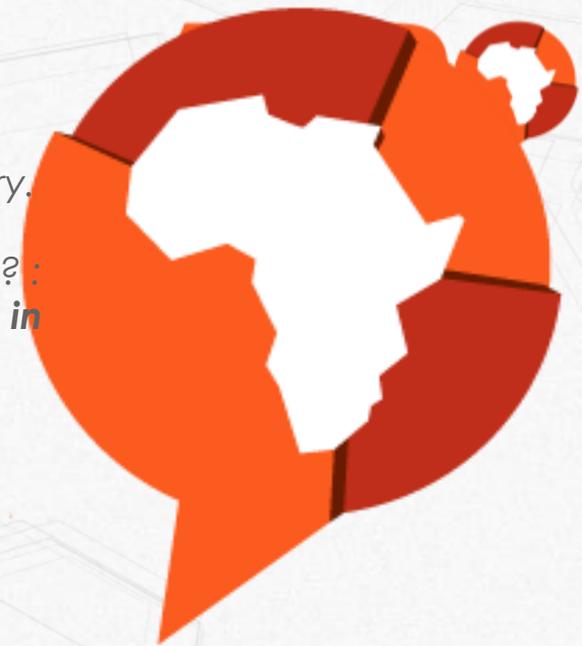
# Key Findings

- Slightly more citizens were in favour of representation in the National Assembly based on ethnic or religious belonging (46%) than those against the current system (40%)
- Men (50%) are more in favour of the status quo than women (42%)
- Citizens in urban areas are slightly more in favour of the elimination (42%) than rural citizens (38%)

# Ethnic Representation

Q: Now I would like to talk to you about a number of proposals that have been made about reforming the electoral system in this country. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following proposals or haven't you heard enough about them to say? :

**The electoral system should be reformed to eliminate representation in the National Assembly based on ethnic or religious belonging.**





# INTRODUCTION OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

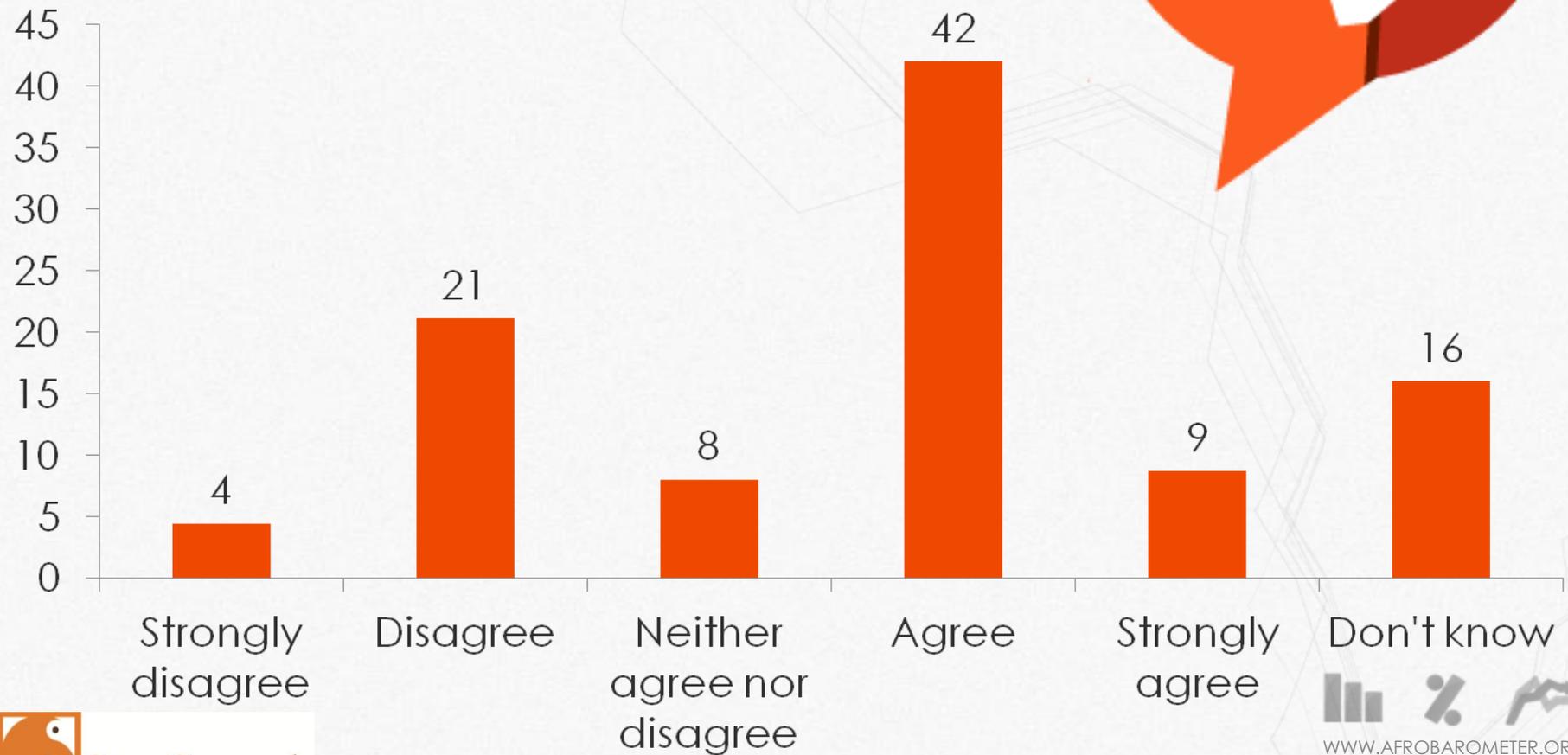
# Key Findings

- **Mauritians** are in favour of the introduction of Proportional Representation for the National Assembly. **1 out of 2 (51%)** believe it to be a good thing while only **1 out of 4 (25%)** disagree.
- A plurality (**42%**) is also in favour of setting the threshold of eligibility to 10% for political parties to get a seat in the National Assembly through PR.

# Introduction of PR

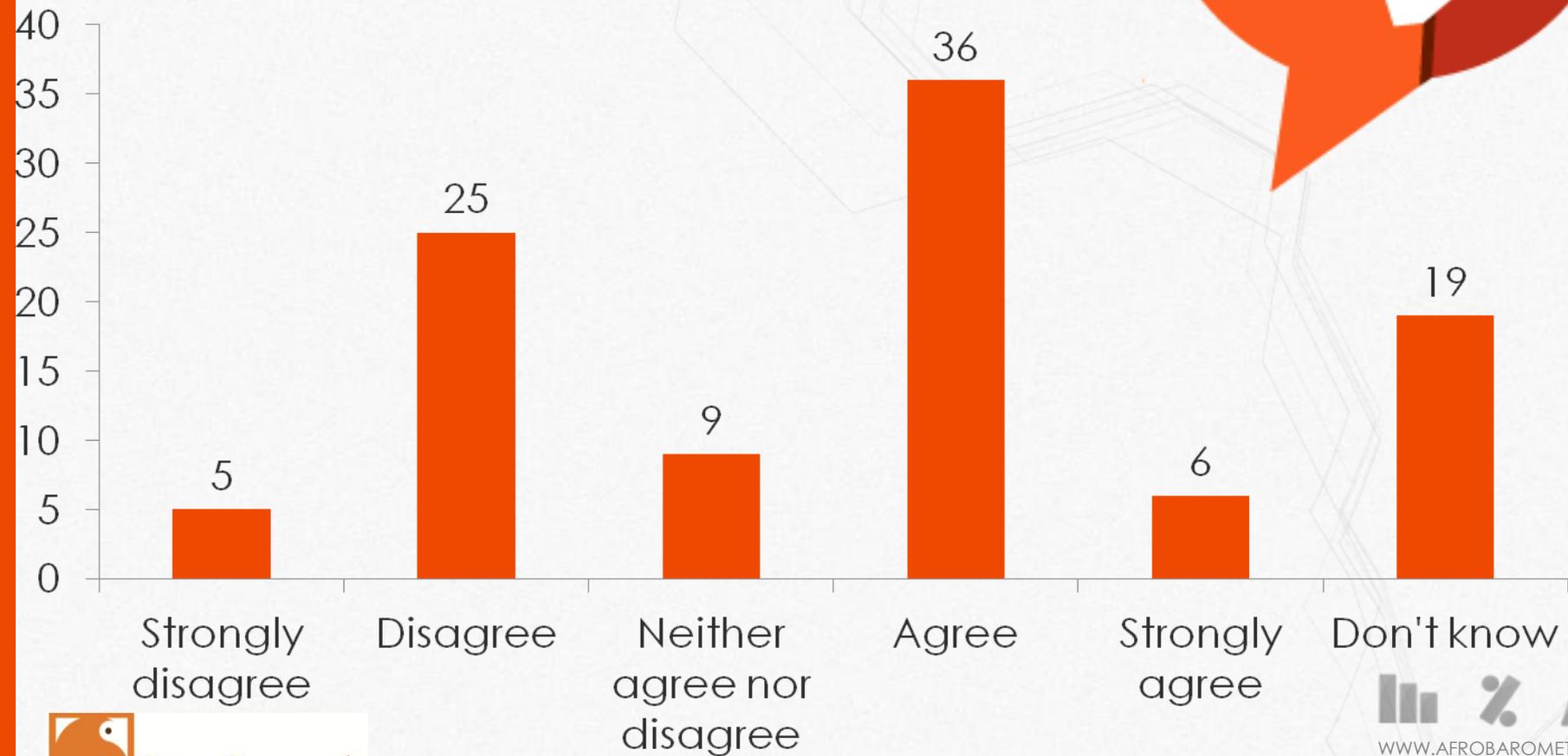
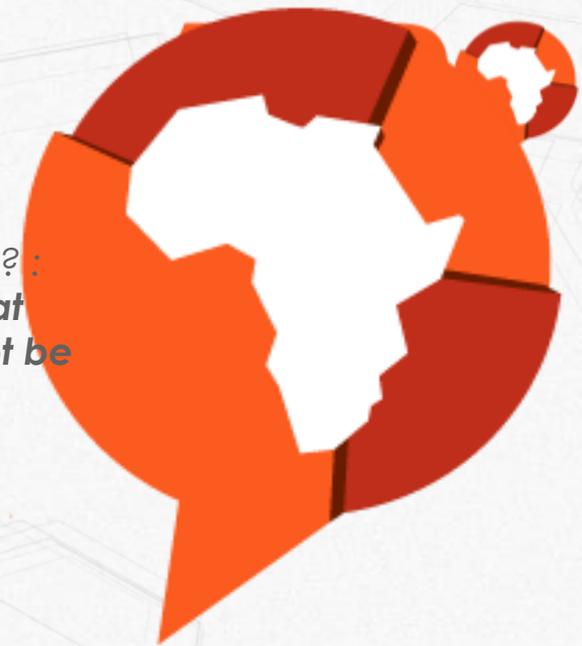
Q: Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following proposals or haven't you heard enough about them to say?

**We should change the current system of electing Members of Parliament in favour of one where political parties are assigned seats in proportion to their share of the vote in elections**



# Introduction of PR – 10% Threshold of Eligibility

Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following proposals or haven't you heard enough about them to say?:  
**In order to promote government stability, the law should stipulate that political parties that get less than 10% of votes in elections should not be eligible to get seats in the National Assembly.**





# EXECUTIVE POWERS FOR THE PRIME MINISTER VS THE PRESIDENT

# Key Findings

- The opinions are divided between those who believe that the Prime Minister should retain his executive powers (43%) and those who think that there should be an elected President with more powers (45%)
- Those in rural areas are more in favour of more powers to the President (51%) than their urban counterparts (35%).

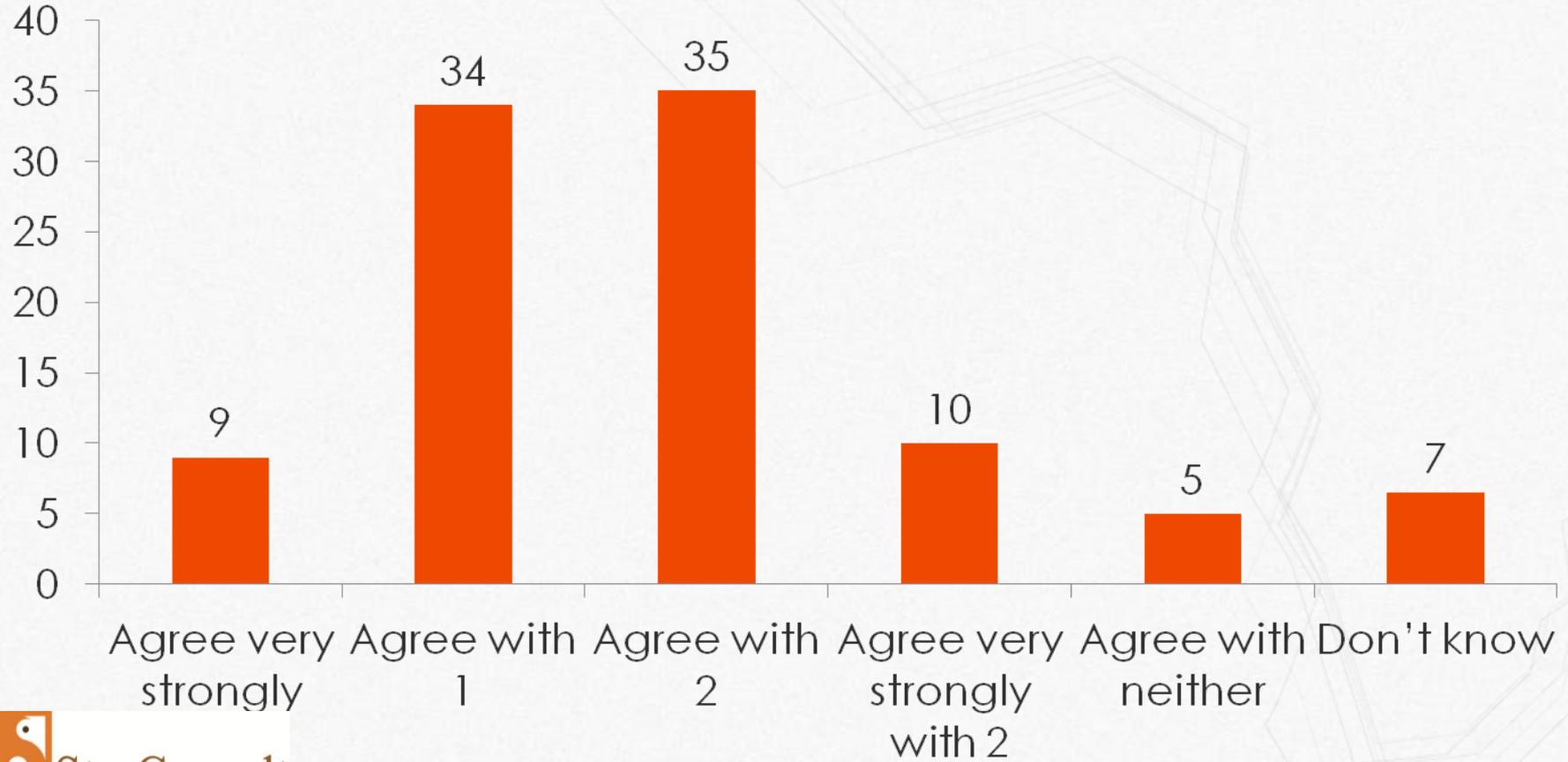
# More Executive Powers to Prime Minister or Elected President



Q. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

**Statement 1: The current government system which gives all executives powers to the Prime Minister has served Mauritius well and should be maintained**

**Statement 2: The constitution should be changed to grant more executive powers to an elected president as a way of promoting greater government accountability**





# CONCLUSIONS

# Major Findings

- Mauritians are torn between long standing political traditions and reforms, which could arguably bring about greater fairness and stability.
- Representation based on ethnic or religious belonging is still a matter for further debate as public opinion is divided on this issue.
- However, there is a stated will for a reform of the electoral system to introduce Proportional Representation.
- While a coalition has recently been formed by the two main parties of the country that pledges to introduce a new system where an elected president would get more political powers, the survey reveals that **43%** of citizens are not in favour of such a system.

Thank You