



# South Africans unhappy with the economy, see slow progress since 1994

Findings from Afrobarometer Round 6 surveys in South Africa



20 April 2016, Durban, South Africa



# At a glance

- **The economy:** South Africans say the economy is headed in the wrong direction and the government is failing to manage it.
- **Socioeconomic changes since 1994:** A majority of South Africans believe there has been no change or there has been a deterioration on a range of indicators.
- **Discrimination:** A significant proportion of minority race groups believe the government discriminates against them.

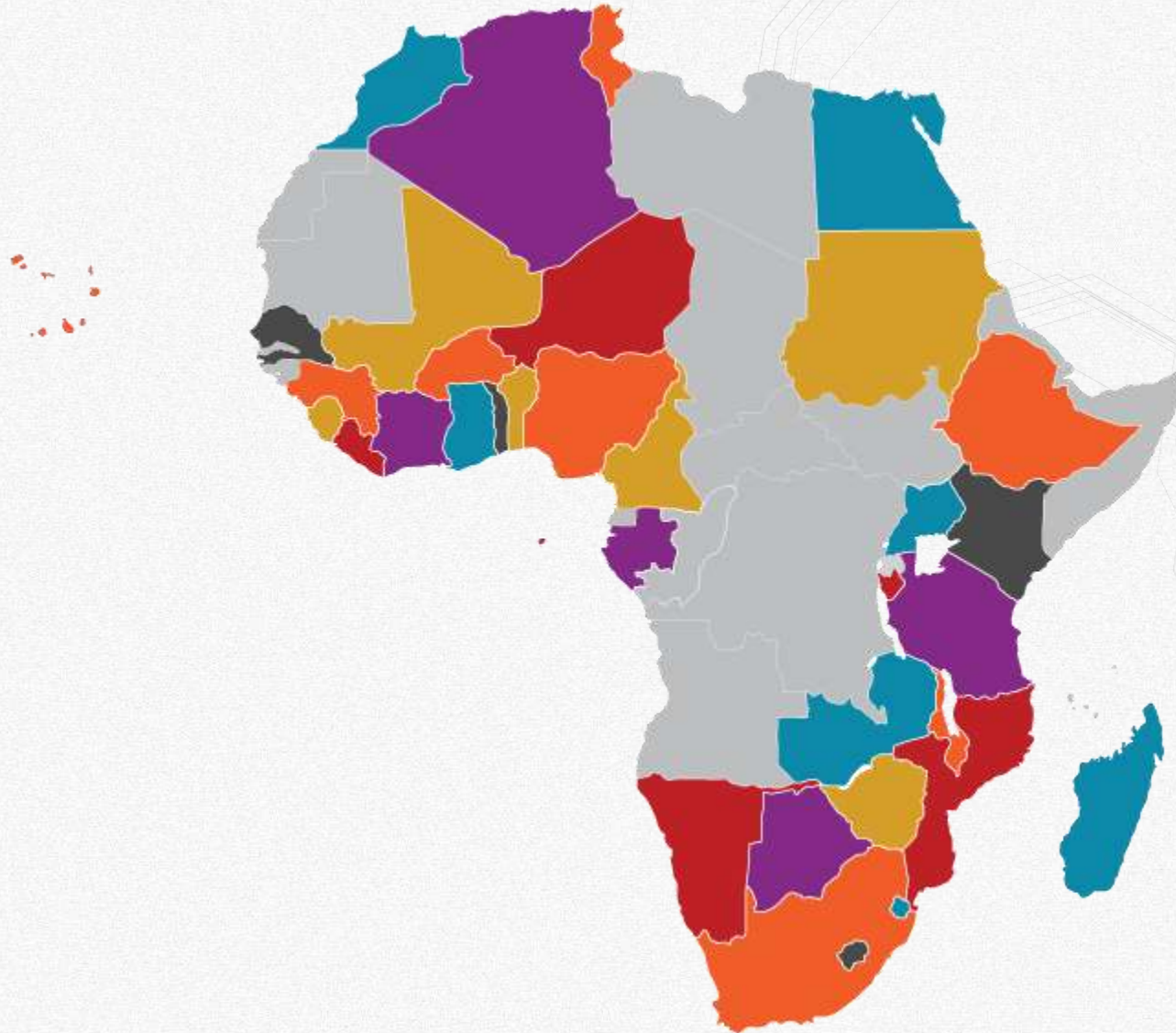
# What is Afrobarometer?



- A pan-African, 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). 36 countries covered in Round 6 (2014-2015)
- **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 South Africa, Afrobarometer Round 6 survey was conducted by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation and Plus 94 Research.



# Where Afrobarometer works



# Methodology

- Nationally representative sample of adult citizens
  - ❑ All respondents are *randomly* selected.
  - ❑ Sample is distributed across [regions/states/provinces] 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.
- **Standard questionnaire** allows comparisons across countries and over time.
- **Sample size** in South Africa of **2,400** adult citizens yields a margin of **error of +/-2%** at a **95% confidence** level.
- Fieldwork for Round 6 in South Africa was conducted between **August** and **September 2015**



# Survey demographics

		Unweighted	Weighted
<b>Gender</b>			
	Male	50%	50%
	Female	50%	50%
<b>Location</b>			
	Urban	68%	66%
	Rural	32%	34%
<b>Province</b>			
	Eastern Cape	13%	12%
	Free State	5%	5%
	Gauteng	24%	25%
	KwaZulu-Natal	18%	20%
	Limpopo	9%	10%
	Mpumalanga	7%	8%
	North West	6%	7%
	Northern Cape	8%	2%
	Western Cape	11%	12%
<b>Education</b>			
	No formal education	3%	3%
	Primary	12%	13%
	Secondary	59%	59%
	Post-secondary	26%	25%

# Survey demographics

		Unweighted	Weighted
<b>Race</b>			
	Black African	70%	75%
	White	11%	9%
	Coloured	14%	12%
	Indian	6%	3%
<b>Religion</b>			
	Christian	82%	83%
	Muslim	3%	2%
	Other	15%	15%





# Results





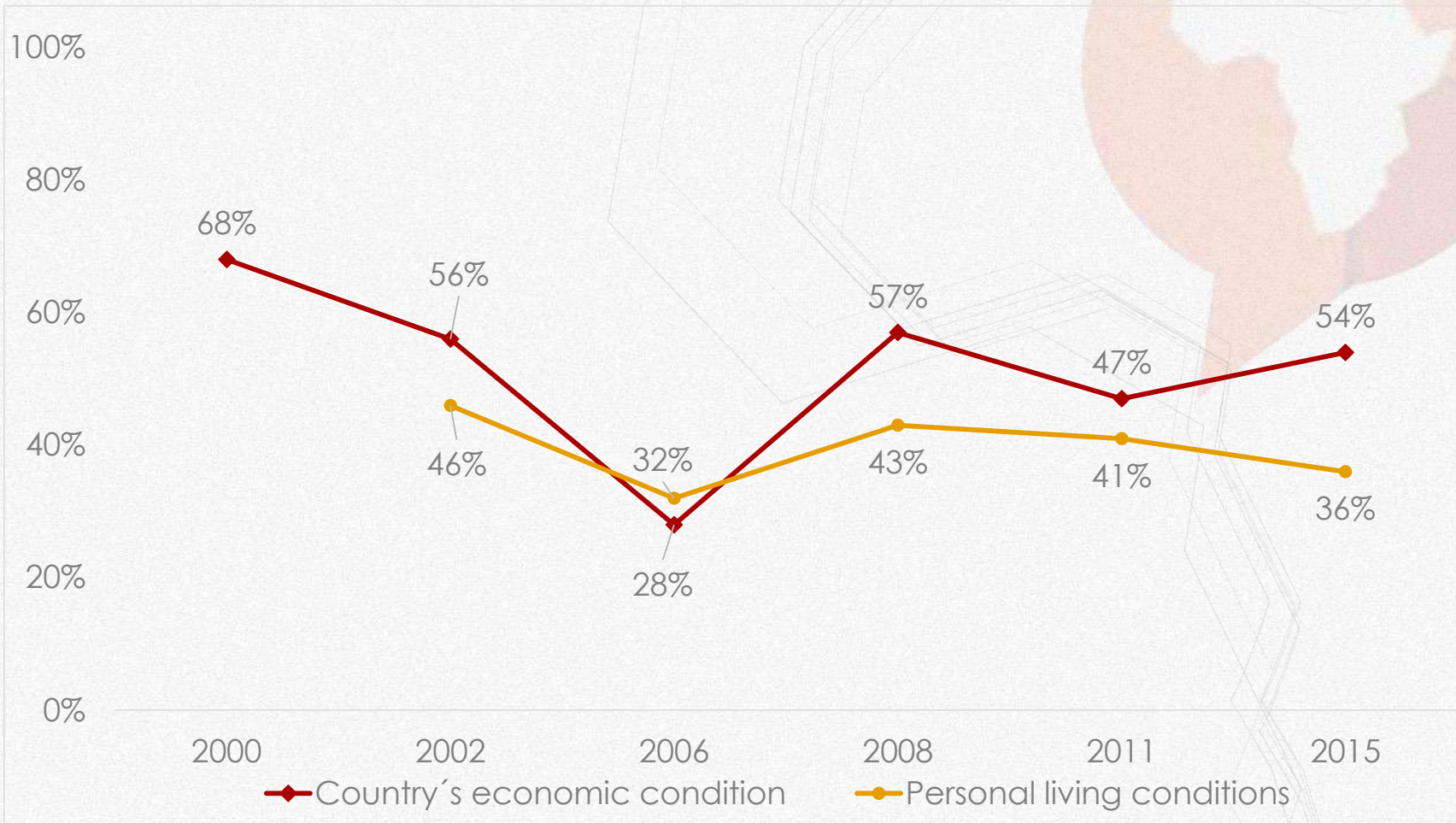
# Perceptions of the economy



# Key findings

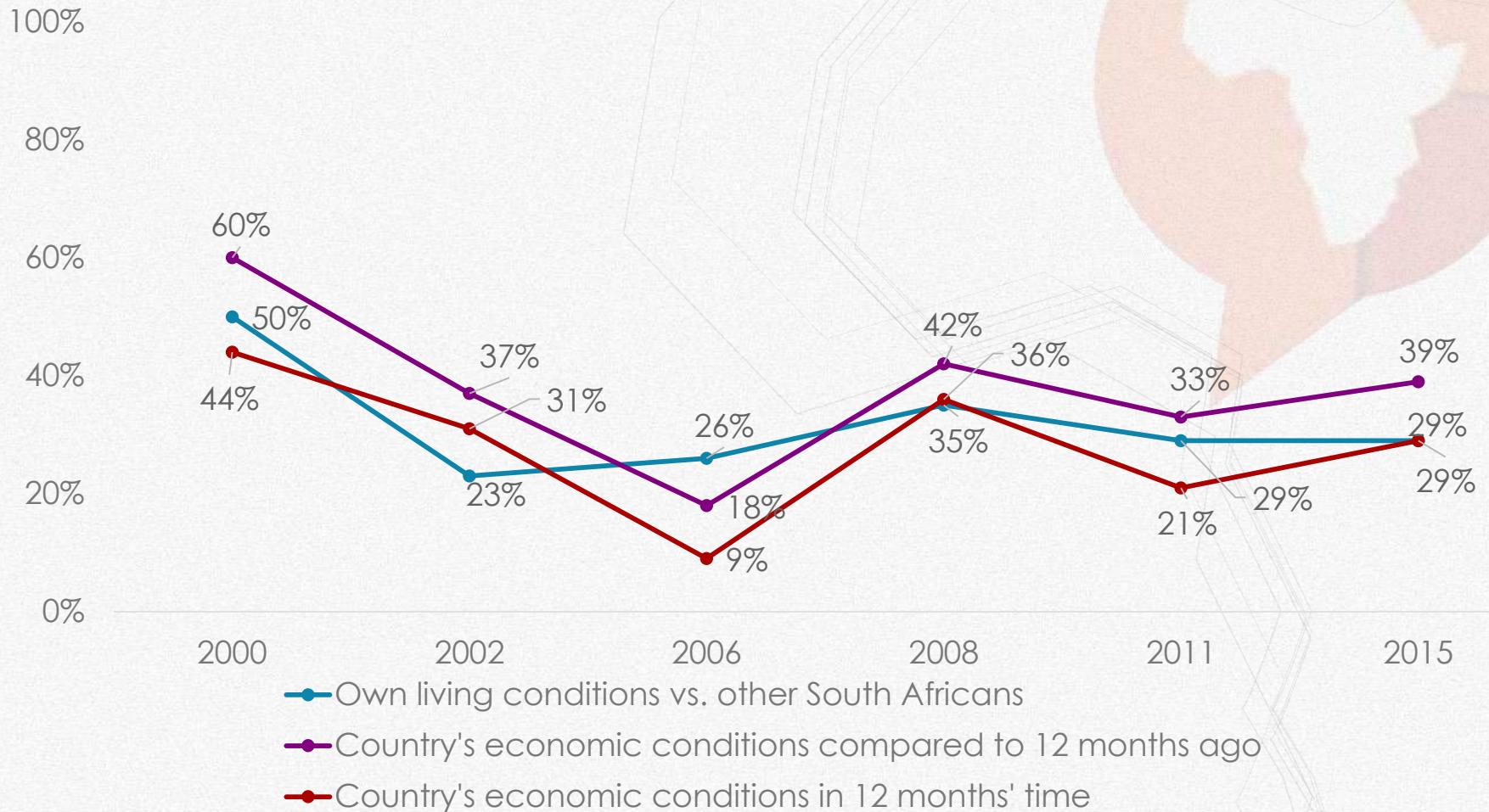
- A majority (54%) of South Africans rate their country's economic situation as "fairly bad" or "very bad," an increase from 47% in 2011.
- Almost two-thirds (64%) of citizens say the country is headed in the wrong direction, an increase of 18 percentage points from 2011. This is the third-highest level of disapproval among 11 countries in southern Africa.
- Lived poverty has decreased: The proportion of citizens deprived of five basic essentials (food, clean water, medical care, cooking fuel and cash income) dropped by half (from 16% to 8%) between 2011 and 2015.
- Indian and white South Africans experience less deprivation than their black and Coloured compatriots.

# Negative ratings of national and personal economic conditions | South Africa | 2000-2015



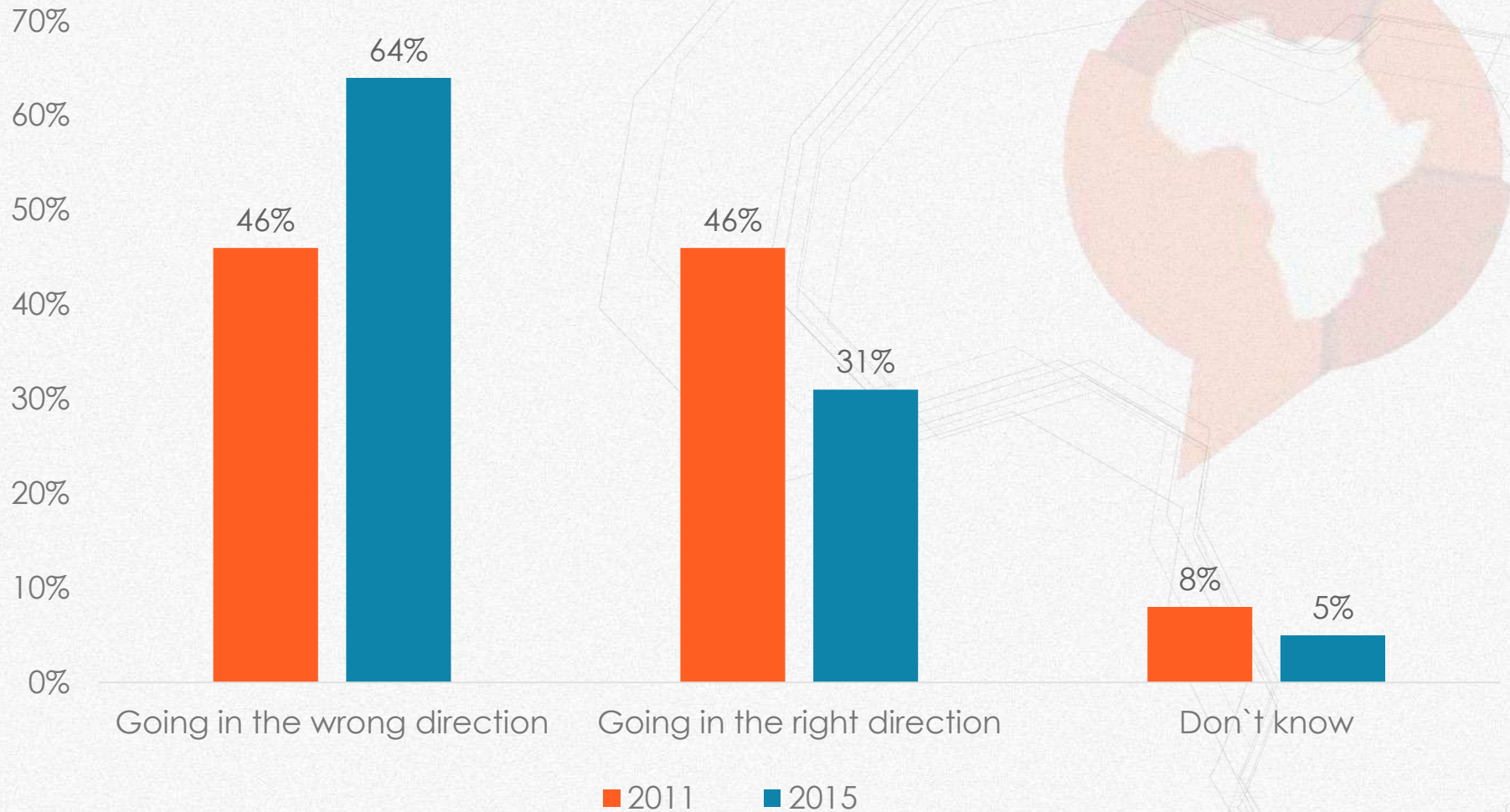
(% reporting "fairly bad" or "very bad")

# Negative rating of economic conditions | South Africa | 2000-2015



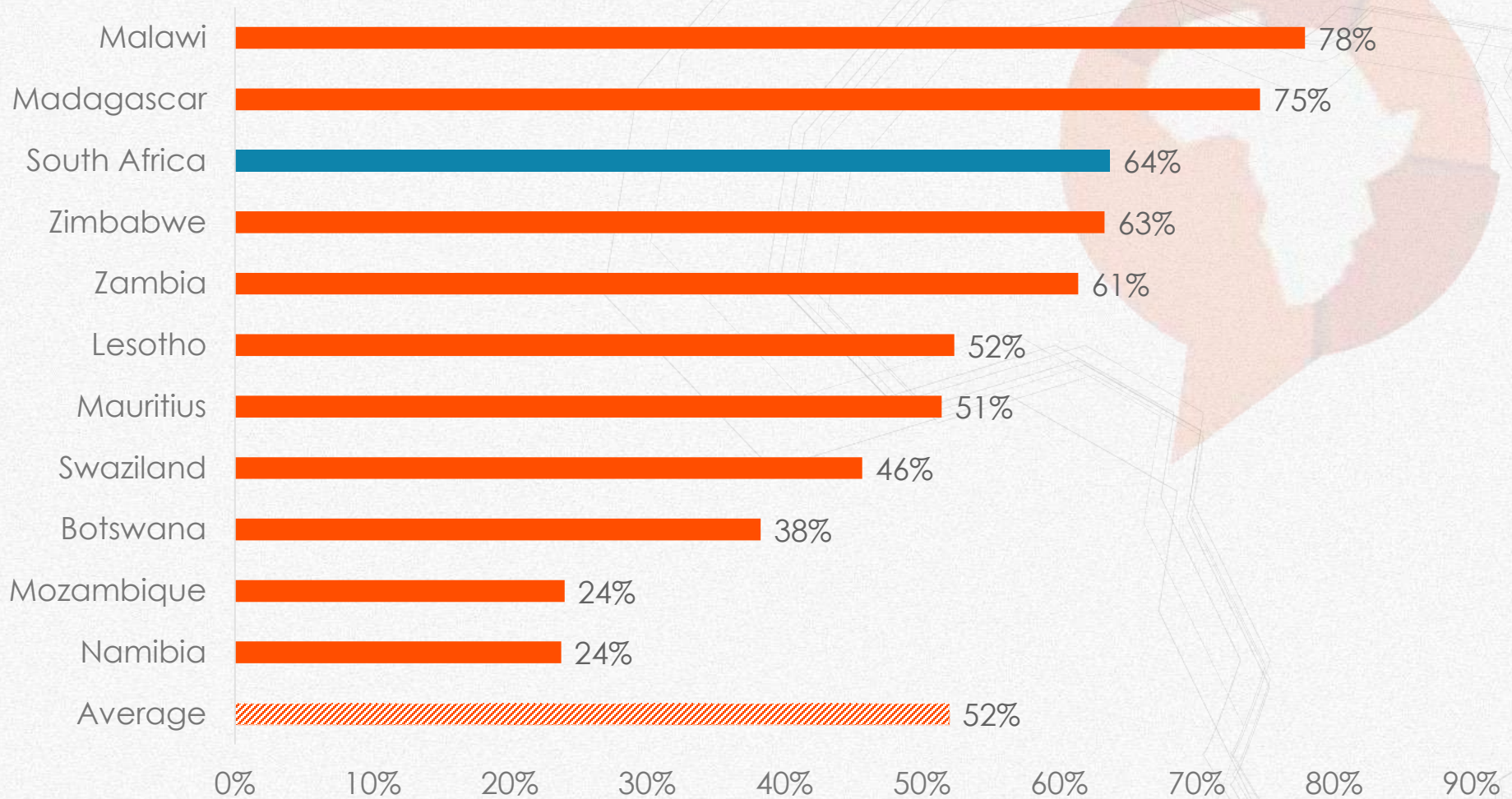
(% reporting "fairly bad" or "very bad")

## Direction of the country | South Africa | 2011-2015



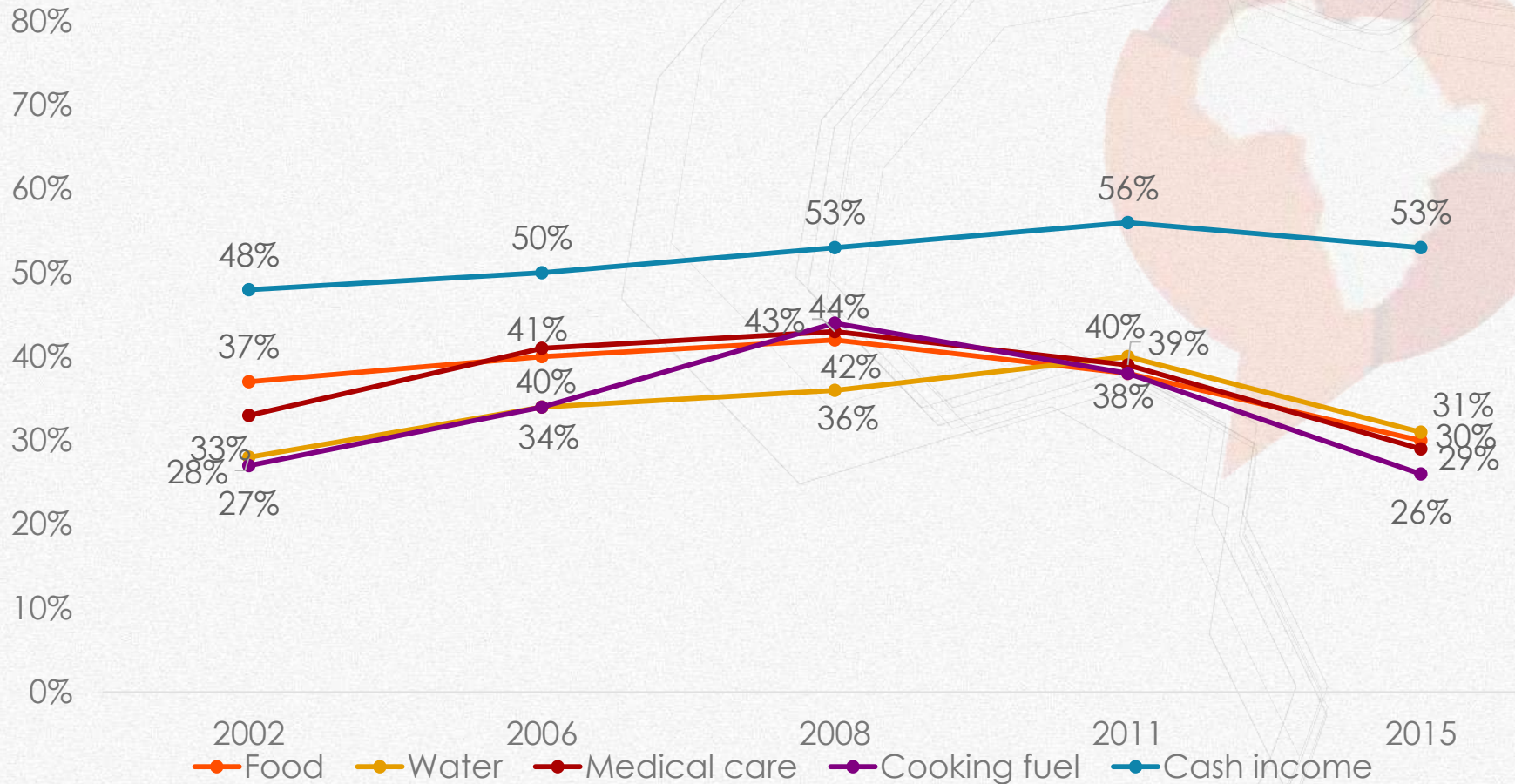
**Respondents were asked:** Some people might think the country is going in the wrong direction. Others may feel it is going in the right direction. So let me ask you about the overall direction of the country: Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or in the right direction?

## Direction of the country | Southern Africa | 2014/15



**Respondents were asked:** Some people might think the country is going in the wrong direction. Others may feel it is going in the right direction. So let me ask you about the overall direction of the country: Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or in the right direction?

# Deprivation from basic necessities | South Africa | 2002-2015

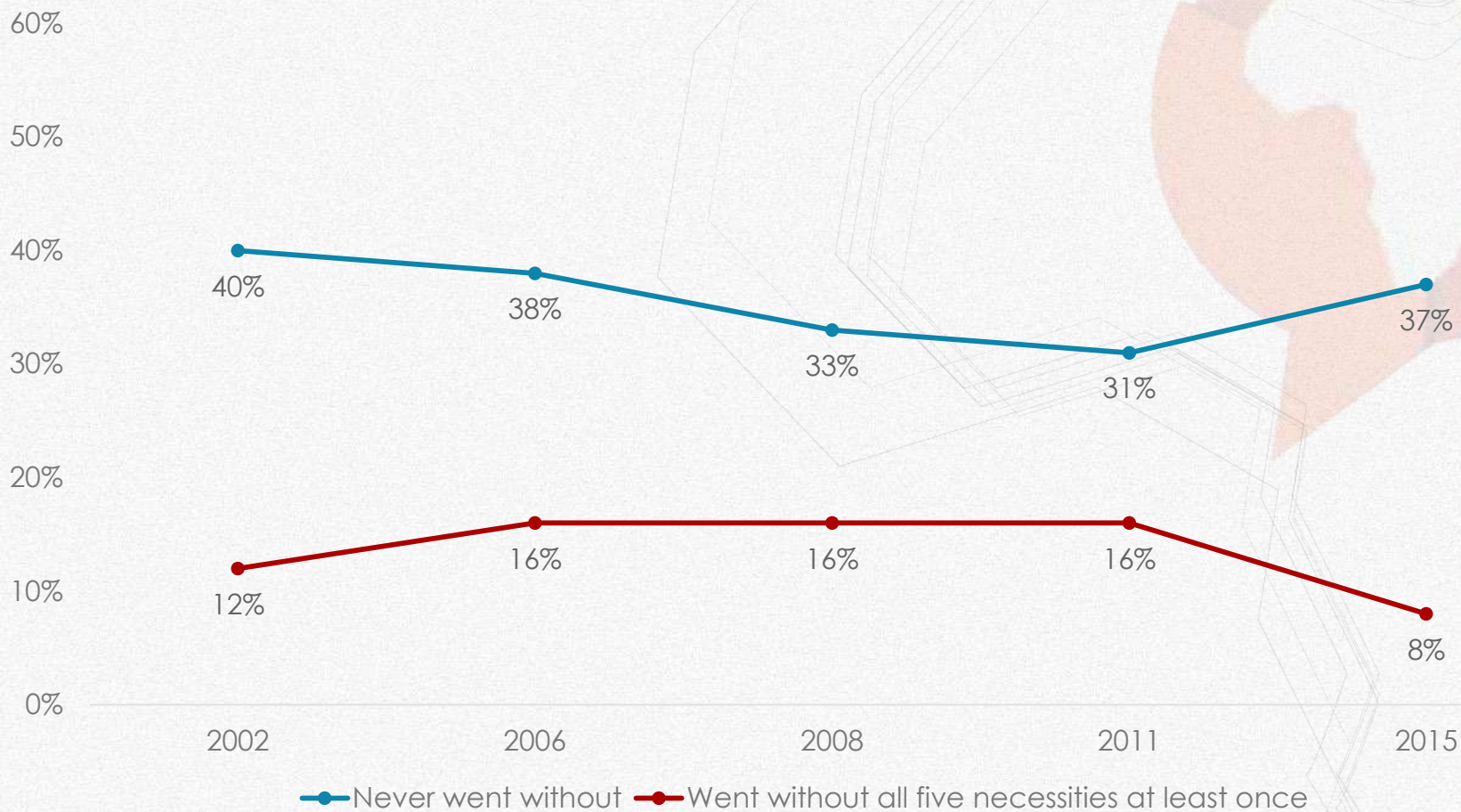


**Respondents were asked:** Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without: Enough food to eat? Enough clean water for home use? Medicines or medical treatment? Enough fuel to cook your food? A cash income?

(% who say "just once or twice," "several times," "many times," or "always")



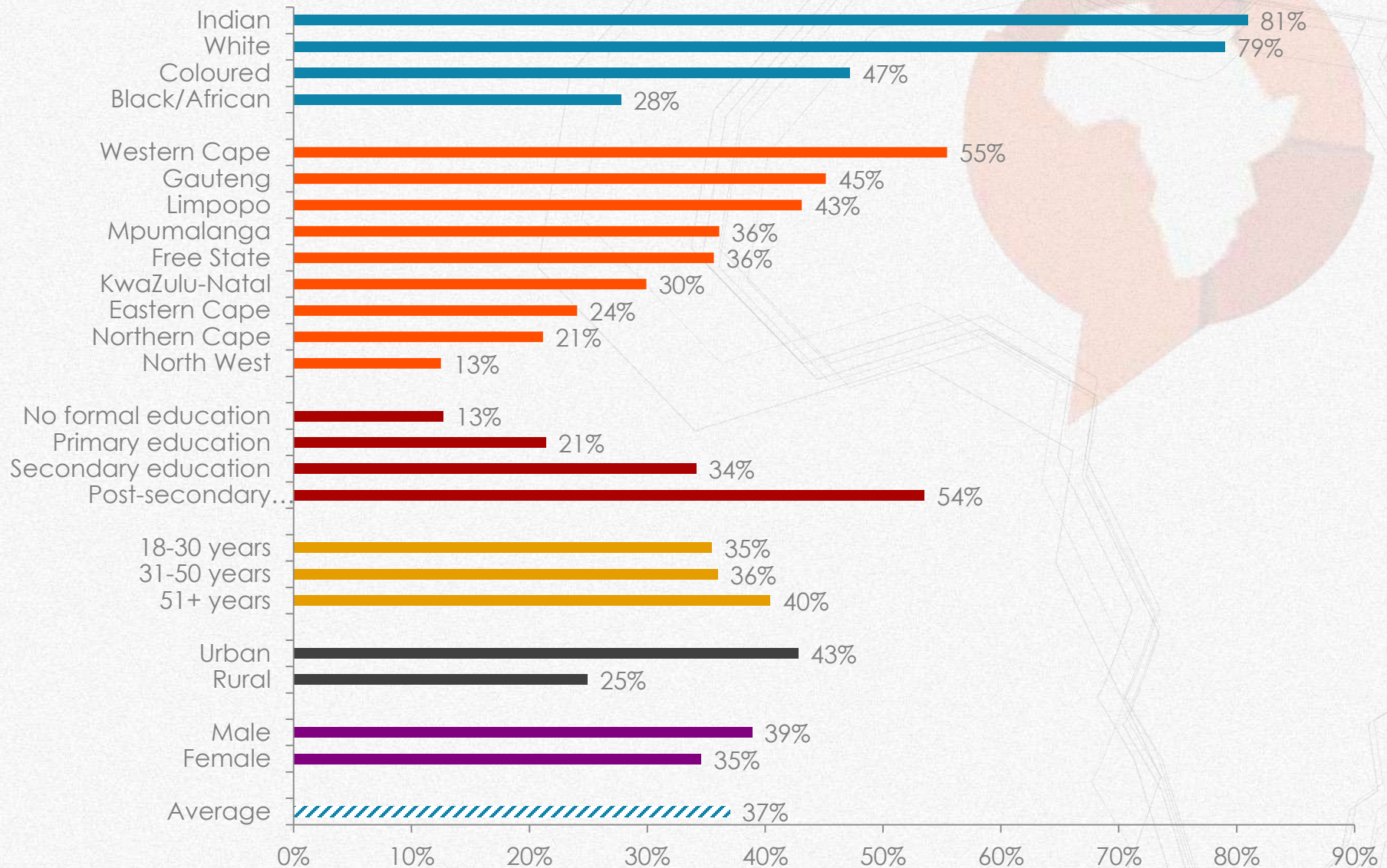
# Basic necessities: never going without vs. going without all five | South Africa | 2002-2015



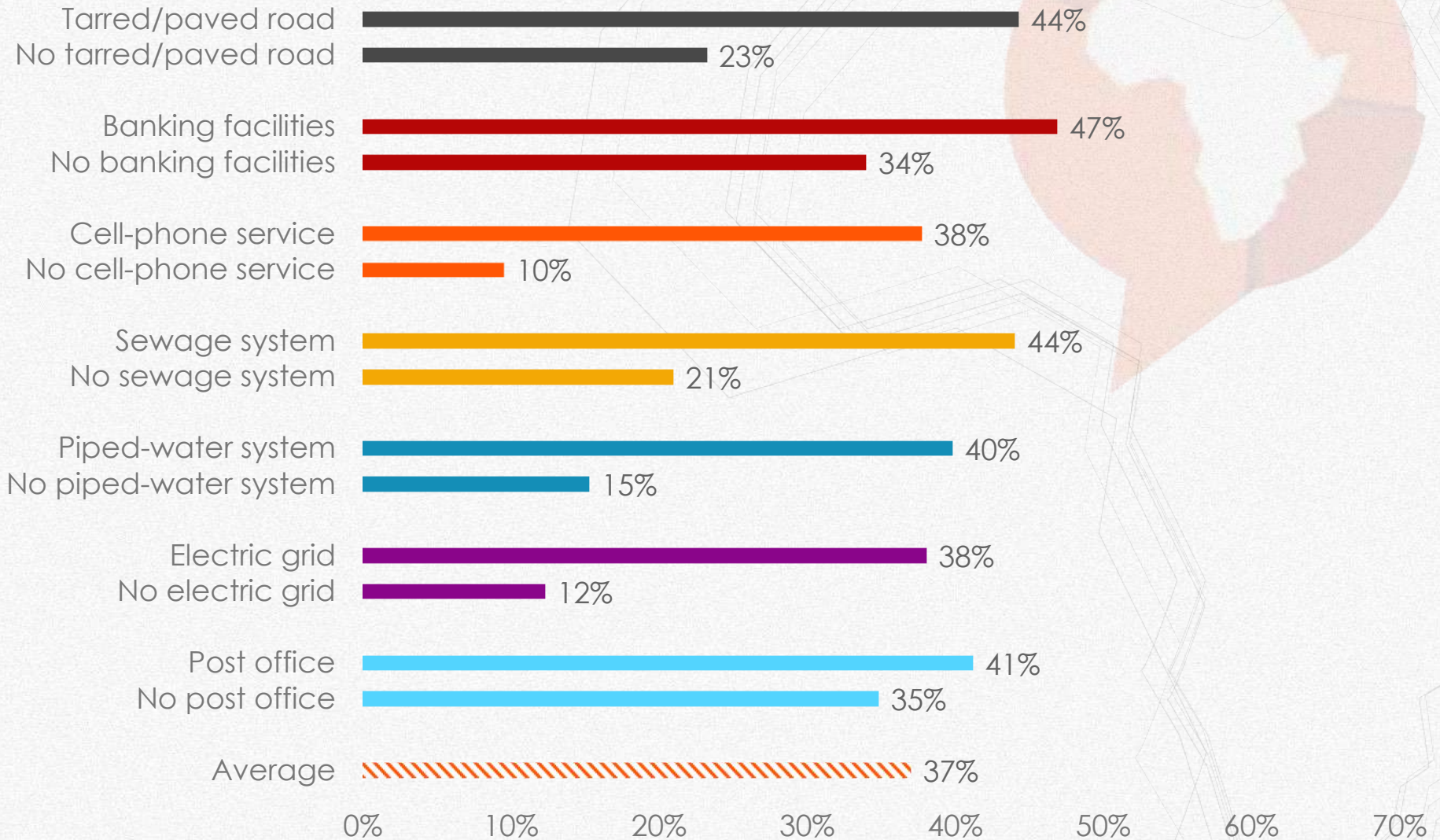
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(% who say "never", "just once or twice," "several times," "many times," or "always")

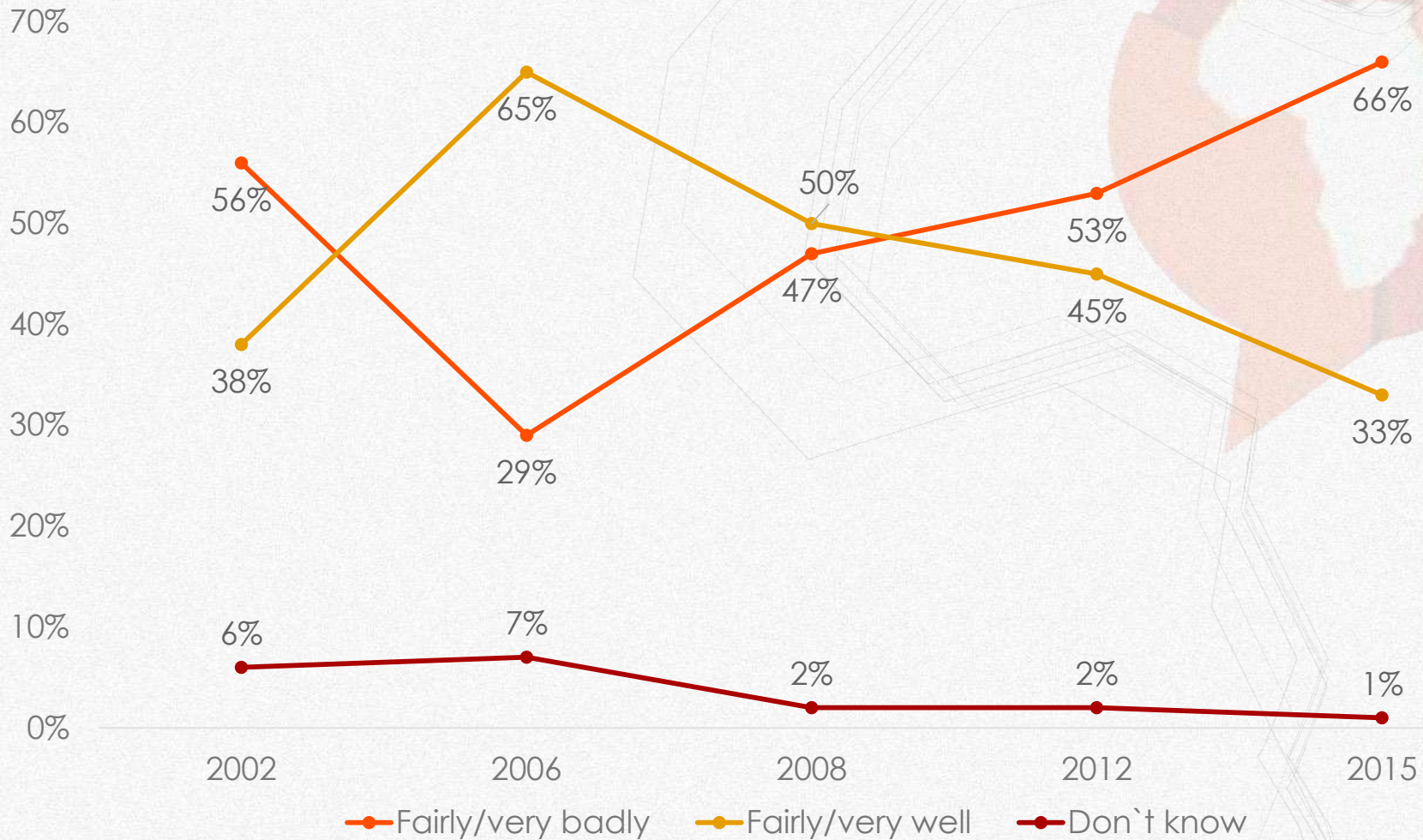
# Basic necessities: Never going without | by social indicators | South Africa | 2015



# Basic necessities: Never going without | by infrastructure | South Africa | 2015



# Government Performance in economic management | South Africa | 2002-2015



**Respondents were asked:** How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Managing the economy?



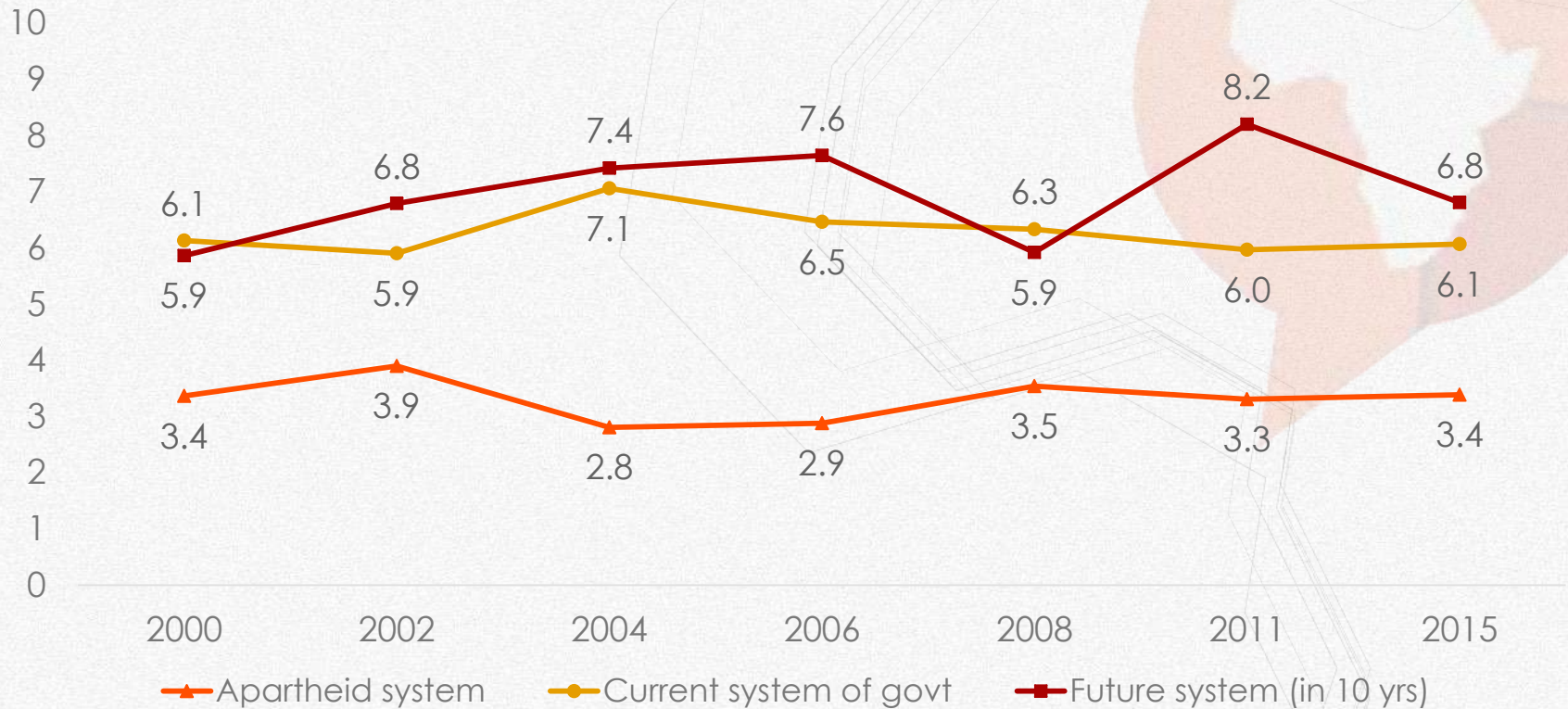
# Evaluations of Post-1994 South Africa



# Key findings

- South Africans' ratings of current and past political systems remain largely unchanged since 2011, but optimism about the political system in 10 years' time has declined significantly (from an average of 8.2 points out of 10 in 2011 to 6.8). As of 2015, white and Indian citizens give apartheid a higher rating than both the current political system and their expectations for the future.
- On average, only 37% of citizens believe that life has improved since 1994 on a range of socioeconomic indicators, while 24% believe that conditions have remained the same and 38% that they have deteriorated. Among racial groups, Indian citizens are the most critical of post-1994 developments.
- Despite their dissatisfaction with the rate of change, South Africans remain committed to their national identity and to nation-building efforts. More than eight in 10 "agree" or "strongly agree" that creating a united country is desirable (87%) and possible (83%).

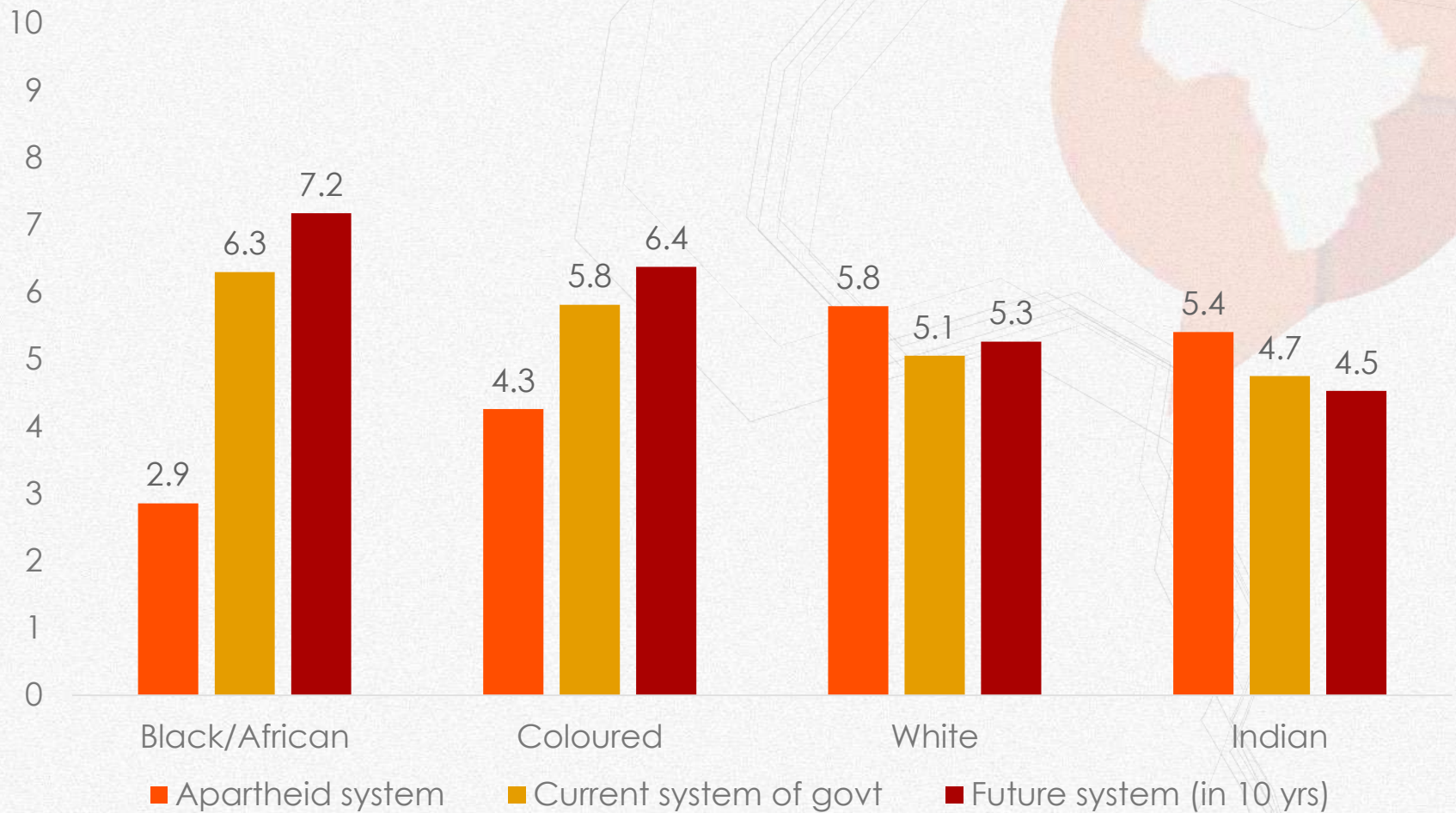
## Average ratings of political systems | South Africa | 2000-2015



**Respondents were asked:** We are now going to discuss how you rate different forms of government. I would like you to give marks out of 10. The best form of governing a country gets 10 out of 10, and the worst form of governing a country gets no marks at all. What grade would you give to:

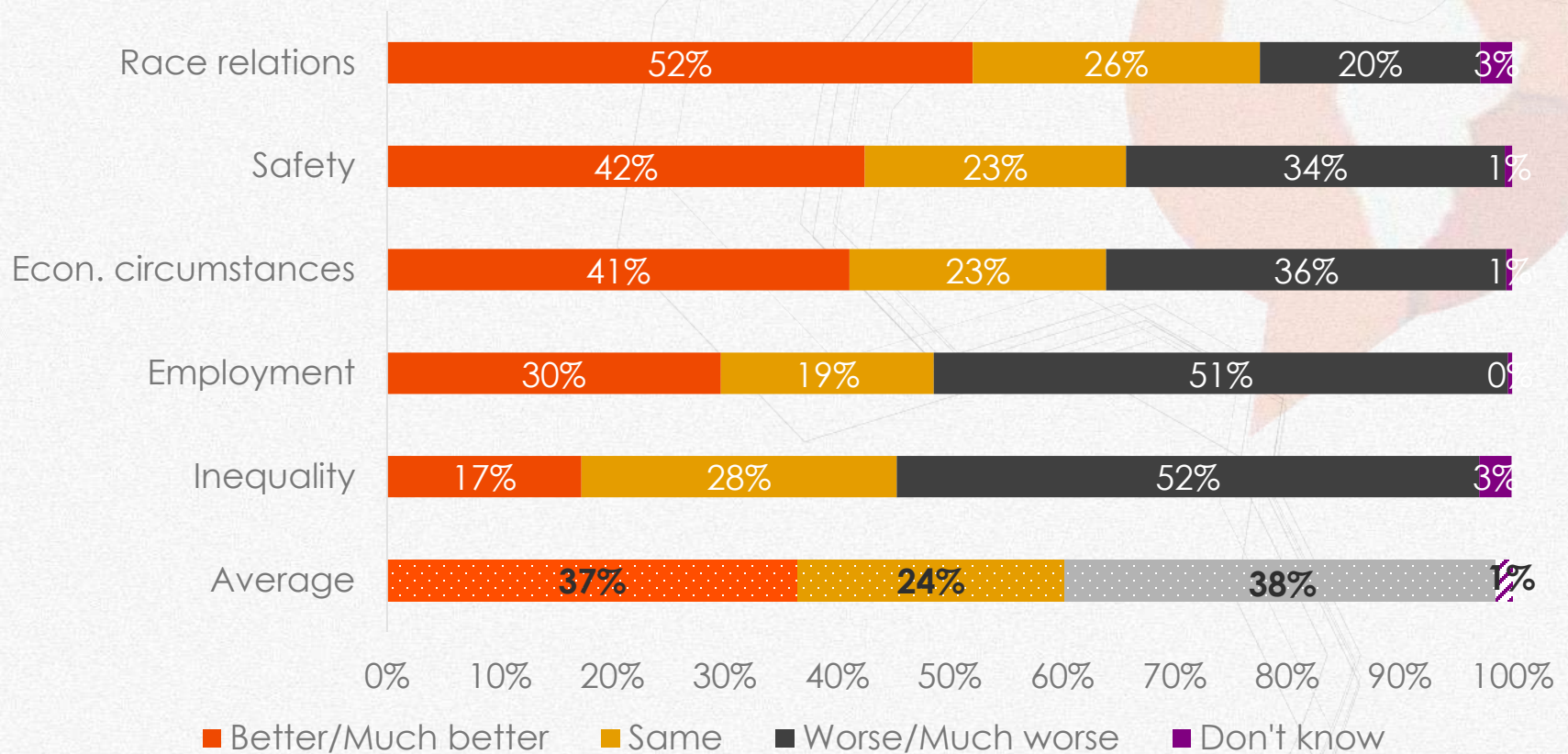
1. The way the country was governed under apartheid?
2. Our current system of government with regular elections where everyone can vote and there are at least two political parties?
3. The political system of this country as you expect it to be in 10 years' time?

## Average ratings of political systems | by race | South Africa | 2015



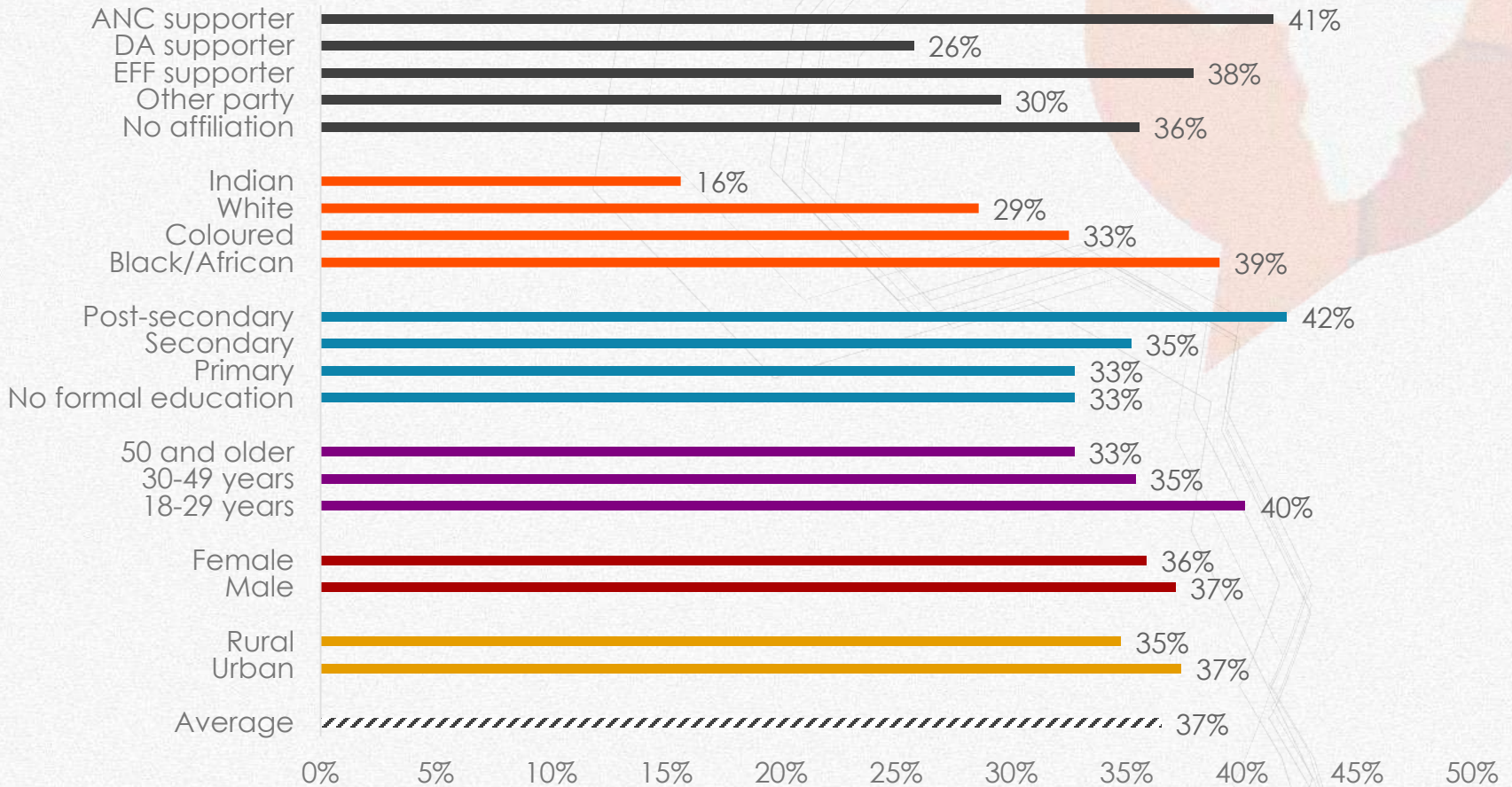


## Changes in socioeconomic conditions since 1994 | South Africa | 2015



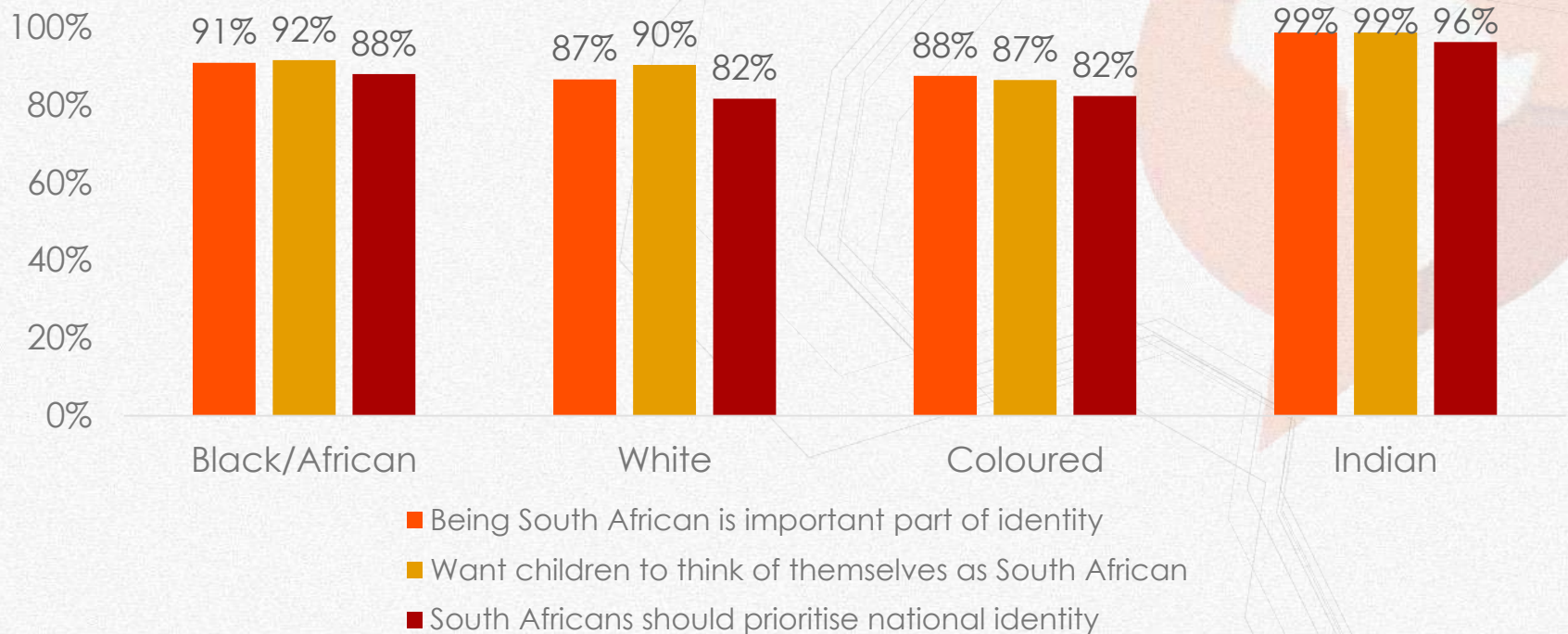
**Respondents were asked:** How would you say the following has changed since the transition in 1994:  
 1) Your personal safety and that of your family? 2) Economic circumstances for you and your family?  
 3) Employment opportunities for you and your family? 4) Relations between members of different race groups? 5) The gap between the rich and poor?

# Improvement in socioeconomic conditions since 1994 | by social indicators | South Africa | 2015



(Figure shows average % of “better” or “much better” responses across the questions regarding personal safety, economic circumstances, employment opportunities, race relations, and inequality between rich and poor)

## Attachment to national identity | by race | South Africa | 2015

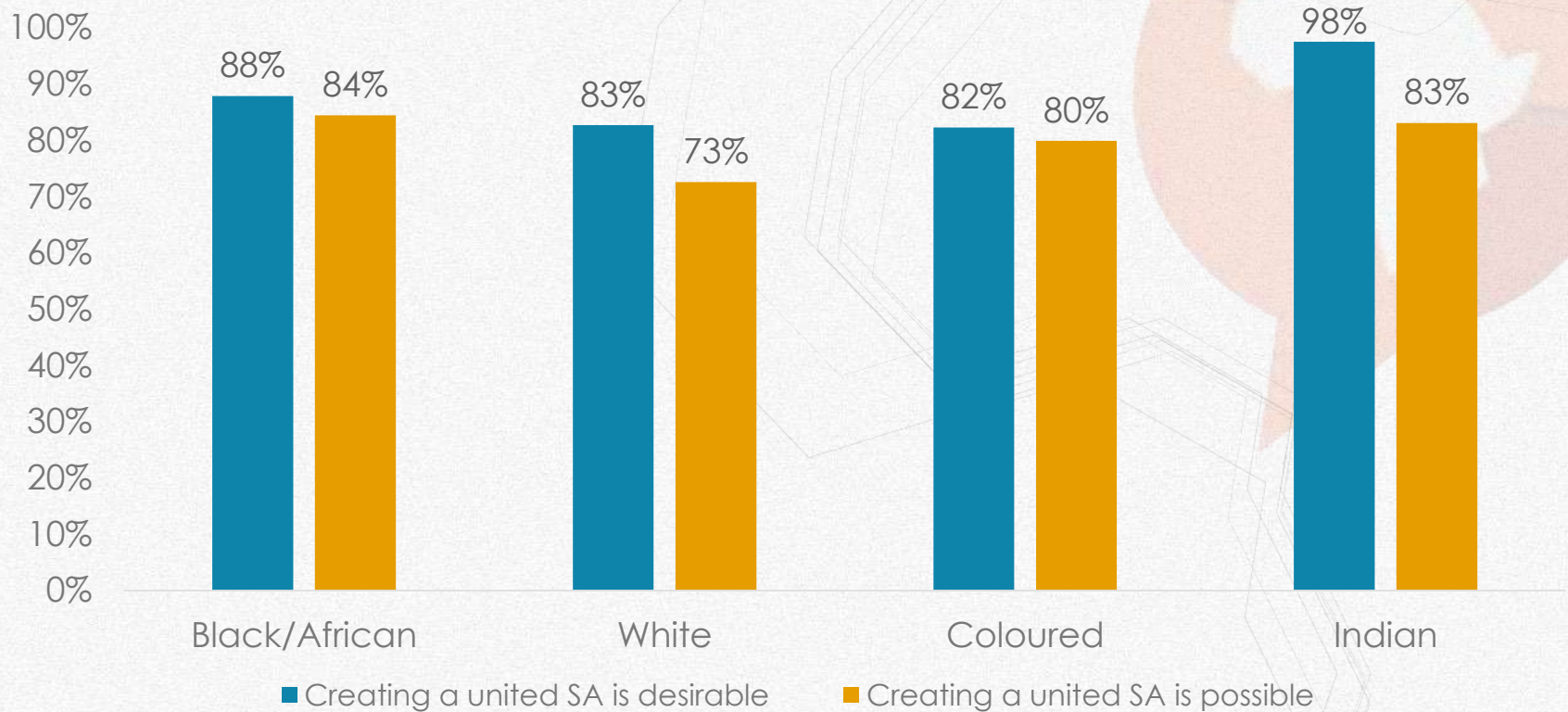


**Respondents were asked:** Here are some things people say about the way they feel about South Africa. There are no right or wrong answers. We are simply interested in your opinions. Please tell me whether you disagree or agree with these statements.

1. Being South African is a very important part of how you see yourself.
2. You would want your children to think of themselves as South African.
3. People should realise we are South Africans first, and stop thinking of themselves in terms of the group they belong to.

(% "agree" or "strongly agree")

## National unity | by race | South Africa | 2015



**Respondents were asked:** Please tell me whether you disagree or agree with these statements.

1. It is desirable to create one united South African nation out of all the different groups who live in this country.
2. It is possible to create such a united South African nation.  
(% "agree" or "strongly agree")



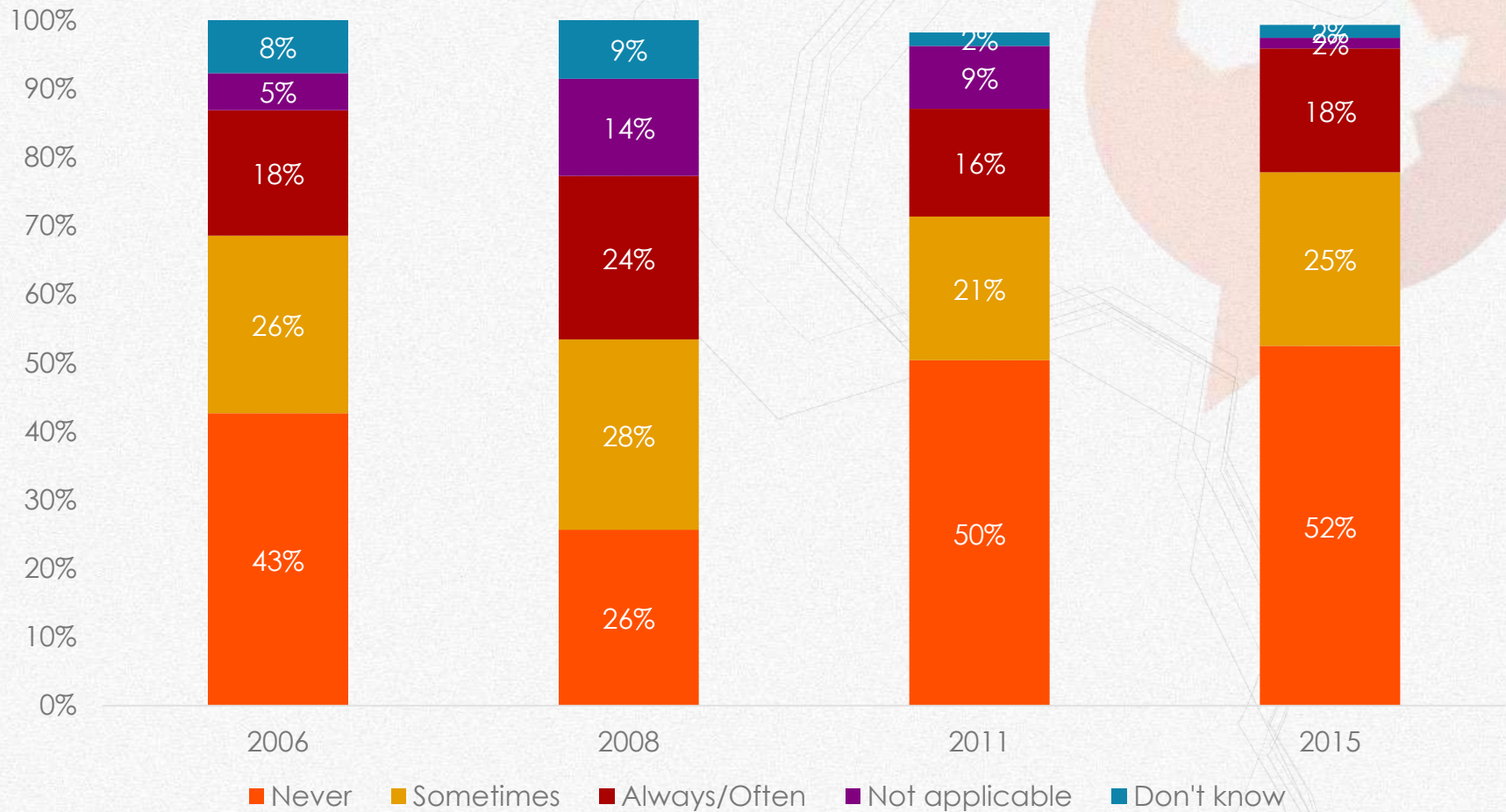
# Discrimination by institutions and society



# Key findings

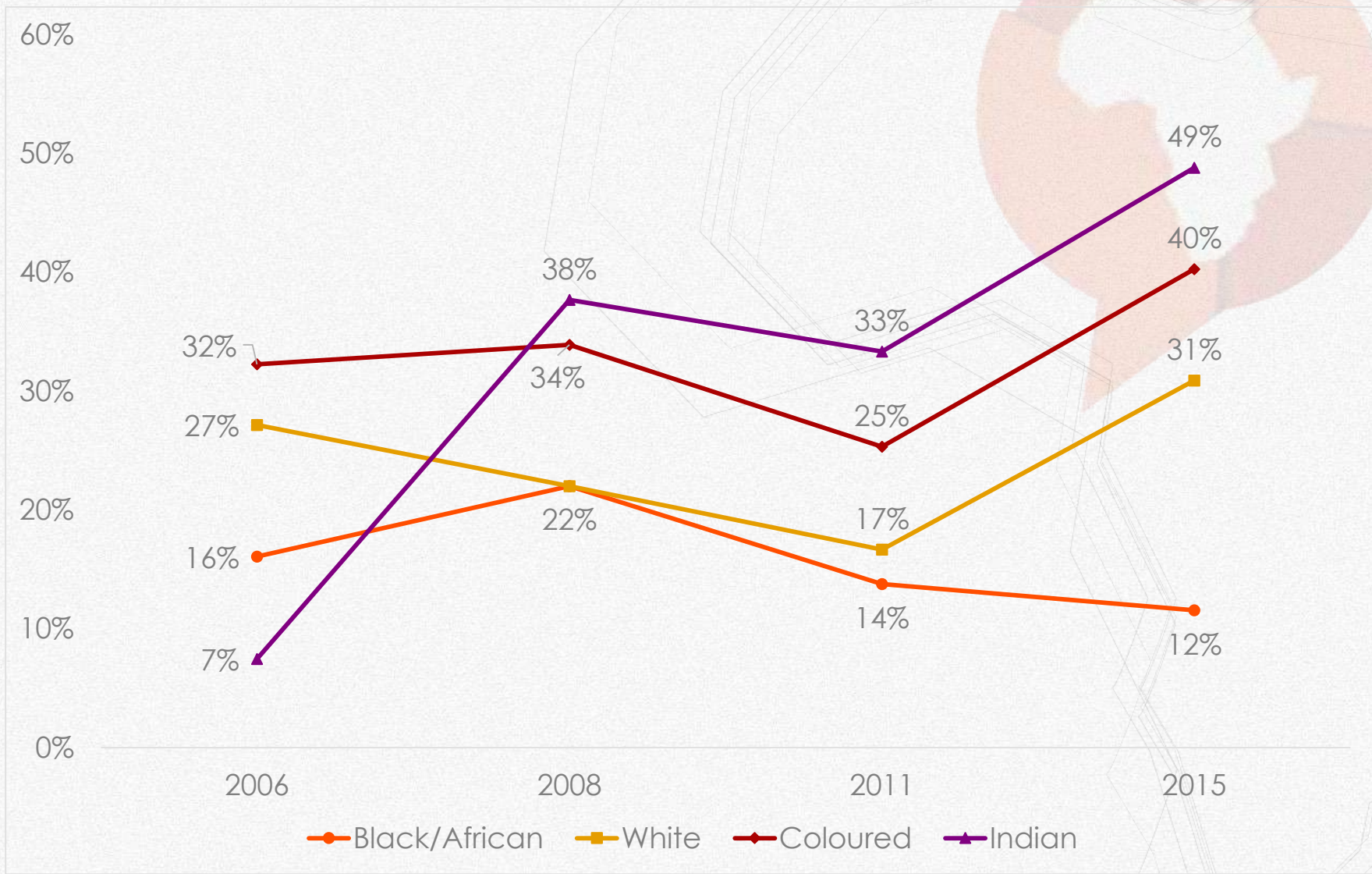
- Although consistently low since 2006, the proportion of South Africans who believe that the government “always” or “often” discriminates against members of their ethnic community increased by 15 percentage points, on average, among citizens of minority race groups between 2011 and 2015.
- A majority of citizens believe that employers (56%) and the courts (54%) “always” or “often” treat people differently based on their race, while 36% say the same about landlords.
- Perceptions of frequent racial discrimination by employers, the courts, and landlords are far higher among Indian respondents (73% on average) than among other race groups. They are also above average among urban residents, citizens with high levels of education, and residents of North West, Gauteng, and Western Cape provinces.

## Government discrimination | South Africa | 2015



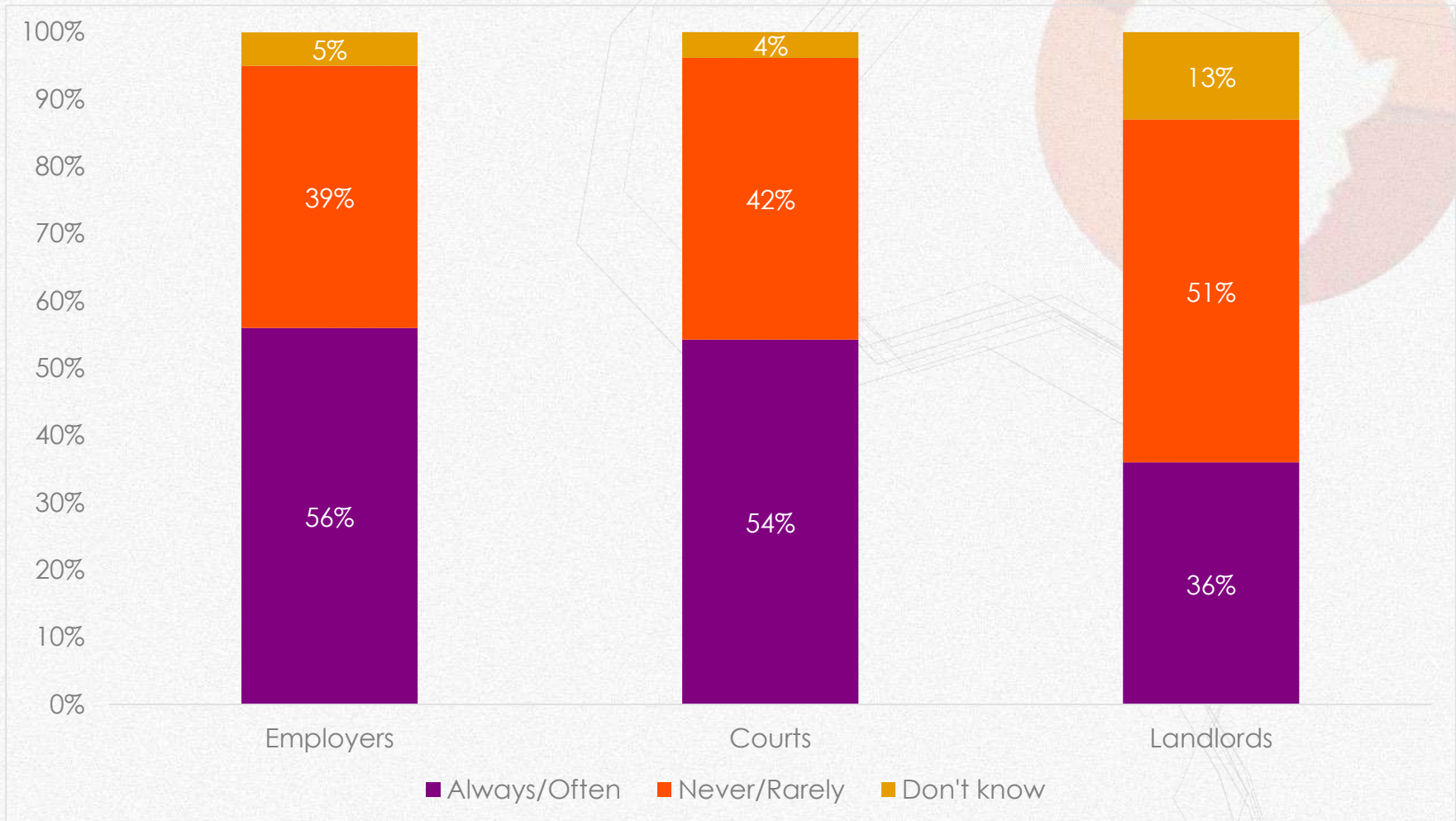
Respondents were asked: How often, if ever, are [members of respondent's ethnic group] treated unfairly by the government?

# Government discrimination | by race | South Africa | 2006-2015



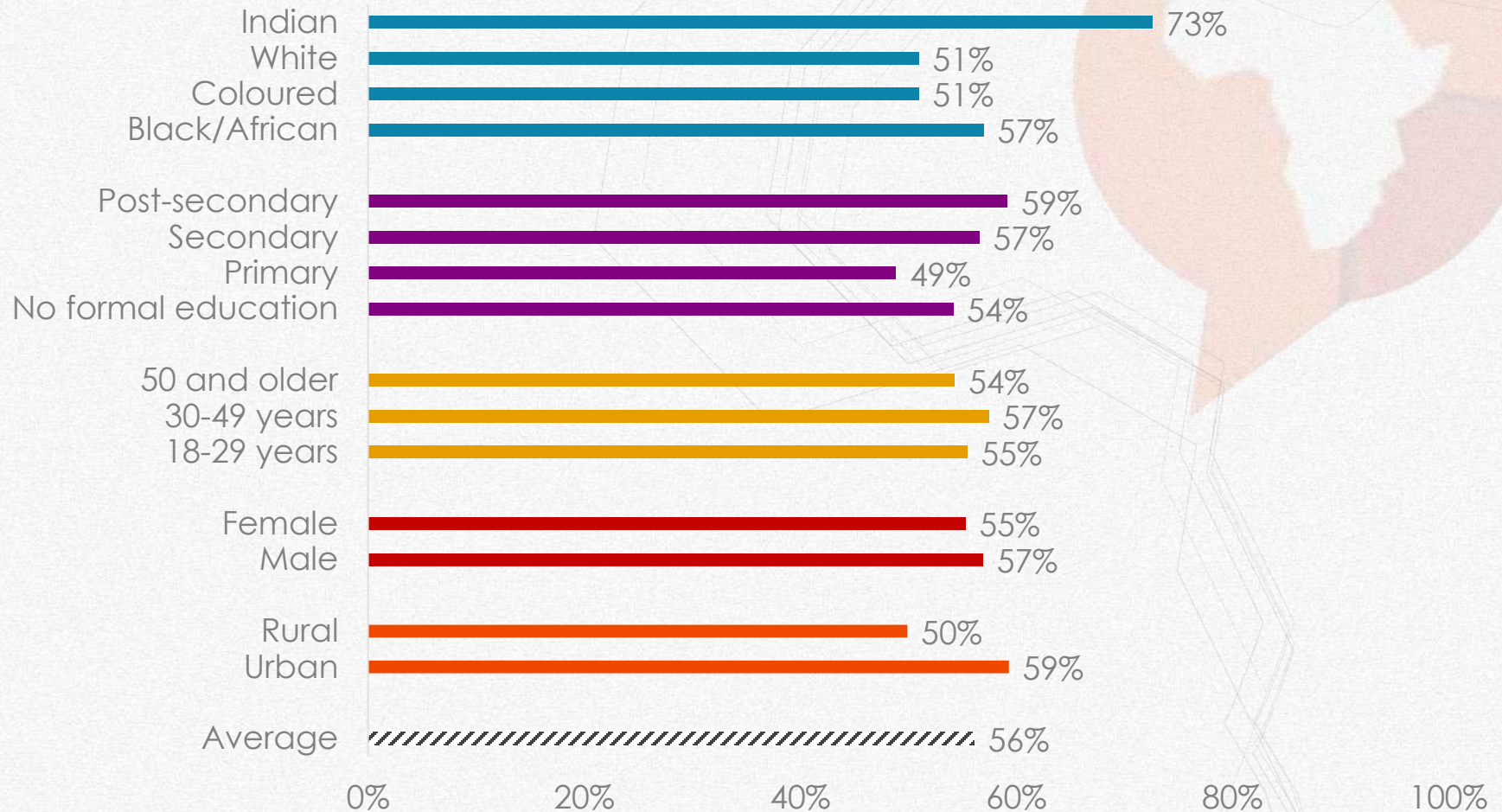


## Perceptions of racial discrimination | South Africa | 2015



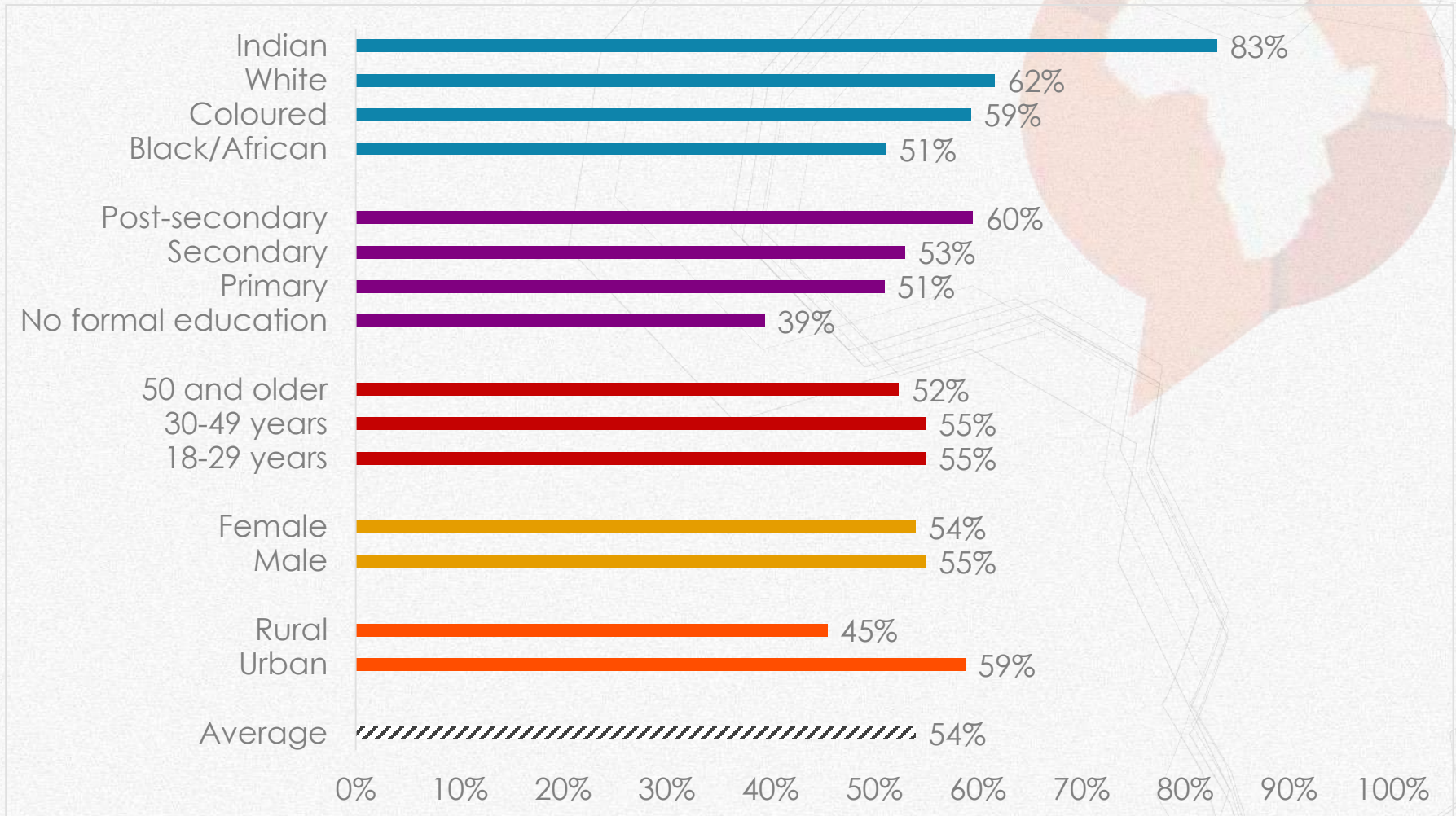
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, how often in this country are people treated unequally because of their race by: Their current or prospective employers? The courts? Potential landlords?

# Racial discrimination by employers | by social indicators | South Africa | 2015



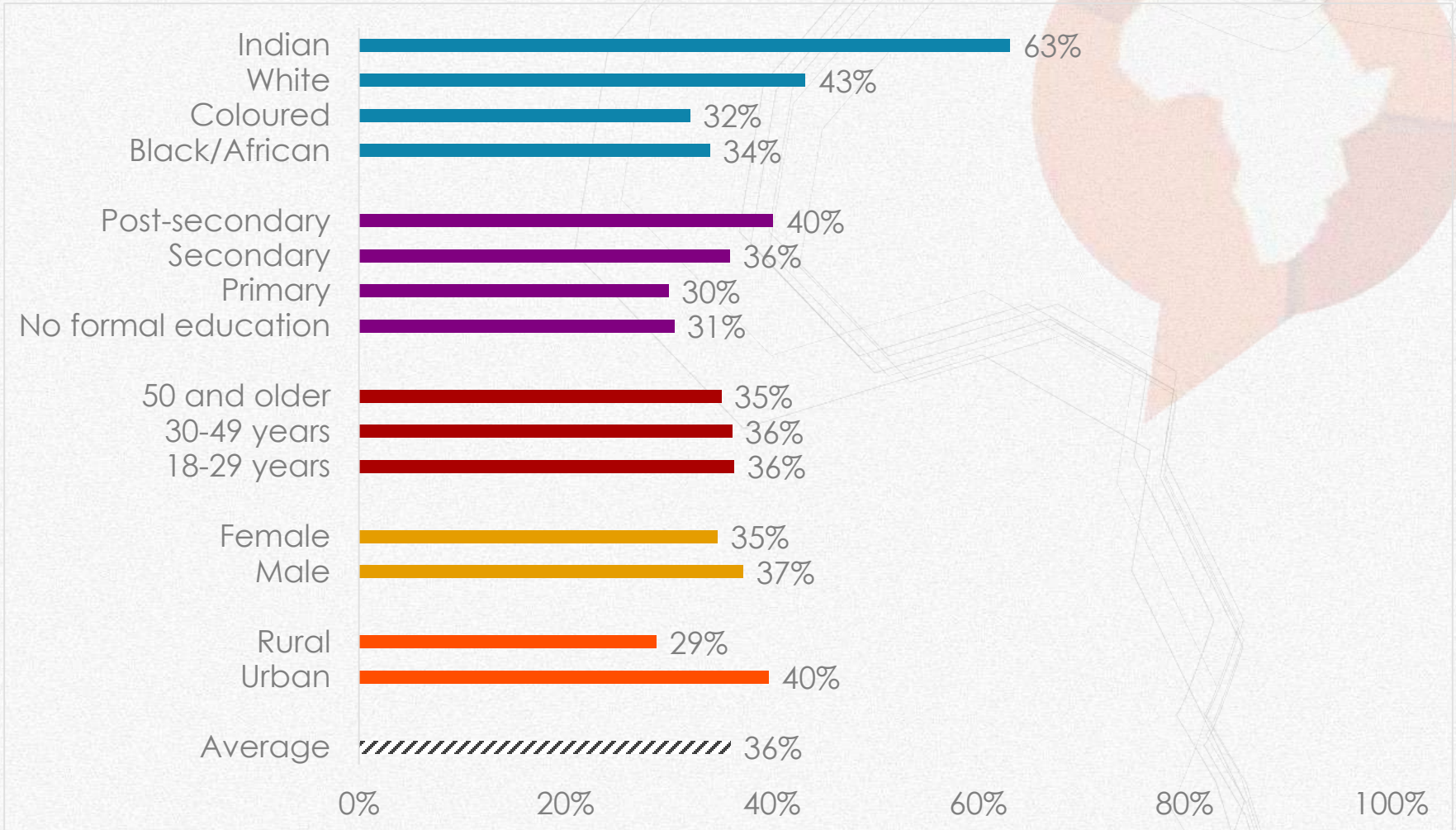
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how often in this country are people treated unequally because of their race by their current or prospective employers? (% "often" or "always")*

# Racial discrimination in the courts | by social indicators | South Africa | 2015



Respondents were asked: In your opinion, how often in this country are people treated unequally because of their race by the courts? (% "often" or "always")

# Racial discrimination by potential landlords | by social indicators | South Africa | 2015



Respondents were asked: In your opinion, how often in this country are people treated unequally because of their race by potential landlords? (% "often" or "always")

# Racial discrimination by employers, courts and landlords | by province | South Africa | 2015

Province	Employers	Courts	Landlords	Average
North West	70%	54%	54%	<b>59%</b>
Gauteng	64%	69%	35%	<b>56%</b>
Western Cape	51%	61%	52%	<b>55%</b>
KwaZulu-Natal	57%	59%	40%	<b>52%</b>
Free State	65%	54%	32%	<b>50%</b>
Eastern Cape	48%	51%	41%	<b>47%</b>
Northern Cape	43%	48%	35%	<b>42%</b>
Limpopo	37%	37%	18%	<b>31%</b>
Mpumalanga	56%	16%	4%	<b>25%</b>

(% "often" or "always")



# Conclusion

- South Africans are increasingly pessimistic about the national economy, saying it is headed in the wrong direction and the government has done a poor job of managing it.
- Optimism about the future has decreased significantly with white and Indian citizens giving apartheid a higher rating than both the current political system and their expectations for the future.
- Perceptions of frequent government discrimination have increased among minority race groups and a majority of South Africans believe that employers and courts “always” or “often” treat people differently based on race, while more than one-third say the same about landlord

## For more information on these topics, please consult:

- Dispatch No. 82: Post-1994 South Africa better than apartheid, but few gains in socioeconomic conditions
- Dispatch No. 83: Despite decline in lived poverty, South Africans increasingly pessimistic about the economy
- Dispatch No. 84: South Africans generally tolerant but report racial discrimination by employers and courts





Thank you  
Siyabonga  
Rea leboha  
Dankie  
Inkomu  
Gangans