

Abuja, Nigeria
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News release

Nigerians show high tolerance for diversity but low trust in fellow citizens, Afrobarometer study shows

A majority of Nigerians value diverse communities, identify equally with their ethnicity and nationality, and believe there is more that unites Nigerians as one people than divides them, new Afrobarometer findings show.

Over the years, Nigeria has witnessed repeated ethnic and religious clashes. But the survey shows that nine in 10 citizens are tolerant of people from different religions, ethnic groups, nationalities, and political parties.

However, general trust in fellow citizens is very low; most Nigerians say one "must be very careful" in dealing with others.

Key findings

- Almost two-thirds (62%) of citizens say they feel equally attached to their Nigerian identity and their ethnic identity (Figure 1).
 - One in five (22%) identify more with their ethnic group than their nationality, while somewhat fewer (16%) identify more their nationality.
- By a ratio of 2-to-1, citizens think there is more that unites all Nigerians as a people (62%) than divides them (36%) (Figure 2).
- Almost three-quarters (72%) of citizens say that diverse communities are stronger than homogeneous ones (25%) (Figure 3).
- About nine out of 10 Nigerians say they would like it or "would not care" if their neighbours were from a different ethnic group (90%), belonged to a different religion (86%), supported a different political party (91%), or were immigrants (88%) (Figure 4).
 - Only one in 10 (9%) would welcome homosexuals as their neighbours.
- Only 7% of Nigerians think that "most people can be trusted" (Figure 5). Nine in 10 (92%) say you "must be very careful when dealing with people."

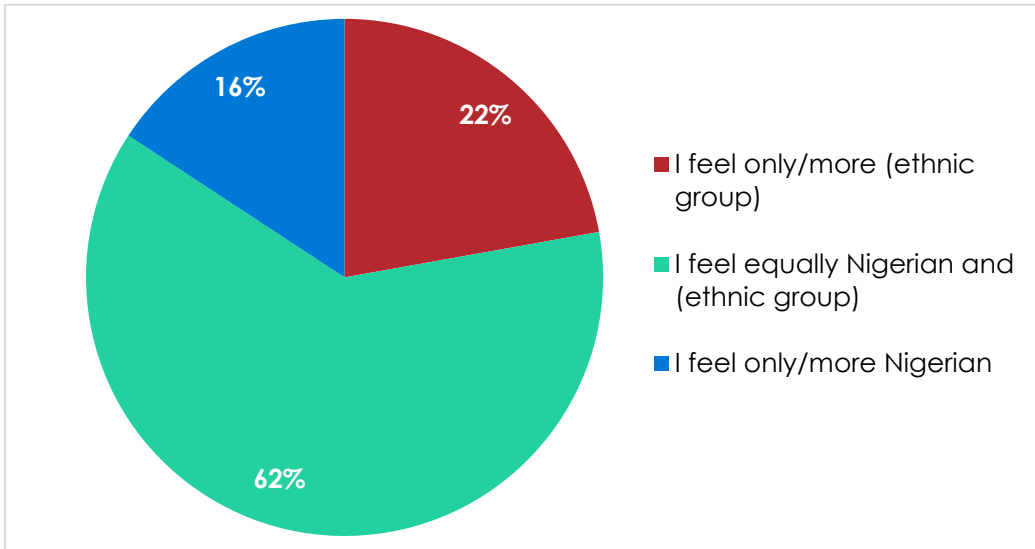
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Seven rounds of surveys were completed in up to 38 countries between 1999 and 2018. Round 8 surveys in 2019/2021 are planned in at least 35 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

The Afrobarometer team in Nigeria, led by NOIPolls, interviewed 1,599 adult citizens of Nigeria in January-February 2020. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Nigeria in 1999, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

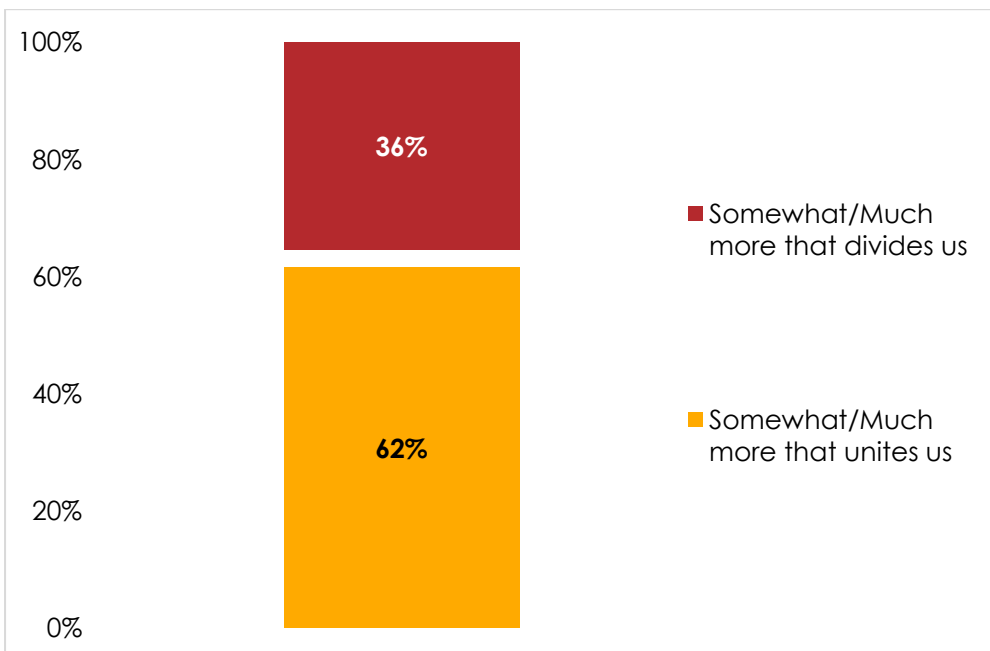
Charts

Figure 1: National vs. ethnic identity | Nigeria | 2020



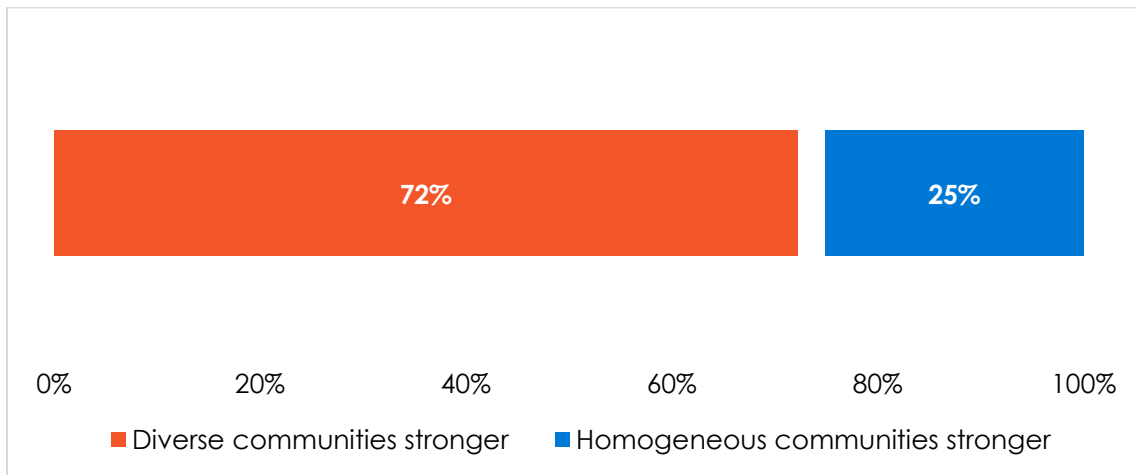
Respondents were asked: Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a Nigerian and being a [member of respondent's ethnic group]. Which of the following statements best expresses your feelings?

Figure 2: More that unites or more that divides? | Nigeria | 2020



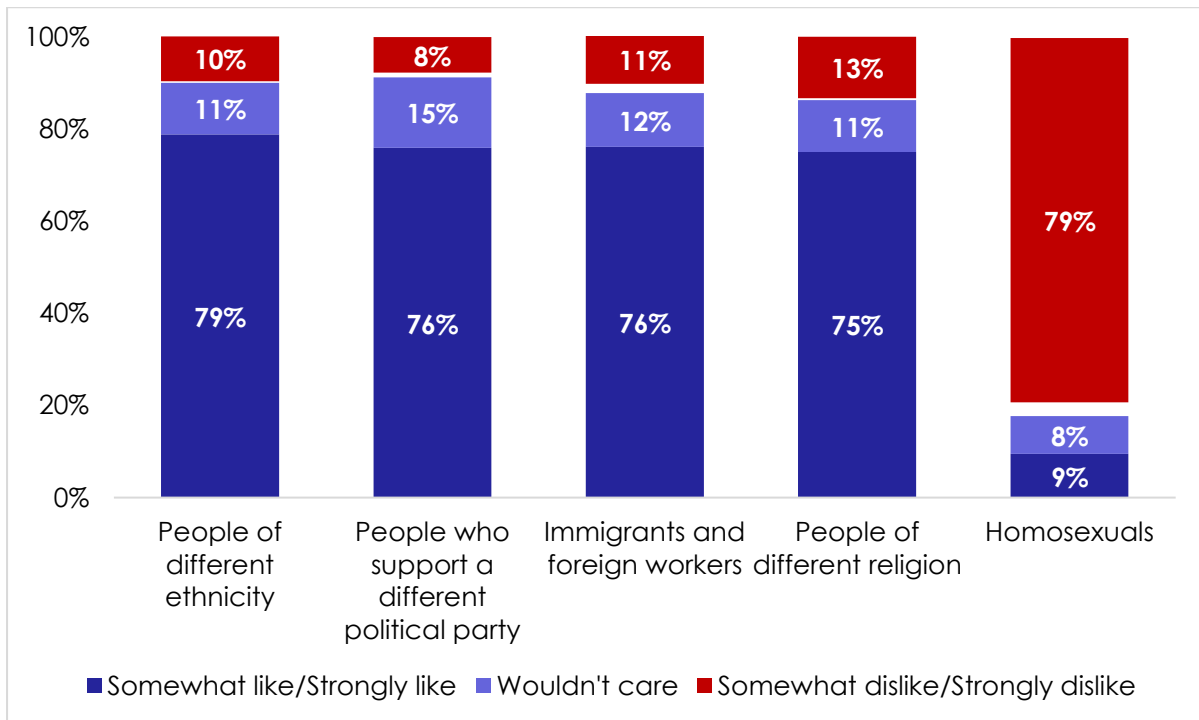
Respondents were asked: Nigerians are very diverse. They come from different religions, ethnic groups, political parties, and economic and social backgrounds. Overall, would you say that there is more that unites all Nigerians as one people, or more that divides them?

Figure 3: Does diversity make communities stronger? | Nigeria | 2020



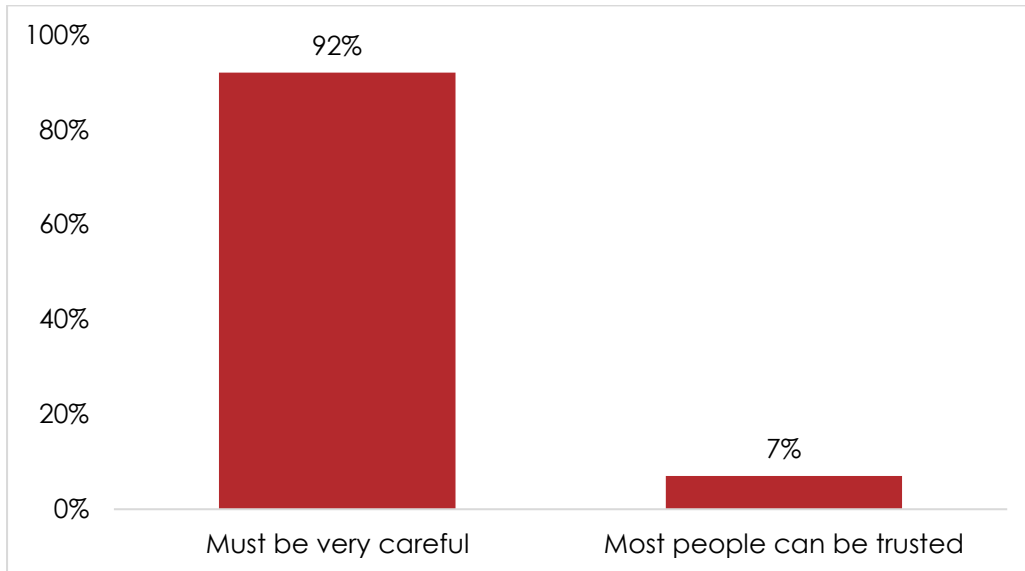
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: Communities are stronger when they are made up of people from different ethnic groups, races, or religions.
 Statement 2: Communities are stronger when they are made up of people who are similar to each other, that is, people from the same ethnic group, race, or religion.
 (% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with each statement)

Figure 4: Tolerance for others | Nigeria | 2020



Respondents were asked: For each of the following types of people, please tell me whether you would like having people from this group as neighbours, dislike it, or not care.

Figure 5: Can most people be trusted? | Nigeria | 2020



Respondents were asked: Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you must be very careful in dealing with people?

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