



Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR)
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News release

Ready to vote in Zimbabwe? Young and urban residents less likely to say yes

Whilst more than eight in 10 Zimbabweans (82%) say they are both registered and likely to vote in the upcoming elections, young and urban residents trail their older and rural counterparts in readiness to vote, a recent national survey suggests.

Despite the enthusiasm they have displayed at political party rallies, as of late April/early May urban residents and youth were less likely than rural and older residents to say they were registered and likely to vote, according to survey findings from the Mass Public Opinion Institute, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, and Afrobarometer.

Harare and Bulawayo had smaller proportions of registered and likely voters than other provinces. Moreover, levels of registered and likely voters were lower among citizens who expected the elections not to be free and fair and those who said the country had more important matters to attend to than conducting elections in 2018.

Watch for more detailed analysis of Afrobarometer pre-election survey findings later this week.

Key findings

- As of late April/early May, younger Zimbabweans were less likely to say they were registered and likely to vote than their elders: 76% of those aged 18-30 compared to 87% of 31- to 50-year-olds and 89% of those over 50 (Figure 1).
- Urban residents were less likely than rural residents to say they were registered and likely to vote, 79% vs. 84%. Analysis by gender shows no significant difference.
- The proportions of respondents who were registered and likely to vote were lowest in the urban provinces of Harare (75%) and Bulawayo (78%), compared to 85% in Midlands, Mashonaland Central, Masvingo, and Mashonaland East.
- Zimbabweans who think the upcoming elections will be “completely free and fair” or “free and fair election with minor problems” were more likely to be registered and likely to vote (85%) than those who expect the elections to be “not free and fair” or “free and fair with major problems” (79%) (Figure 2).
- Registered and likely voters were more numerous among citizens who say that in accordance with the Constitution, elections must be held in 2018 (85%) than among those who think that elections are not necessary in 2018 since there are more important matters that require government attention (69%) (Figure 3).

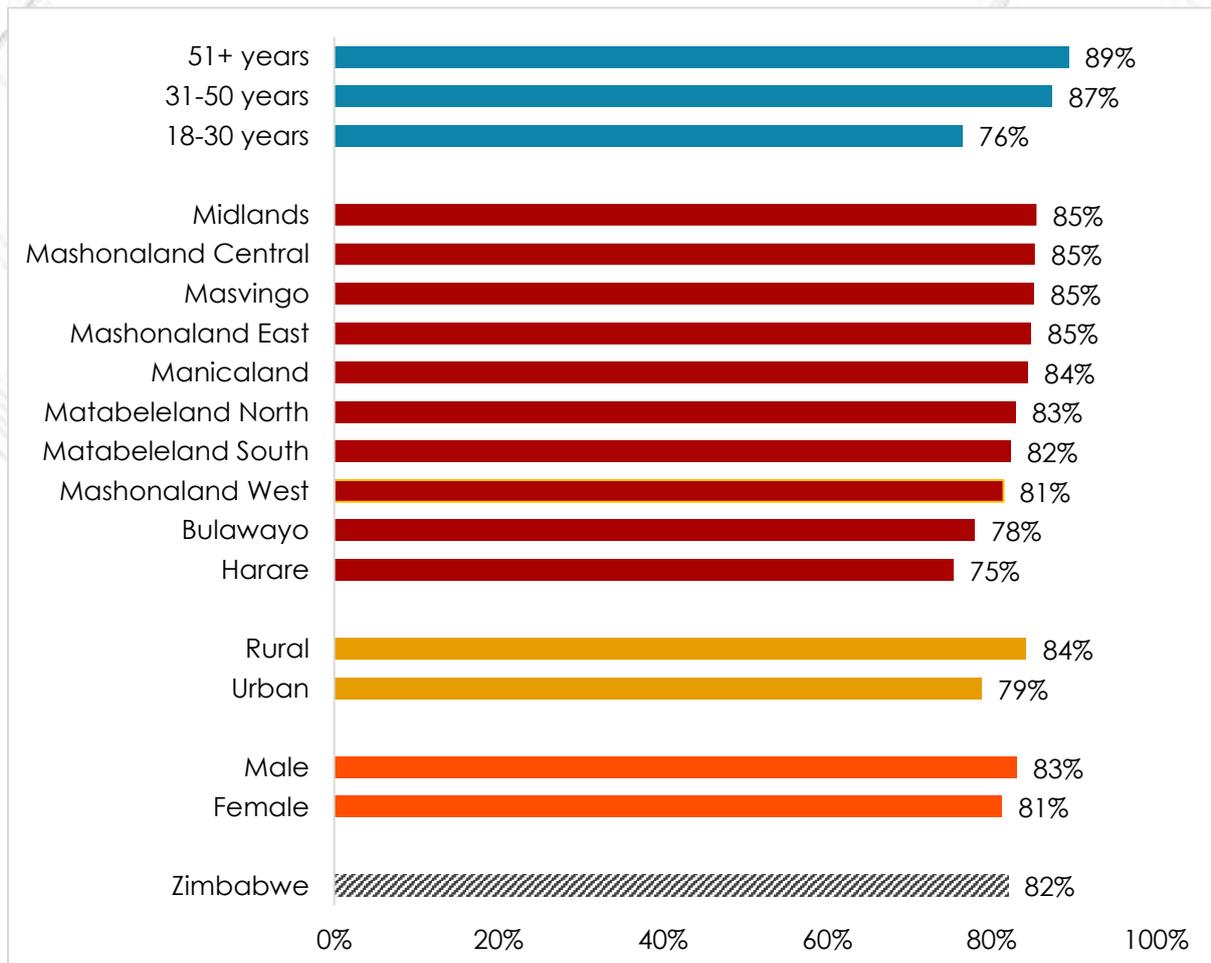
Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues in African countries. Six rounds of surveys were conducted in up to 37 countries between 1999 and 2015, and a regular Round 7 survey was conducted in Zimbabwe in January-February 2017 (for findings, please visit www.afrobarometer.org). Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice with nationally representative samples.

For its latest survey, Afrobarometer national partner Mass Public Opinion Institute in collaboration with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation interviewed 2,399 adult citizens between 28 April and 13 May 2018. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2% at a 95% confidence level.

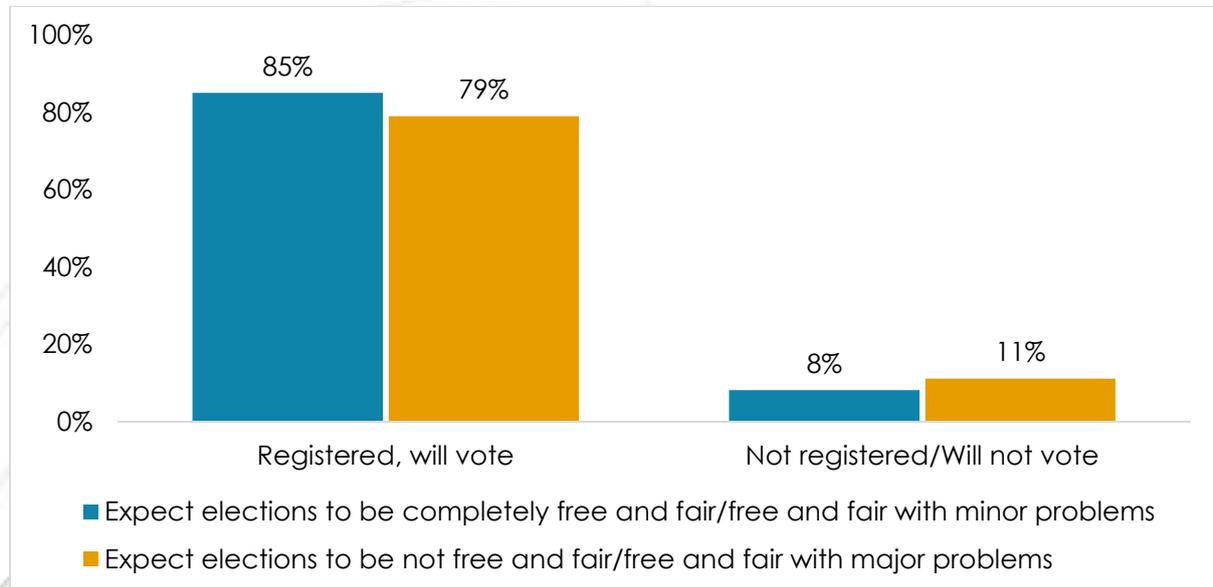
Charts

Figure 1: Registered likely voters | by age, province, rural-urban location, and gender | Zimbabwe | 2018



Respondents were asked: Are you registered to vote in the upcoming 2018 elections? How likely are you to vote in the 2018 elections? (Figure shows % who said they were both registered and likely to vote.)

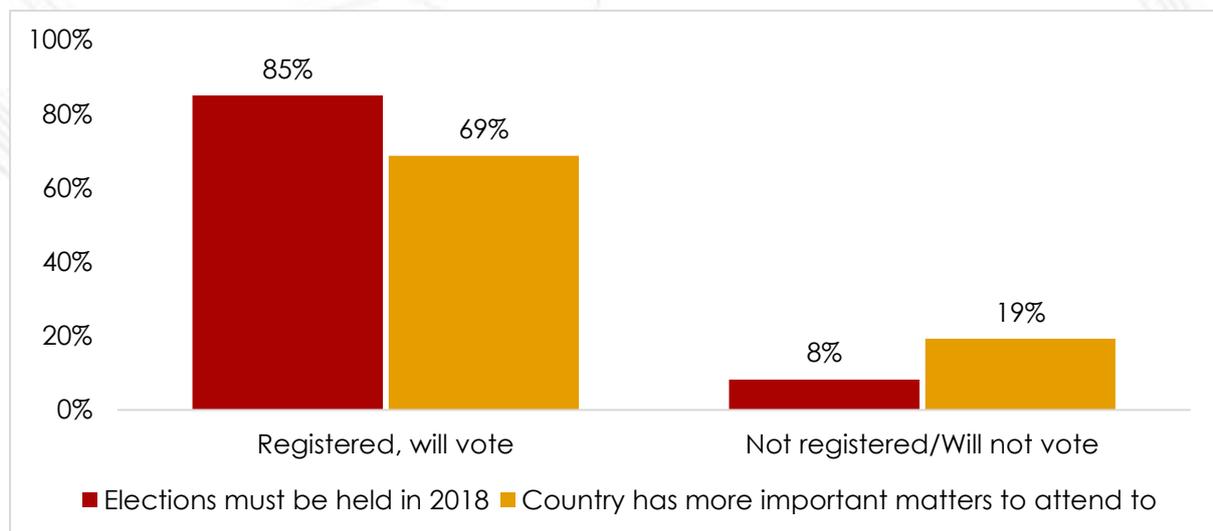
Figure 2: Registered likely voters | by expected freeness and fairness of elections | Zimbabwe | 2018



Respondents were asked:

- How free and fair do you expect the next elections of 2018 to be?
- Are you registered to vote in the upcoming 2018 elections? How likely are you to vote in the 2018 elections?

Figure 3: Registered likely voters | by views on timing of elections | Zimbabwe | 2018



Respondents were asked:

- Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1: In accordance with the Constitution, which requires elections every five years, elections must be held in 2018.

Statement 2: Elections are not necessary in 2018 since there are other more important matters for the country to attend to.

- Are you registered to vote in the upcoming 2018 elections? How likely are you to vote in the 2018 elections?

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