

Lobito-Benguela, Angola
6 May 2022

News release

Proportion of Angolans who favour UNITA has increased since 2019, Afrobarometer survey shows

The proportion of Angolans who say they would vote for the challenger UNITA party in a hypothetical presidential election has increased since 2019, while the share of declared supporters of the ruling MPLA has decreased, according to an Afrobarometer survey in February-March 2022.

But while the MPLA's lead over UNITA among respondents declaring a voting preference has narrowed to 7 percentage points (29% vs. 22%), almost half of survey respondents did not indicate a preference, making a data-based prediction for the August presidential election impossible.

In fact, the proportion of respondents who declined to offer a voting preference increased compared to the 2019 survey, while the share of those who said they would not vote dropped by about half.

In August, Angolans will vote in their fourth peacetime general election. The MPLA won the previous three elections, but its victory margin has been declining, while UNITA's presence in Parliament has grown from 16 to 51 out of 220 seats since 2008.

Key findings

- More than one in five respondents (22%) said they would vote for UNITA if a presidential election were held the next day, up from 13% in the 2019 survey. About three in 10 (29%) said they would vote for the MPLA, down from 38% in 2019 (Figure 1).
 - But almost half of respondents refused to answer the question (31%), said they did not know how they would vote (9%), or said they would not vote (6%).
- Numbers for UNITA grew in cities (from 14% in 2019 to 23%) and in rural areas (from 11% to 19%), in Luanda (from 16% to 23%) as well as in Huila (from 14% to 21%) (Figure 2).
- Support for UNITA was above average among younger respondents (25% among 18- to 25-year-olds vs. 11% among those over age 45), among more educated citizens (26%-27% among those with at least a secondary education vs. 16% among those with less schooling), and among men (25% vs. 19% among women) (Figure 3). In Luanda, the capital, UNITA supporters outnumbered MPLA adherents, 23% vs. 16%.
 - Support for the MPLA was strongest among older citizens (32%-38% among those over age 35), among less educated respondents (35%-41%), and in rural areas (42%).
- Refusals to answer the question were more common in cities than in rural areas (34% vs. 24%), among women than among men (33% vs. 28%), and among residents of Luanda than those of Huila (37% vs. 21%) (Figure 4).

Afrobarometer

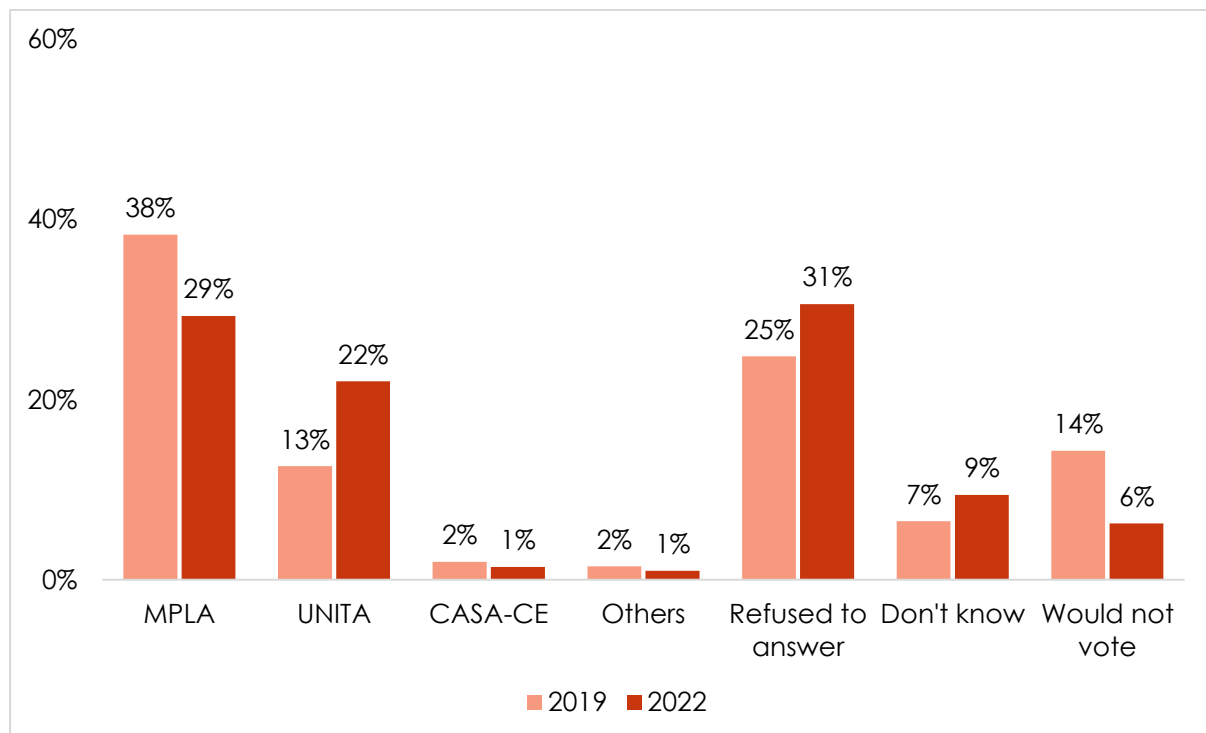
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life.

Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Angola, led by Ovilongwa – Estudos de Opinião Pública, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Angolans between 9 February and 8 March 2022. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-3 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. A previous survey was conducted in Angola in 2019.

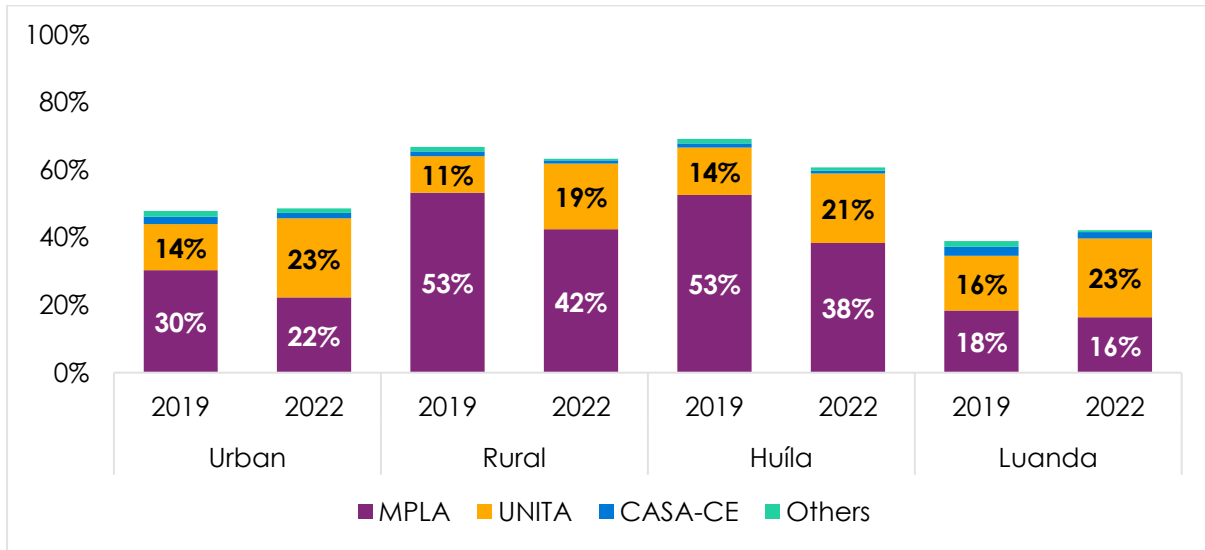
Charts

Figure 1 : Voting intentions | Angola | 2019-2022



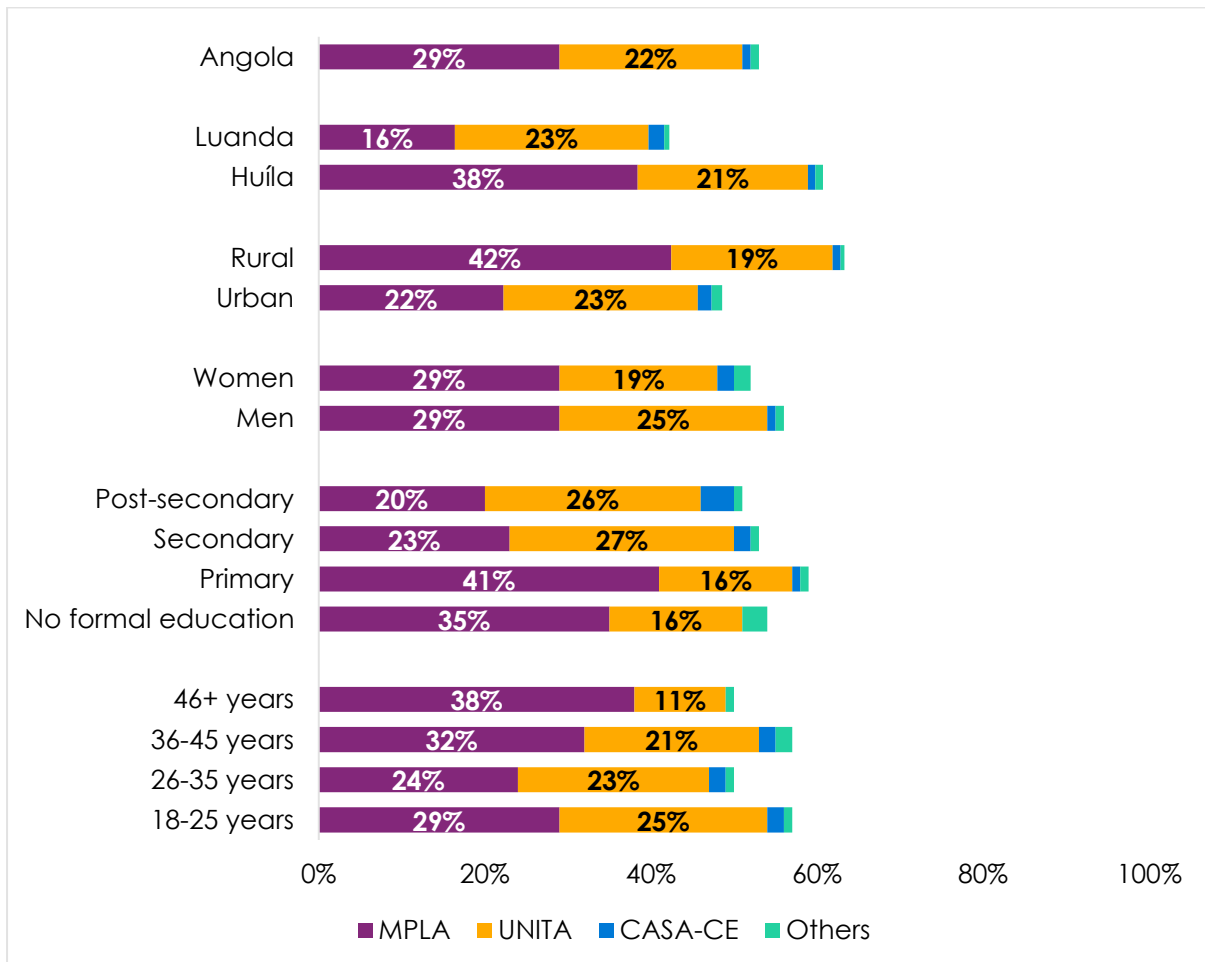
Respondents were asked: *If presidential elections were held tomorrow, which candidate's party would you vote for?*

Figure 2: Change in voting intentions | by residence | Angola | 2019-2022



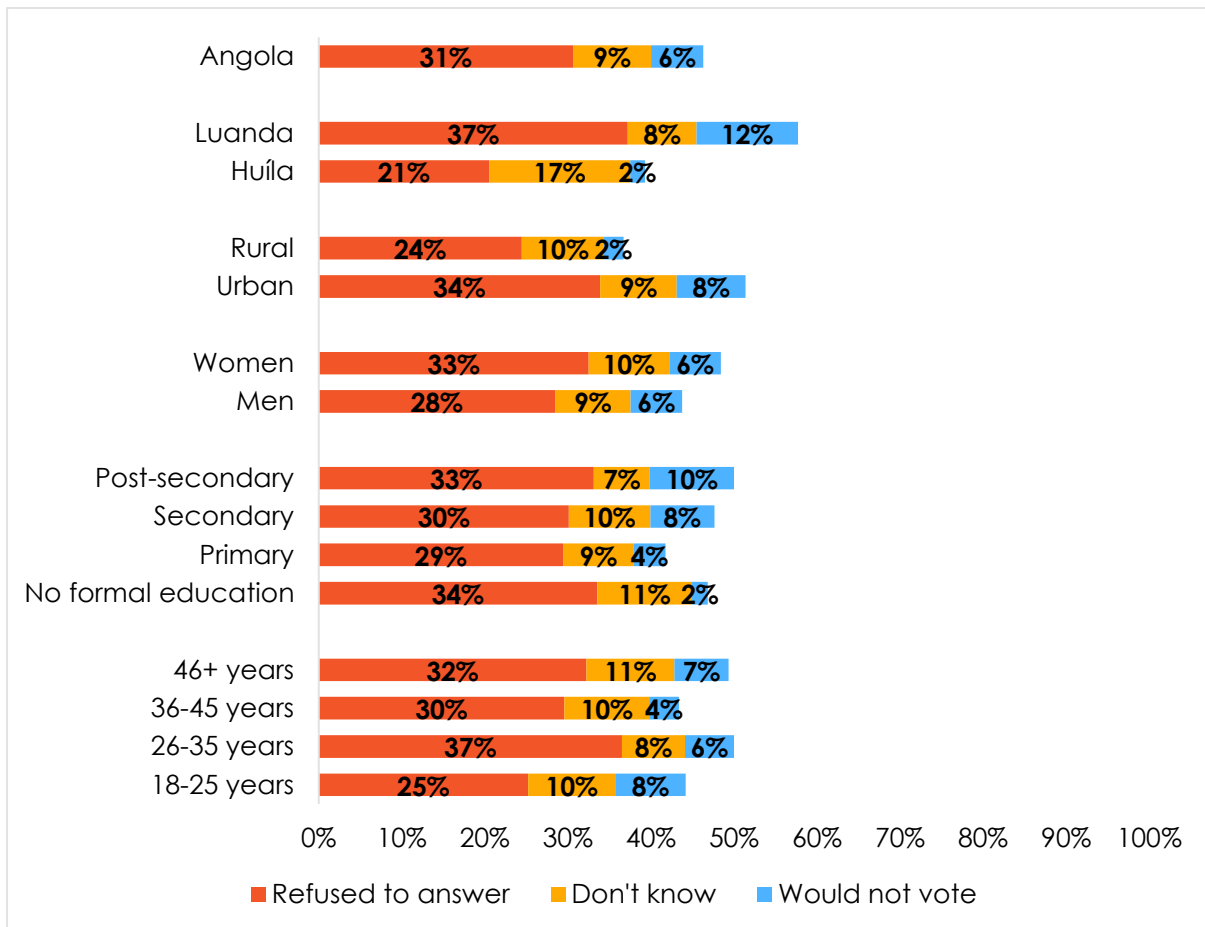
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Figure 3: Voting intentions | by socio-demographic group | Angola | 2022



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Figure 4: Respondents who refused to answer, 'don't know,' or wouldn't vote
 | by socio-demographic group | Angola | 2022



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