



Maseru, Lesotho
6 September 2022

News release

Basotho want reconciliation, but few support amnesty for those guilty of political crimes, Afrobarometer survey shows

Only about one-fifth of Basotho support amnesty for people who have perpetrated political crimes or human-rights violations, a recent Afrobarometer survey shows.

In addition to insisting on accountability for political crimes, most Basotho support the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that can investigate and make recommendations on past political crimes and human-rights violations.

In August, the 42nd Ordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) urged the government of Lesotho to continue its peace, transitional justice, and reconciliation process "to engender national unity and bring about national healing and cohesion."

Lesotho's Transitional Justice Commission has drawn criticism with a proposal to halt prosecution of people accused of political crimes investigated by the SADC-sponsored Phumaphi Commission.

Key findings

- More than eight in 10 Basotho (81%) say that people found guilty of political crimes or human-rights violations should be held accountable. Only 18% favour granting them amnesty to allow the country to move forward (Figure 1).
 - Support for accountability is strong across key demographic groups, though below average among older citizens (74%) and those with no formal education (76%) (Figure 2).
- More than seven in 10 citizens (72%) support the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that can investigate and make recommendations on past political crimes and human-rights violations (Figure 3).
 - Support for such a commission is highest among those aged 18-25 years (74%) and lowest among peri-urban residents (68%) (Figure 4).
- While Basotho want reconciliation, they also want to see those who committed crimes for political motives to be held accountable (Figure 5).

Afrobarometer surveys

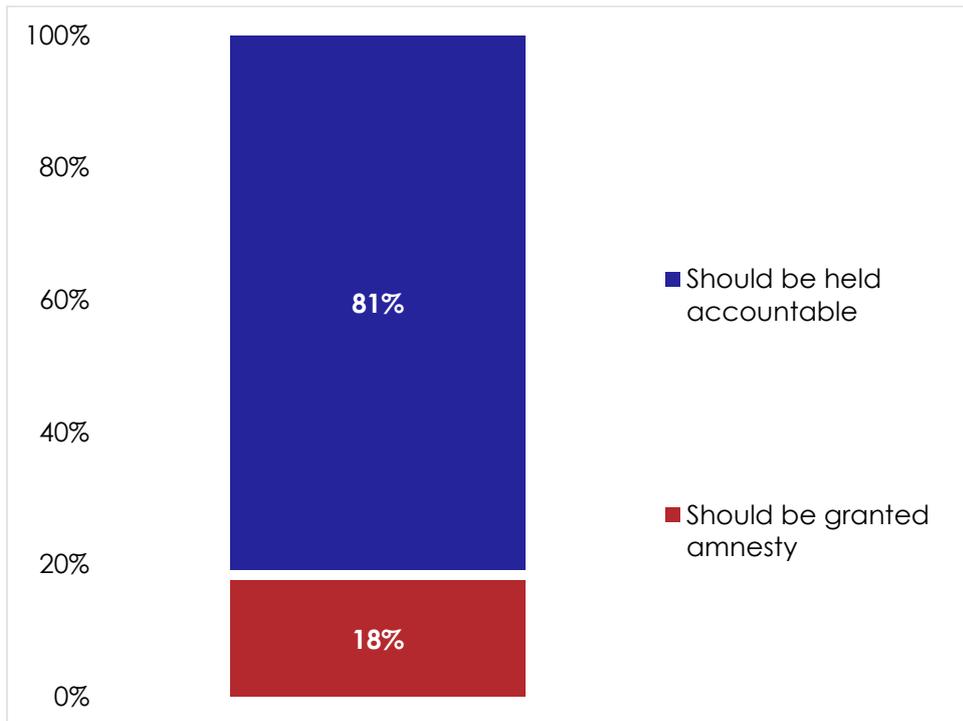
Afrobarometer is a pan-African, non-partisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight survey rounds in up to 39 countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys (2021/2022) are currently underway. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Lesotho, led by Advision Lesotho, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult citizens in February-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. Previous surveys were conducted in Lesotho in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2020.

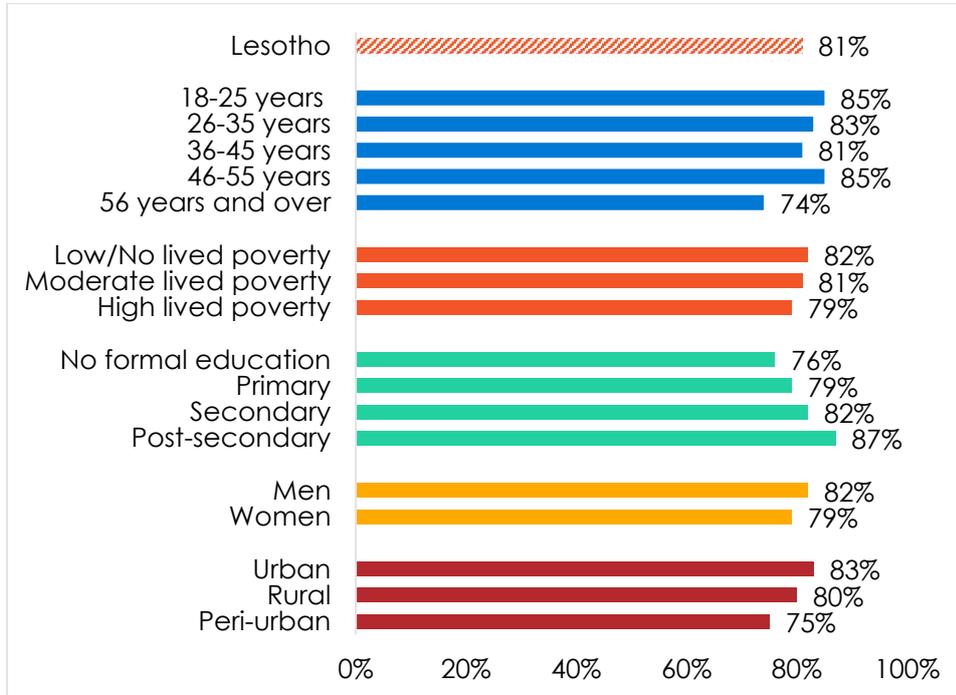
Charts

Figure 1: Views on amnesty | Lesotho | 2022



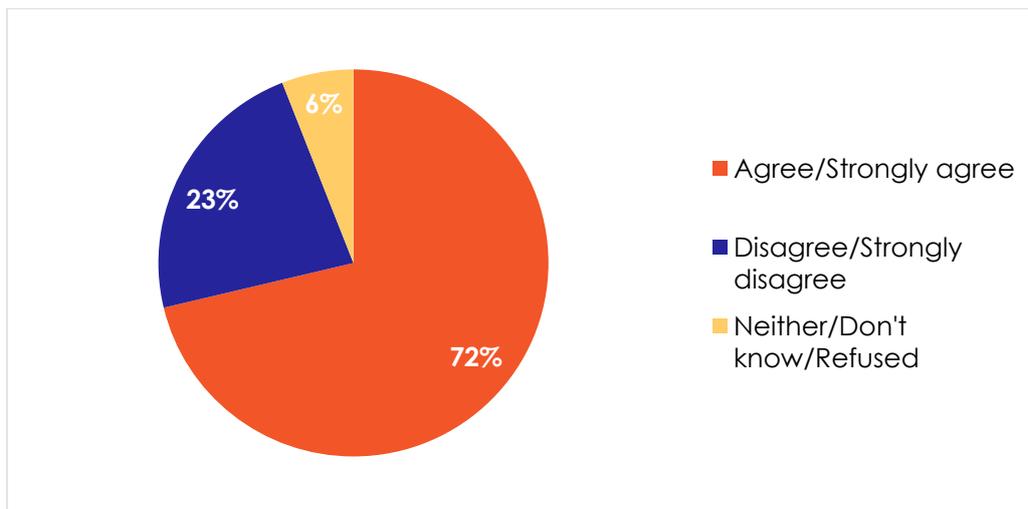
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: People who are responsible for past political crimes or human-rights violations should be granted amnesty so that the country can move forward.
 Statement 2: Individuals who are responsible for past political crimes or human-rights violations should be held accountable and face consequences for what they have done.
 (% who “agree” or “strongly agree” with each statement)

Figure 2: Accountability for those responsible for political crimes | by demographic group | Lesotho | 2022



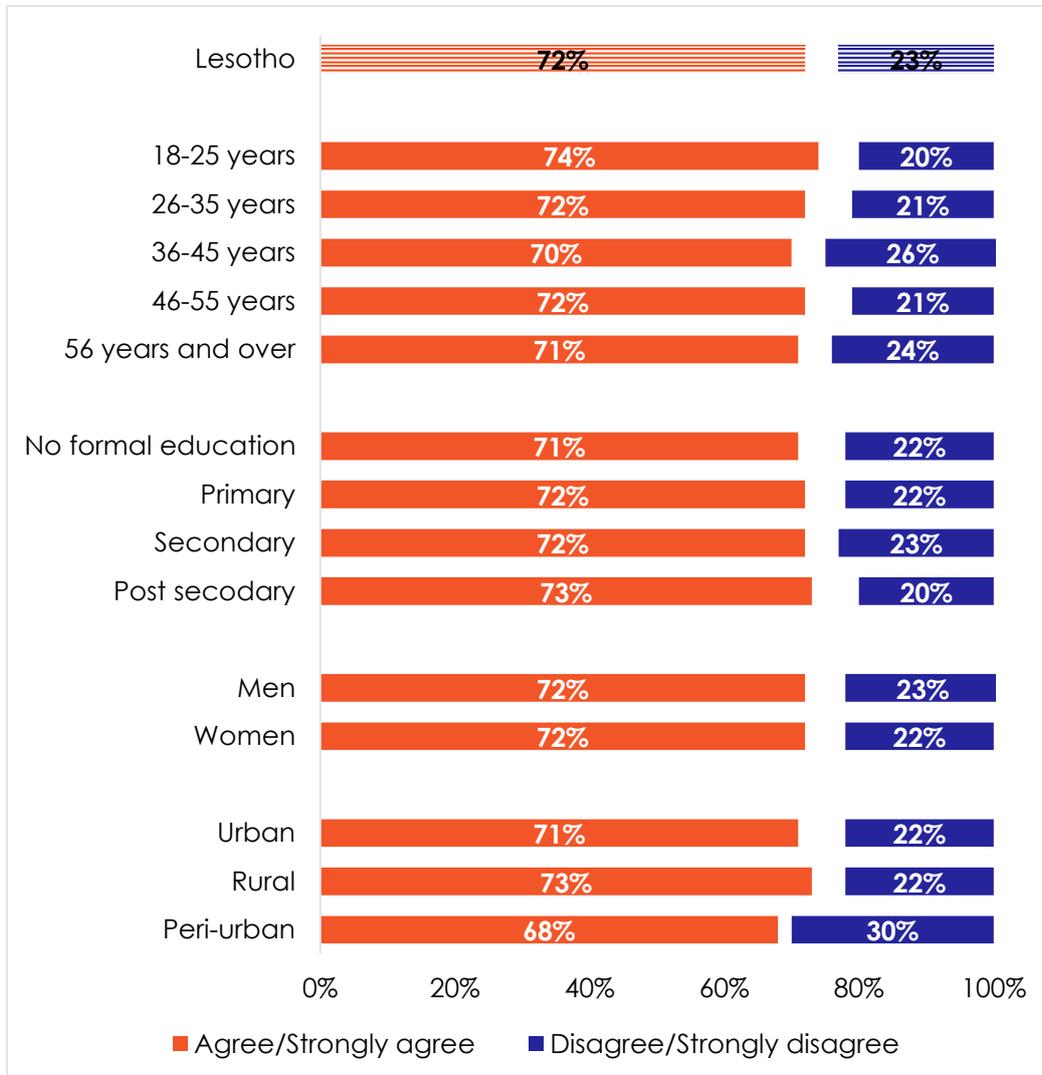
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 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 2)

Figure 3: Should a Truth and Reconciliation Commission be established? | Lesotho | 2022



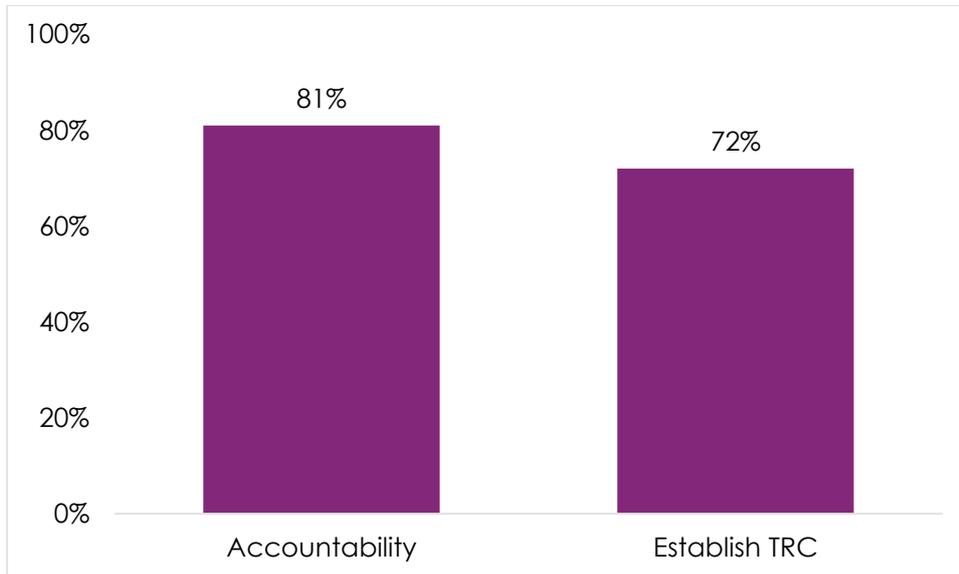
Respondents were asked: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In the interest of peace and unity of Basotho, the country should establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that can investigate and make recommendations on past political crimes and human-rights violations?

Figure 4: Should a Truth and Reconciliation Commission be established?
 | by demographic group | Lesotho | 2022



Respondents were asked: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In the interest of peace and unity of Basotho, the country should establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that can investigate and make recommendations on past political crimes and human-rights violations?

Figure 5: Transitional justice that Basotho want | Lesotho | 2022



Respondents were asked:

- i) Which of the following statements is closest to your view:
 Statement 1: People who are responsible for past political crimes or human-rights violations should be granted amnesty so that the country can move forward.
 Statement 2: Individuals who are responsible for past political crimes or human-rights violations should be held accountable and face consequences for what they have done.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with Statement 2)
- ii) Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In the interest of peace and unity of Basotho, the country should establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that can investigate and make recommendations on past political crimes and human-rights violations? (% who "agree" or "strongly agree")

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