



Gaborone, Botswana
20 February 2023

News release

Growing majority of Batswana say the president must obey the laws and the courts, Afrobarometer survey shows

An overwhelming majority of Batswana say the president must always obey the country's laws and court decisions, even if he thinks they are wrong, the latest Afrobarometer findings indicate.

The proportion of citizens who hold this view has been increasing steadily over the past decade.

Critics have accused President Mokgweetsi Masisi of interfering in the allocation of judges for some cases.

Key findings

- More than eight in 10 Batswana (84%) say the president must always obey the laws and the courts, even if he thinks they are wrong. Only 13% say instead that since the president was elected to lead the country, he should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong (Figure 1).
- The view that the president is bound by laws and court decisions is particularly strong among more educated citizens (91% of those with post-secondary qualifications) and urban residents (92%) (Figure 2).
- The proportion of citizens who say the president should be bound by the laws and the courts has increased by 17 percentage points since 2008 (Figure 3).

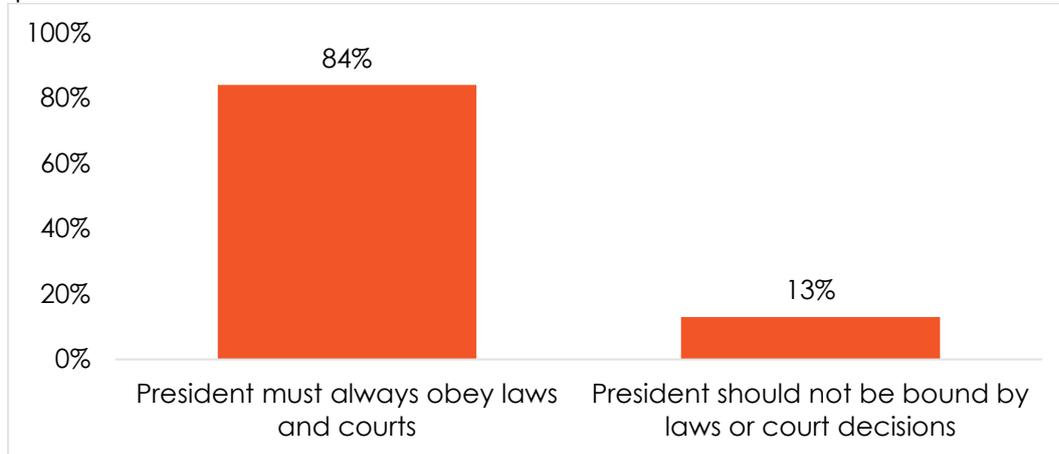
Afrobarometer surveys

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 are being completed in early 2023. Afrobarometer's national partners conduct face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Botswana, led by Star Awards, interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,200 adult Batswana in July-August 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 Botswana in 1999, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2019.

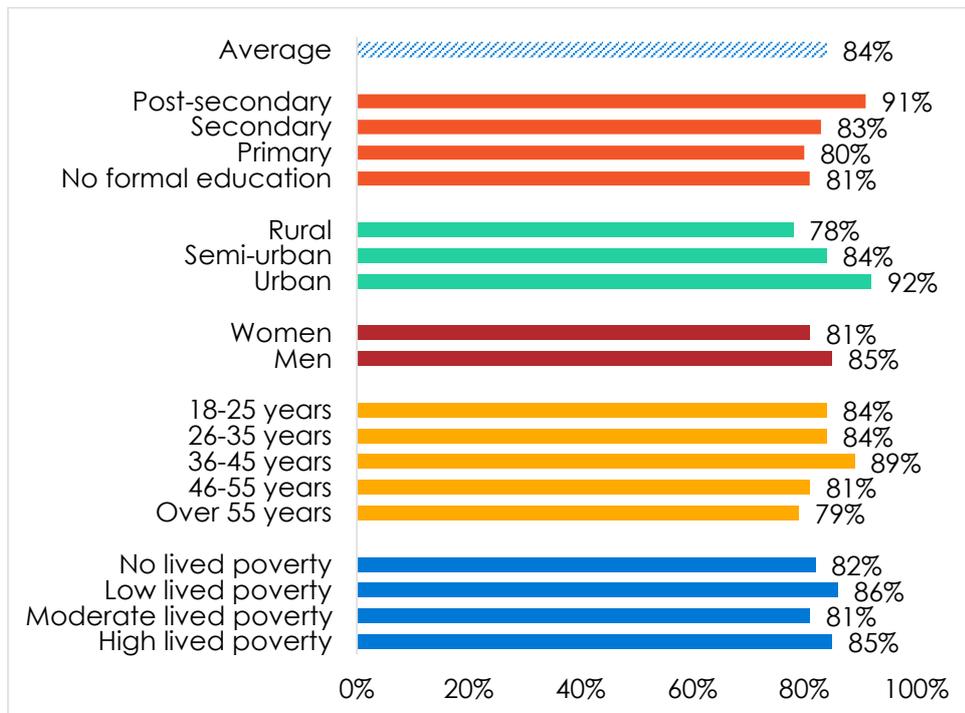
Charts

Figure 1: Should the president be bound by laws and court decisions? | Botswana | 2022



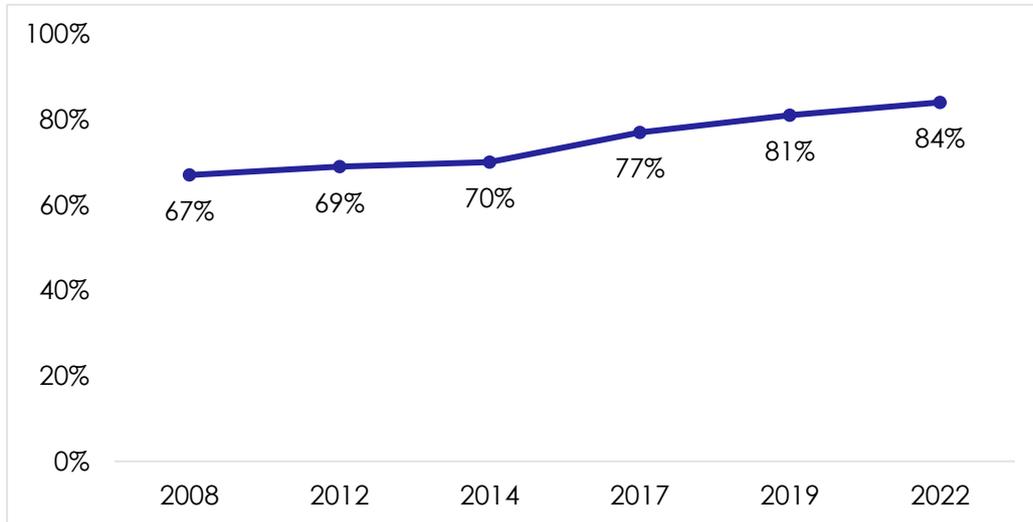
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
 Statement 1: Since the president was elected to lead the country, he should not be bound by laws or court decisions that he thinks are wrong.
 Statement 2: The president must always obey the laws and the courts, even if he thinks they are wrong.
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

Figure 2: President must always obey laws and court decisions | by demographic group | Botswana | 2022



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

Figure 3: President must always obey laws and court decisions | Botswana
 | 2008-2022



Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?
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