

Monrovia, Liberia  
23 March 2023

## News release

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### **Liberians support democratic governance and oppose non-democratic alternatives**

Most Liberians express support for democratic governance and reject non-democratic alternatives, a new Afrobarometer survey shows.

A majority of citizens describe their country as a democracy without major problems, and a growing proportion – though still not quite half – are satisfied with the way democracy works in the country.

Strong majorities also see the government as their employee rather than their boss, and believe it is better for a democracy if power sometimes changes hands, from one political party to another, through elections.

On 10 October 2023, Liberians will participate in the country's fourth presidential and legislative elections since the end of the civil war in 2003 to determine who will govern the country for the next six years.

#### **Key findings**

- By large majorities, Liberians support democracy and reject authoritarian alternatives (Figure 1).
- More than six in 10 Liberians (62%) see their country as “a full democracy” or “a democracy with minor problems.” Satisfaction with how democracy works increased by 6 percentage points since 2020, to 45% (Figure 2).
- Seven in 10 Liberians (71%) say it is better if power sometimes changes hands from one political party to another. But 28% disagree (Figure 3).
- Three-fourths (75%) of Liberians believe the government is like the people's employee and should do what citizens demand. Only 23% instead see the government in the role of the boss who tells citizens what to do (Figure 4).

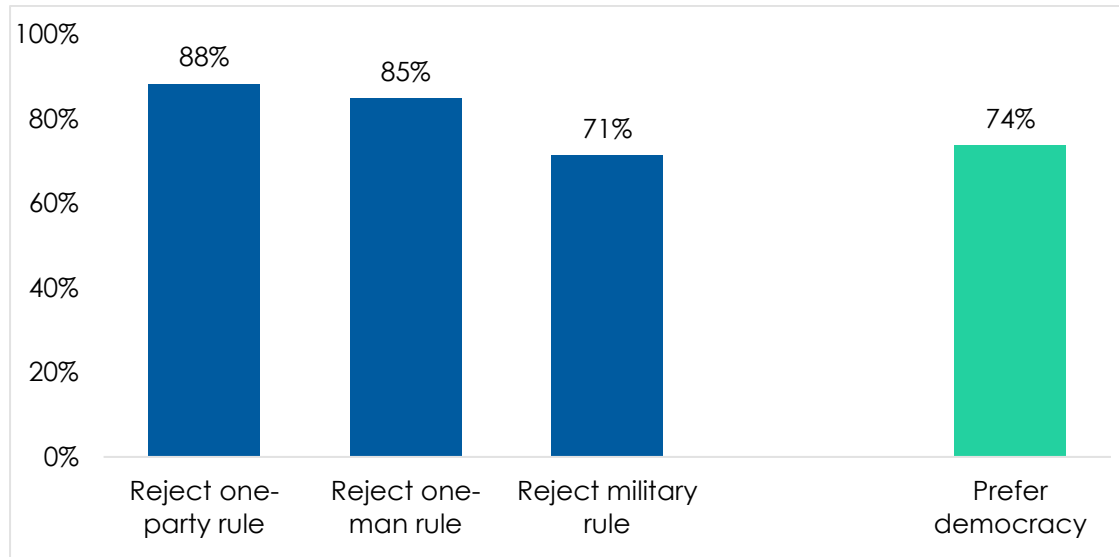
#### **Afrobarometer surveys**

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. Eight rounds of surveys have been completed in up to 39 countries since 1999, and Round 9 surveys are currently underway. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Liberia, led by the Center for Democratic Governance (CDG), interviewed 1,200 adult citizens between 25 August and 2 September 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 Liberia in 2008, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2020.

## Charts

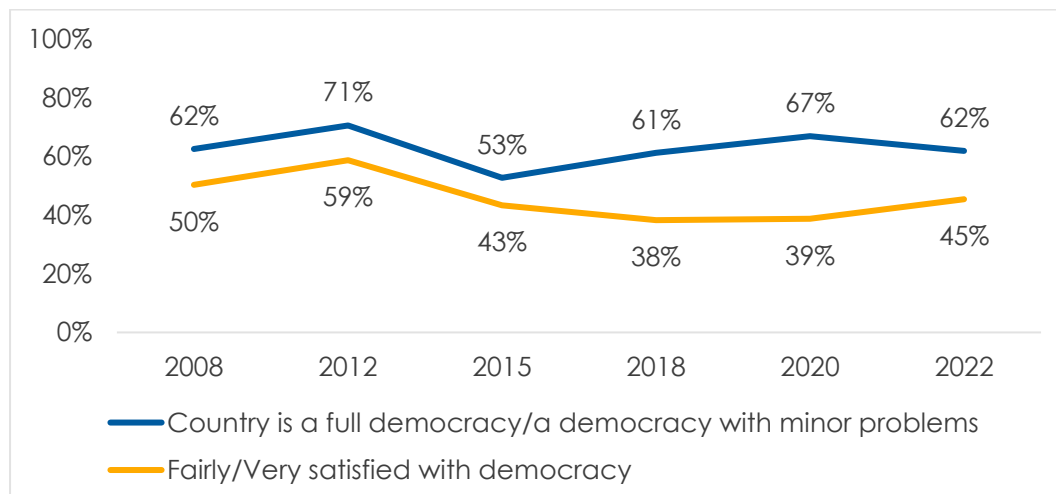
**Figure 1: Key demand-side indicators of democracy | Liberia | 2022**



**Respondents were asked:**

There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office? The army comes in to govern the country? Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything? (% who "disapprove" or "strongly disapprove")  
Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion:  
Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.  
Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.  
Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind government we have.  
(% who support Statement 1)

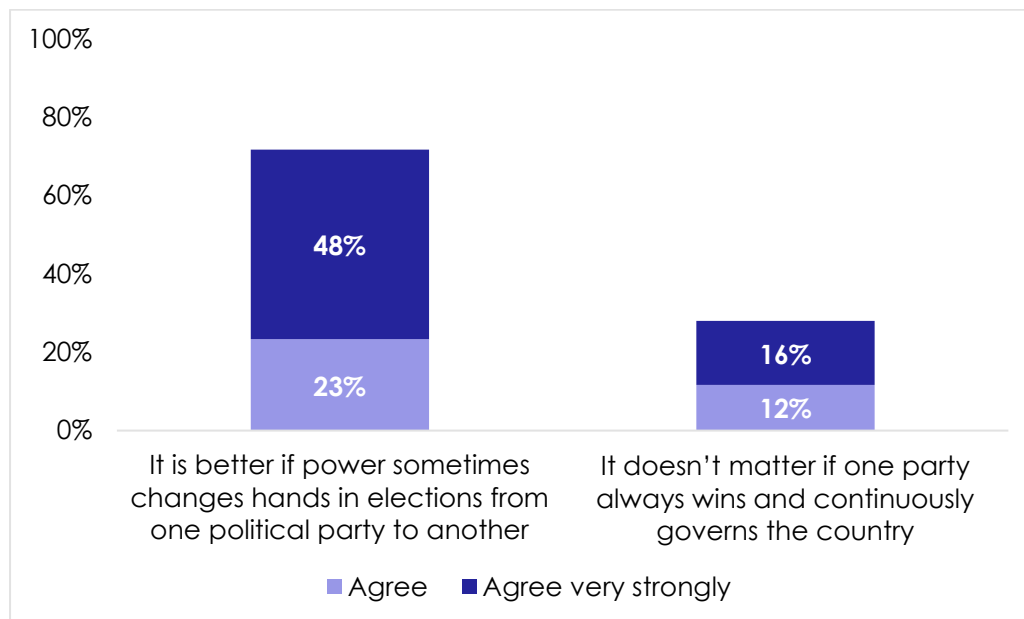
**Figure 2: Extent of and satisfaction with democracy | Liberia | 2022**



**Respondents were asked:**

In your opinion, how much of a democracy is Liberia today?  
Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Liberia?

**Figure 3: Support for political party turnover | Liberia | 2022**

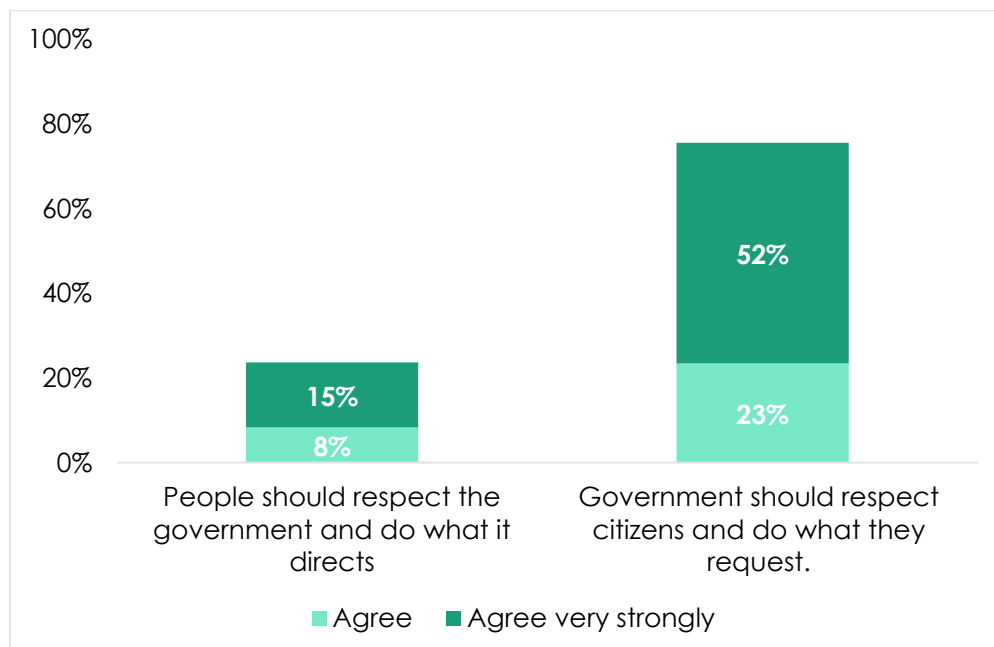


**Respondents were asked:** Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1: In a democracy, it is better if power sometimes changes hands in elections from one political party to another.

Statement 2: In a democracy, as long as a government is elected by the people in a free and fair election, it doesn't matter.

**Figure 4 : Is government the people's employee or boss? | Liberia | 2022**



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

Statement 1: The government is like the people's boss. People should respect the government and do what it directs.

Statement 2: The government is like the people's employee. It should respect citizens and do what they request.

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