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News release

Majority of Zambians are satisfied with their democracy, optimistic about its future

A majority of Zambians say they are satisfied with the way their democracy is working and expect the country to become “more democratic” in the coming years, according to a new Afrobarometer survey.

Survey findings show that overwhelming majorities of Zambians prefer democracy to any other form of government and reject non-democratic alternatives such as one-party rule, military rule, and one-man rule.

Half of Zambians say the country has become more democratic over the past five years, and a majority expect the country to be even more democratic than it is today in five years' time.

Key findings

- Most Zambians prefer democracy to any other form of government (87%) (Figure 1) and reject non-democratic alternatives such as one-party rule (87%), military rule (91%), and one-man rule (95%) (Figure 2).
- Eight in 10 citizens (80%) consider Zambia “a full democracy” or “a democracy with minor problems” (Figure 3).
- Seven in 10 citizens (71%) say they are “fairly satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the way democracy is working in the country (Figure 4).
- Half (50%) of Zambians believe that the country has become “more democratic” over the past five years, while 21% think democracy has lost ground (Figure 5).
- Nearly six in 10 (57%) believe that in five years' time, the country will be more democratic than it is today.

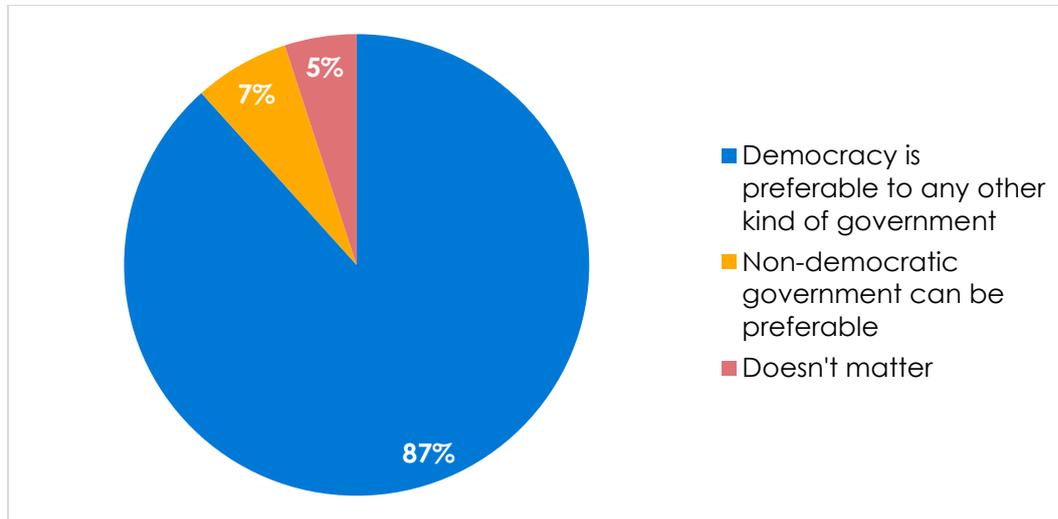
Afrobarometer surveys

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 conducted in up to 39 countries since 1999. Round 9 surveys are being completed in early 2023. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.

The Afrobarometer team in Zambia, led by the Institute of Economic and Social Research (INESOR), a research wing of the University of Zambia, interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 1,200 Zambian adults between 3 August and 7 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 have been conducted in Zambia in 1999, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2013, 2017, and 2020.

ChartsFigure 1: Support for democracy | Zambia | 2022



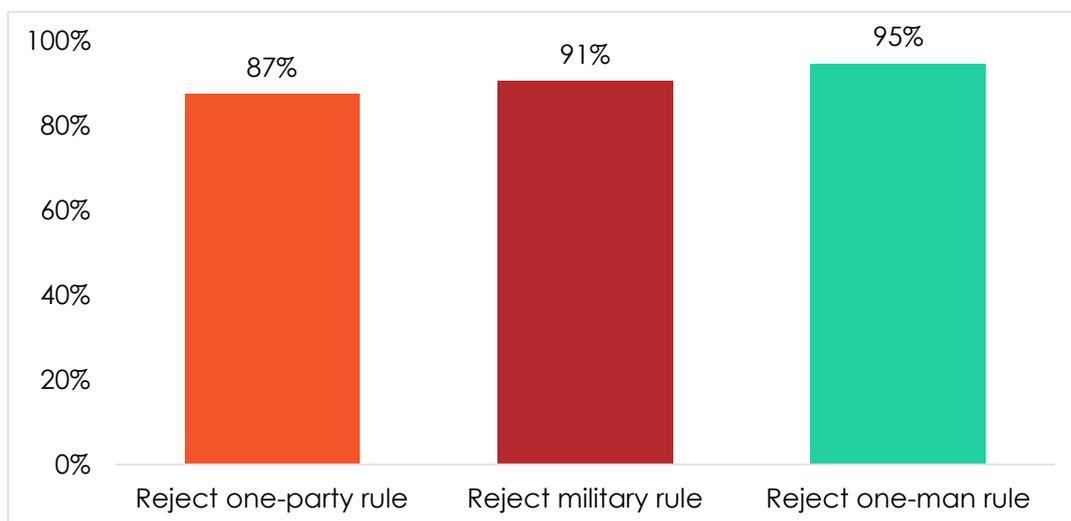
Respondents were asked: Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?

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 of government we have.

Figure 2: Rejection of non-democratic alternatives | Zambia | 2022



Respondents were asked: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives:

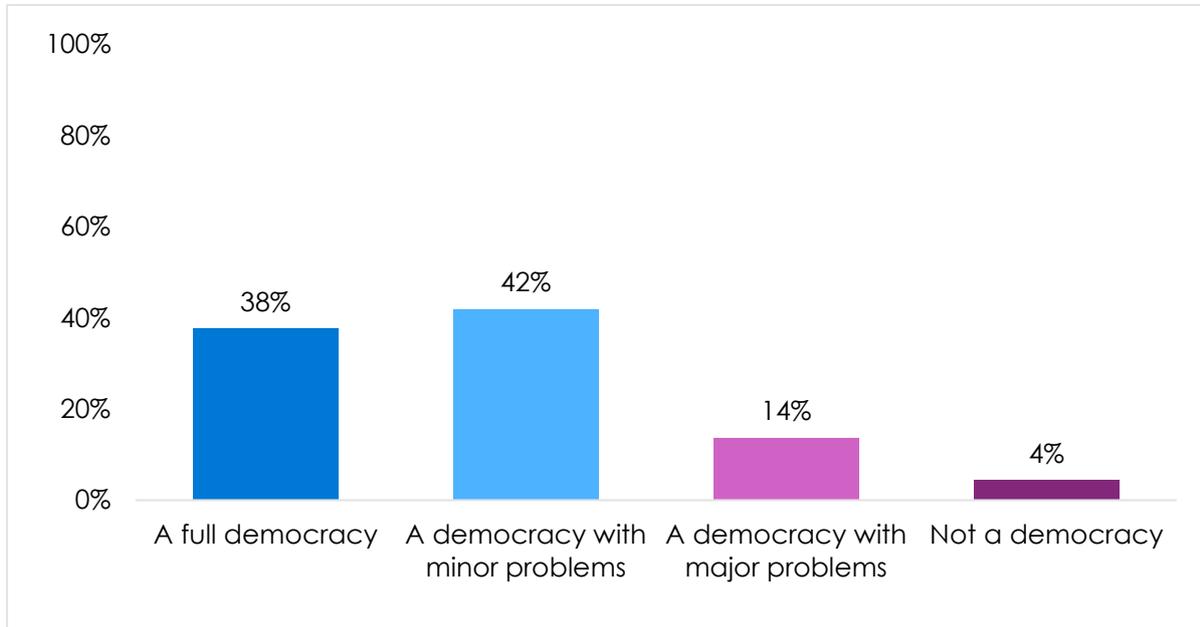
Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?

The army comes in to govern the country?

Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything?

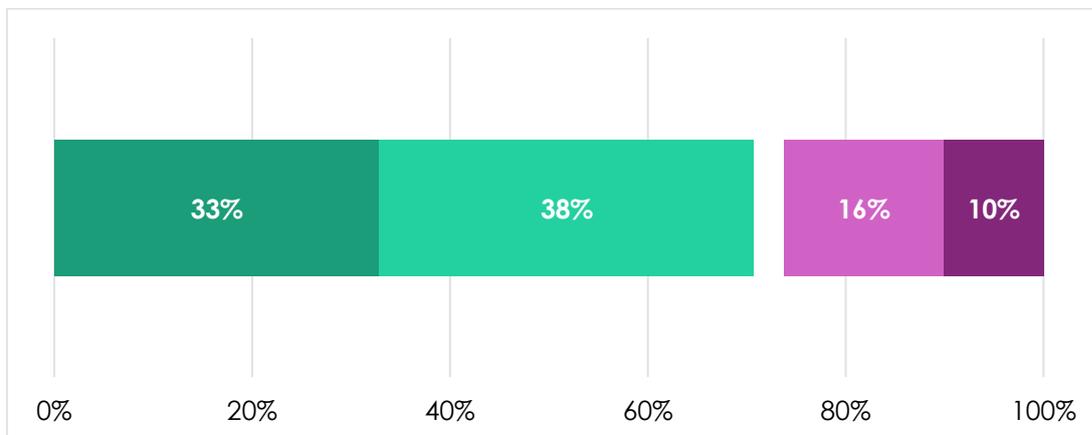
(% who "disapprove" or "strongly disapprove")

Figure 3: Extent of democracy | Zambia | 2022



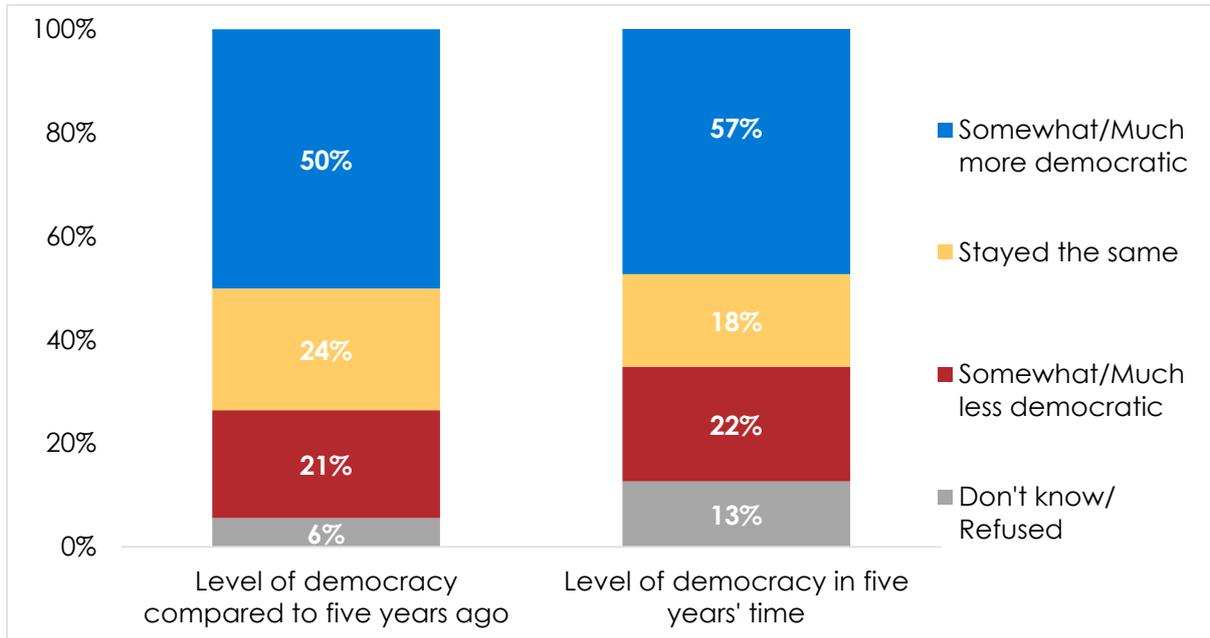
Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how much of a democracy is Zambia today?*

Figure 4: Satisfaction with democracy | Zambia | 2022



Respondents were asked: *Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Zambia?*

Figure 5: Trend in level of democracy | Zambia | 2022



Respondents were asked:

Do you think that this country is more democratic, less democratic or about the same than it was five years ago?

Do you think that in five years' time this country will be more democratic than it is now, less democratic, or about the same?

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