



Citizen views on elections, on Eskom, and on the effects of climate change

Findings from Afrobarometer Round 9 survey in South Africa

At a glance



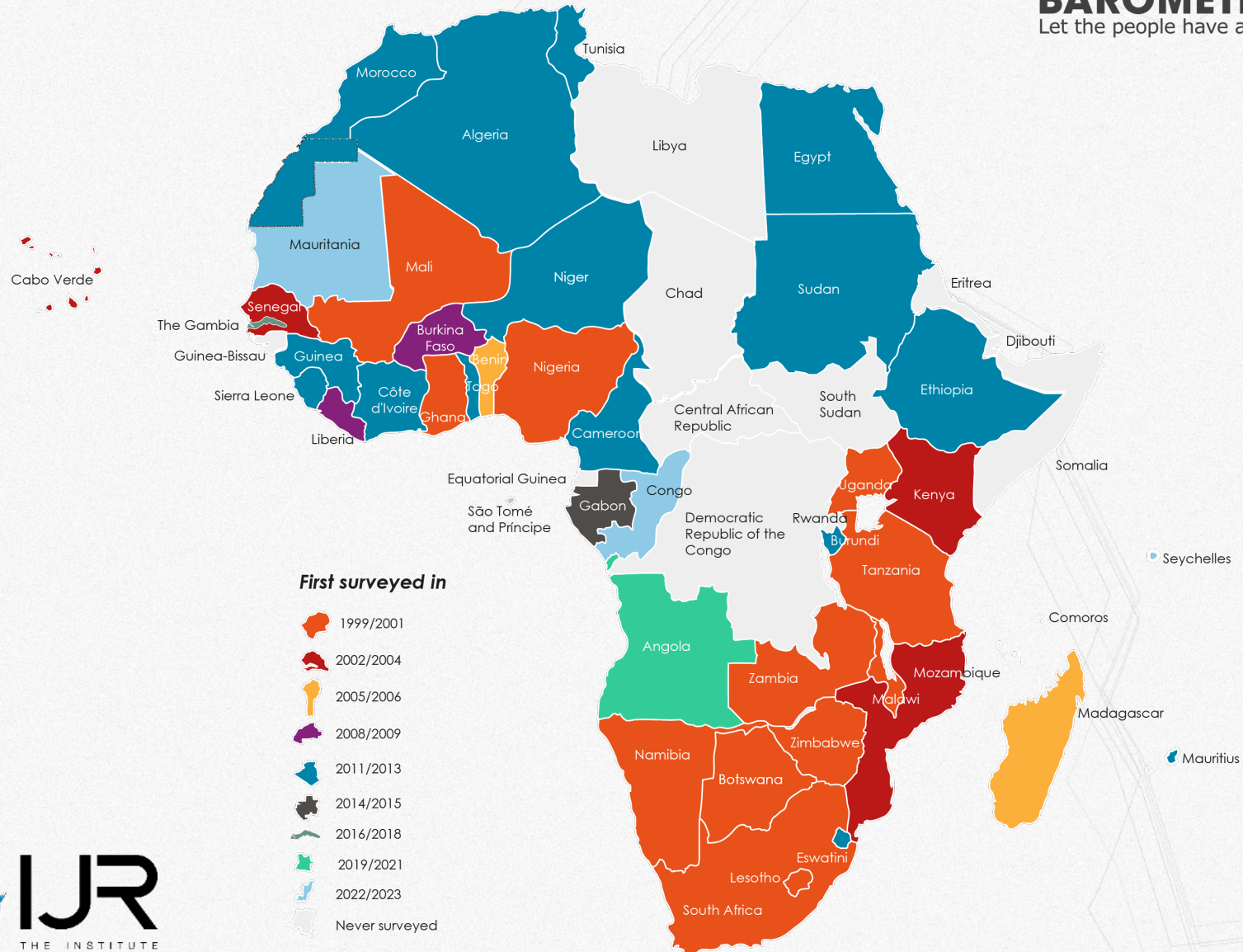
- **Electricity**: Most South Africans say other actors besides Eskom should be allowed to generate and distribute electricity.
- **Climate change**: Half of the population say they have never heard of climate change.
- **Elections**: A growing majority of South Africans would be willing to forgo elections if a non-elected government could provide security, jobs, and housing.

What is Afrobarometer?



- A pan-African, non-partisan, non-profit survey research network that provides reliable data on Africans' experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life.
- Eight survey rounds in up to 39 African countries have been completed since 1999. Round 9 surveys are currently underway.
- **Mission:** To make citizen voice a key pillar of African policy and decision making.
- A national partner in each country conducts the survey. In South Africa, the Afrobarometer Round 9 survey was conducted by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation.

Where Afrobarometer works



Methodology



- Nationally representative sample of adult citizens
 - ❑ All respondents are *randomly* selected.
 - ❑ Sample is distributed across regions/states/provinces and urban/rural areas in proportion to their share in the national population.
 - ❑ Every adult citizen has an *equal* chance of being selected.
- Face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice.
- Standard questionnaire allows comparisons across countries and over time.
- Sample size in South Africa of 1,582 adult citizens yields a margin of error of +/-2.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.
- Fieldwork for Round 9 in South Africa was conducted between 26 November and 19 December 2022.

Survey demographics

Gender	%
Men	50
Women	50
Residence	
Urban	66
Rural	34
Education	
No formal education	3
Primary	13
Secondary	55
Post-secondary	29
Religion	
Christian	72
Muslim	3
Other	24



Findings



Electricity

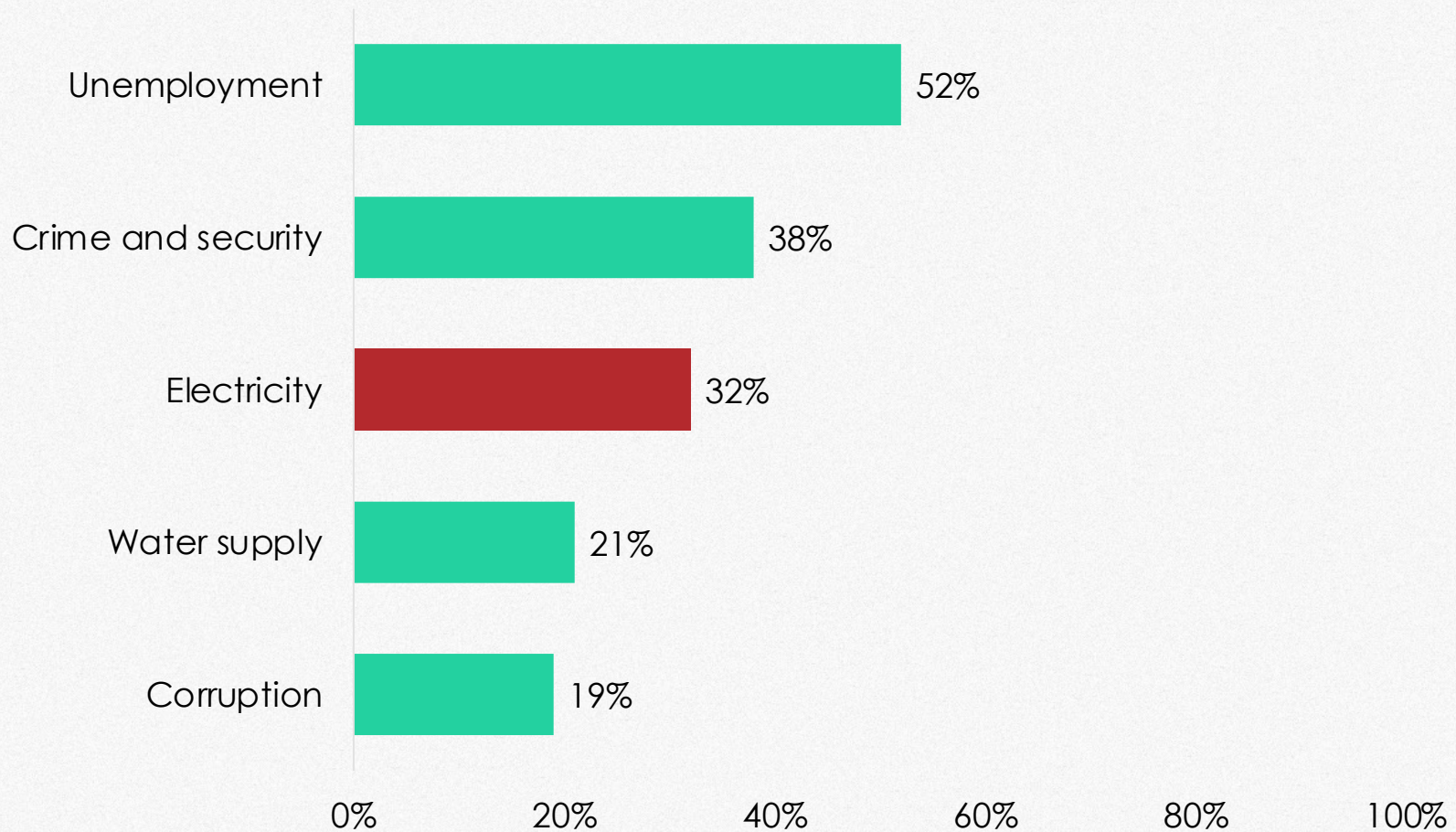


Key findings



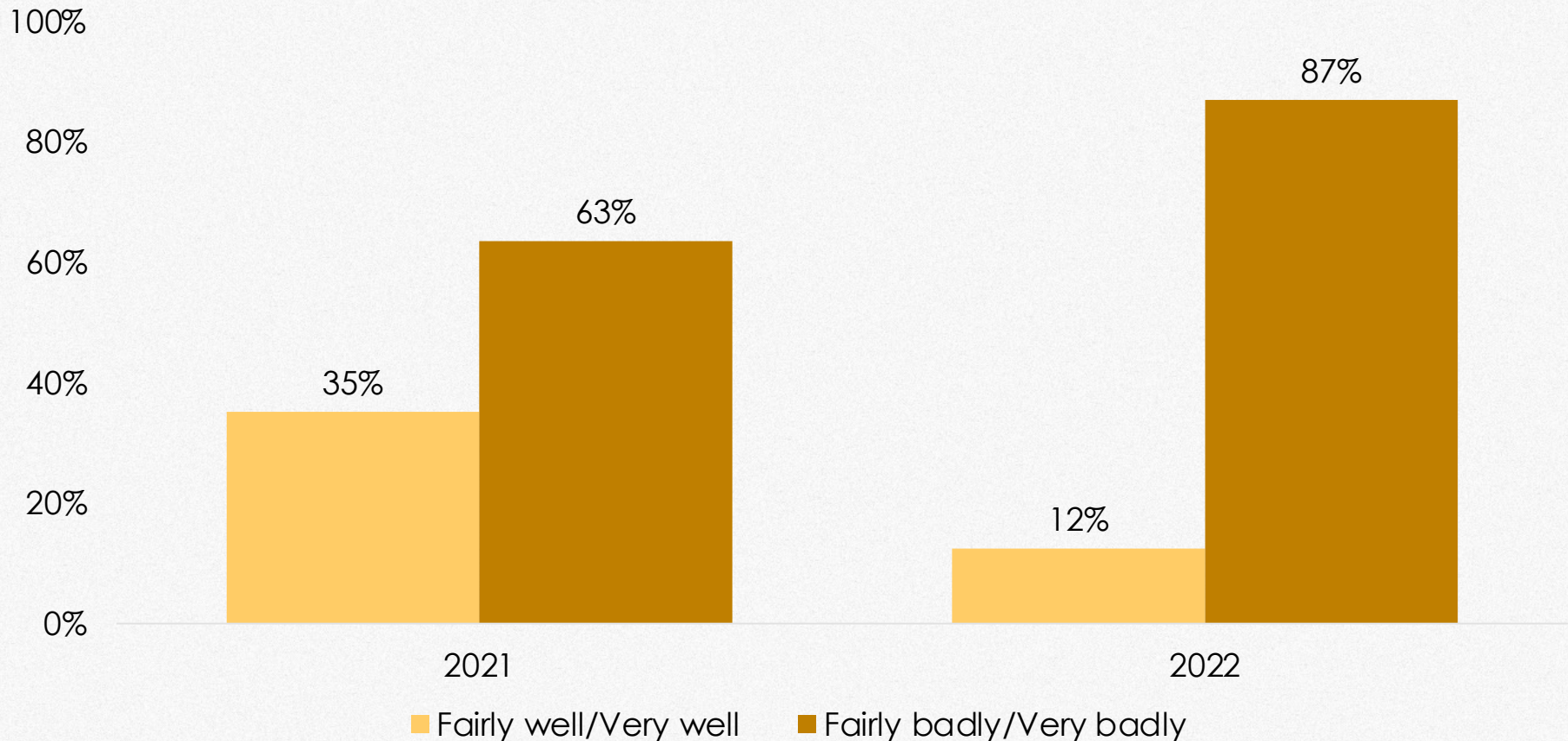
- Electricity ranks third among the most important problems that South Africans want their government to address, trailing only unemployment and crime/security.
- Most South Africans say the government is doing a poor job of providing a reliable supply of electricity.
- A majority of citizens say Eskom should be privatised.
- An even greater proportion of South Africans say the government should allow other actors to generate and distribute electricity.

Most important problems | South Africa | 2022



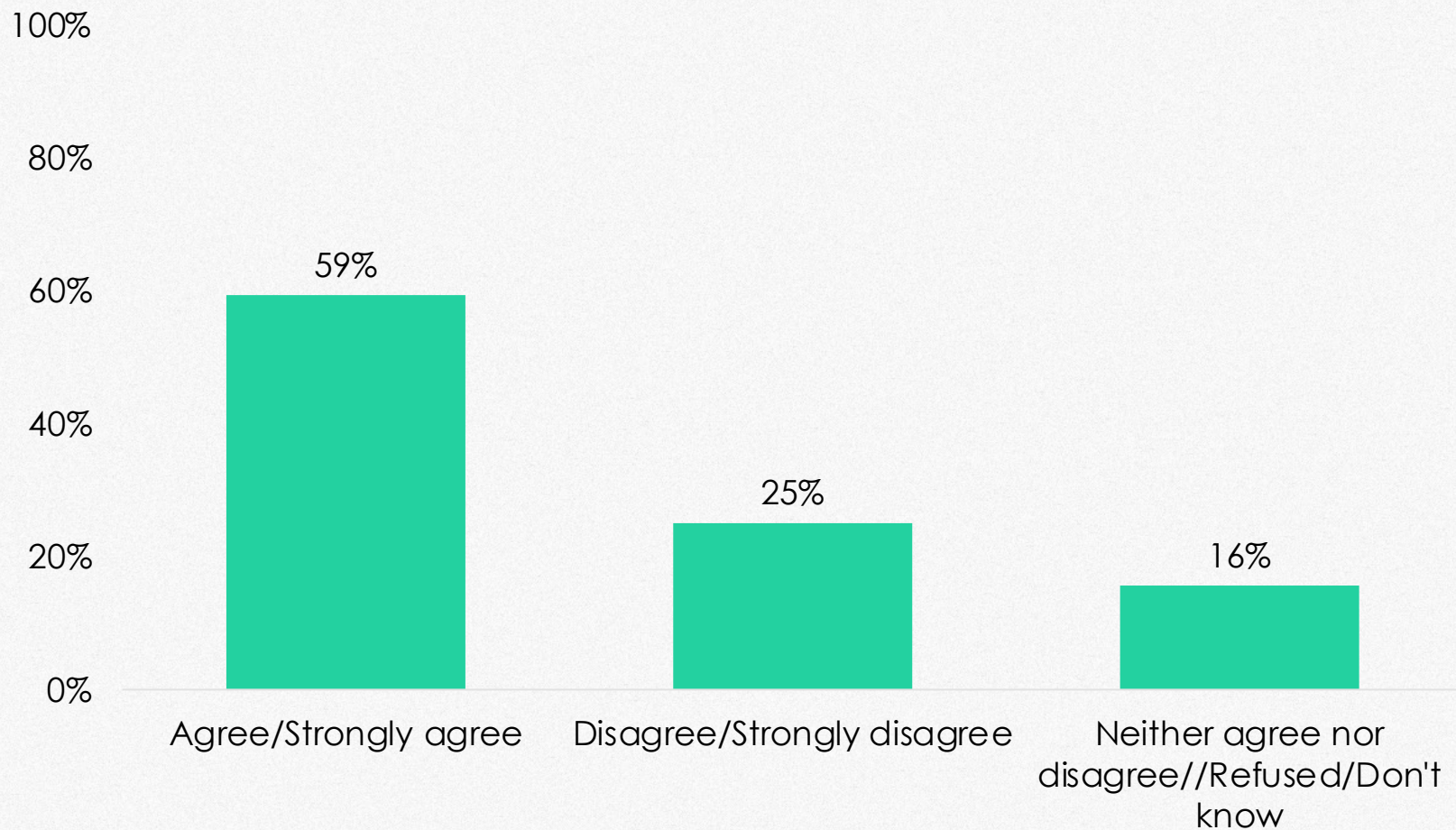
Respondents were asked: In your opinion, what are the most important problems facing this country that government should address? (Up to three responses per person. Figure shows percentage of respondents who cite each problem as one of up to three priorities.)

Government performance in provision of reliable electricity supply | South Africa | 2022



Respondents were asked: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Providing a reliable supply of electricity?

Should Eskom be privatised? | South Africa | 2022

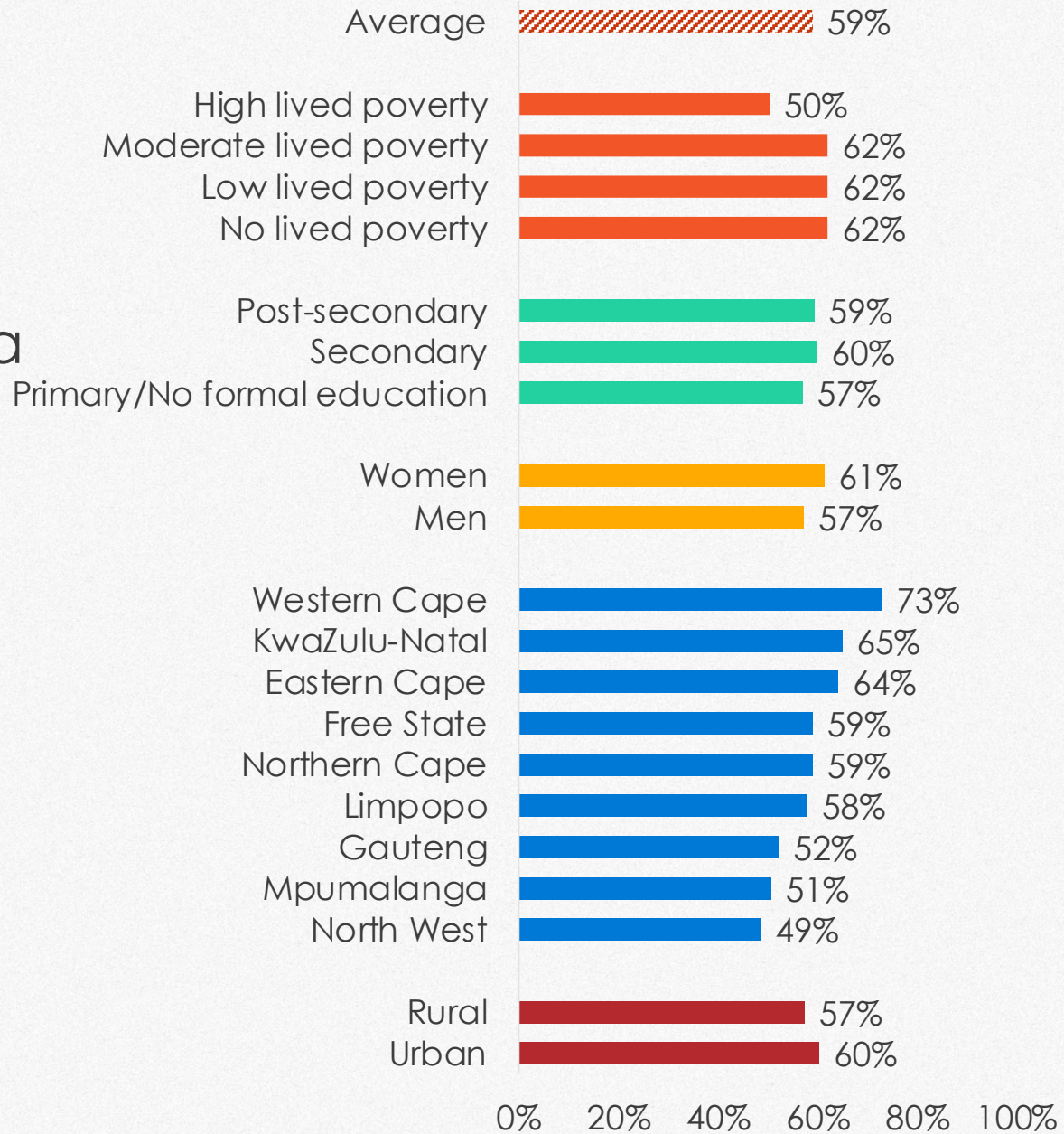


Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you disagree or agree, or haven't you heard enough to say: To ensure effectiveness in the supply of electricity in our country, Eskom should be privatised?

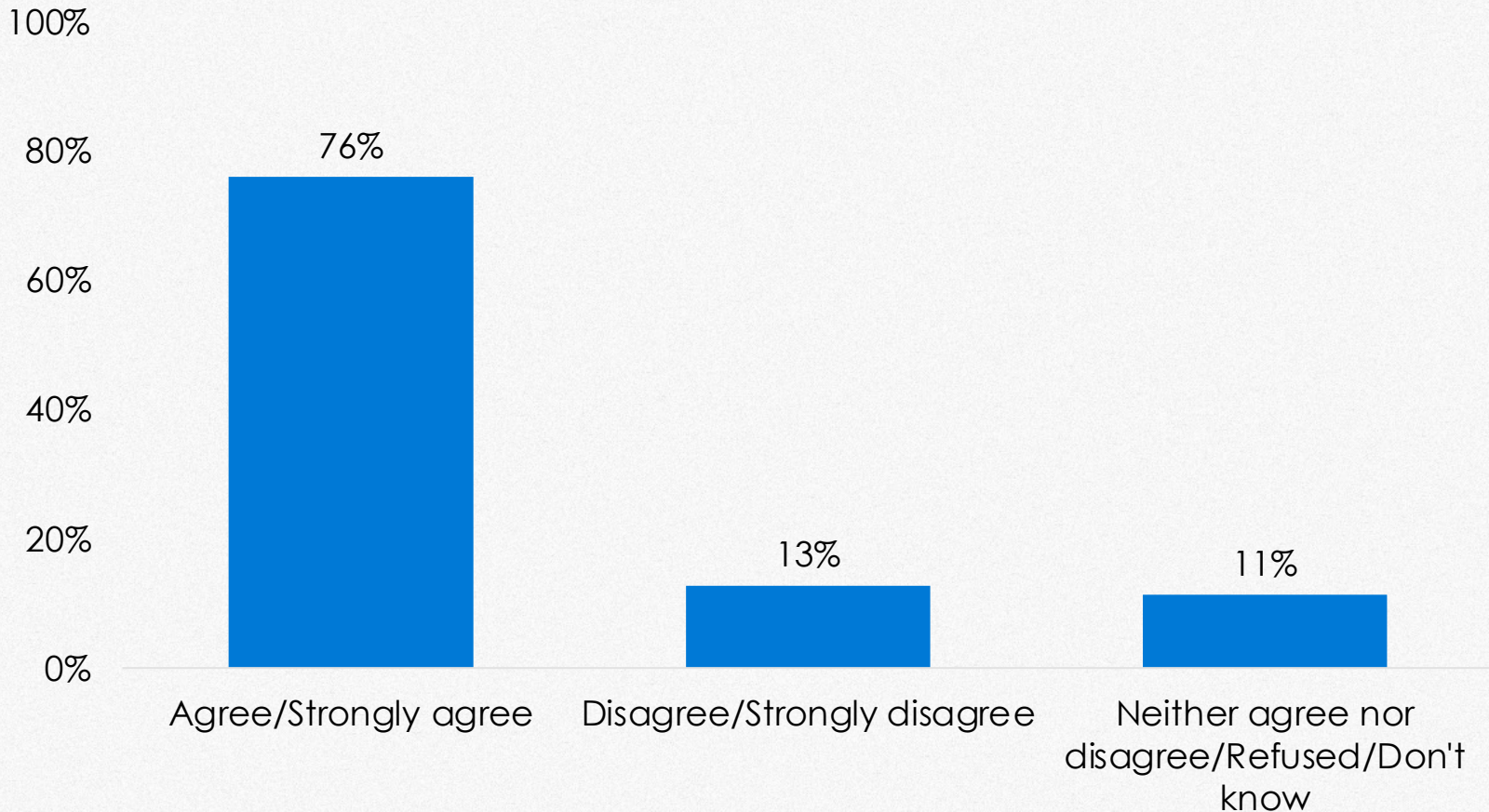
Eskom should be privatised

| by demographic group | South Africa | 2022

Respondents were asked:
 Please tell me whether you disagree or agree, or haven't you heard enough to say: To ensure effectiveness in the supply of electricity in our country, Eskom should be privatised? (% who "agree" or "strongly agree")



Should other actors be allowed to generate and distribute electricity? | South Africa | 2022

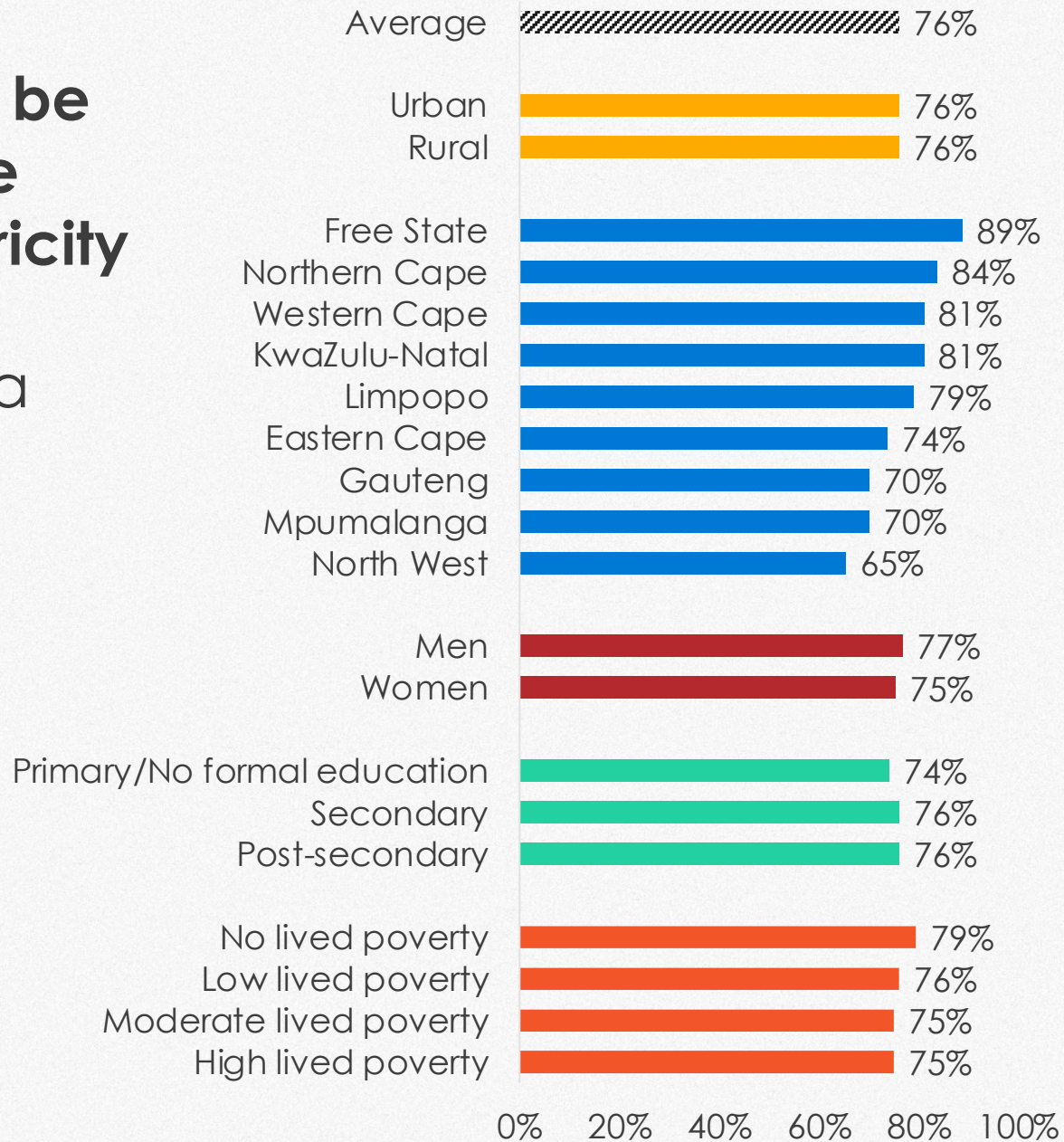


Respondents were asked: Please tell me whether you disagree or agree, or haven't heard enough to say: The government should allow other actors to generate and distribute electricity in South Africa?

Other actors should be allowed to generate and distribute electricity

| by demographic group | South Africa | 2022

Respondents were asked:
 Please tell me whether you disagree or agree, or haven't heard enough to say: The government should allow other actors to generate and distribute electricity in South Africa?
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree")





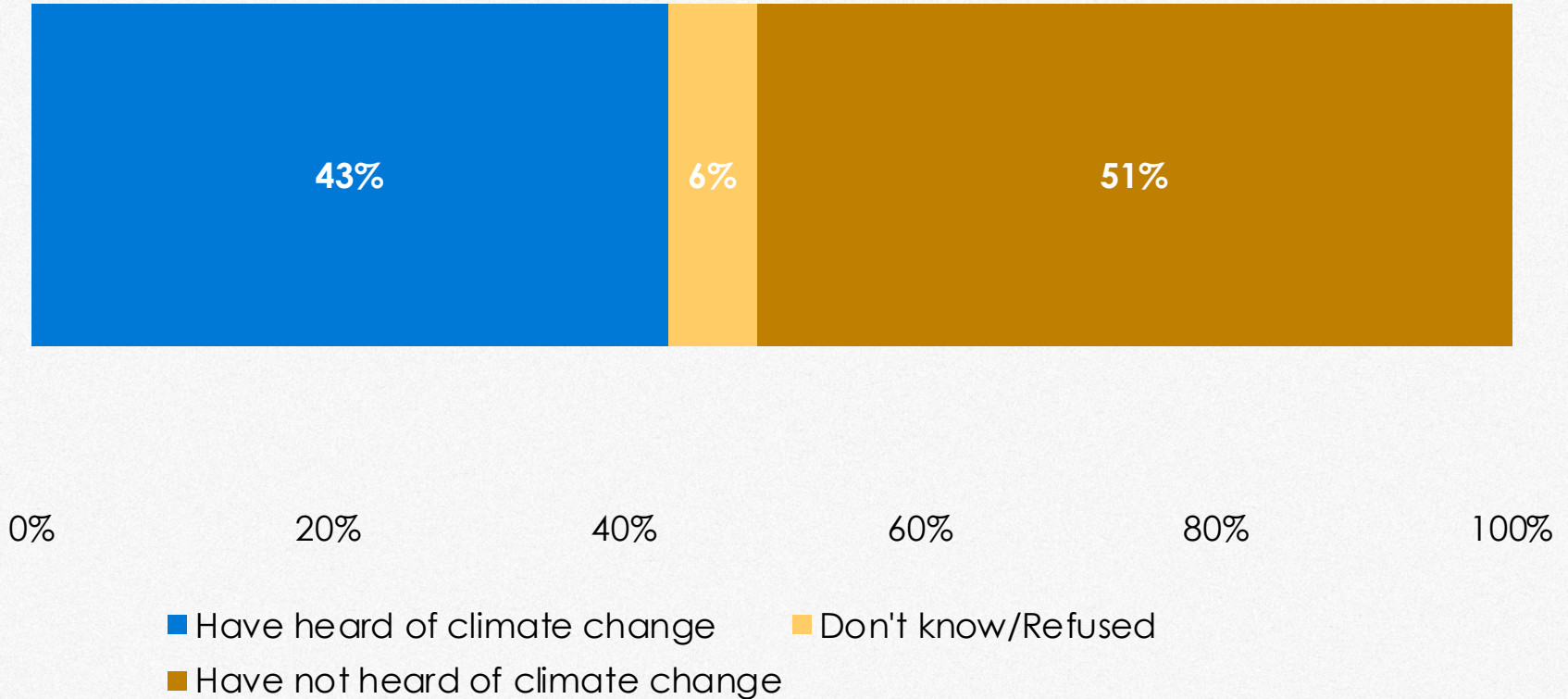
AFRO
BAROMETER
Let the people have a say

Climate change

Key findings

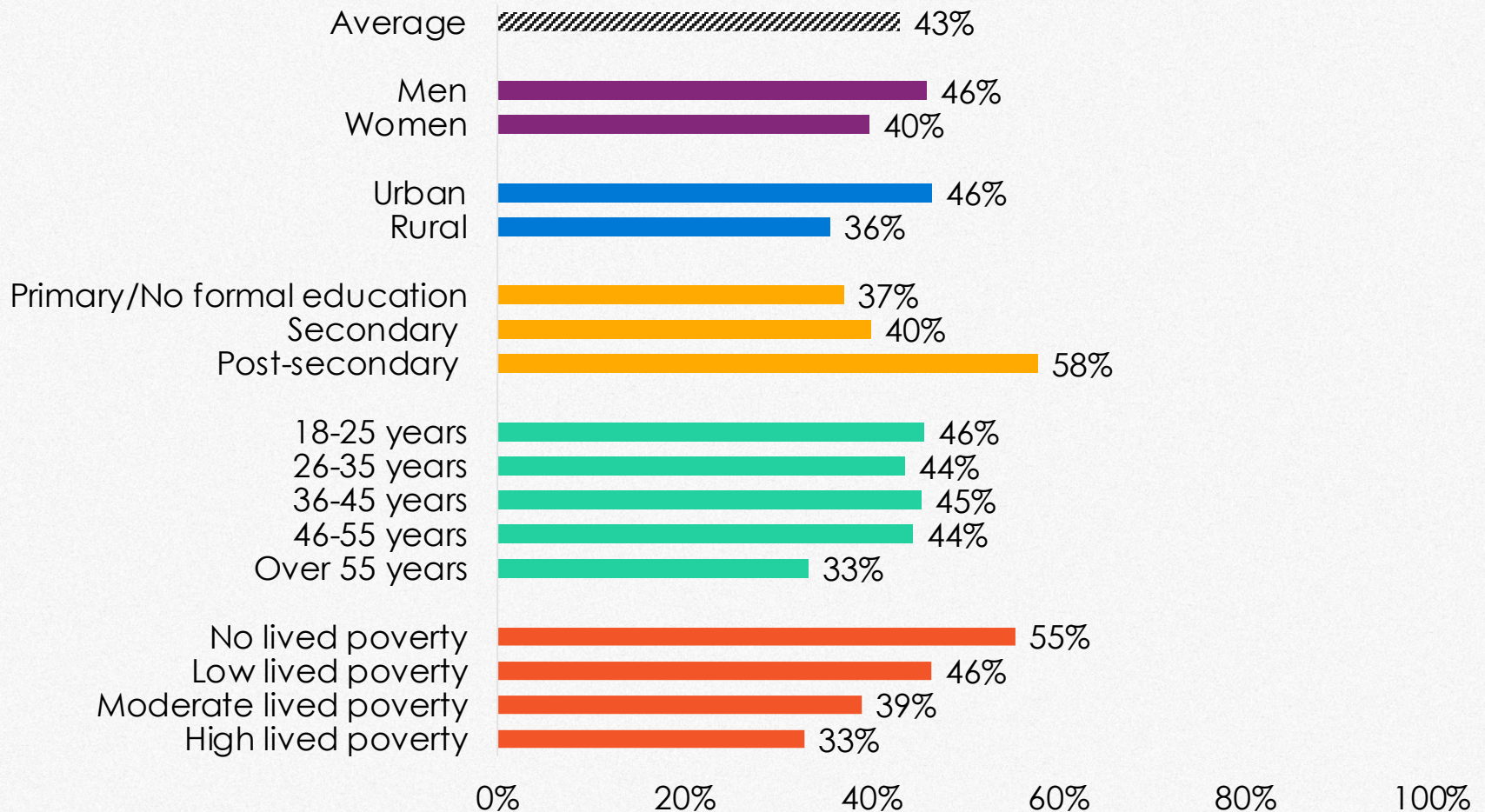
- Half of South African adults say they have never heard of climate change.
- Women, rural residents, the elderly, the poor, and the less educated are less likely to be familiar with climate change.
- Among those who are aware of climate change, majorities agree that:
 - It is making life in South Africa worse.
 - The government should take immediate action, even at considerable cost.
 - Both citizens and the government have important roles to play in limiting its effects.

Climate change awareness | South Africa | 2022



Respondents were asked: *Have you heard about climate change, or haven't you had the chance to hear about this yet?*

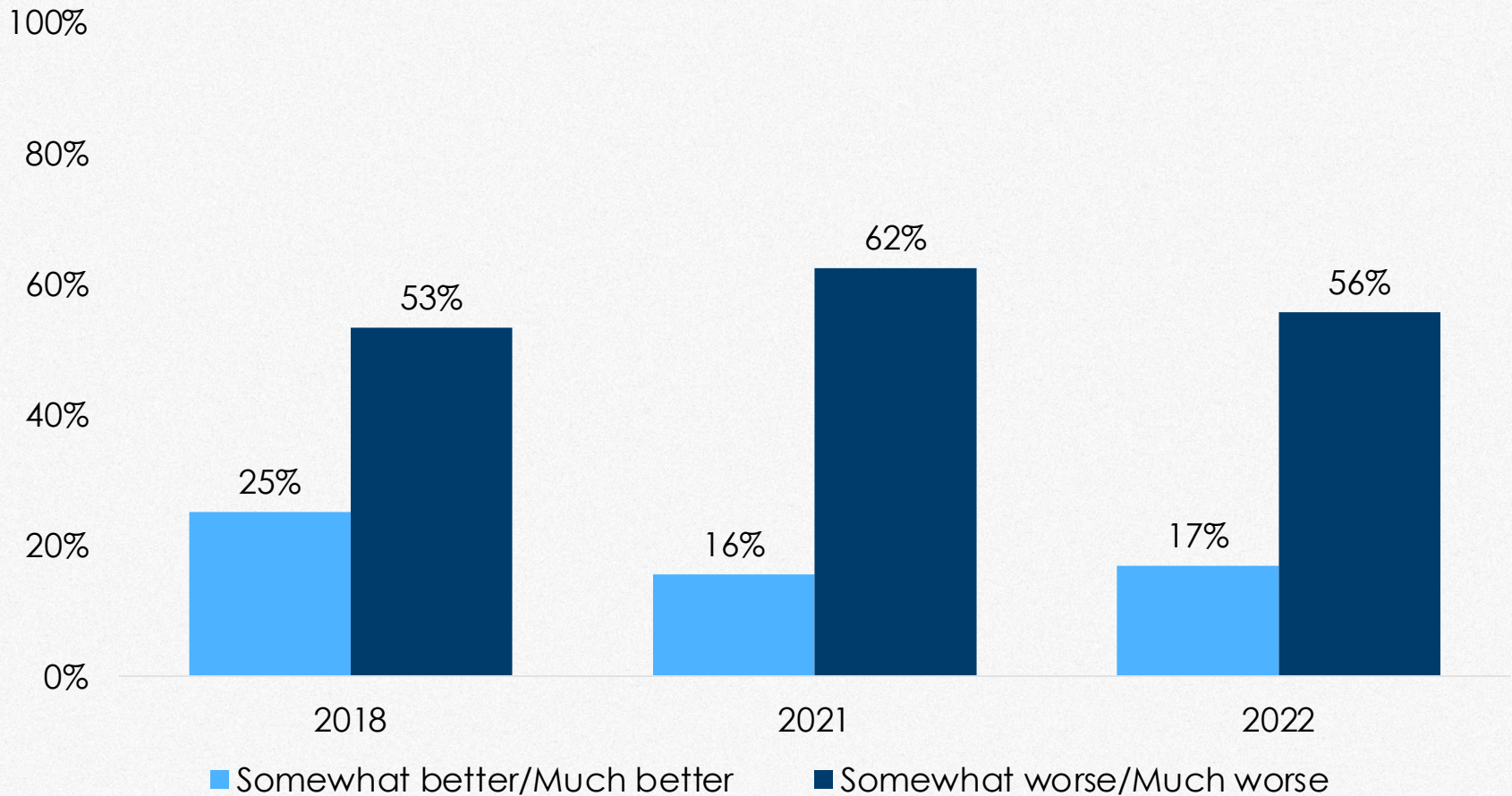
Climate change awareness | by demographic group | South Africa | 2022



Respondents were asked: Have you heard about climate change or haven't you had the chance to hear about this yet? (% who have heard of climate change)

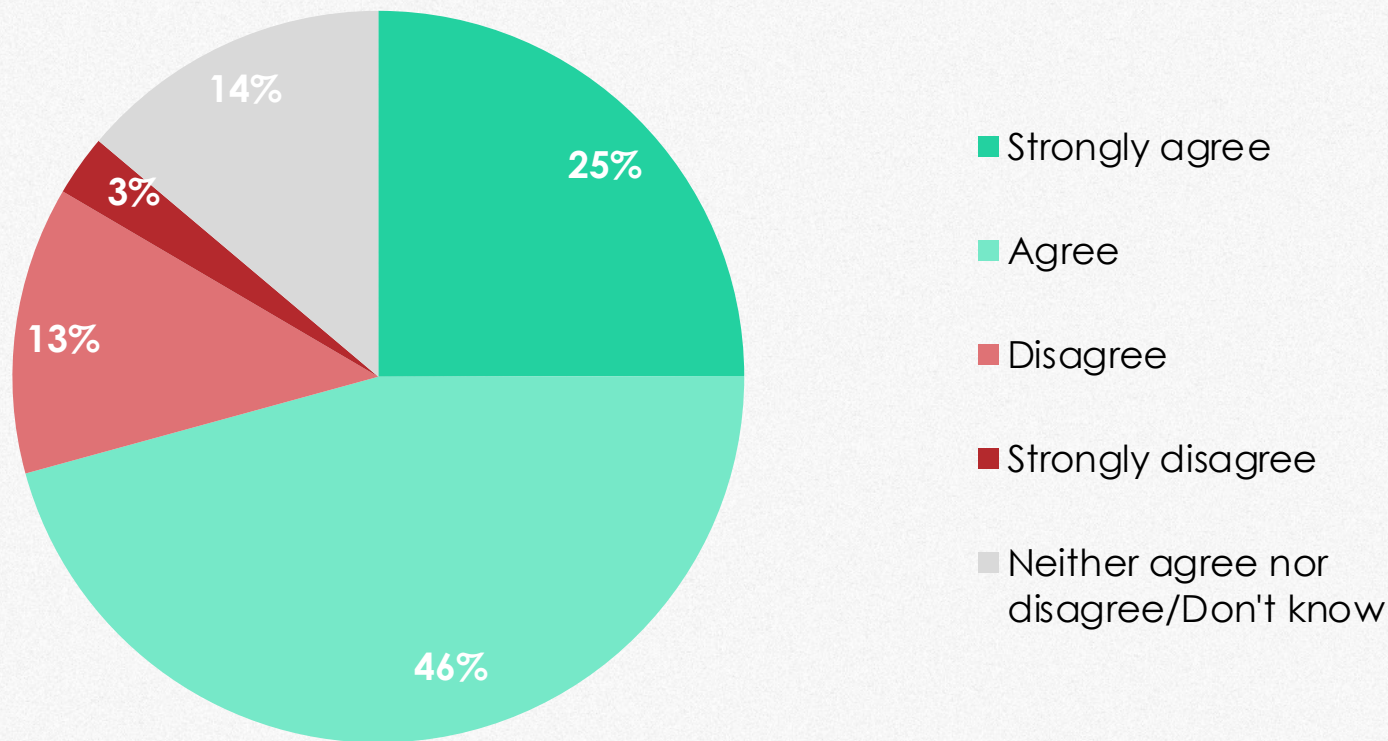
Is climate change making life better or worse?

| South Africa | 2018-2022



Respondents who said they had heard of climate change were asked: Do you think climate change is making life in South Africa better or worse or haven't you heard enough to say? (Respondents who had not heard of climate change are excluded.)

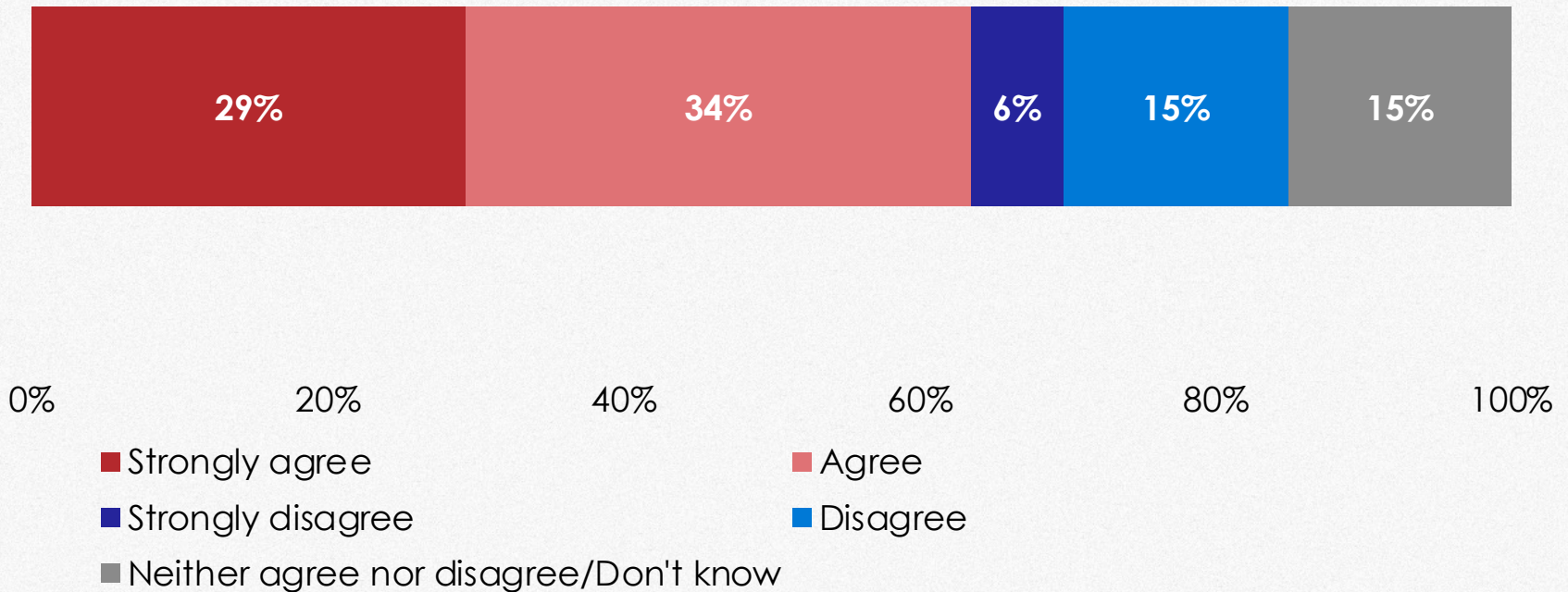
Can ordinary citizens play a role in limiting climate change? | South Africa | 2022



Respondents who said they had heard of climate change were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree: Ordinary South Africans can play a role in limiting climate change? (Respondents who had not heard of climate change are excluded.)

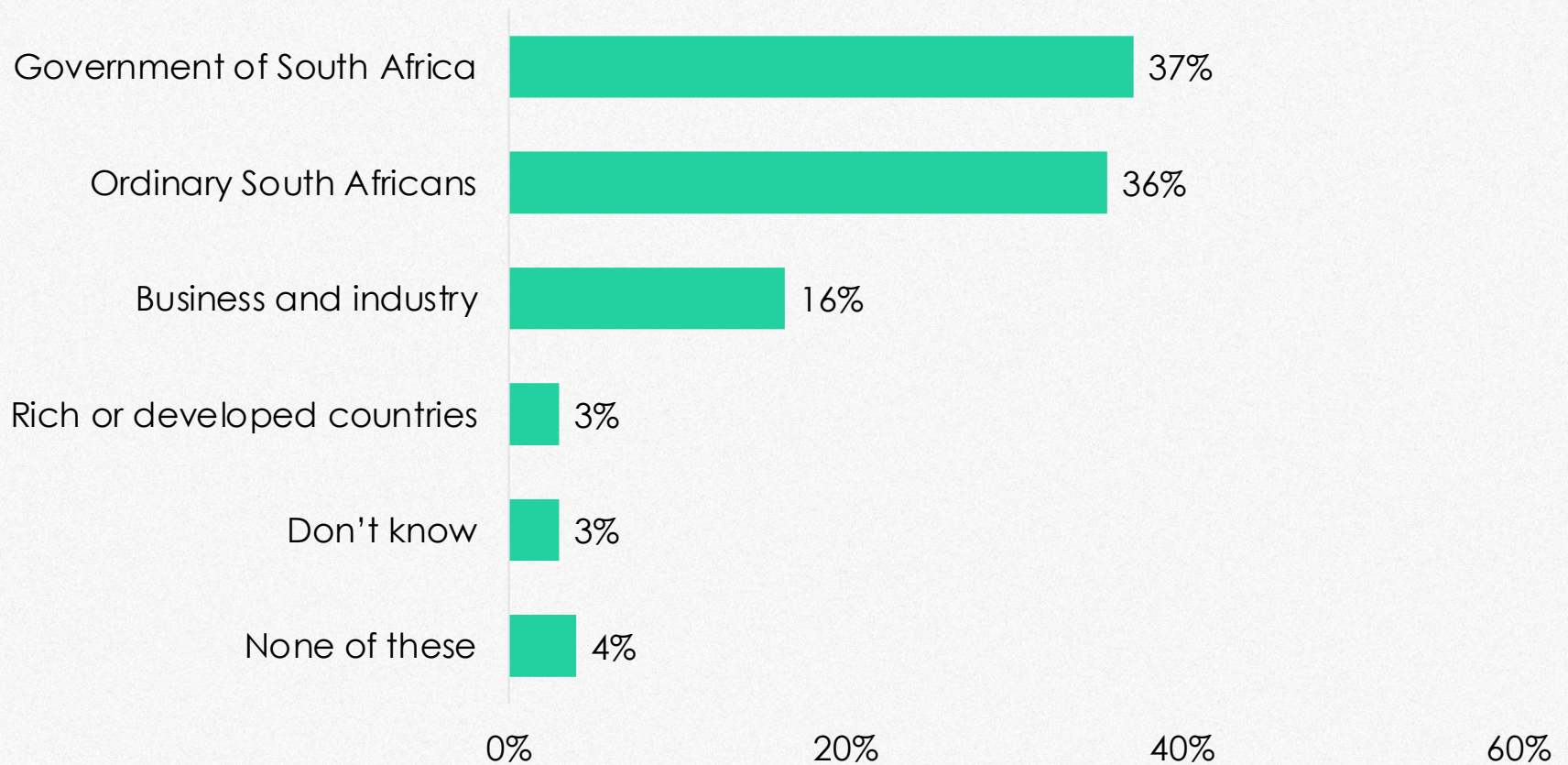
Must government act now to limit climate change?

| South Africa | 2022



Respondents who said they had heard of climate change were asked: For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you disagree or agree: It is important for our government to take steps now to limit climate change in the future, even if it is expensive or causes some job losses or other harm to our economy? (Respondents who had not heard of climate change are excluded.)

Who has primary responsibility for limiting climate change? | South Africa | 2022



Respondents who said they had heard of climate change were asked: Who do you think should have the primary responsibility for trying to limit climate change and reduce its impact?

(Respondents who had not heard of climate change are excluded.)

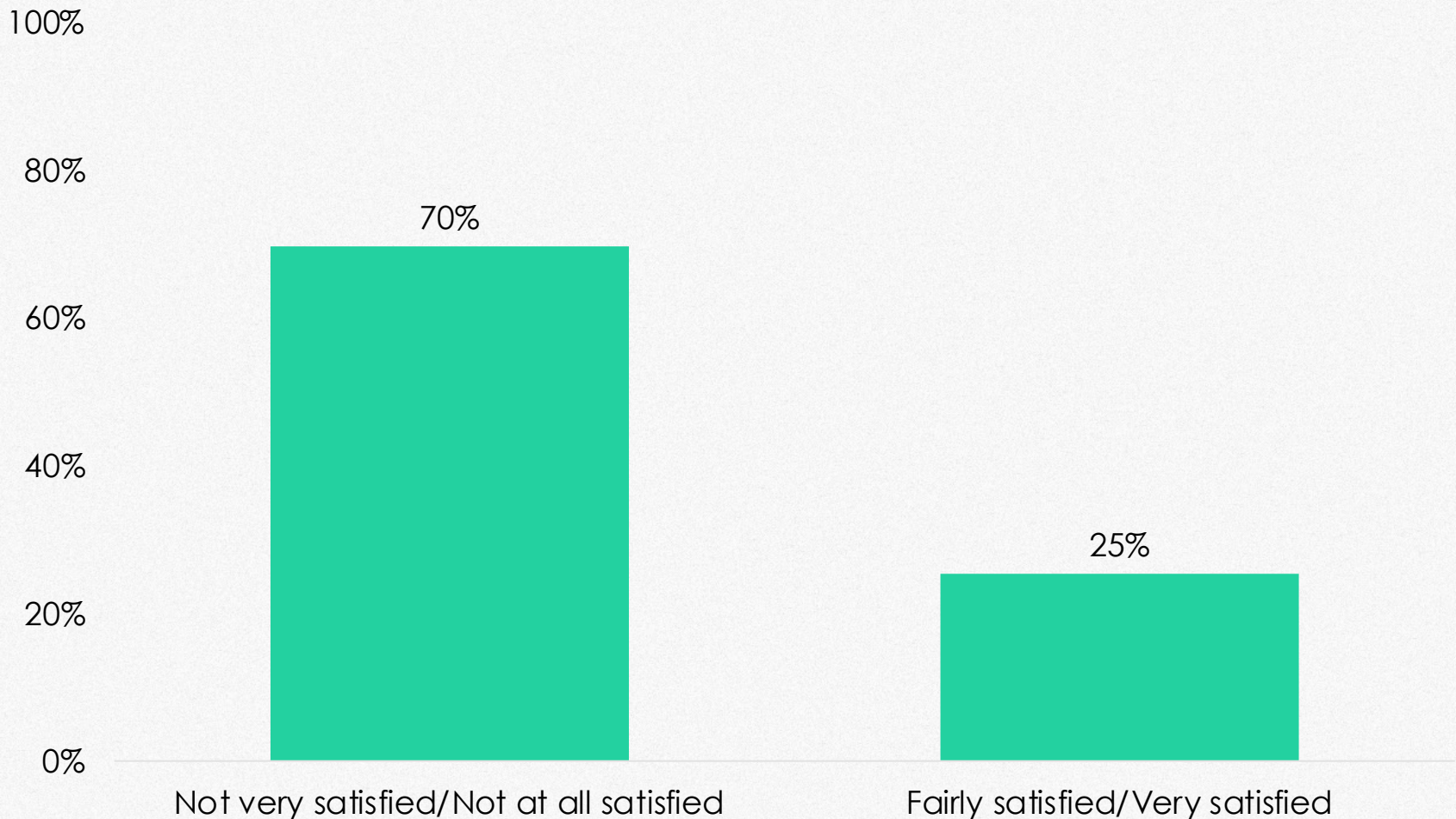
Democracy and elections

Key findings



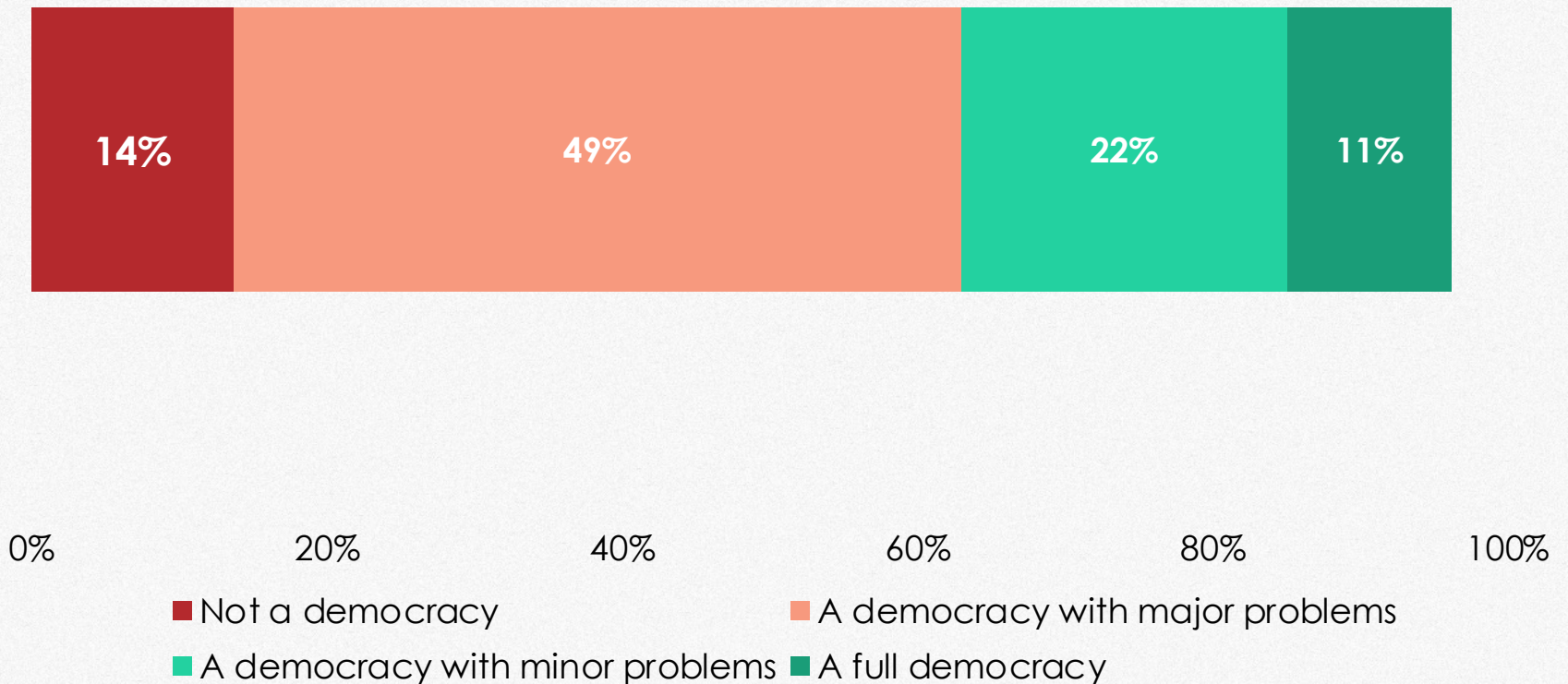
- A majority of South Africans are dissatisfied with their country's democracy.
- Citizens support elections but don't think they work well.
- A growing majority would be willing to forgo elections in favour of a government that delivers security, jobs, and housing.
- In a hypothetical election, the African National Congress would hold the lead, with about one-third of respondents, but a larger share decline to state a voting intention.

Satisfaction with democracy | South Africa | 2022



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

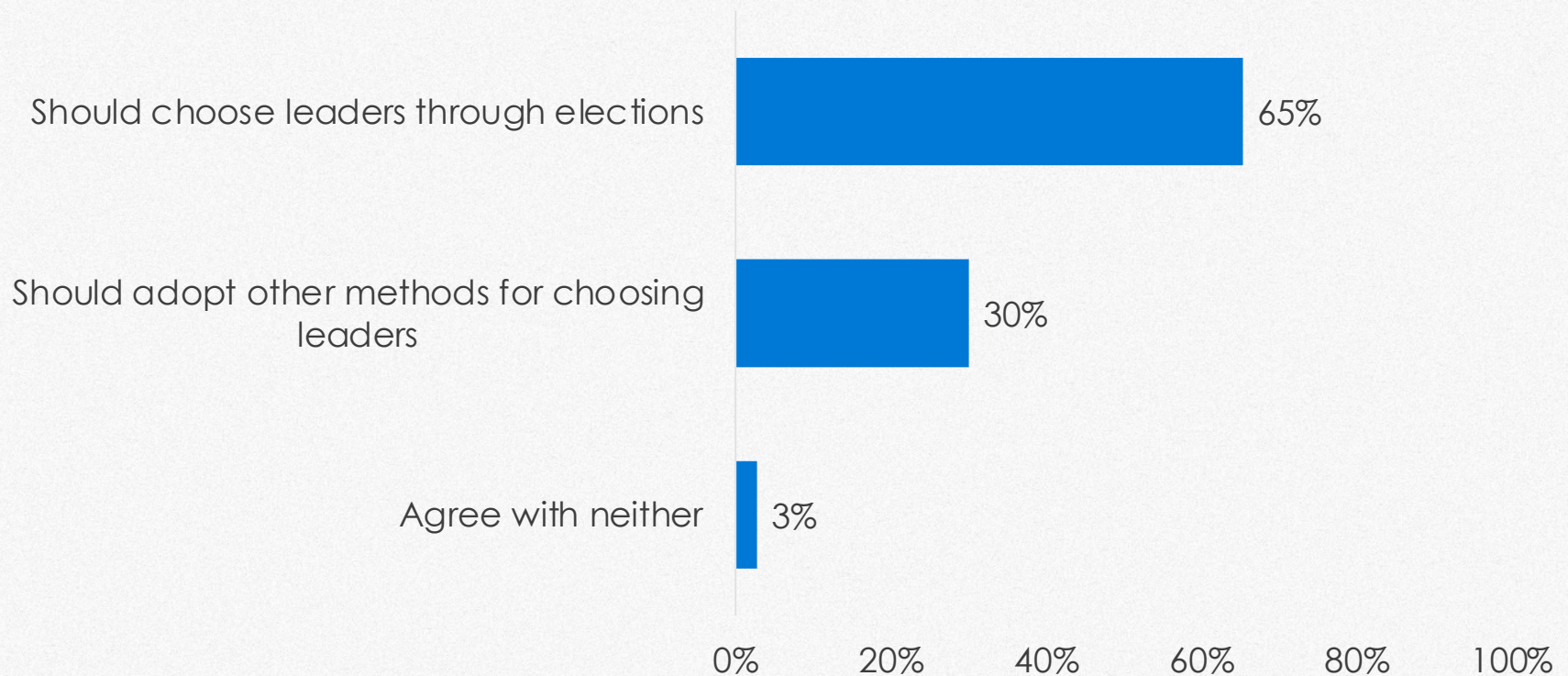
Extent of democracy | South Africa | 2022



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

Support elections as the best way to choose leaders

| South Africa | 2022



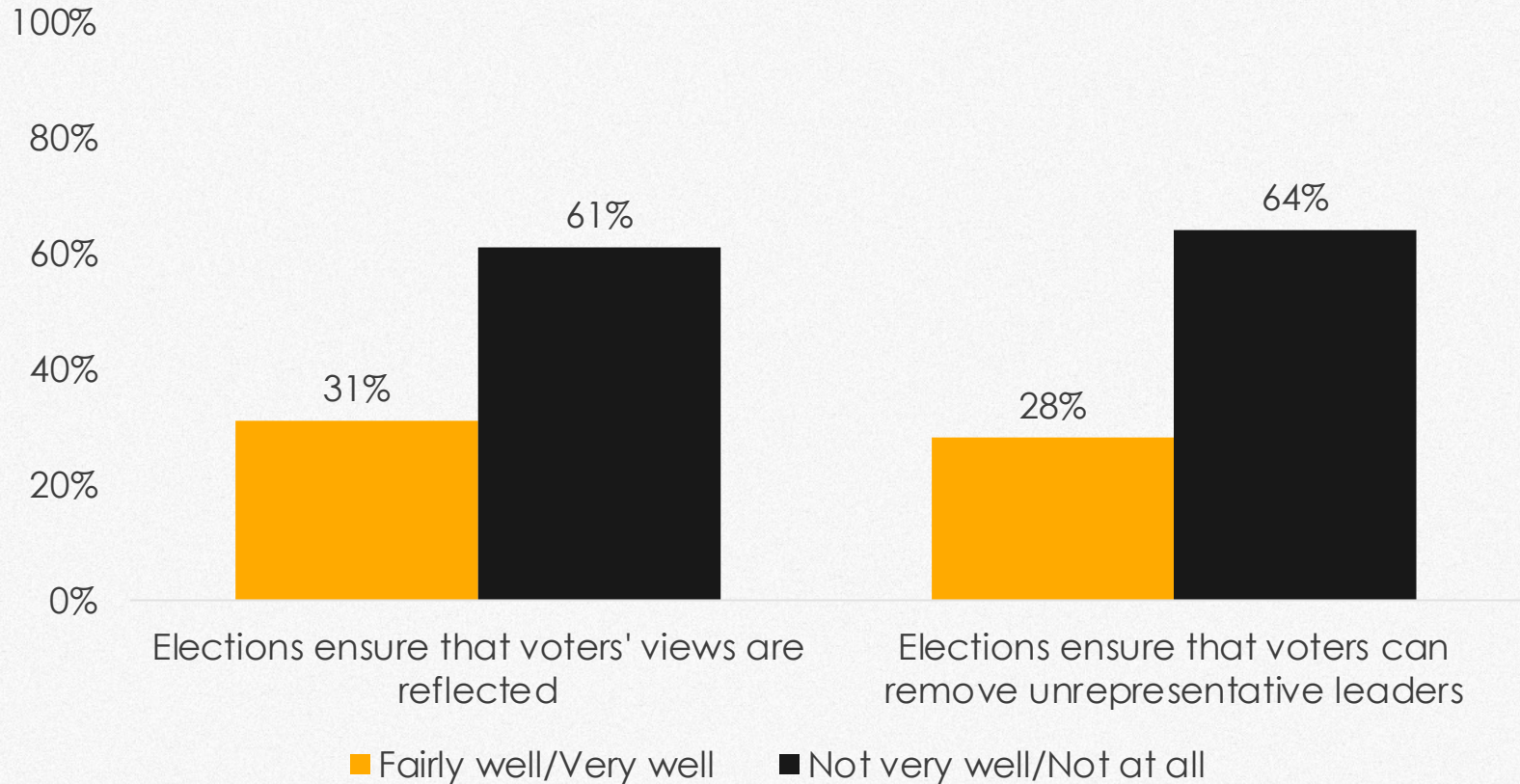
Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1: We should choose our leaders in this country through regular, open, and honest elections.

Statement 2: Since elections sometimes produce bad results, we should adopt other methods for choosing this country's leaders.

(% who "agree" or "strongly agree" with each statement)

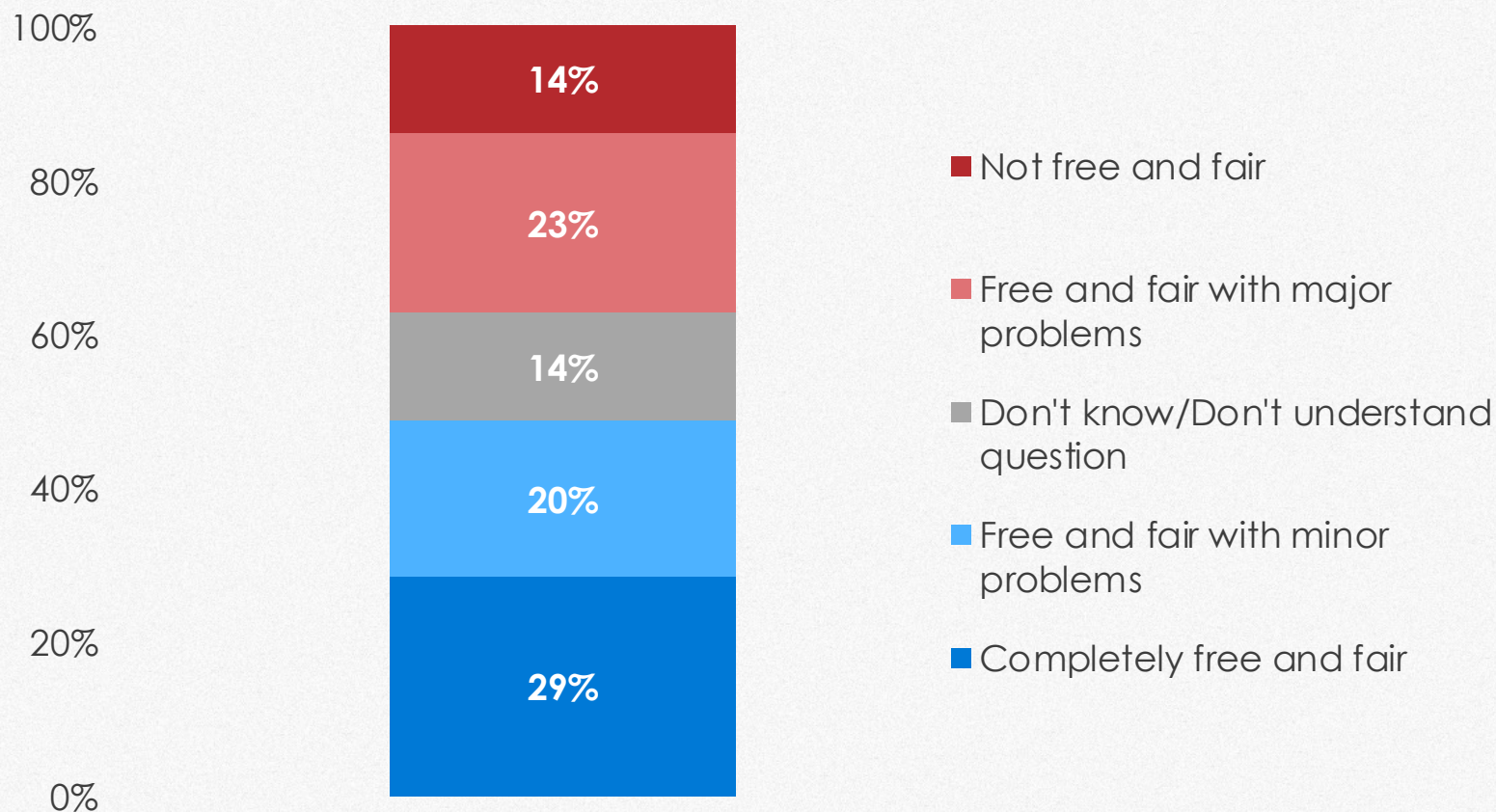
Efficacy of elections | South Africa | 2022



Respondents were asked: Thinking about how elections work in practice in this country, how well do elections: Ensure that Members of Parliament reflect the views of voters? Enable voters to remove from office leaders who do not do what the people want?

Freeness and fairness of election | South Africa

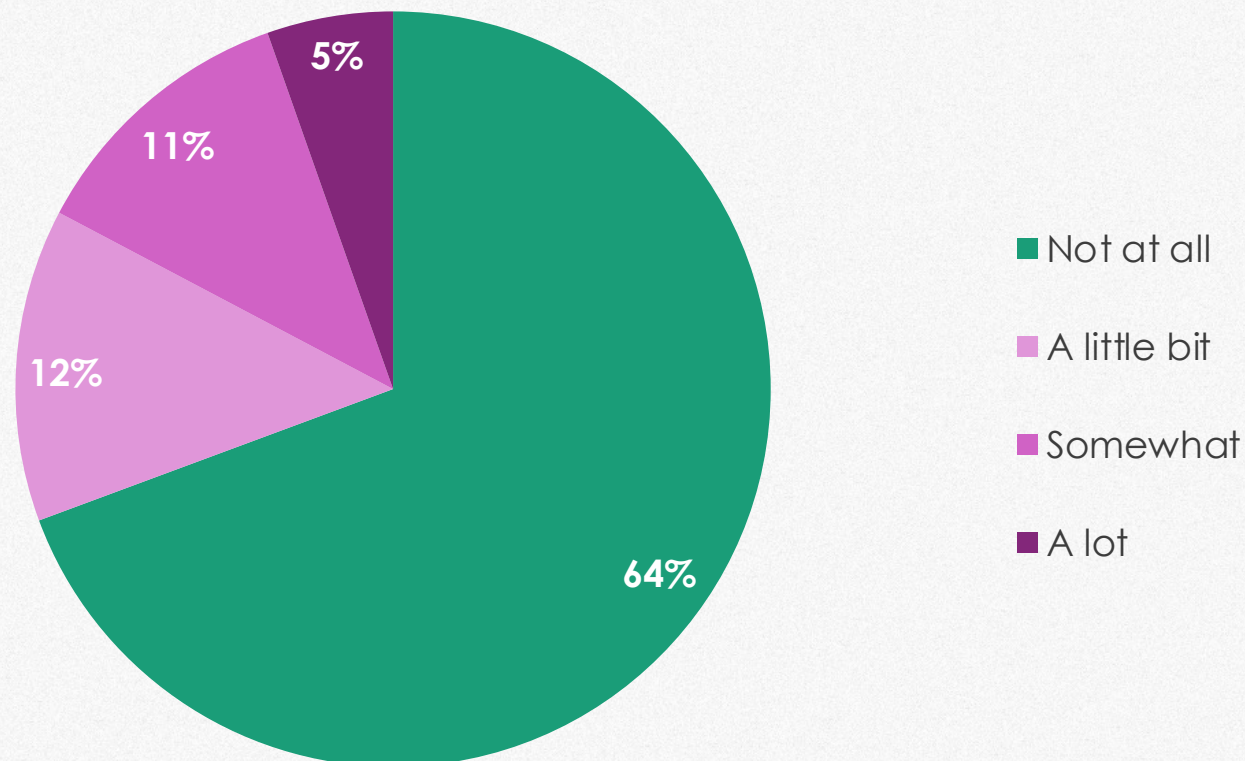
| 2022



Respondents were asked: *On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in 2019?*

Fear of intimidation or violence in 2019 election

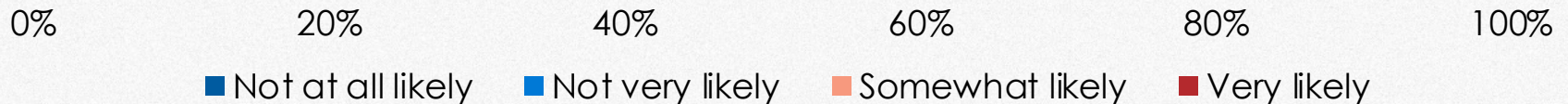
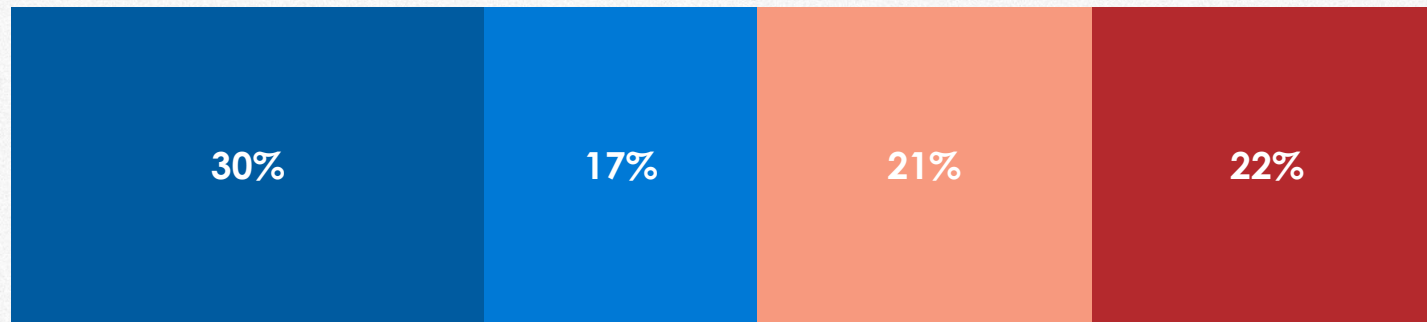
| South Africa | 2022



Respondents were asked: During the last national election campaign in 2019, how much did you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence?

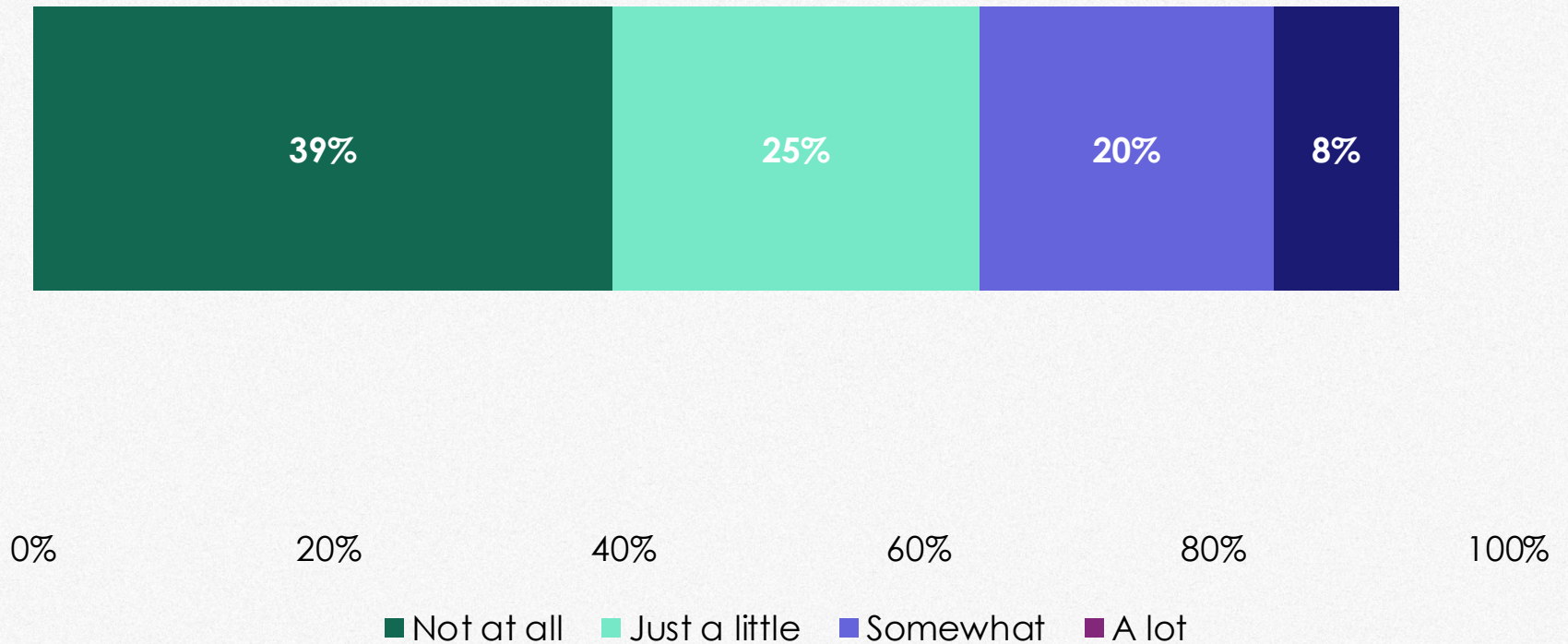
Can powerful people find out how you voted?

| South Africa | 2022



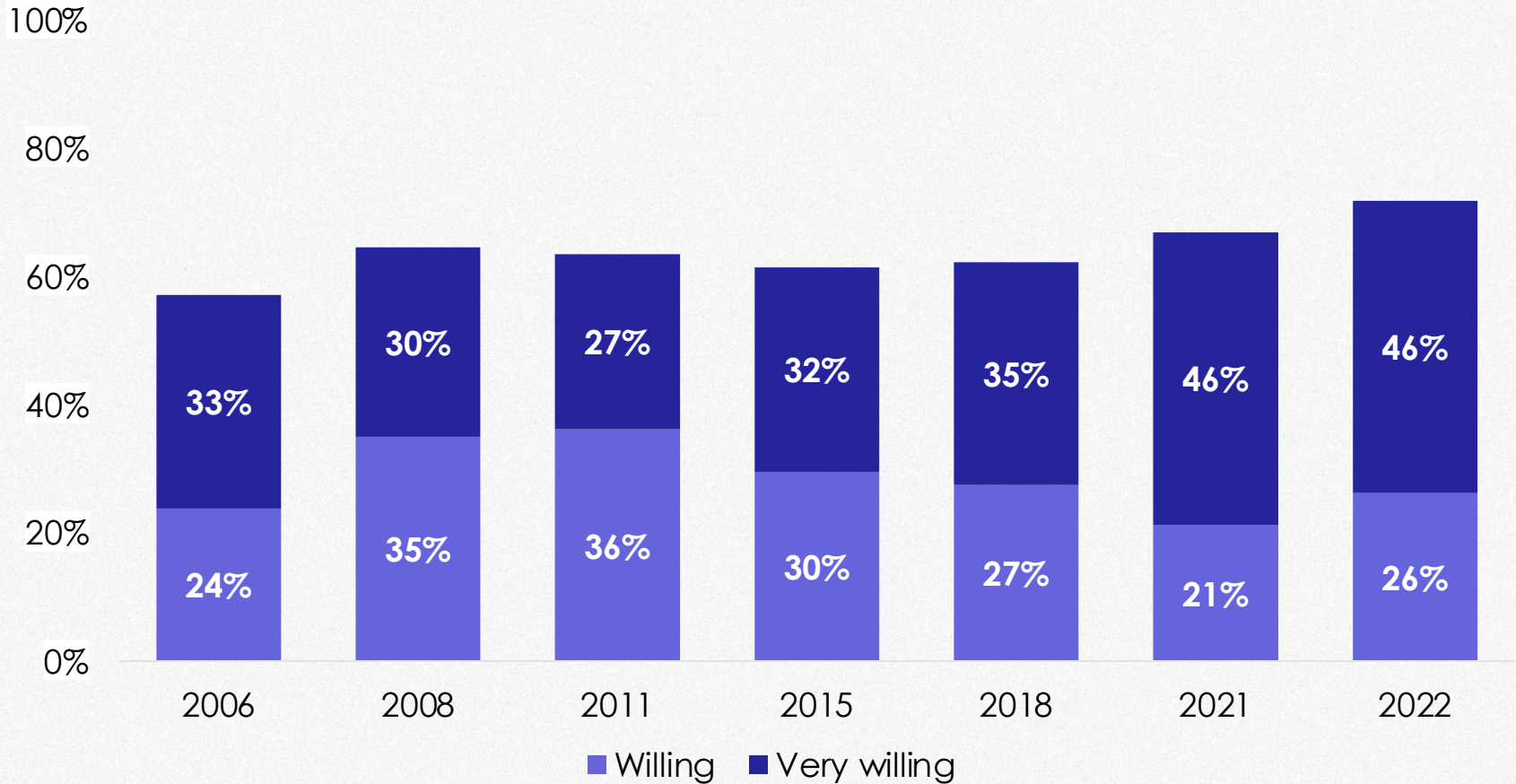
Respondents were asked: How likely do you think it is that powerful people can find out how you voted, even though there is supposed to be a secret ballot in this country?

Trust in South African Electoral Commission | South Africa | 2022



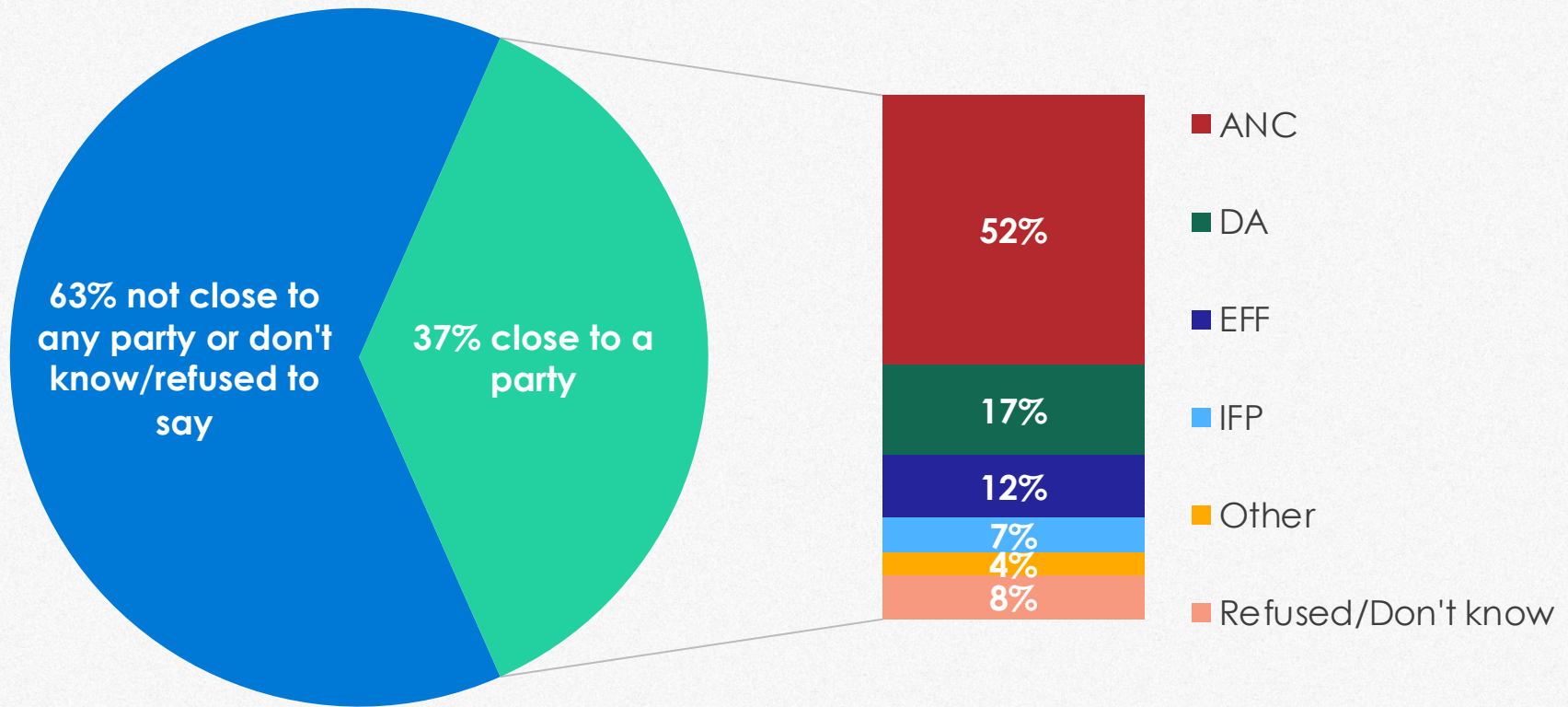
Respondents were asked: How much do you trust the South African Electoral Commission, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?

Willing to forgo elections | South Africa | 2006-2022



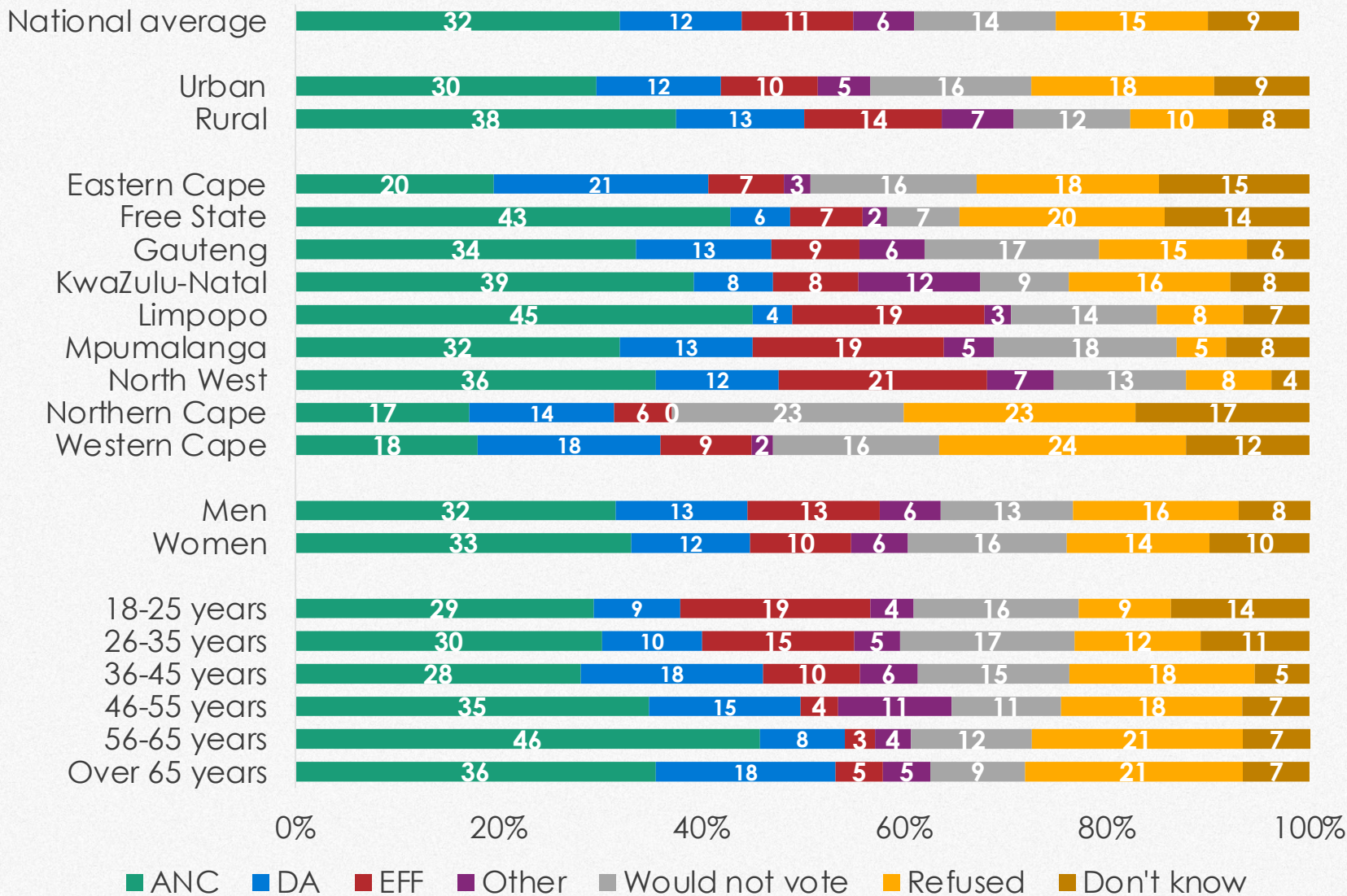
Respondents were asked: *If a non-elected government or leader could impose law and order, and deliver houses and jobs, how willing or unwilling would you be to give up regular elections and live under such a government?*

Do citizens feel close to a political party? | South Africa | 2022



Respondents were asked: Do you feel close to any particular political party? [If yes:] Which party is that?

Voting intentions | South Africa | 2022



Respondents were asked: *If national elections were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?*

Conclusions

Conclusions



- An overwhelming majority of South Africans say the government is doing a poor job of providing electricity and other power producers should be allowed to generate and distribute electricity.
- Awareness of climate change remains low, especially among women, rural residents, the elderly, the poor, and the less educated.
- South Africans' faith in democracy is weak, and while citizens value elections, they do not believe that they work well.
- Increasing numbers of the population would be willing to forgo elections in favour of a non-elected government that provides security, jobs, and housing.

Thank you

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