



Gaborone, Botswana
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News release

Majority of Batswana say chieftainship should not be abolished, but a chief who wants to enter politics should renounce his position

An overwhelming majority of Batswana say that the institution of chieftainship (*bogosi*) continues to be relevant in modern-day Botswana and should not be abolished, a recent Afrobarometer survey shows.

And more than six in 10 believe that the institution of *kgotla* (village assembly) serves as an essential part of democratic society in the country and thus should allow citizens to freely discuss all matters, including potentially sensitive political issues.

But most say that a chief who wants to enter politics should renounce his position as a chief, suggesting that Batswana value non-partisan traditional leadership.

Key findings

- Only about one in five Batswana (18%) think that the institution of chieftainship (*bogosi*) is outdated and should be abolished (Figure 1). Fully 80% disagree, including 48% who “strongly disagree.”
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of citizens say that the institution of *kgotla* serves as the foundation for Botswana’s democracy and should therefore be open to discussing all issues affecting communities, including political matters (Figure 2). About one-third (32%) of citizens disagree.
- Close to three-quarters (73%) of Batswana say that chiefs who want to enter politics should renounce their positions as chiefs (Figure 3).

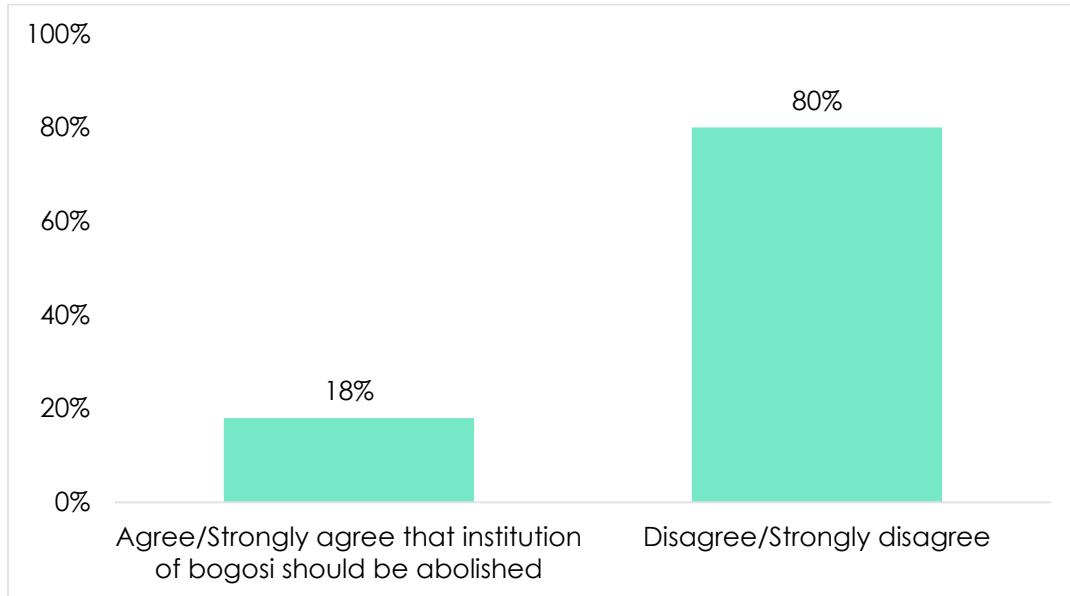
Afrobarometer surveys

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 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.

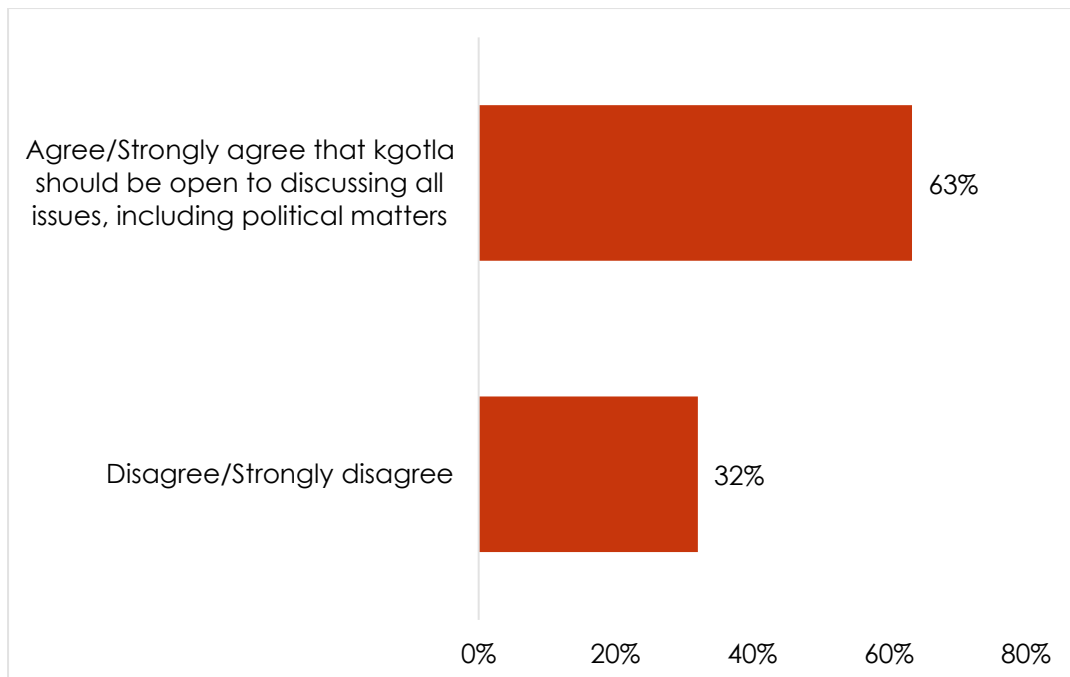
Charts

Figure 1: Should chieftainship (bogosi) be abolished? | Botswana | 2022



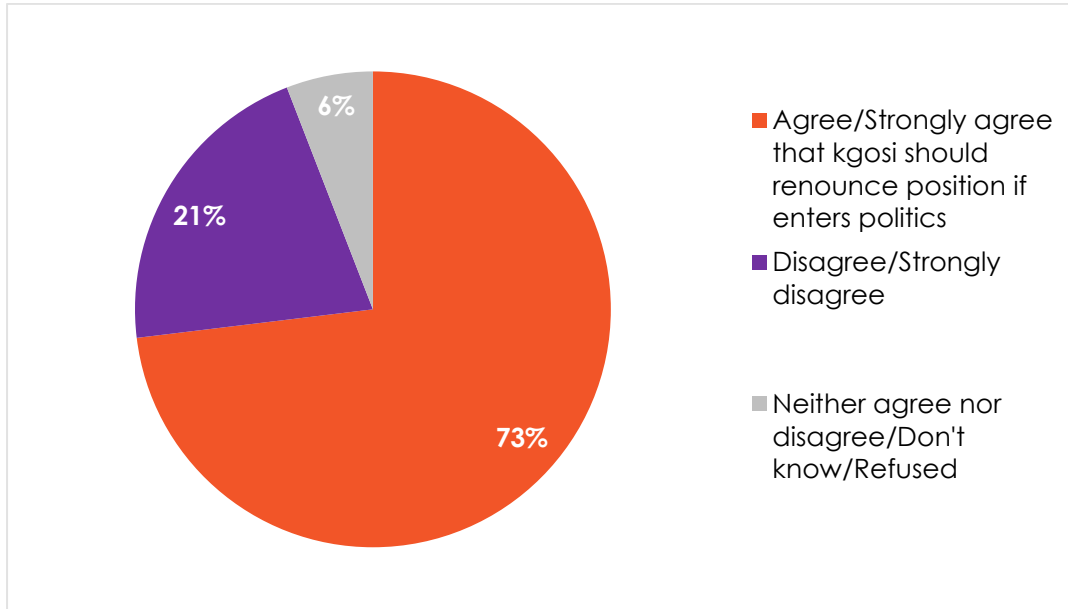
Respondents were asked: Please say whether you disagree or agree with the following statement: The institution of bogosi is outdated and is no longer useful in modern-day Botswana; it should therefore be abolished.

Figure 2: Should kgotla be open to discussing all issues affecting the community? | Botswana | 2022



Respondents were asked: Please say whether you disagree or agree with the following statement: The kgotla institution serves as the foundation of our democracy and should therefore be open to discussing all issues affecting communities, including political matters.

Figure 3: Should a chief (kgosi) renounce his position if he participates in politics?
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Respondents were asked: Please say whether you disagree or agree with the following statement: A kgosi who wants to join politics should completely renounce his position as a kgosi.

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